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Cover image credit: The tailoring workshop of the fascist Internment Camp of Ferramonti. Archives CDEC Foundation.

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REVIEWS

Introduction

by *The Editors of Quest*

This is a miscellaneous issue, publishing four research articles and a review essay, covering several topics in modern Jewish history, focusing primarily on the first half of the twentieth century. The underlying thread of these articles may be the calamitous events that affected Jews in Europe, given the disrupting impact of war and violence throughout the first part of the century. Space is also a recurring theme, both in the form of movement—through migration, exile or displacement—and in the form of confinement and segregation.

The first article, authored by Jan Kutílek and titled "Looting and Killing are Permitted: Rumors in the November 1918 Pogrom in Lviv," explores the violence that erupted in Lviv, leading to the pogrom of Jews in November 1918. Using a wealth of primary sources, the article analyzes the dynamics that led to the massacre of Jews, focusing also on the spread and role of rumors. Shedding light on their influence and significance in driving the violence of the pogrom, and examining how they were validated by the press. Moreover, the article explores the unintentional role of the Jewish militia in creating fear, uncertainty, and paranoia in the minds of Poles, while revealing how Poles' perception of Jews was to a very high degree grounded in prejudice.

The second article, by Anna Teicher, is devoted to the David Diringer's biographical trajectory: "David Diringer's Refugee Itinerary: From Foreign Student in Fascist Italy to Academic in Post-War Britain." Following in the footsteps of a recent wave of scholarship aimed at reconstructing the intellectual trajectories of persecuted emigres (including European Jews), fleeing from totalitarian regimes and antisemitism, the article presents a case study in intellectual migration. Diringer graduated in Florence in 1923 under the guidance of Umberto Cassuto and pursued his early career in Italy, being part of the small cohort of foreigners that successfully obtained Italian citizenship. However, his career and life were disrupted by the loss of his position and his expulsion from Italy following the 1938 racial legislation. As an academic refugee in Britain, unsuccessful in attempts to reach the US or return to Italy after the war, he was precariously dependent on grants until he finally obtained a stable university position in 1948.

" 'Good Moral Conduct' in an Italian Concentration Camp: Women's Daily Lives in Ferramonti di Tarsia, 1940-1943" is the third article published. It is authored by Susanna Schrafstetter. As the title indicates, the article analyzes the situation of

female inmates in the Italian internment camp of Ferramonti, located in Calabria in South Italy, and which was used primarily to imprison foreign Jews from central and eastern Europe. Until now, historical accounts of the camp at Ferramonti have been based mainly on the testimony of male members of the camp's Jewish self-administration, who focused on the successful institutions and the flourishing social and cultural life among the internees. The article draws a somewhat different picture, analyzing the testimony of former female internees, including their work, health, daily chores, and gender relations. It argues that women's bodies in Ferramonti were subject to rigid surveillance by both the male camp inmates and the Fascist authorities. It also illustrates how the specifically male and rather positive representation of Ferramonti that developed since the immediate aftermath of the war contributed to the development of the "myth of the good Italian."

Danny Goldman is the author of the fourth article, titled "Wilhelma, Israel: An Interface of Israeli and German Settlement Histories," which analyses the interconnected history of two settlements, Wilhelma and Atarot. The German settlers of Wilhelma were deported by the British Mandate authorities in 1948 and the Jewish settlers of Atarot had to leave their settlement in the same year. The latter were resettled in Wilhelma as it was vacated by the British. The German settlers of Wilhelma were deported to Australia, where they were naturalized, mostly in Melbourne and Sydney. The name Wilhelma was replaced with Bnei Atarot by the Jewish settlers from Old Atarot.

We also publish a lengthy review essay by our co-editor Ulrich Wyrwa, presenting the 16-volume edition of the publication of documents about the persecution and murder of European Jews ("Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933-1945"), edited on behalf of the Chair of Modern History at the University of Freiburg, the Institute for Contemporary History (Institut für Zeitgeschiche/IfZ), and the German Federal Archives The contribution, titled "Back to the Sources: Over Five Thousand Documents on the 'Persecution and Murder of European Jews by National Socialist Germany'. On the Completion of a 16-Volume Edition" chronicles and discusses the outcome of this monumental project aimed at retrieving the vast documentation on the persecution and massacre of European Jewry.

The "Discussion" section is dedicated to Ari Joskowicz's important study, "*Rain of Ash: Roma, Jews, and the Holocaust* (2023), with contributions authored by Anton Weiss-Wendt and Marius Turda. We also publish a reply by the author.

Finally, the "Reviews" section publishes critical presentations of six books, which are dedicated to a wide range of topics, among which the intellectual biography of Lazare Sainéan, Zionism and Italian identity between 1918 and 1938, Jewish art

collectors in France, material history and Jewish literature, debates on the Holocaust and the persecution of the Jews and Roma in Romania during World War II.

The Editors of Quest

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Looting and Killing are Permitted: Rumors in the November 1918 Pogrom in Lviv

by *Jan Kutílek*

Abstract

The extensive violence of November 1918 in Lviv, the Eastern Galician capital, left hundreds of Jews injured and dozens of dead. The presented paper is an attempt to understand a critical aspect of the dynamics that drove the violence of the pogrom. It seeks to illustrate the mechanism and role of rumors, shedding light on their influence and significance in driving the violence of the pogrom. Based on rich primary sources, it describes the rumors that were circulated and how people perceived the violence. One of the main goals of this paper is to emphasize the unintentional role of the Jewish militia in creating fear, uncertainty, and paranoia in the minds of Poles. The paper examines the key role of the print media in the process of validating the rumors. The investigation considers the significance of Poles' knowledge about Jews based on prejudice.

Introduction*

During and in the aftermath of the First World War, Jews in East-Central Europe experienced brutal violence.[1] In November 1918, the city of Lviv (formerly Lemberg / Lwów) became the focal point of a conflict between two newly created states—the Second Polish Republic and the West Ukrainian People's Republic. The retreat of the Ukrainian military units from the city was followed by a brutal pogrom which claimed the lives of dozens of Jews and left hundreds injured.[2] The

* The article is based on a preliminary paper presented at The Eighteenth World Congress of Jewish Studies held at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem on August 8-12, 2022. It has since undergone revisions for publication. I would like to express my gratitude to Tim Buchen for his comments on the first draft of the article, and to Pieter M. Judson for his guidance in addressing reviewer comments. I also wish to thank external reviewers and journal editor, Guri Schwarz, for their insightful advice on enhancing the article. Additionally, I am thankful to Claudia Kraft, Janusz Mierzwa, and Zbyněk Vydra for their literature recommendations and discussions on the subject matter. Any shortcomings in the article remain my responsibility.

[1] Henry Abramson, *A Prayer for the Government: Ukrainians and Jews in Revolutionary Times, 1917-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Irina Astashkevich, *Gendered Violence: Jewish Women in the Pogroms of 1917 to 1921* (Boston: Academic Studies Press 2018); Jonathan L. Dekel-Chen, *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011); Michal Frankl and Miloslav Szabó, *Budování státu bez antisemitismu? Násilí, diskurz loajality a vznik Československa* [Building the State without Anti-Semitism? Violence, the Discourse of Loyalty and the Emergence of Czechoslovakia] (Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2015); Frank Golczewski, *Polnisch-jüdische Beziehungen 1881–1922: Eine Studie zur Geschichte des Antisemitismus in Osteuropa* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1981); Victoria Khiterer, *Jewish Pogroms in Kiev during the Russian Civil War 1918-1920* (Lewiston - Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2015); Alexander Victor Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland: War, Ethnicity, and Anti-Jewish Violence in East Galicia, 1914-1920* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005); Jeffrey Veidlinger, *In the Midst of Civilized Europe: The Pogroms of 1918-1921 and the Onset of the Holocaust* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 2021); Piotr Wróbel, "The Seeds of Violence: The Brutalization of an East European Region, 1917–1921," *Journal of Modern European History* 1, no. 1 (2003): 125-149; On the concept of anti-Semitism see David Engel, "Away from a Definition of Antisemitism: An Essay in the Semantics of Historical Description," in *Rethinking European Jewish History*, eds. Jeremy Cohen and Moshe Rosman (Liverpool: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization 2009), 30-53; David Feldman, "Towards a History of the Term 'Anti-Semitism'," *American Historical Review* 123, no. 4 (2018): 1139-1150.

[2] See e.g. David Engel, "The Transmutation of a Symbol and Its Legacy in the Holocaust," in *Contested Memories: Poles and Jews during the Holocaust and Its Aftermath*, ed. Joshua D. Zimmerman (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 32-46; Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914–1947: Violence and Ethnicity in a Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016); See also footnotes 4-5 and 7-8.

actions of the state cannot adequately explain the wave of pogroms that occurred in Galicia (including the Lviv pogrom of November 1918), as state institutions had collapsed as the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy imploded. Galicia was in a state of civil war, wracked by chaos and uncertainty.[3]

In recent years several studies have analyzed the events in Lviv. Among them are two Polish-language books by Damian K. Markowski and Grzegorz Gauden. Markowski's text focuses primarily on the Polish-Ukrainian struggle for the control of Lviv, while Gauden's main aim is to describe the Lviv pogrom.[4] Notably, Gauden's study debunks the myths surrounding the genesis of the Second Polish Republic.[5]

The works of William W. Hagen and Eva Reder also present in-depth analyses of the events. Hagen's analysis applies the concept of "moral economy";[6] he interprets the pogrom as a public drama that reflected a desire for a return to a just world order. In Hagen's view, the symbolic nature of the violence was a key element in the events; he emphasizes the sociocultural importance of violent acts, which he views as a means of realizing socioculturally determined relations. Hagen argues that the pogrom was motivated by the desire for the re-installation of a social hierarchy in which Jews had a subordinate status.[7] Reder focuses on the role of the state as a reference point for the perpetrators, who identified themselves with the Polish state and used it as their justification. In her view, the perpetrators considered themselves to be patriots, who were fighting on behalf of an emerging

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[3] Jochen Böhler, *Civil War in Central Europe: The Reconstruction of Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Pres, 2018).

[4] Damian K. Markowski, *Dwa powstania. Bitwa o Lwów 1918* [Two Uprisings: The Battle for Lviv 1918] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2019).

[5] Grzegorz Gauden, *Lwów-kres iluzji: Opowieść o pogromie listopadowym 1918* [Lviv-the End of Illusion: The Story of the November pogrom of 1918] (Kraków: TAiWPN Universitas, 2019); On the debunking of myths surrounding the genesis of the Second Polish Republic see also Böhler, *Civil War*.

[6] Edward P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 50, no. 1 (1971): 76-136.

[7] William W. Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland, 1914-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 123-172; William W. Hagen, "The Moral Economy of Ethnic Violence: The Pogrom in Lwów, November 1918," *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft* 31, no. 2 (2005): 203-226; William W. Hagen, "The Moral Economy of Popular Violence: The Pogrom in Lwów, November 1918," in *Anti-Semitism and Its Opponents in Modern Poland*, ed. Robert Blobaum (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 124-157.

state. They committed their acts of violence against Jews in the knowledge (or on the pretext) that their acts were sanctioned by the state.[8]

Drawing upon diverse primary and secondary sources, this paper analyzes verbal expressions by perpetrators of violence and the links between stereotype and rumor. It sheds light on the role of rumor and seeks to exemplify its mechanism. Specifically, it deals with rumors about Jews fighting alongside Ukrainians. These tales stemmed primarily from the fact that the Jewish militia was forced to enforce order against armed Poles.[9] Whether the perpetrators in Polish ranks were bandits in the turmoil of the dissolution of the Austrian monarchy released from prison, or other Polish volunteers who behaved like them. Central to understanding the dynamics of anti-Jewish violence in Lviv is reconstruction of the previously neglected connection between the oral spread of rumors and the contents shared by the periodical press.[10]

First, I will describe the basic background against which the pogrom occurred. Then, I will consider the setting in which rumors operated and the crucial role of written information in validating such narratives. Later, I will concentrate on how the rumors of a supposed authorization to perform violence functioned as the pogrom's trigger and how perpetrators depended on approval or acquiescence from authorities. Finally, I will focus on the pragmatic role of rumors, which served to mobilize perpetrators by providing the possibility for immediate material gain through the opportunity to engage in looting.

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[8] Eva Reder, *Antijüdische Pogrome in Polen im 20. Jahrhundert, Gewaltausbrüche im Schatten der Staatsbildung 1918-1920 und 1945-1946* (Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 2017); Eva Reder, "Im Schatten des polnischen Staates – Pogrome 1918–1920 und 1945/46 – Auslöser, Bezugspunkte, Verlauf," *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropaforschung* 60, no. 4 (2011): 571-606.

[9] On the activities of Jewish self-defence groups, see e.g. Artur Markowski, *Przemoc antyżydowska i wyobrażenia społeczne. Pogrom białostocki 1906 roku* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2018), 260-306; Vladimir Levin, "Preventing Pogroms: Pattern in Jewish Politics in Early Twentieth-Century Russia," in *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History,* ed. Jonathan Dekel-Chen (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011), 95-110. Gerald Surh, "Jewish Self-Defense, Revolution, and Pogrom Violence in 1905," in *The Russian Revolution of 1905 in Transcultural Perspective: Identities, Peripheries, and the Flow of Ideas,* ed. Felicitas Fischer von Weikersthal (Bloomington, IN: Slavica Publishers, 2013), 55-74.

[10] Tim Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia: Agitation, Politics, and Violence against Jews in the Late Habsburg Monarchy* (New York: Berghahn, 2020), 111-179; On the significance of rumors, see Donald L. Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 74-85.

The Complicated Situation of the Jewish Population

On 1 November 1918 Ukrainian forces, wearing yellow and blue armbands, occupied strategic buildings in the city of Lviv. At the outset of the battle for, the Ukrainian side had a numerical advantage, as more Ukrainians than Poles served in the Austro-Hungarian army. In secret, Polish military organizations formed resistance groups, which included men, women, and boys. Once the Polish forces had recovered from their initial shock, skirmishes with the Ukrainians began.[11]

The Jewish population (which made up 57,000 of the city's 194,000 inhabitants[12]) found itself in a very complicated situation. At that moment, nobody could predict which side would emerge victorious. Moreover, it was possible that if the Jewish inhabitants were to gamble on one side's victory, the consequences for them would be dire were the other side to gain victory. Lviv's Jews therefore settled on a compromise, which appeared to be the best solution under these circumstances. On the day when the Ukrainians occupied the city, representatives of the Jewish population of Lviv met at the offices of the Jewish Religious Community, formed a Jewish security committee, and declared neutrality. Since, following the Ukrainian takeover, the institutions responsible for maintaining law and order had ceased to function, the representatives present at the meeting also decided to establish a militia in order to defend the Jewish population.[13]

The newly established security committee defined its goal as ensuring peace and order in the Jewish quarter and protecting Jewish property. It called on the Jewish

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[11] Mick, *Lemberg,* 144-146; Christoph Mick, "Legality, ethnicity and violence in Austrian Galicia, 1890–1920," *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire* 26, no. 1 (2019): 757-782; 771; Torsten Wehrhahn, *Die Westukrainische Volksrepublik* (Berlin: Weißensee Verlag, 2004), 127-133.

[12] The population belonging to the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic confession in 1918 was around 100,000 and 34,000 respectively. Of the total population of Eastern Galicia, Greek Catholics made up 61.7% of the population, Roman Catholics 25.3%, Jews 12.4%. Mick, *Lemberg,* 157; Mick, "Legality, ethnicity and violence," 759.

[13] Josef Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom* (Wien: Hickl, 1919), 18-19; "O neutralność," *Chwila*, January 12, 1919, 1; Jewish neutrality in the Polish-Ukrainian conflict had already been declared on 28 October. Thus, in the case of a further declaration of neutrality, it was merely a confirmation of what had already been established. Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence*, 153.

population to remain strictly neutral. It is important to mention that the Jewish declaration of neutrality was immediately recognized by both the Polish and Ukrainian sides. The commanders of both sides in the conflict accepted the creation of an armed Jewish militia comprising 200 men. The militia was commanded by Captain Eisler.[14] The city was partitioned into three sectors: the central part was held by the Ukrainians, the Kraków suburb was controlled by the Jewish militia, while the Poles held the south-eastern part of the city.[15]

The creation of the Jewish militia appeared to be a logical step, as the public order situation in Lviv was precarious.[16] Gangs of deserters and local criminals exploited the confusion that reigned in the city, looting shops, and railway wagons.[17] The police, formerly part of the Austrian administration, had effectively ceased to function. When the Ukrainian forces occupied the strategic points in the city on 1 November, they offered the local police chief, Józef Reinlender (?-1941), the option of remaining in his post, but he rejected this offer. The post was formally taken over by Stepan Baran (1879-1953);[18] however, only a small number of police officers belonging to the Ukrainian ethnic group remained on duty.[19]

The Jewish militia began to lay claim to the control public spaces. According to the unwritten rules derived from popular culture, the Poles expected the Jews would submit to them.[20] However, the order began to be questioned. The streets became a place of emotional interaction and conflict.[21] For instance, in his

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[14] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 14-15; By mid-November, the militia already numbered 45 officers and 302 soldiers. Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 78.

[15] Mick, *Lemberg,* 148.

[16] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 14; Leon Chasanowitsch, *Die polnischen Judenpogrome im November und Dezember 1918: Tatsachen und Dokumente* (Stockholm: Verlag Judaea, 1919), 43; "O neutralność," *Chwila*, January 12, 1919, 1.

[17] Mick, *Lemberg,* 148; "Rabusie" [Robbers], *Pobudka* [The Wake], November 7, 1918, 4.

[18] Stepan Baran a Ukrainian lawyer and politician.

[19] Mick, *Lemberg,* 144.

[20] Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence*, 56.

[21] Stefan Wiese, *Pogrome im Zarenreich. Dynamiken kollektiver Gewalt* (Hamburg: Verlag des Hamburger Instituts für Sozialforschung, 2016), 121-123; On pogroms as a consequence of a contested social hierarchy see also other works of Hagen (see footnote 7) and Wiese. See Stefan Wiese, " 'Spit Back with Bullets' Emotions in Russia's Jewish Pogroms, 1881–1905," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 39, no. 4 (2013): 472-501; Stefan Wiese, "Jewish Self-Defense and Black Hundreds in Zhitomir. A Case Study on the Pogroms of 1905 in Tsarist Russia," *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History, Journal of Fondazione CDEC* 3 (2012): 241-266, https://www.quest-

memoirs, Maciej Rataj (1884-1940) claimed that the Jewish militia "treated the Polish population brutally and provocatively".[22]

The situation of the Polish forces in Lviv was desperate as they were outnumbered by the Ukrainians. Every person who volunteered received a weapon. Within just a few days, around 2500 rifles had been issued, but many of the recipients were criminals and bandits. Many had been released from prisons during the last days of Austrian rule. Lviv became a magnet for criminals and bandits from the entire region, who probably viewed the situation as an opportunity for looting and theft.[23] The Polish units thus included elements of the *"urban underclass,"* long demoralized by the material desperation caused by the war, and *"fighting without regard for life, not for ideals, but in hope of material gain"*.[24] The Polish armed resistance against Ukrainian forces involved, beyond released prisoners, but also deserters who literally flooded eastern Galicia, soldiers of the disintegrating Austrian army, and others who intended to take advantage of the chaos following the disintegration of state institutions.[25]

The Influence of Rumors on Perceptions of the Jews

On the morning of 22 November, seven soldiers wearing Polish insignia, followed by a mob, entered a house where Jews lived. Referring to the alleged order for a 48-hour pogrom, one of the soldiers declared: "We have been given this order because

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[22] Maciej Rataj, *Pamiętniki, 1918-1927* (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1965), 25; Maciej Rataj was a Polish politician and writer. In 1940 he was executed by the Nazis.

[23] "Raport delegacji Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych R.P. w sprawie wystąpień antyżydowskich we Lwowie," [Lwów, 17 grudnia 1918], reproduced in Jerzy Tomaszewski, "Lwów, 22 listopada 1918," *Przegląd Historyczny* 75, no. 2 (1984): 279-285; 282; The Austrian administration released around 800 prisoners. Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 78.

[24] Rataj, *Pamiętniki,* 26. It should also be remembered that after four years of war, uniforms were a common sight, and they were worn by a large proportion of the population (Ibid).

[25] Wróbel, "The Seeds of Violence," 137; "Wright Report," in *The Jews in Poland: Official Reports of The American and British Investigating Missions* (Chicago: American Commission to Negotiate Peace, 1920), 45.

you cut our ears off [Mamy rozkaz taki, boście naszym obcinali uszy]."[26] A market trader witnessed "a legionnaire's murder by Jews, who plucked out his eye." When interrogated about the alleged incident, the woman admitted that she had not seen it but had only heard about it, though she added that in fact both his eyes had been "dug out."[27] Other widespread rumors claimed that Jews had murdered injured Polish soldiers, or that Jews had informed the Ukranian side of the Polish positions.[28] One rumor that became very widespread claimed that Jews were using machine guns to shoot at Poles. During the pogrom, there were three arson attempts targeting the progressive synagogue (the Tempel),[29] in fact the alleged motivation was the suspicion that the Jews were storing machine guns there. When Herman Feldstein heard that the Tempel was on fire, he went to see Captain Czesław Mączyński (1881-1935).[30] Mączyński told Feldstein that he was aware of the fire, but it was impossible to enter the building because machine guns were being fired from it. Feldstein denied this claim, to which Mączyński replied: "It's difficult [trudno]—I got that information from my people, and I have to believe the reports they give me [takie sprawozdanie strzymalem od moich ludzi, a ja na sprawozdaniach moich ludzi polegać muszę]."[31] The rumor was deliberately exploited. A doctor who was serving during the pogrom treated a soldier who had sustained a stab wound in the region of his eye. Asked what had happened, the soldier replied that he had been sent to commandeer provisions from Jewish-owned shops, and that Jews had fired a machine gun at him.[32] A delegation (including a Jewish member, one Fishel Waschitz[33]) later searched for Jewish

[26] Tsentral'nyj Derzhavnyj Istorychnyj Arkhiv Ukraïny, L'viv [Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Lviv] (TsDIAL), f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 5, protocol 458.
[27] Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence,* 166.
[28] Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 78-81.
[29] Jan Kutílek, "Anomie and Post-imperial Transition: Anti-Jewish Violence in Galicia and the Czech Lands, 1918–1919," Střed/Centre 16, no.1 (2024): 35-59; 48.; The synagogue was razed to the ground by the Nazis in 1941.
[30] Czesław Mączyński was a Polish officer, politician, and the commander-in-chief of the Polish forces in the battle for Lviv in November 1918.
[31] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 12, protocol 97.
[32] Ibid., 35, protocol 260. This doctor also rejects the claim that Jews poured boiling water on Polish soldiers; he did not encounter any such case during his service.
[33] Fishel Waschitz was a Zionist activist. On his activities in Galicia, see Jan Rybak, *Everyday Zionism in East-Central Europe: Nation-building in War and Revolution, 1914-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

weapons, but no weapons or ammunition were found.[34] As Tim Buchen points out, rumormongers are conscious actors, and their role is not merely to spread disinformation; they also contribute to the content of the rumors, and they claim that their narrative is factually true. These notions become established as such in the public consciousness via oral communication.[35]

Rumors—social constructs formed during private conversations—are rooted in "meta-rumors." Rumors emerge by means of narratives, but such spoken words only gain genuine significance (and take on the dimension of historical events) if they can draw on a reservoir of knowledge that enables people to understand and believe what they heard. In the case of the Lviv pogrom, this reservoir of supposed knowledge concerning Jews was the meta-rumor.[36] In the definition of the German philosopher Theodor Adorno, anti-Semitism is the rumor about the Jews.[37] To simplify the issue and take a specific example: reports about Jews fighting against Poles were believed because they corresponded with preexisting prejudice.

One element that formed a common denominator in such perceptions of Jews was the notion of their supposed insidiousness. This character trait can already be found in traditional Polish representation of Jews as mischievous economic usurpers, profiting from Poles' poverty. During the First World War there were widespread tales of Jews profiteering from the situation while Poles were suffering dire hardships. It was said that Jews were responsible for price rises, and that they hoarded essential commodities such as flour and bread.[38] The fact that such rumors had taken root even among the highest echelons of the political scene is evident from the words of Stanisław Grabski (1871-1949),[39] who claimed that Jews had profited from the war. However, the trope of economic exploitation was not

[34] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 21, protocol 96; Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence,* 166.
[35] Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia*, 115-116.
[36] Ibid.*,* 116.
[37] Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflexe z porušeného života* [Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life] (Praha: Academia, 2009), 110; Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia,* 116.
[38] Kutílek, "Anomie and Post-imperial Transition," 45.
[39] Stanisław Grabski was a Polish politician, economist and academic. In 1892 he cofounded the Polish Socialist Party, and he later became one of the leading members of the National Democracy movement.

the only one he mentioned.[40] Engaging the image of political treachery, he also insisted they caused 30,000 Poles from Galicia to be hanged.[41] Grabski's accusations corresponded with the general backdrop prevailing in Galicia during the last year of the war; the belief that duplicity was inherent among the Jews was widespread. Mere Jewish loyalty to the Habsburgs was interpreted as a betrayal of the Polish cause.[42] References to Jewish perfidiousness were especially common after the treaty of Brest-Litovsk and the cession of the Chełm region.[43]

To summarize, information about Jews attacking Polish troops in Lviv validated deep-rooted stereotypical perceptions. One consequence of the formation of an armed Jewish militia was the intensification of the Poles' traditional feelings of fear and hatred towards Jews. If the Jewish militia was not to fan the flames of the situation, it had to restrict itself to a strictly defensive strategy. However, amid the chaotic turmoil it was difficult to discern the existence of such a strategy. Therefore, there was a substantial risk that any resolute defense of the city's Jewish districts would further escalate the conflict. Having established the basic setting upon which rumors operate, this section will now consider the crucial role of written information in validating rumors.

On 5 November 1918, the first issue of the Polish newspaper *Pobudka* was published;[44] it would later become a key channel for disseminating information to Lviv's Polish population during the battles against the Ukrainian forces. However, the first issue was confiscated by the Supreme Command because the editorial office announced that it was an organ of the Polish Army in Lviv and was published on its authority. This revelation exposed the true nature of the

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[40] On how anti-Semitic tropes work see Sol Goldberg, Scott Ury, and Kalman Weiser, eds., *Key Concepts in the Study of Antisemitism* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

[41] Israel Cohen, "My Mission to Poland (1918-1919)," *Jewish Social Studies* 13, no. 2 (1951): 149-172, 164.

[42] Mick, *Lemberg*, 103.

[43] Ibid., 105; Rybak, *Everyday Zionism,* 167; On February 9, Germany and Austria signed the so-called "bread treaty" with the newly established Ukrainian People's Republic. The essence of the agreement was to establish a German protectorate over Ukraine. The newly formed Ukraine, however, was partly located on the territory of *Kresy* perceived *by* Polish nationalists as essentially Polish. The issue of the Chełm region proved particularly sensitive. See Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence*, 92-93. Also see Jan Kutílek, "Jews in Limbo: Decay of the State Authority in Galicia in 1918 as a Prelude to Post-War Anti-Jewish Violence," Slovanský přehled/Slavonic Review 109, no. 2 (2023): 169-191; 176-183.

[44] *Pobudka* was the press organ of the Supreme Command of the Polish Armed Forces in Lviv.

newspaper, prompting the Supreme Command to intervene and conceal the fact that it was directly controlled by the Polish Command. On 6 November 1918, *Pobudka* began to be published as a press organ of the Civic Committee of the 6th district of Lviv. In fact, it was still the newspaper of the Polish army; the editorial and administrative offices were located in the building of the Military Printing House at Lew Sapieha Street.[45] The foundation of *Pobudka* represented an important milestone, as the Slavic-language press had been subject to censorship up to the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy.[46] As a result of this censorship, people had lost trust in information from official sources. The desire for alternative information was partially satisfied by rumors.[47] *Pobudka* was a trusted source of information, as it was considered to be the opposite of the Habsburg-controlled press. Moreover, it was the only Polish-language periodical that was published in Lviv at the time.

Throughout November, *Pobudka* mentioned various acts of treachery supposedly committed by Jews. On 8 November, *Pobudka* ironically stated: "new heroes have also emerged." The newspaper alleged that the Jews had allied themselves with the Ukrainians. The author of the piece not only depicted the city's Jews as Zionists, but also accused them of providing direct support to the Ukrainian forces. This is clear in the author's claim that "to their Zionist badges they have added Ukrainian cockades".[48] The influence of *Pobudka* on Lviv's population—at a time when other Polish media were no longer in circulation—is evident from the memoirs of Maciej Rataj: "We read issues of Pobudka avidly, and we passed them among ourselves like relics [...]."[49]

It is evident from the above-cited text that an important topic for investigation is the connection between the individual oral dissemination of rumors and their validation and propagation by means of the written word. Oral communication is

[45] Eugeniusz Wawrkowicz and Józef Klink, eds., *Obrona Lwowa. 1-22 listopada 1918* 3 [Defense of Lviv. November 1-22, 1918 3] (Lwów: Towarzystwo badania historii Obrony Lwowa i województw południowo-wschodnich, 1939), 349.

[46] Mark Conrnwall, "News, Rumour and the Control of Information in Austria-Hungary, 1914–1918," *History* 77, no. 249 (1992): 50-64.

[47] Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 126.

[48] "Co słychać śródmieściu?" [What's happening downtown], *Pobudka*, November 8, 1918, 3.

[49] Rataj, *Pamiętniki,* 23.

more effective when it appropriates and reinterprets pre-existing information. Undeniably, the fact that *Pobudka* acted as a conduit for the dissemination of rumors about Jews' alliance with the Ukrainian troops attacking Polish soldiers (at a time when Lviv's other Polish-language media were inactive) meant that this information came to be perceived as accepted knowledge.[50] This accusation was published in *Pobudka* on 17 November: Jews were accused of shooting at Polish units from their windows, and it was claimed that the synagogues on Żółkiewska and Cebulna Streets were being used by Jews as arms depots. The newspaper also wrote that almost all Jews were armed, and that although the weapons were meant to be used for self-defence, in fact they were being employed to attack Polish troops as well as the Polish civilian population. These claims were supported by a list of specific incidents. It was claimed that on November 10 at 11 a.m., a group of armed Jews had run out from the synagogue in Żółkiewska Street and opened fire. Another incident was reported to have taken place in the Kraków suburb, where a Jew allegedly fired a revolver at civilians. Finally, it was also claimed that Polish Catholic shops had been looted by Jews.[51]

Certain incidents may indeed have occurred. For example, on the night of November 13-14, a sizeable militia patrol organized by a Jew named Mojżesz Olmütz encountered a patrol consisting of three Polish "legionnaires"[52], leading to a tense confrontation. The militiamen disarmed and detained the Poles until a Polish lieutenant arrived and persuaded the militia to release two of the detainees; initially they were reluctant to release the third, who was a known criminal, but eventually he was freed as well. Shortly thereafter, a Polish unit arrived at the scene, with the aforementioned criminal among them. He accused Mojżesz Olmütz of having fired at the "legionnaires," and as a result Olmütz and his 11 companions were detained.[53]

Naturally, looting and thefts from Jewish shops and houses did not escape the attention of the Jewish militia, whose principal duty was to protect Jewish

[50] Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia,* 115-116.

[51] "Neutralni" [Neutral], *Pobudka,* November 17, 1918, 1-2; "Raport," 283; Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 20.

[52] As Hagen points out, the term "legionnaires" was a synonym for the irregular soldiers fighting Ukrainians; there were no legionary units in Lviv at the time. See Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence*, 148.

[53] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 2, protocol 167.

property from criminals, so inevitably conflict ensued. Understandably, the use of firearms against these criminals (who were wearing Polish uniforms) could be portrayed as an attack on the Polish "defenders" of Lviv.[54] Despite attempts to maintain the militia's strategy of passivity, incidents of this type could hardly have been prevented. Moreover, in the general confusion it was often not possible to tell who was shooting and from where. Such incidents created ideal conditions for the emergence and spread of new speculations. The actions of the Jewish militia reinforced the suspicion that the Jews were collaborating with the Ukrainians. In the first week of November, the militia became embroiled in numerous skirmishes. Maintaining neutrality was further hindered by the fact that Polish and Ukrainian units frequently operated in territory controlled by Jewish units. However, the Jewish militia also violated the agreed lines of demarcation when confiscating food that was in short supply.[55] The conviction that Jews were fighting on the Ukrainian side emerged because of a series of incidents, misunderstandings, tense situations, and the traditional anti-Jewish prejudice. Furthermore, the Ukrainians, who were still wearing the old Austro-Hungarian army uniforms, used yellow and blue armbands as a means of identification, and in chaotic situations these armbands might be mistaken for the blue and white versions worn by the Jewish militia.

As the case of Maciej Rataj shows, it is evident that Poles also got their information from Ukrainian newspapers.[56] Thus the Ukrainian print media played a role in encouraging the perception that the Jews were allied with the Ukrainians. *Ukrains'ke Slovo* wrote that "the Jews are with us [i.e. the Ukrainians]*"* and a Ukrainian communiqué of 18 November 1918 reported that a Polish attack had "met with the fierce opposition of the Jewish militia".[57] These declarations were

[54] "Raport," 282.

[55] Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 79; A report drawn up by a committee of the Polish Foreign Ministry stated that in several cases members of the Jewish militia had indeed violated their commitment to neutrality, but that these were isolated incidents involving individuals who were acting against the orders given to them by the militia commanders. See "Raport," 283; Reder describes that there may indeed had been occasional cooperation between Jewish militia and Ukrainian soldiers. However, she states that due to the front that ran right through the town, maintaining neutrality at all times was really difficult. Reder, "Im Schatten," 596.

[56] Rataj, *Pamiętniki*, 22-23.

[57] The Morgenthau Report, 10. The blue and white armbands were worn by the Jewish militia in the first days of November. They were then replaced by white armbands in order to prevent

intended to underline the legitimacy of the Ukrainian claims. The support of the large Jewish minority was of key importance for these claims, and the declarations also represented an attempt to boost the morale of the Ukrainian side.[58]

If we consider that incidents in which Jews drew firearms to prevent acts of theft could potentially have sparked vehement hatred if they were interpreted as attacks on Polish soldiers "heroically defending Lviv," some form of Polish reaction was to be expected. The perception of the Jews as allies of the Ukrainians was further strengthened by the location of the city's Jewish quarter, which lay within the Ukrainian-controlled sector. In this scenario, anti-Semitic moods became increasingly intense.[59] The population succumbed to paranoia. Polish units distrusted the Jewish militia, whose members were frequently disarmed and interned following encounters with Polish troops. In one case, members of the Jewish militia were arrested even though they had only been extinguishing a fire.[60] In the ensuing situation, amid an atmosphere of feverish tension, on November 17 members of the Jewish militia decided to mount an operation against a gang of looters who were outside the sector of the city under Jewish control. To do so they had to obtain permission from the Polish command, so a party of seven men, carrying a white flag, approached the Polish line. However, despite the white flag, the paranoia-addled Polish troops fired several salvos. It was only then that they waved cloths in the air to signal to the Jewish militiamen that they could approach, but this was followed by further salvos, causing the death of one militiaman.[61] The Jewish militiamen were detained, beaten and mistreated, and then taken to the Polish headquarters. A Polish first lieutenant commented on the incident with the words: "So this is the glorious Jewish Ukraine".[62]

According to Horowitz, one of the main preconditions for acts of violence is the spread of information that members of a despised ethnic group have committed

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confusion with the yellow and blue armbands worn by the Ukrainians; In addition, Alexander Prusin notes that Polish, Ukrainian and Jewish uniforms were also difficult to distinguish. Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 78-80.

[58] Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 79.

[59] The Morgenthau Report, 5.

[60] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 16.

[61] Ibid., 26.

[62] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 208, ark. 16, 9, protocol 477; Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 26-27, protocol 477, 9.

acts of brutal violence.[63] This precondition was met in November 1918, when reports circulated about Jews allegedly joining forces with the Ukrainians and treacherously attacking Polish troops: "You Jews fired at us, poured boiling water and lye on our fighters, sold them poisoned cigarettes, and gave millions to the Ukrainians—you are enemies of Poland, and Poles can no longer tolerate Jews, so today you must all die."[64] As previously discussed, other similar rumors about the Jews were widespread.

In the memoirs of the politician Maciej Rataj we can read that the Jews sympathized with the Ukrainians and actively assisted them. Rataj states that the Polish fighters came under "treacherous fire [podstępnymi strzałami]" from the Jewish militia. Writing about an incident in which he himself came under fire in Krakowska Street, where most residents were Jews, he concluded that it must have been Jews who shot at him, yet he also significantly expressed a degree of doubt: "But had I not succumbed to suggestion, just like the others? I don't know."[65]

Reports of aggressions usually precede deadly ethnic violence. Such reports create panic, further entrench mistrust, and are subsequently used to justify brutality. [66] As rumors spread, violence is presented as a justified form of retaliation. References to the notion of retaliation can also be found in *Pobudka*. The third issue states: "the public itself will avenge these treacherous crimes".[67] The article does not explicitly identify the perpetrators of the "crimes." However, written texts are always interpreted in accordance with the norms and standards defined by a particular cultural system,[68] and the cultural system in which *Pobudka*'s readers were rooted characterized Jews as a subversive element, so readers would have been in no doubt to whom the newspaper referred.[69]

Narratives that depicted Jews as treacherous aggressors exacerbated the psychological stress felt by the city's inhabitants. The atmosphere in Lviv was hugely tense. Reports of *Pobudka* about the "cunning and treacherous [chytry i

[63] Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, 84.
[64] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 34.
[65] Rataj, *Pamiętniki*, 25-26.
[66] Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, 74-88.
[67] "W siódmym dniu walki" [On the seventh day of the battle], *Pobudka*, November 8, 1918, 1.
[68] Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia,* 115.
[69] Alexander Prusin also notes that the Poles attributed these "treacherous" attacks to the "internal enemy," i.e. the Jews. See Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 80.

podstępny]" enemy killing people "from windows and from behind fences [morduje z okien i z za płotów]"[70] intensified the general anxiety. Citizens' fears were further stoked by paranoia entrenched in their mistrust of Jews. The fact that Jews lived in a street where shooting took place was considered sufficient proof that Jews were responsible. To summarize, since oral communication becomes effective through the appropriation and reinterpretation of existing information, rumors took on a new quality the moment they were distributed in writing through the Polish army press organ *Pobudka*. At this moment - crucial for the dynamics of violence - rumors became widely accepted facts.

Permission for a 48-hour Pogrom?

On November 22 the Polish forces forced the Ukrainian army to retreat, while the Jewish militia was disarmed.[71] The pogrom that ensued was presented as a retaliation for alleged Jewish attacks.[72] On the second day of the pogrom, a man wearing an Austrian uniform came to the home of Klara and Pinkas Obler and threatened to kill them. The man was one N. Kombien, the stepson of the caretaker of a building in Kochanowskiego Street. Klara Obler ran out into the street and asked a Polish officer for help. He replied: "It serves you right, you shouldn't have collaborated with the Ukrainians and set up a militia".[73] A shopkeeper named Machel Kessler stated that his attackers had shouted: "Give thanks to God that we aren't killing you. We've come after the Jews, they wanted to kill us. Now we have the right to murder you."[74] The ranks of the aggressors were swelled by Polish reinforcements, who likewise behaved with brutality: "We

[70] "W siódmym dniu walki," *Pobudka*, November 8, 1918, 1.
[71] Mick*, Lemberg*, 158.
[72] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 49, protocol 374; The prelude to the Lviv pogrom was the outburst of violence in Przemyśl, where a similar scenario occurred. The Jewish militia was accused of taking a side with the Ukrainians. After Polish forces drove Ukrainian fighters out of the city, Jews perceived as traitors became victims of violence. See Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence,* 149.
[73] Ibid., spr. 206, ark. 44, 44, protocol 417.
[74] Ibid., spr. 210, ark. 51, 41, protocol 346.

will take revenge for your Jewish militia—we're from Kraków, we hate Jews. We want to kill them all like dogs [Chcemy ich wszystkich wymordować jak psów]."[75] The Poles' fury was driven by the conviction that the Jews had fought side by side with the Ukrainians, but this alone would not have been sufficient to spark a pogrom. As Horowitz points out, perpetrators of ethnic violence rely on signals sent out by authorities assuring them that they will not suffer any consequences because of their actions, or even that their actions will be met with approval.[76] The perpetrators of the Lviv pogrom did indeed obtain official approval. Before the outbreak of the violence, a rumor began to spread that the army command had granted permission to loot the Jewish district for a period of 48 hours.[77] A major factor in the violence was the perpetrators' sense of impunity and their belief that the pogrom had been officially sanctioned. They created their own social reality in which attacking Jews was a legitimate form of action.[78]

The rumor that official permission had been granted for the pogrom was widely accepted. Two days before the outbreak of the violence, Eliasz Zimmerman told his acquaintances that a pogrom was going to happen.[79] On November 21, an officer (Rittmeister T.) told the Jew H. that it was a good thing that the latter did not live in the Jewish district, because "a slaughter of the Jews [Judenschlächterei]" would soon happen.[80] A Polish officer warned a tailor in Pańska Street: "Take down your shop sign so that nobody can see you're a Jew".[81] On November 22, a Polish officer named Krosiński advised a shopkeeper to hide her goods before three or four days of looting broke out.[82] Mrs F. B. stated that a relative had urged her to flee to safety as soon as possible. Asked how long the looting would last, he replied: "Probably until tomorrow, because permission has only been granted for 48 hours".[83] A confectioner in Lviv, the father of a Polish officer, told a Jewish acquaintance that the pogrom would soon be over, because the soldiers had only

[75] Ibid., spr. 208, ark. 16, 16, protocol 339.
[76] Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, 361.
[77] This fact is confirmed by dozens of protocols held at TsDIAL.
[78] Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia,* 122.
[79] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 206, ark. 44, 109, protocol 499.
[80] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 57, protocol 705.
[81] Ibid., protocol 351.
[82] Ibid., protocol 31.
[83] Ibid., 57-58, protocol 704.

been given permission to loot for 48 hours.[84] Troops who looted the premises of one D. Sch. urged each other to hurry, because the end of the permitted period was fast approaching.[85] Troops looting the premises of Henryk Fischer likewise urged each other to hurry, because "we have 48 hours".[86] Johann Banderowski, an employee of the municipal gasworks, took part in the looting because he believed permission had been granted for a 48-hour period.[87] Mrs Kobrysiowa, the wife of a "legionnaire," stated that the army had received orders to pillage the Jewish quarter for two days.[88] M. S. filed a report stating that he had recognized one of the looters and had wanted to have him arrested, but when he asked a "legionnaire" acquaintance for help, the "legionnaire" replied: "I'm afraid you can't do anything about it, because the looting has been permitted for 48 hours."[89] Asked by a Jewish officer A. B. to send troops to help his family, who were being terrorized by a Polish patrol, the commander of the barracks in Zamarstynowska Street replied that he could do nothing, because "the Polish troops have been ordered to steal from the Jews, so I can't help you".[90] Moritz Anstreicher from Kazimierzowska Street asked an officer to protect him from a group of bandits who were looting his shop. The officer replied, "Looting is still permitted," and he told his troops: "you can take the remaining coal, as well as the equipment."[91] One of the soldiers maliciously remarked to Weinreb Mojżesz that the troops "are permitted to do whatever they like to the Jews".[92]

The time limitation on the alleged permission lent the rumor additional credibility. It also injected a degree of dynamism into the pogrom, urging the participants to make the most of the opportunity while they were still "permitted" to do so. Moreover, the 48-hour deadline helped the looters to coalesce into a group.[93] As soon as the group reached a critical mass, it became a mob, which could

[84] Ibid., 56, protocol 203.
[85] Ibid., protocol 452.
[86] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 206, ark. 44, 63, protocol 331.
[87] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 56, protocol 143.
[88] Ibid., 57, protocol 554.
[89] Ibid., 56, protocol 263.
[90] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 206, ark. 44, 66, protocol 188; Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 57, protocol 188.
[91] Ibid., 39, protocol 156; Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 58, protocol 156.
[92] Ibid., spr. 210, ark. 51, 48, protocol 100.
[93] Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia,* 121.

absorb individuals lending them a sense of anonymity. The perpetrators became able to commit acts of violence that they would never have committed if acting alone.[94] When an individual becomes absorbed into a mob, responsibility for actions becomes blurred, diluted among a large number of people.[95]

In addition to the alleged authorization to loot Jewish property, many of the perpetrators also cited authority figures in justification of their actions—particularly an order that had allegedly been issued by the commander of the Polish forces. A Polish sergeant looting a shop belonging to the merchant Kalman Knepel stated that General Bolesław Roja (1876-1940) had ordered the troops to plunder Jewish property and kill Jews.[96] One of the victims said that a soldier "showed [her] a printed sheet of paper allegedly bearing an order to kill Jews."[97] In fact, no such official order was given by the Supreme Command.[98] Nevertheless, it is likely that some troops were given orders to commandeer property for the Polish army. This can be deduced from the issuing of receipts for commandeered (i.e. stolen) property.[99] Additionally, it is likely there were oral indications (not officially recorded) that encouraged the troops to unleash their violent impulses. In spite of that, there is no evidence to prove that an official order was issued to indulge in pogrom. Moreover, the 1918 Lviv pogrom was not the only occasion on which rumors of official approval for anti-Semitic violence were spread. Similar rumors were recorded in Russia (1881-1882), Galicia (1898), and in Ostrava region within the Czech lands (1917).[100]

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[94] Ibid., 114.

[95] A. Markowski, *Przemoc antyżydowska,* 280.

[96] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 206, ark. 44, 35, protocol 92; Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 56, protocol 92.

[97] Ibid, spr. 210, ark. 51, 17, protocol 61; The question is whether the soldier actually believed he carried the warrant. In 1898, a similar incident took place in the Galician town Kalwarya Zebrzydowska. Leaflets advertising a product removing ink stains were believed to be permit cards for beating Jews. Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia,* 122.

[98] See e.g. Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 83; "Raport," 283.

[99] "Raport," 283; Reder, "Im Schatten," 594.

[100] Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia*, 119; Frankl and Szabó, *Budování státu bez antisemitismu?*, 41; John Klier and Shlomo Lambroza, *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 323; Daniel Unowsky, *The Plunder: The 1898 Anti-Jewish Riots in Habsburg Galicia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 148; Zbyněk Vydra, *Židovská otázka v carském Rusku 1881-1906* [The Jewish Question in Tsarist Russia 1881-1906] (Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubic, 2006), 126.

Notwithstanding a lack of official orders, the fact that the army command essentially approved of the violence is revealed in an account given by Maciej Rataj, who states that he saw the Lviv commander-in-chief Captain Mączyński being driven through the city in a car and smiling as he observed the terrible scenes.[101] Not only Mączyński, but other high-ranking officers also refused to intervene and stop the violence. The second-in-command Antoni Jakubski (1885-1962),[102] when asked by a Jewish delegation to protect the Jewish population, cited a widespread rumor claiming that Jews had fired guns from their windows, and that the "retaliatory action" was therefore justified.[103] Nevertheless, as Reder points out, the Polish command structures were mired in chaos. The absence of military discipline and organization undoubtedly fueled the violence.[104]

The pogrom was terribly brutal. "We have been ordered to kill [wyrznąć] all Jews aged two months and older," shouted a "legionnaire." [105] An officer pulled a newborn baby from its crib, holding it by its feet, and screamed at its mother: "Why do you have so many Jewish bastards?"[106] Jozef Rapp stated that the troops who looted his property declared that they had been given orders to rob and kill Jews, even boasting that they had already managed to kill twenty.[107] Another soldier boasted: "I've already shot one Jew."[108]

As has been mentioned above, an important aspect of ethnic unrest is the tendency to shift responsibility for violence and looting to a higher authority. A Lviv pharmacist stated that the soldiers told him that they had been ordered to loot the Jewish district. One of the looters, a member of the intelligentsia, cynically declared that he did not enjoy looting, but he could do nothing because "orders

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[101] Rataj, *Pamiętniki,* 26; Mączyński did not issue the command to restore order until 23 November. Abraham Insler, *Dokumenty fałszu: prawda o tragedji żydostwa lwowskiego w listopadzie 1918 roku* [Documents of falsity: the truth about the tragedy of Lviv's Jews in November 1918] (Lwów: Jaeger, 1933), 93; Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 83; Even afterwards, the Jews lived in constant fear as searches for Jewish-held weapons were conducted. See Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence,* 156-157.

[102] Antoni Jakubski was a Polish zoologist and university professor. In November 1918 he was a member of the Lviv Supreme Defence Command.

[103] Reder, *Antijüdische Pogrome,* 148-149; Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence,* 155-156.

[104] Ibid., 149.

[105] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 17, protocol 61.

[106] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 46, protocol 28.

[107] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 207, ark. 56, 13, protocol 358.

[108] Ibid., spr. 206, ark. 44, 78, protocol 264.

are orders [Befehl ist Befehl]."[109] Numerous cases of this shift of responsibility were recorded: "I can't help you, there's an order, I'm not here voluntarily, it's your own fault".[110] A "legionnaire" named N. Smutny likewise cited an order to engage in looting and killing.[111] This shifting of responsibility was an important psychological factor. On 22 November an armed patrol wearing Austrian and Polish uniforms entered a house in Żółkiewska Street and began plundering the contents. A clerk with the initial B. asked the captain to stop his men looting, to which the captain replied: "I can't stop it, the troops have been ordered to loot for 48 hours".[112] A soldier gave the same reply to a maid working for a Jewish family: "I can't do anything about it, they've been given permission to loot for two days."[113] Simon Sold stated that the looters had told him they had been ordered to loot and kill for a 48-hour period, but because they were generous, they didn't wish to murder all the Jews.[114]

The Pragmatic Nature of Rumors

Rumors not only focused on the notion that the Jews represented a threat. They also mobilized the perpetrators by emphasizing the opportunity for material gain.[115] During the pogrom, there were incidents in which Jews were forced to give up their property literally in order to save their lives. On November 10 soldiers entered a house in Panieńska Street and extorted the sum of 100,000 crowns from the residents, threatening that they would "shoot the inhabitants like dogs" [116] if they did not pay. On the following day, 42,000 crowns in cash were discovered on the body of one of the soldiers, who had been shot dead.[117] A shopkeeper with the initials M. N. was told to hand over 10,000 crowns because he had allegedly shot

[109] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 57, protocol 376.
[110] Ibid., 58, protocol 19.
[111] Ibid., protocol 673.
[112] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 12, protocol 97.
[113] Ibid., spr. 207, ark. 56, 11, protocol 395.
[114] Ibid., spr. 206, ark. 44, 40, protocol 496.
[115] Buchen, *Antisemitism in Galicia,* 114.
[116] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 25.
[117] Ibid., protocol 109.

at Polish soldiers.[118] Helena Schine stated that a group of soldiers had killed her father and brother-in-law and seriously injured her brother. She herself had been forced to buy her life for 3,000 crowns. The soldiers later returned and killed her brother, before breaking open the family safe and stealing a silver tray.[119] Soldiers broke into the home of Weinreb Mojżesz and shouted: "Now your time has come, hand over the money." They then proceeded to loot the home, hitting Mojżesz's father and son with their rifle butts.[120] A soldier put the barrel of his rifle in A. W.'s mouth and forced his victim to choose between death and buying his life for 1,000 crowns.[121] Natan Schnips stated that soldiers had come and ordered everybody present to stand in a line, before demanding money and gold. The situation escalated into murder: "An officer shot Altman, and a soldier shot my father."[122]

The evidence highlights that the phenomenon of rumor goes beyond class or occupational differences. Among the aggressors were not only soldiers but also civilians—secondary school students, railway workers, and train conductors.[123] The victims sometimes recognized the looters, who included a young academic[124] and a high school teacher.[125] An assault in Boźnicza Street was commanded by an officer named Grubiński, a student at the Lviv Technical University.[126] Even members of the city council were recognized among the mob,[127] as were ladies wearing elegant coats, veils and gloves. In one scene, the "legionnaires" presented their ladies with the items that they had purloined for them.[128] There were even

[118] Ibid., 26, protocol 115.
[119] "The Samuel Report," printed in National Polish Committee of America, *The Jews in Poland: Official Reports of The American and British Investigating Missions* (Chicago: American Commission to Negotiate Peace, 1920), 26.
[120] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 48, protocol 100.
[121] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 46, protocol 228.
[122] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 207, ark. 56, 26, protocol 487.
[123] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 91, protocol 56.
[124] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 39, protocol 213.
[125] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 91, protocol 78.
[126] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 206, ark. 44, 33, protocol 100; Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 58, protocol 100.
[127] Ibid., spr. 210, ark. 51, 24, protocol 114.
[128] Ibid., 23, protocol 114; See also Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence,* 160-161.

ladies wearing hats, accompanied by their servants, who carried away the looted items.[129]

Shops throughout the Jewish district were plundered. Any owners who attempted to resist were either physically attacked (in the best case) or shot dead.[130] There were cases in which the looters included army medical staff, who took any items that could be useful for the military hospital. For example, medical staff from the Red Cross looted a Jewish-owned shop on the corner of Boźnica Street.[131] Events such as these were not restricted to the days on which the pogrom raged with its full intensity; already on November 12, nurses from the hospital were seen sitting in a car being loaded with goods from a Jewish-owned business.[132] The perpetrators did not distinguish between rich and poor victims; social status was irrelevant to them. The inclusive nature of the victimized group was mirrored by the diversity of the perpetrators.[133] The aggressors were driven by various motivations. There was a clear desire for revenge, motivated by the Jews' alleged alliance with the enemy and their "treacherous" attacks on Poles. However, the desire for material gains also played an important role. Some of the aggressors saw the looting as a chance to escape the poverty in which they had become mired during the war, while others spotted an opportunity to get rich quick.[134]

Conclusion

The pogrom was unleashed just a few hours after the retreat of the Ukrainian forces and the disarmament of the Jewish militia. It is estimated that hundreds of people suffered serious injury and around 70 were killed, either directly by the pogromists or as a result of widespread fires.[135]

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[129] Ibid., spr. 207, ark. 56, 21, protocol 283.
[130] Cohen, "My Mission," 168.
[131] TsDIAL, f. 505, op. 1, spr. 210, ark. 51, 23, protocol 114.
[132] Ibid., 38, protocol 550; The pogrom did not in fact last 48 hours, but three days. Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland,* 84; Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence,* 154.
[133] Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot,* 523.
[134] Cf. Christian Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies: Mass Violence in the Twentieth-Century World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 120.
[135] Bendow, *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom,* 45; Cohen, "My Mission," 169; Mick, *Lemberg,* 159; Wróbel, "The Seeds of Violence," 138.

The events of November 1918 in Lviv were influenced by a number of factors: the power vacuum, the social climate during the civil war, economic deprivations, and social upheaval. Nevertheless, we should not ignore the immediate causes that gave the pogrom its main impetus. A key role in sparking ethnic violence was the spread of rumors, which were based on deep-rooted prejudice about Jews. Reports of Jews attacking the "Polish defenders" of the city were widespread. These narratives validated deep-rooted antisemitic tropes of Jewish treachery. There is no doubt that the newspaper *Pobudka* contributed to the spread of these rumors; their supposed veracity was enhanced as soon as they appeared in print. The fact that the only Polish newspaper publishing in Lviv functioned as a medium for spreading rumors about the Jews' assaulting Poles undoubtedly meant that the rumors began to be regarded as facts. The monopoly of *Pobudka* allowed it to influence public opinion and crucially reinforce the Polish population's belief that orally spread disinformation was true.

The final key rumor, concerning a supposed authorization to unleash a 48-hour pogrom, worked to coalesce the perpetrators and brought further dynamism and urgency into the practice of collective violence. This also allowed the perpetrators to transfer responsibility away from themselves as individuals. A crucial role in reinforcing the veracity of the alleged order to kill and loot was played by further rumors spread through the city. Finally, the perpetrators were mobilized by the desire for quick material gain, revealing the pragmatic nature of rumors. Analyzing the nature and role of rumor and its mechanism allows a better understanding of the dynamics of violence.

This study underscores the significance of rumors that not only mirror existing prejudice but also actively shape perception and behavior. Rumors emerge as powerful instruments for galvanizing collective action, heightening interethnic tensions, and legitimizing acts of violence. Hence, understanding the processes of rumor acceptance involves examining how individuals perceive, interpret, and respond to disinformation, as well as the psychological factors that influence their judgments, and behavior.

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David Diringer's Refugee Itinerary: From Foreign Student in Fascist Italy to Academic in Post-War Britain

by *Anna Teicher*

Abstract

While David Diringer (1900-1975) is known for his contribution to the history of the alphabet, his life is presented here as a case study in intellectual migration in the first half of the twentieth century. Numerus clausus *restrictions in the newly independent countries of Eastern Europe and the lack of provision for higher education in Palestine prompted many Jewish students including Diringer to take up the advantageous conditions offered to foreign students by the new Fascist government in Italy. As one of the small cohort successful in obtaining the requisite Italian citizenship to launch a university career, Diringer's trajectory was disrupted by the loss of his position and his expulsion from Italy following the 1938 racial legislation. As a refugee academic in Britain, unsuccessful in attempts to reach the US or return to post-war Italy, he was precariously dependent on grants until he finally obtained a university position in 1948.*

Background and Arrival in Italy

University Studies and the Decision to Remain in Italy

Diringer Begins his Academic Career

A Haven Sought and Found: Florence, Autumn 1938-London, Spring 1939

"A deserving little man"

The Immediate Aftermath of War

Italy: 1945-1946. A Frustrated Return

US and Palestine: 1945-1946. Two More Frustrated Moves

The surge in studies since the late 1980s and the interpretative re-evaluation of the position of Jews during the Fascist period[1] have seen an emergence of interest in the presence of foreign Jews in Italy and in intellectual migration from the country in the wake of the 1938 racial legislation. This essay sets out to consider both these themes through the prism of the career of David Diringer (1900-1975) and its trajectory. A Semitic epigrapher who became a pioneering contributor to the history of the alphabet,[2] he experienced a series of displacements that impacted on European Jews in the first half of the twentieth century. Born in the Austro-Hungarian province of Galicia which later became part of the inter-war Polish Republic, he left the anti-Semitic environment of the newly independent country

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[1] Michele Sarfatti, *Gli ebrei nell'Italia fascista. Vicende, identità, persecuzione* (Turin: Einaudi, 2018); Sarfatti, *Mussolini contro gli ebrei. Cronaca dell'elaborazione delle leggi del 1938* (Turin: Zamorani, 2017). For an overview of the debate, see Guri Schwarz, "Interpreting Fascist anti-Semitism: Jewish memories and the scholarly debate in Italy, from Liberation to the present," in *Beyond Camps and forced labour. Current international research on survivors of Nazi persecution. Proceedings of the first international multidisciplinary conference at the Imperial War Museum, London, 29-31 January 2003*, eds. Johannes-Dieter Steinert and Inge Weber-Newth (Osnabrück: Secolo, 2005), 398-411 (CD-ROM papers); Annalisa Capristo and Ernest Ialongo, "On the 80th anniversary of the Racial Laws. Articles reflecting the Current Scholarship on Italian Fascist Anti-Semitism in honour of Michele Sarfatti," *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 24, no. 1 (2019): 1-13.

[2] Diringer's principal works include: *L'alfabeto nella storia della civiltà* (Florence: Barbèra, 1937) (2nd ed. Florence: Giunti-Barbèra, 1969); *The Alphabet: A Key to the History of Mankind* (London: Hutchinson's scientific and technical publications, 1948 and subsequent editions); *The hand-produced book* (London: Hutchinson's scientific and technical publications, 1953) re-published as *The Book before Printing: Ancient, Medieval and Oriental* (New York: Dover publications, 1982); *The Illuminated Book: Its History and Production* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958); *Writing* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1962) (reprint 1965).

and after a stay in Palestine moved to Italy for his university studies. He succeeded in launching his academic career there before it was abruptly ended by the Italian racial legislation in 1938, forcing him into exile in Britain and a protracted search for an academic position.

The story of the emigration of German Jews into Italy following the Nazi seizure of power in 1933 has been revealed by Klaus Voigt.[3] But there was also an earlier experience, one involving mainly young Eastern European Jews—Diringer among them—who flocked to Italy in the 1920s and 1930s to take up the advantageous conditions for study at Italian universities offered to foreign students in the first months of the Fascist regime. Diringer was one of the first to arrive in what became a stream of migrant students seeking an escape from the discrimination of *numerus clausus* restrictions in their home countries, a movement which continued, despite the introduction of disincentives, until 1938.[4] Italian cultural propaganda had seen this invitation as a way of disseminating Italian culture abroad, based on the premise that the beneficiaries would return to their countries of origin. There were however those, particularly among the Jewish contingent, who sought instead to remain and to forge their careers in Italy following their degrees. It is this largely unstudied cohort and the small number of those among them who were intent on trying to enter the Italian university system for whom the experience of David Diringer serves as a case study.[5]

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[3] Klaus Voigt, *Il rifugio precario. Gli esuli in Italia dal 1933 al 1945*, 2 vols. (Scandicci: La Nuova Italia, 1993 and 1996).

[4] Elisa Signori, "Una *peregrinatio academica* in età contemporanea. Gli studenti ebrei stranieri nelle università italiane tra le due guerre," *Annali di storia delle università italiane* 4 (2000): 139-162; Signori, "Contro gli studenti. La persecuzione antiebraica negli atenei italiani e le comunità studentesche," in *"Per la difesa della razza." L'applicazione delle leggi antiebraiche nelle università italiane*, eds. Valeria Galimi and Giovanna Procacci (Milan: Edizioni Unicopli, 2009), 173-210; Signori, "Migrazioni forzate e strategie formative oltre i confini. Gli studenti stranieri, ebrei e non, nelle Università italiane (1900-1940)," in *Disegnare, attraversare, cancellare i confini. Una prospettiva interdisciplinare*, ed. Anna Rita Calabrò (Turin: Giappichelli, 2018), 184-197. On the measures introduced in March 1923 exonerating foreign students from the payment of university fees, see Anna Teicher, "Studenti stranieri, studenti ebrei: nuove presenze nell'ateneo fiorentino nei primi anni del fascismo," in *L'invenzione della razza. L'impatto delle leggi razziali in Toscana. Atti del Convegno di Studi, 24-25 gennaio 2019, Atti e Memorie dell'Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere*, "La Colombaria," 84 (N.S. 70) Anno 2019 (Florence: Olschki, 2020), 207-220.

[5] Anna Teicher, "Da discriminati a rifugiati: gli studiosi ebrei stranieri dell'ateneo fiorentino," in *L'emigrazione intellettuale dall'Italia fascista. Studenti e studiosi ebrei dell'Università di Firenze in fuga all'estero*, ed. Patrizia Guarnieri (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2019), 41-55.

Having decided to pursue an academic career in Italy, Diringer and his colleagues faced challenges in common with their Italian peers as they sought to position themselves with regard to the Fascist regime. But they also faced particular challenges. The prerequisite of Italian citizenship for obtaining an academic position, sanctioned by Gentile's 1923 reform of the universities,[6] would come to prove an insurmountable obstacle after citizenship became increasingly difficult for foreign Jews to obtain as the 1930s progressed. In practice, it was only those individuals, like Diringer, who applied early who were able to acquire this essential passport to academic advancement. For others in the cohort who applied later—and for the German Jews arriving from 1933—the road into academia was, with very few exceptions, to all intents and purposes barred.[7]

When the racial legislation was promulgated in September 1938, academics of foreign origin, like Diringer, found themselves in a situation of extreme difficulty. Like their Italian Jewish colleagues, they lost their positions. But at the same time, as foreign Jews who had obtained Italian citizenship since 1919, their citizenship was revoked and, unlike their Italian counterparts, they were given notice of expulsion from Italy with six months to leave the country.[8] They were propelled into an urgent search for alternative placements, all the more urgent in the case of those like Diringer who had by that time married and had a family.[9]

The predominantly Jewish experience of intellectual migration from Italy as a result of the 1938 legislation has only relatively recently become the subject of scholarly attention and there is much that still remains uncharted regarding the numbers involved and the narrative of relocation to the US, Latin America, Mandate Palestine, Britain and elsewhere. This stands in contrast to the wealth of studies on exiled German or German-speaking, in the main Jewish, scholars, including those from central and Eastern Europe, who fled European

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[6] Regio Decreto (RD), 30 September 1923, no. 2102, art. 115 and art. 35, comma 3: lectors in foreign languages were exempt from the citizenship requirement.

[7] Teicher, "Da discriminati a rifugiati," 44-45. Voigt, *Il rifugio precario*, vol. 1, 41-42, cites the few German refugees who succeeded in obtaining citizenship.

[8] Sarfatti, *Mussolini contro gli ebrei,* 47-51: "I provvedimenti legislativi razzisti e antiebraici dell'1-2 settembre." For a recent overview (with bibliography) of the consequences of the racial legislation in the field of education, see Michele Sarfatti, "La persecuzione antiebraica fascista nelle scuole e nell'università," *Rivista di storia dell'educazione* 2 (2019): 11-30.

[9] Teicher, "Da discriminati a rifugiati," 47-51.

totalitarianism during the 1930s, and reflects an initial focus in Italian historiography on the political emigration of anti-Fascist dissenters, including the Jewish intellectuals among them. This study of Diringer's experience is thus offered here as a contribution to the growing body of work on intellectual migrants from Italy, whether Jewish or not,[10] through the particular perspective of circumstances in Britain. While existing literature has focused on the US and Latin America, as well as Palestine,[11] the albeit numerically much more circumscribed group that after 1938 found its way to Britain is currently less well served.[12] By then,

[10] See the series of volumes "Italiani dall'esilio" currently being published by Donzelli under the directorship of Renato Camurri; the recent project launched by Patrizia Guarnieri, *Intellectuals Displaced from Fascist Italy: Migrants, Exiles and Refugees Fleeing for Political and Racial Reasons* (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2023), https://intellettualinfuga.com. Accessed July 9, 2024; Guarnieri, ed., *L'emigrazione intellettuale dall'Italia fascista*; Guarnieri, "L'emigrazione intellettuale ebraica dalla Toscana," in *L'invenzione della razza*, 265-280. For an earlier overview, see "The State of Research: Conversation with Annalisa Capristo," Primo Levi Center, New York, 2010, https://primolevicenter.org/the-state-of-research-conversation-with-annalisa-capristo/. Accessed July 9, 2024.

[11] For example, Eleonora Maria Smolensky and Vera Vigevani Jarach, *Tante voci, una storia. Italiani ebrei in Argentina, 1938*-1948 (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1998); Arturo Marzano, *Una terra per rinascere. Gli ebrei italiani e l'emigrazione in Palestina prima della guerra (1920-1940)* (Genova: Marietti, 2003); Renato Camurri, "Idee in movimento: l'esilio degli intellettuali italiani negli Stati Uniti (1930-1945)," *Memoria e Ricerche* 31 (2009): 43-62; Camurri, ed., "Mussolini's Gifts: Exiles from Fascist Italy," *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 15, no. 5 (2010); Annalisa Capristo, " 'Fare fagotto'. L'emigrazione intellettuale dall'Italia fascista dopo il 1938," *La Rassegna mensile di Israel*, 76, no. 3 (2010): 177-200; Alessandra Gissi, "Italian Scientific Migration to the United States of America after 1938 Racial Laws," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften* 3 (2010): 100-118; Gianna Pontecorboli, *America. Nuova terra promessa. Storia di ebrei in fuga dal fascismo* (Milan: Brioschi, 2013).

[12] Cecil Roth, "Reminiscenze sugli ebrei italiani durante le loro traversie," *La Rassegna mensile di Israel* 31, no. 5 (1965): 204-208; Lucio Sponza, "Jewish Refugees from Fascist Italy to Britain," in *The Jews of Italy: Memory and Identity*, eds. Bernard D. Cooperman and Barbara Garvin (Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland, 2000), 425-442; Kate Lowe, " 'I shall snuffle about and make relations': Nicolai Rubinstein, the Historian of Renaissance Florence in Oxford during the War," in *Ark of Civilization: Refugee Scholars and Oxford University, 1930-1945*, eds. Sally Crawford, Katharina Ulmschneider, and Jaś Elsner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 220-233; Oswyn Murray, "Arnaldo Momigliano on Peace and Liberty (1940)," in *Ark of Civilization*, eds. Crawford, Ulmschneider, and Elsner, 201-207; Anna Teicher, "Jacob Leib Teicher between Florence and Cambridge: Arabic and Jewish philosophy in Wartime Oxford," in *Ark of Civilization*, eds. Crawford, Ulmschneider, and Elsner, 327-340; Francesca Fiorani, *Paolo Treves. Tra esilio e impegno repubblicano (1908-1958)* (Rome: Donzelli, 2020); the relevant biographical entries (for refugees with a connection to Tuscany) in Guarnieri, *Intellectuals displaced from Fascist Italy.*

wherever they went, refugees from Italy suffered from being the last in line in an international academic exodus, but Diringer's case serves to illustrate the particular difficulties encountered in the more restricted academic labor market in Britain compared to the US, a situation further aggravated as the war progressed and the practical possibilities of moving away from Britain receded.

At the end of the war, Diringer's search for settled employment continued in the wider geography that peace permitted. His quest included a return to Italy, where his experience further links into discussion of the challenges faced by Italian academics, particularly those of the younger generation, in trying to resume their interrupted careers there.[13] And for him, like others in his cohort of foreign Jews, this also involved re-establishing his revoked Italian citizenship. As this essay discusses, he encountered what amounted to an impossible task as he explored his chances of return. His story is thus one of a great many stories of exile, of the very real challenges he confronted in establishing himself for a second time in a new country, and highlights the crucial role played by patronage in achieving a successful outcome. Diringer's own struggle was particularly drawn-out, a vitiating factor being the nature of his academic specialization. While Semitic epigraphy was part of a tradition of scholarship in Italy, in the English-speaking world he found it very difficult to gain acceptance for his research within an academic context. His original preference had been to try to establish himself in the US, but ultimately it would be Britain, the country where he had found sanctuary back in 1939 that after nearly ten long years finally came to his rescue when, in 1948, he was appointed to what was in effect a specially created position for him at the University of Cambridge.

[13] Dianella Gagliani, ed., *Il difficile rientro. Il ritorno dei docenti ebrei nell'università del dopoguerra* (Bologna: CLUEB, 2004); Francesca Pelini, "Appunti per una storia della reintegrazione dei professori universitari perseguitati per motivi razziali," in *Gli ebrei in Italia tra persecuzione fascista e reintegrazione postbellica,* eds. Ilaria Pavan and Guri Schwarz (Florence: Giuntina, 2001), 113-139; Francesca Pelini and Ilaria Pavan, *La doppia epurazione. L'università di Pisa e le leggi razziali tra guerra e dopoguerra* (Bologna: il Mulino, 2009). For a recent treatment see, Giovanni Montroni, *La continuità necessaria. Università e professori dal fascismo alla Repubblica* (Florence: Le Monnier, 2016).

Background and Arrival in Italy

Diringer was born on 16 June 1900 in Tlumach in the then Austrian-Hungarian province of Galicia.[14] He was the fourth of six children born to Jacob Munzer (Mintzer) and Mirl Diringer, and throughout his life he used his mother's surname.[15] During the First World War, having joined a movement consisting for the most part of Jews seeking refuge in the Imperial capital, he relocated to Vienna where he completed his secondary education.[16] It was also in Vienna that he became a member of the Socialist-Zionist youth organization Hashomer Hatzair, and was active in the movement on his return to his native Tlumach after service in the Austrian army. Driven by his Zionist convictions, in 1920 Diringer left Europe for Mandate Palestine as part of the third *aliyah*, and became a member of kibbutz Beit-Alpha, founded in 1922 by pioneers from Poland.[17] His stay in Palestine was however short-lived, in part because he contracted malaria and in part because until the foundation of the Hebrew University in 1925 there was no provision for higher education which forced aspiring students to move away for their university degrees.[18]

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[14] Galicia was part of the Second Polish Republic between the First and Second World Wars, and its Eastern section, including Tlumach is now in Ukraine.

[15] "Diringer, Davide," Sezione Studenti, f. 138, ins. 2707, Archivio Storico dell'Università degli Studi di Firenze (ASUFi), Florence. The profession of Diringer's father is given as *segretario comunale*, but it is unclear whether the position was a municipal one or whether his father was employed by the Jewish community. Diringer together with two sisters who eventually moved to the US were the only members of his immediate family to survive the Holocaust. For a presentation of Diringer's life and career, see also Ida Zatelli, "In ricordo di David Diringer," in *L'invenzione della razza,* 113-120.

[16] At the Realgymnasium in Vereinsgasse which offered classes in Polish to Galician refugee students. David Diringer, autobiographical notes made available courtesy of Mrs Ray Wolf, Private Archive Anna Teicher, Cambridge, UK.

[17] Munio Wurman, "Prof. David Diringer and Hashomer Hatzair," in *Memorial Book of Tlumacz (Tlumach, Ukraine),* (translation of *Tlumacz-Tlomitsch. Sefer 'edut ve-zikaron*), eds. Shlomo Blond et al. (Tel-Aviv: Tlumacz Society, 1976), LXXI and LXXIX; Guido Mazzoni, "Preliminari," in David Diringer, *L'alfabeto nella storia della civiltà*, 2nd ed., VIII, also for additional details on Diringer's experiences in the First World War.

[18] David Diringer, "Jewish students in Fascist Italy and in war-time Cambridge," in *Studies in the Cultural Life of the Jews of England*, eds. Dov Noy, Issachar Ben-Ami, and Avraham Harman (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), 43.

For Diringer, the Italian government's introduction in the spring of 1923 of favorable conditions to encourage the presence of foreign students, absolving them initially at least from the payment of university fees, could not therefore have come at a more propitious moment, and he enrolled at the first opportunity in the Facoltà di Lettere of the University of Florence (then still the Istituto di Studi Superiori, Pratici e di Perfezionamento) for the academic year 1923-1924.[19]

Fig. 1. Portrait of David Diringer.[20]

University Studies and the Decision to Remain in Italy

Diringer enjoyed a highly successful undergraduate career and was awarded the highest classification for his degree thesis, presented in November 1927, on *Le iscrizioni palestinesi in antico ebraico*, under the direction of Umberto Cassuto, professor of Hebrew language and literature. He went on to complete a further qualification, the *diploma di perfezionamento in storia antica*, two years later in 1929, this time specializing in Etruscology, and was again awarded the highest

[19] "Diringer, Davide," Sezione Studenti, f. 138, ins. 2707, ASUFi, Florence.
[20] David Diringer, *Writing* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1962), dust cover.

classification for his thesis entitled *Ricerche casentinesi*.[21] During his student years, drawing on his experience of youth activism in Hashomer Hatzair, Diringer emerged as a central figure in the organization of Jewish student life in Italy, in particular with regard to foreign Jewish students at Italian universities, attempting—ultimately without success—to link the student organization in Italy to the fledgling international Jewish student movement, and combining this with a deep sense of gratitude owed to Italy as the country which had offered the chance of higher education.[22] The declaration of "undying devotion to Italy" with which the young Diringer rallied his fellow students back in 1925[23] clearly became an abiding sentiment and must have informed the decision he took to remain in Italy and forge his academic career there. Once again, he was fortunate in his timing, as his prompt application to become an Italian citizen, made in the course of the first year of his *perfezionamento*, placed him among the successful early claimants of his student cohort, enabling him, unlike colleagues who applied later on, to comply with the requirement of citizenship for holders of university positions. Diringer's Italian citizenship came through two years later in the summer of 1930.[24] His links to Italy were further cemented by his marriage at the end of 1927, a few weeks after his graduation, to Elena Cecchini, and the birth of their daughter Kedma in May 1932.

Diringer Begins his Academic Career

The years following his *diploma di perfezionamento* saw Diringer's return to the material of his degree thesis on ancient Hebrew inscriptions, in preparation for its

[21] Zatelli, "In ricordo di David Diringer," 116; "Diringer, Davide," Sezione Studenti, f. 138, ins. 2707, ASUFi, Florence.

[22] See Teicher, "Studenti stranieri, studenti ebrei," 218-219.

[23] "[...] imperitura devozione verso l'Italia" in "Dalle città d'Italia-Da Firenze: Il Prof. Pistelli alla mensa accademica," *Israel*, February 5, 1925, 6, cited in Teicher, "Studenti stranieri, studenti ebrei," 216.

[24] Ufficio Personale, Ministero dell'Interno to Pubblica Sicurezza, 25 June 1928, "Diringer, Davide," Ministero dell'Interno (MI), Direzione Generale Pubblica Sicurezza (DGPS), Divisione affari generali e riservati (DAGR), A4, b. 110, Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS), Rome; Ufficio Personale, Ministero dell'Interno, 30 June 1930, on concession of citizenship registered at the Corte dei Conti, 27 June 1930.

publication under the auspices of the Facoltà di Lettere of Florence University. For this, he received funding not only from Florence University but also from the Ministero degli Affari Esteri and the Società Geografica Italiana, and was able to undertake research in Palestine.[25] His volume *Le iscrizioni antico-ebraiche palestinesi* was the second in a planned new series of faculty publications, the first of which was his professor Cassuto's book *La questione della Genesi*. Both came out in 1934.[26] The appearance of his first book provided the conditions for Diringer's successful application to become a *libero docente*, after he had been forced to withdraw his initial attempt the previous year owing to publication delays.[27] The area of expertise for which the *libera docenza* was granted in November 1934 was defined as *antichità ed epigrafia ebraiche*[28] and, the following spring, the Facoltà di Lettere in Florence agreed to Diringer's exercising his *libera docenza* at the faculty, as well as the program of the course he proposed for the new academic year.[29] Diringer was now launched on an academic career in a field of specialization that placed him in a distinguished Italian tradition of scholarship in Semitic epigraphy, within which the importance of his 1934 book as the first systematic treatment of ancient Hebrew inscriptions has recently been underlined.[30]

The preceding years had seen Diringer forge diverse links within the Italian academic establishment. His most significant association was with the Centro di

[25] "Verbali Adunanze (1927-1932)," Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Consiglio di Facoltà, ASUFi, Florence, 8 July 1929, 145; 28 November 1929, 161; 28 January 1930, 169; 15 January 1931, 257; 10 February 1931, 272.

[26] Ibid., 7 November 1932, un-numbered. Both volumes were published by Le Monnier, Florence.

[27] David Diringer to Ministero dell'Educazione Nazionale, 18 October 1933, "Diringer, David," Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione (MPI), Direzione Generale Istruzione Superiore (DGIS), Liberi Docenti, 3a serie (1930-1950), b. 186, Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS), Rome.

[28] Ibid., Decreto Ministeriale, 26 November 1934.

[29] "Verbali Adunanze (1932–1941)," Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Consiglio di Facoltà, ASUFi, Florence, 25 March 1935, 140.

[30] Zatelli, "In ricordo di David Diringer"; Zatelli, "Gli studi ebraici a Firenze durante il regime fascista: l'epilogo di una lunga e gloriosa tradizione," in *La chiesa fiorentina e il soccorso agli ebrei. Luoghi, istituzioni, percorsi (1943-1944)*, eds. Francesca Cavarocchi and Elena Mazzini (Rome: Viella, 2018), 75-87; Felice Israel, "L'epigrafia ebraica antica in Italia," in *Hebraica: miscellanea di studi in onore di Sergio J. Sierra per il suo 75 compleanno,* eds. Felice Israel, Alfredo Mordechai Rabello and Alberto M. Somekh (Turin: Istituto di studi ebraici-Scuola rabbinica S. H. Margulies-D. Disegni, 1998), 275-279 which also discusses the international reception of Diringer's first book.

Studi Coloniali,[31] a connection which aligned him whether through expediency or conviction—and in contrast to others of his cohort of foreign Jewish academics—with the Fascist project. In 1931 he had taken part in the organization of the first Congress of Colonial Studies, held in Florence at the initiative of the Istituto Cesare Alfieri, and had then been appointed secretary to the Centro di Studi Coloniali, established under the auspices of the Istituto in the wake of the congress, being commended for his zealous services.[32] He held this position until 1935, and in that year became a member of the *consiglio direttivo* of the Centro, participating again both in 1934 and 1937 in the organization of the second and third congresses of Colonial Studies.[33] He was also on the board of the Società Asiatica Italiana (1935-1938) and of the Florentine section of the Istituto Fascista dell'Africa Italiana (formerly the Istituto Coloniale Fascista) which collaborated closely with the Centro di Studi Coloniali.[34] His links with institutions heavily involved in promoting Fascist colonial propaganda brought Diringer into contact with high-ranking members of the Fascist party, in particular Prince Piero Ginori Conti who served as *commissario straordinario* of the Cesare Alfieri from 1928 to 1935 and was the founder and president of the Centro di Studi Coloniali whose

[31] On the foundation of the Centro, see Giampaolo Malgeri, "La nascita della 'Rivista di studi politici internazionali' (Firenze, 1934)," *Rivista di studi politici internazionali* 84, no. 2, (2017): 240-243.

[32] R. Istituto superiore di scienze sociali e politiche "Cesare Alfieri," Centro di studi coloniali, *Atti del primo congresso di studi coloniali, Firenze, 8-12 aprile 1931*, vol. 1 (Florence: Tipografia Giuntina, 1931), 11, 14 and 54; R. Istituto superiore di scienze sociali e politiche "Cesare Alfieri", *Annuario per l'anno accademico 1931-1932* (Florence: Tipografia Classica, 1932), 6-8.

[33] Curriculum vitae, undated, "Diringer, David," Special Collections and Western Manuscripts (MS), Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (SPSL), 251/2, Bodleian Libraries (BL), Oxford, fol. 81; R. Istituto superiore di scienze sociali e politiche "Cesare Alfieri", Centro di studi coloniali, *Atti del secondo congresso di studi coloniali, Napoli, 1-5 ottobre 1934*, vol. 1 (Florence: Tipografia Giuntina di Leo S. Olschki, 1935), 9 and 10; R. Istituto superiore di scienze sociali e politiche "Cesare Alfieri," Centro di studi coloniali, *Atti del terzo congresso di studi coloniali, Firenze-Roma, 12-17 aprile 1937*, vol. 1 (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1937), 11 and 14.

[34] Curriculum vitae, undated, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 81; Francesca Cavarocchi and Alessandra Minerbi, "Politica razziale e persecuzione antiebraica nell'ateneo fiorentino," in *Razza e fascismo. La persecuzione contro gli ebrei in Toscana (1938-1943)*, ed. Enzo Collotti, vol. 1 (Rome: Carocci, 1999), 507; Malgeri, "La nascita della 'Rivista di studi politici internazionali'," 241.

secretary Diringer had been.[35] Ginori Conti also employed Diringer as secretary in a private capacity, a role that continued to provide employment in the months following the racial laws and the loss of his academic positions.[36] The Centro also offered the context for his encounter with Guido Valensin whose importance for Diringer's subsequent fortunes in Britain will be discussed later on. In addition, Italian police files hint at activity undertaken by him on behalf of the Fascist party.[37] In tandem with these multifarious activities, Diringer pressed forward with his own research work, continuing his copious output of articles, and following his initial 1934 book with a vast volume, *L'alfabeto nella storia della civiltà*, published in 1937, with its generously worded foreword by the eminent Italianist Guido Mazzoni.[38] In November of that year Diringer was granted a personal audience with the King of Italy, and this was followed a few months later—now less than six months prior to the racial legislation—by a further audience, this time with Mussolini.[39]

[35] Sandro Rogari, "Il 'Cesare Alfieri' da Istituto a Facoltà di Scienze Politiche," in *L'università degli Studi di Firenze, 1924-2004* (Florence: Olschki, 2004), 680; Malgeri, "La nascita della 'Rivista di studi politici internazionali'," : 241.

[36] Prefettura di Livorno to Prefettura di Firenze, 7 October 1937, "Diringer, Davide," MI, DGPS, DAGR, A4, b. 110, ACS, Rome; Prefettura di Firenze to MI, DGPS, 10 November 1937; David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, undated, but received 17 November 1945, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 361.

[37] Prefettura di Livorno to Prefettura di Firenze, 7 October 1937, "Diringer, Davide," MI, DGPS, DAGR, A4, b. 110, ACS, Rome.

[38] Diringer, *L'alfabeto nella storia della civiltà.*

[39] Curriculum vitae, undated, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 81.

La seduta d'una rappresentanza del Consiglio Direttivo del Centro di Studi Coloniali al R. Istituto Orientale di Napoli.

Fig.2. Meeting of a delegation of the ruling council of the Centro di Studi Coloniali at the R. Istituto Orientale, Naples. The figure seated at the desk on the right is in all probability David Diringer, secretary of the Centro di Studi Coloniali.[40]

And yet, despite these manifestations of acceptance, Diringer's position was precarious. When the racial legislation removed him from Italian academic life, he was said to have been, "[...] in the way of getting a Chair of Hebrew in Rome."[41] But this had not happened, and he remained a *libero docente* with no fixed tenure. Back in 1935, a proposal to the Facoltà di Lettere in Florence by the Arabist Giuseppe Furlani that Diringer be given the *incarico di ebraico* had been rejected.[42] Two years later, new regulations governing the content of degree courses, together with the absence in Florence of a Chair in Hebrew following Cassuto's departure for Rome in 1932, forced Diringer to try to broaden the field of his *libera docenza* by changing its title from *antichità ed epigrafia ebraiche* to *storia orientale antica*

[40] *Atti del secondo congresso di studi coloniali, Napoli, 1-5 ottobre 1934,* vol. 1 (Florence: Tipografia Giuntina di Leo S. Olschki, 1935)

[41] Ibid., fol. 101, information sheet, 25 January 1939.

[42] "Verbali Adunanze (1932–1941)," Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Consiglio di Facoltà, ASUFi, Florence, 11 June 1935, 150.

with a view to widening the appeal of his teaching.[43] In this he was not successful, although some leeway was clearly allowed in practice, at least with regard to the content of his course, and the title of his *libera docenza* was referred to, unofficially at least, as *antichità ed epigrafia orientali,* the nomenclature he would give it in his application to the London-based Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (SPSL) in the autumn of 1938.[44]

These difficulties were in a sense a harbinger of the very real issues Diringer would encounter after his departure from Italy because of the perceived narrowness of his subject of specialization. Nor were the practicalities of his life in Florence easy. His position as *libero docente* did not provide him with anything like material security and he needed to earn his living to provide for his family. To this end, he taught German, serving from 1931 to 1938 as lector at the Istituto Superiore di Magistero (upgraded to Facoltà di Magistero from 1936).[45] At the end of 1935, through Guido Mazzoni, he was offered German teaching at the boarding school for girls at Poggio Imperiale on the outskirts of Florence.[46] Despite his efforts, his financial position remained insecure. "He lives in limited economic circumstances."[47] The phrase comes from material in the police file on Diringer dating to the early winter of 1937 in the lead-up to Hitler's visit to Italy the following spring. From it emerges an accusation that he exploited his Fascist connections to conceal his involvement in the struggle against Nazism, using his

[43] "Appunto per il Sig. Direttore Generale," undated, but summer of 1937, "Diringer, David," MPI, DGIS, Liberi Docenti, 3a serie (1930-1950), b. 186, ACS, Rome; Mario Salmi (Preside of the Facoltà di Lettere) to David Diringer, 28 June 1937; Application sent by David Diringer to the DGIS, Ministero dell'Educazione Nazionale, 10 July 1937; Giuseppe Giustini (DGIS at the Ministry) to David Diringer, 26 July and 2 August 1937; David Diringer to Giuseppe Giustini, undated, but in response to Giustini's letter of 26 July.

[44] Mazzoni, "Preliminari," in Diringer, *L'alfabeto nella storia della civiltà*, VIII; curriculum vitae, undated "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 81.

[45] Certificate issued on 3 February 1939 certifying Diringer's teaching at the Magistero, Allegato no. 1, attached to letter from David Diringer to the Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, 15 February 1946, "Diringer, David," MPI, DGIS, Liberi Docenti, 3a serie (1930-1950), b. 186, ACS, Rome; "Registri delle lezioni": lettore di lingua e letteratura tedesca, Archivio storico della Facoltà di Magistero.

[46] "Al prof. Diringer sull'insegnamento del tedesco (dicembre 6)," Allegati-II, Carteggio e atti, no. 58, Affari diversi, 1935-1940, December 1935, Archivio Storico, Educandato Statale SS. Annunziata, Florence.

[47] Prefettura di Firenze to MI, DGPS, 10 November 1937, "Diringer, Davide," MI, DGPS, DAGR, A4, b. 110, ACS, Rome: "Versa in modeste condizioni economiche."

relationship with Ginori Conti to send abroad material "of an undercover nature" to the detriment of Fascist Italy. He was put under "circumspect and unobtrusive surveillance," with the threat that his Italian citizenship would be revoked, although by the following July no incriminating evidence had emerged.[48] It was now however only a matter of weeks before the whole complex edifice of his Italian existence collapsed in September 1938.

A Haven Sought and Found: Florence, Autumn 1938-London, Spring 1939

The double blow of loss of their academic positions and expulsion from Italy within six months, delivered to Jews of foreign origin like Diringer in the first draft of the racial legislation in early September 1938, necessitated an immediate quest for employment outside the country they had come to consider their home.[49] In common with their Italian colleagues who also sought to leave, they turned to the available mechanisms for facilitating departure—to senior academics in Italy willing to exploit their own international contacts (with varying degrees of success) on behalf of their protégés,[50] to their own academic contacts abroad, and to the aid organizations that had been in operation since 1933, initially to relieve the plight of German academic refugees, principally the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (SPSL) in Britain and the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars (EC) in the US.[51] The difficulties refugees from Italy encountered

[48] Ibid., Prefettura di Livorno to Prefettura di Firenze (copy to MI, DGPS), 7 October 1937: "[…] di carattere spionistico"; MI to Ministero della Guerra, Ufficio di Stato Maggiore della R. Marina, Ministero dell'Aeronautica, 16 October 1937: "[…] cauta e non appariscente vigilanza"; Prefettura di Firenze to MI, DGPS, 16 July 1938.

[49] Sarfatti, *Mussolini contro gli ebrei,* 47-51; "I provvedimenti legislativi razzisti e antiebraici dell'1-2 settembre." Legislation promulgated two months later in November 1938 (RDL, 17 November 1938, no. 1728, art. 25, modified the terms to allow foreign Jews married to Italians to remain in Italy beyond 12 March 1939, but Diringer had already made the decision to leave; in mid March 1939, the order for the expulsion was in practice rescinded (Voigt, *Il rifugio precario*, vol. 1, 304-310).

[50] Teicher, "Da discriminati a rifugiati," 48-49.

[51] On the aid organizations, see Claus-Dieter Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile: Refugee Scholars and the New School for Social Research* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993); Giuliana Gemelli, ed., *The "Unacceptables." American Foundations and Refugee Scholars Between the Two Wars and After* (Brussels-New York: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2000); Margaret Lamberti, "The Reception of Refugee Scholars from Nazi Germany in America: Philanthropy and Social Change in Higher Education," *Jewish Social Studies* 12, no. 3 (2006): 157-192; Jeremy Seabrook, *The Refuge*

five years on, as Diringer's case illustrates, underscore the very harsh realities of an already inundated market as well as the decisive influence of effective patronage.

Diringer addressed his initial efforts to foreign contacts he had established in Florence. He lost no time in writing to Arthur Crofton Sleigh, an English colleague who was lector in English at the Facoltà di Lettere at Florence University and who also taught at the British Institute,[52] asking Sleigh, then in London on a visit, to contact the SPSL on his behalf.[53] Forms were duly dispatched to Florence for him to fill out, and returned to London by early October.[54] After that, silence. In mid-November, Sleigh, now back in Florence, wrote again to the SPSL in response to a personal request from Diringer, "to plead his case with you."[55] The reply from David Cleghorn Thomson, general secretary of the SPSL, was hardly encouraging: "We are doing our best to look out for some opening, although I must confess that the position does not look very hopeful at the moment."[56] Other friends and acquaintances who also contacted the SPSL on Diringer's behalf received a similarly negative response.[57] Time was running out and the prospects of finding

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and the Fortress: Britain and the Flight from Tyranny (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Shula Marks, Paul Weindling and Laura Wintour, eds., *In Defence of Learning. The Plight, Persecution, and Placement of Academic Refugees, 1933-1980s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2011); Isabella Löhr, "Solidarity and the Academic Community: The Support Networks for Refugee Scholars in the 1930s," *Journal of Modern European History* 12, no.2 (2014): 231-246; Guarnieri, "L'emigrazione intellettuale ebraica dalla Toscana," 265-280.

[52] Sleigh started teaching at the British Institute in 1925, returning to Florence after the war, and retiring as Vice-Director in 1962. I am grateful to Alyson Price, former archivist at the British Institute in Florence, for her kindness in providing information about Sleigh's career.

[53] David Diringer to Arthur Crofton (A. C.) Sleigh, undated, but around mid-September 1938, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 85.

[54] Ibid., fol. 84, A. C. Sleigh to The Secretary, SPSL, 19 September 1938. Diringer's completed forms were received by the SPSL on 3 October 1938.

[55] Ibid., fol. 96, A. C. Sleigh to The Secretary, SPSL, 14 November 1938.

[56] Ibid., fol. 97, David Cleghorn Thomson to A. C. Sleigh, 19 November 1938.

[57] Ibid., fol. 108, Esther Simpson to Kathleen Speight, 9 February 1939. Speight completed a second degree in Lettere at Florence University in 1936, and also, like Sleigh, taught English at the British Institute. Another who wrote on Diringer's behalf was Jean Seznec, assistant director of the French Institute in Florence, whose letter to Fritz Saxl, director of the Warburg Institute in London, was forwarded by Saxl to the SPSL (Ibid., fol. 90, copy of letter from David Diringer to Jean Seznec, undated; fol. 91, Gertrud Bing to Esther Simpson, 6 October 1938; fol. 92, Esther Simpson to Gertrud Bing, 7 October 1938); an abortive attempt to interest the Professional Committee for German Jewish Refugees in Diringer's case initiated through an English acquaintance of Diringer's

a placement for him looked decidedly remote. His field of expertise, Semitic epigraphy, was not only narrow, but was also not represented in British universities. And while he was under the misapprehension that this circumstance could further his cause,[58] it was in reality—and continued to be for the future—more of a hindrance than a help.

Britain however was not the only option, and, if conditions there were decidedly unfavorable, across the Atlantic, the US was seen as having the potential to offer greater opportunity, and the SPSL consistently pursued a policy of actively encouraging refugee scholars to exploit any potential openings and contacts there.[59] The US was indeed Diringer's stated destination of preference.[60] To this end, he had been exploiting his own academic contacts there, getting in touch with "many scholars" with whom he had personal contact or who knew him through his publications.[61] And yet, despite his details being forwarded to the EC with a robust recommendation from Cyrus Adler (President of Dropsie College and of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America), it was all to no avail,[62] and his quest seemed no nearer resolution.

With all roads seemingly closed, Diringer's fortunes were about to undergo a timely upturn in London, thanks to a curious intertwining of Fascist connections in Italy and the British establishment. At the end of January 1939, only some six weeks before the date by which he was obliged to leave Italy, Cleghorn Thomson, general secretary of the SPSL, received a visit on Diringer's behalf from Giorgia

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in Florence also came to nothing (Ibid., fols. 98-99, L. E. Whitehorn to The Secretary, SPSL, 19 December 1938; fol. 100, Esther Simpson to L. E. Whitehorn, 21 December 1938; fol. 104, R. Luisada (Comitato assistenza per gli ebrei in Italia) to The Jewish Professional Committee, London, 26 January 1939; fol. 105, A. J. Makover, chairman of the Professional Committee for German Jewish Refugees (signed E. Rosenberg, secretary) to Esther Simpson, 3 February 1939.

[58] Ibid., fol. 85, David Diringer to A. C. Sleigh, undated, but around mid-September 1938.

[59] See, for example, Annalisa Capristo, "Arnaldo Momigliano e il mancato asilo negli USA (1938-1941). 'I always hope that something will be found in America'," *Quaderni di storia* 63 (2006): 18-19 on the SPSL's exhortation to Momigliano to try to reach the US in November 1939.

[60] Information sheet, 31 March 1939, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 128.

[61] Ibid., fol. 361, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, undated, but received 17 November 1945. All quotations from Diringer's correspondence have been left in his original English.

[62] David Diringer to Cyrus Adler, 10 November 1938, "Diringer, David," Manuscript and Archives Division (MAD), Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars (EC), I.B. Non-grantees, b. 52, f. 27, New York Public Library (NYPL), New York; Cyrus Adler to Stephen Duggan, 29 November 1938.

Valensin. Her connections with Diringer were forged in Florence through her father, Guido Valensin, an expert in colonial affairs born into the Florentine Jewish elite, the apex of whose career was his appointment in 1936 as ministerial secretary to Alessandro Lessona at the Ministero delle Colonie. Prior to his involvement in Mussolini's government, Valensin had had an academic career, teaching the history of colonialism at the Istituto Cesare Alfieri in Florence, in the same years that Diringer served as secretary of the Institute's offshoot, the Centro di Studi Coloniali.[63] Both men had collaborated in the organization of all three congresses of Colonial Studies, and Diringer's friendship with the family may have dated from this time.[64] More importantly from the point of view of the SPSL, Giorgia Valensin was related through her mother, Countess Gwendoline Balzani, to Lord Hailey, a grandee of British imperialism, who, following an eminent career in India and Africa, had in December 1938 been appointed chairman of the Co-ordinating Committee for Refugees.[65] Valensin, who was working in London at the International Board for non-intervention in Spain, was referred to by the SPSL as Lord Hailey's niece, although in reality the relationship was more distant.[66] The presence however of an advocate with close ties to a figure of the British establishment, who had a special interest in refugees, galvanized the SPSL into action on Diringer's behalf, and proved to be the enabling factor which led to his arrival in Britain.

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[63] Andrea Giaconi, *La patria in movimento. Guido Valensin tra Toscana, Romagna e popoli migranti* (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 2017),12-13, 78-79, 93-94; curriculum vitae, undated, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, fol. 81.

[64] See notes 31 and 32. Valensin's participation is recorded in *Atti del primo congresso di studi coloniali*, vol. 1, 11 and 14; *Atti del secondo congresso di studi coloniali*, vol. 1, 9 and 11; *Atti del terzo congresso di studi coloniali*, vol. 1, 10. Together with her parents, the young Giorgia is listed among the attendees of the first congress (*Atti del primo congresso di studi coloniali*, vol. 1, 120).

[65] Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz, *Never look back: The Jewish refugee children in Great Britain* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2012), 84. William Malcolm Hailey (1872-1969), Governor of the Punjab and later of the United Provinces, India, and author of *An African Survey* (1938).

[66] For Giorgia's appointment, which she ascribed to her father's contacts, see Giaconi, *La patria in movimento*, 94 and 140. Lord Hailey's wife, Countess Andreina (Andreola) Balzani (1869-1939) was a first cousin of Giorgia's mother, Gwendoline Balzani: Vittorio Spreti, ed., *Enciclopedia storico-nobiliare italiana*, vol. 1, A-B, (Milan: Enciclopedia storico-nobiliare italiana, 1928) 492-493. Giorgia (1909-1969) became an acclaimed translator, known especially for her translation into Italian of Arthur Waley's English version of Chinese poems (Giorgia Valensin, *Liriche cinesi: 1753 a.c.-1278 d.c.*, with a preface by Eugenio Montale (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1943).

Cleghorn Thomson, who initially failed to recall that the SPSL was already in contact with Diringer and that a few months previously he had personally written to Arthur Sleigh stressing how unpromising his prospects for coming to Britain were, now agreed to respond to Valensin's request to try to obtain an invitation for Diringer to come and study in London that would facilitate his departure from Italy and entry to Britain.[67] In Cleghorn Thomson's opinion, all that was required was "a more or less fictitious invitation" for Diringer "to come and carry on his research in his subject in England,"[68] one above all that made no offer of financial support. The recipients of Cleghorn Thomson's appeal reacted differently, one, Curt Sigmar Gutkind, not even responding despite a verbal assurance of his willingness to help.[69] Ellis Minns, recently retired professor of archaeology at Cambridge whom Diringer had listed as a referee on his SPSL form, apparently on the basis of an exchange of offprints following the publication of his 1937 book on the alphabet, did respond, but was troubled by the request and had in turn sought the advice of David Winton Thomas, the newly appointed Regius professor of Hebrew in Cambridge. Although both were in no doubt as to the quality of his work, and both were subsequently to give crucial support to him, neither was in favor of issuing an invitation when so much was unclear about Diringer's future plans. They feared that even if he saw his ultimate destination as being the US, his stay in Britain could nonetheless be prolonged, a situation which would "involve us in a moral responsibility for his maintenance," with the risk of his becoming "a permanent liability." And Minns, to whom Diringer had made an unsuccessful personal approach for help back in November 1938, also drew attention to his suspicions that Diringer was involved in cultural propaganda in the Near East and Abyssinia on behalf of the Fascist regime—suspicions that find some confirmation in Italian police files.[70] Diringer had indeed, perhaps unwisely, been at pains to

[67] David Cleghorn Thomson to A. C. Sleigh, 19 November 1938, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 97; David Cleghorn Thomson to Gloria Valensin, 30 January 1939, fol. 103.
[68] Ibid., fol. 111, David Cleghorn Thomson to Ellis Minns, 13 February 1939.
[69] Ibid., fol. 110, David Cleghorn Thomson to Curt Sigmar Gutkind, 10 February 1919. Gutkind had taught Diringer back in the 1920s when he was lector in German at Florence University and took up a position in Italian at Bedford College, London, in 1936.
[70] David Winton Thomas to Ellis Minns, 16 February 1939, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fols. 116-117; Ellis Minns to David Cleghorn Thomson, 18 February 1939, fols. 118-119; Prefettura di Livorno to Prefettura di Firenze, 7 October 1937, "Diringer, Davide," MI, DGPS, DAGR, A4, b. 110, ACS, Rome.

list, in the CV he submitted to the SPSL, the personal audience he had had not only with the King of Italy, but also in the spring of 1938 with Mussolini himself, although he did omit his association with the Istituto fascista dell'Africa italiana.[71] The response from Cambridge thus advocated caution, Minns suggesting to the SPSL that more information be sought about Diringer's financial position before any invitation could be contemplated.[72]

In the meantime, however, the third recipient, Sir Frederic Kenyon, a former director of the British Museum and at the time secretary of the British Academy, to whom alone in his appeal Cleghorn Thomson had mentioned Diringer's connection with Lord Hailey's "niece," and who in his additional role as executive chairman of the SPSL may well himself have had personal contact with Lord Hailey, had suffered no such qualms and, virtually by return of post, had already issued the all-important "non-committal sort of invitation"[73] requested by Cleghorn Thomson. On 13 February, just a month before Diringer had to leave Italy, Sir Frederic wrote to him in the name of the British Academy:

> I understand it would facilitate your studies of the early civilisation of Palestine and the origins of the alphabet, if you were able to come to London and examine the materials available in the British Museum and elsewhere. These are subjects in which British scholars are much interested, and on behalf of the British Academy I write to say that a visit from you in order to pursue your studies would be welcome, and that the resources of the British Museum would be open to you.[74]

Cleghorn Thomson may have voiced his agreement with Minns and Winton Thomas that "it is important for us to know that we are not taking on a permanent responsibility for Diringer's maintenance,"[75] but by now it was too late. Armed

[71] Curriculum vitae, undated, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 81.
[72] Ibid., fols. 118-119, Ellis Minns to David Cleghorn Thomson, 18 February 1939.
[73] Ibid., fol. 110, David Cleghorn Thomson to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 10 February 1939.
[74] Ibid., fol. 112, Sir Frederic Kenyon to David Diringer, 13 February 1939.
[75] Ibid., fol. 120, David Cleghorn Thomson to Ellis Minns, 21 February 1939.

with Sir Frederic's invitation, he was on his way and by the end of March had reached London.[76]

On arrival, Diringer set about continuing his research work not only at the British Museum, but also at the recently established Institute of Archaeology attached to the University of London. The Insititute's secretary at the time was Sir Frederic's daughter, the archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon, who then became acting director during the war years.[77] His collaboration focused on the Hebrew inscriptional material collected by the Wellcome-Marston expedition to Palestine housed at the Institute and would result in a number of publications over the next four years.[78] The Institute would continue to provide an ongoing base for Diringer into the post-war period. However, it did not provide any source of regular funding.[79] Diringer had arrived in Britain without a position to support him. He was "more or less destitute."[80] He became an immediate financial liability to his new host country that increased when he was joined just before the outbreak of war by his wife, Elena, and seven-year-old daughter, Kedma,[81] and was indeed destined to continue for almost a decade.

"He has thrown himself on the hands of the SPSL,"[82] and the SPSL was worried. As Esther Simpson, assistant secretary of the SPSL, wrote to Joseph Hertz, the Chief Rabbi, whom Diringer had visited as soon as he arrived in London:

> We are a little troubled by his case. He came to England before we were able to make any plans for him, and, as a matter of fact, after colleagues in

[76] Ibid., fol. 121, Godfrey Rolles Driver (professor of Semitic philology, Oxford University) to David Cleghorn Thomson, 27 March 1939.

[77] Katie Louise Meheux, " 'An awfully nice job.' Kathleen Kenyon as Secretary and Acting Director of the University of London Institute of Archaeology, 1935-1948," *Archaeology International*, 21, no. 1, (2018): 122-140.

[78] David Diringer, "Report on wartime activities," undated, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fols. 82-83 (fol. 368, copy), for listing of articles on Hebrew inscriptions, weights and jar-stamps and seals discovered at Tell Ed-Duweir (Lachish) published in the Palestine Exploration Quarterly in 1941, 1942 and 1943.

[79] Ibid., fol. 152, Sir Henry Dale to Archibald Vivian (A.V.) Hill, 4 May 1939 on the exceptional one-off payment of £50 made from Wellcome funds to the SPSL as support for Diringer.

[80] Ibid., fol. 121, Godfrey Rolles Driver to David Cleghorn Thomson, 27 March 1939.

[81] Ibid., fol. 161, David Diringer to David Cleghorn Thomson, 1 September 1939.

[82] Ibid., fol. 123, Godfrey Driver to the Provost of The Queen's College, Oxford, 27 March 1939 (incorrectly dated 29 March).

> this country had written confidentially to us that they would not like to undertake an indefinite responsibility for him owing to the difficulty of finding suitable research posts in his subject in this country.[83]

The Society sought advice from British scholars in his field as to the prospects of Diringer's "becoming absorbed," and the chances of his "obtaining a position within a reasonable period," but received no replies.[84] It was, as before, Sir Frederic who came to the rescue, conscious maybe that it was his "non-committal" invitation that had enabled Diringer to reach London in the first place. Following her first interview with him, Esther Simpson underlined the urgency of the case and asked for Sir Frederic's recommendation, as executive secretary of the Society, that Diringer be awarded an SPSL grant.[85] Sir Frederic was happy to oblige,[86] and in mid-April, a matter of a few weeks after he had arrived, Diringer was duly awarded a six-month grant of £250 per annum.[87] The favorable treatment he received was in marked contrast to the experience of other refugee scholars in their dealings with the Society and cemented his position as Sir Frederic's protégé, highlighting the crucial mechanism of patronage, in particular that provided by establishment figures, to refugee scholars as they sought to secure a footing in their new environments.

[83] Ibid., fol. 141, Esther Simpson to Joseph Hertz, 20 April 1939.
[84] Ibid, fol. 136, Nancy Searle to Charles Inge, 13 April 1939; fol. 122, Esther Simpson to Godfrey Driver, 28 March 1939.
[85] Ibid., fol. 129, Esther Simpson to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 3 April 1939.
[86] Ibid., fol. 131, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Esther Simpson, 4 April 1939; fol. 140, Esther Simpson to Archibald Vivian (A.V.) Hill, 19 April 1939: "Sir Frederic was most anxious that he [Diringer] should be helped."
[87] Ibid., fol. 139, Nancy Searle to David Diringer, 20 April 1939. For the rates paid by the SPSL, see Philip Davies, "Out of the Archives: Oxford, the SPSL, and 'Literae Humaniores' Refugee Scholars," in *Ark of Civilization*, 81: £250 p.a. was the rate paid by the SPSL to scholars with dependents, although at this stage Diringer's wife and daughter were still in Italy.

"A deserving little man"

"I will never forget what Sir Frederic and yourself have done for me," was how Diringer expressed himself to Esther Simpson.[88] He had every reason to be grateful. In contrast to other experts whom the SPSL had approached, Sir Frederic—initially at least—took a more sanguine approach to the likelihood of his finding work in Britain. "Dr. Diringer is a scholar of real ability (I have read a book of his which I find full of learning and scholarship), and I feel sure it will be possible to find work for him."[89] Funding would therefore be needed simply "to tide him over the interval."[90] At the time of the first grant renewal in September 1939, Sir Frederic recommended an extension on the grounds that Diringer was being considered for a post in the new Institute for Jewish Science which it was planned to establish in Cambridge and would simply need support until the appointment was settled.[91] The SPSL was so sure that Sir Frederic's word would seal the decision on the grant in his favor that they communicated the good news to him before it became official.[92] But the post in Cambridge (presumably a reference to Herbert Loewe's unrealized plans to relocate the Berlin Hochschule to Cambridge)[93] failed to materialize, and Diringer continued to have to rely on SPSL support. From now on however, in line with wartime arrangements, the grants were extended every three months on a temporary basis and, from January

[88] David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 16 December 1942, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 300.
[89] Ibid., fol. 131, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Esther Simpson, 4 April 1939. In 1942, Sir Frederic referred to Diringer as "a deserving little man" Ibid., fol. 291, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Esther Simpson, 1 December 1942.
[90] Ibid., fol. 131, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Esther Simpson, 4 April 1939.
[91] Ibid., fol. 162, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Esther Simpson, 19 September 1939.
[92] Ibid., fol. 165, Nancy Searle to David Diringer, 29 September 1939.
[93] Richard Fuchs, "The 'Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums' in the Period of Nazi Rule. Personal Recollections," *The Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 12 (1967): 27-28; Christhard Hoffmann and Daniel R. Schwartz, "Early but Opposed – Supported but Late: Two Berlin Seminaries Which Attempted to Move Abroad," *The Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 36 (1991): 283-295.

1940, paid at the reduced rate of £200 per annum,[94] placing him in a position of constant uncertainty.

Following Italy's entry into the war on 10 June, Diringer, now classified as an enemy alien by British authorities (despite the revocation of his Italian citizenship as a result of the Italian racial laws), was interned on the Isle of Man for five months and was held at Palace Camp, together with the Italian detainees. He became chairman of the camp's Cultural Committee which organized an educational program of daily lectures and regular courses.[95] The SPSL's payments were suspended from July to December, although during this period his wife and daughter continued to be given support, and Diringer himself was provided with "pocket money."[96] The Society meanwhile worked tirelessly to secure the release of the interned refugee scholars in its care. Applications concerning scholars in the humanities were submitted to the Home Office through a special tribunal set up by the British Academy,[97] and once again it was Sir Frederic, as secretary of the Academy, who personally undertook the appeal on behalf of his protégé.[98] Diringer was among the first scholars to be recommended by the Academy's tribunal,[99] and was duly released at the end of November 1940. His SPSL grant was immediately reinstated.[100]

As the months became years, the exhortations on the part of the SPSL, first voiced in December 1939,[101] that Diringer find alternative sources of income became increasingly forceful, and from mid-1941 the Society sought to make clear to him

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[94] Nancy Searle to David Diringer, 13 December 1939, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 172.

[95] Ibid., fols. 82-83, David Diringer, "Report on wartime activities," undated. On British internment policy, see David Cesarani and Tony Kushner, eds., *The internment of aliens in twentieth century Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1993) and Yvonne Kapp and Margaret Mynatt, *British policy and the refugees, 1933-1941* (London: Frank Cass, 1997).

[96] Gisela Peiser to Meyer Stephany (Nathan and Adolfe Haendler Charity), 19 September 1941, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 242.

[97] Ibid., fol. 194, Esther Simpson to David Diringer, 2 August 1940.

[98] Ibid., fol. 248, Esther Simpson to David Diringer, 15 October 1941; *New Times and Ethiopia News*, December 14, 1940, 2, "Davide Diringer [...] personally vouched for by Sir Frederic Kenyon."

[99] Esther Simpson to R.D. Barnett, 4 September 1940, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 209.

[100] Ibid., fol. 218, Esther Simpson to David Diringer, 30 November 1940.

[101] Ibid., fol. 172, Nancy Searle to David Diringer, 13 December 1939.

that it was unlikely that their funds would permit a renewal of his grant: "Our committee did not envisage long-term grants, that is why they are anxious that those of our grantees who have been on our books a long time should now become independent."[102] The state of the SPSL's own funds was also precarious.[103] It was at this juncture that the Society remembered an offer previously made by the Nathan and Adolfe Haendler Charity to share the grant, despite the charity being technically barred from giving aid to Italians and, thanks to the help of this timely contribution grant payments could continue.[104] The urgency to find alternative sources of income nonetheless remained. The quest was to prove inconclusive for months to come, despite the continuing support Diringer received from his protector: "Sir Frederic knows all about my efforts and he helped me very much."[105] In the summer of 1940, just before he was interned, Diringer had delivered three lectures on the history of the alphabet in Oxford, but his attempts to further promote his academic profile, or successfully apply for a university position, came to nothing, despite Sir Frederic's support.[106] He was equally unsuccessful in finding paid employment outside academia. The Overseas Service of the BBC was for Diringer, as for other refugee scholars, an obvious port of call, and he too made an attempt to obtain a job there at the beginning of 1941.

> There are some BBC announcers who don't know the language in which they announce, and pronounce so badly the foreign names [...] that I cannot believe that they have been engaged by the BBC without recommendations, while I myself have not been able to get a job there.

He was sure he possessed the "required qualifications," and yet once more he was to be disappointed even though Sir Frederic had sent what Diringer described,

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[102] Ibid., fol. 238, Esther Simpson to David Diringer, 4 September 1941.
[103] Ibid., fol. 236, Esther Simpson to David Diringer, 30 August 1941.
[104] Ibid., fol. 130, Nancy Searle to David Diringer, 4 April 1939; fol. 240, Gisela Peiser to Miss E. Rosenberg, Jewish Professional Committee, 9 September 1941; fol. 242, Gisela Peiser to Meyer Stephany, 19 September 1941; fol. 326, Agenda Item No. 6, undated, but February 1948.
[105] Ibid., fol. 237, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 3 September 1941.
[106] Ibid., fols. 219 and 229, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 5 December 1940 and 4 May 1941 on attempts to arrange lectures in Cambridge; fol. 249, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 18 October 1941 on application as a temporary resident tutor at Bristol University.

mistakenly translating directly from the Italian, as a "hot recommendation."[107] These and other efforts were to prove ineffectual.[108] Indeed, as the SPSL was all too aware, "Diringer has been trying hard for months to find a paid job, but he does not seem to be successful."[109]

Meanwhile, Diringer continued in vain to try to find academic openings in the US. Kalman Friedman, a former colleague of Polish origin from Florence, had approached the EC on his behalf to no avail,[110] while in the summer of 1940 the American Academy of Jewish Research raised the possibility of appointing him as a research fellow. But funding was not forthcoming[111] and discussions with the Rockefeller Foundation also came to nothing.[112] By now it was too late and a move to the US was no longer seen as feasible. As the EC concluded in the spring of 1942, "[...] we see no means of assisting him at the present time. It is practically impossible for us to enable scholars who are still in Europe to reach this country."[113] Diringer was thrown back to reliance on the SPSL that had been funding him all along. The support he received did indeed provide an essential safety net, but it was nonetheless insufficient to protect Diringer and his family from financial hardship. His wife and daughter had left their north London flat for a cheaper alternative in the country during the months Diringer was interned,[114] and it was there—outside the village of Ashley Green in Buckinghamshire, to the west of London—that the family continued to live after

[107] Ibid., fols. 223 and 225, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 14 January 1941 and 25 February 1941.
[108] Ibid., fols. 225, 233 and 252, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 25 February 1941, 31 May 1941 and 3 December 1941.
[109] Ibid., fol. 240, Gisela Peiser to Miss E. Rosenberg, 9 September 1941.
[110] Interview Memorandum, 9 November 1939, "Diringer, David," MAD, EC, I.B. Non-grantees, b. 52, f. 27, NYPL, New York. Kalman Friedman had been appointed Chief Rabbi in Florence before being forced to leave Italy in the wake of the racial legislation.
[111] Ibid., Ralph Marcus (Corresponding Secretary, American Academy for Jewish Research) to Betty Drury, 21 May 1940; Betty Drury to Ralph Marcus, 2 July 1940.
[112] David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 3 September 1941, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 237; fol. 238, Esther Simpson to David Diringer, 4 September 1941; Bertha Katz to EC, 13 January 1942, "Diringer, David," MAD, EC, I.B. Non-grantees, b.52, f. 27, NYPL, New York; Betty Drury to David Stevens (Director "The Humanities," Rockefeller Foundation), 20 February 1942; John Marshall (Associate Director "The Humanities," Rockefeller Foundation) to Betty Drury, 26 February 1942.
[113] Ibid., Betty Drury to Bertha Katz, 3 March 1942.
[114] Elena Diringer to Esther Simpson, 29 October 1940, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fols. 212-213.

his release. Their problems however persisted. In the summer of 1941, Diringer applied to the Welfare Department of the Jewish Refugees' Committee for clothes for his wife and daughter;[115] the local Buckinghamshire refugee committee reported at the end of 1942 that the family was "finding it very difficult to live on the grant which they are receiving."[116]

And yet it had been the previous spring, just as the SPSL had again acknowledged the extreme difficulty Diringer was experiencing in securing employment,[117] that Sir Frederic's efforts on his behalf finally began to bear fruit. Sir Frederic had spoken about him in early spring 1942 to a fellow archaeologist, Ralegh Radford, who had been director of the British School in Rome from 1936 to 1939, and who by this stage of the war was at the Political Intelligence Department (PID) of the Foreign Office. "Sir Frederic hopes that Ralegh Radford will make use of my services. I would be quite happy!" Diringer informed Esther Simpson, reflecting that Sir Frederic had done "all his best on my behalf."[118] Radford proposed a part-time arrangement by which Diringer would assist another Italian exile, a close friend of his, engaged "on important war work the nature of which could not be made public."[119] By September 1942, he was "(precariously) employed" by PID,[120] his position improving the following spring when he was seconded to the Political Warfare Executive (PWE).[121] Hitherto his pay had been meager and, at Sir Frederic's suggestion, the SPSL had continued payment of their grant.[122] But his

[115] Ibid., fol. 235, Secretary Jewish Refugees Committee, Welfare Department to Esther Simpson, 9 July 1941; fol. 234, Esther Simpson to Secretary Jewish Refugees Committee, Welfare Department, 11 July 1941. The exchange elicited a somewhat sharp response from Esther Simpson: "I am afraid we know nothing whatever about any arrangements for his obtaining clothes; our own grants are confined to research."

[116] Ibid., fol. 301, Meyer Stephany to Gisela Perutz (née Peiser), 22 December 1942.

[117] Ibid., fol. 256, Gisela Peiser to Meyer Stephany, 4 March 1942.

[118] Ibid., fol. 260, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 6 March 1942.

[119] Ibid., fol. 264, Ralegh Redford to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 24 April 1942.

[120] Ibid., fol. 277, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Esther Simpson, 22 September 1942; fol. 280, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 21 September 1942, for other employment possibilities he was meanwhile continuing to pursue.

[121] Ibid., fol. 318, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 28 April 1943. An important part of PID's work involved producing weekly intelligence summaries, while at the same time providing cover for PWE after that entity was established in 1941. In April 1943, the production of intelligence summaries was passed to the newly-formed Foreign Office Research Department (FORD), where Diringer found short-term temporary employment immediately after the end of the war.

[122] Ibid., fol. 286, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Esther Simpson, 8 October 1942.

new position, although still part-time, was paid at a rate of just over £350 per annum.[123] At the end of May 1943, the SPSL was finally in a position to suspend the maintenance it paid him.[124] The Society had been supporting him and his family for a little over four years. "It will be one of the happiest days of my life when I shall be able to write to you that I [...] renounce to continue the grant of the Society," he had written back at the end of 1941,[125] and eighteen months later his relief must have been palpable. He now had a job, albeit a non-academic one, and would continue in post, working in intelligence until the end of the war.

The Immediate Aftermath of War

At the cessation of hostilities Diringer's job was immediately terminated and the unresolved challenges of his circumstances re-presented themselves. He had been promised his situation would ease after the war,[126] but reality was to prove otherwise. "In short, the whole situation of mine seems to be black as coal."[127]
He had no source of income.[128] He was no closer to reaching his goal of obtaining an academic position, and indeed his involvement in war work had inevitably impinged on his ability to continue research work, compromising his quest still further.[129] The new configuration of the post-war world widened his range of possible destinations to include, besides Britain and the US, Palestine and still more distant locations, as well indeed as Italy itself. But now his endeavours would be played out against the uncertainties of post-war reconstruction. This was particularly true as regards the possibility of a return to Italy, where his experience serves as testimony to the vexed fortunes of Italian academics who wished to resume their careers there. And everywhere, as he went forward, the crucial

[123] Ibid., fol. 318, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 28 April 1943.
[124] Ibid., fol. 319, Esther Simpson to David Diringer, 1 May 1943.
[125] Ibid., fol. 252, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 3 December 1941.
[126] Ibid., fol. 361, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, undated, but received 17 November 1945.
[127] Ibid., fol. 358, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 12 November 1945.
[128] Ibid., fol.133, David Diringer to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 13 June 1945.
[129] Ibid., fol. 324, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 27 May 1943; fols. 82-83 (fol. 368 copy), David Diringer, "Report of wartime activities," undated.

importance of patronage and personal support, or indeed the lack of them, continued to be paramount.

Italy: 1945-1946. A Frustrated Return

Diringer's acquired Italian citizenship may have been revoked by the racial legislation, but he had been interned in Britain as an Italian, and he had an Italian wife and child. And he had continued moreover to foster his Italian connections throughout the war—not only through his intelligence work for the British government, but also through his membership of the Free Italy Movement.[130] There was an obvious logic in trying to resume his career in newly liberated Italy. Already in 1944, in one of the first acts of the newly liberated zone of Italy, a legislative foundation for the restoration of citizenship to those from whom it had been revoked in 1938 had been established,[131] and in the August his right to exercise the *libera docenza* had been restored.[132] It must have seemed that a framework for return was being set in motion—and the SPSL, initially at least, favored the option[133]—and yet there would prove to be an abyss between expectation and its potential realization.

This was not for want of trying. Immediately at war's end, Diringer took steps to pursue possibilities in Italy, putting out feelers to his old university in Florence

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[130] Ibid. I am greatly indebted to Lucio Sponza for confirming the presence of Prof. D. Diringher (sic) at the meeting held on 26 July 1941 to re-launch the Free Italy Movement: Foreign Office (FO), 371/29937, R. 7474/168/22, Public Record Office, National Archives, London. The meeting is discussed in his book, *Divided Loyalties. Italians in Britain during the Second World War* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2000), 176-177. On talks Diringer gave for the Italian section of the BBC (incorrectly listed as E. Diringer) in the summer of 1941, see Maura Piccialuti Caprioli, ed., *Radio Londra 1940-1945. Inventario delle trasmissioni per l'Italia,* vol. 1 (Rome: Ministero per i Beni Culturali ed Ambientali, Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, 1976), 112, 125, and 128.

[131] Regio Decreto-legge (RDL), 20 January 1944, no. 25, art. 2, given legislative force by the Decreto Legislativo Luogotenenziale, 5 October 1944, no. 252.

[132] For the ministerial decree of 8 August 1944 restoring the rights of dismissed *liberi docenti*: Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione to Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 31 July 1946, "Diringer, David," MPI, DGIS, Liberi Docenti, 3a serie (1930-1950), b. 186, ACS, Rome. See also Pelini and Pavan, *La doppia epurazione,* 196, note 2.

[133] Joseph Bright Skemp to David Diringer, 19 September 1945, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 356: "I do nevertheless think you should look to an eventual return to Italy as the right solution."; fol. 360, 13 November 1945: "I still think that the Italian prospects are the best."

and the Oriental Faculty in Rome. He did not however make a direct approach, but, supported by the SPSL and Sir Frederic Kenyon, went through the channel offered by Edoardo Ruffini, an academic lawyer with exemplary anti-Fascist credentials, who had arrived in London as cultural attaché to the Italian Representation in January 1945, and who was charged with establishing contact with Italian academics who had found sanctuary from the Fascist regime in Britain.[134] It soon became clear, however, that conditions in Italy precluded any possibility of an immediate return and Diringer was advised to wait.[135] Moreover, as the SPSL acknowledged, Diringer "did not actually occupy a chair in Florence"—he was a *libero docente incaricato*—and the situation in Italy was "very difficult for professors," let alone for their non-tenured junior colleagues.[136] The particular difficulties faced by younger scholars only at the start of their professional advancement when they lost their positions in Italy have been acknowledged in recent literature surrounding the question of return,[137] and in Diringer's case, as with other foreign Jews, these were compounded by the need to re-establish their status as Italian citizens. In addition, he seems to have been unable in the new post-war reality to draw on a powerful support network of Italian academics willing to promote his cause.[138]

Diringer did however still have former Fascist connections on whom he could call, and their support was marshaled in an attempt to obtain recognition of his *libera docenza* and readmittance to his university teaching. In early 1946, he made a direct appeal to the Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione in Rome. He had been forced to

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[134] Ibid., fol. 337, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 29 June 1945; fol. 339, Joseph Bright Skemp to Edoardo Ruffini, 2 July 1945; fol. 341, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Joseph Bright Skemp, 5 July 1945. Ruffini was, together with his father Francesco, one of only twelve university professors who had lost their positions in Italy by refusing to sign the Fascist oath of allegiance.

[135] Ibid., fol. 356, Joseph Bright Skemp to David Diringer, 19 September 1945; fol. 358, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 12 November 1945: "Sir Frederic Kenyon [...] does not see any possibility of my returning to Italy in the near future."

[136] Ibid., fol. 374, Joseph Bright Skemp to Harold Henry Rowley, 15 December 1945. Diringer was *incaricato* by virtue of his teaching at the Facoltà di Magistero.

[137] Guarnieri, *Intellectuals displaced from Fascist Italy*, introductory section, "Intellectual emigration" stresses the challenges faced by the younger generation. See also, Maria Zevi, "Dati statistici" in *Conseguenze culturali delle leggi razziali in Italia, Atti dei Convegni Lincei 84* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1990), 59-60.

[138] Guido Mazzoni who had written the foreword to Diringer's 1937 volume, *L'alfabeto nella storia della civiltà,* had died in 1943.

flee to England "where he currently lives with no means of support and without a fixed position" and voiced his confidence that his request be regarded with benevolence in order to repair "at least partially the grave damage suffered by the undersigned."[139] Diringer's correspondence with the SPSL reveals the background to this initiative that seems to have been prompted by the orientalist Enrico Cerulli who had made a personal approach on Diringer's behalf to Rodolfo Micacchi, at the time head of the section of university studies at the Ministry and personal secretary to the Minister.[140] Both these men had been heavily involved in colonial administration under the Fascist regime,[141] and most likely Diringer's connections with them (as with Guido Valensin) went back to his involvement with the Centro di Studi Coloniali.[142] It is not surprising, perhaps, that he sought to conceal these contacts from Ruffini, instructing the SPSL to remain silent about them in their dealings with him.[143] Several months after Diringer's approach to the Ministry, it emerged that Florence University had not taken any action when initially informed of his formal reinstatement as *libero docente,* and he was now advised to apply directly to the university since decisions on the distribution of teaching duties rested with the relevant faculty.[144] At this point the documentary trail falls

[139] David Diringer to Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione, 15 February 1946, "Diringer, David," MPI, DGIS, Liberi Docenti, 3a serie (1930-1950), b. 186, ACS, Rome: "[...] dove vive tuttora senza mezzi di sussistenza e senza un posto fisso"; "... almeno parzialmente i gravi danni sofferti dal sottoscritto stesso."

[140] David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 27 February 1946, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 389. Diringer also hoped for progress on the possibility of employment at the Italian Cultural Institute in London whose establishment was another of Ruffini's projects.

[141] Enrico Cerulli had been appointed Vice Governor General of Italian East Africa in 1937; Rodolfo Micacchi, a specialist in colonial educational policy, had been head of the Office for Schools and Archaeology in the Ministero delle Colonie.

[142] Both Cerulli and Micacchi were members of the *Comitato ordinatore* for the first Congress of Colonial Studies (1931) in the organization of which Diringer (see note 31) was also involved: *Atti del primo congresso di studi coloniali*, vol. 1, 10.

[143] David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 27 February 1946, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 389.

[144] Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione to Ministero degli Affari Esteri, charged with communicating directly with Diringer in Britain, (copy sent to the Rettore, University of Florence), 31 July 1946, "Diringer, David," MPI, DGIS, Liberi Docenti, 3a serie (1930-1950), b. 186, ACS, Rome.

silent: Diringer's personal files in the Ministry and Florence University contain no indication of any further developments.[145]

US and Palestine: 1945-1946. Two More Frustrated Moves

If Diringer's plans to return to Italy were no closer to being realized, and indeed were doomed, despite further attempts, to remain unrealized in the years to come, the return of peace did not ease his chances in the US either. He questioned whether it had not been a mistake to come to London in the first place, since his removal from the dangers he would have faced in continental Europe to the (relative) safety of Britain had meant he was not considered an urgent priority for a position in the US. Had he been able to reach the US in person—he had been told—he would have been able to find an opening. The post-war climate was also different. American universities were overcrowded with refugee scholars, and Diringer also sensed that feelings of sympathy towards them had cooled: "I can hardly believe that they will consider other candidates, unless the suggestion came from some very important personality or Society."[146] He was correct to focus on the need for effective patronage and his own lack of it, and approached his protector Sir Frederic as early as June 1945, asking the SPSL to act directly on his behalf.[147] The Society advocated the need for a personal contact in the US—"then perhaps we could help"[148]—but Diringer had already exhausted all his own contacts to no effect, and Cyrus Adler, who had voiced strong support for him to the EC in 1938, had died back in 1940. It was left to the SPSL to contact Winton Thomas in Cambridge for suggestions.[149] Back in 1938, Winton Thomas, together with the then Ellis, now Sir Ellis, Minns, had not welcomed the prospect of Diringer's arrival in Britain, but he was now prepared—as was Sir Ellis—to act

[145] Ibid. and "Fascicolo carriera libero docente di David Diringer," Sezione docenti, ASUFi, Florence.
[146] David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, undated, but received 17 November 1945, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 361.
[147] Ibid., fol. 333, David Diringer to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 13 June 1945.
[148] Ibid., fol. 360, Joseph Bright Skemp to David Diringer, 13 November 1945.
[149] Ibid., fol. 363, Joseph Bright Skemp to David Diringer, 19 November 1945.

more benevolently, offering him advice and support that would lead eventually, after a lengthy wait of a further three years, to his appointment at Cambridge.
Sadly for Diringer, neither of Winton Thomas's contacts reacted positively, William F. Albright at Johns Hopkins (whom Diringer had met in Palestine in 1932) being particularly critical, underlining the problems deriving from his field of study:

> The trouble with a field like epigraphy is that, except in classical and European studies—and usually, I believe, there—it is ancillary. Dr. Diringer's work does not make him a natural candidate for the kind of post in Judaica or Semitic Languages for which there are openings. Moreover, until the first-class young refugee scholars we still have unplaced in this country, have posts, I should very much regret to see further competition from abroad.[150]

In July 1946, the SPSL informed Diringer of the "negative response" they had received from the US.[151] Once again, his passage across the Atlantic was blocked. A similar lack of support beleaguered Diringer's efforts to find a position at the Hebrew University in Palestine, where he had once received "certain promises" that "there should be some opening for a Hebrew epigraphist."[152] Once again, he discussed with Sir Frederic how the SPSL might promote his cause.[153] But the SPSL was reluctant to act, on the grounds that the university had no money, and the little funding available was being directed into medical and scientific faculties.[154] Conditions in Jerusalem were too unsettled, and he was forced to accept that, "[...] at present, there is no hope for [me] to go to Palestine."[155]

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[150] Ibid., fol. 397, William F. Albright to Joseph Bright Skemp, 6 July 1946; fol. 444, "Dr. David Diringer. Contacts in the United States," undated, but spring 1947, on the negative response of Winton Thomas's other contact, John A. Wilson at the University of Chicago.
[151] Ibid., fol. 401, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 27 July 1946.
[152] Ibid., fol. 406, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 29 August 1946.
[153] Ibid., fol. 329, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Joseph Bright Skemp, 5 June 1945.
[154] Ibid., fol. 363, Joseph Bright Skemp to David Diringer, 19 November 1945; fol. 374, Joseph Bright Skemp to Harold Henry Rowley, 15 December 1945.
[155] Ibid., fol. 401, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 27 July 1946; fol. 402, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 11 August 1946.

Britain: 1945-1946. Ongoing Frustration

If Diringer's attempts to move away from Britain remained unrealized, conditions in his host country at the end of the war were no more likely to offer an immediate solution to his plight after his position in intelligence was terminated. He found himself once more with no income.[156] Yet again, it was Sir Frederic Kenyon who marshaled the SPSL to reinstate his grant.[157] But the SPSL's assistance continued to be given on a temporary three-month basis, the Society reiterating the hope that their payments to him could soon be terminated.[158] Once again, however, apart from two interludes when Diringer found short-term employment as an offshoot from his intelligence work,[159] this hope was to prove unfounded, and he—and his family—continued to be a charge on the Society's funds.

Diringer's search for a position in Britain was now played out in the challenging conditions of post-war reconstruction. The outlook looked bleak. He sounded out Herbert Danby and Godfrey Rolles Driver in Oxford, as well as Winton Thomas in Cambridge, but "realised from their replies that I can hardly expect any post in my field."[160] Even Sir Frederic Kenyon, who had originally been more optimistic, now acknowledged that it would not "be easy for me to get a chair in Great Britain on an oriental subject."[161] The main problem was that his research interests did "not fit in under any of the standard university headings,"[162] but a vitiating factor was also a bias in appointments in his area of study towards

[156] Ibid., fol. 333, David Diringer to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 13 June 1945.
[157] Ibid., fol. 329, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Joseph Bright Skemp, 5 June 1945.
[158] Ibid., fol. 334, Joseph Bright Skemp to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 27 June 1945; fol. 331, Joseph Bright Skemp to Sir Ellis Minns, 18 June 1945.
[159] Ibid., fol. 326, Agenda Item No. 6, undated, but February 1948: Diringer worked for a few months until November 1945 at the Foreign Office Research Department and again in the summer of 1946 as joint editor of the weekly newspaper Il Corriere del Sabato, produced under the auspices of the Political Intelligence Department for Italian prisoners of war. On Il Corriere del sabato, see Sponza, *Divided Loyalties,* 230, 265-269; Lucio Sponza, "La BBC 'in bianco' e 'in nero.' La propaganda brittanica per l'Italia nella seconda guerra mondiale," *StoriAmestre* (2013): 8-11.
[160] David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, undated, but received 17 November 1945, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 361.
[161] Ibid., fol. 358, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 12 November 1945.
[162] Ibid., fol. 398, Ilse Ursell to William F. Albright, 17 July 1946.

clergymen (true also in the US), as well as the very fact of being a foreigner.[163] The blunt conclusion of the SPSL was that Diringer had no prospects in British academia,[164] their analysis borne out by the failure of a number of applications he made between late 1945 and the beginning of 1947.[165]

Diringer continued meanwhile to use the London Institute of Archaeology as his base. If no appointment was forthcoming despite, as the SPSL acknowledged, his making every conceivable effort to find suitable employment,[166] he could at least hope for the chance to deliver lectures to further promote his profile. He elicited the support of the SPSL, and a lecture series was duly organised in Manchester in the spring and summer of 1946 through a contact suggested to the SPSL by Winton Thomas.[167] Any academic success, however modest, must have been welcome. And there were others too. At the beginning of 1946, he was elected a member of the Old Testament Society which afforded him the useful opportunity of "getting to know most leading scholars in his own line in this country."[168] Most importantly, after a series of rejections, he had, in the autumn of 1945, been awarded a contract with the publisher Hutchinson for a book on the history of the alphabet. The crucial intervention here had been that of Sir Ellis Minns, who now, like Winton Thomas, put aside his previous misgivings about Diringer's

[163] Ibid., fol. 361, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, undated, but received 17 November 1945; fol. 440, Id. to Ilse Ursell, 3 May 1947; fol. 358, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 12 November 1945.

[164] Ibid., fol. 383, Joseph Bright Skemp to William F. Albright, 15 February 1946.

[165] Ibid., fol. 358, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 12 November 1945 on failure to create a new section on the history of writing at the British Museum; fol. 395, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 8 April 1946 and fol. 399, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 26 July 1946 on unsuccessful application for Chair of Oriental Studies at the London School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS); fol. 402, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 11 August 1946, on discussions with Winton Thomas regarding the upcoming position in Rabbinics at Cambridge; fol. 418, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 7 February 1947, on failed applications to Leeds University and for a position in Italian at Edinburgh.

[166] Ibid., fol. 393, Joseph Bright Skemp to David Diringer, 2 April 1946.

[167] Ibid., fol. 367. David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 26 November 1945; fol. 371, Joseph Bright Skemp to David Diringer, 4 December 1945; fol. 423, David Winton Thomas to Ilse Ursell, 5 March 1947; fol. 381, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 10 January 1946. Later on, Diringer also joined a panel of lecturers in the Department of Linguistics at SOAS (Ibid., fols. 464 and 521, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 14 June 1947 and 22 January 1948). In addition he gave a course of lectures at Jews' College.

[168] Ibid., fol. 377, Information sheet, 5 January 1946; fol. 423, David Winton Thomas to Ilse Ursell, 5 March 1947.

arrival in Britain, and set about helping him. It would indeed be Sir Ellis who would write the foreword to the volume that went to press in early 1947.[169] Meanwhile, Diringer worried about how he was going to write the book, "having my mind occupied with so many other, economic and financial, matters."[170]

Diringer was not alone however in his worry, as the SPSL was becoming increasingly concerned about his ongoing dependence on their grants. In the summer of 1946, the Society's Allocation Committee began to suggest other employment options, outside his field of academic expertise. He had after all been registered with the Labour Exchange, the Appointments Department of the Ministry of Labour and the Central Register since his release from internment.[171] With his knowledge of various languages, could he not obtain an appointment as a teacher of languages in a technical college or by giving evening classes? His language qualifications might also make his services attractive to UNESCO which was in the process of setting up a small administrative staff in London, and Sir Frederic's support was duly enlisted to write a personal recommendation to Julian Huxley. The fact that Diringer was technically an Italian national and not a citizen of an allied government was problematic and nothing came of the initiative, although he was still hopeful in 1947 that the peace treaty with Italy—and also the forthcoming publication of his book—might yet facilitate an opening for him.[172]

Diringer clearly appreciated the seriousness of his situation, agreeing "whole-heartedly to <u>any</u> temporary or permanent, whole-time or part-time post."[173] And yet he still clung tenaciously to self-belief in his scholarly attainments: "[...] I still think that my qualifications and my publications, which are quite known, do entitle me to some opening." And again, "I frankly think that my publications in Hebrew Epigraphy are as important as those of any scholar; and, therefore, I do not know why I should not be able to get a post in this important field of study."[174]

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[169] *The Alphabet: A Key to the History of Mankind* was published by Hutchinson in 1948.

[170] David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, undated, but received 17 November 1945, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 361; fol. 419, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 14 February 1947.

[171] Ibid., fol. 428, "Notes on David Diringer," 25 February 1947; fol. 326, Agenda Item No. 6, undated, but February 1948.

[172] Ibid., fol. 405, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 27 August 1946; fols. 410, 414 and 495, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 9 October 1946, 2 November 1946 and 21 September 1947.

[173] Ibid., fol. 406, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 29 August 1946 (underlining in original).

[174] Ibid.

Reality for him however was hard. "I feel it very hard to live on charity,"[175] and in any event the payment of just over £20 per month from the SPSL grant was simply not enough to maintain his family.[176]

Crisis: 1947-1948

Up to this juncture, in response fundamentally to Sir Frederic Kenyon's backing, the SPSL had been steadfast in its ongoing funding of Diringer and his family, despite the continuous exhortations to find employment. But by early 1947 this commitment had been in place for nearly eight years, and the SPSL now took steps to end their financial responsibility for him, extending his grant by one month only instead of the usual three.[177] Although, as the denouement would demonstrate, the role played by Diringer's supporters continued to be crucial to his ultimate success, in the immediate term their analysis of his chances was hardly encouraging. For both Winton Thomas and Sir Frederic Kenyon, whose advice the SPSL sought, the constant *leitmotiv* was the narrowness of his specialty. "There has in recent years been no vacant University post for which he could have been seriously considered," opined Winton Thomas.[178] Sir Frederic justly recalled that he had been interested in Diringer from the first, and had "been anxious to do anything [I] could for him." But, he too agreed that "[...] it seems hopeless to find a place for him," before adding: "His command of English is not good, and does not seem to get any better, and this restricts his acceptability as either a writer or a lecturer."[179]

If the likelihood of Diringer obtaining a position in Britain was remote, there still remained the US with its greater provision of specifically Jewish institutions of learning, and the SPSL now took the initiative in pursuing this option on his behalf, advice coalescing around an approach to the Hebrew Union College

[175] Ibid., fol. 389, David Diringer to Joseph Bright Skemp, 27 February 1946.
[176] Ibid., fol. 421, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 1 March 1947.
[177] Ibid., fol. 420, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 25 February 1947.
[178] Ibid., fol. 423, David Winton Thomas to Ilse Ursell, 5 March 1947.
[179] Ibid., fol. 426, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Ilse Ursell, 23 March 1947.

(HUC) and Dropsie College.[180] The Society also made a final attempt to explore possibilities for him in Palestine, contacting the London-based Friends of the Hebrew University.[181] By the summer of 1947, it was clear, however, that both these avenues had proved fruitless,[182] and the SPSL was seriously concerned about maintaining its financial commitments to Diringer. Back in the spring, Sir Frederic had prevailed upon the Allocation Committee of the SPSL to continue his grant, declaring himself "very sorry to abandon him to his fate" and trusting that the Committee would recognize how he had really tried to help himself. "One can only hope something will turn up before the funds of the SPSL are exhausted."[183] The Society did agree to a further three-month grant, but when this came up for renewal at the end of June 1947, the risk of his becoming a permanent liability on their resources, one that could continue "to the end of his days,"[184] prompted the SPSL to adopt a more stringent attitude towards him. Diringer was now informed that the grant would be terminated at the end of following September. He was being given three months' notice to find work outside his academic field: "The general opinion of the Committee is that it would not be in your interests to continue this grant very much longer even if the Society could afford to do so as your value in the general labor market will decrease the older you become."[185] Diringer was distraught, and it took him nearly a fortnight to respond: "The letter was a such a shock that I did not know what to say." He begged the Committee to reconsider and immediately contacted his protector, Sir Frederic,[186] who sailed to his defense: "Might he not continue to go on as long as we have funds to spend? Is there any more deserving object to spend them on? It is not his fault that he has not got employment elsewhere. He has been continually trying: and it is really rather illusory to suppose that he might get employment outside the academic field. He really could not become a miner."[187] The Society continued to argue that

[180] Ibid., fol. 448, notes on telephone conversation with Redcliffe Salaman, 12 May 1947; fol. 450, Isidore Epstein to Ilse Ursell, 19 May 1947.
[181] Ibid., fol. 445, Ilse Ursell to Walter Zander, 31 March 1947.
[182] Ibid., fol. 459, Julian Morgernstern (HUC) to Ilse Ursell, 26 May 1947; fol. 476, Abraham Neuman (Dropsie) to Ilse Ursell, 2 July 1947; fol. 438, Walter Zander to Ilse Ursell, 8 April 1947.
[183] Ibid., fol. 426, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Ilse Ursell, 23 March 1947.
[184] Ibid., fol. 479, Ilse Ursell to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 21 July 1947.
[185] Ibid., fol. 466, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 30 June 1947.
[186] Ibid., fol. 470, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 12 July 1947.
[187] Ibid., fol. 478, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Ilse Ursell, 18 July 1947.

it would be better for him to compete for posts in the open labor market before he reached the age of fifty, but they did agree to a short reprieve, extending the grant for a further month to the end of October 1947.[188] In the event, the Society agreed to further monthly extensions through November and December 1947, before discontinuing the grant—temporarily, as it turned out—from the beginning of 1948.[189]

All this time, Diringer had been continuing his own quest for an opening. He considered widening the breadth of his field of scholarship, but his main hope was that the forthcoming publication of his book would boost his prospects, seeing it as "the best testimonial of my research work."[190] He had, meanwhile, carried on pursuing possibilities, however remote his chances of success, all over the world—in Australia and Latin America as well as the US, including the UN, despite the fact that Italy, whose citizenship Diringer held, was not yet a member of the organization.[191] It was indeed these pending applications that lay behind SPSL's leniency in continuing its grant. Sadly for him, the most promising opening was precisely the one that was significantly loaded against him. When the Institute of Archaeology, which had provided him with his academic base since his arrival from Italy almost a decade previously, launched a new lectureship in Palestinian Archaeology in the summer of 1947,[192] he was competing with none other than

[188] Ibid., fol. 498, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 27 September 1947.

[189] Ibid., fols. 501 and 509, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 31 October 1947 and 25 November 1947.

[190] Ibid., fols. 440, 470 and 495, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 3 May 1947, 12 July 1947 and 21 September 1947, enclosing Sir Ellis Minns' foreword to his book. Sir Frederic Kenyon and the SPSL were more cautious in their expectations: fol. 475, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 15 July 1947 and fol. 480, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Ilse Ursell, 23 July 1947. There was however encouragement from the publishers Hutchinson who expressed interest in commissioning a further volume on the history of the book (fol. 482, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 17 July 1947), which was published as *The Hand-Produced Book* in 1953.

[191] David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 4 June 1947, 14 June 1947 and 21 September 1947, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fols. 455, 464 and 495, on his application for the chair in Oriental Studies at the University of Sydney, Australia; fols. 507, 512 and 521, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 19 November 1947, 25 November 1947 and 22 January 1948 and fol. 530, Fernando Berckemeyer (Peruvian Ambassador in London) to David Diringer, 4 February 1948, on possible openings in Argentina and Peru; fols. 415, 470, 495 and 512, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 5 December 1946, 12 July 1947, 21 September 1947 and 25 November 1947 on possibilities in the US at the UN, and fol. 474, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 15 July 1947 on part-time work for the Jewish Encyclopedia in New York.

[192] Ibid., fol. 461, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 10 June 1947.

Kathleen Kenyon, the secretary of the Institute and Sir Frederic's daughter. The decision to award the position to Kathleen Kenyon— "Diringer has been unlucky again"[193]—in November 1947[194] cannot have been a surprise, nor indeed the decision of the SPSL finally to terminate his grant from the end of the year.

Diringer was now on his own and his immediate conclusion was that there was no point in remaining in Britain. "I do not think I shall stay here much longer,"[195] he informed the SPSL at the end of November 1947. He had already considered the possibility of a return to Italy the previous spring, if he could find no way of succeeding in Britain or the US,[196] and he now decided to make a personal trip there to assess his chances.[197] This despite having been warned by various friends in Italy, some months previously, that "for the present it is not advisable for me to return there with my family." The circumstances did not exist for creating new positions; life was extremely expensive; and the "black market" was active.[198] How right his friends were. Diringer's report to the SPSL, on his return in January 1948, painted a decidedly negative picture. He had seen "hundreds of people," discussed the possibility of reclaiming his previous position—or another one—at the University of Florence. Potential openings in Rome, where he had given some lectures, had been considered. He had even applied for a position in Trieste. But the general situation in Italy was very difficult. Florence University was running a deficit of over one hundred million lire, and it was no wonder that "they don't want to create new posts, especially in a specialized field like that of mine." He had however been promised that his situation would be re-examined, and that should there ever be a very slight possibility, "a position will be created for [me]." But clearly nothing would happen in the immediate future. Diringer admitted that had he been alone he would have remained in Italy, "but I cannot give up my home here and take my family to Italy without having obtained there, at least, a minimum." As it was, he was back in Britain, and, having used up his available

[193] Ibid., fol. 504, Ilse Ursell to Winton Thomas, 8 November 1947.
[194] Ibid., fol. 507, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 19 November 1947.
[195] Ibid., fol. 512, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 25 November 1947.
[196] Ibid., fol. 435, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 9 April 1947.
[197] Ibid., fol. 512, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 25 November 1947.
[198] Ibid., fol. 495, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 21 September 1947 (underlining in original).

resources—and, indeed, overdrawn his bank account by £15—on this abortive trip, found himself once more at the mercy of the SPSL.[199]

"This is my situation. I have been expelled from Italy; I cannot find anything suitable here; I don't know where to go. And still I have not committed any crime, have worked hard all my life, and do not deserve anything but to get an opportunity to earn my living and to maintain my family."[200] Diringer's position was indeed critical: "[...] presently I am in such a situation—without any fault of mine—that I am even unable to make any plans." He asked the SPSL for a grant, at least in the form of a loan until the summer of 1948.[201] In the event, the Society reluctantly awarded an emergency grant for February and again for March, urging him meanwhile to prioritize contact with the Appointments Department of the Ministry of Labour,[202] and at the same time trying to secure at least part-time research work for him.[203] Early that March, the further renewal of his grant was again discussed by the Executive Committee of the Society on the submission of the Allocation Committee whose members argued that scholars in his age-group who had not been re-established in academic work and who had no immediate prospects of so being should try to earn their living by doing other work. They reiterated their fear that he might turn out to be a "pension case." The Society simply did not have the funds "to keep such a scholar going for more than ten years."[204] Against this, Diringer's protector, Sir Frederic, Vice-president of the Society and present at the meeting of the Executive Committee, spoke forcibly—as he had done previously—to the case for continuing to help him "as long as we can." He had never tried to take advantage of the SPSL, had tried hard to get work, and had always given up drawing on the Society's financial assistance whenever he succeeded.[205] It was—again as so many times in the past years—Sir Frederic's view

[199] Ibid., fol. 521, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 22 January 1948.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid., fol. 524, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 27 January 1948.
[202] Ibid., fols. 525, 532 and 538, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 29 January 1948, 6 February 1948 and 26 February 1948.
[203] Ibid., fol. 531, Ilse Ursell to Charles Singer, 6 February 1948; fol. 533, Charles Singer to Ilse Ursell, 9 February 1948. At the same time, Diringer's name had also been put forward for a lectureship at University College, London with a decision expected the following May (fol. 528, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 4 February 1948).
[204] Ibid., fol. 540, Ilse Ursell to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 1 March 1948.
[205] Ibid., fol. 539, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Ilse Ursell, 29 February 1948.

that prevailed now to secure the continuance of Diringer's funding. The grant however would henceforth be renewed month to month, with no indefinite extension, as if to underline the precariousness of his position. It was true that by now his *magnum opus* on the history of the alphabet with its "appreciative foreword" by Sir Ellis Minns had finally come out,[206] but once again the important element behind Sir Frederic's success in persuading the Society to continue its payments (and behind his regret when Diringer's grant had been suspended back in the January) was that there were still avenues of hope for potential employment that remained open in both the US and Britain.[207]

Meanwhile, in the US, Diringer's luck began to improve once family members already there began to activate themselves on his behalf. His younger sister, Henryka (Henia, Henrietta), who, like him, had studied in Italy and then come to Britain where she had married, had moved to the US in the autumn of 1947. An older sister was already there. Henryka, now based in New York, was in an excellent position to do what she could to help her brother, committing herself to move "heaven and earth to get [me] there."[208] She had been to see Arnold Kunst, the Polish Indologist who had promised to arrange something for Diringer at the UN; and more importantly, she had contacted "a kind of cousin," George J. Mintzer, an arbitration lawyer in New York who acted as counsel for the American Jewish Committee.[209] Diringer had always lamented the lack of a "personal friend who would do all in order to help me," doubting with regard to the US that he would obtain a position "if there isn't anybody to say [...] 'We must have this man',"[210] but in George Mintzer he found a well-placed advocate who was willing to take action on his relative's behalf. Mintzer, like the SPSL before him, turned initially to Jewish institutions of learning, before the end of 1947 contacting the HUC, Dropsie College, as well as the Jewish Theological Seminary, but for all three institutions, however aware they were of Diringer's "high scholarly reputation and the extraordinary quality of his scholarly work," the stumbling

[206] Reviews of *The Alphabet* in *The Manchester* Guardian, April 20, 1948 and *The Observer* April 25, 1948.

[207] Sir Frederic Kenyon to Ilse Ursell, 1 December 1947 and 29 February 1948, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fols. 516 and 539.

[208] Ibid., fol. 500, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 25 October 1947.

[209] Ibid., fol. 502, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 4 November 1947. See note 189.

[210] Ibid., fol. 440, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 3 May 1947 (underlining in original).

block was money.[211] Mintzer had better news by February 1948 when it emerged there was a chance that Princeton would "avail themselves of Diringer's services" for the academic year 1948-1949. Mintzer was in London that month and used the opportunity this offered for direct contact not only with Diringer, but also with the SPSL, to promote his cousin's position, asking the Society if funding could be offered at least until Princeton's decision in the forthcoming autumn.[212] And this argument was taken up—successfully—by Sir Frederic at the Executive Committee meeting in March.[213]

At the same time, the SPSL had not abandoned its own quest for a solution to Diringer's dilemma. In late January 1948, the Society contacted on his behalf the American Committee for Emigré Scholars, Writers and Artists which had been established in 1945 when the EC was wound down, leaving many scholars still in need of assistance,[214] and was also in touch with the American Association of University Professors on his behalf.[215] The initial response from the secretary of the Committee for Emigré Scholars had been negative: "I have no suggestion beyond what you have done and, concluding from similar cases, I do not think that he would have a chance in this country."[216] But two months later, the Committee informed the SPSL of a possible opening for him in Canada, apparently following on from a further initiative of George Mintzer, who had been in contact with Saul Hayes, a fellow lawyer and Executive Director of the Canadian Jewish Congress, about his cousin's prospects. The Lady Davis

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[211] Ibid., fol. 520, George Mintzer to David Diringer, 22 December 1947 (copy); Diringer's family had also been in touch with Samuel Belkin, President of Yeshiva University (fol. 512, David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 25 November 1947).

[212] Ibid., fol. 535, George Mintzer to Ilse Ursell, 16 February 1948; fol. 326, Agenda Item No. 6, undated, but February 1948.

[213] Ibid., fol. 539, Sir Frederic Kenyon to Ilse Ursell, 29 February 1948.

[214] Ibid., fol. 518, Ilse Ursell to Else Staudinger, Executive Secretary, American Committee for Émigré Scholars, Writers and Artists (later called the American Council for Émigrés in the Professions (ACEP), 26 January 1948. On the Committee, see Gerhard Sonnert and Gerald Holton, *What happened to the children who fled Nazi persecution* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 211.

[215] Ilse Ursell to Lena F. Dahme, Chairman of the Hunter College Chapter, American Association of University Professors, 4 February 1948, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 526.

[216] Ibid., fol. 542, information sheet, 3 March 1948, extract of letter from Else Staudinger, 10 February 1948.

Foundation—a fund set up by the Canadian Jewish philanthropist Henriette Marie Meyer (Lady Davis)—was planning to invite twenty five refugee scholars to Canada, with potential provision for a position in Diringer's field.[217] He duly sent off the forms in early May,[218] but, before any decision was made, he found himself experiencing a timely reversal of fortune much closer to home.

Resolution at Last

In addition to the US, the other avenue of opportunity for Diringer continued to be Britain, which had been his place of residence now for nearly a decade. Over this period, David Winton Thomas at Cambridge had aligned himself with Sir Frederic Kenyon, and indeed Sir Ellis Minns, as a supporter of Diringer. "I need hardly say again that, should opportunity occur, I shall be glad to do anything I can on Dr. Diringer's behalf,"[219] and he was true to his word. His opportunity finally came in the wake of the publication of the 1947 Scarborough Report on Oriental, Eastern European, Slavonic and African studies in Britain, which sought to boost academic provision in these subjects in order to better meet the country's needs in the post-war world.[220] The resulting injection of funds made possible the creation of new positions and, in November 1947, Winton Thomas hinted at the possibility that an opening for Diringer might be forthcoming in this context. SOAS in London seems to have been initially considered,[221] but in the end it was Winton Thomas' own university at Cambridge that appointed Diringer to a newly created Lectureship in Semitic epigraphy from the academic year 1948-49. There, at the Faculty of Oriental Languages, he joined his former university companion from Florence, Jacob Teicher, in a position that had effectively been

[217] Ibid., fol. 550, Saul Hayes to George Mintzer, 12 April 1948; fol. 546, Else Staudinger to Ilse Ursell, 14 April 1948.
[218] David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 4 May 1948, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 559.
[219] Ibid., fol. 437, David Winton Thomas to Ilse Ursell, 10 April 1947.
[220] *Report of the Interdepartmental Commission of Enquiry on Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies* (Scarborough Report) (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1947).
[221] Ilse Ursell to Sir Frederic Kenyon, 26 November 1947, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 511.

tailored for him.[222] Finally he had achieved his longed-for ambition: an academic position in his own chosen field. It came after a wait of nearly a decade, during which he had suffered enormous uncertainty and difficult living conditions. At the end of May 1948, he informed the SPSL of his good news.[223] The Allocation Committee duly expressed its delight.[224] A few days later, he was granted British nationality.[225] The SPSL awarded him a continuation of his grant until the beginning of the academic year, and a further three months as a loan since his first salary payment would be made in arrears.[226] He repaid the last installment of the loan at the end of 1956 with a wish he could "do something to repay my debt of gratitude apart from my debt of money," so bringing to an end his formal connection with the SPSL.[227]

Epilogue

Apart from witnessing Diringer's establishment as a scholar in Britain, the 1950s also saw a symbolic revival of his academic career in Italy. Towards the end of 1954, just over eight years since the Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione confirmed that his reinstatement as *libero docente* had already been communicated to Florence University, the Ministry contacted the rector requesting an urgent review of his position.[228] The background to this new approach may have been the introduction of the reparations legislation in the Italian parliament back in January 1952 by the Communist senator and former anti-Fascist activist, Umberto

[222] *Cambridge University Reporter 78 (1947-1948)*, August 4, 1948, 1554. On Teicher's appointment, see Teicher, "Jacob Leib Teicher between Florence and Cambridge," 338-339.
[223] David Diringer to Ilse Ursell, 26 May 1948, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 561.
[224] Ibid., fol. 563, Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 31 May 1948.
[225] Naturalisation Certificate, 7 June 1948.
[226] Ilse Ursell to David Diringer, 21 June 1948, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 566.
[227] Ibid., fol. 590, David Diringer to Esther Simpson, 4 December 1956.
[228] See section above "Italy: 1945-1946. A Frustrated Return"; Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione to the Rettore, Università di Firenze, 1 October 1954, "Fascicolo carriera libero docente di David Diringer," Sezione docenti, ASUFi, Florence (copy in "Diringer, David," MPI, DGIS, Liberi Docenti, 3a serie (1930-1950), b. 186, ACS, Rome).

Terracini, and confirmed in March 1955.[229] The original award of the *libera docenza* back in 1934 had required confirmation after five years and this was now fourteen years out of date. Nor, the Ministry observed, was it the case that any extension had been requested. At no point however was it mentioned that, by the date required for his initial confirmation in 1939, Diringer had already been dismissed by the provisions of the racial legislation. Following the ministerial behest, the University of Florence requested an updated overview of his position from him, which of course included details of his Cambridge appointment, and at a meeting of the Council of the Facoltà di Lettere at the end of January 1955, he was duly confirmed as *libero docente.* The report paid tribute to "the productive and important academic work" that characterized his scholarly contribution, noting that he had been forced since 1938 to undertake his work outside Italy, "owing to the Fascist anti-Jewish legislation."[230] The Ministry made a similar acknowledgment and issued its formal ratification by ministerial decree on 26 March 1955.[231] Although the Ministry was at pains to point out that he was obliged to teach at least one *corso libero* every five years,[232] it has not been possible to quantify the extent of his professional presence in Florence in the wake of his formal reinstatement. Diringer certainly had every reason to maintain regular contact with the city to which his wife and daughter had returned on a permanent basis without him, but, as he argued to university authorities in early 1964, he had a full time position in Cambridge and, unless invited to give a course of lectures or official seminars, could only come to Florence during the summer vacation.[233]

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[229] On reparations legislation and Terracini, see Elisabetta Corradini, *Il difficile reinserimento degli ebrei. Itinerario e applicazione della legge Terracini n. 96 del 10 marzo 1955* (Turin: Zamorani, 2012).

[230] Rettore, Università di Firenze to Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione (including extract from the minutes of a meeting of the Consiglio di Facoltà, Facoltà di Lettere, Università di Firenze, 31 January 1955, "Conferma Libera Docenza Prof. David Diringer": "[...] l'intensa ed importante attività scientifica [...]"; "[...] per effetto delle leggi fasciste antigiudaiche [...]"), 9 March 1955, "Fascicolo carriera libero docente di David Diringer," Sezione docenti, ASUFi, Florence (copy in "Diringer, David," MPI, DGIS, Liberi Docenti, 3a serie (1930-1950), b. 186, ACS, Rome).

[231] Ibid., Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione to the Rettore, Università di Firenze, 26 March 1955.

[232] Ibid.

[233] Ibid., David Diringer to the Capo uffici affari legali e del personale (University of Florence), 24 February 1964.

What is clear however is that Diringer continued to be listed among the *liberi docenti* of the university into the 1970s.[234]

As a foreign Jew arriving in Italy as a young student, Diringer had managed to establish himself, however precariously, on the first rungs of the Italian academic ladder. This happened thanks to the support he received from Italian academics and crucially to his felicitous timing in obtaining the requisite Italian citizenship prior to the effective exclusion of Jews from the naturalization process as the 1930s progressed.

In the tragedy of 1938, the loss of his position and his expulsion from Italy forced him to confront the challenge of seeking alternative employment abroad, but unlike those Jewish academics from Italy who managed to reach the US, Diringer failed—before the outbreak of war, as the war progressed, and after the end of the war—to reach the country that for him too was his declared option of choice.[235] As one of the smaller number of Jewish refugees from Italy who had found their way to Britain, he was forced back into having to contend with the fewer opportunities available there.

Frustrated at the end of the war in his attempts to return to Italy, an experience that mirrored that of so many, particularly the younger generation of Italian Jewish academics who had lost their positions in 1938, and unsuccessful in his attempts to move elsewhere, Diringer was left dependent on the sometimes reluctant patronage he had been able to attract in Britain. Over the years, he successfully reinvented himself so that fears about his former Fascist associations were put aside, to be replaced by the sympathy and concern of supporters who struggled to find a suitable position for a scholar whose subject of specialization was too narrow for the requirements of British academia. That, in the end, what the SPSL labeled as "[...] probably our most difficult case"[236] was brought to a successful conclusion was due ultimately to their perseverance and his own determination not to abandon hope.

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[234] Università degli Studi di Firenze, *Annuario per l'anno accademico 1969-70/1970-71* (Florence: Il cenacolo Arti Grafiche, 1973), 386, *Albo Liberi Docenti.*

[235] Diringer's experience was far from unique for Italian academics who reached Britain. See, for example, Capristo, "Arnaldo Momigliano."

[236] Ilse Ursell to Else Staudinger, 26 January 1948, "Diringer, David," MS, SPSL, 251/2, BL, Oxford, fol. 518.

Diringer would spend the rest of his professional career in Cambridge, remaining in post until his retirement in 1967, having been promoted to Reader in Semitic Epigraphy in his final year of office.[237] He was the one and only holder of the position. In 1959, he had founded an Alphabet Museum (housed in the garden of his Cambridge home), the contents of which he took with him to Israel when he moved there in 1968. They currently form part of the Eretz Israel Museum in Tel Aviv. Following his death while in Cambridge, on 13 February 1975, his body was sent for burial to Israel, the land of his youthful Zionist dream.[238]

Acknowledgments

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[237] Cambridge University Officers, Academic Officers, University Lecturers, Semitic Epigraphy, https://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk/Documents/acad/2016/lists/index.html, accessed 9 July 2024.

[238] Munio Wurman, "Prof. David Diringer," in *Memorial Book of Tlumacz,* eds. Blond et al, LXXI.

Keywords: David Diringer, Foreign Students in Fascist Italy, Italian Racial Legislation 1938, Intellectual Migration, Academic Aid Organizations 1930s and 1940s

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"Good Moral Conduct" in an Italian Concentration Camp: Women's Daily Lives in Ferramonti di Tarsia, 1940-1943

by *Susanna Schrafstetter*

Abstract

This article analyzes the situation of female inmates in the Italian internment camp of Ferramonti, 1940-1943. Women formed a minority among the internees, who consisted largely of Jews from central and eastern Europe. Historical accounts of the camp of Ferramonti have been based mainly on the testimony of male members of the camp's Jewish self-administration, who focused on the camp's successful institutions and the flourishing social and cultural life among the internees. A somewhat different picture emerges from the testimony of former female internees. Based on female voices from Ferramonti, this article examines women's lives in the camp: their work, health, daily chores, and gender relations. It argues that women's bodies in Ferramonti were subject to rigid surveillance by both the camp inmates and the Fascist authorities. It also shows that the specifically male and rather positive perspective on Ferramonti promoted the postwar myth of Italians as "brava gente."

Conclusions: The "Best Camp" and Its Afterlife

Introduction*

Situated in the malaria-ridden valley of the river Crati in the far south of Italy, the internment camp of Ferramonti di Tarsia housed at its height more than 2,000 inmates. Ferramonti was one of the largest of a series of such camps that was established after the Fascist government had ordered the interment of foreign Jews and enemy aliens following Italy's entry in World War II in June 1940.[1] Ferramonti was unusual in that it was the largest camp for Jews and one of the few camps for Jews in which men and women were interned together. Yet, only about 33% of the internees at Ferramonti were women.[2] Women arrived in Ferramonti later than the male inmates, and their daily lives and struggles in Ferramonti have largely been obfuscated by a preponderance of male memories and testimonies that focus on the Jewish self-government and the institutions of the camp. The purpose of this article is to reintroduce the female internees into the history of Ferramonti, and to examine life in Ferramonti through the lens of its female population.

Consisting largely of Jews from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia, the inmates of Ferramonti established their

*Fellowships from the Leibniz Institute of European History (Mainz), the Leibnitz Institute for Contemporary History (Munich), the European Holocaust Research Initiative (EHRI), and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM, Washington) made the research for this article possible. Some names have been anonymized to protect the privacy of the individuals or because of archival rules.

[1] Ferramonti was the largest camp that housed Jews but some camps for non-Jewish internees held more inmates, e.g. Le Fraschette (4,500) and Gonars (over 6,000), see Carlo Spartaco Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps: Civilian Internment in Fascist Italy (1940-1943)* (London: Routledge, 2019), 174 (Le Fraschette), 225 (Gonars).

[2] Leo Fürst and Alexander Rosenbach, "Ferramonti-Tarsia: Das Leben der Zivilinternierten in Zahlen," fondo Kalk, busta 2, fasc. 17, p. 1, Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea (hereafter CDEC).

own camp government and administration, court, school system, healthcare, and cultural program. Despite these accomplishments, life in Ferramonti was utterly miserable. The inmates were locked up behind barbed wire merely because they were Jews (and, in some cases, non-Jewish enemy aliens). They had to deal with extreme heat in the summer, and cold and damp in the winter. There were mosquitos that carried malaria as well as vermin that infested the large, crammed dormitories. Some of the inmates did not have enough food or bare essentials such as shoes and clothes. There was a total lack of privacy. Many of them had been ripped from their families and were in the camp without their loved ones – sometimes for years.

Despite the hardship, postwar testimonies about life in Ferramonti have been surprisingly positive.[3] The reasons for the positive views are manifold. Most importantly, Ferramonti, misleadingly named a *campo di concentramento,* had little in common with German concentration camps. The inmates were not murdered or tortured, and they did not have to perform forced labor. After the war, many Jewish internees felt they had to emphasize the stark contrast in the way Jews had been treated by Germans and Italians.[4] In addition, early postwar testimony stemmed largely from men who had held important positions in the camp government.[5] They had an interest in emphasizing what was accomplished at Ferramonti. In addition, the humiliation experienced during internment may have led male internees to turn this negative experience into a narrative of achievement.[6] In this way, the story of Ferramonti became one of virtuous and robust inmates who overcame highly adverse conditions, and who, under the eyes

[3] On this point, see Klaus Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf. Exil in Italien 1933-1945*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1993), 140-41 and 198-99; Carlo Moos, *Ausgrenzung Internierung Deportation. Antisemitismus und Gewalt im späten, italienischen Faschismus (1938-1943)* (Zurich: Chronos, 2004), 119.

[4] This point is made in many ego-documents. Just to provide one example, Mirko Haler reflected on the fact that his testimony of Ferramonti—written 35 years after the war—appears perhaps as overly positive. He explained that this had to do with what he had learnt about the German concentration camps after the war. Mirko Haler, "I ricordi di Mirko Haler," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 66, p. 10, CDEC.

[5] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 198-199.

[6] On the experience of humiliation in internment, Urška Strle, "Revealing Italian Fascist Camps: Some Gendered Perspectives," *Chronica Mundi* 13, no. 1 (2018): 350.

of benign Fascist supervision, built a flourishing Jewish community in the uninhabitable wetlands along the river Crati.[7]

Most literature about Ferramonti relies to some extent on this body of recollections which can be described as a postwar "male master narrative" of Ferramonti.[8] These testimonies were collected by Israel Kalk after the war. Kalk had founded the *mensa dei bambini*, a Jewish aid organization based in Milan that had also been active in Ferramonti, and, in this capacity, Kalk had gotten to know many internees.[9] Many testimonies of former inmates and their correspondence with Kalk became part of Kalk's personal papers which are housed in the archive of the Contemporary Jewish Documentation Center in Milan (*Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea*, CDEC). Subsequently, Kalk

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[7] The most important of these accounts that form a kind of a "male master narrative" are by Hans (Gianni) Mann, Martin Ruben, Albert Springer, and Jan Hermann. They can be found in fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 53 (Springer), fasc. 64 (Mann), fasc. 67 (Ruben), and fasc. 70 (Hermann), CDEC.

[8] The literature about Ferramonti is comparatively small and constitutes a mix of academic and non-academic works. The following are among the most important contributions: Carlo Spartaco Capogreco, *Ferramonti. La vita e gli uomini del più grande campo d'internamento fascista (1940-1945)* (Florence: La Giuntina, 1987); Francesco Volpe, ed., *Ferramonti: Un lager nel Sud. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi 15/16 maggio 1987* (Cosenza: Orizzonti Meridionali, 1990); Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*; Francesco Folino, *Ferramonti? Un misfatto senza sconti* (Cosenza: Brenner, 2004); Francesco Folino, *Ferramonti. Il campo, gli ebrei e gli antifascisti* (Roggiano Gravina: La scossa, 2009); Francesco Folino, *Ferramonti: un lager di Mussolini. Gli internati durante la guerra* (Cosenza: Brenner, 1985); Francesco Folino, *Ebrei destinazione Calabria (1940-1943)* (Palermo: Sellerio, 1988); Carlo Spartaco Capogreco, "L'entrata in guerra dell'Italia e l'internamento degli ebrei stranieri: il campo di Ferramonti," in *I campi di concentramento in Italia. Dall'internamento alla deportazione (1940-1945)*, ed. Costantino di Sante (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2001), 83-94; Mario Rende, *Ferramonti di Tarsia. Voci da un campo di concentramento fascista 1940-1945* (Milan: Mursia, 2009); Stefano Nicola Sinicropi, "L'esilio tedesco a Ferramonti di Tarsia. Storie di ebrei in fuga dalla Germania," PhD thesis, Alma Mater Studiorum-Università di Bologna and Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes Paris, Bologna, 2020, online at http://amsdottorato.unibo.it/9313/1/Sinicropi%20Stefano%20Nicola%20Tesi%20Dottorato.pdf , accessed May 20, 2024. Works in English include Carlo Spartaco Capogreco, "The Internment Camp of Ferramonti-Tarsia," in *The Italian Refuge: Rescue of Jews During the Holocaust*, ed. Ivo Herzer (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 159-177; Silvia Del Zoppo, *Ferramonti: Interpreting Cultural Behaviors and Musical Practices in a Southern-Italian Internment Camp* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2021). Only Voigt acknowledges that the representatives of the Jewish self-government had a very specific perspective on the camp and on their accomplishments, Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 198-199.

[9] On Kalk and the *mensa dei bambini*, see Lucia Realini, "La Mensa dei bambini a Milano 1939–1943," *Italia contemporanea* 232 (2003): 365-400.

was one of the first to publicize this story of resilience and achievement to an audience of ex-internees, historians, and the broader public.[10]

In these male testimonies, women featured very little, and if they did, the image conveyed tended to be negative. In one of the few extensive descriptions, women were characterized as hysterical and quarrelsome: "Generally, fights in the women's barracks were much more frequent than in the men's barracks, and excesses in the women's barrack [sic] were a daily occurrence. Resulting mainly from the most trivial causes, differences of opinion assumed such proportions that, regularly, our intervention was necessary."[11] At the same time, some of the few female voices in the Kalk collection have been ignored by historians. The most glaring example is that of Nina Weksler, whose text *Ferramonti Streiflichter* (Ferramonti Highlights), written in 1941 in Ferramonti, has hardly been used at all.[12] Since the postwar years additional ego-documents by former female inmates of Ferramonti have become available. For the intended purpose of this article, a variety of testimonies are used to provide a more multi-faceted perspective on life in Ferramonti.[13]

The literature on the exclusively female internment camps has remained limited, and while it has discussed the living conditions in these few, comparatively small camps, it has ignored the situation of women in Ferramonti, where both men and women were interned.[14] While some of the problems that women experienced in

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[10] Israel Kalk, "I campi di concentramento italiani per ebrei profughi: Ferramonti Tarsia (Calabria)," in *Gli ebrei in Italia durante il Fascismo*, ed. CDEC (Milan: Arnaldo Forni, 1981), 63-71.

[11] Albert Springer, "Die Statuten des Lagergerichts," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 53, p. 28, CDEC.

[12] Nina Weksler, Ferramonti-Streiflichter, fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 106, CDEC. Weksler also published a memoir-novel about her time in Ferramonti, Nina Weksler, *Con la gente di Ferramonti. Mille giorni di una giovane ebrea in un campo di concentramento* (Cosenza: Progetto 2000 [1992]). While some personalities (most, but not all of the names are changed to anonymize individuals) and occurrences may have been modified for personal or artistic reasons, the book provides a clear and in-depth account of daily life in Ferramonti from a female perspective. It is similar to Maria Eisenstein's book about the women's camp of Lanciano. Maria Eisenstein, *L'internata numero 6. Donne fra i reticolati del campo di concentramento* (Rome: De Luigi, 1944).

[13] Among the sources I use are interviews conducted by the USC Shoah Foundation, published and unpublished memoirs and testimonies as well as internee files (fondo A 4 bis) held at the *Archivio Centrale dello Stato* (ACS) in Rome, testimony from Yad Vashem and compensation claims files from German archives.

[14] On the camps for women, see Annalisa Cegna, "'Di dubbia condotta morale e politica.' L'internamento femminile in Italia durante la Seconda guerra mondiale," *DEP: Deportate, esuli,*

the women-only camps manifested themselves in Ferramonti as well, there were also significant differences that need to be examined and acknowledged. This article seeks to broaden and deepen our understanding of daily life and living conditions in Ferramonti. Focusing on women and women's voices, the article argues that much of the extensive testimony by male members of the self-administration has ignored the situation of women and has established a somewhat "sanitized" image of life in Ferramonti. Viewing Ferramonti largely through a male lens focused on the achievements of the camp administration has limited our knowledge of women's lives and gender relations. In addition, the male perspective focused on achievement—rather than hardship—has also starkly influenced how Ferramonti has been commemorated.

To begin with, this article briefly discusses the internment of foreign Jews in Italy in 1940, the emergence of the Italian internment camps, and the special role of Ferramonti di Tarsia within the Fascist camp system.[15] It provides an overview of the camp's population and organization before focusing on women's experiences

profughe. Rivista telematica di studi sulla memoria femminile 21 (2013): 28-54; Annalisa Cegna, "Fascist female segregation during the Second World War," *Chronica Mundi* 13, no. 1 (2018): 76-91; Cegna, "Alcune reflessioni sull'internamento femminile fascista," *Diacronie. Studi di Storia Contemporanea* 35, no. 3 (2018) http://www.studistorici.com/2018/09/29/cegna_numero_35/; Gianni Orecchioni, *I sassi e le ombre. Storie di internamento e di confino nell'Italia fascista, Lanciano 1940-1943* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2006).

[15] On the Italian internment camps: Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*; Di Sante, *I campi di concentramento*; Luigi Reale, *Mussolini's Concentration Camps for Civilians: An Insight into the Nature of Fascist Racism* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2011); Alessandra Kersevan, *Lager italiani. Pulizia etnica e campi di concentramento fascisti per civili jugoslavi 1941-1943* (Rome: Nutrimenti, 2008); Amedeo Osti Guerrazzi and Costantino di Sante, "Die Geschichte der Konzentrationslager im faschistischen Italien," in *Faschismus in Italien und Deutschland. Studien zu Transfer und Vergleich*, ed. Sven Reichardt (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2005), 176-200. For the internment of Jews in specific regions of Italy, see for example Marco Minardi, *Invisibili: Internati civili nella provincia di Parma, 1940-1945* (Bologna: CLUEB, 2010); Iolanda Ferri Bianchi, ed., *Ebrei a Macerata Feltria, campo d'internamento, 1940-1944: Voci, testimonianze, documenti per non dimenticare* (Urbino: Comune di Macerata Feltria, 1996); Francesco Terzulli, *La Casa Rossa. Un campo di concentramento ad Alberobello* (Milan: Mursia, 2003); Barbara Cardeti, *L'internamento civile fascista: il caso di "Villa Oliveto" (1940-1944). Storia, documenti, immagini, testimonianze* (Florence: Regione Toscana - Edizioni dell'Assemblea, 2010); Anna Pizzuti, *Vite di carta. Storie di ebrei stranieri internati dal fascismo* (Rome: Editore Donzelli, 2010); Alberto Gagliardo, *Ebrei in Abruzzo tra internamento e deportazione. La provincia di Chieti (1940-1943)* (Lanciano: Regione Abruzzo, 1998); Italia Iacoponi, *Il Fascismo, la Resistenza, i campi di concentramento in provincia di Teramo* (Teramo: Grafiche Martintype, 2000).

at Ferramonti. The article examines women's daily lives in an environment characterized by filth and overcrowding, in which women's behavior and bodies were under constant close surveillance by the camp community and the Fascist directorate of the camp. The latter, in particular, expected "good moral conduct" of the female internees.[16]

The Internment of Jews in Fascist Italy

The internment of foreign Jews in Fascist Italy in 1940 needs to be seen in the context of the wave of Jewish refugees that had started to come to Italy since Hitler's rise to power in 1933 and the passage of a series of antisemitic laws in Italy starting in the summer of 1938. By that time, around 5,000 German and Austrian Jews had sought refuge from Nazism in Italy.[17] The Italian government conducted a census of the Jews present in the country in August 1938. Mussolini then promulgated a package of antisemitic measures, which included the Racial Laws as well as a degree stipulating the expulsion of foreign Jews.[18] Issued in September 1938, the expulsion decree, required foreign Jews (except those older than 65 years or married to Italians) to leave the country within six months. Italian Jews who had acquired citizenship after January 1, 1919, i.e. after the First World War, were categorized as foreign.[19] Paradoxically, foreign Jews could still travel to

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[16] "Buona condotta" was expected of all inmates, see page 71. Female internees were widely suspected to be of "dubbia condotta morale e politica," see Cegna, " 'Di dubbia Condotta'."

[17] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 1, 144.

[18] For the antisemitic laws of 1938, see Michele Sarfatti, *The Jews in Mussolini's Italy: From Equality to Persecution* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 121-141; Enzo Collotti, *Il fascismo e gli ebrei. Le leggi razziali in Italia* (Rome: Ed. Laterza, 2003), 58-79; Michele Sarfatti, *Mussolini contro gli ebrei. Cronaca dell'elaborazione delle leggi del 1938* (Turin: Zamorani, 1994). For their impact: Fabio Levi, "Come continuare a vivere nella bufera. Gli ebrei Italiani di fronte alla persecuzione," in *Storia della Shoa in Italia. Vicende, memorie, rappresentazioni*, vol. 1, *Le premesse, le persecuzioni, lo sterminio*, eds. Marcello Flores et al. (Turin: UTET, 2010), 306-328; Iael Nidam-Orvieto, "The Impact of anti-Jewish Legislation on Everyday Life and the Response of Italian Jews 1938-1943," in *Jews in Italy under Fascist and Nazi Rule*, ed. Joshua Zimmerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 158-181.

[19] The expulsion decree ("provvedimenti nei confronti degli ebrei stranieri") is reprinted in Sarfatti, *Mussolini contro gli ebrei*, 185. For the impact of the decree, see: Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 1, 292-348; Sarfatti, *The Jews in Mussolini's Italy*, 141-144.

Italy on six-month tourist visas.[20] Large numbers of Jewish refugees arrived in Italy on tourist or transit visas as a consequence of the mass expulsion of Polish Jews from Germany in October 1938, the Kristallnacht pogrom in the German Reich in early November 1938, and the destruction of Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1939. Starting in August 1939, the entry of German (including Austrian), Polish, Hungarian and Romanian Jews was restricted to Jews who held transit visas for third countries.[21]

Many foreign Jews left Italy in 1939 for places like the US, Britain, France, or Palestine. However, not all of those required to leave Italy were able to obtain visas or permits or could still afford to travel. Hence, despite the expulsion decree, by early 1940, several thousand foreign Jews were still in the country. As the Italian government was getting ready to enter the Second World War, it made plans for the internment of citizens of enemy states in Italy. In addition to this group, Jewish citizens of Allied states that persecuted Jews, stateless Jews, and Italian Jews who were considered "dangerous" were to be interned as well.[22]

In May 1940 Mussolini let it be known to Dante Almansi, the head of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, that foreign Jewish men would be sent to concentration camps, and ultimately be reunited with their wives and children in a camp in Tarsia in the far south of the country, where they would all be interned until the end of the war. From there, they would be sent directly to those countries consenting to their immigration.[23] As Michele Sarfatti has pointed out, this shows clearly that the regime had not abandoned the goal of expulsion and that the concentration of foreign Jews in Tarsia would be one step in that direction.[24] As it happened, not all foreign Jews ended up in Tarsia, but between 1940 and 1943 many of them spent some time there.

In June 1940 Jewish men were arrested in large cities such as Milan, Rome or Genoa and taken to local prisons for a few weeks. From there, they were put under guard on trains to various camps, including Ferramonti di Tarsia, Campagna, Isola

[20] The reasons for that had to do with the interests of tourist industries, Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 1, 294-295.

[21] Ibid., 294-297.

[22] Sarfatti, "La legislazione antiebraica," 75-77; Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 21-23.

[23] Sarfatti, "La legislazione antiebraica," 75-76; Capogreco, "L'entrata in guerra," 83.

[24] Sarfatti, "La legislazione antiebraica," 76.

del Gran Sasso and Urbisaglia (to name a few).[25] Women and children were sent to confined residence (so-called free internment) in small villages. Some women were initially left at their place of residence while others were sent to a comparatively small number of women's camps, among them Lanciano, Vinchiaturo, and Casacalenda.[26] By the late summer of 1940, women and children were taken to Ferramonti to join their husbands and fathers, as family barracks became available at the camp.[27] One year later, however, many families were allowed to leave Ferramonti and transfer to confined residence in remote villages all across Italy. This was largely due to the fact that more and more Jews and enemy aliens were arrested.[28] All in all, 9,747 foreign Jews are known to have been interned in Italy, of whom 3,929 were female and 5,818 were male. Out of the 3,929 female internees, 1,075 spent some time in Ferramonti.[29] The actual numbers are likely higher.[30]

The Camp of Ferramonti di Tarsia

Near the town of Tarsia, where, according to initial government plans, all foreign Jews would ultimately be concentrated, a huge camp was hastily built from scratch starting in June 1940. Six rows of barracks housing around 30-40 inmates each were divided by a main "alley" in the middle. Two adjacent barracks were connected with kitchen facilities and a lounge of sorts, thus forming a U-shaped unit. They would also share toilets and sinks. A few barracks contained "family

[25] For arrest, imprisonment, and transfer to the camps, see Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 38-40; Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 23-31. According to Osti Guerrazzi and di Sante, "Die Geschichte," 185-187, there were roughly 50 camps. On Campagna, Isola del Gran Sasso, Urbisaglia and other camps, see Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*.

[26] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 28, 79. For these camps, see Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, 180-181, 192-194 and 200-201; Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 61-62.

[27] Ibid., 170.

[28] Ibid., 85-87.

[29] All numbers are from Anna Pizzuti, "Ebrei stranieri internati in Italia durante il periodo bellico," http://www.annapizzuti.it/database/ricerca.php, accessed May 18, 2024.

[30] Over the years, numerous names have been added to Anna Pizzuti's database and are still being added.

apartments" (1-2 rooms and individual cooking facilities).[31] At one end of the alley stood more elaborate buildings for the director and his staff. The *direttore* of the camp was a representative of the Public Security division in the Ministry of the Interior. Underneath the director, a *maresciallo* supervised the guards who consisted of police and Fascist militia.[32]

Following the arrival of several hundred men in June 1940, the first women and children came to Ferramonti in September 1940 as part of a group of 300 foreign Jews.[33] The group had attempted clandestine immigration to Palestine from Italy but got stranded at Benghazi, Libya, then an Italian colony. After a short period of internment in North Africa, the "Benghazi group," consisting largely of Jews from Germany, Austria and Poland, was brought to Ferramonti by the Italian authorities.[34] One year later, the number of internees at Ferramonti had grown to over 1,200, of whom 93% were Jews, the vast majority non-Italian.[35] Women were still in the minority (33% of the inmates) but there were now 270 families living in the camp.[36]

In March 1942, another large group of Jewish refugees arrived in Ferramonti. The "Rodi group" was brought from Rhodes (Rodi, then controlled by Italy) to Calabria. Like the members of the "Benghazi group," the more than 500 members of the "Rodi group," among them 30% women, had tried to make it to Palestine but failed. Consisting largely of young Czech, Slovak, German, and Polish Jews, the group was shipwrecked as their vessel sank near an uninhabited Greek island. They were rescued by an Italian warship and taken to Rhodes where they spent several months in internment before they were taken to Ferramonti.[37] In 1942 and

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[31] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 164-165; Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 42; Folino, *Ferramonti*, 14. For a visual model image of the camp, see CDEC, Il campo di Ferramonti di Tarsia, https://jewishrefugees.cdec.it/il-campo-di-ferramonti-di-tarsia/, accessed June 20, 2024.

[32] Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 45-46; Folino, *Ferramonti*, 15.

[33] Hans (Gianni) Mann, "I primi a Ferramonti," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 64, p. 6, CDEC.

[34] On the "Benghazi group," see Susanna Schrafstetter, "Ferramonti, not Palestine. The Failed Aliyah bet of the Benghazi Group, 1940-1943," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 37, no. 3 (2023): 373-389.

[35] Fürst and Rosenbach, "Ferramonti-Tarsia: Das Leben der Zivilinternierten in Zahlen," fondo Kalk, busta 2, fasc. 17, p. 1, CDEC. Only two internees were Italian citizens but 23 spoke Italian as their mother tongue, ibid., p. 2.

[36] Ibid.

[37] On the "Rodi group," see Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 99-113; Folino, *Ferramonti*, 119-138.

1943, Yugoslav Jews but increasingly also non-Jews, among them a group of Chinese men (mostly sailors) and Greek, Yugoslav, French, and Italian anti-fascists, arrived at the camp.[38] While the number of non-Jews increased over time, they remained a fairly small minority among the 2,000 inmates.[39]

Two Jewish aid organizations—which were allowed to operate legally in Fascist Italy until September 1943—Delasem (*Delegazione per l'assistenza agli emigranti ebrei*) and the children's canteen (*mensa dei bambini*) supported the inmates with resources from the outside. The *mensa dei bambini,* in particular, took care of the needs of individual internees, especially children (delivering items such as shoes, clothes, milk) but it also provided support for the camp as a whole. For example, it helped to pay for necessary improvements in the camp, such as the installation of showers.[40] Israel Kalk, who had originally founded the *mensa dei bambini* to help the children of foreign Jewish refugees in Milan, visited the camp a few times, as did the Rabbi of Genoa, Riccardo Pacifici, as envoy of Delasem. In addition to the material aid provided, both Kalk and Pacifici also tried to help with emotional support for the inmates.[41]

Jewish Self-Government and the Institutions at Ferramonti

When the first hundred men arrived at Ferramonti, the camp was still a construction site. There were no bathroom facilities or electricity. The inmates had to line up in the sun for hours for the distribution of drinking water. Many fell ill with diarrhea and other diseases. The dirt, the mosquitos, and the heat made the place hell.[42] Yet, the inmates started to set up a system of self-government. Each barrack elected a speaker of the dormitory (*capo camerata*) and these in turn elected a speaker for the entire camp (*obercapo, capo dei capi*) to deal with the

[38] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 170-172.

[39] There are no detailed statistics of the camp population in 1942 or 1943 but the percentage of Jews in Ferramonti remained at or above 75%, Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, 217.

[40] Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 73-76.

[41] Ibid, 74, 142. On Delasem and Pacifici, see Sandro Antonini, *Delasem: Storia della più grande organizzazione ebraica italiana di soccorso durante la seconda guerra mondiale* (Genoa: De Ferrari, 2000).

[42] Mann, "I primi a Ferramonti," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 64, p. 2-3, CDEC.

directorate. The *obercapi* were always men and the *capi camerata*, who met regularly as a kind of a parliament, were overwhelmingly male but the women's dormitories elected female speakers.[43]

Hans (Gianni) Mann, the first *obercapo*, described his relationship with the first *direttore* as good. According to Mann, the director tried to accommodate the inmates' needs because he understood that ultimately, the allies would win the war.[44] Yet, the camp rules were strict: inmates could not leave the camp without permission and had to show up for three daily roll-calls at the main square. Political activity, foreign newspapers, and radios were forbidden. By 9:00 pm everybody had to be in their barrack. Correspondence was generally limited to family members and mail was censored. Inmates had to display "good conduct" and "disciplined behavior."[45]

As the situation in the camp gradually improved, a broad array of economic, social, cultural, and religious institutions and activities emerged. Kitchen commissions were set up for each barrack which were responsible for employing cooks and preparing the meals. Internees who received their daily meals from the communal kitchens had to pay 5 lire daily.[46] There was a camp infirmary run by inmates who were doctors. The Jewish inmates of Ferramonti operated two synagogues and a Talmud-Torah school, and they formed a Hevrah Qadishah brotherhood, providing for proper ritual burials. They founded a school for the numerous children in Ferramonti.[47]A judicial tribunal dealt with criminal offenses within the camp.[48] A concert office was in charge of staging performances and theatre productions, and there was a sports club, which had divisions for soccer, athletics and ping-pong.[49] Much of the postwar testimony has focused on these male-dominated institutions and initiatives and their positive impact on life in

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[43] Ibid, p. 5.

[44] Ibid, p. 4. On the directors, see Amedeo Osti Guerrazzi, *Poliziotti. I direttori dei campi di concentramento italiani 1940-1943* (Rome: Cooper, 2004).

[45] Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 47; Folino, *Ferramonti*, 16.

[46] Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 53.

[47] Fürst and Rosenbach, "Ferramonti-Tarsia: Das Leben der Zivilinternierten in Zahlen," fondo Kalk, busta 2, fasc. 17, p. 5-8, CDEC.

[48] Ibid., p. 11.

[49] Ibid., p. 7, 10. On concerts and music, Del Zoppo, *Ferramonti*, 89-138.

Ferramonti.[50] While all of these examples are proof of the internees' remarkable resilience and inventiveness, the ways in which life in the camp was portrayed appears to be rosier than the reality. Women were largely absent from these accounts.

The Arrival of Women in Ferramonti

The first women who arrived in Ferramonti in the summer of 1940 were visitors, not internees. Some women were granted visits to Ferramonti to see their husbands. According to Klaus Voigt, it was "fairly easy" to obtain permission for a short visit, but the process was arbitrary, especially when it came to the length of the visit.[51] Nelly Morpurgo Mann was only granted a week, which ended in an agonizing, tearful good-bye from her husband.[52] Women had to make difficult decisions whether to leave their children behind to fend for themselves or to take them along. Rosa Stavsky Ivankowski's mother wanted to go alone. Rosa and her siblings were worried about their mother having to travel by herself. When they saw her off at the train station in Milan, loaded with luggage in a packed train, they burst into tears.[53] Shortly after her return to Milan, the mother was notified that she and her children would also be interned and taken to Ferramonti.[54]

The first women to stay in Ferramonti were those who arrived with the Benghazi group in September 1940. Others were sent from major cities or from free internment in a village. Some were married women who chose to come to Ferramonti voluntarily to be reunited with their husbands. Sultana Razon Veronesi's mother spontaneously decided to leave the family's Milan apartment and move with her daughters to Ferramonti to join her husband. They appeared at the camp unexpected, and, to the astonishment of the guards, demanded to be admitted. Her mother wanted the family to be together and had been frustrated

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[50] Pubblicità a Ferramonti, section "Was sie wissen müssen," (What you have to know, a brochure containing a list of key offices and their all-male representatives in the camp), fondo Kalk, busta 2, fasc. 18, CDEC.

[51] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf,* vol. 2, 114, see also ibid., 117.

[52] Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 84-85.

[53] Rosa Stavsky Ivankowski, *Not Enough Points* (Chicago: Rosa Stavsky Ivankowski, 2009), 83.

[54] Ibid., 88-89.

by the fact that communication with her husband had been almost impossible.[55] Margarethe H. came voluntarily because she had no income after her husband had been arrested and she could simply not afford to stay in Milan on her own with her little son.[56] Adele Obarzanek also struggled financially. She applied for her and her two children to be transferred from free internment to Ferramonti.[57] Fanny F. went to Ferramonti because her husband had fallen seriously ill in the camp.[58] Some women may have felt isolated in free internment or at the mercy of local Fascist officials. In addition, Ferramonti offered a religious life and schooling for children—something that had become impossible in many places because of the racial laws.[59]

Many female internees were adolescents or young adults who arrived with their families, like Thea Obarzanek (16 years), Zdenka Baum (17 years), Edith Fischhof (18 years) or Herta Bratspiess (18 years).[60] Some were all by themselves like eighteen-year-old Nina Weksler. Others came to Ferramonti with their children but without their husbands. Tony Isaack's husband had been hiding to avoid the arrests of Jewish men in Milan. Eventually, the police knocked at the door and took his wife and his children, then five and seven years old.[61] To most of the

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[55] Sultana Razon Veronesi, "Foreword from the book *The Heart, If It Could Think*," in *Stories of Survival: The People of Ferramonti Then and Now*, ed. Yolanda Ropschitz-Bentham (Tuningen: Texianer Verlag, 2021), 145-146.

[56] Margarethe H. to Ministero degli Interni, Jan. 23, 1941, A 4 bis, busta 242, Dir. Gen. Pub. Sicurezza, Div. Affari Generali e riservati, MI, Archivio Centrale dello Stato (hereafter ACS).

[57] Thea Aschkenase, *Remembering. A Holocaust Survivor Shares Her Life* (Amherst: Levellers Press, 2015), 34, 37.

[58] Sworn statement by Fanny F., Nov. 14, 1956, LEA 12260, Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Munich.

[59] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 115, 136.

[60] For the testimonies, see Zdenka Levy (née Baum), interview 12393. Interview by Harriette Kanew. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Feb. 24, 1996, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/12393; Thea Aschkenase (née Obarzanek), interview 38084. Interview by Renée Hecht. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Jan. 21, 1998, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/38084; Herta Gerber (née Bratspiess), interview 40869. Interview by Maurina Schinasi Alazraki. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, April 14, 1998, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/40869, all accessed May 17, 2024. Edith Fischhof Gilboa, *Farben des Regenbogens am Meer. Ein jüdisches Mädchen überlebt den Holocaust* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 2016).

[61] Tony Isaack, interview 43852, segment 65-67. Interview by Marianna Bergida. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, May 16, 1998, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/43852, accessed May 17, 2024.

women, who had not already been there as visitors, the arrival was a shock. Nina Weksler's first impression of Ferramonti was that of a "stable." It was night when she got there, and she remembered: "I saw 30 beds, 29 sleeping strangers, above my head a straw-covered roof – a stable."[62]

Most women arrived exhausted because they had had to sell a family business, empty an apartment, and acquire things that were needed or potentially useful in the camp.[63] At the arrival, many women were happy that families were reunited. In other cases, the reunions were strained. Men who had already been interned for many months were depressed and irritable. Nina Weksler overheard a couple arguing bitterly on the evening that the wife had arrived.[64] Many couples without children had to sleep in the dormitories for single men and women. Apparently, there were not enough family barracks, and whether a couple received a family barrack may have depended on their good connections within the camp.[65]

Daily Life: Dirt and Disease

Many women were appalled by the dirt and the vermin. When Tony Isaack arrived in April 1941, she stood "almost knee-high in the mud."[66] In the cold humid winters, clothes and fabric started to grow mold.[67] In the summer, the mud turned to dust that was everywhere. For many internees, especially women, life at Ferramonti became an eternal struggle to keep dirt and bugs at bay. They often discussed the best measures to kill bedbugs.[68] Some used pins to skewer them or killed them with boiling water.[69] Others aired out sheets and mattresses daily or

[62] Weksler, "Ferramonti Streiflichter," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 106, p. 1, CDEC.
[63] Salomon Hauber, "Internato civile a Ferramonti," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 62, p. 6-7, CDEC.
[64] Weksler, "Ferramonti Streiflichter," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 106, p. 2, CDEC.
[65] Weksler, *Con la gente*, 43.
[66] Tony Isaack, interview 43852, segment 72. Interview by Marianna Bergida. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, May 16, 1998, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/43852, accessed May 17, 2024.
[67] Weksler, *Con la gente*, 76.
[68] Ibid., 100-101.
[69] Ibid.

sprayed the beds with kerosene.[70] Tony Isaack remembered that she always had piles of dirty clothes and had to do laundry every day.[71] Nina Weksler described waking up in the morning. Every morning, her first impression was a swarm of flies in her face, her second impression the screaming and fighting from the wells where "women became hyenas."[72] In both the communal and the family barracks the problem of dirt was exacerbated by the fact that chickens and turkeys were raised as food supply.[73] Typically, these family units consisted of two "rooms" separated by a blanket including a small kitchen area where families could prepare their food. In the summer, many women cooked outside because of the heat, but they faced unexpected problems such as wild dogs in search of food, and they had to defend the meals from hungry animals.[74]

Personal hygiene in Ferramonti was a particular challenge for women. Marta Grunbaum's first impression of the camp was that she was so disgusted by the sanitary facilities that she could not go to the bathroom for quite some time.[75] Apparently, this was not uncommon. During their time in prison Nina Weksler and Maria Eisenstein became so constipated that they needed an enema.[76] Initially there were no showers in the camp and the inmates had to get water at the wells and wash in the barracks. Later a small number of showers were installed. Vera S. signed up voluntarily for the task of cleaning the toilets because that entitled her to a daily shower. However, after a while she realized that the guards had drawn holes in the walls of the women's shower room and were watching them.[77] In the women's barracks women had little privacy to wash and get dressed

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[70] Dina Smadar, "Zvi Neumann and Gita Friedmann," in *Stories of Survival*, ed. Ropschitz-Bentham, 128-129.

[71] Tony Isaack, interview 43852, segment 85. Interview by Marianna Bergida. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, May 16, 1998, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/43852, accessed May 17, 2024.

[72] Weksler, "Ferramonti Streiflichter," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 106, p. 3, CDEC.

[73] Weksler, *Con la gente*, 91; Stavsky Ivankowski, *Not Enough Points*, 95.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Marta Grunbaum, interview 26611, segment 48. Interview by Elaine F. Miller. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Feb. 14, 1997, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/26611, accessed May 17, 2024.

[76] Weksler, *Con la gente*, 21; Eisenstein, *L'internata numero 6*, 92-93.

[77] Vera S., interview 23437, segment 79-80. Interview by Klara Firestone. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Nov. 6, 1996, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/23437, accessed May 17, 2024.

because husbands of the married women joined their wives for breakfast.[78] Nina Weksler wrote about "things people dream about in Ferramonti." She made five points. In first place she listed: "a real bathroom with bath tub in which you can sit" and in second place "a real toilet," followed by "an affidavit" and "a check made out in dollars," and, for once "being alone for an entire day."[79]

The insufficient sanitary facilities and the weather promoted diseases, which were much more widespread in the camp than much of the positive testimony would suggest.[80] Despite the distribution of quinine pills, many inmates came down with malaria. Some of them had outbreaks of malaria for the rest of their lives.[81] There were cases of typhus, gastroenteritis, heart diseases and eye diseases.[82] Sometimes, illnesses were embellished or invented because in this way, inmates could get permission for a journey to Cosenza or another nearby town, but nevertheless, many internees were seriously ill. Barbara E. suffered from cervicitis and weighed barely 44 kilograms.[83] Vera Alkalaj arrived with her sister in the fall when the camp was cold and damp. After a few days her sister contracted pneumonia.[84] Deborah M. suffered a complete nervous breakdown shortly after her arrival.[85] Rosa Ebstein, then twelve years old, was brought to the hospital in Cosenza with malaria together with another internee who had typhus. None of

[78] Weksler, *Con la gente*, 37.

[79] Weksler, "Ferramonti Streiflichter," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 106, p. 6, CDEC.

[80] On this point, see Susanna Schrafstetter, "Zwischen Skylla und Charybdis? Münchner Juden in Italien, 1933-1945," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 66, no. 4 (2018): 603-605.

[81] Walter Greenberg, interview 33330, segment 7. Interview by Martha A. Frazer. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Aug. 14, 1997, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/33330, accessed May 17, 2024.

[82] For a list of common diseases, see Fürst and Rosenbach, "Ferramonti-Tarsia: Das Leben der Zivilinternierten in Zahlen," fondo Kalk, busta 2, fasc. 17, p. 8, CDEC.

[83] Barbara E. to Ministero degli Interni, Nov. 29, 1940, A 4 bis, busta 206, Dir. Gen. Pub. Sicurezza, Div. Affari Generali e riservati, MI, ACS.

[84] Vera Alkalaj, interview 74, segment 8. Interview by Sandy Jacobson. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Aug. 24, 1994, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/74, accessed, May 17, 2024.

[85] Sworn statement by Deborah M., Oct. 25, 1962, LEA 25399, Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Munich.

her family members were allowed to visit her. A few weeks earlier her grandmother had died in the hospital because in Ferramonti they did not have any insulin.[86]
Many inmates tried to work in one form or another because the government allowance paid to the inmates (lire 6,50 per day which was paid out every 10 days) was not nearly enough to survive in Ferramonti.[87] Families were disadvantaged because the full government allowance of 6,50 lire was only paid out to single adults. Married women and children received only 1,10 and 0,55 lire respectively.[88] This meant that mothers, especially, had to struggle to put food on the table and tried whatever they could to obtain food.
Some internees worked in the camp administration and received small 'salaries,' while others opened up small "businesses" in the camp. Watchmakers, shoemakers, tailors, plumbers, painters and locksmiths offered their services. There were bakeries, tea-stands, and "coffee houses" where inmates could get fresh pastries and beverages.[89] Internees who had family members outside of the camp could have goods sent to them and open a "store." For example, in this way Ernst Steiner was able to sell soap, toothpaste, and other toiletries to his fellow inmates.[90] Those internees who still had financial means could buy goods on the black market and set up a business in the camp. The Fascist militia that guarded the camp ran an elaborate black market, regularly bringing in large amounts of goods in the middle of the night.[91]
Women operated successful businesses in typically female domains such as cooking. Marta Grunbaum spoke excellent Italian and because of that she had a good relationship with the guards. She could afford to buy yeast and flour and other baking goods and started making pastries. But she had to get up at 4:00 am

[86] Rosy Berne (née Rosa Ebstein) interview 2679, segments 26-28. Interview by Jay B. Straus. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, May 10, 1995, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/2679, accessed May 17, 2024.
[87] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 118-19.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Pubblicità a Ferramonti, fondo Kalk, busta 2, fasc. 18, CDEC.
[90] Ernesto Steiner, "Come vendevo sapone a Ferramonti," fondo Kalk, busta 6, fasc. 73, p. 1-2, CDEC.
[91] Enrico Besztymt, "Meine campagna in Ferramonti," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 58, p. 2-3, CDEC. On the black market and bribery in Ferramonti, see also Albert Alcalay, *The Persistence of Hope. A True Story* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007), 174-175.

every morning to prepare the dough and do the baking.[92] Other women offered to do laundry and alterations, to cut hair or to provide manicures and pedicures. Renee L., who came with the Rodi group, brought her customers with her from Rhodes. She cut hair for bread and cigarettes.[93] Most likely not all the women who were now compelled to make some money had worked before they came to Ferramonti or to Italy. Some of the women in the camp could fall back on savings or rely on a husband's income, which allowed them to buy food from the local peasants who regularly came to the camp fence to sell groceries at inflated prices across the barbed wire.[94]

Those who lacked funds, specific skills, or contacts outside of the camp were in a much more difficult position.[95] Nina Weksler drew a stark contrast between the "upper crust" of the camp and those inmates who earned a few extra lire cleaning the toilets.[96] Those who did not have the means to start a business offered their services as housekeepers or butlers. Albert Springer, the head of the camp tribunal, later claimed in his testimony that "those who did not have private financial means always had the option to find a decent source of income and could improve their standard of living in this way."[97] Yet many inmates barely scraped by, among them many women. In October 1942, fifteen women, who had formed part of the Benghazi group, wrote a desperate letter to the Red Cross, explaining that they had lost everything and were now utterly destitute.[98] Rosa Ebstein remembered that practically every day she "used to faint from hunger."[99] Hanna Koppel wrote to

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[92] Marta Grunbaum, interview 26611, segment 49-50. Interview by Elaine F. Miller. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Feb. 14, 1997, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/26611, accessed May 17, 2024.

[93] Renee L., interview 52708, segment 53-54. Interview by Gail Moscoso. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Jan. 08, 1996, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/52708, accessed May 17, 2024.

[94] Alice Redlich, trascrizione della testimonianza, fondo Vicissitudini dei singoli, serie 1, busta 21, fasc. 618, CDEC. For an English version see https://deportati.it/wp-content/static/upload/eng/english_alice/english_alice.pdf, accessed May 17, 2024.

[95] These social differences have so far only been addressed briefly by Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 178-79.

[96] Weksler, "Ferramonti Streiflichter," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 106, p. 5, CDEC.

[97] Albert Springer, "Ferramonti," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 53, p. 5, CDEC.

[98] Folino, *Ferramonti*, 61-62.

[99] Rosy Berne (née Rosa Ebstein), interview 2679, segment 21. Interview by Jay B. Straus. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, May 10, 1995, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/2679, accessed May 17, 2024.

a relative, describing how weak she was, and how she had to lie down frequently when she felt dizzy from hunger. Her letter was censored by the camp authority for portraying a negative image to the outside.[100]

How many inmates—female or male—were able to find work in the camp administration or open successful businesses? These questions are difficult to answer but obviously, there were considerable social differences between the internees who could afford to buy extra food and hire a housekeeper and those who were barely able to survive. Claims like the one made by Albert Springer that everyone could make a decent living in Ferramonti were simply not true. Former inmates described prolonged involuntary boredom as one of the main problems of the camp.[101] They were forced to lead the "apathetic humiliating life of grazing animals who have their stable and their food. But what else?"[102]

Love, Sex, and Marriage

The crammed conditions, the widespread boredom, the absence of political news and the general anxiety led to the emergence of a great deal of gossip. Nina Weksler joked that the news in Ferramonti contained about 5% truth.[103] That may have been exaggerated, but gossip, rumors and slander were widespread. The inmates keenly observed what was going on in the camp and commented widely. Lacking any real news from outside of the camp, the inmates' "news" often concerned the behavior of women. "With plenty of free time, there were new daily scandals to be discussed – whose wife had been caught with whom, etc.," explained Richard Mayer who also described the daughter of neighbors in Ferramonti as "blonde [...] with no good reputation as for her morals."[104] Nina Weksler sarcastically commented that there was so much gossip about sex that no young attractive

[100] Folino, *Ferramonti*, 135-36.

[101] See for example Miriam Weiss, interview 1265, segment 47, 51. Interview by Hilary Kahn. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation 1995, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/1265, accessed May 17, 2024.

[102] Weksler, "Ferramonti Streiflichter," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 106, p. 3, CDEC.

[103] Ibid., p. 5.

[104] "Richard and Hella Mayer: Richard Mayer tells the story," in *Stories of Survival*, ed. Ropschitz-Bentham, 113, 112.

woman had her moral reputation intact.[105] Women's behavior was monitored closely. Sixteen-year-old Thea Obarzanek, who had her first boyfriend in the camp, remembered that the young couple was under constant surveillance, "with many eyes watching us."[106]

Love blossomed, despite the miserable conditions. Many young women experienced their first relationships at Ferramonti.[107] Members of the "Rodi group" especially were overwhelmingly young adults in their 20s and 30s. Some were in relationships hoping to get married soon. Others arrived all by themselves. Hedwig P.'s situation was particularly difficult. She entered the camp as a young widow together with her in-laws. In Ferramonti she met a man she liked, and she was grateful that her in-laws were welcoming to her new fiancé despite the pain of having lost their son.[108] The main alley in the camp and the "coffee houses" were central places for courtship. So were sports events. For Sunday afternoon football matches everybody showed up in their best clothes, and the women with their hair done, wearing make-up.[109] Padre Lopinot, the priest looking after the Catholics in Ferramonti, commented sourly about men (internees and guards) still hanging out in the women's barracks after the curfew of 9:00pm.[110] It is important to remember that in 1941 only 33% of the internees were women, and although we don't have statistics for 1942, the number is unlikely to have gone up because among the 506 members of the "Rodi group," who arrived in 1942, only 156 were women.[111] In a society with a large male surplus, young women received a lot of attention, and while some of it was welcome, a lot of it was unwanted.

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[105] Weksler, "Ferramonti Streiflichter," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 106, p. 5, CDEC.

[106] Aschkenase, *Remembering*, 39.

[107] Among them were Buena Pearlman, interview 51619, segment 71. Interview by Paula Saltman. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, May 11, 2001, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/51619; Zdenka Baum, see Zdenka Levy (née Baum), interview 12393, segment 70. Interview by Harriette Kanew. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Feb. 14, 1996, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/12393, all accessed May 17, 2024, and Heidi Mystovski, see Stavsky Ivankowski, *Not Enough Points*, 93-94.

[108] Hedwig P., interview 49972, segment 72-73. Interview by Larry Rosenberg. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, July 7, 1999, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/49972, accessed May 17, 2024.

[109] Weksler, *Con la gente*, 166.

[110] "Dal diario personale di padre Callisto Lopinot (1941-1944)," in Rende, *Ferramonti*, 120.

[111] Numbers according to Anna Pizzuti, *Ebrei stranieri internati in Italia durante il periodo bellico*, http://www.annapizzuti.it/database/ricerca.php, accessed May 17, 2024.

Women who became pregnant were allowed to go to the hospital in Cosenza to give birth. Getting there could be a challenge. About to deliver her baby, Gita Friedmann had to ride on a donkey to the train station to board a train to Cosenza.[112] After the women had given birth, they were sent back to the camp with their newborns. While a number of infants were living in the camp, their situation was precarious. Meta and Philipp Kanner's baby daughter Liane was born in the fall of 1940. In the winter, they had only cold water and the baby got very sick.[113] A couple of the newborns lived only for a few months.[114] Not all of the women who became pregnant carried the pregnancy to full term. Salim Diamand, one of the doctors at Ferramonti, recounted that his girlfriend secretly had an abortion: "One day we discovered that Mala was pregnant. This camp was no place for infants and an abortion was performed by a colleague, a physician from Germany. He did the operation with limited equipment and the most important drug we had was sulfanilamide. The abortion was completed without complications."[115] Unfortunately, we don't have Mala's perspective on her pregnancy, her relationship with the father of her unborn child, or her life in the camp. We don't know why she agreed to the procedure. The brief, matter-of-fact account by Diamand suggests abortions may have been carried out more than once. Apparently, there was a doctor who was willing and able to perform them. Salim Diamand was transferred shortly thereafter because a doctor was needed in another camp.[116]

Weddings occurred frequently at Ferramonti and they were contests of improvisation. Gita Friedmann's veil "was made of mosquito netting," and for the ritual bath, she walked to the river Crati, accompanied by a guard, and immersed herself in the muddy stream.[117] Anny Lazar had a wedding dress made of bedsheets.[118] One internee remarked that by 1942 a real "wedding fever" had

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[112] Smadar, "Zvi Neumann and Gita Friedmann," 129.

[113] Philipp Kanner to the Ministero degli Interni, May 12, 1942, A 4 bis, busta 181, Dir. Gen. Pub. Sicurezza, Div. Affari Generali e riservati, MI, ACS.

[114] Folino, *Ferramonti: un lager di Mussolini*, 142 and 220.

[115] Salim Diamand, *Dottore! Internment in Italy 1940-1945* (New York: Mosaic Press, 1987), 21.

[116] Ibid., 22.

[117] Smadar, "Zvi Neumann and Gita Friedmann," 128.

[118] Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 141-142.

emerged in the camp.[119] The lack of privacy and the constant observation led some couples to consider an early marriage in hopes of securing a family barrack. Other couples simply lied about already being married to get their own quarters or had a "fake" marriage ceremony.[120] In fact, some couples were married in a religious ceremony only, without the necessary documents and registration.[121] One of the inmates reminded his fellow Ferramonters that they needed to legalize their marriages after liberation.[122] Some couples understood the provisional nature of a ceremony, that for the time being, their union was valid only within the camp. Nina Weksler made it clear that women worn down by loneliness, lack of financial resources, and constant nasty gossip entered into strategic relationships with men who had money, and who would be able to obtain a family barrack thanks to his connections.[123]

A number of testimonies indicate that sexual bartering, i.e. "the exchange of sex or affection for resources or protection"[124] was common. Sometimes this involved relationships like the ones described by Nina Weksler, in others it would be merely a single encounter.[125] Renee L. explained in an interview that at the internment camp in Rhodes, "there were quite a few things going on for money, [...] sex for sale was very prominent at that point, and also for favors, for favors from the management [...]." When she was asked whether this happened at Ferramonti as well, she replied, "at Ferramonti, even more, I guess [...]."[126] Nina Weksler explained that the topic of sexual bartering formed a central part of the daily gossip

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[119] Unknown author, "Ferramontiehen," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 108, p. 1, CDEC.

[120] Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 131-32.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Unknown author, "Ferramontiehen" fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 108, p. 1-2, CDEC. Based on information from a former internee, Capogreco confirms that not all marriages at Ferramonti were legally valid. Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 131-132.

[123] Weksler, *Con la gente*, 143-148.

[124] This definition of sexual bartering is from Anna Hájková, "Between love and coercion: queer desire, sexual barter and the Holocaust," *German History* 39, no. 1, (2021): 112; See also Anna Hájková, "Sexual barter in times of genocide. Negotiating the Sexual Economy of the Theresienstadt ghetto," in *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 38, no. 3 (2013): 505. On sexual barter in other Italian internment camps see Cegna, "Alcune riflessioni," 1.

[125] Hájková, "Between love and coercion," 112-113, differentiates between longer, " 'rational' relationships" and " 'instrumental' sex." See also Hájková, "Sexual barter," 505.

[126] Renee L., interview 52708, segment 54-55. Interview by Gail Moscoso. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, Jan. 08, 1996, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/52708, accessed May 17, 2024.

in the camp.[127] By March 1943 Padre Lopinot wrote warily about the "great immorality" in Ferramonti. He complained that "in order to gain some money, married and unmarried women abandon themselves to vice."[128] At the camp of Le Fraschette, where non-Jewish internees were held, the guards had their favorite young beautiful women, whom they provided with food.[129] There, the situation was such that "the entire supervisory staff conducted their tasks in a negligent manner with total lack of discipline, instead seeking every possible opportunity to socialize with the female internees."[130] Sexual bartering and relationships between female internees and guards were common in the women's camp of Casacalenda.[131] According to Maria Eisenstein, in the women's camp of Lanciano, the commander maintained a relationship with one of the female inmates.[132] In Ferramonti some women apparently felt uneasy in the presence of the camp director. Edith Fischhof Gilboa wrote that "he liked young women" and that she felt deeply embarrassed by his sexualized language when he talked to her.[133]

While Padre Lopinot confided his thoughts to his private diary, male inmates of Ferramonti tried to convey a different public image. Albert Springer, head of the Ferramonti tribunal, claimed that there had only been two women in Ferramonti offering sex for money, and that they had not been "driven by need."[134] While both Lopinot and Springer stigmatized the women, they did not say anything about the men involved in the sexual barter.[135] Springer also assured the reader

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[127] Weksler, "Ferramonti-Streiflichter," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 106, p. 6, CDEC.

[128] "Dal diario personale di padre Callisto Lopinot (1941-1944)," in Rende, *Ferramonti,* 131.

[129] Amedeo Osti Guerrazzi, "I campi di concentramento per civili in Italia durante la Seconda Guerra Mondiale," *Studi Emigrazione/Migration Studies* 43, no. 164 (2006): 809.

[130] Ibid., 809-810.

[131] Reale, *Mussolini's Concentration Camps*, 110.

[132] Eisenstein, *L'internata numero 6,* 16-17 and 25.

[133] Fischhof Gilboa, *Farben des Regenbogens*, 116. The sentence that he liked young women is missing in the Italian translation of the book, in which the director is described as "carogna" (swine) instead, see Edith Fischhof Gilboa, *Vivrò libera nella terra promessa* (Milan: Mursia, 2018), 86. Similar allegations by other women can be found in Weksler, *Con la gente*, 45, 99 and John Bierman, *Odyssey* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984), 184-185. See also Smil Reis, "testimony regarding his arrest in Milan and his life as an inmate in the Ferramonti (Italy) camp, 1941-1943," item ID 3690517, file 132, Record Group O.21 (Italy Collection), Yad Vashem, https://documents.yadvashem.org/index.html?language=en&search=global&strSearch=Ferramonti%20Reis&GridItemId=3690517, accessed June 18, 2024.

[134] Albert Springer, "Die Kriminalität im Lager," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 53, p. 34, CDEC.

[135] For this common pattern in male postwar testimony, Hájková, "Sexual barter," 505.

that women were never molested, and that "public morality" was never offended in Ferramonti.[136] While men had their own reasons to remain silent about sexual barter, it is understandable that female testimonies talking openly about these kinds of experiences and choices, be it at Ferramonti or other camps, are rare. Sexual barter has been "among the most stigmatized"[137] themes in Holocaust history. Yet, it does become clear that sexual barter was widespread in a system in which male Fascist authorities claimed full control over female behavior.

"Buona condotta" was one of the camp rules that the Fascist directory had imposed on the inmates. For Italian Fascism internment was—amongst other things—a tool to discipline women (Jewish or otherwise) and the rule of "buona condotta" was typically enforced when it came to women.[138] As Victoria de Grazia has noted, Fascism drew "a sharp line between bad women and good ones,"[139] and many female internees who were educated, emancipated or non-conformist were subsumed in the latter category.[140] In fact, the all-female internment camps were reserved for women considered to be of "dubbia condotta morale e politica."[141] Most of them were not Jews but enemy aliens—among them suspected prostitutes and spies (or wives of suspected spies), known antifascists but also women from Yugoslavia (collectively suspected to be anti-Italian), some Jewish women, women who had violated the rules in other camps. Sometimes no reason was discernable.[142] The subjugation was stronger and the list of vexatious rules longer in the all-female camps, where women suffered under more direct and stricter control of the fascist authorities than in Ferramonti.[143] In Casacalenda some women tried to escape from the camp, others attempted suicide.[144] Suicide

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136 Albert Springer, "Die Kriminalität im Lager," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 53, p. 33-34, CDEC.

137 Hájková, "Between Love and Coercion," 112.

138 Cegna, " 'Di dubbia condotta'," 29.

139 Victoria de Grazia, *How Fascism Ruled Women, Italy 1922-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 45.

140 Cegna, " 'Di dubbia condotta'," 29; Cegna, "Fascist Female Segregation," 76.

141 Cegna, " 'Di dubbia Condotta'," 28.

142 Cegna, "Fascist Female Segregation," 80-81, 85; Cegna, " 'Di dubbia Condotta'," 28, 31-33 and 37.

143 Voigt, Zuflucht auf Widerruf, vol. 2, 111; Cegna, "Alcune riflessioni," 14.

144 Hanna Cassel, interview 53177, segment 62, 67-68. Interview by Gail Kurtz. Visual History Archive, JFCS Holocaust Center, June 3, 1991, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/53177, accessed May 17, 2024.

attempts also occurred in Vinchiaturo and Lanciano.[145] In these women's camps, a self-government organized by the internees did not exist. In Ferramonti, the presence of a Jewish self-government provided somewhat of a buffer from Fascist scrutiny, and the presence of men meant laxer rules for everyone, but female behavior was also controlled closely by the Fascist directorate. Tony Isaack, who was in the camp without her husband, was reprimanded by a camp official for walking and chatting with a young man.[146] Lily S. had an infection that was treated by the doctors in the camp infirmary. Somebody informed the camp director about this, and, as a result, she was forced to undergo an examination to see if she had had an abortion.[147] Nina Weksler was repeatedly reprimanded for meeting up with male friends in the evening after curfew and accused of maintaining sexual relations with various men. She was also reprimanded for wearing trousers and threatened with transfer to an all-female camp.[148] At one point, the directorate considered separating the women's barracks from the rest of the camp to discipline the female inmates.[149] We don't know who signaled the female "transgressions" to the directorate but can assume that it was not always the guards.

While some comparative conclusions can be drawn between the situation of women in Ferramonti and that of women in the all-female camps, Ferramonti was unique. It was the only large camp for Jews where both male and female internees were held, and which had a Jewish self-government. The Fascist universe of camps was vast. Comparisons are fraught, given the different camp populations, the vastly different conditions in the camps, and the changes resulting from German occupation. Just to provide one example: In the camp of Gonars, where Yugoslav civilians were held, conditions were much worse than in Ferramonti, leading to an extremely high death rate. In Gonars, "about 80% of all pregnant women delivered

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[145] Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, 201; Eisenstein, *L'internata numero 6*, 69.

[146] Tony Isaack, interview 43852, segment 78. Interview by Marianna Bergida. Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, May 16, 1998, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/43852, accessed May 17, 2024.

[147] Lily S., interview 52438, segment 42-44. Interview by Anne Feibelman. Visual History Archive, JFCS Holocaust Center, Jan. 27, 1990, https://vha.usc.edu/testimony/52438, accessed May 17, 2024.

[148] Weksler, *Con la gente*, 98-100.

[149] Springer, "Die Statuten des Lagergerichtes," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 53, p. 28, CDEC.

stillborn fetuses."[150] Marija Poje remembered that she was too weak to bury her son who died from starvation only days after he was born.[151] Much work remains to be done examining women's lives in various locations within the Fascist camp system—research that is also hampered by a scarcity of sources. Some places housed only a small number of internees and an even smaller number of women, and, as noted, few women talked openly about sexual abuse or barter. Hence, much of the comparative perspective lies beyond the scope of this article.

The Liberation of Ferramonti: Nostalgia for a Concentration Camp?

Mussolini's removal from power in July 1943 did not lead to an immediate dissolution of the camp, as the directives for internment were not revoked. At that point, the food supply had deteriorated and the camp was overcrowded.[152] More and more inmates had fallen ill with various diseases.[153] The *capi camerata* demanded more food and less censorship and surveillance.[154] In the final days of the camp's existence, several internees were killed by erroneous fire from an Allied plane that mistook the place for military barracks.[155] In early September 1943 the camp was finally liberated by the British, which meant that the Jews in Ferramonti, and in the regions of the far south of Italy that had been reached by the Allies before the announcement of Italy's surrender, were spared from German occupation.

Following its liberation, the camp continued to function as "home" to many of its inmates who were now free but did not immediately have a place to go. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration provided the supplies, the barbed wire was removed, and the camp continued to exist under Jewish self-administration.[156] Some of the internees stayed until 1945. Among the last to leave

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[150] Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, 224. At one point almost 6,400 internees were imprisoned in Gonars. 439 internees did not survive the camp, ibid.

[151] Kersevan, *Lager italiani*, 156.

[152] Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 140-41, 144.

[153] Folino, *Un misfatto senza sconti*, 84.

[154] Ibid., 90.

[155] Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 145-146.

[156] On the final phase, Capogreco, *Ferramonti*, 143-166.

was Siegfried Danziger from Munich, who wrote about the "comfort" (*Geborgenheit*) he experienced in Ferramonti "during terrible times," and who was convinced that "former Ferramonters [...] will never forget their camp which for many years had been an involuntary Heimat."[157] Julius (Giulio) Fleischmann from Vienna reached a similar conclusion:

> And in this way in the camp of Ferramonti, a whole range of institutions emerged, the likes of which you only find in big, well-developed communities. And when the camp was dissolved and closed after the war, all former Ferramonters felt, on the one hand, the joy that they had survived the war more or less intact, on the other hand, a certain nostalgia and a deep sense of regret that Ferramonti, this interesting and strange concentration camp, was now consigned to history.[158]

Danziger's and Fleischmann's remarkably nostalgic looks back are indicative of much testimony from men romanticizing the community that they had built in Ferramonti. Whether it was them or Albert Springer writing about moral virtuosity or work opportunities, or Gianni Mann stressing the good relationship with the Fascist director, they focused on their achievements as they searched for meaning and belonging. Not everyone saw it this way. By contrast, the Viennese teenager Gisella Weiss had little time for nostalgia. She expressed her hope that Ferramonti "to us will remain nothing but an ugly record far away from our lives."[159]

Conclusions: The "Best Camp" and Its Afterlife

The women of Ferramonti were a heterogeneous group from different countries, of different ages, with or without their families. What they shared in Ferramonti

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[157] Siegfried Danziger, "Die Letzten von Ferramonti," fondo Kalk, busta 5, fasc. 55, p. 3, 4, CDEC.
[158] Julius (Giulio) Fleischmann, "Die Chevrà Kadishà in Ferramonti," fondo Kalk, busta 6, fasc. 71, p. 1, CDEC.
[159] Gisella Weiss, "Momenti salienti della vita del campo," fondo Kalk, busta 7, fasc. 103, p. 2, CDEC.

was a daily struggle against dirt, disease, boredom, and hunger, heat in the summer and damp in the winter in a space dominated by men. They had to find ways to make money in order to maintain themselves and their families in a society of great economic inequality with a flourishing system of barter involving internees, guards, and the local population. In this system, sex was a readily accepted currency that was used strategically to acquire food, favors, protection, and other assets. They had to negotiate sex, love, marriage, and maternity in a confined setting in which their bodies and behavior were under constant surveillance by the camp community and the Fascist directorate. They dealt with all of this, sometimes for years, while receiving no news about family members and loved ones. Despite this, many female internees (like their male counterparts) emphasize the positive aspects of their time in Ferramonti in their testimonies and relegate the specifically female experience and hardship to the sidelines.

The reluctance by survivors to be critical of internment (and of their treatment by the Italians more generally) has surprised historians.[160] As mentioned in the introduction, this has to do with a comparative lens juxtaposing treatment in Italy with the situation in German concentration and death camps. Especially for a survivor of Auschwitz, in retrospect, time in Ferramonti appeared to have been quite pleasant.[161] Many survivors were young at the time and associated Ferramonti with the years of their youth, with first romance, with courtship and perhaps with marriage. Others put all of their energy and life blood in the running of camp, in bettering the conditions in the malaria ridden wetlands of the Crati valley, and, in this way, experienced a sense of purpose and belonging.[162]

Yet, the unusually positive assessment contributed to the self-exculpatory postwar narrative of the "good Italian," who unlike the "bad German," never meant any harm to the Jews.[163] In this narrative Ferramonti became a "humane camp," the best camp in Italy, and, in this way, the narrative also deflected attention from Italian camps that had been much worse than Ferramonti. Among them were the

[160] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 140-41 and 198-99.

[161] Aschkenase, *Remembering*.

[162] Voigt, *Zuflucht auf Widerruf*, vol. 2, 199.

[163] For the myth of the good Italian and the Italians as "brava gente," see Filippo Focardi, *Il cattivo tedesco ed il bravo Italiano. La rimozione delle colpe della Seconda Guerra Mondiale* (Bari, Editori Laterza, 2013); Davide Bidussa, *Il mito del bravo italiano* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1994).

camps for Yugoslavs, such as Gonars, which has been mentioned above, or Arbe, and those in north Africa, such as Giado.[164]

There were some signs however, that not all the former inmates approved of this narrative of Ferramonti as the "good camp." The dissenting voices were female. In 1979 Bojana Jacovljević complained to a fellow former internee that Israel Kalk had painted too rosy a picture of Ferramonti.[165] At the time, Kalk did much to publicize the narrative of heroic achievement. A few years later, in February of 1984, a controversy erupted when one of the most important Italian newspapers, the *Corriere della Sera* published an article titled "In Calabria, a Lager which was not a Lager," by Mario La Cava. The author was an accomplished writer from Calabria. "However, in 1940, Italy was not yet flooded with German and Nazi directives," La Cava wrote. "The persecution of the Jews could appear to be formal only, not substantial, and even if it was not legitimate, it was appropriate to the serious situation that Italy experienced and to the need of not annoying the German allies." Following this stunning (and in itself contradictory) justification for the persecution, La Cava explained that Ferramonti was the most humane camp in all of Italy, where one could play soccer, go to concerts, get a permit to go shopping in town, attend religious services, and get married in a serene environment. The rest of the text was a eulogy to the humanity of the camp *maresciallo* Gaetano Marrari.[166] In essence, the text painted the same picture of Ferramonti as Fascist propaganda had done 50 years earlier, according to which internment of opponents of the regime was nothing but a "*villeggiatura*" (vacation time) for the inmates.[167] And the article nourished the myth of Italians as "*brava gente*," portraying Marrari as a splendid example.

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[164] For these camps, see Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*; Kersevan, *Lager italiani*; Davide Rodogno, *Il nuovo ordine mediterraneo* (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2003), 397-484; Eric Salerno, *Uccideteli tutti. Libia 1943: Gli ebrei nel campo di concentramento fascista di Giado* (Milano: Il Saggiatore, 2008).

[165] Haler to Kalk, 11 July 1979, fondo Kalk, busta 2, fasc. 25, CDEC.

[166] Mario La Cava, "In Calabria un lager che non era un lager," *Corriere della Sera*, February 13, 1984, fondo Località d'internamento, busta 1, fasc. Ferramonti, CDEC. For an assessment of how newspaper articles about Ferramonti spread a positive image of the camp, see Teresa Grande, "La ricostruzione 'in positivo' di un'esperienza di internamento: il camp di Ferramonti di Tarsia," in *Responsabilità e memoria. Linee per il Futuro*, eds. Donatella Barazzetti e Carmen Leccardi (Rome: La Nuova Italia Scientifica, 1997), 147-149.

[167] Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, 20-21.

Shortly thereafter, Rita Koch, who had been interned in Celico near Ferramonti and had come to the camp in the fall of 1943, wrote an angry letter to the editor in chief of *Corriere della Sera*. She asked whether the author had any idea of what it meant to be locked up behind barbed wire in a torrid malaria-ridden area, whether he understood the humiliation, the denigration, and the despair of the inmates. Koch made it clear that a friendly *maresciallo* did not alter the fact that Ferramonti constituted a "terrible crime" and serious violation of human rights.[168] The long-term distortion in the public perception of the camps caused by the way in which Ferramonti was portrayed for decades after the war has most recently been critiqued by the Italian historian Carlo Spartaco Capogreco, a trailblazer in the critical examination of the Fascist camp system. In 2019 he berated "the hilarious description of the Ferramonti camp proffered by the local Pro loco association, for example, [which] describes it as the 'unique experience of an internment camp that was free from every racial prejudice'."[169] Adding to Rita Koch's point, he stated that the Jews who escaped deportation in southern Italy did "not owe their lives to the 'kindness' of the fascist camps" but to the geostrategic situation of the Second World War in southern Italy.[170] For Koch, the sanitized image of Ferramonti was "counterproductive to the safety and respect of democracy." She concluded, you "don't do a service to Italy of today if you're trying to prettify the crimes of the past."[171] Her admonition still rings true today.

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[168] Rita Koch to direttore di *Corriere della Sera*, February 21, 1984, fondo Località d'internamento, busta 1, fasc. Ferramonti, CDEC.

[169] Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, 10.

[170] Ibid., 5.

[171] Rita Koch to direttore di *Corriere della Sera*, February 21, 1984, fondo Località d'internamento, busta 1, fasc. Ferramonti, CDEC.

Germans and the Holocaust: Popular Responses to the Persecution and Murder of the Jews (co-edited with Alan E. Steinweis, New York: Berghahn, 2016). She has held fellowships at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the Center for Holocaust Studies at the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History in Munich, and the Leibniz Institute of European History in Mainz.

Keywords: Internment, Ferramonti, Jews, Women, Italy

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Wilhelma, Israel: An Interface of Israeli and German Settlement Histories

by *Danny Goldman*

Abstract

The article deals with two settlements, Wilhelma and Atarot, whose histories are connected: the settlers of Wilhelma were deported by the British Mandate authorities in 1948 and became refugees, and the settlers of Atarot had to leave their settlement as it fell in the same year and also became refugees. They were re-settled in Wilhelma as it was vacated by the British. The German settlers of Wilhelma were deported to Australia where they were naturalized, mostly in Melbourne and Sydney. The name Wilhelma was replaced with Bnei Atarot by the Jewish settlers from Old Atarot.

The article opens with an introduction describing the relations between Jews and Germans in Palestine from the beginning of the German settlement until the Germans were forced to leave the country. It follows with an encounter with the Luz family, in Bnei Atarot and their narrative of the events that led to the evacuation of Old Atarot in 1948; the acts of settlement in Old Atarot and Wilhelma; the impact of the 1948 War of Independence on both communities, the heavy fighting in Atarot and Neve Yaakov; what happened to the lands of Wilhelma; and other Jewish refugees who joined for the re-settlement of Wilhelma. The article ends with an epilog, surveying the events in Old Atarot, to the cemeteries of Wilhelma and Old Atarot, and the Luxemburg Agreement (1952) and its significance to both communities.

Introduction

Retrospect and Overview: Relations between Templers and Jews in the Holy Land 1868-1948

More Jewish Refugees joined the Atarot Re-settling Project on Wilhelma Lands: Be'erot Yitzhak, Nehalim, and She'ar Yashuv

Conclusion

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Introduction

2001. Israel, near Ben-Gurion airport. I am walking the old road, in Bnei Atarot, a small suburban community 15 km east of Tel Aviv. The old Eucalyptus trees planted along the narrow road, and the century-old houses next to that road conceal a historic affair relevant for Germans and Israelis alike: the drama of a small settlement named Wilhelma, a Christian-German colony founded 1902, that became the Jewish settlement of Bnei Atarot, in 1948.

Fig. 1. Main Street of Wilhelma, early 1910s, Yoel Amir postcard collection. The German title says "German Colony Wilhelma near Jaffa."

Right ahead of me I notice an old man, walking slowly with a walking stick. I understand that he is a resident of the settlement, and stop to greet him and introduce myself. His name is Michah Luz, and as I assumed, he was among the first settlers in Bnei Atarot (sons of Atarot) and a veteran of the old settlement, Atarot, which is no more[1].

We talked a little about the tragic histories of Wilhelma and Atarot, and upon my request, met again that evening for more, this time in the presence of a video

[1] The most prominent member of the family was Shabtai Luzinski, a key activist in the "Illegal Immigration" (Aliya Bet) organization. Settled in Atarot (1923), died in Italy in January 1947, and buried in Atarot (1947). Biodata by Ruth Danon, December 20, 2022.

camera; we sat for hours in his house, him telling me in detail his account of the beginning of the settlement: how they lost their homes in Old Atarot and how Wilhelma, the German colony, became the Jewish *moshav*[2] of Bnei Atarot.

Fig. 2. Interview with Michah Luz, 2001. Sitting next to M. Luz is his sister Ruth. Michah and Ruth Luz, "Atarot and Wilhelma 1948," interview (2000) by Danny Goldman, video, 1:26, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3BvvIivaJo (Bnei Atarot Archive) accessed May 14, 2024.

1902. Four years after the historic visit of Keiser Wilhelm II to the Holy Land, then under the Ottoman rule. At this point in time, there were already four German Templer settlements in the Holy Land:[3] in Haifa (est. 1868); Jaffa (est. 1869); Sarona (now in Tel Aviv, est. 1871) and in Jerusalem (est. 1874). The small community of Germans in Palestine harvests the fruits of the imperial visit: The German government recognizes the pioneering enterprise of the settlement, and its alignment with Germany's interests in the Middle East. Now the German

[2] Many thanks to all those who assisted in compiling this article: Mrs. Ruthy Danon, Abraham Tamir, Michael Luz, Ruth Luz, Mary Pfeffer and many others.

[3] The Templers, German protestant settlers in the Holy Land, arrived in the Holy Land 1868, and established 7 colonies. Their enterprise ended on April 1948 when they were deported to Cyprus by the British Mandate authorities, and from there to Australia and Germany. Detailed history of the Templers in Paul Sauer, *The Holy Land Called*, trans. Henley G. (Melbourne: The Temple Society, 1991). Settlement history by Yossi Ben-Artzi, *From Germany to the Holy Land* (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 1996); Alex Carmel, "German Settlement in Palestine at the End of the Turkish Rule: The Political Problems, Local and International" (PhD diss., Hebrew University Jerusalem, 1970) [Heb.]; Eyal Jacob Eisler, "The American – German Colony in Jaffa and its' Distinction within the Context of the Christian World in the Land of Israel by the End of the Ottoman Rule 1866- 1914" (M.A. thesis, Haifa University), 1993 [Heb.].

settlers can lean on their government for support, and are able to purchase farming land east of Jaffa, which they name Wilhelma-Hamidiya in honor of the king of Wuertemberg (Friedrich Wilhelm Viktor Albert; 1859-1941) and the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Abdul Hamid II (1842-1918). Ten years later the Jewish community of Atarot was founded, by acquiring land near Kalandia (10 km north of Jerusalem); the first group of settlers came a year later. They dispersed due to difficulties during WWI; another group resettled in 1919 once the War was over.[4] Atarot lasted a few months into the War of Independence and on May 14, 1948 (the day Israel's independence was declared) it fell and was evacuated just before the Arab forces raided the settlement, looting and destroying it.
It is worth mentioning that during WWI, Wilhelma was in the midst of fierce combat between the British and the Ottomans, as described by Binyamin Zeev Kedar:

> During WW1, a German military hospital operated in the village (one of its patients was Rudolf Franz Höss, who was to become in Infamous *kommandant* of Auschwitz). [...] [Wilhelma was taken by the British in November 1917 D.G.]. The British deported the Germans to Egypt, but allowed their return after the war.[5]

It was in Wilhelma that the German and the Jewish histories will merge, 46 years later.
The Germans were pietists,[6] mainly farmers and artisans from Württemberg, who came to settle the Holy Land, then a desolate part of the Ottoman Empire, in the mid-1860s, forming 7 prospering colonies, Wilhelma among them; the Jews of Atarot were settlers who bought land north of Jerusalem early in the 1920s (and earlier) and formed a *moshav*, a collective community they named Atarot.

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[4] Yossi Spanier, in cooperation with Ruth Danon, Shmuel Even-Or, Zvi & Hanna Tal., *The Garden of Fortitude: A Memorial to the Settlement North of Jerusalem* (leaflet in honor of 100 years for the Settlement of Atarot, 2012).
[5] Binyamin Zeev Kedar, *The Changing Land between the Jordan and the Sea* (Israel: MOD and Yad Ben Zvi Press, 1999), 142-143.
[6] A faction in Lutheranism emphasizing biblical doctrine with individual pious sentiment and living a vigorous Christian life.

Retrospect and Overview: Relations between Templers and Jews in the Holy Land 1868-1948

In the second half of the 19th century, two groups of immigrants to the Holy Land made a successful settlement attempt. The earlier group were the Templers, Germans who (in the late 1860s) emigrated from Germany, Switzerland, the United States, Russia and other places. The second group were Jews, with waves of immigration starting in the 1880s.[7] The German (Templer) immigration preceded the Jewish immigration, however in smaller numbers. The first Templer colony (in Haifa) was founded in 1868, by a handful of Templer families, the forerunners for more German immigrants to the German settlements in the Holy Land. The first Jewish colony, Petakh Tikva was founded in 1878, also by a small group.

> In that colony [Sarona] we sat, sipping beer, and after we have looked around and watched the houses and the fields, the beauty and the order, the serene and peaceful life in the colony, we thought: [....] if the Templer group, composed of average persons in education and property, and rich only in a deep drive to make the Holy Land settled as in old times[...] if they could find a way to establish this colony that [quality] is not to be found even in Germany, so should we[...] (Translation by the author).[8]

[7] The first wave of Jewish immigration (first Aliya starting 1880s) was 25,000, of immigrants coming in from Europe, Russia and Yemen; then came a number of waves: second Aliya (1904-1914, 35,000), most of them left or deported by the Ottoman authorities during WW1; third Aliya (1918-1923, 37,000), these were mainly Jews from East Europe, Poland, Russia, Romania, and Lithuania; forth Aliya (1924-1929, 80,000) from East Europe and Middle-Eastern countries such as Yemen and Iraq; fifth Aliya (1930-1931 250,000) from East and Central Europe, Many from Germany. Last was the Aliya before and after WWII and shortly afterwards, also called Aliya Bet (illegal immigration) from Europe and north Africa. The Templers on the other hand numbered approx. 2200 in all colonies, between the two World Wars, at their peak presence in the Holy Land.
[8] Translated from Old Hebrew by the author. Yehiel Bril, *Yesud Hama'ala* (Jerusalem: Magenza 1883), 124.

Fig. 3. Yehiel Bril 1836-1886. A journalist and a public figure, among the founders of Hebrew journalism and the first Jewish colonies. Mazkeret Batya site, unknown date and photographer, public domain.

Bril (the author of the above), saw the German settlement as a model for Jews that were beginning to flow in. Many other leaders of *Shivat Zion* (return to Zion) Movement expressed the same idea, and even rented rooms (as Bril did) in Templer colonies in order to study closely how the Germans manage to establish such successful communities. Many even visited the founder of the Templer movement, Christoph Hoffmann in person, in order to learn from the Templers' experience.[9]

[9] Alex Carmel, *The German Settlement in the Holy Land by the end of the Ottoman Era, its Political, Local and International Problems* (Haifa: Haifa University and the Gottlieb Schumacher Institute for research of the Christian World Activity in the Holy Land during the 19th Century, and the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel [SPNI] 1990), 201.

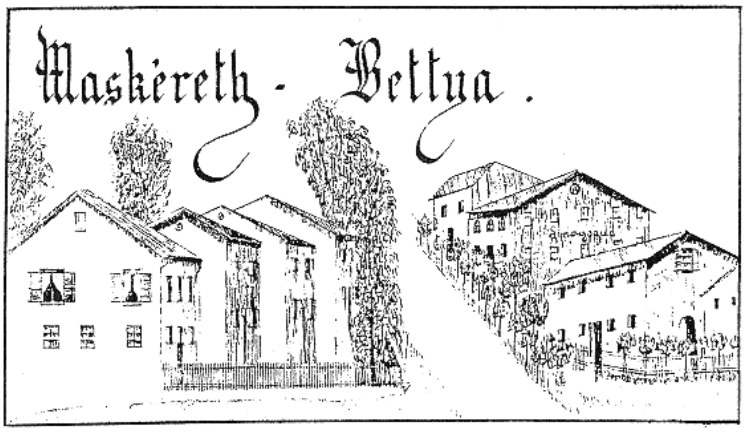

Fig. 4. The Jewish colony of Mazkeret Batya, drawing by Eliyahu Scheid, from his book *Memories of the travels in Eretz Israel and Syria, 1883-1899*, (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi Institute, 1983).[10]

The Jews regarded the German Colonies as a benchmark for their own settlements. Hagai Binyamini, who lived near Waldheim and Bethlehem recalled his impressions of the German Colonies:

> The farms were very orderly; stone walls, cleanliness, flowers, the yards were swept, everything built and neat. Our farms were sort of provisional: sheet metal, things tied up with wires, use of old metal pipes... theirs was everything built with cut stone, tiled courts, fodder pits... I understood from them the German order and efficiency. This gave some idea as to what German are capable of creating. People who can work so systematically with such means and dedication, no wonder that they almost conquered the world...[11]

The Templers, for their part, welcomed the introduction of Jewish populace to the Holy Land, and were pleased to see Petakh Tikva (the first Jewish colony) established by Jewish settlers, regarding it as "a substantial step towards the

[10] Bril was not only praising the German colonies, he actually implemented what he learned in Sarona. In 1883 he (and others) founded one of the first Jewish colonies, Mazkeret Batya. The drawing by Scheid reflects the influence of Templers' architecture resembling the German houses of Sarona.

[11] Nogah Binstock, *We Are not Like Them, the Taking over of the German Colonies*, video, 1989, for *Camera Obscura project*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmMj3Oh9FjI , (4:43), accessed December 12, 2023.

advancement of *Eretz Israel*,"[12] and even leased farming land in Petakh Tikva from the Jewish settlers as they trusted and cooperated with them.[13]

The Jews that settled Petakh Tikva approached the Templer architect Theodor Sandel, a young architect and surveyor[14]. They needed planning for the colony, and Sandel delivered: he (along with the Templer surveyor Ernst Voigt) produced a master plan for the colony, which became the first Jewish colony in the Holy Land.

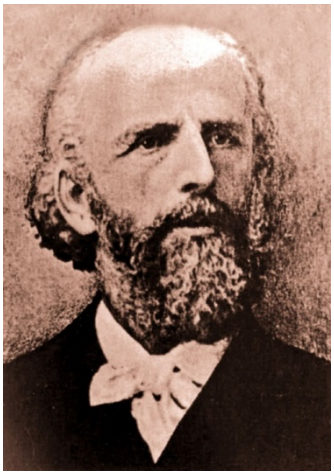

Fig. 5. Photo of Theodor Sandel, Tamar Yardeni collection and digitization.

A few years before Petakh Tikva, the Jewish entrepreneur Charles Netter founded the Jewish farming school in Mikveh Israel (near Jaffa). Netter approached Sandel for the layout of the institution. Sandel provided the planning and later designed

[12] Carmel, *The German Settlement in the Holy Land by the end of the Ottoman Era, its Political, Local and International Problems*, quoting the *Warte,* May 22, 1879, 7. The *Warte* was and still is the official platform of the Templer Movement. This is a newspaper in German, full name is *Die Warte des Tempels*.

[13] Ibid., quoting a report from Sarona in the *Warte*, March 25, 1880.

[14] Theodor Sandel (born 1845) studied in Stuttgart at the high technical school, arrived at the Holy Land by 1871, settled in the Templer colony of Jaffa, established an architectural practice, and designed Sarona as his first project. Moved to the Templer colony in Jerusalem in 1880, where he later became head of the colony. In Jerusalem he embarked on a number of projects for the Jewish community, such as the Sha'arei Zedek hospital, the Lemmel Jewish school, and other projects for the Ottoman authorities and the German Christian community. In 1898 Sandel was awarded the high title *Baurat* by the Keiser, recognizing his skill and talent.

the local winery, (built 1887), one of the first modern wineries in the Holy Land.[15] Sandel proceeded to design the winery of Sarona (1893), the third Templer colony, based on the experience he gathered in the Mikveh winery design. There is evidence that the design of Mikveh was advised by German settlers who had gathered a limited experience from their years of settlement prior to Mikveh, and were very pleased to see the new farming school being established there. Christoph Paulus, a Templer figure wrote (1870) about the economical benefits the Templers could gain from the Mikveh enterprise, and wished Karl Netter success in the endeavor.[16]

Fig. 6. Sandel's largest building project in the Holy Land, built for the Jewish community: Sha'arei Zedek Hospital in Jerusalem. Built in 1902, outside of the Old City. The building still stands. Private collection, photographer unknown, public domain. Data from: David Kroyanker, *Jerusalem: A Guide to Neighborhoods and Buildings, an Architectural View* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing Ltd., 1996), 96.

The two groups of settlers regarded themselves as "partners in fate." Both were oppressed by the Ottomans, who ruled the Holy Land until 1918. The Ottomans preferred to keep the region unchanged, and therefore made life for outsiders very hard: land registry and ownership, construction of new structures, heavy taxation, and poor law enforcement. However, Jewish immigration intensified in the 1880s

[15] Eisler, "The American – German Colony in Jaffa and its' Distinction within the Context of the Christian World in the Land of Israel by the End of the Ottoman Rule 1866- 1914," 49.
[16] Naftali Thalmann, "Farming in the Templer Settlements and its Contribution to the Development of Agriculture in Eretz-Israel," *Cathedra* 78 (December 1995): 65-81.

and more Jewish colonies were founded: Zichron Ya'akov, Rosh Pinna, and Rishon Lezion. The Templers, by now with four strong colonies (Haifa, Jaffa, Sarona and Jerusalem), were pleased with the establishment of new Jewish colonies; these contributed to the economy of the Templer settlements, bought German products sold at the Templer colonies, and Templer builders were involved in construction at the Jewish colonies.

The Germans and the Jewish settlers suffered equally from hostility coming from the Ottoman authorities and the local Arab residents of the Holy Land. The hostility from the Arabs was even worse, as it was accompanied by violence.[17]

The Germans were equally subject to crops theft and threats from their Arab neighbors. Alex Carmel estimated one third of the crops was stolen by Arabs.[18] In general, the Germans were also concerned about the increasing hostility of their Arab neighbors. In Wilhelma, the German settlers suffered from theft and robbery, and at one point there was even a raid of armed Arabs from neighboring villages, into the heart of the colony (1909).

The great waves of Jewish immigration generated a competition between the Jews and the Germans. The Jews had already established more colonies (Yesud Hama'ala (1883), Ness Ziona (1883), Mazkeret Batya (1883) and Gedera (1884), and also expanded the Jewish presence in towns. From this point on, the relations between Jews and Germans begun to oscillate. The Germans in their colonies felt overwhelmed by the Jewish settlement; the result was German hostility toward the Jewish settlers, expressed in the hindrance of economical cooperation.

In 1890-1891, it became clear for the Templers, that it is more likely that the Jews will be taking over as the leading civilian factor in the Holy Land; however, the Germans accepted the idea that both communities are to live side by side for years to come. The German colonies were thriving and so were the Jewish colonies; as Jewish immigration dwindled, the rate of forming new colonies slowed down; and the Templer colonies were maintaining their superiority in terms of quality of life.[19]

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[17] Many other hostilities of the same nature are described in Yair Assiskowitz, The *Bitter and the Sweet* (Herzliya, Israel: Milo Publishers, 2000).

[18] Carmel, *The German Settlement in the Holy Land by the end of the Ottoman Era, its Political, Local and International Problems*, 185, quoting the letter from Von Linker (head of the German military cabinet) to the head of the Admiralty in Berlin, Bonn Archive, file 140, volume 1.

[19] *Warte*, March 1889, and July 1890, and November 1890.

By the end of the 1890s, there were in Palestine about 50,000 Jews compared to 1,500 Germans.[20] In 1897, the Zionist Movement led by Theodor Herzl,[21] opened its first session in Basel. The Templers were unhappy with the development, as they realized that for the first time this was a political process, aimed at uniting all the small initiatives and would accelerate the Jewish settlement. This time it was clear that this was a significant international move managed professionally and charged with national aspiration. The establishment of the new Zionist bank was the last straw that made the Templers interpret the Zionist movement as aspiring to make the Holy Land the national home for the Jews, therefore regarding other populations as undesirable for a future Jewish majority.

In the mid-1890s, the Zionist movement formed the Jewish National Fund, that immediately commenced purchasing land for further Jewish settlement. The Germans could not compete with this powerful instrument, Combined with increased Jewish immigration. Templer voices were now heard insisting that the German settlers need to be on watch not to lose the lead in export of Jaffa Oranges as they had lost the lead in viticulture.[22]

In the years before WWI, it became clear that the Ottoman Empire was weakening, and its collapse was only a matter of time. The commander of the German fleet in the Mediterranean, wrote to his superiors:

> [...]Zionism is about to achieve supremacy in the Holy Land - a fact that without doubt will contribute to spreading the German culture and enhance its economy. With the aid of the Jewish community in the Holy Land, Germany has a good measure to expand its interests in the Land. Moreover, the Jewish factor, who alongside Hebrew is proficient in German more than any other language, will be most willing to accept German political patronage (in the event of disintegration of the Ottoman Empire).[23]

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[20] *The Hebrew Encyclopedia*, vol. 6, (Jerusalem: The Encyclopedia Publishing Corporation 1957), table 4, 674.

[21] Theodor Herzl, a Jewish journalist (1860-1904), political activist who was the founder of modern political Zionism, seeking to establish a Jewish homeland.

[22] *Warte* from January 1908.

[23] Report dated May 31, 1913, Berlin Archive, file 134, vol. 32.

Davis Trietsch, a German-Jewish politico and an activist in the Zionist movement, made an effort to persuade the German settlers in a shared interest between them and the Jewish settlers. In 1913, he published an article in the *Warte* for that purpose: Jewish presence in the Holy Land is gaining ground, and now consists of 100,000 souls, 70,000 of which are fluent in German. These Jews prefer German products and are the main body of consumers for the products of the German colonies. German settlers are consulting Jewish experts in forestry; there is cooperation in medicine, and civil cooperation between neighboring communities. Trietsch's ideas were echoed in the German press, which now advocated German support for the Jewish enterprise in the Holy Land, to secure Germany's interests there.

In the years between the two World Wars, and until the NS party in Germany assumed power, more positive relations developed between Jews and Germans. The Jewish settlers of Petakh Tikva and the German farmers of Sarona developed a proactive work relationship, as did the Jewish farmers of the Jezreel Valley with the Germans of Waldheim and Bethlehem.[24]

In 1926, the *Warte* published an article regarding the relations with the Jewish community, quoted by Sauer (1991):

> [...] It is our endeavor to live and work in harmony with the Jews, as far as it is at all possible for two different religious groups to do so. Basically, we have the same goal: namely the task of continuing development of the country [...] a fact which is ignored by those who describe us as anti-Semitic [...] in spite of our small number, our cultural and economic work has been of importance [...] our settlements and communities have considerably encouraged Jewish immigration and settlement, a fact which, in our opinion, ought to receive a little more official recognition on the part of the Jews [...] it is our conviction that physical and economic

[24] Jehuda Raab, *The First Furrow / Memoirs* (Jerusalem: The Zionist Library, 1988), describes an on-going relationship between the Jews of Petakh Tikva and the Germans in Sarona; Meir Shalev, *Fontanel* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2002), 27, describes romantic ties between Jewish women and German men. According to Shalev (personal communication November 17, 2002) there were about 30 such couples, some eventually marrying the Jewish women and eventually deported with their German spouses to Australia.

> development has to be supported by the proper recognition and observance of living together in the spirit of God.[25]

Wilhelma was the first in the country to use reinforced concrete. It was introduced there by Daniel Lichtenstein, a Jew from the neighboring Petakh Tikva, who specialized in Portland Cement, and suggested its use in water tanks to a farmer of Wilhelma. Together they constructed an open concrete reservoir (1913), that lasted for many years.[26] Wilhelma also hosted a Jewish family, headed by a Jew who was a Kosher supervisor, in order to have the produce and dairy products accessible to the Kosher-keeping population.[27]

The change came in the 1930s when the NS party in Germany took over. In January 1933 the NS party led by A. Hitler gained power. Many Germans in Palestine joined the Party supporting its racist policy. For most Templers in Palestine, however, it was not a positive development, a replacement of one government by another one, whose promises and vision were yet to be delivered. In Germany, by April 1933 the Reich had encouraged a boycott on Jewish businesses. The Templers in Palestine were not happy with the new situation, as they knew that the Jews in Palestine would do the same with German goods.

On the international level, Simon Stern (1986) wrote about the relations between Germans and Jews in the 1930s as heavily charged, the German Government refusing to sell German properties to Jews in Palestine and elsewhere to refugees from Germany:

> Appeals of Jews to the German Government and to the German colonies in Palestine increased following the rise of the NS party in Germany. The Templers were not comfortable in Palestine, where the hostile Jewish community was growing fast. In 1935 a group of Templers organized in order to exchange property with Jewish property in Germany, and approached the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This appeal was

[25] Sauer, *The Holy Land Called*, 174.

[26] Shmuel Avizur, *Inventors and Adopters* (Tel Aviv & Jerusalem: Israel Museum and Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 1985), 174-178.

[27] Fredricke Imberger, *Recollections From my Life in Wilhelma* (Melbourne: self-published, 1961), 9.

> rejected on grounds that reduction of German nationals in Palestine would meet the Jews' interests, and provoke the Arabs' hostility toward Germany. That position had been applied to other locations elsewhere. In 1936 the German Government notified its embassies that [...] "It is preferred that German nationals will keep on living in their locations and encourage German export with their trade." [...] the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs responded to an appeal by Germans to exchange property in Sarona, that this was a Zionist attempt to take Sarona without a substantial payment. It is clear from that response that the German authorities assumed already then, that Jewish property in Germany would be nationalized in any event, therefore did not constitute a "substantial payment (Translation by the author)."[28]

Stern concluded the article saying that "[...] the German policy actually prevented saving the Jewish property in Germany, in many cases causing economical damage to German nationals in Palestine [...] (Translation by the author)."[29]

During WWII when news came from Europe of the systematic genocide the Nazis perpetrating there, the Jewish community in Palestine disassociated itself from the ties with the German community. In 1946, the Jewish military organization *Palmach* assassinated Gotthilf Wagner, a prominent member of the Templer community and mayor of the Jaffa and Sarona Templer settlements who prevented the sale of Templer lands to Jews. The motive for the assassination was probably an attempt by Jewish leadership to take over German property and to create a situation of animosity toward the German community in Palestine. Two more Templer men were assassinated in the vicinity of Waldheim in the same year: Mitscherlich and Müller, on November 17th in Waldheim 1946.[30]

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[28] Translated by the author. Simon Stern, "The Selling of German Nationals' Land to Jews in Eretz-Israel in the 1930s," *Cathedra* 41 (October 1986): 200-205.

[29] Ibid. Translated by the author.

[30] In an interview I have conducted with Rafi Eitan on 4 April 2013, ex-Palmach officer Eitan described an instruction that was channeled down from Ben-Gurion, to "... kill Wagner and 2 or 3 more [Germans], so that they understand that whoever will be back [to Palestine] we the Haganah will kill him." According to Eitan, he was directly involved in this operation, assassination of Wagner and the two Germans (Mitscherlich and Müller) on November 17th in Waldheim 1946. On 1st December 2014, Eitan was interviewed by Channel 1 of Israeli Television (by Ben Shani), in which he described in detail the assassination of Mitscherlich and Müller.

> April 1948: The British Mandate was still in effect in Palestine, and would expire on May 15th. But hostilities between Jews and Arabs were already in progress: street fighting in Haifa, and bitter fighting in the Jezreel Valley; in the fighting for control of the Valley, on April 17th Jewish militia took by force the two German colonies there, Waldheim and Bethlehem. During the operation two German civilians were killed, an event which compelled the British to take decisive action: they evacuated all Germans from Palestine within the next few days—by April 20th the Germans were shipped out to Cyprus (then a British Crown Colony) as refugees.[31]

The 1948 war profoundly changed the situation in Palestine: The Jewish population gained independence and control over much of the land west of the Jordan River, and the Germans in Palestine found themselves deported to other countries; in the harsh events of the war, both the German settlers of Wilhelma and the Jewish settlers of Atarot became refugees: Atarot settlers lost their homes as the settlement fell in the fierce fighting between Jews and Arabs and were ordered to evacuate (as a strategic decision) to Jerusalem. The Germans of Wilhelma were forced to leave their homes as the British initiated on April 1948 a deportation of all Germans from Palestine.

All the German settlements in Palestine (including Wilhelma) became ghost settlements, emptied of their original German settlers.

[31] Detailed description of the events on April 17th 1948, the taking over of the German communities of Waldheim and Bethlehem, Paul Sauer, "The Loss of the Agricultural Settlements" in Sauer, *The Holy Land Called*, 267-270; and Danny Goldman, "Waldheim, April 1948: The Warriors' Silence and the Courage of Frankness," in *Exiled from the Holy Land, the Loss of the Templer Settlements in Palestine and Deportation to Australia 1941-1950*, eds. Horst Blaich (Victoria B.C. Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2009), 141-177.

Fig. 7. Deportation of Wilhelma residents, July 1941. The final deportation was on April 1948. Collection of Otto Löbert, Boronia, Australia.

Thus ended the 80 years of German presence in Palestine; they started their settlement project on 1868 and ended on 1948, the first successful Western settlement in the Holy Land since the Crusaders.

The Jews who settled Atarot near Jerusalem were also very successful. In 1912 a considerable tract of land was bought from Arabs, residents of Kalandia and Bir Naballah, by Jewish settlement organizations. More transactions continued in the following years,[32] and by 1914, the land was already populated by a small Jewish group.

They marketed their produce in Jerusalem, and were growing steadily in spite of great difficulties. Then came WWI and the British takeover, things began to improve for the small cooperative community. It could develop free of the constraints imposed by the previous rulers, the Ottomans. New expertise began to emerge pertinent to modern agriculture: their development was guided by Yitzhak Wilkanski, an agronomist who knew the German farmers of Wilhelma, studied their methods and applied their experience to Jewish settlements, Atarot one of them. Wilkanski advocated "mixed farming" along with dairy farming and self-sustainability.[33]

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[32] According to Eyal Zamir and Eyal Benvenisti, *The Legal Status of Lands Acquired by Israelis Before 1948 in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, and the Hay Elyachar House, 1993), 21, their research points out 1,222 dunams owned by KKL (JNF) plus 343 dunams owned privately by Jews. According to Yosef Weitz, *The Mountain* (Tel Aviv: KKL, 1944) the total was 1,417 dunams.

[33] In 1921 Yitzhak Wilkanski founded the Institute for Natural Sciences, the Agronomic Experimental Station, a first step in the advancement of Israeli agriculture. The research station managed by Wilkanski has paved the way to founding the faculty of agriculture and the Weizmann

Fig. 8. Yitzhak Wilkanski (front) and the High Commissioner to Palestine, Sir Arthur Grenfell Wauchope, 1935, unknown photographer, Wikimedia Commons, public domain.

They changed the form of the community from a cooperative to *moshav-'ovdim*[34] in 1923, and family-owned land allotments were reduced a number of times, due to expropriations made by the British Authorities for the purpose of establishing a small airport.[35]

Atarot British Airport was used on May 14, 1948, by the entourage of the (British) High Commissioner to Palestine, one day before the British Mandate expired. The High Commissioner (Sir Alan Cunningham), left Jerusalem via the Airport, built by the British Authorities, and flew to Haifa. The local Arabs and the Jordanian Army were waiting for that moment: the invasion of Israel by Arab armies was about to begin, only hours after Israel declared independence. Now Atarot and

Institute in Rehovot, and making the town a center of scientific research. Wilkanski managed the station for 30 years.

[34] A cooperative agricultural community of individual farms; the *moshav-ovdim* operates as a cooperative economy framework. The family is an independent economical unit operating as part of mutual aid protocol. Every member family in the moshav is allocated a tract of land normally used by the members for farming.

[35] Yossi Spanier, *The Garden of Fortitude: A Memorial to the Settlement North of Jerusalem*; Ruth Danon, *Atarot: A First Moshav in the Judean Hills*, eds. Eli Schiller and Gabriel Barkai (Jerusalem: Ariel, 2007), 89.

Neve Yaakov were the only obstacle between the Jordanian army standing-by north of Atarot and Jerusalem.[36]

In light of the looming Arab attack on Atarot, and probably because of the British had implored Atarot, Neve Yaakov and the Etzion Bloc to evacuate,[37] the settlers made a decision to evacuate all the children and the elderly (May 10), and made an attempt to take over the airport of Atarot. They waited until the British left the airfield, and took it (May 14), knowing that the Arabs intend to do the same, as they were massing up on the adjacent hills.[38]

Much to their surprise, they received orders from the high command of the *Haganah* (May 14), saying that they need to evacuate Atarot and join the settlers of Neve Yaakov, in order to create a stronger defense force, with better chances of success there.

According to Goldberger, the orders they received were "[...] evacuate in daylight on the main road to Jerusalem on foot with the women and non-combatants in the middle [of the column leading the cows [from Atarot] as Jerusalem was in need of food. Effective immediately."[39] They decided to disobey these orders as they understood that if they followed them, they would be slaughtered with the cows by the locals waiting for them on the main road.

Yossi Spanier (2012) describes the action taken by Atarot defenders once they received the retreat orders:

> On their leaving [the settlement] they left all the lights on, mined some of the structures, sabotaged equipment and furniture and left once it was dark (on foot avoiding [Arab] villages) toward Neve Yaakov. The next day the Arabs shelled the Moshav with cannons. As they did not encounter any resistance, [by then the settlement was already empty at that point] they entered the Moshav, looting and ruining buildings. Atarot defenders

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[36] See a discussion by Yitzhak Levy, Netanel Lorch, Uzi Narkiss and Yaacov Salman, "The Battle for Jerusalem, 1948," *Cathedra* 44 (June 1987): 158-190 [Heb.].

[37] Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2010), 99. The British advised Arab villages to do the same between January and May 1948.

[38] The following events concerning the fighting in Atarot and Neve Yaakov were documented by Yossef Goldenberg, Avraham Timor, Zvi Tal, Pinhas Goldwasser and others and compiled by Ruth Danon, *Atarot: A First Moshav in the Judean Hills*, 175-190.

[39] Goldberger in Danon, *Atarot: A First Moshav in the Judean Hills*, 175.

> saw from Neve Yaakov their homes and fruits of their hard labor being burnt but were compelled to prepare for securing the road to Jerusalem (Translation by the author).[40]

They reached Neve Yaakov in four hours and were immediately integrated into the defense of the settlement. On the next day (May 16), heavy fighting erupted in Neve Yaakov. The defenders suffered 4 casualties.

That evening the defenders of Neve Yaakov gathered to assess the situation. It was bad: 4 dead and many wounded, their ammunition almost depleted, communication with the Command gone, as was the food. They decided on withdrawal toward Mount Scopus near Jerusalem. At 23:00 they buried their four dead combatants, destroyed part of the weapons and ammunition, and commenced their retreat toward Mount Scopus.[41]

The small column of settlers made its way in the wadi, led by the brothers Michah and Shaul Luz, who knew the terrain well. They carried the wounded on improvised stretchers; it was dawn when they reached Mount Scopus, not before Michah Luz was injured by a land mine. The two settlements were lost.

Below is Paul Sauer's (1991) account on the evacuation of the Templers from Palestine on April 1948:

> The [Jewish] raid on Waldhein was the signal for the British to complete the evacuation of the perimeter settlements immediately and to take the [German] internees to safety.[42] Convoys of trucks [...] transported the internees from Wilhelma as they had previously done in Waldheim. [...] the former inmates of the Wilhelma camp were taken to Jaffa [...] on 20th April 1948. [...] the 'Empire Comfort', a converted corvette, [...] awaited them there. The ship set course for Haifa. [...] where chaos reigned. There was constant shooting, bullets whizzed over the ship. [...] everyone was relieved when the ship finally left port around 5:00 p.m. Not long

[40] Translated by the author.

[41] History Dept., *Chronicles of the War of Independence* (Tel Aviv: Ma'arakhot, 1978), 199.

[42] The perimeter settlements were four: Sarona, Wilhelma, Waldheim and Betlehem; they were so called for the fence that surrounded the houses area. They were actually detention camps set by the British as the Templers were considered Enemy subjects even in 1948, 3 years after the War.

> afterwards Jewish forces took the port. On the evening of the 22nd, [...] the 'Empire Comfort' anchored at the port of Famagusta, on the island of Cyprus.[43]

Wilhelma became a ghost settlement.

Fig. 9. Templers disembarking from the "Empire comfort" at Famagusta Port, The Albert Blaich archive (Courtesy of Horst Blaich).

The survivors from Neve Yaakov marched 12 km in the dark until they reached the Hadassa hospital on Mount Scopus. The Haganah members on duty there detected them, hospitalized the wounded, gathered their weapons, a considerable addition to the local arsenal. They did a headcount and reached the same number as the headcount before leaving Neve Yaakov: 164 souls.[44]

Most of the settlers left Mount Scopus shortly after arrival (May 18), while some remained and joined the defense of the mountain, while the wounded were still hospitalized in *Hadassah* hospital on site. During the second temporary truce (starting July 19, 1948), they were transferred to Jaffa, where they were housed

[43] Sauer, *The Holy Land Called*, 270.

[44] Account of Pinhas Goldwasser, IDF Archive 263 922/1975 as compiled by Danon, *Atarot: A First Moshav in the Judean Hills*, 190.

temporarily. They formed an organization and started negotiations with the settling bodies. One of the options was Wilhelma, which they willingly accepted.

More Jewish refugees joined the Atarot Re-settling Project on Wilhelma Lands: Be'erot Yitzhak, Nehalim, and She'ar Yashuv

She'ar Yashuv (est. Feb. 1940) was part of the "Usishkin Fortresses,"[45] and heavily bombarded by Syrian artillery in the 1948 War, to a degree that those remaining in the settlement made a decision to abandon it (late 1948) once the fighting subsided and the Armistice Agreements were still in negotiation. Part of the families of She'ar Yashuv (12 Families) were absorbed by Bnei Atarot and the rest were settled elsewhere. Minutes from the Bnei Atarot general meeting from November 1948 show a decision to accept the "12 candidates" as members.[46]

Moshav Nehalim was established in the Northern Galilee (1943), also as part of the Usishkin Fortresses. Only a few years later, the in the War of 1948, the Moshav suffered heavy damage. Women and children were evacuated to Haifa; as the devastation was beyond repair, the remaining members decided to abandon.[47] Once the War was over, the settling bodies suggested Wilhelma as an alternative settlement spot. They received a considerable tract of land, part of Wilhelma farming lands. They were joined by some of Neve Yaakov refugees. Today the lands of Old Nehalim are settled by Kibbutz Hagoshrim.

[45] 1939-1944 a group of settlements in the northern part of the Galilee were established, among them She'ar Yashuv and Nehalim. They were called "Usishkin Fortresses" to honor the vision of their establishment by Menahem Usishkin, who headed the Jewish National Fund at the time.

[46] Collection of Ruth Danon, Bnei Atarot Archive, *Minutes from Benei A'ta'rot general meeting*, November 3, 1948.

[47] To their plight caused by the war, one must add also the hostile relations between them and the other Jewish settlement in their vicinity. See Zvi Galilee, "The First Evacuation of a Settlement by Jews," in *The Common Sense in the Madness* blog. Accessed December 17, 2022 http://www.zeevgalili.com/2004/09/315.

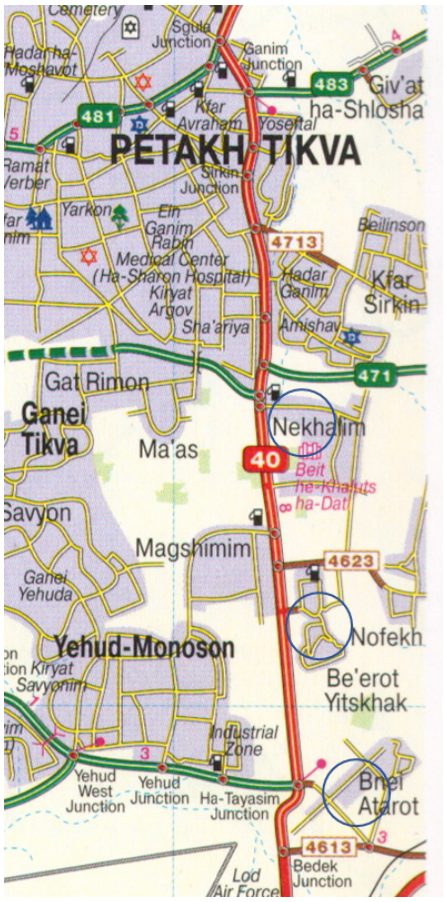

Fig. 10. Map of Bnei Atarot and vicinity (detail), *Road Atlas*, Mapa GIS Department (Elena Belinki Cartographic editor, 2006), 26. Road 40 is aligned South to North and east of it the three settlements: Bnei Atarot, Be'erot Yitzhak and Nehalim. All are on Wilhelma Lands.

Be'erot Yitzhak was a kibbutz established in 1943 5 km southeast of Gaza. In May 1948 the Egyptian Army invaded the region, and its artillery and air force heavily bombarded the settlement. The settlement did not fall; the defenders pushed the Egyptian military away, with assistance from the *Negev* Brigade of IDF. However, the damage was very heavy, and, "[...] the defenders' losses were 17 dead, 15 wounded and heavy damage to the settlement."[48]

[48] History Dept., *Chronicles of the War of Independence*, 277.

Fig. 11. The water tower of Be'erot Yitzhak after the Egyptian bombardment. Photo by the author, 2014. The structure still stands, as a memorial to the events in 1948 there.

The members debated whether to abandon or to rehabilitate the settlement, and finally decided on leaving. They were offered an alternative location on the farming lands of Wilhelma, built new houses and besides farming, they developed other sources of income. Nothing remained of the Kibbutz near Gaza, except for the water tower that still stands as a memorial to Old Be'erot Yitzhak. The land remained in Israeli hands since and are now cultivated by Kibbutz Alumim and Kibbutz Nahal-Oz.

The Templers of Wilhelma and all the others from the Templer Colonies still present in Palestine were evacuated to Cyprus, and arrived at the port of Famagusta on April 22nd. Richard Eppinger, one of the evacuees, described in detail what followed once they disembarked, and became detainees of the British on Cyprus soil.

> We sighted Cyprus early in the morning on 22 April [...] Adjoining the old Byzantine fortress with its backdrop of ancient churches and chapels from the time of the Crusaders.
>
> In a camp called 'Golden Sands' we found many small tents [...] to the right of the paved road stood large 'Indian tents' [...] this was the camp of the German POWs [who also erected the camp for the evacuees next door; author's note].[49]

[49] Richard Otto Eppinger, "The Cyprus Group 1948-1949," in *Exiled from the Holy Land*, eds. Horst Blaich (Victoria B.C. Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2009), 65.

Fig. 12. Templer's refugee camp in Famagusta, The Albert Blaich Family Archive (Courtesy of Horst Blaich). In the background the larger tents of the German POW camp.

The Templers stayed in Cyprus until they left for Australia and Germany between 1948 and 1949. Arriving in Australia, they were immediately accommodated by the Temple Society of Australia in temporary housing. Sauer (1991) labeled it "[...] a remarkable organizational and especially human achievement which does the Templers in Australia much credit."[50]

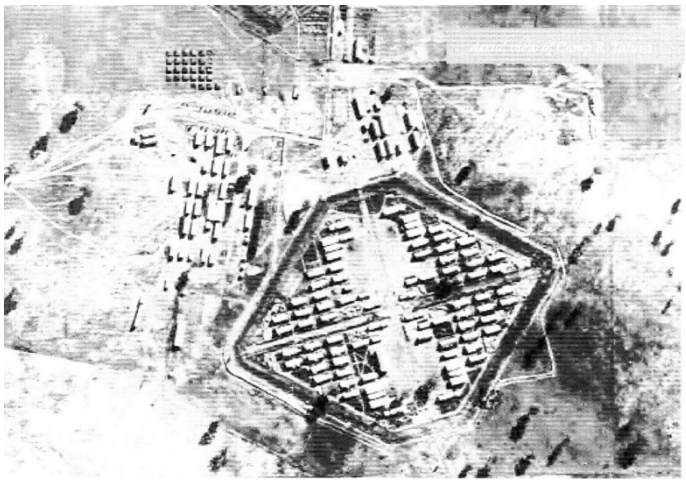

Fig. 13. Camp 3 *Tatura*, Date and photographer unknown, *75 Years of Templers in Australia*, Doris Frank, Renate Weber editors, (Bentleigh, Vic.: Temple Society of Australia, 2016), 29.[51]

[50] Sauer, *The Holy Land Called*, 295.

[51] The camp housed those Templers who were deported in 1941, and closed on Spring 1947. The Cyprus group was accommodated by the Templers who were released from Tatura in 1947, and others.

Conclusion

April 17th marks the end of the Templer presence in the Holy Land; and with it, 80 years of Templers - Jewish relations sharing the same piece of land. These relations knew many fluctuations and what started as a partnership and shared destiny ended up, following WWII with feelings of bitterness and anger of the Germans toward the British and the Jews in Palestine. The Germans lost everything they had, became refugees and started all over again in Australia and Germany. Israel was declared a State on May 1948, and two years later the Israeli Government issued the *German Assets Act* expropriating all secular German Property in Israel and nationalizing it. After long and exhausting negotiations between Israel, Germany and Australia (and representatives of the Templer community), the negotiating sides agreed on compensations for the Lost German property, paid to Australia and Germany proportionately according to the number of Templers in each of these countries.

With the signing of the Armistice Agreement between Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan on April 1949, the Old Atarot settlement and airstrip became Jordanian territory. The Jordanians expanded the airstrip area onto the lands of Old Atarot—an empty area containing but ruins of the settlement. As the new construction also covered the Jewish cemetery, the Jordanian authorities removed the headstones and human remains of those buried there and dumped them some distance away.[52]

Old Atarot came back under Israeli control in June 1967 (the Six Day War). Members of the old settlement started a search on premises for graves and other remnants. On June 1969, after a long inquiry, the search team from Bnei Atarot discovered the human remains. Michah Luz, active in the recovery team, told *Maariv* (Israeli newspaper) that the cemetery contained, in addition to other graves, six graves of Haganah members: 5 that fell in the riots of 1936-39 and one of Shabtai Luzinski, from Old Atarot, a Jewish "illegal immigration" activist, who

[52] Hagai Hoberman, "The Airport of Atarot – chronicles of an Israeli Airport," in *Shomron and Binyamin vol. 2, research in Historical Geography*, eds. Zeev Erlich (Jerusalem: Reuven Mas, 1991) 126-133. The article was re-published in *Marqi'a Shhaqim*, Aviation History in Israel, November 2021.

died in Europe and laid to rest in Atarot. Luzinski was Michah Luz's father.[53] Veterans of Atarot later decided to leave them were found, put a marker on the spot, and had the IDF chief Rabbi, general Goren, sanctify the location, as among the 18 bodies were 5 Haganah members. The location was declared a military mass grave.[54] The four Jewish combatants who were killed during fighting in 1948 and temporarily buried in Neve Yaakov were laid to rest in the military cemetery on Mount Herzl, Jerusalem, in 1949, following the armistice agreement between Israel and Jordan (same year).[55]

Fig. 14. "Guardians of the Place" memorial in Old Atarot, Photo by Ori, *Ma'a'leh Hayezirah*, 2011. Leah Golowizki[56] wrote the opening text on the memorial: "Guardians of the Place / Only you remained watching and guarding / On the soil that was cleared of rocks with your hands / That you bettered with your sweat and blood." (Translation by the author). The rest of the text tells the story of the recovery of the remains, the last battle of Neve Yaakov and establishing the memory of the pioneers and 42 combatants that fell in the "Atarot Bloc" and in defense of Jerusalem.

[53] Mordechai Elkan, "18 Bodies Were Found That Were Originally from the Cemetery of Atarot," *Ma'ariv,* June 16, 1969, 8.

[54] Ruth Danon, mail message to author, January 2023.

[55] Spanier et al, *Gan Hagvura*: *in Memory of the Settlement North of Jerusalem*, (Atarot: the Association for Atarot Legacy, 2012).

[56] Leah Golowizki (1895-1978), one of the settlers of Old Atarot, whose husband was killed in the riots of 1936. She was evacuated from Old Atarot April 1948 and settled in Nahalal. Biodata from *Zemereshet* https://www.zemereshet.co.il/m/artist.asp?id=3497, accessed January 22, 2023.

Next to the cemetery of Bnei Atarot there is a walled empty lot that used to be the German cemetery of Wilhelma. That cemetery was vacated of headstones and human remains and re-interred at the Templer Cemetery in Jerusalem. Currently in Bnei Atarot, formerly Wilhelma, there are two cemeteries, the German one empty.

Figs. 15 and 16. Wall of the German cemetery as seen from the Jewish cemetery of Bnei Atarot. Right: relics of the entrance to the German empty cemetery. Images by the author, January 2023.

On Sep. 10, 1952, the Governments of Israel and Western Germany signed an agreement (also known as the Luxemburg Agreement), concerning reparations to the State of Israel against Jewish property and the heavy burden of absorbing Jewish refugees. Germany Paid the State of Israel over the years (1953-1965) about 3 billion DM.

An integral part of that agreement dealt with compensating Germany for German Secular Property in Israel. Israel agreed (in a number of documents attached to the main reparations agreement) to pay Germany for the Templers' lost Property in Israel.

Only in July 1962 Germany and Israel reached an agreement under the mediation of Prof. Sørensen, an agreed upon Danish mediator. Yossi Katz detailed the

financial terms: "The amount of compensation that Sørensen ruled was 54 million DM, equal to 4.82 million British pounds"; Rutland (2005) mentions 6,057,885 Pound Sterling as the "final package."[57]

And some post-memory views: In the 1970s, Israeli scholars begun to publish researches regarding the history of the Templers' settlement in the Holy Land. The reason was a realization that the history of the Templer settlement was, and still is, an important part of the Settlement History of the Jewish colonies. The Templer phenomenon was significantly influential for Jewish settlement, architecture, agriculture, and many other aspects. Carmel concluded his book with the note that,

> [...] no doubt that the pioneering enterprise of the Templers and their success actually encouraged the "Return to Zion" Movement of Jews by proving that European settlement of the Holy Land is possible. That way, the Jews learned willingly from the earlier experience of the Templers, who were close to them culturally and in mentality, and for that reason the Templer settlement served as a primary subject especially for the Jews.[58]

With this realization came respect for remnants left in Israel by the Templers, primarily the buildings. Israeli architects and scholars developed ties with Templers in Germany and Australia, which turned into long lasting friendships. When the question of preserving the Templer colonies came up, the history-minded Templers in Australia and Germany willingly cooperated with Israeli individuals and official bodies active in preserving the Templers' heritage in Israel. The Templers archives in Germany and Australia were opened for study as were family archives. Groups of Tempelrs visit Israel on a regular basis, to show respect for the Templers cemeteries, help maintaining them, and visiting the old colonies

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[57] Yossi Katz, "Who owns the German Colonies? German Assets Law and Compensation of the Templers for Their Property in Israel," in *Iyunim Bitkumat Israel* (Studies in Israeli and modern Jewish society) 17 (2007): 431-464; Suzan Rutland, "Buying out of the Matter: Australia's Role in Restitution for Templer Property in Israel," *Journal of Israeli History* 24, no. 1 (March 2005): 135-154.

[58] Translated by the author. Carmel, *The German Settlement in the Holy Land by the end of the Ottoman Era, its Political, Local and International Problems*, 228.

and the houses their forebears built with so much optimism, faith and hope, mirrored by the Jewish settlers in the Holy Land.

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Keywords: Israel, Palestine, British Mandate, 1948 War, Templers, Settlement History, Wilhelma, Atarot, Neve Yaakov

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Back to the Sources. Over Five Thousand Documents on the "Persecution and Murder of European Jews by National Socialist Germany." On the Completion of a 16-Volume Edition

by *Ulrich Wyrwa*

Early on, Jews attentively documented their disenfranchisement, the humiliations and insults in National Socialist Germany,[1] and since the invasion of Poland by the German Wehrmacht, Jewish contemporaries collected testimonies of ghettoization and shootings as well as testimonies from the concentration camps; the Ringelblum archive from the Warsaw Ghetto, for example, comprises 25,000 pages that were buried in boxes and rediscovered after the war.[2] After liberation, Jewish survivors made efforts to document the crimes of National Socialist Germany or set up corresponding institutions.[3]

In post-war Germany Joseph Wulf—partly in collaboration with Léon Poliakov—had published extensive annotated source volumes on the humiliation and disenfranchisement of Jews in National Socialist Germany.[4] West German historians, on the other hand, had difficulties dealing with the recent German past. Although an Institute for the Study of National Socialist Politics, renamed Institut für Zeitgeschichte [IfZ] in 1952, was founded in Munich in 1949,[5]

[1] Already in the last years of the Republic, contemporary Jews collected the evidence of the anti-Jewish violence of the Nazi movement in the Wilhelmstraße Office: Simon Sax, "Das Büro Wilhelmstraße: neue Quellen, neue Perspektiven," in *Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens. Anwalt zwischen Deutschtum und Judentum*, eds. Rebekka Denz and Tilman Gempp-Friedrich (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2021), 169-194. In 1933 Alfred Wiener continued this activity: Ben Barkow, *Alfred Wiener and the Making of the Holocaust Library* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1997).

[2] Robert Moses Shapiro and Tadeusz Epsztein, eds., *The Warsaw Getto Oyneg Shabes – Ringelblum Archive. Catalog and Guide* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009).

[3] See the fundamental study by Laura Jockusch, *Collect and record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation in early postwar Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[4] Klaus Kempter, *Joseph Wulf. Ein Historikerschicksal in Deutschland* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013).

[5] Horst Möller and Udo Wengst, eds., *60 Jahre Institut für Zeitgeschichte München-Berlin. Geschichte – Veröffentlichungen – Personalien* (München: Oldenbourg, 2009); Nicolas Berg, *Der Holocaust und die westdeutschen Historiker. Erforschung und Erinnerung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003).

"Auschwitz," as one of the early staff members later put it, "resisted the emergence of contemporary history most fiercely."[6] According to the reproach of the young IfZ staff member Martin Broszat the documentary *The Third Reich and its Servants* by Joseph Wulf and Leon Poliakov[7] lacked the necessary "detachment of scientific-historical source publication."[8] Broszat studiously ignored the Nazi involvement of West German historians.[9] Even in the mid-1980s, by then director of the IfZ, he returned to his reservations about Jewish historians.[10] Saul Friedländer then pointed out the contradictions in Martin Broszat's argumentation.[11] In the course of his ensuing controversy with Broszat, he asked: "Why do you think historians who belonged to the group of persecutors should be able to deal with this past in a detached way, while those belonging to the group of victims cannot?"[12]

Nevertheless, a large number of groundbreaking and fundamental studies on the history of National Socialism have been produced at the IfZ.[13] Then, in 1999, the IfZ, in cooperation with Yad Vashem, began to compile a database of all criminal proceedings for the prosecution of Nazi crimes by German judicial authorities

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[6] Hans-Dietrich Loock, "War's so? Erinnerungen an die Entstehung der Zeitgeschichte," in *25 Jahre Institut für Zeitgeschichte. Statt einer Festschrift* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags Anstalt, 1975), 38-54; 49.

[7] Léon Poliakov and Joseph Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und seine Diener* (Berlin: Arani, 1956).

[8] Martin Broszat, "Probleme zeitgeschichtlicher Dokumentation," *Neue Politische Literatur* 2 (1957): 298-304; 298.

[9] Ingo Haar, *Historiker im Nationalsozialismus. Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft und der 'Volkstumskampf' im Osten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000); Rüdiger Hohls and Konrad H. Jarausch, eds., *Versäumte Fragen. Deutsche Historiker im Schatten des Nationalsozialismus* (München: Deutsche Verlags Anstalt, 2000).

[10] Martin Broszat, "Plädoyer für eine Historisierung des Nationalsozialismus," *Merkur* 39, no. 435 (1985): 373-385.

[11] Saul Friedländer, "Überlegungen zur Historisierung des Nationalsozialismus," in *Ist der Nationalsozialismus Geschichte? Zu Historisierung und Historikerstreit*, ed. Dan Diner (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 1987), 34-50.

[12] Martin Broszat and Saul Friedländer, "Über die 'Historisierung des Nationalsozialismus'. Ein Briefwechsel," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 36 (1988): 339-372; 347.

[13] See for example: Wolfgang Benz, ed., *Dimensionen des Völkermords. Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus* (München: Oldenbourg, 1991); Benz, ed., *Die Juden in Deutschland 1933-1945. Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft* (München: C. H. Beck, 1993).

since 1945.[14] However, a comprehensive edition of sources on the persecution and murder of the Jews in Europe by National Socialist Germany was still overdue.[15]

The Project of the Edition

On 27 January 2005, an article in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* announced that historians Ulrich Herbert and Götz Aly were preparing one.[16] A few thin collections of sources were available,[17] but in view of the state of Holocaust research, the overcoming of the old controversies between intentionalists and structuralists,[18] and the opening of the Moscow Special Archive with requisitioned German archival material,[19] it seemed time to compile comprehensive documentation on the persecution of Jews by National Socialist Germany that included the European dimensions. The IfZ as the institution relevant for coming to terms with the Nazi-past was included, and in order to have the expertise of archivists at its side, the Federal Archive was recruited as co-editor.

In 2004, the project of the source edition on the persecution and murder of the European Jews was started with the support of the S. Fischer Foundation. Since

[14] Andreas Eichmüller, "Die Verfolgung von NS-Verbrechen durch westdeutsche Justizbehörden seit 1945 – Inventarisierung und Teilverfilmung der Verfahrensakten. Ein neues Projekt des Instituts für Zeitgeschichte," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 50 (2002): 507-516.

[15] In the mid-1990s, Raul Hilberg unsuccessfully proposed to the Frankfurt publishing house S. Fischer "the idea of a 'multi-volume edition of official writings on the so-called Jewish Question'," which René Schlott recalled in his review after the VEJ had been completed: R. Schlott, "Ein Monument des Gedenkens," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 4, 2022.

[16] Lorenz Jäger, "Die Sache selbst. Zum Forschungsstand Hilberg, Aly und die Vernichtungspolitik," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* , January 27, 2005.

[17] Etwa: Kurt Pätzold, ed., *Verfolgung, Vertreibung, Vernichtung. Dokumente des faschistischen Antisemitismus, 1933 bis 1942* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1983); Hans-Dieter Schmid, ed., *Juden unterm Hakenkreuz. Dokumente und Berichte zur Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden durch die Nationalsozialisten 1933 bis 1945*, 2 vol. (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1983); Peter Longerich, ed., *Die Ermordung der europäischen Juden. Eine umfassende Dokumentation des Holocaust 1941–1945* (München: Piper, 1989).

[18] Jan Philipp Reemtsma, *Charisma und Terror. Gedanken zum Verhältnis intentionalistischer und funktionalistischer Deutungen der nationalsozialistischen Vernichtungspolitik* (Frankfurt/M: Fritz Bauer Institut, 1994).

[19] Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, eds., *Das Zentrale Staatsarchiv in Moskau („Sonderarchiv"). Rekonstruktion und Bestandsverzeichnis verschollen geglaubten Schriftguts aus der NS-Zeit* (Düsseldorf: Hans-Böckler-Stiftung, 1992).

2005, the German Research Foundation has taken over the funding.[20] Dieter Pohl, then a member at the IfZ, presented the basic outlines of the project "Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Ein neues Editionsprojekt" [VEJ] in the same year in the *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*.[21] The aim was to "scientifically document the persecution of the German Jews, and from 1938/39 of the European Jews, and the mass murder of them." The "spatial structure" of the volumes would be based on the administrative boundaries valid at the time, "which were important for the events of the persecution of the Jews." The criterion for the selection of sources was that they were "limited as far as possible to contemporary sources, and that they followed the triad of "perpetrator, victim, bystander" as conceived by Raul Hilberg.[22] In addition to state files, personal documents such as diaries or letters, as well as newspaper reports, sources from the "underground movements" and documents from the governments of allied and neutral states were to be included. The decisive factor for the selection had to be the relevance of the source, with a focus "on murderous actions" and "the variety of acts of persecution." For each source, a short note should explain the historical context and provide biographical information on the persons mentioned.[23]

The historian Susanne Heim was responsible for the scientific supervision and coordination of the overall project. The VEJ project's working place became the IfZ in Berlin, which had opened an office there in 1990. For each volume, separate editors were employed along with additional student and research assistants.

[20] Hellmuth Auerbach, Hermann Weiß, and Udo Wengst, "Institutschronik," in *60 Jahre Institut für Zeitgeschichte*, eds. Möller and Wengst, 101-148; 137. Applications for funding to the German Research Foundation were submitted by the Institute of Contemporary History and the Chair of Modern and Contemporary History at the University of Freiburg.

[21] Dieter Pohl, "Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Ein neues Editionsprojekt," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 53 (2005): 651-659.

[22] Raul Hilberg, *Täter, Opfer, Zuschauer. Die Vernichtung der Juden 1933–1945* (Frankfurt/M.: S. Fischer, 1992).

[23] Andrej Angrick, "Dokumentation, Interpretation, Impuls. Das Editionsprojekt ‚Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden 1933-1945'," *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History* 5 (2008): 446-450.

Course of Publication and Reception of the Volumes

In December 2008, Oldenbourg-Verlag, Munich, published volume 1 on the German Reich from 1933 to 1937, compiled by Wolf Gruner.[24] In his introduction Gruner recapitulates the policy towards Jews from January 1933 onwards, which fluctuated between violence and special rights and led to the Nuremberg Laws in 1935. Gruner selected 320 published and previously unpublished sources in chronological order. The document section begins with the editorial of the *Jüdische Rundschau* of 31 January 1933 on Hitler's appointment as Reich Chancellor, and also contains the NSDAP's call for a boycott of Jewish shops printed in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the law on the "dismissal of Jewish and politically disagreeable civil servants" of April 1933, which was already printed elsewhere but is fundamental and therefore indispensable for the edition, or an article in the "Nationalsozialistische Monatshefte" of May of this year on the "solution of the Jewish question," to name just a few of the sources from 1933. These documents alone show how much, according to Gruner, antisemitism became the government's "state goal."[25] For the year 1937, with which this volume ends, Gruner selected a lecture by Theodor Oberländer on the "Strengthening of German Influence in Eastern Europe," in which he described Eastern European Jewry as the "most active carrier of communist ideas."[26] In the biographical explanation, Gruner points out that Oberländer took part in the Hitler putsch in Munich in 1923, joined the NSDAP in 1933 and was Minister for Displaced Persons, Refugees and War-Affected Persons in the Adenauer government from 1953 to 1960.

In his review in the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*, Hans Mommsen, then the doyen of West German NS research, criticized the chronological arrangement of the sources. He also lodged a complaint about the lack of "factual classification" and "insufficient explanation of the content" of the selected documents. According to

[24] The editors were Ulrich Herbert, Götz Aly, Wolf Gruner, Susanne Heim, Dieter Pohl and the director of the IfZ Horst Möller, with Hartmut Weber and Hans-Dieter Kreikamp of the Bundesarchiv.

[25] VEJ 1, 30.

[26] Ibid., 672.

Mommsen, the reader would therefore get "a more or less impressionistic impression of the course of the persecution."[27]

Overall, however, the reception of this first volume was consistently positive. In her review in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Franziska Augstein was "shocked, outraged and moved" after reading the volume. The sources showed "the cruelty already represented by the exclusion of the Jewish population" in the early years of Nazi rule.[28] "The sources unfold a powerful force," wrote Arno Widmann in his review in the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, they make clear "what 'Gleichschaltung' meant" and that the persecution of the Jews affected the whole of society. "The 'Final Solution'—this book makes clear—lay from the outset in the consequence of the National Socialist view of the world."[29] Stefan Reinecke, reviewer for the *tageszeitung*, saw the advantage of the volume in the fact that it was arranged "strictly chronologically."[30] For the reviewer of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Manfred Gailus, the first volume already showed that this is "a truly monumental" project. "All in all," when the project was completed, "an impressive textual monument" to the "singular catastrophe of the 20th century" was to be expected.[31] Rainer Blasius included volume 2 published in 2009 in his review in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and was deeply impressed by the documentary power and praised in particular the "haunting" visualization of Nazi bureaucratic obsession through the "partly repulsive, partly poignant" documents.[32]

This volume 2 was compiled by Susanne Heim.[33] Taking up Hans Mommsen's criticism of the lack of factual classification, the editors include a systematic

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[27] Hans Mommsen, "Wie es geschehen konnte. Ein Großprojekt: Die Quellenedition zur Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden," *Die Zeit*, November 13, 2008.

[28] Franziska Augstein, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, January 25, 2008.

[29] Arno Widmann, " 'Ja wovon sollen sie denn leben?' Dokumente zur Ausgrenzung und Verfolgung von Juden während des Nationalsozialismus," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, January 26, 2008.

[30] Stefan Reinecke, "Frau Elly schreibt an die SS. Bald sind auch die letzten Zeitzeugen des Holocaust gestorben. Historiker wie Susanne Heim und Götz Aly sammeln Quellentexte," *tageszeitung*, January 26, 2008.

[31] Manfred Gailus, " 'Schweigend verlassen wir den Raum, bis ins Innerste empört'. Der erste Band eines beeindruckenden Schriftdenkmals für die ermordeten europäischen Juden," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, July 12, 2008.

[32] Rainer Blasius, „Unkontrollierbare Regionen und legale Wege," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, November 9, 2009.

[33] Wolf Gruner resigned from the editorial board with this volume.

document index from the second volume onwards. In terms of time, this volume refers to the phase from January 1938 to 31 August 1939, the period during which the German Reich occupied Austria, parts of Bohemia with a German-speaking population and the Sudentenland, and during which the National Socialist government imposed what Heim called a "state of emergency on the German Jews."[34] Beginning with the expulsion of Polish Jews from Germany, 9 November 1938, a new climax of the antisemitic furore fell into this phase. Heim, however, does not use the contemporary term "Kristallnacht," but the later common term November pogrom.[35] One of the consequences of 9 November was the Aryanization and "de-Jewification" of the economy. It also triggered an increased flight movement. Next to the persecution and expulsion of Austrian Jews, which is documented by numerous sources, the volume shows the intensification of war preparations and the expansion of the concentration camps. Heim draws special attention to the experts for Jewish policy in the police and the security service with their strategies of registration, exclusion and racial classification as well as the establishment of institutions of forced labor. On 30 January 1939, Hitler gave his much-quoted Reichstag speech, also printed in this edition, in which he threatened "the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe."[36] Heim also drew on excerpts from a large number of first-person documents such as diaries or letters, or the essay of a twelve-year-old pupil who summarized the quintessence of the antisemitic National Socialist worldview in just a few lines.

The online review organ of the German Historical Institute Paris, *Francia Recensio*, published a detailed appraisal of volume 2 by Michel Fabréguet;[37] in the Berlin newspaper *Tagesspiegel*, Manfred Gailus praised the "impressive diverse

[34] VEJ 2, 13.

[35] Heim used the term Kristallnacht only once, and then in inverted commas. Recently, this rather discredited word has been re-purposed: Ulrich Baumann, François Guesnet, "Kristallnacht—Pogrom—State Terror: A Terminological Reflection," *New Perspectives on Kristallnacht: After 80 years, the Nazi Pogrom in Global Comparison,* eds. Wolf Gruner and Steven Ross (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2019), 2-24; see also: Wolfgang Benz, *Gewalt im November 1938. Die „Reichskristallnacht." Initital zum Holocaust* (Berlin: Metropol, 2018).

[36] VEJ 2, Dok. 248.

[37] Fabréguet, Michel review of *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945, Band 2*, ed. Susanne Heim, in *19./20. Jahrhundert - Histoire contemporaine* 3 (2011), https://perspectivia.net/receive/ploneimport2_mods_00006158, accessed June 1, 2024.

selection of sources, which provides a perspective-rich view of Nazi persecution policy." Gailus concluded his review with the sentence: "If you are looking for competent enlightenment about this time of horror based on authentic documents—here it is."[38]

After a break of two years, two more volumes appeared in 2011. First, volume 4, entrusted by Klaus-Peter Friedrich, on Poland from September 1939 to July 1941.[39] In his introduction, Friedrich first outlined the history of the Jews in Poland up to the time of the Second Polish Republic and the German invasion. The primary goal of German policy was the Germanization of the occupied territories.

In 751 pages and 321 sources, Friedrich documented the persecution of Polish Jews from the German invasion to the attack on the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941. The sources meticulously show the violent policy of the Wehrmacht and SS units, the humiliation of the Jewish population, their successive disenfranchisement, economic plundering and finally ghettoization. Friedrich has also selected letters, diary entries or leaflets translated from Polish into German, as well as sources on the role of the Jewish councils and Jewish self-help, and on the everyday experiences of the Jews. The majority of Christian Poles remained indifferent, as the sources show, and some even supported the German policy towards the Jews. At the end of the period covered in this volume, in July 1941 the Polish Jews were "marked, disenfranchised, impoverished," confined to ghettos or labor camps, and "tens of thousands had already been murdered." In the summer of 1941, according to Friedrich, Poland was on the "threshold of mass murder."[40] According to Sybille Steinbacher, as she wrote in her review in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, through "the change of perspective that results from the compilation and chronological arrangement of the sources, a multifaceted picture of the reality of the German occupation emerges that could hardly be more dense and differentiated."[41] For Elvira Grözinger, the "hauntingly arranged, even

[38] Manfred Gailus, " 'Sind sie arisch?' Die Historikerin Susanne Heim veröffentlicht Dokumente zur Judenverfolgung," *Tagesspiegel*, January 4, 2010.

[39] Götz Aly left the editorial board as of this volume.

[40] VEJ 4, 14.

[41] Sybille Steinbacher, " 'Die humanste Lösung'. Der vierte Band der Holocaust-Dokumentation zeichnet eindrucksvoll die Verfolgung der Juden in Polen nach," *Süddeutsche Zeitung* September 12, 2011. Similarly positive is the review by Bernward Dörner: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 25, 2011.

choreographed" sources printed "in chronological order" "shockingly present the chronicle of events and their perception by perpetrators and victims alike." Nevertheless, the book is "surprisingly easy to read despite the texts that are hardly bearable."[42] The volume was then presented at the German Historical Institute in Warsaw in October.[43]

2011 also saw the publication of volume 7, the first of two volumes on the annexed territories of the Soviet Union,[44] covering the Soviet territories under German military administration, as well as the Baltic states and Transnistria, the Ukrainian territory occupied by Romania that extended to Odessa. The criterion for the delimitation of the two volumes relating to the occupied territories of the Soviet Union was, according to Bert Hoppe and Hildrun Glass in their introduction, the chronological course of the murder of the Jews in Eastern Europe.

After a survey of Jewish history in the Tsarist Empire and the Soviet Union, the editors trace the course of the war in the East, the preparations for the murder of Jews and the transition to mass murder and conclude with a look at foreign observers.

A particular merit of this volume, according to the review by Felix Ackermann in the online review organ *HSozKult*, is "that a large number of texts cover the Jewish perspective in the ghettos and hiding places and document the internal conflicts of the Jewish communities struggling to survive."[45] According to Jacob Tauber's review in the *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, there is no better recommendation for "a first in-depth insight, based on contemporary materials, into antisemitic mass crimes in the occupied Soviet Union."[46]

Two volumes followed in 2012. First, volume 3 on the German Reich and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia from September 1939 to September 1941, edited by Andrea Löw.[47] The 1 September 1939 meant "a deep caesura" for the

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[42] Elvira Grözinger, *PaRDeS. Zeitschrift der Vereinigung für Jüdische Studien* 18 (2012): 178-181.

[43] Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau / Niemiecki Instytut Historyczny w Warszawie, Jahresbericht 2011, 56.

[44] With this volume, Gertrud Pickhan joined the editorial circle.

[45] Felix Ackermann, review of *Hoppe, Bert; Glass, Hildrun (Hrsg.): Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933-1945, Bd 7:*, February, 16, 2015, https://www.hsozkult.de/publicationreview/id/reb-18021, accessed July 20, 2024.

[46] Jacob Tauber, *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 63, no. 1 (2014): 136-138.

[47] From this volume onwards, Andreas Wirsching joined the editorial team.

German, Austrian and Czech Jews.[48] With the opening of the war, the regime intensified the measures against the German, Austrian and Czech Jews. In these two years, the National Socialist leadership moved from a policy of forced emigration and suppression of the Jews to mass murder. At the end of this period, the Jews were identified by a yellow star for everyone, and their systematic deportation to the occupied territories in the East was imminent. However, there was still no clarity about how the Jewish question was to be solved in concrete terms. The sources selected by Löw contain statements from the Nazi cadres and authorities about this path. The personal records of the Jewish victims about the humiliations they experienced give insight into their despair but also their hopes. Between the beginning of the war and the summer of 1940, the regime intensified the terror, forced the murders of the sick, and the first deportations were undertaken. In her introduction, Löw describes both the Jewish self-government and the desperate emigration efforts. The extent to which National Socialist propaganda was incorporated into school lessons can be seen, for example, in the dictation of a 14-year-old pupil in September 1939, who had to take notes on a war report read out to her, which spoke of "barefoot Polish women and greasy Kaftan Jews."[49]

According to Tatjana Tönsmeyer in her review in the *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* the first reading of the sources initially leaves a haphazard impression, but because of "the chronological arrangement they formed their own narrative." At the same time, she emphasized, it becomes clear "how confusing the situation was for those affected." The only point of criticism for Tönsmeyer was the use of German instead of Czech place names.[50] For Stefan Dölling the selection of sources showed how much the pressure to deport the Jews from the Reich had come "from the National Socialist base—but also from 'ordinary' Germans." The documents also prove, according to Dölling, "how the paranoid vision of an existential danger from "world Jewry" had been internalized

[48] VEJ 3, 13.

[49] Ibid., Doc. 13.

[50] Tatjana Tösnmeyer, *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 63, no. 3 (2014): 463-464; also accessible in the online review journal *sehepunkte* 15, no. 4 (2015), http://www.sehepunkte.de/2015/04/26197.html, accessed June 20, 2024.

by part of the Reich's population."[51] Anna Hájková, on the other hand, drew a divided balance in her review published in the journal Bohemia. While she was impressed by the first part relating to Germany and Austria, she criticized the second Czech part not only because it mainly reproduced already known sources, but above all because it painted "far too homogeneous a picture" of Czech Jews and they appeared merely "as pale appendages of their German relatives."[52]

The second volume 5, published in 2012, documents the persecution of Jews in Western and Northern Europe from 1940 to June 1942 and was edited by Michael Mayer, Katja Happe, and Maja Peers.[53] Only seven months after the invasion of Poland, the German Wehrmacht overran Denmark and Norway; Denmark, unlike Norway, offered no resistance. This was followed by the rapid conquest of Luxembourg, Belgium, the Netherlands and northern France. More than 500,000 Jews had come under National Socialist rule. With the exception of Denmark, the Reich's Jewish policy was implemented in these countries. The sources and documents in this volume are arranged by country, whereby chronology has been maintained internally. The introduction recapitulates the different forms of occupation policy and the development of the persecution of Jews in the countries, explaining also the special situation in Denmark or the anti-Jewish policy in the non-occupied part of France under the Vichy regime. How the Jewish policy was to be implemented initially remained unclear. Unlike in Poland, the National Socialist forces tried to win over the non-Jewish population and the administration in the northern and western European countries to collaborate in the persecution of the Jews. While in Eastern Europe the policy of murder had already begun in 1941, in Northern and Western Europe preparations for the deportation of the Jews there began after the Wannsee Conference.

On Jewish perceptions and experiences in these countries, the volume reproduces, for example, the farewell letter of a Dutch couple who "put an end to their lives," the farewell speech of a dismissed Dutch law professor to his students, or the diary

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[51] Stefan Dölling, review of *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Band 3,* https://www.hsozkult.de/publicationreview/id/reb-19569, accessed June 20, 2024.

[52] Anna Hájková, *Bohemia Band* 53 (2013): 476-478.

[53] From this volume onwards, Michael Hollmann of the Federal Archives was part of the editorial team.

entry of a French student who was outraged by the introduction of the yellow star.[54]

In his review in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Bernward Dörner emphasizes that by presenting the developments in the individual countries, the common features of the "persecution process clearly emerge." The sources, according to Dörner, made "the escalation of the situation of danger clear in an oppressive way."[55]

After the first seven volumes of the VEJ were published, Michael Wildt presented a first interim report in the *Historische Zeitschrift*.[56] Due to the "contemporary perspective" of the selected sources, the focus of the edition was not memory, "but the historical events themselves." According to Wildt, however, it was problematic that only written documents were used, not pictorial sources. Photographs in particular were an indispensable source for the history of the persecution and murder of European Jews, and antisemitic posters can help to recognize how hatred of Jews was stirred up and "a visual idea of the 'Jew' " created. Thus, "a desideratum of this edition remains, which should be worked on in the future." Nevertheless, the edition impresses with "the multitude and multi-perspectivity of the documents." Since it includes the intention of the perpetrators to persecute, "the self-assertion and resistance of those persecuted, but also the indifference [...] of so many 'Volksgenosseninnen und Volksgenossen'," it offered an "integrated history" of the Shoah in the sense of Saul Friedländer.[57]

In 2014, Klaus-Peter Friedrich, who had already edited volume 4, submitted volume 9 on Poland and the Generalgouvernement from August 1941 to spring 1945.[58] Poland was, Friedrich had written in volume 4, in the spring and summer of 1941 on the "threshold of mass murder."[59] He meticulously documented this phase. In 1941, the majority of Polish Jews lived in what the German occupiers

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[54] VEJ 5, Doc. 27, 47, 314, and 325.

[55] Bernward Dörner, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, August 5, 2013.

[56] Michael Wildt, "Dokumentation des Holocaust. Die Quellenedition zur Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden," *Historische Zeitschrift* 297, no. 2 (2013): 417-421.

[57] Saul Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden. Die Jahre der Verfolgung 1933-1939* (München: C.H.Beck, 1998); Saul Friedländer, *Die Jahre der Vernichtung. Das Dritte Reich und die Juden, 1939-1945* (München: C. H. Beck, 2006).

[58] The archivist Hans-Dieter Kreikamp was replaced from this volume onwards by Simone Walther, later Simone Walther-von Jena, also from the Federal Archives.

[59] VEJ 4, 14.

called the Generalgouvernement, "a kind of colonial 'tributary country of the Reich'."[60] The mass murders of Jews began in the provinces of Posen and Lodz, which were occupied by the Wehrmacht and declared Reichsgau Wartheland. After the Wehrmacht invaded the Soviet Union, SS and German police units also began mass murders in the Generalgouvernement at the end of June 1941. After the Belzec death camp was established, the first phase of the mass murders began, lasting from March to June 1942. In the second phase, from July to December 1942, the killings took place mainly in the camps of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, until spring 1943 the "central death factories for European Jews."[61] Friedrich also explores the reactions of the non-Jewish population to the murder actions, which, however, as he writes, remain controversial. In January 1943, the Jews still living in the Warsaw ghettos took up armed resistance. The uprising had no chance of success, and yet this "act of self-assertion" was, as Friedrich points out, "a sign of hope for those who were still alive."[62]

The offensive of the Red Army in the summer of 1944 "came too late for the vast majority of Jews."[63] Only between 50,000 and 60,000 had survived. The Jewish Historical Commission has collected several thousand testimonies from them. According to Friedrich, along with the Ringelblum Archive, these represent "one of the most important sources on German occupation in Poland."[64]

The volume, too, was presented at the German Historical Institute in Warsaw in October.[65] According to Alexander Brakel in the online journal *sehepunkte*, the sources show "the radicalization of Jewish policy in the German-occupied parts of Poland." The volume is impressive not least because of its diversity of perspectives.[66] Frank Golczewski, on the other hand, emphasizes in the *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* that the volume's "drastic descriptions" are

[60] VEJ. 9, 13.
[61] Ibid., 36.
[62] Ibid., 46.
[63] Ibid., 49.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau / Niemiecki Instytut Historyczny w Warszawie, Jahresbericht 2014, 40.
[66] Alexander Brakel, review of *Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933-1945*, in *sehepunkte* 14, no. 2 (2014), http://www.sehepunkte.de/2014/02/24651.html, accessed June 20, 2024.

"an exhausting read" that "one may not subject oneself to for long."[67] The value of this volume, as Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg points out in *Editionen in der Kritik*, lies both in the fact that it deals with the space in which "the German extermination camps Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor" were located and in the presentation of documents "in languages that were previously difficult to access." However, he criticizes the omission of pictorial documents.[68]

In 2014, when seven of sixteen volumes were thus available, Moshe Zimmermann took stock in the journal *Neue Politische Literatur*.[69] First, he praised the editors for choosing the "title 'Persecution and Murder of the European Jews by National Socialist Germany'" and for avoiding the terms Holocaust, Shoah or Final Solution.[70] According to Zimmermann, the edition project rightly devoted considerable space to Jewish policy in the German Reich and the period before the war. This deserved special attention because of the " 'experimental' character of the Nazi persecution of Jews" in this phase. "Without this long 'run-up', the dynamics of the further development cannot be understood."[71] Even though German Jews made up less than 7% of the Jewish population in Europe at the time and only 5% of the Jews murdered by the National Socialists, this weighting of sources—almost a third of the entire work thus refers to the fate of German Jews—was nevertheless justified according to Zimmermann.[72] The edition could help to answer the "question about the connection between planning and implementation of the 'Final Solution'." The volumes already available also showed how much the various authorities were "involved in the process of disenfranchisement of the Jews in the Reich" long before the war.[73] At the same time, the sources show the importance of "targeted antisemitic propaganda" and how the population was "manipulated by the propaganda technique of the

[67] Frank Golczewski, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 68, no. 3-4 (2020): 666-670; 667.

[68] *Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg, Editionen in der Kritik – Editionswissenschaftliches Rezensionsorgan* 9, no. 1 (2017): 120-122.

[69] Moshe Zimmermann, "Stationen kumulativer Radikalisierung. Das Editionsprojekt 'Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden 1933–1945'," *Neue Politische Literatur* 59 (2014): 10-22.

[70] Ibid., 10. For the conceptual history of the term Holocaust: Ulrich Wyrwa, "Holocaust. Notizen zur Begriffsgeschichte," *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 8 (1999): 300-311.

[71] Zimmermann, "Stationen kumulativer Radikalisierung," 10.

[72] Ibid., 11.

[73] Ibid., 13.

National Socialist regime" in order to gain their consent to the persecution of the Jews.[74] But the path to the "solution of the Jewish question" was by no means mapped out. The documents also reveal the "confusion that prevailed in the leadership strata of the National Socialists."[75] It was therefore not surprising how perplexed German Jews often were. The sources show the "uncertainty of many Jews" until 1938-1939 about their situation. The question of the Jews' reaction in particular has often been simplified in the literature, for example when they were accused of "blindness" or non-resistance. The records "force us to take a more differentiated view."[76] The edition "impressively documents that many German Jews could not imagine how radically their treatment would develop." In this context, Zimmermann urges that the persecution of the Jews must "not be judged a posteriori from the current state of knowledge," but "from the standpoint of contemporary information." Making this possible, Zimmermann sums up, "is one of the great achievements of the project."[77] Regarding the debates on how the Final Solution was carried out in real terms the "successive reading of the documents gives the impression of a crescendo."[78] The first volumes are, Moshe Zimmermann concludes, "a successful start."[79]

After a one-year break in publication, volume 12, worked out by Katja Happe, Barbara Lambauer, and Clemens Maier-Wolthausen, followed in 2015, covering Western and Northern Europe from June 1942 to May 1945.[80] From then on, the Berlin publishing house De Gruyter, which had taken over Oldenbourg Verlag and created the imprint "de Gruyter Oldenbourg," published the edition.

With the exception of Denmark, the German occupation authorities began preparations for the deportation of the Jews in these countries after the Wannsee Conference. From Norway, almost half of the Jewish population perished, in the Netherlands it was three quarters. The Netherlands thus had "the highest death rate in Western Europe."[81] From Belgium, 45% of the Jews living in the country,

[74] Ibid., 21.
[75] Ibid., 16.
[76] Ibid., 18.
[77] Ibid., 16.
[78] Ibid., 17.
[79] Ibid., 22.
[80] Gertrud Pickhan no longer served as co-editor since this volume.
[81] VEJ 12, 45.

the majority of whom did not have Belgian citizenship, were deported. In Luxembourg, supported by the Volksdeutsche movement, a third of the Luxembourgish Jewish population perished.

In France, the Wehrmacht controlled the northern part of the country, interning between 7,000 and 8,000 Jews in camps. In the south of France, the collaborationist government under Marshal Pétain enacted antisemitic measures, too. After the German occupation of southern France in November 1942 and of the Italian zone in September 1943, "a merciless manhunt" began, so that altogether a quarter of the Jewish population of France became victims of the German policy.[82]

In comparison, the proportion "of the deported and murdered Jews in the countries of Western and Northern Europe was very different."[83] A connection between autochthonous antisemitism before the occupation and "the quota of deportees," according to the editors, "cannot be drawn." "Rather, the main impetus for the persecution of the Jews came from the German side.[84]

After half of all the volumes had been published, Susanne Heim drew up an "interim balance sheet."[85] In view of the hardly manageable abundance of detailed studies on the history of National Socialism and the Holocaust, Heim's initial observation is that there is a "danger of scattering."[86] Also, research on victims and perpetrators would often fall apart.

At the same time, Heim warns, the "omnipresence of the topic in the media" leads to the impression that people are already "comprehensively informed." However, "instead of profound knowledge, often only a moral attitude" is conveyed. Consequently, the aim of the edition was "to direct the view more towards the historical events themselves."[87] Reading the sources "a nuanced overall picture" or

[82] Ibid., 77.
[83] Ibid., 81.
[84] Ibid., 83.
[85] Susanne Heim, "Neue Quellen, neue Fragen? Eine Zwischenbilanz des Editionsprojektes ‚Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden'," in *Der Holocaust. Ergebnisse und neue Fragen der Forschung*, eds. Frank Bajohr and Andrea Löw (Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 2015), 321-338.
[86] Ibid., 321.
[87] Ibid., 322.

a "mosaic" opens to the reader, concentrating on single sources however "suddenly reveals the monstrosity of the entire crime."[88]

A comparative reading of the volumes available so far, in turn, shows that "the exclusion of Jews was much easier to enforce in some societies than in others." But the willingness to protect Jews differed also. The reaction of the Jewish population in the individual countries to the persecution was equally inconsistent. All in all, Heim concludes, referring to Saul Friedländer's call,[89] the edition has "set at least a few bridge pillars for an integrated history of the persecution of the Jews."[90]

In the following year, 2016, the volume 8 on Belarus and Ukraine was published, compiled by Bert Hoppe with the collaboration of Imke Hansen and Martin Holler. The introduction reconstructs the beginning of the murder of the Jews under German military administration, explains the German rule of occupation in the General Commissariat of White Ruthenia and in the Reich Commissariat of Ukraine, where the SS, police and local auxiliary policemen immediately set about plundering and ghettoizing the Jewish population. In addition to the differentiated presentation of the "practice of murdering Jews," the sources also give a picture of everyday life in the ghettos and the attempts of Jews to escape.[91] Probably the "most dastardly feature of the anti-Jewish policy of the German occupiers," according to the introduction, was the incorporation of Jews in the crimes in form of the Judenräte.[92] Since mid-1941, about 580,000 Jews had been murdered on the territory of the Belarusian Soviet Republic and about 1.5 million in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. The support of persecuted Jews by the Belarusian and Ukrainian population was rather low, but this, according to the editors, was less related to antisemitic attitudes of the population than to the fact that they also "suffered excessive persecution measures by the German occupiers."[93]

"The prudently annotated sources" of this volume, Jörg Osterloh concludes in his review in the *Historische Zeitschrift,* "impressively document the more than three

[88] Ibid., 329.
[89] Ibid.; Saul Friedländer, *Den Holocaust beschreiben. Auf dem Weg zu einer integrierten Geschichte* (Göttingen; Wallstein, 2007).
[90] Heim, "Neue Quellen, neue Fragen?," 337.
[91] VEJ 8, 35f.
[92] Ibid., 43.
[93] Ibid., 68.

years of horror of the Jewish population under German occupation [...] at two of the main regional sites of the Holocaust."[94] René Schlott conducted in this occasion an interview with Hoppe for the journal *zeitgeschichte/online*. When asked which of the documents had made a particular impression on him personally, Hoppe named the diary of a sixteen-year-old schoolboy who described the deportation of Jews from his Ukrainian hometown.[95]

In 2017 followed the publication of volume 14 on occupied Southeastern Europe and Italy, edited by Sara Berger, Sanela Schmid, Erwin Lewin and Maria Vassilikou,.[96] The South and Southeast European region initially played only a subordinate role in the strategy of National Socialist policy and was rather assigned to the Axis power Italy. Mussolini's attempt to annex Greece became "a single disaster." As a result, Germany's political strategy in this area changed fundamentally.[97] The German Wehrmacht's Balkan campaign began in April 1941. Yugoslavia, which is given a focus in the document section due to its complex development, and Greece were divided into different occupation areas. Germany annexed northern Slovenia, Serbia and the area around Salonika were placed under German military rule. In Albania, previously an Italian protectorate, the Wehrmacht established a formally independent Albanian administration. For Croatia, a dependent state was created under the leadership of the fascist Ustasha movement, other parts of Yugoslavia and Greece came under Italian, Bulgarian or Hungarian rule. In Serbia, occupied by the German military, mass terror began immediately. Only in Albania did the German military hold back. The Ustasha regime in Croatia began persecuting the Jews on its own initiative. The Bulgarian government deported the Jews from the Bulgarian-occupied areas of Yugoslavia and from the former Greek Thrace.

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[94] Jörg Osterloh, *Historische Zeitschrift* 305, no. 2 (2017): 450-452; 452.

[95] R. Schlott, "Ein Schriftdenkmal für zwei Millionen Tote. Zum Erscheinen von Band 8 der Quellenedition ‚Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden'," *zeitgeschichte/online,* March 1, 2016, https://zeitgeschichte-online.de/interview/ein-schriftdenkmal-fuer-zwei-millionen-tote, accessed June 20, 2024.

[96] With this volume, the director of the Fritz Bauer Institute, History and Impact of the Holocaust, Sybille Steinbacher, joined the editorial board.

[97] VEJ 14, 13.

According to Sara Berger, Italy played "an ambivalent role" in this context.[98] Mussolini had enacted racial laws for Italy in 1938, thus "elevating antisemitism to state policy," but the Italian occupation authorities in the Balkans did not implement the persecution of Jews expected by Germany.[99]

Integrated into the German extermination policy, the "murder of almost 85 percent of the Jewish population in the southern Balkans" nearly reached the dimensions of the German extermination policy in Eastern Europe.[100] In Yugoslavia, even the social and political integration of the Jewish population could not prevent the murder campaigns. For the Italian Jews, this began with the occupation by the Wehrmacht. 8,000 Italian Jews were murdered by the Germans. Here, however, 39,000 could be saved with support from the population or the Catholic Church.

In his review in the *Historische Zeitschrift*, Vaios Kalogrias emphasizes that the chronological arrangement enables readers to "draw comparisons and parallels."[101] The volume thus offers "in-depth cross-border insights into the extermination process." Kalogrias only remarked that South-Eastern Europe with Bulgaria and Romania also deserved a volume. In fact, volume 13 on Romania and Bulgaria including Slovakia was published the following year, worked out by Mariana Hausleitner, Souzana Hazan, and Barbara Hutzelmann. After the three countries concluded an alliance with the Third Reich in 1940-1941, they increasingly oriented themselves towards National Socialist Jewish policy. However, the "practice and dynamics" differed significantly.[102] With the German attack on the Soviet Union, all three governments increasingly worked towards the German policy of extermination. Slovakia delivered the Slovakian Jews to the Third Reich. By autumn 1942, 58,000 Jews were deported from Slovakia and murdered in the death camps. Bulgaria enacted anti-Jewish laws, protected Bulgarian Jews but extradited 11,300 Jews from Bulgarian-occupied territories. Romania, on the other hand, pursued its own persecution and expulsion policy on its own initiative, following on the country's previous antisemitic policy. In June 1941 alone,

[98] Ibid., 15.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid., 16.
[101] Vaios Kalogrias, *Historische Zeitschrift* 308, no. 2 (2019): 552-553.
[102] VEJ 13, 16.

Romanian perpetrators murdered 14,000 Romanian Jews; it is estimated that 280,000 to 380,000 Romanian Jews perished in total. However, political divergences began to emerge between Romania and the Third Reich in the autumn of 1942. The Romanian government distanced itself from the Nazi persecution policy and suspended the planned further deportation of Romanian Jews. Slovakia also stopped extraditing Jews to Germany in the autumn of 1942, until the Wehrmacht occupied the country in the summer of 1944 after a Slovakian uprising; it then continued the persecution policy and deported about 12,000 Jews to the extermination camps. The introduction underlines the pressure exerted by the Foreign Office and by the Reichssicherheitshauptamt on the governments of the three countries to force the persecution of the Jews. However, the sources also show that the governments in Bratislava, Sofia and Bucharest still had some room for *manoeuvre*.[103]

In his review in the Berlin *Tagesspiegel*, René Schlott praised this volume for casting "new light on the seemingly explored Holocaust history."[104] He concluded by referring to a letter of a Bulgarian Jew translated from Hebrew from December 1940, who wrote about the sinking of a refugee ship in the Mediterranean. Simon Geissbühler focused his review on the *Deutsch-Rumänische Hefte* entirely on Romania. He described the volume as a "new standard work in German on the Holocaust in Romania" and praised it as an "extraordinary treasure trove."[105] The volume is a "milestone in the historiography of the Holocaust on the periphery." However, Geissbühler criticized the underexposure of Romania's own initiative in the persecution of the Jews and the over-emphasis on the pressure that representatives of the Foreign Office and the Reich Security Main Office had exerted on Romania. This interpretation, he remarks critically, falls back "into a narrative with regard to Romania that is believed to have been overcome."

Even before the source edition was completely finished, the last volume 16, compiled by Andrea Rudorff, was published in November 2018. It deals with Auschwitz, the place whose name has become the epitome of the persecution and

[103] Ibid., 95.

[104] René Schlott, "Verräterische Sprache," *Tagesspiegel* 23642, November 6, 2018.

[105] Simon Geissbühler, "Ein neues Standardwerk in deutscher Sprache zum Holocaust in Rumänien. Eine außergewöhnliche Fundgrube für Experten und Laien," *Deutsch-Rumänische Hefte. Caiete Germano-Române. Halbjahresschrift der Deutsch-Rumänischen Gesellschaft* 22, no. 1 (2019): 40.

murder of European Jews, as well as with the dissolution of the concentration camps and the death marches. The number of prisoners, half of whom perished by the end of 1941, was about 35,000 at that time, including 1300 Jews, and Auschwitz was not yet destined to become the central place for the murder of Jews. In 1941, a larger camp was built in nearby Birkenau. In the same year, the first experiments in killing prisoners with poison gas took place in Auschwitz. In January 1942, the decision was made to make Auschwitz the destination for the deportations of Jews from all parts of Europe. Deportation trains began arriving in the spring of 1942. In her introduction, Rudorff discusses the long controversial question of the dimensions of the murder of Jews in Auschwitz. Of the total of 1.1 million Jews deported to Auschwitz, 960,000 perished.

Due to the advance of the Red Army, the first camps were vacated in spring 1944, first in the occupied Baltic States, then in the Generalgouvernement. With the Soviet offensive in January 1945, the Auschwitz camp complex was also abandoned. Rudorff thus moves on to the second part of the volume: the death marches. The number of prisoners who perished on these can only be estimated at around 250,000, of whom at least 100,000 were probably Jewish prisoners. After the landing of the Western Allies in Normandy, the dissolution of the camps also began in the West. Rudorff meticulously describes this development for the individual concentration camps.

According to the review by Bernhard Schulz in the *Tagesspiegel*, Andrea Rudorff has done a "tremendous job in every respect." When reading the book, the reader is confronted with "the immediacy of horror." "Here," says Schulz, "the innermost core of National Socialism is unlocked." He quotes passages from the sources and concludes his review: "One would have to go on quoting endlessly. It is a terrible read from the terrible first half of the 20th century. [...] It forces one to reflect."[106] According to Werner Renz in his review in the *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, the selected documents on the "crime events" of the death marches "demonstrate in a terrifying way how strong and unbroken the German will to exterminate was right up to the last minute."[107] Stephan Lehnstaedt, on the other hand, criticized in his review in the review organ *sehepunkte*, firstly, that the

[106] Bernhard Schulz, "Im innersten Kreis der Hölle," *Tagesspiegel* 23631, November, 15, 2018.
[107] Werner Renz, *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 67, no. 5 (2019): 490-492.

volume was rather "two separate and only loosely connected parts," "of which Auschwitz takes up about two thirds, the death marches one third."[108] The volume also runs counter to the country-based concept of the edition. For Lehnstaedt, the decision to present sources on Auschwitz and the death marches in a separate volume is "not very consistent," since the camp could also have been dealt with in the volume on occupied Poland and the death marches in the corresponding country volumes.[109] According to Lehnstaedt, it is barely convincing to argue for this conception "with the meaning of Auschwitz, because this is essentially a retrospective attribution." In addition, Lehnstaedt criticizes the omission of pictorial sources that have already been mentioned on several occasions, which would have been of decisive importance for Auschwitz in particular. Nevertheless, Lehnstaedt comes to a positive conclusion at the end: "Anyone who wants to deal with Auschwitz and the death marches must do so in future on the basis of this book."

Again a year after the publication of volume 16, volume 6, worked out by the coordinator of the overall project, Susanne Heim, followed in October 2019. Related on the persecution of Jews in the German Reich as well as in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia from October 1941 to March 1943, it covers the "core phase of the murder of the Jews in the whole of German-dominated Europe."[110] The volume contains 329 sources for these 18 months, in the first part for the German Empire, in the second for Bohemia and Moravia.

After failure of the plan to resettle the European Jews on the French colonial island of Madagascar, the leadership circles of the Nazi regime initially planned to resettle the Jewish population of the Reich "far to the east" after the expected victory following the attack on the Soviet Union.[111] Since the summer of 1941, the failure of the war strategy became apparent. In autumn, the deportations of Jews from the Reich to the East began. However, as Heim points out, Hitler did not yet agree

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[108] Stephan Lehnstaedt, review of *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933-1945*, *sehepunkte* 20, no. 3 (2020), http://www.sehepunkte.de/2020/03/34168.html, accessed June 20, 2024.

[109] At the closing conference, Dieter Pohl addressed this objection and emphasized that Auschwitz and the death marches were transnational phenomena that could therefore not be assigned to any one country.

[110] VEJ 6, 13.

[111] Ibid., 16.

to systematic murder at that moment. The question of when the decision to murder was made is still disputed. According to Heim, the decision was probably made at the end of 1941. The first deportations from the Reich and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia began in October 1941. Diaries and letters from this period reveal how worried the Jews were from the autumn of 1941 onwards about these reports. At first, the deportation routes led to the ghettos and concentration camps, and since May 1942 also to the death camps. The last major deportations took place in spring 1943. The sources also report on the February 1943 arrest of Berlin Jews who lived in mixed marriages and were obliged to do forced labor in armaments factories, a measure against which the non-Jewish spouses successfully protested. Finally, Heim has included documents on the situation of the Jews in hiding, whose number is estimated at 10,000 to 12,000.

In his review for the *tageszeitung* Stefan Reinecke emphasized that the sources collected by Heim "show a system of radicalizations that was extremely accelerated by the invasion of the Soviet Union." The volume also reveals what the "word Auschwitz, which has become a metaphor for extermination, conceals": The mass murder had already begun before the expansion of this camp and had been carried out by firing squads. In this way, "the whole spectrum of extermination" is brought before the eyes.[112] Bernhard Schulz, in turn, emphasizes in his review in the *Tagesspiegel* that the reprinting of the sources of perpetrators and victims in chronological order results in "a kaleidoscope of the reality of the murder of the Jews that summary accounts" are not able to offer. "The reader experiences the horror directly."[113] Finally, Bernward Dörner, in his review for the *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, praises above all "the moving self-testimonies of the victims and survivors."[114]

In April 2020, the 11th volume, compiled by Lisa Hauff, was presented. It contains sources on the German Reich and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia for the period from April 1943 to 1945. By the beginning of 1943, almost all Jews still living in the Reich had been deported and the Jewish communities dissolved. The sources in this volume show firstly the intensification of the persecution of Jews

[112] Stefan Reinecke, *tageszeitung*, October 30, 2019.
[113] Bernhard Schulz, "Zuletzt die Berliner Juden," *Tagesspiegel*, November 13, 2019.
[114] Bernward Dörner, *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 68, no. 3 (2020): 268-269.

in view of the worsening war situation for the Third Reich,[115] secondly the situation of Jews from mixed marriages who were still protected as well as Jews in hiding, and thirdly the fate of Jewish forced laborers. Still other documents provide evidence, fourthly, of the German population's knowledge of the mass murder of the Jews. A fifth focus deals with the international reaction to the National Socialist crimes. The sources for the Reich and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia are divided into two parts. The defeat of the Wehrmacht in Stalingrad in the winter of 1942/43 was a profound turning point. One of the consequences was that the German population became visibly demoralized, while the regime intensified internal terror and at the same time intensified agitation against Jews. The "antisemitic propaganda campaign of spring 1943 proved to be a failure, however. Instead of mobilizing the will to persevere, it rather fueled resignation and doubt among the German population."[116] On the other hand, the desolate military situation, "did not change the undiminished will of the German leadership to continue the extermination of the European Jews."[117] In the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, deportations to Theresienstadt, which were extensively documented, increased in 1943. After the failed assassination attempt on Hitler on 20 July 1944, the German authorities intensified anti-Jewish persecution measures. As Hauff notes Germany's looming defeat led to divergences within the Nazi leadership. While some representatives "continued to adhere to the unconditional intention of extermination," others intended "to use the Jews as 'bargaining chips'."[118]

Stefan Reinecke selected some sources for his favorable review in the *tageszeitung*, such as the article by a Nazi propagandist from Danzig from May 1944, which stated that in "the core areas of Jewish concentration [...] five million Jews alone were eliminated." "The crimes," says Reinecke, "have rarely been so clearly stated."[119]

In June 2020 Volume 10 compiled by Ingo Loose on the occupied Polish territories from August 1941 to 1945 had been published. According to Loose, the goal of

[115] VEJ 11, 13f.
[116] Ibid., 41f.
[117] Ibid., 73.
[118] Ibid., 65.
[119] Stefan Reinecke, *tageszeitung*, November 17, 2020.

German policy was initially Germanization, the expulsion of the Polish population and the "de-Jewification" of the occupied territories.[120] Jews were concentrated in ghettos, had to do forced labor or were murdered. With regard to the enforcement of anti-Jewish policies, Loose documents the initiative of the Reich governors and Gauleiters. Many of the selected sources show the disastrous role they assigned to the Judenräte in the administration of the ghettos. Other documents provide insight into the reactions of non-Jewish Poles or trace how knowledge about the crimes spread. When selecting the sources, the Reichsgau Wartheland was given special attention because here "the connection between Germanization, the use of Jews for forced labor and finally the murder of the Jewish population is particularly obvious."[121] This part of occupied Poland was home to both the Litzmannstadt[122] ghetto and the Kulmhof extermination camp. Other sources refer to the province of Upper Silesia. Documents on Oświęcim, Auschwitz, which was added to this province, are presented in a separate volume. Thirdly, Loose has compiled sources on the Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreußen with the concentration camp Stutthof. Fourthly, he documents the development in the administrative district of Zichenau, assigned to the province of East Prussia, where the small German minority participated in the persecution of the Jews, fifth, the district of Białystok, which was annexed to the Reich and where the last Jewish ghetto uprising took place in August 1943.[123]

In his review in the *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, Frank Grelka praises the large number of archives from which Loose has compiled the sources. The work will become a "standard work for future generations of Holocaust researchers." Grelka only expresses concern that Loose neglected the perspective of the victims in favor of the institutions, which, he adds, is understandable due to the "mass of authorities involved" and can thus provide an insight into the "universality of the persecution of the Jews in these areas."[124] Under the title "Into the Slaughterhouse. The details of horror, that is not nameless, but on the contrary consists of endless rows of names," Arno Widmann published a double review of

[120] VEJ 10, 22.
[121] Ibid., 14.
[122] The Nazi name for the town of Łodź.
[123] VEJ 10, 55-64.
[124] Frank Grelka, *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung/Journal of East Central European Studies* 71, no. 1 (2022): 143-145.

volumes 10 and 11 in the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, which he opened with the observation that no one will "simply read through these books," "every reader will flee from reading them again and again: from the hopelessness of history [and] the meanness of people."[125]

Bernhard Schulz chose similar words when he reviewed the last volume to be published, Volume 15 on Hungary during the German occupation in 1944-1945, which was published in May 2021 and worked out by Regina Fritz, in the *Tagesspiegel*: despite the "increase in historical knowledge," it remains "a horrifying read, one that one would rather not do to oneself, but must."[126] When the Wehrmacht invaded Hungary in March 1944 and installed a government close to the National Socialists, "the annihilation of the last large remaining Jewish community in Europe" began.[127] The selection of sources refers to the Hungarian state in its interwar borders and those territories that had been annexed to Hungary since 1938 or during the war. However, the anti-Jewish policy in Hungary did not begin in 1944, as Fritz points out in her introduction. It already began under the regent Miklós Horthy after the First World War. Deviating from the principle of the edition Fritz has included sources on the persecution of Jews before the German occupation. Hungary intensified its measures against Jews when it annexed further territories and joined the war against the Soviet Union. However, the regime maintained a certain independence insofar as it "largely saved the local Jews from deportation and murder" until the German occupation.[128] When the tide of the war turned, the Hungarian government sought to make a separate peace with the Western powers. But the Wehrmacht forestalled this by invading Hungary in March 1944, while leaving Horthy in office. In May, the deportations began. As the war was no longer winnable for the Axis powers, however, a few months later, Horthy stopped the deportations and concluded an armistice with the Soviet Union. German officials then appointed a government led by the Hungarian antisemitic Arrow Crossers, who shot thousands of Budapest Jews on the banks of the Danube. The deportation of Jews from Hungary at the end of the war, Fritz concluded, exceeded "in its speed the

[125] Arno Widmann, "In das Schlachthaus," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, July 23, 2020.
[126] Bernhard Schulz, "Der furchtbare Alltag des Holocaust," *Tagesspiegel* 24581, June 1, 2021.
[127] VEJ 15, 13.
[128] Ibid., 13.

persecution measures in other European countries" and "cost the lives of more than half a million people."[129]

In her review in the Austrian newspaper *Die Presse*, Cornelia Grobner first emphasized the many references that Fritz's selected sources had to the neighboring country of Austria.[130] But above all, says Grobner, the volume makes visible "what is still swept under the carpet in Hungary today—even in official memorials such as the House of Terror in Budapest: The collaboration on the Hungarian side was massive." Similarly, Beáta Márkus emphasized in the *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* as well as on *sehepunkte* that the volume offers "a profound insight into the darkest, and in part hushed-up, chapter of Hungary's history,"[131] a fact that is all the more important "because in Hungarian historiography to this day there are tendencies to attribute the Holocaust exclusively to German influences and to exclude Hungarian participation."

With the publication of this volume in May 2021, the complete work was available. While the individual volumes had been presented in public events at various memorials, the presentation of the complete work could not occur due to the Corona pandemic. A planned final conference also had to be postponed; it did not take place until May 2023 under the title "The Holocaust as a European Event" at the Berlin memorial Topography of Terror.[132] At least the work could be handed over to the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Frank Walter Steinmeier, in June 2021.[133]

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[129] Ibid., 84.

[130] Cornelia Grobner, " 'Jetzt sind wir an der Reihe'," *Die Presse*, June 19, 2021.

[131] Beáta Márkus, *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung / Journal of East Central European Studies* 71, no. 4 (2022): 682-683; *sehepunkte* 23, no. 2 (2023), http://www.sehepunkte.de/2023/02/37877.html, accessed June 20, 2024.

[132] *Der Holocaust als europäisches Ereignis. Die Edition "Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945"*, https://www.hsozkult.de/event/id/event-134134, accessed June 20, 2024. See the conference report: Ulrich Wyrwa, " 'Der Holocaust als europäisches Ereignis'. Zur Abschlusskonferenz über das Editionsprojekt 'Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945'," *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 75, no. 7-8 (2024): 451-459.

[133] *Übergabe der 16-bändigen Edition "Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933-1945"*, https://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Reden/DE/Frank-Walter-

In the meantime, the audio project "Die Quellen sprechen" (The Sources Speak) had been presented on the basis of the edition, which was broadcast on Bayrischer Rundfunk from January 2013 and is now available on the internet.[134] A 14-CD audio book was also released in 2015.[135]

In 2014, the IfZ also began an English-language edition of the source edition, The Persecution and Murder of the European Jews by Nazi Germany [PMJ], in cooperation with Yad Vashem. The project, coordinated by Elizabeth Harvey, is not a simple translation of the German version into English. Rather, all sources and documents were newly translated from the original languages into English. Volumes 1 to 5 and 12 have now been published. The English edition should be complete by 2026.[136]

At the conclusion of the source edition, a series of reviews of the complete work have once again appeared. According to Christoph Jahr in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, the edition "reflects the enormous gain in knowledge of Holocaust research in recent decades."[137] The old controversies between intentionalists and structuralists are over, and the sources show "that ideological will to extermination and pragmatic agility were by no means mutually exclusive." Antisemitism was more or less present in all countries of Europe, and yet, according to Jahr, the murder "could never have been implemented with such radicality without the constant push [...] by the German leadership."[138] Bernhard Schulz addressed in his review the use of inverted commas. In the editorial preface to all volumes, it is stated that, as a rule, the customary terms of National Socialist Germany are not placed in inverted commas, but other terms of the time are. "The use of inverted

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Steinmeier/Reden/2021/06/210616-Edition-Verfolgung-Ermordung-Juden.html?nn=9042544, accessed June 20, 2024.

[134] *Die Quellen sprechen,* https://www.br.de/mediathek/podcast/die-quellen-sprechen/alle/809, accessed June 20, 2024.

[135] *Die Quellen sprechen. Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933 - 1945. Eine dokumentarische Höredition* (München: Der Hörverlag, 2015).

[136] See the homepage of the English edition: https://pmj-documents.org/purchase/, accessed June 20, 2024.

[137] Christoph Jahr, "Wer künftig fundiert über den Holocaust sprechen will, wird an dieser Publikation nicht vorbeikommen. Eine monumentale Quellenedition zur Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden liegt jetzt vor," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, October 5, 2021.

[138] Schulz, "Der furchtbare Alltag des Holocaust."

commas, which cannot be clearly defined, cannot be systematically justified," the volume preface state. "It forms a certainly contestable compromise between historiographical rigor and the need to at least occasionally set a distancing signal."[139] But this, according to Schulz's criticism, is not what the edition can achieve: "Setting a 'distancing signal': This is precisely what the Edition does not allow the reader to do. It presents the horror of deprivation of rights, dehumanization and murder unfiltered before the eyes. [...] Facing the truth is the great, the lasting achievement of this edition."[140] In his article on the final conference, Bernhard Schulz once again made clear the quantitative dimensions of the 16 volumes: 13,465 pages offer about 5500 documents, which come from 230 archives and have been translated from 21 languages.[141]

Concluding Considerations

Since the end of the 1980s, especially after the Historikerstreit in the middle of the decade, a new politics of remembrance had gained acceptance in West Germany, which promoted a critical reappraisal of the German past. After the political turnaround in 1989-1990, this form of commemoration determined the German political culture and the public approach to German history. In view of current controversies in the politics of remembrance and history, it remains to confront the crime against humanity perpetrated by National Socialist Germany. The great merit of this comprehensive source edition is that it has created a crucial building block for this after the end of the age of contemporary witnesses.

Finally, seven reflections on working with this work will be discussed.

1. The current historical-political controversies alluded to are characterized by multidirectional attacks on the German politics of remembrance. On the political field, the attacks come from right-wing nationalist actors. For example, the leading

[139] VEJ 1, 12; VEJ 16, 11.
[140] Schulz, "Der furchtbare Alltag des Holocaust."
[141] Bernhard Schulz, "Schriftliches Denkmal. 16 Bände zur Ermordung der Juden Europas," *Tagesspiegel* 25249, May 16, 2023.

politician of the far-right authoritarian-nationalist party in Germany, AfD, Björn Höcke, had called for a "180° turn in remembrance policy."[142] From the academic side, these attacks are led in particular by the New York-based political scientist A. Dirk Moses, son of an Australian Anglican clergyman, who called for the connection between the Holocaust and the colonialism of the German Reich to be brought into focus. In a sublimely religious tone, he accused the political culture in Germany of treating the Holocaust as a "sacred trauma," and he raised the accusation that the politics of remembrance had taken on a "sacred redemptive function."[143] This attack was flanked, but less noticed, by the German historian Wolfgang Reinhard, who, in similarly religious language in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, accused German intellectuals of asserting "an eternal guilt of Germany."[144]

Referring to Moses, Martin Doerry objected in his evening lecture at the final conference that there may be a way from Namibia to Nuremberg, but there is no way from Namibia to Auschwitz.[145] The methodological problem, however, the confusion of comparison and equation and the associated short-circuit from colonialism to National Socialism was not further explored at the final conference. This was despite the fact that Susanne Heim had already noted in her interim

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[142] Speech by Björn Höcke on 17 January 2017 at the Ballhaus Watzke, Dresden, as part of the event series "Dresdner Gespräche," organised by the youth association of the extreme rightwing party Alternative für Deutschland: https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/parteien-die-hoecke-rede-von-dresden-in-wortlaut-auszuegen-dpa.urn-newsml-dpa-com-20090101-170118-99-928143, accessed June 20, 2024; See: Aleida Assmann, "Unbehagen von rechts. Die Wiederaufrüstung der Nation. Angriffe auf die deutsche Erinnerungskultur. Höcke und Gauland," in *Das neue Unbehagen an der Erinnerungskultur. Eine Intervention*, 3. edition, ed. Aleida Assmann (München: C. H. Beck, 2020), 219-224.

[143] A. Dirk Moses, "Der Katechismus der Deutschen," https://geschichtedergegenwart.ch/der-katechismus-der-deutschen/, accessed June 20, 2024. On the discussion of the bizarre misjudgements of the historian A. Dirk Moses and the steep thesis on the "Catechism of the Germans": Saul Friedländer, Norbert Frei, Sybille Steinbacher, and Dan Diner, eds., *Ein Verbrechen ohne Namen. Anmerkungen zum neuen Streit über den Holocaust* (München: C. H. Beck, 2022). In the meantime, Moses has intensified his attacks on German memory politics in a small book: A. Dirk Moses, *Nach dem Genozid*, trans. David Frühauf (Berlin: Matthes & Seitz, 2023).

[144] Wolfgang Reinhard, "Vergessen, verdrängen oder vergegenwärtigen?", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 10, 2022.

[145] An abridged version of the lecture: Martin Doerry, "Ein Tagebuch gegen das Vergessen. Die Erinnerung an den Holocaust verblasst," *Die Zeit*, June 1, 2023.

report that the "classification of the Holocaust in the world history of the 20th century" was one of the still "open questions."[146] In his review of the complete work published in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung,* Christoph Jahr noted that without this source edition it would no longer be possible to participate in a well-founded way in the debate on the relationship between colonialism and the Shoah.[147]

2. Furthermore, in current historical-political controversies, a bizarre conceptual confusion in the use of the term antisemitism can be observed, and debates on memory policy all too easily get bogged down in meta-discourses. As the concept of antisemitism is ubiquitously rolled out in public debate and occasionally even hypostasized as a basic anthropological constant, the term is emptied and threatens to affect debates on remembrance policy, too. For this reason, the editors have been very careful with the use of the term antisemitism. Consequently, the semantic linkage "anti-Jewish policy" is found much more frequently; in contrast, "antisemitic policy" is mentioned only rarely, in most volumes not at all.[148] In this sense, Frank Bajohr stated at the final conference that the murder of the Jews cannot be understood solely on the basis of social antisemitism, and according to Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, antisemitism is also not sufficient to explain the Holocaust, even if it would not have been possible without antisemitism. Taking up this question, the introduction to volume 14 states that the German policy of extermination "impressively demonstrates that it was hardly strategic, political or economic motives that led to the murder of the Jews, but above all radical antisemitism." The deeds showed "the criminal energy with which German authorities had promoted mass murder."[149]

3. Even though Ulrich Herbert lamented at the final conference, in addition to the small number of chairs designated at German universities for the history of

[146] Heim, "Neue Quellen, neue Fragen? Eine Zwischenbilanz," 336.
[147] Jahr, "Wer künftig fundiert über den Holocaust sprechen will."
[148] In this context, it would certainly have been instructive to include in the edition the instruction of the Reich Ministry of Propaganda Goebbels of 1935 to "avoid the word Antisemitic or Antisemitism in the Jewish question" and to "use the word: anti-Jewish" instead: *NS-Presseanweisungen der Vorkriegszeit. Edition und Dokumentation 3/II: 1935*, eds. Hans Bohrmann and Gabriele Toepser-Ziegert (München: Saur, 1987), 522.
[149] VEJ 14, 15.

National Socialism, above all the declining interest of students of history in this subject. The interest of young people in Germany in dealing with the National Socialist past, however, is extremely high. In the representative study conducted by the Bielefeld Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, in which young people aged between 16 and 25 were asked about their historical-political attitudes, it was found that over 82% of the young people surveyed perceived the period of National Socialism as an important epoch in German history, and 63% had even dealt intensively with this period themselves. 76% disagree with the demand to draw a line under this period and not to deal with it any further. They also value more knowledge about this time, they want to visit the historical places and ask about the present-day references.[150] It is precisely in this respect that the source edition has proved particularly productive and helpful, as demonstrated not least by the great commitment of the students in the public readings of selected sources from the 16 volumes.[151]

4. When Moshe Zimmermann reminded us in his interim review of the difficulty of the task of editing a "representative and at the same time comprehensive selection" of sources "which in the end is to be accepted as a canon of sources,"[152] he thus touched on a methodological problem that affects all comprehensive source editions in a similar way: the danger of canonization or the idea that the work represents a supposedly closed canon of sources that has been declared authoritative. If the present corpus is read in this sense as a completed work, further archival studies no longer seem necessary. This reading could be reinforced by the fact that the work was not presented as a collection of sources—comparable series appear under this label—but as a "document edition," and series with this title are not seldom published with the claim of completeness.
A particular problem arises with regard to the English edition. Thus, English-speaking users are not likely to be prompted to consult supplementary foreign-

[150] Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft, Institut für interdisziplinäre Konflikt- und Gewaltforschung, ed., *Multidimensionaler Erinnerungsmonitor 2023. Memo Jugendstudie*, o.O. 2023.
[151] *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, November 6, 2014. In Munich, for example, "Days of Sources" have since been held regularly with schoolchildren.
[152] Zimmermann, "Stationen kumulativer Radikalisierung."

language sources, to consult continental European archives or to study the German National Socialist documents in the original.
The editor of the two volumes on the Soviet Union, Bert Hoppe, also pointed out the problem of language skills in his conversation with René Schlott.[153] On the question of what contribution the edition would make to Holocaust research, he explained that they provided documents "that were previously inaccessible to many Holocaust researchers because of the language barrier" and which were now available, translated from 13 languages. Stefanie Schüler-Springorum therefore saw the edition, as she emphasized at the final conference, as a statement for historical research and a plea for work in archives.

5. Less attention has been paid, both at the conference and in the reviews of the individual volumes, to the geographical dimensions and precise historical maps contained in the volumes from volume 4 onwards.[154] It is precisely these maps that provide an accurate spatial orientation of the topography of terror, as well as the German administrative structures and their consequences for the politics of killing. Maps like that of the Generalgouvernement in volume 9,[155] or, even more precisely, those of the German Reich and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia 1943-1945 in volume 11, also make it clear that the Polish town of Oświęcim, Auschwitz, was located in the areas of Poland annexed by the German Reich. The province had been added to Upper Silesia, but the very name Auschwitz, as Detlev Claussen put it, "refers to the concrete historical-geographical location of the events. Auschwitz stands pars pro toto for the universe of concentration and extermination camps [...]. As a German name for a place in Poland, Auschwitz refers to the German authorship of the criminal act,

[153] Schlott, "Ein Schriftdenkmal für zwei Millionen Tote."
[154] It should be noted that individual maps printed in the bound edition are not included in the paperback edition or the e-book. Furthermore, the maps are found in different places in the volumes, sometimes on the front or back endpaper, sometimes within the introductions and sometimes in the source section; in one case a map is also included in the bound edition as a loose sheet. It should also be noted that the maps are not listed in the tables of contents.
[155] Not included in the paperback edition.

which cannot be understood without the National Socialist grip on world power. The German naming of a Polish place symbolizes this grip."[156]

6. As the title and the originating concepts for the edition project already show, the fundamental aim was to focus on the European dimensions of the murder of the Jews of the entire continent.[157] In this sense, Susanne Heim emphasized in her interim review that the edition offers the possibility of comparative insights into the persecution of Jews in different European countries.[158] Similarly, Moshe Zimmermann had pointed out on the same occasion that the murder of the German Jews had taken place against "the background of the Europeanisation of persecution."[159] For Christoph Jahr, in turn, according to his review of the complete work, the achievement of the editing lies above all in having made it clear that "the Holocaust can only be understood as a pan-European [...] event."[160]
Thus, the final conference was held under the title "The Holocaust as a European Event," and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum emphasized the European dimensions of antisemitism at the beginning. For Ingo Loose, the edition opens up a transnational perspective on the Holocaust. What is needed is a new European perspective. Similarly, Susanne Heim had already warned in her article that the "overall events of the persecution of the Jews" would be lost from view due to the abundance of individual studies. There is a danger of a "Verinselung des Wissens," a restriction of the knowledge to single islands, which makes comparative observations difficult.[161] At the final conference, Dieter Pohl lamented in this sense the microscopization of current Holocaust research. What is needed are new, transnational questions. The edition could inspire this. According to Pohl, it offers in this way a piece of European social history. Bernhard Schulz pointed out that 11 of the 16 volumes refer to European countries that were dominated by the

[156] Detlev Claussen, "Die Banalisierung des Bösen. Über Auschwitz, Alltagsreligion und Gesellschaftstheorie," in *Antisemitismus und Gesellschaft. Zur Diskussion um Auschwitz, Kulturindustrie und Gewalt*, ed. Michael Werz (Frankfurt/M.: Verlag Neue Kritik, 1995), 13-28; 16-17.
[157] Pohl, "Die Verfolgung und Ermordung."
[158] Heim, "Neue Quellen, neue Fragen?", 353.
[159] Zimmermann, "Stationen kumulativer Radikalisierung."
[160] Jahr, "Wer künftig fundiert über den Holocaust sprechen will."
[161] Heim, "Neue Quellen, neue Fragen?", 321.

Nazi regime. Thus, according to Schulz, "one of the most delicate problems of European remembrance culture comes into view."[162] Therefore, Auschwitz as a European place of remembrance in the sense of Pierre Nora is also included in the three-volume handbook of *European lieux de mémoire* edited by Pim den Boer, Heinz Duchhardt, Georg Kreis and Wolfgang Schmale.[163] The three-volume work on this subject edited by Étienne François and Thomas Serrier contains a contribution to the memory of mainly Eastern European Jewry and the destroyed world of the shtetl under the heading "The Disappeared,"[164] and, in addition to the general lemmas deportations or genocides, also the entry "National Socialism," which is presented as a "European affair."[165]

7. The greatest benefit of the edition, however, is probably to counteract the danger of historical research being suppressed by debates on memory and history policy. In his review of the first volume, Stefan Reinecke had lamented the "rampant meta-discourse of remembrance politics" about the Holocaust and therefore praised the edition project as an "attempt by historical scholarship" to "counter this trend with something: namely, the unabridged source."[166] As Susanne Heim put it in her interview with *Die Zeit*, the edition could prevent academia from "only conducting meta-discourses about the Nazi era, the more distant it becomes."[167] In his interview with the *tageszeitung*, Ulrich Herbert also expressed skepticism about the public discourse on the Holocaust offering "an excess of media pretense and little concern with the matter itself."[168] Similarly, René Schlott wrote that with "the edition, the veto power of the sources comes into its own in a completely new way, especially in the often politicized, sometimes instrumentalized discourses surrounding the Shoah." At the final conference,

[162] Schulz, "Der furchtbare Alltag des Holocaust."
[163] Wolfgang Benz, "Auschwitz," in *Europäische Erinnerungsorte*, eds. Pim den Boer, Heinz Duchhardt, Georg Kreis, Wolfgang Schmale, vol. 2 (München: Oldenbourg, 2012), 465-478.
[164] Mike Plitt and Thomas Serrier, "Die Verschwundenen," in *Europa. Die Gegenwart unserer Geschichte*, eds. Étienne François and Thomas Serrier, vol. 1 (Darmstadt: Theiss, 2019), 144-147.
[165] Johann Chapoutot, "Der Nationalsozialismus – eine europäische Angelegenheit," in *Europa*, eds. François and Serrier, 72-80.
[166] Stefan Reinecke, "Frau Elly schreibt an die SS," *tageszeitung*, January 26, 2008.
[167] "Bald sprechen nur noch die Quellen. Fragen an die Historikerin Susanne Heim," *Die Zeit*, April 22, 2021.
[168] Stefan Reinecke, "Die Quellenlage ist besser geworden," *tageszeitung*, June 15, 2021.

Andreas Wirsching had addressed this problem and explained that in the current academic discourse, empirical research on the Holocaust is overshadowed by the history of remembrance. As Stefanie Schüler-Springorum put it, there is a lot of opinion and little knowledge in the controversies about memory policy.
A way out of the current aberrations in the debates about German politics of remembrance and the underlying lack of historical judgement can thus only lie in the appeal "back to the sources." Only by going back to the sources—and of which the 16 volumes of the edition offer only a sample—can the particular horrors of this period be grasped, and only through historical enlightenment and a precise knowledge of the documents, through the appeal 'back to the sources', can the current confusions of public debates be overcome.

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Ari Joskowicz, *Rain of Ash: Roma, Jews, and the Holocaust* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2023), pp. 368.

Roma, Jews, and Archival Evidence on the Holocaust

by *Anton Weiss-Wendt*

Writing comparative history poses a number of challenges. The prospective author has to go through a large amount of primary and secondary sources looking for links between the elements chosen for comparison. The existing body of evidence should be large enough to justify a comparison. The linkage accentuated must not violate the logic of historical analysis. Finally, the purpose of a comparative study has to be clear. Ari Joskowicz tackles all those challenges with distinction in his new book, *Rain of Ash: Roma, Jews, and the Holocaust*. Beside its immediate focus on Jewish and Romani victims of the Nazis, the book raises a broader issue of institutional and financial foundations of historical research.

Scholarship on Holocaust memory is vast. The story is very different, however, when it comes to victim groups other than Jews. Even then, accounts of a specific victim group targeted by the Nazis—people with mental disabilities, Jehovah's witnesses, homosexuals, Soviet prisoners of war, political opposition, and others—typically treat it in isolation. Beyond anecdotal evidence, no author has so far comprehensively compared and contrasted the experiences of two or more minority groups slated for destruction. That alone makes *Rain of Ash* a pioneering work.

Joskowicz's family history underlines his academic interest in the subject of the Holocaust, though he does not say in the book what prompted him to pursue research on the Roma genocide (pp. ix–xi). In his reply to my question, Joskowicz wrote that his vague, early understanding of a shared victimhood of Jews and Roma at the hands of the Nazis was reinforced by the killing of four Roma in a right-wing bomb attack in 1995 in his native Austria. Teaching about the Holocaust at Vanderbilt University, where he serves as assistant professor of

history, made Joskowicz realize how unforgivably little he knew about the Nazi persecution of Roma.[1]

Rain of Ash relates a history of an asymmetrical relationship between Jewish and Romani survivors in pursuit of justice. Although the book has the word *Holocaust* in its title, five out of six chapters deal with the post-1945 period. Joskowicz is intent on "breaking down the conventional barrier in scholarship between what happened during the Holocaust and how it has been represented ever since" (p. 11). Reasonable as may sound, this approach creates a misbalance of a different kind whereby the discussion on memory politics superimposes conclusions regarding academic research at large.

Joskowicz begins his discussion by surveying Jewish-Romani encounters—personal, communal, and administrative—during and immediately after the Holocaust. Earlier efforts to document the Nazi destruction of Roma (mainly in the Greater Germany) paralleled its emergence as a stand-alone subject in war crimes trials. Throughout the book, Joskowicz emphasizes the contribution of individual Jewish professionals and of what he is referring to as "Holocaust" or "Jewish" archives to raising the awareness of the persecution and mass murder of Roma under Nazis.

There is currently a scholarly consensus that, of all targeted groups, the Nazis committed genocide against Jews and Roma. This realization took long to sink in when it comes to Roma, however. The scope of the Jewish Holocaust became public knowledge already during the International Criminal Tribunal at Nuremberg in 1945-46, while the Nazi mass murder of Roma first came in sharp relief in the subsequent Einsatzgruppen Trial in 1946-47 that had received much less publicity. Romani survivors in postwar Europe, German Sinti in particular, were keen on emphasizing the similarities between the Nazi treatment of Jews and Roma—something that the International Refugee Organization had recognized early on. Beyond emotional relief, such a comparison bore on the chances of receiving financial compensation. West German courts consistently rejected Romani claims for compensation on the grounds that they had fallen victim to *racial* persecution only beginning in 1943. This type of argumentation had

[1] Communication from Ari Joskowicz, November 2, 2023.

persisted until 1965 when the German Federal Court of Justice reversed it by putting the burden of proof on the state rather than the Romani victims.

The interaction between Jewish and Romani prisoners—who sometimes found themselves locked up in the same Nazi camps, ghettos, and deportation trains—did not necessarily manifest in acts of mutual assistance and empathy. Rather, Jews and Roma had taken with them into the places of incarceration traditional stereotypes of the other group. Most of the encounters were transactional, informed by the impossible choices that the victims were facing. Jewish prisoners would typically refer to Romani to emphasize their own ordeal, and vice versa. In the poignantly titled subchapter, "Seeing, Hearing, Smelling Each Other," Joskowicz narrates of Romani survivors recalling the nauseating smell of the incinerated Jewish corpses and Jewish survivors the bloodcurdling screams of Romani prisoners, both at Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp. When talking about power dynamics between Jews and Roma in a vulnerable situation, Joskowicz contrasts the history of "loud" and "silent" persecution of the respective minority (pp. 6-7, and 10). As he does not pursue this discussion further in the book, I am not sure as to its usefulness.

When situating Joskowicz's study in the body of existing academic literature, I would single out the following three discursive elements as perhaps most instructive: the ambivalence embedded in the initial attempts by concerned professionals, many of them Jewish, to make sense of a tragedy befallen the Roma (chapter 3); larger prominence of the subject of Nazi destruction of the Roma in the courtroom (chapter 4); and the politics of scholarship, especially in the 1990s (chapters 5-6).

To illustrate that first point, Joskowicz looks at three particular individuals: British linguist Dora Yates (1879-1974), American psychologist David P. Boder (1886-1961), and Belgian journalist Estelle Goldstein (1902-1991). As the secretary of the Gypsy Lore Society in England, Yates in 1943 began speaking of the shared history of persecution of Jews and Roma and three years later opened the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* to reports on the Nazi destruction—the first such accounts to appear. Boder in 1946 traveled to Europe to interview Jewish survivors. Among other things, he asked them what they knew about the fate of Roma, specifically at Auschwitz. Concurrently, Goldstein on behalf of the Belgian Government interviewed Jewish survivors in that particular country for the purpose of

compensation. About 13 percent of respondents volunteered information about their fellow Romani prisoners. In spite of their best intentions, writes Joskowicz, all three failed to grasp the full scale of destruction of the Roma people during the Second World War.

Of the three major war crimes trials that Joskowicz examines with reference to Roma, the Nuremberg is the best known. His analysis of the statement of Otto Ohlendorf, commander of Einsatzgruppe D who had argued that Roma were executed en masse on the same grounds as Jews, remains also the only direct reference in the book to the mass murder of Roma in the German-occupied Soviet territories. The relative prominence of the Roma genocide in the Adolf Eichmann trial in 1961 is a new information, however. Harrowing details about the "Gypsy family camp" at Auschwitz came from a Jewish physician who worked there, while not a single Romani took the witness stand. Despite that, Romani activists would subsequently refer to the Eichmann trial as the type of justice and/or forum they have been seeking, mainly due to the prominence accorded to victims' narratives. In contrast, six Romani witnesses, alongside eighty-eight Jewish, testified in the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials. On the one hand, the 1963-1965 trials produced a significant body of evidence on the Nazi mass murder of Roma and thus made it a public knowledge in Germany. On the other hand, the few Romani witnesses who shared their experiences in the courtroom had been under police surveillance, which accentuated their continuous persecution.

Beside the main subject of his study, Joskowicz engages in an important, overlooked discussion on financial foundations of historical research. Jews have had a long tradition of self-organization, something that Roma are lacking. Specific to the United States is tax exemptions for charitable donations, which bolsters fundraising. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) emerges in his discussion as an example of an American public-private partnership whose agenda is determined in part by donors, in this particular case Jewish. Established in 1980 by Congress, the US Holocaust Memorial Council did not originally consider incorporating the Nazi persecution and mass murder of Roma into the story of the Holocaust to be told in a new purpose-built museum on the National Mall in Washington, DC. Negative publicity generated by Romani activists' protests made the council to eventually offer a seat to a Romani representative. The fact of Romani representation on the USHMM council alone

could hardly alter the focus of the museum's permanent exhibition or the principles of acquisition of archival collections, however.

During the first five decades since the end of the Second World War, archival evidence—specifically few in numbers survivor testimonies—on the Nazi destruction of the Roma has found its way or been deliberately incorporated in purpose-assembled document collections dealing with the history of the Jewish Holocaust. That makes him draw a logical nexus between the emergence of "Jewish/Holocaust archives" and the growth of knowledge about the Roma genocide. An original thesis, it has an inbuilt discursive flaw.

By means of a disclosure, I have reviewed Ari Joskowicz's article that eventually appeared in 2016 in *History and Memory*.[2] While I recommended the article for publication, I found a number of problems with the author's notion of *Jewish/Holocaust archives*. The published version of the article failed to address the thrust of my criticism; Joskowicz has reworked the journal article into the book manuscript, faithfully reproducing his earlier argument, parts of which I regard fallacious. *Quid pro quo*, some of the criticism below stems from my reader report, which the author had presumably received from the journal editorial board.

Joskowicz's book falls in the established pattern of substituting the victimization of Roma in the Third Reich (i.e., Germany proper, Austria, and the Protectorate of Bohemia & Moravia) for that in the entire German-dominated Europe, and the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp for the thousands of sites of mass murder. The destruction of Roma in southeastern and eastern Europe, and by extension the interactions between Jewish and Romani victims in those territories, appear at the level of anecdotes within few sentences, maximum paragraphs (pp. 20, 23–24, 36, 41, and 112). This does not accurately reflect the geography of the genocide: as many Roma were murdered by the Nazis at Auschwitz in occupied Poland as by the Ustaša at Jasenovac camp in Croatia; nearly as many Russian-speaking Roma perished as German-speaking Roma.[3]

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[2] Ari Joskowicz, "Separate Suffering, Shared Archives: Jewish and Romani Histories of Nazi Persecution," *History and Memory* 28, no. 1 (2016): 110-140.

[3] Anton Weiss-Wendt, "Roma," in *The Cambridge History of the Holocaust*, vol. 3, *Victims, Bystanders, and Helpers, 1939-1945*, ed. Mark Roseman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024), in print.

The sense that one gets when reading *Ash of Rain* is that the successful incorporation of Romani victimization in the history of the Holocaust still depends on an equilibrium between Jews and Roma. Joskowicz convincingly argues that historians, lawyers, and activists among Jewish Holocaust survivors had played an important role in drawing attention to the comparable faith of the Roma under the Nazis in the first postwar decades. By the late 1990s, however, the body of knowledge on the Roma genocide has reached a level that injected it into academic research beyond any ethnic markers. As a watershed event, I regard the publication in 1996 of a book by German historian Michael Zimmermann (1951–2007), *Rassenutopie und Genozid: Die nationalsozialistische "Lösung der Zigeunerfrage."* Based on research in sixty-five archives in seven different countries, Zimmermann's study remains unsurpassed until today. There hardly finds a Holocaust synthesis on the market today that would not incorporate the victimization of the Roma at the hands of the Nazis and their allies (how comprehensively any given book treats this subject is an entirely different matter). Joskowicz makes a good observation when arguing that, when it comes to addressing historical injustices, the "focus on one victim group does not always translate easily into advantages for others" (p. 135). Academic scholarship, obviously, does not approach history from the vantage point of advantages for any chosen subject of research.

As they emerge from the Joskowicz's discourse, factors that had motivated certain (Jewish) individuals, including historians, to study the Nazi destruction of the Roma are mainly emotional—"shared suffering," as he puts it. Correct as it may be, historical analysis is embedded in rational choice. Sometimes, historians find themselves in a situation when documents stare them in the face. Former USHMM historian, Martin C. Dean (b. 1962), once replied as follows to the question how he had come across the subject of his 2000 book that dealt with local collaboration in the Holocaust in Belorussia and Ukraine: "They found me rather than I found them." He then explained that, as part of his former job as a historian in the Scotland Yard War Crimes Unit, he was handling cases of alleged war criminals among ethnic Belorussians and Ukrainians.[4]

[4] Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941–44* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000). Dean told this anecdote in a private conversation sometime in 2003.

It was no different in my case. When doing research for my doctoral dissertation on the Holocaust in Estonia in the late 1990s and early 2000s—the subject I chose because it had not been until then comprehensive treated in scholarship—relevant archival files I have ordered contained recurrent references to the mass murder of Roma. With no advanced knowledge of the Nazi policy toward Roma, I put the documentary evidence regarding the persecution of Roma in German-occupied Estonia in a separate pile. A compact material, it fit well the format of a journal article, which I published in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* in 2003, six years before my book on the Holocaust in Estonia came out.[5] The files in question came from the Estonian Security Police Collection deposited in the Estonian National Archives in Tallinn. The same files are available as copies in USHMM in Washington, DC. I will be using this particular anecdote to discuss what I regard as a major problem with the discourse that Joskowicz advances in his book.

Joskowicz is inadvertently proposing a certain hierarchy when it comes to primary sources on the Holocaust. He is correct to pinpoint that Holocaust historians writing on the Roma genocide mainly approach it from the perpetrator's perspective (p. xi). This does not automatically means, though, that perpetrator records are useless in rendering a victim's perspective.[6] Equally true is that for each existing Romani survivor testimony there are over two hundred Jewish survivor testimonies. As I have argued elsewhere, however, the oral history gap can be, and has been, bridged by using other types of primary sources.[7] Hence, the following claim by Joskowicz cannot be substantiated: "...there is a good reason that most scholars working on the Jewish Holocaust typically use administrative accounts only to supplement others [survivor testimonies]" (p. 100).

The original comparison between the Nazi treatment of Jews and Roma had been drawn not by the survivors, activists, and/or scholars, but by the perpetrators themselves. Joskowicz does say so at the beginning of the book (pp. 23, 46-47), yet this point gets lost in his discussion of "knowledge production." "Jews and Roma

[5] Anton Weiss-Wendt, "Extermination of the Gypsies in Estonia during World War II," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 17, no. 1 (2003): 31-61; Weiss-Wendt, *Murder without Hatred: Estonians and the Holocaust* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2009).

[6] I am making this point in my recent article, "Who Were the Roma Victims of the Nazis: A Case Study of Estonia," *Journal of Baltic Studies* 54, no. 1 (2023): 27-54.

[7] Anton Weiss-Wendt, introduction to *A People Destroyed: New Research on the Roma Genocide*, ed. Anton Weiss-Wendt (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 2025), in print.

have become inextricably connected by proximate experiences, overlapping archival labor, and comparative perceptions of their fates," writes Joskowicz (p. 10), in an attempt to rebuild after the genocide carried out by the Nazis, that is. "Shared Romani and Jewish archives" (p. 13) is thus a direct consequence of the murderous policy pursued by the Nazi regime. Concerned Jewish archivists, activist, and scholars did contribute to popularizing the victim linkage, yet only inadvertently (p. 14).

Joskowicz argues at the end of Chapter 1 that: "Yet, they [Jews and Roma] are forever associated with each other because their traces reach us through the same *archival* and knowledge *infrastructure* that survivors and liberators began building after the war [emphasis added]" (p. 48). Throughout the book, Joskowicz talks of archives metaphorically more than he does literally. He unduly segregates "Jewish/Holocaust" archives from "non-Jewish" archives essentializing the former in the process. Joskowicz unwittingly commits the fallacy of the false dichotomous question when inquiring, "What does it mean for members of one minority group to control a large part of the archives and, thus, the history, or another?" (p. 11). By approaching the study of the Nazi genocide of the Roma through the prism of "Jewish/Holocaust archives," he predictably concludes that it has been secondary to that of the Nazi genocide of the Jews. By analogy, anyone finding his or her way into Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at the New York University that holds records of trade unions, Communist Party USA, anarchist groups, and other American radical left organizations may reasonably deduce that entities to the right of the political spectrum take significantly less, if any, space in this particularly depository.

In reference to available archival documentation, Joskowicz spends considerable time discussing survivor testimonies. Yad Vashem in Jeruslaem, Wiener Library in London, and the Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation in Paris have pioneered the collection of written, and later audio, testimonies in the 1950s. In the United States, the Fortunoff Archives at Yale University and the Shoah Foundation at the University of South California picked up the torch in in the 1980s and the 1990s, respectively. Oral history is thus a novel type of evidence, considering that the history of archives stretches back ca. 5,000 years. Traditionally, state archives store administrative, legal, religious, military, financial, and other records. Archival collections are typically assembled according

to institutional principle, accounting for chronology and geography (e.g., Estonian Security Police, 1941–1944). Archivists at Tallinn subsequently organized and systematized the records of the Estonian Security Police that reflect on the decision-making, reporting and documentation system of that particular agency.

Joskowicz mentions but does not accentuate that, survivor testimonies put aside, "Holocaust" archives are derivative by definition. Institutions like USHMM and Yad Vashem contain copies of documents mainly from central and branch state archives in Europe. For instance, in a footnote on page 276 Joskowicz refers to copies of documents on the destruction of Roma in German-occupied Eastern Europe that the Wiener Library had received from Yad Vashem. The latter institution, then, acquired those documents from some other archives. When USHMM archivists travelled in Estonia in the 1990s for the purpose of identifying and copying the records relevant to the history of the Holocaust, they replicated the earlier efforts of their Estonian counterparts in acquiring the entire collection. The records on the mass murder of Jews and Roma in Nazi-occupied Estonia, as carried out and documented by the Estonian Security Police on German orders, have no subjective quality that would reflect on an archival institution where they have been stored. Those records can be studied either in "Holocaust" archives at Washington or in "non-Jewish" archives at Tallinn, to the same effect. For that matter, of the sixty-five different archives whose documents Michael Zimmermann has used for his opus magnum, just one depository can de accurately described as "Jewish/Holocaust"—The Auschwitz State Museum.

Given the thrust of Joskowicz's argument, I am missing an analysis of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem comparable to that of USHMM in Washington, DC. To my knowledge, Yad Vashem has been practicing what Joskowicz identifies as the USHMM's earlier policy on building archival collections, namely copying specifically "records relating to Jewish losses" (p. 180). The USHMM in the meantime has effectively dropped that practice, as transpires from its archival holdings. Some of the collections from the former Soviet archives acquired at different times by USHMM and Yad Vashem are the same. However, the former typically copied the entire collections while the latter only those files in the respective collections that have to do with the persecution and mass murder of Jews. Correspondingly, Joskowicz utilizes eight different archival collections from

USHMM and three from Yad Vashem—one of them Righteous among the Nations, which lists a single Rom (p. 43).

That goes beyond specific victim groups. To give just one example, the USHMM holds extensive documentation on the Russian Orthodox Church in German-occupied Baltic States that originates from the Latvian Central State Historical Archives. While the attitude of the Catholic Church toward the Nazi persecution of the Jews has been a subject of both debate and research in Holocaust studies that of the Orthodox Church hardly. Yet, there are just a few, if any, references to the Jews in those particular records acquired by USHMM. In all likelihood, the USHMM archivists who had gone to Riga to survey the available records proceeded from the principle of maintaining integrity of relevant archival collections, copying just everything in the process. This is of great benefit to historians who would eventually come to study those records. Though, in this particular case, the USHMM may not be the most obvious address for a scholar writing history of the Russian Orthodox Church to look for relevant source material.

Both Yad Vashem and USHMM operate a fellowship program. The former only provides a list of fellowships awarded in the period 1993–2014, while the latter of all fellowships awarded since 1997. In the twenty years, none of the 122 visiting fellows at Yad Vashem did research on the Roma genocide.[8] In contrast, twenty out of 673 fellowships awarded by USHMM up until now, six of them in the past three years, have had the destruction of Roma as the (main) subject.[9] One of the twenty fellows was Ari Joskowicz, in 2014. Taking into account the number and/or percentage of Jews and Roma who lost their lives in the Holocaust, the fellowship breakdown at Washington, DC is rather representative. When it comes to dedicated fellowship programs that scholars working on any aspect of the persecution of Roma throughout history can apply for, there is currently just one: Romani Rose Fellowship-in-Residence for doctoral and postdoctoral students

[8] Yad Vashem, list of research fellowships awarded in 1993-2014, accessed June 13, 2024, https://www.yadvashem.org/research/fellowships/postdoctoral-fellowships/past-research-fellows.html.

[9] USHMM, list of research fellowships awarded in 1997-2023, accessed June 13, 2024, https://www.ushmm.org/research/about-the-mandel-center/all-fellows-and-scholars. Within the broader subject, deportation of Romanian Roma to Transnistria has attracted the largest number of fellows, seven.

administered by the Heidelberg University Research Center on Antigypsyism.[10] If fellowship breakdown is any indication to go by, then the USHMM appears less affected by history politics than the other two institutions. Here, academic research emerges as the antithesis of history politics rather than its moderation, testing Joskowicz's determination to view the Holocaust history and its ex post facto interpretation as one whole—as quoted earlier in these pages.

Joskowicz praises "Holocaust and genocide archives" as an alternative to traditional state archives (p. 13). This may be true when it comes to convenience of using selected records from multiple archives on any given subject. At the same time, the principle of selectivity poses a problem when it comes to contextualization, that is, the records and collections a "Holocaust" archives decided against copying. To illustrate, USHMM had copied from the Latvian Central State Historical Archives the records related to Russian Orthodox Church in German-occupied Baltic States but not Protestant or Catholic Church; responses to the Nazi mass murder of Jews and Roma might meanwhile have come from all three denominations.[11]

What Joskowicz calls "recontextualized state documents" (p. 13) is not ideal for historical research. Recontextualization, as a foundational principle of the "Holocaust" archives—or just any secondary document depository for that matter—is what has unintentionally created a victim hierarchy in reference to institutions holding major collections of witness testimonies in the first place. Ironically, by balking at assembling oral history collections, traditional state archives have also avoided the pitfall of recontextualization.

Joskowicz's discussion of the controversy surrounding the place of the Nazi destruction of Roma in the USHMM's permanent exhibition and archival holdings begs a comparable analysis of Romani politics of memory, specifically in Germany.[12] Particularly revealing is USHMM's internal correspondence, as used by Joskowicz in Chapter 6 of his book; it would be instructive analyzing similar type of document to map the politics of history behind the establishment of the

[10] University of Heidelberg, call for applications, August 28, 2023, accessed June 12, 2024, https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/newsroom/romani-rose-fellowships-advertised.

[11] *Archival Guide to the Collections of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* (Washington, DC: USHMM, 2014), 266.

[12] I argue that, insofar as unified Germany is concerned, one can safely speak of Romani memory politics.

Documentation and Cultural Center of German Sinti and Roma at Heidelberg in 1997. Insofar as Joskowicz deals with the institutional history of central "Jewish/Holocaust archives"—sans Yad Vashem—it would make sense looking at the Heidelberg documentation center as a Romani equivalent. Not unlike in the case of Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, it does not take long to establish that the documentation center mainly collects records related to German Sinti and Roma, as opposed to other groups persecuted by the Nazis.

The other side of Sinti and Roma reclaiming their tragic past and molding it into a universal story of suffering has been an unfortunate tendency to exercise control over a historical narrative. Of the many examples, I have the space to mention just a few. Joskowicz documents the struggle to insert a Romani member on the US Holocaust Memorial Council. Linguist Ian Hancock (b. 1942), who served on the council between 1997 and 2002, appeared unyielding and confrontational in the regular meetings.[13] Michael Zimmermann had been effectively ostracized by the Central Council of the German Sinti and Roma and attacked by activist historians in the wake of the publication of his 1996 book—largely on account his estimates of Romani deaths.[14] Founder and longstanding leader of the Central Council of the German Sinti and Roma, Romani Rose (b. 1946), has threatened to withdraw his organization's support from the memorial to the Sinti and Roma Murdered under National Socialism in the works in Berlin unless the accompanying text referred to 500,000 Romani deaths—a grossly exaggerated estimate unsupported by historical evidence.[15] Several times during my career, I have experienced one scholar writing on the Roma genocide not wanting to associate himself or herself with another—the phenomenon virtually unknown when it comes to the study of the Jewish Holocaust.

Meanwhile, I observe gradual professionalization of history when it comes to the study of the Roma genocide. One positive sign here is an increasing number of

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[13] Communication from Michael Gelb, assistant editor of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* between 1997 and 2022, August 8, 2023.

[14] See, for example, Wolfgang Wippermann, *"Auserwählte Opfer?" Shoah and Porrajmos im Vergleich: Eine Kontroverse* (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2005), 46-47, 114-115, and 118-120.

[15] Communication from Karola Fings, editor in chief of the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of the Nazi Genocide of Sinti and Roma in Europe* and "Voices of the Victims" segment of the Rom Archive, September 2, 2021. On Romani death statistics, see Anton Weiss-Wendt, "The Number of Romani Deaths during the Nazi Era Revisited," in *A People Destroyed*, ed. Weiss-Wendt.

scholars with academic degrees in Romani studies who identify themselves as Roma or Sinti. Meanwhile, the factor of emotional engagement, whether on an individual or institutional level, in the subject of research has become less. I can volunteer no better example that the institution where I work, Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies in Oslo. Opened in 2005, the center's permanent exhibition on the history of the Holocaust deals with multiple victim groups alongside Jews, including Roma. The annual commemoration of the Holocaust on January 27 organized by the center always features representatives of those groups (e.g., Roma, peoples with disabilities, homosexuals). At some point, we urged the Norwegian government to allocate funds for a comprehensive study of the persecution of Norwegian Roma before, during, and after the Holocaust. Findings presented in the research project subsequently carried out by the center motivated the government to issue an official apology to the Norwegian Roma and offer a restitution package. In 2021 we upgraded the permanent exhibition by including additional panels on the interwar persecution of Roma in Norway and Europe, and listing the names of 62 Norwegian Roma murdered by the Nazis alongside those of 743 Norwegian Jews in the Memorial Hall.

None of the elements of politics of memory eloquently discussed by Joskowicz in his book applies to Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies. The center is on the government's budget. None of the permanent members of staff identifies himself or herself as either Jewish or Roma/Sinti. No interest organization ever influenced the center to assume any particular perspective on history. We believe that an accurate representation of history must necessarily include the destruction of Roma during the Holocaust, the notion superimposed by decades of academic research. Still an exception rather than a rule, the center in Oslo is part of an emerging tendency toward professionalization of history, here with respect to the contextualization of the Roma genocide.

There is no any sort of victim hierarchy or memory politics at work in a Holocaust historian expanding his or her quest onto the mass murder of Roma, not unlike a student of modern history taking up the subject of the Holocaust. Archives, in their traditional form, function merely as knowledge banks. Some of them are more user-friendly than the other, yet at the end of the day it comes down to the professional historian—regardless of his or her ethnic background and family history—to scrupulously analyze the body of information they contain. Back in

the 1990s, as told by Joskowicz, USHMM used the claim of universality to the story of the Holocaust to marginalize Roma in its permanent exhibition. One thing that has irreversibly changed since then is that the destruction of the Roma people by the Nazis and their allies during the Second World War now regarded a part of the universal message that the Holocaust conveys. I want to think of it as the logic of history. Funding, identified by Joskowicz alongside political origins and moral mission as central to the USHMM (p. 177), was certainly a factor that determined the scope of acquisitions from the Estonian National Archives. Yet, I would regard as equally important a factor here professional qualifications of the USHMM archivists and historians.

In conclusion, *Ash of Rain* constitutes a major contribution to Holocaust studies by expanding on the victim's perspective. Simultaneously, it sets a high standard when it comes to writing comparative history. The structural problem with Joskowicz's argument, as identified in this review article, might have been avoided had the author drawn a clearer line between memory politics and academic research and taken time to reflect on general archival principles and practices beyond what he is referring to as "Jewish/Holocaust archives." Reading Joskowicz's book makes me want know more about Jewish-Romani encounters during the Holocaust, though I acknowledge the practical difficulties in collecting relevant evidence.

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Ari Joskowicz, *Rain of Ash: Roma, Jews, and the Holocaust* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2023), pp. 368.

On Ash and Blackness: Roma Victims of the Holocaust

by *Marius Turda*

After decades of neglect, the Holocaust of the Roma and Sinti peoples—sometimes referred to as the "forgotten Holocaust"—has finally captured the attention of scholars and the general public alike. This year alone, two major studies are made available in English, enriching a growing scholarship that brings forth the long history of prejudice against the Roma peoples in Europe, while at the same time offering fresh perspectives on the genocide perpetrated against them during the Second World War.[1] Outstanding work by Roma activists and organisations from across the world has also profoundly changed the nature of academic research, inducing both international collaboration[2] and the emergence of a scholarship committed to new strategies of interpretation.[3] It is imperative to

[1] Klaus-Michael Bogdal, *Europa erfindet die Zigeuner. Eine Geschichte von Faszination und Verachtung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2011) translated into English as *Europe and the Roma: A History of Fascination and Fear*, trans. Jefferson Chase (London: Penguin 2024) and María Sierra, *Holocausto gitano. El genocidio romaní bajo el nazismo* (Madrid: Arzalia Ediciones, 2020) translated into English as *The Roma and the Holocaust: The Romani Genocide under Nazism*, trans. Margaret Clark (London: Bloomsbury, 2024).

[2] As demonstrated by the ongoing project entitled *The Encyclopaedia of the Nazi Genocide of the Sinti and Roma in Europe* (more details here: https://encyclopaedia-gsr.eu/, accessed June 14, 2024) and the Annual Roma Conference organized by the indefatigable Magda Matache at Harvard University's *François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights*.

[3] For early attempts, see Michael Zimmermann, *Verfolgt, vertrieben, vernichtet: die nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik gegen Sinti und Roma* (Essen: Klartext, 1989); Donald Kenrick, ed., *In the Shadow of the Swastika: The Gypsies during the Second World War* (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1999); Viorel Achim and Constantin Iordachi, eds, *România şi Transnistria: Problema Holocaustului. Perspective istorice şi comparative* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2004); János Bársony and Ágnes Daróczi, eds., *Pharrajimos: The Fate of the Roma During the Holocaust* (New York: International Debate Education Association, 2008). See also Anton Weiss-Wendt, ed., *The Nazi Genocide of the Roma: Reassessment and Commemoration* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013); Adrian-Nicolae Furtună, *E Rroma Rumuniator: thaj o Holokausto. Historia, teorie, kultura* (Popeşti-Leordeni: Dykta! Publishing House, 2018). For more recent

question the long-accepted marginalisation of the Roma experience of the Holocaust.

Recently, work has been produced exploring the ramifications of race science and eugenics, providing a much-needed amendment to the perception still popular among some historians that the deportations of Roma to concentration and labour camps were not racially and eugenically motivated.[4] This view paralleled earlier interpretations which disputed the use of the term "Holocaust" to describe the Nazi genocide of the Roma.[5] To be sure, the so-called "Gypsy problem" is not commensurate with "the Jewish problem" in terms of its history, but the racial and eugenic policies which were put in place in Nazi Germany and then in a host of countries in East-Central Europe, including Hungary, Romania and the Independent State of Croatia during the late 1930s and early 1940s considered the Roma to be an "inferior," "non-white" and "foreign" race, alongside the Jews. The Roma, too, were purposefully targeted for elimination.[6]

Fortuitously, there are historians who discuss Jewish and Roma experiences of the Holocaust in relation to each other.[7] One such historian is Ari Joskowicz, whose masterful monograph, entitled *Rain of Ash: Roma, Jews, and the Holocaust*, was

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studies see the journal *Critical Romani Studies:* https://crs.ceu.edu/index.php/crs, accessed June 14, 2024.

[4] Guenter Lewy, *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). In Romanian scholarship, this view has been promoted by historian Viorel Achim. See his "Gypsy Research and Gypsy Policy in Romania, 1920–1950," in Michael Zimmermann, ed., *Erziehung und Vernichtung. Zigeunerpolitik und Zigeunerforschung im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag 2007), 157-174.

[5] Sybil Milton, "Gypsies and the Holocaust," *The History Teacher* 24, no. 4 (1991): 375-387. Milton's claim that if the term Holocaust is used to describe the planned programme of extermination of the Jews, it should be applied to the Roma as well, was rejected by another prominent historian of the Holocaust, Yeduda Bauer. Yehuda Bauer and Sybil Milton, "Correspondence: Gypsies and the Holocaust," *The History Teacher* 25, no. 4 (1992): 513-521.

[6] Marius Turda and Adrian-Nicolae Furtună, "Roma and the Question of Ethnic Origin in Romania during the Holocaust," *Critical Romani Studies* 4, no. 2 (2021): 8-33.

[7] See, for example, Roni Stauber and Raphael Vago, eds., *The Roma: A Minority in Europe: Historical, Political and Social Perspectives* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007); Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania: The Destruction of Jews and Gypsies Under the Antonescu Regime, 1940-1944* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2008); Eliyana R. Adler and Katerina Capková, eds., *Jewish and Romani Families in the Holocaust and Its Aftermath* (Newark: Rutgers University Press, 2020), and a more recent study by Hana Kubátová, "Jewish and Romani Encounters under Slovak Persecution," *Shoah: Intervention, Methods, Documentation* 10, no. 1 (2023): 95-111.

published last year.[8] The book, as the author points out in the introduction, explores the entangled ramifications of Jewish-Roma relationships from the perspective of historical memory. The aim here is to highlight the major difference that exists between how the Jews "managed to have their accounts of persecution heard and documented" and how the Roma "struggled to gain recognition of everything they had suffered and lost" (p. 2). What accounts for this discrepancy? How can we reconcile each group's specific narratives about the Holocaust?

The memory of what happened during the Holocaust is perpetually reaffirmed and re-articulated through each new listening to and reading of stories and testimonies. As aptly noted by Joskowicz, an integral part of this historical process of who is remembered as a victim of the Holocaust and how depends fundamentally on the testimonies provided by the Jews and the Roma themselves. How they recount the story of the Holocaust and the order of victimhood differ considerably. Their stories rarely intersect. While only a few Jewish survivors mention the Roma in their testimonies, admitting that they had suffered together at the hands of the Nazis, most Roma survivors describe their experience in concentration camps alongside that of the Jews. Although both groups share the narrative of lives that had been destroyed in the Holocaust, they render their stories in very different ways.

Both groups were targeted by anti-Semitism and racism, but they had different experiences of integration, assimilation and marginalisation. Before anti-Semitic laws stripped them of civil and political rights during the 1930s and turned them into the "enemies of the race," many assimilated Jews in Germany and East-Central Europe enjoyed privileged positions in society, often embracing the dominant narrative of national belonging. By the turn of the twentieth century, Jewish elites were part of the national upper classes; they enjoyed wealth and privilege. These Jews considered themselves to be not only German, Hungarian and Romanian and so on, but also superior, culturally and socially, to the Roma.

[8] Ari Joskowicz, *Rain of Ash: Roma, Jews, and the Holocaust* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2023). Joskowicz had already published two important articles on the suffering of the Roma during and after WWII in 2016. Ari Joskowicz, "Separate Suffering, Shared Archives: Jewish and Romani Histories of Nazi Persecution," *History & Memory* 28, no. 1 (2016): 110-140; Joskowicz, "Romani Refugees and the Postwar Order," *Journal of Contemporary History* 51, no. 4 (2016): 760-787.

The latter's assumed "inferiority" was not questioned during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The Roma too responded with similar strategies, siding with the majority against the Jews. One example, mentioned by Joskowicz as well, is that of the anti-Semitic National Christian Party in Romania, which, in 1937, attempted to attract Roma voters. There is also the example of various Roma leaders endorsing the radical nationalist programme proposed by the Legionary Movement, also in Romania during the 1930s. To be "a good Romanian" meant, at the time, to be anti-Semitic, and many Roma were hoping to be just that: "good Romanians." But some Roma anti-Semitic feelings lingered on, as mentioned by some Jewish survivors, who recounted after the war seeing German Roma in Auschwitz refusing to be treated by Jewish physicians and even displaying Nazi uniforms (p. 122). From this perspective, the relationship between Jewish and Roma prisoners was unequal and often conflictive.

It is true, however, as pointed out by Joskowicz, that both Jews and Roma were perceived by anti-Semites and racists to be intruders in the national community. The argument rested exclusively on a racial representation of their social, economic and cultural functions in society. Nomadic Roma, in particular, were always portrayed as a socially deviant group, a racial and eugenic threat; they were undesired and unwanted. The Romanian demographer and director of the Central Institute of Statistics in Bucharest, Sabin Manuilă, highlighted this important point in an article he published in 1940. The Jews, he noted, were, "the most important social problem, the most sensitive political problem and most serious economic problem of Romania." But they "[did] not constitute a racial problem as racial mixing between Romanians and Jews occurs very rarely." The Roma, on the other hand, represented "the most important, sensitive and serious racial problem of Romania."[9]

It is therefore important to understand how both groups were perceived by the ethnic majority but also how, in turn, they perceived each other's position in society. This is evident in the interviews collected by sociologist Gabrielle Tyrnauer for the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies in 1991. As remarked by Joskowicz, Tyrnauer was perceived by the Roma interlocutors less as

[9] Sabin Manuilă, "Problema rassială a României', *România Nouă* 7, no. 41 (1940): 5.

a "fellow outsider" and more "as someone with a fundamentally different role in society—in other words, as a Jew with power" (p. 6). This sense of difference between Jews and Roma is historically created. Throughout the interwar period, ethnic nationalists braided the concepts of race, "blood" and belonging into the political discourse, defining who belonged to the nation and who did not. This biologisation of national belonging also brought with it depictions of the ideal racial community which was considered to be white, European and Christian and whose eugenic health and future were allegedly compromised by the presence of "foreign," "non-white" minorities such as the Jews and the Roma.

The insidious primitivizing and orientalising of the Jews and the Roma were intertwined with fantasies of miscegenation which would inform programmes of ethnic cleansing during the early 1940s across Nazi-occupied Europe. At the time, many anti-Semitic and anti-Roma caricatures depicted the Jews and the Roma as "Black." These descriptions were never only about the colour of the skin. The repeated reference to contrasting skin tones between Jews, Roma and the rest of the population was also meant to signify the ontological limitations of ethnic assimilation and to highlight the overwhelming force of whiteness as the dominant ideological underpinning of European ethno-nationalism, racism and anti-Semitism. Blackness was not simply a racial descriptor of physical difference, for it was seen by European as a way of asserting their superiority over the "darker races," both outside and within their societies. Many assimilated Jews and Roma, however, were undistinguishable from the other members of the population, lacking any visible signs of "Blackness." Yet, their racial difference was not difficult to convey as it relied on long-established racial traditions of describing different groups of people according to their religious beliefs, cultural achievements, political acumen and moral character. Within this hierarchical system, the Jews, notes Joskowicz, "viewed themselves as people who occupied a fundamentally different place in society than did the Sinti and Roma in their environment" (p. 25). Such attitudes explain perhaps why no attempt to build a platform of solidarity between the Jews and Roma emerged before and during the Holocaust. Forms of persecution against German Roma and Sinti were already introduced in the 1930s. Prior to the 1936 Berlin Olympics, authorities in Cologne "began moving Roma to camps" (p. 25), soon followed by other cities in Germany including Frankfurt am Main, Essen and Dortmund. Yet, German Jews, "likely

perceived [these measures] as other Europeans did, as extensions of long-standing policies toward unwanted populations by welfare authorities, municipalities, and state security forces" (p. 25). At the time, the Jews projected the German majority's fears of "unwanted populations" onto the Roma, associating themselves with the official response to the perceived threat of "inferior others." This attitude, which implicitly privileged the Jews, also provided the normative frame through which their encounters with Roma peoples in concentration camps were explained later. One of the greatest merits of Joskowicz's book is to provide examples of what can only be described as "antigypsyism." This form of anti-Roma racism worked at a discursive level, as a trope and as symbol of mistreatment. Simon Dubnow, a Jewish-Russian historian and writer, used the expression "behandelt wie a zigeiner" (treated like a Gypsy), when referring to anti-Semitic abuse. It also worked as a form of cultural appropriation of the Roma style of clothing, as in the "Gypsy dress" mentioned in her letters by the Dutch survivor Etty Hillesum. Again, Joskowicz explains that for "a middle-class Dutch Jewish woman, the daughter of a classical philologist, 'Gypsies' were a figure of spee.ch, a metonym for deprivation, squalor, or, at times, romanticized exoticism" (p. 31).

But other Jews described the Roma's "real" presence, albeit not necessarily in the most favourable light. The Hamburg lawyer and businessman Edgar Behr, for example, who spent seven months in a slave labour battalion in 1944, found working "with Gypsies particularly discriminating" (p. 5); others, such as Aaron Bejlin, a Jewish physician from Poland, who worked in the so-called "Gypsy camp" in Auschwitz, used an openly "racialised language" (p. 120) to describe the Jews as "whites" and the Roma as not, although he noted that among them "there were also blond types with blue eyes." For Bejlin, these were "offspring of mixed marriages [...], or they were the second generation" (p. 120). Once again, we can see how the category of whiteness remained the ultimate reference for a sense of belonging, but also for creating a sense of distinction between the Jews and the Roma. Such essentialised images of the Roma borrowed heavily from versions of "antigypsyism" which were already prevalent in East-Central Europe before the Holocaust.[10] This can be clearly seen in another example provided by Joskowicz;

[10] Marius Turda, *În căutarea românului perfect. Specific național, degenerare rasială și selecție socială în România modernă* (Bucharest: Polirom, 2024).

that of Judith Sternberg, a Jewish woman survivor from Hungary. In her memoir, published in the late 1950s, she describes the arrival in Auschwitz of "the dark-skinned gypsies" from Hungary, resembling "the Negroes" (p. 121).

Joskowicz does an exemplary job of analysing and contextualising these examples. He is particularly attentive to the way in which such recollections were then used during the trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961, at which Bejlin was one of the Jewish victims to take the stand (pp. 124-125), and at the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial, "the largest German postwar trial to deal with Nazi atrocities" (p. 127), which took place between 1963 and 1965. On this occasion, prosecutors declared that the Jews and the Roma were the main groups the Nazis had classified as "inferior races" and that "the largest part of imprisoned Gypsies died in the camps by the end of the war, especially in Auschwitz-Bierkenau" (p. 127). Yet the few Roma witnesses who appeared in the indictment were used, according to Joskowicz, to condemn individual Nazi perpetrators for their crimes but not to "explain the broader context of Nazi genocidal policies" (p. 128).

Joskowicz then turns to the role played by Jewish institutions in the rise of the scholarship on Roma genocide, fittingly noting how valuable the acknowledgement of the Nazi crimes would have been to articulate a strong platform for Roma rights organisations. In addition to being very familiar with the German context, Joskowicz distils a great deal of information about Roma organisations in Western Europe, particularly France, and the USA. One cannot help but wonder about the impact of such knowledge on the lives and civic emancipation of the Roma peoples in other countries in East-Central Europe, such as Romania, which, after 1945, conveniently forgot that they had also pursued their own policies of ethnic purification regarding the Roma.

The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies was published in 1972, co-written by a Jewish linguist, Donald Kendrick, and Grattan Puxon, a Roma writer and political activist, who was largely responsible for organising the first World Roma Congress in 1971. This is considered the first comprehensive account of the Roma genocide. These two authors would also publish *Gypsies under the Swastika* in 1995. These are books that brought to a general audience in the West the story of the Nazi persecution of the Roma, contextualising it within the long history of abuse, marginalisation and mistreatment of the Roma in European societies. Since the 1970s, and especially since visits to the city of Oświęcim began to be organised by

Roma survivors of the "Gypsy" camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau every year on 2 August, the commemoration of the Roma Holocaust has achieved its own identifiable form, related to, but yet distinct from its Jewish counterpart. But, as rightly remarked by Joskowicz, the impression that "the murder of Roma assumed a strange liminal position in mainstream descriptions of the Jewish Holocaust as a kindred and related event that was nevertheless subordinate to the larger story of Jewish persecution" (p. 171) has not disappeared, either from national historiographies or from the public perception of the Holocaust, notwithstanding the solidarity shown by some Jewish survivors, including Elie Wiesel.

The fears, as Joskowicz admits, of Jewish leaders and organisations were that "the gravity of the Holocaust as the defining event in German history could be diminished by conflating the experiences of different victims" and that "adding the Romani genocide was an act of relativizing, and thereby trivializing, the Holocaust" (p. 195). Similar fears are seen in other countries in East-Central Europe which are slow in acknowledging that the Roma were subjected to humiliating racial and eugenic research to evidence their assumed "inferiority;" and that they were seen as representing different, and less able, human beings. Before, during and after the Holocaust, the Roma were often described as a "burden" on the resources of the state and societies, and they were repeatedly de-humanized in order to justify their exclusion from the normal rhythm of society, and their institutionalisation in normalizing establishments such as special schools and work colonies. The Roma people continue to be "the other victims" of the Holocaust even if some agreement has now been reached between historians and Roma rights activists regarding the nature of the plan of elimination, which, as in the case of the Jews, was also motivated by racism and eugenics.

Joskowicz's work is one of intense commitment to both historical scholarship and the ideals of human equality and dignity. It is engagingly written and a most welcome addition to the growing field of critical Romani studies. He is not a passive observer of historical events but an engaged voice, expressing universal human concerns about stigma, marginalisation and resistance. By speaking words of encouragement, affirmation, and support, Jewish historians of the Holocaust can inspire others, helping them to overcome shortcomings and biases. It is exactly for the memory of those hundreds of thousands of Roma victims of the Holocaust

whose deaths have been for so long invisible to historians that Ari Joskowicz has written this very timely book.

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Archives, Scholarship, and Politics in the Study of the Romani Genocide: A Response to Marius Turda and Anton-Weiss-Wendt

by *Ari Joskowicz*

I would like to begin by thanking Marius Turda and Anton Weiss-Wendt for their generous and careful comments before taking the opportunity to clarify some fundamental methodological points.[1] Turda, Weiss-Wendt, and I agree on a great deal, so allow me to highlight these aspects first. Each of us is heartened by the increasing attention that scholars, politicians, and Holocaust educators are now giving the Nazi genocide of European Roma. Over the past two decades, we have witnessed a growing number of serious studies on the subject, notable progress in state-based and grassroots memorialization, and an increasing awareness among university instructors and museum pedagogues of the importance of bringing attention to the history of the Romani genocide.

We can quibble, of course, about how far we have come. While I share my colleagues' general sense of progress, I am less convinced than Weiss-Wendt that the relevance of the Romani genocide is beyond dispute among scholars. As Turda notes, in 2024, two major studies on the persecution and stigmatization of Roma appeared in English translations. Weiss-Wendt also mentions works that cover the genocides against Jews and Roma alike. Yet, there are many other examples that might lead us to draw different conclusions. It certainly seems premature to me to claim, as Weiss-Wendt does, that one "hardly finds a Holocaust synthesis on the market today that would not incorporate the victimization of the Roma." Some of the most successful recent syntheses, Peter Hayes' *Why? Explaining the Holocaust* (2017) and Dan Stone's *The Holocaust: An Unfinished History* (2023), offer only a few words on the subject.

My book addresses these shortcomings of Holocaust scholarship by focusing on one revealing aspect: the history of Romani-Jewish relations. Weiss-Wendt is right to note that my attempt to explore that relationship does not put the emphasis on

[1] Marius Turda, discussion of *Rain of Ash: Roma, Jews, and the Holocaust,* by Ari Joskowicz, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 25, no. 1 (2024), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/14967; Anton Weiss-Wendt, discussion of *Rain of Ash: Roma, Jews, and the Holocaust,* by Ari Joskowicz, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 25, no. 1 (2024), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/14964

those places where the Nazis and their allies murdered the majority of Roma. This is not so much an oversight on my part than a decision guided by one of the fundamental questions that drive my book: how Jewish attempts to document that past have changed the way we understand the Romani genocide. By answering this question, I seek not just a deeper understanding of Jewish and Romani history but also a deeper understanding of our ability to know the past. This includes, most importantly, an emphasis on resources, rather than the more common themes of memory, representation, and the political will to learn about the past. To make this argument, I focused on places where Jewish and Romani victims interacted, particularly those that left an entwined documentary trail and inspired later memory work. In so doing, I sought to offer insights into the different forms these interactions took, rather than pursue a comprehensive account or one driven by the number of dead in different locations.

The discrepancy between the geography of my inquiry into Romani-Jewish relations and the places where the greatest number of Romani were murdered nonetheless raises interesting questions. Weiss-Wendt points to the importance of acknowledging the experiences of Russian-speaking Roma, who, he suggests, perished in numbers comparable to those of German-speaking Roma but whose histories receive much less attention. It will be the task of others to address this imbalance. Yet, as I sought to illuminate in other respects in my book, imbalances in coverage and scholarship have their own histories. Some of this has to do with the very moment of the crimes committed against different Sinti and Roma communities and the much more detailed documentation that crimes against German Romani populations left. In Germany, postwar survivors also inherited a more elaborate infrastructure of historical documentation than did Roma in the occupied Soviet Union. Roma in Germany have been able to build on the country's active memorial culture, strong research universities, and a ferment of individuals who are willing to tackle legacies of genocide. In spite of the deep and continuing history of anti-Romani discrimination in Germany, this infrastructure has allowed German Sinti and Roma to tell their stories more effectively than members of many other Romani communities have been able to do. While Weiss-Wendt insists that memory politics and academic work should be strictly distinguished, his own example of the biased representations of Europe's history of genocide hints at the way they can be entwined.

Archives and systematic documentation efforts are one major part of this story, although they play a slightly smaller role in my book than they did in the article that Weiss-Wendt anonymously reviewed many years ago.[2] While he may feel that I did not sufficiently take his critiques into consideration at that juncture, I agree that we need to qualify where and when Jewish archives were important for Romani history. In *Rain of Ash*, I focus on a cluster of institutions that states or civil society groups established to document the Nazi murder of Jews, study the Holocaust as part of a larger focus on genocide, or explore racially-driven extermination policies as part of their mission to research the Nazi occupation of their country. Jewish survivors frequently played a major role in these institutions, much as they did in the field of Holocaust Studies in general. In the book, I contend that these institutions continue to curate collections and access points for information that crucially change how we study Romani history and 20th-century politics and societies at large. Clearly the ones I chose to focus on are not the only ones out there. In many contexts, historians who made major contributions to the history of the Romani Holocaust have relied on centralized state archives or regional and municipal collections. Michael Zimmerman's ground-breaking habilitation *Rassenutopie und Genocid*, which Weiss-Wendt cites, offers an important example of this.

Yet, my argument about "infrastructure" goes further than this. As Weiss-Wendt noted, I am particularly interested in the material bases that makes historical work possible. Here many of the examples that Weiss-Wendt mentions are more closely tied to Jewish documentation efforts than he concedes. Zimmermann's work, for example, emerged in a context in which Jewish individuals and institutions supplied crucial resources. Zimmermann first started working on the topic as a postdoctoral assistant in a project directed by the Jewish public intellectual Micha Brumlik, among others, and found employment at the Jewish cultural center of the Old Synagogue in Essen once that project ended. Weiss-Wendt's example of his own research center is also revealing. Although he suggests that Jews were not involved in research and exhibition-making on Romani victims in Norway and that this research did not rely on "Jewish archives," he fails to mention that the

[2] Ari Joskowicz, "Separate Suffering, Shared Archives: Jewish and Romani Histories of Nazi Persecution," *History and Memory* 28, no. 1 (2016): 110-140.

Norwegian government founded the Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities, where he works, as a means to offer a moral reckoning for the confiscation of Jewish property during the war and as a result of lobbying on the part of Norway's Jewish community. Its statutes say its first mission is the study of the Jewish Holocaust and antisemitism.[3] I note this not to challenge the research that either Zimmermann or Weiss-Wendt's center has produced in any way, but to suggest that we cannot understand the rise of their scholarship without the efforts previously put in place by Jewish communities.

The fact that Jews were involved in such efforts will not matter substantially in every single case, of course, just as not all documentation centers of the Jewish Holocaust have contributed to the study of the Romani Holocaust. Yad Vashem, cited at length in Weiss-Wendt's response to my book, is indeed a notable counterexample. Its efforts to copy material, its fellowship program, and its publications have largely ignored the Romani genocide.[4] The reasons for this are multifold. Most importantly, the Israeli archive is defined by its mission to focus on Jewish victims and to frame their fate to visitors of the memorial site within the narrative of Jewish nationalism and state-making. None of this changes the overarching argument of my book. One can highlight the unique nexus of Jewish and Romani efforts to account for the past and still concede that some Jewish archives have been reluctant to include Romani material and also that much important work has been done in state archives.

Weiss-Wendt's comments on the place of state archives make apparent the most significant disagreement that emerges in this forum: he and I have fundamentally divergent views of the nexus between archives, scholarship, and politics. This disagreement goes to the heart of my project and debates in the field writ large. It is a highly productive disagreement, in my view.

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[3] "Statutes for The Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies," Articles of Association for the Center for studies of Holocaust and Minorities. Adopted by the University of Oslo the 27 March 2001 with amendments adopted on 21 January 2003 and amendment adopted by the Vice-Chancellor 16 November 2005. https://www.hlsenteret.no/english/about/statutes/ accessed June 21, 2024.

[4] There are some exceptions: Roma figure in many testimonies of Jewish survivors, which Yad Vashem started collecting very early thanks to Rachel Auerbach. Boaz Cohen, "Rachel Auerbach, Yad Vashem, and Israeli Holocaust Memory," in *Making Holocaust Memory*, *Polin* 20 (Oxford, UK: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2008), 197-221. There are, however, no original Romani oral history interviews in their collection.

Weiss-Wendt asserts that, archives, "in their traditional form, function merely as knowledge banks." Yet, their holdings, cataloguing, and accessibility policies are hardly neutral. They follow their own political logic, which is the central theme of a whole wave of scholarship associated with the "archival turn."[5] We can defend our discipline's methods, I believe, without abandoning all questions of state archive's unintentional and deliberate decisions to highlight and obscure certain realities.

Weiss-Wendt is right, of course, that these archives deal differently with the documentation of Nazi mass murder than do Holocaust documentation centers. Whereas the new institutions founded to study the Holocaust copied only parts of holdings according to their perceived relevance to their mission, state archives keep core collections intact and organized according to the bureaucratic unit that originally produced or retained the files.[6] In archival study, this principle of maintaining provenance is called respect des fonds. In this sense, archives focused on documents produced by a single state seemingly "avoided the pitfall of recontextualization," as Weiss-Wendt claims.[7]

Yet reality has always been much messier than the principle. Let me mention just two issues that challenged the straightforward application of respect des fonds: First, ministerial authorities often retained and reorganized material from predecessor administrations with different agendas. States also frequently transferred sub-collections to other state archives as a result of territorial conquest and peace treaties. In an age of profound regime and border changes, these were not trivial issues.

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[5] Apart from the crucial work of early modernists, scholarship on colonial archives has broken new ground here. See, for example, Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009). Newer works also deal more with the domestic collections of state archives: Rosie Bsheer, *Archive Wars: The Politics of History in Saudi Arabia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020); Kirsten Weld, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

[6] This difference has been central to crucial studies on Jewish historical archives. Lisa Moses Leff, *The Archive Thief: The Man Who Salvaged French Jewish History in the Wake of the Holocaust* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Jason Lustig, *A Time to Gather: Archives and the Control of Jewish Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022).

[7] Weiss-Wendt notes that state archives have often balked at assembling oral history archives and thus remained "pure" in the application of these principles. Nearly all state archives have vast holdings of collected papers from politicians, military leaders, and famous individuals, however, collections which raise the same issues.

If we explore the history of state paperwork, its retention, and its use, it also becomes clear that the "pitfall of recontextualization" does not only happen when archives copy partial holdings from another archive. Bureaucracies are recontextualization machines, reframing interactions in a particular language, obscuring some acts of violence while highlighting others.[8] Historians themselves are trained recontextualizes of documents and information. Much like administrators and archivists, they make decisions based on their background, politics, and more. Whether "historical analysis is embedded in rational choice," as Weiss-Wendt claims, depends on our understanding of the terms "embedded" and "rational choice." The same goes for the idea that documents find historians, not the other way around, a notion he attributes to the historian Martin Dean. It is hard to know precisely what to make of this suggestion, since Weiss-Wendt writes only that "Dean told this anecdote in private conversation sometime in 2003." I am happy to agree if it is meant to propose that good historians should seek to arrive at conclusions that are transparent and compelling based on professional standards. I also certainly believe that historians need to be open to unexpected finds and permanently rethink their interpretive frameworks based on the materials they encounter. I disagree, however, if this is supposed to suggest that documents speak for themselves and that historians merely articulate the truth that they find ready-made in the archive.

Following basic assumptions of the archival turn does not mean that we cannot draw clear lines "between memory politics and academic research" as Weiss-Wendt argues that I should have done. At their core, academic history, the historical work of identity and interest groups, and personal memory are not the same thing. Each has different priorities, constraints, and conventions, which is not to say that we cannot—or should not—interrogate each with related questions about their tacit assumptions, framings, and institutional frameworks.

Weiss-Wendt writes about the important work done at the Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies where he works. He has good reason to be proud

[8] For a deep history of bureaucracies, the law, and filing systems, see Cornelia Vismann, *Files: Law and Media Technology*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, Meridian (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008). On the results in the archive, see, among others, Marisa J. Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

of its achievements. I am sure that researchers at the United States Holocaust Museum, Yad Vashem, and any other genocide research center for that matter would reflect on their publications and exhibits in similar terms, emphasizing the professional standards they employ in their research, their careful interpretation of documents, and eschewing the idea that their scholarship is determined by preconceived notions or political platforms. I feel the same way about my own work. Yet, that sentiment is moderated by the abstract knowledge that there is more to how we arrive at our conclusions, irrespective of how objective we may strive to be.

I don't want to fight a theoretical battle here between positivist and constructivist views of history or the archive. Yet in practical terms, I believe we lose something profound and fundamental when we emphasize "rational choice" and claim that records or categories in particular archives have "no subjective quality." Doing so discards questions that can help us rethink our own approach and improve our methods. Yes, we need to defend the discipline against politicized claims that historians are merely cynical agents of powerful interests. Still, I cannot subscribe to Weiss-Wendt's notion that "Academic scholarship, obviously, does not approach history from the vantage point of advantages for any chosen subject of research." The problem here is the word "obviously." The same empirically minded historical scholarship that he wants to defend shows us that academic scholarship of the past—whether in colonial empires, fascist states, under socialism, or in the Cold-War West—has represented the advantages of particular groups.

We should also remain attuned to the fact that genocide research of the type Weiss-Wendt highlights is a subfield that differs from other areas of historical study. The tendency of many scholars to emphasize the difference between memory and historical scholarship or to insist on the importance and possibility of apolitical primary source work is paradoxically an outcome of the field's role in commemorative work and politics.[9] Weiss-Wendt highlights how his center created new lists of names, added panels to a state-supported exhibit, and convinced the government to issue an apology for the state's actions under Nazi

[9] It is, of course, not unique to that field. On the development of truth claims, see Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

occupation. I can see how that type of work requires particular truth claims. Holocaust Studies focused on particular killing operations, as described by Weiss-Wendt, can also frequently rely on state sources in ways that other fields cannot. Romani history—like Jewish history for most of the past millennia—is the attempt to account for the presence of a group that did not pursue or succeed in ethnic state capture. It is largely ethnicized, transnational, non-state history. The notion that professional history worthy of its name exclusively consists of discovering documentary evidence of state actions in state archives does not do justice to this task.

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Natalie Zemon Davis, *Listening to the Language of the People: Lazare Sainéan on Romanian, Yiddish and French* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2022), pp. 200.

by *Andreea Kaltenbrunner*

The famous historian of the early modern period Natalie Zemon Davis surprises her readers with a biography of the Romanian-Jewish linguist Lazare Sainéan (1859-1934). Sainéan is often being mentioned in studies on the Jewish emancipation and the fight for citizenship rights in late nineteenth century Romania. The linguist, whose research focused on Yiddish, Romanian and French struggled for more than ten years to become a naturalized Romanian citizen, before he gave up and established himself in France in 1901. For scholars of Romanian-Jewish history, Zemon Davis's book is a long-awaited contribution as it covers important issues of this topic.

Although the research on Jewish history in Romania before World War I made significant progress in the past couple of years, there is still little understanding of the Jewish communities in Romania and their reactions to the emancipation debates and the growing modern antisemitism. Relying on Sainéan's studies, published correspondence and memoirs, the author conceived the book with two goals: to write Sainéan's intellectual biography and to determine how "ideas about language and folklore fare in a Europe infused with national sentiment and conflict over the status of Jews" (p. 2). The book is therefore a history of linguistics as much of a history of Jewish emancipation in Eastern Europe. It is organized chronologically in two main parts: the first one focuses on Sainéan's career in Romania, and the second one deals with his life in France.

Born in the city of Ploiești, Wallachia, as Eliezer ben Moses Șain, Sainéan showed from early on an interest in languages. His father, who had studied in Vienna and became a painter of decorative murals for private homes and public buildings, supported his interests. Ploiești's closeness to Bucharest allowed Sainéan to befriend Moses Gaster and Moses Schwarzfeld, two intellectuals representing the "circles of modernizing Jews" in Romania. Gaster, native of the Romanian capital, studied in Leipzig and Breslau while Schwarzfeld hailed from a literary family of Moldavian activists for Jewish enlightenment and emancipation. In his first book,

published at the age of 21, Sainéan wrote a celebratory biography of Moses Mendelsohn and included numerous thoughts on the Jewish emancipation in Romania.

Under the guidance of the linguist and literate Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, Sainéan as a doctoral candidate immersed himself into the study of semasiology, the study of the meaning of words, and into Neogrammarian theories that were concerned with how the language and the sounds change. Sainéan completed his studies for his dissertation in Paris and Leipzig and upon his return, he published a study on Yiddish, which constituted also his first scientific work. Besides being an unusual topic, he was also "relatively on his own in such a scholarly choice" (p. 29). Among Haskalah Jews, Yiddish had a negative reputation as an "obstacle to the acquisition of a true culture, both of their own and that of the countries in which they lived." (p. 32). As Davis explains, such a topic did not help him move up on the career ladder, as this was "not going to advance the cause of the Romanian language as a Roman language." Sainéan was personally attached to Yiddish, the language of his mother, and was fascinated by an almost unexplored field. He conducted research in Berlin and Leipzig and analyzed the speech practices of five Yiddish speakers living in Bucharest. He understood Yiddish in part as mixed language, as a "dialect of Middle High German, which over time had become autonomous with sub-dialects of its own." When analyzing the lexicographic elements, he identified words especially from the Bavarian dialect, Hebrew, Polish, Russian and Ukrainian. Roman and Latin influences were present in the Danube region in words referring to everyday life. By looking into the Wallachian Yiddish, Zemon Davis wrote that "Sainéan was affirming the historical presence of Jews in his native land" (p. 39). It would have been interesting to learn more on the Wallachia Yiddish as differed from that of Moldavia, where Romania's largest Jewish population lived. But neither these differences nor other information about the Jewish communities in the two regions is included.

Sainéan's relationship to his doctoral advisor Bogdan Patriceicu Hasdeu was marked by highs and lows. Hasdeu was a complex figure with an even more complex view towards the Jews in Romania. Born in Khotyn, Bessarabia in the Tsarist Empire, into a multilingual family, he had grown up surrounded by Yiddish, the language of his paternal grandmother. Hasdeu opted for a Romanian identity and migrated to Romania where he pursued an impressive academic

career. He was against the emancipation of Jews, but agreed there were remarkable Jewish men of letters, Sainéan included. Hasdeu supported Sainéan's research and professional aspirations but failed to be on his side when Sainéan needed him most—during the tedious process of becoming Romanian citizen.

Sainéan made three attempts to be naturalized: in 1890, in 1895 and in 1901. Since the Berlin Congress in 1878, Jews could obtain citizenship under special circumstances, although the numbers of naturalizations remained extremely low. For example, Sainéan's father-in-law Ralian Samtica, owner of a renowned publishing house in Craiova, was the only Jew to be naturalized in 1889. Sainéan's requests for naturalization coincided with a rise in modern antisemitism and each request required an adaption of his strategy. His research interests also focused in this period on Romanian fairy tales and Romanian language, questioning the hyper-Latinism of the nationalist linguists. With each failed attempt the question of leaving Romania became more acute. From a young Jewish activist who believed in emancipation, he felt more and more "as a persecuted Jew" (p. 76).

To increase his chances of naturalization, Sainéan took the difficult decision to convert to Orthodox Christianity in 1899. Zemon Davis reflects on "the model of baptized Jew" Sainéan might have imagined. It seems that the idea had come from his brother Mariu Șaineanu. Mariu was an instructor of French and history at a gymnasium and although he had a doctorate, he could not obtain a chair for French language in Bucharest. It was in this context that Take Ionescu, member of the ruling Conservative Party and Minister of Public Instruction, suggested Mariu to get baptized—an advice the brothers followed in 1899. Sainéan lost through this gesture his friendship to Moses Gaster, who lived as a Zionist in London, but he inspired others to try this path.

Finally, 48 deputies voted against and 45 in favor of Sainéan's naturalization in the Chamber of Deputies. Antisemitic politicians simply could not accept a Jew to teach Romanian language. Sainéan analyzed in a new study the influence of Ottoman-Turkish on Romanian and emphasized the linguistic mixture of Romanian despite the nationalist discourse.

Sainéan never mentioned his conversion in any writings, a fact that Zemon Davis interprets as shame. Before leaving for France, the linguist wrote an article in which he complained that modern antisemitism became in Romania a "patriotic delirium." In the meantime, his brother Mariu Șaineanu succeeded professionally.

When Constantin, as Mariu Șaineanu called himself after baptism, published an article in which he denied the persecution of Jews in Romania and defended the country's policies, he was awarded a teaching position at a prestigious military school in Bucharest.

Less detailed than in the first part, the author covers in the second one Sainéan's life in France until his death in 1934. He continued to publish on Romanian topics, did translations and supported his family through private investments. But soon Sainéan discovered new research interests in the popular language of France, publishing on the vernacular spoken in the streets of nineteenth-century Paris. He went on to study the language of the Renaissance writer François Rablais. It was through his writings on Rablais that Zemon Davis became interested in Sainéan. It is clear that once in France, the identity question no longer preoccupied him as much as back in Romania. When he arrived in France the linguist changed his name from Lazar Șaineanu into Lazare Sainéan, acquired French citizenship and was well received in various scientific societies. There is little information on how his reflection on his Jewishness developed in France, an interesting aspect since Sainéan was in close contact with Dreyfusards through his work.

There are many gaps and unknowns in Sainéan's biography, as the linguist wrote only a short memoir and left no personal papers. Either by reconstructing the linguist's social networks or by tracing his intellectual influences, Zemon Davis fills the blank spaces with great accuracy and helps us understand how transfer of ideas and Sainéan's reflection on identity and sense of belonging evolved. This way Zemon Davis manages to write a biography that can serve as a starting point for the research of modern Jewish history in Romania and beyond.

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Sara Airoldi, *Nazione in patria. Sionismo e identità ebraica in Italia, 1918-1938* (Milano-Torino: Pearson, 2022), pp. 184.

by *Arturo Marzano*

Sara Airoldi's book, which is based on her July 2016 PhD dissertation in History at the University of Milan, has several qualities. First of all, it sheds light on an issue so far overlooked by historiography, namely the relationship between Italian Zionism and the definition of Italian Jewish identity. It does so by focusing on Enzo Sereni and Alfonso Pacifici, two prominent figures among Italian Jewry who definitely deserve much more attention than they have been getting from scholars. Second, it bridges the gap between the (mainly Italian) historiography of early twentieth-century Italian Jewry and the (mainly international) historiography of Jewish communities abroad during the same period. By merging two traditions that do not often interact, Airoldi gives us a glimpse into the specificities of Italian Zionism. More specifically, she highlights that the distinction between Zionism and what is defined as "Jewish Diaspora nationalism" in international historiography—the former being a form of nationalism aimed at creating a Jewish territorial state in Palestine, while the focus of the latter was on strengthening Jewish identity without compromising the feeling of belonging to the nation states in which Jews lived—is less relevant in the case of Italy. Airoldi suggests that, contrary to how it was often portrayed, Italian Zionism was not so much philanthropic in nature, nor solely dedicated to assisting the Eastern European Jewish masses in their migration to Palestine, as it was "a movement of cultural and spiritual renaissance aimed at providing form and content to a national identity that was certainly weakened, but not at all extinguished, because of the integration process" (p. 4). Third, Airoldi draws on a wide range of primary sources, in Italian as well as German, Hebrew, and English—something that is not so common among scholars of contemporary Italian Jewry. Finally, the book is written in a style that makes it accessible to both scholars and non-experts, who are not necessarily familiar with the subject.

The book is organized into three chapters, in addition to the introduction and the conclusion. In chapter one, titled "Old issues and new challenges: Italian Zionism and identity politics between 1918 and 1938," Airoldi traces the history of both

national and local Zionist organizations—such as the Italian Zionist Federation (FSI), re-established in 1918, and smaller Zionist groups and associations that were active in Rome, Florence, and Turin. This allows her to explore different tendencies within the Zionist movement, with a focus on socialist and revisionist Zionism. Airoldi succeeds in proving that even the so-called "philanthropic tendency"—as exemplified by Felice Ravenna, who was the first president of the FSI—advocated not only support for the Zionist project in Palestine but also the "remaking of the Jews" by helping the "diaspora rediscover its own identity and roots" (p. 16). One of Airoldi's original contributions is to show that Mussolini's attacks on Zionism had begun as far back as the early 1920s. Mussolini first referred to the "antipatriotic position of Zionism" in an article published in the daily *Il Popolo d'Italia* on 19 October 1920. In his first speech to Parliament the following year, he stressed the risk posed to "Italianness" by "other races, the most dangerous of which was the Jewish one," as well as intimating that the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine would lead to Italian Jews becoming hostile toward Italy (p. 22). These same arguments would be used again in the 1930s, such as during the notorious anti-Zionist and antisemitic campaign that erupted in 1934, after two Turin Jews were arrested at the Italian-Swiss border on March 19 for carrying anti-fascist material in their luggage. The Italian Zionist movement rebutted accusations that Italian identity and Zionism were incompatible by pointing out that, rather than being a "relief agency" supporting Eastern European Jews, the latter was an instrument through which "Jews could regain self-awareness" (p. 62). The focus of chapter two, titled "Enzo Sereni: Judaism as thought and action," is on Enzo Sereni, who was born in Rome in 1905, moved to Palestine in 1927, and was deported to Dachau where he died in 1944, after volunteering to parachute into Northern Italy to help rescue Italian Jews under Nazi-fascist rule. Airoldi recounts Sereni's choice to embrace Socialist Zionism, his faith in what Aaron David Gordon had defined a "religion of labor," and his decision to establish kibbutz Ghiv'at Brenner in Palestine—where his commitment to supporting Jewish and Arab workers' common cause was driven by the belief that "class solidarity" was crucial to preventing clashes between Arabs and Jews. Of particular interest are the pages Airoldi dedicates to the "revision of Zionism" (p. 92) that Sereni advocated for during his visits to Germany and the United States. In an essay originally written in German and later translated into English, he criticized

the Zionist project of establishing a Jewish majority in Palestine, arguing that it was necessary to "recognize, once and for all, Arabs' aspirations to national independence" (p. 104).

Airoldi devotes chapter three to "Alfonso Pacifici: the eternal contemporaneity of Judaism." Alfonso Pacifici was born in Florence in 1889 and moved to Palestine in 1934, where he died in 1981. According to him, "Jews were a nation, even without a land," and Zionism should be regarded as "a movement of cultural renovation and return to the observance of Jewish commandments, through which Jews would recover their national identity" (p. 119). Pacifici's counterargument to fascist anti-Zionism was that no contradiction could exist between being Italian and a Jew at the same time, as "nationality" (i.e., being part of the Jewish nation), was "one of two existential dimensions for Italian Jews," the other one being Italian "citizenship" (p. 136). But once settled in Palestine, he gradually adopted an anti-Zionist stance, as Zionism had mistakenly believed that "migrating to Eretz Israel was the main instrument through which the Jewish people would fulfill their historical mission." On the contrary, Pacifici was persuaded that this would only happen by "living in accordance with the principles of integral Judaism," following in the footsteps of ultra-orthodox supporters of the anti-Zionist Agudat Yisrael party (p. 152).

For all the reasons above, I believe this is an excellent book. Through the contributions of two giants of Italian Zionism, Sara Airoldi provides in-depth insights and better understanding of the debate around Jewish identity, and its relationship with fascist-ruled Italian society and politics, in the 1920s and 1930s.

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James McAuley, *The House of Fragile Things: Jewish Art Collectors and the Fall of France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022), pp. 320.

by *Katharina Hüls-Valenti*

In *The House of Fragile Things* Historian James McAuley portrays the milieu of the Jewish elite in the French Third Republic through the lens of art collecting. Spanning a timeframe from the Dreyfus affair until the German occupation and formation of the Vichy government, the author reconstructs the lived experiences of four intermarried families which were considered the custodians of French Jewish community at that time: The Camondos, the Reinachs, the Cahen d'Anvers and the Rothschilds.

McAuley's choice of protagonists is not just motivated by the fact that they were prominent members of French society but also because these families shared a common passion of collecting and bequeathed parts of their legacies to the French state. By portraying one member of each family and their respective art collections, the author foregrounds both the private and public significance those collections assumed in the decades after the Dreyfus affair, when the post-revolution idea of French universalism and the growingly aggressive antisemitism in France became an unescapable predicament. Their collections, therefore, did not just reflect their individual understanding of collecting art, but were also expressions of an evolving French Jewish identity which, despite the growing hostile environment towards Jewish life in France, aimed at cultural assimilation.

The reader is introduced into this milieu through the lead character Béatrice de Camondo (1894-1945), daughter of Moïse de Camondo (1860-1935), head of a long-standing bankers' family from Constantinople, and Irène Cahen d'Anvers (1872-1963), a wealthy and sophisticated Parisian, who had been portrayed by Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) when she was a child. McAuley offers the reader an intimate and touching portrait of Béatrice, unleashing her personality and beliefs with the help of two handwritten letters that Béatrice had written to a childhood friend in 1917 and 1942 respectively, only a few months before her arrest by the Vichy regime and her following deportation to Auschwitz, where she died on 4 January 1945. The story of her life, from a childhood in one of the most renowned,

yet troubled families in Paris, her marriage with Leon Reinach (1893-1944), exponent of another extremely influential family in fin de siècle France, their troublesome divorce, her convinced conversion to Catholicism and the fate of her entire family as victims of the Holocaust, instantly absorbs the reader and gives an idea of the book's quintessence: the acknowledgement that these figures should not just be remembered as victims, but as multifaced individuals with complex life stories in a certain moment in time.

Although the topic of antisemitism in fin de siècle France has already been studied profoundly, McAuley evokes a new perspective by depicting the lived experience with French antisemitism through the means of art collecting. This approach reveals itself as particularly pertinent for the discussed period, for antisemitic sentiments were often expressed through the language of objects and things, which the author explains strikingly in his second chapter by introducing the term "material antisemitism."

This kind of antisemitism, McAuley argues, evolved towards the end of the nineteenth century in French literature and media and in response to a society in which material objects were given national significance, representing traces of French history and patrimony. This identification particularly applied to those items and artefacts which had started circulating on the market after the French Revolution, originating from clerical and aristocratic patrimonies. In the material culture of the fin de siècle, these objects found their way into a new generation of collectors, who aimed to acquire prestige and a certain Frenchness with these pieces. Although this ancient régime style was popular amongst all collectors in France, virulent antisemites like Éduard Drumont (1844-1917), with his publication *La France juive* (1886), and the Goncourt brothers imbued it with exclusive nationalistic significance and used it to attack the material existence of the Jewish elite. Fueled by a number of financial scandals, which involved leading Jewish-owned banks and therefore collectors such as the Rothschilds and Camondos, the hatred expressed in aesthetic and material terms became a particularly effective antisemitic rhetoric in the French public.

Regardless of the public attacks, Jewish collectors eagerly pursued their passion for collecting, identifying themselves precisely with the ancient régime style as means of personal solace as well as a gateway to assimilation. In reference to Susan Stewart's book On Longing (1992) the author illustrates how the comprehensive

collecting zeal of his figures reflects their longing towards French identity and the compatibility of Jewishness and Frenchness.

In the third chapter, McAuley connects this vision to the experience of World War I where many French Jews felt obliged to contribute to the war, such as, for example, Nissim de Camondo (1892-1917) who joint the French army and fell on the battlefield. That those, who had lost a son or had converted their exclusive homes into military hospitals (e.g., the Château de Champs owned by the Cahen d'Anvers), bequeathed their art collections or homes to the nation was yet another affirmation of their sense of belonging to France and strengthened once again the aim to inscribe these families in the long durée of French history.

The main body of the book substantiates this theory by presenting the reader with the biographies of Moïse de Camondo, Thèodore Reinach (1860-1928) and Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild (1864-1934). Whilst the author depicts their individual visions and products of material self-expression—from Camondos petite Versailles mansion in Rue de Monceau 61 to Reinach's to de Rothschild's uniquely designed Villas along the Cote d'Azur—the reader also learns about the tragic end of these life's work, to which McAuley devotes the last chapters: the Fall of France during World War II and the ultimate betrayal these families experienced under Nazi occupation, seeing their homes sacked, their collections seized and lastly, becoming in parts themselves victims of the Holocaust.

One could argue that, by merely considering and focusing on the wealthy Jewish French elite, McAuley does not catch the entire phenomenon of French antisemitism. His approach, however, does work in the sense that he exclusively discusses a particular immigrant minority and their relationship to the concept of French universalism. And by doing so—although antisemitism is much different today than it was back then—he ultimately enables the reader to draw parallels to today's situation in France and the still existing conflict between the sense of foreignness and assimilation of minority communities.

Advised by several renown international scholars such as Alice Kaplan, the author not only took a notable amount of secondary literature into consideration, but also delved into a number of public and private archives to investigate meticulously each of his main characters. One can tell from the appendix of notes that this book was born as a PhD thesis and therefore meets the academic standard

of a historical study. At the same time, McAuley's vivid and suspenseful writing make it very enjoyable to read.

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Barbara E. Mann, *The Object of Jewish Literature: A Material History (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2022),* pp. 280.

by *Martina Mampieri*

Barbara Mann's book, *The Object of Jewish Literature: A Material History*—finalist for the 2023 Jordan Schnitzer Book Award, sponsored by the Association for Jewish Studies—offers an insightful and pioneering investigation into the materiality of Jewish secular literature and literary culture in the twentieth century with glimpses on contemporary art. In this instructive and creative contribution, Mann employs a comparative and interdisciplinary methodology that intertwines literary analysis, cultural history, and the examination of material features into a cohesive dialogue. This approach is meant to answer a fundamental question (which emerges more clearly at the end of the volume): "what does materiality even mean in a post-book era, when the digital domain threatens to supplant our most mundane and tangible experiences—the brittle page, the crumbling spine?" (p. 210).

Mann's fascination for early twentieth-century journals and ephemeral materials beyond sacred texts guides her (and through her, us) on an exploration of artifacts that may not be visually stunning or luxurious, but are undoubtedly captivating. Recent scholarship on material culture and provenance research vividly illustrates that examining a book as a physical object can reveal narratives specific to that particular specimen. Drawing inspiration from these studies and acknowledging the uniqueness of each item, Mann introduces an additional level of analysis. She contemplates the relationship between the text, language, layout, format, design, and material choice, and how these elements shape the readership experience and interpretation of the content.

The book consists of six well-reasoned chapters that explore specific genres through a thorough presentation of some representative texts. After an introduction explaining the origins of this work and the theoretical framework on which it grounds (see, for example, the concepts of "modernism" and "material affordances"), the first chapter is dedicated to Jewish imagism and the interplay between the word and image in Hebrew and Yiddish poetry books by a group of poets working in Hebrew and European contexts as well as in New York and

Palestine. As Mann concludes at the end of this chapter, "the production of poetry is presented here as a physical process in which the poet's body (hand and foot) becomes enmeshed in the body of the machine press (its "shining arms"), a demanding and exacting set of activities that is nonetheless satisfying" (p. 50). The second chapter looks at magazines and newspapers as visual artifacts and art manifestos, produced between Eastern Europe and New York. While the narrative of these pieces maintains its "Jewishness" (or more precisely, its "Yiddishkeit," also thanks to the development of Yiddish typography), their other physical attributes deeply resonate with the influence of modernist culture, expressionism, art nouveau, constructivist abstraction, and various avant-garde movements. This embodies a theme of mobility, mirroring the magazines' purpose to be circulated in a pocket, from one location to another, "between local and transnational contexts" (p. 84). In the following chapter, Mann delves deeper into her analysis by contemplating the tangible aspects derived from fictional objects—including the shtetl, bricolage, olive wood creations, and stuffed animals—as depicted in the works of David Bergelson, Henry Roth, and S. Y. Agnon. The third chapter might be the most challenging to comprehend and the least persuasive, given its focus shifts away from the physical attributes of the book itself to instead spotlight the items described within it. Its relevance and consistency with the remainder of the volume remain uncertain. Conversely, the fourth chapter (which Mann defines the "spine" of her study) offers an insightful examination on Holocaust memorial books (or *yizkor* books) as a "new transnational genre wherein writing itself becomes an object" (p. 112). Here, the books themselves—supported by photographs, illustrations, maps, poems, and ephemeral items—act as mediums "to commemorate the history of their towns and its destruction and to honor the memory of their murdered neighbors" (p. 118). This chapter showcases several significant examples that underline this fundamental connection. Linked to the Holocaust, it's the reflection on graphic novels in chapter five. Graphic novels such as *Maus* by Art Spiegelmann, *The Property* by Rutu Modan, and *The Rabbi's Cat* by Joann Sfar are presented as a compelling genre of images and texts to talk about Jewish trauma. Like graphic novels, artists' books (chapter 6) create a novel language that enhances the book as an object while simultaneously their physical characteristics can challenge the traditional sequential format of the codex and the standard expectations of readers. While looking at premodern sacred

scrolls and the small magazines explored in chapter two, the artists' book redefines the relationship between art and the world, provoking inquiries about the fundamental nature and classification of the book as an object, as well as the environments in which they are created. Mann's contemplation on the art scene in Musrara and the politically charged act of creating literature and art "on the seam" in Jerusalem—a context that is notably pertinent and impactful—is succeeded by notes and an index that wrap up the volume.

In addition to the already emphasized content and methodological merits of the volume, significant appreciation is also due for the incorporation of a wide array of images and materials from libraries and museums, as well as for the thoughtful addition of brief introductions at the end of each chapter that pave the way for the subsequent one. The narrative is enriched by Mann's engaging writing style, which makes this book a valuable resource not only for scholars but also for general readers and artists with an interest in Jewish culture and literature.

However, the book could have gained from an alternative introduction, one that more directly addresses the transition from premodern to modern books, and from sacred to secular realms. Although sacred scrolls and the codex format are occasionally referenced, a concise historical overview of premodern books—from the development of Jewish printing through the emancipation and secularization of European Jewry, the political turmoil in Eastern Europe and Palestine, and the significant Jewish migration to the United States—could have offered readers a more nuanced understanding of the rise of secular genres during the interwar and postwar periods. Opting for a different title (such as *The Object of Modern Jewish Secular Literature*) might have also aided readers in more easily discerning the subject matter of the volume.

Overall, Mann's work is a groundbreaking and meticulously researched book. It offers a fresh perspective on modern Jewish secular literature, challenging readers to consider the significance of the physical form in shaping literary meaning and cultural values. This volume significantly enhances our comprehension of the intricate interplay between text and materiality within the Jewish literary tradition, highlighting its pivotal importance in the development of literary genres that help narrate the past, interpret the present, and envision the future.

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Dan Stone, *The Holocaust: An Unfinished History* (London: Pelican Books, 2023), pp. 464.

by *Anna Veronica Pobbe*

In his *The Holocaust: An Unfinished History*, historian Dan Stone attempts to trace the boundaries within which the event that goes by the name of Holocaust is placed today; to do so, the author mainly uses a pathway consisting of chronological steps, which unfold from the birth of the National Socialist Party to the liberation of the camps. Although the book defines the Holocaust as a "phenomenon which troubles all thinking people, as it should" (p. 36), it does not aim to be exhaustive and is intended primarily for Anglo-Saxon readers, given the predominance of scholarly references included in the text related precisely to the academic production from across the Channel.

This is not the first time Stone has measured himself against the themes addressed in *The Holocaust*; in fact, several references to other works by the same author appear in the text. However, unlike the previous works, *The Holocaust* has a threefold ambition: the first is to cover the entire temporal extent of the Holocaust phenomenon; the second is to present itself as the heir to a «traditional» literature on the specific case, represented, especially, by the works of Friedlander and Hilberg; finally, the third ambition is to integrate within this tradition other approaches such as the psychological and anthropological ones.

The book is divided into eight chapters, where the first seven are developed within a time frame covering the years from 1919 to 1950, while the last chapter is devoted exclusively to Holocaust remembrance, with particular reference to the prosecutions of some historians and some memorial policies of European states.

The reader is introduced to the subject by the "Ideology door": for the author defining the ideological scenario of Nazism is fundamental in order to understand the crimes that will be committed later on, during the war. Nazism is defined as "a paranoid conspiracy theory which believed in history as a redemption story" (p. 44); this movement was successful within German society in that it was perceived first as pure, in comparison to the "rotten" Weimar Republic, and then as a reality capable of "healing" society itself, within a specific idea of history as "something organic" (p. 63).

During the second chapter, "Attack on the Jews 1933-1939," Stone traces the stages that led to the pogrom of November 1938. The author focuses mainly on the violence of the Nazi message and, quoting Evans, describes how "the leading Nazis wanted to be able to control the violence but 'in practice continually fuelled it with their rhetoric" (p. 70). The pogrom, within this narrative, is simultaneously a moment of rupture and cohesion, establishing the fundamental dichotomy between perpetrators and victims.

"Before the Final Solution" is the first chapter that begins, gradually, to go beyond German borders. In fact, the author traces the period between 1938 and 1941, dwelling on three issues/moments: the Anschluss and the elaboration of the Viennese Model; the implementation first of T4 and then of 14f13; and the invasion of Poland and the ghettoization process. Regarding T4 in particular, Stone stresses its importance within the Nazi genocidal path: "T4 was thus one vital part of the Nazis' expanding genocidal visions. Nevertheless, the unique place of the Jews in Nazi ideology means that the Holocaust was not simply a logical extension of the euthanasia program: Jews were not merely regarded as sub-humans who needed to be removed for the sake of race progress; they were also considered a racial threat because of their supposed global power" (p. 113).

It is only in the fourth chapter that the scenario outlined by the author takes on a European dimension: first by talking about the so-called "Holocaust by bullets" and later, in the fifth chapter, by addressing the question concerning the co-participation of other states in the Nazi genocidal project. Regarding the action of the Einsatzgruppen Stone moves within the path already traced by the theory of the common men introduced by Browning "A combination of indoctrination, a routinized brutalization and a sense of obligation to comrades, superiors and the nation facilitated turning family men into mass murderers" (p. 139). As for the issue of collaboration, on the other hand, the author defines the word (collaboration) as "a highly loaded term" that should not be defined solely by "the lenses of the resistance movements, but also as a form of deliberately decided-on behavior and action by groups of people with specific aims in mind" (p. 158) and identifies a "large framework" within which the specific cases of: Vichy Republic, Hungary, Italian Social Republic (RSI), Slovakia, Croatia and Romania.

When it comes to addressing the darkest pages of Holocaust History, the author's approach is, once again, built upon steps: the Operation Reinhardt camps, the

evolution of Auschwitz, and the subcamps system. In addressing the issue of the *Todeslager*, Stone admits a certain lag in the English-language scholarly production on this specific topic:

> Because they were culled before the Allies got there, and because they were discovered by the Red Army[...], because mainly Polish Jews were killed there, and, above all, because there were so few survivors, the Reinhardt camps have long been obscured in Western Europe and the Americas, although the situation has changed somewhat in recent years" (p. 203).

In addressing, however, what is commonly referred to as the *Auschwitz paradox*, Stone seeks to deconstruct its modern/industrial myth and relies on the words of some of the best-known voices on the subject. "Here the combination of racial paranoia, sexual violence, looting and greed, ritual humiliation and what Primo Levi called *unnecessary violence* collide, exemplifying the reality of Auschwitz: not a factory of death in the sense of a clean and efficient site of genocide (as if such a thing could exist), but an abattoir of concentrated genocidal fantasy" (p. 211).
The three sub-sections ("Death Marches," "Liberation and Displaced Persons - Refugees – Survivors") that are part of the chapter "Great is the Wrath" are united by one very strong theme: suffering, first declined almost exclusively in physical terms and then increasingly psychological and emotional ones. It is in this part that the narrative effort to give voice to the testimonies appears most evident, making heavy use of the work done by Dawid Boder. As mentioned before, the last chapter is devoted, exclusively, to the Holocaust memory, which is defined as "far from being a comfortable place to inhabit for the liberal-minded, is now highly contested, confusing and not a little disorienting" (p. 276). Inside these last pages, the author aims to show the challenges of the Holocaust memory but he wants also to come back to the radical nature of the Holocaust, which "lay in the way in which modern characteristics such as science, bureaucracy or railways were used to intensify and make manifest of non-rational fantasy thinking that underpinned Nazism and was itself a product of modern age" (p. 285).
Overall, Stone's work should be valued not by its exhaustiveness but by its attempt to bridge cultural history, social history, and the history of ideas inside the frame of the Holocaust. One remark should be made also regarding the title, which seems

quite misleading: the book is more a collective report of the Anglo-Saxon historiography on the matter, than a look into the new waves of studies. Maybe one of the greatest accomplishments of this volume is the role that it gives to the readers; page after page, in fact, the author suggests a simple but very important question: "Who do we talk to when we talk about Holocaust History?".

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Radu Ioanid, *La Roumanie et la Shoah: Destruction et survie des Juifs et des Roms sous le régime Antonescu, 1940-1944* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2023), pp. 576.

by *Ştefan Cristian Ionescu*

While Romania was the second largest Holocaust perpetrator, the history of its atrocious record is still under-researched by scholars and rather unknown to the wider public. This outstanding book, authored by the Romanian-American historian Radu Ioanid, is the second French edition of one of the first and the most important studies in the historiography of the Romanian chapter of the Holocaust. Initially published in Romanian in 1998, then in English in 2000, followed by the first French edition in 2002, the book critically examined the neglected sufferings of the Jews, Roma, and religious minorities during the pro-Nazi regime of the antisemitic General Ion Antonescu. At the time of its first publication, this well documented book represented a breakthrough—together with Jean Ancel's *Transnistria* which was published in the same year, 1998—in elucidating the history of Romania's participation in the Holocaust after decades of silence and negationism. Based on a wealth of primary archival sources used for the first time by Ioanid, at that time working for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (henceforth, USHMM) in Washington D.C., the book uncovered the participation of the Romanian state institutions and individuals in the numerous discriminatory policies and crimes perpetrated against the Jews, Roma, and protestant religious groups in Romania and former Soviet territories.
More than two decades later, Ioanid has updated and improved his book with newly available historiographical references and archival documents that became available in the rich collections of the USHMM or were published after 1998. The new French edition of the book matches the third Romanian edition published in 2019, which was followed by the English version in 2021. In addition to new official documents and secondary literature, the current edition contains more photographs of better quality that are crucial in documenting the horrific crimes perpetrated by the Antonescu regime. Although some of the images are difficult to look at, they are very important visual evidence of the wartime violence unleashed against innocent Jewish, Roma, and other civilians. The wealth of

official documents is convincingly complemented by numerous survivor and eye-witness testimonies that were collected or published during the last few decades.
In terms of its structure, the book is divided in 10 thematic-chronological chapters and an Epilogue. The chapters focus on the legal status of the Jews before World War II (henceforth, WWII), the local fascism and antisemitic legislation, the mass killings before the invasion of USSR, the mass crimes from the summer of 1941, the deportations, camps, ghettos, and the crimes perpetrated in Bukovina and Bessarabia, the death zone of Transnistria, the plight of the Roma, the persecution of Protestant churches and other religious minorities, the discussion of the survival of most Romanian Jews, the status of the Romanian Jews living abroad, and the Antonescu officials' view of their regime and its policies.
Chapter five is particularly relevant for understanding Antonescu's genocidal policies as it investigates the region of Transnistria, which was an occupied territory in the South-West part of USSR. This region became the main deportation area used by Antonescu to remove hundreds of thousands of Jews and Roma from Romania and lock them—as well as the surviving local Jews—in a huge network of camps and ghettos before the final deportation/removal. Ioanid shows how the Romanian military and civilian authorities engaged in Transnistria in the systematic exploitation and mass murder of the deported and local Jews and Roma, sometimes in collaboration with the German authorities.
In addition to the substantial corpus of new documents, in the current edition of the book a short chapter on the persecution of Protestant churches and other neo-Protestant religious minorities has been added. The discussion of the variety of groups persecuted for religious reasons during WWII is an important addition to Holocaust historiography as, usually, historians have neglected Antonescu's discriminatory policies targeting the recognized (such as Adventist and Baptist) and unrecognized (such as Pentecostal, Nazarene, Millennialist, and Inochentist) religious minorities, often deemed by the Romanian officials as dangerous "sects." The author shows how the persecution against the religious minorities included intense surveillance, arrests, camp internment, confiscation of property, and forced conversion.
Ioanid also briefly discusses the persecution of the Ukrainian minority, which was seen by the Antonescu authorities as a major national-biological threat to the Romanian ethno-nation. It would have been great if the author further expanded

this part of his study by more minutely examining the ideological justifications of Antonescu's hostility towards the Ukrainians as well as his plans and measures targeting this group in Bukovina, Bessarabia and, especially, Transnistria.

Overall, this new edition of Ioanid's book offers an improved and remarkable study that elucidates the horrific record of the mass crimes perpetrated by the Antonescu regime against the Romanian and Soviet Jews, the Roma, and religious minorities. The book provides not only a major historical reconstruction of an important chapter of WWII history but also a warning to contemporary societies about the risks of ethnic and religious based hatred targeting minorities. Hopefully, the book will make a major contribution to the fight against the rising antisemitism, neo-fascism, authoritarianism, and Holocaust denial.

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