

Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe

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Edited by
Cornelia Wilhelm

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Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe

Shared and Comparative Histories

Edited by
Tobias Grill

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Preface

In the last 25 years historiography has shifted its focus increasingly away from long-standing “methodological nationalism” and toward more transnational approaches and perspectives. These take an interest in relational aspects of history, moving beyond a hitherto prevalent concern for the history of the (European) nation state. However different such transnational approaches may:

[...] all share the conviction that historical and social processes cannot be apprehended and understood exclusively within customary, delineated spaces or containers, might they be states, nations, empires or regions. Consequently, all of these tools or perspectives stress the importance of the interaction and circulation of ideas, peoples, institutions or technologies across state or national boundaries and thus the entanglement and mutual influence of states, societies or cultures.¹

Thus, transnational perspectives focus on the multi-directionality of cultural relationships and reflect the rejection of the previously prevailing method of historical comparison which investigates similarities and differences, convergences and divergences between independent units.² Yet, we should be aware that it fundamentally limits scholarly insight to completely discard any comparative approach within transnational history. Rather, it “is the task of the future to better combine comparative and entanglement history,”³ as Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt have stressed.

One such transnational approach in historiography is the concept of *shared* or *entangled history*, which is closely related to the emergence of the New Imperial History.⁴ This approach concentrates first and foremost on interactions, dependencies, and interdependencies between specific national, regional, ethnic, social, political or religious entities, but also on parallels, similarities and differences. An *entangled history* approach particularly encompasses issues of cultural

1 Bernhard Struck, Kate Ferris and Jacques Revel, “Introduction: Space and Scale in Transnational History,” *The International History Review* 33 no. 4 (2011): 573–574; see also Akira Iriye (ed.), *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History: From the Mid-19th Century to the Present Day* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), xviii. The *Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History* claims that transnational history deals with the “links and flows,” the “people, ideas, products, processes and patterns that operate over, across, through, beyond, above, under, or in-between polities and societies.”

2 On the method of comparison see Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, “Comparison and Beyond: Traditions, Scope, and Perspectives of Comparative History,” in *Comparative and Transnational History: Central European Perspectives and New Approaches*, Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka (eds.) (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 1–30.

3 Ibid., 21.

4 See Margrit Pernau, *Transnationale Geschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2011), 56.

borrowing, transfer or appropriation, such as when one group adopts or imitates certain ideas and cultural practices of another group, and adapts them according to their own specific needs.⁵ Insofar, to overcome former research interests in unidirectional “influences” of one culture on another, a general concern for cultural hybridity has gained much currency among scholars of culture, history, anthropology etc. However, it needs to be emphasized that processes of exchange and interaction between certain entities are regarded as highly ambivalent. According to Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria, who devised the approach of entangled history, an increasing circulation of goods, people and ideas generates not only commonalities, but also demarcations and the desire for particularism, and the reification of dichotomic structures, which still dominate perceptions of history.⁶ Thus, entanglement is not only characterized by parallels, similarities, exchange, or appropriation, but also by differences, exclusion, and even persecution. Hence, historical acts of violence can also be interpreted as an entangled or shared history of perpetrators and victims. In general, the perspective of an entangled history should not neglect, as Klaus Kiran Patel warns, “the suppression and subsiding, the diversion and destruction, the forgetting and fading of transnational relations.”⁷

One of these destructed and largely forgotten transnational, transcultural, or entangled relations is the history of Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe. For many centuries, both “groups”⁸ played a very significant role in Eastern Europe, a region which for a long time was dominated by the poly-ethnic and multi-confessional empires of Russia, the Habsburgs, the Ottomans and Prussia-Germany.⁹ According to Andreas Kappeler, who subdivides Eastern Europe into East Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, one of the three historical characteristics of

⁵ See Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, “Comparison and Beyond,” 19–20.

⁶ Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria, “Einleitung: Geteilte Geschichte – Europa in einer postkolonialen Welt,” in *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus. Postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften*, Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria (eds.) (Frankfurt/Main-New York: Campus Verlag 2002), 17.

⁷ Klaus Kiran Patel, “Transnational History,” *Europäische Geschichte Online (EGO)* (Mainz: Institute of European History (IEG), 2010) <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/patelk-2010-en>, 14.

⁸ The use of the term groups in quotation marks confronts the tendency, observed by Rogers Brubaker, “to treat ethnic groups, nations, and races as substantial entities” [...] as if they were “internally homogenous, externally bounded groups, even unitary collective actors with common purpose” and “to represent the social and cultural world as a multichrome mosaic of monochrome ethnic, racial, or cultural blocs.” See Rogers Brubaker, “Ethnicity without groups,” *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 43 no. 2 (2002): 164.

⁹ And, of course, one could add the commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania which for a considerable time was also a global player in Eastern Europe.

East Central Europe was the fact that since the Middle Ages the German and Jewish settlements had a significant influence on the societies, cultures, economies, and legal traditions of the region.¹⁰

Other scholars also have observed the structural and functional similarities of Jews and Germans in the fabric of East European societies. Thus, by referring to the Russian Empire of the 19th century, Yuri Slezkine has phrased this fact in the following way: “The German estate manager was the central Russian version of the Pale of Settlement’s Jewish leaseholder.”¹¹ These structural and functional similarities might have been the main reason that Jews and Germans were perceived by the surrounding population as the essential “others.” One example will suffice to illustrate this: in the 1870s there was much anger among peasants in the southwestern region of the Tsarist Empire against Jews and Germans, who they regarded as their “main ‘oppressors’ and ‘bloodsuckers.’” As Sergei Zhuk has demonstrated:

[...] local peasants blamed only Jews and Germans. For the Russian and Ukrainian peasants, especially for recent migrants, the “alien others” – Germans and Jews – were the obvious “cultural opponents.” Therefore, these “cultural others” became the first victims of the ethnic hatred in the southern provinces.

As a consequence, according to Zhuk, the “Russian administration was anxious to maintain and protect the Russian national identity of the peasantry of the southern frontier in the struggle with the economic and cultural influence of Germans and Jews.”¹²

10 Andreas Kappeler, “Osteuropäische Geschichte,” in *Aufriß der historischen Wissenschaften*, vol. 2: Räume, M. Maurer (ed.) (Stuttgart: Reclam Verlag, 2001), 213.

11 Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton/ NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 112; See also Eric Lohr, “1915 and the War Pogrom Paradigm in the Russian Empire,” in *Anti-Jewish Violence. Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History*, Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan M. Meir, and Israel Bartal (eds.) (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 49. Lohr writes that the “structural similarities between Germans and Jews in the empire were striking.”; See further Winfried Schich, “Zum Problem der Juden in der frühen deutschrechtlichen Stadt im östlichen Mitteleuropa,” in *Deutsche, Polen, Juden – ihre Beziehungen von den Anfängen bis ins 20. Jahrhundert; Beiträge zu einer Tagung*, Stefi Jersch-Wenzel (ed.) (Berlin (West): Colloquium Verlag, 1987), 65–101, esp. 82–95; See also Wolfgang Wippermann, “Probleme und Aufgaben der Beziehungsgeschichte zwischen Deutschen, Polen und Juden,” in *Deutsche, Polen, Juden – ihre Beziehungen von den Anfängen bis ins 20. Jahrhundert; Beiträge zu einer Tagung*, Stefi Jersch-Wenzel (ed.) (Berlin (West): Colloquium Verlag, 1987), 12–13. Wippermann, like Schich, points to the structural and functional similarities of both groups in East Central Europe during the Middle Ages.

12 Sergei I. Zhuk, *Russia’s Lost Reformation. Peasants, Millennialism, and Radical Sects in Southern Russia and Ukraine, 1830–1917* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004), 52.

The common perception of Jews and Germans as essential and influential “others” could also be observed during the First World War when the denunciatory rhetoric in the Russian population, press, bureaucracy and among army commanders freely mixed the notion of “German dominance” with that of “Jewish dominance.”¹³ Hence, the overwhelming majority of those Russian subjects who were deported from their hometowns were Jews and Germans. This was not only because they were regarded as collaborators with the German war-enemy, but particularly for the opportunity deportation afforded for seizing German and Jewish property – and thus to terminate their perceived economic dominance.¹⁴

Apart from structural and functional similarities, Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe also shared cultural commonalities. These centered on the common origin of German and Yiddish, termed by Peter Stenberg as “sister language cultures.” According to Stenberg, in his 1991 monograph *The End of the East European Yiddish and German Worlds in the Mirror of Literature*, within “Eastern Europe, Yiddish created a Germanic-language base, which was complemented by the more erratic settlements of the German colonialists in much the same geographical sense.”¹⁵ This resulted in “historical and literary threads that have run in broadly parallel and often intertwining lines for more than half a millennium between the sister language cultures.”¹⁶

This concept of “sister language cultures” emphasizes two distinct cultures founded on the common linguistic origin of German and Yiddish vernaculars. Nevertheless, at certain times and in particular regions of Eastern Europe, Jews and Germans also formed a more hybridized “communication community” with a shared “communication structure.”¹⁷ In the course of the 19th century, Jews

13 Lohr, “1915 and the War Pogrom Paradigm in the Russian Empire,” 49; Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century*, 166.

14 Ibid. See also Eric Lohr, “The Russian Army and the Jews: Mass Deportation, Hostages, and Violence during World War I,” *Russian Review* 60 no. 3 (2001): 404–419.

15 Peter Stenberg, *Journey to Oblivion. The End of the East European Yiddish and German Worlds in the Mirror of Literature* (Toronto et al.: University of Toronto Press 1991), 23.

16 Ibid., 13. See also Stenberg’s following summary in the same monograph: “German begins its drive into Eastern Europe at about the same time as Yiddish does, moves into approximately the same territory, eventually finding a home in much the same geographical space, and comes to a historical end at almost the same time. Thus roughly speaking, the two sister Germanic languages travel eastward together (though in isolation from each other), spend approximately 750 years in this newly won linguistic territory, establish populations numbering in the millions in generally the same area, become the mother languages of large minority populations in great parts of Eastern Europe, and virtually cease to exist in these areas within a decade of each other.” (26–27)

17 See in part Carl Bethke, *(K)eine gemeinsame Sprache? Aspekte deutsch-jüdischer Beziehungsgeschichte in Slawonien, 1900–1945* (Berlin: LIT-Verlag, 2013), 6.

in Posen,¹⁸ Bukovina,¹⁹ Galicia,²⁰ Courland,²¹ and Croatia-Slavonia²² became outstanding representatives of German language and culture. In some cases, this Jewish identification with German culture was so far-reaching that Jews considered themselves – and were regarded by others – as the real agents of Germanness. Thus, in 1884 the non-Jewish Bukovinian author Ludwig Adolf Simiginowicz-Staufe wrote that it was the Germanness of Jews, rather than the Germanness of ethnic Germans, which provided cities in the Bukovina with their German character.²³ Also, the renowned Jewish writer Ernst Toller noted in his memoirs that the Jews in Posen “looked upon themselves as the pioneers of German culture, and their houses in these little towns became cultural centers where German literature, philosophy and art was cultivated with a pride and an assiduousness which bordered on the ridiculous.”²⁴ Both these statements reflect the fact that the Jews’ acquisition of German language and culture in the Bukovina and Posen was closely linked with their embourgeoisement. As the non-Jewish German middle class was quite underdeveloped in Bukovina and Posen, the Germanness of Jews in these regions was even more conspicuous and striking due to their bourgeois way of living. German newspapers and theaters were not only read and attended by Jews – in many cases they were even run by Jews. Such a shared communication structure among Jews and Germans in

18 Sophia Kemlein, *Die Posener Juden 1815–1848. Entwicklungsprozesse einer polnischen Judentum unter preußischer Herrschaft* (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz, 1997).

19 Martin Broszat, “Von der Kulturnation zur Volksgruppe,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 200 (1965): 572–605; Emanuel Turczynski, “Langzeitwirkungen der deutsch-jüdischen Kulturgemeinschaft in der Bukowina,” in *Symbiose und Traditionsbruch: Deutsch-jüdische Wechselbeziehungen in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa (19. und 20. Jahrhundert)*, Hans Hecker and Walter Engel (eds.) (Essen: Klartext, 2003), 47–63; Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, “Deutsch-jüdische Symbiose in der mitteleuropäischen Provinz: Bukowina,” in *Jüdische Welten in Osteuropa*, Annelore Engel-Braunschmidt (ed.) (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2005), 219–230.

20 Albert Lichtblau and Michael John, “Jewries in Galicia and Bukovina, in Lemberg and Czernowitz: Two Divergent Examples of Jewish Communities in the Far East of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy,” in *Jewries at the Frontier. Accommodation, Identity, Conflict*, Sander L. Gilman and Milton Shain (eds.) (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

21 Svetlana Bogojavlenska, *Die jüdische Gesellschaft in Kurland und Riga. 1795–1915* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2012), 97–105, 158–179; Trude Maurer, “Die Westjuden des Russischen Reichs? Überlegungen zur Akkulturation der Juden in Kurland,” *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 54 no. 1 (2005): 2–24.

22 Bethke, *(K)eine gemeinsame Sprache?*, 47–118; See also Marija Vulesica’s chapter in this volume.

23 Ludwig Adolf Simiginowicz-Staufe, *Die Völkergruppen der Bukowina* (Czernowitz: Verlag Pardini, 1884), 191–192.

24 Ernst Toller, *I was a German. An autobiography* (London: John Lane the Bodley Head LTD, 1934), 2.

Eastern Europe is a clear indication that, until late 19th century, the affiliation to Germandom and Germanness was far from being solely defined by national and ethnic categories. Since those termed German in Eastern Europe did not form a coherent group, for a long time being German meant more or less that one spoke German or a German dialect. Hence, the historical significance of cultural definitions of Germanness must not be underestimated – reminding us of Jeremy King’s warning against adopting an “ethnicist” approach.²⁵ For example, those Jewish authors in the Bukovina and in Galicia who contributed in a significant way to German literature were and are an intrinsic part of the German cultural sphere, which, of course, transcended and transcends the borders of a German nation state and constructions of an imagined homogenous ethnicity. To speak of Germans and Jews is, following Rogers Brubaker’s *Ethnicity without Groups*, merely a simplified construction useful in analyzing the entanglements (and hybridities) of two assumedly distinct groups and their cultures.²⁶ Instead it should be highlighted that, in Eastern Europe, it became possible for Jews to feel both Jewish and German at the same time – a development which was quite common among Jews in Central Europe.²⁷

Even the rise of modern nationalism did not necessarily prompt German-aculturated Jews in Eastern Europe to dissociate themselves immediately and radically from Germanness. Benno Straucher, founder and leader of the Jewish National

25 Jeremy King, “The Nationalization of East Central Europe: Ethnicism, Ethnicity, and Beyond,” in *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present*, Nancy Wingfield and Maria Bucur (eds.) (West Lafayette/IN: Purdue University Press, 2001), 112–152.

26 In this regard, Brubaker postulates the following: “Ethnicity, race and nation should be conceptualized not as substances or things or entities or organisms or collective individuals – as the imagery of discrete, concrete, tangible, bounded and enduring ‘groups’ encourages us to do – but rather in relational, processual, dynamic, eventful and disaggregated terms. This means thinking of ethnicity, race and nation not in terms of substantial groups or entities but in terms of practical categories, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organizational routines, institutional forms, political projects and contingent events. It means thinking of ethnicization, racialization and nationalization as political, social, cultural and psychological processes. And it means taking as a basic analytical category not the ‘group’ as an entity but groupness as a contextually fluctuating conceptual variable.” See Brubaker, “Ethnicity without Groups,” 167–168.

27 Lichtblau and John, “Jewries in Galicia and Bukovina,” 42. For example, the father of the later famous writer Karl Emil Franzos who was born in Eastern Galicia told him as a young boy that his nationality was not Polish, not Ruthenian, nor Jewish, but German. However, he told him also very often that as to his religion he was a Jew. When Franzos, after the death of his father, moved with his family to Czernowitz, he felt at home there: “Here, I was no longer an outsider, but rather a German among Germans.”

People's Party in the Bukovina, who supported (in German) the development of a Jewish diaspora-nationalism, proclaimed in the Austrian parliament that Bukovinian Jews would nevertheless remain friends of the German people because they are "followers of the gigantic German culture."²⁸ Political demarcations were by no means always accompanied by cultural demarcations.²⁹

Even though there are a few studies focusing on the relationship between Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe,³⁰ these generally do not emphasize the structural and functional similarities, and cultural commonalities of the two "groups." This volume, comprised primarily of papers presented at an international conference held at the Center for Advanced Studies at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich (LMU), from 22 to 24 June 2015, intends to trigger discussion of the shared history of Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe in a broad context. Hence, this volume seeks to contribute not only to the field of Jewish and German History, but also to the area of New Imperial History,³¹ Habsburg Studies,³² and Nationalism Studies, among others.

The fact that the question of a shared history of Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe is not a superficial one is shown by the phenomenon that, for a long time, even the beginnings of East European Jewry were directly linked to the larger German *Ostsiedlung* in the East, which developed around the turn to the 12th century. Thus, many scholars did and do perceive the establishment of German

28 Quoted after Albert Lichtblau and Michael John, "Mythos 'deutsche Kultur'. Jüdische Gemeinden in Galizien und der Bukowina. Zur unterschiedlichen Ausformung kultureller Identität," in *Studien zur Geschichte der Juden in Österreich*, Martha Keil and Eleonore Lappin (eds.) (Bodenheim: Philo Fine Arts, 1997), 107; See also Lichtblau and John, "Jewries in Galicia and Bukovina," 41, 52. (With a different translation!)

29 Lichtblau and John, "Jewries in Galicia and Bukovina," 52.

30 Hans Hecker and Walter Engel (eds.), *Symbiose und Traditionsbruch: Deutsch-jüdische Wechselbeziehungen in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa (19. und 20. Jahrhundert)* (Essen: Klartext, 2003); Hildrun Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft. Das deutsch-jüdische Verhältnis in Rumänien (1918–1938)* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996); Jürgen Hensel (ed.), *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Lodz 1820–1939. Eine schwierige Nachbarschaft* (Osnabrück: Fibre, 1999); Mariana Hausleitner, *Deutsche und Juden in Bessarabien 1814–1941: Zur Minderheitenpolitik Russlands und Großrumäniens* (München: IKGS-Verlag, 2005); Bethke, *(K)eine gemeinsame Sprache?*; Maurer, "Die Westjuden des Russischen Reichs?"

31 On the New Imperial History see, for example, Stephen Howe, "Introduction: New Imperial Histories," in *The New Imperial Histories Reader*, Stephen Howe (ed.) (London: Routledge, 2010), 1–20; Another excellent introduction to the New Imperial History, albeit in the Russian/Soviet context, is: I. Gerasimov, S. Glebov, A. Kaplunovski, M. Mogilner, and A. Semyonov, "In Search of a New Imperial History," *Ab Imperio* (2005): 33–56.

32 See, for example, the Berghahn Series *Austrian and Habsburg Studies* which amounts to 20 volumes so far: Howard Louthan (ed.), *Austrian and Habsburg Studies*, vol. 1–20 (New York: Berghahn Books, 1996–2016).

and Jewish-Ashkenazi settlements in the Polish lands as one common historical process. However, as Shaul Stampfer meticulously shows in his contribution, the immigration of German agricultural migrants did not include Jews. Neither did the timing of Jewish migration coincide with that of non-Jewish migrants from the West, nor were these Jewish migrants from German soil proper.

However, this does not mean that Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe, or, more precisely, in Poland, were not perceived as the most prominent “others.” As Jürgen Heyde analyzes in his contribution, the stories about Jews and Germans are more elaborate in the *Annales* of Jan Długosz written in the second half of the 15th century than in any other work of Polish medieval historiography. These images of the “other” were used as a mirror of the “own.” While Germans serve as a reference to explain what, according to Długosz, was specifically Polish, Jews are referred to by contrast in order to represent Christianity.

One of the most interesting questions of entanglement between German (-Jewish) and East European Jewish culture is the Haskalah – the Jewish Enlightenment. Until recently, it was generally argued that the German Haskalah, much influenced by the German Enlightenment, was essentially exported to the East, thus the East European Haskalah was merely an offspring of its German counterpart. However, this perception not only neglects that the German Haskalah itself was a joint project of Jews from German lands and Eastern Europe, but also the fact that the emergence of the East European Haskalah had its roots in internal regional factors as well.³³ Moreover, those East European Jews who were closely associated with the Berlin Haskalah, and who returned to Eastern Europe, had their own agendas. One such figure was Solomon Dubno from Dubno (today Western Ukraine), who, after a dispute with Moses Mendelssohn, abandoned his *Bi'ur* project in Berlin and settled in Vilna. As Zuzanna Krzemien illustrates in her contribution, Dubno’s scholarly work in Vilna attempted to blend the Maskilic program of Berlin Jewry with the East European veneration for a traditional religious education. Such an adaptation reflected his perception that his Western coreligionists had been too receptive to the German Enlightenment, and thus the religious worldview of his brethren in the East needed to be protected against excesses of the Haskalah. In this regard, Krzemien’s contribution is a telling example of how entanglements not only generate commonalities, but at the same time also demarcations.

Rachel Manekin’s contribution is also devoted to questions of entanglement between the Enlightenment in Central Europe and the Haskalah in Eastern Europe,

³³ See Immanuel Etkes, “Immanent Factors and External Influences in the Development of the Haskalah Movement in Russia,” in *Toward Modernity. The European Jewish Model*, Jacob Katz (ed.) (New York: Transaction Books, 1987), 13–32.

more precisely in Galicia. As she convincingly argues, the two historiographical trends which present the Galician Haskalah either as a continuation of the Berlin Haskalah, or as an independent expression of the Haskalah movement, neglect a fact of utmost importance: the cultural and political context of the *Austrian* Catholic Enlightenment. Drawing on various examples, Manekin shows how Austrian literature from the Josephinian period in particular influenced the development of the Haskalah in Habsburg Galicia. Thus, she decisively contributes to a much more nuanced understanding of the consolidation of the Galician Haskalah.

However, while recent historiography has toned down the German influence on East European Haskalah to some degree, emphasis is needed on the fact that Eastern European opponents of the Maskilim, especially in Russia, regarded the Haskalah as nothing but a German phenomenon. This perception found its most profound expression in the fact that traditional Jews in Eastern Europe often ridiculed Russian Maskilim as *daytsh* (German), as *Berliner*, or *Berlintshik*. In her contribution, Marie Schumacher-Brunhes analyzes the various connotations and different aspects the figure of the *daytsh* could assume in East European Yiddish literature. While from the perspective of the inhabitants of the Jewish *shtetl*, the *daytsh* was nothing but an intruder who would expose the traditional *shtetl* life to harmful modernity, there were also positive, or at least ambivalent, depictions of the *daytsh* to be found in Yiddish literature. Yet, the fact that in East European Jewish literature and culture *daytsh* referred to all modern Jews (and even non-Jewish Germans), whether they were German or Eastern European, use of the term was primarily a strategy of “othering” in order to stress one’s own *Yiddishkayt* and Jewishness. Thus, the perceived commonalities between the Haskalah in West and East, mostly in the form of the specter of modernity, provoked particularism and the reification of dichotomic structures, along the lines observed by Conrad and Randeria.

The intention of a considerable part of East European Jewry to defend its own culture against German and Jewish-German influences was, however, at best partially successful. Despite deep reservations about the figure of the *daytsh*, the so-called *daytshmerish* style arose from the beginning of the nineteenth century. This style proliferated in written Eastern Yiddish, and, to a degree, spoken Eastern Yiddish – which, after all, had its roots in Middle High German. Between about 1880 and 1920, Yiddish newspapers and so-called *shund* novels especially were permeated with a considerable number of German linguistic features.³⁴ As Steffen

³⁴ It should be added that not only Yiddish *shund* novels featured many *daytshmerizms*, but also for example serious works like Ansky’s memoirs on the destruction of Jewish Galicia during the First World War, posthumously published in 1925; see Joachim Neugroschel’s introduction in S. Ansky, *The Enemy at his Pleasure: A Journey through the Jewish Pale of Settlement during World War I*, Joachim Neugroschel (ed., trans.) (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2002), XV.

Krogh elaborates in his contribution, the authors and editors of such texts were oriented towards contemporary German examples and ideals, striving to imitate not only their content but also their language. As Krogh's thorough linguistic analysis demonstrates, the recent features in Eastern Yiddish borrowed from New High German (so-called *daytshmerizms*) were not limited to spelling and vocabulary, but rather went significantly further, including inflectional and derivational morphology as well as syntax.

When, after the outbreak of the “Great War” in 1914, German troops occupied large parts of the western borderlands of the Russian Empire, German soldiers, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, were “very pleasantly surprised” that they could communicate with the Jewish population in the area of occupation due to the closeness of Yiddish to German.³⁵ Moreover, at the beginning of the war the assumption that Yiddish was nothing but a German dialect also played a major role among a considerable number of German-Jewish policy-makers. This assumption was one of their main arguments to the public in representing East European Jews as pioneers and bearers of Germanness who could, together with ethnic Germans, uphold German influence in the East. As I show in my contribution, the propaganda of a shared history and a shared future of Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe remained futile, since neither non-Jewish German policy-makers nor East European Jews adopted such a view and changed their policy accordingly. Only Poles and Russians seem to have employed the notion of East European Jews being spearheads of Germanization in the East – with severe consequences: it further exacerbated the already strained relations between the Jewish and the non-Jewish population in Eastern Europe. Yet, there was one major “Germanizing” effect on Yiddish speaking Polish Jewry during the time of German occupation proving that the fears were not totally unfounded. Due to the linguistic closeness of Yiddish to German, the war resulted in a growth of *daytshmerizms*.

It comes as no surprise that these extensive linguistic influences of New High German on Eastern Yiddish, especially in the three decades before and then during the First World War, provoked *Yiddishists* to take up the fight against such borrowings. This coincided with attempts of Yiddish activists to make Yiddish a full-fledged language of its own. Prior to the war, Yiddish was usually only considered as a German dialect due to its Middle High German roots. Thus, with the founding of the *Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut* (YIVO) in 1925, among others, such as a philological section (*filsektse*), was established. In 1938 Max

35 Sammy Gronemann, *Hawdolah und Zapfenstreich: Erinnerungen an die ostjüdische Etappe 1916–1918* (Königstein/Ts.: Jüdischer Verlag, 1984 [1924], 3; Stenberg, *Journey to oblivion*, 14.

Weinreich, head of this section, published the pamphlet *Daytshmerish toyg nit* ‘Germanisms are not acceptable,’ which became widely known for its outspoken denunciation of German influence on Yiddish. Despite YIVO’s strong policy of demarcation, Martina Niedhammer’s contribution shows that for the members of YIVO’s *filsektseye*, both German language and academic traditions also served as an important role model for standardizing Yiddish and thus making it a full-fledged language. As she wisely concludes, the histories of YIVO’s philological section and of German academia, of Yiddish and German, are histories both divided *and* shared.

The efforts of German-Jewish representatives to convince the *Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland* (Association for Germandom Abroad, VDA) to acknowledge East European Jewry as bearers of Germanness in the East proved to be largely futile during the war (see my contribution). Yet, even after the German defeat the defense of *Deutschtum* (German language and culture) in the East remained a crucial concern for German Jews. As Philipp Nielsen shows in his contribution, this cooperation of Jewish and non-Jewish German patriots for the German cause in Eastern Europe was quite ambiguous. On the one hand, right up to the Nazis’ ascension to power, Jews were welcomed into the ranks of the VDA. On the other hand, the association was not free of antisemitic tendencies. Thus, the *Central-Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens* (Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith) in general supported the goals of the VDA and Jewish membership in it, but at the same time closely observed possible antisemitic sentiments among the association’s ranks. It is very noteworthy that the VDA in some instances either denied or fought antisemitic tendencies by pointing out to the close collaboration of the VDA with East European Jews in the defense of Germandom. Eventually, with the Nazis’ rise to power, the VDA had to abandon its “long held position of making language rather than confession or descent the marker of German identity,” resulting in the exclusion of Jewish members. Due to the new political circumstances, a shared concern of Jews and Non-Jews for the cause of Germanness in the East was no longer tolerated. Thus, German “homeland nationalism” had become much more exclusive.³⁶

Marija Vulesica analyzes the ambivalent relationship of Croatian and Yugoslav Jews with Germanness in her contribution, focusing on Zionists’ perception of *Deutschtum*, Germany, and German Jews in the first four decades of the 20th century. As she highlights, for a long time *Deutschtum*, that is, German language and culture, was an intrinsic and crucial part of Croatian Jewish life. Not only was German the

³⁶ On “Weimar homeland nationalism,” see Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 112–134.

first language of a considerable number of the Jews in Croatia-Slavonia,³⁷ they also pursued German-Jewish cultural paradigms. Even though the common language of the German and the Jewish minorities in Croatia-Slavonia did not bring them together, the close bond of Croatian Jews to *Deutschtum* was often the target of anti-semitic attacks. Time and again, Jews were accused of being “German agents” or “Germanizers,” even after the Nazis’ rise to power.

Thus, around the turn of the century a young generation of Zionists emerged who tried to dissociate themselves from *Deutschtum*, proclaiming a Jewish national and Croatian patriotic identity. However, *Deutschtum*, and above all the German language, remained an important medium of discourse in Jewish and Zionist circles in Croatia during the interwar years. Only when Croatian and Yugoslav Jews were confronted with the political realities in Nazi-Germany did they ultimately turn away from *Deutschtum*, because, as Vulesica states, “it no longer stood as synonymous with culture and progress.”

While the Jewish and German minorities in Croatia-Slavonia and Yugoslavia, despite their close bond to *Deutschtum*, remained largely separated from each other, this was not the case with Jews and Germans in the Bukovina. As Mariana Hausleitner shows in her contribution, especially after the establishment of Romanian rule in the Bukovina following the end of the First World War, both “groups” closely cooperated in order to protect their rights and to preserve their *Deutschtum* against a ruthless policy of Romanization. She further argues that until 1933 Jews and Germans had agreed on a goal to modernize the underdeveloped region of Bukovina. With the emergence of the Third Reich, German-Jewish cooperation failed due to the Nazis’ influence on ethnic Germans in the Bukovina. In April 1933, a representative of Bukovinian Jewry proclaimed that they didn’t want to be bearers of German culture any longer. However, to suddenly dissociate themselves from *Deutschtum* was not an easy task for Jews in the Bukovina, as a statement in 1936 made by Severin Schrajer from Czernowitz shows:

With my mother I only talked in German. At home we had a German library. I am almost a German, because we were absolutely German-educated. [...]. We were very German-minded. And up to the point when we arrived in the Ghetto, we maybe didn’t understand that we were Jews. [...] I repeat it once again, we were more German than Jewish, not at all orthodox, we simply didn’t understand that. It was never understood that at heart I was a German and according to the documents I was a Jew.³⁸

³⁷ According to Carl Bethke, around the turn to the twentieth century German was still the mother tongue of the largest group of Jews in Croatia. See Bethke, (*K)eine gemeinsame Sprache?*, 7.

³⁸ Severin Schrajer, “... aber die deutsche Sprache liegt im Blut,” in “... und das Herz wird mir schwer dabei.” *Czernowitzer Juden erinnern sich*, Gertrud Ranner (ed.) (Berlin: Deutsches Kulturforum östliches Europa, 2009), 162–164, 169 (my translation).

Due to a long-standing attachment to German culture, which was often regarded as much more civilized than other cultures, and due to the fact that in some parts of Eastern Europe Jews had been or still were the main representatives of *Deutschtum*, it was for many of them totally incomprehensible that they would have to experience persecution and annihilation at the hands of Germans.³⁹ Yet, the genocide of East European Jewry, later to be known as the Holocaust, is not only an entangled history of German perpetrators and Jewish victims, but also of Polish (and other) “bystanders,” “neighbors,” and even perpetrators. While these terms are usually negatively connotated, and thus rejected as biased by those who are characterized in such a way, Hannah Maischein’s contribution analyzes Polish national memory discourses which were primarily shaped by a positive Polish self-image as “eyewitnesses” of the Holocaust. This often encompasses the Polish self-perception of being martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the Jews. Thus, during the Cold War, in Polish memory culture Jews were only visible as objects of Polish aid and as proof of Polish heroism in order to present an idealized vision of Polish national identity. However, in Western memory discourses, Poles were and are almost never embraced as witnesses of the fate of the Jews, and certainly not as the saviors of Jewish lives. Nevertheless, there is an entanglement with the Western memory discourse of witnessing that has a considerable influence on Polish memory. As Maischein shows by referring to a specific example, there are contemporary representations in Polish memory discourse which in a very playful, ambiguous, and critical way deal with the idealized Polish self-perception as witnesses.

In the final contribution of this volume, Kamil Kijek examines the important role of Polish Jews in establishing a Polish presence in the newly acquired Western parts of Poland, mainly in Lower Silesia, after the Second World War. The initially successful development of Jewish settlements in Lower Silesia was closely linked with the deportations of the German population, and thus the final stage of a shared history of Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe. The fact that Jews enjoying a limited degree of social and cultural autonomy settled where Germans used to live was regarded by Polish Jewry “as an important form of symbolic revenge for the Holocaust” and as “an act of historical justice”. However, the establishment of Jewish settlements in the so-called Regained Territories was intrinsically tied to emergent socialist state-building and a communist form of Polish nationalism. As Kijek shows, it was precisely the Jewish participation in the construction of a Polish nationalist language, and Jewish submission to Polish nationalist propaganda, that eventually led to a “symbolic exclusion” of Polish Jewry. What

39 See Lichtblau and John, “Mythos ‘deutsche Kultur,’” 114–115.

had begun so hopefully as a form of compensation for the Nazi genocide was crushed by an ethnic nationalism which would no longer permit Jews to pursue a specific Jewish national life in Poland.

I would like to conclude this brief overview with a few general observations and remarks: It is very crucial to note that Jews in Eastern Europe who represented Germanness had not adapted towards the culture of the Germans in these regions, but rather towards a *Kulturdeutschtum*, a cultural Germanness, which as imperial culture was transmitted by the Prussian/German and Austrian states through its government officials, army officers, and teachers, as well as through other more virtual means.

The fact that Jews in Eastern Europe adopted a hegemonic German culture relates to another observation: the entanglement between Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe seems to have been an asymmetrical one, since some kind of Germanness was the dominant element of a shared culture of both “groups.”⁴⁰ Whether this entanglement was more symmetrical in other areas, for example the economy, needs to be substantiated by further research.

As many of the contributions to this volume show, the entanglement of Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe can hardly be analyzed without taking into consideration their respective entanglements and relationships with other (ethnic, religious, ethno-religious) “groups.” Thus, for example the Jewish choice for German acculturation (as in Posen or in Galicia) could and would be perceived by Poles as an anti-Polish decision with severe consequences.

However, entanglements between “groups” are never static or permanent, as “groupness” itself is, to quote Rogers Brubaker, a “contextually fluctuating conceptual variable.”⁴¹ The shared history of Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe is a good example of how cultural borrowings and entanglements were often followed by acts of demarcation and attempts at disentanglement, often initiated by “ethnopolitical entrepreneurs.”⁴² Therefore, it is impossible to subject the shared

40 However, it should be noted that there were also cases of Germans adopting Yiddish. For example, during a journey in the Soviet Union in the 1930's Dov Leyb Mekler met a German female farmer from the Kalinindorf rayon who to his surprise not only spoke Yiddish fluently, but told him that all Germans in the rayon spoke Yiddish, since they have grown up among Jews. See D. L. Mekler, *Mentsh un mashin in Sovyetn-land: faktn, bilder, eyndrukn fun a rayze iber Sovyet-Rusland* (Warsaw: Ziman, 1936), 248–249. Also around 1933, a German Protestant who visited German colonies in Poland remarked that the German settlers' language resembled a “Jewish jargon.” See Doris L. Bergen, “The ‘Volksdeutsche’ of Eastern Europe, World War II, and the Holocaust: Constructed Ethnicity, Real Genocide,” *Yearbook of European Studies* 13 (1999): 75.

41 Brubaker, “Ethnicity without Groups,” 167–168.

42 Ibid., 166–167, elaborates on the role of ethnopolitical entrepreneurs.

history of Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe to a general interpretation, since it depends on the period of time, and the region in question, as to what kind of qualities their entangled history presented. During some time-frames and in some areas, this shared history was shaped by good relations, cultural exchange, and common experiences. At other times and in other places, it was shaped by more or less exclusive tendencies and even violence.

This volume hopes to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the shared history of Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe, one that does not reduce this manifold entangled history down to its last act of unrestrained violence, when the Shoah, also committed by “Volksdeutsche” (ethnic Germans living in Eastern Europe),⁴³ completely annihilated East European Jewry and cut their once tremendous bond to German culture, German language, and the German people.

Finally, I would like to thank the *Center for Advanced Studies* and its team at the LMU Munich, which so generously hosted me and the conference in the summer of 2015. Without their outstanding help and support, neither the conference nor this volume would have been realized. I also owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Dr. Julia Brauch at *De Gruyter*, whose endorsement, kindness, and, above all, patience were tremendous. Professor Cornelia Wilhelm was so kind to accept this volume for the series *New Perspectives on Modern Jewish History*. I would also like to thank the *Institute for Contemporary History* in Munich/Berlin, for generously supporting the volume’s copy-editing done by Tryce Hyman in such a thorough and meticulous way. I am also very grateful to the anonymous

43 Martin Dean, for example, concludes in the case of Nazi-occupied Ukraine “that an influential number of ethnic Germans, serving as low-level perpetrators, came to perform key functions within the police structure of the RKU [Reich Commissariat Ukraine] and to participate actively in the Holocaust at the regional level.” Martin Dean, “Soviet Ethnic Germans and the Holocaust in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine, 1941–1944,” in *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, Testimony, Memorialization*, Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (eds.) (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008), 265; see also Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 63; Meir Buchsweiler, *Volksdeutsche in der Ukraine am Vorabend und Beginn des Zweiten Weltkriegs – ein Fall doppelter Loyalität?* (Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1984), 377; Eric C. Steinhart, “Family, Fascists, and Volksdeutsche: The Bogdanovka Collective Farm and the Holocaust in Southern Ukraine, December 1941,” *Holocaust Studies. A Journal of Culture and History* 16 no. 1–2 (2010), 65–96; Bergen, “The ‘Volksdeutsche’ of Eastern Europe,” 75–76; moreover, it needs to be emphasized that “Volksdeutsche” also benefitted from the persecution and destruction of East European Jewry. They moved into their houses and took possession of their belongings. See e.g. Buchsweiler, *Volksdeutsche in der Ukraine*, 372–373; Steinhart, “Family, Fascists, and Volksdeutsche,” 82; Bergen, “The ‘Volksdeutsche’ of Eastern Europe,” 76; Doris L. Bergen, “The Nazi Concept of ‘Volksdeutsche’ and the Exacerbation of Anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe, 1939–45,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 29 no. 4 (1994), 571–572.

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Shaul Stampfer

Settling down in Eastern Europe

There is no question that knowledge about the history and stages of early Jewish settlement in East Central Europe, and about the number of Jews in the region at various times, is important for many reasons. While these topics have not been neglected, new data, and novel (as well as not so novel) methodologies, can add to our knowledge. Certainly, additional sources, when found, will make it possible to refine the historical picture – but there is already enough information to provide a reasonably clear outline.¹

The Origins of East European Jewry

Communities do not appear by accident. Historians of the Jewish community of Poland-Lithuania have always been aware of this – and have tried to uncover the origins and the reasons for the establishment of this community. Among the various explanations for Jewish settlement in the region, three are most popular. One, that can be quickly dismissed, is that the early Jewish settlers were descended from Khazar converts who fled from their homeland near the Caspian Sea after a military defeat. It seems unlikely that there was a Khazar conversion

¹ I am grateful to Hanna Zaremska, Jürgen Heyde, Tomasz Jankowski, Adam Teller, Ted Fram, Gershon Bacon, Agnieszka Jagodzinska, Yannay Spitzer, Sergio Della Pergola, Mark Tolts, Scott Ury, Menachem Butler and Gershon Hundert for their assistance in the course of the preparation of this paper. The research was carried out with the support of the Israel Science Foundation grant 1671/12. Many have written on this topic and I have not tried in any way to give a comprehensive guide to the literature on the topic. Much of what I am writing is far from their views. It is good to remember that the only reason we can argue with our predecessors is because we have learned so much from them – and that the first thing the next generation of researchers will do is to start revising what we have claimed. A good starting point for a bibliographical survey is Zaremska's recent book (see note 5) and articles by Jürgen Heyde. See Jürgen Heyde, "Jüdische Siedlung und Gemeindebildung im mittelalterlichen Polen," in *Jüdische Gemeinden und ihr christlicher Kontext in kulturräumlich vergleichender Betrachtung. Von der Spätantike bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, Christoph Cluse, Alfred Haverkamp, and Israel J. Yuval (eds.) (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2003); Jürgen Heyde, "Die Juden im frühneuzeitlichen Polen-Litauen," in *Polen in der europäischen Geschichte. Ein Handbuch*, Michael G. Müller (ed.), vol. 2, *Frühe Neuzeit*, Lieferung 9/10, Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg (ed.) (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2016).

at all,² and, in any case, the genetics of East European Jewry show no indication of Central Asian ancestry.³ In addition, the dates when Jewish communities were founded or first documented reflect a settlement pattern over time from West to East. The earliest communities developed in the twelfth century in Silesia – which is to the west of Central Poland.⁴ A recent map of the chronology of establishment of Jewish communities shows that these Jewish communities, dated to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, were generally to the west, while those founded in the fifteenth century were further to the East.⁵ This of course fits a pattern of migration from the West – and not from the Khazar lands.

There is a more reasonable alternative explanation for the presence of Jews in Eastern Europe: that the early Jewish settlers were refugees from violent persecution in the German speaking lands. This description fits in with a common trope of Jewish history that sees persecution and flight as a common and recurring phenomenon – and it explains why the early Jewish settlers in the region would take such an extreme step and move to a relatively underdeveloped “frontier” region. However, the cultural characteristics of the early Jewish residents of the Polish-Lithuanian lands do not fit those of the Jewish populations of Central Europe that were most affected by persecution and much of the migration does not seem to have taken place in the immediate wake of persecutions.⁶

2 I have expressed this opinion at length elsewhere. See Shaul Stampfer, “Did the Khazars Convert to Judaism?” *Jewish Social Studies* 19 no. 3 (2013): 1–72.

3 See Doron M. Behar et al, “No evidence from genome-wide data of a Khazar origin for the Ashkenazi Jews,” *Human biology* 85 no. 6 (2013): 859–900. It would not be necessary to make a point of this were it not for bizarre theories about the origin of East European Jewry that are floated every once and a while.

4 Przemysław Wiszewski, “The multi-ethnic character of medieval Silesian society and its influence on the region’s cohesion (12th–15th centuries),” in *Cuius Regio? Ideological and Territorial Cohesion of the Historical Region of Silesia (c. 1000–2000)*, vol. 1, *The long formation of the Region Silesia (c. 1000–1526)*, Lucyna Hanc, Przemysław Wiszewski, and Rościsław Żerelik (eds.) (Wrocław: Publishing House eBooki.com.pl, 2013). View Wiszewski’s citations on the matter.

5 For maps, see Hanna Zaremska, *Żydzi w średniowiecznej Polsce. Gmina krakowska* (Warszawa: Instytut Historii PAN, 2011), 245f; For the German edition, see Hanna Zaremska, *Juden im Mittelalterlichen Polen Und Die Krakauer Judengemeinde*, Heidemarie Petersen (trans.) (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2013), 240–243.

6 I discuss this at greater length in a previous work. See Shaul Stampfer, “Violence and the migration of Ashkenazi Jews to Eastern Europe,” in *Jews in the East European Borderlands: Essays in Honor of John Doyle Klier*. Eugene M. Avrutin and Harriet Murav (eds.) (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2012). My understanding of developments differs somewhat from that of Jacek Wijaczka, “Die Einwanderung der Juden und antijüdische Exzesse in Polen im späten Mittelalter,” in *Judenvertreibungen in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, Friedhelm Burgard (ed.) (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1999), 241–258.

Yet another explanation connects the Jewish settlement with the large scale medieval *Ostsiedlung*, or organized migration/settlement in the Slavic speaking lands by Germans (and other nations).⁷ This is a tempting explanation because it links Jewish behavior to a broader phenomenon. However, the settlement process of agricultural migrants did not include Jews. They were not invited to participate because they were not experienced in farming and they had no advantages over the land-hungry and experienced farmers from the West. The Jews were also not indispensable for some of the fastest growing elements and most remunerative fields of the commercial life of the Polish lands – grain export to the West and the import of luxury goods. The Germans, Italians, and later Scots filled most of these needs. In other words, the Jews were not uniquely qualified to fill any specific niches in these lands. Therefore, it is not surprising that the appearance of Jewish settlements, the clearest evidence for the timing of Jewish migration, did not coincide with the settlement of non-Jewish migrants. The *Ostsiedlung* phenomenon, which had been a consequence of overpopulation in the West, ended in the wake of the Black Death – which had effectively resolved the issue of overpopulation for several generations. However, the bulk of Jewish migration appears to have taken place later, and it continued even after in-migration of non-Jews stopped being significant.

There may have been a link between another development in the German lands and Jewish settlement in Poland-Lithuania. In the late middle ages and early modern period, the overland trade route from Nuremberg to Poland developed as did the route from Prague to Kraków. This served as an alternative to the maritime route of the Hanseatic League for East–West trade and thus opened possibilities for Jewish traders.⁸ However, though important, the development of this route is hardly a sufficient reason to explain all of the migration of Jews Eastward.

7 Bernard Weinryb, *The Jews of Poland: A Social and Economic History of the Jewish Community in Poland from 1100 to 1800* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1972), 24–25. To be sure, he carefully notes that there were many Jewish immigrants who were not part of this movement.

8 Johannes Müller, “Der Umfang und die Hauptrouten des Nürnberger Handelsgebietes im Mittelalter,” *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 6. Bd., H. 1 (1908), 1–38. See especially, 22–29 on routes from Nürnberg to the East; The most useful discussion in English on trade routes to Kraków is in F.W. (Francis William) Carter, *Trade and Urban Development in Poland: An Economic Geography of Cracow, from its Origins to 1795* (Cambridge, Cambridge; University Press, 1994). See esp. “land and river routes,” 93–98; For a broad overview of some of these issues see Pierre Jeannin, “The Sea-borne and the Overland Trade Routes of Northern Europe in the XVIth and XVIIth Centuries,” *Journal of European Economic History* 11 no. 1 (1982): 5–59; For an even broader perspective, see Zsigmond Pál Pach, “The Shifting of International Trade Routes in the 15th-17th Centuries,” *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* vol. 14, no. 3/4 (1968): 287–321.

All of the above explanations for the background of migration of Jews to the Polish-Lithuanian lands are reasonable (except for the first) and offer a migration narrative – but do not fit the facts that we know about the migrants. In light of this, it seems the best explanation is that the migrants who were the core of the later Jewish population of the region were largely descended from the Jewish population of nearby regions such as Bohemia, Moravia, and Southern Austria, for whom the move Eastward was not to an unfamiliar land and not necessarily a long distance migration.⁹ This explanation offers no drama or links to major events, but it is more reasonable, and it fits the facts. According to this interpretation, the Jewish migrants moved mainly because of economic and demographic pressures and generally came to the East individually or in small groups. There were, of course, exceptions. There were some individual Jews who migrated from the Rhineland, and there were very possibly small waves of migration, albeit limited in number and size, which were precipitated by anti-Jewish violence. However, it seems that, for most migrants, moving East represented individual solutions to individual problems.

What little we know about early rabbis in the region fits the hypothesis that the bulk of the migrants came across rather short distances. Bernard Weinryb identified the following rabbis who came to Poland before 1500¹⁰:

~1400 two rabbis from Schweidnitz (Silesia)

1420 r. Lipman Milnausen to Kraków from Prague

~1450 r. Moses Muriel to Poznań from Halle and r. Pinchas from Wiener Neustadt

1474 r. Moses Mintz to Poznań from Nuremberg

~1475 r. David Shprinz and r. David Frank to Kraków from Nuremberg

~1490 parents of r. Moses Isserles from “Germany” to Kraków and r. Jacob Polak from Prague

Looking at this list, it seems that almost all of the rabbis came from the same regions – the Czech lands, Bavaria, Austria, or from a city (Nuremberg) that had strong trade ties with Kraków – but not from the Rhineland. This is not conclusive proof that the non-rabbinic Jewish migrants came from these regions, but it is suggestive.

⁹ Stampfer, “Violence and the migration.”

¹⁰ Weinryb, *The Jews of Poland*, 30–13.

The Dynamics of Migration

Migration – whether international or internal, is rarely simple or easy. It is a product of “push” and “pull” factors. Most people prefer to stay in a familiar place and near to family and friends, and seek to move only when it is difficult to remain where they were living. The decision to move is strongly influenced by knowledge and by impressions about opportunities in other places. The more enticing these possibilities appear, the more likely a person will decide to move. In the decision-making process, information is a key factor. The more a person knows about conditions in a potential place of settlement, the more likely they are to feel secure in making a move. On the other hand, if there are very attractive opportunities in a possible destination but an individual knows nothing about them, these will of course have no impact on the decision. Of course, there is usually more information about nearby locations than distant ones. Ernst Ravenstein pointed out, in his seminal study of migration, a number of “laws” of migration – or what we can perhaps refer to as typical patterns.¹¹ His research on migration focused on England in the pre-modern period, but his findings are extremely applicable to the migration of Jews to Eastern Europe. Among his conclusions were the following:

- The majority of migrants go only a short distance.
- Migrants going long distances generally go by preference to one of the great centers of commerce or industry.
- Migration increases in volume as industries and commerce develop and transport improve.
- The major causes of migration are economic.
- Large towns grow more by migration than by natural increase.

The first three of the “laws” cited here are governed by the issue of information. There is more information on nearby locations than far away ones, and this lowers the risk sensed in migration. There is also more information about well-known centers that are far away than about small and distant locations – hence the preference for migration to centers. Subsequent migration, in the wake of more information on opportunities within the region, is more likely to be from larger centers to smaller ones.

¹¹ I still find Ravenstein's laws of migration to be a very level-headed introduction to the topic. For a concise, clear and convenient picture of Ravenstein's views, see David B. Grigg, “EG Ravenstein and the ‘laws of migration,’” *Journal of Historical geography* 3 no. 1 (1977): 41–54.

One can add to this that individuals who flee violence often (if not usually) feel that the violence will pass and tend to seek a safe haven, from which they can return to their homes and occupations when the danger has passed. It takes time for refugees to conclude that violence in their previous place of residence will be permanent, and that they have to seek a permanent place of residence elsewhere.

It appears reasonable that the growth of the Jewish population in Bohemia, Moravia, and perhaps also the region around Vienna, contributed to the subsequent migration of Jews. In these areas, the Jews, as in many other places, were mainly tradesmen and, to some degree, craftsmen. The growth of the Jewish population there was apparently faster than that of the general population. As a result, the number of clients did not grow at the same pace as the Jewish population, and this in turn led to economic pressure.¹² In other words, faster population growth among Jews created congestion effects within the Jewish occupational niches and led some individuals to seek a better lot further East from where they were living. There does not seem to have been a strong pull factor, in the sense that it was relative deterioration in the places of origin that prompted the move, rather than events in the destinations that would have made them more attractive.¹³ The Jews did not have unique skills, a great amount of capital, nor did they have exceptional trade contacts that were not equaled by other groups. Thus, the migration of Jews to the Slavic lands seems to have been largely the migration of single people or family groups who identified opportunities. Judging from patterns of migration in other societies, these migrants were probably younger, less established, and less conservative in their personalities than peers in their home towns.

Pace of Jewish Settlement and the Rise of Population Centers before the Sixteenth Century

It is not easy to reconstruct the pace of Jewish settlement in the Polish-Lithuanian lands or to describe with any precision the economic activities of the migrants.

¹² Stampfer, “Violence and the Migration.”

¹³ The large-scale migration to the United States at the end of the nineteenth century was quite different in nature. It was the product of a combination of push and pull and that is why it was so massive. The standard study is Simon Kuznets, *Immigration of Russian Jews to the United States: background and structure* (Cambridge: Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, 1975), 35–124. See also the very important recent study of Yannay Spitzer, *Pogroms, Networks, and Migration: The Jewish Migration from the Russian Empire to the United States, 1881–1914*. Working Paper, 2015.

We have no documents or memoirs from them that would allow us to reconstruct their motivations and characteristics. We know for example that in 1264 Jews were given a “privilege” and recognized legal status in Kalisz, and Lwów in 1356.¹⁴ It is highly unlikely that privileges were granted in a vacuum. Someone was urging, and probably paying off, the granter to take such a step. When privileges were granted to Jews, the initiator was probably Jewish and probably already present in the town. Thus, we can safely assume that Jews were in Eastern Europe even before the mid thirteenth century – but how much earlier, how many, and in what professions cannot be determined from the fact that a “privilege” was granted. In the absence of such materials, one of the more promising options is to look at some of the characteristics of the Jewish population at the beginning of the sixteenth century, to consider how it came into being, and then to follow some of the changes in the years following 1500. A recent study of medieval and early modern Polish Jewry, by Hanna Zaremska, makes this possible. It provides a comprehensive and coherent picture of this period because it focuses on the dynamics of migration and settlement of the Jews.¹⁵

How many Jews were there in the Polish lands in 1500, and where did they live? Various estimates have been made by researchers of the size of this population, but these estimates were not based on a clear and reproducible methodology. It appears that these estimates were based on a “sense” as to what was possible, or on instinct. Hanna Zaremska carefully, systematically, (and convincingly) analyzed the data on Jewish population and on taxes. We have evidence for the size of the Jewish population in some central cities, and there are some tax lists indicating the amount of taxes paid by the Jews in the Polish lands in 1507 – with a partial breakdown that specifies the amounts to be paid by the Jewish populations of some central cities and in other locations. These taxes apparently reflect the size of the Jewish population. Since well-founded estimates exist for the number of Jews in some of these cities, based on other sources, Zaremska was able to determine what appears to be a good estimate of the total Jewish population. Her conclusion: that the total Jewish population of Poland (not including Lithuania) around the year 1500 was a bit less than 6000.¹⁶

14 Jacob Goldberg, *Jewish Privileges in the Polish Commonwealth* (Jerusalem, Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1985–2001).

15 Zaremska, *Polsce/Polen*.

16 Zaremska, *Polsce/Polen*, 263 (in the Polish edition), 258 (in the German translation). In the Polish, the estimate is given as “około 5000” and in the German it is “etwas unter 6000.” The difference in formulation is not significant.

A good estimate of population size has to fit what we know about the population in the period to which it refers, and also to fit what is known about the history and subsequent development of the community. Zaremska's estimate passes such scrutiny. Higher estimates, and there are such estimates, are problematic because it is difficult to explain where the "additional" population could have been located. For example, if we consider Baron's estimate of a population of nearly 30,000,¹⁷ this requirement is a challenging one. If we assume that the Jewish population in the large cities was substantially larger than Zaremska's estimate, one consequence would be that the percentage of the Jews out of the total population of those cities would be elevated – yet this does not fit what we know about the role of Jews in those cities. If the Jewish population had been a significant percentage of an urban population, it would have attracted attention and it would have been discussed – but this was not a topic that came up in descriptions of fifteenth and sixteenth century Polish and Lithuanian cities. If, of the other hand, we assume that the additional Jewish population was living in urban centers that Zaremska had not mentioned, one has to ask: where were they and why do we know nothing about them? If we explore yet another option and assume that the additional Jewish population was living in rural areas and made up a large, non-urban, population, similar problems arise. In what fields were they economically active and why is there no mention of such a large population? Had there been many more Jews in 1500, it is difficult to understand why such a large community did not play an important role in the arena of European Jewry. Therefore, Zaremska's cautious estimate sits well with what we know about the Jews in Eastern Europe before and after 1500.

The picture Zaremska presents of the Polish-Lithuanian Jewish communities in 1500 is enlightening. There were over 100 towns with documented Jewish communities at that time.¹⁸ The 1507 tax list of Polish Jews was for a total of 1391 gulden or florins. Of this amount, Lwów paid 300, as did Kraków, together with Tarnów, while Poznań paid 200. In other words, over half of the total amount was paid by three communities. There were 18 communities that paid between 10 and 75 (a total of 475), and what remained (216 gulden/florin)

¹⁷ Salo Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 2nd ed., vol. 16 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976). Baron wrote, (on page 207): "As mentioned above, in 1500 the Jewish population in the dual Commonwealth did not exceed 30,000." I could not find the previous statement to which he was referring. I understand his statement to mean that the Jewish population was close to 30,000 but not more than that.

¹⁸ Zenon Guldón, "Skupiska żydowskie w miastach polskich w XV-XVI wieku," in *Żydzi i judaizm we współczesnych badaniach*, vol. 2, Krzysztof Pilarczyk and Stefan Gąsiorowski (eds.) (Kraków: Księg. Akademicka, 2000), 13–25. For the number of communities, see Table 1 on pages 16–17.

was paid by about 85 small communities. In other words, there were a few very large Jewish communities and a great number of very small communities – some of which no doubt consisted of only a few families or perhaps even only one.¹⁹ Zaremska suggests that the larger communities had about 600 Jewish residents.²⁰ If Lwów had a population of more or less 600, it would fit what we know about Przemyśl – the second largest community in the region. This community had about 100 Jewish residents at the time.²¹ It is also possible that these large communities were even smaller than Zaremska's cautious estimates.²² These figures are not surprising when seen in context. The Jewish population of Prague in 1500, regarded as a central community, was probably no more than 500.²³

The distribution of urban centers was not what would be anticipated from a population that had formed a mature commercial network. There were many towns and cities in Poland without Jewish residents and some important regional population centers did not necessarily have correspondingly sized Jewish communities. However, the distribution of the Jewish population fits a pattern of long distance migration to known communities and a partially completed process of migration to lesser known and smaller population centers. Over the course of the sixteenth century, the number of Jewish communities grew and the basis for a true commercial network began to be established with a network of large central cities, regional centers, and smaller communities.²⁴

What is noteworthy is the size of the Jewish communities of Lwów and of Lublin in 1500. The size of the general population of Lwów, Poznań, and Kraków was quite similar. There were about 10,000 in Lwów, and a slightly larger

¹⁹ See Zaremska, *Polsce/Polen*, 241–245 (in the Polish edition), 238–245 (in the German edition). The largest of these smaller communities was Lublin that paid 75 gulden or florins.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 263 (in the Polish edition), 258 (in the German edition).

²¹ See Hanna Wegrzynek, "On the history of the Jews of Przemyśl in the fifteenth century," *Gal-Ed* 12 (1991): 13–35. Especially, see page 16. Dr. Wegrzynek does not state the figure of one hundred explicitly. This is my extrapolation.

²² Мирон Капраль [Myron Kapral], "Демографія Львова XV–першої половини XVI ст Ль" in *Історичні нариси* Упоря. Я. Ісаєвич, Ф. Стеблій, М. Литвин (ed.) (1996): 67–81, 72. Kapral implies that the Jewish population of Lwów/Lviv in 1500 was about 400.

²³ See Marie Buňatová, "Commercial Relations between the Jews of Prague and Kraków in the Period before the Battle of White Mountain," *Judaica Bohemiae* 47 no. 2 (2012): 5–33. The information on the population is on page 8.

²⁴ For a discussion (and critique) of "central place theory" which underlies my comments, see Paul Krugman, "On the number and location of cities," *European Economic Review* 37 no. 3 (1993): 293–298.

population in Poznań.²⁵ The general population of Lublin was about 5,000. Judging from the tax payments, the Jewish community of Lwów was disproportionately large, and that of Lublin, small. Lwów differed from both Poznań and Kraków in that the share of the German and Italian population was lower. The city had a more mixed ethnic population than Kraków. There was a large Armenian population in Lwów, and, in the late sixteenth century, the richest person in Lwów was a Moldavian merchant.²⁶ It may be that this demographic make-up was more congenial to Jewish settlement than Kraków or Lublin, even though Lwów was further to the East.²⁷

The presence of Jews in both large and small communities may have had long term consequences. Urban centers at the time were usually regarded as “importers” of population and not “exporters,” because they had negative natural population growth. This was largely because of health conditions such as poor sanitation in cities. While we do not have any statistical data on life expectancy of Jews in this period, it seems quite possible that the Jews were no exception. If so, the large population that was not urban may well have served as the motor for demographic growth.

The location of the major Jewish communities in the early sixteenth century was not a random distribution. Both Poznań and Kraków were major commercial entrepôts in Western Poland. Kraków was the largest city in the Polish Lands and on a number of important trade routes from East to West. Poznań was more to the north and had a similar role. One may anticipate a large Jewish community in Wrocław, but this was not the case. In 1300, it had the largest Jewish community in the Polish lands, but in 1453 the city had been granted the “right” not to tolerate a Jewish settlement. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, there was no significant Jewish community there. Lwów was the major commercial center in the Eastern Polish lands and was similar to Kraków in many respects, hence its large Jewish community could have been anticipated. Lublin was at the intersection of the Lwów-Wrocław trade route and the Kraków-Brzesc trade route but not directly on the East-West route. This explains its size. Another community that was smaller than may have been anticipated was Brzesc. It had been a major center, but at the end of the fifteenth century the Jews had been expelled from Lithuania (including Brzesc). While they were allowed to return in 1503, the Jewish community of Brzesc was still recovering at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

²⁵ Cezary Kukło, *Demografia Rzeczypospolitej przedrozbiorowej* (Warszawa: Wydawn. DiG, 2009), 233 table 42.

²⁶ Konstanty Korniakt (~1517 – 1603), a Moldavian merchant of Greek descent.

²⁷ See Andrzej Janeczek, “Ethische Gruppenbildungen im spätmittelalterlichen Polen,” in *Das Reich und Polen*, Thomas Wünsch (ed.) (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2003), 411, 424–425.

Economic Activities of the Jewish Residents of Early Modern Poland – Lithuania

What were the economic activities of these early Jewish settlers?²⁸ Coming from the regions near Poland-Lithuania, most did not have the connections needed for international and transcontinental trade, nor did they bring exceptional skills. Whatever the role Jews may once have had in the slave trade, this was a thing of the past by the fourteenth century, so this was also not an option.²⁹ Most of the Jewish settlers also did not have significant capital at their disposal. As noted above, they migrated because of growing economic pressures in their places of origin relative to the destinations, and not necessarily because of outstanding opportunities that emerged in those destinations. There were lucrative opportunities in early modern Poland, but the avenues to major economic success were closed to most Jews. The large-scale export of grain was controlled by German and Dutch merchants. The grain went by sea through the Baltic ports, and the Jews were excluded from this transit trade. The Jews did not have an effective trade network in the West for the long-distance import of luxury items or for export. They had no working network at all for overland import (or export) to the East. Such trade was the monopoly of a very effective Armenian diaspora. In the cities, craft guilds were quite aggressive in defending their livelihoods and were not eager to have to deal with Jewish competitors.

What was left was small-scale trade and services. The pattern of wide dispersal in small communities also fits an economic reality in which Jews worked mainly in these fields. It seems that at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Jews in the Polish speaking lands had not yet entered crafts in large numbers and did not have any special functions in rural communities. In Lwów of 1500, Jews (and Armenians) were, at least officially, totally excluded from crafts.³⁰ This

28 On the economic activity of the Jews see the very important study of Jürgen Heyde, *Transkulturelle Kommunikation und Verflechtung. Die jüdischen Wirtschaftseliten in Polen vom 14. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2014). Heyde's focus is on the Jewish elite. The economic patterns of the non-elite Jews were of course different.

29 See Hanna Zaremska, *Żydzi w średniowiecznej Europie środkowej: w Czechach, Polsce i na Węgrzech* (Poznań: Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 2005), 23–27. For a more detailed discussion, see Zofia Kowalska, “Handel niewolnikami prowadzony przez Żydów w IX–XI wieku w Europie,” in *Niewolnictwo i niewolnicy w Europie od starożytności po czasy nowożytne: pokłosie sesji zorganizowanej przez Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w Krakowie, w dniach 18–19 grudnia 1997 roku*, Danuty Quirini–Popławskiej (ed.) (Kraków: Wydawn. Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1998), 81–91. See especially page 90. I wish to thank Dr. Agnieszka Jagodzinska for providing me a scan of this article.

30 Капраль [Kaprall], Демографія Львова XV, 72

reality is also suggested by the privileges given Jews. The earlier privileges, before the eighteenth century, emphasize trade rights more than any other area of economic activity. Of course, it is quite possible that traders were more involved in the process of negotiating for the privilege than were craftsmen, so it is important to be cautious before jumping to conclusions. Jews were concentrated in commerce, but they did not have any special roles that would give them an advantage as a group over non-Jewish competitors. One area in which Jews apparently played a prominent role was that of fencing, or dealing, in stolen goods.³¹ This was not a typical profession for Jews, but of the male ‘fences’ a large proportion were Jews. This is a risky business which offers high profits but exposes the dealer to constant danger. It also offers only limited opportunities for advancement and expansion of business. Fencing works best when the dealer has a regular business that can serve as a cover and connections with potential clients. It depends on a system of trust on the part of suppliers as well as clients. For individuals who had few alternatives, the potential for gain outweighed the risks. This was a reasonable alternative for migrants with limited options.

Money lending also does not appear to have been a central source of income for most Jews around the year 1500.³² Of course, any merchant may find that he has cash on hand that can be invested, at times, more profitably in lending than in his business. He may also find that to succeed in business it is often necessary to give credit – and credit is a type of a loan. For that matter, large loans were on occasion paid off by granting the person who gave the loan the income from taxes, or from a monopoly, for a certain period of time. In such cases, the loan can be regarded as payment in advance for an income. However, money lending as the primary basis of a livelihood is something different. Such an occupation

³¹ Zaremska, *Polsce/Polen*, 231 (in the Polish edition), 227 in the German edition). For example, see Paul F. Cromwell, James N. Olson, and D'Aunn W. Avary, “Who Buys Stolen Property? A New Look at Criminal Receiving,” *Journal of Crime and Justice* 16 no.1 (1993): 75–95; Ted Roselius and Douglas Benton, “Marketing theory and the fencing of stolen goods,” *Denv. LJ* 50 (1973): 177–205; Tracy Johns and Read Hayes, “Behind the Fence: Buying and Selling Stolen Merchandise,” *Security Journal* 16 no. 4 (2003): 29–44.

³² Heyde, “Die Juden im frühneuzeitlichen Polen-Litauen,” in *Polen in der europäischen Geschichte. Ein Handbuch*, hrsg. von Michael G. Müller in Verbindung mit Christian Lübke u.a., Bd. 2: Frühe Neuzeit, hrsg. von Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg, Lieferung 9/10 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2016), 741–790. See also Adam Rutkowski, “Kredyt żydowski na rynku lokalnym Warszawy w pierwszej połowie XV wieku,” *Przegląd Historyczny: dwumiesięcznik naukowy* 70 no. 2 (1979): 267–284. See also Marjan Ungeheuer, *Stosunki kredytowe w ziemi przemyskiej w połowie XV wieku* (Lwów: Institut Popierania Polskiej Tworczosci Naukowej, 1929). I am very grateful to Dr. Jürgen Heyde for this reference; Also see Darius Sakalauskas, “Jews as Creditors and Debtors: A Comparative Study Between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Poland in the 17th-18th Centuries,” *Lietuvos istorijos studijos (Mokslo darbai)* 34 (2014): 23–47.

requires capital for investment – and a sufficiently large body of potential borrowers. These conditions did not apply for most of early modern Poland-Lithuania. It should also be remembered that there were probably regional variations in the demand for loans – variations that today are difficult or impossible to document.

It seems, then, that the bulk of the Jewish population of the Polish-Lithuanian lands around the year 1500 was involved in small scale trade. However, this changed in the sixteenth century. With growing familiarity with the East European markets and larger communities and networks, Jews began to play a growing role in trade. In Lwów, which was home to what was probably the largest Jewish community, this shift was dramatic. Eleonora Nadel-Golobic noted: “In the late sixteenth century the Armenians lost their dominant position in international trade to Jewish merchants who became prevalent in Lwów’s oriental commerce.”³³

One development that ultimately had a major impact on patterns of Jewish residence was a growing desire of landowners to maximize their income by developing – and taxing, the production and sale of alcoholic beverages to peasants on their domains. The economic developments of the sixteenth century, and the precipitous decline in the export market for grain in the seventeenth century, accelerated this development.³⁴ This created a need for inn keepers, and tax collectors, and over time the *arenda* system came into being. In this framework, landowners would lease the rights to collect fees for the use of facilities and a monopoly on the local sale of alcoholic beverages. The lessees were usually Jews, who then resided in villages and attempted to cover their investment. This created a large rural Jewish population who were not generally farmers, but who lived in relative isolation from population centers.

Settlement Options and their Demographic Impact

In the early modern period, there was a growing tendency among the urban population to deal with increasing competition with Jews in trade – and in the course of time in crafts as well, by prohibiting Jewish residence in cities. This usually had a limited impact. In some cases, Jews simply moved to city neighborhoods that were

³³ Eleonora Nadel-Golobič, “Armenians and Jews in Medieval Lvov. Their Role in Oriental Trade 1400–1600,” *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* (1979): 345–388, 365.

³⁴ Krzysztof Olszewski, “The Rise and Decline of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth due to Grain Trade,” University Library of Munich, Online at <https://mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/68805/>; Andrzej Wyczanski, “The Adjustment of the Polish Economy to Economic Checks in the XVIIth Century,” *Journal of European Economic History* 10 no. 1 (1981): 210.

under noble rule and thus immune from the ordinances of the city citizens. In other cases, Jews moved outside the city walls (and outside of urban authority) but in close proximity to their customers. However, this policy also encouraged Jews to move to new towns founded by nobles and to smaller towns that did not exclude Jews.

Both the growth of the *arenda* system, and the interest of city dwellers to expel Jews from towns, have long been central themes in Jewish history. However, less attention has been given to the demographic impact of these developments. As noted above, pre-modern urban centers were generally characterized by negative population growth and depended on constant immigration to maintain and expand their population. In the pre-modern world, it was the rural population that was the engine of population growth. There are good grounds to think that rural population growth was even higher in the case of Jews. In peasant societies, high infant mortality, due in part to the fact that peasant women who helped in fields were not able to nurse for extended periods, and periodic food shortages that had severe impacts on non-mobile populations, served as checks on population growth. Jewish women tended to nurse for longer periods than their non-Jewish neighbors, and Jews in general, who were not tied to the lands, were less subject to natural checks on population growth. In such a demographic regime, the movement of Jews from cities to towns and villages may, in the long run, have amplified their demographic advantage over non-Jews. Water in cities was often polluted and contributed to the spread of disease, which also gave a demographic advantage to non-urban populations.

Continued Jewish Migration to Poland in the Sixteenth Century

As noted above, Jewish migration to Poland continued in the sixteenth century. The growth of Jewish communities made migration to Poland a more attractive option, and the general urban growth offered more economic opportunities than previously. It seems that more migrants came from farther away than previously, but it appears that the great bulk of migrants were still from the nearby German speaking regions – as previously.³⁵ A look at the leading rabbis of the sixteenth century offers striking evidence of the close ties between Prague and the Polish lands – and the absence of strong ties between Polish Jewry and German Jewry during this period.

³⁵ Louis Lewin, “Deutsche Einwanderungen in polnische Ghetti,” *Jahrbuch der jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft* (1907): 75–154.

It seems, then, that the in-migration of the sixteenth century was a continuation of the earlier migration from the Czech lands and from nearby regions.

These were some of the leading Polish rabbis of the sixteenth century:

Name	Year of Death	Place of Origin
Jacob Pollack	After 1532	Prague
Shalom Shakhna	1558	Lwów
Moses Isserles	1572	Kraków
Shlomo Luria	1573	Poznań
Mordechai Jaffe	1612	Prague
Me'ir ben Gedalyah (Maharam)	1616	Lublin
Shemu'el Eli'ezer Edels (Maharsha)	1631	Kraków (mother from Prague)
Nathan Spira	1633	Grodno
Joel Sirkes	1640	Lublin
Yom tov Lipman Heller	1654	Wallerstein (Swabia) Studied/ lived in Prague

It is reasonable to ask: why did the Polish rabbinate begin to play a major role in European Jewish intellectual life only in the sixteenth century, and not earlier? Here, the size of the cities cannot be overlooked. There is a correlation between important rabbis and urban growth. Important rabbis are attracted to large cities that can offer generous salaries and can support enough students to build a major yeshiva. A community of 30 families cannot really attract a major rabbi. A community of 100 families can. Before 1500, even the central communities were not large enough to attract serious scholars. However, once several communities had reached the minimal size, there was rapid increase in rabbinic scholarship in Poland.

Unfortunately, while there is information on individual scholars, the occasional rich Jew – or an unfortunate Jew who ran into trouble with the law, there does not seem to be any source that will allow for a direct calculation of the number of migrants in the sixteenth century, their geographic origin, or their precise motives for leaving their original places of residence. The only clear thing is that there was apparently significant migration and that it was probably from the same nearby regions as earlier migration.

The Rapid Jewish Population Growth

The picture presented here, of small numbers of migrants from a reasonably restricted area, not only suggests – but depends – on an assumption that rapid

population growth by the descendants of these migrants was the “engine” that created the very large Jewish population of later centuries. In other words, it was not a large base of migrants that made this population possible. In later periods, we have documentation for rapid population growth, but there is no solid proof that the Jewish population was already growing quickly in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There is, however, indirect genetic evidence for a rather narrow population base from which East European Jews stemmed, provided in part by the prevalence of common genetic diseases.

A recent study of the genetics of Jews concluded that³⁶ “Reconstruction of recent AJ [Ashkenazic Jewish] history from such [descent] segments confirms a recent bottleneck³⁷ of merely ~350 individuals.” In other words, the population of Ashkenazi Jews originates from a group of 500 individuals or less. This is not necessarily the number of migrants. If three brothers migrated, they would be carrying the genetic material from their two common parents. However, the genetic data certainly fits well with the claim that most migrants came from the same region and in limited numbers. There is still much more research that needs to be carried out on Ashkenazi Jewish genetics. In particular, researchers have tended not to distinguish between Jews of Western Ashkenazi origin and Jews whose ancestors were East European Ashkenazi Jews. They have also not paid careful attention to sub regions in Eastern Europe. This does not contribute to the precision of their findings. It may be that future studies based on larger samples will provide refined conclusions or will show that the bottleneck was somewhat larger. However, it is highly unlikely that the existence of a bottleneck or a small starting population can or will be dismissed.

Genetic studies also illuminate a significant development in population movements among Jews in Eastern Europe. It has long been noted that the East European Jewish community was divided into sub-groups that can be roughly termed: Lithuanian Jews, Polish Jews, and Ukrainian Jews. These groups were characterized by clear dialectical differences in the Yiddish that they spoke and by less clear differences in their folk culture. In addition to these markers, different subgroups were also characterized by genetic diseases that were often

36 Carmi S et al, “Sequencing an Ashkenazi reference panel supports population-targeted personal genomics and illuminates Jewish and European Origins,” *Nature Communications* 5: 4835 (2014).

37 A bottleneck assumes that there was at some point a population whose numbers were sharply cut for one reason or another and later rebounded in numbers – but without the introduction of new genetic material. In the context of Jewish history, this would mean that a large Jewish population was succeeded by a large Jewish population but that only a small proportion of the founder population were the ancestors of the later population.

concentrated in one region or another. The following list presents some of the best known³⁸:

- Factor XI (FXI) deficiency, Ukrainian/Romanian that originated 600 years ago³⁹
- Bloom Syndrome, Poland and Ukraine⁴⁰
- Lucotte syndrome, Lithuania and decreasing as moving away⁴¹
- Familial Hypercholesterolemia, Lithuania⁴²
- Tay Sachs, Lithuania⁴³

The phenomenon of regional genetic diseases fits the pattern of a limited early population as well as limited inter-regional migration.

At this point, it is possible to ask: from how many Jews alive in 1500 were subsequent generations of the East European Jewish community descended? Certainly not all of them were descended from the 5000–6000 Jews who were in Poland in 1500. First of all, there was already a significant Jewish community in Lithuania in 1500 though we do not have hard data on its size.⁴⁴ However, it was certainly a few thousand. Moreover, Jewish migration into Poland did not stop in 1500. We do know that there was continued and substantial immigration into Poland after this date. This appears to also have been from nearby regions – notably the Czech lands. Balaban, and after him Elchanan Reiner, discuss the immigration of Jews in the sixteenth century – especially richer and more

38 On this topic, see Neil Risch, Hua Tang H, Howard Katzenstein, and Josef Ekstein, “Geographic Distribution of Disease Mutations in the Ashkenazi Jewish Population Supports Genetic Drift over Selection,” *American Journal of Human Genetics* 72 no. 4 (2003): 812–822.

39 H. Peretz et al, “Type I mutation in the F11 gene is a third ancestral mutation which causes factor XI deficiency in Ashkenazi Jews,” *Journal of Thrombosis and Haemostasis* 11 no. 4 (2013): 724–730.

40 Shahrabani-Gargir et al, “High frequency of a common Bloom syndrome Ashkenazi mutation among Jews of Polish origin,” *Genetic testing* 2 no. 4 (1998): 293–296.

41 G. Lucotte and P. Smets, “CCR5-Δ32 allele frequencies in Ashkenazi Jews,” *Genetic Testing* 7 no. 4 (2003): 333–337.

42 V. Meiner et al, “A common Lithuanian mutation causing familial hypercholesterolemia in Ashkenazi Jews,” *American Journal of Human Genetics* 49 no. 2 (1991): 443–449, 443.

43 Neil Risch et al, “Geographic distribution of disease mutations.”

44 See Zenon Guldón and Jacek Wijaczka, “Die zahlenmäßige Stärke der Juden in Polen-Litauen im 16.-18. Jahrhundert,” *Trumah* 4 (1994): 91–100, 95. Guldón and Wijaczka estimate the population in mid-sixteenth century Lithuania as about 10,000–12,000, basing this on a study of Bershadsky (*Litovskie Evrei*, St. Petersburg, 1883, 409). This page number reference appears in additional publications of Guldón but the page reference is incorrect. It should be 334–335. I thank Mark Kupovetsky for his assistance in finding the correct page number. This roughly fits the estimate for 1500.

scholarly Jews.⁴⁵ While there was an influence on the “veteran” Jewish population, this migration did not inundate them. One can roughly estimate that there were several thousand migrants during the course of the sixteenth century. During this time, the population that was already in Poland-Lithuania in 1500 continued to grow. If all of the above is taken into account, the total of the Polish-Lithuanian Jewish population in 1500 together with ancestors of future migrants would come to about around 13,000. This very rough estimate is a compound number of the forbears of the subsequent community.

Gershon Hundert estimates the population of Jews in Poland-Lithuania in 1660 as about 150,000 – but did not deal with earlier periods.⁴⁶ This date is, of course, after the upheavals of the mid-century. How does this estimate for 1660 fit with Zaremska’s estimate for 1500, taking into account later immigration and the Jewish population of Lithuania? A population of 13,000 starting in 1500 and growing at 1.2% annually would have reached about 90,000 in 1660 and if it grew at 1.6% it would have reached 165,000. Hundert assumes a growth rate of 1.6% – and the application of this rate, and our estimate for migration, yields almost exactly his estimate for the population in 1660.⁴⁷ It cannot be over-emphasized that these are all estimates. The population in 1660 had undergone substantial population losses in the mid-century, that are difficult to take into account, and this might require a revised estimate. The point is that Zaremska’s estimate is well within the realm of the reasonable – while other, higher, estimates make it difficult to explain later developments.

Trade Routes and Patterns of Settlement

The existence of regional Yiddish dialects and of genetic diseases that are characteristic for specific regions, together with what we know about the history of trade routes and economic developments, make it possible to reconstruct the patterns of Jewish migration and settlement in Poland-Lithuania up until the

⁴⁵ See Elchanan Reiner, “The Jewish Community of Cracow, Documents and Introductions,” in *Kroke–Kazimierz–Cracow, Studies in the History of Cracow Jewry*, Elchanan Reiner (ed.) (Tel Aviv: The Center for the History of Polish Jewry: The Diaspora Research Institute Tel Aviv University, 2001). See his references to Balaban.

⁴⁶ Gershon Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century: A Genealogy of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 22.

⁴⁷ Believe it or not, I made the estimate of 13,000 *before* I checked the “fit” to Hundert’s estimate. Needless to say, I was quite happy with the results.

mid-seventeenth century with a fair degree of certainty. Dialects and genetic singularity are characteristic of a common phenomenon: limited interregional migration. Dialects are maintained in isolation. If there is significant population exchange, they lose their distinctive characteristics. Similarly, if there is substantial migration, the genetic diseases that may have developed in one location migrate elsewhere along with the carriers. If they remain characteristic of a limited population one can assume there was little out-migration. Thus, both phenomenon suggest that while the Jewish migrants to Eastern Europe may have come from common or shared regions in East Central Europe, after they settled into different regions of Poland-Lithuania, they and their descendants tended to stay within the same regions.

The pattern of limited Jewish interregional migration in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is quite reasonable. There were two main options for East-West trade. One option was the maritime routes controlled by the Hanseatic League. Transport by sea was less expensive than overland transport, and for bulk products, such as grain, was the only reasonable option. Thus, the prominent position of Baltic seaports in the Polish-Lithuanian export trade is not difficult to explain. However, this route offered few opportunities for Jews. The Hansa cities did not allow Jews to take an active role in commerce in these cities, and often Jewish residence in these cities was prohibited.⁴⁸

The only practical option for most Jews who wanted to trade with Poland-Lithuania, or to migrate there, was overland. A glance at a map of the trade routes in early modern Poland makes it clear how this could have happened. The main route, from West to East, went to Kraków and then branched out – north to

48 The general phenomenon of relations between Hansa cities and the Jews has not been treated at length though it is widely recognized. The only study I know of is Jan Lokers, “Men bedervet er ok nicht?: Juden in Hansestädten; Probleme und Perspektiven der Forschung,” in *Hansische Studien Band 22: Am Rande der Hanse*, Klaus Krüger, Andreas Ranft and Stephan Selzer (eds.) (Trier: Porta Alba Verlag 2012), 105–133. This is the best starting point for studying the topic, but the author notes, on p. 4, “Ich spare aus arbeitsökonomischen Gründen die holländischen Hansestädte an IJssel- und Zuiderzee, Hinterpommern, Preußen, Schlesien, Polen sowie Livland aus.” which is very unfortunate for my purposes. The Hansa policies to Jews were not without consequences. See also Margrit Schulte Beerbühl, “Networks of the Hanseatic League” in *European History Online (EGO)* (Mainz: Institute of European History (IEG), 2012). Beerbühl notes in her fascinating description: “The xenophobic attitudes of Lübeck and Danzig were another important reason for their decline”; On the difficulties Jews encountered when they wanted to own ships see Benjamin Arbel, “Shipping and toleration: The emergence of Jewish shipowners in the early modern period,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 15 no. 1 (2000): 56–71.

Lithuania via Brzesc, and to the East via Lwów.⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, Brzesc was the largest Jewish community in Lithuania before being overtaken by Grodno and later Vilnius. Neither of these two routes offered options to advance further on the route. The northern route that continued to Hanseatic ports were generally not hospitable to Jews. The route to the East offered few attractive points of settlement beyond Lwów, and the distance trading on this route had long been in the hands of Armenians. However, in all of the regions where Jews had settled, the descendants of migrants were apparently able to sustain themselves by finding opportunities in smaller or new communities. When the transition from trade to tavern-keeping and rural settlement took place, many more opportunities were created for Jews. At the same time, the absence of significant interregional trade cut down on the amount of information exchanged between regions, and also made distance migration more challenging. Thus, as the Jewish populations in each region grew, individuals sought out new opportunities within the region. The search for opportunities outside the region was the last alternative.

Conclusion

By 1600, the picture of Polish-Lithuanian Jewry had been transformed from that of previous centuries. There were major communities spread out in the area and formed, in effect, a network. These communities were organized in regional councils – the Council of the Lands and the Council of Lithuania. Poland-Lithuania had become a center for Jewish intellectual creativity. The Jews had increasingly important economic roles – especially in rural areas and in the noble economy. With the decline of the export trade for grain, and the subsequent departure (or assimilation) of non-local population groups such as Germans, Italians, Scots etc. – the Jews became the most prominent religious-ethnic minority. All of this was directly related to, and built upon, the demographic growth of Polish Jewry in the previous century.

⁴⁹ A very useful introduction to this topic is Nina Antonovna Gusakova, “Die wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen zwischen den Städten Belorußlands und den Städten Polens und Böhmens im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert,” *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena: Gesellschafts- und sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe* (1977): 323–335. I am very grateful to Dr. Daniel Mahla for obtaining a copy of it for me; Another useful study is Leon Koczy, “Handel Litwy przed połową XVII wieku,” *Pamiętnik VI Powszechnego Zjazdu Historyków Lwów* (1935): 272–278; Another very useful study, that includes an excellent map, is Alina Wawrzyńczyk, *Studia z dziejów handlu Polski z Wielkim Księstwem Litewskim i Rosją w XVI wieku* (Warszawa, 1956).

Jürgen Heyde

Images and Narratives: Germans and Jews in the “*Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*” of Jan Długosz

The “*Annales*” of Jan Długosz (1415–1480)¹ comprise the greatest chronicle of medieval Poland. The chronicler tells the history of Poland across twelve books, from its mythological beginnings up to the second half of the fifteenth century, against a European background.² Inspired by the 500th anniversary of the chronicler’s death in 1980, and his 600th birthday in 2015, a broad range of studies have been initiated on Jan Długosz and his work in recent decades.³ The chronicle reaches beyond a dynastic point of view; the monarchs and their families are not at the heart of the story, but rather the *Polonia* – the Polish lands, and the *Poloni* – the political and social elites.⁴ Długosz constructs their historical

1 Jan Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, vol. 1–11, liber I–XII [Annals or chronicle of the famous Kingdom of Poland. Book 1–12] (Varsaviae 1964–2005).

2 Marko Jačov, “L’Europe vue par l’humaniste polonais Jan Długosz,” *Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique* 102 no. 1 (2007): 155–162; Urszula Borkowska, “Uniwersalizm i regionalizm w *Rocznikach* Jana Długosza [Universalism and regionalism in the Annals of Jan Długosz],” in *Uniwersalizm i regionalizm w kronikarstwie Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, Urszula Borkowska OSU (ed.) (Lublin: Instytut Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej, 1996), 7–24; Brigitte Kürbis, “Johannes Długosz als Geschichtsschreiber,” in *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewußtsein im späten Mittelalter*, Hans Patze (ed.) (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1987), 483–496.

3 www.jandlugosz.edu.pl; Aleksandra Witkowska, *Wyobrażenia o cudzoziemcach w świetle “Roczników” Jana Długosza* [Imaginations about foreigners in the light of the “Annals” of Jan Długosz] (<http://www.jandlugosz.edu.pl/artykuly> [2015]); Sławomir Gawlas (ed.), *Ecclesia regnum fontes. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza* [Church Kingdom Sources. Studies in medieval history] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2015); Stanisław Gawęda (ed.), *Długossiana. Studia historyczne w pięćsetlecie śmierci Jana Długosza* [D. Historical studies on the 500th anniversary of the death of Jan Długosz], vol. 1 (Warszawa: PWN 1980), vol. 2 (Warszawa: PWN – Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 1985); Urszula Borkowska, *Treści ideowe w dziełach Jana Długosza. Kościół i świat poza kościołem* [Ideological contents in the works of Jan Długosz] (Lublin: Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski, 1983); Sławomir Gawlas, “Świadomość narodowa Jana Długosza [The national consciousness of Jan Długosz],” *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 27 (1983): 3–64.

4 Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa, “Pojęcie państwa i narodu w *Rocznikach* Jana Długosza [The concept of state and nation in the annals of Jan Długosz],” in *Nie ma historii bez człowieka. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza* [There is no history without humans. Studies in medieval history] (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2011), 207–216; Maria Koczerska, “L’amour de la patrie et l’aversion pour la dynastie. Exemple de Jan Długosz, historiographe des Jagellon,” in *Les princes et l’histoire du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle. Actes du colloque 13–16 mars 1996*, Chantal Grell, Werner Paravicini,

importance against a comparative background of other communities, looking not just at neighboring territories and kingdoms, but also at social groups within the Polish realm.

Among the neighbors of Poland, the Lithuanian and Ruthenian territories became part of the kingdom in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but this does not change Długosz' perspective. He continues to treat them as different entities, even though he emphasizes their subordination to the "Corona Regni Poloniae." The Jews, on the other hand, cannot be categorized territorially; they are treated as a religious "Other," relating not just to the Polish but also to the Christian realm. In the chronicle Germans represent one of the most important neighbors of Poland, but they are also described as a factor within the Polish political landscape. Długosz discusses in great detail the diplomatic and military encounters with the Holy Roman Empire and Poland's territorial neighbors like Saxony, Brandenburg, and the Teutonic Order in Prussia. The stories about Germans as a factor of domestic politics, however, present them as a "foreign" influence, but never link them to the influence of German territorial powers.⁵ The stories about Jews and Germans are more elaborate in the "Annales" than in other works of Polish medieval historiography; Długosz tells stories about Germans to explain what he understands as specifically Polish, and stories about Jews to tell about Christianity. The image of the "Other" is used as a mirror of the "Own". This is what Bernhard Waldenfels called the "responsive phenomenology of the stranger."⁶ Analyzing the narrative strategies in the chronicle's reports on Germans and Jews draws attention to the contexts, in which the "Other" is mentioned, and to the effects Germans and Jews have on the Poles, and Christians, respectively.

Jürgen Voss (eds.) (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1998), 171–180; Urszula Borkowska, "Historiograficzne poglądy Jana Długosza," in *Długossiana. Studia historyczne w pięćsetlecie śmierci Jana Długosza* [D. Historical studies on the 500th anniversary of the death of Jan Długosz] vol. 2, Stanisław Gawęda (ed.) (Warszawa: PWN – Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 1985), 45–69.

5 Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa, "Niemcy w opinii Jana Długosza," in *Nie ma historii bez człowieka. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza* [There is no history without humans. Studies in medieval history] (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2011), 225–240; Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa, "Poglądy polskich kronikarzy średniowiecznych na Niemcy i stosunki polsko-niemieckie [The opinions of Polish medieval chroniclers on Germany and Polish-German relations]," in *Nie ma historii bez człowieka. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza* [There is no history without humans. Studies in medieval history] (Poznań: Instytut Historii UAM, 2011), 241–294.

6 Bernhard Waldenfels, "Fremdheit und Alterität im Hinblick auf historisches Interpretieren," in *Alterität als Leitkonzept für historisches Interpretieren*, Anja Becker, Jan Mohr (eds.) (Berlin, Boston: Akademie Verlag 2012), 61–72.

In the first book of the “Annales,” Długosz provides his readers with a general concept of dealing with the “Other within.” In a short chapter on the nature and customs of the Poles he writes:

Foreign newcomers and strangers, even though there might be talent and virtuous habits visible in them, [the Poles] only rarely admit to leading positions in offices, maybe after some time or the passing of a generation, and even if it occurs that way, it seldom goes on without envy. Oh, if the Poles would use the honorable example of the Spaniards, who do not despise of the descent of any man, who distinguishes himself by virtue, and they [even] assign bishoprics and high dignities to neophytes from the Jews or Saracens, and through such generosity they make their country blossom even more.⁷

As a negative example, Długosz hints at the Czechs, who regard it an assault to their honor if not every office in the kingdom remained in the hands of one and the same family, even if the office-holder might be dishonest and incompetent or invalid.⁸

In this case, Długosz uses a story about others (Spaniards and Czechs) to explain his own ideas of how to deal with strangers in Poland. He rejects the thought of exclusion on principle like in Bohemia, but he sees the prospect of integration as hinged on conditions. If a non-Christian changes faith, he may be awarded an office, but only then – the conversion constitutes a necessary precondition; it shows the will of the “Other” to discard his difference and to submit to the religious order. Likewise, the Germans – as the article shows – have to submit to the political order of the Polish realm in order to become accepted. When those conditions are met, the status of being “Other” is overcome, and there is no need for exclusion anymore. Długosz develops a normative concept of dealing with the “Other,” which in his mind is not yet realized in Polish society. In contrast to Bohemia, he points out, in Poland integration is possible, but even after a long period of time accompanied by negative emotions; a sort of mental dissociation remains.

This mental dissociation in the image of Jews and Germans within the chronicle of Jan Długosz has attracted the most scholarly attention. In 1973 Jerzy Kłoczowski criticized the older Polish historiography for not distinguishing between the image of Germans as military opponents and the image of Germans living in Poland, which led to the construction of a one-sided history of conflict. In his article on “Poles and strangers in the fifteenth century,” Kłoczowski underlines that Długosz viewed not only Christian foreigners in general in a positive light, but also Germans in particular, even though the battles against

7 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 1–2, liber 1, 108.

8 Ibid.

the Teutonic Order remained one of the core questions of the fifteenth century.⁹ Ten years later, Sławomir Gawlas demanded a separate analysis of the Germans living in Poland when studying Długosz' attitude toward foreigners. Gawlas points out that the chronicler had no objections against foreigners living in the kingdom of Poland, as long as they did not take part in political life. Therefore, he had no complaints against German immigration, e.g. from burghers, if there was no harm to the Polish population. With respect to the thirteenth century as the epoch preceding the reunification of the kingdom, Gawlas emphasizes that the sources Długosz had at his disposal did expose the conflicts even more than Długosz himself. This must be taken into account in the interpretation of the chronicler's assessments.¹⁰ In its time Gawlas' article on the "national consciousness of Jan Długosz" constituted not just a new perspective within Polish medieval studies, but it marked a definite departure from a political appropriation of historiography, criticized already by Jerzy Kłoczowski. An echo of an older, politicized history is still present in an article by Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa from 1987, where she states that Długosz correctly assessed the threat arising from German immigration to Poland, and that Długosz thought it was especially dangerous if princes supported German immigrants and were influenced by them.¹¹

In his image of Jews, Długosz emphasizes different features. Whereas the remarks on Germans are directed towards the secular, political sphere, the image of Jews is linked to the divine order and secondly concerns the repercus-

9 Jerzy Kłoczowski, "Polacy a cudzoziemcy w XV wieku [Poles and foreigners in the fifteenth century]," in *Swojskość i cudzoziemszczyzna w dziejach kultury polskiej* [The Own and the Foreign in Polish cultural history], Zofia Stefanowska (ed.) (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1973), 51–53.

10 Gawlas, "Świadomość narodowa Jana Długosza," 36–51; See also Wojciech Mrozowicz, "Die Polnische Chronik (Polnisch-Schlesische Chronik) und die Chronik der Fürsten Polens (Chronica principum Poloniae) als Mittel zur dynastischen Identitätsstiftung der schlesischen Piasten," in *Legitimation von Fürstendynastien in Polen und dem Reich. Identitätsbildung im Spiegel schriftlicher Quellen (12.–15. Jahrhundert)*, Grischa Vercamer, Ewa Wólkiewicz (eds.) (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2016), 249–262; Norbert Kersken, *Geschichtsschreibung im Europa der "nationes."* *Nationalgeschichtliche Gesamtdarstellungen im Mittelalter* (Köln: Böhlau 1995), 512–516.

11 Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa, "Niemcy w opinii Jana Długosza," 232. For first appearance of this material, see Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa, "Niemcy w opinii Jana Długosza [Germans in the opinion of Jan Długosz]," in *Polacy i Niemcy: dziesięć wieków sąsiedztwa. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Januszowi Pajewskiemu w osiemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin* [Poles and Germans: Ten centuries of neighborhood. Studies presented to prof. Janusz Pajewski on his 80th birthday], Antoni Czubiński (ed.) (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1987), 69–85.

sions of Jewish presence in Poland to the political sphere. The thought of divine intervention in politics permeates the whole chronicle,¹² but it is especially prominent with regard to the Jews. Jews are presented as being fundamentally different, but conversion to Christianity was able to overcome their status as "Others," as Długosz explains. The image of Jews in the "Annales" has been researched primarily by scholars of Jewish history;¹³ in the area of Christian religious history, Urszula Borkowska deals with the presentation of Jews and other non-Catholic groups in her various studies on the writings of Jan Długosz.¹⁴

Borkowska also remarked that the chronicler had not just collected information but tried to augment it in order to achieve historic truth. She points out that, for Długosz, historic truth can be reached through *caritas patriae*, the service for the fatherland with sword and feather, through *utilitas*, the benefit for one's countrymen and the fatherland, and most of all by the right balance, which prevents the chronicler from one-sided praise or condemnation. If the available information is not sufficient, the chronicler is called to *illustrare* and to amend (*extendere, amplificare*) it. In this way the diligence of the historian makes it possible to supplement and complete the originally scarce information and to present them clearly.¹⁵

In Długosz' works the confrontation with difference is used to bring out the qualities of "the Own." Episodes with repeating motifs show the chronicler's narrative strategy. To Długosz, Otherness is not a fundamental quality, something

12 Maria Koczerska, "Mentalność Jana Długosza w świetle jego twórczości [The mentality of Jan Długosz in the light of his works]," *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 15 (1970): 109–140, here 113–116; Wojciech Drelicharz, *Idea zjednoczenia królestwa w średniowiecznym dziejopisarstwie polskim* [The Idea of unification of the kingdom in medieval Polish historiography] (Kraków: Societas Vistulana, 2012), 419; Urszula Borkowska, "The merging of religious elements with national consciousness in the historical works of Jan Długosz," in *Faith and Identity. Christian Political Experience. Papers Read at the Anglo-Polish Colloquium of the British Sub-Commission of the Commission internationale d'histoire ecclésiastique comparée 9–13 September 1986*, David Michael Loades, Katherine J. Walsh (eds.) (Oxford/Cambridge: B. Blackwell, 1990), 69–80.

13 Hanna Zaremska, *Żydzi w średniowiecznej Polsce. Gmina krakowska* [Jews in Medieval Poland. Cracow Municipality] (Warszawa: Instytut Historii PAN, 2011), 267–292 (with an overview over older research literature); Jürgen Heyde, *Transkulturelle Kommunikation und Verflechtung. Die jüdischen Wirtschaftseliten in Polen vom 14. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014), 58–67.

14 Borkowska, *Treści ideowe w dziełach Jana Długosza*; Borkowska, "The merging of religious elements with national consciousness.,"; Urszula Borkowska, "The Ideology of Antemurale in the Sphere of Slavic Culture 13th–17th Century," in *The Common Christian Roots of the European Nations. An International Colloquium in the Vatican* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1982), 1206–1221.

15 Borkowska, "Historiograficzne poglądy Jana Długosza," 56, 66–67.

that lies in the person itself, but a disturbance of order that can be resolved by integration into the political or religious order.

In the German as well as in the Jewish case the narrative program becomes visible only through an overview of all the episodes dealing with each of them. In the case of the Germans the chronicle reaches a certain end-point in the times contemporary to the chronicler. Examples from the early Piast monarchy and the era of principalities are written as a history of conflict where the political order is endangered by the harmful influence of foreigners; in the times of the re-united kingdom the Germans are described as having accepted their place in the political order, therefore no longer posing a threat.

The Jewish case is presented differently. There are short remarks where Jews are mentioned *en passant* but with negative connotations, and there are few episodes in which Jews are described in detail. Here the emphasis lies on Christian-Jewish interaction, where the Jews are portrayed as a disturbance of the divine order rather than a danger to the political system.

Germans as a factor in Polish politics

The image of Germans in Polish politics and society in the “Annales” is not uniform. There are three different narrations about Germans that can be differentiated by time. In the early Piast monarchy, from the first kingdom to the introduction of the principle of seniority – the division of the Polish realm into several principalities in 1138 – the presence of Germans at court became associated with crises of power, caused or intensified by the preferential treatment of the foreigners. During the period of principalities between 1138 and the reunification of the kingdom in 1320, the narration diversifies. Again, Germans in the retinue of the dukes are cast as problematic, leading to the expulsion either of the Germans or of the monarch together with the foreigners. In other contexts, when Germans are mentioned for example as settlers, there are no negative associations linked to their presence in Poland. This trend continues in the late Piast and Jagiellon kingdom of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, where Germans at court are not described as influential and/or problematic anymore. On the contrary, the chronicle underlines the growing admiration for Poland by Germans in that period.

The “Annales” mention the influence of German immigrants in Poland for the first time in relation to the crisis of the early Piast monarchy in the times of king Mieszko II (1025–1034). Mieszko was the second member of the Piast dynasty to be King of Poland, following his father, who was crowned shortly before his death in 1025. Since 1013, Mieszko had been married to Richeza, a princess from a

Saxon aristocratic family and granddaughter to emperor Otto II.¹⁶ Długosz alludes to a connection between this marriage and the political problems the monarchy faced. Thus the chronicler relates under the year 1030 that the Polabian tribes had deserted Mieszko because of two reasons – the first being the idleness and injustice of the king, and the second the family ties to Germans due to mutual marriages.¹⁷ The chronicler’s criticism concerned a phenomenon that was far from rare – marriages between Polish and German elites were widespread and continued to be so; and the princesses were always accompanied by German or – if the marriage was in the other direction – Polish knights.¹⁸

In fact, Długosz appears not to be critical of those matrimonial ties themselves. He merely uses the ties between Mieszko and the German princess against the background of the catastrophe of the early Piast monarchy to discuss fundamental problems in political order. This becomes clear when he tells the story of the events after Mieszko’s death in 1034.¹⁹ Długosz reports that the Polish nobles blamed Richeza for the political unrest and discord in Poland at that time:

Queen Richsza (=Richeza) herself for a long time, when her husband had been alive and later on, after his death, has hated the Poles, detested their customs and language, and often hurled insults at them. Moreover, she kept Germans at her court and in offices. To tell the truth, she passed the Polish barons and their sons by and detested them, and even though they came from outstanding and noble families, when it came to handing out offices or bestowing money she gave priority to the German newcomers, even though they might be people of ignoble and low descent.²⁰

According to the chronicle, Richeza’s actions violated the political order on various levels and, through these actions, brought disaster to her husband and the land. She preferred the newcomers to the Polish barons, violating also social hierarchies, as the Polish lords came from outstanding and noble families while the foreigners may have been of ignoble and low descent. Długosz calls the Germans newcomers and because of that assigns a lower status to them. It does not concern him that these relations might look different from Richeza’s

16 Gerard Labuda, *Mieszko II król Polski (1025–1034). Czasy przełomu w dziejach państwa polskiego* [Mieszko II, King of Poland (1025–1034). A turning point in the history of the Polish state] (Kraków: Secesja, 1992), 135–143.

17 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 1/2, liber II, 304.

18 Herbert Ludat, *An Elbe und Oder um das Jahr 1000. Skizzen zur Politik des Ottonenreiches und der slavischen Mächte in Mitteleuropa* (Köln: Böhlau, 1971); Tomasz Jurek. “Married to a Foreigner. Wives and Daughters of German Knights in Silesia During the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century,” *Acta Poloniae Historica* 81 (2000): 37–50.

19 Ludat, *Mieszko II król Polski*, 119–134

20 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 1, liber II, 313–314.

perspective – since the queen as well as her protégées both came from German lands, as the chronicler states immediately prior.

Therefore, the problem was not in the mere presence of the foreigners, but in the conscious policy of Richeza, which the chronicler describes as hostile towards the Poles. Długosz repeats his accusation in the next paragraph, writing that at first she despised everything Polish, and then arbitrarily imposed her will and filled only the Germans in with her plans, disrespected the advice of the Poles and pushed them to the margins, while giving the higher offices away to Germans. There was more to explain Richeza's actions than just her being a foreigner, as she violated not only the social order, but also the hierarchy of gender: Richeza, the chronicler tells, "oblivious to her strengths and her female gender, was unable to use her luck wisely and did not hear wise advisers."²¹

The crisis, which Richeza's multiple violations of the order had evoked, was the gentle uprising after the death of Mieszko II that brought the monarchy to collapse and forced Richeza to flee the land together with her son Kazimierz. She did not return to Poland, while Kazimierz later managed to restore the rule of the Piast dynasty (with help from imperial forces), for which historiography awarded him the title "the Restorer" ("Odnowiciel").

A queen who endangers the kingdom because she violates the gender roles assigned to her, as well as the hierarchy between "own" and "foreign," was not just a means for Długosz to explain the catastrophe of the monarchy so soon after the glorious beginnings under Mieszko I and Bolesław Chrobry. He regarded the connection between the double violation of social roles and the danger to the kingdom to be so central that he repeated this story at the beginning of the third book through the example of Hungary after the death of king Stephen the Holy (1038). In this case, too, it was a German wife (Gisela, the sister of Emperor Henry II) of King Stephen, who – after the death of her husband – preferred Germans over the locals. In doing, so she weakened the position of Stephen's proclaimed heir (Peter Orseolo, a relative of Gisela and a foreigner himself) until in the end both were driven out of the country and the new king Aba expelled all Germans from Hungary.²²

In this example, Długosz shows how the crisis can be overcome and order restored without foreign interference. The chronicler does not omit, however, that

²¹ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 1, liber II, 314.

²² Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 2, liber III, 42–43. On the basis of a chronicle from the fourteenth century that, however, provides a much less detailed account than Długosz, see Ryszard Grzesik, *Polska Piastów i Węgry Arpadów we wzajemnej opinii (do 1320 roku)* [Poland under the Piasts and Hungary under the Arpads in their reciprocal opinions] (Warszawa: Sławistyczny ośrodek wydawniczy, 2003), 72 with note 576 (p. 170).

Aba also violated his duties as a ruler, so that in the end his retinue turned against him and expelled him as well. Peter Orseolo was allowed to return and decreed that Hungarians should live henceforth according to their own laws.²³

The motif of a Polish monarch's foreign wife, who prefers Germans and hates Poles, returns in Długosz' account of the twelfth century. Here again, the German princess and her advisors appear in the context of a major crisis in Polish history: the division of the Polish among the sons of Duke Bolesław III "Wrymouth" in 1138, together with the futile struggle of Bolesław's eldest son Władysław, who tried to protect the unity of monarchic rule against the claims of his younger brothers. In the end Władysław was driven out of the country and dies in exile.

The "Annales" describe how in 1121 Władysław married Agnes (of Babenberg),²⁴ who Długosz introduces under the name of Cristina as the daughter of Emperor Henry IV, while conceding that he had no reliable information – according to some she might have been the daughter of Henry V, he adds.²⁵ According to Długosz, Agnes/Cristina "because of haughtiness and pride despised all Poles. She removed them from her table and company and used exclusively the services of the German. She claimed that just the presence of Poles offended because of their bad smell; even the way they dressed was unbearable. She even hated the Polish priests, just like any secular person, and never showed them any respect."²⁶

In the light of the further developments, the relevance of this episode becomes apparent. In accordance with the testament of his father, Władysław assumed the title of Duke of Silesia and Senior (high duke) of all Poland, when in 1138 the Polish lands were distributed among the sons of Bolesław. In the following years Władysław frequently fought against his younger brothers as well as against the powerful palatine Piotr Włostowic. After his flight in 1146 he pledged all of Poland to the German King Konrad III, a half-brother of Władysław's wife, and as vassal of the Holy Roman Empire secured German military support. Neither Konrad's intervention, nor a military campaign by Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in 1157,

23 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 2, liber III, 54.

24 Agnes von Babenberg was the daughter of duke Leopold of Austria, granddaughter of Emperor Henry IV, half-sister of king Konrad III. See Aleksander Semkowicz, *Krytyczny rozbiór Dziejów polskich Jana Długosza (do roku 1384)* [A critical analysis of the Polish History by Jan Długosz] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Akademii Umiejętności, 1887), 161; her marriage took place probably after 1123. Stanisław Rosik, *Bolesław Krzywousty* [Bolesław the Wrymouth] (Wrocław: Chronicon 2013), 226 gives the year 1125, Mariusz Dworsatschek, *Władysław II Węganiec* [Władysław II, the Exiled] (Kraków: Wilczyska, 2009), 29–30 dates it between 1123 and 1127, and Kazimierz Jasiński, *Rodowód pierwszych Piastów* [The genealogy of the first Piasts] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, 2004), 204 between 1123 and 1124.

25 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 2, liber IV, 293.

26 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 2, liber IV, 294.

managed to restore his power. Władysław stayed in Thuringia until his death in 1159; only in 1163 did his sons return to Poland and became dukes of Silesia.²⁷

The history of the wedding and the behavior of Władysław's wife are told to illustrate and explain the resistance against his policy by his younger brothers, who she allegedly removed from table and company, and by the clergy – Archbishop Jacob of Żnin excommunicated Władysław in 1146, – as well as by secular persons, for example the palatine Piotr Włostowic, to all of whom she did not pay any respect. Thus in this episode, already, all later conflicts find an explanation.

For Długosz it is furthermore important to explain Władysław's political failure and death in exile. His defeat was not just the outcome of a dynastic struggle but had its roots in a double violation of norms – in the politically active role of his wife (who initially tried to defend Cracow against the younger brothers after Władysław's flight at the end of 1145) and the preferential treatment of the Germans.

Already a generation earlier the chronicle takes up the German motif and links it with the older half-brother of Duke Bolesław Wrymouth. Through this connection, Zbigniew is marked as an usurper: "Born out of wedlock and raised among Czechs and Germans he was so infected and saturated with insidious customs that he even wronged his father repeatedly and to cause the downfall of his brother [...] he frequently led Czechs, Germans, Pomeranians and Prussians into the country."²⁸ Zbigniew was presumably born from a marriage in the so-called "Slavic rite" no longer accepted by the church. In the opinion of the chronicler he had no legitimate claims to power and allied himself with foreign powers against his own family. Długosz does not dwell on the fact that Pomeranians and Prussians were still pagans; Zbigniew's upbringing among Czechs and Germans were more important to the chronicler. Zbigniew was defeated by his younger brother Bolesław Wrymouth; he was blinded in 1112 and died shortly afterwards.²⁹

The motif of Germans in the retinue of Polish dukes is developed again in the history of the principalities, especially during the thirteenth century. In telling these stories Długosz could lean on contemporary chronicles from Great Poland, which used the concept of "Polonia" in a double sense – meaning on the one hand the province of Great Poland, but on the other hand sometimes all of Poland as well. These chronicles argued against the striving for hegemony by Silesian dukes in the first half of the thirteenth century, presenting the dukes of Great Poland as "natural lords" and delegitimizing their Silesian competitors by associating

²⁷ Dworsatschek, *Władysław II Wygnaniec*, 114–138.

²⁸ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 2, liber IV, 241.

²⁹ Rosik, Bolesław Krzywousty 137–153.

them with foreigners. This motif appears with great intensity in relation to Duke Bolesław III of Silesia, also called Bolesław “the Horned” (Rogatka) or “the Bald” (Łysy). Between 1242 and 1257 the “Annales” no less than eight times talk about the duke’s relationship to Germans. These stories are supplemented by accounts of a conflict between the sons of Duke Henry the Bearded at the beginning of the thirteenth century and a short notice on the death of Duke Siemomysł of Kujawy, who had been driven from his duchy for more than ten years because he had favored the Germans. Apart from these episodes dealing with Germans in the retinue of a Polish prince, the chronicle mentions Germans in that period also in other contexts, when they are not associated with abuse of power or political crises.

Any stories about Germans in the retinue of Polish rulers are still associated exclusively with conflicts. However, in contrast to the early Piast times, it is now the (male) rulers who surround themselves with Germans, and it is not so much political catastrophes that follow from such contacts, but the fears among the Polish nobility that matter.

Długosz introduces the reader to an episode from the year 1213, based on an account of the late thirteenth century in the so-called Polish-Silesian chronicle. It describes a conflict between the sons of Duke Henry the Bearded, Konrad and Henry II, the Pious. Konrad was said to oppose the planned partition of the realm, in which he would have been awarded territories in the northern peripheries of Silesia (Lausitz/Lużyce and the land of Lebus/Lubusz), whereas Henry the Pious would become Duke of Silesia. Długosz wrote: “Konrad felt offended and upset by that, and from his very nature he treated the Poles friendly and courteously, whereas to the Germans he was [their] most determined enemy [...] therefore he decided to remove him [duke Henry the Pious] and all the Germans who supported him from Silesia.”³⁰ Modern historiography treats this episode as fictional; Konrad died in the same year, in which the fight against his brother was said to have taken place (1213), and there is no mention in any other sources apart from the Polish-Silesian chronicle about a plan to divide the realm of duke Henry the Bearded in that time or a conflict between the brothers.³¹ It is interesting that Długosz does not portray Henry the Pious in a negative light or as a loser in the

30 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 3, liber VI, 219.

31 Benedykt Zientara, *Henryk Brodaty i jego czasy* [Henry the Bearded and his time] (Warszawa: Trio, 1997), 221–226; Benedykt Zientara, “Konrad Kędzierzawy i bitwa pod Studnicą [Conrad the Curly and the battle of studnica],” *Przegląd Historyczny* [Historical Review] 70 (1979): 27–55; Jerzy Mularczyk, “Kronika Polska i jej relacja o bitwie pod Studnicą [The Polish Chronicle and its report on the battle of Studnica],” *Kwartalnik Historyczny* [Historical Quarterly] 95 no. 2 (1988): 25–56.

conflict with his brother. The chronicler uses the episode to describe an opposition that would become relevant for his understanding of the dynastic struggles, which dominates the narration of Polish history in the thirteenth century. The argument is that a duke could associate either with “the Poles” or with “the Germans,” and the solution to these conflicts lay in removing the Germans (at least) from the retinue of the duke and therefore from political influence.

German influence and its negative consequences for a duke who relied on it constitutes the core motif of Długosz’ narration about Duke Bolesław II “the Horned (Rogatka),” son of Duke Henry the Pious, who reigned in the northern parts of Silesia (duchy of Liegnitz/Legnica) between 1241 and 1278 and often fought with his Piast neighbors in order to enlarge his territories. The first mention of Bolesław’s military ambitions the “Annales” note under the year 1242. Bolesław fought in parts of Great Poland that had been taken by Duke Henry the Pious after the death of Duke Władysław Odonic of Great Poland in 1239: “Bolesław, called ‘the Bald’ committed very many unbearable acts of violence against the knights and the common people of Great Poland, and the valued just any Germans and newcomers, even ragged ones and simpletons [...], he was profligate and generous to the Germans,” thus the nobles of Great Poland turned to the sons of Władysław Odonic, Przemysław and Bolesław the Pious, and accepted them as “natural heirs” to their land.³² In 1249, Bolesław Rogatka tried to annex the duchy of Wrocław, the demesne of his younger brother Henry III, “aided by Saxons and Germans and other wandering soldiers.”³³ During the fight, Bolesław was taken hostage and released after giving his word of honor not to attack his brother again. Nevertheless, he thirsted for revenge and “handed over his fortresses to the Germans, in order to be free to sow devastation among his own.”³⁴ Bolesław’s problems did not end there, as already in the following year he “was pressured by German soldiers, who he brought into the land, to hand out the promised salary, [and therefore] he got rid of all his horses, armor, possessions and jewels, and paid off less than half of the amount he was due for the hired

³² Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 4, liber VII, 34; Jerzy Mularczyk, “Książę legnicki Bolesław II Rogatka na tle sytuacji polityczno – społecznej Śląska [Duke Bolesław the Wild of Legnica against the political and social background of Silesia],” *Spółeczeństwo Polski średnio-wiecznej* [The Medieval Society of Poland] 9 (2001), 89–142; Aleksander Swieżawski, *Przemysł król Polski* [Przemysł King of Poland] (Warszawa: DiG, 2006), 33–34; Jerzy Topolski (ed.), *Dzieje Wielkopolski*, vol. 1: *Do roku 1793* [History of great Poland. Vol 1: Up to 1793] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 1969), 288–296.

³³ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 4, liber VII, 66.

³⁴ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 4, liber VII, 67; Dietrich Kurze, “Das Bistum Lebus zwischen Magdeburg und Gnesen,” *Jahrbuch für Berlin-Brandenburgische Kirchengeschichte* 68 (2011): 17–49.

soldiers”.³⁵ In this situation Bolesław, who is called by the chronicler constantly “the Bald,” according to the “Annales” ordered the imprisonment of one of his few trusted men “hoping to extort money for Germans and advisors [...] he hands the prisoner over to the Germans, whom he owed money, so that they could extort it from him. In doing so, he offended all Polish lords so much [that] they left Bolesław the Bald in hatred for his increasing from day to day tyranny.”³⁶ The incident described in this episode did not happen this way; Długosz took it from a Great Polish chronicle that was openly hostile to Bolesław.³⁷ However, six years later, in 1256, Bolesław Rogatka did try to abduct Bishop Thomas of Wrocław. The “Annales” tell that the duke attacked the bishop “in the night during sleep time together with his Germans (whose instigation and council are said to have propelled him [Bolesław] to this act).”³⁸ Both stories complement one another, showing the duke spiraling into perdition because of the ill advice given by his German retinue. From the very beginning it was the Germans who made the duke turn against his own (=Polish) nobles and advisors, and in the end they were responsible for his act of treason and sacrilege.

In contrast to the early medieval episodes, Długosz does not tell Bolesław Rogatka’s story as a tale of imminent catastrophe – the duke still ruled his territory for more than 20 years after his failed attack on the Bishop of Wrocław. The “Annales,” however, provide such a narrative, albeit by using another character. In 1287, shortly before the attention of the chronicle fully turns to the efforts of re-uniting the kingdom, Długosz mentions the death of duke Ziemomysł of Kujawy, and explains that he had returned to power only “after 12 years of exile from his duchy for that reason that he had usually treated the Poles with contempt and favored the Germans, and preferred them to Poles, and tried to break the rights of the knights, take away their hereditary possessions and to remove the Polish nation from the land.”³⁹ Shortly after taking over the duchy of Inowrocław, after his father’s death in 1267, Ziemomysł had used German knights in a conflict with the Bishop of Kujawy and local nobles. He was driven from the country twice by invasions from neighboring Great Poland and allowed to return to his principality in 1278 only after solemnly swearing that he would not use German knights or the sons of German knights to serve him in the land or at court, to abolish all privileges given to them and to make decisions only with the mature counsel

35 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 4, liber VII, 72.

36 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 4, liber VII, 76.

37 Mularczyk, “Książę legnicki Bolesław II Rogatka,” 101–102.

38 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 4, liber VII, 107.

39 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 4, liber VIII, 248.

of his barons.⁴⁰ By telling this story in the context of Ziemomysł's death, after his return to power, Długosz manages to associate the duke's pledge to renounce his contacts to Germans with the end of his life. Thus, the narration about the presence of Germans at the courts of Polish dukes stretches throughout nearly the entire thirteenth century, with the first episode located in 1213 and the last in 1288, apparently a lifelong struggle, from the supposed conflict between the sons of Henry the Bearded over the years of conflict during the reign of Bolesław Rogatka up to the death of Duke Ziemomysł of Kujawy.

The image of a long, fierce, and ultimately successful struggle against Germans influencing Polish politics relates exclusively to the realm of knights and the ducal retinue. Other immigrants from German lands, if they are noted in ethnic categories and not just as "hospites" (guests), are described usually without negative overtones. Długosz presents an interesting example of this when he writes about Duke Leszek the Black ("Czarny") of Sieradz, whose rule over the principal territory of Cracow (1279–1288) was contested by local nobles, aided by dukes from neighboring territories, against whom he leaned on the support of Hungarian troops and the Cracow burghers.⁴¹ The "Annales" describe one of Leszek's victories in 1285, emphasizing that the "German burghers of Cracow" had remained faithful to Leszek and defended the Cracow castle, whereas the nobles had defected to Duke Konrad of Mazovia.⁴² In reward for their loyalty, Duke Leszek granted the townsmen the right to build a moat, a well, towers, and walls, and the right "that the unrestricted power over [these enforcements] should be held solely by the Germans, even though the knights cursed at that and protested severely [fearing] that in some [future] time the Germans might raise their head against him [i.e. the duke]. And eventually, from that time on Duke Leszek Czarny showed and expressed his sympathy for the German burghers of Cracow with such pleasure and kindness that he adopted their customs even with

⁴⁰ Franciszek Piekosiński (ed.), *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski Codex diplomaticus Poloniæ Maioris* [The book of documents of Great Poland], vol. 1, no. 482 (1278 Aug. 24), http://www.wbc.poznan.pl/Content/20061/kw_01.html <31.3.2017>; Tomasz Jurek, "Die Migration deutscher Ritter nach Polen," in *Das Reich und Polen. Parallelen, Interaktionen und Formen der Akkulturation im hohen und späten Mittelalter*, Thomas Wünsch, Alexander Patschovsky (ed.) (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2003), 259–260; Tomasz Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo na Śląsku do połowy XIV wieku* [Foreign knights in Silesia up to the middle of the fourteenth century] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, 1996), 148–149; Jadwiga Karwasińska, *Sąsiedztwo kujawsko-krzyżackie 1235–1343* [The neighborhood between Kujawy and the Teutonic Order 1235–1343] (Warszawa: Drukarnia Łazarski, 1927), 70–80.

⁴¹ Paweł Żmudzki, *Studium podzielonego królestwa—książę Leszek Czarny* [A study of the partitioned kingdom—prince Leszek the Black] (Warszawa: Neriton, 2000).

⁴² Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 3, liber VII, 235.

his hairstyle and clothing.”⁴³ Długosz does not dwell on the admonition of the Polish nobles; in the context of that story the chronicler leaves no doubt that the duke’s problems were caused by the Polish knights and not by the German burghers. The burghers were Germans, but they did not try to influence the politics of the duke or push aside the Polish nobles, therefore the “Annales” could present them in a positive light.

With the restitution of the Polish kingdom at the turn of the fourteenth century, the narration changes again. While military conflicts, especially with Brandenburg or the Teutonic Order in Prussia, continued to be a major issue in Polish politics for a long time, the Germans living in Poland ceased to be perceived as a danger to the political order. In his narration of the fifteenth century, Długosz reverses the roles and depicts the Poles as role models for the Germans.

In his description of the civil war in Lithuania after the death of Grand Duke Vytautas in the 1430s, the chronicler offers an assessment of the military virtues of the Polish, Ruthenian, and German knights and soldiers engaged in this conflict. “Prince Zygmunt Korybut [...] time and again in numerous battles saw the superiority, bravery, and courage of the Polish troops and the faint-heartedness of the Ruthenians and Germans.”⁴⁴

In 1440, when Władysław, the elder son of king Władysław Jagiełło, at the age of only 16, after being King of Poland already for six years, was elected by the Hungarian estates to become King of Hungary as well, the “Annales” report the reactions to the young king: “it was with a very wonderful and unfamiliar power that not only the Hungarians but also the Germans cordially greeted King Władysław. For when they had not known and never seen him, a lot of them either dismissed him or treated him hatefully. But once they had beheld, when they perceived him as a youth in the prime of life, pleasant in conversation, in his generosity and his charming voice” they were convinced that he was the right person to rule the Hungarian kingdom.⁴⁵

After Władysław’s untimely death in the battle of Varna in 1444, his brother Kazimierz, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, had been the first choice for election to the Polish throne. Kazimierz, however, waited for several years before he accepted

⁴³ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 3, liber VII, 236–237.

⁴⁴ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 9, liber XII, 158; Robert I. Frost, *The Oxford history of Poland-Lithuania*, vol. I: The Making of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, 1385–1569 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 170–188.

⁴⁵ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 9, liber XII, 238; Frost, *The Oxford history of Poland-Lithuania*, 131–150; Krystyna Łukasiewicz, *Władysław Warneńczyk. Krzyżacy i kawaler Świętej Katarzyny* [Władysław of Varna. The Teutonic Order and the knight of St. Catherine] (Warszawa: Wilczyńska, 2010).

the Polish crown in 1447. Fearing that the Jagiellon might not be willing to accept the conditions necessary to become King of Poland, the Polish aristocracy, led by the Archbishop of Gniezno and the Bishop of Cracow, began to look for other candidates. Długosz describes how the Archbishop of Gniezno opted for margrave Frederic of Brandenburg as a candidate in 1446:

[...] for his reason, which in him was visible even when he was young of age, and which grew in the course of time and filled up, as well as for his knowledge of the Polish language and the proximity of possessions. He was followed by the bishop of Cracow [...], who cast the second vote and explained, that nobody is likewise useful and likewise suitable to govern the Kingdom of Poland, like the aforementioned margrave Frederic, because he is the most reasonable among the German princes, he is restrained and humble, and he was raised in the Kingdom of Poland.⁴⁶

In the end, Frederic of Brandenburg did not become King of Poland. The reason why Długosz relates the story of his election in such detail is that it shows how the relations between Poles and Germans changed. In the eleventh century, it had been family ties to the German dynasty and the influence of the Germans at the Polish court that endangered the young monarchy; in the twelfth century, the chronicler points out that Zbigniew had been raised among Germans and Czechs, which explains his bad character. In the thirteenth century, Germans in the retinue of Polish dukes in various principalities had caused harm and were finally expelled. After the reunification of the kingdom, the close ties between Polish and German elites continued, but then, in the middle of the fifteenth century, it was a German prince, raised in the Kingdom of Poland and versed in the Polish language, who was thus deemed suitable to become king.

Długosz' image of the Jews

There are very few references to Jews in Polish chronicles. Apart from short notes in the *Chronicles of Vincenty Kadłubek*⁴⁷ from the early thirteenth century, and Maciej of Miechowa⁴⁸ from the turn of the sixteenth century, only Jan Długosz elaborates on the Jews as a topic. He draws a multi-layered picture of the Jews and integrates them into the larger narrative. Jewish themes appear in various places

⁴⁶ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 10, liber XII, 30.

⁴⁷ Marian Plezia (ed.), *Magistri Vincentii dicti Kadłubek Chronica Polonorum* [The chronicle of the Poles by Magister Vincentius called Kadłubek] (Kraków: Secesja, 1994) (Monumenta Poloniae Historica, N.S. 11), Book 4, 133.

⁴⁸ Matthias Miechovita, *Chronica Polonorum* [Chronicle of the Poles] (Kraków: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1986; 1st print: Cracoviae, 1521), CCCXLIX.

throughout his chronicle, and in different functions, making his account unique in Polish medieval chronistics.⁴⁹

In the "Annales," Długosz refers not only to things related to Jews in Poland, but also adds tales from Silesia, neighboring Bohemia and Germany, and in one case even Italy to his narration. The oldest references (to 989 and 993) associate Jews with the sale of Christian slaves in Prague. In the first passage he tells about St. Adalbert (in Polish: Wojciech, in Czech: Vojtěch), the Bishop of Prague, later martyr and patron saint of Poland; the chronicle criticizes those sins of the Bohemian elites which St. Adalbert tried to fight, such as polygamy, the practicing of pagan and blasphemous rites, and the sale of their own Christian subjects into slavery to Jews.⁵⁰ Shortly afterwards Długosz takes up the issue of slavery again, when he refers to Adalbert's return to Prague after his stay in Rome, his attempts to lead the people on the Christian path and his despair over the fruitlessness of his efforts. When Adalbert had been overwhelmed by exhaustion and despair, he heard a divine voice admonishing: "You sleep, and I am again sold to the Jews."⁵¹ Afterward he went to market and redeemed all the Christian slaves there. In this episode Długosz establishes the link between the Jewish presence in history and divine intervention.

The next episodes concern the fourteenth century. First the chronicler draws the attention of his readers to the anti-Jewish pogroms in the times of the plague in 1348/1349. Persecuted by Christians, the Jews preferred to kill themselves and their relatives in order not to fall into the hands of the Christians. The chronicle qualifies however, that the persecutions did not end Jewish presence completely, as in some provinces and towns they had been pardoned because of greed (on the part of local authorities).⁵² Again, Długosz offers no direct criticism of the Jews. He does not blame the plague on them, yet he appears convinced that they should have become extinct were it not for the sins of Christian authorities.

Shortly after the report on the catastrophe of the Jews in central Europe, the "Annales" present a tale of Jewish origins in Poland by referring to the biblical motive of Esther. Długosz narrates the story of the unsuccessful marriage plans between king Kazimierz the Great and princess Adelheid of Hesse, and the romance between the king and Christine Rokyczana. In this context he introduces the story of the Jewess Esther and King Kazimierz: when Kazimierz had sent away Christine Rokyczana, because she had been bald and leprous, he took the Jewess Esther for her beauty and elegance as a mistress and had two sons with her. Through the

⁴⁹ Borkowska, *Treści ideowe w dziełach Jana Długosza*, 17, 186.

⁵⁰ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 1, liber II, 202.

⁵¹ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 1, liber II, 210.

⁵² Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 5, liber IX, 252.

influence of Esther, Długosz continues, the king had granted some Jews in the kingdom excessive privileges and freedoms, which others (meaning: Christians) suspected to be forgeries, and which insulted and offended God's majesty; their stench lingered up to the present day. One son from this relation died early of a natural death; the other, however, was struck dead by a peasant during a dispute over transportation duties during the reign of King Władysław Jagiełło. Especially atrocious yet had been the fact that the daughters born through the relationship with Esther had been allowed to take the Jewish faith.⁵³

This episode provides a legend of origin to explain the Jewish presence in Poland and their position within the social order.⁵⁴ It signals the high social status ascribed to the Jews and forms an analogy to the Ruthenian legend of origin, where Długosz introduces Rus', not – like in the other chronicles – as brother, but nephew of Lech, the protoplast of the Poles.⁵⁵ In early modern times the Esterke-story became popular also in Jewish chronicles; at the end of the sixteenth century it is retold in the chronicle of David Gans (Tsemah David, Prague 1595). In the Hebrew text, though, it becomes difficult to tell if Esther had been the mistress or the wife of the king.⁵⁶

In the following episodes, leading up to the middle of the fifteenth century, Długosz changes his narrative strategy by inserting a series of small episodes in which divine intervention against the Jews becomes apparent. The first deals with a fire in the town of Wrocław in 1361. Długosz initially criticizes the Christian burghers – like in the story about the slave market in Prague – before the Jews are woven into the tale. During the fire, the burghers of Wrocław failed to extinguish the flames in time, so that almost the whole town burned down. After the fire, however, they all came to the conclusion that the fire had been a sign of God. They turned to attack the Jews, whose number within the town walls had been great, murdering some of them and expelling those who remained from the town.⁵⁷

53 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 5, liber IX, 284–285; cf. Jerzy Wyrozumski, *Kazimierz Wielki* [Casimir the Great] (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1980), 209–213.

54 On the Esterke-motif in modern historiography see Chone Shmeruk, *The Esterke Story in Yiddish and Polish Literature. A Case Study in the Mutual Relations of Two Cultural Traditions* (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 1985), esp. 110–115; on the interpretation of the story in early modern anti-Jewish polemics, see pages 13–36.

55 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 1, liber I, 89–90; See also Kłoczowski, "Polacy a cudzoziemcy w XV wieku," 47.

56 Shmeruk, *The Esterke Story*, 37–38.

57 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 5, liber IX, 307–308, 448 with note 28.

The “Annales” report about an anti-Jewish riot in Prague during Holy Week of 1389.⁵⁸ A contemporary chronicle from Germany describes the incident in the following way: A priest had been on his way to administer the sacraments to Christians not far from the Jewish street. A Jew had then “thrown a little pebble upon the monstrance,” which caused the riot. The chronicler adds a phrase denoting his distance from the story: “That is what the Christians said.”⁵⁹ Długosz’ report lacks such doubts: Jews had shouted blasphemies and thrown a rock at the priest holding the monstrance. As punishment from the just God for this blasphemy, the riot against the Jews followed.⁶⁰ There was no mention of the symbolic dimension of the throwing of a stone (or pebble), rather Długosz presents it as a corporal assault on the priest.

Ten years later, in 1399, the “Annales” tell about a miracle in Poznań originating in a case of desecration of the host. A woman had been given a host in the monastery, which she later took out of her mouth in order to sell it to the Jews. At the place where the host was later found, a miracle occurred prompting King Władysław Jagiełło to fund a Carmelite monastery there.⁶¹ Like in the tale about the fire in Wrocław, Długosz works through associations. The story only tells about the intention of selling, and that the host was indeed later found. Later on, beginning in the seventeenth century, the motif reappears in anti-Jewish polemical literature up to the eighteenth century and acquires ever greater detail with each retelling.

Another eight years after the Poznań miracle, the chronicle provides a detailed account of the anti-Jewish riots and plundering in Cracow.⁶² Długosz situates the riots in the week after Easter and associates them with a legend of ritual murder. In contrast to other episodes, this story takes up a whole section in the

58 Ferdinand Seibt and Maria Tischler, “Prag,” in *Germania Judaica*, vol. III/2, Marcus Brann, Ismar Elbogen, Arye Maimon (eds.) (Tübingen 1995), 1134; František Graus, *Struktur und Geschichte der drei Volksaufstände im mittelalterlichen Prag* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1971), 50–60, 76–78, 86; Friedrich Lotter, “Hostienfrevelvorwurf und Blutwunderfälschung bei den Judenverfolgungen von 1298 (‘Rintfleisch’) und 1336–38 (‘Armleder’),” in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter. Internationaler Kongreß der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, München, 16.–19. September 1986. Teil V, Fingierte Briefe Frömmigkeit und Fälschung Realienfälschung* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1988), 535–583, here 545 discusses the reliability of such stories.

59 Arthur Wyss (ed.), *Die Limburger Chronik des Tilemann Elhen von Wolfhagen*, München: Monumenta Germaniae Historica 1993 [MGH Deutsche Chroniken, 4,1], 79. Tileman Elhen von Wolfhagen (ca. 1347–1402/06) was contemporary to the incident.

60 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 6, liber X, 178.

61 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 6, liber X, 236; Hanna Węgrzynek, “Czarna legenda” Żydów. Procesy o rzekome mordy rytualne w dawnej Polsce [The “black legend” of the Jews. Processes about alleged ritual murders in Old Poland] (Warszawa: Bellona, 1995), 47–57.

62 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 7, liber X, 15–17.

chronicle and is divided into several sub-episodes. In the beginning the chronicler provides a general characterization of the Jews, where he already introduces elements guiding the interpretation of the following incidents.

“The Jews in Cracow have become numerous and wealthy, through unworthy usury, so much that they have become haughty and provoked hatred, because they conducted without punishment certain crimes, and the secular authorities neglected to prevent it strictly. Thus, upon them came God’s punishment, which sometimes turns out more severe, for with its strictness it is meant to balance out the negligence of man, when out of minor cause, as it sometimes happens, the wrath of the people broke out.” Before the chronicler reveals this “minor cause,” he explains how the information about the alleged crime found its way to the public:

Magister Budek, a canon from Wiślica, had just ended his sermon and was about to leave the pulpit, when he paused and said that a sheet, which lay on the pulpit, contained a request and an admonition to tell the people about an incident, but he had willfully passed over this request, because a comparable warning had caused great disturbances in Prague.⁶³ At the insistence of the masses, who were a little too eager to know the news, and at their pleading that he should not hesitate to tell what it was about, he went back to the pulpit, more inconsiderate than befits for a magister and preacher, and announced the unworthy request. The request contained the message that the Jews living in Cracow had the night before murdered a Christian child and had accomplished ungodly atrocities with the child’s blood, and they had thrown rocks at a priest who took the holy sacrament to a sick person.

It did not take long for the public to react: “After hearing that the whole people began, like having received a signal, a riot, and they started to take revenge vehemently and cruelly on the Jews. They plundered one Jewish street and killed many.” But the authorities reacted as well. The Starosta of Cracow and the king’s representative in Cracow intervened and ended the riot as well as the plundering.⁶⁴

Still there is more to report about this incident; Długosz continues:

As it already looked like everybody had returned to their homes; and the Jewish street was surrounded by guards, and the bells of the town hall tolled to call the councilors to assemble in order to punish the leaders of the riots and plundering, a voice from the people was

⁶³ On the relation to the note on the Prague incident of 1389, see Hanna Zaremska, “Jan Długosz o tumultach krakowskim w 1407 roku [Jan Długosz on the uproar in Cracow in 1407],” in *Między polityką a kulturą* [Between politics and culture], Cezary Kukło (ed.) (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1999), 160.

⁶⁴ On the persons involved, see Zaremska, “Jan Długosz o tumultach,” 158; Hanna Zaremska, “Le roi, la cité et les Juifs: Cracovie au XV siècle,” in *Anthropologie de la ville médiévale*, Michał Tymowski (ed.) (Varsovie: DiG, 1999), 55–57.

heard that the magistrate and the town authorities had called to plunder the Jews.⁶⁵ When the people heard this, they ran together in great unanimity from all parts of the city and began anew with the plundering and murder of the Jews, and nobody dared to stand up against them. And once the unreasonable rage of the masses had started to murder and plunder, there was no way to stop it. In order to better end the uproar, fire was laid to Jewish houses – if it was done by a Christian or a Jew could not be determined.

The fire spread quickly, only the building of the university (which was situated in the Jewish quarter) could be saved by the efforts of the student youth.

Some Jews had fled to the tower of St. Anna's church. They defended themselves till evening, but as fire was laid [to the church] they surrendered voluntarily [...] in the end a multitude of those who had been saved, let themselves be christened. Furthermore, all Jewish children, who were spared or saved from the flames by Christians, were born again in the Holy Well of the baptism. Tremendous riches that were found in Jewish homes were forfeited in the plundering. From this many Christians enriched themselves, and their wealth grew remarkably. As the uproar receded, in Jewish homes many treasures were found, buried in the sand or hidden in the sewers.

At the same time, the "Annales" reports similar incidents, not just in Cracow, but also in the Silesian towns of Nissa and Frankfurt as well as in Canterbury in England, where, likewise, "the Jews suffered by the just God's permission the same judgement."

In her recent analysis of Długosz' account, the Polish historian Hanna Zaremska differentiates between two levels: the moralizing statement and the factual validity of the story.⁶⁶ She touches only briefly on the narrative strategy and concentrates on the factual analysis of the account. Długosz appears to be well informed about the incident in Cracow in the early fifteenth century; most of the people identified by name in his story indeed were present in the city at that time. Problematic, however, is the core of the tale – the motif of alleged ritual murder, for which the contemporary court records offer no hint at all (in contrast to the plundering). Zaremska associates Długosz' account with a note in the *Collectarium* of the Cistercian monastery of Mogila near Cracow, which said that in the same year Christians had killed a Jew because of a certain scholar, whom the Jews had killed on their holiday.⁶⁷ She adds that Długosz himself had not believed in the story of ritual murder in Cracow, even though he thought the reports about the events in Trento 1475 (see below) trustworthy.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Zaremska, "Jan Długosz o tumultach," 160 points out that the rioters might have expected a favorable attitude of the magistrate.

⁶⁶ Zaremska, "Jan Długosz o tumultach."; Zaremska, *Żydzi w średniowiecznej Polsce*, 456–477.

⁶⁷ Zaremska, "Jan Długosz o tumultach," 163.

⁶⁸ Zaremska, "Jan Długosz o tumultach," 160.

The “*Annales*” indeed deliver a suggestive story shifting the responsibility for the uproar from the plunderers to the Jews. It begins with the tale about Jewish wealth, haughtiness, and their protection by the authorities having provoked the hatred of the people. At the very beginning Długosz introduces the motif of God’s punishment against the Jews. In the same paragraph the first of a series of “severability clauses” appears, underlining the chronicler’s distance to his own report: the pogrom had occurred “out of minor cause, as it sometimes happens” – the (alleged) murder of a child as a “minor cause”? The next lines tell the story how Magister Budek (a historically confirmed preacher) orchestrated the uproar of the congregation – announcing the note, refusing to read it, and finally giving in to the pressure. Długosz tries to describe the actions of the priest as comprehensible by referring to the violation of a priest in Prague in 1389, a story he relays earlier. On the other hand, he distances himself from Budek by claiming that the priest’s succumbing was “more inconsiderate than befits for a magister and preacher.” The uproar and the plundering happened “like having received a signal,” and the reaction of the authorities was indicated already in the beginning. When telling about the fire set to Jewish houses, Długosz again works through associations by claiming that it could not be determined if a Christian or a Jew had caused the fire. When the preacher of St. Anna’s church granted the Jews sanctuary, the rioters set fire even to the church – and the chronicler neither condemns this act of sacrilege nor does he attempt to relativize it, because the incident directly leads to the surrender of the Jews and the baptism of the saved. To emphasize the divine background of these incidents, Długosz refers to similar cases in other towns, where the Jews suffered the same just judgment of God.

The following accounts are even shorter than those above, little more than remarks inserted into the main narrative. But even these episodes from the middle of the fifteenth century serve to highlight God’s wrath against the Jews. During the year 1454 the chronicler notes the defeat of the Polish troops in the battle of Chojnice against the Teutonic Order. Again, he uses the scheme of criticizing the Christians first before he puts their misfortune into the context of the Divine by associating it with Jews. He states “many would believe that the defeats of the king and the Poles arose from injustice [...], but essentially it was the Jewish privileges that drew God’s wrath unto king and people.”⁶⁹ The year before King Kazimierz the Jagiellon had confirmed the Jewish privileges in the kingdom, right after the confirmation of the privileges of the nobles, who had waited for six years for this act after Kazimierz had been elected and crowned King of Poland. The Catholic clergy, especially Cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki, who Długosz served as

69 Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 10, liber XII, 215–216.

a secretary at that time, had protested sharply against the confirmation of the Jewish rights and used the defeat against the Teutonic Order to unite the opposition against the king. Kazimierz the Jagiellon was forced to revoke the Jewish privileges in 1454.⁷⁰ When, in 1455, a fire broke out in Cracow near St. Thomas' church, the chronicler ascribes this calamity to the Jewish privileges as well, even though they had already been revoked. He explains that Cracow Jews had stored valuables near St. Thomas church – again distancing himself in the same sentence by adding "as is believed by many."⁷¹

Both episodes reflect Długosz' close relation to Cardinal Oleśnicki and his pronounced opposition against both the king and the Jews. Thus, in the last accounts relation to Jews, situated after Oleśnicki's death, show a change in the chronicler's attitude,⁷² who is getting closer to the court and changes the way he portrays the Jews as well. His general opinion remains negative, but religious arguments become less pronounced.

For the year 1464 he relates how an army of crusaders on their way against the Ottoman Empire looted and plundered the Jewish quarter of Cracow, and emphasized that the bishop and vojevode were side by side in granting the Jews protection in the royal castle. Długosz adds that in other Polish towns Jews had been harmed or killed if they had not received sanctuary in castles of fortified places. He reports that the king imposed a fine on the town of Cracow for not defending the Jews, but he himself could not detect any wrongdoing by the magistrate.⁷³ A link between Jews and Ottomans appears again in the year 1477, when the chronicle describes the war between the German emperor and the Ottoman Empire in Hungary. On this occasion Długosz accuses Jews of acting as spies for the Ottomans.⁷⁴ Lastly, he delivers an account from the year 1475 of the trial about the alleged ritual murder in Trento.⁷⁵ Citing the records of the prosecution, he could abandon the distancing clauses he had added in his account of 1407, thereby legitimizing his interpretation of the earlier incident retrospectively.

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⁷⁰ Heyde, *Transkulturelle Kommunikation und Verflechtung*, 45–55; Jürgen Heyde, "Polnischer Adel und jüdische Elite. Über rechtliche Oberhoheit und soziale Kontakte 1454–1539," *Leipziger Beiträge zur jüdischen Geschichte und Kultur* 3 (2005): 103–115.

⁷¹ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 10, liber XII, 232–233.

⁷² Borkowska, *Treści ideowe w dziełach Jana Długosza*, 117 with additional literature.

⁷³ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 11, liber XII, 80–81.

⁷⁴ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 11, liber XII, 405.

⁷⁵ Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae*, vol. 11, liber XII, 368–369.

The article shows that images of the “other” in the “Annales” are far more than just representations of the chronicler’s opinions. Długosz combines various episodes to convey a message to his readers. The tales about Germans and Jews do not aim at understanding the “other,” but rather at explaining important issues of the “own.” “Strangers” matter to the chronicler only in so far as they are relevant for the message to his audience, therefore his phenomenology of strangers is not absolute (valid/important in itself), but responsive.

This responsivity is explained in the remarks “on the nature and customs of the Poles” in the first book of the “Annales,” where Długosz talks about ways of becoming “own” as a specific process of conversion. He praises the integration of converted Jews and Saracens in Spain, but from his remarks on Poland and Bohemia it becomes apparent that the “talent and virtuous habits” of foreigners should be treated accordingly – as evidence of their will to integrate into Polish society.

Długosz’ story about Germans – taken as a whole – is such a conversion story. In the first part, the chronicler describes in detail the strangeness and danger they present, the examples from Poland for added emphasis followed by analogous stories from Hungary. The second part paints a more differentiated picture – in the retinue of Polish princes, Germans continue to be associated with political crises, but the examples of Ziemomyśl of Kujawy and Leszek the Black of Cracow indicate a fundamental change. The expulsion of the Kujawyan duke symbolizes the end of the problematic presence of Germans in the centers of power; the defense of Leszek the Black by the burghers of Cracow shows them in a new, positive role. The third part completes the conversion story. Długosz elaborates on how the Poles are recognized as role models by Germans, culminating in the prospect of the margrave of Brandenburg as a candidate for the Polish throne – because he was raised among Poles and was familiar with their ways and customs.

Interestingly, the story about Jews is not about conversion. The chronicler mentions a case of Jews converting to Christianity in the context of the Cracow riots, but this is merely a marginal aspect of the whole tale. The story about the Jews is a story of entanglement, of continuous challenge. Długosz does not embrace this entanglement but contests it strongly. The single act of conversion mentioned in the context of the 1407 events depicts an ideal, but not the reality of Jewish-Christian relations. On the whole, Długosz’s account of these relations is far more critical and less one-sided than in the case of the Germans.

There is no evolution in the story about Jews – they present a looming danger to Christian/Polish society from the very beginning to the last pages of the chronicle. Christian behavior towards Jews is criticized frequently as well – not just the indulgence of the kings, but also the greed of the rioters or the inappropriate proceeding of the preacher in Cracow.

Długosz uses this story to underline the importance of divine intervention. Already in the first episode, God himself interferes and urges St. Adalbert to save Christians from slavery under Jews. The next episodes have to be interpreted in pairs. The chronicle relates the persecution of Jews in other countries in the middle of the fourteenth century before giving a detailed account of Esterke's romance with King Kazimierz, which functions as a legend of origin for the Jewish position in Polish society. The incidents of Prague in 1389, and Cracow in 1407, illustrate how much Jewish presence influenced every-day life; the riots are interpreted as signs of "divine justice." In the middle of the fifteenth century, the chronicle directs the readers' attention to the role of Jews in political life, and again emphasizes divine intervention in punishing the king and nobility (defeat against the Teutonic Order in 1454) as well as the Jews (fire in the Jewish quarter in Cracow in 1455). In the last book, Długosz relates how the bishop and vojevode saved Jews from plundering crusaders in 1464, and contrasts this with suspicions about Jewish espionage for the Ottoman Empire in 1477. Both episodes receive merely brief mentions, but they convey an important message: the Christian authorities acted virtuously and saved the Jews from harm; on the other hand, the Jews would not become part of Polish society but remain a foreign and dangerous element.

Both stories cannot be read as accounts of Długosz' perception of either Germans or Jews, but as skillfully constructed tales offering distinct messages concerning ideals and realities of Polish society in the Middle Ages.

Zuzanna Krzemien

Solomon Dubno, His Eastern European Scholarship, and the German Haskalah

This article examines the life and works of Solomon Dubno (1738–1813), an Eastern European intellectual who lived and worked in Berlin over a period of ten years. While he is remembered as an initiator of the publication *Sefer netivot ha-shalom* [Paths of Peace], and for his work on the commentary (*Bi'ur*) of Moses Mendelssohn's Pentateuch translation,¹ Dubno's influence on the early German Jewish Enlightenment, as a commentator of the book of Genesis, has been largely forgotten. Following a dispute with Mendelssohn, Dubno abandoned the *Bi'ur* project and headed for Vilna. There, he persuaded several members of the rabbinical elite of the need to create a new Bible commentary under his authorship, which could be published together with the Aramaic translation of Onkelos. He aimed to facilitate a correct understanding of the sacred text among Eastern European Jews, for whom Mendelssohn's translation was not easily understandable, and which was regarded as a German textbook rather than a tool for enhanced study of the Torah. In this way, Dubno combined the maskilic program of Berlin Jewry with the Eastern European reverence for a traditional religious education.

The Life and Works of Solomon Dubno

Solomon ben Yoel Dubno was a renowned scholar from Eastern Europe and a preeminent representative of the early Jewish Enlightenment (Haskalah), who found recognition among his contemporaries through his poetry and expertise in Hebrew grammar. He was educated under the tutelage of Solomon Chelm (1717–1781),² whose *Sha'arei ne'imah* [Gates of Melody], a work on accentuation in

¹ Moses Mendelssohn (ed.), *Sefer netivot ha-shalom* [Paths of Peace] (Berlin: George Friederich Starcke, 1780–1783).

² It is unclear where and when Dubno studied under Chelm. According to Alexander Altmann and Gershom Scholem, Dubno's instruction took place in Lemberg. Rehav Rubin claims that Chelm worked first as a rabbi in the city of Chelm, and subsequently received a rabbinical position in Zamosc in 1767 and in Lemberg in 1771. Since Dubno printed Chelm's *Sha'arei ne'imah* in Frankfurt an der Oder in 1766 and immigrated to Amsterdam a year later, they must have met in Chelm. See Alexander Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn: A Biographical Study* (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilisation, 1998), 354; Gershom Scholem, "Eduto shel rav shlomo dubno

the books of Job, Proverbs and Psalms, was published with Dubno's commentary.³ In his late twenties, Dubno decided to leave his native Volhynia for Amsterdam, where he became acquainted with local Jewish followers of the Enlightenment and discovered a manuscript of Moses Hayyim Luzzatto's *La-yesharim tehillah*, an allegorical drama written in 1743, which was not duly appreciated by the Jewish public until Dubno republished it with an introduction in 1780.⁴ After spending five years in the Dutch Republic, he moved to Berlin in 1772, where he lived for a decade before leaving for Eastern Europe as a result of his conflict with Mendelssohn.

Dubno's sojourn in Prussia was his most productive period in terms of literary and scholarly activity. He composed several poems,⁵ most notably *Evel yahid*,⁶ a eulogy of Jacob Emden (1697–1776), and became engaged in collaboration with Mendelssohn on the German Pentateuch translation. His last published composition, *Birkat yosef*,⁷ praised a Vilna rabbi, Yosef Pesseles, for his financial support during Dubno's stay in Lithuania, and advocated the study of neglected texts of the Tanakh—the books of Prophets and Writings. Many unpublished works by Dubno testify to the versatility of his interests, which included both science and halakhah.⁸

Through contact with Amsterdam and Berlin Jewry, Dubno's intellectual horizons, which until his journey westwards rested mainly on rabbinical education, were expanded by the ideas of the Enlightenment, to which Dubno was indirectly exposed thanks to his acquaintance with Moses Mendelssohn. However, their collaboration ended in a dispute,⁹ as a result of which Dubno decided to

al ha-hasidut" in *Ha-shalav ha-aharon: mehkarei ha-hasidut shel gershom shalom* [The Latest Phase: Essays on Hasidism by Gershom Scholem], David Assaf and Esther Liebes (eds.) (Jerusalem: Am Oved Publishers, The Hebrew University Magnet Press, 2008), 177; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. "Chelm, Solomon ben Moses," 4, 589; Rehav Rubin, "Hug ha-'areš by Rabbi Solomon of Chelm: An Early Geographical Treatise and Its Sources," *Aleph* 8 (2008): 135–136.

3 Solomon Chelm, *Sha'arei ne'imah* [Gates of Melody] (Frankfurt an der Oder: 1766).

4 Moses Hayyim Luzzatto, *La-yesharim tehillah* [Glory to the Righteous] (Berlin: 1780).

5 See for example: Solomon Dubno, *Kol simhah* [The Voice of Happiness] (Berlin: 1780). Dubno's poems were also included in Immanuel Solomon, *Sefer mahberet tofet ve-'eden u-mahberet purim* [Poem of Hell and Paradise and a Purim Poem] (Berlin: 1778); Naftali Wessely, *Hokhmat shlomo* [The Wisdom of Solomon] (Berlin: 1780).

6 Solomon Dubno, *Evel yahid* [Private Mourning] (Berlin: 1776).

7 Solomon Dubno, *Birkat yosef* [The Blessing of Joseph] (Dyhernfurth: 1783).

8 For example, see Solomon Dubno, *Kelalei isur ve-heiter bi-shehitah* [Precepts for Ritual Slaughtering], HS. ROS. 268, Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, Amsterdam; Solomon Dubno, *Hibbur al ha-tekhunah, ha-filosofiah ve-ha-mistorin* [Astrological, Philosophical and Mystical Treatise], HS. ROS. 577, Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, Amsterdam.

9 Dubno claims in *Birkat yosef* that finances where the main source of the conflict: "And sometimes I quarreled a bit with those authors [whose works Dubno studied] and I proved that they

devote himself to writing his own biblical commentary. Despite the fact that he was the initiator of the publication of *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*, Dubno's role in that undertaking has often been underestimated by academics.

Solomon Dubno and the Jewish Enlightenment

The Haskalah emerged in eighteenth-century Prussia, and subsequently arose in other parts of Europe.¹⁰ The movement's agenda was to revive Hebrew, to popularize secular knowledge (such as the sciences and modern languages) among the Jewish population, and to improve the position of Jews in society.¹¹ Consequently, through its absorption of elements of the European Enlightenment and, in some cases, the advocacy of cultural integration, it ushered in the beginning of a new kind of relationship between Jews and Gentiles.¹²

In its early stages, the Haskalah was composed of individuals such as rabbis, doctors, and amateur scholars, though was not an organized movement.¹³ Dubno was one of several Eastern European Jews who immigrated to Western Europe in the early modern age due to the worsening economic situation in the Polish-Lithuanian

were wrong in some points regarding the meaning of the tradition, and that they did not read it correctly. [...] I have already published commentaries on the Books of Genesis and Exodus, which were welcomed by those who are wise in heart and knowledgeable, and by scholars. And if I was not stopped [in my work] [...] because of someone's desire of money that does not belong to him, [...] who corrupted many with his hypocritical flattery, I would have already finished my commentary on the whole Torah." See Solomon Dubno, *Birkat Yosef*, in David Kamenetsky, "Haskamot gedolei ha-rabanim le-humashim shel rabi shlomo dubno [Approbations of Great Rabbis to the Pentateuch by Rabbi Solomon Dubno]" (part 3), *Yeshurun* 10 (2002), 767.

10 While some scholars, such as Jacob Katz, believe that the Prussian Haskalah inspired Haskalah movements in other locations, other academics, like David B. Ruderman, Israel Bartal, and Lois C. Dubin, refute this view and claim that Jewish enlightenments developed independently in different parts of Europe. See Jacob Katz, *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770–1870* (Syracuse University Press, 1973); David B. Ruderman, *Jewish Enlightenment in an English Key: Anglo-Jewry's Construction of Modern Jewish Thought* (Princeton University Press, 2000); Israel Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772–1881* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Lois C. Dubin, *The Port Jews of Habsburg Trieste: Absolutist Politics and Enlightenment Culture* (Stanford University Press, 1999).

11 Moshe Pelli, *Haskalah and Beyond: The Reception of the Hebrew Enlightenment and the Emergence of Haskalah Judaism* (University Press of America, 2012), 9–10.

12 Edward Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment: Jews, Germans, and the Eighteenth-Century Study of Scripture* (Harvard University Center for Jewish Studies, 1996), 15.

13 David Sorkin, *The Berlin Haskalah and German Religious Thought: Orphans of Knowledge* (Valentine Mitchell, 2000), 62.

Commonwealth, antisemitism, and the longing for more access to cultural and scholarly resources.¹⁴ Consequently, the immigration of Eastern European tutors would constitute a major source of religious education for the German-Jewish youth.¹⁵ Among the most noteworthy Polish advocates of the Prussian Haskalah were Barukh Schick of Shklov (1744–1808), Solomon Maimon (1753–1800), Menahem Mendel Lefin (1749–1826), Israel Zamosc (about 1700–1772) and Isaac Satanov (1732–1804).¹⁶

Dubno's interest in the study of Hebrew grammar and the natural sciences developed prior to his journey from Volhynia to Western Europe. Although he probably did not encounter any maskilim per se in his youth, he was acquainted with Solomon Chelm, a Polish rabbi who was known for promoting the study of the natural sciences and philosophy among the Jewish community.¹⁷ A number of Polish Jewish intellectuals were equally acquainted with religious and secular fields of knowledge, heralding the arrival of modernity in traditional Jewish communities.¹⁸

Mendelssohn's Pentateuch Edition

Mendelssohn's Pentateuch translation, and accompanying commentary, was one of the most significant intellectual achievements of the German Haskalah. In the framework of his work on *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*, Dubno composed a commentary on the book of Genesis (except for the *parashah bereshit*,¹⁹ written by Mendelssohn), parts of the commentary on the book of Exodus, *Tikkun soferim*

14 Moses A. Shulvass, *From East to West: The Westward Migration of Jews from Eastern Europe During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1971), 15.

15 Werner Weinberg, "Language Questions Relating to Moses Mendelssohn's Pentateuch Translation (In Commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of the *Bi'ur*)," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 55 (1984): 228.

16 To learn more about these maskilim, see David E. Fishman, *Russia's First Modern Jews: The Jews of Shklov* (NYU Press, 1995); Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn*, 360–62; Nancy Sinkoff, *Out of the Shtetl: Making Jews Modern in the Polish Borderlands* (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2004); Gad Freudenthal, "Jewish Traditionalism and Early Modern Science: Rabbi Israel Zamosc's Dialectic of Enlightenment (Berlin, 1744)," in *Thinking Impossibilities: The Intellectual Legacy of Amos Funkenstein*, David Biale and Robert S. Westman (eds.) (University of Toronto Press, 2008), 63–96; Moshe Pelli, "Literature of Haskalah in the late 18th Century," *Zeitschrift für Religions-und Geistesgeschichte* 52 no. 4 (2000): 337–339.

17 Solomon Chelm, *Mirkevet mishneh* [Second Chariot] (Frankfurt an der Oder: 1781), 8.

18 Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe*, 93–97.

19 Genesis 1:1–6:8.

[Scribal Emendation], and a prospectus, *Alim li-terufah*.²⁰ At first, he intended to write a commentary on all the books of the Torah translation. However, the undertaking proved too laborious to be completed by Dubno alone, therefore the work was divided among a number of scholars. Mendelssohn completed the commentary on the book of Exodus with Dubno's assistance²¹ while Naphtali Herz Wessely composed the elucidations on the book of Leviticus. After Dubno resigned from his further participation in the enterprise, Aaron Jaroslav of Galicia penned a commentary on the book of Numbers, and Herz Homberg of Bohemia on Deuteronomy. While Dubno authored the Masoretic notes for the first two books of the Pentateuch, the rest of the task was completed by Shalom of Mezerich.²²

According to Mendelssohn, the project was initiated and at first managed mainly by Dubno, as he himself lacked expertise in Hebrew grammar and, therefore, was compelled to ask other scholars to compose an adequate commentary to the Torah.²³ However, in contrast to Dubno, Mendelssohn regarded grammatical elucidations as a small addition to the publication,²⁴ whose main purpose was to provide Jewish youth with a correct understanding of the text. As a result of difficulties in financing the project,²⁵ and due to a dispute over publishing Dubno's introduction and *Tikkun soferim*, which Mendelssohn deemed too technical for the average reader,²⁶ Dubno decided to end his collaboration and compose a biblical commentary on his own. Consequently, only the first four pages of his

20 Solomon Dubno, *Alim li-terufah* [Leaves for Healing] (Amsterdam: 1778). Several passages in *Alim li-terufah* and in *Or la-netivah* [Light for the Path], Mendelssohn's introduction to *Sefer ne-tivot ha-shalom*, are repeated word for word. For that reason, some scholars believe that despite the fact that the prospectus was signed by Dubno, the real author of *Alim li-terufah* was Mendelssohn, or that the prospectus was a joint work of the two scholars. For a discussion of this subject see: Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn*, 369; Weinberg, "Language Questions," 239; and Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment*, 234–235, 26f.

21 Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften: Jubiläumsausgabe*, 38 vols., Ismar Elbogen et al. (eds.) (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1932; Breslau: S. Münzs, 1938; Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 1971), 14, 246.

22 *Ibid.*, 247.

23 See Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 16: 291, letter no. 272, where on March 6, 1784, Mendelssohn writes from Berlin to Moses Fischer: "And regarding grammar [...], to be honest, I am not an expert in the ways of this work [...] and all the grammatical points in the commentary were written either by Rabbi Solomon Dubno, or by other famous people."

24 Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 14: 248: "[...] because we are not lacking in books of grammar, and I will not add another one to their number."

25 Samuel Joseph Fuenn, *Sofrei yisra'el* [Writers of Israel] (Vilna: Rosenkranz, 1871), 138–142.

26 Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn*, 399; Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment*, 24, 27, 174; Sorkin, *Moses Mendelssohn*, 55.

introduction,²⁷ and fragments from his Masoretic annotations, were included in *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*.

Prior to the publication of *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*, the meaning of the Hebrew text of the Scripture was often inaccessible to German-Jewish youth. As we see in the prospectus *Alim li-terufah*, until the publication of *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*, those Jews who were unable to fully understand Hebrew would have recourse only to flawed Yiddish translations by Yekuti'el ben Isaac Blitz of Witmund (Amsterdam: 1679) and Eliyahu Bakhur (1469–1549),²⁸ or to non-Jewish Bibles, which contained Christian interpretations of the Scripture:

How are we to deal with Jewish children 'running to and fro to seek the word of the Lord' (Amos 8:12) and desiring to understand the Scriptures and to taste the savour of its poetic style in a language with which they are familiar, who find nothing [wherewith to satisfy their desire?] [...] In their narrow straits they 'turn to vainglory and alluring deception' (Psalms 40:5), that 'changes into wormwood' (Amos 5:7) the Law of our God. They supply themselves with the works of the Gentiles (Isaiah 2:6),²⁹ using the translations of non-Jewish scholars who disdain the trusted interpretations of our sages of blessed memory and who refuse to accept their unblemished tradition, while interpreting Scripture according to their own fancy and spoiling the vineyard of the Lord of hosts.³⁰

In *Alim li-terufah*, Dubno explained that the purpose of *Sefer netivot ha-shalom* was to facilitate Torah study for those young people who were not fluent in biblical Hebrew. Described by Dubno as a part of the Jewish cultural heritage, it remained the mother tongue of Hebrews after the confounding of speech following the incomplete construction of the Tower of Babel. Hebrew was spoken as the vernacular during the Israelites' sojourn in Egypt and at the time of the Babylonian exile, but as a result of mixing with Gentiles, it began to be gradually forgotten. Because the Tanakh was no longer understood, several translations had been composed since then to facilitate the correct reading of the Scripture. Dubno evokes such works as *Targum Yonatan* (an Aramaic translation of the books of the Prophets), a Greek translation by Aquila of Sinope, Saadia Gaon's translation into Arabic, Jacob ben Joseph Tavus' Persian translation, and the Ladino translation that was published in the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century.

²⁷ See: Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 15: 1, 15–18. According to Breuer, the first pages of Dubno's introduction might have been printed because its typesetting had already been completed before Dubno withdrew from the project. Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment*, 285, f24.

²⁸ Shabbatai Bass ascribed the Judeo-German translation published in Constance in 1544 to Eliyahu Bakhur, which was the source of a mistake in *Alim li-terufah*. In fact, it was authored by Michael Adam and Paulus Fagius. See: *GSJ* 15, 1, cxvi, f25f.

²⁹ Literally: 'They please themselves in the brood of aliens.'

³⁰ Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 14: 327; the translation was taken from Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn*, 374–375.

Mendelssohn's project aimed to provide young Jewish readers with a good translation and an adequate commentary and, consequently, to prevent them from reading undesirable versions of the Pentateuch.³¹ Moreover, he hoped to popularize study of the Torah, which at that time was given only perfunctory attention at the expense of the prevalent pilpul (casuistic) methods of analyzing the Talmud.³² The accompanying commentary was based on renowned authorities such as Rashi, Samuel ben Meir, Abraham ibn Ezra and Nachmanides. Consequently, Mendelssohn's Pentateuch edition was a combination of rabbinical tradition and Enlightenment ideas. However, since his translation was composed in sophisticated German language, its reading would require a major effort from someone who was not a fluent German speaker. As a result, many members of the rabbinical elite, including Yechezkel Landau, were concerned that the Jewish youth would devote more time to mastering the Gentile language than to Torah study itself, which would inevitably lead to assimilation into non-Jewish society. In this vein, Dubno's former teacher Naphtali Herz personally reprimanded his disciple for being involved in such a dubious undertaking.³³ However, according to Werner Weinberg, Mendelssohn never conceived *Sefer netivot ha-shalom* as a German textbook. In fact, it was intended for native German speakers rather than for a wider Jewish readership.³⁴

A good command of German, which was promoted through *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*, inscribed itself within an idea of universalism which both Jews and Gentiles embraced. Moreover, the publication expressed the engagement of enlightened Jews with Christian biblical scholars. The religious study of the *Aufklärung* was marked by textual criticism and a rationalistic approach to the reading of the Scripture. On the one hand, the flourishing of the Christian biblical scholarship perpetuated the questioning of traditional Jewish interpretation. On the other hand, Scripture, being a text read by both Christians and Jews,

31 Similarly, Mendel Lefin, another Polish maskil, wanted to enhance the understanding of the Bible through a Yiddish translation of the Scripture, and even urged authorities of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to create a Jewish school in which the study of the Tanakh would be facilitated through the use of a Polish translation of the text. See: Sinkoff, *Out of the Shtetl*, 92, 174.

32 Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 15: 1, xxi–xxii.

33 Benjamin Hirsch Auerbach, *Geschichte Der Israelitischen Gemeinde Halberstadt* (Halberstadt: Meyer, 1866), 179. Moshe Samet claims that the letter is a forgery; See Moshe Samet, "Mendelssohn, Veisel vi-rabbanei doram [Mendelssohn, Wessely, and the Rabbis of their Generation]," in *Mehkarim be-toldot am-yisra'el ve-erets-yisra'el le-zekher tsvi avineri* [Studies in the History of the Jewish People and the Land of Israel in Memory of Tsvi Avineri] (Haifa: University of Haifa, 1970), 235–236.

34 Weinberg, "Language Questions," 197–242.

constituted a shared cultural heritage and gave an opportunity to the latter to take a position in the intellectual discourse of the German Enlightenment.³⁵

From the early sixteenth century onwards, Christian scholars began to pay more attention to the original Hebrew text of the Bible and its Masoretic punctuation.³⁶ While Protestants used the Tanakh for their scholarly purposes, Catholic circles questioned the accuracy of the Hebrew text, favoring the Latin Vulgate instead. The scholarly debate was further prompted by the discovery of a complete Samaritan Pentateuch by Pietro della Valle in 1616,³⁷ which was regarded by some Bible scholars as closer to the original of the Scripture than the Hebrew Torah. In the eighteenth century, Charles François Houbigant (1686–1783) refuted the claim that the Masoretic vowel points conveyed the same pronunciation of Hebrew as in the times of Ezra.³⁸ In his *Biblia Hebraica, cum Notis Criticis et Versione Latina*, he purported to correct the mistakes of the Masoretic text.³⁹ In 1776–1780, Benjamin Kennicott (1718–1783) brought to the public two volumes of his critical edition of the Hebrew Bible,⁴⁰ in which he compared variations of the Scripture collected from several hundred manuscripts gathered from various libraries of Western Europe and the Middle East.⁴¹

In German lands, Johann David Michaelis (1680–1764) pioneered textual criticism, claiming the Masoretic vowel points to be unreliable,⁴² and including several emendations in his German translation of the Old Testament with notes.⁴³ Similarly, Johann Gottfried Herder (1752–1827) introduced corrections in

35 Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment*, 17, 20–22.

36 Roland H. Bainton, “The Bible in the Reformation,” in *The Cambridge History of the Bible: The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, S. L. Greenslade (ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 1–37; Marie-Luce Demonet-Launay, “La désacralisation de l’hébreu au XVI^e siècle,” in *L’Hébreu au temps de la Renaissance*, Ilana Zinguer (ed.) (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 154–171.

37 Robert Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (London: A. & C. Black, 1948), 99–100.

38 Charles François Houbigant, *Racines hébraïques sans points-voyelles: ou, dictionnaire hébraïque par racines* (Paris: Claude Simon et Barthelemy Alix, 1732), xxxvi–lxv.

39 Charles François Houbigant, *Biblia Hebraica, cum Notis Criticis et Versione Latina* [Hebrew Bible, with Critical Notes and a Latin Version] (Paris: 1743–1754).

40 Benjamin Kennicott, *Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum cum Variis Lectionibus* [The Hebrew Old Testament with Various Readings] (Georg Olms Verlag: 2003).

41 William McKane, “Benjamin Kennicott: An Eighteenth-Century Researcher,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 28 no. 2 (1977): 445–464.

42 Anna-Ruth Löwenbrück, “Johann David Michaelis et les débuts de la critique biblique,” in *Le Siècle des Lumières et la Bible* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1986), 113–128.

43 Johann David Michaelis, *Deutsche Übersetzung des Alten Testaments mit Anmerkungen für Ungelehrte* (Göttingen: 1769–1785).

his translation of the Hebrew text in *Vom Geist der ebräischen Poesie*.⁴⁴ In Jewish circles, Eliyahu Bakhur (1469–1549) became known for his *Masoret ha-masoret*,⁴⁵ in which he stated that the vowel points were a post-Talmudic invention.⁴⁶ However, he had no doubts that the Masoretic pointing had faithfully reflected the original pronunciation of the text. By contrast, Mendelssohn and Dubno believed that the punctuation had been extant since the revelation at Sinai.⁴⁷ The publication of their new Pentateuch edition was an expression of defending the traditional Jewish stance in response to Christian textual criticism and emergent desacralization of Scripture. Dubno's *Tikkun soferim*, although incomprehensible to the majority of readers, served as a confirmation of the authenticity of the Masoretic vowel points.⁴⁸

Dubno's Pentateuch Edition

Following his departure from Berlin, Dubno decided to publish a Pentateuch edition that would be free from translations into modern languages. His plan was to complement the text of the Scripture with Targum Onkelos and Rashi's commentary, as well as his own elucidations on the Torah. In this way, the new publication would fully comply with the standards of religious tradition, while serving a pedagogical purpose by providing a correct interpretation of and instruction in Hebrew grammar. While the text of *Sefer netivot ha-shalom* was intended for German Jewry, Dubno aspired to publish a Torah edition that was suitable for Eastern European Jews who could not understand Mendelssohn's translation.⁴⁹

Mendelssohn was harshly criticized for not including any rabbinical *haskamot* in the prospectus of *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*, as well as for not asking for approbations from renowned rabbis other than the ones residing in Berlin.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Johann Gottfried Herder, *Vom Geist der ebräischen Poesie: eine Anleitung für die Liebhaber derselben, und der ältesten Geschichte des menschlichen Geistes* (Dessau: 1782–1783).

⁴⁵ Eliyahu Bakhur, *Masoret ha-masoret* [Tradition of the Masorah] (Venice: 1538).

⁴⁶ Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, "The Science of Language among Medieval Jews," in *Science in Medieval Jewish Cultures*, Gad Freudenthal (ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 403.

⁴⁷ Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 15: 1, 22, 25.

⁴⁸ Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment*, 174.

⁴⁹ David Kamenetsky, "Haskamot gedolei ha-rabanim le-humashim shel rabi shlomo dubno [Approbations of Great Rabbis to the Pentateuch by Rabbi Solomon Dubno]" (part 2), *Yeshurun* 9 (2001): 748.

⁵⁰ In a letter to Avigdor Levi (Berlin, 25.05.1779), Mendelssohn explained he felt it was not necessary to include any *haskamot* in the prospectus itself, and asked for approbations only from

Dubno was determined not to make the same mistake. In order to win the support of various rabbinical authorities, he set off on a journey around Eastern and Western Europe, visiting such places like Vilna, Shklov, Volozhin, Brody, Lemberg, Frankfurt an der Oder, Prague, Mainz, Karlsruhe and Nancy.⁵¹ Dubno's Bible project raised significant interest, by the end of his tour he had gathered more than 1,200 subscribers. He received approbations from such eminent rabbis as Hayyim of Volozhin⁵² and Eleazar Fleckeles.⁵³ Zalman, a brother of the former, applauded in his *haskamah* the idea of comparing different *peshat* (literal) interpretations in Dubno's commentary, as well as his *Tikkun soferim*.⁵⁴ The study of grammar and the significance of the latter work was also evoked in several other approbations, for example by Rabbi Moses Eisenstadt of Kleck; Hayyim Tzvi Berlin; judge of the Mainz community, and Ya'akov Schweich, judge of Nancy. The need for a new biblical commentary was acknowledged, for example, by Shmuel ben Avigdor, the Chief Rabbi of Vilna, who reported on the disapproval of Polish and German rabbis of Mendelssohn's translation. David ben Simon Broda, a scribe and a judge of the Vilna community, wrote that "not everyone is pleased with the German translation, and certainly there is no need to explain the great benefits that his [Dubno's] commentary and *Tikkun soferim* will yield."⁵⁵ Similarly, Yechezkel Landau explained in his *haskamah* that Dubno had first asked him for approbation when he still worked with Mendelssohn on *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*. However, Landau ignored this request because the publication mixed the holy with the profane⁵⁶ through the use of the German translation, which, he believed, would cause difficulties for young Jewish readers and would distract them from study of the Torah.⁵⁷ Moses ben Mordekhai Meisel, beadle of Vilna, also expressed criticism of Mendelssohn's work in his *haskamah*:

Berlin rabbis in order to adhere to the custom; the publication was written in Judeo-German, it was never meant to yield any financial profit, and it consisted only of the translation and a commentary based on traditional rabbinical texts. Therefore, in Mendelssohn's opinion, it did not convey anything new. Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 19: 251–253.

51 The approbations have been published in Kamenetsky, "Haskamot," *Yeshurun* 9, 711–715.

52 *Pinhas ha-hatumim al ha-humashim shel rav dubno*, 96 alef or 117 (double pagination), MS A 74, The Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy, St. Petersburg; Kamenetsky, "Haskamot," *Yeshurun* 9, 726.

53 *Ibid.*

54 *Ibid.*, 13 alef. Also reproduced in: Kamenetsky, "Haskamot," *Yeshurun* 9, 715.

55 *Ibid.*, 16 alef or 6 (double pagination). Also reproduced in: Kamenetsky, "Haskamot," *Yeshurun* 9, 716.

56 [...] ki hubru la yahadav ba-hadpasah ha-hi kodesh ve-hol [...].

57 Kamenetsky, "Haskamot," *Yeshurun* 9, 733.

[...] he [Dubno] improved the Torah which was translated by Moses, a great man and his name is greater than the title of a rabbi,⁵⁸ so every man could master and speak [the text of the Scripture] like his mother tongue, and Solomon became wise and 'he dug it up' (Isaiah 5:2) when he composed the commentary in his innocence. [...] and it would be Solomon's bread, were it not for the translation, which was a source of distress to Solomon.⁵⁹ He changed his mind,⁶⁰ because some people⁶¹ complained, he 'turns from the bay' (Joshua 15:2) 'to the land of his people' (Numbers 22:5), and then he asked what he should do with his vineyard, he put aside complaints of the people and his bread, he broke the pact⁶² that Moses made with him in order to build the altar that he will publish for himself. [...] he only replaced the German [translation] with [Targum] Onkelos, and then he collected that, what gave it the seal of truth.⁶³

Even Dubno dissociated himself from the German text, which had impressed him so much in the past that he had allegedly persuaded Mendelssohn to have it published.⁶⁴ Furthermore, in an introduction to his booklets of rabbinical approbation, he writes: "Learning a foreign language yields no obligation, no commandment, and no benefit for us and it is not customary for us. It is nothing more than a waste of time in vain and, therefore, the German edition is of no use to us."⁶⁵

On the one hand, a certain interest in the publication of *Sefer netivot ha-shalom* is well reflected by the number of its readers. Although they were not German speakers, fifty-nine Polish Jews, among them four rabbis, purchased copies of the German Pentateuch edition, which in total had five hundred fifteen subscribers. Nevertheless, the majority of Polish Jewry rejected Mendelssohn's translation. A fluent command of German, which *Sefer netivot ha-shalom* purported to enhance, would give access to non-Jewish literature, and result in an increased study of

58 gadol me-rabban shemo.

59 hayah satan le-shlomo.

60 be-shanoto et ta'amo.

61 anshei planyah.

62 paratz gadro.

63 *Pinhas ha-hatumim*, 21 alef or 13 (double pagination). Also reproduced in: Kamenetsky, "Haskamot," *Yeshurun* 9, 739.

64 In *Or la-netivah*, his introduction to his Pentateuch edition, Mendelssohn wrote the following: "When the aforementioned rabbi [Dubno] saw the Torah translation in my hands, he liked it and found it useful. He therefore asked for my permission to have it printed for the benefit of students who, by the grace of God, were able to appreciate poetic language. I consented [to his proposal] on condition that [in a commentary to be written by him] he carefully point out where in my translation I had decided to follow the view of some earlier commentator and where I had departed from all previously expressed views and had chosen a different interpretation that seemed to me to be more in accord with the ways of the [Hebrew] language, as well as with the context and the Masoretic marks of intonation." Translation from Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn*, 371. The original Hebrew text was reproduced in Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 14: 243.

65 Kamenetsky, "Haskamot," *Yeshurun* 9, 749.

secular subjects such as natural sciences. Following the spread of the Haskalah within the Russian Empire, the *Bi'ur* was republished in Eastern Europe in 1836, 1847, and 1852. However, despite the fact that it was given a form that could meet the expectations of a more conservative reader (the first two editions contained Targum Onkelos, and the third edition did not include the German translation at all), it never gained much popularity among local Jewry. The publication of the work was supported by the Russian government, and, consequently, the Orthodox circles perceived it as an instrument of assimilation.⁶⁶

Dubno himself claims that the only reason why some Eastern European Jews purchased the German Pentateuch edition was his remarkable commentary and *Tikkun soferim*. According to his testimony, the subscribers, who were pleased with the content of the prospectus and with the commentary to the first two books because of its concentration on the Hebrew grammar and literal meaning of the text, were disappointed with Wessely's work ("Because the book suffered an enormous damage")⁶⁷ and regretted its purchase. Consequently, they persuaded Dubno to publish his own Pentateuch edition.

Dubno, who, thanks to his enthusiasm and reputation was very successful at promoting his project among different Jewish communities, and at gaining support of some of the most renowned rabbis, still did not manage to raise enough to finance the new Torah edition. Even though the practice of funding a publication by subscribers was not uncommon in early-modern Amsterdam,⁶⁸ and was implemented by Mendelssohn himself in printing his Pentateuch translation, for some reason Dubno decided not to resort to it, or did not manage to persuade his subscribers to offer anything more than words of encouragement. He returned to Amsterdam in 1783, where, after a failed attempt to obtain a loan,⁶⁹ he abandoned his Bible edition project. Up until his death in 1813, he devoted his life to teaching and book selling. In a letter written to Wolf Heidenheim in 1789,⁷⁰ three years after Mendelssohn had died, Dubno declared that he still considered *Sefer netivot ha-shalom* to be of great value for the instruction of the Jewish youth. Despite all the criticism aimed at the publication, he was still glad that he had had an opportunity to contribute to it.

⁶⁶ Steven M. Lowenstein, "The Readership of Mendelssohn's Bible Translation," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 53 (1982): 183, 190–193, 195.

⁶⁷ Kamenetsky, "Haskamot", *Yeshurun* 9, 754.

⁶⁸ Avriel Bar-Levav, "Amsterdam and the Inception of the Jewish Republic of Letters," in *The Dutch Intersection: the Jews and the Netherlands in Modern History*, Yosef Kaplan (ed.) (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2008), 235.

⁶⁹ Kamenetsky, "Haskamot", *Yeshurun* 9, 737.

⁷⁰ Auerbach, *Geschichte der Israelitischen Gemeinde*, 180.

While Gustav Karpeles⁷¹ denounced Dubno for withdrawing from Mendelssohn's undertaking due to "literary vanity," Alexander Altmann pointed to the significance of his role in the project and expressed regret that Dubno has not been held in high regard by contemporary academics. Furthermore, he believed that if it were not for Dubno's intervention, the *Bi'ur* would never have been published.⁷² Heinrich Graetz regarded Dubno as an outstanding scholar, "a praiseworthy exception to his countrymen,"⁷³ who abandoned the *Bi'ur* project as a result of pressure from the rabbinical elite. Conversely, David Kamenetsky suspected that Mendelssohn, whose intention was to enhance assimilation through his German Pentateuch translation, exploited Dubno's expert knowledge. Dubno, who aimed solely to spread the correct interpretation of Scripture, and who was widely known for his traditional, religious outlook,⁷⁴ would lend credibility to the *Bi'ur* project. Edward Breuer⁷⁵ regarded Dubno as a cautious follower of the Enlightenment who was alert to the potential menace that some elements of European culture could pose to the traditional Jewish worldview. David Assaf⁷⁶ and Eliahu Stern⁷⁷ perceived him as a mediator between the entourage of the Vilna Gaon and the Berlin maskilim. Pointing to Dubno's warm welcome to the Vilna community, they emphasized that the local rabbinical elite did not have an entirely negative attitude towards Mendelssohn's project, and acknowledged the necessity of composing a new biblical commentary.

While Dubno's contemporaries were aware of his significant role in the publication of *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*, many later scholars have underestimated or completely overlooked his contribution to the project. His conflict with Mendelssohn and his abrupt departure from Berlin are often absent from the latter's

71 Gustav Karpeles, *Jewish Literature and Other Essays* (Library of Alexandria, 1985).

72 Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn*, 355, 371.

73 Heinrich Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart: Geschichte der Juden vom Beginn der Mendelssohn'schen Zeit (1750) bis in die neueste Zeit (1848)* (Leipzig: Oskar Leiner, 1870), 11, 42. The translated quotation was taken from Heinrich Graetz, *History of the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1949), 5, 329.

74 Kamenetsky, David. "Haskamot gedolei ha-rabanim le-humashim shel rabi shlomo dubno [Approbations of Great Rabbis to the Pentateuch by Rabbi Solomon Dubno]" (part 1), *Yeshurun* 8 (2001), 733. For Mendelssohn's utterance of a hope for Jewish acculturation, which the publication of *Sefer netivot ha-shalom* would enhance ("Der erste Schritt zur Cultur"), see his letter to August Hennings, June 29, 1779 in Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 12: 2, letter no. 490, 149.

75 Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment*, 228.

76 David Assaf, *Untold Tales of the Hasidim: Crisis and Discontent in the History of Hasidism* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2012).

77 Eliahu Stern, *The Genius: Elijah of Vilna and the Making of Modern Judaism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 70.

biographies.⁷⁸ In addition, Mendelssohn's personality was often romanticized by his followers, who refused to report events that could cast a shadow over this legendary figure.⁷⁹

Conclusion

While Dubno was considerably influenced by Mendelssohn, especially in his interest in biblical commentary, he remained faithful to his traditional, Eastern European outlook. Thus, his intellectual pursuits were marked by an intermingling of values advocated by both rabbinical and maskilic circles. In *Alim li-terufah*, and in the introduction to Luzzatto's *La-yesharim tehillah*, Dubno testified to his dream of turning Hebrew into a fully-fledged literary language, a goal that inscribed itself into similar tendencies expressed by Enlightenment writers in German states and other European locations. He sought to achieve this goal through writing poetry and works on Hebrew grammar. At the same time, he was unwilling to compromise on his religious beliefs or to lose his reputation as a pious Jew among rabbis who did not support all the ideas espoused by the Berlin maskilim.

Although several members of the rabbinical elite in Eastern Europe denounced Mendelssohn's Pentateuch translation, they agreed that new tools were needed in order to transmit to the Jewish youth knowledge of the Scriptures. A new Torah edition could be accepted only as long as it did not carry any potential threat of assimilation into the non-Jewish society. While Dubno's biblical commentary would spread the correct interpretation of the text, his *Tikkun soferim* aimed at rectification of several spelling mistakes⁸⁰ that were prevalent in Pentateuch editions.⁸¹ In this way, he aimed to popularize the study of the Hebrew grammar and biblical exegesis, while avoiding the opposition that such far-reaching ideas like Mendelssohn's translation might have triggered. He was ready to embrace certain goals of the Prussian Haskalah, but with a large dose of caution: this, he believed, would protect the religious Jewish worldview in a much more effective

⁷⁸ Isaac Euchel, *Toldot rabeinu he-hakham moshe ben menahem* [The Life Story of Our Rabbi the Sage Moses Mendelssohn] (Vienna: G. Holzinger, 1814), 26–28.

⁷⁹ See the description of Mendelssohn in David Friedländer, *Moses Mendelssohn: Fragmente von ihm und über ihn* (Berlin: Friedrich Enslin, 1819), 12: "His unimpeachable character needs no concealment of weaknesses, his virtues no enhancement, his kindness no literary ornaments."

⁸⁰ Kamenetsky, "Haskamot," *Yeshurun* 9, 747.

⁸¹ Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment*, 27.

way than the open attitude of his coreligionists in the West toward the German Enlightenment.⁸²

In Eastern Europe, Mendelssohn's German Pentateuch translation gained popularity only among a small group of maskilim. Although a good command of German could not be used in communication with the local non-Jewish population, it could potentially enable the study of works of Western science, which was perceived by the rabbinical elite as a threat to the traditional, religious worldview. The preponderance of the Hasidic movement effectively prevented the spread of maskilic literature in Eastern Europe. Moreover, since the advocates of the Haskalah were often viewed as agents of the Russian governments, the *Bi'ur* was regarded by more Orthodox circles as a means of assimilation rather than an educational tool for Torah study, especially as its dissemination was supported by the state. Consequently, Mendelssohn's Pentateuch edition never exerted the level of influence that it gained in German lands, and it remained known only to a marginal number of readers.⁸³

⁸² Ibid., 228.

⁸³ Lowenstein, "The Readership of Mendelssohn's Bible Translation," 190–192.

Rachel Manekin

From Johann Pezzl to Joseph Perl: Galician Haskalah and the Austrian Enlightenment

An examination of the place of the Galician Haskalah within the historiography of the Hebrew Haskalah reveals two major trends. The first of these trends describes the Berlin Haskalah as the first phase of the Haskalah movement, and the Galician Haskalah as the second.¹ The second trend moves away from the model of phases, describing the Galician Haskalah as a phenomenon connected to its time and place, namely, as one of the independent expressions of the Haskalah movement.² While the second trend does not ignore the existence of ties and influences between the different expressions of the Haskalah across geographical regions, it rejects the linear, Germanocentric description according to which the Haskalah movement began in Germany, moved to Galicia, and from there continued to the Russian Empire.³ What is common to both trends is the almost complete absence of the cultural and political context of the *Austrian* Enlightenment.⁴ This article serves as a first step forward in the investigation of the Austrian context of the Galician Haskalah, focusing on several key points where there is a clear affinity between the two movements.

1 Shmuel Feiner, *Milḥemet tarbut: tenu'at ha-haskalah ha-yehudit ba-me'ah ha-19* [Culture war: the Jewish Haskalah movement in the 19th century] (Jerusalem: Karmel, 2010), 19. Feiner, 46, views the Haskalah as a historical movement characterized by uniformity and continuity stretching over several phases, the Berlin one being the first and then the Galician. The spread of the Haskalah to Galicia was made possible by individuals Feiner calls “liaisons.” He attributes to the Galician Haskalah a “radical character,” and its struggles against Hasidism he describes as “culture wars.” See *ibid.*, 70–72.

2 Jonatan Meir, *Ḥasidut medumah: ‘iyunim bi-khetavav ha-satiriyim shel Yosef Perl* [Imagined Hasidism: the anti-Hasidic writings of Joseph Perl] (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 2013), 23; 150–151. See also Gershon Hundert’s more general criticism on applying western models on developments in Eastern Europe: “History is not a train that progressively moves across Europe from west to east bringing the same developments to different countries, each in its term.” Gershon David Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century: A Genealogy of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 3.

3 On the need to move away from the model of phases in which Berlin is the starting point see Ela Bauer, “Review of Shmuel Feiner, *Milḥemet tarbut: tenu'at ha-haskalah ha-yehudit ba-me'ah ha-19* [Culture war: the Jewish Haskalah movement in the 19th century],” *Gal-Ed* 23 (2010): 173–180.

4 Meir touches upon the Austrian context but doesn’t elaborate it, see Meir, *Ḥasidut medumah*, 64–65.

The Austrian Enlightenment

Recent scholarship refers to the Austrian Enlightenment by a variety of names: the Austrian Catholic Enlightenment, Enlightened Catholicism, Reform Catholicism, and Enlightened Josephinism.⁵ While a Catholic Enlightenment also developed in Germany, its German manifestation was different from the Austrian in several essential points, notably in the influence of Jansenism on the latter.⁶ Jansenism, a Catholic religious ideology that stressed piety, ethics, and a return to the ideas of Augustine, penetrated Austria via Holland; Spanish Holland had been part of the Austrian monarchy since 1714. Jansenism did not have a similar presence in Germany. Jansenism was in essence anti-Baroque, a characteristic that stood in stark contrast to the Baroque Catholicism that was popular in Austria since the counter-reformation. Baroque Catholicism was distinguished by a growing number of pilgrimages to saints' graves, religious processions, and the attribution of holiness to different objects. Some scholars view the absorption of Jansenist ideas among the high clergy in Austria, starting in the second half of the eighteenth century, as preparing the ground for the Josephinian reforms in the last quarter of that century.⁷ Until that time, the Jesuits had exclusive control over all educational institutions in Austria, including universities and religious seminaries. This exclusive control was abolished in 1773, when the Jesuit order was dissolved.

The terms "Josephinism," or "Enlightened Josephinism," express the connection of the Austrian Enlightenment with the period of Joseph's II sole rule (1780–1790), a period described sometimes as "Enlightened Absolutism." One of the major elements of Joseph's internal policy was the carrying out of Church reforms.⁸ It should be emphasized that Joseph II did not promote the separation

5 Harm Klueting, "The Catholic Enlightenment in Austria or the Habsburg Lands," in *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe*, Ulrich L. Lehner and Michael Printy (eds.) (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 128–164.

6 Michael Printy, *Enlightenment and the Creation of German Catholicism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Klueting, "The Catholic Enlightenment in Austria," 130.

7 W. R. Ward, "Late Jansenism and the Habsburgs," in *Religion and Politics in Enlightenment Europe*, James E. Bradley and Dale K. Van Kley (eds.) (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 154–186. The Austrian Enlightenment was influenced also by Ludovico Muratori, one of the fathers of the Catholic Enlightenment. While not a Jansenist, Muratori viewed Jansenism with sympathy. On Muratori see Paola Vismara, "Ludovico Antonio Muratori (1672–1750): Enlightenment in a Tridentine Mode," in *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment*, Ulrich L. Lehner and Michael Printy (eds.) (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 259–268.

8 Derek Beales, *Joseph II: Against the World, 1780–1790* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 314–326.

of Church and State. Though a staunch Catholic, Joseph II was also influenced by Jansenist ideas. Joseph II and the members of his Court rejected Baroque Catholicism, specifically pilgrimages, processions, and what were viewed as superstitions. During Joseph's reign, pilgrimages to burial places of saints were prohibited, the number of processions was reduced, and the administration made efforts aimed at uprooting popular superstitions and generally any adherence to Baroque Catholicism.⁹ Despite these official efforts, such practices remained rooted among broad sectors of the Austrian population.¹⁰

In 1783, many of the contemplative monasteries were shut down (estimates quote 700–800 such monasteries), and their property was allocated to the establishment of schools and other practical purposes.¹¹ That same year, Joseph II also changed the way the clergy was trained, specifically by establishing seminaries in the different crown lands where the curriculum was dictated by the state.¹² While Joseph made clear that Deism and Atheism would not be tolerated in his monarchy, he was determined to apply a policy of toleration toward non-Catholic Christians and Jews. Religious toleration was one of the major principles of the Enlightenment, and the embrace of such a policy toward Protestants was opposed by the Roman Catholic Church. Historians emphasize that the toleration policy of Joseph II was more progressive than the policies of any other contemporary Catholic state.¹³

The Flood of Pamphlets

Abolishing most of the censorship regulations in 1781 brought in its wake what is referred to as the “flood of pamphlets” (*Broschiürenflut*).¹⁴ This included the publication of many works, many of them satires mocking monks, monasteries, and popular superstitions. Though labeled “pamphlets,” many of the publications

⁹ Ibid., 320–321.

¹⁰ R. J. W. Evans, *Austria, Hungary, and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe, c. 1683–1867* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 60–71.

¹¹ Derek Beales, *Enlightenment and Reform in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 227–255.

¹² Klueting, “The Catholic Enlightenment in Austria,” 147–149; Beales, *Joseph II*, 289–292.

¹³ Charles H. O'Brien, “Ideas of Religious Toleration at the Time of Joseph II: A Study of the Enlightenment among Catholics in Austria,” *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 59 no. 7 (1969): 22–31.

¹⁴ Leslie Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien: Zur Prosa der österreichischen Aufklärung 1781–1795* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1995), 117–178. This is the most detailed discussion on the subject.

were hundreds of pages long. True to the Josephinian spirit, the authors of those works wished to promote moral conduct, moderation, improved education, utilitarianism, and a return to original Christian ideas, all under the guidance of the state. The “flood of pamphlets” made use of genres such as dialogues, epistolary novels, utopian travel literature, sermons, comic novels, parodies, and visions.

Philosophical literature in the spirit of German Idealism did not take root in the Austrian Enlightenment. Instead of abstract discussions on social and political issues, which were popular in Germany, Austrian Enlightenment literature dealt with practical issues based on everyday concerns.¹⁵ This is one of the reasons why Austrian culture became the subject of criticism in literary circles in Germany, which preferred systematization and intellectual depth in their writings:

German writers tended to regard it [Austrian literature] as nothing but a provincial, second-rate product of authors “who were not even able to write correctly,” i.e., according to the linguistic norms of North and Central Germany. Since the eighteenth century, Austrian culture has often been attacked in German historiography and literary criticism from a position of abstract speculation and systematization.¹⁶

Romantic *Sturm und Drang* literature did not develop in Austria either. Scholars claim that this is the reason why Austrian literature written in the Josephinian period remained marginal within the broader German literary sphere.¹⁷

The “flood of the pamphlets” opened the gate for a new literary output dealing mostly with subjects whose interests were local, and in which religion, especially that which was viewed as superstition, and the clergy’s exploitation of the masses, occupied a central place. Many of the authors of these pamphlets were employed in the Austrian bureaucracy and wrote out of a “sense of civic duty.”¹⁸ The Austrian tradition of parody writing that started at this time, aimed at criticizing contemporary Austrian life, continued even after this period, referred to as “thawing” (*Tauwetter*), came to an end. Austrian satirical writing continued through the nineteenth century, reaching its peak in the twentieth century, with writers such as Karl Kraus (1874–1936). It was this parodic guise that enabled authors to escape fears of censorship, especially during periods of political reaction.¹⁹

¹⁵ Leslie Bodi, *Literatur, Politik, Identität – Literature, Politics, Cultural Identity* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2002), 181; 417.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 418.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 252–253.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 417–422.

Joseph Perl and the Austrian Satirical Tradition

Joseph Perl was a Galician *maskil* (follower of the Hebrew Enlightenment) well-known for his anti-Hasidic satire *Revealer of Secrets*, a work considered by some to be the first Hebrew novel.²⁰ Perl was able to secure the censor's permit to publish *Revealer of Secrets* after his more direct attack of Hasidism, *Über das Wesen der Sekte Chassidim*, was banned from publication.²¹ In his day, Perl was also known for his extensive library, which he bequeathed to the school he founded in Tarnopol. Solomon Judah Rapoport's eulogy of Perl describes the library as including rare books in Hebrew as well as in other languages, which could scarcely be found even in single copies in the country or in the monarchy. Perl's gift, wrote Rapoport, meant those books could now be enjoyed by anyone who visited the school library. Perl was known to be a God-fearing man, who never in his life transgressed even the most minor ruling of rabbinic origin.²² This defensive comment was made by Rapoport on Perl's behalf because more than half of the books in Perl's library were in languages other than Hebrew.

Although some of the manuscripts in Perl's library were recovered, until recently we knew nothing about the book titles in his library, neither of the Hebrew books, nor of books in other languages. Moreover, unlike such Galician maskilim as Judah Leib Miseses or Nachman Krochmal, who incorporated in their writings references to many non-Jewish titles, Perl never mentioned a single non-Jewish title in his works. Yet, a recently discovered list of some of his books, namely, those that were forbidden by the Austrian censor, provides us with a glimpse into Perl's broader cultural world.²³

One of the books on the censor's list of Perl's forbidden books was the travesty by Aloys Blumauer (1755–1796), *Virgils Aeneis: travestiert*.²⁴ The book is a parody of Virgil's *Aeneid*, dealing in effect with the reality of everyday life in contemporary Austria. The book appeared in installments from 1784 to 1788 and, according to Ritchie Robertson, “helped to establish travesty and parody as central to the

²⁰ See Meir, *Hasidut medumah*; Joseph Perl and Dov Taylor, *Joseph Perl's Revealer of Secrets: The First Hebrew Novel* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997).

²¹ Nancy Sinkoff, *Out of the Shtetl: Making Jews Modern in the Polish Borderlands* (Providence: Brown Judaic studies, 2004), 247, n. 141.

²² See “Letter 15,” *Kerem hemed* (1841): 163–169, esp. 164.

²³ I plan to publish the list in the near future; here I will discuss some of the broader implications of this list for understanding the cultural milieu of Galician maskilim such as Joseph Perl.

²⁴ On this work see Barbara Becker-Cantarino, *Aloys Blumauer and the Literature of Austrian Enlightenment* (Bern: Herbert Lang, 1973), 63–75.

Austrian comic tradition,” and “to unleash a flood of travesties.”²⁵ Although the book was banned after Joseph’s II death, Joseph Perl kept Blumauer’s travesty on Virgil’s *Aeneid* in his library. Additionally, Perl kept another book forbidden by the Austrian censor, a parody on Blumauer’s parody, which appeared several years after the original.²⁶ Clearly, Perl was familiar with the satires written in the Josephinian period. Of course, Blumauer did not invent the genre of satirizing classic literature. The scholar of the Haskalah movement, Shmuel Werses, lists several possible models of this genre that might have inspired Joseph Perl, but Werses did not consider Blumauer’s work, or any other Austrian satire.²⁷ German satires were considered more refined than their Austrian counterparts; the latter being generally described as crude.²⁸ Scholars quote Schiller as referring to Blumauer’s humor as “filthy wit,” thus expressing his low appreciation for this type of literature and its lack of refined aesthetics.²⁹ Similar “filthy wit” is also found in the *Revealer of Secrets*, a satire of the Hasidic praise literature, such as *In Praise of the Baal Shem Tov*, and the stories by Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, which appeared around 1815. Perl’s travesty includes vulgar descriptions written in an unrefined style.³⁰

Like several other Austrian satirists from this period, Blumauer was a Jesuit until the order was dissolved. His *Aeneis* was banned after the short period of the Josephinian Austrian Enlightenment ended, because it was viewed as attacking religion and morals. Writing it deliberately as an anachronistic work allowed Blumauer to mock superstition and the clergy’s exploitation of simple believers. The work describes individuals and events familiar to contemporary Austrian readers, such as pilgrimages to Mariazell, the small city in Styria whose church became a holy shrine and the most popular place of pilgrimage in Austria.³¹

25 Ritchie Robertson, “Heroes in their Underclothes: Aloys Blumauer’s Travesty of Virgil’s *Aeneid*,” in *The Austrian Comic Tradition: Studies in Honour of W. E. Yates*, John R. P. McKenzie and Lesley Sharpe (eds.) (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 16.

26 Wolfgang Anselm von Edling, *Blumauer bey den Göttern im Olympus über die Travestirung der Aeneis angeklagt, oder Tagsatzung im Olympus, Virgilius Maro Contra Blumauer, in puncto labefactae Aeneidis* (Leipzig: Franz Ferstl Buchandler, 1792).

27 Shmuel Werses, “Studies in the Structure of *Megaleh temirin* and *Bohen zadik*,” *Tarbiz* 31 (1962): 377–411 (Hebrew); Jonatan Meir, “The Hebrew Lucian,” *Dehak le-sifrut tovah* 5 (2015): 287–304 (Hebrew).

28 Robertson, “Heroes in their Underclothes,” 24–40, esp. 25.

29 Norbert Christian Wolf, “‘Der schmutzige Witz des Herrn Blumauer’: Schiller und die Marginalisierung populärer Komik aus dem josephinischen Wien,” in *Komik in der österreichischen Literatur*, Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler et al (eds.) (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1996), 56–87.

30 See Meir, *Hasidut medumah*, 141–142.

31 Robertson, “Heroes in their Underclothes,” 28.

Blumauer's criticism was not directed toward the authority of the Catholic Church in general, but rather against its desire for political power and exploitation of the masses.³² It was Joseph II who prohibited, in 1783, pilgrimage to this shrine during his fight against Baroque Catholicism.³³ Blumauer's characters are presented in their under garments, and there are references in his work to different bodily functions, descriptions that were among the causes of the criticisms voiced by the neighboring Germans.³⁴ Similar literary devices were used by Joseph Perl in his *Revealer of Secrets*, which includes references to such activities as the use of bathrooms,³⁵ and is written in an intentionally ungrammatical and lowbrow Hebrew.

Another important author associated with the "flood of pamphlets" was Johann Pezzl (1756–1823). Pezzl was born in Germany, but moved to Austria in 1784. He was first a novitiate in a Benedictine monastery, and later studied law in Salzburg, where he discovered the writings of Christian Wolff, as well as other works of the Enlightenment. Wolff's works were taught in law faculties in Austria at the time. One of Pezzl's best known works is *Faustin, or The Philosophical Century*, a book compared by some to Voltaire's *Candide*.³⁶ The book tells the story of Faustin, who as a result of the influence of an enlightened priest, becomes convinced that Enlightenment had spread in the world and all rulers were promoting freedom of thought and making efforts to combat superstitions, fanaticism, and suffering. When Faustin and his mentor embarked on a trip to see this with their own eyes, they discovered in one state after the next, including America, that this apparent Enlightenment is in fact fraudulent. The description of their adventures in each of the places they visit are based on a reality well-known to contemporary readers, including names of known individuals. In the end, Faustin finds what he was looking for in Joseph's II Vienna. Pezzl describes the Enlightenment there as a practical way of life rather than a set of abstract ideas without expression in everyday life.³⁷ Austrian Enlightenment thinkers like Pezzl did not see a necessary contradiction between Joseph's absolutism and Enlightenment, and believed that Enlightenment could also flourish under the aegis of a monarch.

³² Ibid., 31–32.

³³ Beales, *Joseph II*, 321.

³⁴ Robertson, "Heroes in their Underclothes," 35–37.

³⁵ For references see Yosef Perl, *Megaleh temirin: nispaḥim* [Revealer of secrets: appendices], Yonatan Meir (ed.) (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 2013), 614; 617. See also Meir, *Ḥasidut medumah*, 142, n. 67.

³⁶ Johann Pezzl, *Faustin oder das philosophische Jahrhundert* (n. p., 1783–1784).

³⁷ Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*, 185–190; Beales, *Enlightenment and Reform*, 277–278; Ritchie Robertson, "Johann Pezzl (1755–1823): Enlightenment in the Satirical Mode," in *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment*, Ulrich L. Lehner and Michael Printy (eds.) (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 227–245.

The general structure of *Faustin* – an imaginary searching journey – may have served as an inspiration for Joseph Perl's *Bohen Zadik* (1838), which records a journey aimed at discovering honest people.³⁸ *Bohen Zadik*, similarly to *Faustin*, records many contemporary known events and individuals. While scholars note similarities with Voltaire's *Candide*, they fail to look at *Faustin*, an Austrian work, as another possible model for Joseph Perl.

Another work of Pezzl, *Marokkanische Briefe*, a satire on religious fanaticism, is modelled after Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*.³⁹ The work is written as a series of letters sent by a member of a Moroccan diplomatic delegation visiting Vienna to his friend in Tangier.⁴⁰ The letters present, in a comic light, the Viennese Baroque Catholicism, and even voice direct criticism against some principles of the Catholic religion, the Bible, and the New Testament. It is considered to be Pezzl's most radical work and it was later prohibited from being published in Vienna or brought into the country.⁴¹ When Perl wrote his *Revealer of Secrets*, he probably had in front of him not only Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*, as speculated by scholars,⁴² but also a similar Austrian work.

Another work by Pezzl, *Letters from a Novitiate*, was written as a series of "authentic" letters smuggled out of a monastery.⁴³ The book is an attack on monastic life,⁴⁴ and one scholar suggests that its descriptions are based on Pezzl's own experience as a young man in a Benedictine monastery.⁴⁵ One of the recurring motifs in the book is the suppression of the sexual drive in the monastery, including descriptions of warnings against nocturnal emissions and hints of homosexuality.⁴⁶ Similar hints and descriptions were also recorded in the anti-Hasidic literature. Joseph Perl, who was himself a follower of Hasidism during his youth, does not shy away from literary discussions of the sexual drive of Hasidim.⁴⁷ Pezzl supported Joseph's II church reforms, and although he was viewed as one of the more radical authors of this period, as an Enlightenment figure he is considered rather conservative. A citizen, he writes, should conform to the state religion and keep his private beliefs to himself. He did not support

38 On Perl's *Bohen Zadik* see Meir, *Hasidut medumah*, 159–206.

39 Johann Pezzl, *Marokkanische Briefe: Aus dem Arabischen* (Wien, 1784).

40 Helmuth Rogge, *Fingierte Briefe als Mittel Politischer Satire* (München: Beck, 1966), 118–121.

41 Robertson, "Johann Pezzl (1755–1823)," 237–240.

42 Werses, "Studies," 379.

43 Johann Pezzl, *Briefe aus dem Noviziat* (Zürich, n. p., 1780).

44 Rogge, *Fingierte Briefe*, 113–118.

45 Robertson, "Johann Pezzl," 230.

46 Ibid., 233.

47 See Joseph Perl, *Megaleh temirin* [Revealer of secrets], vol. 1, Yonatan Meir (ed.) (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 2013), 205, n. 23.

the breakdown of the Christian character of the state and remained personally loyal to it.⁴⁸ This was a common position for adherents of the Austrian Enlightenment, and as such it stands to reason that it was more attractive to the Galician maskilim than the French Enlightenment or even the German example.

The use of parodies and satires as the preferred means to uproot superstitions and religious fanaticism is certainly not an innovation of the Viennese “flood of pamphlets.” The *Letter concerning Enthusiasm* (1708), written by Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713),⁴⁹ was translated into German.⁵⁰ Perl, like other Galician maskilim, was probably aware of Shaftesbury’s recommendation of satire and ridicule as the best means to suppress religious enthusiasm, or *Schwärmerei*, as it was referred to in German speaking lands.⁵¹ *Schwärmerei* was a term used frequently by Galician maskilim when describing Hasidism, indicating that they were well aware of this phenomenon and the struggle of Enlightenment figures against it.⁵² Contemporary works on comic literature cite Shaftesbury’s recommendations, and those interested in this genre were probably familiar with such works.⁵³ Still, the uniqueness of the Austrian Enlightenment, as opposed to the English or the German movements, was in its Catholic social and religious context. Figures of the German Enlightenment mocked Viennese Baroque Catholicism and were unimpressed by Viennese efforts during the Josephinian period. Especially harsh in his critique was

48 Robertson, “Johann Pezzl (1755–1823),” 242. As Robertson writes: “Although he approached the boundaries of Catholic Enlightenment, Pezzl did not – publicly at least – go beyond them.” *Ibid.*, 244.

49 On the letter see Michael Heyd, “*Be Sober and Reasonable*”: *The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 211–227.

50 Anthony Ashley Cooper, *Des Grafen von Shaftesbury Philosophische Werke*, vol. 1, Johann Heinrich Voss and Ludwig Heinrich Christoph Hölty (trans.) (Leipzig, 1776).

51 “... [T]he notion that ridicule was an effective, perhaps the only effective, antidote to resolute non-sense and ‘fanaticism’ became widespread in the eighteenth century ... But it does appear that writers of the eighteenth century defended the use of witty attack as a moral stance and perfected its application to serious issues in a way that marks a contrast with earlier centuries,” H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Exorcism and Enlightenment: Johann Joseph Gassner and the Demons of Eighteenth-Century Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 118–142. See also Moses Mendelssohn, “Soll man der einreissenden Schwärmerei durch Satyre oder durch äussere Verbindung entgegenarbeiten?” in *Moses Mendelssohn Gesammelte Schriften, Jubiläumsausgabe* (Stuttgart: Frommann, 1981), 6/1: 136–141.

52 See Rachel Manekin, “Galician Haskalah and the Discourse of Schwärmerei,” in *Secularism in Question: Jews and Judaism in Modern Times*, Ari Joskowicz and Ethan B. Katz (eds.) (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 189–207.

53 See for example: Carl Friedrich Flögel, *Geschichte der komischen Litteratur*, vol. 1 (Liegnitz: D. Siegert, 1784), 101–113.

the German Enlightenment thinker and publisher Christoph Friedrich Nicolai (1733–1811), whose journal series of articles on his travels in different countries, including Vienna, was later published as a multi-volume book.⁵⁴

A literary “debate” between two pamphlets, *Letters from Berlin* and *Letters from Vienna*, is useful in illustrating the uniqueness of the Austrian Enlightenment.⁵⁵ While the anonymous author of the fictional letters from Berlin expresses his disappointment in the Viennese Enlightenment, and looked down upon what he views as the exaggerated patriotism of the Viennese authors, Johann Friedel, his Viennese interlocutor, emphasizes that the Enlightenment in Vienna was still taking its first steps. He explains that only the authority of the state could ensure the ongoing existence of the Austrian Enlightenment, which depended on rulings from above. Friedel believed that abstract philosophical ideas would not assist in the spread and absorption of the Enlightenment in Austria. Rather, state laws would be instrumental in teaching the public ideas they found difficult to accept. According to Friedel, such coercion was rather healthy.⁵⁶ Galician maskilim held a similar view on the role of the state, and thus sought the help of the state in their political struggle against Hasidism.

The “flood of pamphlets” included many other satires and parodies, as well as epistolary works. Notably, several of the most famous titles of this period appear in the list of forbidden books found in Joseph Perl’s library after his death. Even based upon the small sample of books discussed above, the case for Austrian Enlightenment influence on Galician maskilim is compelling. While the German Enlightenment, originating in the Protestant German lands, especially in Berlin, did have some influence on the Galician Haskalah,⁵⁷ the Berlin context was rather different from the Galician context, thereby limiting its impact. After all, Galician maskilim lived under the Austrian monarchy, a state where the Catholic religion was the dominant one until 1867. A disregard of the influence of Austrian literature from the Josephinian period on the development of Galician maskilim, the motifs they chose, and the genres they used, misses a key local element in understanding the consolidation of the Haskalah in Galicia. While the Galician maskilim were active several decades after the “flood of pamphlets” period, penetration of ideas

⁵⁴ Christoph Friedrich Nicolai, *Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz, im Jahre 1781: Nebst Bemerkungen ueber Gelehrsamkeit, Industrie, Religion und Sitten*, 12 volumes (Berlin, 1781–1795).

⁵⁵ Johann Friedel, *Briefe aus Wien* (n. p., 1783); Johann Friedel, *Briefe aus Wien verschiedenen Inhalts an einen Freund in Berlin* (Leipzig, 1784); Carlo Antonio Pilati di Tassulo, *Briefe aus Berlin über verschiedene Paradoxe dieses Zeitalters* (Berlin, 1784).

⁵⁶ Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*, 170–178.

⁵⁷ Werses, “Studies,” 378–379; Meir, *Hasidut medumah*, 63–64.

from the non-Jewish world into the Jewish world often spread over several generations. Moreover, the ideas of the Austrian Enlightenment did not disappear, but rather continued to exist after the death of Joseph II. While sometimes those ideas had to be subverted and disguised, the “flood of pamphlets” literature continued to bolster the impact of the Josephinian legacy. The fact that Joseph Perl kept several works from this period in his library, despite the prohibition of the censor, is testimony to its longevity as a source of inspiration. Moreover, the world view and ideology expressed in this literature remained relevant, especially in Galicia, where maskilim searched for ways to stop the spread of Hasidism, which continued attracting an ever-growing number of Jews.

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The Figure of the Daytsh in Yiddish Literature

Berliner, berlintshik, maskil, porets ('landowner'), *meshumed* ('apostate'), *asimilator, yeke* ('Western Ashkenazi [person]')¹ ... these are among the many qualifiers to be found in Yiddish texts for the character of the *daytsh*. Though the nature of the character varies depending on the context, it appears mainly in three versions: the German Jew who is recognizable because he sports Western European dress and a partially or fully shaven face, leads a secular way of life or engages in minimal religious observance, and who uses the German language as vernacular; the non-Jewish German, who appears also as the antisemitic German in later writings; and the westernized Eastern European Jew, a figure whose combination of identities and affiliations often implied a traditional Jewish upbringing and its eventual rejection.² Nahum Stutchkoff's thesaurus shows how the word *daytsh* was used both as a non-Jewish referent (under the topics "language" and "clothing") and as a Jewish descriptor, as a synonym of "heresy." Moreover, the word is also listed under the topic "Non-Jew," referring not only to national categories but also indicating that the person for whom the term was used was deprived of Jewishness.³ The unmistakable ambiguity of the term as derived from these observations is captured perfectly by Yiddish linguist Mordkhe Schaechter's statement that "*daytsher yid*" is the only way to refer to a German Jew.⁴ In this semantical field, there is no possibility of playing around with different nuances of the word stem, as is the case when contrasting for example the adjective "*poylish*" (for example "*poylisher yid*") and the noun "*polyak*" ('Pole,' exclusively) or, following the same pattern, "*rusish*" and "*rus*." It is necessary here to further investigate terminology. Much is known about how nineteenth-century German-Jewish literature depicted the encounter with Eastern Jews leading up to the enthusiastic rediscovery

1 See for example David L. Gold, "The Etymology of Yiddish Yeke," *Zeitschrift für Dialektologie*, no. 1 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1981), 57–59.

2 For a detailed analysis of these elements, see Nicholas Alexander Block, "In the Eyes of Others: The Dialectics of German-Jewish and Yiddish Modernisms" (PhD Diss., University of Michigan, 2013), 45–50.

3 Nokhem Stutchkof [Nahum Stutchkoff], *Der oytser fun der yidisher shprakh* (New York: Yidisher visnshaftlekher institut, 1950). See entries 369 ("*shprakh*"), 522 ("*bakleydung*"), and 613 ("*umgloybn, apikorses, shmad*"). The term "*germaner*," cited in the index in relation to the term "*daytsh*," refers to entry 236 ("*nit-yid*").

4 As underlined by Block, "In the Eyes of Others," 48n16.

of the *Ostjude* in the context of the Jewish Renaissance. But Yiddish literature is also rife with passages that focus on the contrast between the traditional and the westernized Jew. From the very first works of the Haskalah, the *daytsh* was a stock character who intruded into the Eastern European *shtetl*, disturbing and endangering traditional structures and mores. A top hat and shaven face are his attributes and epitomize his ambitions. These typical items were sometimes more subtle or varied according to the fashion of the times, to include a hat, short jacket or ankle-length coat, an umbrella, a pocket watch, striped pants, a signet ring, green pants and a jacket, a hunter's hat with feather, and so on. Undoubtedly, the gaze upon the "Jewish Other" served as a mechanism that structured the self-consciousness. This study seeks to broaden the scope of the already thorough analysis offered by specialists of the Yiddish maskilic literature⁵ by opening the investigation to different periods and to texts that are not strictly belletristic – in order to catch a glimpse of the tribulations of the figure of the *daytsh* through the history of Yiddish literature.

Abraham Levie's travelogue,⁶ published in 1764, and describing the travels of a young twenty-year-old Jewish man through various European countries between 1719 and 1723, shows that "German" and East European Jews had already started to develop separate, specific identities, thus providing a basis for the two inverse literary images that would henceforth run parallel to each other. Although Jewish communities still possessed common norms across geographical and cultural borders, Levie's observations, based on his sense of each community's level of "*frayhayt*" or "*umfrayhayt*," nonetheless show his awareness of change among Jews. The distinction he draws between Western and Eastern European Jews reflects a growing dichotomy between these two groups, as illustrated by the Jews of the Moravian city of Nikolsburg, whose dress (in particular the so-called Polish "*zhupets*"), wild beards, and pious behavior (they are "*frome layt*") he describes in great detail.

A text edited first by Max Weinreich in the third issue of the YIVO publication *Filologische shriftn* (Vilnius, 1929)⁷ confirms this early antagonism between

5 See for example Dan Miron, *The Image of the Shtetl and Other Studies of Modern Jewish Literary Imagination* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000).

6 Shlomo Berger, *Travels among Jews and Gentiles: Abraham Levie's Travelogue, Amsterdam 1764*, Hebrew Language and Literature Series 3 (Leiden: Brill and Styx, 2002). See p. 70–71 for a description of the community of Nikolsburg (Mikulov).

7 For this Yiddish edition, see Max Weinreich, "Tsvey yidishe shpotlider oyf yidn," *Filologische shriftn* 3 (1929): col. 537–554. Later edited by Chone Shmeruk (1979); Commented on in detail by Ewa Geller, "Aschkenas und Polak. Ein Jahrhunderte währendender Antagonismus, exemplarisch dargestellt an einem jiddischen Streitlied aus dem 17. Jahrhundert," in *Jewish Lifeworlds and Jewish Thought*, Nathanael Riemer (ed.) (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 357–368; Mentioned by Evi

Western and Eastern models among Ashkenazic Jewry. A satirical poem entitled “*Di bashraybung fun ashkenaz un polak*” (“The Description of the *ashkenaz* and the *polak*”) and known to us from an undated print from Prague, which experts date to around 1680,⁸ is the most famous and elaborate literary example of the expression of a pre-Haskalah intra-Ashkenazic bias. The title is misleading, since the text actually describes a debate not only between a “*polak*” and an “*ashkenaz*,” but also a third person, a “*prager*,” i.e. a representative of Prague’s or perhaps Moravia’s Jewry. The term “*ashkenaz*” here reverts to its earlier denotation of a Jew in German-speaking lands (the term “*taytshland*” occurs in the poem). The confrontation between the *polak* and the *ashkenaz* comprises the major part of the poem, while the Jew from Prague plays a kind of intermediary or reconciliatory role (verses 341–354), even though he is still not depicted very positively.

The whole poem, which Max Weinreich attributed to an anonymous Polish writer—in contrast with Ewa Geller who, relying on phraseology and linguistic arguments, is more inclined to identify the author as German—consists of a series of polemical exchanges dealing with almost every imaginable subject which could temptingly be called *ex post* stereotypes: religious learning and observance, virtues, dress and appearance, eating and drinking habits, social behavior, treatment of children, and so forth. The historical context of the verbal dispute is the influx of Polish Jews escaping the Chmielnicki Massacres to the German lands, hence reflecting a post-1648 order. This satirical, rhymed song, which belongs to the German genre of the *Streitlied* or *Spottlied* (Yid. “*shpotlid*” or “*vikuakh-lid*”), should also be viewed in the context of other satirical texts mocking Polish shortcomings and chiding Polish Jews who took second wives in Germany without getting divorced first.

An impartial narrator who presents himself as the editor of the text appears in the introductory sentences. Having witnessed such ugly things during his travels across the various realms of the Ashkenazic world, he shares that he decided to commit his impressions to print in the hope of shaming the parties concerned and prompting them to repent and change their ways and thus reconcile the Jewish world: “And as soon as we have turned away from the wrong path/God will not hesitate to send us the Messiah/And He will reconcile the

Butzer, *Die Anfänge der jiddischen purim shpiln in ihrem literarischen und kulturgeschichtlichen Kontext* (Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 2003), 74–76; See also Diana Matut, *Dichtung und Musik im frühneuzeitlichen Aschkenas* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 2:381–384. I am very indebted to Jean Baumgarten, who first told me of the existence of this text.

⁸ Among them Shlomo Berger. See Shlomo Berger, “The Oppenheim Collection and Early Modern Yiddish Books: Prague Yiddish 1550–1750,” *Bodleian Library Record* 25 no. 1 (April 2012): 49n16.

Ashkenazim and the *Polakn*.⁹ The fact that no other solution but the coming of the *Meshiakh* ('Messiah') is considered gives insight into the insuperability of the tensions between both communities. Interestingly, this antagonism seems to already be enacted in symbolic issues like the appearance of the beard, a metonymy with a promising future in the literary portrayal of the Jew: the opponents here mock alternately long Polish beards and the German "*komets*-beard," a meticulously trimmed T-beard.¹⁰ The description begins with the torments suffered by the Polish Jew entering the land of Ashkenaz: the *polak* faces German Jews' lack of hospitality—which contrasts nicely with a section later on in the poem that reminds the reader of the exemplary attitude displayed by Polish Jews who welcomed German Jews fleeing the Thirty Years' War. After this narration in the third person (the narrator speaks for the *polak*), which takes up almost half of the poem, the *ashkenaz* replies (and the text therefore switches to the first person) and in his response almost surpasses the previous speaker in the radicalism of his merciless attacks against Polish Jewry. Focusing on the portrayal of the German Jew in the eyes of a Polish one highlights those elements of interest for comparison with later depictions of the Western Jew.

The Ashkenazi's mediocre dining habits, resulting from German Jew's stinginess and embodied by the tasteless *tsholent* (the traditional Shabbat stew), or the meagre portions of porridge which were served instead of a more festive roast, is an object of recurrent criticism¹¹: "Whether the *tsholent* is big or small/ Half of it needs to be left for the next day/ Alas, *tsholent* like this struggles to pass muster/ And like a peasant, the guest has to satisfy his hunger with bread."¹² The *ashkenaz*, likened to a grumbling bear, is then shown smoking a pipe, praising the virtues of tobacco for proper digestion (or perhaps to steady a less-than-full

9 In the original Yiddish: "un az mir zikh fun dem beyzn veg vern vendn/do vert undz Got Meshiakh bald zendn/der vert di ashkenazim mit di polakn fartrogn" (v. 9–11).

10 Compare here the mocking attacks: "ir polakn mit ayere breyte bert" (v. 194; "you, Polaks, with your abundant beards") vs. "er putst in avek als eyn khomets, er lozt iber eyn komets" (v. 123–124; "he trims it out as if he were conducting the ritual search for *khomets* [leavened dough], nothing is left except a *komets* [Hebrew vowel sign resembling to a truncated T]").

11 This theme should not be underestimated as it also appears in a very incomplete *purim-shpil*, a much less elaborate example dating back to around 1600 and known as the *Khazonim-shpil* of the so-called Wallikh manuscript, which introduces an Ashkenazic triad in form of an "Ashkenaz" (German), a Polish and an Italian Jewish cantor who are compared in terms of their gastronomy. See Matut, *Dichtung und Musik*, 1:452–455 for the text and Matut, *Dichtung und Musik*, 2:381 for the analysis.

12 In the original Yiddish: "der tshalit meg zayn groys oder kleyn/di helft muz fun tish oyfgehoybn zayn./der tshahlit vert dem gast nebekh zer zoyer;/er muz oykh a sthik broyt tsu esn vi eyn poyer" (v. 91–94).

stomach?). Notably, he does not even consider inviting his host to take a puff. Apart from mediocrity and rudeness, another point giving the Polish Jew cause for criticism is the Ashkenazi's lack of spirituality and religious education: "In Poland, we have more Jewish settlements and communities/Than you *ashkenazim* have prayer books and prayers."¹³

These few examples demonstrate that despite a pan-Ashkenazi consciousness, very strong local identities became apparent as early as the Early Modern period. In contrast to the hopeful expectations of the anonymous (self-) critical author of "*Di Bashraybung fun Ashkenaz un Polak*," German and Polish Jews could not be reconciled. By the nineteenth century, German Jewry, which championed a new Judaism, had never been so different from East European Jewry: German Jews were adopting German *en masse* and abandoning Western Yiddish; they wore Western clothes, men were clean-shaven; and they had developed typically German-Jewish products even in religion through Reform Judaism and "neo-Orthodoxy." These differences between Western and Eastern Jews have been summed up in the critical literature in a kind of dress-code, the very popular "*Kaftanjude*"—the Ostjude wearing a gabardine ("*chalaciarz*" in Polish, "*a yid mit a langer kapote*" in Yiddish)—facing the less popular/common/widespread? (in the sense: restricted to expert circles) "*Kravatjude*" of Steven Aschheim.¹⁴

Setting out from the premise of an early antagonism and on the basis of the original features of the *ashkenaz* as observed, if not caricatured, by a *polak*, focus turns to the proper appearance of the *daytsh* from the moment the term occurs as such in Yiddish literature. Leaving debate on the nature of literature aside, this examination utilizes a broader definition which includes folkloric sources. This allows the figure of the *daytsh* to be set within a richer constellation. Undoubtedly, authors such as Y. L. Peretz or Sholem Aleichem, who still provide the greatest examples of the literary use of this figure, would have endorsed such a strategy, enhancing as it does the "treasure of *yidishkayt*." Rather than a strictly chronological review, a thematic approach is best suited to demonstrating the different aspects this figure of the *daytsh* could assume. These can essentially be broken down into three main categories: the positive, the negative, and the ambivalent.

¹³ In the original Yiddish: "mir hobn in Poyln mer yeshuvim un kehiles/als ir ashkenazim hot makhzorim un tfiles!" (v. 175–176). See also v. 152–160.

¹⁴ Steven Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers. The East-European Jew in German and German-Jewish Consciousness 1800–1923* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982). See here chapter 3: "Caftan and Cravat: 'Old' Jews, 'New' Jews, and Pre-World War I Antisemitism," 58–79.

The Daytsh as a Positive Character

The representatives of the Second Haskalah, the Eastern European *maskilim*, pioneered the Europeanization and modernization of Jewish life according to the Berlin model. Hence, the literature of the Haskalah necessarily conveys a positive image of the westernized, modern Jew and uses it as a propaganda tool in favor of its ideas. It is fairly clear how the word *daytsh* found its way into belles lettres. A short detour into social life in Warsaw at the time allows a better understanding of the phenomenon.

After the Third Partition of Poland (1795), a number of banking families moved to Warsaw from Berlin, where the Jewish middle classes had already started to assimilate. Their example encouraged a shift to European dress and manners by others. Apart from a few exceptions (Selig Natanson, Mathias Rosen), this group was steadily becoming Christianized, if not in the second, then in the third or fourth generations (Fraenkel, Kronenberg, Bloch, Epstein, Jan). Simultaneously, there was a rise in the assimilationist trend favored by the adherents of the Warsaw Haskalah, who were eager to remain faithful to Judaism. Unlike in Western centers or in towns under German or Austrian cultural hegemony, Warsaw's Haskalah was strongly opposed by the much larger Orthodox community.¹⁵

This handful of assimilators, few at the beginning, met in the reformed synagogue on Daniłowiczkowa Street. It was known as the "German" synagogue ("*di daytshe shul*") because, for a long time, sermons there were in German, even though only a small part of the congregation came from German-speaking regions (notably Berlin, Posen and Breslau).¹⁶ The Warsaw Jews nicknamed those Jews, who shaved their beards and wore clothes in the German fashion, *daytshn*. This name stuck among the Yiddish-speaking Jews of Warsaw and was later applied to the Great Synagogue on Tłomacka Street, a sumptuous edifice opened in 1878.

Without deluding themselves about the possible evolutions of this new trend, the Orthodox leaders of the Jewish community maintained good relations with them and thus prevented a schism. This peace, however, was confined to the leadership. The hostility of the Orthodox masses to the *daytshn* often led to outbreaks of violence.¹⁷ The historian Simon Dubnow gives an insight into these developments in his *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*:

¹⁵ Stefan Kieniewicz, "Assimilated Jews in nineteenth-century Warsaw," in *The Jews in Warsaw – A History*, Władysław T. Bartoszewski and Antony Polonsky (eds.) (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 171–180.

¹⁶ Polish was only introduced in the 1850s into two progressive Warsaw synagogues before being forbidden by the Russian occupier.

¹⁷ Kieniewicz, "Assimilated Jews," 187.

The breezes of Western culture had hardly a chance to penetrate to this realm, protected as it was by the double wall of Rabbinism and Hasidism. And yet here and there one may discern on the surface of social life the foam of the wave from the far-off West. From Germany the free-minded 'Berliner', the nickname applied to these 'new men', was moving towards the borders of Russia. He arrayed himself in a short German coat, cut off his earlocks, shaved his beard, neglected the religious observances, spoke German or 'the language of the land' and swore by the name of Moses Mendelssohn. The culture of which he was the banner-bearer was a rather shallow enlightenment, which affected exterior and form rather than mind and heart. It was *Berlinerdom*, the harbinger of the more complicated *Haskalah* of the following period, which was imported into Warsaw during the decade of Prussian dominion.¹⁸

Yiddish literature best reflects this potential antagonism in all its possible nuances. Shloyme Ettinger's play *Serkele, oder a yortsayt nokh a bruder* (*Serkele, or, in Mourning for a Brother*, 1839)¹⁹ is a *comédie larmoyante* considered the first true drama to be written in Yiddish for artistic purposes. Interestingly, Ettinger's father, Yoske Ettinger, had refused the position of rabbi of Frankfurt am Main because of his desire to stay in Poland.²⁰ In the same way, his son Shloyme, a *maskil* versed in German and Hebrew, never felt the need to justify his decision to write in Yiddish. The play not only testifies to Ettinger's linguistic virtuosity (in particular through the linguistic differentiation of the characters), along with his epigrams and ballads, but also explicitly explores, among other maskilic themes, the interplay between traditional Eastern and westernized Jews. The story takes place in Lemberg (L'viv), capital of Galicia under Habsburg rule and a city of cultural influence. Freyde-Altele/Friederike, the daughter of the eponymous hero, dreams of a life far removed from all things Jewish for herself and her fiancé, Hendler. Switching from colloquial Yiddish to a highly Germanized (though not purely German) Yiddish, she says: "Ach! This is perfect for me—and with that hat with the feathers that's arriving—oh, how pretty! How glorious I'll look! Yes, I must dress in the most modern German styles, and my Hendler must too! When we look like this, and go out together for a walk—no one could ever imagine that we were Jews, that's for certain."²¹ There is no question in Ettinger's play that the appropriate groom is the enlightened figure – to be found, not in the person of the scheming Hendler, but in the young doctor Markus, who aspires to adopt Gentile culture and language, a context far removed from his current society and

¹⁸ Simon Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, from the Earliest Times until the Present Day* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1916), 384–385.

¹⁹ Shloyme Ettinger, *Ale ksuivim fun Dr Shloyme Ettinger*, vol. 2 (Vilna: Vilner farlag fun B. Kletskin, 1925).

²⁰ Joel Berkowitz and Jeremy Dauber (eds.), *Landmark Yiddish Plays: A Critical Anthology* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2006), 23.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 126. See also 30–35 for the discussion of the play.

its system of arranged marriage and reliance on both lineage (Yidd. “*yikhes*”) and money. Although the play ends with the victory of the truly enlightened figure pleading for a transformation of Jewish society (Markus Redlekh saves the innocent bride), Friederika’s exaggerated pseudo-German provides an insight into the excesses of a foolish or false Enlightenment.

Many novels or plays of the Early Eastern European Haskalah introduced the figure of the *daytsh* as the emblematic representative of the Enlightenment shedding light on the miserable *shtetlekh*, especially when these are under Hasidic domination. From the perspective of the inhabitants of the *shtetl*, the *daytsh* is nothing but an unwelcome visitor who brings modernity and traditional *shtetl* life into confrontation with each other. More particularly, the pattern of the native’s return can be found in most dramas written by the *maskilim* from the late eighteenth century onwards. The homecoming of the hero signified the ascent of the Haskalah and made it possible to move plots towards a happy ending, as epitomized by Yisroel Aksenfeld’s novel *Dos shterntikhl* ([The Headband], 1861).

In a sense, one will not find any *daytsh* portrayed in such a positive light until WWI, when he reappears on the streets of the Polish capital, this time as a specific German soldier, reminding us that before designating a modern Jew, the word *daytsh* simply signifies “German.” Later, people used to call the Germans who had driven out the Russian occupiers “*di gute daytshn*,” ‘the Good Germans,’ or “*yener Daytsh*,” ‘that first German.’²² Isaac Bashevis Singer grew up in a traditional milieu, partly in the rabbinical court his father had established after their move to Warsaw. A few pages excerpted from Singer’s collection of autobiographical stories *Mayn tatn’s bezdn-shtub* ([In my Father’s Court], 1956), written with his usual irony, provide a good example of how, over a century after the arrival of the first Berliners in Warsaw, the spirit of Enlightenment entered again the realm of Eastern European Jewry: “Discussing politics, we boys decided that it would be preferable for Germany to win—what would be gained from Russian rule? German occupation would put all Jews into short jackets, and the Gymnasium would be compulsory. What could be better than going to worldly schools in uniforms and decorated caps?”²³

Returning to the *daytsh* at the focus of this study, the westernized Jew, it is clear that a few decades after publication of the first maskilic works in Yiddish literature, the figure of the *daytsh* was still a positive one, even though he had

²² See the biography of the Lithuanian Yiddish poet Menke Katz by his son Dovid Katz in the introduction to: Dovid Katz and Harry Smith (eds.), *Menke. The Complete Yiddish Poems of Menke Katz*, Benjamin and Barbara Harshav (trans.) (New York: The Smith, 2005), xix.

²³ Isaac Bashevis Singer, *In My Father’s Court* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979), 192. First published in English in 1962.

lost some of his luster and the strategy championed by the *maskilim* seemed to be running out of steam. Mendele-Abramovitch articulates the suspicion that the Haskalah had been naïve in its valorization of European culture over Jewish tradition. The novel *Dos vintshfingerl* ([The Magic Ring], 1865) is a perfect example, though wisdom ultimately proves to be the natural magic ring, of how the *daytsh* is gradually becoming an emblem for the approaching bankruptcy of the Haskalah.

One final point is salient in relation to this first category of positive representations of the *daytsh*. Although not exempted from caricatured features, the first models were real, lifelike characters. The last item reveals another stratum of Yiddish literature—the fantastical. The entry of Yiddish literature into European modernism essentially marks an end to dogmatic nineteenth-century representations of the German Jew. Peretz, in a number of his neo-folktales, plays with the ancient midrashic motif of the visit by Elijah the Prophet. Elijah the Prophet is a ritual visitor at Jewish lifecycle events, as a place is set for him at both Passover meals and circumcisions. In tales of Elijah the Prophet, he most often appears disguised as a figure not immediately associated with holiness. Thus, Peretz lets him appear twice in the form of a *daytsh*. In the folktale “*Zibn gute yor*” (‘Seven Good Years’), a poor family, facing the impossibility of preparing for the *seder* in accordance with the Biblical prescriptions, receive a magical reward for their ethical behavior: Toyvye meets on the road a “*daytshl*” dressed as a hunter, but a few lines further, the reader learns about his identity: “It was, it turned out, Elijah the Prophet who, as is his nature, was dressed up as a *daytshl*.”²⁴ Superimposing both figures, the prophetic and the temporal, operates like redemption for the *daytsh*. Yet the careful reader should bear in mind that in the later story “*Iber a shmek tabak*” (‘A Pinch of Snuff’),²⁵ the *daytsh* is a demon sent by Satan to defeat the Chelmer Rabbi. In the folktale “*Der kuntsnmakher*” (‘The Magician’), Peretz does not use the word *daytsh*; however, the attributes of the main character leave little doubt as to his very nature: the magician wears a top hat and is clean-shaven, but possesses “a truly Jewish face.” He is totally unobservant and seems to survive without eating. By the end of the story, the magician provides a grand Passover meal for a poor Jewish couple and disappears. The reader is told that he was Elijah the Prophet.²⁶

²⁴ Yitskhok Leybush Peretz, *Ale verk*, vol. 5 (New York: Cyco, 1947), 106. This is indeed a very old Hebrew motif (see Midrash *Ruth Zuta*), which eventually reappears in Hassidic literature.

²⁵ Peretz, *Ale verk*, vol. 5, 254–259.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 147; For the English see Hillel Halkin (trans.), “The Magician,” in *The I.L. Peretz Reader*, Ruth Wisse (ed.) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 218; For a thorough discussion of “The Conjuror,” see David Roskies, *A Bridge of Longing. The Lost Art of Yiddish Storytelling*

The Daytsh as a Negative Figure

Probably as far back as the middle of the nineteenth century, performance troupes performed songs portraying encounters between the Hasid and the *daytsh*. Some of these can be found in the collection of satirical folk songs of Yoel Linetski entitled “*Der beyzer marshalik*” (‘The Vexed Wedding Jester,’ Warsaw, 1879). In the most emblematic acts, as recorded in a number of memoirs and songbooks, the actors’ parodying effects spare neither one nor the other.²⁷ Israel Grodner, a talented Broder singer (an itinerant Jewish performer, thus called after the city of Brody), thus conceived of an act in which cursing between the two characters escalates into a brawl until the violence culminates and transforms into dance—the *daytsh* dancing a Hasidic dance and the Hasid dancing a Russian Komarinsky.²⁸

Depending on the audience, another configuration consisted in ridiculing only one of the protagonists, in this case the *daytsh*. In a series of *purim-shpiln* described as “temporal” by Y.L. Kahan, the editor of the fifth issue of the review *Filologishe shriftn* (1938),²⁹ the dramaturgy is based on the opposition between a Hasid – or alternatively a group of Hasidim – and their *rebbe*, and a “*daytsh*.”

In the first play (number fourteen of the collection), collected in Łódź and entitled “*Khosid-daytsh-shpil*” (‘Play of the Hasid and the *daytsh*’), a *daytsh* turns up at a Hasidic gathering celebrating Purim at the *rebbe*’s home. He wears the traditional attributes of modernity or heresy, a top-hat and a signet ring (alternatively, like in *saynète* 15, a top hat with a tail coat). The play opens with the *rebbe* and Hasidim reciting Kiddush in a rather eccentric way, since they mix different blessings. The *daytsh*, who does not understand Hebrew, feels excluded from this ceremony, which is in reality completely farcical. He wants to take part in the Kiddush but is unable to say the blessing. Irritated by a Purim song evoking Haman and King Ahasuerus and of which he feels himself to be the target, he revolts by launching a debating contest in which two-verse arguments alternate – a form reminiscent of the first maskilic attacks against

(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 139–142; See also Marie Schumacher-Brunhes, “Entre tradition et modernité. L’œuvre de Y. L. Peretz” (Thèse de doctorat, Université de Lille, 2005), 539–542.

²⁷ See Alyssa Quint, “The Salon and the Tavern” in *Inventing the Modern Yiddish Stage*, Henry Berkowitz (ed.) (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2012), 46–48.

²⁸ See Israel Berkovitch, *Hundert yor yidish teater in Ruménye, 1876–1976* (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1976), 31.

²⁹ Yehude Leyb Kahan (ed.), “Filologishe shriftn V. Yidisher folklor,” *Shriftn fun yidishn visn-shaftlekhn institut*, vol. 9 (Vilna: Yivo, 1938), 265–271. The texts were ready for publication as early as 1931.

Hasidism. The Hasid has the final say when he invites one of his fellows to come and daub the *daytsh*'s face with soot. The play ends with this humiliation. Of the Hasid's arguments in response to the attacks, his opponent presenting him as boorish, malodorous, fanatical and false, the following is illustrative: "You see this *daytsh* with his grand, high-rise hat/You'd think he was a rich man when he's really a beggar, in fact. [...] Just look at that *daytsh* with his gold signet ring/For him, smoking a cigarette on Shabbat is no sin."³⁰

The Hasidic argument in the debate does indeed draw on motifs found in many songs or ditties current among religious youth, thus singling out secular Jews' heretical ways of life.³¹ An interesting example, drawn from the collection of folk songs gathered by Y. Skuditsky in the 1930s, reads as follows: "He wears his trousers over his boots/And eats like a non-Jew/Without washing his hands// Respectable and fine, fine, fine/A *daytsh*, a *daytsh* he must be./He walks in the street and steals a bun/And on the Sabbath he smokes his pipe."³² This ditty clearly shows how the figure of the *daytsh* is superimposed over that of a heretic indulging in sin, abandoning God and piety – theoretically for money and material welfare. Such a motivation is still not particularly manifest in these rhymes where the thief is probably driven merely by deprivation, unless he is acting out of nostalgia for traditional Jewish food – an argument with a promising future.

It is therefore no surprise when, in the second *purim-shpil* of the Kahan series which was collected in the region of Lwów/Lviv, the name "*daytsh*" is associated in the discourse of the Hasid with the qualifier "*meshumed*" ('convert, apostate'), hardly a compliment. This second short play is also of great interest because its entire structure relies on a humorous device that results from playing with the lexical confusion that emerges from the proximity between Yiddish and German.

³⁰ In the original Yiddish (*Filologishe shriftn*, 268): "kukt nor on dem daytsh mit dem hoykhn tsilinder,/me ment, er iz a noged, dervayl iz er fun meylekh evyens lender. [...] kukt nor on dem daytsh mit zaynem goldenen signet/a papiros in shabes iz bay im gor nit keyn khet."

³¹ As, for instance, this ditty from the category "children's rhymes," reproduced in a collection of Galician Yiddish folksongs: "*daytsh, daytsh, kuk zikh on!/host a ponem, vi a hon!/A ring oyf di finger,/dayn vayb mit di kinder/shtarbn far hunger.*" See Dov Noy and Meir Noy (eds.), *Yiddish Folksongs from Galicia: The Folklorization of David Edelshtadt's song "der arbeter" [and] Letters* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1971) 221. In this song, the shortcomings of Hasidism mocked by secular society are inverted: the proud *maskil* or his descendant is starving his wife and children in order to afford the external trappings of modernity.

³² Zalmen Skuditsky, *Folklor-lider*, vol. 2 (Moskve: Farlag Emes, 1936), 333; Ruth Rubin, *Voices of a people. The Story of Yiddish Folk Song* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, [1963] 2000), 275n7. The Yiddish original reads as follows: "Geyt er di hoyzn iber di komashn/Frest vi a goy umgevashn//Orntlekh un fayn, fayn, fayn,/A daytsh, a daytsh muz men zayn //Geyt er in gas un ganevet a bulke/Un um shabes reykheret er di lulke."

A lot of *daytsh* jokes (and later *yeke* jokes) work on the basis of such a device.³³ It is hardly surprising that precisely those *purim-shpiln* were collected as late as the 1930s in Łódź and in Lwów, two cities with significant German minorities, two regional metropolises where the strategy of assimilation was particularly attractive. In the last *purim-shpil* of the series (number sixteen), which is limited to a fragment, the character of the *daytsh* is even associated with the violent curse “*yemakh-shmoy*” (‘May His Name Be Blotted Out’) in the list of the various actors needed.³⁴ To erase the names of persons is not merely to destroy them physically but to eradicate every vestige of their being and the awareness others have of them, i.e. to annihilate them spiritually.

In Peretz’s journalistic works, the word “*daytsh*” is a strict synonym of “assimilationist” and “(follower of) Reform Judaism.” Though condemning mummified orthodoxy, Peretz, the thinker and activist, did not look kindly on reforms that failed to understand the very essence of *yidishkayt*. In his essay “*Vegn vos firm op fun yidishkayt*” (‘Paths that Divert from *Yiddishkayt*’), an ironic, if not angry, survey of the cultural and political alternatives current in the Jewish world³⁵ published as a series of articles in the Warsaw Yiddish daily *Der fraynd* from March 1 to May 11, 1911, Peretz devoted one page to describing the attempts of Reform Judaism as necessarily doomed, since its endorsers had merely superimposed foreign forms on a Jewish body from which the soul had already departed. It was, he noted, a masquerade staged by the congregants of the Great Synagogue in Warsaw, the last defense of the assimilationists who, he said, were still hesitant to convert. What remained of *Yiddishkayt* was relegated to the synagogue, which no one trusted to call a “*shul*” anymore: people attended the so-called “temple” to hear a German “*Gottesdienst*” (‘service’) led by a rabbi dressed like a pastor, and enjoyed a mixed male and female choir accompanied by an organ: “It has to ring out! As in church! And if that is not possible on Shabbat, well, let it ring out on a Sunday! Something has to remain. And we cut things out, we transform and we embalm But what is dead is dead!”³⁶

³³ Ettinger’s *Serkele* too. See for example the very beginning of Act I, Scene 4.

³⁴ The characters of this *purim-shpil* are indeed three Hasidim with their rebbe, a *bar-mitsve* (a boy just reaching his religious maturity), and a “*daytsh, a yemakh-shmoynik*.”

³⁵ For a thorough analysis, see Michael Steinlauf, “Hope and Fear: Y. L. Peretz and the Dialectics of Diaspora Nationalism, 1905–1912,” in *Warsaw. Jewish Metropolis. Essays in Honor of the 75th Birthday of the Professor Antony Polonsky*, Glenn Dynner and François Guesnet (eds.) (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 242–247.

³⁶ Peretz. *Ale verk*, vol. 9, 182.

The Daytsh as Ambivalent Character

This study's final category examines instances where the *daytsh* appears as an ambivalent figure, suspended between two worlds, ranging from decisive and benevolent to eerie and even evil. Peretz is the master of such depictions. Behind the disturbing feelings resulting from the ambivalence that the dual nature of the term "*daytsh*" generates, the impression of vagueness emanates precisely from the ambiguous role devoted to the *daytsh* in his stories. The example in Peretz's "Monish" (1888), his first poem in Yiddish, is widely known. In this satirical and reflective ballad, the young Monish, an *iluy*, a talented *yeshiva* student, is seduced and driven to destruction by the daughter of a *daytsh* who has traveled from Danzig to the *shtetl*. Notably, the daughter character is referred to as Marye in the 1888 and 1892 versions, which the literary critic Criticus, a pen name for none other than Simon Dubnow, interpreted to mean that Marie's character was trying to get Monish to convert to Christianity. However, in 1908, Peretz deleted any mention of her name and instead replaced it with the word *daytshke*. Avrom Novershten was among the first who noticed this fundamental ambiguity. This raises the question of what Peretz was trying to convey to his readership with this change. Perhaps that being torn away from a traditional life by a *daytshke*, the representative of a disastrous reformulation of *yidishkayt*, is even worse than falling into the radical trap of conversion to Christianity. Whatever the case, the fact remains that the result of this fatal encounter between the traditional world and a misdirected and badly harnessed modernity was the first declaration of love for Yiddish by a writer embracing artistic modernity.³⁷

In this sense, the figure of the *daytsh* is a necessary evil. This is evident within Peretz's next masterpiece, *Bilder fun a provints-rayze* ([Impressions from a Journey through the Tomaszow Region], 1890), which sublimates the encounter of center and periphery. *Bilder fun a provints-rayze* drives to a painful, but salutary, if not redemptive, experience decentering the subject. The *Rayze-bilder* were written as a result of Peretz's experience as a census taker among rural Jews as part of Jan Bloch's statistical expedition. The *daytsh* in the *Rayze-bilder*, who appears more like a *porets*, a Polish nobleman, than a Berliner, possesses some intentional autobiographical similarities to Peretz; the fusion of author and narrator is explicit. The arrival of the statistician in the marketplace of Tishevits/Tyszowce and his wanderings through the *shtetl* trigger a series of panic attacks. Peretz, who is deliberately playing with the maskilic motif of the prodigal son's return to the *shtetl*, gradually reverses the movement, driving towards a final

37 Block analyzes this work and its genesis very thoroughly. See "In the Eyes of Others," 50–53.

questioning of modernity by the statistician himself: rather than changing the *shtetl*, the *shtetl*, resisting his efforts at classification and containment, changes him. The optimistic agent of urban modernity is gradually overcome by the same anxieties and is made to question the desirability of what he took to be the antinomy of *shtetl* decline and decay.³⁸

In 1904, Peretz added a new chapter to these *Rayze-bilder*, entitled “Dos vasrl” [The Pond]. The chapter fits well with the rest of the book, but the substance is enriched by his *Folkstimlekhe geshikhtn* [Stories in the Folk Vein], which he was working on at the time and which marks his move towards neo-Romanticism and symbolism. The narrator, a Europeanized Jew, travels in a coach and enters into discussions with his travel companion Reb Moyshe, beseeching him to explain the presence of a nearby pond. He expects a completely irrational narrative and is not disappointed. Indeed, all the requisites of a supernatural story in the Hasidic manner are present: there used to be a *shtetl* there which repeatedly escaped destruction thanks to the piety of one of its inhabitants, a *lamedvovnik* (one of the Thirty-Six Hidden Saints), before a final flood provoked by an “angel of fire” erased it for good from the face of the Earth. Fundamentally, the difference between this story and the previous ones in the *Rayze-bilder* cycle rests upon the narrator’s relationship with the story as told to him: namely, he has ceased to be the improvised receptacle for the narrative and has become a consumer of anecdotes and legends, curious and conscious of his desire. The cosmological struggle between the elements of fire and water, culminating in the destruction of the *shtetl*, is in clear contrast not only with the rational discourse of the earlier sections of Peretz’s *Bilder fun a provints-rayze*, but also with the chapters addressing the narrator’s own duality and the dilemmas of *shtetl* life. The final flood is preceded by a fire lit from the pipe of a *daytsh* who has come to the *shtetl* to speculate in real estate, a kind of stand-in for the narrator who spends his time asking for information and writing it down (Yidd. “*farshraybn*”):

Not a week has gone [...] when there arrives from the devil knows where someone who claims to be a German Jew and starts making inquiries about doorsills and other lumber products. He doesn’t do any buying; he just walks around with a pipe in his mouth and asks about prices and takes notes – smokes his pipe and takes notes. So one evening a little breeze springs up, snatches a spark out of his pipe, and speeds off with it to a thatched roof.³⁹

³⁸ See for example Schumacher-Brunhes, “Entre tradition et modernité,” 428–431.

³⁹ Milton Himmelfarb (trans.), “The Pond,” in *The I. L. Peretz Reader*, Ruth Wisse (ed.) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 83. The Yiddish original reads as follows: “Es geyt nisht avek a vokh [...], kumt ontsuform fun aldi shvartse yor mekloymersht a *daytshl*, fregt zikh nokh vegn shveln un ander gehilts. Koyfn koyf er nisht, nor er geyt arum *mit a pipke* in moyl un fregt oys

There is no doubt that the Europeanized visitor from the big city, the capitalist traveling to the straw-and-earth-shtetl, whose last tie to the traditional life is his pipe, embodies modernity. Thus, Reb Moyshe's cosmological interpretation of the *shtetl*'s fate notwithstanding, it is modernity that precipitates the ruin of the *shtetl* rather than being its promise of salvation.⁴⁰ As a consequence, the narrator's *raison d'être* ceases to exist, since there is no longer a *shtetl* to be redeemed from backwardness, or even to set down on record. All he can do is remember the meditation of Reb Moyshe who, albeit with bonhomie, anticipates the burning questions of Peretz's later publicistic works:

All of a sudden everything is topsy-turvy. Young men in the *yeshiva* become Zionists, and then they throw away the Talmud and do all kinds of wicked things. Contrariwise, when German Jews become Zionists, they recover their *Yiddishkayt*. Shaven beards, and *Yiddishkayt*! [...] What has that to do with the pond? What has it to do ... Please don't take this amiss. Let's assume a German Jew becomes religious again and it's the anniversary of his mother's death. He goes to a Jewish restaurant and for the repose of her soul orders kugel [a baked pudding of potatoes]. Kugel is his *Yiddishkayt*. Maybe your *Yiddishkayt* is stories. Is this the anniversary of a death for you?⁴¹

Conclusion

This overview of the metamorphoses of the figure of the *daytsh* ends with this Peretzian telescoping of the mythical and the real, historical *daytsh*, resulting in the burning and insistent questioning of the very nature of *Yiddishkayt*. This study has shown the non-monolithic nature of East European Jews' response to German Jewry. Referring to all modern Jews only as "Germans," whether they were German or Eastern European in origin, was clearly a result of the Judeo-centric character of Eastern European Jewish culture. The richness and variety of the responses to previous fearful representations of the *daytsh* in the literature of the Haskalah show how the figure of the *daytsh* continued to fertilize the self-consciousness of the heirs of the *polakn*, helping them to define or enhance

vegn mekokhim un farshraybt...Pipket un farshraybt, un es bavayzt zikh eynmol farnakht *a vintl*, un khapt aroys a funk fun der pipke, un yogt aroyf oyf a shtroyenem dakh!" (Peretz, *Ale verk*, vol. 2, 202).

⁴⁰ For this, see also Marc Caplan, "The Fragmentation of narrative Perspective in Y. L. Peretz's *Bilder fun a provints-rayze*," *Jewish Social Studies* 1 (Fall 2007): 84.

⁴¹ Ibid., 78; Also Peretz, *Ale Verk*, vol. 2, 197 for the Yiddish original. Himmelfarb translates the word "Yiddishkayt" as "Judaism." I chose here to restore the term "*Yiddishkayt*," which means, in Reb Moyshe's language, "piety," "religiosity."

their own sense of self, either as orthodox Jews, Hasidim, workers, or modernist writers. A multitude of other *daytshn* serve a similar purpose—those fooled by the Chelmer Jews in Y. Y. Trunk's tales published after WWII⁴²; the *daytsh* who seduces the adulterous wife in a WWI-era soldier's song in Vilna⁴³; the character passionate about Lessing as portrayed by Sholem Ash,⁴⁴ or his less friendly counterpart, the somewhat monstrous Moritz Shpilrayn of Y. Y. Singer's short story "Perl" ('Pearls,' 1919)⁴⁵; along with the various *daytshn* scattered about in the works of Sholem Aleichem and Y. L. Peretz. Indeed, a story by Sholem Aleichem entitled "Der daytsh" (1902) stands out as a humorous and far-echoing response to the recriminations of the seventeenth-century *polak* complaining about German hospitality.⁴⁶

42 Y. Y. Trunk, *Khelmer khakhomim oder yidn fun der kligster shtot in der velt* (Buenos Aires: Farlag Yidbukh, 1951). The sixteenth story, "Tsvey Khelmer khakhomim geyn opnarn di narishe velt [Two Wise Men of Chelm Go to Fool the Foolish World]", relates the adventures of Reb Leybush and Reb Feyvush in Prussia, the land of the "Kaiser of the yekes."

43 See the song "Der daytshl" in the section devoted to war songs in the chapter "Materyaln tsum yidishn folklor" of Zalmen Reyzen (ed.), *Pinkas far der geshikhte fun Vilne in di yorn fun milkhome un okupatsye* (Vilna: historish-etnografishe gezelschaft oyfn nomen fun An-ski, 1922), 938–939.

44 Sholem Asch, "Der kleyner daytsh" *Haynt* 111 (May 14, 1926). Analyzed by Block, "In the Eyes of Others," 103–105.

45 Israel Joshua Singer, *Perl un andere dertseylungen* (Warsaw: Farlag Kultur-lige, 1922), 7–48. See here in particular p. 16. Although the old man Shpilrayn sports the external attributes of the Emancipation, among them his admiration for Lessing, he is a monument to the insolent permanence of the Jewish traditional world.

46 Sholem Aleykhem, *Ale verk*, vol. 16 (Vilna: Vilner farlag fun Kletskin, 1925), 133–147.

Steffen Krogh

Dos iz eyne vahre geshikhte ... On the Germanization of Eastern Yiddish in the Nineteenth Century

1 Introduction

1.1 *Daytshmerizms*, Previous Research, Chronology of Recent German Impact on Eastern Yiddish

The designation ‘Yiddish’ originates from the Yiddish adjective יידיש *yidish* ‘Jewish,’ cf. German (henceforth: G) *jüdisch* ‘Jewish.’¹ It applies to the German-origin vernacular of the non-assimilated Jews in Germany and contiguous Western and Central European countries on the one hand, and in large parts of Eastern and East-Central Europe on the other hand – termed Western Yiddish and Eastern Yiddish respectively. Western Yiddish already began to disappear from German-speaking areas in the beginning of the nineteenth century and eventually became extinct in the second half of the twentieth century. Eastern Yiddish, by contrast, is still spoken by several hundred thousand speakers worldwide. The majority of these speakers belong to large ultraorthodox groups, particularly in the US and in Israel. Until the outbreak of World War II, Eastern Yiddish was the mother tongue of approximately ten million Jews in Poland, the Soviet Union, the Baltic States, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Romania, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of Yiddish-speaking immigrants overseas, first and foremost in North and South America.

1 The Yiddish sentence which forms the initial part of the title of the present paper was extracted from the subtitle of a narrative by Ayzik-Meyer Dik, *Der siem hatoyre* [The ceremony of the Torah completion], published anonymously in Vilna in 1868; cf. David G. Roskies, “An annotated bibliography of Ayzik-Meyer Dik,” in *The Field of Yiddish. Studies in Language, Folklore, and Literature. Fourth Collection*, Marvin I. Herzog, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Dan Miron, and Ruth Wisse (eds.) (Philadelphia: The Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1980), 152–153, no. 79. This study follows the transcription of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research; cf. Uriel Weinreich, *College Yiddish. An Introduction to the Yiddish Language and to Jewish Life and Culture*, Sixth Revised Edition, First Printing (New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 1999), 26–27. I thank the following people for advice and suggestions: Marion Aptroot, Jürg Fleischer, Dovid Katz, Simon Neuberger, Yitskhok Niborski, Kathrine Thisted Petersen, David Roskies, the late Mordkhe Schaechter, and Avraham Zaks.

The Yiddish adjective *daytshmerish* terms a specific style category in the history of Eastern Yiddish. The *daytshmerish* style arose in the beginning of the nineteenth century and reached its peak between ca 1880 and ca 1920. *Daytshmerish* means ‘German-style’ or ‘German-like’ and refers to a considerable number of German linguistic features which, during the period mentioned, entered written, and, in part, also spoken Eastern Yiddish.² It should not be confused with so-called Ashkenazic German (G *Jüdischdeutsch*), i.e., pure German written with Hebrew characters, which, from the days of Moses Mendelssohn until ca 1900, was widely used not only in the German-speaking areas, but also in large parts of Eastern Europe.³ In the present study, the noun *daytshmerizm* designates the linguistic features in question in written Eastern Yiddish from 1800 until the present day.

There have been two attempts to trace the etymology of the word *daytshmerish*. The first attempt interpreted *daytshmerish* as *deutsch-mährisch* and related it to the region of Moravia (G *Mähren*), located east of Bohemia.⁴ The second attempt assumed that *daytshmerish* originated from an older form *daytsherish* with a derogatory *-m-*.⁵ Neither of these attempts has proved entirely satisfactory, and thus this etymological question still awaits a comprehensive investigation.

The phenomenon *daytshmerish* was considerably important for the emerging Eastern Yiddish written language. However, despite this, there has been little sincere research on the subject since the beginning of Yiddish linguistics at the end of the nineteenth century. Most attempts by prewar Yiddish linguists to describe it do not go beyond puristic pamphlets.⁶ Thus far, nobody has

2 Cf. Noyekh Prilutski, “Metodologiske bamerkungen tsum problem daytshmerish [Methodological remarks on the problem of daytshmerish],” *Yidish far ale* 8 (1938): 209.

3 Cf. Paul Wexler, “Ashkenazic German (1760–1895),” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 30 (1981): 119–130; Werner Weinberg, “Die Bezeichnung Jüdischdeutsch. Eine Neubewertung,” *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 100. Sonderheft. *Jiddisch. Beiträge zur Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft* (1981): 268.

4 According to Yuda A. Yofe, “Hundert un fuftsik yor yidish [One hundred and fifty years of Yiddish],” *Yivo-bleter* 15 (1940): 92, *daytshmerish* was the designation that the indigenous Jewish population of sixteenth-century Cracow used for the idiom spoken by Jewish emigrants from Bohemia. Unfortunately, Yofe does not confirm this claim with evidence of any kind.

5 Noyekh Prilutski, *Dos gevet. Dyalogen vegen shprakh un kultur* [The bet. Dialogues on language and culture], vol. 1 (Varshe: Kultur-lige, 1923), XLVII; Noyekh Prilutski, “Shpet-loshn [Mocking language],” *Yidishe filologye* 1 (1924): 36–37.

6 Cf., for example: Dr. X [Ludwik Zamenhof], “Vegen a yudisher gramatik un reform in der yudisher shprakh [On a Yiddish grammar and a reform of the Yiddish language],” *Leben un visenshaft* 1 (May) (1909): 53–56; Dr. X [Ludwik Zamenhof], “Proben fun a yudisher gramatik [Excerpts from a Yiddish grammar],” *Leben un visenshaft* 7 (January) (1910): 91–94; Sh[muel] Niger, “Daytshmerish [Daytshmerish],” *Leben un visenshaft* 2, 11–12 (1912): 49–55; B[er] Borokhov,

embarked on a typology of *daytshmerish* features or a historical outline of the phenomenon.⁷ Anyone who attempts to fill this research gap soon realizes that this task involves considerable work. Ideally, one would need to work through immense amounts of texts, particularly Yiddish newspapers, which were printed on a daily basis not only in prewar Eastern Europe, but also in Jewish centers in America, first and foremost in New York City. A would-be specialist on *daytshmerish* features is confronted with the question of where to begin and how to continue the task.

The article *Daytshmerish toyg nit* by Max Weinreich (1894–1969)⁸ is probably the best-known contribution to the debate on this issue. Notwithstanding Max

“Di oyfgabn fun der yidisher filologye [The tasks of Yiddish philology],” *Der Pinkes* 1 (1913): 1–22; [M.] Olgin, “Vi men darf nit shrayben yudish. (Notitsen fun a lezer) [How Yiddish should not be written. (Remarks by a reader)],” *Di yudishe velt* 1 (1915): 44–45; Z[elig] Kalmanovitsh, “‘Nay yidish’? III. Daytshmerish [‘New Yiddish’? III. Daytshmerish],” *Literarishe bleter* 67 (1925): 21–22; Z[elig] Kalmanovitsh, “Der shoyresh fun daytshmerish [The roots of daytshmerish],” *Yidish far ale* 8 (1938): 209–216; Prilutski, *Metodologiske bamerkungen*; N[oyekh] P[rilutski], “Zhargonizirung fun yidish [The jargonization of Yiddish],” *Yidish far ale* 1 (1938): 3–6; M[ax] Weinreich [M[aks] Vaynraykh], “Daytshmerish toyg nit [Germanisms are not acceptable],” *Yidish far ale* 4 (1938): 97–106, reprinted in *Yidishe shprakh* 34 (1975): 23–33; M[ax] Weinreich [M[aks] Vaynraykh] and Zalmen Reyzen, “Ven zol men nitsn ‘als’? [When should ‘als’ be used?],” *Yidish far ale* 1 (1938): 21–22.

7 Cf., for example, A. Goldstik, “Daytshmerish ken tsu nits kumen [Germanisms may be of some value],” *Yidishe shprakh* 6 (1946): 15–21; Solomon A. Birnbaum [Shloyme Birnboym], “Fun daytshmerizm biz der heyl in der midber yehude [From Germanisms to the cave in the desert of Judea],” *Yidishe shprakh* 13 (1953): 111–112; Yudel Mark, “Vos iz a vort fun der yidisher shprakh? [What is a word in Yiddish?],” *Yidishe shprakh* 13 (1953): 139; Yudel Mark, “Vegn shedlekhe un nitslekhe daytshmerizmen [On harmful and useful Germanisms],” *Yidishe shprakh* 23 (1963): 65–87; Yudel Mark, “Kloymershte, sofekdike un nitslekhe daytshmerizmen [Presumable, dubitable, and useful Germanisms],” *Yidishe shprakh* 24 (1964): 1–19, 65–82; Max Weinreich [Maks Vaynraykh], *Geshikhte fun der yidisher shprakh. Bagrifn, faktn, metodn* [History of the Yiddish language. Concepts, facts, methods], vol. 2 (Nyu-York: Yidisher visnshaftlekher institut – Yivo, 1973), 115–117; Christopher Hutton, “Normativism and the Notion of Authenticity in Yiddish Linguistics,” in *The Field of Yiddish. Studies in Language, Folklore, and Literature. Fifth Collection*, David Goldberg (ed.) (Evanston: Northwestern University Press and the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 1993), 14–28; Ewa Geller, “Zum Kampf gegen den ‘Dajtschmerismus’ in der jiddischen Sprache,” in *Deutsch als Wissenschaftssprache im Ostseeraum – Geschichte und Gegenwart. Akten zum Humboldt-Kolleg an der Universität Helsinki, 27. bis 29. Mai 2010*, Michael Prinz and Jarmo Korhonen (eds.) (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011), 289–301. See also the summary of the entire controversy in Dovid Katz [Hirshe-Dovid Kats], *Tikney takones. Fragn fun yidisher stilistik. Geboyt oyf printsipn vos zaynen oyfgeshtelt gevorn durkh dem mekhabers foter, dem yidishn poet Meynke Kats* [Amended amendments. Issues in Yiddish stylistics. Based upon principles established by the author’s father, the Yiddish poet Menke Katz] (Oksford: Oksforder yidish, 1993), 166–239.

8 Weinreich [Vaynraykh], *Daytshmerish toyg nit*.

Weinreich's other merits in the field of Yiddish linguistics, it is worth emphasizing that this famous paper of his does not contain any significant information on the topic at issue. The work of his younger colleague, Mordkhe Schaechter (1927–2007), by contrast, is more informative. In books and articles, Schaechter, albeit also a strict purist, listed and discussed a considerable number of *daytshmerish* features and suggested ways to replace them with words, phrases, and grammatical constructions that – in his opinion – were more authentic.⁹

During the period between ca 1880 and ca 1920, newspapers and so-called *shund* ('trash') novels were highly *daytshmerish* in their language, because the authors and editors of such writings were oriented towards contemporary German examples and ideals and strove to imitate not only their content but also their language. In the opinion of the worldwide Yiddish-speaking community at the time, Yiddish was, after all, not a language of its own, but a variety of German. However, it would be a mistake to assume that the phenomenon of *daytshmerish* was confined to newspapers and popular fiction, because virtually everybody who published in Yiddish during this period was under the spell of the *daytshmerish* fashion. Even world-famous and classic writers such as Sholem-Yankev Abramovitsh (Mendele Moykher-Sforim, 1835–1917) and Sholem Aleichem (1859–1916) wrote in such a *daytshmerish* style in their early works that one would immediately classify these works as *shund* if one was unaware of their authorship. Mendele's *Dos vintshfingerl* ('The magic ring') from 1865 and Sholem Aleichem's *Shomers mishpet* ('Shomer's trial') from 1888 are cases in point. It is mostly unknown to posterity that these two classic writers also succumbed to the *daytshmerish* fashion. There are two reasons for this: The novel *Dos vintshfingerl* was subsequently expanded and revised by the author, and the majority of the *daytshmerizms* were eliminated. *Shomers mishpet* maintained its status as an important work by Sholem Aleichem, particularly through a

9 Cf., for example: Mordkhe Schaechter, "The 'hidden standard': a study of competing influences in standardization," in *The Field of Yiddish. Studies in Language, Folklore, and Literature. Third Collection*, Marvin I. Herzog, Wita Ravid, and Uriel Weinreich (eds.) (London, The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1969), 284–304; Mordkhe Schaechter, "Four Schools of Thought in Yiddish Language Planning," *Michigan Germanic Studies* 3 no. 2 (1977): 52–55; Mordkhe Schaechter [Mordkhe Shekhter], *Laytish mame-loshn. Observatsyes un rekomendatsyes* [Authentic Yiddish. Observations and recommendations], vol. 1 (Nyu-York: Yidish-lige, 1986); Mordkhe Schaechter [Mordkhe Shekhter], "Laytish mame-loshn. Fardrosik. Oder vos iz frier – der tsvontsikster yorhundert tsi der akhtseter? [Authentic Yiddish. Fardrosik. Or what came first, the twentieth or the eighteenth century?]," *Oyfn shvel* 284–285 (1991–1992): 36–41; see also Dovid Katz [Hirsh-Dovid Kats], "A shtekele arayn, a shtekele aroys, di daytshmerishe gefar iz – oys [At long last, the *daytshmerish* danger is over]," *Yidishe kultur* 53 no. 5 (1991): 24–31 for a discussion with M. Schaechter.

Russian translation, but it was never included in the authoritative Yiddish editions of Sholem Aleichem's works, and, therefore, it never became a subject for sincere scholarly debate.

The chronology of *daytshmerizms* can be divided into the following five sections:

1. Prelude: ca 1800 to ca 1840;
-partial gap in the records-
2. Beginning: ca 1860 to ca 1880;
3. Peak: ca 1880 to ca 1920;
4. Decline: ca 1920 to ca 1940;
5. Second flowering: ca 1950 to the present.

Due to the severe restrictions on the publication of Yiddish and Hebrew books during the second half of the reign of the Russian Emperor Nicholas I, there exists only a limited number of Eastern Yiddish texts from the period between ca 1840 and ca 1860. It is for this reason that the second phase of the above chronology of *daytshmerizms* begins about 1860.

It is a common misconception that the recent features borrowed from New High German that we usually term *daytshmerish* are limited to spelling and vocabulary. The German impact went significantly further. At least in written Eastern Yiddish, it also included inflectional and derivational morphology as well as syntax.

The peak of *daytshmerizms*, the period from ca 1880 to ca 1920, is characterized by the following two tendencies:

1. The impact on the levels of lexicon and grammar is profounder than in the previous period; the German influence on Yiddish spelling remains unchanged.
2. There is barely a text in Eastern Yiddish from around 1900 that does not contain *daytshmerish* elements. This is why I classify the previous period, from ca 1860 to ca 1880, in which far from everybody wrote according to *daytshmerish* standards, as the "beginning."

The aim of the present study is to outline *daytshmerizms* in written Eastern Yiddish. Performing the same task with spoken Eastern Yiddish warrants a separate study.

1.2 Methodological Deliberations

Before embarking on a description of the phenomenon *daytshmerish*, it is wise to ascertain whether the feature or features in question are actual borrowings.

In other words: How can one be sure that a suspected *daytshmerizm* is actually a *daytshmerizm*?

First, there are two famous Eastern Yiddish texts printed in 1815 – *Sipurey mayses*, a collection of fairytales by Reb Nakhmen Bratslever, and *Shivkhe ha-Besht*, a collection of legends about the founder of Eastern European Hasidism, Israel ben Eliezer Baal Shem Tov. These two relatively comprehensive sources are almost devoid of *daytshmerish* features, both in spelling and at the levels of vocabulary, morphology, and syntax. In other words, from the language of these two texts it can be deduced that *daytshmerish* could not have been the natural state of affairs in Eastern Yiddish at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Secondly, there are the Eastern Yiddish dialects, which, for the most part, are well attested from the first half of the twentieth century onwards. They provide evidence for what can be considered authentic Eastern Yiddish at the levels of vocabulary, morphology, and syntax. If a given feature suspected of being a *daytshmerizm* is either not attested or occupies a peripheral position in the dialects, it is in all likelihood not authentically Yiddish but a *daytshmerizm*.

The most important evidence, however, is provided by the *daytshmerizms* themselves. *Daytshmerish* loanwords mostly display a phonological shape that is different from what is known about Eastern Yiddish sound changes. Take, for example, the suffix *-loz* ‘-less,’ which, etymologically, corresponds to G *-los* and which is attested in numerous *daytshmerish* adjectives such as *makhtloz* ‘powerless.’ This suffix cannot be considered authentically Yiddish, since its vowel, according to the Eastern Yiddish sound laws, ought to appear diphthongized as *-oy-* (Central and Southeastern Yiddish) or *-ey-* (Northeastern Yiddish). Likewise, the consonantal sequence *-pf-* in, for example, Eastern Yiddish *opfern* ‘to sacrifice,’ is incompatible with authentic Yiddish, since West Germanic **-pp-* remains unaffected in the branch of High German on which Eastern Yiddish is based; compare, for example, G *Apfel* ‘apple’ versus Eastern Yiddish *epl*. Germanic-origin nouns such as *libe* ‘love’ and *shtele* ‘spot’ ending in *-e* must also be viewed as *daytshmerizms*, since, in authentic Yiddish, their final *-e* ought to have undergone apocope centuries earlier, as is the case in such authentically Yiddish nouns as *hits* ‘heat’ (G *Hitze*) and *kelt* ‘cold’ (G *Kälte*). Furthermore, the way *daytshmerizms* usually occur in a given text is also indicative of the linguistic make-up of the text. A given *daytshmerizm* is by no means always used consistently in a text. Very often, it remains an exception, and the authentic spelling, word, inflection, or syntactic construction is found in the previous or following line or on one of the previous or following pages.

In other cases, it may be more difficult to spot a *daytshmerizm* if the phonological shape of the word in question does not conflict with the sound laws of

authentic Yiddish; take, for example, such lexemes as *foter* ‘father’ and *muter* ‘mother’ (G *Vater*, *Mutter*; authentically Yiddish (henceforth: AY) *tate*, *mame*). Likewise, the adjectival ending *-es* in, for example, *keyn gutes* (G *kein Gutes*; AY *keyn guts*) and the historical subjunctive *het* (G *hätte*; AY *volt gehat*), which are frequently found in nineteenth century Eastern Yiddish writings, cannot a priori be discarded as *daytshmerish*, simply because they do not correspond to what is known from modern Standard Yiddish usage. It is still possible that they are mere archaisms, i.e., residuals from an older stage of Eastern Yiddish.

As previously mentioned, the heyday of *daytshmerizms* was the period from ca 1880 to ca 1920. However, it would be another mistake to focus exclusively on this period, since *daytshmerizms* are already present in at least some Eastern Yiddish sources from the beginning of the nineteenth century, and since, after ca 1920, they never completely disappeared. In modern Haredi Yiddish texts, they are still present and vibrant.¹⁰

2 Ayzik-Meyer Dik as a Case in Point

In view of the current state of research on *daytshmerish* features in Eastern Yiddish, this paper approaches its subject by selecting one text for an in-depth examination – to exemplify the most prominent features of recent German impact on Eastern Yiddish.¹¹

An instructive example of many of the aforementioned points is offered by the work of Ayzik-Meyer Dik (1814–1893), who, based in then Russian Vilna, was one of the best-known and most prolific representatives of popular Yiddish fiction in the nineteenth century.¹² Therefore, to illustrate some of the most characteristic elements borrowed from recent German into Eastern Yiddish, this

¹⁰ Steffen Krogh, “The foundations of written Yiddish among Haredi Satmar Jews,” in *Yiddish Language Structures*, Marion Aptroot and Björn Hansen (eds.) (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2014), 76–77, 84–87.

¹¹ The two nineteenth-century dictionaries, Joachim Heinrich Campe, *Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache*, vols. 1–5 (Braunschweig: In der Schulbuchhandlung, 1807–1811) and Daniel Sanders, *Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache. Mit Belegen von Luther bis auf die Gegenwart*, vols. 1–2 (Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1860–1865), give us a lexicographic baseline for the examination of the German-origin lexemes in Dik’s narrative. Consequently, in the present study, the designation “German” generally refers to the state of affairs not in the twenty-first but in the first half of the nineteenth century. To a twenty-first-century speaker of German, a number of the German-origin traits found in Dik’s narrative may seem outdated.

¹² Cf. Zalmen Reyzen, *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur, prese un filologye* [Lexicon of the Yiddish literature, press, and philology], vol. 1. Drite oyflage (Vilne: B. Kletskin, 1928), 711–734;

paper examines Dik's narrative *R' Shmaye der gut yon tev bitter* ('Reb Shmaye, the holiday well-wisher'), in its first edition – printed in Warsaw in 1860.¹³ Dik's narrative reflects the author's native Northeastern Yiddish dialect but also includes a certain amount of dialectal traits of southern (Central Yiddish / Southeastern Yiddish) provenance, particularly in the areas of phonology and inflection, which are absent from this idiom. Either Dik himself or the Warsaw-based publisher must have inserted them in order to attract readers from outside the Northeastern Yiddish area.

2.1 Spelling

Dik's text displays the types of orthographic borrowing from contemporary German listed below. In the majority of instances, the trait in question is not consistently used.

2.1.1 Vowels

1. *Ayen-hey* אַײַן-הײַ <eh> (cf. G <eh>), rendering [ɛ], occasional: *tsehen* 'ten,' G *zeh(e)n* (5); *gezehen* 'seen,' G *gesehen* (8); *geshehen* 'happen,' G *geschehen* (8); *fornehme* 'distinguished,' G *vornehm* (13); *akhtsehen* 'eighteen,' G *achtzehn* (15); *nehrung* 'aliment,' cf. G *Nahrung* 'aliment,' *nähren* 'to nourish' (19, ≠ AY *nerung* 20); *nehmen* 'take,' G *nehmen* (21, ≠ AY *nemen* 5); *ehre* 'honor,' G *Ehre* (22, ≠ AY *erlikhe* 'reputable' 63); *mehr* 'more,' G *mehr* (28, ≠ AY *mer* 29).
2. *Hey* הַ <h> after other vowels, occasional: *vahre* 'true,' G *wahr* (3); *ihre* 'its,' G *ihr* (7, ≠ AY *ire* 7); *tsihet on* 'attracts,' G *zieh(e)t an* (7); *friher* 'in the past,' G *früher* (8, ≠ AY *frier* 'prior to that' 44); *ihr* 'her,' G *ihr* (15, direct object, ≠ AY *ir* 15); *angeborene* 'innate,' G *angeboren* (24, ≠ AY *geborin* 'born' 32); *geyhet* 'goes,' G *geh(e)t* (25, ≠ AY *geyt* 62); *ihr eyniklikh* 'great-grandchildren,' G *Urenkel* (31, ≠ AY *ir ir eyniklikh* 'great-great-grandchildren,' G *Ururenkel*, 31); *aruhig* 'a quiet,' G *ruhig* (54, ≠ AY *umruig* 'nervous' 56); *agelihe* 'a borrowed,' G *geliehen* (60); *fertsayhlekh* 'excusable,' G *verzeihlich* (64); *blihung* 'flowering,' G *Blühung* (66). In *angeborene* and *ihr eyniklikh*, Dik even exceeds the German use of <h>.

Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur [Bibliographical dictionary of modern Yiddish literature], vol. 2 (Nyu-York: Alveltlekher yidisher kultur-kongres, 1958), 518–524.

¹³ Roskies, *An annotated bibliography*, 142, no. 25.

3. *Tes-hey* תס <th> (cf. G <th>), rendering the consonant [t], sporadic: *gutmithe-kayt* ‘good-naturedness,’ G *Gutmüthigkeit* (7); *thetig* ‘active,’ G *thätig* (12).
4. <e> instead of AY <a> in the following prefixes:

be- (cf. G *be-*), frequent: cf., for example: *beshraybung* ‘description’ (1); *besheftigt* ‘busy’ (1); *bereyder* ‘slanderer’ (3); *bemerkt* ‘noticed’ (5); *bezukhin* ‘visit’ (12); *bezunder* ‘separately’ (13); *betrakhten* ‘observe’ (14); *zikh* [...] *benemen* ‘behave’ (23); *beloynt* ‘rewarded’ (23); *bedaytung* ‘meaning’ (24); *bezitst* ‘owns’ (25); *zikh* [...] *benugin* ‘be content’ (32). ≠ AY *ba-* in, for example, *bakumen* ‘got’ (9).

ent- (cf. G *ent-*), only once: *entshlosin* ‘decided’ (67). ≠ AY *ant-* in: *antkegin* ‘towards’ (71); *antlofin* ‘run away’ (75).

fer- (cf. G *ver-*), frequent: cf., for example: *fershmayet* ‘busy’ (1); *ferdorbene* ‘corrupted’ (3); *fershteyn* ‘understand’ (4); *ferikhten* ‘repair’ (12); *ferkalotset zikh* ‘is tapping’ (17, cf. Russian заколотиться ‘to start beating’); *ferdinen* ‘earn’ (22); *ferleykenen* ‘deny’ (24); *zikh* [...] *fershmuest* ‘had a conversation’ (25); *fershprokhin* ‘promised’ (38); *fershoynt* ‘spared’ (42); *ferdrus* ‘resentment’ (61). ≠ AY *far-* in, for example, *far firen* ‘entice’ (12).

2.1.2 Consonants

1. Double-consonant spelling, which is frequent in other German-style writings throughout the nineteenth century: only once in *gut yon tev bitter* ‘holiday well-wisher,’ cf. G *bitten* ‘to request’ (1 heading, ≠ AY *gut yon tev biter* 1).
2. Etymological spellings in words with final, frozen devoicing of:
 - *b*: in the prefix *ob-*, in approximately half of the relevant instances; cf., for example: *zikh* [...] *obgishtelt* ‘stopped’ (18); *ob gientfert* ‘retorted’ (18); *obfiren* ‘take’ (23); *ob geshikt* ‘sent away’ (24); *ob gelozin* ‘shabby’ (35); *brengt* [...] *ob* ‘returns’ (39); *ob leygin* ‘store up’ (43); *pater shoyb ob* ‘Finish it!’ (46); *zikh* [...] *obgetrogen* ‘got away’ (59). ≠ AY *op-* in, for example, *op gehalten* ‘delayed’ (58).
 - *d* in a number of lexemes: *hand* ‘hand,’ G *Hand* (22, ≠ AY *hant* 13); *vind* ‘wind,’ G *Wind* (29); *toyzind* ‘thousand,’ G *tausend* (31, ≠ AY *toyzenter* ‘thousands’ 7); *vand* ‘wall,’ G *Wand* (34, ≠ AY *vent* ‘walls,’ G *Wände* 44); *zind* ‘since’ (40, hypercorrect, cf. (archaic) G *sint*); *ovend* ‘evening,’ G *Abend* (49); *gezind* ‘health,’ G *gesund* ‘healthy,’ *Gesundheit* ‘health’ (51, ≠ AY *gezunt* ‘healthy’ 4); *geld* ‘money,’ G *Geld* (53, ≠ AY *gelt* 53); *shtod* ‘town’ (63, hypercorrect, cf. G *Stadt*, ≠ AY *shtot* 7); *zikh bagenugend* ‘is content’ (64, hypercorrect, cf. G *-t*).

- *g*: almost exclusively confined to the suffix *-ig* (cf. G *-ig*), in which it appears in approximately half of the relevant instances; cf., for example: *leydig* 'loafers' (7); *heyiligen* 'saint' (10); *untsaytigen* 'ill-timed' (10); *zaytigin* 'extraneous' (11); *giherig* 'appropriate' (11); *thetig* 'active' (12); *lebidigi* 'living' (17); *shtromidigin* 'rushing' (18); *fartig* 'ready' (19); *nekh-tigin* 'spend the night' (21); *eybigkayt* 'eternity' (22); *reynigen* 'cleanse' (22); *rikhtig* 'correctly' (23); *lumpigin* 'mean' (25); *vikhtig* 'important' (25); *fertsig* 'forty' (25); *shtendig* 'always' (26); *tsvantsig* 'twenty' (32); *veynig* 'little' (35); *neytig* 'necessary' (35); *hayntigin* 'this' (45); *akalekhDIGE* 'a round' (48); *trogedige* 'pregnant' (48); *ibrige* 'remaining' (50); *aruhig* 'a quiet' (54); *hungerig* 'hungry' (56); *shpitsige* 'sharp' (56); *blutigen* 'make bleed' (56); *aroyts geyendig* 'leaving' (62); *draysig* 'thirty' (67). ≠ AY *-ik* in, for example, *shtendik* 'always' (11). Except for the above-mentioned *aroyts geyendig* (62), the present participle always features *-ik*, cf., for example, *zitsendik* 'sitting' (75). Cf. also the hypercorrect *tsang* 'quarrel,' G *Zank* (61, ≠ AY *tsank* 39). *arop* 'down' (11), *ahipshe* 'a considerable' (13), and *avek* 'away' (46) are apparently not associated with their German cognates *herab*, *hübsch*, and *weg* and are therefore spelt phonetically.
- 3. Unmarked epenthetic *d/t* between *l/n* and subsequent *s*, *z*, or *sh*, very frequent: *unz* 'us,' G *uns* (1); *menshen* 'person,' G *Mensch* (4, ≠ AY *mentshen* 'persons' 3); *unzer* 'our,' G *unser* (6); *kuns* 'skill,' G *Kunst* (20); *halz* 'neck,' G *Hals* (29, ≠ AY *haldz* 76); *ales* 'everything,' G *alles* (46, ≠ AY *alts* 54); *ganz* 'goose,' G *Gans* (55); *vinshen* 'wish,' G *wünschen* (74). In the Yiddish etymon *bentshn* 'to bless' – e.g. בעניצען *bentsen* 13 (infinitive), געבנטשטן *gebentshten* 44 (past participle)¹⁴ – which has no German cognate, the epenthetic *t* is explicitly marked throughout the text.¹⁵

It is noteworthy that the following *daytshmerish* spellings, which can be found in other Eastern Yiddish writings from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, are absent from Dik's narrative:

- *y* <e> rendering [ey] (cf. the monographic German spellings <e, ö, ä>);
- *ø/œ* <o> rendering [oy] (cf. the monographic German spelling <o>);
- *y* <ie> rendering [i] (cf. the digraphic German spelling <ie>);
- <פּפּ> <pf> and <טּטּ> <tt> as adoptions of the spelling of the German affricates <pf> and <tz>.

¹⁴ Both forms are cited without the niqqud of the original.

¹⁵ On the etymology of Eastern Yiddish *bentshn*, see Erika Timm, *Historische jiddische Semantik. Die Bibelübersetzungssprache als Faktor der Auseinanderentwicklung des jiddischen und des deutschen Wortschatzes. Unter Mitarbeit von Gustav Adolf Beckmann* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2005), 186–187.

<s> instead of AY <sh> in the suffix *-nish*, *G -nis* – *tsu nemens* ‘nickname’ (5); *beshefnesh* ‘creature’ (21); *shvernes* ‘difficulty’ (22) vis-à-vis *-nish* in: *bashefnish* (19); *bedarfnish* ‘need’ (20); *oyskumenish* ‘livelihood’ (64) – is, in all likelihood, due to the merger of [ʃ] and [s] in Northeastern Yiddish and, consequently, not a *daytshmerizm*.¹⁶

2.2 Lexicon

The group of recent German loanwords in Dik’s narrative is inevitably heterogeneous. Firstly, it consists of various chronological layers, as some of the words must have entered Eastern Yiddish earlier than others; for example, the relative and interrogative pronoun *velkher* ‘who, which; which, what,’ *G welcher*, which is attested in *Shivkhe ha-Besht* from 1815,¹⁷ vis-à-vis the adjective *abergloybish* ‘superstitious,’ *G abergläubisch*, which is obviously more recent. Secondly, it comprises not only single words belonging to various lexical classes but also entire phrases and even sentences. Thirdly, the group of single words includes not only content words, i.e. nouns, adjectives, and verbs, but also function words such as pronouns and subordinating conjunctions. Fourthly, there is not always a one-to-one correspondence in terms of semantics, phonology, morphology, and syntax between the loanwords found in Dik’s text and the German counterparts of these, i.e., at least in some cases, there must have been an incomplete transmission of the word from the source to the target language. Take, for example, *oyb voyl* (38), which means ‘even if’ in Dik’s text but whose German source word, by contrast, means ‘although,’ and *entshlosin* ‘decided’ (67) which Dik employs without the otherwise obligatory reflexive pronoun *zikh* (cf. *G sich entschließen* and modern Standard Yiddish *antshlissn zikh*).¹⁸ Moreover, in some of the cases where entire linguistic units are meant to be perceived as German, there are obvious signs of interference from authentic Yiddish; cf., for example, the authentically Yiddish verb-second word order in the subordinate clause of the following sentence:

¹⁶ Cf. Mordkhe Schaechter [Mordkhe Shekhter], “Litvish-dialektish shprakhvarg in Ginzburg un Mareks gezeml [The Lithuanian dialect of Yiddish as reflected in Ginsburg and Marek’s anthology of Yiddish folksongs],” *Yivo-bleter*. Naye serye 2 (1994): 183–184 with further references.

¹⁷ Cf. Steffen Krogh, “Zur Syntax in der jiddischen Version der ‘Schivche ha-Besht’ (1815),” *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 129 (2007): 213n63.

¹⁸ Cf. Yudl Mark (ed.), *Groyser verterbukh fun der yidisher shprakh* [Comprehensive dictionary of the Yiddish language], vol. 3 (Nyu-York; Yerusholaim: Komitet farn groysn verterbukh fun der yidisher shprakh, 1971), 1577, s.v. *antshlissn zikh*. Dik may have confused this verb with the non-reflexive AY *bashlissn* ‘to decide’ or simply omitted the reflexive pronoun due to the adjacent prepositional phrase *bay zikh* ‘within himself.’

- *zey zolin visen mayn her dos zey zind eyn (boshtard)* [sic] ‘You should know, sir, that you are a bastard’ (23)
versus the German equivalent with sentence final position of the finite verb:
- *Sie sollen wissen, mein Herr, daß Sie ein Bastard sind.*

It follows both from Dik’s biography and narrative that Dik had acquired a certain command of German¹⁹ and regarded German as the language of civilized discourse. The latter can be seen from his references to German notions and terminology, cf., for example:

“Unter di file nareshkayten vos di alte velt hot gigloybt vor oykh eyn narisher gloybin vos men ruft es in tayts (eyn dopel genger) dos heyst men hot gegloybt dos es iz do azelkhe menshen vos tsaygen zikh dopel” ‘Among the numerous stupidities in which the Old World believed there was also a foolish notion which, in German, is called a double, that is, it was believed that there existed people who appeared double’ (47).

Moreover, in a number of cases, Dik uses a German word that he subsequently glosses with a word or an explanation in Yiddish (cf. the examples below).

The examined material can be divided into five sections:

1. Content words, for example (arranged chronologically):
nur ‘only,’ G *nur* (1, ≠ AY *nor* 11); *biten* ‘request,’ G *bitten* (1, only in *gut yon tev biten* ‘to wish [someone a] happy holiday,’ in all other instances, Dik uses the authentically Eastern Yiddish form *beten*, for example 55); *shprikhvort* ‘proverb,’ G *Spruchwort* (1); *vahre* ‘true,’ G *wahr* (3, ≠ AY *emes* 52); *tsunge* ‘tongue,’ G *Zunge* (3, ≠ AY *tsung* 27); *vunde* ‘wound,’ G *Wunde* (3); *artst* ‘doctor,’ G *Arzt* (4, ≠ AY *dokter* 4 as a gloss); *kerper* ‘body,’ G *Körper* (4, ≠ AY *aguf* ‘a body’ 30); *nikht* ‘not,’ G *nicht* (4, ≠ AY *nit* 5); *herts* ‘heart,’ G *Herz* (5, ≠ AY *hartsen* 72); *art* ‘manner,’ G *Art* (5, ≠ AY *shteyger* 51); *heyl* ‘good, benefit,’ G *Heil* (6); *abergloybishe* ‘superstitious,’ G *abergläubisch* (7); *yetst* ‘now,’ G *jetzt* (7, ≠ AY *atsund* 3, *itsund* 51); *ungetsifer* ‘vermin,’ G *Ungeziefer* (7); *zelbst* ‘itself’ (in the expression *es far shteyt zikh shoyn fun selbst* ‘it goes without saying’), G *selbst* (7, ≠ AY *aleyn* 9); *yud* ‘Jew, man,’ G *Jude* (8, or perhaps a residual from Western Yiddish?); *ende* ‘end,’ G *Ende* (8, ≠ AY *sof* 43); *bezukhin* ‘visit,’ G *besuchen* (12); *brandvayn* ‘vodka,’ G *Branntwein* (13, ≠ AY *branfen* 43); *fornehme* ‘distinguished,’ G *vornehm* (13); *anfang* ‘beginning,’ G *Anfang* (14, ≠ AY *on heyb* 19); *hoykhshprekherke/hoykhshprekherin* ‘a woman who talks a lot and loudly,’ a German-Yiddish hybrid, cf. G *sprechen* ‘to speak’

¹⁹ Cf. Max Weinreich [Maks Vaynraykh], *Bilder fun der yidisher literaturgeshikhte. Fun di onheybn biz Mendeley Moykher-Sforim* [Images from the history of Yiddish literature. From the beginnings until Mendeley Moykher-Sforim] (Vilne: Farlag ‘Tomor’ fun Yosef Kamermakher, 1928), 294.

(15); *gishprokhn* ‘talked,’ G *sprechen* (17, ≠ AY *giret* 3); *libi* ‘love,’ G *Liebe* (18); *mansperzon* ‘a male person,’ G *Mannsperson* (18); *lezirin* ‘(female) reader,’ G *Leserin* (18); *nun* ‘well,’ G *nun* (19, ≠ AY *nu* 70); *virt* ‘becomes,’ G *werden* (19, cf. Section 2.4.3 below); *fragi* ‘question,’ G *Frage* (19, ≠ AY *akashe* ‘a question’ 42); *vayzhayt* ‘wisdom,’ G *Weisheit* (20, ≠ AY *khokhme* 20); *antvort* ‘answer,’ G *Antwort* (20); *gerade* ‘just,’ G *gerade* (20); *toygenikhtn* ‘good-for-nothing’ (plural), G *Taugenicht(s)* (21); *ehre* ‘honor,’ G *Ehre* (22, ≠ AY *koved* 46); *zikh* [...] *benemen* ‘behave,’ G *sich benehmen* (23, ≠ AY *hot zikh* [...] *gefirt* ‘behaved’ 27, *zikh* [...] *noyeg zayn* ‘behave’ 32); *boyershe* ‘peasant’s,’ G *bäu(e)risch* (23); *her* ‘landowner; gentleman; Mr.,’ G (*Guts*)*herr/Herr* (24, 58, 61); *nakhfrage* ‘inquiry,’ G *Nachfrage* (24); *angeborene* ‘innate,’ G *angeboren* (24); *zite* ‘custom,’ G *Sitte* (25, ≠ AY *mide* 25, *mineg* 43); *firten* ‘fourth,’ G *viert* (25, ≠ AY *ferdi* 30); *yudishe* ‘Jewish,’ G *jüdisch* (26, or perhaps a residual from Western Yiddish?, ≠ AY *idishe* 26); *um zinst* ‘in vain,’ G *umsonst* (27, ≠ AY *umzist* 11); *geendert* ‘changed,’ G *ändern* (28); *entveder* ‘either,’ G *entweder* (30); *benah* ‘almost,’ G *beinah(e)* (31, ≠ AY *kimat* 38); *ayn geladin* ‘invited,’ G *einladen* (31); *shpinen gevebe* ‘cobweb,’ G *Spinn(en)gewebe* (34); *zakhe* ‘concern,’ G *Sache* (35, ≠ AY *zakh* ‘matter’ 17); *fershprokhn* ‘promised,’ G *versprechen* (38); *shtunde* ‘moment,’ G *Stunde* (38, ≠ AY *sho* 39); *befor* ‘before,’ G *bevor* (39); *imer* ‘always,’ G *immer* (39, ≠ AY *shtendik* 39); *runde* ‘round,’ G *Runde* (42); *zikh* [...] *bemihen* ‘take the trouble to,’ G *sich bemühen* (43, ≠ AY *zikh* [...] *klopotsen* 53); *ler* ‘empty,’ G *leer* (45, ≠ AY *leydig* 45, in the synonymous pair *leydig un ler*); *tsaygen zikh* ‘appear,’ literally: ‘show themselves,’ G *zeigen* (47, ≠ AY *vayzen* ‘show’ 46); *arbeyt* ‘work,’ G *Arbeit* (50); *anders* ‘different,’ G *anders* (55, ≠ AY *andersh* 43); *tsum bayshpil* ‘for example,’ G *zum Beispiel* (57, ≠ AY *lemoshl* 53); *dame* ‘lady,’ G *Dame* (58); *vagt zikh* ‘dares,’ G (*sich*) *wagen* (58); *glentst* ‘is shining,’ G *glänzen* (59); *zikh ferirt* ‘misses the mark,’ cf. G *sich verirren* ‘to lose one’s way’ (60); *fristik* ‘breakfast,’ G *Frühstück* (60, ≠ AY *iber baysens* (plural) 38); *shats* ‘treasure,’ G *Schatz* (60); *irtum* ‘mistake,’ G *Irrthum* (60, ≠ AY *toes* 60 as a gloss); *nakhbar* ‘neighbor,’ G *Nachbar* (60, ≠ AY *shkheyrim* ‘neighbors’ 60); *vorhayt* ‘truth,’ G *Wahrheit* (64, cf. *beemes* ‘truly,’ literally: ‘in truth’ 21); *fertsayhlekh* ‘excusable,’ G *verzeihlich* (64); *fragen* ‘ask,’ G *fragen* (65, ≠ AY *fregin* 19); *ya* ‘yes,’ G *ja* (65); *antvorten* ‘answer,’ G *antworten* (65, ≠ AY *enferin* 45); *filaykht* ‘perhaps,’ G *vielleicht* (65); *zelbst* ‘even,’ G *selbst* (65, ≠ AY *afile* 54); *vayzt zikh heroys* ‘proves to be,’ cf. G *sich herausstellen* (65–66, ≠ AY *muz zikh* [...] *aroys vayzin* 23 ‘must become apparent’); *firtsig* ‘forty,’ G *vierzig* (66, ≠ AY *fertsig* 25); *blihung* ‘flowering,’ G *Blüfung* (66); *entshlosin* ‘decided,’ G *sich entschließen* (67); *urzakh* ‘cause,’ G *Ursache* (67); *erst* ‘first,’ G *erst* (68, ≠ AY *ersht* 41); *ayngeveyde* ‘intestines,’ G *Eingeweide* (70); *zonst* ‘otherwise,’ G *sonst* (71); *gezikht* ‘face,’ G *Gesicht*

(71, ≠ AY *ponem* 71); *eygentimer* ‘owner,’ G *Eigenthümer* (71); *zele* ‘soul,’ G *Seele* (71, ≠ AY *neshome* 54); *vayli* ‘moment,’ G *Weile* (72, cf. *der vayl* ‘meanwhile’ 72); *shpore* ‘prop,’ cf. G *Sparre(n)* ‘rafter’ (74); *geshikhte* ‘story,’ G *Geschichte* (75, ≠ AY *mayse* 15); *kunst* ‘skill,’ G *Kunst* (76, ≠ AY *kuns* 20). The majority of these lexical borrowings occur only once or twice, as variants of the authentically Yiddish forms. Some of them may even be designated mere spelling variants of the latter rather than independent lexical borrowings.

2. Entire phrases:

- (*di ziten*) *eynes shedlikhen mentshen* ‘a pernicious person’s (customs),’ G *eines schädlichen Menschen* (3);
- (*tsu vishen di falben*) *eynes hemdes* ‘(between the folds) of a shirt,’ G *eines Hemdes* (7);
- (*fun dem shveys und blut*) *eynes anderen* ‘(on the sweat and blood) of another person,’ G *eines anderen* (7);
- *ehre im laybe* ‘sense of honor,’ G *Ehre im Leibe* (69);
- *fol ergernis* ‘full of annoyance,’ G *voll Ärgeris* (72).

3. Entire sentences:

- *bahit unz got* ‘God preserve us!,’ G *Behüte uns Gott!* (19, ≠ AY *kholile* 32, *khas vesholem* 53);
- *zey zolin visen mayn her dos zey zind eyn (boshtard)* [sic] ‘You should know, sir, that you are a bastard,’ G *Sie sollen wissen, mein Herr, daß Sie ein Bastard sind* (23);
- *dos du yetst eyropeesh gekleydet bizt* ‘that you now dress European,’ G *daß du jetzt europäisch gekleidet bist* (29);
- *vos nur man zikh denken kan* ‘that you can possibly imagine,’ G *die man sich nur denken kann* (66);
- *keyne menshlikhe feder izt nikht um* [i.e. *im*] *shtande* ‘no human pen is able,’ G *Keine menschliche Feder ist im Stande* (70);
- *lebe voyl!* ‘Farewell!,’ G *Lebe wohl!* (76).

The previous two sections contain examples of grammatical traits which are absent from authentic Yiddish:

- A) Genitive of an inanimate noun: *eynes hemdes*;
- B) Dative singular of nouns in *-e*: *ehre im laybe*, *um shtande*;
- C) The third person plural of the personal pronoun *zey* used to denote polite address;²⁰

²⁰ Cf. the authentically Yiddish construction with the second person plural personal pronoun *ir* in, for example, *gene khlebin ir est gor nit* ‘Gene, indeed, you eat nothing’ (45).

- D) Present tense subjunctive in -o: *bahit*;
 E) Imperative singular in -e: *lebe voyl!*²¹

Since these traits are otherwise unattested in Dik's narrative, it seems more appropriate not to analyze them as separately borrowed elements but as parts of chunks, i.e., more or less fixed expressions that were transferred from the source language as whole units.

4. Function words, for example (arranged alphabetically):

als, G *als*, very frequent: 'than' (7, ≠ AY *far* 29, vi 73, *eyder* 76), 'when' (18, ≠ AY *az* 59), 'as, being' (75); *damit* 'in order that,' G *damit*, frequent (12, ≠ AY *kedey* 14); *den* 'for, because,' G *denn*, very frequent (4); *den* 'the,' G *den* (definite article, accusative singular masculine), only once in *tsu beshraybin di freydin und den groysin fergnigin* 'to describe the delights and the great pleasure' (70); *dizer* 'this,' G *dieser* (cf. Section 2.3 below); *dos* 'that' (complementizer), G *daß* (1, very frequent, ≠ AY *az* 15); *eyn* 'a(n),' G *ein* (indefinite article, cf. Section 2.3 below); *etvos* 'something,' G *etwas*, occasional (3, ≠ AY *epes* 68)²²; *kan* 'can,' G *kann*, rare (62, ≠ AY *ken* 64); *man* 'one, you, they,' G *man*, rare (67, ≠ AY *men* 1 / *me* 38); *nikhts* 'nothing,' G *nichts*, rare (19, ≠ AY *gor nit* 45); *oyb voyl* 'even if,' cf. G *obwohl* 'although,' only once (38); *um* 'around,' G *um*, only once (13, ≠ AY *arum* 12); *um* (with infinitive clause) 'in order to,' G *um*, frequent (4, ≠ AY *kedey* 13); *und* 'and,' G *und*, very frequent (12, ≠ AY *un* 12); *velkher* 'who, which; which, what,' G *welcher* (relative; interrogative, cf. Section 2.3 below); *verdin* 'will; be, get,' G *werden* (future and passive auxiliary, cf. Section 2.4.3 below); *zolkher* 'such,' G *solcher*, only once in *zolkhe zakhin* 'such things' (10), ≠ AY *azelkhe gute zakhen* 'such good things' (27).

5. Characteristic derivational types:

- *da(r)*- (cf. G *da(r)*-): *dadurkh* 'as a result' (4); *dabay* 'in doing so' (4); *damit* 'with that' (4); *daher* 'therefore' (6); *dafir* 'for that' (13); *daroyf* 'thereupon' (19); *dariber* 'for this reason' (64). ≠ AY: *der nokh* 'then' (8); *der tsu* 'in addition' (9); *der fun* 'of these' (11).
- *er*- (cf. G *er*-): *erloybt* 'permitted' (3); *ertseylungen* 'narratives' (6). ≠ AY: *der tseylt* 'talks about' (3); *der shpirt* 'sensed' (11); *zikh der trinken* 'drown' (18); *der nerin* 'nourish' (22); *der veyst* 'finds out' (23); *der lebt* 'lived to

²¹ Cf. the authentically Yiddish construction with a zero ending in, for example, *gey du frier ariber* 'You cross [it] first!' (18).

²² In the meaning 'some sort of' (62), which is not shared by G *etwas*, Dik never substitutes *epes* for the German-like *etvos*.

see' (31); *der loybt* 'permitted' (37). The two authentically Yiddish prefixes mentioned are homophonous but otherwise unrelated.

- *un-* (cf. G *un-*): *ungetsifer* 'vermin' (7); *unreynlikhkayt* 'uncleanliness' (7); *ungerufene* 'uninvited' (8); *untsaytigen* 'ill-timed' (10); *ungliklikher* 'more unfortunate' (58). ≠ AY: *umglik* 'misfortune' (10); *umruig* 'nervous' (56); *umgliklikh* 'unfortunate' (58).
- *-yon* (cf. G *-ion*): *natsyon* 'nation' (6); *religyon* 'religion' (7); *komnekatsyon* 'communication' (60).

The last three words are internationalisms which were borrowed from German into Eastern Yiddish but whose ultimate source is either Latin or French.²³

2.3 Inflectional Morphology

Contrary to German-Eastern Yiddish convergence in the areas of spelling and lexicon discussed above, instances of German influence on Eastern Yiddish inflection are scarce and confined to a limited number of cases.

There are four cases in which the borrowed word or construction equals or even outnumbers the authentically Yiddish counterpart:

1. The borrowed demonstrative pronoun *dizer* 'this' (G *dieser*), which inflects for case, gender, and number like the pronominal adjective *yeder(er)* 'every.' The attempt to inflect *dizer* in the same way as *yeder(er)* does not always come across successfully. In some cases, the paradigm of the definite article *der* seems to be the standard according to which *dizer* is inflected. In the examined text, we find:
 - *dizer shmaye* 'this Shmaye' (1, subject);
 - *in dizen ershtin kapitel* 'in this first chapter' (3);
 - *dizen ferdorbenen* 'this corrupted [man]' (4, direct object);
 - *unter dize lekherlikhe geshikhte* 'by this ridiculous story' (5);
 - *dizes glik* 'this fortune' (12, subject);
 - *mit dize tayere esroygim* 'with these precious etrogs' (13);
 - *tsu dizen noged* 'to this rich man' (13);
 - *mit dize vort* 'by this word' (21);
 - *in dizer tsayt* 'at this time' (39);
 - *dizen shats* (60, direct object).

²³ If the three nouns ending in *-yon* had been borrowed from Polish or Russian, the suffix would have taken on the form *-ye* (Polish *-ja/-ia*, Russian *-ия*), cf. AY *natsye*, *religye*, *komunikatsye*.

2. The borrowed indefinite article *eyn* ‘a(n)’ (*G ein*). The authentically Yiddish indefinite article *a/an* (before a consonant or a vowel respectively) is invariable. The author vacillates between the borrowed *eyn* and the native *a*. Moreover, when he selects *eyn* he vacillates between borrowed inflection (for case and gender) and native invariability (the latter in analogy to *a*), sometimes in the same sentence. The inflection of the borrowed *eyn* follows the paradigm of the native freestanding numeral *eyns* ‘one.’²⁴ The borrowed and the authentically Yiddish indefinite articles are roughly equal in terms of frequency. Both of them are used before nouns and attributive adjectives, with the exception that *eyn* is the sole option when the following word (noun or attributive adjective) begins with a vowel.²⁵ Hence, the variant *an* does not surface in Dik’s narrative. Take, for example:
- *eyne zeyer sheyne beshraybung* ‘a very fine description’ (1, predicative);
 - *tsu vishen eynem shedlikhen mentshen* ‘between a pernicious person’ (3);
 - *azoy vi es izt eyn untersheyd tsu vishen eyn khoynef und tsu vishen eynem menshin vos der tseylt vahre mayles* ‘like there is a difference between a flatterer and a person who talks about true virtues’ (3);
 - *eyne aperatsye* ‘an operation’ (4, direct object);
 - *eynen toyten kerper* ‘a dead body’ (4, direct object);
 - *girekhent zayn far eyn braven man* ‘be considered a righteous man’ (5);
 - *fun eyner oys gelasene froy* ‘of a debauched woman’ (6);
 - *eyne eydele und eyn erlikhe shtot* ‘a noble and an honest town’ (7, predicative);
 - *eyne ende* ‘an end’ (12, direct object);
 - *in eyner ey* ‘in an egg’ (17);
 - *tsu eyn am* ‘to a wet nurse’ (17);
 - *bay eynem heren* ‘in the service of a landowner,’ literally: ‘with a landowner’ (24);
 - *vi eyn berin trayber firt eyn ber* ‘the way a bear tamer leads a bear’ (46, subject and direct object);
 - *tsu eyner froy* ‘to a woman’ (50)

vis-à-vis the following selected examples of the invariant authentically Yiddish article, which is consistently written together with the following word:

- *azoy agroyser unter sheyd* ‘such a big difference’ (3, subject);

²⁴ Cf. Neil G. Jacobs, *Yiddish. A Linguistic Introduction* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 192.

²⁵ Cf., for example: *eyn oyg* ‘an eye’ (62, direct object), *eyne eybigkayt* ‘an eternity’ (68, predicative). The consistent spelling *aingel/aingil* ‘a boy’ (21, 42, 56) could be explained by the fact that the noun in question is pronounced with an initial *y*- outside the Northeastern Yiddish area; cf. the above Section 2.

- *gilten far amenshen* ‘be considered a decent person’ (5);
- *ashem* ‘a reputation’ (8, direct object);
- *traktirt mit ashmaps mit ashtikel fish* ‘served a vodka and a piece of fish’ (13);
- *agants yor* ‘for a whole year’ (13, adverbial adjunct);
- *ahipshe tsayt* ‘for a considerable time’ (13, adverbial adjunct);
- *alebdigen* [sic] ‘alive,’ literally: ‘as a living person’ (14, predicative);
- *afremd kind anegidishin* ‘another woman’s child, from a rich family’ (17, direct object);
- *ashtarke nakhfrage* ‘a thorough inquiry’ (24, direct object);
- *atoes* ‘a mistake’ (36, direct object);
- *aponem* ‘an appearance’ (48, direct object);
- *ahalbe tepele marts oder akvertil med* ‘half a pot of March beer or a pint of mead’ (62, subject);
- *abisil* ‘a little while’ (71, adverbial adjunct).

Occasionally, *eyn* and *a* co-occur in the same sentence, e.g.:

- *eyn groshin mit ashnaps* ‘a penny and a vodka’ (26, direct object)

or in two parallel sentences:

- *er iz geven amoyhel. er iz geven eyn oyfes shoykhet* ‘He was a circumciser. He was a slaughterer of poultry’ (26, predicative).

3. Borrowed inflection of the possessive pronoun for case and gender in the singular like the above-mentioned *dizer*. In authentic Yiddish, the possessive pronoun inflects for number only.²⁶ In this case, an even higher degree of fluctuation can be observed than in the inflection of the borrowed indefinite article *eyn*, in that the third person masculine singular pronoun *zayn* ‘his, its’ very often, the third person plural pronoun *zeyer* ‘their’ never, and the remaining forms *mayn*, *dayn*, *ir*, *unzer*, and *ayer* occasionally inflect for case and gender. Compare the following examples:

mayn ‘my’:

- *mayne zeyer gelibte natsyon* ‘my very beloved nation’ (6, vocative expression);
- *mayne tayere lezerin* ‘my dear reader [feminine]’ (25, vocative expression);
- *mayne fraynden* ‘my friend [feminine]’ (29, vocative expression);

²⁶ However, when postposed, as in *di muter ihre* ‘her mother’ (39, subject) and *dem ershten hunger zaynem* ‘his first hunger’ (40, indirect object), or when freestanding, as in *nun bin ikh shoyn ayerer* ‘Now I’m all yours’ (72–73, predicative), the possessive pronoun always inflects for case, gender, and number, even in authentic Yiddish.

dayn ‘your’:

- *mit dayner heylicher und breyter hand* ‘with your blessed and generous hand’ (22);

zayn ‘his, its’:

- *mit zayne erlikhkayt* ‘with his honesty’ (4);
- *zayne dumhayt un falshhayt* ‘his stupidity and falsehood’ (7, direct object);
- *fun zayne kabtsanstvo* ‘of his poverty’ (22);
- *bay zayner muter* ‘with his mother’ (24);
- *zayne angebohrene grobhayt* ‘his innate vulgarity’ (24, direct object);
- *in zaynem nets* ‘into his net’ (63);

ir ‘her, its’:

- *ire gutmithekayt* ‘its good-naturedness’ (7, subject);
- *in ihrem loyf* ‘in its course’ (58);

unzer ‘our’:

- *unzerem r’ shmaye dem gut yon tev biter* ‘our Reb Shmaye, the holiday well-wisher’ (67, indirect object);
- *tsu unzerin ortsikin di kluge yarmelke* ‘to our Ortshik, the Bright Yarmulka’ (69);

ayer ‘your’:

- *nur tsu ayerem heyl* ‘for your own good’ (6).

4. The borrowed relative and interrogative pronoun *velkher* ‘who, which; which, what’ (G *welcher*), which inflects for case, gender, and number like the above-mentioned *dizer*:

- *fershteyn fun velkhn feler er iz gishtorbin* ‘understand which mistake caused him to die’ (4, interrogative);
- *oyf dem tish um velkhin es zaynin gizesin fornehme layt fun shtot* ‘onto the table around which distinguished persons from the town were sitting’ (13, relative);
- *gideynkt [...] velkhi es iz baret* ‘remembered [...] who [feminine] was being gossiped about’ (17, interrogative);
- *adokter velkher es flegt zeyer kinstlikh kuriren* ‘a doctor who would cure very ingeniously’ (23, relative);
- *zayn nayer eydem velkhin er flegt imer oys tsu bayten* ‘his new son-in-law whom he always used to replace’ (40, relative).

The following example:

- *dizen ferdorbenen [...] velkher es izt shoynt mit zayne erlikhkayt far bay* ‘this corrupted [man] [...] whose reputability has come to an end’ (4)

is a blend of two constructions: the German inflectable relativizer *welcher* on the one hand and the authentically Yiddish invariant relativizer *vos* + a resumptive possessive pronoun on the other.

5. Partly borrowed conjugation of the verb *zayn* 'to be.' In addition to the authentically Yiddish inflectional forms, a number of borrowed forms appear. In the present tense, the third person singular *izt* 'is,' G *ist* (1), clearly outnumbers AY *iz* (1). The third person plural *zind* 'are,' G *sind* (61), appears sporadically next to AY *zaynen* (10) and *zenin* (19) as well as the puzzling form *zay(e)n* (10), which is neither German nor authentically Yiddish. In all likelihood, *zay(e)n* is the result of an (unsuccessful) attempt to make AY *zaynen* appear more German-like (cf. the German present tense subjunctive (!) first and third person plural *seien*). *zenin* is an extra-Northeastern Yiddish form (cf. the above Section 2). In the past tense, we find the German forms *vor* (1) / *var* (8) (G *war*) in the third person singular and *voren* (14) / *varen* (7) (G *waren*) in the third person plural next to the authentically Yiddish perfect forms *izt/iz geven* (16, 27) and *zenin/zenen geven* (30, 31). These are the only examples in Dik's narrative of borrowed German synthetic preterites. In all other (simple) past tense contexts, the authentically Yiddish perfect is used. The adoption of *vor* etc. into (written) Eastern Yiddish may have been facilitated by the fact that these forms were still in use in Western Yiddish, which, in Dik's time, most educated speakers of Eastern Yiddish would have been familiar with.²⁷

All remaining features are scarce and peripheral, being more the exception than the rule:

Weak declension of the borrowed noun *her*: *eynen groysen heren* 'a great landowner,' G *einen großen (Guts)herm* (23, direct object); *dem heren* 'to the landowner,' G *dem (Guts)herm* (23, indirect object); *bay eynem heren* 'in the service of a landowner,' literally: 'with a landowner,' G *bei einem (Guts)herm* (24). In authentic Yiddish, the weak declension of nouns is in a state of regression, containing only a very limited number of words such as *mentsh* 'man, person,' (y)id 'Jew' and, confined to the singular, *rebe* 'Hasidic rabbi, teacher,' *tate* 'father,' *zeyde* 'grandfather.' Hence, the fact that the borrowed noun *her* follows the weak declension is only explicable against the background that it was borrowed together with its original German inflection.

²⁷ Dov-Ber Kerler, *The Origins of Modern Literary Yiddish* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 240; Shouou-Huey Chang, *Der Rückgang des synthetischen Präteritums im Jiddischen kontrastiv zum Deutschen* (Hamburg: Helmut Buske, 2001), 186–190.

In the plural formation of nouns, the desinence *-e^(*)* (cf. G *-e^(*)*) is used in a few cases: *geste* ‘guests,’ G *Gäste* (8, ≠ AY *gest* 72); *kerli* ‘guys,’ G *Kerle* (25); *layte* ‘people,’ G *Leute*, (58, ≠ AY *layt* 66); *getranke* ‘beverages,’ G *Getränke* (66); *getreyinke* ‘beverages,’ G *Getränke* (70); *aynfele* ‘ideas,’ G *Einfälle* (74).²⁸

Authentic Yiddish displays no specific case marking in the plural inflection of nouns. Therefore, *fun layten* ‘about people,’ G *von Leuten* (3), *mit layten* ‘with people,’ G *mit Leuten* (52) contrary to, for example, *yunge layt* ‘young people,’ G *junge Leute* (34, subject) featuring AY *-o* may be isolated examples of a dative-plural ending *-en* borrowed from German.

The negative indefinite article *keyn* is invariant in authentic Yiddish. The German equivalent *kein* inflects for case, gender, and number, parallel to its positive counterpart *ein*. In most cases, Dik adheres to the authentically Yiddish treatment of *keyn*. There are three examples of German-like inflection of *keyn*:

- *keyne shtifmutter* [...] *vet* [...] *nit* ‘a stepmother [...] will [...] not’ (5);
- *keyne efnung fun hintin* ‘no anus,’ literally: ‘no opening from behind’ (21);
- *keyne menshlikhe feder izt nikht um* [i.e. *im*] *shtande tsu beshraybin di freydin* ‘no human pen is able to describe the pleasures’ (70).

In authentic Yiddish, the inflectional ending *-t* in the third person singular and the second person plural present tense as well as in the past participle merges with stem-final *-t* or *-d*. In German, except for a few irregular verbs, this merger is blocked through the insertion of *-e-* between the stem-final consonant and the ending, cf., for example, *er übernacht-et* ‘he spends the night.’ In the following four cases, Dik adopts the German pattern: *hitet zikh* ‘is careful,’ G *hütet sich* (4); *shodet* ‘causes damage to,’ G *schadet* (33); *zikh gevendet* ‘turned,’ G *sich gewandt/gewendet* (41); *betrakhtet* ‘observes,’ G *betrachtet* (62). Otherwise, he adheres to the authentically Yiddish rule, cf., for example: *ret* ‘speaks,’ G *redet* (3); *giret* ‘spoken,’ G *geredet* (41); *bet* ‘asks,’ G *bittet* (53); *ob geget* ‘divorced’ (67, without a German cognate); *gevalt* ‘waited,’ G *gewartet* (72).

In authentic Yiddish, the present participle is formed by adding the suffix *-(e)ndik* to the verbal stem.²⁹ This is substantiated by ample evidence in Dik’s text, cf. Section 2.1.2 above. There is, however, one example of the German-origin suffix *-(e)nd* in *lakhend* ‘laughing,’ G *lachend* (72). The borrowing of

²⁸ Cf. Steffen Krogh, “Zur Diachronie der nominalen Pluralbildung im Ostjiddischen,” in *Beiträge zur Morphologie. Germanisch, Baltisch, Ostseefinnisch*, Hans Fix (ed.) (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2007), 267n13, with references.

²⁹ Cf. Steffen Krogh, “Zu Form und Gebrauch des Partizips Präsens in der Geschichte der ostjiddischen Schriftsprache. Mit einem Ausblick auf das moderne ultraorthodoxe Schriftjiddisch Satmarer Prägung,” *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 129 (2010), 387–389.

-(e)nd is probably the most interesting grammatical innovation attributable to the *daytshmerish* fashion. In Eastern Yiddish writings from the first half of the nineteenth century, the new formant is absent. After ca 1870, it gained immediate popularity and swiftly confined the older suffix -(e)ndik to a limited number of syntactic functions. The most significant of these was the use of the present participle as an adverbial, roughly equivalent to a subordinate clause expressing time, cause, or manner. -(e)nd, for its part, took over the other prominent syntactic function of a Yiddish present participle, that of an attributive adjective. Thus, the two formants eventually appeared in complementary distribution with one another.³⁰

2.4 Syntax

2.4.1 Word Order

In many German-style Eastern Yiddish writings from the nineteenth century, there is a preponderance of sentences displaying the German sentence bracket, i.e., a verbal structure which forms an arch over the non-verbal constituents of the sentence (G *Satzklammer*), particularly heavy objects and heavy adverbials. Such sentences can also be found in Dik's work; for example:

- *dos er zol | tsehn mol in aminut di hitel | on ton un oys ton* 'that he could put on the hat and take it off ten times in a minute' (32).

Yet these sentences are outnumbered by instances of the regular authentically Yiddish type, e.g.:

- *ven er volt | zey nit | gevorfin efter di vayb in kop arayn* 'if he had not thrown them at the head of his wife more often' (38).

A feature which differs entirely from what is considered natural in authentic Yiddish is when the finite verb appears finally, or, as the case may be, later than in the second structural position, in subordinate clauses. Dik's narrative displays the following examples, some of which appear more German than Yiddish (cf. the above Section 2.2):

- *oyf eynem vos nur besheftigt iz* 'about somebody who is permanently busy' (1);
- *velkhi nokh tsu retiren meglikh izt* 'who can still be saved' (4);

³⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 389–402.

- *damit mir nit tsu shand verin in der eybigkayt* ‘so that we will not be put to shame in the eternal life’ (22);
- *eyner vos nur gilekt hot fremde shislin* ‘somebody who has only licked other people’s bowls’ (22);
- *ven er oykh agroys far megin bezitst* ‘if he also owns a large fortune’ (25);
- *dos du yetst eyropeesh gekleydet bizt* ‘that you now dress European’ (29);
- *vi zi nur forbay im geyt* ‘as soon as it passes him’ (62);
- *vos nur man zikh denken kan* ‘that you can possibly imagine’ (66).

The initial placement of the infinitive phrase *velkhi nokh tsu retiren*, so-called pied piping, in the second example can also be attributed to German influence.

2.4.2 Negation

In Dik’s narrative, sentences being negated without employing the negative particle *nit* are frequently found. Take, for example:

- *nun fershteyt zikh dos er var keyn bal hoytsoe* ‘Well, of course he was no spendthrift’ (21);
- *der grester glik ken im keyn mol reynigen fun zayne kabtsanstvo* ‘The greatest happiness will never be able to purge him of his poverty’ (22);
- *der nokh [...] est zi shoyt keyn ander zakh nur mayz* ‘Afterwards [...] it will no longer eat anything but mice’ (23);
- *ayer foter vor keyn her nur eyn akonom bay eynem heren* ‘Your father was not a landowner but a steward in the service of a landowner’ (24);
- *er hot shoyt keyn kraft gehat tsu geyn* ‘He did not have the strength to walk anymore’ (31);
- *es vor in zey keyn guter hor* ‘There was no good hair in them’ (34);
- *keyn shtub vor far im zikher un keyn tir vor far im far shlosin* ‘No house was safe from him, and no door was closed to him’ (42);
- *keyn shies* ‘Stop dawdling!’, literally: ‘No delays!’ (44);
- *er flegt dafir oykh keyn nits geld nemen* ‘He would not demand a rental fee for that’ (49);
- *zayn horevanye hot gor keyn shier* ‘His drudgery knows no limit’ (52);
- *ver es hot r’ shmayer gut yon tev biter nit gezeihen oyf asimkhe hot keyn freser gezeihn in lebin* ‘Anyone who had not seen Reb Shmayer, the holiday well-wisher, at a feast, had not seen a glutton all his life’ (55);
- *den amensh iz dokh keyn got* ‘because man is no god after all’ (57);
- *zayn oyg hot es keyn mol gizeihen un zayn oyer hot es keyn mol gehert* ‘His eye had never seen it, and his ear had never heard it’ (70).

In the above sentences, *keyn* appears as a negative in its own right, as is the case with its German equivalent *kein*. In authentic Eastern Yiddish, by contrast, the rule of negative concord also implies the mandatory use of the negative particle *ni(sh)t*. Thus, *keyn* is not a negative in its own right but a mere satellite of the negative particle.³¹ This applies to about half of the relevant instances in Dik's text. Compare, for example:

- *zi hot nit geshpinen keyn flaks, keyn vol* 'She spun no flax, no wool' (27).

2.4.3 Verbal Periphrasis (Future Tense and Passive Voice)

In authentic Yiddish, the future tense is formed analytically by combining the auxiliary *veln* with the bare infinitive of the main verb. In the majority of the relevant cases, Dik follows this pattern; cf., for example:

- *az di ober vest zikh der trinken* 'but if you drown' (18);
- *den mir velin es shpetir [...] neytig darfen* 'because, later on, we will need it urgently' (35);
- *ikh vel aykh vayzen mayn hoyf* 'I will show you my property' (73).

However, there are also examples of a future-tense construction borrowed from German which deploys the German-origin auxiliary *verden* (< G *werden*). Take, for example:

- *virt er shoyt keyn eygeni esin* 'Consequently, he will not eat his own anymore' (23);
- *der ayn voyner fun yerusholaim vird nikht zogin* 'The citizen of Jerusalem will not say' (24);
- *nun virst du mikh mayne lezerin fragen* 'Now you, my reader [feminine], will ask me' (65);
- *ya. verde ikh dir antvorten* 'My answer to you will be yes' (65);
- *vos ayri vayber verden mir vinshen* 'which your wives will wish me' (74).

There are even sentences in which both constructions co-occur:

- *az ikh verd zehnt dos di klatti iz ginug shtark tsu trogin oyf zikh amentshin vel ikh oykh dernokh ariber geyn* 'When I see that the footbridge is strong enough to carry a man, thereafter, I will also cross [it]' (18).

³¹ Cf. A[zyik] Zaretski, *Praktishe yidishe gramatik. Far lerers un studentn* [Practical Yiddish grammar. For teachers and students] (Moskve: Shul un bukh, 1926), 208; Yudel Mark, *Gramatik fun der yidisher klal-shprakh* [A Grammar of Standard Yiddish] (Nyu-York: Alveltlekher yidisher kultur-kongres, 1978), 394.

Furthermore, in a few cases, the German-origin *verden* is employed as a passive auxiliary combined with the past participle of the main verb, cf., for example:

- *in dizen ershtin kapitel vert giret verdin etvos iber di (kritik)* ‘In this first chapter, something will be said about criticism’ (3)

and also as a content verb:

- *dan virt fartig zayn nehrung* ‘then its aliment becomes ready’ (19).

In the two last-mentioned cases, however, *vern*, the authentically Yiddish cognate³² of G *werden*, is the most common form; cf., for example:

- *zelbst di flig iz oykh gishafin givorin mit groys kuns* ‘Even the fly was created with great skill’ (20);
- *er meg raykh verin* ‘He may become rich’ (22).

3 Conclusion

3.1 Results

Ayzik-Meyer Dik and many of his Jewish contemporaries in Eastern Europe endeavored to cultivate and elevate their native Yiddish to a higher level of communication by approximating it to German – the most prestigious cultural language in Central and Eastern Europe in the nineteenth century.³³

In order to determine the range of the German influence on Eastern Yiddish, it is necessary to focus on each of the treated subsystems separately.

In spelling, this influence was by no means far-reaching. Even if some German orthographic practices did gain a temporary footing in Eastern Yiddish, they were mostly used inconsistently, and the abandonment of the Hebrew in favor of the Latin alphabet was, at least in Eastern Europe proper, never seriously debated. In Yiddish spelling, German-origin features first and foremost performed the function of ornament; for example, Dik deployed double-consonant spelling (*gut yon tev bitter*) only once, confining it to the most exposed position, the title of his narrative. Contrary to German, Eastern Yiddish never let the imported German-style

³² Due to the fact that Middle High German *ē* remains unchanged in AY *vern* (cf. Erika Timm, *Graphische und phonische Struktur des Westjiddischen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Zeit um 1600* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1987), 136–137), this verb is presumably also a *daytshmerizm* – albeit an older one.

³³ Cf. Niger, *Daytshmerish*, 49–52.

spelling obtain distinctive functions regarding, for example, homophones or vowel length.³⁴

When it comes to German impact on the Eastern Yiddish vocabulary, it is more the exception than the rule that the German-style words and phrases employed by Dik fill lexical gaps in authentic Yiddish. There are only a few instances of this in Dik's narrative; e.g., *dame* 'lady' (58), for which hardly any authentically Yiddish designation can be found. As a rule, the *daytshmerish* words and phrases fulfil two functions:

1. They create more or less exact synonyms of existing authentically Yiddish words. However, the former are usually not intended to supplant the latter, as they frequently co-occur at shorter or greater distance from each other within the same text.
2. They change the spelling or morphology of existing authentically Yiddish words to make them appear more German; sometimes, this may be accompanied by a slight semantic modification.

Foreign traits in spelling and lexicon are usually recognized by most ordinary speakers to be particularly indicative of the foothold a dominating language has obtained in a recipient language. Influence on the grammatical structure of the latter requires long-standing intense contact and is active on a subconscious level. However, the majority of grammatical traits borrowed from German are superficial and peripheral and, furthermore – when viewed in a wider perspective – ephemeral. The following borrowed grammatical features, however, can be characterized as relatively robust:

1. The pronouns *dizer* and *velkher* as well as the indefinite article *eyn*, which are all inflected according to authentically Yiddish rules;
2. The inflection of the possessive pronouns *mayn*, etc. not only for number but also for case and gender;
3. *izt* as the third person singular present tense form of the verb *zayn*;
4. Negation without the negative particle *nit*.

Of these, only *velkher* has survived into present-day Standard Yiddish. Negating a sentence without the negative particle *nit* remains in proverbs such as *eyn kind iz keyn kind* 'It is not enough to have only one child,' literally: 'One child is no child.'

The Germanization of Eastern Yiddish, the *daytshmerish* fashion, in the nineteenth century should not be viewed as an attempt to abandon Yiddish in favor

³⁴ Cf. L. Zamenhof's suggestions on this problem: Dr. X [Ludwik Zamenhof], *Vegen a yudisher gramatik*, 54; Dr. X [Ludwik Zamenhof], *Proben fun a yudisher gramatik*, 92–94.

of German. Such an interpretation of the evidence compiled in the present study is belied by the fact that the Germanization at issue remains superficial: Firstly, in the affected subsystems of the language, it is mostly carried out without any regular pattern, and, secondly, the borrowed features are by no means used consistently. The introduction of recent German traits into Eastern Yiddish should rather be considered an attempt to standardize the language. This attempt was launched not by a language academy or a similar linguistic authority but, as a pluricentral bottom-to-top initiative, by the users of the language themselves. Contrary to the late Mordkhe Schaechter's³⁵ claim regarding the top-to-bottom standardization of Eastern Yiddish conducted primarily by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in the twentieth century, in this process, German was not a covert but an overt standard. In this respect, nineteenth century Eastern Yiddish is comparable to creoles spoken in, for example, the Caribbean which underwent partial restructuring by taking on structural features from their former European superstrates in order to accommodate them.³⁶

3.2 Future Research Perspectives

The present study provides an in-depth analysis of Ayzik-Meyer Dik's narrative *R' Shmaye der gut yon tev bitter* from the perspective of German-Yiddish language contact. However, it can only be considered a first step towards a more comprehensive survey on the entire *daytshmerish* era within the history of Eastern Yiddish. It appears particularly important to determine exactly when the German influence on Yiddish commenced and from which German sources it first emanated. As a second step, it could prove fruitful to investigate the duration of the *daytshmerish* era, the balance between *daytshmerish* and non-*daytshmerish* writings in the nineteenth century, and the retention of certain *daytshmerish* features in written and spoken twenty-first century Haredi Yiddish.

³⁵ Schaechter, *The 'hidden standard'*, 284–285.

³⁶ Cf. John Holm, *Languages in Contact: The Partial Restructuring of Vernaculars* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Martina Niedhammer

Codified Traditions? YIVO's *filologishe sektsye* in Vilna and Its Relationship to German Academia

Daytshmerish toyg nit

In June 1938, Max Weinreich, then head of YIVO's (*Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut*) philological section in Vilna, published an article which became one of his most popular texts to appear during his long career as a leading scholar of Yiddish language. The pamphlet, *Daytshmerish toyg nit* 'Germanisms are not acceptable,' is widely known for its strong impetus against the influence of German on Yiddish.¹ In blaming the Yiddish speaking masses, and even famous lexicographers and writers, for their thoughtless adaption of vocabulary and grammatical elements from German, Weinreich insisted on the purity of Yiddish *klal-shprakh*: in cases where there was no suitable term in Yiddish, he recommended using internationalisms. In addition to this, he instructed his readers not to be too anxious when picking up expressions from Slavic languages,² while introducing German words to Yiddish was regarded as a sincere "act of linguistic impotence."³

Max Weinreich's campaign to protect Yiddish against borrowing from German should be seen against the background of YIVO's long-standing attempt to establish a standardized written form of Yiddish, which could serve the practical needs of a highly diverse society. As all proponents of early linguistic and national movements, Yiddishists like Weinreich faced the problem that Yiddish lacked the prestige of a "fully-fledged" language. Thus, borrowing from other surrounding languages was considered highly dangerous. This was especially the case with German, which had served as a *lingua franca* among Eastern European Jews for a long time. Moreover, the fact that Yiddish is closely related to German from a linguistic point of view, and that state authorities, and also the *maskilim*, regarded Yiddish as "corrupted German" (*jargon*), boosted the efforts of Weinreich and other members of YIVO to eliminate Germanisms.

Given these facts, the relationship between YIVO and German academia – used in its broadest sense, i.e. with respect to both YIVO's scholarly work connected to German and its exchange with the scientific community in German

1 Max Weinreich, "Daytshmerish toyg nit," *Yidish far ale* 4 (1938): 97–106.

2 *Ibid.*, 105.

3 *Ibid.*, 106. Translations my own.

speaking countries – may seem to be a hopeless case. Yet, several documents from the YIVO archives – including minutes of meetings of the philological section (*filsechtsye*) and Max Weinreich's personal papers – paint a more colorful picture.

This article sheds light on the attitude of YIVO's *filsechtsye* towards German by underlining its ambivalent character. The following aspects are of particular importance: the impact of German language or German scholarship on the daily work of YIVO's philological section, mutual contacts between YIVO and the German speaking academia, and the way in which members of YIVO dealt with German scholars interested in the field of Yiddish after World War II.

German Language and Scholarship in the Daily Work of YIVO's Philological Section

YIVO's philological section was established in Vilna in 1925.⁴ It represented, on a smaller scale, what the Diaspora Nationalism project meant to YIVO's founders. From its earliest activities, the philological section was divided into different subdivisions whose members had specific tasks: the terminological commission was responsible for developing and codifying new vocabularies for scientific disciplines as well as for trades and crafts; the orthographic commission had to formulate spelling rules to be implemented in the Yiddish-language educational system; and the linguistic commission conducted field research in order to establish grammatical norms, such as the use of grammatical gender in spoken Yiddish. The philological section thus took a more pragmatic approach, like that stipulated by philologist Nokhem Shtif in his famous memorandum on the foundation of a Yiddish scientific institution: academic research in Yiddish should concentrate on concrete matters and only later pay attention to theoretical problems.⁵

The members of the philological section came from different backgrounds. Some lived in Vilna or other cities in Poland, others were from abroad in nearby Lithuania, New York, Palestine, or Germany.⁶ Most had been enrolled at Russian

⁴ For a history of pre-World War II YIVO see Cecile Esther Kuznitz, *YIVO and the Making of Modern Jewish Culture. Scholarship for the Yiddish Nation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

⁵ Nokhem Shtif, "Vegn a yidishn akademishn institut [On a Yiddish Academic Institute]," in *Di organizatsye fun der yidisher visnshaft* [The Organization of Jewish Research] (Vilna: Tsentraler Bildung Komitet and Vilbig, 1925).

⁶ *Tsvey yor arbet far dem yidishn visnshaftlekhn institut 1925–1927. A barikht far der tseyt fun merts 1925 biz merts 1927* [The Yiddish Scientific Institute. Account of Two Years Organizing Work] (Vilna: [s. n.], 1927), 29, Footnotes. Both footnotes mention the current members of the

universities, and only very few could be considered as linguistic experts in the classical sense. Instead, they were enthusiasts of Yiddish language and culture. It was in these circumstances that Max Weinreich, as an actual doctor of philology, and through the effect of his charisma upon his contemporaries,⁷ soon became the most influential member of the group. He headed the section from 1925 until he left Vilna for New York in September 1939.⁸

Weinreich's strong commitment to the philological section is especially important when one takes into account his own linguistic background. Max Weinreich was born into a Jewish family in Courland (today's Latvia), where most people spoke German and Russian. His mother tongue was German, only later was he introduced to Yiddish by a friend.⁹ Weinreich became an ardent "convert" to Yiddishism, a phenomenon well-known from other young national movements in Europe. He earned his PhD at the University of Marburg, where he submitted a thesis in 1923 dealing with the linguistic history of Yiddish.¹⁰ It is most significant that Weinreich already at this early stage of his career had an interest in the contemporary status of Yiddish: his manuscript's final chapter underscores the important role of modern Eastern Yiddish for the cultural life and the growth of national consciousness among Eastern European Jews.¹¹ Further, Weinreich stresses the need to establish a Yiddish research center, which should draw on methods of German dialect research.¹²

terminological and the ethnographical commissions; the only sub-committees of the philological section that did, in fact, exist at the time. The orthographical and the linguistic commissions were still to come.

7 See Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *From that Place and Time. A Memoir, 1938–1947* (New York: Norton, 1989), 82. Dawidowicz, who had spent a year at YIVO in Vilna as a member of the research training program for young academics (*aspirantur*), wrote about Weinreich's extraordinary will power: "He [Weinreich, MN] could create worlds if he decided to do so."

8 In New York, Max Weinreich and his son Uri re-established YIVO and tried to resume their research undertaken in pre-war Vilna. See Kuznitz, *YIVO and the Making of Modern Jewish Culture*, 181–189.

9 Dawidowicz, *From that Place and Time*, 82–83.

10 Max Weinreich, "Studien zur Geschichte und dialektischen Gliederung der jiddischen Sprache," PhD diss. (University of Marburg, 1923). The manuscript was finally published by medievalist Jerold C. Frakes. See Max Weinreich, *Geschichte der jiddischen Sprachforschung*, Jerold C. Frakes (ed.) (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993). For an overview of Weinreich's journalistic work and his activities concerning Yiddish during his years in Germany (1919–1923) see Amy Blau, "Max Weinreich in Weimar Germany," in *Yiddish in Weimar Berlin. At the Crossroads of Diaspora Politics and Culture*, Gennady Estraiikh and Mikhail Krutikov (eds.) (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2010), 163–178.

11 Weinreich, *Geschichte der jiddischen Sprachforschung*, 227–307, 231.

12 Ibid., 306.

If one takes a closer look at working methods of the philological section, it becomes apparent that there was a huge gap between internal research and external self-presentation. A reader of *daytshmerish toyg nit*, or other similar articles, would have been rather astonished to notice the extent to which the three subdivisions – for terminology, orthography, and linguistics – relied on the example of German and other surrounding languages, especially Russian and Polish. Only a few months after the terminological commission had been established, the question of working language arose. This was less a problem of mutual understanding, than of systematization. Every new term in Yiddish had to be written down on a record card together with a translation into another European language.¹³ Eventually Latin, Polish, and German were chosen,¹⁴ most likely because of academic traditions and easy access to available literature.

In March 1928, the terminological commission sent a letter to Dr. Mark Lifshitz in Zwickau, who was developing a terminology of internal medicine.¹⁵ In order to speed up Lifshitz's research, the commission explicitly recommended *Guttmanns medizinische Terminologie. Ableitung und Erklärung der gebräuchlichsten Fachausdrücke aller Zweige der Medizin und ihrer Hilfswissenschaften*.¹⁶ This medical dictionary was published by the German-Jewish doctor Walter Guttman (1873–1941), who had been working for the Kaiser Wilhelm Society for the Advancement of Science, a predecessor of today's Max Planck Society, in Berlin.¹⁷ The book was reprinted in numerous editions, and owed its popularity to Guttman's etymological interpretations and the high quality of its explanatory illustrations – thus providing a tool of practical significance, also, for YIVO in Vilna. Examples like this prove that YIVO's philological section was quite eager to draw inspiration from German vocabulary if needed, whereas western European languages – mainly English and French – seemed to be less important. However, it was crucial that this (hidden) German influence did not lead to *imitation*, but instead to *adaptation*.

13 Minutes of meeting of the terminological commission, Vilna, 8 May 1926, YIVO Archives, RG 1.1, folder 616.

14 Ibid.

15 Letter of the terminological commission to Dr. Mark Lifshitz, Vilna, 6 March 1928, YIVO Archives, RG 1.1, folder 617. It was not possible to get biographical information about Mark Lifshitz.

16 Walter Guttman, *Medizinische Terminologie. Ableitung und Erklärung der gebräuchlichsten Fachausdrücke aller Zweige der Medizin und ihrer Hilfswissenschaften. Mit 464 Abbildungen*, 12th–15th revised edition (Berlin: Urban & Schwarzenberg, 1920).

17 For a short biography of Walter Guttman, see Peter Voswinckel, "Um das Lebenswerk betrogen: Walter Guttman (1873–1941) und seine Medizinische Terminologie: Oder: von den Fallstricken und Versäumnissen deutscher Biblio- und Historiographie und den Folgen unkritischen Kompilierens im Computerzeitalter," *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 32 no. 3/4 (1997): 321–354.

Moreover, there is evidence that the philological section actively used German patterns of language planning as a model. Paradoxically, this was primarily due to questions of purism, i.e. the famous attempts of Weinreich and other members of the section to combat incorrect syntax and foreign-derived words, especially those of supposed German origin, as seen in *Daytshmerish toyg nit*.

In January 1930, Max Weinreich developed an outline to rebuild the whole philological section.¹⁸ He suggested that the section and especially its linguistic subdivision should cut itself off from “ordinary” Yiddish speaking people in order to avoid a negative impact on YIVO’s concept of standard Yiddish, the so-called *klal-shprakh*. Instead, members of the *filseksye* should inform the public about common linguistic mistakes made by the press and writers. For this purpose, Weinreich encouraged the establishment of so called *shprakh-vinkelen* in several newspapers; they were supposed to publish newsletters on a regular basis which listed the above mentioned language errors together with “popular explanations” of how to better avoid them.¹⁹ This very special type of announcement was designed along the lines of a similar initiative, developed by *Allgemeiner Deutscher Sprachverein*, as Weinreich stated.²⁰

The *Allgemeiner Deutscher Sprachverein*, founded in 1885, not only condemned French loanwords in German, but also tried to influence how people spoke in the privacy of their homes.²¹ The latter approach was also very important for Max Weinreich, although his idea of *shprakh-vinkelen* was only realized in 1938, when the popular language journal *Yidish far ale* ‘Yiddish for Everyone’ was established.²² In almost every issue of the short-lived journal, one can find articles headed *fraynd shraybn – mir entfernen* ‘you ask – we answer’ or *undzer brifkastn* ‘our letterbox,’ where subscribers were given the opportunity to improve their grammatical and vocabulary knowledge of Yiddish by reading expert answers to (most likely faked) questions. For example, in July 1938, a certain M. Vegmeyster from Warsaw was interested in the polite way of asking for something: He was to

¹⁸ Max Weinreich, Strategic plan for the Philological Section of YIVO and its four sub-committees, Vilna, January 1930, YIVO Archives, RG 1.2, folder 1.

¹⁹ Ibid., 31.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ For the ideological background of “Allgemeiner deutscher Sprachverein” see a pamphlet written by the first chairman of the “Sprachverein”: Herman Riegel, *Ein Hauptstück von unserer Muttersprache, der allgemeine deutsche Sprachverein und die Errichtung einer Reichsanstalt für die deutsche Sprache*, 2nd revised and enlarged edition (Braunschweig: C. A. Schwetschke und Sohn, 1888).

²² For a detailed analysis of the didactic aims of “Yidish far ale” see Jordana Bloeme, “A Cultural Language for the Folk: The Creation of a ‘Popular’ Kultur Sphrakh in Yidish Far Ale, 1938–39,” *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 31 no. 3 (2013): 86–102.

learn, that the noun “bite” was Germanified (*daytshmerish*), and therefore not suitable; instead he should use the Hebrew derived *bekashe*.²³

Analyzing these questions, it becomes quite clear that Weinreich, and at least some of his colleagues, actually feared possible confusions between Yiddish and German. This can also be seen from Weinreich’s personal notes for a Yiddish dictionary, which he compiled around 1939/1940: he carefully wrote down German vocabulary lists for which there did not exist any equivalent in Yiddish.²⁴ The case of Western Yiddish, which had almost entirely disappeared by the middle of the nineteenth century, provided a frightening example.²⁵ It was also for this reason that Max Weinreich tried to initiate a competition to single out the best essay written in Yiddish. One of the two topics to choose was “the fight against Yiddish language in Germany between 1750 and 1850,” and the cash prize offered by YIVO was 100 Dollars²⁶ – an amount which, at the time, was quite substantial.

Mutual Contacts between YIVO and German Speaking Academia

Considering mutual contacts between YIVO’s philological section and the German speaking academia, these contacts officially existed to a far lesser extent than we can trace the influence of German on the daily work of the section. Nevertheless, correspondences of the philological section demonstrate that YIVO’s members were quite eager to donate their publications to other scientific institutions in Poland and abroad, which largely included German-speaking countries. In March 1926, for example, the Prussian State Library in Berlin sent a letter to Max Weinreich in order to thank him for several copies of “Yidishe filologye.”²⁷

Other attempts to spread the idea of YIVO and its political and cultural program among German speaking scholars can be found in promotional

²³ N. P. [Noah Prylucki], “Undzer brifkasten. Kurtze tshuves oyf vershidene onfregn,” *Jidish far ale* 5 (1938): 158–159, 159.

²⁴ Max Weinreich’s notebook containing notes on specific words (around 1939/1940), YIVO Archives, RG 584, folder 121.

²⁵ For an overview of the history of Yiddish see Dovid Katz, *Words on Fire. The Unfinished Story of Yiddish* (New York: Basic Books, 2004).

²⁶ Weinreich, “Strategic Plan for the Philological Section of YIVO,” 72.

²⁷ Postcard of the Oriental Department of the Prussian State Library to Max Weinreich, Berlin, 10 March 1926, YIVO Archives, RG 1.2, folder 203.

literature, such as small booklets,²⁸ or Weinreich's article on Yiddish language for the seventh edition of *Meyers Konversationslexikon*, which was published by the Bibliographisches Institut in Leipzig.²⁹ The letters Weinreich received from Leipzig reveal that he insisted on rewriting a former version of his abstract where he had not mentioned YIVO and its part in standardizing Yiddish.³⁰ Although the editors were quite reluctant to proliferate his article, Weinreich was finally successful.³¹ He was thus able to secure a prominent place for YIVO and its sections, whereas other similar institutions in the Soviet Union were rather neglected.

Occasionally, one can also find some indication of cooperation between members of the *filsektse* and German or Austrian scholars of Yiddish. Jubilee and commemorative publications, which were dedicated to outstanding researchers in the field of Yiddish, are good examples for such encounters where Yiddishists and specialists in German studies, Jews and non-Jews, met. This applies especially to the Festschrift printed in honor of the German-Jewish philologist Alfred Landau (1850–1935),³² in which Weinreich also tried to place articles written by non-Jewish German-speaking scholars. In a circular letter to colleagues in Western Europe he offered the possibility of writing an article in a foreign language although the volume as a whole was to appear in Yiddish.³³

One of the very few Non-Jews who actively took part in the philological work of YIVO before World War II was Franz J. Beranek (1902–1967), a young scholar from the German speaking parts of Czechoslovakia. His work is germane to examining how members of YIVO dealt with German scholars interested in the field of Yiddish after 1945.

28 See *Das Jiddische Wissenschaftliche Institut (1925–1928)* (Berlin: Verein zur Förderung des Jiddischen Wissenschaftlichen Instituts, 1929); Max Weinreich, *Das Jiddische wissenschaftliche Institut ("Jiwo"), die wissenschaftliche Zentralstelle des Ostjudentums* (Berlin: [s. n.], [1931]).

29 [Max Weinreich], "Jiddisch," *Meyers Lexikon*, vol. 14, *Engler – Laibach. Ergänzungen*, 7. ed. (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1933), 930–931.

30 [Max Weinreich], "Jiddisch," *Meyers Lexikon*, vol. 6: *Hornberg – Korrektiv*, 7. ed. (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1927), 344.

31 See three letters of the editor-in-chief [Schriftleitung] of Bibliographisches Institut Leipzig AG to Max Weinreich, Leipzig, 1 February, 10 February and 11 June 1930 and an undated manuscript by Max Weinreich containing the revised version of his article, YIVO Archives, RG 584, folder 304.

32 *Landoy-bukh. Dr. Alfred Landoy tzu zayn 75stn geboyrrnstog, dem 25stn november 1925. Fun zayne gute fraynt un talmidim* [Jubilee Volume for Dr. Alfred Landau to his 75th Birthday, November 25th, 1925, Presented by his Friends and Pupils] (Vilna: B. Kletzkin, 1926).

33 Circular letter of Max Weinreich [in German], Vilna, 2 May 1925, YIVO Archives, RG 1.1, folder 603. In the end, all articles were published in Yiddish and Willy Staerk, a professor for Old Testament from the University of Jena, was the only non-Jew who contributed to *Landoy-bukh*. See *Landoy-bukh*, table of contents, n. p.

YIVO and German Scholars Interested in Yiddish after World War II

Born in Moravia in the beginning of the twentieth century, Beranek studied German philology at the German division of Prague University. Although he had no Jewish background, he developed an increasing interest in questions of Yiddish and soon came into contact with Max Weinreich and the philological section in Vilna. In 1935 he gave a conference speech at YIVO and, in 1936, he was able to publish this small study about Yiddish in Czechoslovakia in the “YIVO-bleter.”³⁴ Since YIVO could hardly find any experts for the history of Yiddish in the Czechoslovak region, the members of the philological section energetically tried to promote Beranek’s research. Thus, even in February 1940, when the political conditions at Vilna had become rather complicated, Beranek got an answer to his request to publish a manuscript on Yiddish dialects in Carpathian Ruthenia: although Zelig Kalmanowitch, co-founder and head of the institute, saw no possibility for publishing it in the near future, he declared his interest in Beranek’s study.³⁵

What followed can be read in Alan Steinweis’s and Christopher Hutton’s works on antisemitic scholarship and the role of linguistics in the Third Reich.³⁶ Franz Beranek was unwilling to understand the difficult and soon very dangerous situation of YIVO, and its members whose lives were threatened both by the Soviet army and Nazi Germany. Instead, he was mainly interested in pursuing his academic career. Therefore, he offered his manuscript to another institution which was far more influential at the time, the “Reichsinstitut für Geschichte des neuen Deutschlands” in Berlin.³⁷ The “Reichsinstitut” had been founded in Berlin in 1935 and was intended to become the very center of National Socialist

³⁴ The talk was given on 18th August, 1935. Beranek was the only guest in Vilna who had made his way from Czechoslovakia. See Franz Beranek, “Jidish in Tshekhoslovakay [Yiddish in Czechoslovakia],” *Yivo bleter* 9 (1936): 63–75, 63.

³⁵ Letter of Zelig Kalmanovitch and rb [?] to Franz Beranek, Vilna, 12 February 1940, YIVO Archives, RG 584, folder 293 A.

³⁶ Alan Steinweis, *Studying the Jew. Scholarly Antisemitism in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 152–156; Christopher Hutton, *Linguistics and the Third Reich: Mother-tongue Fascism, Race and the Science of Language* (London: Routledge, 1999), 212–220. Steinweis puts his focus on Beranek’s moral failure as due to his career ambitions, whereas Hutton seeks to locate Beranek’s problematic understanding of Yiddish as “neither German nor non-German” (Hutton, *Linguistics*, 217) as part of his nationalistic Weltanschauung.

³⁷ Franz J. Beranek, *Die jiddische Mundart Nordostungarns* (Brünn, Leipzig: Rudolf Rohrer, 1941). Page 8 reveals that the book was printed with the support of the “Reichsinstitut.” Hungary appeared in the title due to the fact that Carpathian Ruthenia, which was a part of interwar Czechoslovakia, had been annexed by Hungary in March 1939.

historiography.³⁸ Reading the preface of Beranek's book, one can see how the author had changed his mind about Yiddish: it is presented as a "derivative (*Nebensprache*) of High German,"³⁹ worth exploring for ideological reasons, as part of the efforts of Nazi scholarship to solve the "Jewish Question."⁴⁰ Beranek continues on to characterize research on Yiddish as having been very poor so far⁴¹ – a statement only possible if he simply ignored what the linguists working for YIVO had published over the last sixteen years.

Unsurprisingly, Beranek's overtures to revive his former connection with YIVO in the 1950s were sharply rejected by Weinreich and his colleagues in New York.⁴² Naturally, they were disappointed by Beranek's opportunism during National Socialism from a moral point of view – a top Weinreich dealt with in his ground-breaking book *Hitler's Professors*.⁴³ Moreover, the members of YIVO were not inclined to accept Beranek's conception of Yiddish as a German dialect and intrinsic part of Germanic studies.⁴⁴ Beranek himself was apparently not able to understand why his former friends did not want to continue their pre-war academic dialogue. Despite the fact that his research approach to Yiddish was considered inappropriate by several linguistic experts, he nevertheless became one of the leading figures of Yiddish studies in Germany after 1945.⁴⁵ Since 1962, he held an extraordinary professorship for Germanic studies with special regard to Yiddish at the University of Gießen, and focused on Yiddish and Sudeten German dialects. Thus, in 1965, he published *Westjiddischer Sprachatlas*, a description of Western Yiddish dialects.⁴⁶ Simultaneously, he was responsible for the *Sudetendeutsches Wörterbuch*, a dictionary of the German dialects of Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia.⁴⁷ It was published in cooperation with Collegium Carolinum, a

38 Dirk Rupnow, *Judenforschung im Dritten Reich. Wissenschaft zwischen Politik, Propaganda und Ideologie* (Wiesbaden: Nomos, 2011), 73.

39 Beranek, *Die jiddische Mundart Nordostungarns*, 8.

40 *Ibid.*, 7.

41 *Ibid.*, 8.

42 Steinweis, *Studying the Jew*, 154–155.

43 Max Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors. The Part of Scholarship in Germany's Crimes against the Jewish People*. 2. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999). The book was originally written in Yiddish and appeared in English in 1946. Weinreich does not mention Beranek's case; Steinweis assumes that this was due to its minor importance for Weinreich. See Steinweis, *Studying the Jew*, 155.

44 Steinweis, *Studying the Jew*, 156.

45 Hutton, *Linguistics*, 219.

46 Franz J. Beranek, *Westjiddischer Sprachatlas* (Marburg: Elwert, 1965).

47 Norbert Englisch and Heinz Engels, "Vorwort zum ersten Band," in *Sudetendeutsches Wörterbuch. Wörterbuch der deutschen Mundarten in Böhmen und Mährisch-Schlesien*, vol. 1: A, Heinz Engels (ed.) (Munich: Oldenbourg 1888), V–VIII, VI–VII.

research institute for the history of the Bohemian lands in Munich, which was dominated during the 1950s by scholars that had been expelled from Czechoslovakia after 1945.⁴⁸

Conclusion: a History of Ambivalence

While the relationship between YIVO's philological section and German academia was never neutral, or even relaxed, it would be over-simplistic to understand German only as a negative counterpoint to Yiddish. Rather, German also served as an important role model.

Apparent in the daily work of the *filsektseye*, their members very much relied on the example of German (and other surrounding languages), when it came to language planning, by standardizing orthography and terminologies for various disciplines. Moreover, Max Weinreich, who had been enrolled at a German university, was very familiar with German academic traditions, in terms of language politics, and drew inspiration from them even in developing his thoroughly anti-German linguistic purism. One must carefully distinguish between internal research methods, which were driven by practical considerations, and the external self-presentation of the philological section, which was part of YIVO's political program of Diaspora Nationalism. The fact that some non-Jewish German philologists also took part in the philological work of YIVO, before World War II, offers proof of the open academic culture at YIVO at that time. The break-up of this was caused not only by the Shoah, but also by the insistence of some German scholars on Yiddish being a variety of German.

The history of YIVO's philological section and German academia, of Yiddish and German, is therefore a history of ambivalence. Not shared, but rather an entangled history, or even *geteilte Geschichte* in the true meaning of the German word – a history both divided *and* shared at the same time.

⁴⁸ Martin Schulze Wessel, "Eröffnung der Festveranstaltung anlässlich des sechzigjährigen Jubiläums des Collegium Carolinum, 10. November 2016, Ehrensaal des Deutschen Museums, München," in *Jahresbericht des Collegium Carolinum 2016* (Munich: Collegium Carolinum, 2016), 6.

Tobias Grill

“Pioneers of Germanness in the East”?

Jewish-German, German, and Slavic

Perceptions of East European Jewry during the First World War

When the Great War broke out in the summer of 1914, large portions of German Jewry were as enthusiastic as many of their non-Jewish compatriots.¹ While one reason for this was their unabated patriotism, another reason many German Jews welcomed the war was their hope that their East European brethren would be liberated from the Tsarist yoke and be restored to a higher cultural level.

About two months after the beginning of the war, Professor Ludwig Stein² (1859–1930) gave a talk at the *Association for Jewish History and Literature of the Jews*, stating that of the eleven million Jews in Eastern Europe, ten million spoke Jewish-German (Yiddish) as their vernacular:

Maybe it was the plan of providence that the Jews were prohibited to settle in St. Petersburg, in order to remain pioneers of Germanness (Deutschtum) and to become once again Germans. Our soldiers are outside of Warsaw. That is the latest news. If it will be of success to drive Russia, where it belongs, to Asia, then it is not impossible that we will lead the Russian Jews back to German culture and civilization.³

About the same time, Carl Ernst Donner published in the central organ of the *Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens* (Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith) a contribution called *The Russian Jews as Pioneers of Germanness in the East* where he explained the following:

The Jew plays in his Russian environment the role of a cultural carrier, and his German vernacular [...] is of great importance for us Germans, this all the more, since it is not a newly acquired language. Is it therefore not necessary to speak of these Russian Jews, who despite the atrocious persecutions in and the expulsion from Germany, retained the German language, as pioneers of Germanness in the East? Especially these Jews will be, wherever the Germans will get to, not to be underestimated supporters of Germanness. After 600 years in a newly occupied territory our troops are encountering Germans – and even conservative

1 See e.g. Sarah Panter, *Jüdische Erfahrungen und Loyalitätskonflikte im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 39–51.

2 On Stein, see Jacob Haberman, “Ludwig Stein: rabbi, professor, publicist, and philosopher of evolutionary optimism,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 86 no. 1–2 (1995): 91–125.

3 *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, 23 October 1914, supplement: Der Gemeindebote: 1.

ones. Not only the Poles, also especially the Russian Jews are rejoicing over the arrival of the German-Austrian troops and providing them a great service. A pioneer service.⁴

In fact, with the advance of German and Austrian troops into Eastern Europe, the notion of the Germanness of East European Jewry gained some ground among German Jewry. The aim of this paper is to focus on the specific question of to what extent the concept or notion of East European Jews being, or becoming, Germans played a role in German and German-Jewish policy-making during the First World War. Was there a perception of Germans and East European Jews sharing a common history and culture which could serve as a base for a shared future?

Previous scholarship has not dealt with this question in a systematic way, or with due attention to the various actors. Thus, this study utilizes a multi-perspective approach. First, the different currents of German Jewry (Zionist, liberal, Orthodox) regarding the notion of East European Jews being pioneers of Germanness in the East will be discussed. Among all of these currents there were factions and personalities who harbored such a stance, with certain Zionists being the most outspoken in this regard. Following is a brief look at the German authorities and non-Jewish Germans, exploring whether this notion found support among them, and the question how the Russian and Polish populations in the Eastern war zone looked upon East European Jewry and its supposed Germanness. Finally, the attitude of East European Jewry itself will be considered, as they were the subjects (or objects) of such a policy.

Zionism and the Komitee für den Osten

Within a week of the beginning of the war, Otto Warburg (1859–1938) and Nahum Sokolow (1859–1936), main representatives of the *World Zionist Organization*, then located in Berlin, wrote a letter to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this letter, Warburg and Sokolow placed the Zionist organization, especially its East European branches, at the disposal of the German army in order to fight the “sole” enemy of Zionism – the Russian Empire.⁵ As they stressed, with Zionist backing it would even be possible to create revolutionary movements on Russian soil. However, they continued, “all this cannot be achieved under the banner of

⁴ Carlernst Donner, “Die russischen Juden als Pioniere des Deutschtums im Osten,” *Im Deutschen Reich* 20 (1914), no. 10–12, 382.

⁵ Letter of Warburg und Sokolow, representatives of the Zionist Organization, to the German secretary of foreign affairs, 7 August 1914 (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Berlin [PA AA] R 20942, K 190222).

Zionism, which is international, but by a special committee to be founded, which the leaders of Zionism will provide with their knowledge, cooperation and all of their aides."⁶

Ten days later a *German Committee for the Liberation of the Russian Jews* was established. Since the newly created committee emerged out of the *Engere Aktions-Comitee* (executive committee) of the *Zionist World Organization*, all of its members were well known Zionists like Max Bodenheimer (1865–1940), still acting president of the *Jewish National Fund*, Adolf Friedemann (1871–1932), Arthur Hantke (1874–1955), Alfred Klee (1875–1943), and the famous artist Hermann Struck (1876–1944). The German Ministry of Foreign Affairs enthusiastically welcomed this development, because the Zionist Organization would be a "tool of inestimable value [...] for the intelligence service and our propaganda activities abroad," especially in the territory of the Russian Empire.⁷ Very soon the provocative name of the organization was changed to *Komitee für den Osten* ("Committee for the East," KfdO).⁸

However, the establishment of the KfdO triggered a bitter conflict within German Zionism, since more radical Zionist leaders and the *Engere Aktions-Comitee* voiced the opinion that the Zionist Organization seemed to have sacrificed its stance of neutrality for German war aims.⁹ As a result of this conflict, ties between the *Engere Aktions-Comitee* and the KfdO were soon severed, and the KfdO expanded to include non-Zionist German Jews in order to present the committee as a non-partisan enterprise.¹⁰ Nevertheless, from the onset, leading German Zionists like Max Bodenheimer, Franz Oppenheimer (1864–1943),

⁶ Ibid., R 20942, K 190224.

⁷ See Egmont Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik und die Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969), 120.

⁸ On the genesis of the KfdO see Zosa Szajkowski, "The Komitee für den Osten and Zionism," *Herzl Yearbook* 7 (1971), 205–209.

⁹ In fact, the official policy of the World Zionist Organization remained one of neutrality. See for this conflict esp. Jay Ticker, "Max I. Bodenheimer: Advocate of Pro-German Zionism at the Beginning of World War I," *Jewish Social Studies* 43 no. 1 (1981): 20–25; See also Letter of Max Bodenheimer to Engere Aktions-Comitee, 9 January 1915, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem (CZA), Z 3\204. The conflict between Bodenheimer and the Engere Aktions-Comitee reached a climax when on 9 January 1915 he wrote to it the following: "I am no longer able to regard the EAC [Engere Aktions-Comitee; T.G.] which has proven by its activities during the war its complete incompetence to run the matters of the Zionist Movement as the Executive-Office of the GAC [Größeres Aktions-Comitee; T.G.]." Letter of Max Bodenheimer to Engere Aktions-Comitee, 9 January 1915, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem (CZA), Z 3\204.

¹⁰ See Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik*, 133; Szajkowski, "The Komitee für den Osten and Zionism," 211, 216.

Adolf Friedemann, Hermann Struck, and Heinrich Loewe (1869–1951) remained members of the Committee and gave it a Zionist outlook.

In the first two years of the war the KfdO constantly presented East European Jews as Germans who would uphold Germanness in the East and would guarantee German influence in the region. The main argument was that East European Jewry's vernacular was Yiddish, which, according to the KfdO leaders, was a German dialect. This was to a large extent propaganda in order to enlist the support of Germany for granting East European Jewry some kind of cultural autonomy. However, to a considerable degree it was also a firm belief of German and even some Russian born Zionists who advocated a synthesis of Jewish nationalism and German patriotism.¹¹

In the fall of 1914, Max Bodenheimer presented in a memorandum to the German Government the principles of the Committee's activities. As he stated, it was "one of the most wonderful phenomena of world history that at the present time the interests of the suppressed Jewish masses in Russia are absolutely concurrent with those of the German Reich." Instead of an autonomous Polish kingdom he proposed the establishment of a German-dominated buffer state between Germany and Russia extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea and encompassing about 40 Million people. While no nationality would form the majority, the German influence in such a buffer state would be guaranteed by the higher intelligence and economic power of the Jewish and German population who held the majority in the cities.

Bodenheimer further stressed that the language of Russian Jewry was medieval German, which the enlightened classes after a few years under German control would replace with modern German:

The Jews will be a German speaking and German culture fostering element, which will form a living rampart against the separatist aspirations of the Poles and their vernacular will gain the same importance as the other German dialects, namely the fostering of the patriotic and tribal feeling of the Russian Jews.¹²

11 On the pronounced war enthusiasm and German patriotism of German Zionists during the First World War, see Moshe Zimmermann, "Die Kriegsbegeisterung der deutschen Zionisten," in *Kriegstaumel und Pazifismus: Jüdische Intellektuelle im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Hans Richard Brittnacher and Irmela von der Lühe (eds.) (Frankfurt upon Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2016), 333–349.

12 Memorandum of Max Bodenheimer to the German government (which according to a general report to the members from December 1914 served as guiding principle for the activities of the KfdO), PA AA, R 10503, K 188480–K 188488. It should be noted that Bodenheimer as early as 1898 had attempted to convince the German government of the political advantages of a German-East European Jewish alliance alluding to the closeness of German and Yiddish; See also, Steven E. Aschheim, "Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany's *Ostpolitik* in the First World War," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 28 (1983): 356.

While in October 1914, the German Foreign Ministry regarded Bodenheimer's scheme of a German-dominated buffer state in the East as "largely utopian ideas,"¹³ Bodenheimer and Oppenheimer were nevertheless invited to the German army headquarters in Radom for negotiations with Paul von Hindenburg (1847–1934) and Erich Ludendorff (1865–1937).¹⁴ These negotiations seemed to be a success for the KfdO, since Hindenburg expressed a benevolent interest in the endeavors of the Committee and a willingness to support its aims.¹⁵

After the German breakthrough at Gorlice-Tarnów in the beginning of May 1915, and the rapid eastward advance of the German army, Bodenheimer, on behalf of the KfdO, toured "Russian Poland" (Congress Poland). In his report, which was also sent to the Foreign Ministry, Bodenheimer reiterated the position of the KfdO that East European Jewry's mother tongue Yiddish was a German dialect and thus the whole of Jewish-inhabited Western Russia¹⁶ was a German language area. Further, since between forty-five to sixty percent of the cities' population in that area was Jewish, these cities were in fact half German.

Interestingly, Bodenheimer presented East European Jews as better defenders of Germandom in the East in comparison to ethnic Germans. In order to promote his agenda he made exaggerated historical claims about the extent to which ethnic Germans of the past, who had migrated to Eastern Europe during the Middle Ages, assimilated into the Slavs and abandoned German, while East European Jewry had faithfully retained their German-Jewish dialect. Distorting numbers and facts, Bodenheimer presented East European Jews as *the* national group in the East on which the German government could rely on through all vicissitudes. Referring to the language of instruction in Jewish schools, he pleaded for the retention of Yiddish in Jewish elementary schools "for the time being." Yet, in most Jewish middle and high schools High German should immediately be installed as teaching language. Thus, Bodenheimer advocated a sort of linguistic Germanization of East European Jewry, even though his elaborations were not devoid of contradictions: at the same time, he proposed that the German military

¹³ Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik*, 130.

¹⁴ For Bodenheimer's own account on these negotiations see his memoirs, Max Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel. The Memoirs of M. I. Bodenheimer*, Henriette Hannah Bodenheimer (ed.) (New York: T. Yoseloff, 1963), 248–251.

¹⁵ See Letter of Hindenburg to Bodenheimer und Oppenheimer, 15 October 1914, PA AA, R 21343, K 204027; See also Letter of Major Caemmerer to KfdO, 19 November 1915, PA AA, R 21343, K 204025.

¹⁶ It remains unclear which territory exactly Bodenheimer had in mind. It seems that he did not only mean the former Kingdom of Poland (Congress Poland), but probably also adjacent parts of the Jewish Pale of Settlement.

and civic authorities should foster the “Jewish-German language” (i.e. Yiddish) by supporting the Jewish press and Jewish technical literature.

Bodenheimer also emphasized that a re-organization of Jewish life in the Russian part of Poland would no longer induce them to immigrate to Germany. As seen below, the fear of mass immigration of Polish Jewry to Germany played a crucial role in all political deliberations concerning the Jewish question in the East.

Eventually, Bodenheimer’s report proposed to establish a Jewish department within the German civil administration in Russian Poland as a means to gain support and sympathy of the Jewish population toward the German government, Germanism, German culture, and German interests.¹⁷

Two months later the German army finally occupied Warsaw, hosting the largest Jewish population in Eastern Europe, with about 330,000 Jews. The proposals of the KfdO were no longer of purely hypothetical character. A considerable part of the area which they had addressed in their plans was now under German rule. Only a few days after the occupation, Wladimir Kaplun-Kogan, head of the KfdO department for questions on national-cultural autonomy,¹⁸ published an article on Germans and Jews in Poland in the renowned *Vossische Zeitung*. He emphasized the need to protect the rights of German and Jewish populations of Warsaw in any future state. This was of “utmost importance” for the prosperity of the city and the “strengthening of Germanism in the East.” Especially for the Jews, the victorious advance of German troops brought a “closer union with German culture with which Jews for a long time had already been very familiar” due to their German dialect Yiddish. This culture and language community of Germans and East European Jews would, as Kaplun-Kogan stressed, “open huge chances of development for Germanism in Poland.”¹⁹

Three weeks later the Ministry of the Interior confidently notified the KfdO that the liberal German Jewish politician Dr. Ludwig Haas (1875–1930), member of the Reichstag, was assigned to the German civil administration of the newly established Government-General of Warsaw as head of the department for Jewish affairs. Thus, as the Ministry claimed, “one of the main requests of the Committee should be fulfilled.”²⁰ However, a letter of Victor Jacobsohn to Arthur Hantke

¹⁷ Bericht über die im Auftrage des “Komitees für den Osten” im Mai-Juni 1915 unternommene Reise nach Russisch-Polen von Justizrat Dr. M. I. Bodenheimer, PA AA, R 20946, K 190961–K 190978.

¹⁸ See Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel*, 255.

¹⁹ W. Kaplun-Kogan, “Deutsche und Juden in Polen,” *Vossische Zeitung*, no. 414 (Abend), 14 August 1915, 3.

²⁰ Letter of the Ministry of the Interior to the KfdO from 2 September 1915, PA AA, R 21343, K 204026.

from September 1915 shows that the Zionist Organization was very alarmed by this appointment because Haas was an "avowed Anti-Zionist."²¹ Thus, the KfdO asked the Foreign Ministry in mid-March 1916 to appoint Adolf Friedemann as representative of the committee in the German civil administration of the Government-General of Warsaw, clearly indicating that the KfdO did not feel represented by Haas and his advisers.²² While the KfdO failed in this attempt, it was a major success when Hermann Struck, one of its main representatives, became referent for Jewish affairs in Ober Ost (*Oberbefehlshaber der gesamten Deutschen Streitkräfte im Osten*, 'Supreme Commander of All German Forces in the East'), a territory of German occupation which encompassed the former Russian-ruled regions of Courland, Lithuania and Białystok-Grodno.²³

In October 1915, after a meeting with the Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry, Bodenheimer and Oppenheimer argued in one of their many memoranda to this ministry in favor of a coalition of East European Germans and East European Jews in order to uphold Germanness in the East. Once again, Yiddish was denoted as a Middle High German dialect which was no more different from High German than Schwyzer Dütsch (Swiss German) or Plattdeutsch (Low German). The mindset of East European Jews was rooted in Schiller, Goethe, Kant, Lessing, and other German intellectual heroes, who were mostly translated into the Jargon, i.e. Yiddish. The Jews were depicted as natural carriers of German thought in the East who must not fall prey to Slavisation.

Since Yiddish was not a language capable of development, the Jews in Congress Poland would have the choice to become either German or Polish. In order to prevent Polonization, the Jargon should be used as a tool to slowly transform the Jews into German speakers. This linguistic transformation should be accompanied by the introduction of national-cultural autonomy according to the concept of Karl Renner and Otto Bauer.²⁴ The Germanized Jews would, together with the ethnic German minority, promote the German way of thought. This way, Germanness would gain much sympathy among the millions of East European Jews as far

²¹ Letter of Victor Jacobsohn to Arthur Hantke, 6 September 1915, CZA, Z 3\140.

²² Letter of the KfdO to the Foreign Ministry from 13 March 1916, PA AA, R 21334.

²³ On Struck's activities in this regard see Abba Strazhas, "Die Tätigkeit des Dezernats für jüdische Angelegenheiten in der 'Deutschen Militärverwaltung OberOst'," in *Die Baltischen Provinzen Russlands zwischen den Revolutionen von 1905 und 1917*, Andrew Ezergailis and Gert von Pistohlkors (eds.) (Cologne-Vienna: Böhlau, 1982), 315–329.

²⁴ On this concept see e.g. Roni Gechtman, "Conceptualizing national-cultural autonomy: from the Austro-Marxists to the Jewish Labor Bund," *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts* 4 (2005): 17–49, esp. 19–43.

as the Urals and Asia Minor. German trade and economy, especially, could thus enlist seven million voluntary pioneers in the East.²⁵

It is most remarkable that leading Jewish nationalists like Bodenheimer and Oppenheimer envisaged a gradual linguistic Germanization of East European Jewry in the future and thus seemed to be willing to relinquish a fundamental feature of East European Jews' nationality. Such a stance was not only adopted for propaganda reasons, it also had political implications. In March 1915, the KfdO negotiated with leading representatives of the Polish faction in the Austrian Reichsrat and of the Supreme Polish National Committee about the legal conditions of Germans and Jews in a future Polish entity.²⁶ According to the KfdO, these Polish representatives were willing to accept that Polish Jewry would not be Polonized, but on the contrary would be Germanized as far as possible. Of course, the committee's chairman Oppenheimer did not miss the opportunity to emphasize that minority protection or (national) cultural autonomy for Polish Jews would be of tremendous service for German language, for German culture, and German trade interests.²⁷

The linguistic Germanization of Eastern European Jews advocated by the KfdO was also a subject of negotiations with Hungarian and Austrian authorities and politicians.²⁸ The main goal was to achieve some sort of autonomy for their East European brethren.²⁹ Nevertheless, the leading Zionist representatives

25 Letter of Oppenheimer and Bodenheimer to the Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry Zimmermann from 11 October 1915, whom they had met a week before to present the policy of the KfdO, PA AA, R 20947, K 191221–K 191225.

26 On these negotiations see Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik*, 144–154; Marcos Silber, "The development of a joint political program for the Jews of Poland during World War I – success and failure," *Jewish History* 19 (2005): 212–213.

27 Chairman of the Komitee für den Osten Franz Oppenheimer to Baron von Bergen at the Foreign Ministry, 25 March 1915, PA AA, R 20945, K 190810–K 190819; See also Silber, "The development of a joint political program," 218. The agreement between the KfdO and the Supreme National Committee was so far-reaching that the latter "organized a propaganda campaign" in Warsaw at the beginning of 1916, promoting a program to divide the population by national curiae"; See also F. Schwabe, "Polnische Versprechungen," *Das Größere Deutschland. Wochenschrift für Deutsche Welt- und Kolonialpolitik* no. 6, 10 February 1917, 186. However, in 1917 the former president of the Polish Supreme National Committee Jaworski spoke out in favor of a full legal emancipation of Polish Jewry, under the precondition that the Jews would closely affiliate themselves to the Poles.

28 See e.g. Bericht über eine Reise der Herren Dr. Friedemann, Dr. Oppenheimer und Professor Sobernheim nach Oesterreich-Ungarn und ins österreichische Hauptquartier nach Teschen in der Zeit vom 11. Sept. 15 bis 2. Okt. 15, PA AA, R 20946, K 191188; see also Letter of KfdO to Baron von Bergen (Foreign Ministry), 27 July 1915, PA AA, R 20946, K 191127–K 191130.

29 Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel*, 261. As Bodenheimer states in his memoirs, he argued in favor of national-cultural autonomy, while the remaining members of the KfdO envisaged a "purely cultural autonomy."

of the Committee, like Bodenheimer and Oppenheimer, were convinced that Jews in Eastern Europe constituted a part of Germanness and therefore could be useful for the Reich even after the war. Clearly, such a stance did not seem contradictory to them. In their view, Germanization of East European Jews was not only advantageous to German interests but was also the best chance to preserve the Jewishness of East European Jews. In fact, in a meeting of the executive committee of the KfdO in March 1915, everyone agreed that Jewish autonomy was "the best way to Germanise the East."³⁰ Thus, Jay Ticker is correct that the "synthesis of Jewish and German interests advocated by Bodenheimer was his solution to his conflict of identities."³¹ This was not only true in Bodenheimer's case. His close associate in the KfdO, Franz Oppenheimer, also a Zionist since the beginning of the movement, not only exclaimed: "We are Germans to our last drop of blood,"³² but also stated a few months before the end of the war: "Because German is our mother tongue, it is dear to our heart as Germans, not as Jews, only as Germans that the largest German dialect, the unjustly mocked old-upper-German Yiddish, will not be drowned in the Slavic sea."³³

The KfdO not only tried to gain the support of the German and Austrian-Hungarian governments, as well as of representatives of the Polish and Ukrainian national movements,³⁴ but also attempted to mobilize the German public – Jewish

30 Quoted after Aschheim, "Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany's *Ostpolitik* in the First World War," 357.

31 Ticker, "Max I. Bodenheimer: Advocate," 26; See also Szajkowski, "The Komitee für den Osten and Zionism," 215. I disagree with Szajkowski's claim that "Bodenheimer's anti-assimilationism was a constant influence on the policies of the KfdO"; See also, Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers. The East European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, 1800–1923* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 158. Aschheim observed that the KfdO's "appeal to German political interests was never merely tactical." See also Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel*, 256. Bodenheimer's own statement on his identity in regard to his KfdO activities: "It had been right for me to deal with this matter as a German patriot without a mandate. [...] As Jews we had at present only to do our duty towards our fatherland, and that too with the utmost sacrifice. As Zionists we had to keep ourselves quiet and loyal in the warring countries until the storm was over." See also Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel*, 274.

32 Franz Oppenheimer, "Angeblich Judenverfolgungen in Palästina," *Breslauer Lokal Anzeiger*, 26 February 1915; Szajkowski, "The Komitee für den Osten and Zionism," 213.

33 Franz Oppenheimer, "Gemeinbürgerschaft," *Im Deutschen Reich* 24, no. 4, April 1918, 148.

34 Report of the activities of the Komitee für den Osten from 1914 to February 1918, CZA, A 8\31. In fact, the KfdO also negotiated with leading representatives of the Ukrainians (Ruthenians) in Vienna. According to a KfdO report these negotiations yielded "a complete congruence of interests and even bore fruits regarding the establishment of the Ukraine." As the report further emphasized, Jews in this new state were awarded with the "right of a national cadastre" (national autonomy) and "should gain a satisfactory political position" there.

and non-Jewish alike.³⁵ On behalf or in support of the KfdO, other influential Zionists like Hermann Struck, Heinrich Loewe, Felix Perles (1874–1933), Nachum Goldmann (1895–1982), Davis Trietsch (1870–1935) and Wladimir Kaplun-Kogan emphasized, in articles and pamphlets, the idea of a shared language and culture between Germans and Jews in Eastern Europe. According to them, these Jews could promote, spread and conserve Germanness in Eastern Europe and be of advantage for the Reich.³⁶ And some of these KfdO representatives and supporters even favored – at least initially – a far-reaching Germanization of East European Jewry. “Propaganda arguing for the symbiosis of *Ostjudentum* and *Deutschtum* was so common that it became clichéd,”³⁷ as Steven Aschheim has noted.

A major propaganda coup of the KfdO was the publication of a whole issue on East European Jews in the well-known *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* in February 1916.

35 The KfdO even started publishing a new periodical, the *Neue Jüdische Monatshefte*, edited among others by Franz Oppenheimer and Adolf Friedemann as well as well-known non-Zionists like Hermann Cohen and Eugen Fuchs. As it was stated in letters and in the editorial of the first issue the periodical aimed at being non-partisan, addressing Jews and non-Jews alike and promoting understanding among various parties and factions. Main goal for the decision to publish the *Neue Jüdische Monatshefte* was the intention to provide concerned circles of officials in the occupied areas and the Reich as well as the larger audience with news. Thus, the periodical was distributed to ministries, administrative authorities, heads of counties in the occupation area and others for free. See Report of the activities of the Komitee für den Osten from 1914 to February 1918, CZA, A 8\31; see also Letter of the KfdO to Bodenheimer, 10 July 1916, CZA, A 15\670; Szajkowski, “The Komitee für den Osten and Zionism,” 208; Franz Oppenheimer, *Erlebtes, Erstrebtes, Erreichtes. Lebenserinnerungen, ergänzt durch Berichte und Aufsätze von und über Franz Oppenheimer*, Ludwig Yehuda Oppenheimer (ed.) (Düsseldorf: Melzer 1964), 223. However, it should be emphasized that it was never explicitly stated in the *Neue Jüdische Monatshefte* that it was a periodical of the KfdO.

36 Felix Perles, *Der Krieg und die polnischen Juden in ihrem Verhältnis zu Deutschland* (Königsberg: Gräfe & Unzer, 1914); Hermann Struck, *Ueber die jüdisch-deutsche Sprache. Eine kurze Einführung. Im Auftrag des “Komitees für den Osten”* (no place, no publisher, December 1914); Heinrich Loewe, *Die jüdischdeutsche Sprache der Ostjuden. Ein Abriß. Im Auftrag des “Komitees für den Osten”* (Berlin: no publisher, October 1915); Wald. W. Kaplun-Kogan, *Der Krieg: Eine Schicksalsstunde des jüdischen Volkes* (Bonn: A. Marcus & E. Webers Verlag, 1915), 11; Davis Trietsch, *Juden und Deutsche. Eine Sprach- und Interessengemeinschaft* (Wien: R. Löwit-Verlag, 1915); Nachum Goldmann, “Das polnisch-jüdische Problem,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, no. 244, 3 September 1915, Erstes Morgenblatt, 1–2; Wlad. W. Kaplun-Kogan, *Die jüdische Sprach- und Kulturgemeinschaft in Polen. Eine statistische Studie. Verfasst im Auftrage des “Komitees für den Osten”* (Berlin-Wien: R. Löwit-Verlag, 1917 (first published in *Zeitschrift für Demographie und Statistik der Juden* 11 no. 7/8/9 (July/August/September 1915), 65–80); Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel*, 256. Bodenheimer states in his memoirs that Struck’s and Loewe’s essays “proved of great interest to the Reich authorities.”; see also Zosa Szajkowski, “The Struggle for Yiddish during World War I: The Attitude of German Jewry,” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 9 (1964): 135–137.

37 Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers*, 158.

This issue ran essays by Zionists associated with the KfdO, like Adolf Friedemann, Franz Oppenheimer, Max Bodenheimer, Wladimir Kaplun-Kogan, and Heinrich Loewe. Although the contributors emphasized that Yiddish was a German dialect and thus East European Jewry represented a German element in the East, the potential linguistic Germanization of East European Jewry appeared to no longer be part of KfdO policy.³⁸ This change was probably due to the realization that a prospective Germanization contradicted the claim of a distinct Jewish nationality and the demand for a future (national) cultural autonomy of East European Jewry, which were main priorities of the KfdO. Moreover, the representatives of the KfdO seemed to have realized the negative consequences of a decidedly open anti-Polish stance. Thus, Franz Oppenheimer, for example, argued in favor of Polish Jewry becoming a mediator between the culture of Germany and the culture of the Western Slavs.³⁹

Thus, compared to earlier KfdO memoranda to the German government, statements by KfdO representatives were more moderate. Nevertheless, this slight moderation was not enough to calm the numerous opponents of the KfdO. Even though many of the committee's main representatives like Oppenheimer, Friedemann, or Bodenheimer were leading Zionists of the first hour, the KfdO was exposed to harsh criticism from other Zionists who sided with practical or cultural Zionism.⁴⁰

For example, Moses Calvary (1876–1944) argued in his essay on Yiddish, published in the first issue of Martin Buber's (1878–1965) *Der Jude*, that Yiddish was a language in its own right. While he acknowledged that Yiddish was linguistically much related to German, he expressed the opinion that both languages had little in common regarding their spiritual content.⁴¹ Although Calvary did not mention any of the KfdO representatives or their attitude towards Yiddish, this was a clear allusion to Friedemann's article in the *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*.

Also in reaction to the issue of *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, Julius Berger (1883–1948), secretary of the World Zionist Organization and of the Zionist Association for Germany (which had been founded by Bodenheimer himself), launched a scathing criticism against the KfdO in the June 1916 *Der Jude*, without explicitly

38 Szajkowski, "The Struggle for Yiddish during World War I," 146. Szajkowski claims that the "majority of the members of the KfdO were in favour of replacing the jargon by High German." He, however, does not take into consideration that the KfdO by 1916 had largely changed its attitude in this respect.

39 Franz Oppenheimer, "Nationale Autonomie für die Ostjuden," *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, February 1916, 730.

40 The German Zionist central committee had even unanimously condemned the approach of the KfdO "portraying the Ostjuden as ideal allies of, and perfect pioneers for, *Deutschtum* in the East," as it was done in the *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*; Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers*, 163.

41 Moses Calvary, "Jiddisch," *Der Jude*, no. 1, April 1916, 25–32, esp. 32.

mentioning it. In general, he accused the activities of German Jews on behalf of their Polish brethren of being characterized by a “spirit of paternalism.” For German Jewry, Polish Jews were mere objects, although it should have been the “first and self-evident duty to make them subjects of the activities.” This would imply not doing anything without asking Polish Jewry itself. According to Berger, it was vital for German Jews not to interfere where the status of Polish Jewry vis-à-vis the Poles was concerned. However, certain German Jews had taken on the role of being mediators between the Jews in Poland and the German occupation forces. Berger pointed to a “strange logic” of these “gentlemen.” On the one hand, they had emphasized the unity of the Jewish people in Poland and had requested that the “conqueror” respect the Jewish nation. At the same time, however, they had proclaimed everywhere the “doctrine of the affinity of Polish Jewry and Germanism.” According to this doctrine, politics, the economy, and especially the language of the Jewish people in Poland was German. Yiddish, as it was emphasized in “countless essays and pamphlets,” was only a “branch of the German language body,” most closely related to German and thus should be promoted and not be absorbed by the German language. To Berger it seemed “almost funny” to prove the “special character of a nation” by claiming its close relatedness to another nation. Since a German-Polish agreement had not yet been achieved, it was dangerous for the Jews when someone brought forward the “totally wrong” claim that “German and Jewish interests, German and Jewish future, German and Jewish language in Poland were identical.” This would, “from outside,” “poison” the “severe national struggle” which the Jews had to fight against the Poles. And what the Polish Jews designated as their own national needs seemed, to the Poles, only an excuse and a courting of German grace. For Berger, the representatives of these “committees” – a clear allusion to the KfdO – were totally ignorant in all matters concerning Polish Jewry, including their language, since they had never lived among them. Even German soldiers who had served in Poland for a few months knew more about Polish Jews than these German-Jewish activists.⁴²

Not surprisingly, the KfdO representatives were quite enraged by Berger’s attacks. Thus, Oppenheimer complained in a letter to Martin Buber that Berger’s article contained the “rudest attacks” on the KfdO and demanded an opportunity for rebuttal in the pages of *Der Jude*.⁴³

Also in 1916, Bodenheimer published, under the easily decipherable pseudonym Dr. M. J. Bodmer, in a series dedicated to the German war effort, a pamphlet

⁴² Julius Berger, “Deutsche Juden und polnische Juden,” *Der Jude*, no. 3, June 1916, 138–141; See also Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers*, 163–164; Aschheim, “Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany’s *Ostpolitik* in the First World War,” 360.

⁴³ Letter of Oppenheimer to Martin Buber, 7 July 1916, CZA, A 15\670.

arguing in favor of a German (and Austrian-Hungarian) dominated buffer state in Eastern Europe and cultural autonomy for its different nationalities. In fact, this pamphlet was a more elaborate version of the memorandum which he had submitted to the German government in fall 1914. Bodenheimer publicly reiterated all the arguments for the establishment of a new confederation that would guarantee a permanent German influence through its German and Jewish populations in the East.⁴⁴ Compared to the memorandum from 1914, or the report on his tour of Russian Poland in May and June 1915, there was only one important change. While once again emphasizing that East European Jewry's Yiddish vernacular made it the "most valuable base for German culture in the East," Bodenheimer now explicitly argued in favor of the preservation of Yiddish. Any mention of attempts or possibilities for Germanization were dropped.⁴⁵

By November 1916, Bodenheimer's plan for a German dominated buffer state in Eastern Europe was made obsolete by the German and Austrian proclamation to establish an independent Polish kingdom on the territory previously under Russian rule. In mid-December the KfdO asked the Foreign Ministry to be consulted when the Polish constitution would be drawn.⁴⁶ However, the main goal of the KfdO, (national) cultural autonomy for Polish Jewry, conflicted with the German intention to avoid creating facts on the ground which might enrage the Poles.⁴⁷ This intention corresponded with the pro-Polish and anti-Jewish-nationalist policy of Haas, Pinchas Kohn (1867–1941), and Emanuel Carlebach (1874–1927) in the department for Jewish affairs of the Government-General – who viewed Jewry as only a religious community, thus precluding any demands for autonomy.⁴⁸ For them, "'Jewishness' was a matter of religion and not culture, much less

⁴⁴ Obviously, Bodenheimer's plan for a German-dominated buffer state in the East had allusions to Friedrich Naumann's and Ernst Jäckh's *Mitteleuropa* (Central Europe)-concept which they promoted since 1915. Not surprisingly, Bodenheimer's pamphlet was published in a series edited by Jäckh.

⁴⁵ See Dr. M. J. Bodmer [Bodenheimer], *Ein neuer Staatenbund und das Ostjudenproblem* (Stuttgart/Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt 1916). It should be noted that Bodenheimer regarded hatred against Germany as closely associated with antisemitism (p. 9), a view that was not uncommon among German Jewry at that time. This was a new argument for the relationship between German and East European Jewish culture.

⁴⁶ Letter of KfdO to Foreign Ministry, 12 December 1916, PA AA, R 21337, K 203706–K 203707.

⁴⁷ See e.g. Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik*, 140; Konrad Zieliński, "Polish-Jewish relations in the Kingdom of Poland during the First World War," *European Journal of Jewish Studies* 2 no. 2 (2008): 269–282, 274.

⁴⁸ See e.g. Tobias Grill, "The Politicisation of Traditional Polish Jewry: Orthodox German Rabbis and the Founding of Agudas Ho-Ortodoksim and Dos yidishe vort in Gouvernement-General Warsaw, 1916–18," *East European Jewish Affairs* 39 no. 2 (2009), 236.

nationality.”⁴⁹ Thus, the influence of the KfdO on German policy-making regarding Polish Jewry was insignificant.

In our context, it is very conspicuous that in the last two and a half years of the war the KfdO seemed to have abandoned the notion of East European Jews as carriers of German culture and Germanness in the East. In the archives of the German Foreign Ministry, apparently only one document from this time period employs such a notion: In the beginning of October 1917, the KfdO mentioned in a letter to the state secretary of the Foreign Ministry that East European Jewry knew German and as “pioneers of German trade” could hardly be dismissed for the “future peace work.”⁵⁰ Clearly, the KfdO had drastically changed its whole policy in the course of 1916. This is also substantiated by Bodenheimer’s statement in his memoirs that the KfdO “[s]ince after the spring of 1916 [...] had engaged only in philanthropic activity.”⁵¹ One of the main reasons for this change was likely the fact that “by early 1916 the rift separating the Eastern Jews from their German occupiers was clear,” and “[f]ear and hostility was prevalent.”⁵² Against this background allusions to East European Jews being carriers of Germanness had lost all credibility. Moreover, the KfdO representatives must have realized that the German authorities were not willing to succumb to such a notion, as illustrated below.

The Attitude of Liberal and Assimilationist German Jews

Apart from more radical Zionists, the pro-Zionist KfdO had other fierce opponents within German Jewry. Their main rivals amongst these were the anti-Zionists James Simon (1851–1932) and Paul Nathan (1857–1927), who in 1901 had founded the *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden* (Aid Association of German Jews) in order to alleviate the lot of East European Jews. In September 1915, more than a year after the outbreak of the war, Nathan initiated the establishment of the *Deutsche Vereinigung für die Interessen der osteuropäischen Juden* (German Association for the Interests of the East European Jews) which was joined not only by assimilated and liberal Jews, but also by non-Jewish Germans. It seems that the main impetus for

⁴⁹ Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers*, 167.

⁵⁰ Letter of KfdO to state secretary of the Foreign Ministry von Kühlmann, 5 October 1917, PA AA, R 21343, K 204011–K 204012.

⁵¹ Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel*, 278.

⁵² Aschheim, “Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany’s *Ostpolitik* in the First World War,” 362.

establishing this association was the fear that masses of "uncivilized" East European Jews could migrate to Germany, thereby giving rise to antisemitism which would also affect German Jewry. In opposition to the KfdO, the *German Association for the Interests of the East European Jews* refrained from claiming that the Jews in Eastern Europe would constitute a component of Germanness in the East. This was not only due to the fact that they regarded East European Jewry as culturally inferior, but particularly because they were uncertain about future developments in this region. According to them, in light of Polish antisemitism, a premature turn of East European Jews to Germany could result in fierce persecutions by the Poles. However, in the future, as they emphasized, civilized and cultivated East European Jews could become useful intermediaries between Russia and Germany.⁵³ In general, the association headed by the outspoken assimilation proponents Nathan and Simon more or less advocated a Polonization of Polish Jewry and thus were strictly opposed to any kind of autonomy for their brethren in the East.⁵⁴

Yet, other liberal and assimilated German Jews held up the notion of East European Jews being German pioneers in the East. Since 1897 the *Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens*, the main association of liberal and assimilated German Jewry, adhered to the principle that East European Jews were "carriers of German culture," and that they had proven themselves as "pioneers of Germandom abroad."⁵⁵ Clear examples of this carried through the war, such as those of Stein and Donner, as quoted above. It depended on which identity of the individual was dominant at the moment. Arguing as a German, East European Jews could be of advantage for the Reich. Arguing as a Jew, these same Jews in Eastern Europe could pose a threat, since such "uncivilized" people might migrate to Germany and give rise to antisemitism there.⁵⁶

53 See the own account of the Deutsche Vereinigung für die Interessen der osteuropäischen Juden on the occasion of its establishment, PA AA, R 10504, K 188643–K 188650. In a contribution for the *Berliner Tageblatt* in January 1916 Nathan had also envisaged Congress Poland as a buffer state between the Russian Empire and Western Europe, in which Polish Jews could serve as "useful mediators" between Germans and Poles; Paul Nathan, "Polen und Juden," *Berliner Tageblatt und Handels-Zeitung*, no. 30, 17 January 1916, Abendausgabe, 2.

54 See Szajkowski, "The Komitee für den Osten and Zionism," 221.

55 See Arndt Kremer, *Deutsche Juden – deutsche Sprache: Jüdische und judenfeindliche Sprachkonzepte und -konflikte 1893–1933* (Berlin: De Gruyter 2007), 249–254. Thus, the Centralverein's majority position in 1917 was that Polish Jewry in the newly proclaimed Kingdom of Poland would be linguistically Germanized through public schooling; William W. Hagen, "Murder in the East: German-Jewish liberal reactions to anti-Jewish violence in Poland and other East European lands, 1918–1920," *Central European History* 34 no. 1 (2001): 1–30, 5–6.

56 On discussions in the Centralverein regarding a mass emigration of East European Jews to Germany, see Avraham Barkai, "*Wehr Dich!*": *der Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens (C.V.) 1893–1938* (München: Beck, 2002), 77–86.

An outstanding example of a patriotic and liberal German Jew who argued that not only East European Jews, but all Jews of the occident were in fact Germans, was the renowned professor emeritus of philosophy, and co-founder of the Marburg School of Neo-Kantianism, Hermann Cohen (1842–1918). At the end of January 1915, he published in the New York-based newspaper *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung* a German call to American Jews titled “You shall not be a slanderer.” In this contribution Cohen vehemently defended Germany and its war efforts against the accusations of militarism raised by her opponents. His main goal, however, was to explain to American Jews, who, according to him, hailed mostly from Eastern Europe, that all the Jews of the occident had a spiritual and emotional link to Germany and thus were in fact “German Jews.” As an example, he pointed to “German Jews” in the Crimea and everywhere in Russia who had preserved their fidelity to the German language as an effect of their mentality and affection. Furthermore, he stated that the reform of Judaism was of German origin, which had through Germans migrated to the USA. Moreover, the “general cultural work of the Jews is,” as Cohen put it, “everywhere stimulated by the German spirit.” Eventually Cohen directly addressed American Jews with the following statement:

Dear brothers in America! [...] Next to his political fatherland every Jew of the occident has to acknowledge, adore and love Germany as motherland of his modern religiosity as well as his esthetic fundamental force und thus as center of his cultural ethos.

According to Cohen Germany was nothing less than the “motherland of occident Jewry.”⁵⁷

Just a few days before Cohen’s appeal to American Jews appeared in a German-language newspaper in New York, he had declared his willingness to travel to the United States in order to campaign among university professors and “cultural Jews” for Germany. As Ludwig Holländer (1877–1936), syndic of the *Central-Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens*, informed the Foreign Ministry, despite his age Cohen was willing to make these sacrifices for his fatherland, which had been criticized recently by some influential American Jews.⁵⁸ Against this background, Cohen’s statements about the essential role of German

⁵⁷ Hermann Cohen, ““Du sollst nicht einhergehen als ein Verleumder.” Ein Appell an die Juden Amerikas,” *Sonntagsblatt der New Yorker Staats-Zeitung*, 31 January 1915; here quoted after Hermann Cohen, *Jüdische Schriften*, ed. by Bruno Strauß, (Berlin: C. A. Schwetschke & Sohn / Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1924), 234–235; Cohens article was also published in *Israelitisches Familienblatt*, 24 June 1915, 9–10.

⁵⁸ Letter of Ludwig Holländer to the German Foreign Office, 28 January 1915, PA AA, R 20944, K 190693–K 190695.

culture for all Jews of the occident seems to be merely the propaganda of a dedicated German patriot. However, there is no doubt that Cohen, like other liberal German Jews, was really convinced of the superiority of German Jewry and its leadership role for the other Jewries in the world. A year later, he published an essay on “The Polish Jew,” in Martin Buber’s periodical *Der Jude*, arguing for a fundamental reform of East European Jewry according to the German and Jewish-German example, thus basically envisaging a Germanization or Re-Germanization of the Jews in Eastern Europe.⁵⁹ “And it will be the highest triumph of the German Jew,” as Cohen wrote, “if his fatherland will be able to effect this true liberation, this inner rejuvenation of the Jews in the East by gradual progress.”⁶⁰

While many liberal German Jews shared the attitude of German Jewry’s undisputable superiority over East European Jewry, there was some difference of opinion regarding the question of whether the Jews in Eastern Europe represented Germanness and if they should be Germanized in the future. In general, compared to the Kfdo, the notion of East European Jews being carriers of Germanness was much less pronounced and, above all, much less politicized among liberal German Jews.

The Attitude of German Orthodoxy

Discussion of the attitudes of German Zionists and liberal German Jews raises the question of how representatives of German Orthodoxy saw their East European brethren during the First World War in respect to perceived Germanness.

When the German civil and military authorities in occupied Poland decreed that German was to be the language of instruction for both German and Jewish schools in Poland, German orthodoxy at first welcomed the decision.⁶¹ However, when the liberal German-Jewish politician Ludwig Haas supposedly informed representatives of the secessionist branch of German orthodoxy that he intended to “Germanize” Polish Jewry as a benefit for Germany, this was regarded as a massive threat to traditional Polish Jewry.⁶² Two German rabbis, Pinchas Kohn and Emanuel Carlebach, of the secessionist *Freie Vereinigung für die Interessen*

⁵⁹ Hermann Cohen, “Der polnische Jude,” *Der Jude*, no. 3, June 1916, 153–156.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁶¹ Matthias Morgenstern, *Von Frankfurt nach Jerusalem: Isaac Breuer und die Geschichte des “Austrittstreits” in der deutsch-jüdischen Orthodoxie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995), 67.

⁶² Jacob Rosenheim, *Erinnerungen 1870–1920*, Heinrich Eisemann and Herbert N. Kruskal (eds.) (Frankfurt upon Main: Kramer, 1970), 145. On Haas and his attitude towards Yiddish as an instrument of political influence, see Szajkowski, “The Struggle for Yiddish during World War I,” 136.

des orthodoxen Judentums (Free Association for the Interests of Orthodox Jews), were allowed to settle in Warsaw in order to advise Haas on reform projects of Polish Jewry. As Jacob Rosenheim, one of the leading representatives of the orthodox *Agudat Israel*, stated years later, Pinchas Kohn seemed to be the only one who immediately understood that the notion of Polish Jews being German pioneers in the East would have a disastrous outcome, since in the eyes of the Polish public this would identify the Jews as foreigners in the country.⁶³ Although these German rabbis initiated cultural transfers from German-Jewish orthodoxy into traditional Polish Jewry, they nevertheless pursued an overtly pro Polish policy.⁶⁴

While Kohn and Carlebach steered clear of qualifying Polish Jewry as German, other orthodox German Jews seemed to regard East European Jewry not only as Germans but also as a means of Germanization. In Kovno (Kaunas) the two German army chaplains (field rabbis) Leopold Rosenak (1868–1923) and Joseph Carlebach (1883–1942), brother of Emanuel and brother-in-law of Rosenak, established a Jewish *Realgymnasium* under the auspices of the German military authorities. Although the German authorities in Ober Ost would have approved of Jewish schools with Yiddish as the language of instruction, both German rabbis introduced German as a medium of teaching. According to a report of the KfdO, both stated from the beginning of the school project that Yiddish was not a language and that the Jews had to serve as mediators and carriers of German culture.⁶⁵ Until the end of the German occupation, the school remained an institution of German *Bildung*. Thus, this school like others served as a Germanizing institution, at least for some time.⁶⁶ Though both rabbis did not acknowledge Yiddish to be a language, they implicitly regarded it as quite close to German, a fact that enabled them to introduce German as the language of instruction and to teach German classics like Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller.⁶⁷

The notion of East European Jews as mediators of German language, German culture, and German interests also played a major role in Jonas Simon's proposal

⁶³ See Jacob Rosenheim, "Dr. Pinchas Kohn in Polen," *Der Israelit*, no. 9, 4 March 1937, 4.

⁶⁴ See Tobias Grill, "Die polnisch-jüdische Tageszeitung Das Yudische Wort als Versuch eines deutsch-jüdischen Kulturtransfers nach Osteuropa," in *Deutsch-jüdische Presse und jüdische Geschichte. Dokumente, Darstellungen, Wechselbeziehungen*, Eleonore Lappin and Michael Nagel (eds.) (Bremen: Ed. Lumière, 2008), 185–207; Grill, "The Politicisation of Traditional Polish Jewry": 227–247.

⁶⁵ See Tobias Grill, *Der Westen im Osten: Deutsches Judentum und jüdische Bildungsreform in Osteuropa (1783–1939)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 302. See also Szajkowski, "The Struggle for Yiddish during World War I," 140.

⁶⁶ See also Hirs Abramowicz, *Profiles of a Lost World: Memoirs of East European Jewish Life before World War II*, Dina Abramowicz (ed.) (New York: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1999), 203.

⁶⁷ Grill, *Der Westen im Osten*, 311.

to German authorities a few months before the end of the war. Simon, who, like his brother-in-law Rabbi Pinchas Kohn, was a follower of S. R. Hirsch's Neo-Orthodoxy, was very active in promoting an observant Jewish lifestyle among the Orthodox Jews in Heidelberg. Moreover, he ran a school which taught Jewish children from traditional homes religious as well as secular subjects. During the war he initiated the founding of the *Thorabund* (Torah League) which was supposed to establish private schools for the religious education of Jewish children in cities and in the country.⁶⁸ Closely related to this project was Simon's proposal to open a "German Leader School for the East European Jewish Masses" (*Deutsche Führerschule für die ostjüdischen Massen*) which was passed to the German Foreign Ministry by Reichstag member Matthias Erzberger (1875–1921) in June 1918. In his draft, which until present no researcher has given much attention, Simon raised the question of whether after the war, there would be enough mediators of German interests and enough carriers of German trade and German industry throughout the world. Not surprisingly, Simon pointed to the numerous and influential East European Jews who, despite their dispersion all over the world, had preserved the German language and who were able, and seemed to be destined, to spread elements of German language and German characteristics everywhere. In order to make these Jews effective mediators between their former German homeland and their contemporary place of settlement, it would be important for the German cause to train leaders for the East European Jewish masses in Germany. According to Simon, the curriculum of such a school should follow those of the renowned Yeshivot in Eastern Europe. After their training, these Jews from Germany and other countries would gain an enormous influence among East European Jewry and thus the "Führerschule" would contribute in an outstanding way to an extension of the German sphere of influence in all the countries where East European Jews dwell. At the end of his draft Simon stated that German Jewry would be eager to provide for the financial funding of the "Führerschule" if the German government expressed its consent that such an institution could serve German interests.⁶⁹

While the German government generally regarded Simon's proposal with favor, it considered it to be embryonic.⁷⁰ For the sake of clarification, Jonas Simon sent Imperial Chancellor Georg von Hertling (1843–1919) a printed version of his

68 Susanne Döring, "Die Geschichte der Heidelberger Juden (1862–1918)," in *Geschichte der Juden in Heidelberg* (Heidelberg: Verlag Brigitte Guderjahn, 1996), 237–239.

69 Jonas Simon, "Entwurf einer Darlegung über den Plan zur Schaffung einer Deutschen Führerschule für die ostjüdischen Massen," Letter of Matthias Erzberger to Carl-Ludwig Diego von Bergen at the Foreign Office, 11 June 1918, PA AA, R 21349, K 204277–K 204282.

70 See letters of the Foreign Office from 19 July 1918 and 27 July 1918, PA AA, R 21350, K 204318, K 204320.

plan for the establishment of a “German Leader School of the Torah League”⁷¹ at the end of July 1918. However, this version was almost identical to the former draft. As Simon pointed out in his letter to the Chancellor, the Jews in Eastern Europe spoke a German dialect and therefore could be of great value to German interests in Eastern Europe. Yet, the under-secretary of inner affairs still regarded Simon’s elaborations as insufficient. He felt that the question of how to guarantee the necessary influence of the German government upon the goals and activities of the Leader School, and its trained leaders, remained unresolved.⁷²

In mid-December 1918, a month after Germany’s defeat, Professor Hermann Strack (1848–1922), an outstanding Christian authority on Talmudic and Rabbinic literature, submitted his expert assessment of the proposed German Leader School of the Torah League to the Foreign Ministry. According to him, the main task of this school was the Talmudic training of gifted students from the west. Beyond this primary task, the trained students of Simon’s proposed school should also contribute to the important communication between Germany and East European Jewry. However, as Strack emphasized, such a useful impact was severely hindered by an utterly wrong German policy towards Poland, which he had repeatedly and strongly criticized. As Strack elaborated, the Poles remained enemies of the Germans, and the Polish Jews who were not sufficiently protected by the Germans against Polish oppressions were intimidated, and thus they had not become mediators and promoters of German trade and industry as desired. Thus, Strack blamed the German authorities for the failure of the concept of East European Jews as German pioneers in the East. Nevertheless, according to Strack, it was not impossible that those trained students could have an influence on good relations between Germany and East European Jewry. In his view, from both a German and a pedagogical standpoint, Simon’s plan could not elicit any objection.⁷³

However, the German Foreign Ministry remained skeptical, as it doubted that the Poles would allow German rabbis and scholars to fill positions in Poland. Thus, the establishment of a German Leader School for the East European Jewish Masses seemed too premature, as one official concluded.⁷⁴ In fact, the plan was never realized.

⁷¹ Jonas Simon, “Entwurf eines Planes zur Schaffung der Deutschen Führerschule des Thora-bundes,” PA AA, R 21350, K 204324–K 204327.

⁷² Letter of under-secretary of inner affairs to under-secretary of foreign affairs, 14 August 1918, PA AA, R 21350, K 204329.

⁷³ Letter of Hermann Strack to the Foreign Office, 12 December 1918, PA AA, R 21351, K 204434–K 204435.

⁷⁴ Statement of an unknown official in the Foreign Office, 21 December 1918, PA AA, R 21351, K 204436.

The Attitude of German Authorities and Non-Jewish Germans

Turning to the question of whether the German government and influential non-Jewish Germans regarded East European Jews as an outpost or as pioneers of Germandom, there is only scarce evidence indicating that they did. Only the fact that the language of instruction for German and Jewish schools was to be German, immediately after the establishment of the German military and civil administration in occupied Poland, seems to be an indication that Yiddish was seen as a German dialect which would offer an easy opportunity to linguistically Germanize Polish Jewry.⁷⁵ Since the Jewish population protested against such a discrimination against their vernacular, the German authorities ruled that Yiddish was a German dialect and that a dialect was on an equal footing with the original language.⁷⁶ At the same time, German authorities were eager to support Jewish schools with German as the language of instruction, as in the case of Kovno and other cities of Ober Ost.⁷⁷ However, there was no clear-cut policy towards East European Jews. One of the primary reasons that German authorities never really adopted the notion of East European Jews as Germans was the fact that they were afraid of losing credibility with the dominant non-Jewish, mostly Polish, population. Thus, German occupation forces were in many cases very reluctant to rely on the support of East European Jews. In September 1915, a German *Kreishauptmann* in occupied Lithuania reported “that it does damage to the public esteem of German agencies if the Jew – who is often hated and despised by Poles and Lithuanians alike for other reasons – is used as a German auxiliary.” The superior of the *Kreishauptmann* added the margin note “very correct” to this report.⁷⁸ Further, German authorities often harbored their own antisemitic attitudes, which also prevented them from regarding East European Jewry as representatives of Germanness. The fact that Wilhelm von Gayl (1879–1945), a staunch antisemite, had written a memorandum on settling ethnic Germans in the East was the main reason that Ludendorff summoned him to Ober Ost. In November

⁷⁵ See e.g. Szajkowski, “The Struggle for Yiddish during World War I,” 137.

⁷⁶ See Wilhelm Stein, “Die politische Entwicklung im polnischen Judentum während der Zeit der deutschen Okkupation,” in *Die politische Entwicklung in Kongresspolen während der deutschen Okkupation*, Paul Roth (ed.) (Leipzig: Koehler, 1919), 153–154.

⁷⁷ Szajkowski even claims that “German authorities of occupation forcibly introduced German into the curriculum of Jewish schools, very often as the language of instruction,” as it was the case in cities of Ober Ost, see Szajkowski, “The Struggle for Yiddish during World War I,” 139.

⁷⁸ Jürgen Matthäus, “German “Judenpolitik” in Lithuania during the First World War,” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 43 (1998): 166.

1916 von Gayl eventually became Chief of the Department of Interior Politics and Administration and thus one of the most important officials in the German occupied part of Eastern Europe. In this capacity, he developed plans for new ethnic German settlements in the East as a “human wall” against Russia, approved by the High Command and welcomed by the Foreign Ministry. Jews played no role in such deliberations.⁷⁹

However, since February 1918 Lithuania’s path to independence was increasingly directed against German interests, in this case German authorities seemed to regard Jews as representatives of Germanness and German interests in order to check the rising anti-German attitude of the Lithuanians. While in the Baltic provinces a strong German population was present, in Lithuania this was not the case. In the light of the absence of a German minority in Lithuania, the Jewish population could temporarily fill this gap in the eyes of the German military authorities.⁸⁰ However, this was an attitude of mere pragmatism rendered obsolete only a few months later with the defeat of Germany.

There seemed to be only a few German officials who regarded the East European Jew as some manner of German who could be useful for German interests in the East. One was Jesco von Puttkamer (1876–1959), who had served as an officer in the German colonies, and who also supported the KfdO’s demand for (national) cultural autonomy for East European Jewry in order to preserve their Germanness as a bulwark against the Russians.⁸¹ Yet, it is safe to assume that his contribution was written on behalf of the KfdO. This was also the case with the conservative publicist and colonial officer Paul Rohrbach (1869–1956), who was originally from Courland. As Bodenheimer states in his memoirs, the KfdO supplied Rohrbach “with material about the Jews for his book on the nationalities of the Russian Empire.”⁸² Thus, Rohrbach wrote that Yiddish was geographically the most widespread German dialect and, apart from the religious literature, almost everything within East European Jewish culture originated in German culture (“Deutschtum”), to which East European Jewry had retained its ties. According to Rohrbach, who favored a “Greater Germany”⁸³ and a Germanization of the East,

⁷⁹ Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 61, 94–96.

⁸⁰ Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik*, 236.

⁸¹ See Gouverneur von Puttkamer, “Eine Kulturfrage im Osten,” *Der Tag*, no. 300, 23 December 1915, 1.

⁸² Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel*, 262.

⁸³ See Walter Mogk, *Paul Rohrbach und das “Größere Deutschland”: Ethischer Imperialismus im Wilhelminischen Zeitalter. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Kulturprotestantismus* (München: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 1972).

this fact might have important consequences for German interests in the future.⁸⁴ But such a stance as von Puttkamer's and Rohrbach's was exceptional and had no influence on German policy-making.⁸⁵

When, in February 1916, the KfdO published a whole issue on East European Jewry in the *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, Silvio Broedrich contributed an essay on the Jews in Courland. Broedrich, a non-Jewish ethnic German, was born in Mitau. Before the outbreak of the war he was a member of the magistrate in Goldingen, owned a large estate in Courland, and was very active in projects regarding German colonies in the East. In his article, Broedrich not only emphasized the existing harmony between Jews and Germans in Courland, but also highlighted the fact that, together with their German fellow-citizens, some 40,000 Jews had defended Germandom before many were deported by the Russian army during the war. According to Broedrich, the Jews in Courland were German-aculturated, comprised a consciously feeling German society, and were in fact "good Germans." Thus, just like the ethnic Germans they would put their hope in a German victory and in unification with the German Reich. Moreover, it would only do these Jews justice if those deported were allowed to return to their former homes after a peace settlement.⁸⁶ While Broedrich explicitly stressed in his essay the fact of a shared language and culture between Jews and Germans in Courland, he would not repeat such an opinion in his pamphlet *Das neue Ostland*⁸⁷ (The new East land), or in his contributions for the journal of the *Society for the Encouragement of Internal Colonization*⁸⁸ where he argued for new German settlements in Lithuania and the Baltics.

84 Paul Rohrbach (ed.), *Die Juden in Polen und Westrußland. Aus der Denkschrift "Russisches"* (Berlin: Sittenfeld 1915), "Nicht für die Presse!" (not for press release!), 4–5. Together with Ernst Jäckh, Rohrbach edited the periodical *Das größere Deutschland* which was devoted to Naumann's and Jäckh's Mitteleuropa-concept.

85 Sammy Gronemann, a German Zionist who was part of the German occupation forces in Ober Ost, claimed that "a number of German authors, by no means only Jews, proved by in depth treatises that East European Jews were in fact real and right Germans, carriers of German culture, who have preserved in unprecedented tenaciousness and adherence their German *Volkstum* through centuries of Slavic oppression," see Sammy Gronemann, *Hawdloh und Zapfenstreich: Erinnerungen an die ostjüdische Etappe 1916–1918* (Königstein/Ts.: Jüdischer Verlag, 1984 [1924], 31. However, I was not able to find any proof that non-Jewish Germans apart from these rare exceptions which I have mentioned, have propagated such a view.

86 Silvio Broedrich, "Die Juden in Kurland," *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, February 1916, 740–741.

87 Silvio Broedrich-Kurmahlen, *Das neue Ostland* (Berlin: Ostlandverlag, 1915 (1st ed.), 1916 (2nd ed.).

88 See e.g. Silvio Broedrich, "Gründung der deutschen Bauerngemeinden Kurmahlen-Planetzen in Kurland, Kreis Goldingen," *Archiv für innere Kolonisation* 8 (1916), no. 4, 73–84. See also Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 165.

As early as 1910, the Journal of the *Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland* (Association for Germanism Abroad, VDA) had published an essay by the Zionist Davis Trietsch stressing the importance of “German-speaking” East European Jewry for German interests in the East.⁸⁹ Yet, his appeal does not seem to have had any impact. This was also the case when the KfdO approached Philipp von Hentig (1852–1934), chairman of the VDA, to win his support for the “idea of a cultural autonomy for East European Jewry.”⁹⁰ Nevertheless, during the war some of the (probably Jewish) members of the VDA suggested replacing Yiddish with German as the language of instruction in the Jewish elementary schools of Poland. Since Yiddish was seen as a mere dialect of German, such a policy was regarded as a means to bring the numerous Polish Jews closer to German cultural and economic interests.⁹¹ However, when Alfred Geiser, an important representative of the association, discussed in 1917 the future of Germanism in Poland in the VDA’s journal, he rejected this approach on three grounds. First, this would ignore the nationalistic character of Polish Jewry, which consciously perceived itself as an independent kind of nation (“Volksart”) and as such was also politically active. Second, it overlooked the strong hatred the whole Polish population harbored for Polish Jewry, a fact which in the case of a larger fusion of Polish Jews with Germanism would put a heavy burden on Germans in Poland. Third, it did not pay attention to the fact that a more intense linguistic Germanification of Polish Jews was doubtless to make Germany itself very attractive to them, a consequence which, as Geiser stated, German Jews especially found unappealing.⁹² As mentioned before, the “spectre of mass Jewish invasion from the East” was quite prevalent among German Jews, and not only within the liberal and assimilationist camp.⁹³ It is also remarkable that Geiser, from a non-Jewish German standpoint, voiced concerns about Polish anger directed against the ethnic German population in Poland in case of a rapprochement between Jews and Germans. This corresponded with the reverse view of many German Jews who feared that East European Jewry’s openly siding with German interests and Germany would result in an antisemitic outburst of the Polish population.

⁸⁹ Davis Trietsch, “Das deutschsprachige Judentum im Ausland,” *Das Deutschtum im Ausland*, no. 6, December 1910, 274–279, esp. 279.

⁹⁰ See Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel*, 261–262.

⁹¹ See Alfred Geiser, “Die Zukunft des Deutschtums in Polen II,” *Das Deutschtum im Ausland*, no. 32 (1917), 210–211.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 210–211.

⁹³ Aschheim, “Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany’s *Ostpolitik* in the First World War,” 364.

Within the pages of its official journal, the VDA seems to have generally rejected the notion of East European Jews as representatives of Germanness in the East.⁹⁴ Also, Walter Lambach, who discussed at length the role of merchants as pioneers of Germanness in the East, consciously referred only to ethnic Germans undertaking this task. According to his antisemitic dichotomy, there was a business-like trading on the one hand, and something which "we encounter in Poland as Eastern Jewish haggling in its whole repulsiveness" on the other. "The more a merchant is close to haggling," Lambach went on, "the less he can be taken into consideration as cultural worker and as carrier of Germandom, who is able to gain respect for us among the aliens."⁹⁵

This clear rejection of East European Jews being pioneers of German trade interests in the East stood in stark opposition to one of the main arguments frequently brought forward by the KfdO when lobbying the German government. The most important justification of KfdO members, as well as other Jewish activists, for regarding East European Jewry as representatives of Germanness in Eastern Europe was not very convincing. Despite the closeness of Yiddish to German, it seems that the notion of East European Jews being some sort of nationality in its own right (which did not necessarily entitle them to autonomy) dominated in non-Jewish German politics. One example of such a stance was the above-mentioned Alfred Geiser. Another is the protestant Georg Gothein (1857–1940), member of the Reichstag and of Jewish origin, who stated in 1916 that although the vernacular of East European Jews was a German dialect, they nevertheless would not consider themselves as Germans, just as the Dutch would not regard themselves as Germans. The dialect of the Jews in Eastern Europe, as Gothein, who was also on the board of the Centralverein, explained, would significantly deviate from the High German spoken by ethnic Germans in the region. According to him, the large majority of East European Jews would deem themselves a specific people, as a tribe, as a nationality.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ See e.g. Adolf Eichler, "Deutsche Kulturarbeit in Polen," *Das Deutschtum im Ausland*, no. 27 (1916), 1–12; Gerhard Schulze-Pfaelzer, "Weltwirkungen des germanischen Geistes," *Das Deutschtum im Ausland*, no. 34 (1917), 284–287; or Emil Lehmann, "Sprachinselfragen," *Das Deutschtum im Ausland*, no. 37 (1917), 380–385, who do not even mention East European Jews.

⁹⁵ Walter Lambach, "Kaufleute als Pioniere des Deutschtums," *Das Deutschtum im Ausland*, no. 33 (1917), 245. On the relationship between the VDA and German Jews in the Weimar Republic, see Philipp Nielsen, "In the Defense of Germandom in the East: Jews and the Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland, 1914 to 1935" in this volume.

⁹⁶ Georg Gothein, "Die Juden in Polen," *März. Eine Wochenschrift*, no. 12, 25.3.1916, 221; for a similar view, see also Georg Gothein, "Zur Nationalitätenfrage in Polen," *Neue Jüdische Monatshefte*, no. 1, 10 October 1916, 7–8; It is interesting to note that only a few months before Gothein had written that Yiddish is German and thus East European Jews could be assigned to the German

Also, Wolfgang Heinze, who during the war worked in Warsaw as a journalist, explicitly pointed out that just because East European Jews spoke a corrupted German – with numerous elements of various other languages and a non-European alphabet, as he emphasized – this should not be seen “as expression of a brand new German mind and German heart.” According to Heinze, among East European Jews there was a “lack of inner contact with Germanness,” a fact which they cannot be blamed for, since they sharply differed from Germanness in regard to their manners, customs, way of life, and obviously also in regard to their bodily nature. He further added that this difference from Germanness was far more distinct than that of any other people living in close proximity to the Germans.⁹⁷

While Heinze harbored a more or less neutral attitude towards East European Jewry, this was not true of the catholic prelate Paul Maria Baumgarten (1860–1948), who had spent many years in the Vatican. Between the beginning of September 1915 and the beginning of October 1915, he had toured Courland, Lithuania, and Poland. Regarding his experiences in the German occupied area, he sent an extensive report to the Foreign Ministry in Berlin. Since Baumgarten had been press agent for the Foreign Ministry in Rome between November 1914 and March 1915, one can assume that his tour through Courland, Lithuania, and Poland was also on behalf of this ministry. In his report, which was full of antisemitic diatribes, the pro-Polish German prelate noticed that Polish Jews would speak German (in Warsaw they would even speak nearly High German in the streets!), a fact which would make them comfortable mediators. However, he went on, just because they spoke German, this in no way meant that they felt German or that they thought about being German.⁹⁸

In general, German authorities and other non-Jewish Germans with a political agenda were, apart from some minor exceptions, most reluctant to regard East European Jewry as bearers of Germanness in the East. Thus, the KfDO, which in the first two years of the war employed such a notion, had in this respect no partners

language community. Moreover, according to Gothein's former view it was a not easily solved question if in a future state Polish Jews should form their own national cadastre or one together with ethnic Germans, see Georg Gothein, M. d. R., “Zum westslawischen Problem,” *März. Eine Wochenschrift*, vol. 9, no. 31, 7 August 1915, 93, no. 32, 14 August 1915, 111; While the Zionist Fritz Mordechai Kaufmann welcomed Gothein's change of heart regarding his former view of Germanization of East European Jews, he nevertheless criticized him for still not fully acknowledging a specific Jewish nationality, see Fritz Mordechai Kaufmann, “Ein ungewohnter Helfer,” *Der Jude*, no. 3, June 1916, 200–201.

⁹⁷ Wolfgang Heinze, “Die polnisch-jiddische Presse,” *Preußische Jahrbücher* 163 (1916): 496–509, quotes on 500, 505.

⁹⁸ Paul Maria Baumgarten, “Bericht über eine Reise in Kurland, Litauen und Polen, 3 September to 3 October 1915,” PA AA, R 21328, K 201507–K 201519, esp. K 201510.

within the realm of non-Jewish German policy-makers. If the KfdO seemed to have had any influence in the German government in the first two years of the war, it was not because of the notion of East European Jews being bearers of Germanness in Eastern Europe, but despite this. The fact that the KfdO to a large extent abandoned such a policy in 1916 illustrates its understanding that it was useless in furthering KfdO goals.

The Attitude of Poles and Russians

Because the notion of East European Jews as representatives of Germanness in the East bore explicitly or implicitly an anti-Slavic stance, the attitude of Poles and Russians regarding this notion also needs to be addressed.

The severe anti-Jewish policy of the Russian army from the outbreak of the war was not based solely on antisemitism. There was also an assumption that these Yiddish-speaking Jews would collaborate with the German enemy. It is no coincidence that the overwhelming majority of Russian subjects expelled and deported from their homes were Germans and Jews, as they were regarded as “potentially disloyal because of their ethnic connection to enemy subjects.” As Yuri Slezkine states, “the most widely advertised part of the campaign against them was conducted under the banner of the struggle against ‘German dominance’ in the economy and included the liquidation of firms with ‘enemy-subject’ connections. Anti-Jewish and anti-German pogroms were a regular part of wartime mobilization.”⁹⁹ The fact that Yiddish was often considered German was a primary reason why Jews were regarded as traitors.¹⁰⁰ Insofar, the notion of

⁹⁹ Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton/ NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 166; See also Eric Lohr, “The Russian Army and the Jews: Mass Deportation, Hostages, and Violence during World War I,” *Russian Review* 60 no. 3 (2001), 404–419.

¹⁰⁰ See e.g. The American Jewish Committee (ed.) *The Jews in the Eastern War Zone* (New York 1916), 56–57; Wladimir Kosowski, Die Judenzerstörung in Russland, no. 1: Ausweisungen, July 1916 (Ausgabe des ausländischen Komitees Bund), Folio 9 (PA AA, R 10504, K 188613); S. Ansky, *The Enemy at his Pleasure: A Journey through the Jewish Pale of Settlement during World War I*, Joachim Neugroschel (ed.) (trans.) (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2002 [originally published 1925]), 3–7. See also Melissa Kirschke Stockdale, *Mobilizing the Russian Nation: Patriotism and Citizenship in the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 177. In fact, there is no doubt that there were cases of espionage of Russian-Jewish subjects for the German war-enemy, a fact that was also responsible for triggering a “spy-mania” in Russia, see William C. Fuller, *The Foe Within: Fantasies of Treason and the End of Imperial Russia* (Ithaca/ NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 173; And also ethnic Poles seemed to have harbored the view of Jews being traitors and spies for the German cause. Thus, Prince Lubomirski, a leading member of

Russian Jews being Germans seemed to have been of some significance for the attitude of Russian military authorities towards Jewish subjects of the Empire.

However, it is notable that according to Ansky's war recollections during the anti-German pogrom in Moscow in May 1915, Jewish shops remained untouched, since "many Jewish shopkeepers hung out a sign that said, 'A Jewish store owned by the son of native subjects of Russia.'" Moreover, a few Germans were even able to save their businesses "by pretending to be Jews."¹⁰¹

Similarly, a segment of the Polish population regarded Polish Jews as Germans.¹⁰² According to a report by Max Bodenheimer, many Poles called the German troops "your soldiers" when talking to Jews.¹⁰³ This corresponds with an article within the Polish newspaper *Czas* in October 1917, claiming that after the occupation of Congress Poland the "All-Germans" had attempted to Germanize it by drawing upon Polish Jews. This attempt, however, had failed.¹⁰⁴ For an outspoken Polish antisemite like Piotr Pawel Kasprzycki, the Jews in Poland indeed represented a German element, as he explained in his *Open Letter to all People*, published in November 1915.¹⁰⁵

The main reason that Poles regarded Polish Jewry as at least proto-Germans was their use of Yiddish. Thus, Roman Dmowski, co-founder and chief ideologue of the Polish right-wing and antisemitic National-Democracy (*Endecja*) movement, explained in a conversation with one of the leaders of American Jewry that *Endecja's* "opposition to Yiddish lies in the fact that its basis is German and that the natural tendency of continuing its use would be to make the Jews German instead of Polish in their sympathies in the event that differences should ever arise between the Poles and the Germans."¹⁰⁶

Poland's Regent Council, is supposed to have said that "90 percent of the Jews are traitors and 10 percent are spies," see Ansky, *The Enemy at his Pleasure*, 4. According to Ansky, the "smaller politicians and the masses were even less restrained. They said everywhere that the Jews were waiting for the Germans to arrive and helping them."

101 Ansky, *The Enemy at his Pleasure*, 135.

102 Zieliński, "Polish-Jewish relations in the Kingdom of Poland during the First World War": 274.

103 Max Bodenheimer, *Bericht über die im Auftrage des "Komitees für den Osten" im Mai-Juni 1915 unternommene Reise nach Russisch-Polen* (no place, no publisher, 1915), 5.

104 "Próby germanizacji w Królestwie [Attempts of Germanification in the Kingdom]," *Czas. Wiedanie wieczorne*, no. 496, 26 October 1917, 1.

105 Piotr Pawel Kasprzycki, "Offener Brief an alle Völker," November 1915 (written in Vienna), PA AA, R 10504, K 188619–K 188620.

106 Louis Marshall, *Champion of Liberty: Selected Papers and Addresses*, vol. 2, Charles Reznikoff (ed.) (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1957), 589. "Conversation of Roman Dmowski with Louis Marshall on 6 October 1918."

Also, the journal *Polnische Blätter*, which was devoted to Polish independence, stated that a part of the Polish population saw in the closeness of Yiddish to German the threat of Germanization. Such a fear was not unfounded, as the journal emphasized. This was proven by the fact that after the German occupation of Congress Poland, many German-Jewish publicists recommended that the occupation forces consider Yiddish as a “transitional medium” for Germanizing the East. Such alien interference from outside aroused understandable distrust among Polish patriots and caused great harm to Polish Jewry. Along with German Jews and Russian Jews living in Germany, the *Polnische Blätter* explicitly accused the KfdO in this respect.¹⁰⁷

Eventually, the distrust towards Yiddish was so deep that in July 1918 the “influential Polish newspaper *Gazeta Warszawska* demanded the prohibition of Yiddish because it was a German dialect and Poland was at war with Germany.”¹⁰⁸

In general, due to the closeness of Yiddish to German (and the German-Jewish propaganda which emphasized this), a considerable part of the Polish and Russian population regarded East European Jewry as spearheads of Germanness or Germanization in the East. Such an attitude was further aggravated, above all, by the policy of the KfdO in the first two years of the war, which put a heavy strain on Polish-Jewish relations during and after the war.¹⁰⁹

The Attitude of East European Jews

It is very striking that in most German-Jewish considerations and deliberations regarding East European Jews, the latter were treated as mere objects, as a disposable quantity. In particular, this was the case regarding the notion of East European Jews as pioneers of Germanness in the East. However, they seemed to pay little attention to the question how East European Jews perceived themselves and if they were really willing to take up the burden of representing Germanness in the East.

Already in 1915, staunch advocate of assimilation Bernard Lauer published in the renowned *Preußische Jahrbücher* a contribution “on the Polish-Jewish

107 “Die Judenfrage im Königreich Polen,” *Polnische Blätter. Zeitschrift für Politik, Kultur und soziales Leben* VI, no. 53, 10 March 1917, 249–250.

108 Szajkowski, “The Struggle for Yiddish during World War I,” 157. In December 1918 the militia in Tarnów prohibited to speak “German and alike” in the streets and public places of the city. This was a clear allusion to Yiddish. See *Nowy Dziennik*, 4 January 1919, 1.

109 See e.g. Aschheim, “Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany’s *Ostpolitik* in the First World War,” 363.

problem,” “from the point of view of a Polish Jew,” as it was emphasized in the heading. According to him, discussions on the Jewish question in Poland during the early stages of the war produced a flood of pamphlets and newspaper articles in Germany. However, this all happened without asking the Jews in Congress Poland or their representatives about their own opinions, aspirations, and goals. There would have been, as Lauer stressed, enough politically mature Jews in Poland capable of expressing their views with respect to their own future. Moreover, Jews in Germany approaching the Jewish question in Poland were primarily those who had not had direct experience or knowledge regarding the Jewish conditions there. Even worse, their advice could be most harmful for Polish Jewry’s future. In this context, Lauer specifically named Wladimir Kaplun-Kogan and Nachum Goldmann. However, in general his severe criticism was directed mainly at the policy of the KfdO, with which both were closely associated.

According to Lauer, the Polish-Jewish intelligentsia in Congress Poland and Galicia, being educated in Polish culture and thus being Polish-minded, strove as far as possible for a linguistic Polonization of Polish Jewry which was politically already assimilated into Polish society. In opposition to these “natural aspirations and goals” stood the “new German-Jewish literature” (Lauer’s paraphrase for the KfdO), which intended to “jargonize” (Yiddishize) Polish Jewry and to transform it into “national Jews.” However, in practice the representatives of such a policy were seeking to Germanize the Polish Jews under the guise of Jewish nationalism and to separate them from their fellow Polish citizens in accordance with former Russian practices. This would expose Polish Jewry to the highest danger. Correspondingly, a special protection of Polish Jewry by Germany would give cause for mistrust among other denominations of the Polish population. Such outside interference would exacerbate the problems of Polish citizens living together in peace.

Lauer also rejected Goldmann’s (and the KfdO’s) demand for the educational autonomy of Polish Jewry by establishing Yiddish schools, which if realized would generate a whole generation of Jews unable to communicate with the large majority of the population. Moreover, Lauer reproached Goldmann for his view that due to the conservation of the “Jewish-German jargon,” Polish Jews were also some sort of Germans. To regard Yiddish as a “German cultural product” was, as Lauer claimed, an insult to German culture.

Eventually, he warned against inducing the German government to introduce practices of Germanization in Congress Poland, as this would be a huge political mistake. A total Germanization of Polish Jewry in an utterly Polish environment was most improbable, and a superficial Germanization of Polish Jewry would provoke the enmity of the Poles and thus increase the danger of mass emigration

of Polish Jews to Germany.¹¹⁰ Like so many assimilated German Jews and non-Jewish Germans, Lauer also rejected any policy of politically, linguistically, or culturally Germanizing Polish Jewry, since this would pose a threat to vital interests of Polish and German Jews as well as Germany itself.

Only a few months later the German public could read another harsh statement of a Polish Jew regarding the KfdO policy. In the beginning of 1916 Benjamin Segel (1866–1931), who hailed from Galicia and called himself a "Polish Jew," launched a scorching criticism against the leading representatives of the KfdO and ridiculed them in an unprecedented manner. In his publication on the Jewish question in Poland, Segel explicitly blamed Bodenheimer, Oppenheimer, Friedemann, Kaplun-Kogan, Goldmann, and Davis Trietsch for their ignorance of Jewish matters in general, and their particular ignorance of everything concerning Polish Jewry. Despite this deep ignorance, they had taken up the cause of Polish Jewry without having been asked by those whose interests they claimed to champion. Repeatedly, Segel rejected the attitude of KfdO representatives and others to treat Polish Jewry as mere objects. This was not only degrading, as if Polish Jews were not able to take care of their own matters, but most harmful, since the KfdO presented Polish Jewry in public as defenders of German interests and anti-Polish pioneers of Germanization in Poland. In Segel's eyes, such a publicly practiced policy conveyed to ethnic Poles the impression that Polish Jewry was their enemy. In return, this would lead to harsh reactions against the Jews from the Polish side. According to Segel, neither the German government nor the ethnic Germans in Poland wanted Polish Jewry to act as defenders of Germanism against the Poles. And, of course, Polish Jewry itself was not willing to take a stance against their fellow Polish citizens. Moreover, Segel also discussed the KfdO plans of a "buffer state" between Germany and Russia, in which East European Jewry would supposedly play a major role as spearheads of Germany and Germanism against the other nationalities in such a political entity:

If these 70 to 80 million non-Germanic people will ever be made to seriously believe that those five to six million Jews are being pushed forward by 100 million Germans, in order

110 Bernard Lauer, "Zum Polnisch-Jüdischen Problem (vom Standpunkt eines polnischen Juden)," *Preussische Jahrbücher* 162 (1915), 281–301. For Goldmann's response see Nachum Goldmann, "Zum Polnisch-Jüdischen Problem: Eine Erwiderung zum Aufsatz Bd. 162, Heft 2, S. 281," *Preussische Jahrbücher* 162 (1915), 457–467. While Goldmann claimed that as a national Jew he didn't favor the Germanization of Polish Jewry, he nevertheless held the opinion that due to the fact that Yiddish was related to German Polish Jewry was related to Germanism. And as such Polish Jewry was the most appropriate part of the population to serve as supporters of a German barrier against Russia; See also Goldmann's letter to A. H. (Arthur Hantke?), 9 November 1915, CZA, Z 3\142.

to pave the way for their conquest and subjugation by the Germans, what might one think will be the fate of these few million Jews? Such a hate would rise against them which world history has never seen before, an infernal, cruel, adamant hate, and what is even worse: a justified hate.¹¹¹

Ultimately, Segel did not miss the opportunity to point out the main contradictions in the policy of the KfdO. On the one hand the committee requested national autonomy for the Jews in Poland with Yiddish as their national language. On the other hand, in Segel's eyes, the KfdO had replaced Jewish nationality with a German one while Yiddish was treated merely as a place-holder for German, because after a while Polish Jewry was supposed to linguistically assimilate to German – in Poland, as Segel emphasized.¹¹² Moreover, Segel regarded it as a strange fact that the policy of the KfdO was pursued in the name of Zionism. Since Zionism aspired to establish a home land for the Jewish people in Palestine with Hebrew as a vernacular, it was quite contradictory to fight for the establishment of Jewish home lands (autonomy) in other countries with Yiddish as the main language. To revive Hebrew in Palestine, to develop Yiddish into a modern civilized language in Eastern Europe, and at the same time to Germanize Poland by imposing on the country German, was most inconsistent and exceeded the capability of Polish Jewry, as Segel ironically noted.¹¹³ Some become, because of their Zionism, more "Teutonic" than any "Teuton." Rhetorically, Segel asked the representatives of the KfdO if they had lost their minds or if they were suffering from "moral insanity."¹¹⁴

Segel's attack on representatives of the KfdO were so fierce that the Foreign Ministry, after an intervention of the KfdO, temporarily confiscated all available copies of Segel's book. However, Segel had already sent copies of his book out to friends, who in at least one case used it in a public meeting against the KfdO.¹¹⁵ Eventually, the Committee's appeal to the authorities to block the distribution of Segel's book failed. Obviously, Segel's harsh criticism of the KfdO policy found a readership.¹¹⁶ In the same year, a second edition was published numbering eight thousand copies.¹¹⁷

111 Binjamin Segel, *Die polnische Judenfrage* (Berlin: Verlag von Georg Stilke, 1916), 135–136.

112 *Ibid.*, 139–140.

113 *Ibid.*, 148.

114 *Ibid.*, 155.

115 Letter of the KfdO to Bodenheimer, 25 February 1916, CZA, A 15\666 and letter of the KfdO to Bodenheimer, 1 March 1916, CZA A 15\667. See also Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers*, 162.

116 In the renowned *Preußische Jahrbücher* 164 (1916), 498–500, Emil Daniels even published a review.

117 Yet, it should be noted that only three years before, Segel's perception of East European Jewry was not that much different from the one he now so bitterly opposed. In an essay for *Ost*

Lauer's and Segel's critical statements on the KfdO policy of presenting East European Jews as pioneers and bearers of Germanness were particularly important, since assimilated "Polish Jews"¹¹⁸ informed the German public in German about the possible negative consequences of such a policy – for Polish Jewry, German Jewry and Germany itself. It became obvious that German Jews had transposed their identity of being Jewish and German onto their East European co-religionists. Or, to use Aschheim's words: "In many ways the various solutions which German Jews had proposed for their Polish brethren were projections of their own condition."¹¹⁹ However, German army chaplain Rabbi Dr. Siegbert Neufeld, who during the war had numerous encounters with his brethren in the East, rightly noted the following: for the majority of Eastern European Jews who regarded themselves religiously and ethnically as Jews, it was totally incomprehensible that one could be a Jew and a German at the same time.¹²⁰

In general, it needs to be emphasized that the overwhelming majority of East European Jewry, though at first welcoming the occupation of German and Austrian troops as liberation from the Tsarist yoke,¹²¹ did not perceive themselves as an "unredeemed vanguard of Germandom, who had to fulfill a cultural mission in the hostile Slavic East and who were waiting with burning desire to establish close political and economic ties with the German Empire."¹²² From the beginning, they were not willing to adopt German language, to assimilate into German culture, or to represent Germanness. Either they were advocates of an assimilation into Polish culture, which to them made much more sense, as the majority of the society was Polish, or they were opposed to assimilation in general – as

und West in January 1913 he had explicitly stated that so called Polish and Russian Jews are German Jews who spoke a language which had primarily been spoken at the Upper Rhine in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Moreover, these German speaking Jews in Eastern Europe had always been carriers of German culture and German influence. In order to support this stance Segel had also pointed to the fact that in 1911 the Journal of the Association for Germandom Abroad had also emphatically stressed the importance of these millions of German speaking Jews in Eastern Europe for German influence, see Binjamin Segel, "Der Drang nach Osten," *Ost und West. Illustrierte Monatsschrift für das gesamte Judentum* 13 no. 1, January 1913, 10–12. Obviously, Segel had then referred to Davis Trietsch's essay from 1910. Now, three years later, he ridiculed Trietsch for his stance.

118 See also Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel*, 257.

119 Aschheim, "Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany's *Ostpolitik* in the First World War," 365.

120 Siegbert Neufeld, "Warum verachten uns die Ostjuden?," *Der Israelit*, no. 32, 8 August 1918, 3.

121 Aschheim, "Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany's *Ostpolitik* in the First World War," 352; Zieliński, "Polish-Jewish relations in the Kingdom of Poland during the First World War": 273; see also Adolf Warschauer, *Deutsche Kulturarbeit in der Ostmark: Erinnerungen aus vier Jahrzehnten* (Berlin: Verlag von Reimar Hobbing, 1926), 280.

122 Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik*, 129.

the large majority of traditionally and nationally oriented Polish Jews were.¹²³ Nevertheless, the German occupation had one major “Germanizing” effect on Yiddish speaking Polish Jewry. Due to the closeness of Yiddish to German, “a large number of German words and expressions” were introduced into spoken Yiddish.¹²⁴ Thus, the war had led to a growth of so-called *daytshmerizms*.¹²⁵

Concluding Remarks

Immediately after the outbreak of the “Great War,” representatives of German Jewry expressed the notion of East European Jews as pioneers of Germanness in the East. The main point of origin for this claim was the assumption that Yiddish was a German dialect. Above all, the Kfdo, which was established by leading German Zionists, structured a considerable part of its policy during the first two years of its existence upon this notion. This was, to a large extent, propaganda intended to induce support from the German government for the cultural autonomy of East European Jewry. Nevertheless, it was also an expression of German patriotism (and assimilation) which, however, was less exclusive than the ethnic nationalism of many non-Jewish Germans. That someone like Bodenheimer, as one of the most important pioneers of the Zionist movement, could also act as a German patriot highlights the fact that, until the war, especially for the older generation of German Zionists (born in the years around the establishment of the German Kaiserreich in 1871), Jewish nationalism was not an exclusive identity. However, the attempt to impose such a special post-emancipationist German-Jewish identity upon East European Jewry was not only paternalistic and colonialist, but also absurd, since it utterly ignored the attitudes and conditions of East European Jews. Further, it was contradictory to define East European Jewry as bearers of Germanness and as a distinct Jewish nationality at the same time. Thus, the idea of East European Jews as pioneers of Germanness in the East was a clear misconception. In the long run, it became obvious that neither German policy-makers nor the Jews in Eastern Europe were willing to embrace this intended

123 For a prominent Polish-Zionist rejection of East European Jews being bearers of Germanness, see Berl Locker’s “Wer sind wir?,” *Lemberger Tageblatt*, 25 January 1916, also to be found in Germano-Judäus, “Deutsch, Polnisch oder Jiddisch?” (Berlin: Schwetschke 1916), 18–20.

124 Szajkowski, “The Struggle for Yiddish during World War I,” 142.

125 On *daytshmerizms*, see also Steffen Krogh’s essay “Dos iz eyne vahre geshikhte ... On the Germanization of Eastern Yiddish in the Nineteenth Century,” and Martina Niedhammer’s essay “Codified Traditions? YIVO’s filologishe sektsye in Vilna and its Relationship to German Academia,” in this volume.

identity construction. Moreover, the activities of Zionists in the KfdO, and their propaganda that East European Jewry was a carrier of Germanness in the East provoked, to a considerable extent, a sharp rift within the Zionist movement. As a consequence of this controversy between the political Zionists (and German patriots) of the older generation and the practical Zionists of the younger generation, the German and World Zionist movement soon began to employ a more exclusive Jewish nationalism separating itself from political Zionism.¹²⁶

Due to the failure of their policy and fierce criticism from many sides, in the course of the war the KfdO (and others) gradually abandoned the notion of East European Jews as carriers of Germanness in the East. However, by that time, the policy of the KfdO and other representatives of German Jewry had already further exacerbated the strained relations between Polish Jews and ethnic Poles by presenting East European Jewry as a German and Germanizing force in the East.

While the negative consequences of such a policy cannot be denied, a major positive result should not be overlooked. Those German Jews who argued that East European Jews were bearers of Germanness, due to the assumption that Yiddish was a German dialect, contributed to a further development of Yiddish and a new understanding of that once much despised Jargon. Not only did they do "much to influence the German authorities towards establishing Yiddish schools and other strongholds of Jewish culture," but were, at least partially, also able to create a more positive attitude towards Yiddish among Jews and non-Jews in Germany.¹²⁷ Last, but not least, their representation of Yiddish as a German dialect was of considerable importance to the question of whether Yiddish was a language in its own right or not.

126 On this change see Stefan Vogt, "The First World War, German Nationalism, and the Transformation of German Zionism," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 57 (2012), 267–291.

127 Szajkowski, "The Struggle for Yiddish during World War I," 156–157.

Philipp Nielsen

In the Defense of Germandom in the East: Jews and the Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland, 1914 to 1935

In 1881, the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Schulverein* (Universal German School Association, ADS) was founded in Berlin, following the establishment of the Austrian *Deutscher Schulverein* in Vienna the previous year. Supporting the Austrians' advocacy on behalf of German speakers, especially in the Balkans and Hungary, the ADS initially directed most of its work overseas.¹ Over the next two decades, the ADS was increasingly drawn into politics closer to home, and in 1908 it changed its name to *Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland* (Association for Germandom Abroad, VDA). This change reflected efforts to increase its influence on the German diaspora beyond matters of schooling – and thus upon German national politics.² This article investigates the development of the VDA's nationalism in relation to German Jews and the concomitant question of antisemitism. Therefore, it deals with both the history of antisemitism, as part of German nationalism, and the involvement of Jews in German nationalism.

The ADV experienced its first antisemitic episode in 1887, when its governing board rejected a number of antisemitic petitions from within its ranks; the rise of such petitions were inspired by similar movements in the Austrian *Schulverein*.³ The matter appears to have subsequently been of relatively little importance, even when völkisch sentiments flared up, as they did on several occasions, triggered by cooperation with other nationalist and colonial associations – not least of which was the *Alldeutsche Verein*.

Based on the surviving correspondence of the *Central-Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens* (Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith, CV), the largest German Jewish organization, founded in Berlin in 1893, German Jewish interest in the VDA remained muted until the outbreak

1 Gerhard Weidenfeller, *VDA. Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland. Allgemeiner Deutscher Schulverein (1881–1918). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus und Imperialismus im Kaiserreich* (Bern: Lang, 1976), 165–66; Also see Otto Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland, 1770–1990* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1996), 202–05; Annemarie H. Sammartino, *The Impossible Border* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 99–100; On the Deutsche Schulverein see Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

2 Weidenfeller, *VDA*, 304–05.

3 Weidenfeller, *VDA*, 228.

of the Great War. With German troops advancing east in 1914, German speakers in Eastern-Central Europe became a major concern for claiming and establishing imperial power. Eastern European Jews, due to the proximity of Yiddish to German (and the ability of many to speak German), were seen as possible vectors for Germanism. As the VDA shifted its focus toward them, German Jews' interest in the VDA increased in turn, and with it their attention to possible antisemitic sentiments among the association's ranks. In particular, the VDA's connection to the Austrian *Deutscher Schulverein* came under scrutiny. The relationship between the two associations remained a source of conflict with German Jews throughout the Weimar Republic, though otherwise the connection between the VDA and the CV improved.

While the means to assert German control over Eastern Europe may have been lost following November 1918, the belief in German superiority that had fueled such aspirations had not disappeared. With its military clout decimated and its economy impaired, *Kultur* – and especially language – once more moved to the fore of German efforts to regain the “lost East.” The most active association in this promotion of *Deutschtum* in Eastern Europe, as a way to advance German nationalist and anti-Polish aims, was the VDA. Despite an increase in antisemitism among the VDA's members, the defense of *Deutschtum* in the East continued to bring Jewish and non-Jewish German nationalists together.

This article traces the history of this cooperation, its changes, and challenges over the course of the Weimar Republic. While controversial in the rank and file of the VDA, its governing board responded to concerns about antisemitism expressed by the CV by retaining a welcoming attitude towards German Jews until the National Socialists came to power. There were a number of internal and external challenges to this stance. Despite these challenges, and the name change deemphasizing education in 1908, the liberal legacy of the VDA and inherent logic of language as the relevant factor of unity – over race or religion – proved more resistant to antisemitic arguments than experience-based markers of identity, such as the much vaunted “community of the trenches.”⁴ The VDA was neither isolated from nor immune to antisemitism. Therefore, its relationship with Jews sheds light both on the development of interwar German nationalism and on the place of German Jews in this development as active participants, rather than merely as its victims.

⁴ A similar logic had prevented the Austrian *Deutscher Schulverein* from adopting an “Aryan paragraph” before the war, despite some members and regions urging its adoption, and instead led it to support Jewish German language schools in the Austrian border regions. See Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*, 49, 51.

War and Defeat

German Jews' relations with the *VDA* begin in 1916 – so far as surviving sources reveal – and from its inception, it was a relationship of mixed emotions, of cooperation, and of conflict.⁵ In 1916, a representative of the *VDA* responded to an inquiry from the *Central-Verein*. This representative sidestepped the *CV*'s question of whether or not the Viennese branch of *Deutscher Schulverein* was antisemitic. Instead of offering a clear answer, he responds with a claim that the *VDA* and the Austrians were only loosely affiliated. The aim was to neutralize the issue and deny any question of antisemitic contagion.⁶ Like the Austrian *Deutscher Schulverein* before the war, the *VDA* tried to walk a line of neutrality – avoiding discussion of antisemitism as much as possible, so as to not alienate German speaking Jews or antagonize antisemites.⁷

The *VDA* was more circumspect than the German military and government during the war in this respect. German officials, at times, promoted East European Jews' cultural and linguistic connection to Germany as a means of German influence in the area, while also giving in to antisemitic sentiment and clamoring. The infamous *Juden-zählung* of the Prussian army existed side by side with wartime plans for an Eastern Europe in which Jews were integral as agents of German control.⁸ Following the defeat of 1918, and the loss of both the conquered territories and parts of the pre-1914 German provinces in the East, such plans came to an abrupt end. The overnight departure of Warsaw's Governor General Hans Hartwig von Beseler from the city was but one example of this. When Polish troops arrived at the National Archives, the German Jewish historian Adolf Warschauer, who

5 Little prewar correspondence between the *VDA* and the *Central-Verein* remains. This is not least of the problem with sources. The *VDA* records did not survive the Second World War. Records of the *Central-Verein* did survive, though in probably decimated form. Nonetheless, the extant records reconstruct the rich history found in this article.

6 "Osoby" Archives, Moscow, 3430; microfilm at Central Archives of the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP) – HM2/8827 (henceforth only: CAHJP 3430 – HM2/8827): Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland (VDA), 1920–1925 – Dr. vom Staden of the VDA to Mr. J. Emrich, Pforzheim, 19 July 1916, 229; for the annexationist position of the *VDA* during the war, see Sammartino, *The Impossible Border*, 32–33. 7 Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*, 50–51.

8 On the contradictory policies, see Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and the German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 126, 191–92; Jürgen Matthäus, "German *Judenpolitik* in Lithuania during the First World War," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 43 (1998): 155–74; Steven E. Aschheim, "Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany's *Ostpolitik* in the First World War," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 28 (1983): 351–68; Egmont Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik und die Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969), 278–84; Jesko von Puttkammer, "Eine Kulturfrage im Osten", *Der Tag*, 23.12.1915, 1.

had been in charge of its reorganization, was wholly unprepared to be suddenly in charge of organizing the transition of power.⁹

With its grand war plans shattered, and the search for scapegoats for Germany's defeat in full swing, the immediate postwar period did not seem promising for continued inclusion of Jews in a VDA which had staked so much on a German victory.¹⁰ In the general surge of antisemitism following the defeat, the association came under attack by antisemitic agitators for its supposedly too welcoming attitude towards Jews. In 1920, the *Deutschvölkische Blätter*, a newspaper affiliated with the violently antisemitic *Deutschvölkische Schutz- und Trutzbund*, claimed that the VDA had so many Jews among its leadership that it could hardly be called an association for "Germans" abroad.¹¹ The *Central-Verein* took note of such accusations, which antisemites likewise lobbed at other nationalist associations, such as the veterans' association *Stahlhelm* or the *Deutschnationale Volkspartei*. The aim of the antisemites was to discredit such organizations through their association with German Jews. While both *Stahlhelm* and *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* soon accepted the logic of these accusations, which led most Jews and even those of Jewish ancestry to leave them, even before they formally adopted so-called "Aryan paragraphs" in the mid-1920s, the VDA leadership did not embrace such *völkisch* positions.¹² Yet, despite the leaderships' attitude, and their reassurances that the VDA was operationally separate from the Austrian *Schulverein*, it was precisely from there that a challenge to its neutral position originated. In 1921, members of the Salzburg chapter floated an amendment introducing an "Aryan paragraph," aimed at excluding Jews from membership, to the association's statutes. German Jews and the *Central-Verein* were keenly aware of the motion and tried to motivate both Jewish and "Jew friendly" members of the VDA to attend the meeting.¹³ At the time, the amendment failed to come up for a vote.¹⁴ Following this incident, the

9 Adolf Warschauer, *Deutsche Kulturarbeit in der Ostmark: Erinnerungen aus vier Jahrzehnten* (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1926), 314–17.

10 Weidenfeller, VDA, 366–71.

11 CAHJP 3430 – HM2/8827: VDA – *Deutschvölkische Blätter*, 19 August 1920, Nr. 34, 12.

12 Werner Bergmann, "Deutschnationale Volkspartei", in *Handbuch des Antisemitismus: Judenfeindschaft in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. 5: Organisationen, Institutionen, Bewegungen, Wolfgang Benz (ed.) (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 195; Volker R. Berghahn, *Der Stahlhelm: Bund der Frontsoldaten, 1918–1935* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1966), 64.

13 CAHJP 3430 – HM2/8827: VDA – for example CV (Cohen) to Max Dreyfuss, Landau i. Pf., 6 May 1921.

14 Ibid. – *Aktennotiz* Cohen, 28 June 1921, 82; German or *Heimat* associations in Austria, such as the Alpine society, for example, were indeed quicker to exclude Jews from their ranks than their equivalents in Germany, see Matthias Hambroek, *Etablierung der Außenseiter* (Köln: Böhlau, 2003), 440–52; Paul Yogi Mayer, "Equality – Egality: Jews and Sport in Germany," *Leo Baeck*

internal challenges to Jewish membership in the *VDA* appear to have decreased. Nonetheless, the *Central-Verein's* leadership remained wary of the *VDA*, even if they supported its general goals. The *CV* adopted a standard answer to inquiries from Jews wanting to join the *VDA*, but unsure about the association's attitudes toward them. The *CV's* response, that the *VDA* per se was not antisemitic, though its Austrian affiliate was, added the caveat that, within Germany, Jews should look at the attitudes of individual local chapters. Yet, different *CV* leaders tweaked the emphasis of this standard statement. Alfred Wiener, as legal counsel of the *CV's* Berlin chapter, generally advised those he corresponded with to join the association. He considered their overall goal of strengthening German culture in the East, particularly in those areas "torn away" after Versailles, commendable. Furthermore, he thought it would be easier to confront antisemitism and *völkisch* ideas from within the *VDA* rather than from without.¹⁵ Alfred Hirschberg, responsible for the youth activities of the *CV*, was more circumspect. According to him, German Jews interested in joining the *VDA* and its student groups should be careful, as he "could not recommend participation" in the association's endeavors.¹⁶

Inquiries about the *VDA's* stance on Jewish membership persisted. In mid-1923, officials within the *CV's* regional associations pressured the head office in Berlin to use its (financial) clout to persuade the *VDA* central office to condemn antisemitism.¹⁷ The *VDA* central office, in turn, continued to reassure the *Central-Verein* that it did not harbor any antisemitic feelings. In a discussion with a representative of the *Central-Verein* in August 1923, the *VDA's* managing director, Friedrich Carl Badendieck, reiterated the centrality of Jews to the association's mission – asserting that the Austrian *Schulverein* did not receive a single penny from the *VDA*. However, he had to acknowledge that the *VDA* needed to fight antisemitism within its own ranks.¹⁸ Badendieck went on to claim that his association even had a Jew on its board, a *Kommerzienrat* Goldschmidt.¹⁹ The only Goldschmidt who was

Institute Yearbook 25 (1980): 226; Lee Wallace Holt, "Mountains, Mountaineering and Modernity: A Cultural History of the German and Austrian Mountaineering" (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2008), 113–36.

¹⁵ CAHJP 3430 – HM2/8827: *VDA* – Alfred Hirschberg to Arthur Kahn, 2 November 1923, 238; Alfred Wiener to Dr. Max Mainzer, 24 June 1921, 77.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, – Alfred Hirschberg to Paul Homburger, Berlin 11 June 1924, 244. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the author.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, – *Central-Verein* Breslau to the *Central-Verein* head office in Berlin, 30 May 1923, 210; *ibid.*, – *Central-Verein* Regional Association for Hesse-Nassau (including Wetzlar) and Hesse (Local Chapter Frankfurt a.M.), Max Mainzer to Ludwig Holländer, 13 June 1923, 217.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, – Mayer to the attention of Dr. Wiener and further use at the board meeting, 14 August 1923; Report of the Conversation with Mr. Badendieck, Director of the *VDA* on 13 August 1923, 231.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

on the board of VDA at the time was Karl Goldschmidt, a Protestant with Jewish ancestry.²⁰ Badendieck's claim was both problematic and noteworthy. Though Goldschmidt's father had converted to Protestantism in his youth, to Badendieck even the younger Goldschmidt was still Jewish. In contrast to the *Stahlhelm* however, where the Jewish ancestry of a co-founder was hushed up before erupting into a scandal in the waning years of the republic, Goldschmidt's ancestry was seen by Badendieck as an asset rather than a problem.²¹ Badendieck could leverage Goldschmidt's ancestry to the VDA's benefit at a time when other associations were shedding any real or imaginary connection to Jews. How aware Badendieck was of the exceptional nature of this response, at the time, and thus how calculated his move was vis-à-vis a Jewish organization, which saw its members increasingly excluded from other nationalist organizations, remains unclear.

Whatever the case, Badendieck pointed to the Lithuanian capital of Kaunas during a 1923 conversation with the CV. He identified a clear example of amicable cooperation (or so he claimed) in Kaunas, where the local German school was housed in the Jewish school's building.²² The VDA's director invoked the promise of a common Jewish and German identity, and common interests, in Eastern Europe. However, as the incessant queries to the *Central-Verein* about the VDA demonstrated, Jews had doubts about the sincerity of this promise even as they remained attracted by it. Attempts by VDA leadership to reassure the CV continued at both the national and local levels. In June 1923, Johannes Trebst, the head of the VDA's chapter in Schweinfurt in Bavaria, wrote to the head of the local CV chapter. During a CV event, Trebst overheard a speaker describing the VDA as antisemitic. It was "very important" to him to refute this accusation. "For our association the only embodiment of Germanism is the German language & the German feeling, all other motives are overridden, especially every hatred of confessions & parties [Konfessions- & Parteihass]." ²³ Trebst signed the correspondence "Mit deutschem Gruß."²⁴

The amicable overall tone of conversation between the VDA and the *Central-Verein*, including Trebst's letter and Badendieck's claims about the VDA's cooperation with Eastern European Jews, were all the more impressive for the time at which they occurred. Amid rampant inflation and political instability,

²⁰ See "Goldschmidt, Industrielle, Chemiker. (ev.)" in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 6 (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1964), 609.

²¹ See Volker R. Berghahn, "Die Harzburger Front und die Kandidatur Hindenburgs für die Präsidentschaftswahlen 1932," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 13 (1965): 64–82, 79, FN 71.

²² CAHJP 3430 – HM2/8827: VDA – 'Report of the Conversation with Mr. Badendieck', 231.

²³ CAHJP 3430 – HM2/8827: VDA – VDA Local Chapter Schweinfurt to Justizrat Dr. Hommel, 28 June 1923, 225.

²⁴ Ibid. 'Mit deutschem Gruß' was the preferred nationalist greeting that would later become synonymous with the 'Hitler Gruß'.

antisemitism was once again on the rise. The assassination of foreign minister Walter Rathenau, in June of 1922, was the most visible result of this resurgence. While the assassination led to some temporary soul searching on the right, an even greater escalation of the economic and political crisis the following year increased the specter of public violence. Violent rioting and looting returned to German streets during the summer and fall of 1923.²⁵ In early November 1923, one such riot in Berlin targeted Eastern European Jewish immigrants specifically. German Jewish veterans of the First World War formed self-defense groups and guarded Eastern European Jews from attack by antisemitic thugs during the ‘Scheunenviertel-Krawalle.’²⁶ The Beerhall Putsch in Munich only a few days later, though it failed, highlighted the violent potential of anti-Republican and antisemitic forces.

The surviving records of the VDA’s correspondence with the *Central-Verein* are unfortunately patchy, and documents from the time of the pogrom and putsch have not survived. What evidence does remain, however, suggests that even the increasing antisemitism in Germany did not stop Jews from joining the VDA. In one curious case, from late October of 1923, high school student Arthur Kahn contacted the CV’s main office *after* he had become the head of the newly formed VDA chapter at his school. A local professor, and former head of a liberal democratic association, had assured him that the VDA was a non-partisan organization, but the youth now wanted to make sure.²⁷ Alfred Hirschberg responded with the CV’s standard letter about the VDA. Instead of his usual warning, Hirschberg concludes the letter with an almost deadpan comment: “as you are the head of your local chapter, antisemitic tendencies in it should be impossible.”²⁸ The episode suggests that the VDA’s school activities did not necessarily find support among students because of the association’s goals. Another reason might have

25 Gerald D. Feldman, “Bayern und Sachsen in der Hyperflation 1922/23,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 238 (1984): 604; Hans Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy* (Ort: Verlag, Jahr), 135.

26 Institut für Zeitgeschichte (IfZ) ZS 2196 – Löwenstein, 41; Friedrich Solon was one of the Jewish veterans who participated in the defense of the *Ostjuden*: Leo Baeck Institute (LBI) New York (NY) ME607- Friedrich Solon, *Mein Leben vor und nach dem 30. Januar 1933*, 65; Ulrich Dunker, *Der Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten 1919–1938: Geschichte eines jüdischen Abwehrvereins* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1977), 50–51; Avraham Barkai, “Wehr Dich!“, *der Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens (C.V.) 1893–1938* (München: Beck, 2002), 119.

27 CAHJP 3430 – HM2/8827: VDA – Arthur Kahn to Alfred Hirschberg, Mannheim, 30 October 1923, 238.

28 Ibid., – Alfred Hirschberg to Mr. Jüdel (though the letter was in response to Arthur Kahn), 2 November 1923, 238.

been that it offered a way to get out of class to collect donations and membership dues during school hours.²⁹

Despite the association's courtship, and the occasional example of Jewish members in prominent positions within the VDA and its student branch, the *Central-Verein's* leadership remained circumspect, as did other *Central-Verein* members. A letter from Gretel Goldstein, leader of the *Jüdische Frauenbund* in Darmstadt, to Alfred Wiener in October 1924, is a testament to this.³⁰ The local VDA chapter approached Goldstein about advertising the association's activities to the *Frauenbund's* members. Vaguely aware of the Salzburg convention's antisemitic episode, Goldstein was wary of doing so. She felt she should generally not advise her members to join the VDA but wanted clarification from the CV about such a step.³¹ Instead of Wiener, the more circumspect Hirschberg responded in a letter that reads, "the VDA when it came to antisemitism had always acted correctly." However, Hirschberg also attached a CV article very critical of the VDA's actions abroad. Overall, he reassured Goldstein in her reserved attitude.³² He remained equally ambivalent in response to another inquiry about the VDA half a year later in April 1925. Hirschberg at first echoes Wiener's more encouraging attitude that "it could even be advantageous, if among the ranks of this association there were positively contributing Jewish Germans."³³ Yet, a few sentences later, he returns to his skepticism and warns that because of the VDA's ties to the Austrian *Schulverein*, supporting the VDA also meant "supporting antisemitic aspirations."³⁴

The Ambiguously "Golden Years"

The persistence of antisemitic aspirations among local VDA chapters soon became all too clear. In August 1925, an initiative to introduce an "Aryan paragraph" on the national level originated in Pirna, Saxony. The Saxon state office for the VDA had to wage an internal propaganda campaign to suppress the initiative and keep

²⁹ Yehudit Shaltiel, interview with author, July 2009. Shaltiel, born Irmgard-Alice Schoenstaedt in Berlin in 1913, who had been active in her youth in Berlin in the VDA, suggested that this was at least part of the appeal to join the association in our interview conducted in Jerusalem on 24 July 2009.

³⁰ On the *Jüdische Frauenbund*, see Marion A. Kaplan, *The Jewish feminist movement in Germany: the campaigns of the Jüdischer Frauenbund, 1904–1938* (Wesport: Greenwood Press, 1979).

³¹ CAHJP 3430 – HM2/8827: VDA – Prof. Dr. Gretel Goldstein to Dr. Wiener, Darmstadt 17 October 1924. 252.

³² *Ibid.*, – Alfred Hirschberg to Gretel Goldstein, 28 October 1924, p. 257.

³³ *Ibid.*, – Alfred Hirschberg to Toni Simon, 28 April 1925, p. 271–272.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

it away from the national convention's floor later that year. One of the arguments the Saxon head office used to prevent an "Aryan paragraph" was the close collaboration of the *VDA* with Eastern European Jews in the defense of Germanism. The leaflet sent out to convince the members quotes the schoolmaster, amateur historian, and *VDA* member Gotthold Weicker:

If the *Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland* wants to protect the German language in Eastern Europe, it has to recognize Jewry as the carrier of the German language and cannot exclude it from participating [*in the protection of German*].³⁵

The newspaper of the Jewish veterans' association, *Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten*, reported on the matter. Members of the *Central-Verein* continued to bring other instances of antisemitism to the attention of their leadership. The insistence of the *VDA*'s national leadership that it did not condone antisemitism, and its success in suppressing at least formal initiatives to institute an "Aryan paragraph," did not fail to make an impression on the more circumspect members of the *Central-Verein*'s board.

Even Alfred Hirschberg's position slowly began to shift. In February 1926, Hirschberg modified his position, while remaining cautious, advising a member that "donating a little money here and there" to a specific chapter of the *VDA* would be alright.³⁶ His attitude reflected even more positivity after Hirschberg became aware of a particular exchange of letters between Emil Maenner, the head of *VDA* in Baden, and Nathan Stein, Maenner's counterpart at the Council of Israelites of Baden. Stein inquired about the association's attitudes after hearing reports of antisemitism among the *VDA*'s high school groups in September of 1926. Maenner argued in his response that the very goal of the *VDA* was antithetical to antisemitism. According to Maenner, the association's desire "to help our endangered German brothers in their difficult fight for survival irrespective of their class or their confession" was the sole driving force behind the *VDA*.³⁷ Germany had witnessed enough "strife and quarrel," and it was time to come together as:

[...] one community of fate, to become *one* people. If our fellow citizens of the Jewish faith now participate so willingly and eagerly in this task for the German future, something I can assume in light of your lively interest that you have expressed for our work, we have taken an important step towards our inner unification.³⁸

³⁵ "Der Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland und die Judenfrage," *Der Schild*, 14.8.1925, 287.

³⁶ CAHJP 3439 – HM2/8828: Deutscher Schulverein, Südmark – Hirschberg to Director Carl Gotthelf, 21 February 1926, 230.

³⁷ CAHJP 3439 – HM2/8828: Deutscher Schulverein, Südmark – Professor Maenner, Chairman of the Baden Association of the *VDA* to Professor Nathan Stein, 16 November 1926, 169–171.

³⁸ *Ibid.* Emphasis in the original.

Within his argument, Maenner made a rhetorical pivot common to conservatives at the time, initially rejecting accusations of antisemitism only to later place the onus of action on German Jews. Nonetheless, Stein was quite satisfied with the exchange. He felt assured that the VDA would move against any antisemitic tendencies within its ranks. Stein felt that Maenner's "words about our people's unity [*unsere Volkseinheit*] echoed [his] sentiments exactly," and hoped that he and Maenner would have the opportunity to speak about the matter in the near future.³⁹ Hirschberg referred directly to Maenner's letters when he recommended supporting the VDA to yet another inquiring CV member.⁴⁰

Half a year later, Eva Jungmann, one of the *Central-Verein's* most important spokespeople, responsible for questions of culture and education at the Berlin head office, enthusiastically reported on a meeting with a Mr. Wagner, press representative for the VDA. In discussions during July of 1927, Wagner denounced antisemitism even more strongly than Jungmann hoped he might, discussing possible cooperation with those daily newspapers usually derided in nationalist circles as "Jewish," such as the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and *Berliner Tageblatt*.⁴¹ Despite Jungmann's enthusiasm, members from local chapters continued to paint a more ambivalent picture through positive and negative reports to the central office. Saxony in particular continued to stand out as a stridently antisemitic local VDA chapter.⁴²

Overall, however, the *Central-Verein's* leadership was inclined to defend the VDA. In May 1928, Jungmann wrote to a member in Hamburg who had complained about a nationalist VDA publication that had sampled a text by the radical antisemite Artur Dinter – though the text in question contained no references to Dinter's antisemitism. Jungmann's response asserted, "every self-assured Jew can affirm the goals of the VDA without the slightest compromise."⁴³ In June 1928, Max Mainzer, chair of the *Central-Verein's* Frankfurt branch and longtime VDA member, proudly reported a meeting of his local VDA chapter to the CV head office. In this meeting, the chapter's chair declared that he did not know any difference between Jews and non-Jews belonging to the VDA's school groups. Further, the VDA chapter chair's statement drew strong applause from the audience. Mainzer found it

39 CAHJP 3439 – HM2/8828: Deutscher Schulverein, Südmark – Professor Nathan Stein to Prof Maenner, 22 November 1926, 173–4; Also see Stein's letter to Maenner expressing the very same sentiments, 29 September 1926, 192.

40 For example, see CAHJP 3439 – HM2/8828: Deutscher Schulverein, Südmark – Alfred Hirschberg to Leopold Hiller, 5 November 1926, 157–58.

41 CAHJP 3440 – HM2/8828: VDA – Memo, Eva Jungmann, 16 July 1927, 140–2.

42 Ibid., – Alfred Wiener to VDA Head Office, 15 May 1928, 261–62.

43 Ibid., – CV Berlin, Eva Jungmann to Alfred Behrens, 15 May 1928, 289.

“characteristic” that the *VDA* chapter’s chair was also member of the right wing *Deutschnationale Volkspartei*.⁴⁴ What exactly such membership was supposed to be “characteristic” of remained unsaid. Presumably, Mainzer meant to insinuate that a member of the old right, and staunch German nationalist, would be a principled defender of a notion of Germandom that did not divide by race or creed – a sentiment contradicted by the fact that the party passed an “Aryan paragraph” in 1926.

Mainzer’s assessment of the *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* might have been curious, but his appraisal of the *VDA* was shared more widely. The *Central-Verein* viewed the *VDA* more positively in the late 1920s not because antisemitism had disappeared from its ranks, but because of the decisive stance that the leadership took against it. Proof of this fact came by way of antisemitic attacks on the *VDA* from the radical right. Following the *VDA*’s annual meeting in Goslar in late 1928, Richard Karlssohn, a journalist with the *völkische Deutsche Tageblatt*, complained that antisemitism did not enter into the discussion at all. In his article, the journalist demanded that the *VDA* must exclude all Jewish members if it really wanted to represent *Deutschtum*. Karlssohn ends his article with a polemical question: “Whither is the *VDA* bound?”⁴⁵ Karlssohn himself was not even present at the convention. Notably, his source on the meeting’s proceedings was sufficient indictment for Karlssohn. He obtained his information from an article written by the head of a local *VDA* school group and printed in the *CV*’s paper.⁴⁶

In response to the *Deutsche Tageblatt* article, Eva Jungmann tried to prod the *VDA* chapter from which the positive source article originated to respond, though her indirect method through local *CV* contacts denotes a sense of the limited urgency attached to the matter.⁴⁷ A few months later, this indirect route proved ineffective. In April 1929, Eva Jungmann – now Reichmann after marriage to her colleague Hans Reichmann – wrote to the *VDA* directly regarding yet another antisemitic attack.⁴⁸ The cause was an article published in *Die Flamme*, a national socialist newspaper in Nuremberg. The author of the article called on German youths to leave the *VDA* and join the National Socialists, as only the latter were true warriors for *Deutschtum*, since the battle for *Deutschtum* was a battle against Judaism. With Jews amongst its members, the *VDA* certainly could not claim to be warriors for *Deutschtum*.⁴⁹ Reichmann sent the *VDA* a copy of this article and asked for a comment. The *VDA* press bureau was apologetic yet slightly ambiguous. The

⁴⁴ Ibid., – Max Mainzer, Local Chapter Frankfurt to CV Berlin, 28 June 1928, 160.

⁴⁵ CAHJP 3440 – HM2/8828: *VDA* – Richard Karlssohn, *Deutsches Tageblatt*, 29 January 1929, 1–2.

⁴⁶ Ibid., – Eva Reichmann to Frau Justizrat Roth (CV-Neiße), 9 March 1929, 53.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ CAHJP 3440 – HM2/8828: *VDA* – Eva Reichmann to *VDA*, 2 April 1929, 42.

⁴⁹ Ibid., – Richard Feder, *Die Flamme*, Nr. 12, 21 March 1929, 45.

VDA's response deplored the "skewed and absurd depictions" and the intrusion of day-to-day politics into an issue that was of interest to all Germans.⁵⁰ Though vague vis-à-vis the VDA's opposition against, or even position toward, antisemitism, Reichmann felt sufficiently reassured by the response. When, in May 1929, a cantor from Fürth inquired about the attitudes of the VDA, Reichmann responded that the VDA's attitude left nothing to be desired, and there were no reasons not to cooperate with or support the association.⁵¹ The same month, the Prussian Ministry of the Interior also concluded that the VDA had finally committed itself to the republican order.⁵² It was a commitment just before crisis struck. Moreover, even during this relative calm, the skittish reactions of the *Central-Verein* to any possibility of antisemitism within the VDA demonstrate that, despite its pronouncements to the contrary, this positive state of affairs was not entirely trusted.

Toward 1933: Deceptively Solid Ground

Eva Reichmann was right to be skittish, but she was also correct in her positive assessment of the VDA. The antisemitic challenges to the VDA's more inclusive stance, both from inside and outside the association, continued. For the time being, the internal challenges seemed to be a more pressing issue, especially the antisemitism within the Austrian branch. In August of 1930, Julius Brodnitz and Ludwig Holländer, respectively the head and the director of the *Central-Verein*, convened a meeting with the managing director of the VDA, *Oberregierungsrat* Kühne. The high level of the participants speaks to the importance the *Central-Verein* accorded to it. In the meeting, Brodnitz complained about the anti-Jewish actions of the Austrians' branches in Czechoslovakia, which needlessly drove the Jews there into the Czech cultural camp. The example of Posen, where Brodnitz was from, and which had become part of Poland following the First World War, showed that "precisely Jews were some of the strongest pillars of Germanism in the East."⁵³ To his mind, the necessary defense of German interests in the East did not have to be antisemitic. Apart from Posen, Brodnitz could also point to the Baltic port city of Danzig, administered since 1919 by the League of Nations. A few months earlier, the head of the Danzig *Central-Verein* chapter wrote to Berlin. According to him,

50 Ibid., – VDA press office to Eva Reichmann, 9 April 1929, 41.

51 CAHJP 3440 – HM2/8828: VDA – Dr. Eva Reichmann to Cantor B. Adler, Fürth, 24 May 1929, 32.

52 Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz (GStA PK), I HA Rep. 77 Tit. 856, Nr. 809: Hegg to Rathenau and Schöner for notice, 21 May 1929, 35.

53 CAHJP 3442 – HM2/8828: VDA – Memo, 30 August 1930, 258.

the VDA chapter in Danzig was more nationalistic than chapters within Germany, though this was understandable in light of “the fighting posture Germandom assumes and has to assume against certain attempts to advance by Polishdom.” Brodnitz did not see any problem with Jews supporting the VDA in this effort and, presumably, neither did the VDA in Danzig.⁵⁴ The report of the meeting does not include Kühne’s position, though Brodnitz and Holländer appear to have been satisfied with its outcome.

While Austrian antisemitism had bedeviled CV-VDA relations for over a decade, these worries had apparently become manageable. The rise of the National Socialists, however, would soon eclipse all else. The article from *Die Flamme*, mentioned above, was a harbinger of things to come. Following the July 1930 elections, the National Socialists were indisputably the main arbiters of *völkisch* and antisemitic sentiment. The VDA, and other established nationalist associations, needed to determine their relationship with the party. Questions of dual membership, of NSDAP flags, and buttons, were all issues that the VDA had to deal with, on top of the attacks that the new party waged against them when it deemed the VDA insufficiently radical. In mid-1929, the VDA could still brush questions about the role of National Socialists within its ranks aside, through reference to its apolitical character, and the CV would be satisfied. The meteoric rise of the National Socialists, beginning with the fall 1930 elections, changed that. As a result, discontent grew among members of the *Central-Verein* with the VDA’s formulaic disavowal of antisemitism. In early September 1931, a representative of the CV’s branch in Lower Silesia wrote from Breslau. He had never been satisfied with the official assurances or the policy of the VDA. Two events further convinced him that urgent action was required. One of these was the recent rioting in Breslau by National Socialists who were also members of the VDA. The other was an article in the *Reichsbanner*, the newspaper of the main republican veterans’ organization. The article alleged that the large presence of National Socialists within the VDA’s school association in Württemberg had effectively turned it into a National Socialist school association. The CV representative felt that, rather than some platonic statement, the VDA now needed to ostracize publicly all its members who supported antisemitism. Until then, no Jew should support the association.⁵⁵

The *Central-Verein*’s leadership tried to downplay the issue, in particular the *Reichsbanner* article. This was unsurprising in light of the way the CV promoted Jewish membership in school associations. Rather than basing its assessment on

⁵⁴ CAHJP 3442 – HM2/8828: VDA – Alfred Weinkrantz, CV Danzig to the Berlin head office, 8 April 1930, 332.

⁵⁵ Ibid., – CV Regional Association Lower Silesia to the Berlin head office, 4 September 1931, 120.

“certain newspapers connected to a party” (a dig at the proximity of *Reichsbanner* and Social Democrats), the CV chose an assessment based on its own altogether positive experience with the VDA. This reaction also revealed a continuing distance between the bourgeois *Central-Verein* and the Social Democrats. In order to foster better relations with the VDA, the CV sent all VDA branches copies of the *CV-Zeitung* moving forward.⁵⁶ Yet Fürth, the representative from Lower Silesia, was not convinced this course of action was sufficient. In a follow up letter, he insists once more that “platonic pleas” by the *Central-Verein* to the VDA to discipline its local chapters were unsatisfactory and did not impress anyone. The audience “does not want to wait, it wants to see action.”⁵⁷ This insistence moved Hirschberg, at least partially. He assured Fürth that the *Central-Verein* would investigate the *Reichsbanner*’s reports from Wurttemberg, and asked him to pass along any other instances of antisemitism so that he could inform the VDA’s head office.⁵⁸

In the meantime, the *Central-Verein* had received assurances from the VDA that the association was above politics. Unfortunately, this meant that National Socialists were equally welcome at its meetings. The VDA could not throw out National Socialists any more than it could throw out Jews. It is difficult to determine whether Hirschberg’s assessment that this was a “lively testament to the VDA’s position above parties” was ironic or not.⁵⁹ Whatever the case, two weeks after Hirschberg had reached this ambiguous conclusion, Eva Reichmann was as enthusiastic as ever when, in late October 1931, she advised a member to join the VDA.⁶⁰

The CV’s relationship with the VDA, however, changed drastically in January of 1932, and, contrary to what one may assume, it was for the better. The reason for this was the VDA’s new chairperson. According to a report of the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, the old chair, Hilmar Freiherr von dem Bussche-Haddenhausen, had been personally likable but politically hapless, and not really in control of the antisemitic factions within the association.⁶¹ The VDA’s new chairperson was of a different caliber. Otto Geßler, former *Reich* minister of defense in the cabinets of seven different chancellors between 1920 and 1928, certainly could not be charged with lack of political savvy. The *Central-Verein* greeted the incoming chair with a letter highlighting “the decade of first distant and later

56 CAHJP 3442 – HM2/8828: VDA – Alfred Hirschberg to CV Regional Association Lower Silesia, 9 September 1931, 115.

57 Ibid., – CV Lower Silesia to the Berlin head office, concerning letter from 9 September, 11 September 1931, 114.

58 Ibid., – Alfred Hirschberg to CV Lower Silesia, 15 November 1931, 113.

59 Ibid., – Alfred Hirschberg to VDA Head Office, 14 October 1931, 96.

60 Ibid., – Dr. Eva Reichmann-Jungmann to Dagobert de Levie, 29 October 1931, 89.

61 GStA PK, I HA Rep. 77, Tit. 856, Nr. 809 – “Bericht Ministerialrat Wolffs von der 50. Jubiläumstagung des VDA in Salzburg, 6. Bis 10. Juni 1930,” 137–41.

closer relationship with the leadership of the VDA,” in which “the ideological basis [*weltanschauliche Grundlage*] of the VDA always allowed for the active participation of German feeling [*deutschgesimter*] Jews among its ranks.” The letter further stated, “The Central-Verein has the urgent desire that this friendly relationship will be preserved beyond the current day and will grow stronger in light of the certain countering tendencies coming from the outside.”⁶²

Geßler, a founder of the liberal *Deutsche Demokratische Partei*, which he left in order to stay in the cabinet in 1927, remained true to his confessional liberalism. In a meeting with Alfred Wiener, who had become the *Central-Verein*’s deputy director by this time, Geßler proposed that German Jews should seek representation on the VDA board just as the Catholic and Protestant Churches had done. Wiener asked his staff to initiate the necessary steps for this, but it is unclear whether the *Central-Verein* ever gained such representation.⁶³

Both the leadership and local chapters of the VDA continued to cooperate with the *Central-Verein*, despite the rise of the National Socialists and the increasing pressure they exerted on nationalist organizations. In March 1932, a member of the *Central-Verein*’s regional association in Lower Silesia told of the cordial and close relations with the local VDA chapter, and of his cooperation in drafting the chapter’s statutes. In response, Hirschberg recounted the talks he had given in front of VDA school groups. Hirschberg and the youth leader of the VDA agreed upon an expansion of this engagement in the next round of talks, highlighting “the work of Jews as carriers of German cultures abroad.”⁶⁴ However, the VDA did not operate in a vacuum. A report about the annual VDA meeting in May 1932, held in Elbing, East Prussia, noted that while the official speakers at the event had steered clear of antisemitism, the residents of Elbing had decked out their town in Swastika flags and many participants of the event wore NSDAP buttons. The local representative of the *Central-Verein* in Elbing also viewed the behavior of the VDA more skeptically. It was not because of the VDA that National Socialists were not among the speakers in Elbing. In fact, the VDA had pressured the East Prussian School Association, which hosted and organized the convention, to invite a larger number of rightwing groups. This demand was rejected by the School Association, whose chairperson argued that her association was above party politics. She contended that any invitation to right wing groups would also extend to left wing organizations, which was (apparently) sufficiently unappealing to carry weight

⁶² CAHJP 3442 – HM2/8828: VDA – Draft for a Letter to the incoming new head of the VDA Otto Geßler prepared and approved by Alfred Wiener, 13 January 1932, 48.

⁶³ Ibid., – Note of Alfred Wiener to Alfred Hirschberg: “Betr. VDA,” 20 January 1932, 46.

⁶⁴ CAHJP 3442 – HM2/8828: VDA – Hirschberg to Attorney Dr. Liegner, CV Regional Association Lower Silesia, 22 March 1932, 42–3.

with the VDA. The CV's East Prussian representative also relayed that the chairperson had told him that many Germans abroad [*Auslandsdeutsche*] reported how harmful the National Socialists were for their positions.⁶⁵ Despite this criticism of VDA policies, cordial meetings between the *Central-Verein* and the VDA continued at least until November 1932.⁶⁶

Conclusion

None of this cordiality, built up over a decade of meetings and correspondence, survived for long after the assumption of power by the National Socialist. By March 25, the VDA had begun to change. Josef Löwensberg, a *Central-Verein* member from Nieder-Ingelheim, close to Mainz in western Germany, reported that efforts were underway in the local VDA to introduce an "Aryan paragraph." Löwensberg had been a VDA member since 1924, attracted by the promise of "building a true *Volksgemeinschaft*." Beginning in 1928, he was on the governing council of his local VDA chapter. The sudden changes in the VDA's attitude toward Jews perplexed him, as he had failed to detect any antisemitism among his fellow members previously, though it may have been possible "that Jew haters had been present in the VDA all along, they never let it show." Trying to understand the situation, Löwensberg requested that the *Central-Verein*'s leadership inquire at the VDA central office in Berlin how far advanced the plans were to exclude Jews. Löwensberg placed some hope in the democratic credentials of the VDA's chair, but above all used the opportunity to point out how exceptional the VDA had been in its attitude towards Jews:

In any case, the entire time the VDA was one of the very few national associations in which Jews could participate and it would be extraordinarily regrettable, if also here the antisemitic direction would win the upper hand. The current chairman, Dr. Geßler, former minister of defense, should as a former Democrat not be the man, who would look upon these tendencies kindly.⁶⁷

Geßler, though, did not remain chair for long. Suspected for his attitudes toward the new regime, he was replaced by Hans Steinacher on 30 April 1933, who had

⁶⁵ Ibid., – CV Regional Association East Prussia to head office, 21 May 1932, 40.

⁶⁶ Ibid., – Alfred Hirschberg, "Aktennotiz Betr. Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland," 30 November 1932, 35.

⁶⁷ CAHJP 3442 – HM2/8828: VDA – Josef Löwensberg, Nieder-Ingelheim, to CV Berlin, 25 March 1933, 33–34.

tellingly made his career in the Austrian section of the *Schulverein*.⁶⁸ Still, the status of Jews in the *VDA* remained ambiguous for a little while longer. In June 1933, the *Central-Verein*'s chapter in Essen reported that the *VDA* asked Jewish students to join its school groups.⁶⁹ The chapter inquired with the *Central-Verein*'s leadership whether this had been a mistake or not. Berlin responded that the *VDA* operated without a current statute, but that under the new *Reichs* leader Steinacher the *VDA* reinterpreted old statutes as excluding Jews. As such, the *CV* could not recommend joining.⁷⁰ In July 1933, Hirschberg reported to Löwensberg that an "Aryan paragraph" now applied across the *VDA* and asked the *Central-Verein* to advise its members to leave the association. Potentially to soften the blow, he also relayed that Löwensberg's work as the *VDA*'s spokesperson had been commended by the *VDA* and thus had not been forgotten.⁷¹ If the *Central-Verein* did advise its members to leave the *VDA*, uncertainty remained as late as the summer of 1935, as members inquired if the *VDA* might still be open to Jews.⁷²

As remarkable as the *VDA*'s openness to Jews for most of the Weimar Republic had been for a nationalist association, right up to its demise, in the end its behavior became typical of most associations after the National Socialists assumed power – it fell quickly into line. Admittedly, the *VDA* had to shed its old leadership first, but soon after it excluded Jews from its ranks. While there was some concern about the effect this would have on the position of German speakers abroad, the *VDA* adopted a National Socialist line. At this point, the *VDA*'s long held position of making language, rather than confession or descent, the marker of German identity – even against considerable critique from within and without – was abandoned. With it, one of the last examples of German nationalism's liberal origins disappeared. This liberalism had not been more tolerant, *per se*, but it had drawn different boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. These boundaries promised a place for German Jews, a promise that, as the archive of the *Central-Verein* demonstrates, held considerable attraction for German Jews.

68 Tammo Luther, *Volkstumspolitik des Deutschen Reiches, 1933–1938: Die Auslandsdeutschen im Spannungsfeld zwischen Traditionalisten und Nationalsozialisten* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004), 68–69.

69 LBI NY ME511 – Fritz Rathenau, 1895–1935: *Als Jude im Dienste von Reich und Staat, 1895–1935*, 119; GSStA PK, I HA Rep. 77, Tit. 856 Nr. 810 – 'Der Vorsitzende des VDA an Seiner Hochwohlgeboren Herrn Ministerialrat Dr. Rathenau im April 1933', 210.

70 CAHJP 3442 – HM2/8828: VDA – Alfred Hirschberg to CV Local Chapter Essen, 3 July 1933, 11.

71 Ibid., – Alfred Hirschberg to Josef Löwensberg, 3 July 1933, 10.

72 Ibid., – Dr. Löwenthal to CV Württembergischen Landesausschuss Stuttgart, 4 February 1935, 3.

Marija Vulesica

An Ambivalent Relationship: The Yugoslav Zionists and Their Perception of “Germanness,” Germany, and the German Jews at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

Introduction

For some time, researchers, principally in Germany, have focused on Germans and Jews in Eastern Europe: their relations, their shared experiences as minorities in the region, as well as possible mutual mechanisms of differentiation and dissociation.¹ However, scant attention has been given to the German and Jewish minorities of southeastern Europe, or questions about the forms comprising the structure of their (non-)relations. Mariana Hausleitner and Carl Bethke are the only scholars who have investigated German-Jewish coexistence and social cohabitation in several regions in Europe’s southeast.² Carl Bethke’s (2013) study is both unique and fundamental for exploring the Croatian regions of the Habsburg monarchy and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (SHS), which was established after 1918 and renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929. Bethke examined the relations between Germans and Jews, from the late nineteenth century until 1945, investigating the importance of their common language for the development of a possible feeling of togetherness, the role of antisemitism among ethnic Germans, and also their role in the destruction of Croatian Jewry

¹ See the articles in this volume. Further: Ines Koeltzsch, *Geteilte Kulturen: Eine Geschichte der tschechisch-deutschen-jüdischen Beziehungen in Prag (1918–1938)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012); Hans Hecker and Walter Engel (ed.), *Symbiose und Traditionsbruch: Deutsch-jüdische Wechselbeziehungen in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa (19. und 20. Jahrhundert)* (Essen: Klartext, 2003); Hildrun Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft. Das deutsch-jüdische Verhältnis in Rumänien (1918–1938)* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996); Jürgen Hensel (ed.), *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Lodz 1820–1939. Eine schwierige Nachbarschaft* (Osnabrück: Fibre, 1999).
² Mariana Hausleitner, *Deutsche und Juden in Bessarabien 1814–1941: Zur Minderheitenpolitik Russlands und Großrumäniens* (München: IKGS-Verlag, 2005); Carl Bethke, *(K)eine gemeinsame Sprache? Aspekte deutsch-jüdischer Beziehungsgeschichte in Slawonien, 1900–1945* (Berlin: LIT-Verlag, 2013).

after 1941. His scholarship, like that collected in the present volume, is of great importance to understanding German-Jewish history in Europe.³

However, the present study's approach to this thematic complex differs. Rather than examining the relations between the German and Jewish minorities in southeastern Europe before and after the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy, this study centers on the significance of "Germanness," termed *Deutschtum*, for Ashkenazi Jews in southeastern Europe. What did *Deutschtum* represent outside the core German and German-Austrian regions? How did the Ashkenazi Jews in Croatia-Slavonia perceive this in the period from the late nineteenth century until the Holocaust?

Notably, "Germanness" for the Ashkenazi Jews in the South Slavic areas was synonymous with the cultivation of the German language and a sense of attachment to German culture. In addition, the sense of a close connection with German-speaking Central Europe encompassed other familial, personal, occupational, and political facets, so that *Deutschtum* was an omnipresent emotional and intellectual locus of reference.

A number of questions related to *Deutschtum* in South Slavic areas require answers. Such as, what was the significance of this attachment in everyday life, or for the concrete development and history of the Jewish Communities in the Croatian regions? Under what circumstances, and how, did Jewish individuals and communities maintain their connection and bond with *Deutschtum* in majority Slavic areas? What reactions and perceptions were they confronted with from the side of the non-Jews? How did the relevance and significance of "Germanness" change over the years, and particularly during the 1920s and 1930s? What role did the political and cultural changes and processes in German-Austria and the German Empire play? Finally, how did Yugoslav Jews perceive German Jews after 1933, and what relations and sense of a common bond did they have with German Jewry?

These questions arise within a context of the perspective of Croatian, and, after 1918, Yugoslav Zionists. Near the end of the nineteenth century, the idea of a Jewish nation already enjoyed very powerful resonance among Ashkenazi Jews in Croatia-Slavonia. The engaged Zionist work by numerous men and women made Zionism the leading political current within Croatian Jewry.⁴ After World War I, and at the latest during the 1920s, the Zionists in effect took over the reins of administrative power in the Jewish communities, and from then on

³ This study has emerged in the framework of my research project funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

⁴ H.P. Freidenreich, *The Jews of Yugoslavia: A Quest for Community* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979), 103; Wieland Köbsch, *Die Juden im Vielvölkerstaat Jugoslawien 1918–1941* (Berlin: LIT-Verlag, 2013), 152–153.

determined the work of the organizations and committees of Jews in Yugoslavia. The first Croatian Zionists were already pursuing the goal of uniting the Ashkenazim and Sephardim in the South Slavic lands.⁵ After the establishment of the first Yugoslav state, the Ashkenazim, who lived primarily in Croatia-Slavonia and Northern Serbia (Voivodina), found themselves united in a single state together with the Sephardim of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Serbia, and South Serbia (Macedonia). Although many Sephardi Jews joined Zionism as a political current, the Zionist committees were dominated and shaped by an Ashkenazi majority. Within Sephardi Jewry, principally in and from Sarajevo, there were also initiatives to approach aspects of *Deutschtum*. This was connected with the political and cultural influence of Austria-Hungary dating from its occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878. Nonetheless, the encounter with *Deutschtum* was relevant primarily for the Ashkenazi Croatian Jews and their own intellectual and organizational positioning. As seen below, they were the ones who perceived and used "Germanness," and the German Jews, as reference points, both in the sense of a paradigm and an antithesis.

The Jewish encounter and confrontation with *Deutschtum*, and their own relation to German culture and language, determined the debates on identity over many decades within both German and Austrian Jewries.⁶ Outside the German-Austrian territories, scholars often referred to the Bohemian Crown Lands in the Habsburg monarchy, and later to Czechoslovakia, when they sought to show the close historical bonds between Jewry and "Germanness."⁷ But the bonds of attachment among Ashkenazim in the Croatian lands have thus far remained largely hidden to researchers. In contrast with German-Jewish relations in Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia, where Jews had to negotiate

5 *Izveštaj društva Židova akademičara iz jugoslavenskih zemalja "Bar Giora"* u Beču, 1903/1904 [Report of the Society of Jewish Students from the South Slavic Lands 'Bar Giora' in Vienna] (Vienna: 1904).

6 Avraham Barkai, "Between *Deutschtum* and *Judentum*: Ideological Controversies inside the Centralverein," in *In Search of Jewish Community: Jewish Identities in Germany and Austria 1918–1933*, Michael Brenner and Derek J. Penslar (eds.) (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 74–91; Marsha L. Rozenblit, *Jewish Ethnicity in a New Nation-State: The Crisis of Identity in the Austrian Republic*, in *In Search of Jewish Community: Jewish Identities in Germany and Austria 1918–1933*, Michael Brenner and Derek J. Penslar (eds.) (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 134–153.

7 Marek Nekula and Walter Koschmal (eds.), *Juden zwischen Deutschen und Tschechen: Sprachliche und kulturelle Identitäten in Böhmen 1800–1945* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2006). For a critical analysis of the German-Jewish bond in Bohemian lands, see Dimitry Shumsky, *Zweischprachigkeit und binationale Idee: Der Prager Zionismus 1900–1930* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 39–49.

and demonstrate their affiliation with German culture and language, the Croatian Jews did not explicitly claim this nexus of belonging. However, *Deutschtum* remained a crucial element of identity. It was manifested in the important role accorded to the German language, in the reception of German literature and culture, and in the perception of developments and processes within the German speaking world. Nonetheless, the Jews in Croatia-Slavonia, and, in particular, in later Yugoslavia, endeavored to not explicitly show these elements openly in their identity, seeking rather to distance themselves therefrom in public. On the one hand, this was due to their growing self-awareness as Croatian Jews. On the other, it was also influenced by the antisemitic movement in this region, which tried to instrumentalize the *Deutschtum* of the Jews against them and their presence.

This study represents a first attempt to investigate the meaning and importance of *Deutschtum* for the Jews in the South Slavic lands. The political and cultural developments within the Habsburg monarchy after 1918 did not lessen the sense of attachment Croatian Jews felt for *Deutschtum*. Even if, in political terms, they expressed allegiance to the newly proclaimed Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, the sense of close attachment to the core German areas continued unabated during the 1920s and 1930s. Today, a quick glance at the Jewish sources on Jewish history in this region suffices to also underscore the enormous importance of the German language for this period. However, Bethke has been able to show that the common language did not bring the German and the Jewish minorities in Croatia-Slavonia or Yugoslavia together, and that their respective worlds existed at best as parallel worlds. All the more pressing is the question: what importance and value did the sense of cultural attachment to the German hemisphere have for the Croatian Jews?

This study first discusses the early ties among Croatian Jews to “German-ness,” and attempts to elucidate its consequences. Following this is an exploration of the attitude held by the mainly Croatian Zionists toward *Deutschtum* in the newly created Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (since 1929, Kingdom of Yugoslavia). Finally, this study explores the importance of National Socialism to the changed perception of “Germanness.”

Deutschtum until the Demise of the Habsburg Monarchy

The Tolerance Edict of Joseph II (1782/83) made it possible for Jews to settle in the Croatian lands of the Habsburg monarchy. They were permitted from then on to engage in trade and commerce, and to attend schools and universities.

This improved legal status led Jews from elsewhere in the Habsburg monarchy to relocate and settle in Croatia-Slavonia. They came mainly from the Hungarian provinces of Bohemia and Moravia, and some also from Galicia.⁸ The first communities were established in 1777 in Varaždin and 1806 in Zagreb, where at that time only nine Jewish families lived. However, the number of Jewish immigrants continued to increase in the following decades. The magnificent and representative Zagreb Synagogue was dedicated in 1867. The law emancipating the Jews of Croatia-Slavonia was passed, albeit with certain restrictions, by the Croatian parliament in 1873. As a result of the civic equality, this law guaranteed, Jewish immigration to Croatia-Slavonia rose, in particular to the major cities of Zagreb and Osijek. Thus, in 1880, the Jewish population of Croatia-Slavonia numbered some 13,400, and by 1900 had increased to 20,000; in 1910 it numbered ca. 21,200.⁹ In Zagreb and Osijek, Jews comprised 5.5 and 8.8 percent of the total respective population.¹⁰ Yet, until World War I, the Jews never constituted more than 0.8 percent of the total Croatian population.

In 1890, some 52 percent of Croatian Jews listed German as their mother tongue. In 1900, 42 percent indicated German was their first language (L1), and in 1910 still some 30 percent gave German as their native L1. Even though official census data shows that Croatian came to supplant German as L1, German was maintained in almost all Jewish families. It functioned as the language of the parents, grandparents, and relatives outside Croatia; as a language of education and commerce; and simply as the *lingua franca* of the Habsburg monarchy. The German language was doubtless the most important link to the German hemisphere—to German-Austria and the German Reich. Personal and professional correspondence was conducted in German, and German-language newspapers from Vienna and Berlin had a substantial readership. The active knowledge of German kept alive the channel of connection between Croatian Jewry and *Deutschtum*. Even beyond the German language, the most evident and direct manifestation of the link to *Deutschtum*, this nexus was shaped and determined by additional stimuli and developments.

8 Melita Švob, *Židovi u Hrvatskoj* [Jews in Croatia], vol. 1 (Zagreb: Izvori, 2004), 34.

9 Wolfditer Bihl, "Die Juden," in *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918*, vol. 3/2, Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch (eds.) (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980), 880–948, here 883.

10 Agneza Szabo, "Židovi i proces modernizacije građanskog društva u Hrvatskoj između 1873. i 1914. godine [Jews and the process of modernization of the middle classes in Croatia between 1873 and 1914]," in *Dva stoljeća povijesti i kulture Židova u Zagrebu i Hrvatskoj* [Two centuries of Jewish history and culture in Zagreb and Croatia], Ognjen Kraus (ed.) (Zagreb, Ždovska općina Zagreb, 1998), 142–155.

After the Zagreb Synagogue was completed, the community also needed a rabbi. It invited the young Hosea Jacobi (1842–1925) for a trial sermon. Rabbi Jacobi hailed from Jakobshagen in Prussia, he had grown up in Berlin and also studied there, earning a doctorate at the University of Halle in 1865 with a dissertation on “The Role of Women in Judaism.”¹¹ The congregation in Zagreb liked his sermons, and he was thus appointed Zagreb’s chief rabbi, beginning his tenure on 14 January 1868.¹² On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of his service as a rabbi in 1908, the young lawyer and ardent Zionist Aleksandar Licht (1884–1948) published a commemorative Festschrift celebrating the work of Rabbi Jacobi. He described Jacobi’s character and rabbinical career, but in particular his contributions to the Jewish communities in Croatia and Zagreb. The Festschrift, written in German, appeared in the first Zionist periodical in the South Slavic lands, edited and published by Aleksandar and his brother Hermann Licht. Aleksandar Licht recognized and stressed Jacobi’s singular importance for Jewish life in Croatia, noting that when he began his service in Croatia in the 1860s, he had found communities that had neither a tradition nor any ongoing communal work. These congregations were all very young; there was nothing comparable to the great, albeit often melancholy traditions of German, Bohemia, Polish or Italian communities. There was very little substance on hand, everything had to be created.¹³

Some 40 years later, with Jacobi’s help and dedication, the Jewish Community of Zagreb had evolved into a prosperous, active, and well-organized community, having advanced into the political and cultural center of Croatian Jewry. By 1900, numerous Jewish associations had been established, including societies for charity, women, sports clubs, and also, gradually, Zionist associations.¹⁴ Jacobi promoted the Jewish school, had a new school building constructed, and established for the first time a Talmud Torah school in Zagreb. In 1883, fifteen years after the beginning of his service as chief rabbi, Jacobi introduced sermons in Croatian – he was the first rabbi in Croatia to do so.¹⁵ Until then, Jewish religious services had been conducted solely in German.

Thus, a rabbi of Prussian origins promoted and pushed forward the building and development of the Jewish Community of Zagreb, shaping its existence and

11 Hosea Jacobi, *Ueber die Stellung des Weibes im Judenthum* (Berlin: Sittenfeld, 1865).

12 Aleksandar Licht, “Dr. Hosea Jacobi: Zu seinem 40-jährigen Rabbinerjubiläum,” *Židovska smotra*, no. 3 (1908), 7–11.

13 *Ibid.*, 8.

14 Ivo Goldstein, “Zagrebačka židovska općina od osnutka do 1941 [The Jewish community in Zagreb from its beginnings until 1941],” in *Dva stoljeća povijesti i kulture Židova u Zagrebu i Hrvatskoj* [Two centuries of Jewish history and culture in Zagreb and Croatia], Ognjen Kraus (ed.) (Zagreb, Židovska općina Zagreb, 1998), 12–18.

15 Licht, “Dr. Hosea Jacobi,” 10.

work in a significant manner. His German background, German primary and university education, as well as his native German language skills, contributed substantially to making *Deutschtum* in Croatia-Slavonia a ubiquitous cultural point of reference. Jacobi's contemporaries, especially the generation of young Zionists surrounding Aleksandar Licht, were well aware of Jacobi's importance, and his singular contribution to the development of a self-assertive Jewish life in Zagreb and all of Croatia-Slavonia. In 1898, Jacobi supported the establishment of the *Literarische Zusammenkünfte der jüdischen Jugend* (Literary Meetings of Jewish Youth), which were a first gathering point for pupils and university students interested in Zionism. The principal aim of these meetings was the fostering of Jewish literature and the Science of Judaism (*Wissenschaft des Judentums*). This development was undoubtedly influenced by the intellectual currents underway in Berlin and Vienna during the nineteenth century. It can be assumed that the creation and development of a self-confident Jewry in Croatia-Slavonia, knowledgeable about its own literature and history, and seeking to achieve political relevance, certainly endeavored to pursue the exemplary German paradigms.

The development of the Croatian-Slavonian communities into prosperous centers of Jewish life provided the stimulus for a new generation of rabbis appointed and called to Croatia-Slavonia in the late nineteenth century. Along with Jacobi in Zagreb, there was Rabbi Hermann E. Kaufmann in Virovitica (1871–1931), Gavro Schwarz (1872–1942) in Karlovac, Armand Kaminka (1866–1950) in Osijek, Marcus Ehrenpreis (1861–1951) in Đakovo, and Ignaz Ernst (?–1916) in Varaždin. They came from various parts of the Habsburg monarchy to Croatia-Slavonia, and decisively shaped Jewish life there, leaving an enduring stamp. For example, Rabbi Gavro Schwarz, who came from Galicia, was one of the first to dedicate himself, around 1900, to researching the history of the Jews in this region. He published his findings in a number of articles.¹⁶ The approach adopted in establishing and presenting the data and events of Jewish history of this region were inspired by the German-Jewish paradigm of the Science of Judaism,¹⁷ while at the same time being an expression of a self-confident attitude within

16 Gavro Schwarz, "Prilozi k povjest Židova u Hrvatskoj: Tolerancijalna taksa u zagrebačkoj županji [Contribution to the history of Jews in Croatia: The Tolerance tax in the Zagreb county]," in *Vjestnik kr. Hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog Zemaljskog arkiva* [Messenger of the royal Croatian-Slavonian Dalmatian State Archive] (Zagreb: Tiskak kraljevske zemaljske tiskare, 1902); Gavro Schwarz, "Prilozi k povjest Židova u Hrvatskoj: Iz starina zagrebačke općine [Contribution to the history of Jews in Croatia: From the old times of the Zagreb community]," in *Vjestnik kr. Hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog Zemaljskog arkiva* [Messenger of the royal Croatian-Slavonian Dalmatian State Archive] (Zagreb: Tiskak kraljevske zemaljske tiskare, 1902).

17 The Science of Judaism (*Wissenschaft des Judentums*) was a scientific current within German Jewry that arose at the beginning of the nineteenth century. See Michael Brenner and Stefan

the Jewry of Croatia-Slavonia. The development and call for this sense of Jewish self-assertion in Croatia-Slavonia is apparent, for example, toward the end of the nineteenth century. Until 1906, there was no explicitly Jewish newspaper or periodical in this region, but Croatian Jews—Rabbi H. E. Kaufmann was a prominent example—made use of the weekly published in Vienna, *Dr. Blochs Österreichische Wochenschrift*, in order to report on the concerns of Croatian Jewry or to confront local antisemitic tendencies and currents.¹⁸

Thus, the Croatian Jews initially utilized the German-language press distributed across the Habsburg monarchy in order to express their views and opinions. Of special importance for Croatian Jews was the German-language press in Croatia-Slavonia, which included the *Agramer Zeitung* (1849–1912) and *Die Drau* (1868–1938). Both these newspapers, in the 1880s and '90s, and *Die Drau* long thereafter, had Jewish editors-in-chief and/or Jewish publishers.¹⁹ Although these print media did not see themselves as specifically “Jewish” or “representing Jewish interests,” they followed developments concerning the Jewish communities with interest and goodwill. In addition, these were papers clearly denouncing antisemitic remarks made by Croatian politicians and journalists during that period.²⁰ The German-language newspapers and periodicals, and the close bond of Croatian Jews to German language and culture, and thus to *Deutschtum*, were in turn the target of antisemitic attacks, precisely for that reason. Political antisemitism served the nationalist and clerical circles in Croatia-Slavonia inter alia as a weapon in their struggle against Austrian-Hungarian dominance. Precisely because the Croatian Jews were closely associated with German language and culture, they were vilified as “national adversaries,” enemies, and agents of the Germans and Hungarians. These circles accused their “German-Semitic” culture of posing a threat to Christianity and the Croatian nation.²¹

As a consequence of the mounting political antisemitism in the late nineteenth century, the Croatian Jews found themselves confronted with a dilemma: on the one hand, German was their mother tongue and their connections with

Rohrbacher (eds.) *Wissenschaft vom Judentum: Annäherung nach dem Holocaust* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000).

18 Marija Vulesica, “...dieses Pfäfflein erlaubt sich von der Kanzel herab die Bevölkerung unseres ruhigen Städtchens gegen Juden und Serben aufzuregen.’ Die Reaktion der kroatischen Juden auf den Antisemitismus,” in *Einspruch und Abwehr: Die Reaktion des europäischen Judentums auf die Entstehung des Antisemitismus (1879–1914)*, Ulrich Wyrwa (ed.) (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2010), 230–247.

19 Marija Vulesica, *Die Formierung des politischen Antisemitismus in den Kronländern Kroatien und Slawonien 1879–1906* (Berlin: Metropol-Verlag, 2012), 44–46.

20 *Ibid.*, 112–17, 159, 230–35, 265–74.

21 *Ibid.*, 86–88.

the German-speaking world were an important component of their lives; on the other, they were being pressured specifically by antisemites to dissociate and distance themselves from *Deutschtum*. In order to emphasize their loyalty to Croatia and the Croatian nation, many Jews, in particular older Jewish men and women, made special efforts to learn the Croatian language. Communities called for members to learn Croatian, teachers in the Jewish schools were encouraged to use Croatian as the language of instruction, and rabbis gradually began to deliver their sermons in Croatian.²²

They also demonstrated their close attachment to Croatia-Slavonia via the social and economic contribution they were making to the blossoming and further development of Croatian society. They were entrepreneurs and tradespeople, strengthened the Croatian commercial export branch, established banks and hotels, expanded the book publishing trade, built mills and breweries, and founded the Croatian chemical industry. Jews were elected to the municipal councils and to the Croatian Diet, became presidents of chambers of commerce, mayors, chief prosecutors, and judges.²³ In short, until the demise of the Habsburg monarchy, Croatian Jews were for the most part a well-integrated and participating minority, seeking to manage the balancing act between *Deutschtum* and Croatianness.

However, around the turn of the century, a new generation of Croatian Jews began to speak out. Inspired and supported by the older generation of rabbis, this new generation had a strong affinity for the emergent Zionist movement that was active in Basel and Vienna. In 1902, the *Jüdische Akademiker aus den süd-slawischen Ländern Bar Giora* (Jewish University Students from the South Slavic Lands *Bar Giora*) association was established in Vienna; many students from Croatia-Slavonia, among them Aleksandar Licht (1884–1948) and Lavoslav Schick (1882–1942), as well as students from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dalmatia, and Serbia, joined the association.²⁴ The organization's principal aim was to:

²² Ibid., 71–73.

²³ Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević, "Židovi u gospodarstvu sjeverne Hrvatske od 1873 do 1941 godine [Jews in the economy sector in Northern Croatia 1873–1941]," in *Dva stoljeća povijesti i kulture Židova u Zagrebu i Hrvatskoj* [Two centuries of Jewish history and culture in Zagreb and Croatia], Ognjen Kraus (ed.) (Zagreb, Ždovska općina Zagreb, 1998), 129–136; Vulesica, *Die Formierung*, 70, 73.

²⁴ On the beginnings of the Zionist movement in the South Slavic countries of the Habsburg monarchy, see Cvi Loker, "Začeci i razvoj cionizma u južnoslavenskim krajevima [The beginnings and the development of Zionism in the South Slavic regions]," in *Dva stoljeća povijesti i kulture Židova u Zagrebu i Hrvatskoj* [Two centuries of Jewish history and culture in Zagreb and Croatia], Ognjen Kraus (ed.) (Zagreb, Ždovska općina Zagreb, 1998), 166–178; Ljiljana Dobrovšak, "Prva konferencija zemaljskog udruženja cionista južnoslavenskih krajeva austrougarske monarhije

[...] awaken and strengthen Jewish-national feelings among Jewish university students from the Slavic South in order to cultivate the Hebrew language and Jewish history, and to bring together and unite Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews.²⁵

After their studies in Vienna, they returned to their home countries and began to distribute Zionist pamphlets and brochures, to establish associations and organize meetings. For this young generation of Zionists, their turn toward Jewish nationalism was an answer to their question of identity. In the second annual report of *Bar Giora* (1903/1904), Lavoslav Schick, born in Vienna, declared that Croatian Jews should express their allegiance to their Jewish nationality and their Croatian patriotism. He argued that they could be proud Jews and political Croats at one and the same time. As Zionists, he said, they would have Croatian as a mother language instead of German, while knowing and cultivating Hebrew as the “language of their fathers.”²⁶ In the conception and aspirations of the young Zionists, their allegiance to Jewish nationalism was to make themselves into self-assertive and confident Croatian Jews who no longer needed the ties to *Deutschtum* as a platform for personal identity. But this call to abandon the German language was, at the beginning of the twentieth century, still premature. In August 1904, the first conference of Jewish students from the South Slavic countries, initiated by *Bar Giora*, took place in Osijek in Slavonia. Before some seventy participants, presenters from Croatia-Slavonia, Bosnia, Serbia, and Bulgaria reported (also in German) on the situation of Zionism in their respective home countries. After the conference, the Zionists invited the Jewish residents of Osijek to the municipal casino in order to inform them about Zionism. Speaking in German to an audience of 250–300 persons, they explained to them the goals of the Zionist movement, since most in the audience spoke no Croatian at all.²⁷ Even Schick, who later would become a lawyer, but at the beginning of the twentieth century was working as a journalist, still wrote and published principally in German. As a correspondent for *Die Welt*, the *Jüdisches Volksblatt* and the *Agramer Zeitung*, he wrote articles dealing with Croatian-Jewish topics exclusively in the German language.²⁸

u Brodu na Savi 1909. Godine [The first conference of the Association of Zionists in the South Slavic regions of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in Brod on the Sava in 1909],” *Scrnja slavonica* 6 (2006): 234–266.

²⁵ Adolf Benau and Oskar Grof, “Mrtvim drugovima” [For the dead comrades], *Gideon*, June 18, 1922, 176.

²⁶ Lavoslav Schick, “Cijonizam i patriotizam [Zionism and patriotism],” *Izveštaj društva Židova*: 8–10.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Lavoslav Schick wrote and published numerous articles and essays in diverse German, Austrian, Hungarian, and Croatian/Yugoslav magazines and papers. A systematic collection of his works is still pending.

The opportunity to also deal with Jewish topics in Croatian did not arise until 1906, when Licht and his brother Hermann founded the first Zionist periodical in the South Slavic countries, *Židovska smotra* (Jewish Review). Yet, until 1910, the journal was published in two languages, Croatian and German, and, at least during the first two years of publication, articles and reports in German predominated. The editors justified the texts in German by stating that certain information from the South Slavic lands was being published in German so that it would also be understood beyond these lands as well.²⁹ It is doubtful whether this was a sufficient justification for the large amount of reportage in German. Rather, the aim was to reach the Jews in the South Slavic countries, the majority of whom at this point in time had a better reading knowledge of German than Croatian. It was important to win them over to the Zionist cause. Likewise, in the first issue of *Židovska smotra*, the editors noted, writing in German, that the Zionists would be viewed quite favorably by the non-Jewish public in Croatia, since they were explicitly championing the use of the Croatian language. And, because they were now Zionists, they were no longer Germans or Magyars.³⁰

The attempts to distance themselves from *Deutschtum* were highly evident among the Zionists at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Jewish national consciousness and the cultivation of Jewish culture and history were now of paramount concern for the Croatian Jews. As the mother tongue and everyday language, Croatian was to be an expression of Jewish belonging to Croatia-Slavonia. *Deutschtum* was to be overcome. A first expression of this was the sustained use of Croatian in *Židovska smotra*. After 1910, only rarely were articles published in German. The Zionists who, before World War I, had raised the question of their identity and belonging, reflected on what importance *Deutschtum* still had for the Croatian Jews. A decisive and positive attitude toward Croatia-Slavonia as their homeland, and a self-confident identification with Jewish nationalism would now gradually act to sever their link to *Deutschtum*. To what extent non-Zionist Jews thought about their link with *Deutschtum* cannot be determined. We can assume that this link was not even questioned in the first place. After all, German was the lingua franca of the Habsburg monarchy, and the relation to the German hemisphere and culture was indeed omnipresent. And after the outbreak of war in the summer of 1914, Croatian Jews, among them Licht and Schick, enlisted for military service in order to defend the interests of Vienna against Serbia.³¹

²⁹ *Židovska smotra* [Jewish Review], no. 1 (1906–7), 25.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ljiljana Dobrovšak and Filip Hameršak, “Croatian-Slavonian Jews in [the] First World War,” *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History* 9 (2016).

Deutschtum, Zionism, and Yugoslavism

On December 1, 1918, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (SHS) was proclaimed. During the war years, tough negotiations and diverse political considerations preceded this proclamation and the envisioned merger of the South Slavs in a single state.³² The Zionists in the South Slavic lands expressly welcomed this unification and called on all Zionists to be good patriots.³³ However, in the final months before the war's end, and the official proclamation of the new state, they engaged in intensive debates regarding the nature of their role and place in the "Yugoslav movement," and their own national identity and positioning. Should the Zionists in Central Europe espouse a "dual nationality?" Should the Croatian Zionists identify themselves in Yugoslavia as "Croats of Jewish nationality" or according to the German paradigm as "Croats of the Mosaic faith?" Should they cultivate only love and respect for their homeland while declaring themselves exclusively as nationalist Jews?³⁴ Such questions, raised and discussed in the periodical *Židov* (Jew), the new organ of the Zionist movement established in 1917, dominated the internal Zionist debates during the final phase of the Habsburg monarchy. At the same time, non-Jews also directed such questions to the Zionists. In the period of national negotiations and positioning, antisemitic incidents mounted in Croatian areas, and the question arose as to how loyal and patriotic the Jews actually were and what their relation to the Yugoslav movement was.³⁵ The Zionists declared in the pages of *Židov* that they supported the Yugoslav movement because it held out the promise of equal rights for the constituent nations. The generation of older Jews would, they argued, still speak German (and Hungarian) and feel an attachment to this cultural circle, while the younger generation would be partly Yugoslav-minded and partly non-national or Jewish in outlook. The Zionists explained the "animosity" toward Jews as stemming from the fact that many still spoke German. However, they averred that

32 On the history of the First Yugoslavia, see Holm Sundhaussen, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 1982); Dejan Djokić, *Nikola Pašić and Ante Trumbić: The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes* (London: Haus, 2010).

33 Speeches given at the first congress of the Association of Zionists in Yugoslavia, which took place on January 5–6, 1919 in Zagreb. Published in *Židov*, January 31, 1919, 2–11.

34 See the debate between Vera Ehrlich and Mirko Kraus. Vera Ehrlich, "Dvostruka narodnost [Twofold nationality]," *Židov*, January 16, 1918, 3–4; Mirko Kraus, "Dvostruka narodnost [Twofold nationality]," *Židov*, February 1, 1918, 3.

35 "O patriotizmu naših Židova [About the patriotism of our Jews]," *Židov*, April 16, 1918, 8; "Antisemitizam," *Židov*, July 16, 1918, 1–2; Nikola T. [Tolnauer], "Nekoliko riječi k jugoslavenskom problemu [Some words about the Yugoslav problem]," *Židov*, August 16, 1918, 1–2; "Svakako samo ne hrvatski [Everything but Croatian]," *Židov*, October 1, 1918, 1–2.

Jews who would embrace Jewish nationalism and Jewish culture would cast off this "alien cooptation."³⁶ They argued that the "emancipation of the Jews in the national-Jewish sense" would give the Yugoslav movement further momentum, stating that the national-minded, self-confident Jews demonstrated that for them too, the "nationalism of the peoples was sacrosanct."³⁷ With their national-political and economic cooperation with the Yugoslavs, they would also contribute to the building of Yugoslavia.³⁸ As a result of such debates and lines of argumentation around the role of the Jews in the Yugoslav movement, the Zionists finally decided on the formulation that they were both "nationalist Jews" and "political Yugoslavs" in equal measure.³⁹

However, the internal Zionist understanding and decision to subscribe in political terms to the new state did not offer Jews any protection from antisemitic attacks and accusations. The winter of 1918–1919 witnessed a spate of anti-Jewish incidents and attacks on Jews in Croatia-Slavonia. The press and some politicians vilified Jews as war profiteers, exploiters, and draft-dodgers. In addition, the reproach was repeatedly voiced once again in the immediate postwar period that they were "Germanizers."⁴⁰ The old stereotype that Jews, by dint of their close bond with *Deutschum*, were agents and supporters of German interests in Yugoslavia surfaced anew.⁴¹ Along with accusations in the press, that same winter there were also violent excesses against the Jews and their property. Houses, businesses and in some instances even synagogues were ravaged and destroyed. In addition, in the spring of 1919, deportations of "German" Jews from Bosnia began. They were denied Yugoslav citizenship by the newly created state.⁴² The Zionists protested resolutely against these events and the underlying antisemitic mood within some political circles. In his "Memorandum to the National Council" and his passionate speeches at the first convention of the Alliance of Zionists in January 1919, Licht spoke out for the rights of the Yugoslav Jews and against the antisemitic policy evident in the new state.⁴³

36 T. {Tolnauer}, "Nekoliko riječi," 2.

37 Ibid., 2.

38 Ibid., 2.

39 "Cijonizam i jugoslavenski pokret [Zionism and the Yugoslav movement]," Židov, October 23, 1918, 2.

40 "Svakako samo ne hrvatski [Everything but Croatian]," 2.

41 For a contemporary synopsis of all anti-Jewish stereotypes and an analysis of the allegation that Jews were German agents, see Aleksandar Licht, "Političko opredjeljivanje [Political decision]," Židov, December 29, 1922, 1.

42 Marija Vulesica, "Antisemitismus im ersten Jugoslawien 1918–1941," *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 17 (2008): 131–152.

43 See "Special issue on the occasion of Aleksandar Licht's 50th birthday," Židov, April 6, 1934, 7.

Thus, already by 1919, the Zionists in the new Yugoslavia had resolved the questions of their belonging and identity. In the multi-national and multi-religious Yugoslav state, it was appropriate to resolutely and openly stress allegiance to their Jewish nationality. Political maneuvering between Serbs and Croats or even the attempt to view oneself as “a-national” in a state that was highly charged in national terms appeared problematic. Nevertheless, the Jews were not recognized as a nationality in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, much to the great disappointment of the Zionists. The constitutions of 1921 and 1931 guaranteed the Jews their political and civil rights. They were considered a religious minority enjoying the protection and financial support of the state. In 1921, there were some 65,000 Jews in the newly created Yugoslav state, and their number increased to approximately 75,000 in 1941.⁴⁴

The 1920s were marked by intensive Zionist activity in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The significance of *Deutschtum*, the nexus with the German hemisphere of culture, gradually shifted into the private sphere. Although German-language papers such as the *Agramer Tagblatt* (1886–1922) / *Zagreber Tagblatt* (1922–1926), the *Morgenblatt* (1926–1941), and *Die Drau* (1869–1938) continued to be published in Croatia, and German-language newspapers from Germany and Austria retained a readership, the link with *Deutschtum* in the official organs of the Zionist movement no longer played a prominent role. In the 1920s, the focus here was on Zionist action and the struggle against antisemitism.

Over the course of the following years, the Zionists built up a dense network of local Zionist societies and associations, which published numerous periodicals and brochures. Cultural events and Zionist meetings across the country gave manifest expression to a self-assertive Jewish nationalism.⁴⁵ The League of Zionists was founded in 1918, the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in 1919, and the Association of Rabbis in 1923. By the end of the 1920s, the Zionists had gained a leadership position in the political and cultural communal life of Yugoslav Jews and their umbrella associations.⁴⁶ Of course, the orientation of the Jewish communities and organizations was not decided on without internal struggles and differences of opinion.⁴⁷ *Deutschtum* and its significance for Yugoslav Jewry were, however, no longer matters up for discussion and negotiation. Nevertheless,

⁴⁴ Freidenreich, *Jews of Yugoslavia*, 56; Holm Sundhaussen, “Jugoslawien,” in *Dimension des Völkermords: Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, Wolfgang Benz (ed.) (München: Oldenbourg-Verlag, 1991), 311–330, here 311–312.

⁴⁵ Ivo Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918–1941* [Jews in Zagreb 1918–1941] (Zagreb: Novi Liber, 2004), 108–124, 230–258.

⁴⁶ Loker, “Začeci i razvoj cionizma u južnoslavenskim krajevima,” 174.

⁴⁷ Freidenreich, *Jews of Yugoslavia*, 97–114, 103–104, 146–154.

news reports from Germany and German-Austria still appeared in the Zionist press. But often these reports involved antisemitic events⁴⁸ or Zionist activities in these countries. Meanwhile, Jewish and Zionist students from the South Slavic lands ensured that the personal and institutional ties were nonetheless partially maintained. For example, the South Slavic student association *Bar Giora* was still active in Vienna in 1927.⁴⁹ Yet, in the 1920s, the number of Jewish students from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia declined, so that after twenty-five years *Bar Giora* ultimately decided to discontinue its work. In contrast, the number of Jewish students from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia increased in Berlin. In 1924, *Židov* reported that more and more Yugoslav students, including Jews, were going to study in Berlin rather than Vienna.⁵⁰ Berlin had clearly developed, since the end of World War I, into an internationally esteemed center of science and culture. Among the Jewish students from Yugoslavia who followed that international trend was also Cvi Rothmüller, who would later become a prominent Yugoslav Zionist. In Berlin, he founded, with a few others, the *Gruppe jüdischer Studenten aus Jugoslawien in Berlin* (Yugoslav Jewish Students in Berlin), which apparently served as a self-help organization in those economically difficult times.⁵¹ After his studies, Rothmüller became especially active within the socialist wing of the Zionist movement and in Zionist youth work. It has been thus far difficult to determine whether the years he spent in Berlin as a student had a formative impact on his later activity as a Zionist on the left.

Despite the clear and pronounced efforts to dissociate themselves from *Deutschtum*, the German language remained an important medium of discourse in Jewish and Zionist circles within Croatia during the interwar years. Communication with fellow Zionists outside of Yugoslavia occurred in German. Zionist activists on lecture tours in Yugoslavia gave their talks and speeches in German.⁵² These presentations and lectures were published in the Zionist print media, but now, unlike before 1914, they were translated into Croatian. In addition, it is clear from the autobiographies and memoirs of Yugoslav Jews that German remained a familiar language. German was spoken and learned with the aid of private

48 For examples, see "Pogromi," *Židov*, May 23, 1924, 1–2. The author/authors meant here the Europe-wide antisemitic manifestations. They attacked in particular Germany, because it allowed the "Journeyman tailor Hittler" (sic!) to be as successful as he was.

49 Michael Agmon, "Sa članovina 'Bar Giora' od prije I. svjetskog rata," [With the members of Bar Giora before World War I] *Bilten Hitahdut Oley Jugoslavije*, September 30, 1979.

50 Zerning, "Židovski študenti iz Jugoslavije u Berlinu," [Jewish students from Yugoslavia in Berlin] *Židov*, January 5, 1924, 5.

51 Ibid.

52 Nachum Goldmann, for example visited in 1924; see *Židov*, January 4, 1924; Joachim Prinz visited in 1935, see *Židov*, November 15, 1935 and *Jevrejski glas*, November 15, 1935.

tutors in most Croatian-Jewish families.⁵³ The Croatian journalist Slavko Goldstein (b. 1928) related that his mother, who was from Czernowitz, knew no other language but German, and thus spoke only German with her children.⁵⁴ A subsequent generation of Croatian Jews, the demographic born in the 1920s, grew up with the German language and, consequently, also developed ties to the German hemisphere, in particular German culture. Yet, in public, Croatian was spoken, and the Zionists in particular sought to avoid displaying any attachment to *Deutschtum*, believing that this might undermine their national-Jewish identity. Furthermore, dissociation from *Deutschtum* also underscored their emancipation from a German-oriented Judaism and their stance as loyal, patriotic Yugoslavs.

The Rise of National Socialism and the Perception of *Deutschtum*

The emancipation from *Deutschtum* took on a new quality after the Nazis rose to power in Germany in 1933. While the Zionists (who were primarily from Croatia) pursued dissociation from *Deutschtum*, the intensive confrontation and debate with the events unfolding in Germany nonetheless highlighted the persisting intellectual ties to this area of Europe. The electoral successes of the NSDAP and their explicit antisemitic propaganda were a hugely important topic for the Yugoslav Zionist activists. Already in 1931, and especially over the course of 1932, the Zionists were intensively engaged in discussion about the National Socialists and their aims. Numerous articles, reports, and news items in the Zionist media described and discussed the political situation in Germany.⁵⁵ In 1932, internal Zionist debates began in Yugoslavia regarding the appropriate Jewish reaction to the National Socialist successes. After they came to power in January 1933, this debate became an essential focus for the Yugoslav Zionists.⁵⁶

⁵³ See personal life stories in Jasminka Domaš Nalbantić (ed.), *Obitelj* [Family] (Zagreb: Novi Liber, 1996); Manfred Lahnstein, *Massel und Chuzpe: Wie Blanka und Rudolf den Holocaust überlebten* (Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe, 2004), 35.

⁵⁴ Slavko Goldstein, *1941: The Year That Keeps Returning* (New York: The New York Review of Books, 2013), 199.

⁵⁵ For numerous reports about the situation in Germany, see Židov, March 11, 1932, 1; March 18, 1932, 1; April 1, 1932, 1; July 8, 1932, 2–3; August 5, 1932, 1.

⁵⁶ On the reaction of Yugoslav Zionists to the National-Socialist politics and actions, see Marija Vulesica, “Formen des Widerstandes jugoslawischer Zionistinnen und Zionisten gegen die NS-Judenpolitik und den Antisemitismus 1933–1941,” in *Jüdischer Widerstand in Europa*

The confrontation with the political realities in Germany ultimately brought a demonstrative and resolute turning away from *Deutschtum*, because it was no longer seen as synonymous with culture and progress. In “Letter from Berlin,” published in June 1932 in *Židov*, the author states: “If anyone still counts Germany as part of Western Europe, then this West is seriously in the grip of decline.”⁵⁷ *Deutschtum* was thus both a cultural and political reference point, with which the goals of aspects of social progress such as democratic freedom were also associated. This view of *Deutschtum*, and the importance of the West, was described by the head of the Zagreb Palestine Office, Robert Veith, shortly after his escape to Switzerland in October 1943. In passages of his memoirs, he explained the importance for him of “Western democracy”:

Western is my education, Western the culture that I breathed in, because Germany and the German language that my mother passed on to me also still belonged then to Western democracy.⁵⁸

In 1933 at the latest, this “Western democracy” and *Deutschtum*, which in the eyes of the Yugoslav Zionists had certainly merged in a symbiotic fusion, degenerated into a quintessential symbol of racism and inhumanity.

The Yugoslav Zionists reacted to the rise of Nazism with debates about the “manful” Jewish reaction to antisemitism. Concepts such as “defense,” “struggle,” “honor,” and “dignity” dominated their calls appealing to all Jews in Yugoslavia and Europe, and likewise to Jews in Germany.⁵⁹ “German Jews” had previously not been a separate reference point for Yugoslav Jews. But with the rise of the Nazis, they too became a focus in the Yugoslav-Zionist confrontation and debate concerning the alarming events transpiring in Germany. If before the Yugoslav Zionists had only shown interest when it came to the leading German Zionist activists and their activities, now they turned their attention to German Jewry more broadly. In their eyes, German Jews served as focal point for identification, negative projection, and critique. They were the target of accusations, demands, and calls for action. The Yugoslav Zionists were undoubtedly aware of the importance of German Jewry for the general development of the Jews in Europe. Even if, in March 1932, they imputed a certain intellectual decline to German Jewry, they initially declared their concern and solidarity:

(1933–1945): *Formen und Facetten*, J.H. Schoeps, Dieter Bingen, and Gideon Botsch (ed.) (München: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2016).

57 “Primirje u Njemačkoj. Pismo iz Berlina [Cease-fire in Germany. Letter from Berlin],” *Židov*, June 24, 1932, 2.

58 ARC. 4* 1836, Robert Veith Archive, Archives Department, National Library of Israel, Jerusalem.

59 Vulesica, “Formen des Widerstandes.”

Notwithstanding the [current, M.V.] level of intellectual culture of the German-Jewish community, it was considered a material and moral pillar of strength within those persecuted and suppressed sections of Jewry. That is the basis for our concern for their future as well as our heartfelt sympathy for their troubles and pain.⁶⁰

In the summer of 1932, an article in the Zionist journal *Židov* described the life of the German Jews as “bitter” and their future as “uncertain.”⁶¹ But soon reproaches were also intermingled with expressions of concern and anxiety for the “German brethren”⁶²—a term seldom used to refer to Jews in Germany. The most commonly articulated criticism was that of assimilation:

For us Jews, the expression “German Jew” was always a special concept. The German Jew was a Jew who through emancipation and his great abilities had advanced to the pinnacle of European culture. The German Jew was also someone who – sensing a certain subordinated status in their cultural position – thought he had achieved a special synthesis of Judaism and German nationalism. “German-Jewish ethnicity”[!] – this is the epitome of all assimilationist currents in the countries of Western Europe.⁶³

On one hand, the Zionists here expressed their admiration for the German Jews and their intellectual and cultural development. On the other, they reproached them for their naiveté, because they had believed in a fusion between “Jewishness” and “Germanness,” *Judentum* and *Deutschtum*. In keeping with their Zionist self-understanding, they called on German Jews to abandon their assimilationist attitudes and move toward a proud and self-confident Zionist orientation.⁶⁴ They argued that only a self-assertive avowal of allegiance to the Jewish nation and identity could serve as a means of defense in their struggle against Nazism and antisemitism. This remained the dominant tenor in the mindset of the Yugoslav Zionists during subsequent years:

The majority of German Jewry stands before this monster antisemitism and does not know what to do. [...] The process of assimilation has previously hindered every form of political, economic and cultural unification and a uniform shared attitude. It has also thwarted the creation of self-help and self-defense.⁶⁵

The coopting of *Deutschtum* as an integral part of Jewish identity, the Yugoslav Zionists concluded, had misled German Jews, rendering them incapable to now

60 D.S. (Drago Steiner?), “Izbori u Njemačkoj [Elections in Germany],” *Židov*, March 18, 1932, 1.

61 Anonymous, “Suton u Njemačkoj [The twilight in Germany],” *Židov*, July 8, 1932, 2–3.

62 Hinko Gottlieb, “Aktuelni zadaci [Current tasks],” (lecture), *Židov*, December 7, 1934, 2.

63 Šlomo Löwy, “Uz izbore u Njemačkoj [On the occasion of the elections in Germany],” *Židov*, March 3, 1933, 1.

64 “Primirje u Njemačkoj. Pismo iz Berlina [Cease-fire in Germany. Letter from Berlin],” *Židov*, June 24, 1932, 2.

65 Löwy, “Uz izbore,” 1.

resist the hostile current predominant in Germany. Here the Yugoslav Zionists used the German Jews as a negative projection screen: by thinking they had identified the mistakes German Jewry had made in the past, they reassured themselves internally about what they presumably had done correctly. First, they had in their majority embraced Zionism, the German Jews had not. Second, they had liberated themselves from the lures and promises of *Deutschtum*. In dissociation from the German Jews, they thus formulated a positive self-image.

The arrival of German-Jewish refugees in Yugoslavia in 1933/34 presented a new challenge.⁶⁶ Lavoslav Schick, who was very active in the aid efforts for the German refugees, demanded from the immigrants that they distance themselves from Germany and German culture. In a letter to Julius Dessauer in Kassel in May 1933, Schick wrote:

If he [the refugee, M.V.] wishes to come here in order to continue with his life based on the German-Mosaic faith, if he wishes to join the German Choral Society and Gymnastics Club Association, or even to establish such an organization, it would be best, I suggest, for him to forego that plan and not think of Yugoslavia at all. The local German organizations here are of course Jew-free, and do not want to have anything to do with the German-Mosaic faith. And in our view quite correctly, because a Jew should have nothing to do with such German associations.⁶⁷

Thus, on one hand, Schick demanded that the German Jews finally sever their ties to *Deutschtum*. At the same time, he gave some insight into the relation between the (ethnic) Germans and the Jews in Yugoslavia: both minorities did not want, and should not have, anything to do with one another.

In subsequent years, Schick also campaigned worldwide for overcoming the German language as the “colloquial language of the Jews,” he saw Hebrew exclusively as the “language of the Jewish future.”⁶⁸ In a speech in November 1936 at the Zagreb Lodge of the B’nai Brith, he called on Jews to abandon German as a medium. Although he stressed the great importance the German language once had for the development of Jewish literature and culture, at the same time he called for Jews to turn away from German and toward Hebrew as the language of Jewish literature in the future.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Some 8,000 Jewish refugees came to Yugoslavia in 1933/1934; these numbers have not been questioned until recently. See Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu*, 448.

⁶⁷ Lavoslav Schick to Julius Dessauer, 4 May 1933, Osobni arhiv Lavoslav Schick, R 7883a, Arhiv Nacionalne i sveučilišne knjižnice (NSK), Zagreb.

⁶⁸ Lavoslav Schick, “Jevrejski jezik nije mrtav jezik [The Jewish language is not a dead language],” *Židov*, September 27, 1935, 9.

⁶⁹ *Grada za židovsku povijest 1918–1945* [Materials on the Jewish History 1918–1945], Fond 1551, Hrvatski Državni Arhiv (HDA), Zagreb.

Yet in the mid-1930s, neither the German language nor the German-Jewish cultural heritage could simply be jettisoned so easily. And with the increased presence of German refugees (and refugees from Central Europe) in large cities like Zagreb, *Deutschtum* was once again more in evidence and physically closer than before. This strengthened presence prompted some forces hostile to the Jews, including politicians such as Senator Ivan Majstorović, to denounce Jews as agents of German culture and thus “Germanizers” in Yugoslavia. Once again, the old stereotype resurfaced that Jews were agents of the German “*Drang nach Osten*” (Drive to the East).

Events in Germany, and the visibility of the German Jews on the streets, led to a situation where the Zionists demanded even more vehemently that Jews dissociate from *Deutschtum*—as Schick had stressed in his remarks. At the same time, they also hoped to convince Jews to flock to and support the Zionist vision, calling on refugees to embrace Zionism, the Hebrew language, and then, consistently, to emigrate to Palestine. However, such calls and debates grew silent—particularly those centering on the *Deutschtum* of the Jews—as the political situation for all Jews in Central Europe exacerbated during the 1930s. The Zionists were increasingly more concerned with rescuing Jews in Central Europe, and far less with the intellectual and emotional debate and confrontation regarding the significance of *Deutschtum*. Offshoots of antisemitic and National Socialist policies also became noticeable in Yugoslavia toward the end of the 1930s, and explicitly anti-Jewish laws were passed in September-October 1940. Even if the Yugoslav Zionists had clearly dissociated and distanced themselves from *Deutschtum*, they nevertheless were ultimately excluded as aliens, outsiders who didn’t belong to Slavic society. In the course of the 1930s, a murderous ideology in whose name millions across Europe were slaughtered arrived from Germany. Some eighty percent of Yugoslav Jewry fell victim to the crimes of the German occupiers and their local confederates between 1941 and 1945.

A Final Observation on Deutschtum

During the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem in 1961, two witnesses – Aleksander Arnon and Hinko Salz – testified about the anti-Jewish measures in Yugoslavia after the invasion of the German Wehrmacht in April 1941. Both men came from Yugoslavia, and although both men at that time had long lived in Israel, they gave testimony in German. Even after the experience of the Holocaust, the German language remained so near and familiar to them that they felt far more certain

using it in testimony before a court than speaking in the colloquial language they used in Israel.⁷⁰

Long after the end of World War II, some Croatian Holocaust survivors also saw no emotional contradiction in using the German language. The persecution and murder of European Jewry by the German National Socialists and their allies in Europe had separated many Holocaust survivors from *their* German language and affinity for German culture. The former Zagreb Jewish residents Zeev Milo (Vladimir Müller, 1922) and his wife Tamar survived the Holocaust and emigrated to Israel in 1949/1950. At home and with their children, Croatian was spoken. When, in the early 1990s, after Croatia separated from Yugoslavia, they went on a visit to their former hometown, they were extremely upset by the nationalistic talk and the Ustasha symbols that had reappeared in the public sphere on the streets. As a form of protest against this, they decided not to speak Croatian from then on with one another, but rather German.⁷¹ Although both then were quite advanced in years and their active use of German lay far removed in the past, apparently, they nonetheless were easily able to reactivate their proficiency in German.

In April 2013, Croatian journalist and Holocaust survivor Slavko Goldstein was invited to Berlin for the Conference on Jewish Resistance in Europe, 1933–1941, which was organized by the Moses Mendelssohn Center in Potsdam. He spoke in perfect German about his life and time with the Yugoslav partisans. During a visit to Croatia in the framework of an excursion with students from the Center for Research on Antisemitism, TU Berlin, the author of the current study encountered a similar case. In the Zagreb Jewish Community, the group met retired academic Professor Boris Braun (b. 1920). He too relayed his life story in fluent German.

Milo, Goldstein, and Braun also share the background of having been born in Croatia in the 1920s, then the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, into families that maintained a strong bond to the German-speaking area of culture. Their parents set an example in their own lives, providing them a chance for an intimate access to German language and culture, to *Deutschtum*. However, they also share the fact that they did not pass this same affinity for and bond with *Deutschtum* on to their own children. The reasons are obvious. After the experience of the Holocaust, which sprang from the politics of the National Socialists in Germany, *Deutschtum* as a conception of culture and progress had disqualified itself. It was the Germans and their allies in Europe who had persecuted the Jews and murdered many of

⁷⁰ The Nizkor Project, “The Adolf Eichmann Trial, Session 46,” May 19, 1961, <http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/Sessions/Session-046-01.html>

⁷¹ Descriptions in a personal conversation in Berlin, in May 2007.

their relatives. After 1945, at the latest if not before, *Deutschtum* as such, the bundling of the German language with the highly admired intellectual culture, had forfeited its reference and power of attraction for Jews outside German and German-Austrian areas. In the German language, or rather in its rare employment, there lies concealed something akin to an unburdened memory of the time of their childhood and youth. This is exemplified in the case of Holocaust survivors, like those mentioned here, who nevertheless still effortlessly speak the language. For them it reflects a time in which they were able to cultivate and cherish *Deutschtum* in a private space with their families. A time when *Deutschtum* still stood for, and held out the promise, of humane cultural progress and orientation.

Translated from the German by Bill Temple

Mariana Hausleitner

Transformations in the Relationship between Jews and Germans in the Bukovina 1910–1940

In the Bukovina, a region which is today divided between Romania and the Ukraine, there have been ethnic tensions since the end of the nineteenth century. Until that time, despite its Austrian administration, political power was in the hands of Romanian large estate owners. When a small segment of intellectuals emerged among the Ukrainians there, the Romanian upper class tried to frustrate their political participation. Ukrainians lived mainly in the northern part of the Bukovina, comprising 38.4% (1910) of the population, slightly larger in size than the Romanians, who made up 34.4% of the population and dwelled mainly in the southern area. Germans and Jews lived everywhere. Together they comprised 20% of the population.¹

This article argues that, before 1933, Jews and Germans shared the goal of modernizing the underdeveloped region of Bukovina. The first section of the article discusses how they together developed German culture within Bukovina under Austrian Rule, followed by a second section elaborating upon how, after 1918, Jews and Germans mutually turned against governmental policies of Romanization. The third section focuses upon the subsequent disintegration of this cooperation as a result of the influence of National Socialism. The fourth and fifth sections sketch out the consequences of the National Socialist influence for minority politicians from Romania as well as their contribution to the European Nationalities Congress.

The Cooperation of German-speaking People before and after 1918

Until 1918, German was the official language in Habsburg Bukovina. Despite this, Germans only represented 8% of the population, many of whom were peasants. Thus, the conditions for the social elevation of Jews were favorable. Jews lived mostly in cities (74%) and represented, at over 30%, the largest group of

¹ Mariana Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung der Bukowina: Die Durchsetzung des nationalstaatlichen Anspruchs Großrumäniens 1918–1944* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2001), 39.

inhabitants in the capital city of Czernowitz. Consequently, Jews appointed the mayor there several times. Because of legal emancipation, they were present in almost all professions beginning in 1867. Many were judges, administrative officers, and teachers. Some Jews became professors at the University of Czernowitz. German was the primary language in the Franz-Joseph-Universität, and 41% of the students were Jews in 1906 – the largest ethnic group.² Primary and secondary schools during Austrian rule offered classes for German, Romanian, Ruthenian (Ukrainian) and Polish speaking pupils. Zionist attempts to establish a Hebrew-language school in Czernowitz inside the state system were unsuccessful.³ Only a German education promised upward social and economic mobility within the Habsburg Empire. Jews represented 10% of the population, and the administration supported the assimilation of the Jews there into German culture. Fred Stambrook describes the period from 1880 to 1914 as a Golden Age for the Jews in the Bukovina, arguing that they were, during that time, the most fortunate Jews in East Central Europe.⁴

Antisemitic ideas reached Czernowitz through the appointment of professors from Graz, Innsbruck and Vienna. These professors founded the Association of Christian Germans (*Verein der christlichen Deutschen*) in 1897, which, among other things, spoke out against the usury of Jewish moneylenders. This resulted in a large network of German co-operatives. The new borrowing facilities improved the situation of the peasants and craftsmen. Consequently, in the absence of a specifically Jewish network of moneylenders, antisemitism among Germans in Bukovina remained weak.⁵ Only some Romanians from Bukovina, who collaborated with the Liga for Cultural Unity of all Romanians (*Liga pentru unitatea culturală a tuturor românilor*), published antisemitic articles in Romania.⁶

2 Černivec'kyj Universytet 1875–1995 [The University in Czernowitz] (Černivci: Černivec'kyj Universytet, 1995), 34–35; Mariana Hausleitner, “Die Universität Czernowitz als kulturelles Zentrum. Von der österreichischen zur rumänischen Zeit,” in *Literarische Zentrenbildung in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa, Hermannstadt/Sibiu, Laibach/Ljubljana und weitere Fallbeispiele*, Mira Miladinović Zalaznik, Maria Sass, Stefan Sienerth (eds.) (München: IKGS Verlag, 2010), 295.

3 David Rechter, “The Education of a People: The Case of Bukovina Jewry,” in *Partizipation und Exklusion. Zur Habsburger Prägung von Sprache und Bildung in der Bukowina 1848–1918–1940*, Markus Winkler (ed.) (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 2015), 109.

4 Fred Stambrook, “The Golden Age of the Jews of Bukovina, 1880–1914,” (working paper, Center for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 2003), 14.

5 Emanuel Turczynski, *Geschichte der Bukowina in der Neuzeit. Zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte einer mitteleuropäisch geprägten Landschaft* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 1993), 183.

6 Benjamin M. Grilj, “Nationalisierung, Segregation und Exklusion in der Bukowina. Der (Allgemeine) Deutsche Schulverein und die Rumänische Kulturliga im Vergleich,” in *Partizipation und Exklusion. Zur Habsburger Prägung von Sprache und Bildung in der Bukowina 1848–1918–1940*, Markus Winkler (ed.) (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 2015), 94; Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 58.

Because of the introduction of general suffrage in 1907, both the Jewish and the German population were well represented in the Imperial Council (*Reichsrat*) in Vienna. Benno Straucher represented Czernowitz in this parliament from 1897 to 1918. In 1907 he was elected as president of the Jews' Club, a parliamentary caucus of Jewish deputies.⁷ Although there was, after the *Ausgleich* in 1910, only a voting curia for the German-speaking population in the Landtag, Germans and Jews were able to agree on the allocation of seats.⁸

Germans and Jews developed a cultural life together in Czernowitz. For instance, they founded and supported a city theatre (*Stadttheater*) and a music association (*Musikverein*). The main daily newspapers in German were edited by Jews and read by all educated people in Czernowitz.⁹

The first profound break in the life of the Bukovinian population was the invasion of the Romanian army in November 1918. This event did not bring disunity to Jews and Germans, however, as the social position of both groups was now in danger. At the beginning, the representatives of the Germans believed Romanian promises that their cultural life would remain unfettered, and so Germans took part in the unification celebrations. In contrast, the representatives of the Jews refused to participate as they were not guaranteed full civil rights.¹⁰ At that time, the majority of the Jews in Romania were stateless and thus completely at the mercy of the public authorities. Until 1918, only around one thousand Jews had been granted citizenship, based on special merits.¹¹

At the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919, the representatives of France and Great Britain demanded a naturalization, *en masse*, of all Jews in Greater Romania. The number of Jews had risen from 240,000 in old Romania to about 700,000 through the annexation of Bessarabia, the Bukovina, and Transylvania.¹²

7 David Sha'ari, "The Jewish Community of Czernowitz under Habsburg and Rumanian Rule. Part One," *Shvut: Studies in Russian and East European Jewish History and Culture* 6 no. 22 (1997): 150–183, 173.

8 John Leslie, "Der Ausgleich in der Bukowina von 1910: Zur österreichischen Nationalitätenpolitik vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg," in *Geschichte zwischen Freiheit und Ordnung. Gerald Stourzh zum 60. Geburtstag*, Emil Brix, Thomas Fröschel, and Joseph Leidenfrost (eds.) (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1991), 123, 130–135.

9 David Sha'ari, "Die jüdische Gemeinde von Czernowitz," in *Czernowitz. Die Geschichte einer ungewöhnlichen Stadt*, Harald Heppner (ed.) (Wien: Böhlau, 2000), 112.

10 Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 100–101.

11 Mariana Hausleitner, "Antisemitism in Romania. Modes of Expression between 1866 and 2009," in *Antisemitism in Eastern Europe. History and Present in Comparison*, Hans-Christian Petersen and Samuel Salzborn (eds.) (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag, 2010), 204.

12 Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România 1919–1938. De la emancipare la marginalizare* [The Jews in Romania 1919–1938. From emancipation to marginalization] (București: Editura Hasefer, 2000), 17–18.

Delegates from minority groups far and wide sent representatives to Paris during the conference. Among these were two Jews from Czernowitz, who worked together with the *Comité des Délégations juives auprès de la Conférence de la Paix*, with representatives from Europe, Palestine, and the United States of America.¹³ At the Conference, the Romanian Prime Minister, Ion I. C. Brătianu, spoke out against the naturalization of Jews en masse and walked out in protest. Brătianu declared, in September 1919, that his refusal to sign guarantees for the protection of the minorities in Romania was because such guarantees were incompatible with the dignity, internal security, and economic interests of a sovereign state.¹⁴

It was only an ultimatum of the Great Powers in December 1919 that forced the new coalition government in Romania to adopt a protective law that guaranteed the equality of minorities in Greater Romania, who made up 28% of the population. The Allies threatened to not recognize Romania's right to the territories gained at the end of the war, which had increased its size by twofold, unless they agreed to these minority protections.¹⁵

During the discussion of the new constitution adopted in 1923, an antisemitic movement was rising. It was, above all, supported by students calling for a limitation of Jewish access to universities.¹⁶ Before 1918, Jews in Romania were unable to attend state educational establishments. The subsequent competition for civil positions meant a sudden threat to the social prospects of Romanians.

The emancipation of Jews was included within the constitution, and the government could not completely turn a blind eye to the protection of minorities. However, when Brătianu came to power again, in January 1922, he began a severe policy of Romanization. In response to the antisemitic movement, and the influx of refugees from Russia, Ukraine, and Hungary, the government issued a new law on citizenship in 1924, which turned many Jews once again into stateless persons – especially in the newly annexed regions. Their children were thus barred from state schools.¹⁷

13 Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, *La Bucovine. Éléments d'histoire politique et culturelle* (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Slaves, 2004), 114; Carol Iancu, *L'Emancipation des Juifs de Roumanie 1913–1919* (Montpellier: Editions de l'Université Paul Valéry, 1992), 228.

14 Ephraim Nathanson, "Romanian Governments and the Legal Status of Jews between the two World Wars," *Romanian Jewish Studies* 1 (1987): 51–66, 54.

15 Erich Kendi, *Minderheitenschutz in Rumänien* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1992), 18, 24–27.

16 Armin Heinen, *Legiunea "Arhangelul Mihail". Mișcare socială și organizație politică. O contribuție la problema fascismului internațional* [The Legion "Archangel Mihail." Social movement and political organization. A contribution to the problem of international fascism] (București: Editura Humanitas, 1999), 111–116.

17 Dietmar Müller, *Staatsbürger auf Widerruf. Juden und Muslime als Alteritätspartner im rumänischen und serbischen Nationscode. Ethnonationale Staatsbürgerschaftskonzepte 1878–1941* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2005), 270–275.

In the Bukovina, where the majority of the population consisted of 60% non-Romanians, resistance against such discriminatory acts was fiercest. Many Jews and Germans had been pushed out of their positions in civil administration and justice because of the sudden introduction of Romanian as the official language. Romanian had also been introduced as the language of university lecturing. Consequently, many professors who had been appointed from the Habsburg monarchy had to leave the city in 1919. These were replaced primarily by Romanian grammar school teachers. No Jew was appointed professor after this time.¹⁸

The fast conversion of the local theatre at Czernowitz into a Romanian institution contributed to its downfall. Only 16% of Romanians lived in the city; other ethnic groups no longer attended after December 1921, when a group of radical Romanians halted a German performance in a violent attack against which police failed to intervene. Afterwards, the statue of Schiller was removed from the front of the theatre. Germans and Jews accompanied it in a procession to its new home in the garden of the German House.¹⁹ Subsequently, German and Jewish members of the *Deutscher Theaterverein* organized their own cultural program together until 1932.²⁰

Minority Resistance against the Politics of Romanization

The state of siege, existing until 1928, made public criticism difficult for non-Romanians through censorship and assembly bans. Disputes over language was fiercest at the schools. Romanian schools advanced at the expense of schools for other ethnic groups.²¹ Further, the Ministry of Education ordered that Jews must send their children to Romanian schools. Jewish and German deputies alike protested against this order. The majority of Jews in the Bukovina spoke Yiddish or German

18 Lucian Nastasă, “Die Unmöglichkeit des Andersseins. Überlegungen zum universitären Antisemitismus in Rumänien 1930–1940,” *Jahrbuch für Universitätsgeschichte* 4 (2001): 54–67.

19 Markus Winkler, *Jüdische Identitäten im kommunikativen Raum. Presse, Sprache und Theater in Czernowitz bis 1923* (Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2007), 256–271.

20 Markus Winkler, “Nationale Umbrüche, Antisemitismus und das deutsch-jüdische Verhältnis: Zur Rolle der deutschsprachigen Presse in der Czernowitzer Theaterkrise 1921–1923,” in *Deutschsprachige Öffentlichkeit und Presse in Mittelost- und Südosteuropa 1848–1948*, Andrei Corbea-Hoisie, Ion Lihaciu, and Alexander Rubel (eds.) (Iași: Editura Universităţii, 2008), 464–465.

21 Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania. Regionalism, Nation Building and Ethnic Structure 1918–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 64.

in the household, and did not want to subject their children to another language in primary school. The German deputy Alfred Kohlruß demanded that the autonomy of education, which had been guaranteed in 1918, be maintained. The prescriptions were only changed marginally. All teachers had to pass a test in the Romanian language, and were removed from civil service if their knowledge was deemed insufficient. The Jews reacted robustly, when, in December 1925, the minister of education prescribed the Romanian language for private schools as well. Salo Weisselberger, from Czernowitz, criticized the decree in the Senate, the Upper Chamber of the parliament.²² Jews from Romania also lodged complaints to the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in Paris, which forwarded their protest to the League of Nations.²³

As of 1926, external examiners were brought to conduct final examination tests in secondary state schools. These external examiners failed large numbers of high school students based on poor knowledge of Romanian. When disappointed Jewish pupils took a nationalist Romanian examiner to task, they were arrested. At the court proceedings, a Romanian right-wing extremist shot a defendant student in front of the court-house. In addition to Jews, there were also Germans in solidarity at the victim's funeral. Jewish, German and Ukrainian deputies protested together against the measures of Romanization, citing their contribution to the escalation of ethnic violence. However, these protests were shouted down by nationalist Romanians in parliament. When the Jewish deputy Manfred Reifer was assaulted, his Ukrainian colleague from the Bukovina, and some social democrats, protected him. Jews and Germans were particularly appalled by the Minister of Interior, Octavian Goga, who called the shooting of the Jewish high-school student "a defense of Romanian honor." The murderer was subsequently cleared by a jury in court.²⁴

The social democrats in the Bukovina were an important link between the five ethnicities their members were recruited from. They were influential until October 1920, when the government violently crushed a general strike. However, there was always a social democrat elected to parliament in Czernowitz. Jakob Pistiner, from the General Jewish Labour Union (*Jüdischer Arbeiterbund*), advocated, together with the deputy of the German conservatives Alois Lebouton, separate

22 Claudia Ursuțiu, "Între reușită și eșec. Politici școlare evreiești în parlamentul României 1922–1931" [Between success and failure. Jewish schoolpolitics in the Romanian Parliament 1922–1931], *Studia Historia* 49, vol. 2 (2004): 113–137, 119.

23 Ioan Scurtu and Ioan Dordea (eds.), *Minoritățile naționale din România 1925–1931, Documente* [National minorities in Romania 1925–1931. Documents] (București: Arhivele Naționale ale României, 1996), 111–115, 234.

24 Benjamin Lya, "Paradigma Falik-Totu sau cum s-a transformat un fapt cotidian într-un caz de asasinat politic" [The paradigm Falik-Totu or how an every-day event transformed in political murder], *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae* 2 (1997): 187–200; Berthold Brandmarker, "David Fallik," in *Geschichte der Juden in der Bukowina*, vol. 2, Hugo Gold (ed.) (Tel Aviv: Olamenu, 1962).

schools for all ethnicities.²⁵ In the *Haus Morgenrojt*, the social democrats established, with financial support from the US, professional courses in Yiddish.²⁶

Given the policy of forced Romanization of all governments in Romania until 1928, representatives of non-Romanians were compelled to form a united front against this policy. After every initiative to improve their standing in parliament was thwarted, the Jewish deputies turned to the League of Nations in 1925. The law of nationality was criticized there because it resulted in statelessness for about 30,000 Jews in Romania. Lucien Wolf, of the Joint Committee, also addressed the prescriptions regarding education. In 1926, the European Nationalities Congress also spoke out against the violation of minority rights in Romania. Subsequently, German, Jewish, Hungarian, and Ukrainian representatives of Romania formed a voting bloc in July 1927. This bloc attempted to generate support from the League of Nations.²⁷ The Alliance Israélite Universelle, the Joint Foreign Committee, and the American Jewish Committee published the booklet *La situation de la minorité juive en Roumanie*, in Paris, to inform League delegates of the situation in Romania.²⁸

In 1928, there was short-lived hope that a minority act in Romania would improve their situation. The National Peasant Party, which had also put non-Romanian representatives and social democrats on their electoral lists, came to power that year. This lifted the state of siege, making assemblies possible. Deputy Lebouton stated, contentedly, that 21 German primary schools had been opened in the Bukovina.²⁹ The German deputies also received subventions for the two German secondary schools in Bukovina.³⁰ In Czernowitz, a Jew and a German became vice-mayors. In 1930, again, there were Jewish, German, and Ukrainian representatives on the electoral lists of the National Peasant Party in Bukovina, which formed the government.³¹

Eventually, however, this positive development came to an end when the Great Depression considerably limited the government's room to maneuver.

25 Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 199–201; Joseph Kissmann, “Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Arbeiterbewegung ‘Bund’ in der Bukowina,” in *Geschichte der Juden in der Bukowina*, vol. 1, Hugo Gold (ed.) (Tel Aviv: Olamenu, 1958), 129–144.

26 Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 191; Gaby Coldewey, Anja Fiedler, Stefan Gehrke, Axel Hallig, Mariana Hausleitner, Nils Kreimeier and Gertrud Ranner (eds.), *Zwischen Pruth und Jordan. Lebenserinnerungen Czernowitzer Juden* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2003), 22.

27 Scurtu and Dordea, *Minoritățile naționale*, 225–235.

28 Manfred Reifer, *Menschen und Ideen* (Tel Aviv: Edition Olympia, 1952), 175–176.

29 Alois Lebouton, “Die deutsche Sprache in den Bukowiner Staatsschulen,” *Czernowitzer Deutsche Tagespost*, 10.12.1931.

30 Daniel Hrenčiu, *Între destin și istorie. Germanii în Bucovina 1918–2012* [Between destiny and history. Germans in Bukovina 1918–2012] (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2013), 149.

31 “Zur Wahlbewegung,” *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 28.2.1930.

Beginning in 1931, the governments ceased authorizing new school classes for non-Romanians – as they were hardly able to pay the Romanian teachers already on staff. The government of Nicolae Iorga closed a school in Czernowitz that was attended by a large number of Jews. The deputies and parents protested vehemently against this attempt to limit the Jews' access to higher education. The next government rescinded the closing.³²

Radicalization of the Germans in Romania after 1933

These years of crisis also put an end to the cooperation between German and the Jewish representatives. German peasants were hit hard by the Great Depression as corn prices dropped by half. Their co-operatives were unable to support them because the system of loans, on the part of the banks, was no longer working. The peasants became unwilling to take their small savings to the banks, which could no longer make good on deposits. The Romanian government backed only Romanian banks through the National Bank. This created problems both for small German banks and the large Jewish-owned bank (*Marmarosch*), which was driven into bankruptcy.³³ The German banks asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin for help. At first they replied that all Germans living abroad were facing these problems. It was only in 1932 that a loan for the Bukovinian agricultural bank was settled – but by this point it was too late.³⁴

Meanwhile, the crisis reached all wood exports in Romania. Many mountain farmers also worked in sawmills, which had only produced small amounts of lumber since 1930. In some parts of the Bukovina, 95% of Germans were unemployed. The agricultural bank could only marginally support these starving mountain farmers.³⁵ The deputy, Lebouton, appealed for a collection of money from the communities, but it generated little support because poverty had also spread among German townspeople.³⁶

³² Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 294–295.

³³ “Krise und jüdisches Wirtschaftsleben,” *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 28.10.1931.

³⁴ Mariana Hausleitner, “Die Radikalisierung von Deutschen in Rumänien vor ihrer Gleichschaltung 1932–1940,” in *Nationalsozialismus und Regionalbewusstsein im östlichen Europa*, Burkhard Olschowsky and Ingo Loose (eds.) (Oldenburg: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2016), 191–192.

³⁵ “Im Bezirk Storojinez sterben Menschen Hungers,” *Der Tag*, 23.12.1932; Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 276–277.

³⁶ Michel Stocker, “Unser täglich Brot gib uns heute,” *Czernowitzer Deutsche Tagespost*, 19.4.1931.

In these years of crisis, Professor Cuza's Romanian "National Christian League," and the Legionary Movement of his former student, Corneliu Codreanu, gained influence. They organized many antisemitic riots in Bukovina.³⁷ Both leaders claimed that the economic crisis had been caused by Jews speculating in the stock market, demanding that the Jews be deprived of power. German antisemites also picked up this propaganda. In Transylvania, Fritz Fabritius's so-called Movement of Self-Help (*Selbsthilfebewegung*) arose, and in 1932 began to gain followers in Bukovina.³⁸ It accused the conservative representatives of the Germans to be at least partially responsible for the increasing squalor through their support of the rich. Their strategy of negotiation had not led to any concessions from the Bucharest governments. Until then, the conservative leaders generally formed electoral alliances with the strongest Romanian party. In return, they received concessions on the question of education and safe party list positions. While these concessions remained on the drawing board, the radicals accused government leaders of propagating those electoral alliances merely to secure their positions. In the elections of 1932, many Germans no longer supported the government party list but instead cast their votes for Cuza's antisemitic protest party. Fabritius defended the electoral alliance with this party by claiming that a solution to the Jewish question would also improve the situation of Germans.³⁹

The rise of right-wing organizations had already put a strain on the relationship between Germans and Jews in 1932. 1933, however, marked the beginning of a permanent crisis. When, in April, people in Berlin were called on to boycott Jewish shops, fellow travelers in the Bukovina did likewise. In cities like Czernowitz, where the population of Jewish merchants was largest, it was hardly possible to put this into practice. Almost 79% of Jewish men in the Bukovina pursued trade as their occupation. This large amount was partly due to its location, as there was a high percentage of transit trade which crossed the region. Jewish enterprises also held leading positions in wood exports, the textile industry, and sugar refineries.⁴⁰

37 Traian Sandu, "Der Ertrag der Militanz und der regionale Erfolg der Eisernen Garde. Eine Analyse des Wahlverhaltens und die Folgerungen für die Theorie," in *Inszenierte Gegenmacht von rechts. Die "Legion" Erzengel Michael in Rumänien 1918–1938*, Armin Heinen and Oliver Jens Schmitt (eds.) (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2013), 158–161; Francisco Veiga, *Istoria Gărzii de Fier 1919–1941. Mistica ultranaționalismului* [The Iron Guard 1919–1941. Ultrnational mysticism] (București: Editura Humanitas, 1993), 138–145.

38 Günter Schödl, "Lange Abschiede. Die Südostdeutschen und ihre Vaterländer 1918–1945," in *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas. Land an der Donau*, Günter Schödl (ed.) (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1995), 559–561.

39 Wolfgang Miede, *Das Deutsche Reich und die deutsche Volksgruppe in Rumänien 1933–1938* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag, 1972), 285.

40 Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 293.

In this respect, the call for boycott published in the *Czernowitzer Deutsche Tagespost* was little more than propaganda. Yet, it showed how endangered the relationship between Germans and Jews had become. In Czernowitz, 38% of the inhabitants were Jews. The urban population had, for a long time, read mainly two German daily newspapers, which were edited by Jews. These newspapers strictly contained themselves when talking about the boycott. In contrast to this, the paper *Tagespost*, which had been rather unimportant until that time, made the boycott a central issue. In doing so, its editors sought both to win new readers and be granted subsidies by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The senior editor of the *Tagespost*, Bruno Skrehunetz-Hillebrand, who had previously worked on occasion as a proof-reader at the Zionist-owned *Ostjüdische Zeitung* [East-Jewish Newspaper], now fashioned himself into a militant Nazi mobilizing Germans' social envy.⁴¹ In the *Tagespost* Jews were charged with unfairly competing with the Germans because they were supported by the American Joint Reconstruction Foundation.⁴²

In fact, the "Joint" had granted loans for re-building the Union of Jewish Credit Cooperatives in Romania.⁴³ The 12 Jewish cooperatives had 8,394 members in the Bukovina. Consequently, Jewish peasants, craftsmen, and entrepreneurs were able to pull through the crisis a little better than the Germans. From 1933, Germans received money from the Reich above all for propaganda. Thus, an additional hate-mongering newspaper, called *Der Scharfschütze* [The Marksman], was created.⁴⁴

In April 1933, an assembly of 60 Jewish representatives decided, in Czernowitz, to show their solidarity with the persecuted Jews in Germany by refraining to sell either print products or medicine sent from the Reich. Likewise, German films would no longer be shown in the cinemas that were mostly run by Jews. While these measures were rarely put into practice, they illustrate the dilemma of Jews who had, until then, been the most important consumers of German cultural goods in the Bukovina.⁴⁵

In the *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, Mayer Teich, a lawyer from the Workers of Zion (*Poale Tzion*) and president of the Jewish community in Suceava, wrote in April 1933: "We do not want to be bearers of the German culture [...] any longer. We have been inclining towards German culture and politics too much. The brain

⁴¹ After the War he confessed that his newspaper received financial support from the Propagandaministerium in Berlin. See Günther F. Guggenberger, *Georg Drozdowski in literarischen Feldern zwischen Czernowitz und Berlin 1920–1945* (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2015), 56.

⁴² Hildrun Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft. Das deutsch-jüdische Verhältnis in Rumänien 1918–1938* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996), 359–360.

⁴³ "Konferenz der jüdischen Kooperativen Rumäniens," *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 2.7.1933.

⁴⁴ Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 293; Anthony Komjathy and Rebecca Stockwell, *German Minorities and the Third Reich* (New York, London: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1980), 111.

⁴⁵ Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft*, 378.

and heart have to unlearn. It is our tragedy that many of us still have to express this in the German language.” (Transl. M. H.)⁴⁶ Jews should now orient themselves towards the cultures of France and Great Britain. These states had always made efforts to protect Jews in Romania. As a long-term aim, Teich advocated that private schools begin teaching Hebrew lessons and shift their orientation towards Palestine.⁴⁷ Many Jews in Bukovina and Bessarabia, however, began to speak out for schools with Yiddish lessons – while in Transylvania, many Jews still considered themselves to be part of the Hungarian nation.⁴⁸

When the Jewish Party of Romania congregated, German had been the common language up to that point. However, in November of 1933, the delegates from Bessarabia refused to speak German, forcing Mayer Ebner to use the Yiddish he had previously derogated as “jargon.”⁴⁹ Ebner had been elected to Parliament in 1926, 1927, 1931, and 1932, and worked closely with the deputies of the Germans as far as school questions were concerned.⁵⁰ In 1931, he was one of the founders of the Jewish Party, which received 2.38% of the vote in Romania in 1931 and 1.29% in 1933.⁵¹ In the senate, the Bukovinian Manfred Reifer represented the Jewish Party. He saw an opportunity within the strain between Jews and the German minority to lead the Jews to a Jewish identity.⁵²

The Conservative Germans in Romania and European Nationalities Congress

Until 1933, Ebner and Reifer, as well as the German deputies from the Bukovina, had taken part in the meetings of the European Nationalities Congress. In spring of 1933, the Congress meeting was postponed until autumn. Jewish representatives had previously demanded that the Congress criticize the persecution of Jews in the German Reich. This was a difficult task for the director of the Congress, as the

46 Mayer Teich, “Umschalten! Gegen den deutschen Terror,” *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 12.4.1933.

47 Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft*, 381.

48 Until 1931 many Jews in Transylvania voted for the Hungarian Party, afterwards some voted for the Jewish Party. See Iancu, *Evreii din România*, 223.

49 Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft*, 528.

50 Hildrun Glass, “Manfred Reifer und Mayer Ebner – zwei Bukowiner Zionisten in ihren Selbstzeugnissen,” in *Deutsche und Rumänen in der Erinnerungsliteratur. Memorialistik als Geschichtsquelle*, Krista Zach and Cornelius R. Zach (eds.) (München: IKGS Verlag, 2005), 199–200.

51 Daniel Hrenciuc, *Dilemele conviețuirii: Evreii în Bucovina 1774–1939* [Dilemata in living together. Jews in Bukovina 1774–1939] (Iași: Tipo Moldova, 2010), 272.

52 Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft*, 381.

organization was funded primarily by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since the days of Stresemann, it had considered the Congress to be a way of supporting the rights of the German minorities particularly in those areas separated from the Reich. In 1933, senator Hans Otto Roth from Transylvania chaired the confederation of German ethnic groups in Europe. Being regional curator of the Protestant Regional Church, he also held the highest position of layman in the church, which had a large membership. On the 15th of June 1933, he tried, during an audience, to make clear to Hitler the effects of persecuting Jews on the German minorities of the East. The governments in the East might soon push the German minorities, like the Jews in Germany, to the margins of society. Because of this danger, he asked Hitler not to pass any further racial laws and not to undermine the churches' autonomy. These requests precipitated a fit and a long diatribe from the Führer.⁵³

During the European Nationalities Congress, the German deputies could not bring themselves to criticize Germany's racial laws, as there were already influential right-wing powers in their states. In September 1933, the Association of Germans (*Verband der Deutschen*) presented a woolly declaration: on the one hand, they criticized the deprivation of Jewish rights in the Reich. On the other hand, they referred to the peoples' right for "dissimilation" of alien races. The Jewish delegates left the Congress. While the Congress continued to exist until 1935, its influence waned.⁵⁴

After the Congress, pressure on the conservative leaders of Germans in Romania increased. Given the growing influence of the National Socialists, the conservatives joined forces in a defensive front. In the *Volksbund*, there were – apart from the deputies of the Bukovina, such as Lebouton – also representatives of Protestant and Catholic Churches from all regions.⁵⁵ Now, however, Berlin also supported right-wing extremist forces. They fought the *Volksbund* with many accusations until it ceased activities in 1935. Now, the moderate National Socialist Fabritius became spokesman of the *Verband der Deutschen in Rumänien*. This Umbrella Organisation of Germans in Romania was renamed the *Volksgemeinschaft der Deutschen in Rumänien*.⁵⁶

The conservative leaders of the Germans had been fiercely discredited by the Nazis. Alfred Kohlruß, who had built the network of the German co-operatives in the Bukovina, was blamed for their financial problems. He withdrew after being accused of misappropriating money. In 1935, Kohlruß died, embittered, at the age

53 Thomas Frühmesser, *Hans Otto Roth. Biographie eines rumäniendeutschen Politikers (1890–1953)* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2013), 117–118.

54 Ibid., 128; Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft*, 209.

55 Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 288.

56 Johann Böhm, *Hitlers Vasallen der Deutschen Volksgruppe in Rumänien vor und nach 1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag, 2006), 144; Hausleitner, *Die Radikalisierung*, 201–202.

of 53. Senator Alois Lebouton was also constantly assailed by the *Tagespost* from 1933 on, as he occasionally criticized the imitation of the Nazis in Romania as being dangerous. During the elections for the people's council (*Volksrat*) in 1935, Lebouton was shouted down by chanting Nazi youths – who received the majority of votes in the *Volksrat*. When Lebouton died from liver disease in 1936, the priest at the funeral attributed his early death at the age of 55 to the constant assaults.⁵⁷ All positions that received financial support from the Reich now went to young Nazis.

The Right-wing Trend and the failed Cooperation of Minorities in Romania

After a number of strikes, the state of siege and censorship were reintroduced in 1933.⁵⁸ In December, when Prime Minister Gheorghe I. Duca was murdered by Romanian fascists, the police became more right-wing.⁵⁹ The Romanian governments also occasionally fought the excesses of the German Nazis when it was felt that they were too violent. In 1934, the National Movement for the Renewal of Germans (*Nationale Erneuerungsbewegung der Deutschen*) was banned. However, because the governments were interested in the economic exchange with Germany, they did not aggressively take action against the Nazi groups being financed by Himmler and the *Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland* from the Reich.⁶⁰

However, it was especially National Liberal politicians who made use of the factionalism within the German minority in order to revoke the concessions on the matter of schools. In the Bukovina, most of the German classes at primary state schools were closed.⁶¹

The National Liberals were backed by those forces which wanted to marginalize minorities, especially in business. In 1934, Ion Nistor, the Secretary of State for Employment, who hailed from the Bukovina, submitted a law that ordered

57 Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft*, 385; Ekkehart Lebouton, "Dr. Alois Lebouton. Erinnerungen an meinen Vater," *Kaindl-Archiv* 8 (1990): 54–67.

58 Günther Guggenberger, "Rahmenbedingungen und strukturelle Merkmale der Czernowitzer deutschsprachigen Presse in der Zwischenkriegszeit," in *Presselandschaft in der Bukowina und den Nachbarregionen. Akteure – Inhalte – Ereignisse 1900–1945*, Markus Winkler (ed.) (München: IKGS Verlag, 2011), 40.

59 "Zynische Mordfanatiker," *Der Tag*, 3.1.1934.

60 Vasile Ciobanu, *Contribuții la cunoașterea istoriei sașilor transilvăneni 1918–1944* [Contributions for studying the history of Saxons in Transilvania] (Sibiu: Editura Hora, 2001), 197–198.

61 Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, R 60194, "Gustav Rösler to the VDA on 21.8.1935"; Hausleitner, *Die Rumänisierung*, 288.

private enterprises to preferentially hire Romanians. This intervention was legitimized by an intention to establish a Romanian middle class. In fact, the Romanian share in the urban population had risen only slightly since 1920.⁶²

When the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs spoke out in favor of the German minority, the Romanians claimed that this law was only directed against Jewish influence. Consequently, the Germans did not, like they had done before 1933, protest together with representatives of other minorities. Jewish representatives appealed to the influential associations of Jews in France and Great Britain. The ambassadors of those two states, which had covenanted the protection of minorities in 1919, intervened with the government.⁶³ The representatives of the Hungarian minority, which was strong in Transylvania, appealed in September 1937 to the League of Nations in an interpellation. The law was slightly changed.⁶⁴ At first, only businesses that had many Jewish employees were prosecuted.⁶⁵

When it became clear that the protection of minorities, which had been guaranteed in 1919, would only be weakly enforced, the guilds began barring Jews. Beginning in 1935, Jewish lawyers were no longer admitted in the trade associations, which also barred doctors, pharmacists, and others as of 1937. The idea was to force Jews to emigrate. In December 1937, an antisemitic government, of which Professor Cuza was part, came into power. He derided the League of Nations in the German Press and called them a corpse that had to be buried at last.⁶⁶ Prime Minister Goga, who had already justified the murder of the Jewish pupil from Czernowitz in 1926, was now openly stirring up hatred against Jews. He claimed that more than half a million Jewish refugees from Germany had come to Romania, and that they had obtained Romanian citizenship only through corruption.⁶⁷ Reasoning thus, he submitted to the government, in January 1938, a law to test citizenship. The Jewish World Congress formulated a harsh protest to the League of Nations in Geneva, but without positive effect for the Jews in Romania.⁶⁸

Goga's government collapsed after 44 days, but the law remained in force with little change. By 1939, 255,222 Jews (36.5%) had lost their citizenship.⁶⁹ Jewish

⁶² Müller, *Staatsbürger*, 398–402.

⁶³ Iancu, *Evreii din România*, 241.

⁶⁴ Anders E. B. Blomqvist, *Economic Nationalizing in the Ethnic Borderlands of Hungary and Romania* (Stockholm: Stockholm University Library, 2014), 304–308.

⁶⁵ Glass, *Zerbrochene Nachbarschaft*, 544.

⁶⁶ "Eindrücke in Bukarest. Ein Gespräch mit Professor Cuza," *Berliner Börsen Zeitung*, 18.1.1938.

⁶⁷ A. L. Easterman, "Rumanian Premier '500,000 Jews Must Go,'" *Daily Herald*, London, 6.1.1938.

⁶⁸ Bureau du Congres Juif Mondial, *La situation des Juifs en Roumanie* (Geneve: Centre International, 1938).

⁶⁹ "Report from Bucharest on 27 November 1939 of the French Ambassador Adrien Thierry to Prime Minister Édouard Daladier," in *Lupta internațională pentru emanciparea evreilor din România*

organizations in Romania did not offer very strong resistance to these developments, for various reasons. The Jews from old Romania were less concerned by the law because of special arrangements. The Jewish Party, which was particularly powerful in the regions that had been annexed in 1918, was in sharp decline. Its members, who were increasingly rendered stateless, could be expelled at once if found to be engaging in any political action.

Some young Jews became increasingly radicalized, given the occupational bans. Because of this, the social democratic Jewish Worker's Union (*Jüdischer Arbeiterbund*) in the Bukovina came increasingly under fire beginning in 1936. When right-wing Romanians denied a Jewish group access to the Czernowitz municipal park, the Jews put up a fight. A young Romanian died in the brawl. Only Jews were arrested, and one of them died inside the police station. The fact that he had been frequenting *Haus Morgenrojt* served as a pretext for closing the premises of the *Arbeiterbund*.⁷⁰

While Jews were increasingly being persecuted, the German Reich supported the German minority. Romania was striving for an extension to the economic exchange. The first agreement was reached in 1938, through which the export of crude oil increased by 25%. In March 1939 Romania signed an economic treaty with Germany which was valid for five years. This treaty provided a close linking of the two countries' economies through coordinated planning and joint companies.⁷¹

Within the German minority, a young generation of leaders supported by the Reich grew up, burning to prove themselves within the Reich. In summer 1940, they enthusiastically propagated the resettlement from the Bukovina as "repatriation." However, it was ultimately due to the Soviet occupation that nearly all of the 43,000 Germans of northern Bukovina joined, during the autumn, in this precarious future.⁷²

Some young Jews who had become radicalized by their marginalization in Romania hoped for a fresh start in the Soviet Bukovina. They welcomed the Red

1919–1939 [The international fight for the emancipation of Jews in Romania 1919–1939] Documente și mărturii, vol. 2., Document 150, Carol Iancu (ed.) (București: Editura Hasefer, 2004), 382–383.

70 Kissmann, "Zur Geschichte der jüdischen," 143–144; Johann Schlamp, "Ich hatte wenig Freunde unter den Deutschen," in "... und das Herz wird mir schwer dabei." *Czernowitzer Juden erinnern sich*, Gertrud Ranner, Axel Halling, and Anja Fiedler (eds.) (Berlin: Deutsches Kulturforum östliches Europa, 2009), 153–156.

71 Florian Banu, *Asalt asupra economiei României de la Solagra la SOVROM 1936–1956* [Attack on the Romanian economy from Solgra to SOVROM 1936–1956] (București: Editura Nemira, 2004), 28; Zvi Yavetz, *Viața politică și problema evreiască în timpul domniei regelui Carol al II-lea, 1930–1940* [The political life and the Jewish problem in the time of king Carol II, 1930–1940] (Cluj-Napoca: Clusium, 2006), 131–132.

72 Dirk Jachomowski, *Die Umsiedlung der Bessarabien-, Bukowina- und Dobrudschadeutschen. Von der Volksgruppe in Rumänien zur "Siedlungsbrücke" an der Reichsgrenze* (München R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1984), 80.

Army's invasion in Czernowitz. In July 1940, around 70,000 Jews from across Romania moved to the Bukovina, which had been annexed by the Soviet Union.⁷³

Some wealthy Jews went to Romania, with its fascist ministers. They would survive the years of the war better than those who stayed behind in the Bukovina. Very few Jews were deported from Central Romania.

In contrast to this, Jews in northern Bukovina who were considered to be politically suspect, or who were entrepreneurs, were the first to be deported to Siberia by the Soviet secret police, the NKVD.⁷⁴

In summer 1941, when the Romanian Army, alongside the Wehrmacht, re-conquered the northern Bukovina and Bessarabia, more than 45,000 Jews were killed. The others were deported to the Ukrainian area of Transnistria. In this Romanian occupation zone more than 250,000 Jews died from hunger and deficiency disease.⁷⁵ Only around 20,000 Jews remained in Czernowitz because of the interventions of Mayor Traian Popovici and German Consul Fritz Schellhorn.⁷⁶

Consequently, the common understanding of Jews and Germans regarding their role in the process of modernization in the Bukovina came to an abrupt end. The resettled Germans considered themselves, during the Cold War, to be victims of Stalin. In contrast, Jewish survivors stressed Hitler's guilt.⁷⁷ A few descendants of both ethnic groups are now realizing the consequences of the Hitler-Stalin Pact. Together, with today's inhabitants of the Bukovina, they are seeking traces of commonality in their shared history.

73 Jean Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României. Problema evreiască 1933–1944* [Contributions to the history of Romania. The Jewish problem 1933–1944], vol. 1, part 1 (București: Editura Hasefer, 2001), 256.

74 Kissmann, *Zur Geschichte*, 144; Julius Wolfenhaut, *Nach Sibirien verbannt. Als Jude von Czernowitz nach Stalinka 1941–1994* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 2005), 57–67.

75 Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania. The Destruction of Jews and Gypsies Under the Antonescu Regime 1940–1944* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), 289.

76 Ancel, *Contribuții*, 258; Mariana Hausleitner, "Rettungsaktionen für verfolgte Juden unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Bukowina 1941–1944," in *Holocaust an der Peripherie. Judenpolitik und Judenmord in Rumänien und Transnistrien 1940–1944*, Wolfgang Benz and Brigitte Mihok (eds.) (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2009), 113–128.

77 Gaëlle Fisher, "Same Space, Different Stories: German and Jewish memories of Bukovina after the Second World War," *Tropos. Journal of Comparative Critical Enquiry* 1 (2014): 26–32.

Hannah Maischein

The Historicity of the Witness: The Polish Relationship to Jews and Germans in the Polish Memory Discourse of the Holocaust

If one bears witness for a crime that happened to someone else,¹ the entanglement between the perpetrator, the victim, and the witness is relevant not only for the event itself, but also for how the event is remembered. This article focuses on the Polish witnesses of the Holocaust, who reflect themselves in an act of memory in their relation to Jews and Germans.² Analyzing the historicity of the witness through a discourse analysis of the Polish self-image as witness in Polish memory culture provides an opportunity to understand the Polish historical experience from a Polish point of view. The analysis of the Polish self-image as witness differs from concepts or terms like “bystanders” (Raul Hilberg), or “neighbors” (Jan T. Gross), within memory discourse; since they are often used with negative implications, in Poland they are mostly rejected as being judgmental.

The historicity of the witness is explored in this article by first outlining the methodological concept of witnessing. Second, the perception and narration of ethnicity in the act of witnessing is analyzed. Subsequently, representations of Polish witnesses in Western memory discourses of the Holocaust are discussed. Fourth, Polish eyewitnesses’ self-perceptions are addressed, followed by a concluding discussion of entangled and divided memory cultures.

The Concept of Witnessing

Witnesses play a very important role in memory discourses. They can inform others about what has happened to someone else. Therefore, they are different from victims and perpetrators. Those who were defined by the race policy of the German occupier as Poles in World War II became not only victims themselves but were also present when those defined as Jews were killed by Germans.

¹ In this article, I focus on those who bear witness for someone else’s fate. However, there are also those who bear witness to their own experience, like many Jewish survivors.

² This article is based on research conducted for my Ph.D. project, which was published in 2015; see, Hannah Maischein, *Augenzeugenschaft, Visualität, Politik: Polnische Erinnerungen an die deutsche Judenvernichtung* [Witnessing, Visuality, Politics: Polish Memories of the German Destruction of the Jews] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015).

Therefore, the figure of the witness is of general interest in Polish memory discourse. Taking into consideration the division from and the entanglement with Jews and Germans can help to understand the specificity of the Polish historical experience during the Holocaust.

From the point of view of media theory, witnesses are media themselves because they transmit what they have seen. Thus, they seem to allow a very auratic relationship to the historical event for others who come in contact with them: the trace of the event is inscribed in the witness' memory like the light on a photograph.³ This indexical relationship, often described as authenticity, makes us forget that there is no representation without perspective and thus without interests.⁴ When the person who has been there bears witness after the event has taken place, he transforms what he has seen into a testimony that possesses relevance in her view. He wants to transmit this intended meaning of the event to the person he is addressing. The index becomes a symbol in this act of transformation from history to memory. This is the crucial moment in the act of witnessing, because even though the witness has been there, he is unable to prove that what he is saying is true.⁵ To make the person addressed a "secondary witness,"⁶ the "epistemological gap"⁷ between the witness and his account needs to be filled. To

3 In terms of representation, the trace is an indexical representation of the event inscribed in a media and therefore possesses the highest authority of all forms of representation. See Oliver R. Scholz, *Bild, Darstellung, Zeichen*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 2004), 17–19; W.J. Thomas Mitchell, "Repräsentation," in *Bildtheorie*, W. J. Thomas Mitchell (ed.) (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2008), 78–97; Roland Barthes, "Es-ist-so-gewesen," in *Die helle Kammer: Bemerkung zur Fotografie*, Roland Barthes (ed.) (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 86.

4 This is as true for narration as for visualization. See Reinhart Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), 183–192; W. J. Thomas Mitchell, "Was ist ein Bild?," in *Bildlichkeit: Internationale Beiträge zur Poetik*, Volker Bohn (ed.) (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1990), 48; Jens Ruchatz, "Fotografische Gedächtnisse: Ein Panorama medienwissenschaftlicher Fragestellungen," in *Medien des kollektiven Gedächtnisses: Konstruktivität, Historizität, Kulturspezifität*, Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (eds.). (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), 89; John Durham Peters, "Witnessing," *Media, Culture and Society* 23 (2001): 716.

5 Jacques Derrida, "A Self-Unsealing Poetic Text: Poetics and Politics of Witnessing," in *Revenge of the Aesthetic: The Place of Literature in Theory Today*, Michael Clark (ed.) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 190.

6 For more on secondary or post-memory, see Reinhart Koselleck, "Gebrochene Erinnerung? Deutsche und polnische Vergangenheiten zum Beispiel," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* no. 220, September 22 and 23, 2001, 49; Marianne Hirsch, "Projected Memory: Holocaust Photographs in Personal and Public Fantasy," in *Acts of Memory – Cultural Recall in the Present*, Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer (eds.) (Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 1999), 2–23; Marianne Hirsch, *Ghosts of Home: The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

7 Peters, "Witnessing," 710.

be considered of “documentary” value,⁸ the testimony needs to be legitimized. Thus, the communicative act between seeing, representing, and addressing is meant to enable legitimization of the witness’ account.⁹ John D. Peters describes the difficulty of transmission as a struggle for legitimization: “The forensics of the trial, the pains of the martyr, and the memoirs of the survivor are all attempts to overpower the melancholy fact that direct sensory experience [...] vanishes when put into words and remains inaccessible to others [...]”¹⁰ Analyzing the politics of memory strategies used to legitimize the witness is therefore crucial to the de-construction of the legitimization of the witness.

One of the most important criteria for the legitimization of the witness is the proximity to the event.¹¹ Thus, space is the central category for the analysis of the individual who is at the scene, i.e. the bystander.¹² During World War II, the German occupiers made the Polish territory the center of the annihilation of European Jews. The greatest number – and the most heinous of the war’s extermination camps, including Birkenau (Brzezinka), Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec and Kulmhof (Chełmno) – were erected on the territory that would come to belong to the Polish state after the war. How did this shape the national memory discourse in post-war Poland, taking into consideration that many of those who shared this experience belonged after the war to the Polish People’s Republic?¹³

8 Documentary means that it can “teach” (from the Latin “docere”) someone something. See James E. Young, *Beschreiben des Holocaust – Darstellung und Folgen der Interpretation* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), 39.

9 See Aleida Assmann, “Vier Grundtypen von Zeugenschaft,” in *Zeugenschaft des Holocaust: Zwischen Trauma, Tradierung und Ermittlung*, Michael Elm and Gottfried Kößler (eds.) (Frankfurt/Main/New York: Campus, 2007), 47; Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas, “Introduction,” in *The Image and the Witness: Trauma, Memory and Visual Culture*, Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas (ed.) (London: Wallflower Press, 2007), 12.

10 Peters, “Witnessing,” 717.

11 Ibid., 715. There can even be a kind of hierarchy of witnesses depending on who has been closest to the event.

12 Etymologically the “parastatês” (Greek) indicates, like the modern term “bystander,” the vicinity in terms of space.

13 Barbara Breysach’s work explores the textual memory discourse of those who might have become witnesses; see Barbara Breysach, *Schauplatz und Gedächtnisraum Polen: Die Vernichtung der Juden in der deutschen und polnischen Literatur* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2015); Izabela Kowalczyk analyzes the challenges of Polish post-memory in visual media after a long time of suppression, see Izabela Kowalczyk, *Podróż do przeszłości: Interpretacje najnowszej historii w polskiej sztuce krytycznej* (Warsaw: SWPS Academica, 2010); Most authors assume that Poles are either unaware of their responsibility as witnesses and this is why they don’t bear witness (see for example Alina Cała, *The Image of the Jew in Polish Folk Culture* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995), or that they are traumatized and therefore unable to remember (see for example Michael

To call Poland a “witness’ land/country of witnesses”¹⁴ would be misleading, since the other criterion, as important as proximity, is the representation of the event ex-post. In terms of visualization or language the event needs to be narrated by the witness who is remembering what has happened.¹⁵ When one bears witness, one embeds the event of the past in the present context of meaning. This actualization of the past event is a symbolic codification of the meaning of the event for the present age. Thus, when analyzing the Polish memory discourse, one cannot take it for granted that Poles have become witnesses because they were somehow present when the Jews were murdered in their country. One must question whether the Poles remembered what happened and became witnesses by representing this specific experience.

The Perception and Narration of Ethnicity

The narration of the witness’ account has very interesting implications for a national memory discourse; this can be explored by analyzing the representations of testimony over time. Narrating what has happened to someone else implies a difference between the one who bears witness and the one for whom he does so. Thus, the concept of the witness is based on the assumption that witnessing is an act of perception: the witness perceives himself in contrast to the other.¹⁶ The difference between the two is constructed on two levels: historically and in the memory discourse.

C. Steinlauf, *Bondage to the Dead: Poland and the Memory of the Holocaust* (Syracuse/New York: Syracuse University Press, 1997).

¹⁴ In comparison to professor of English and Judaic Studies James E. Young, who assigns Poland to the “victim nations,” the historian Jean-Charles Szurek calls Poland a “country of witnesses” (kraj-świadek), see James E. Young, “Der Holocaust als Vergangenheit aus zweiter Hand,” in *Nach-Bilder des Holocaust in zeitgenössischer Kunst und Architektur*, James E. Young (ed.) (Hamburg: Hamburger Ed., 2002), 14; Jean-Charles Szurek, “Między historią a pamięcią: polski świadek Zagłady,” in *Zagłada Żydów: Pamięć narodowa i pisanie historii w Polsce i w Francji*, Barbara Engelking (ed.) (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2006), 147; See also Ewa Koźmińska-Frejłak, “Świadkowie Zagłady – Holocaust jako zbiorowe doświadczenie Polaków,” *Przegląd Socjologiczny* 49/2 (2000): 181.

¹⁵ See Peters, “Witnessing,” 709.

¹⁶ See Ulrich Baer, “Introduction,” “Niemand zeugt für den Zeugen” – Erinnerungskultur und historische Verantwortung nach der Shoah, Ulrich Baer (ed.) (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2000), 22.

When it comes to Jewish and Catholic Poles, the difference is based on the perception of ethnicity.¹⁷ Ethnicity is thus understood as a construction made by those who perceive someone as being defined ethnically. This was instrumentalized by German racial policy during World War II.¹⁸ Historically, the encounter between the occupier and those who were defined differently by the race policy of the occupier was a very difficult one, as Irena Kisielevska remembers. As a Polish-Jewish child, she was hidden in a monastery during the war:

I remember how the Germans at the beginning of the occupation led Jews who were dressed in the typical manner through the streets and how we—I was one of them—stood there and looked. [...] Only one person laughed sneeringly. Only one. But it is not about him. [...] They [the Jews] might have felt better, if they had been chased through an unpeopled desert, where no one would have seen their pain and their humiliation. [...] The Germans hit, but the presence of the Poles amplified the pain. [...] For some years, Poland was just a reloading site, where every day only some of its inhabitants were singled out and sent to annihilation—this happened in front of the other residents. And maybe it was hard for these people until today to forgive the Poles, even though it was certainly not their fault. [...] On the other hand I guess, the Poles cannot forgive the Jews, that they have become witnesses of their own normal human pusillanimity. But it was not the Jews who imposed such a test on the Poles. It is not their fault.¹⁹

This highlights the consequences the racial definition of Jews and Poles, constructed and imposed by the German occupier, had for their relationship: becoming a witness by seeing the other's fate resulted in a felt or assigned guilt that has shaped the relationship of Poles and Jews ever since, even though, as Kisielevska emphasizes, the fault is neither that of Poles nor Jews, but of the German occupier.

This difference created by the German occupier needs to be represented and therefore explained in the narration of the memory discourse after the event

17 See Roger Brubaker, *Ethnizität ohne Gruppen* (Hamburg: Hamburger Ed., 2007), 126.

18 See for example Włodzimierz Borodziej, *Geschichte Polens im 20. Jahrhundert* (München: C. H. Beck, 2010), 189–260; Beate Kosmala, “Ungleiche Opfer in extremer Situation: Die Schwierigkeiten der Solidarität im okkupierten Polen,” in *Solidarität und Hilfe für Juden während der NS-Zeit*, vol. 1, Regionalstudien (Polen, Rumänien, Griechenland, Luxemburg, Norwegen, Schweiz), Wolfgang Benz and Juliane Wetzel (eds.) (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 1996), 19–97; Beate Kosmala, “Der deutsche Überfall auf Polen: Vorgeschichte der Kampfhandlungen, in *Deutsch-polnische Beziehungen 1939/1945/1949: Eine Einführung*, Włodzimierz Borodziej and Klaus Ziemer (eds.) (Osnabrück: fibre, 2000), 19–41.

19 Irena Kisielevska, “W dziadku – moje korzenie,” in *Losy żydowskie: Świadectwo żywych*, vol. 1, Marian Turski, trans. Hannah Maischein (ed.) (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Żydów Kombatanów i Poszkodowanych w II Wojnie Światowej, 1995), 17.

took place. By representing the difference between Poles and Jews from a Polish point of view, the Jew is represented as the other. This construction of the other contains important information about the self-image of the witness.²⁰ Both images, that of the other and that of the self, are constructed in order to create an idealized image of the self and to externalize aspects that have less positive connotations in the current hegemonic discourse.²¹ Desires and fears shape the image of the other: “[D]escriptions of alterity are never based on a ‘real’ other, but on a denial of the self, of the observer’s identity. [...] The other is not the description, not even an interpretation of a reality, but the formulation of an ideal, desired identity.”²² In the act of witnessing, the often binary oppositions between self and other are made explicit.²³ There are different grades of acceptance of ambivalence and naturalization of difference that can indicate how one deals with himself and his borders. Both the open concept of self-identification and the exclusionary concepts that can lead to stereotypes and fetishizations can be found in the act of witnessing.²⁴ Since the act of witnessing consists of a

20 On the construction of otherness and its meaning for self-perception, see for example Ernst van Alphen, “The Other Within,” in *Alterity, Identity, Image: Selves and Others in Society and Scholarship*, Raymond Corbey and Joep Leerssen (eds.) (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991), 2; Ernst van Alphen, “Strategies of Identification,” in *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretation*, Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith Moxey (eds.) (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), 260; Daniel Tiffany, “Cryptesthesia: Visions of the Other,” *American Journal of Semiotics* 6 (1989): 209–219; James Clifford, “Introduction: Partial Truths,” in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, James Clifford and George E. Marcus (eds.) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 23.

21 See for example Aleida Assmann and Heidrun Frieze, “Introduction,” in *Identitäten*, 2nd ed., Aleida Assmann and Heidrun Frieze (eds.) (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1998), 23; Paul Gifford, “Defining ‘Others’: How Interperceptions Shape Identities,” in *Europe and its Others: Essays on Interperception and Identity*, Paul Gifford and Tessa Hauswedell (eds.) (Oxford: Lang, 2010), 17 and 26; Stuart Hall, “New Ethnicities,” in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (eds.) (London: Routledge 1996), 445.

22 Van Alphen, “The Other Within,” 3.

23 Sander L. Gilman, *Rasse, Sexualität und Seuche: Stereotype aus der Innenwelt der westlichen Kultur* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1992), 16.

24 See Hall, “New Ethnicities,” 445; W. J. Thomas Mitchell, “Das Sehen zeigen: Eine Kritik der Visuellen Kultur,” in *Bildtheorie*, W. J. Thomas Mitchell (ed.) (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp 2008), 335; Isolde Charim, “Der negative Fetisch – Zur Funktionsweise rassistischer Stereotype,” in *Typisch! Klischees von Juden und Anderen*, Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek and Cilly Kugelmann (eds.) (Berlin: Nicolai, 2008), 27–33 and 36; Gilman, *Rasse, Sexualität und Seuche*, 8; Michael Jeismann, “Was bedeuten Stereotypen für nationale Identität und politisches Handeln?,” in *Nationale Mythen und Symbole in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts: Strukturen und Funktionen von Konzepten nationaler Identität*, Jürgen Link and Wulf Wülfing (eds.) (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1991), 90; Jochen Bonz, Karen Struve, and Homi K. Bhabha, “Auf der Innenseite kultureller Differenz:

representation of testimony, the difference constructed between Poles and Jews is an important part of the witness' account.

Polish Witnesses in Western Holocaust Discourse

The legitimization of the witness is crucial for his credibility. During the Cold War, legitimization of differing memory cultures in East and West were highly political. Because of this, Polish witnesses could not even play a minor role in the Western memory discourse.

The "Western" memory discourse was based on the political alliances after the end of the war, and aimed at legitimizing the Western democracies that were understood in contrast to the totalitarian Soviet Union.²⁵ When the memory of the destruction of European Jews became central for the national memory discourses in the United States of America, in Israel, and in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), starting in the 1960s, the memory of the destruction of the Jews was associated with dictatorship in contrast to democracy, enlightenment, and modernity.²⁶ The Cold War created the Western memory discourse and, at the same time, this strong force of legitimization was made invisible.

According to such a view, it was the horrendous Holocaust experience—and not the Marshall Plan or the incipient Cold War antagonism towards the Soviet

'In the Middle of Differences,'" in *Kultur: Theorien der Gegenwart*, Stefan Moebius and Dirk Quadflieg (ed.) (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2001), 141; Van Alphen, "Strategies of Identification," 260; Nicholas Mirzoeff, "The Subject of Visual Culture," in *The Visual Culture Reader*, Nicholas Mirzoeff (ed.) (New York: Routledge, 2004), 10.

²⁵ Sven Kramer, "Including and Excluding the Holocaust: Changing Perceptions in German and European Identities," in *Europe and its Others: Essays on Interperception and Identity*, Paul Gifford and Tessa Hauswedell (eds.) (Oxford: Lang, 2010), 160; Aleida Assmann, *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit: Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2007), 259; Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, "The Politics of Uniqueness: Reflections on the Recent Polemical Turn in Holocaust and Genocide Scholarship," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 13/1 (Spring 1999): 30. For a critical reflection on the terminology of totalitarianism in the Cold War see Raul Hilberg, "Die Holocaustforschung heute: Probleme und Perspektiven," in *Die Macht der Bilder: Antisemitische Vorurteile und Mythen*, Elisabeth Klamper (ed.) (Wien: Picus, 1995), 408.

²⁶ See Klas-Göran Karlsson, "The Uses of History and the Third Wave of Europeanisation," in *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stråth (eds.) (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), 42; Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *Erinnerung im globalen Zeitalter: Der Holocaust* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2001), 28 and 211.

Union—that brought the Western victors of the war together and forced through the European integration project to create a peaceful and democratic Europe.²⁷

This makes it extremely difficult for Poland to find its place in the Western narrative. The role assigned to Poland in Western memory discourse was constructed not only after the end of the war but was already created by the German occupier during the war. National Socialist memory politics (*Gedächtnispolitik*) was already structuring memory while the destruction of the Jews was still taking place: by deporting the Jews to “the East” – a terminology fundamentally vague – these memory politics were integral to the crucial goal of obscuring, to a Western audience, what was going on.²⁸ From a Western point of view, not only the sites of crime, but also the sites of memory, seem even today to be located far away.²⁹ In addition, the National Socialists made the places of annihilation invisible and tried to expunge all traces of them. This makes the places of the annihilation of European Jews in Western memory seem like sites without location; they are imagined as unimaginable places. Only in the 1980s did this space start to be filled with the voices of the Jewish survivors. The filmmaker Claude Lanzmann remembers facing ‘non-memory spaces’ (*non-lieux de la mémoire*) when he went to film the remnants of the German camps in Poland.³⁰ He called the Polish territory where he shot the images that should be formative for the Western memory discourse, a “no man’s land of memory.”³¹ The Polish space was loaded so heavily with his imagination, that the director remembers experiencing an “extraordinary shock” when he discovered that there were concrete places with concrete names: Treblinka did exist as a real village with a real train station.³² The same clash of imagination of an unimaginable past and a very concrete place in contemporary Poland happens to many Western tourists today when they come to see the former camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau that are very close to the Polish town Oświęcim. The visitor tries to integrate the location in his mental symbolic order.³³ Lanzmann did

27 Karlsson, “The Uses of History,” 41.

28 See Avishai Margalit and Gabriel Motzkin, “Die Einzigartigkeit des Holocaust,” *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 45 (1997): 13; Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden* (Berlin-Grunewald: Arani, 1955), 370; Jean François Lyotard, *Heidegger und “die Juden”* (Wien: Passagen-Verlag, 1988), 36f, 40, 42.

29 See Young, *Beschreiben des Holocaust*, 276.

30 Claude Lanzmann, “Der Ort und das Wort: Über Shoah,” in “Niemand zeugt für den Zeugen” – *Erinnerungskultur und historische Verantwortung nach der Shoah*, Ulrich Baer (ed.) (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2000), 105.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid., 110.

33 See Detlef Hoffmann, “Auschwitz im visuellen Gedächtnis: Das Chaos des Verbrechens und die symbolische Ordnung der Bilder,” in *Auschwitz. Geschichte, Rezeption und Wirkung: Jahrbuch*

this by combining interviews with Jewish survivors with pictures of the Polish landscape.³⁴ This happened to make Poland a space of memory that seemed to “speak” about the destruction of the Jews; Poland became the “landscape of the Holocaust,” even though the sites testify to German crimes.³⁵ This is criticized as a form of outsourcing of the German complex of guilt,³⁶ and has culminated in the Polish condemnation of calling the concentration camps “Polish.”³⁷ Only since the 1990s has there been discussion and reflection of how Poland was made a space of the Holocaust in Western memory discourse.³⁸

The Western perspective of Polish territory also influenced the notion of the Polish eyewitness in Western memory discourse. One of the first visual representations of the Polish witnesses that would become highly influential was Lanzmann’s documentary *Shoah* (1985). Raul Hilberg’s distinction of Germans, Jews, and Poles as perpetrators, victims, and bystanders influenced Lanzmann’s concept for the movie.³⁹ The relationship of Polish bystanders to the Jewish victims was shown as a rather negative one: the gesture of the cutting of one’s neck, made by one of the interviewees, would become symbolic of the Polish bystanders, who were consequently considered as having been cruel and indifferent.⁴⁰ This picture contributed to a negative image of Poles as antisemites.⁴¹ Poles were almost never accepted as witnesses for the fate of the Jews in Western memory discourse.

In contrast to the Polish witnesses, the Jewish witnesses would take on a central role in the Western memory discourse with the Eichmann trial in 1961; they were thought to represent important values of Western democracies and

1996 zur *Geschichte und Wirkung des Holocaust*, Fritz-Bauer-Institut (ed.) (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 1996), 248.

34 See Lanzmann, “Der Ort und das Wort,” 114.

35 See Breysach, *Schauplatz und Gedächtnisraum Polen*, 25; Magdalena Marszałek, “Introduction,” in *Nach dem Vergessen: Rekurse auf den Holocaust in Ostmitteleuropa nach 1989*, Magdalena Marszałek and Alina Molisak (eds.) (Berlin: Kadmos 2010), 13.

36 See Cornelia Brink, *Ikonen der Vernichtung: Öffentlicher Gebrauch von Fotografien aus nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern nach 1945* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1998), 81; Frank Stern, *Im Anfang war Auschwitz: Antisemitismus und Philosemitismus im deutschen Nachkrieg* (Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1991), 237; Breysach, *Schauplatz und Gedächtnisraum Polen*, 393.

37 See for example Thomas Urban, “Populisten lassen googeln,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, May 17, 2010, accessed March 28, 2016, <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/kultur/medien-kritik-populisten-lassen-googeln-1.363475>.

38 See Breysach, *Schauplatz und Gedächtnisraum Polen*, 123.

39 See Lanzmann, “Der Ort und das Wort,” 117–118.

40 Ibid., 111.

41 See Steinlauf, *Bondage to the Dead*, 111.

to function as moral authorities.⁴² The authority of the Jewish witness is crucial for questions of representation of what the German perpetrators had planned to be an event without witnesses.⁴³ Since the 1990s, a different category of witness has become relevant in Western memory discourse: the (late) intervention of the forces of the United States, who liberated concentration camps, became examples and symbols of those who are neither perpetrators nor victims, but who can make a difference by intervening. These spectator-witnesses recognize their moral obligation and act to help the victims. In the course of the globalization of Holocaust memory that began in the 1990s, this ethical position has become a universal one.⁴⁴

Only after the end of Communism did the question of how Poles treated Jews under German occupation become a point of discussion in historiography.⁴⁵ The realm of the Communist bloc, where the National Socialists had killed the Jews, came newly into sight for Western scholars, and archives were (relatively) open for research. The lack of research on this topic became evident. With the focus on Polish conduct—did the Poles help or harm the Jews?—moral questions were negotiated. In the beginning of the 1990s historian Raul Hilberg coined the term “bystanders,” trying to distinguish precisely between victims, perpetrators, and spectators.⁴⁶ This made perfect sense for research that focuses on the perpetrators and the structures created by them; consequently the experience of the victims differentiated totally from that of the perpetrators.⁴⁷

The specificity of the territory where the annihilation of the Jews took place became increasingly clear starting in the 2000s: the influence of the occupation of two aggressors, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, became an important

⁴² Avishai Margalit, *The Ethics of Memory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 147–182; Omer Bartov, *Murder in Our Midst: The Holocaust, Industrial Killing, and Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 117.

⁴³ Shoshana Felman, “Im Zeitalter der Zeugenschaft: Claude Lanzmanns Shoah,” in “*Niemand zeugt für den Zeugen*” – *Erinnerungskultur und historische Verantwortung nach der Shoah*, Ulrich Baer (ed.) (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2000), 179–181; Baer, “Introduction,” 12.

⁴⁴ See Levy and Sznajder, *Erinnerung im globalen Zeitalter*, 155, 160, 174–175.

⁴⁵ Jan T. Gross worked on this topic as early as the late 1970s. See Jan T. Gross, *Polish Society under German Occupation: The Generalgouvernement, 1939–1944* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979). See works published since 1989, for example Omer Bartov, “Eastern Europe as the Site of Genocide,” *Journal of Modern History* 80 (2008): 557–593; Klaus-Peter Friedrich, *Der nationalsozialistische Judenmord und das polnisch-jüdische Verhältnis im Diskurs der polnischen Untergrundpresse (1942–1944)* (Marburg: Herder-Institut, 2006); Gunnar S. Paulsson, *Secret City: The Hidden Jews of Warsaw 1940–1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

⁴⁶ Raul Hilberg, *Täter, Opfer, Zuschauer: Die Vernichtung der Juden 1933–1945*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 1992), 9.

⁴⁷ See Bartov, “Eastern Europe as the Site of Genocide,” 566.

topic.⁴⁸ It made the situation in these territories especially complex, because loyalties could be contradictory and ethnicity could be instrumentalized in different ways. Another focus of the relatively new research on the territory where the destruction of the Jews took place is the entangled history between Jews, Germans, and the local Polish population. The relationship of the Polish population to the murder of the Jews committed by the German occupier is much more complex and nuanced than a clear-cut distinction between victims, perpetrators, and bystanders might suggest. Poles could have been victims themselves, could murder or harm the Jews and therefore be considered perpetrators, and they could also help the Jews and therefore be remembered as heroes.⁴⁹ Finally, the Poles could profit from the annihilation of the Jews, for example by living on stolen property.⁵⁰ However, one can assume that most Poles were neither heroes nor perpetrators, but tried to accommodate, adapt, and find suitable arrangements in a grey zone of the occupations.⁵¹

The heated debate over Polish-Jewish-American historian Jan T. Gross' essay, "Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland,"⁵² was an important impulse for more detailed research on the field of Polish-Jewish relations during the war.⁵³ However, it also led to a strong politicization of the topic. Today, the critical research on the role of the Poles in the German

48 Timothy Snyder called the countries of concern "bloodlands" and therewith gave a region that had been out of Western sight a catchy label; see Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). The consequences for the differing memory cultures are analyzed in Elazar Barkan, Elizabeth A. Cole, and Kai Struve (eds.), *Shared History – Divided Memory: Jews and Others in Soviet-Occupied Poland, 1939–1941* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2007).

49 See Christoph Dieckmann, Babette Quinkert, and Tatjana Tönsmeier, "Editorial," in *Kooperation und Verbrechen: Formen der "Kollaboration" im östlichen Europa 1939–1945*, Christoph Dieckmann, Babette Quinkert, and Tatjana Tönsmeier (eds.) (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 2003), 11; Katrin Steffen, "Formen der Erinnerung: Juden in Polens kollektivem Gedächtnis," *Osteuropa* 58/8–10 (2008): 382.

50 See Bartov, "Eastern Europe as the Site of Genocide," 572.

51 See Dieckmann, Quinkert, Tönsmeier, "Editorial," 19; Gunnar S. Paulsson, "Das Verhältnis zwischen Polen und Juden im besetzten Warschau, 1940–1945," in *Aktion Reinhardt: Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement 1941–1944*, Bogdan Musiał, (ed.) (Osnabrück: fibre, 2004), 398.

52 Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

53 A number of micro-histories were conducted in the last fifteen years, including Jan Grabowski, *Judenjagd: Polowanie na Żydów 1942–1945 – Studium dziejów pewnego powiatu* (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów, 2011); Barbara Engelking, "Szanowny panie gisto: Donosy do władz niemieckich w Warszawie i okolicach w latach 1940–1941" (Warsaw: Wydawn. IFiS PAN, 2003); Barbara Engelking, *Jest taki piękny słoneczny dzień: Losy Żydów*

destruction of the Jews is constantly flanked by a politicization of history that tries to contrast the very ambivalent image of Poles in the past with a positive one. Highlighting Polish aid for Jews is often understood as a patriotic act. Even though a historian like Gross who tries to keep in mind that Poles during the war had very limited options and alternative choices,⁵⁴ his attempts to verify the historical situation have been contested by conservative politicians in Poland, who tried to sentence Gross and to strip him of previously received awards.⁵⁵

Looking at the historicity of Polish witnesses in Western memory discourse, it becomes evident that the image of the Polish witness was shaped over time by different interests: by the memory politics of the German occupier, by politics of history during the Cold War that were intended to legitimize the powers in competition, and by politics of history today. Altogether, the image of the Poles as witnesses is a rather negative one in the West.

The Self-Perception of Polish Witnesses: Difference, Idealization, and “the West”

The self-perception of Polish witnesses represents the visions of Polish identity in the post-war era in relation to the Holocaust and to the Jews as alterity. There is a long tradition of understanding “the Jew” as “the other” in Polish culture⁵⁶ – as in many other European cultures. Many researchers observe that the Polish

szukających ratunku na wsi polskiej 1942–1945 (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów, 2011).

54 Jan T. Gross, “Themes for a Social History of War Experience and Collaboration,” in *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and Its Aftermath*, István Deák, Jan T. Gross, and Tony Judt (eds.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 16.

55 Karol Sauerland, “Ein Bedauern hat es nie gegeben,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 26, 2008, accessed February 3, 2014, <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/buecher/rezensionen/sachbuch/antisemitismus-in-polen-ein-bedauern-hat-es-nie-gegeben-1514898.html>; Piotr Kadłcik, “Die Ehre des Jan Gross,” *Jüdische Allgemeine*, February 18, 2016, accessed March 28, 2016, <http://www.juedische-allgemeine.de/article/view/id/24707>.

56 See for example Aleksander Hertz, *The Jews in Polish Culture* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988); Monica Rüthers, *Juden und Zigeuner im europäischen Geschichtstheater: “Jewish Spaces”/“Gypsy Spaces” – Kazimierz und Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer in der neuen Folklore Europas* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2012); Yisrael Gutman, “The Popular Image of the Jew in Modern Poland,” in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia*, Robert S. Wistrich (ed.) (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 1999), 259; Maria Janion, Claudia Snochowska-Gonzalez, Kazimiera Szczuka (eds.), *Inny, inna, inne: O inności w kulturze* (Warszawa: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN Wydawn., 2004); Ireneusz Krzemiński, *Antysemityzm w Polsce i na Ukrainie: Raport z badań*

perception of Jews after the German occupation did not change; in contrast, others state that Poles internalized German racial policy and perceive Jews as different from those considered Aryans or Slavs as a result.⁵⁷ Many researchers understand the vacuum left by the murder of Jewish populations as a reason for why “the Jew” became some kind of projection screen in post-war Poland.⁵⁸ “The Jew” became the symbol of alterity in general, states historian Alina Cała.⁵⁹ The forms of Jewish otherness might be negative or positive, they can include forms of exoticism that might lead to commerce of kitsch labelled “Jewish.”⁶⁰ Eventually, philo-Semitism without Jews resembles antisemitism without Jews—both function totally independent of a Jewish self-image and perspective.⁶¹ They contain only information about who constructs them according to his self-image. Analyzing these forms of negotiations in order to de-construct Polish post-war identity (and alterity) allows a deeper understanding than stating a competition of the witnesses, because it can explain the conflict over memory. Instrumentalization of ethnicity in Communist Poland, like the antisemitic campaign at the end of the 1960s, can be taken into consideration to explain specific constructions of Jewish otherness as part of the witness’ account.

Generally, different attitudes of dealing with entangled history can be described by focusing on the grades of acceptance of ambivalence, or naturalization of difference, inherent in the representations of witnessing. By looking at two examples of post-war visual representations of Polish eyewitnesses, different ways of dealing with the representation of Polish witnesses in Poland can be explored.

(Warszawa: Wydawn. Naukowe Scholar, 2002); Joanna B. Michlic, *Poland's Threatening Other: The Image of the Jew From 1880 To the Present* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

57 See for example Karol Sauerland, *Polen und Juden zwischen 1939 und 1968: Jedwabne und die Folgen* (Berlin/Wien: Philo, 2004), 183.

58 See Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 21; Michlic, *Poland's Threatening Other*, 6, 9; Agnieszka Skalska, *Obraz wroga w antysemickich rysunkach prasowych marca '68* (Warsaw: Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2007), 280; Breysach, *Schauplatz und Gedächtnisraum Polen*, 32; Ireneusz Jeziorski, *Od obcości do symulakrum – Obraz Żyda w Polsce w XX wieku* (Kraków: Nomos 2009), 391–392.; Steffen, “Formen der Erinnerung,” 367.

59 See Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 17.

60 Ruth E. Gruber has been observing for many years now an instrumentalization of things being considered Jewish. See Ruth E. Gruber, *Virtually Jewish: Reinventing Jewish Culture in Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

61 See Gruber, *Virtually Jewish*, 236–237; Paul Lendvai, *Antisemitismus ohne Juden: Entwicklungen und Tendenzen in Osteuropa* (Wien: Europaverlag, 1972); Wolfgang Benz, “Tradition und Trauma: Wiederbelebter Antisemitismus in Osteuropa,” in *Juden und Antisemitismus im östlichen Europa*, Mariana Hausleitner and Monika Katz (eds.) (Berlin: Harrassowitz, 1995), 33; Jeziorski, *Od obcości do symulakrum*, 382; Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Neutralizing Memory: The Jew in Contemporary Poland* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1989), 290.

In the first years after the end of the war and before the beginning of Stalinism, the filmmaker Aleksander Ford (birth name Mosche Liwczyc) released the movie *Ulica Graniczna* [Border Street] at a time of violent conflicts between Communists and anti-Communists that approached civil war.⁶² Ethnic belonging was highly instrumentalized in this phase of Poland's negotiation of its political future in the years between 1946 and 1948/49, when the movie was made. Ford, who survived the war in the Soviet Union, is one of the very few Jewish authors of visual representations of Polish witnesses. In this first movie on the relationship between Jews and Poles during the war, Ford wanted to show shades of gray and did not want to spare the Polish public images of their negative behavior.⁶³ But after the pogrom in Kielce in 1946, the authorities feared that a representation of Polish antisemitism by the state film production company could result in riots.⁶⁴ As a result, the filmmaker had to remove scenes depicting negative aspects of Polish behavior from his movie. After these corrections, his movie produced a generally heroic image of Polish behavior towards Jews during the war. The last scene of the movie underlines this interpretation. The movie shows Polish and Jewish families living together in a house on the street separating the ghetto and the so-called "Aryan" side of Warsaw. At the end of the movie (in which children are the protagonists), a Polish boy hands over his father's revolver to his Jewish friend, who wants to fight in the ghetto. The Polish boy had lost his father, who had fought in the Polish underground and was not only a nationalist but also an antisemite.⁶⁵ That the son changed his attitude towards the Jews did not only illustrate Polish support of the Jewish insurrection, but also suggested that Polish

62 *Ulica Graniczna* [Border Street], directed by Aleksander Ford, international release 1948, Polish release 1949, Wytwórnia Filmów Fabularnych Łódź, ŻIH K-385, Movie Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw.

63 This becomes evident by comparing the screenplays: see Aleksander Ford, *Ulica Graniczna: Pierwsza wersja scenariusza* [Border Street: First Version], 1946/47, S-2397, Archiwum Filмотeki Narodowej, Warsaw; Jan Fethke and Ludwik Starski, *Ulica Graniczna: Scenopsis* [Border Street: Screenplay], 1946, S-4558, Archiwum Filмотeki Narodowej, Warsaw; Aleksander Ford, Ludwik Starski and Jean Forge, *Ulica Graniczna: Scenopsis* [Border Street: Screenplay], S-878, Archiwum Filмотeki Narodowej, Warsaw. The last screenplay is undated; presumably it was written between the second screenplay from 1946 and the first public showing of the movie in 1948.

64 See Iwona Kurz, "'Ten obraz jest trochę straszliwy:' Historia pewnego filmu, czyli naród polski twarzą w twarz z Żydem," *Zagłada Żydów – Studia i Materiały* 4 (2008): 476; Alina Madej, *Kino, władza, publiczność: Kinematografia polska w latach 1944–1949* (Białą: Wydawn. Prasa Beskidzka, 2002), 190–193; Piotr Litka, "Polacy i Żydzi w Ulicy Granicznej," *Kwartalnik Filmowy* 29 (2000): 73; "Protokół z posiedzenia Komisji Kwalifikacyjnej w dniach 1 i 2 czerwca 1948 roku" [Minutes of the Sitting of the Qualification Commission at June 1 and 2, 1948], A-329, Pozycja 1.5, Archiwum Filмотeki Narodowej, Warsaw.

65 See Joanna Preizner, *Kamienie na macewie* (Kraków: Wydawn. Austeria, 2012), 30–39.

nationalists were able to feel solidarity with Jews. This was a very important message in the post-war era, when most Polish nationalists understood themselves as anti-Communists and antisemitism was an optional aspect of nationalism. The state movie company produced an image of the Polish eyewitness that was cleansed of ambivalence and was supposed to show that Polish nationalists could fight together with Jews for a better future in Poland. This is very different from the filmmaker's intentions which aimed to show the negative behavior of the Poles towards the Jews. With the pogrom in Kielce in the background, this was meant to provoke some kind of catharsis.⁶⁶ Thus, because state authorities feared the Polish public's reaction, Ford's Jewish authorship and critical perspective on wartime Polish-Jewish relations were made invisible. Taking into consideration these negotiations, it becomes evident that the Polish eyewitness' ambivalence was visible at first but needed to be excluded from the public. This happened at a time when ethnic belonging was instrumentalized. A compromise between the Communist leaders and the often anti-Communist public could be attained by excluding a Jewish perspective and by tabooing negative images of Polish eyewitnesses.

The second example from the end of the 1960s shows that the tendency to exclude negative images of Polish eyewitnesses became stronger over time. When the rights of Jews were restricted with the beginning of Stalinism and after the establishment of the state of Israel, representations of Polish witnesses reappeared in the Polish public only after the beginning of the thaw. The end of Stalinism in Poland meant a reinforcement of nationalist positions, especially in the politics of history.⁶⁷ Veterans who had often been imprisoned and marginalized after the war because of their nationalism and anti-communism were rehabilitated in this period. Antisemitism was very strong in this milieu; Stalinist power was often interpreted as a secret cooperation of Jews and Communists who wanted to suppress the Poles. Finally, in the antisemitic campaign of 1968, Jews were excluded altogether from Polish society.⁶⁸ Accounts of the annihilation of the Jews during World War II by Polish eyewitnesses disappeared almost entirely from Polish discourse. Analyzing a newspaper caricature that represents Polish witnessing can explain why this topic became almost impossible to represent in this time. The newspaper caricature by Zbigniew Damski from 1968 entitled

⁶⁶ See the discussion in "Protokół z posiedzenia Komisji Kwalifikacyjnej w dniach 1 i 2 czerwca 1948 roku."

⁶⁷ See Borodziej, *Geschichte Polens*, 295, 306–309; Marcin Zaremba, *Im nationalen Gewande: Strategien kommunistischer Herrschaftslegitimation in Polen 1944–1980* (Osnabrück: fibre, 2011), 271–358.

⁶⁸ See for example Irwin-Zarecka, *Neutralizing Memory*, 61; Steinlauf, *Bondage to the Dead*, 68.

“Joint Guilt” depicts the feet of a hanged person next to an SS officer.⁶⁹ On the gallows, there is a tag informing the reader that this person had been hiding Jews. We can be sure that most Polish readers of the newspaper recognized the hanged person as a Pole. The representation clearly shows who the victim is: the Pole. In this picture, Jews exist only as recipients of Polish assistance. The text above the picture explains the occasion for this instrumentalization of history. It reads: “Zionist circles have unleashed an anti-Polish campaign to accuse the Poles of a joint guilt for the assassination of millions of citizens of Jewish origin.” The apology made in this picture is complex: it states that at the end of the 1960s when the antisemitic campaign took place, such a campaign was impossible precisely because Poles had a positive attitude towards Jews. In the argumentation of the picture, this is proved by the assistance Poles provided to Jews during the war. In addition, the picture shows that Poles sacrificed their lives when they saved Jewish lives. Following the reasoning of the caricature, the injustice becomes evident for the viewer: even though the Poles sacrificed their lives for the Jews they are accused of antisemitism. The result is a self-image of the Polish eyewitness as a martyr. The Poles’ martyrdom is a very characteristic interpretation of national history that goes back to romanticism in Polish culture;⁷⁰ interestingly, in the 1960s the national narrative of martyrdom fused with Communist politics of history. This is one of the very scarce published visual representations of Polish witnesses from this period. The complexity of the picture indicates the difficulties of dealing with this topic in the public sphere, often described as an atmosphere of silence or muteness. The caricature shows that in 1960s Poland, not only were Jewish authors and critical approaches to Polish witnessing excluded from the public, but representations of Jews appeared only scarcely. Jews became visible only as objects of Polish aid; they were proof of Polish heroism. Therefore, the heroic image of the Polish witness was meant to naturalize an idealized vision of Polish national identity. Polish self-perception did not make room for ambivalence at this time; the exclusion of Jews from society and memory carried with it the difficulty of showing the act of witnessing.

Overall, through an analysis of the historicity of the figure of the witness in Polish visual memory discourse, what becomes evident is a strong tendency toward idealization of the self-image on one side and an exclusion of Jews on the other. Therefore, the entangled histories and memories become as if artificially divided by politics of memory. However, this division can never be fully successful and negotiations of this entangled memory cannot be halted because

⁶⁹ Zbigniew Damski, “Współodpowiedzialność,” *Żołnierz Wolności* no. 73, March 26, 1968, 1.

⁷⁰ See Hannah Maischein, *Ecce Polska – Studien zur Kontinuität des Messianismus in der polnischen Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Hildesheim/Zürich/New York: Olms, 2012).

of the international dimension of this memory. Hence the Polish and the Western memory cultures are entangled to a large extent because of shared history. In Eastern Europe, the end of the war that in the Western perspective led to a democratic liberation is associated with new suppression of the Eastern bloc.⁷¹ In Poland, the end of the war is linked with the symbol of Yalta and the delusion of the Western allies who relinquished former ally Poland to the realm of Soviet power, provoking feelings of betrayal in Poland.⁷² This is why the story of Poland after the end of the war is narrated as a story of two totalitarianisms, and why the nation-state became much more important after the long period of suppression ending only in 1989.⁷³ Furthermore, Western memory of the Holocaust is in Poland not only seen as something not genuinely Polish, but the norms and taboos derived from a specific Western constellation of history and memory seem unfit for Poland. This is very obvious when it comes to critical self-reflection. In the Western Holocaust discourse the acknowledgement of guilt has become some kind of superior form of democratic practice in order to guarantee human rights in the new Europe and to condemn the crimes of the past.⁷⁴ This “cosmopolitan ethic”⁷⁵ is based on a “negative memory”⁷⁶ that is typical of West Germany; since 1989 this concept has also made other Europeans take into consideration collaboration and guilt rather than heroism and resistance when it comes to images and understanding of their own roles in the past.⁷⁷ These negative forms of memory

71 Stefan Troebst, “Das Jahr 1945 als europäischer Erinnerungsort,” in *Erinnerungsorte in Ostmitteleuropa: Erfahrungen der Vergangenheit und Perspektiven*, Matthias Weber (ed.), 287–297 (München: Oldenbourg, 2011), 294; Kramer, “Including and Excluding the Holocaust,” 160.

72 See Troebst, “Das Jahr 1945,” 291; Assmann, *Der lange Schatten*, 255.

73 See Assmann, *Der lange Schatten*, 260–262.

74 See for example Heidemarie Uhl, “Introduction,” in *Zivilisationsbruch und Gedächtniskultur: Das 20. Jahrhundert in der Erinnerung des beginnenden 21. Jahrhunderts*, Heidemarie Uhl (ed.) (Innsbruck: Studien-Verlag, 2003), 9.

75 See Levy and Sznajder, *Erinnerung im globalen Zeitalter*, 206.

76 Reinhart Koselleck, “Formen und Traditionen des negativen Gedächtnisses,” in *Verbrechen erinnern: Die Auseinandersetzung mit Holocaust und Völkermord*, Volkhard Knigge and Norbert Frei (eds.) (München: Beck, 2002), 21–32; see also Claus Leggewie, *Der Kampf um die europäische Erinnerung: Ein Schlachtfeld wird besichtigt* (München: Beck, 2011), 15; Christopher Daase, “Addressing Painful Memories: Apologies as a New Practice in International Relations,” in *Memory in a Global Age: Discourses, Practices and Trajectories*, Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad (eds.) (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

77 Andreas Langenohl, “Memory in Post-Authoritarian Societies,” in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (eds.) (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), 169; Levy and Sznajder, *Erinnerung im globalen Zeitalter*, 225, 237; Michael Jeismann, “Die Holocaust-Erinnerung als Passepartout. Geschichte ohne Erfahrung – Erfahrungen ohne Geschichte: Wie das kollektive Gedächtnis der Gegenwart eine Prognose stellt,” in *Erinnerungsmanagement, Systemtransformation und Vergangenheitspolitik im internationalen*

take place on two levels, historically and as a critical reflection of the memory discourse, its taboos, and its blank spots. Furthermore, the concept of the other has become central, and standing up for the rights of the oppressed became important in this universal memory culture. However, in Poland, as in other Eastern European countries since 1989, decades of Marxist historical narration that to some extent tried to ban national categories gave way to the nation and a specific and heroic narration. The resurgence of a memory of victimhood under the Soviet Union during the war and after its end, which had been suppressed in Communist Poland, seems to pander to a national focus.

The entangled cultures of memory also influence self-perceptions of Polish witnesses. When Lanzmann's documentary *Shoah* was released in the 1980s, the Polish government reacted strongly, even threatening to break off Polish-French diplomatic relations and to eliminate French from Polish school curricula.⁷⁸ Beginning in the 2000s, new forms of problematizing the entanglement not only of history and memory but also of differing memory cultures have appeared in Polish society. Even though these forms are very infrequent, they show that the third post-war generation has a different, new sense of humor and is open to deal differently with questions of Polish national identity and the self-perception of Polish eyewitnesses. In his painting *Maus*, internationally recognized Polish artist Wilhelm Sasnal adapts Western forms of memory and transforms them according to the structure of the Polish memory discourse.⁷⁹ He refers to Art Spiegelman's *Maus – A Survivor's Tale* and its very distinct iconography for Jews, Germans, and Poles in which the Jewish victims are represented as mice, the German perpetrators are depicted as cats, and the Polish bystanders are shown as pigs.⁸⁰ As early as 1987 when Spiegelman wanted to go to Poland for a research visit, he was questioned when applying for a visa to Poland about how he would depict the Poles.⁸¹ For the publication of the book in Poland in 2011, a new publishing house was established; copies of the book *Maus* were burned in front of it.⁸² Sasnal's painting *Maus* shows a pig depicted in Spiegelman's style. The painter plays with the semantics established by Spiegelman on different levels. First, he shows all three groups together in one image: the perpetrators are represented in the

Vergleich, Joachim Landkammer, Thomas Noetzel, and Walther Ch. Zimmerli (eds.) (München: Fink, 2006), 259.

⁷⁸ See Steinlauf, *Bondage to the Dead*, 111.

⁷⁹ Wilhelm Sasnal, *Maus*, 2001, oil on canvas, 50 cm x 40 cm, Sadie Coles HQ, London.

⁸⁰ Art Spiegelman, *Maus*, vol. 1: *Die Geschichte eines Überlebenden* (Reinbek beim Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1989).

⁸¹ Tomasz Łysak, "Contemporary Debates on the Holocaust in Poland: The Reception of Art Spiegelman's 'Graphic Novel' *Maus*," *Polin* 24 (2009): 469–479.

⁸² *Ibid.*

German writing of the word “Maus”; the dimension of the victims is represented by calling it *Maus* because mice are the Jewish victims in Art Spiegelman’s codification; and the Poles are represented by the picture of the pig. Second, he stresses the contradictions of Polish memory. Sasnal seems to say that even though they call themselves mice, the Poles are pigs. They want to hide the negative aspects of their behavior (the pigs in them) under their victimhood (the mice). Third, this representation cannot be distinguished formally from the forms used in Western memory of the Holocaust.

Thus, on one side, Polish self-images are to a certain extent very specific, because of the historical experience and the nationalist interpretations of witnessing that were established in Communist Poland. On the other side, the entanglement with the Western memory discourse of witnessing has a strong influence on Polish memory. This can often be confrontational, but it also holds possibilities of dealing with the difficulties of communication in playful, more productive ways.

Conclusion

Analysis of the historicity of the eyewitness shows the entanglement and division of Polish history and memory with Jews and Germans on different levels. Starting from the historical event of the annihilation of the Jews by the German occupier in Poland, the representations of Polish witnesses in Western and Polish memory discourses show very different tendencies: while the image of the Polish witness is basically a negative one in Western memory discourse, the Polish self-image highlights positive aspects. Analyzing the historicity of this constellation, not only German memory politics of World War II, but also of the Cold War, became visible as influential forces behind these differing images. This sheds new light on the so-called competition of Jewish and Polish victimhood, which can be discussed as a competition of differing historical experiences and memory cultures created by the conflict of worldviews during the Cold War. Finally, difficulties in Poland of dealing with negative self-perceptions as stressed by representations in the historiography such as that of Jan T. Gross might be comprehensive. In contrast, visual representations like that of Wilhelm Sasnal have the advantage of alluding to differing experiences, self-perceptions, and memory cultures without assigning blame to any one side. Clearly, and understandably, this intellectual, playful, and post-modern approach is not to everyone’s taste, especially when it comes to foreign politics of memory.

Kamil Kijek

Aliens in the Lands of the Piasts: The Polonization of Lower Silesia and Its Jewish Community in the Years 1945–1950

Introduction

In 1947, the “Cultural and Propaganda” Division of the Central Committee of Polish Jews, together with the “Kinor” film cooperative, produced a Yiddish propaganda-documentary movie entitled ‘Jewish Settlement in Lower Silesia’ (*Der Yiddisher Yishev in Nidershlezye*), directed by Natan Gross. The film was prepared for the second anniversary of the settlement in June 1947. These festivities were held in its first center, Dzierżoniów, which was previously known by its German name: *Reichenbach im Eulengebirge*. The film tells the story of the miraculous reconstruction of Jewish life in Polish Lower Silesia, praising its rich, autonomous, pluralistic national Jewish life – made possible by the reality of a “new,” “socialist,” and “democratic” Poland. It showcases Jewish workers, artisans, schoolchildren, cultural and social institutions, as well as Zionist activities, and even the rebirth of religious life. The film was presented to Jewish audiences in Poland in the summer of 1947, in the so-called “year of stabilization,” when for many it seemed that collective Jewish national life, with a degree of cultural and social autonomy, had a bright future. Before aptly showing this miraculous rebirth as a brave Jewish answer to the tragedy of the Holocaust, the film begins with images of the Lower Silesian landscape, its farms, factories and coal mines (“the land of black gold”). Its narrator speaks of the “old Polish lands,” “Polish roads,” “Polish automobiles,” now rightfully returned to Poland, and about the Jewish contribution to this act of historical justice.¹

The goal of this article is to analyze the connection between two narrative lines found in the film: the “German” narrative, connected to the very recent German past of Lower Silesia and the communist politics of its “polonization,” and the “Jewish” narrative, concerned with the possibility of national Jewish life in post-1945 Poland.² This article examines the deep metapolitical meaning behind the language used in this document, which characterized all of public

1 See *Der Yiddisher Yishev in Nidershlezye*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5q82Lk7Zi0> (02.10.2016)

2 Research for this article was made possible by participation in a research project and support of Czech Science Foundation, “Inclusion of Jewish citizens in Postwar Czechoslovak and Polish Societies” (project no: 16–01775Y) and Polish National Science Center Bethoveen

discourse in Lower Silesia, and Poland more broadly, in the first five years after the Second World War. Further, drawing a connection between these two aspects sheds new light on the trajectory of Jewish life in post-Holocaust Poland, deepening scholarly understanding of the reasons for its demise in 1949–1950. The small Jewish community of Holocaust survivors responsible for the rebirth of Jewish life in Poland was entirely dependent on the will of state authorities. It thus had no other alternative but to participate in the project of constructing the new “socialist” socio-political reality. One of its core elements was a nationalist propaganda regarding the “Polishness” of the newly acquired Western Territories, which formed the basis of the general vision of a new communist, and simultaneously mono-ethnic, state. The paradox – and great tragedy – of the Jewish community was the fact that it had to participate in a discourse that, in the long term, undermined the popular legitimization of the Jewish presence in Poland.

The Rebirth of Jewish Life in Lower Silesia and the “German Problem” in the New Poland

By the end of July 1944, when large parts of Poland were already liberated by advancing Soviet troops, Polish communists and left-wing socialists alike, closely following guidelines received from Joseph Stalin, proclaimed a new government. This government was called the Polish Committee of National Liberation (*Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego*, PKWN) and began its activity in Chełm, and shortly after relocated to Lublin. On 4 September 1944, a handful of Jewish survivors, as well as a few Jewish activists brought for this occasion from the Soviet Union, established the Temporary Central Committee of Jews in Poland (*Tymczasowy Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce*, TCKŻP, later CKŻP).³ On 13 November, the Jewish Press Agency, in the first issue of its bulletin, presented the official objectives of the new central Jewish body. The second point on the list declares: “Full Jewish participation in the active struggle for the complete driving out of the Germans and for the creation of an independent, free and truly democratic Poland.”⁴ Here, “driving out of the Germans” means the occupying forces of the Nazi state. But soon it became obvious that the meaning of this term was much broader.

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³ In February 1945, the committee was renamed the Central Committee of the Jews in Poland (CKŻP).

⁴ August Grabski, *Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce (1944–1950). Historia polityczna* (Warszawa: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, 2015), 19.

The redrawing of the Polish-German border, as part of the postwar arrangement, was debated by Polish politicians from all sides of the political spectrum – including those active in the Polish government-in-exile in London. But these plans could only be put into practice by political forces that had the support of the Soviet Union, which was driving German armies out of Poland at the time and was the only decisive player in that part of Europe. Stalin had no intention of relinquishing the eastern territories of Poland he acquired through his infamous pact with Hitler in September 1939. During the allied conference in Tehran (28 November–1 December 1943), Stalin shared with F.D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill his plan of moving Poland westwards and placing its border on the Oder-Nisse line.⁵ From that time, the Allies, as well as Stalin's Polish protégés, understood that this act would entail the expulsion of millions of Germans living in territories that would be acquired by Poland. These territories were to be resettled by Poles relocated (or exiled) from territories acquired by the Soviet Union or from Central Poland.

As the Second World War was coming to an end in the spring of 1945, it was not clear, at least for the Western allies, how far the Polish western border would go and how many Germans would be expelled from the country. In May 1945, Władysław Gomułka, Poland's communist leader, speaking to the congress of his Polish Workers Party (*Polska Partia Robotnicza*, PPR), emphasized the complete expulsion of Germans from the so-called "Regained Territories" (*Ziemie Odzyskane*), to make room for Poles arriving from the Soviet Union.⁶ In addition, Gomułka outlined an original vision of a communist mono-ethnic state, which surprisingly meant the appropriation of old right-wing nationalist ideas.⁷ The rapid resettlement of Lower Silesia was also crucial for rebuilding the country's

⁵ The allies thought that Stalin meant the eastern Nisse, which would leave most of Lower Silesia, with its capital Breslau (Wrocław), inside the German borders. For tactical purposes, the Soviet leader did not clarify that he meant the western Nisse, which meant moving Poland's south-western border more than 200 kilometres further to the west. For a discussion of the Polish borders during the Teheran conference and its aftermath, see Sebastian Siebel-Achenbach, *Niederschlesien 1942 bis 1949: alliierte Diplomatie und Nachkriegswirklichkeit* (Würzburg: Bergstadtverlag Wilhelm Gottlieb Korn, 2006), 50–54; Ray M. Douglas, *Orderly and Humane: The Expulsions of the Germans after the Second World War* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012), 75–82.

⁶ Douglas, *Orderly and Humane*, 83.

⁷ For so-called Polish "western thought" and the acquisition of elements of Polish nationalism by the communist state, in 1945 and after, see Marcin Zaremba, *Komunizm, legitymizacja, nacjonalizm. Nacjonalistyczna legitymizacja władzy w komunistycznej Polsce* (Warszawa: TRIO, 2005), 135–173; Gregor Thum, *Obce miasto. Wrocław 1945 i potem* (Wrocław: Via Nova), 2005, 233–282 [for the original of this work, see Gregor Thum, *Die Fremde Stadt. Breslau 1945* (Muenchen: Seidler, 2003)].

economy.⁸ These actions would play an important role in binding Poles to the widely distrusted communists. At the time, few could anticipate the important role of Polish Jews in establishing a Polish presence in the Regained Territories, mainly in Lower Silesia. This process began the very month the war came to an end, in May of 1945.

Lower Silesia was the location of one of the main German concentration camps, Gross-Rosen. From April through the beginning of May, when it was liberated by the Soviet troops, the camp contained 18,000 surviving prisoners, among whom were 10,000 Polish Jews.⁹ One of its subcamps, *Sportschule*, was located in the southern part of the region, Reichenbach (from 1945 Rychbach and 1947 Dzierżoniów). On 13 May 1945, the Jewish prisoners of this camp formed the Committee for the Aid of Former Jewish Camp Prisoners (*Komitet Pomocy Żydom z Obozów Koncentracyjnych*). Besides providing for the food, shelter, defense and physical recovery of former camp inmates, a second major goal of the committee was to explore the possibility of Jewish settlement in the area.¹⁰ Very soon an initiative was taken by the Central Jewish Committee in Warsaw. It seems that its leaders tried to enlist themselves and the whole Jewish community in a general state policy of “creating facts on the ground,” in other words, establishing a Polish presence in the disputed territories. All of this happened before the Potsdam Conference (17th of July–2nd of August 1945), which granted Poland “temporary administration” in the region, and the July 1945 Polish-Soviet agreement over repatriation of Polish citizens from all territories of the Soviet Union.¹¹ The goal of the state was to have as many Polish citizens in Lower Silesia and other Western Territories as quickly as possible, before their fate would be decided at the conference. Incidentally, the largest groups of Polish citizens there, many of whom were not interested in going back to their former homes in central and eastern Poland, were Polish Jews. The Central Jewish Committee acted swiftly in

8 Beata Halicka, *Polski Dzik Zachód. Przymusowe migracje i kulturowe osvajanie Nadodrza 1945–1948* (Kraków: Universitas, 2015), 184–186 [for the original of this work, see: Beata Halicka, *Polens Wilder Westen: erzwungene Migration und die kulturelle Aneignung des Oderraums 1945–1948* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2013).

9 Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (APW), 145, Wojewódzki Komitet Żydowski, 5, k, 37–38.

10 Jonas Turkow, *Noch dem Bafrayung. Zichroyes, Sere dos Poylishe Yidentum* 145 (Buenos Aires: Yiddish Bicher, 1959), 230–231.

11 The 6 July 1945 repatriation agreement was preceded by one signed in September 1944 allowing for the return to Poland of its pre-1939 Polish and Jewish citizens who inhabited the eastern territories, now annexed to the Soviet Union, at the time of the agreement. The July 1945 agreement extended the possibility of repatriation for Poles and Jews now living in the whole territory of the Soviet Union. See Józef Adelson, “Żydzi w Polsce ludowej,” in *Najnowsze dzieje Żydów w Polsce w zarysie (do 1950 roku)*, Jerzy Tomaszewski (ed.) (Warszawa: Wydawn. Nauk. PWN, 1993), 390–391.

the first days of June 1945, sending Itzhak Zukerman, a hero of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and communist activist Jacob Egit to Dzierżoniów. They inspected the communities established by the former camp prisoners and brought their delegation back to Warsaw for talks with the leaders of the Central Jewish Committee, as well as the Minister of Public Administration Edward Ochab. On 17 June 1945, the Jewish Lower Silesian Voivodship Committee was established, with its home in Dzierżoniów. This committee would supervise the work of Jewish town committees formed in a few local towns.¹² When the Polish-Soviet agreement was signed regarding the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of Polish citizens (Poles and Jews) from the Soviet Union, both Jewish and Polish state leaders indicated Lower Silesia as the site of major Jewish settlement.¹³ On 26 June 1945, the Central Jewish Committee, in its Yiddish language program, broadcast by Polish State Radio, announced the following message: "In Lower Silesia today we have around 7,000 Jews [...] former prisoners of the camps in Reichenbach and Waldenburg [...] They have manifested their great joy from the fact that after 700 years of German rule Polish lands are finally going back to Poland and they decided to take part in the reconstruction of these lands. They will work here, establish cooperatives, factories."¹⁴ In addition, a memorandum entitled "On settlement of the Jews in Lower Silesia," the first document issued by the Rychbach/Dzierżoniów Voivodship Jewish Committee, stressed that many Jewish concentration camp survivors had tried to return to their former places of residency, but were "unable to find peace there,"¹⁵ and thus decided to return to a place where they could live among other Jews – to Lower Silesia. One of the main tasks of Jewish communities in this territory was to organize the fast and efficient take over by Jews of German work

12 APW, 145, Wojewódzki Komitet Żydowski, 1, k, 1; Yaacov Egit, *Tzu a naye Leben* (Wrocław: Nidershlezye, 1947), 19–31; Jacob Egit, *Grand Illusion* (Toronto: Lugus, 1991), 44–54.

13 Hana Shlomi, "Rashit ha hitargenut shel yehudei Polin be shlihei milchemet ha olam ha shniya," in *Osefet mechkarim le toldot shearit ha plita ha yehudim be Polin 1944–1950*, Hana Shlomi (ed.) (Tel-Aviv: Universitat Tel-Aviv, Ha merkaz le cheker toldot ha yehudim be polin ve moreshetam, ha machon le cheker tefutzot, 2001), 78–79.

14 YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 6, Yiddish broadcast transcript from 26.06.1945 (no pagination). These auditions, which started to be aired in autumn 1944, were the first Yiddish auditions in the history of Polish radio.

15 This passage of the memorandum vaguely refers to ongoing anti-Jewish violence that did not stop with the German occupation and the Holocaust, but continued to menace Jewish life in Poland in the first years after the Second World War. For anti-Jewish violence in this period, see David Engel, "Patterns of Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland, 1944–1946," *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1998): 43–85; Jan T. Gross, *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz: An Essay in Historical Interpretation* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2006).

places in local industry, service, and agriculture, as well as “placing Jews as part of a plan of restoration and development of former German factories.”¹⁶

For Jewish leaders committed to the plan of building a Jewish future in Poland, binding this plan to Polish nationalism was unavoidable. In respect to the Western Territories, which contained the most favorable conditions for Jewish settlement and collective life, it meant participating in a grand narrative of “native Polish” or “Slavic” lands that, after centuries of existing in an unnatural state under German dominion, returned to their rightful owners, the Poles.¹⁷ Harnessing the Jewish case to Polish ethnic nationalism, which had a long exclusionary tradition in relation to all other ethnicities, especially the Jews, meant active support for the deportation of the German population from Lower Silesia in the first year of socialist Poland. It also meant stepping into a historical trajectory which, over time, allowed for less and less space in the country for Jews themselves.

At the time, in late spring and summer of 1945, Lower Silesian Committees consisting almost entirely of Holocaust survivors achieved impressive results, given the harsh conditions under which they operated, in building the foundations of collective Jewish settlement in the area, and in some cases very much serving as outposts of the Polish state in the new territories. In Dzierżoniów and the vicinity, former Jewish camp prisoners quickly formed a militia that was armed by the local garrison of the Red Army. Before the Polish state militia was formed, it was the Jewish militia that guarded the local factories, shops, workshops and farms from many different restless spirits in the “Polish Wild West,” as these territories came to be called. Officially, the goal of these militias was to defend the local population from the Nazi underground (so-called “Wehrwolf” groups). In fact, the biggest threat of the time came from deserters, demoralized regular soldiers of the Red Army, and criminal elements arriving from Central Poland who engaged in looting (*szaber*) of property in the Western Territories.¹⁸ Restless spirits of this kind could be found among any group. According to the first government reports arriving in Warsaw from Dzierżoniów, some freshly demobilized Jewish soldiers of the Polish army had joined Soviet marauders in robbing arriving Polish settlers.¹⁹ This was a time of chaos, of masses of people travelling through Europe to their homes from

16 Egit, *Tzu a naye Leben*, 26.

17 These narratives, supporting Polish claims to Silesia as ancient Polish territory, were accepted and even supported by some important representatives of the American Jewish community. For an example from Joseph Tenenbaum, president of the World Federation of Polish Jews, see Joseph Tenenbaum, *In Search of a Lost People* (New York: The Beechhurst Press, 1948), 248–250.

18 Yaacov Waserstrum, “Yidn in Nidershlezye noch dem tsvaite velt milchome (zichroynes),” *Bleter far Geshichte* 24 (1986): 209–214, 213; Hersch Smolar, *Oyf di letzter pozicye mit der letzter hofnung* (Tel-Aviv: Ferlag I. L. Peretz, 1982), 35–36.

19 Archiwum Akt Nowych (AAN), 196, Ministerstwo Administracji Publicznej, 2453, k. 3.

camps and forced labor, of Poles and Jews flocking from now Soviet territories, settlers from Central Poland, members of the anti-communist underground trying to hide in Lower Silesia or escape Poland with masses of other illegal emigrants, and of disoriented Germans who stayed in their homes or returned to them after initial flight. In some localities of Lower Silesia, Jews had played a substantial role in the gradual restoration of order. Despite official support from central state authorities for building Jewish social institutions, and taking over German property, Jews often faced openly antisemitic opposition by local officials.²⁰

In these hard and chaotic times, the development of Jewish settlements in Lower Silesia was closely linked with subsequent waves of deportations of the Germans. After their spontaneous flight before the arrival of Soviet and Polish troops, the Germans were expelled by Polish troops from Lower Silesia and other newly acquired Polish western territories beginning in June of 1945. After British protests against these “wild” deportations, they were stopped in autumn 1945, only to recommence again in the late winter and early spring of 1946.²¹ The deportations were part of a well-organized political plan, but more importantly, they were accepted by the decisive majority of Polish society.²² The connection between German deportations and the development of the Polish Jewish community in Lower Silesia was not only a matter of “objective” historical circumstances. In the wake of the Holocaust, there was a certain affinity between the dual notions of Jewish resettlement and anti-German revenge, for both Polish Jews and for important representatives of American Jewry visiting Lower Silesia at the time. Enthusiastic support for the harsh measures taken against the German population, and the great optimism for the prospects of Jewish life in Lower Silesia, from people such as the American Jewish communist Pesach Novick, who visited Poland in 1946, is illustrative.²³ These combined notions were accepted also by important non-communist Jewish figures as well. Yaacov Pat, for example, was a former interwar Polish Bund leader and general secretary of the New York Jewish Labour Committee. In his book, *Osh un Foyer* (1946), and its English translation

20 For an example, see Diaspora Research Center Archives, P-70, The Abraham A. Berman Bequest, 141, Report of the Jewish Voivodship Committee send to Central Jewish Committee in Warsaw (2nd of July 1945) (no pagination); APW, 145, Wojewódzki Komitet Żydowski, 5, k. 1–3, 12.

21 Hugo Service, *Germans to Poles: Communism, Nationalism and Ethnic Cleansing after the Second World War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 51; Sebastian Siebel-Achenbach, *Niederschlesien 1942 bis 1949: alliierte Diplomatie und Nachkriegswirklichkeit* (Würzburg: Bergstadtverlag Wilhelm Gottlieb Korn, 2006), 124–143; Also, for the report of the June 1946 deportations from Lower Silesia, see AAN, 192, Ministerstwo Ziem Odzyskanych, 1945–1949, 52, k. 41.

22 Hugo Service, *Germans to Poles*, 93.

23 For excerpts of Novick’s 1946 report from his visit to Lower Silesia, see <http://dolnoslaskosc.pl/nowy-zydowski-dom-dolny-slask,313.html> (12.10.2016).

Ashes and Fire (1947), he describes his trip to post-Holocaust Poland, made in late winter and early spring of 1946. He was a staunch anti-Stalinist and anti-Communist, and very critical of prospects for the rebirth of Jewish life in Poland. In the first 150 pages of the book, Pat describes the horrors of the Holocaust, and also of Jewish life in Poland after it, with antisemitic attacks, murder and dreadful Soviet domination. His recollections suddenly change in tone within a chapter called “Raichenbach” (sic). Pat writes here:

It was just before the Sabbath, on a Friday night when I drove into Richenbach [sic], capital[sic] of Lower Silesia [...] difference between Richenbach and any other East European city – was staggering. Richenbach is a beautiful town, as whole and rounded as a nut. The market square is clean, pleasant, intact. Everywhere you turn you see Jews going about their business or standing in small clusters on street corners. If an occasional German passes by, you know him by a white armband – just as the yellow badge with the Star of David had once marked the Jew. I can see lighted store windows, open doors. Everything is peaceful and snug. Is this [a] dream or reality?²⁴

Joseph Tenenbaum, president of the World Federation of Polish Jews, visiting Poland in spring and summer of 1946, shared a very similar impression:

I came to Rychbach on April 28, 1946. I was struck by the sound of Yiddish everywhere, Yiddish posters, large streamers in Yiddish calling for May Day celebrations, Yiddish theater bills, and in the Silesian Hotel Polonia where I was lodged a dance was given that night to Yiddish music and songs [...] in spite of the psychical suffering there was a feeling of security, a feeling of “belonging”. Here, the Jews could rebuild a permanent home for Polish Jews. [...] On the following day, I visited the outlying districts, made the rounds of the cooperatives, orphanages and Chalutzim shelters. Some of the Zionist youth buildings were located right in front of the Soviet district, where Soviet garrison was billeted. One could hear from the spot Hebrew songs competing with the Soviet melodies all through the day and most of the night. I also encountered new phenomena, prosperous Jewish farms and farmers, farm schools with Jewish workers and farmhands plowing the fields. Jewish maidens were milking fat German cows, and Jewish farm boys chasing German pigs.²⁵

No different were the attitudes of Polish Jews themselves. They saw their Lower Silesian success, and the rebirth of Jewish life in Poland, as an important form of symbolic revenge for the Holocaust. This stance was aptly expressed by Polish-Jewish emigrant writer Henryk Grynberg, who, in his semi-autobiographical novel *Życie osobiste* [Personal life], remembered his visit to Lower Silesian Bielawa with Jewish scouts at the end of the 1940s:

Every day, after theory class, we came out with our outspread banners and marched in array occupying the whole width of the street, through which only a few years ago the brave boys of

²⁴ Jacob Pat, *Ashes and Fire* (New York: International Universities Press, 1947), 142.

²⁵ Joseph Tenenbaum, *In Search*, 253–254.

the Hitlerjugend had marched. We couldn't stop thinking about that looking at XVII century facades of buildings, with their gothic signs. And so we hit the German pavements even more strongly with our boots, and under the guise of a march of cheers and songs we screamed: You didn't succeed, sons of We had survived you! You don't live here anymore, but we do!²⁶

These kinds of arguments were a central part of official Jewish discourse at the time.²⁷ Hersh Smolar, one of the leaders of the so-called "Jewish Faction" of the Polish communist party, wrote in 1947 that the Jewish presence in Lower Silesia was an act of historical justice that was possible only through Jewish participation in the Polish struggle to regain their lands after hundreds of years of German domination.²⁸

It is important to note that Jewish victimhood from the hands of the Nazis was also used by the authorities to legitimize the Polish presence and permanent acquisition of Lower Silesia. In connection with the Paris Peace Conference, in July 1946, the Ministries of the Regained Territories and of Foreign Affairs jointly organized a study trip for Polish correspondents of the British and American press to Lower Silesia. Western journalists visited southern parts of Wrocław voivodship, which contained the highest density of Jewish settlements. The author of the government report noted with satisfaction that, thanks to this visit,

26 Henryk Grynberg, *Życie osobiste* (Warszawa: PIW, 1992), 20. The same mood is also expressed in the memoirs of the American volunteer working in the Jewish orphanage in Peterswaldau/Piotrlesie, see YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 1, 16; or recollections of Bela Fleis, who arrived with her mother from the Soviet Union to Lower Silesia in spring 1946. For quote, see Helga Hirsch, *Gehen oder Bleiben. Juden in Schlesien und Pommern 1945–1957* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2011), 78; these emotions were perfectly congruent with the popular mood of Lower Silesian Poles at the time. For example, see Teresa Gos, *Moja wędrówka z Kielc na Ziemię Odzyskaną* (Wrocław: [printed by the family of the author], 2010), 21; and in all of Poland, see Marcin Zaremba, *Wielka trwoga. Polska 1944–1947. Ludowa reakcja na kryzys* (Kraków: Znak, 2012), 561–573.

27 That of course does not mean that Jews did not have social contacts, or even good relations with German individuals, usually their new neighbors. Jews as did Poles in many cases were able to take over and run anew factories, workshops, farms or places such as dental clinics with the help of their previous German owners. Also, Jewish committees had taken care, supported financially and defended in front of the authorities individual Germans who were known to help Jewish camp prisoners during the war, or for example Konrad Springer, who took care over the Jewish cemetery in Dzierżoniów and prevented its destruction during the war. See "Fotoreportaż z życia Żydów na Dolnym Śląsku, Rychbach 1945–1946" (Rychbach: ZIH, 1946); interviews with Bela Fleis (Dzierżoniów, 28.09.2008); Szymon and Dora Tennebaum (Bielawa, 19.11.2008); Frieda Pertman (Baltimore, 16–17.02.2009); Samuel Ponczak (Colombia, 13.02.2009); Joseph Tenenbaum, *In Search*, 254. But all of this did not change the fact that in public discourse the German nation, as a whole, was presented as a collective enemy.

28 Egit, *Tsu a naye leben*, 3–5. Find Hersh Smolar's remarks in the Introduction; for recollections of Jewish public discourse justifying harsh anti-German measures, see Turkow, *Noch dem Bafrayung*, 235–236.

the correspondents could understand the “Jewish question in Poland” and the “attitude of Polish Jews towards Polish reality.”²⁹ In the first years of communist Poland, the reconstruction of its Jewish community, despite the presence of anti-semitism and waves of popular anti-Jewish violence, had an important place in foreign propaganda and the legitimization of the policies of the new authorities. Jews were to serve as an important public relations asset, proof of a new democratic non-xenophobic Poland. The rebirth of Jewish life in Lower Silesia was frequently reported in *Poland of Today*, an English language bulletin published by the Polish embassy in the United States.³⁰

In January 1946, the Polish Jewish Committees had 93,000 registered Jews (with thousands of others unregistered). From February until July 1946, a large wave of 136,000 Jewish repatriates arrived in Poland from the Soviet Union.³¹ Most of them were directed to Lower Silesia, as it had the best conditions for their resettlement. Precisely at the time when Jewish repatriation from Soviet Union was coming to an end and the number of Jews in Poland after the Holocaust reached its peak, the terrible pogrom of 4 July 1946 took place in Kielce, taking the lives of 42 Jews.³² This caused a major emigration panic and flight from Poland by the majority of Polish Jews. Its effects were also enormous in Lower Silesia, but still weaker than in other parts of the country. In November 1946, the Jewish population of Lower Silesia, having stabilized after the panicked mass emigration, was still impressive, numbering some 72,000 – densely concentrated in a few towns – and representing 70% of all of Polish Jewry.³³ The following year, 1947, was a time of so-called “stabilization.” Jewish schools, cooperatives, and collective farms reached the peak of their development. Paradoxically, this was also the year of the highest Zionist activity in Poland, now concentrated not on flight (*Bricha*), but on establishing party cells, youth movements, kibbutzim, schools – besides Łódź, with Lower Silesia as their center. With the exception of Zionist Revisionists, all of the important Jewish political parties, among them the

²⁹ AAN, 196: Ministerstwo Ziem Odzyskanych, 52, k. 57.

³⁰ For examples, see *Poland of Today*, no. 4, April 1946; *Poland of Today*, no. 4, April 1947; YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 1, k. 3, 20.

³¹ Grzegorz Berendt, August Grabski, and Albert Stanowski, *Studia z historii Żydów w Polsce* (Warszawa: ŻIH, 2000), 108.

³² For the Kielce pogrom, see Bożena Szaynok, *Pogrom Żydów w Kielcach 4 lipca 1946* (Warszawa: Bellona, 1992); Joanna Tokarska-Bakir, *Okrzyki pogromowe. Szkice z antropologii historycznej Polski lat 1939–1946* (Wołowiec: Czarne, 2012), 143–176.

³³ YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 1, k. 4; Bożena Szaynok, *Ludność żydowska na Dolnym Śląsku* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2000), 103. Szaynok disputes the figure of 72 thousand registered Jews, arguing that the real number was probably around 50 thousand at the time of the “stabilization.”

orthodox Agudat Israel, ran their activities legally in Poland.³⁴ As it is written in the Bundist *Folkstsaytung* correspondence from Lower Silesia, in June of 1947:

We arrive here from “alienated” Warsaw, which is alienated externally, because there’s fewer Jews here, and internally (in the offices of the Central Jewish Committee one can hardly hear any Yiddish). And here, in Lower Silesia, one finds a kind of consolation [...] Against all odds, Jewish culture still lives and is being built [...] And so, this last remnant of Jewish survivors, who gave so much blood of their closest relatives in the fight with the Hitlerite occupiers, and this Jewish survivor, who carried the flame of the fight against the fascist oppressors, had won his place and right to live in a free anti-fascist Poland.³⁵

In 1947, the documentary *Jewish Life in Lower Silesia* was produced. For many – not only for Jewish communists and Jews living in the country, but also those in the West – it seemed that collective Jewish national life in Poland, with a limited degree of social and cultural autonomy, was not only possible, but was an established fact. The problem was that through their unavoidable participation in this new socialist state-building, or a curious version of communist-directed Polish nationalism, Jews found themselves on a path that endangered their remarkable communal achievements.

Nationalism, Communism and the Trajectory of the Demise of Jewish National Life in Post-Holocaust Poland

What were the conditions that Jews had to meet in order to receive this “right to live in a free anti-fascist Poland” mentioned above in the *Folkstsaytung*? Most important of all was the unshakable support for the new ruling regime. As we have seen, this support also meant participation in the public discourse that drew intensively from the arsenal of Polish nationalism. Its code was well known to Polish Jews, who were subjected to it in interwar Polish schools and acquired it through Polish acculturation. For the first time in modern history, Jews were not only victims of Polish nationalism exclusionary praxis, but also its participants, while simultaneously not being denied their right to individual and collective Jewish identity. However, Jews had to pay a certain price for their inclusion, which grew steadily with the increasing authoritarianism of the communist regime. Anti-German discourse was just as inseparable from other elements

³⁴ Adelson, “Żydzi w Polsce ludowej,” 446–447.

³⁵ *Folkstsaytung*, no. 10–11, 15.VII–1–VIII 1947, 9.

of the general state discourse that Jews were forced to reproduce. This steadily undermined the possibility of forming their own discourse, their own authentic communal voice, and, thus, their collective and national subjectivity.

Since the second half of 1944, when the PKWN and the Central Jewish Committee were formed, the latter's political line was fully subjugated to that of the former. Among other things, this loyalty assumed participation in attacking the Polish émigré government in London and the anti-communist opposition in the country.³⁶ This political line had to be consistently sustained, and gradually strengthened, because of the deepening division between World War II Allies and the development of the Cold War. Thus, for example, during the meeting of the CKŻP in January 1946 – where participants included not only the Warsaw Jewish leaders, but the leaders of the voivodship and county committees from all over Poland – a resolution was made against the “campaign of the foreign press [...] spreading fantastic and deceitful news [...] about the rising tide of antisemitism, which is allegedly the reason for Jewish flight from Poland.” All of this was recast as lies issued by a “band of reactionaries,” that is, the Polish London émigré government.³⁷

This process of subjugating Jewish political discourse, disabling the ability to speak freely about the complicated position and hardships of Jewish life in Poland, reached its peak during the campaign for the communist referendum that was to take place on 30 June, 1946. Jewish committees were already forced to act in accordance with a communist-supported policy of a “united front,” according to which Jewish parties active in Jewish committees had to speak with one voice in all matters related to Polish politics and the international policy of the state. In practice, regardless of the quantitative domination of various Zionists in the Jewish committees, they were acting under the hegemony of the communists. The former acted under strict guidelines issued by the Central Committee of the Polish Workers Party. It is also important to note that this Jewish “united front” was a copy of the Polish “national unity government” acting under uncontested domination of the communists. As it was framed by Hersh Smolar, the Jewish national front was an “extension of the new state organism.”³⁸ Thus, on the level of official politics, independently of internal Jewish matters, there was no Jewish autonomy in post-war Poland, even in its first years.³⁹ Jewish committees were fully subjugated to the policies of the state.

³⁶ YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 6 (unpaginated). See Yiddish Polish Radio broadcasts from 31.03 and 12.05.1945.

³⁷ YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 14 (unpaginated).

³⁸ Smolar, *Oyf di letzter pozicye*, 43–44.

³⁹ For differences of opinion regarding whether Jews in Poland in the years 1944–1949 had a relatively large degree of political and national autonomy, see Grabski, *Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce*, 21.

This kind of subjugation was clearly manifested during June 1946 referendum, which was little more than a propaganda trick by the communists to postpone elections in Poland. Polish society was asked three questions, to which it was hard to answer “No,” even for people opposing communism. Answering three times “Yes” meant supporting the communist government. Voters were asked if they were in favor of the abolition of the Senate (second chamber of the Polish parliament), agrarian reform, the nationalization of big industry (combined with keeping private economic enterprises), and support for the new Polish western border.⁴⁰ A proclamation of Poalei Zion Left, issued two months before the referendum as part of its campaign, not only praised the Soviet Union for defeating fascism, but also condemned western “capitalist and imperialist vultures again showing their claws.” In the same proclamation, people who attacked Jews in Poland at the time were regarded as solely connected to the “forces of reaction” operating in capitalist countries. These forces were seen as acting against the Soviet Union and supporting the Germans after the war. Hence, unwavering support for the Polish government was the only answer that Jews could give.⁴¹ Just before the referendum, this logic was offered by one of the leading Zionist journalists in Poland, Henryk Szner, who wrote the following in an article titled, “The Jewish masses will answer three times yes!” (“*Masy żydowskie odpowiedzą trzykrotnym tak!*”):

The Oder and Nisse borders were not only an act of satisfaction for centuries of long harm inflicted upon Slavs and the Polish nation. By answering “yes” to the third question, we will corroborate and strengthen the rightful Polish territorial claims. The Oder and Nissa border is one of the main guarantees against the rebirth of German imperialism, they are the basis of a mighty and independent Poland.⁴²

As the words of Szner aptly demonstrate, even Zionists were forced to use the language of communist propaganda, taken straight from the arsenal of right-wing Polish ethnic nationalism. In Lower Silesia, all Jewish political parties, even those as remote from communism as orthodox Agudat Israel and religious-Zionist Mizrachi, were harnessed to the referendum propaganda campaign.⁴³

This level of political subjugation had deep consequences central to the problems of Jewish life in Poland. Just a few days after the Referendum, the Kielce pogrom of 4 July 1946 took place. On the level of official public language, Polish Jews could not take any other stance or interpretation of the reasons behind

⁴⁰ Krystyna Kersten, *Narodziny systemu władzy. Polska 1943–1948* (Lublin: [s.n.], 1989), 199.

⁴¹ YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 34, (unpaginated). Proclamation of the Poalei Zion Left, 1st of May 1946.

⁴² Grabski, *Centralny Komitet Żydów*, 281. Grabski quotes Szner.

⁴³ For example, see Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu, 145, Wojewódzki Komitet Żydowski, 5, k. 83–86.

the pogrom other than those presented in the official propaganda explanations of the state. There was no place for a discussion about the antisemitism of the Polish masses, of some communist party members, and of state functionaries. There was no place to talk about glaring mistakes, or even the conscious decision, of the local Kielce authorities and security forces to not defend Jews, or about the participation of members of the military and militia in the pogrom. In the public comment on the Kielce pogrom issued by the Central Jewish Committee of 9 August 1946, anti-Jewish violence was condemned by a “decisive majority of democratic Polish society,” and was cast as almost solely planned and perpetrated by the right-wing anti-government opposition, directed from London. Antisemitism functioned only among the “epigones of Hitlerism,” never among the ranks of people supporting “democratic progress.” The state was said to have taken all measures needed to fight antisemitism in Poland.⁴⁴ A similar tone is found in a speech by the Bundist leader Michał Szuldenfrei, wherein he regarded antisemitism in general, and the Kielce pogrom in particular, as:

strictly connected to the offensive of the camp of Polish reaction, supported by Anders [general of the Polish Army evacuated from the Soviet Union in 1942 and later fighting on the side of Western Allies- K.K.] circles, in its fight for political power and against the democratic camp. Methods of racism and antisemitism were always and also today are used by forces of the reaction in their class fight against democracy and social progress.⁴⁵

There were also individual voices in the Jewish West supporting this narrative. Perhaps the most important was the above-mentioned Joseph Tenenbaum.⁴⁶ However, other voices were more dominant. This included columns within a New York Yiddish newspaper, the socialist-oriented *Forverts*, written by none other than Yaacov Pat – whose many other activities included organizing ongoing help for the Jewish community in post-Holocaust Poland. As seen in relation to Lower

⁴⁴ YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 15 (unpaginated). Public Appeal of CKŻP from 09.08.1946. It should be added that the authorities also liked to use anti-German language regarding its own problems in dealing with the antisemitism of the Polish population. It was often attributed to hidden Volksdeutsche, continually being uncovered by the new regime. In the words of a government official: “In pre-war Poland, ruled by Rydz-Smigly and the Colonels, the poison of antisemitism had penetrated deep into the souls of the Polish people. Six years of German occupation, six years of unpunished Jewish massacres and incessant anti-Jewish propaganda, have left their profound imprint upon the population.” Placing all blame on the Germans, Nazi propaganda directed at the Polish population during the war and the pre-war Sanacja regime was much easier for an unpopular and authoritarian state than to confront the truly extant and widespread antisemitism in contemporary Poland; for another example, see YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 1, k. 13, 20.

⁴⁵ Grabski, *Centralny Komitet Żydów*, 133. Grabski quotes from: “Przemówienie tow. posła Dra M. Szuldenfreia na XI sesji KRN,” *Głos Bundu*, 1946, no. 2–3.

⁴⁶ Joseph Tenenbaum, *In Search*, 196–200, 209–215, 224–231.

Silesia, he had cautiously believed in the possibility of sustaining the community in spring 1946. Pat was a well-informed person, who visited Poland and was well-connected to various people in the Jewish community. He was also speaking with the representatives of the state like Prime Minister Edward Osóbka-Morawski or with Stanisław Mikołajczyk, leader of the Polish Peasant Party, which was the head of the official opposition until it was crushed in 1947. Pat was also a committed and lifelong socialist. In a series of articles in *Forverts*, he was able to describe the complicated situation of Polish Jews and the multifaceted character of antisemitism in the country. He had the ability to speak with a voice that Polish Jews were themselves forbidden to use. In his pieces on the Kielce pogrom, he condemned the attitude of the Polish Church, which refused to condemn antisemitism and attacks on Jews, instead fueling a narrative of “Judeocommunism” and the myth that Jews ruled the country. Pat was also not shy in writing that anti-Jewish attacks had taken place all over Poland, and that many Jews saw flight from the country as the only possible solution. He had also clearly demonstrated the participation of the military and militia in the Kielce pogrom. Like the Central Jewish Committee and Polish authorities, he identified the role in the pogrom of the anti-Jewish stereotypes and myths which had been promoted so intensely by the government opposition. However, Pat also wrote that there was no proof, or even any sign, of their participation or will to organize a pogrom. Contrary to “official” Polish statements, he could freely write that the perpetrators of the pogrom were not an isolated group, but rather represented broad and very different strata of Polish society, as well as social circles that were, generally, positively predisposed to the ruling regime. By highlighting that the authorities had only officially condemned antisemitism, Pat accused them of negligence before and during the pogrom – thus, the “state from which a part of its citizens needs to flee with panic is responsible for the pogroms and the Jewish blood that is spilled.” In recognizing the deep pre-war and Holocaust-rooted antisemitism as the main reason behind anti-Jewish violence, Pat also observed the devastating effects that the undemocratic communist minority dictatorship was wreaking on Polish society. Moreover, Pat revealed that it was within the American and British German occupational zones, and not the Soviet areas, that Polish Jews could truly find shelter. As he concluded in an article published on 3 September 1946 – after Kielce, tens of thousands of Jews fled to DP camps in western allied zones of occupied Germany, yet none fled to the Soviet Union. This was because, he argued: “Polish Jews had already known well what Soviet Russia is.”⁴⁷

⁴⁷ YIVO Archives, RG 541, Yaacov Pat bequest, 137. Unpaginated clippings from Pat’s articles in *Forverts* from August and September of 1946.

The difference between Pat's remarks on the Jewish situation in Poland, and what could be officially expressed by Polish Jews residing in the country, indicates crucial problems of Jewish national subjectivity under the early years of communism. The decades following the end of the nineteenth century saw the emigration of Jews from Eastern Europe to America, Palestine, and other non-European locations until the early post-Holocaust years. This was a time of constant development for modern Jewish internationalism, communication, mutual support, and consciousness of the deep links between various Jewish communities across the world. After the Holocaust, a concert of developments served as ultimate proof for the growth of Jewish transnationalism. These include: Jewish emigration from Poland, interconnected activities carried out in Palestine and elsewhere by Zionist institutions, as well as the crucial role of organizations such as American Joint Distribution Committee or Jewish Labor Committee (directed by Pat) in the reconstruction of Jewish life in Europe and their support for the Jewish *yishuv* in the Land of Israel. After the war and the genocide, the Polish Jewish community, once at the demographic center of the Jewish world, became its margin. Its prospects as a national community, sustaining independent social and cultural life, were dependent upon a modern transnational connection with the new centers of the Jewish world – the United States and Palestine. In 1946, the emergence of the Cold War and the hardening of the "Iron Curtain" began to endanger the international connections of Polish Jews. As seen in the declarations of the Central Committee of Polish Jews, and Jewish political parties, mentioned above, they were forced to condemn western countries in general as capitalist regimes and as opposed to communist policies in Poland in particular. With time, this growing logic of Cold War conflict also endangered links with the western world's Jewish communities. These were perhaps the most important assets of the Polish Jewish community after the Holocaust, which enabled its rebuilding. The subjugation of Polish Jews to the logic of the Cold War, among many other things, impeded their ability to diagnose, speak openly about, and act against the main challenges to their life in the country. Also, the public manner in which Polish Jewish institutions could speak of antisemitism was subordinated to the propaganda language of the state, in which all social ills were located outside of it and outside of the core of Polish society, connected only to the western "forces of reaction." The state propaganda, and consequently the language of Polish Jewish institutions of the time, was thus characterized by "rhetorical collectivism," public speaking in strict and clearly defined categories of large social and national groups, with extensive use of stereotypes and aggressive images. This kind of language was used against the German population in the Regained Territories, and justified not only their Polish resettlement, but for a time, also the reconstruction of Polish Jewish national life in a new place, in Lower Silesia. In time, this political language also harmed the Jews themselves.

This is the crucial paradox. At the beginning, Jews were exceptional as the only ethnic group provided with a degree of self-government, and the opportunity to rebuild their connections with Jewish centers outside of Poland. But this was done with many caveats, and one, paradoxically, was participation in the nationalist policies of ethnic homogenization performed by the Polish State in Lower Silesia. The consequence of this paradox was that by fulfilling this condition by supporting the state propaganda and rhetoric of polonizing the “Western Territories,” the Jews were losing their own political subjectivity. They were also losing the capacity to speak their own language and, with that, the ability to express and manifest their Jewish presence in Lower Silesia. Jews who came to the conclusion that they had no other alternative in Poland were thus forced to support the state. That state was authoritarian and did not accept any competition in the form of public discourse. Therefore, discourse could only be carried out in ideologically loaded and nationalist terms. And, paradoxically, participation in this policy subverted Jewish autonomy of Lower Silesia and was decisive in spelling the end of Jewish social, cultural, and political pluralism.

The logic of an increasingly authoritarian state, combined with the simultaneous demise of Jewish national subjectivity, was revealed in the subsequent chain of events. After the June 1946 referendum, the next big political campaign of the communists was in the election of 19 January, 1947. The Yiddish language electoral appeal of the Central Jewish Committee had called on Jewish voters to vote for the communist-led Democratic Bloc. It was touted as the only answer to the “fascism” that had attacked Polish Jews in 1946, a clear association with the Kielce pogrom.⁴⁸ Four days before the elections, the Polish-language Central Zionist newspaper *Opinia* called on Jewish voters to support the Bloc:

The electoral win of the Bloc of Polish Democracy will enable further reconstruction of the country, social reforms, keeping the Oder and Nisse borders and a continuation of the country's peaceful foreign policy by an alliance with the Soviet Union. For us, Jews, the victory of the Democratic Bloc is a guarantee of the intensified fight with the forces of reaction, the murder of our innocent brothers, a guarantee of real equality and finally of the support of the Polish state for our fight for an independent life in Palestine.⁴⁹

In a report covering the months between the January 1947 elections and the May Day demonstration of the same year, the Lower Silesian branch of the Jewish Faction of the communist party underscored an “overwhelming victory of the Democratic Bloc [...] demonstrating a total bankruptcy of the Polish Peasant Party

⁴⁸ YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 42 (unpaginated).

⁴⁹ Grabski, *Centralny Komitet Żydów*, 300. Grabski quotes from Abraham Rozenman's “O zwycięstwo demokracji,” *Opinia*, 15.01.1947.

opposition,” “enthusiasm of the Jews masses,” and the “vanishing of the anti-semitism.”⁵⁰

The year 1947 was a year of stabilization for Jewish life in Poland, after the panic and emigration wave caused by the Kielce pogrom had ended, and Polish Jews, especially the Lower Silesian community, reached the peak of their economic and organizational development.⁵¹ But this was also the year when the true “Stalinization” of Polish life began. In the summer of 1947, the “war for commerce” introduced the Stalinization of economic life. In September 1947, the Cominform was created at the well-known Lower Silesian mountain resort Szklarska Poręba. The American Marshall Plan for Europe was declined by Soviet-dominated states. Not only communists, but also other Jewish parties, were forced to support the Polish rejection of the Marshall Plan, and with that, they were also forced to curb their relations with the Jews in the West. Thus, exactly at the moment when Natan Gross’s film reached cinema screens – praising the Jewish pluralism of Lower Silesia, and its socialist, but also Zionist and orthodox life – that life was already beginning to end. The space for Jewish national subjectivity, inextricably linked to its Jewish transnationalism, was drastically limited, and ultimately liquidated.

In the beginning of 1948, when Polish authorities, following the lead of the Soviet Union, still supported the Zionist struggle in Palestine and accepted close ties between the Polish Jewish community and the Palestinian *Yishuv*, the Ministry of Public Security observed these and all other international Jewish ties with great suspicion. Any Jewish independence or autonomy in relation to the state was perceived as potentially criminal.⁵² The fate of the “Jewish pavilion” is perhaps the most telling example of how the indigenous nationalism of Lower Silesia (“the lands of the Piasts”), anti-German propaganda, the authoritarianism of the communist state, and Jewish participation therein, meant the demise of Jewish pluralism and national life. This “pavilion” was supposed to be erected as part of the “Exhibition of Regained Lands,” which took place in Wrocław between July and October 1948. Local Jewish authorities, headed by the chairman of the Jewish Voivodship Committee of Lower Silesia, and communist activist, Jacob Egit, treated their part of exhibition as a priority. It was to serve as an ultimate proof and manifestation of their success, showcasing Jewish achievements and contributions to the Polish resettlement of “historical Polish lands.” The “pavilion” was also to be a sign of Jewish integration in the new socialist Poland. Jewish activists from the

50 APW, 331/VI: Urząd Wojewódzki we Wrocławiu Wydział Społeczno-Polityczny, Akta Komisarza. Wojewódzkiego dla spraw produktywizacji ludności żydowskiej na województwo wrocławskie, 697, k. 77–85.

51 Especially see Szaynok, *Ludność żydowska*, 101–168.

52 Bożena Szaynok, *Z historii i Moskwą w tle. Polska a Izrael, 1944–1948* (Warszawa, IPN, 2007), 141.

region, together with local artists, began to work on the Jewish part of the exhibition in spring of 1948. In their March meeting, Jacob Egit expressed pride that “Jews were the first pioneers of Polishness in the Regained Territories.”⁵³ This kind of opinion was not necessarily shared by the authorities, and such public expressions could be blocked by the government. This was seen during events surrounding the “Great Week of the Western Lands” in Wałbrzych (former Waldenburg), one of the most important Lower Silesian towns, in April of 1948. Wałbrzych contained one of the largest Jewish populations, where Jews were indeed the pioneers of Polish rule in 1945. As reported in Yiddish radio broadcast, “those celebrations were a great manifestation of the Polishness of ancient Piast lands.” A crowd of 20,000 people was addressed by Vice-Prime Minister Władysław Gomułka and the president of Wałbrzych. They spoke about “cleansing the land of any signs of Germanness,” and about German atrocities committed in death camps and the genocide of the Polish nation. Jews were not mentioned at all, neither as victims of war and the Holocaust, nor as the pioneers of Polish Lower Silesia.⁵⁴

Nevertheless, Jewish community work on the construction of the Jewish pavilion for the summer exhibition went as planned. In April 1948, its design was accepted by the Ministry of the Regained Territories.⁵⁵ But suddenly, in June, two weeks prior to the opening of the exhibition, when the pavilion was ready, it was visited by the Wrocław chief of security police and his Soviet advisor. One of them said to Egit, “Comrade Egit, you must think that you’re in Israel. This would be a very appropriate pavilion for Tel-Aviv, but this is Poland.”⁵⁶ Hersch Smolar remembered that when the pavilion was ready, the authorities had sent to Wrocław Antoni Bida (the future Polish ambassador in Israel), who, meeting with local Jewish leaders, praised the pavilion, but also asked them meaningful questions: “Why is it [the Jewish pavilion] needed? Why did the Jews have to be shown? Is this in the interest of Poland and of the Jewish community?” Jacob Egit tried to intervene with the local head of the communist party, Kazimierz Witaszewski (in later years, a well-known antisemite in the high ranks of the party). He not only refused to help but accused Egit and his colleagues of “Jewish nationalism, alienation from the Polish reality, enclosing in a Jewish Ghetto, close cooperation with foreign Jewish elements, especially with the American Joint Distribution Committee.”⁵⁷

53 Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego (AŻIH), 303/XIII, Wydział Kultury i Propagandy CKŻP, 8, k. 68.

54 Ibid., 11, k. 45–46.

55 Ibid., 11, k. 73.

56 Egit, *Grand Illusion*, 98.

57 Smolar, *Oyf di letzter pozicye*, 152.

In the end, the Jewish pavilion was dismantled and its elements, taken out of their context, were integrated into the general exhibition. Perhaps the most tragic aspect of the event was the fact that Jews were forced to act as if nothing had happened. The above-mentioned words of Egit and Smolar were written years after the events, after the former left Poland for Canada and the latter for Israel. At the time in Poland, neither they, or any other Jewish public figure or institution, could express their protest publicly or even inform others about what happened. On 1 July 1948, two weeks after officials had communicated to the Jewish leaders the decision to liquidate their pavilion, Jewish listeners of Polish state radio broadcasting in Yiddish were told that in the exhibition they would see a “Jewish pavilion that will show three years of work of the Jewish settlement in Lower and Upper Silesia and the Szczecin voivodship.”⁵⁸ Another broadcast about the exhibition from later in July simply did not mention the Jewish pavilion at all, neither informing nor explaining to listeners the reasons why it was liquidated just before the opening of the event. This was only implied in an apologetic tip of the hat about the presence of Jews in different parts of the general exhibition. Its encompassing narrative line was constrained by the logic of Polish ethnic nationalism.⁵⁹

Following these events, the deconstruction of Jewish national life and institutions carried on according to the same logic. In January 1948, the Central Jewish Committee in Poland, after many months of negotiations, finally joined the World Jewish Congress (WJC). Half a year later, between the 27th of June and the 6th of July 1948, the Congress held its second session in the Swiss town of Montreux. Members of the Polish Jewish delegation, which in Montreux had strictly followed the guidelines received in Warsaw, were attacked upon returning to Poland for the “political mistakes” they made at the Congress. According to communist party officials, the Polish Jewish delegation did not do enough to confront the imperialist views of Jewish delegates from Western countries.⁶⁰

The autumn of 1948 saw the dismantling and annexation of the Polish Socialist Party into the ranks of the communists, now called the Polish United Workers' Party (*Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza*, PZPR). The same happened with the Jewish Bund, which was forced to join PZPR in January of 1949. Before that happened, the Polish Bund had to break its ties with the World Bund Coordinating Committee in New York.⁶¹ After the support of the Soviet and satellite countries for

⁵⁸ AŻIH, 303/XIII: Wydział Kultury i Propagandy CKŻP, 15, k. 1.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 15, k. 15, 26; 16, k. 9–11, 44–46; 19, k. 3–5.

⁶⁰ Grabski, *Centralny Komitet Żydów*, 192–193.

⁶¹ Daniel Blatman, *For our Freedom and Yours: Jewish Labour Bund in Poland 1939–1949* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003), 210–211.

the establishment of the State of Israel did not lead to expected results, an attack on Zionism began. In September 1949, the Central Jewish Committee attacked the WJC that it had so recently joined. The main reason was the alleged alliance of the capitalist and imperialist West with German “revanchism” and the Western Jewish community’s alleged complicity therein. In a document of the Central Jewish Committee announcing this breakup, Yaacov Pat and his *Forverts*, together with the leaders of the WJC, were accused of a “full, undisguised hatred towards Jewish communities of the people’s democracies in general and the Polish Jewish community in particular.”⁶² On 16 May 1949, the Central Jewish Committee had officially broken its ties with the WJC. Finally, in October 1950, the Committee was dismantled and replaced by a fully state-controlled Jewish Socio-Cultural Association. Jewish pluralism in Poland and in Lower Silesia was now over. Its dismantling, and the severe limitations imposed on connections with families and organizations in the western world, caused many Polish Jews to emigrate. Between the autumns of 1949 and 1950, 28,000 of them had left Poland.⁶³

Summary

From the end of nineteenth century, internationalism was an important part of Jewish modernity. It was crucial to the reconstruction of Jewish life after the Holocaust. Another feature of the modern Jewish experience in Poland, as well as all other European countries, was participation in a local meta-language of the public discourse. In Poland, this encompassed the obligation of constantly declaring Polish patriotism, attachment to the Polish nation, its history, and acting consistently in accordance with its interests. In post-war Polish Lower Silesia, this obligation meant full support for the “Piaśt” or “indigenously Polish” character of the Regained Territories. Only by such means were Jews allowed to feel at home in the region. The paradox of the time was that precisely in the years when interwar discrimination was abolished, when for the first time the Polish state openly declared its fight with antisemitism, it demanded an even stronger “symbolic submission” from the Jews than before. Jews who wanted to stay in Poland had no choice but to obey this call. Integration and acceptance of Jews into Polish society, longed for by the former for so long, in post-1945 Poland assumed their participation in the construction of a nationalist language that in the long run made them victims of symbolic exclusion. Jews who, in the first

⁶² YIVO Archives, RG 116, Poland 3, Folder 14 (unpaginated).

⁶³ Berendt, et. al, *Studia z historii Żydów*, 117. Only 70,000 still stayed in the country.

years after the Holocaust, stayed in Poland, had allied themselves with the government. They did so not only due to a lack of other options, but also because it promised them equality, individual freedom, and possibilities for a collective Jewish national life. However, alliance with an authoritarian state also meant a growing dependence upon it, losing in the process autonomy and the ability to speak in public about the many important problems confronting Jewish life in Poland. At the same time, the constant use of ethnic nationalism by communist authorities diminished the very space for a Jewish national life within Poland. In effect, Poland became a mono-ethnic state in which Jewishness could not function openly in the public sphere, and any contact with Jews of the western world was treated with the utmost suspicion.

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