

INVENTING THE JEW

ANTISEMITIC STEREOTYPES IN ROMANIAN
AND OTHER CENTRAL-EAST EUROPEAN CULTURES

ANDREI OIȘTEANU

Inventing the Jew

STUDIES IN ANTISEMITISM

Series Editor: Robert S. Wistrich

Vadim Rossman, *Russian Intellectual Antisemitism in the Post-Communist Era* (2002)

Anthony D. Kauders, *Democratization and the Jews: Munich, 1945–1965* (2004)

Cesare G. De Michelis, *The Non-Existent Manuscript: A Study of the Protocols of the Sages of Zion* (2004)

Robert S. Wistrich, *Laboratory for World Destruction: Germans and Jews in Central Europe* (2007)

Graciela Ben-Dror, *The Catholic Church and the Jews; Argentina, 1933–1945* (2008)

Inventing the Jew

ANTISEMITIC STEREOTYPES
IN ROMANIAN AND OTHER CENTRAL-EAST EUROPEAN CULTURES

Andrei Oișteanu

Foreword by Moshe Idel

Translated from Romanian by
Mirela Adăscăliței

Published by the University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, for the
Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism (SICSA),
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

© 2009 by the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism
All rights reserved

Manufactured and distributed for the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the
Study of Antisemitism (SICSA), the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, by the
University of Nebraska Press



Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Oisteanu, Andrei.

Inventing the Jew: antisemitic stereotypes in Romanian and other
Central-East European cultures / Andrei Oisteanu; foreword by Moshe Idel;
translated from Romanian by Mirela Adascalitei.

p. cm. — (Studies in antisemitism)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-8032-2098-0 (cloth: alk. paper)

1. Antisemitism—Romania. 2. Antisemitism—Europe, Eastern. 3. Jews in
popular culture—Europe, Eastern. 4. Stereotypes (Social psychology)—Europe,
Eastern. 5. Europe, Eastern—Ethnic relations. I. Title.

DS146.R6O38 2009

305.892'40498—dc22

2008043761

Editing and Typesetting: Alifa Saadya

To my wife, Angela

Contents

Foreword by <i>Moshe Idel</i>	ix
Preface	xi
INTRODUCTION: THE IMAGINARY JEW	1
Ethnic Imagology	1
Romanian Tolerance: Between Myth and Reality	7
The Tabooed Jew	25
Notes	30
1. THE PHYSICAL PORTRAIT	38
Hooked Nose and Thick Lips	38
Ritual Hair, Beard, and Sidelocks	44
Why Jews Are Freckled	57
The Ruddy Man as Evil Omen	59
Filthy, Stinking Jew	66
Beautiful, Elegant Jewess	85
Jewish Dress and the Stigma of Clothing	99
Notes	113
2. THE OCCUPATIONAL PORTRAIT	138
The Jew as Tradesman	138
The Jew as Craftsman	154
The Jew as Moneylender	162
The Jew as Musician	169
The Jew as Tavern-keeper	173
The Jew as Wagon-driver	191
The Jew as Farmer and as Shepherd	197
Notes	205
3. THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL PORTRAIT	228
The Intelligent, Yet Cunning Jew	228
Dangerous Intelligence	233
The Cowardice of the Jew	235
The Good-Bad Jew	257
Ethnical and Ethical Characteristics	266
The Blind, Deaf, and Dumb Jew	276
Notes	290

4.	THE MYTHICAL AND MAGICAL PORTRAIT	310
	Brimstone and Fire	310
	Demonization of the Jew	315
	The Jew as Warlock and Rainmaker	324
	The Legend of the Wandering Jew	330
	Why Jews Do Not Eat Pork	342
	The Jew as Good Omen	347
	The “Jidovi” or Giants	356
	Notes	360
5.	THE RELIGIOUS PORTRAIT	378
	Deicide	378
	Hagiocide	385
	Iconocide	393
	Ritual Infanticide	400
	Ritual Xenocide?	426
	Notes	441
	Index	459

Foreword

Andrei Oișteanu is an expert in Romanian folklore and an active Jewish intellectual in Romania today. His book, *Inventing the Jew: The Morphology of Antisemitism in Romanian and Central-East European Cultures* is not a history of external events but a learned inventory of the images of the Jew in the *imaginaire* of the Romanian people. Here the scene is neither the historical vicissitudes of individuals in a given historical moment or period, but the slow and widening accumulation of stereotypes, distortions, pictures, and slogans that nourished both the popular imagination and the approaches of many of the elite figures in Romanian culture over generations. “A mythology crystallizes sediment accumulated over great stretches of time” as George Steiner once described traditional cultures, but one that did not remain in the realm of the imagination but become, recurrently, hard history.

What strikes a reader acquainted with the opus of the names that recur in Oișteanu’s book is the consonance between the popular beliefs concerning the Jews and the evaluations of the elite figures. Surprisingly enough, antisemitism become the open confession of the highest part of the Romanian cultural elite. A short list includes the most important Romanian philosopher, Vasile Conta; the most important poet, Mihai Eminescu; the leading intellectual on the 1930s, Nae Ionescu; the most important Romanian historian, Nicolae Iorga; the leading Romanian folklorist Bogdan P. Hasdeu; the most important scholar of religion, Mircea Eliade; and finally, the most important essayist, Emile Cioran. We can see that their views sometimes differ from the crude popular mythology only in details. Leading politicians like Octavian Goga or A. C. Cuza were also outspoken antisemitic thinkers. As an example, Oișteanu shows a fascinating comparison between the attitude expressed by a popular dictum from Maramureș to the preface written by Nae Ionescu to the Jewish novel of his protégé, Mihai Sebastian. When one is asked whom he encountered on the way, the answer is “a man and a Jew.” Ionescu wrote in his preface that Sebastian is not a “man of the Danube” but “a Jew of Danube.” Such juxtaposition demonstrates the vast knowledge of the author, who is master of all the main layers of Romanian culture, and for the ingenuous treatment of the reverberations of these stereotypes.

Oișteanu's present book is erudite and richly documented. Though both a comprehensive and explicit analysis of so many themes concerning the images of the Jews, it is at the same time an implicit critique of an important component of Romanian culture.

In Romania, as in many other parts of Eastern Europe, the disappearance of the Jews from the living present creates a thirst for knowing and understanding Jewish culture. The creation of many centers for studying Judaism in all the major universities in Romania and, what is even more evident, the huge interest of so many young students in Jewish topics, reflected also by so many translations of Jewish literature and studies in Romanian, all speak eloquently about the possibility of a shift in the character of Romanian traditional culture. The Jewish stereotypes analyzed by Oișteanu are, to extrapolate from the vector of the last decade, weakening in most of the modern forms of literature and culture in Romania. Books like *Inventing the Jew* and the ongoing involvement of its author in contributing to this new culture, are vital for its future.

Moshe Idel

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

Preface

My pursuit of ethnic imagology goes back to the early 1990s. My first study, “The ‘Imaginary’ versus the ‘Real’ Jew in Romanian Folklore and Mythology” was published in 1995 in *Revista de Istorie si Teorie Literara* (Journal for Literary History and Theory).

In 1997–1999, the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem awarded me a research grant for a study on the image of the Jew in traditional Romanian culture, intended as a comparative exploration in the central and eastern European context. My focus on central and eastern European ethnology thus overlapped my interest in the history and culture of the Jews in that same geographical area.

Later, it occurred to me that it would be engaging to search into the ways in which Jewish stereotypes apparent within traditional Romanian culture have or have not survived into so-called high culture. I focused therefore on probing the origin, the evolution in time and space, and the survival (or conversely, the decline and extinction) of the clichés that substantiate the physical, occupational, spiritual, moral, and religious portrayal of the “imaginary Jew,” as well as the manner in which (unconscious and inactive) popular antisemitism has influenced (conscious and active) intellectual and political antisemitism. This is how the title of the research came to be “The Image of the Jew in Romanian Culture.” The sphere of traditional culture was thus included, without, however, its being exclusive. Excerpts from my research have been published in different cultural magazines. The structure of the book improved when, from 2000, I began teaching a course on ethnic imagology for MA candidates at the Center for Hebrew Studies within the University of Bucharest.

It is a pleasure to mention here the names of those who assisted me in various ways as my research progressed. First let me mention the staff of the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem who supported the progress of my research and made possible the publication of this book. In particular I want to thank Dalia Ofer (former Chair of the Center), Robert S. Wistrich (present Chair),

and Leon Volovici (Head of Research). In addition, I wish to mention Galit Hasan-Rokem and Moshe Idel of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

I am, as always, grateful to my wife Angela, who helped me immensely during the difficult process of developing this book.

Andrei Oișteanu
Bucharest, February 2007

INTRODUCTION

The Imaginary Jew

ETHNIC IMAGIOLOGY

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, only a very few written works appeared in Romania which dealt with the way in which the image of the Jew was reflected in various folkloric mythical productions. In 1887, and subsequently in 1896, Lazăr Șăineanu tried to put together some features of the “mythical Jew,” alias the *Jidov* or the Giant, which he garnered from Romanian mythical legends.¹

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a Romanian folklorist of high standing, Simeon Florea Marian, and Moses Schwarzfeld simultaneously, yet separately, tried to establish how the Jew was represented in folk works of the comic register, that is, in satires and in anecdotes respectively.²

Unfortunately, the folk and mythology questionnaires drawn up at the end of the nineteenth century by B. P. Hasdeu and Nicolae Densusianu included very few questions referring to the Jews (the red man, the sorcerer, the *Jidovs* or Giants). As a result, answers relating to these topics, collected from villages in all regions of Romania from informants who were mostly country teachers and priests, were relatively few. At that time, Hasdeu published in his magazine, *Columna lui Traian* [Trajan's Column], some of the replies to these questions that were put to country people, questions about the way Romanians perceive “strangers,” or “people of a different stock.” In his turn, Jewish folklorist Moses Schwarzfeld, in his role as first secretary of the Iuliu Barasch Historical Society, compiled and published in 1888 an *Interrogation* [*sic!*] comprising several questions on folk beliefs and traditions about Jews in Romania.³ However, the results of this initiative were rather humble. The available literature on this research topic is meager, old, and outdated. Moreover, even in the past few years, few surveys have been conducted in Romania (unlike other countries in the area such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Austria), to shed light on the way in which the Jew has been perceived by the native population.

Drafted in 1886, the statutes of the Iuliu Barasch Historical Society stated its purpose in the very first article: “The Society...intends to gather materials concerning the history of the Jews in Romania and the Romanian-Jewish popular psychology.” The founding members of the society understood this to mean not only “collecting the [Jewish] customs of old” and “collecting Romanian-Jewish folk literature,” but also—a novel and laudable act—“collecting Romanian folk literature about the Jews.” This was a sign that the Jewish intelligentsia was interested not only in the traditional culture of Romanian Jews, but also in the manner in which the “real Jew” was reflected in Romanian folk culture.

In this spirit, Moses Schwarzfeld published (in 1898) not only a “psycho-ethnic study” on the image of the Jews “in their folk literature,”⁴ but also a “study of folk psychology” (in 1892) entitled *The Jews in Romanian Folk Literature*, in which he attempted to delineate the profile of the Jew as it appears in the Romanian folk literature and mentality.⁵ In the Appendix (entitled, somewhat abusively, “The Jew in Universal Folk Literature: A Comparative Synopsis”) the author presented over four hundred sayings and proverbs on the Jews, gathered mostly from Central and Eastern Europe. Schwarzfeld’s study is a relatively small-sized work, outdated today. However, despite the limitations of this “psycho-ethnic study,” which were largely those of its epoch, it did contain some surprisingly modern elements. For instance, the author was aware that the true subject of his work was the Romanian, not the Jew: “[The study] shall highlight the Jew with the qualities and defects that the Romanian sees in him and shall, at the same time, partly unfold the powers of observation, the preconceptions and the weaknesses of the Romanian people.... It shall depict the Jew as the Romanian sees him, believes him to be, and understands him, not as he was or as he is indeed.”⁶

A century later, similar conclusions have been reached by scientists who have studied ethnic imagology or have psychoanalyzed the Christian collective unconscious. “The characteristics attributed to the Jew in antisemitic folklore,” observes American scholar Alan Dundes, “have nothing to do with the historical Jew, but rather with the Christians, who make the attributions in the first place. If folklore is ‘autobiographical ethnography,’ then antisemitic folklore tells us a great deal about Christians and almost nothing about Jews.”⁷ For German professor Klaus Heitmann, who has studied the image of the Romanian in the German linguistic area, “as is the case with all images about nations, especially in their distorted forms,

ethnic stereotypes do not allow for a well-founded representation of what they express. More important, instead, is the information that they offer about those who fathered the images.”⁸

In imagology, this is in fact a standard way of defining coordinates of identity. When a community (of an ethnical, confessional, or other nature) tries to define the identity of another, it invariably reflects back the coordinates of its own identity and sheds light on the similarities and—most often—on the differences that exist. The opposite is equally true: we need “them” in order to be able to better define “us.”

A contemporary of Moses Schwarzfeld, Moses Gaster, raised the stakes of the problem by reassigning it from the socio-cultural sphere to the socio-political one. The folklore referring to the Jews is not the only element which is symptomatic; the way in which society, as a whole, treats Jews (minorities in general, it should be added) is a defining attribute for all the layers of the respective society. “The way of treating Jews,” Gaster wrote in 1894, “represents a kind of political and social barometer, with whose help one can, with a certain amount of precision, gauge the intellectual and moral state of each epoch and for all countries.”⁹ What Moses Gaster claimed was also reinforced by his own tragic personal experience: in 1885, nine years before the above passage was written, Gaster had been expelled from Romania as an undesirable Jew.

The main purpose of the present study is to establish the origins, the evolution in time, the geographical dissemination, and the survival (or, on the contrary, the decline and demise) of the stereotypes that make up the physical, spiritual, and moral profile of the “imaginary Jew.” In other words, I have inquired into the way in which popular antisemitism was born and matured in the Romanian cultural sphere, together with the way in which (unconscious and passive) popular antisemitism has influenced (conscious and active) political antisemitism from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards.

I have approached the subject from the perspective and with the tools of cultural anthropology. The main method consists in reassembling the profile of the *imaginary Jew* and in evaluating the difference that exists between it and the profile of the *real Jew* (with all the precaution necessitated by generalizations and approximations in the field of ethnic identity). Moses Schwarzfeld, even if in a crude and intuitive form, already made the distinction between the Jew “as the Romanian sees him, believes him to be

and understands him” and the Jew “as he used to be or as he is indeed.” I shall attempt to focus on the way in which mythological beliefs, legends, superstitions, popular traditions, Christian iconography and texts (either canonical or apocryphal), phobias, and prejudices have generated the sizeable gap between the two profiles. The greater the gap between the “real Jew” and the “imaginary Jew,” the greater was popular Judeophobia. A noteworthy discrepancy can be distinguished between the commonly negative profile of the “imaginary Jew”—one composed of largely the same stereotypical elements in Romania and in western Europe—and the usually moderate image of the “real Jew.”

It has not slipped my attention that folk mentality often makes a qualitative differentiation between, on the one hand, the *local, indigenous stranger (Jew)*, from within the community, with whom the Romanian peasant has at times cohabited well and at other times badly, yet in all cases without the excesses known in western and central Europe, and, on the other hand, the *exogenous stranger (Jew)*, from outside the community, a generic, abstract Jew, to whose account the most terrible vices of the “imaginary Jew” (deicide, ritual murder, ruining the crop by means of magic, etc.) were laid.

Obviously, the coordinates of the “imaginary Jew” do not overlap those of the “real Jew.” These two terms are rather theoretical and abstract. Their comparison is itself theoretical, for the simple reason that an image of what I have called the “real Jew” cannot possibly be pinned down. Whenever we try to outline such an image, we unavoidably resort to approximations, equalizations, generalizations, and clichés. The result can only be another hypostasis of the “imaginary Jew.”

Surely enough, the imagology equation is an extremely complex one: it has numerous variables and its terms operate on several levels. Paraphrasing a parable by Miguel de Unamuno, I must say that the relationship between *the Jew* and *the Romanian* is not a simple one, but a multi-tiered one:

1. On one level, there is the relationship between the “real Jew” and the “real Romanian”;
2. On another level, that between “the Jew’s self-image” and “the Romanian’s self-image”;
3. And on yet another level, that between the “Romanian’s image of the Jew” and the “Jew’s image of the Romanian.”

I have collected folkloric, ethnological, and pictorial material, no matter how humble and apparently inconsequential, so that, by putting them together in

puzzle-fashion, I might obtain as finely tuned, as full, and as well-drawn an image as possible of both the “real Jew” and the “imaginary Jew” in an attempt to measure the “cultural gap” that separates the two profiles.

Moreover, in the course of my research, I have considered it appropriate to approach the theme comparatively, along four distinct lines:

1. **Comparison in time:** the theme is placed in a diachronic context, by means of which I have attempted to see how clichés and motifs of legends have evolved over time, as well as to highlight the causes that have led to this evolution (or involution);

2. **Comparison in space:** the main theme of the work is studied in a geo-cultural context. In other words, I have intended to see to what extent the profile of the “imaginary Jew” in traditional Romanian culture resembles or differs from that existing in the traditional culture of other European peoples, especially those of central, eastern, and southeastern Europe (Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary, Russia, Ukraine, Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey, etc.).

3. **Cultural comparison:** I have intended to establish which features and elements of “folk antisemitism” have been taken over by “intellectual antisemitism” (in the cultivated as well as the political literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries). The issue under discussion is that of mental clichés migrating from one cultural medium to another. I have attempted to trace surviving stereotypes, to see why and how they were changed, and to explain the causes for the disappearance of some of them. I have also analyzed cases in which the cliché, after migrating from the traditional rural milieu into the urban cultured one, has been reformulated, reactivated, used for ideological purposes, disseminated by the press, and returned with tenfold power into the cultural zone that had generated it. This phenomenon I have called *cultural feedback*.

4. **Ethnic comparison:** I have attempted to focus on the extent to which, and the causes why the image of the Jew in traditional Romanian culture has differed from the image of other “strangers” with whom the Romanian people have lived or merely come into contact with throughout the centuries: Hungarians, Germans, Gypsies, Turks, Armenians, Greeks, Russians, Ukrainians, etc.

The Jewish community of Romania lends itself well to this type of research. This is not only due to its endurance and size (in 1940 almost 800,000 Jews were living there and Romania had the third-largest Jewish population in Europe—and the fourth-largest in the world after the USSR, Poland, and the United States). Comparative research is also justified by the

fact that, over the centuries, the Jewish community in Romania has been located in a multicultural area, at the point of convergence of important and well-established political, linguistic, cultural, and religious zones. Here, at the interface between central, eastern, and southeastern Europe—between the Habsburg, Tsarist, and Ottoman Empires—there is the confluence between Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Christianity, as well as that between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews.

A story from urban folklore, published in 1844 by the Viennese magazine *Der Humorist*, best outlines the status of the Romanian area as a “frontier between empires.” An Englishman, it was reported, wanted to spend the night in three different empires, so he went to the only place on earth where such a feat was possible at that time, namely the strip of land known as *triplex confinium*, in northeastern Bukovina (next to the village of Noua Suliță, on the river Prut), where the frontiers of the Russian, Austrian, and Ottoman empires converged. The English traveler was said to have drunk tea in Russia, wine in Austria, and coffee in Turkey, seated on one and the same three-footed stool, each foot stuck in a different empire.

I am not attempting to theorize the rise, growth (in space and time), and demise or survival of the stereotypes. Other scholars have done so with success. I have chosen to employ the results of their research by applying them to the concrete case of ethnic imagology and particularly to the image of the Jew in the traditional culture of eastern and central Europe. There are those conspicuous mental clichés which send one to conspicuously untrue statements of fact (of the kind that “the Jews have horns”) which survive chiefly in areas where there are no Jews or where they are extremely sparse. In such cases, the profile of the “imaginary Jew” may develop freely and adopt the features of a fabulous being, without the possibility for the “real Jew” to contradict this profile.

There are, moreover, those less conspicuous clichés that do not necessarily express an untruth, but a partial truth raised to the rank of a general truth (of the type: “the Jew is a good tradesman”). To impose upon a whole category of human beings a feature that only part of them possess is the symptom of stereotypical and readymade thinking. The cliché is an ultra-simplified image of a phenomenon, determined by the cultural milieu in which it appears. Moreover, since the coordinates of this medium are commonly rooted in traditional culture (which is archaic and profound), we can well imagine how strong and resistant to change are clichés, even when they are invalidated (or

just partially validated) by reality. “Preconceptions have a metaphysical mainspring,” wrote Romanian philosopher Lucian Blaga. “That is the reason why they can only be shattered and replaced by other prejudices.”

Since our mode of thinking works with categories, it is largely stereotypical (“Preconceptions are the crutches of reason,” André Gide has maintained) and we cannot alter this situation unless we, on the one hand, limit the number of clichés that we use and, on the other, become aware of the degree of deformation that they introduce in reality. Yet, if we cannot possibly avoid partially true and schematic definitions (of the “birds fly” type), we should at least realize that by using them we assume the risk of coming to the wrong conclusions (of the “flies are birds but hens are not” type).

ROMANIAN TOLERANCE: BETWEEN MYTH AND REALITY

“It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Romania was the most antisemitic country in pre-war Europe,” Hannah Arendt wrote in the early 1960s.¹⁰ I believe that this affirmation by the distinguished author actually is an exaggeration. However, we might grant Hannah Arendt certain extenuating circumstances. Bearing in mind that the book from which this statement was quoted was written on the basis of reports she sent the *New Yorker* from Adolf Eichmann’s trial in Jerusalem (1961–1962), the sentence reveals its marked “journalistic” intentions. Moreover, it is probable that Hannah Arendt was under the sway of powerful emotions, due to the evidence presented during the trial.

The same type of evaluation, however, and in much the same terms, is to be found in ample (and otherwise serious) scholarly works on Jewish history. Writing about the Holocaust, historian Paul Johnson maintains that “the Austrians were worse than the Germans,” and “the Romanians were no better than the Austrians; worse in some ways.” Judging by such assertions, the Romanians may well have come first in the classification as the most antisemitic of nations, closely followed by the Austrians and then by the Germans. A few sentences below, however, Paul Johnson turns his classification around with a single stroke of the pen: “After the Germans and Austrians, the Romanians were the greatest killers of Jews.”¹¹

Such statements are not merely untrue but, above all, inadequate. I do not believe that international rankings could be made in the case of antisemitism, as we would make them in athletics. I do not believe that one has the

authority to speak in such terms of any circumstance, least of all of one so complex and specific (even atypical) as was the fate of the Jews of Romania during the Second World War. Sufficient works exist which have presented the Holocaust in Romania with objectivity, based strictly on documents and facts.¹²

In cases such as this, the shorter and more trenchant the diagnosis, the more mistaken it is. To turn a blind eye to hues and details, to forsake objective and balanced analyses, to overlook specific historical, political, and cultural conditions, to substitute a few tags and morbid classifications for dramatic reality based on the number of murdered Jews, means using the same kind of pigeonholing, rudimentary schemes, and mental clichés for which we reproach antisemitic thinking. It amounts to creating, next to the profile of the “imaginary Jew,” a few new ones such as those of the “imaginary Romanian,” “imaginary Pole,” “imaginary German,” and so forth. Such, as a rule, is the outcome of any “ethno-centric, even ethno-exclusivist, historiographic discourse,” as Leon Volovici defined the species.¹³ Such are the discourses that suffer from Jewish-centrism or from Romanian-centrism and which resort to all-enveloping formulas—either vituperative to the extreme, which result in instigation, or flattering to the extreme, which result in an anaesthetic effect. Among the latter, the “Romanian’s proverbial tolerance” is the most widespread mental cliché.

Particularly since the middle of the nineteenth century, Romanian intellectuals and politicians began to prefer discussions about tolerance to practicing it. There was, therefore, tenacious talk, in many voices, about a “proverbial” tolerance that Romanians professed towards other nations and religious denominations, a virtue inscribed in a virtual national “genetic code.” Is this a real quality or simply one of the many clichés that make up the stereotypical profile of the Romanian, which in its turn becomes “imaginary”?

In 1845, out of an excess of *avant la lettre* proto-chronism, Mihail Kogălniceanu wrote that the Romanians “were among the first who consecrated religious tolerance and freedom of conscience.”¹⁴ The Moldavian politician made that affirmation in an era in which, since 1831, the Constitutions, or Organic Regulations, had sanctioned antisemitism in the Romanian Principalities. This new legislation “proclaimed the principle of affiliation to the Christian creed as a condition for granting civil and political rights.” As a consequence, the Jews’ status was changed from *pămînteni*

(Romanian for “native”) to alien, while the “Jewish Guild” became the “Jewish nation,”¹⁵ “constituting themselves as a separate nation, devoid of rights.”¹⁶ This was a watershed, when “the deputies of the Jewish nation” from the “whole of Moldavia”—as they were called in a petition dated 3 December 1831 addressed to the executive Divan of Jassy—still spoke on behalf of a liberalism in which the “tolerance of all religions is generally practiced, and so is the unrestricted allowance to embrace all manners of trades.”¹⁷

Romanian 1848 revolutionaries had mixed feelings about the Jews, ranging from pity to disgust, yet it was admitted that these “wandering foreigners” were necessary to society in the role of victims of the “people’s intolerance and savage prejudices.” In 1840 Alecu Russo wrote:

The Jew, that degraded and wandering being, chased from every place, intruding and tedious, that being which society has put on the index yet cannot do without (in this country, of course), inspires pity: the Jew is beaten and mocked at by the crowds, his crawling baseness stands against the people’s intolerance and savage prejudices.¹⁸

It is not without significance that the 1848 Program of the Romanian revolutionaries solicited “the gradual emancipation of the Israelites” (in Moldavia) and “the emancipation of the Israelites and political rights for any other fellow citizens of a different creed” (in Walachia).¹⁹ Nevertheless, these all proved to be merely “illusory promises.”²⁰

Even after the union of Moldavia and Walachia in 1859, when several of the 1848 revolutionaries came to power, political emancipation of the Jews remained at the level of no more than a desideratum. With respect to “the rights of the Romanian Israelites,” the sovereign, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, made the following declaration in 1864: “I intended to give [the Jews] everything, yet it could not be done. You shall have a gradual emancipation. Wherever I have gone, I have loved you and made no distinction between religious beliefs.”

After several anti-Jewish riots erupted towards the end of 1867, and following protests expressed by some western governments over the matter, Prince Carol considered it wise to include several references to the “issue of the Israelites” in “The Message from the Throne” delivered to the Parliament of Romania on 3 January 1868. “The Romanian nation in time past did not swerve from the principles of humanity and of religious tolerance,” declared the sovereign, and “it will not begin this day, in the nineteenth century, under my reign, to violate these hallowed principles....”

Both chambers of the Legislative Assembly hurriedly reassured the Throne that “in the delicate issue of the aliens of the Israelite rite,” there was no “religious persecution” involved, “as it would not be deemed consistent with our national traditions in matters of tolerance, with the century that we live in, or with the enlightened and liberal regime of Your Highness.” The parliamentary commission charged with drafting the reply to the sovereign’s discourse was composed of C. A. Rosetti, B. P. Hasdeu, Kogălniceanu, Lahovary, and others. Nobody seemed to remember that no more than a year and a half earlier, in July 1866, Parliament had passed the first Constitution of Romania, which sanctioned political discrimination on confessional grounds. Article 7 had stipulated that “only aliens of the Christians rite may acquire Romanian citizenship.” This was an anachronistic decision when compared to the legislation and mentality of western European countries, and it blocked the political emancipation of the Jews in Romania (even with the formal modification of 1879) for more than half a century, until 1919–1923.

The animated debates conducted in Parliament and in the press in 1866–1868 over the “issue of the Israelites” induced B. P. Hasdeu to write and publish a study entitled *The History of Religious Tolerance in Romania* (1868). Attempting to refute the idea that Romanians were xenophobes and, above all, antisemites, Hasdeu, a young Member of Parliament, countered it with “the reality of the secular religious tolerance of our ancestors and fathers.” He motivates this “sacred inheritance,” this “historical tradition” by claiming that the Romanians had no need for religious fanaticism.²¹ By making a more or less veiled display of antisemitism in the same pamphlet, Hasdeu contradicts his own thesis.

Journalist Mihai Eminescu adopted the same type of rhetoric in 1878–1879 when, at the Congress of Berlin, the Great Powers pressured the Romanian authorities to accelerate the process of Jewish emancipation. A partisan of discrimination against the Jews for economic reasons, Eminescu did not agree to their being persecuted on racial or confessional grounds. In 1879 he wrote:

Religious intolerance never existed in Romania. This consideration is superfluous, because not only the children know it, but also the *Alliance Israélite* itself, which does not relish knowing it. It is therefore plainly useless to repeat this truth for the hundredth time. Catholics, Protestants, Calvinists, Armenians, Lippovans, Turks, and finally Jews, all Christian and non-Christian confessions, imaginable

and unimaginable, always enjoyed the greatest religious tolerance on our soil.²²

Actually, this was precisely the official position of Romania. In an interview granted in 1877 to the newspaper *Deutsche Zeitung*, Prime Minister Ion C. Brătianu declared: "Religious intolerance is unknown to me, and it is the same with my country." This was true, he claimed, despite the fact that Jews immigrate to Romania "in order to evade military service" and they are "of Russian nationality," therefore "of the lowest quality"; they "are debtors in what relates to taxes." In sum, they are "unfaithful citizens."²³

On 10 October 1879, in a debate in the Senate on the occasion of emendations made to Article 7 of the Constitution of Romania, Vasile Alecsandri depicted Romanians and Jews as being on the two opposing sides of a barricade, two irreconcilable foes. The Romanian people was said to be "gentle, generous, hospitable, intelligent, a lover of progress, apt to be assimilated with the most civilized among nations, tolerant over issues of religion," a people threatened by the Jews, who ostensibly were "adherents to the blindest religious fanaticism, the most exclusive among all who walk the earth, the most inassimilable with any other people of the world!... Their power is unfathomable, because it rests and grounds itself on two other powers: religious freemasonry and gold!"²⁴

Almost every German commentator writing on the Romanian area in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries took the trouble to note that religious feeling was something "external" for the Romanians.²⁵ In 1909, Radu Rosetti reached a similar conclusion: "religious fanaticism" was an "emotion absolutely unknown to the Romanian"; moreover, the Romanians "suffered from a lack of religious feeling." For that reason, "among the numerous accusations brought by the Jews in the country and abroad against the Romanians, none is perhaps so groundless as that of *religious intolerance*" [my emphasis—A.O.]. Those who gave evidence of intolerance, fanaticism, and an "excess of religious feeling" were, to the contrary, those who accused the Romanians, i.e., the Jews of Romania.²⁶

In 1910, Romanian philosopher Constantin Rădulescu-Motru made a greater display of irony, but came to the same conclusion: the absence of bigotry among Romanians. As he reviewed the "good qualities and the defects" of the Romanian, the author considered the latter to be religious, yet only "for show." "The same is the case with his nationalism," Rădulescu-Motru went on. "Romanians to a soul would parade their nationalist feelings. Yet they stop short at deeds."²⁷ Years later, he taught an original and well-

poised ideology of national spirituality (*Romanianism*, 1936) which he defined in opposition to “nationalist demagoguery,” “xenophobia,” “racism,” “antisemitism,” and “fascism.”²⁸ Entering into a polemic with Rădulescu-Motru, Nichifor Crainic maintained that Romanianism is inconceivable in the absence of “antisemitism and xenophobia.” “This is precisely the essence and the insufficiency of [Rădulescu’s] book,” Crainic concluded in 1938, “a naïve and confused mystification of Romanianism.”²⁹

There were certainly occasions on which the Jews themselves were tempted to appropriate this stereotypical language. In 1926, Carol Klüger, a Jewish Member of Parliament, spoke in Parliament about the “character of the Romanian people,” observing that “tolerance and kindness of soul speak for its noble side.” It is true that these remarks served merely as a lightning rod for the rest of the speech, directed at “those who preach intolerance, the spirit of chicanery, our [i.e., the Jews’] enslavement.”³⁰ An article published in 1881 in the Jewish newspaper *Fraternitatea* [The fraternity] is similarly structured:

There was a time when Romania was an El Dorado for all the refugees and the persecuted from all over the world. Here reigned a boundless and most generous religious tolerance, the living was patriarchal [i.e., idyllic], all the necessities of life were cheap like in no other place, and people were gentle and unselfish. That is the reason why the Lippovans, the Bulgarians, the Greeks, the Hungarians, and the Israelites came into this country, particularly after the Revolution of 1848. Today things have changed.... Selfishness under the name of national defense has been the inspirer of many restrictions, so that foreigners no longer look upon Romania as a country where they can find happiness and a good living, smoother than there where they come from.³¹

At this time some Romanian intellectuals praised the exceptional status of the Romanians in regard to their tolerance towards strangers. Nationalist politician Aurel C. Popovici was one of them, maintaining in 1910: “We have oppressed nobody, and have stripped nobody. We have burned no one at the stake for one’s belief, we spoliated no one of one’s nationality, of one’s soul. A good-natured and God-fearing people, the Romanians have an evangelical tolerance and wisdom, like few other peoples.”³²

In 1938, folklorist Artur Gorovei wrote about the conversion of Jews to Christianity in Moldavia during the first half of the nineteenth century, and of

their assimilation into the mass of Romanian society. Half proudly, half indignantly, he exclaimed: "The tolerance of the Moldavians has always gone beyond all imagination."³³ A few years later, Simion Mehedinți entertained a similar conviction: "The feeling of tolerance has been with us [i.e., the Romanians] to a wholly exceptional degree," while the Romanian peasant was "the most tolerant man in Europe."³⁴ Such extravagant conclusions struck a false note against the prevailing rhetoric of Romanian intellectuals, politicians, and journalists of the 1920s and the 1930s. Even Mehedinți's discourse was strongly undermined by xenophobia and intolerance. He was convinced, for instance, that the great afflictions which had plagued Romania were entirely due to the foreigners in the country: Hungarians, Bulgarians, Russians, Gypsies, and—above all—Jews.³⁵ Nichifor Crainic too spoke in 1937 of "Romanian tolerance" in a programmatic text about a quite uncommon ethnic intolerance. On the very sheet of the Program of the Ethnocratic State, where he glossed on the margin of "our proverbial tolerance," he insisted that the Germans, the Hungarians, and especially the Jews of Romania are dangerous, since "they offer no guarantees whatsoever, and secure nothing within the official organism of the state," being "an element of dissolution and ruin." "Jews," he concluded, "are a permanent menace to any national state."³⁶

In 1942, in a report commissioned by Marshall Ion Antonescu in order to justify the discrimination and deportation of the Gypsies, Sabin Manuilă (at the time chief of the National Institute for Statistics) in his turn maintained that "the loss [i.e., the assimilation] of the Gypsies into the mass of the majority" might be explained "by the extreme humanitarianism which is characteristic of the Romanians." This mental and verbal cliché was, however, contradicted by the racist conclusions of the report: "The Gypsies remain social and national non-values, and a racial hazard, to the extent that our people will preserve in the future a purer biological substance and will consciously tend to a higher Romanian ideal of humanitarianism."³⁷ Viewing "the extreme humanitarianism that is characteristic of the Romanians" as a shortcoming, the report's author proposed achieving "a higher ideal of humanitarianism" by the adoption of racist laws.

In the interwar period, the concept of "Romanian tolerance" was redefined to suit the new social and political context. The new constitution, ratified in 1923, granted full civil and political rights to the Jews (as well as to the other non-Christian minorities). Yet, the specter of xenophobia and ethnic intolerance had begun to haunt Europe (and Romania was no exception) with

a force previously unknown. On the other hand, with the annexation of new territories to Greater Romania, ethnic minorities increased, now accounting for approximately 30 percent of the total population and even over 50 percent in certain areas. For the ultra-nationalists, Romanian tolerance was no longer considered a virtue that defined the “ethnic spirit” (*Volksggeist*), but as a defect and a weakness that dissolved it, and a virus that infected the immunity system of the national organism. Thus, Romanian society was being infested by a lethal pathogenic agent. So, for instance, believed right-wing radical doctrinaire Nicolae Roșu in 1937: “The Semite virus, which gives rise to conflict and division, fragments and disrupts the very essence of the social apparatus.”³⁸ Around the same time, Alexandru Cantacuzino—“the Prince of legionnaire thought,” as Horia Sima has called him—used the same pseudomedical terms to express his revulsion of the “weakness” and “lack of vigor” of the Romanian when faced with “alien rule” and the “torrent of foreigners”: “These are the germs of weakness that penetrated the nerves of this nation and fermenting agents which destroy its will and produce the weakness in Romanian blood. A terrible blood disease, an atavistic worm paralyzes the motory nerves of the Romanian and arrests the nation’s impulse to fight.”³⁹

“Fighting foreigners,” Leon Volovici has sagaciously noted, became for many a Romanian intellectual of the epoch “the favorite form of expressing patriotism and the national specific.”⁴⁰ The response to Romanian hospitality as a national shortcoming actually has a history going back to the nineteenth century. In the 1850s, the liberal prince of Moldavia, Grigore Alexandru Ghica, annulled the interdiction (“which has been in force for a long time”) against Jews who operated groceries in Jassy so that his Government would not appear to be “suspect of religious intolerance before foreign powers.” Radu Rosetti considered “his magnanimity” as in effect being “a weakness” which “impinges on the required rigor” in relations with the Jews.⁴¹

Commenting on the lack of hospitality with which Russian dignitary Anatole de Demidoff had been treated while in Moldavia, Romanian statesman Mihail Kogălniceanu wrote: “Where does this pretension of foreigners come from that, upon their arrival, we should bestow upon them our homes, food, and respect? Where from, indeed? From our despicable habit of becoming ecstatic about each and every fleeting foreigner.”⁴²

The indignation caused by this “despicable habit” of Romanian munificence was to be ideologically contoured in the interwar period. In 1934 Nichifor Crainic wrote:

It has been said that our nation is tolerant and hospitable to foreigners. Does it flourish so much that it feels the need for hospitality? Reduced to beggary by the invading foreigner, this people cannot be tolerant and cannot be hospitable. Tolerance presupposes power that grants, and not weakness that lies vanquished. Hospitality presupposes affluence that gives of itself, not poverty robbed through thievery.⁴³

In his turn, in the mid-1930s Emil Cioran complained about “the absence of religious intolerance among the Romanians.”⁴⁴ He criticized the fact that Romanians were “a people far too good and too kind” in contacts with aliens, because this would certainly lead to “our definite destruction”: “Jewish vitality is so aggressive, so that our tolerance before this people, in its exploited state, would certainly lead to our ruin.... There is no human being kinder than the Romanian. This is the disaster.” Cioran reverses the terms of the traditional equation. To him, “kindliness” and “decency” were false “national virtues,” in fact closer to vices, which “have kept us behind for so long.” Instead, people should discover and resuscitate the true ethnic virtue—xenophobia. “Adversity to foreigners is so characteristic of the Romanian national feeling, that the two could never be separated”; “the first national reaction of the Romanian...is revolt against foreigners”; and “it means a lack of national instinct not to hate and not to eliminate them” are a few quotes from his book.⁴⁵

Finally, in a political declaration prior to the election of December 1937, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu complained that tolerance had brought the Romanians to their deathbed:

President Maniu says that his party [i.e., the National Party of Peasants] shall bring justice and tolerance for the minorities. I am for *justice*, without *tolerance*. For we have tolerated so much that we are now on our deathbed.... There is no justice that might force us to share our rights of ownership and of ruling this country with the Jews.⁴⁶

In that same year, and in the pages of that same journal, *Buna Vestire*, Toma Vlădescu, one of the editors of this filthy publication, also vituperated against Romanian hospitality which accounted for the settlement of Jews in Romania: “They sat at our table and ate vigorously, now they regained strength and next they command by their satiousness all the official thinking of the country..... This is why we will be fanatic antisemites, to excess, and to the limits of scandal, if need be.”⁴⁷

In 1940, Nicolae Iorga wrote about “our kindness and tolerance” towards the Jews and reached the conclusion that Romanians showed “foolish kindness to guests and to thieves.”⁴⁸ In 1938 he had written that in the eyes of Romanians, Jews were “oppressors,” “aliens,” “intruders,” infiltrating “to the very center “of the vital organs of a stupidly hospitable historical society.”⁴⁹ In other words, for Iorga, “Romanians” were “foolishly welcoming” and “of a pointless hospitality” in the case of the Jews. This kind of rhetoric was notably popular in this epoch, and even an unengaged intellectual like literary historian George Călinescu assumed this perilous inclination for a while. Commenting in 1941 on Jewish-Romanian author Emil Dorian’s novel *Profeți și paiate* (Prophets and harlequins, 1931), the critic notes: “Romanians are identified [in the novel] precisely by the quality of being a ‘welcoming people,’ which is indeed a blemish, since under the influence of all civilized nations Romanians should wield hale and hearty selfishness, thus putting an end to all immigration.”⁵⁰

In 1935, Mircea Eliade believed that this type of reaction, at times looking like the feat of a panic-monger, was generated by an “imbecilic inferiority complex” with respect to foreigners. On that same occasion he made some comments on the issue of Romanian tolerance, not denying its “proverbial” character, but without refraining from placing this adjective between inverted commas:

Our “proverbial” tolerance is a sign of strength, not of weakness.... I do not understand why we are shouting: Danger! Where is the danger? That there are too many members of the minorities in commanding positions? We shall remove them by competition, by our own strength, and, if need be, by administrative laws—but it is a far cry from this to a threat to “Romanianism”.... We do not need intransigence and intolerance. They are alien to our structure.

Two years later, however, in September 1937, Eliade’s views took a radical turn (there being only two or three months to go before the elections!) despite his being convinced “that the Jews will shout that I am an antisemite, and the democrats that I am a hooligan or fascist.” The rhetorical question he posed in 1935—“Where is the danger?”—now received a precise answer. The Romanian nation is “slowly caving in” because of the “allogenic elements,” first of all because of the Jews (who “have occupied the villages of Maramureș and of Bukovina” and “all the towns and cities of Bessarabia”), but also due to the Hungarians, the Carpatho-Russians, the Bulgarians, the

Serbs, the Saxon Germans, etc., but not so much the Swabians (“our only sincere allies”).⁵¹

A few years later, with the commencement of World War II, the interim president of the Ministerial Council, Mihai Antonescu, took upon himself, as did Mircea Eliade, “the risk of not being understood by some of the traditionalists” when he came out in favor of “the forced migration and expulsion of the entire Jewish element across the borders of Bessarabia and Bukovina.” At a government meeting of 8 July 1941, Antonescu was appalled by the fact that Romanians’ “syrupy compassion” and the “humanitarian philosophy” inculcated by the Jews could bring about the stoppage of “an historical moment” in which, by a “total unchaining of ethnic force, we should cleanse Romanian territories [of Jewish presence], even if it were to use machine-guns. I ask therefore: be implacable,” he urged the government authorities in charge of the ethnic cleansing process in progress in Bessarabia and Bukovina.

Syrupy, diffuse humanitarianism and philosophy are, in this context, out of place. I thought myself for a moment that this humanitarianism could indeed claim to have vestiges of sincerity, but I soon enough realized what remains hidden in this reality: under the guise of humanitarian ideology is hidden the most heightened race concern, of a race that would wish to sway over all, and of abstract principles that concealed a profit-bargaining religion, and that to the loss of a nation brought down with neediness—and there were many nations like ours. Consequently, let us utilize this historical moment and let us cleanse the Romanian land and our nation of all the hardship which centuries have impinged on the land over which we were not able to rule. Therefore, gentlemen, let us use machine-guns, if necessary.⁵²

This propagandist discourse was intended to demonstrate the exceptional level of tolerance allegedly characteristic of the Romanians for thousands of years, which had survived during the nationalist-Communist era and even during the post-Communist period.

As for legionnaire devotee Ion Coja, in books he published during 1997–2001 he maintained that alongside many other racial traits Romanians are humane and kind, being naturally endowed with tolerance and kindness, so much so, that during World War II American soldiers strove to surrender to the Romanians.⁵³ A few lines signed by Dan Amadeo Lăzărescu exhibit the elation caused by the nationalism which enraptured quite a number of historians and researchers:

[Romanians] were fatally tolerant because there was nobody to fight with. They are heirs to that propensity we see in the “Miorița,” which was so ably studied by Lucian Blaga, that of being tolerant. One can see here, I believe, a trace of the Zamolxis cult and of the death cult as they were practiced by the Dacians.... We have all the interest to be tolerant, and this is why one does not find in Romania religious persecution, under any form whatsoever.... Not even against the Jews were there any social or political movements in Romania.

Lăzărescu drew a conclusion which can only be termed ridiculous: “The Romanian is tolerant per se.”⁵⁴

In his study of Romanian intellectuals of the interwar period and antisemitism, Leon Volovici wrote:

The Romanians’ tolerant spirit, frequently mentioned by Romanian historians and politicians, and still used as a propaganda slogan, did also apply to the Jews. In the course of time, it manifested itself as an *acceptance* of a foreign community, even of a different religion, but not as a *mixing* with it. Accepting foreigners as equals before the law was an idea that all social strata, including the intellectuals, found difficult to receive.⁵⁵

In reality, we are dealing with several levels of tolerance and with different interpretations of that word (some rather negatively connoted): “to tolerate,” “to suffer,” “to accept,” “to allow,” etc. A royal document from the middle of the eighteenth century forbade foreigners (“Greeks, Albanians, Serbs, and others”) from becoming boyars and taking up public positions by virtue of the fact that they were “suffered [i.e., tolerated] to live and dwell here, on the country’s land.”⁵⁶ In an article published in 1876, Mihai Eminescu wrote that as they were “foreigners of a non-Christian rite,” the Jews of Romania “cannot raise claims to more than being suffered” and they “have no grounds to complain of our tolerance.”⁵⁷

Finally, in 1867, when the Jews of Jassy complained to the authorities that by order of Minister Ion Brătianu some of them were being brutally driven out of the country,⁵⁸ the town’s mayor gave the following reply:

It is beyond any law that we, the Romanians, as owners of this country, have the right to chase you, the Jews, who are here only as people who are suffered. Accordingly, you must understand that you can do nothing except leave the country in which you abide only in this status.⁵⁹

It should also be borne in mind that during certain epochs (the eighteenth century, for instance) and in certain regions (Transylvania, Banat, as well as the entire Habsburg Empire), the Jews acquired toleration under the guise of a tolerance tax, known either as “*Toleranztax*” or “*Taxa tolerantiali Judeaorum*.”⁶⁰

There are abundant reports about the hospitality displayed by Romanians throughout the centuries. “The manner in which [the Moldavians] receive foreign guests and travelers is worthy of the highest praise,” Dimitrie Cantemir wrote around 1717, “because, although very poor due to their bordering on the Tartars, they never deny a guest food and lodging, and they put him up without pay for three days, together with his horse. They receive the stranger with a smiling face, as if he were a brother to them, or some other relation.”⁶¹ This was not an exercise in rhetoric on the part of the Romanian prince. Similar words of appreciation were set down later by many foreign travelers through the Romanian Principalities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶²

I think, nevertheless, that this kind of rhetoric should be treated with some reserve. Narratives about this area and this period are readily contradictory.⁶³ In eighteenth-century Moldavia some other travelers, coming from Europe of the Enlightenment, reassure us of the exact opposite, of the residents’ lack of hospitality to strangers. In some cases, peasants had to be compelled to grant lodgings, victuals, and transportation to the alien visitor. The French Baron François de Tott wrote around 1767:

[Our conductor] established us in a good enough village, in which the poor inhabitants were constrained right away to bring provisions. A family promptly dislodged made place for us, and two sheep slaughtered, roasted, eaten without payment, together with several blows distributed unnecessarily, begun to put me in a mood against my conductor.⁶⁴

Similar intelligence refers to the peasants of Walachia and Banat,⁶⁵ but also to other eastern or central regions of Europe. As an exception, however, Count d’Hauterive, traveling through Moldavia in 1785 to take up the position of a royal secretary at the princely court of Jassy, noted the “extreme politeness” manifested by common people on “at the sight of a man who has the air of pertaining to the prince.”⁶⁶

At times, however, Romanian hospitality was not extended to the “allogeneous stranger” or the “foreigner” (especially one who professed a different religion), but only to the “indigenous stranger”—the Christian/Romanian

who was a “stranger to the village.” At the end of the nineteenth century, B. P. Hasdeu summarized the opinions of Romanian peasants, transmitted to him via rural teachers, in the following terms:

Strangers who pass through the village, if they are Christians, are looked upon with favor by the villagers, they are seated at their tables and are taken care of. Strangers are mainly thought to be those of a different law or faith in God. Jews are looked upon by the people as individuals foreign to their nation and religion, and with the nastiest of features.⁶⁷

In that same period (1881), author Ioan Slavici remarked that the Romanian “is extraordinarily welcoming, yet only towards Romanians; to foreigners he would shut his house and, in some places, would go as far as to even refuse the foreigner a glass of water.”⁶⁸ Around 1644, Paul Beke (a Hungarian Jesuit and parishioner of Jassy) noticed that Moldavians are welcoming, and that they give particular treatment to those who speak the ruler’s language.⁶⁹ Years later, Ottoman scholar Evlia Celebi noted that the Romanians “live in good relations with the Armenian folk; conversely, they abhor Jews.”⁷⁰ As a counter-example, Moldavian prince and chronicler Dimitrie Cantemir thought that hospitality (especially that provided by monasteries) in Moldavia did not depend much on the foreigner’s religious confession or mother-tongue, but it seems that this time his words are mere bragging: “We ought to have high regard for the manner in which guests are received in all Moldavian monasteries. Many a traveler, be he of the right belief [Christian Orthodox], be he a Jew, or Turk, or Armenian, not only is he well-received, but he may well linger there for an entire year... and will be fed and taken care of.”⁷¹

When he reopens the myth of Romanian hospitality and tolerance for discussion, Lucian Boia rightly observes that, in reality, “it is not the Romanian who is particularly hospitable, but the Romanian peasant, and not merely the Romanian peasant, but simply the peasant.”⁷² In other words, hospitality is the key word for traditional societies and mentalities. It should be noted here that the kind of hospitality which operates in traditional societies is largely determined by magic and ritual motives. “There was a time when the alien—*xenos*—was not only a character who inspired fear or curiosity,” says Andrei Cornea, “he also was an individual surrounded by a sort of mystery. Who is he, really, and where does he come from? And is he the one he pretends to be?” He may well be a peripatetic wizard, a *solomonar* (rain-maker), testing the good faith of the villagers,⁷³ or he could be a

penniless surgeon, such as the Christian saint Thalaleus Athanasse, who walked “teleleu Tănase” (a Romanian corruption of the saint’s name used idiomatically to express aimless wandering), walking in and out of villages, curing without fee ailments of the body or of the soul; or he could be a disguised god, as in Homer’s *Odyssey*: “Gods in the likeness of strangers, in many a guise, / Go hither and thither among the cities of the earth” Book 17, 483–84). Under these circumstances, Cornea concludes, “hospitality, such as washing the feet of the guests, bowing, sacrificing animals, setting up the table—all these acts become an advised caution against the disasters which a divinity in disguise can always bring about.”⁷⁴

The peasant is hospitable towards the “stranger” (the “other”) *now*, so that he and his kind should enjoy prosperity *later* (during the rest of the year); the peasant gives to the “stranger” *here*, so that he and his family should receive *there* (in the afterlife). See, in this context, the Christian Orthodox tradition of remembering the dead—*pomană* (Romanian for eleemosynary acts)—with gifts of food and useful objects to the poor. “He who gives, gives to himself,” goes a Romanian proverb which succinctly sums up the whole mentality.⁷⁵ Within the terms of reference of traditional hospitality, the logic of a ritual “contract,” of magical reciprocity, can be discerned (Latin *Do ut des*, “I give to you, for you to give to me”). Consequently, ritual hospitality is not necessarily determined by feelings of good will or magnanimity, but rather by an archaic cultural code of the community. This is by no means a small matter either, when we take into account the existence of numerous other types of closed communities, isolated and endogamous, founded on essentially different cultural codes, which include *magic xenophobia* (based on the principle *hospes hostis*, “the stranger is an enemy”) and even ritual xenocide.

It is my opinion, therefore, that there is a difference between “hospitality” and “tolerance,” at least for the Romanian collective mentality of the modern era. Hospitality, a sort of “more frivolous tolerance,” a feeling of sympathy which does not entail obligations in principle and which manifests itself from time to time as a desirable connection, a convivial sort of generosity, including eating and drinking in common, is perceived by Romanians as a great national virtue. On the other hand, tolerance as such is seen as a serious shortcoming, allowing aliens to take advantage of the hosts; it is foolish kindness and therefore a national flaw.

In almost all opinion polls conducted during the 1990s, Romanians perceived themselves to be a particularly hospitable people. This is a well-rooted self-stereotype. As a rule, hospitality represents the psychological and moral quality most frequently attributed to oneself. Curiously enough, the same opinion polls point to the Romanians' tolerance as a negative self-stereotype. Out of a total of 98 psychological and moral negative traits, tolerance is the sixth most frequent trait which Romanians attribute to themselves.⁷⁶ Just like Romanian intellectuals of the 1930s (such as Nichifor Crainic, Emil Cioran, Nicolae Iorga, and others, as noted above), the average citizens of the 1990s also perceived Romanian tolerance to be a vice.

By means of our hospitality, "we" try to make "them" feel at home. For that reason, anthropologists are correct in considering the role of hospitality to be "the integration of the stranger into the social world of the host.... Hospitality and hostility are thus the obverse and reverse of the same coin, as suggested by the common origin of the terms *hospes* and *hostis* (Latin for 'guest' and 'enemy' respectively)."⁷⁷ I, on the other hand, believe that excessive hospitality may not be a sign of tolerance. The stranger, who is "different," receives a different type of treatment. Just like xenophobic feelings, xenophilic sentiments do nothing to bridge the gap, but in fact highlight the "cultural difference" between the indigenous and the alien. Xenophilia is a discriminatory feeling, even if a positive one. In apparently paradoxical fashion, both xenophobia (hostility) and xenophilia (hospitality) act, in different circumstances, within the same traditional community. The "cultural difference" is erased only when one practices the *indifference* typical of urban agglomerations, but is unthinkable in rural communities. In a Romanian folk anecdote, "a Gypsy goes to the barber for the first time to get his beard shaved; then he goes to the tavern to make himself seen, but nobody pays attention to him. He then exclaims with relief: 'Praised be the Lord! See, I'm a man now!'"⁷⁸ Only the indifference of the "majority" towards the "minority"—the fact that "nobody pays attention" to him, to the Gypsy, makes the latter think of himself as "a man" among men. This is an essential point for the discussion, because the Gypsy—just like the Jew—was often perceived as a "non-human": "Neither is the willow a tree, / nor is the Gypsy a man."⁷⁹

A Jewish intellectual such as Felix Aderca also spoke in praise of ethnic "indifference." In the late 1930s, he blamed not only the antisemites, but the philosemites too who, he claimed, "are much too well spoken of."

The sympathy, attraction, and affection which the Jew instills in some is not, to my eyes, a satisfaction or a reason to rest with an easy mind. He who explicitly declares himself, even in the best of faith, to be fond of our nation above all the others is himself the author of discrimination. I praise those who themselves never raise the problem of ethnic origin in any way.... In essence, the Jews are no different from other people. This is why the generous difference drawn by the philosemites fails to flatter me. My dream is to deal with fellow men who do not care a rap whether I am a Jew or not.⁸⁰

Elsewhere, Aderca also expressed this idea aphoristically: "When he secretly confesses philosemitism, all of a sudden I have a hunch. I would prefer to know he is indifferent."⁸¹

On the other hand, Nichifor Crainic made the utter distinction between "Christian tolerance" and "democratic indifference": "The idea of tolerance, in the manner in which it is requested from us by the Jews," he wrote in 1938, "is not of Christian origin, but democratic." Jews "make pretensions to our indifference as to race and religious confession," which "means the collapse of moral and spiritual consciousness. This is democratic tolerance, that is, tolerance embodied in the Judeo-Freemason doctrine." Christian tolerance, however, "is humane towards humans" and "indulgent towards bastards." Intolerance intervenes when "you persevere diabolically...willing to obliterate my belief in the name of which I tolerate you."⁸² It is not by chance that Crainic supported this thesis towards the end of the 1930s. "We shall oppose the Ethnocratic State to the Democratic State," he prophesied in 1937.⁸³ And indeed, in 1938 democracy was suspended and ethnocracy instituted in Romania, thus transforming antisemitism into a state doctrine.

It is extremely difficult, if not downright impossible, to manage with abstract, indistinct, and generalized principles such as "national spirit" (*Volksgeist*), "soul of the nation" (C. Rădulescu-Motru), "national virtues" (Emil Cioran), or an opposite one such as "vices foreign to our structure" (Mircea Eliade). I believe that concrete historical conditionings are infinitely preferable. Ioan Petru Culianu, for instance, has admitted that one may speak of religious tolerance in the Romanian Middle Ages, yet he deemed that this was due to the weak political authority in the Romanian Principalities and also to the fact that the Orthodox Church was not rigorously organized in that period.⁸⁴ To the extent to which we grant that Culianu was right, such causes result in the "tolerance of weakness" (as Nichifor Crainic might have termed it in 1934)

on the one hand, and the tolerance existing only at the level of the authorities, whether political or ecclesiastical, on the other.

Yet, in my opinion some degree of religious tolerance did exist at the level of the common people, tolerance warranted by the type of Christianity professed by the Romanians. This was in fact a highly complex religious syncretism, an inextricable mixture of pagan and Christian mythology, a *folkloric Christianity* or, as Mircea Eliade called it, a “cosmic Christianity.” Under such cultural and religious circumstances, the population inhabiting the Romanian area was, as a rule, unlikely to place itself in very strict and exclusionist positions from the doctrinal point of view, and therefore also failed to adopt an intolerant stance towards the doctrines of the other religions (Judaism or Islam) or towards the various Christian heresies. Acceptance of differences of faith is reflected in several folk sayings which indicate a certain kind of tolerant mentality: “as many customs, as there are households”; everyone being left “to his law,” if not entirely “to God’s retribution.” As support for this point, it is symptomatic that no heretical factions were born in the Romanian cultural area, these commonly appearing wherever the official dogma is rigid and all-powerful. Simion Mehedinți was correct when he asserted that “our nation was exempt from heresies, and from heretics,”⁸⁵ while Mircea Eliade made a similar assertion in 1934: “For us easterners [i.e., Eastern Orthodox], there had not been not so many heretics.”⁸⁶

Moreover, the Romanian Principalities have always welcomed religious dissidents from outside (twice strangers, as it were), and the Romanian area was considered a kind of paradise for heretics (be they Hesychasts and Bogomiles coming from the south, Lippovans and Russians from the east, or Hussites from the west) excommunicated by the Christian churches around Romania which are more dogmatic and intolerant (or “better organized,” as Culianu might have put it). “The religions which were indicted in those countries,” read the 1848 revolutionary program, “have always found refuge in Moldavia.”

This being the case, it is no wonder that around 1768, for instance, a Jesuit abbot objected to the fact that “heretics and schismatics” banished from a neighboring country found refuge in Transylvania:

They have retreated to this province where, in the formulation of Tacitus, all sin gathers as if it is refuse. You have in Transylvania Catholics, Calvinists, Lutherans, Anabaptists, Jews, Quakers, Aryans,

Tolerants, Unified Greeks [i.e., of the Greek Catholic Church], Schismatic Greeks [i.e., Christian Orthodox], etc.⁸⁷

Similar reactions were to be found among Catholic missionaries with respect to the situation in Moldavia and Walachia. Around 1677, for example, papal nuncio Urbano Cerri (during the time of Pope Innocent IX) recorded his dissatisfaction at seeing that “at the [Walachian] ruler’s court one can find Lutherans and Calvinists, as many of the like in Transylvania, as well as Jews and Turks.”⁸⁸ In his turn, Minorite monk Antonio Angelini di Campi, while traveling through Moldavia, wrote in 1682 that many schismatics, heretics, and pagans inhabit Jassy: “such a great number of Turks, Armenians, Jews, Tartars, and Greeks [i.e., Greek Orthodox], that you would say [it was] a town of the Pentapolis.”⁸⁹ Perceiving the situation as an ethnic, linguistic, and particularly confessional Babel, the monk concluded that “the life style [of Jassy’s inhabitants] is riotous, faithless, and unconventional.”⁹⁰

THE TABOOED JEW

Among the predicaments I have faced in the process of researching a comparative study of ethnic imagology was one that, although anticipated to some degree, I could not have foreseen its proportions. This predicament is due to the unhealable wounds that Communist censorship inflicted upon the corpus of literature of the social sciences.

The great majority of the books, publications, and studies devoted to folklore and ethnology in Romania in the post-Second World War period avoid making one single mention of the Jew, because that *nomen ethnicum* and everything that was connected to it had become, in most circumstances, a taboo. After excessive popularity—true, a negative one—enjoyed in the period between the wars, when the Jew had become the unwitting protagonist of all too many books, studies, and articles of an antisemitic character, as soon as the Communist regime came to power in Romania in 1945 the Jew became the object of yet another excess: nothing whatsoever was written about him, as if he had not existed. (This followed a general principle of totalitarian regimes: “Who/what is not talked about, does not exist.”) An excess of silence took the place of an excess of noise.

This “modesty” was present at the very highest levels of authority too, be they Romanian or Jewish. Initially, in order to make the official voice of authority sound “politically correct,” Ceaușescu would use the famous formula, “irrespective of nationality: Hungarians, Germans, Jews.” Since the

mid-1970s, the Jews began to be omitted from the discourse of power and included in the more aseptic expression, “and other nationalities.” (The Gypsies, on the other hand, were never mentioned in official discourse.) Some of the leaders of the Jewish community did not intend to lag behind in this matter. In my opinion, Chief Rabbi Moses Rosen, himself a person with an authoritative inclination, was mistaken when he campaigned during the 1980s for prohibiting the printing of the socio-political writings of Mihai Eminescu, particularly those referring to the Jews. I believe such energy and authority might have found a better outlet, namely calling for the inclusion, in the respective volumes in the series of Eminescu’s *Complete Works* (vols. 9 and 10), of an adequate study which would, in correct context and with all the appropriate nuances, have explained Eminescu’s antisemitic discourse. In 1957, Moses Rosen was also the one who requested (and obtained, for a while) the purging of the first page of the novel *Baltagul* (The hatchet), in which Mihail Sadoveanu had set down an innocent folk legend that explained the fate of several peoples, including the Jews.

In volumes of folklore and ethnology—otherwise worthy of all praise, in anthologies or typologies of carols, ballads, legends, folk anecdotes, or folk theater, etc.—written or edited by otherwise creditable authors, the texts concerning Jews were carefully censored and, in the best of cases, marked with dots. In this last case, the omissions were at least marked and the researcher could search and, with some luck, even find the integral text in the original. Throughout the decades there were different reasons given justifying that political phenomenon, sometimes even antagonistic ones: at first, in the period of “internationalist Communism,” it stemmed from an erroneous understanding of the fight against antisemitism (when Jewish activists must have themselves had a say); later, in the “national-Communist” epoch, it was out of an excess of nationalism or even antisemitism. Commenting upon an album-monograph of Jassy, printed in the 1980s—where no mention is made of the history of the town’s old and important community of Ashkenazi Jews (51 percent of the population before the Second World War), or of its great economic and cultural achievements—some researchers have called this phenomenon the “elimination of the Jews from the history of the town of Jassy.”⁹¹

I hasten to add that the phenomenon under discussion is not specifically Romanian, nor is it specifically Communist. It rises and grows in any regime that has nationalistic traits, wherever an ethnocentric, if not downright ethno-exclusive, cultural perspective is enforced. Greece may be a good example to

that effect, with its alleged “religious and ethnic homogeneity of the Greek population” (98 percent, according to official records), and with the authorities’ refusal to acknowledge the present and past existence of national minorities.⁹² Here is what a Jewish woman intellectual from Thessaloniki declared a few years ago about the present state of culture in that city where, in 1913, over 50 percent of the inhabitants belonged to the community of Sephardi Jews: “Today [i.e., October 1990], at the University of Salonika there is not a department, not a course, nothing about the Jews—or about the Turks or other communities either. There is nothing in the historical institutes. Nothing in the city’s museums. Hardly a book [on this subject] in the Greek bookstores. Nothing. As if we [i.e., the Jews] were never here.”⁹³

Coming back to postwar Romania, I shall give a few examples of the censorship of Jewish topics in print. In all postwar editions of Alecu Russo’s *Iașiul și locuitorii săi în 1840* [The town of Jassy and its inhabitants in 1840], the pages referring to the Jews in Jassy were drastically expurgated. Letter XX, entitled “Ovrei” [The Jews], was omitted by the censors from the postwar editions of *Scrisori către V. Alecsandri* [Letters to Vasile Alecsandri] by Ion Ghica. Vasile Alecsandri himself was censored in that epoch, his more or less “complete” works failed to include (with some extremely rare exceptions) the caustic texts directed at the Jews (such as *Lipitorile satului* [The village leeches]).

Historical sources suffered a similar fate. In 1959, Dan Simonescu published *Cronica lui Baltasar Walther despre Mihai Viteazul* [Baltasar Walther’s chronicle on Michael the Brave], written at the end of the sixteenth century.⁹⁴ The literary historian expunged—by replacing it with dots indicating the ellipse—the following passage: “Likewise, [Mihai Viteazul] had all the Jews murdered, who, according to their custom, as they were wont, conducted themselves as traitors to the country.” The editors of subsequent volumes of Romanian history and ancient literature took over the document thus truncated, without even marking the omission in the censored passage. In a recent book, Dan Horia Mazilu absolves both Dan Simonescu and the editors, yet he neglects to mention the real culprits: “It is not the late Professor Dan Simonescu who bears responsibility for the elisions,” and “the innocence of the publishing houses seems to me beyond question.”⁹⁵

Similar treatment was meted out by the censors to foreign books. Here are just a few examples. In all Romanian editions of Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, the “Prioress’ Tale” (written in 1387), which dwells on the Jews and their “lucre of villainye” and on the accusation of ritual infanticide,

was either reduced to an incipient fragment without any relevance, or replaced by a laconic and neutral summary. Even the very recent edition of the *Canterbury Tales* (Jassy 1998) does nothing to remedy the situation. The well-known book by Lion Feuchtwanger, *Die Jüdin von Toledo* [The Jewess from Toledo] has been translated into Romanian under the neutral title of *Balada spaniola* [The Spanish ballad; Bucharest, 1973]. Then there is the case of the Romanian writer of the preface to the translation of Elias Canetti's *Die gerettete Zunge* [The saved tongue; Cluj, 1977]—an autobiographical novel describing the childhood of the author within the Jewish community in Rusciuc—who accomplishes the difficult feat of not mentioning the ethnonym—*horrible dictu!*—"Jew" even once; when she cannot avoid it, she replaces it with that of "Sephardim": "besides the Bulgarians, there [i.e., in the town] lived so many other nationalities: Sephardim, Turks, Romanians, Armenians, Russians."

From August to October 1919, Benjamin Fundoianu published in *Mîntuirea* [The deliverance], a magazine appearing in Romania, a series of eleven essays under the title "Judaism and Hellenism." In 1980, an attempt was made to publish this important text in an ample volume containing all of Fundoianu's published works, but the censors ordered the purging of that cycle of essays from the volume. This important philosophic study was only reprinted eighty years after its original publication.⁹⁶ Another case with respect to Fundoianu: Tudor Arghezi authored a warmly sympathetic article in memory of the "poet assassinated [in Auschwitz] by poisonous fumes" in the December 1945 issue of *Revista Fundațiilor Regale* [The magazine of the royal foundations]. A passage mentioning Benjamin Fundoianu's Jewishness was excluded by censorship when the text was reprinted in the mid-1970s (*Scrieri*; Bucharest, 1975).

A volume of Romanian miniatures and texts written around the year 1840 by church attendant Picu Pătruț was published in 1985. The Jews (*jidovi*) in "The Legend of St. John the New" were expurgated from the book, in spite of their being major characters: according to tradition, they had been the ones who beheaded the saint. I had to search for and consult the manuscript in order to fill in the gap left by the censor's "scissors." In an anthology of studies on "The Legend of Master Manole," published in 1980, Lazăr Șăineanu's study was censored to the same effect—mention of the sacrifice of a "Turk or a Jew" was replaced with dots. In a monographic study on another essential motif of Romanian popular mythology, *Miorița* (Bucharest, 1964), Adrian Fochi enumerates the "Armenian," the "Gypsy," and even the

“Austrian” among the foreign shepherds who crop up in different variants of the poem, but not the Jew (“*jîdan*”) who appears in a version recorded in the region of Vrancea in 1926 and published in 1930: “Lo, flocks of sheep three, / Are acoming down / With handsome lads three: / One is Transylvanian, / One is a Moldavian, / And the other is a Jew [*jîdan*].” Commenting today upon this regrettable omission, linguist Stelian Dumistrăcel reminds readers of the younger generation of the “political bashfulness” (an ironic euphemism) “that characterized the moment [1964] when the quoted monograph was drafted.”⁹⁷

Finally, the most conspicuous case is related to the attempted publication in 1972 of a study authored by an ethnologist from Jassy, Petru Caraman, entitled *Descolindatul, în orientul și sud-estul Europei* [Negative carolling in eastern and southeastern Europe]. The directorate of the Minerva Publishing House set the author a condition for publication of the volume: removal of the chapters on the Jews and the Gypsies. The editors’ request appears so much stranger today, for these two ethnic groups were described with sympathy and humor. As the ethnologist did not agree to the compromise required of him, the book was eventually withdrawn. Its publication was only recently made possible, in 1997, after a lapse of twenty-five years.⁹⁸ “The study could not be published at Minerva Publishing House [in 1972],” writes the editor of Caraman’s studies, Iordan Datcu, “because of increasingly harsh censorship, as it is well known that in 1971 a famous—in its anti-cultural consequences—ideological plenum of the only [i.e., Communist] party had taken place.”⁹⁹

As can be seen, the Gypsies were subject to the same regime of interdiction as the Jews. It is interesting that, after 1990, the Gypsies themselves demanded that the ethnonym *țigan* (“Gypsy”) be banned, as being overloaded with disparaging connotations. Coming back to the national-Communist epoch, I remember that in 1979 ethnologist Romulus Vulcănescu complained to me that the censors had expurgated the entire entry on “*țiganologie*” (Gypsy studies) which he had written for the *Dictionary of Ethnology* in preparation at the Albatros Publishing House. After the author replaced that term with “*gipsologie*,” the text of his article could be printed in the *Dictionary*. This ridiculous story is symptomatic. It demonstrates that the general degradation of Communist society had even reached the field of censorship, which began to be undermined by an inept formalism. An instrument of degradation (censorship) was itself degraded. Thus, the agents of Ceaușescu’s censorship had come to be more frightened by terms than by

ideas. This happened at a time when the catalogue of taboo-terms (a list as long as it was inane) was sure to contain certain ethnonyms, such as those—*nomina odiosa*—of “Jew” and “Gypsy.”

I have dwelt at length on this issue not merely to emphasize the difficulties of research I myself faced, but also because this political phenomenon is an aspect which can by itself round out “the image of the Jew in Romanian culture.”

NOTES

1. Lazăr Șăineanu, “Jidovii sau Tătarii sau Uriașii” (The ‘Jidovs’ or the Tartars or the giants), *Convorbiri literare* (Literary talks) 21 (1887): 521–28.

2. Simeon Fl. Marian, “Satire bucovinene contra evreilor” (Satires against the Jews in Bucovina), *Columna lui Traian* (Trajan’s column), 2 (1871): 39; Moses Schwarzfeld, “Anecdote populare românești cu privire la evrei” (Romanian folk anecdotes about the Jews), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 12: 127–43.

3. Moses Schwarzfeld, “Excursiuni critice asupra istoriei evreilor în România” (Critical enquiries on the history of the Jews in Romania), *Analele Societății Istorice “Iuliu Barasch”* (Annals of the Historical Society “Iuliu Barasch”) 2 (1888): 17–122.

4. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura lor populară: Studiu etnico-psihologic* (The Jews in their own folk literature: A psycho-ethnic study) (Bucharest 1898).

5. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română: Studiu de psihologie populară* (The Jews in Romanian folk literature: A study of folk psychology) (Bucharest 1892).

6. Ibid., 5.

7. Alan Dundes, *From Game to War, and Other Psychoanalytic Essays on Folklore* (Lexington, Ky. 1997), 114.

8. Klaus Heitmann, *Imaginea românilor în spațiul lingvistic german, 1775–1918: Un studiu imagologic* (Das Rumänenbild im Deutschen Sprachraum, 1775–1918: Eine imagologische Studie), transl. by Dumitru Hîncu (Bucharest 1995), 29.

9. Moses Gaster, *Memorii (fragmente). Corespondență* (Memoirs [fragments]. Correspondence), ed. Victor Eskenasy (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), xiii.

10. Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 190.

11. Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 499–500.

12. See, for example, Lya Benjamin, ed., *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944*. Vol. 1: *Legislația antievreiască* (The Jews of Romania between 1940–1944).

Vol. 1: Anti-Jewish legislation) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1993); *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944*, II: *Problema evreiască în stenogramele Consiliului de Miniștri* (The Jews in Romania in 1940–1944. Vol. 2: The Jewish problem in the minutes of the cabinet sessions), ed. Lya Benjamin (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996); Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001); Randolph L. Brham, ed., *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); idem, ed., *The Destruction of Romanian and Ukrainian Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); S. Stanciu, Lya Benjamin et al., eds., *Martiriul evreilor din România, 1940–1944: Documente și Marturii* (The martyrdom of the Jews in Romania, 1940–1944: Documents and testimonies), foreword by Moses Rosen (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1991); *Documents Concerning the Fate of Romanian Jewry during the Holocaust*, vols. 1–12, selected and ed. by Jean Ancel (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1986); Jean Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României: Problema evreiască (1933–1944)* (Contributions to Romanian history: The Jewish problem, 1933–1944), vol. 1, parts 1–2; vol. 2, parts 1–2, transl. from the Hebrew by Carol Bines (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001–2003); idem, *Transnistria, 1941–1942: The Romanian Mass Murder Campaigns*, vols. 1–3 (Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, Tel Aviv University, 2003); Michael Shafir, *Between Denial and “Comparative Trivialization”: Holocaust Negationism in Post-Communist East Central Europe* (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2002).

13. Leon Volovici, “On Several Concepts and Stereotypes in the Historiography Dedicated to the Jews,” *Studia Judaica* (Cluj-Napoca) 7 (1998): 89.

14. In his *Fragments tirés des chroniques moldaves et valaques*; cf. Lucian Boia, *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească* (History and myth in Romanian perception) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997), 36–37.

15. Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu, “Sfârșitul unei instituții—Hahambasia (I)” (The end of an institution—Hahambashia [I]), in *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudeorum Romaniae*, vol. 2, eds. Silviu Sanie and Dumitru Vitcu (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1997), 78.

16. Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919): De la excludere la emancipare* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 46. First published as: *Les Juifs en Roumanie (1866–1919): De l’exclusion à l’émancipation* (Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1978).

17. Ungureanu, “Sfârșitul unei instituții,” 80.

18. Alecu Russo, “Iassy et ses habitants en 1840,” in idem, *Opere complete* (Bucharest: Cugetarea, 1942), 109.

19. Ladislau Gyémánt and Lya Benjamin, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews in Romania), vol. 3, part 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 492.

20. Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 51–54.

21. B. P. Hasdeu, *Istoria toleranței religioase în România* (The history of religious tolerance in Romania) (1st ed. 1868; Bucharest: “Saeculum” Publishing House, 1992), 22ff.

22. *Timpul* (The time), March 1879, reprinted in Mihai Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască* (The Jewish problem), ed. D. Vatamaniuc (Bucharest: Vestala Pub. House, 1998), 57.

23. Nicolae Iorga, “Istoria evreilor în Terile noastre” (History of the Jews of our countries) *Analele Academiei Române: Memoriile Secției Istorice* 36 (1913): 39.

24. Vasile Alecsandri, *Discurs ținut în ședința Senatului la 10 oct. 1879, cu ocaziunea revisuirii art. 7 al Constituțiunei* (A discourse held in the Senate session of 10 October 1879, upon the revision of art. 7 of the Constitution) (Bucharest: Socec, 1879), 4–5.

25. Heitmann, *Imaginea românilor*, 247.

26. Radu Rosetti, “Un proces de sacrilegiu la 1836 în Moldova” (A trial of sacrilege in 1834 in Moldavia), *Annals of the Romanian Academy* 31 (1909): 9.

27. Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, *Sufletul neamului nostru: Calități bune și defecte* (The soul of our people: Qualities and shortcomings) (Bucharest: Anima Publishing House, 1990; 1st ed.: Bucharest: “Lumen” Publishing House, 1910), 8.

28. *Românismul: Catehismul unei noi spiritualități* (Romanianism: Catechism for a new spirituality; 1936), reprinted in C. Rădulescu-Motru, *Scriseri politice* (Political writings), ed. Cristian Preda (Bucharest: Nemira, 1998), 507–12.

29. Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație* (Orthodoxy and ethnocracy), ed. Constantin Schifirnet (Bucharest: Albatross, 1997; 1st ed. 1938), 111.

30. *Monitorul Oficial* (The official monitor) no. 10 (Jan. 1927).

31. Quoted in Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască* (n. 22 above), 163.

32. Aurel C. Popovici, *Naționalism sau democrație: O critică a civilizației moderne* (1910) (Nationalism and democracy: A critique of modern civilization), ed. Constantin Schifirnet (Bucharest: Albatros, 1997), 58; see also Cristian Preda, “Poporul meu: Călători străini și naționalism românesc” (My people: Foreign travelers and Romanian nationalism), in *Firea românilor* (The nature of the Romanians), ed. Daniel Barbu (Bucharest: Nemira, 2000), 157–77.

33. Gorovei, *Folticenii: Cercetări istorice asupra orașului* (Fălticeni: Historical research on the town) (Folticeni 1938), 128.

34. Simion Mehedinți, *Creștinismul românesc* (Romanian Christianity), ed. Dora Mezdrea (Bucharest: Anastasia, 1995; 1st ed. Cugetarea 1941), 33, 39 respectively.
35. Ibid., 197.
36. Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație*, 246.
37. Lucian Nastasă and Andrea Varga, eds., *Minorități etnoculturale, Mărturii documentare: Țiganii din România (1919–1944)* (Ethnic and cultural minorities, documents and testimonies: The Gypsies of Romania, 1919–1944), foreword by Alexandru Zub (Cluj-Napoca: Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center, 2001), 335, 342 respectively.
38. Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României*, vol. 1, 149.
39. Lucian Borleanu, ed., *Mișcarea legionară în texte originale și imagini* (The legionnaire movement in original texts and images) (Bucharest: Lucman, [n.d.]), 155.
40. Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991), 95.
41. Radu Rosetti, *Amintiri: Ce-am auzit de la alții* (Memories: What I heard from others), ed. Mircea Anghelescu (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1996), 225.
42. George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române, de la origini până în prezent* (The history of Romanian literature, from its origins to the present), 2d ed. (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 182.
43. Z. Ornea, *Anii treizeci: Extrema dreaptă românească* (The thirties: the extreme right wing in Romania) (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1995), 129.
44. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology*, 82.
45. Emil Cioran, *Schimbarea la față a României* (The transfiguration of Romania) (Bucharest: Vremea, 1936), 128–43; see also Ornea, *Anii treizeci*, 119–32. Half a century later, in the second edition of his book (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1990) Cioran suppressed these “divagations” and similar statements, believing them to be “pretentious and stupid.”
46. *Buna Vestire* (The annunciation), no. 229 (1937).
47. Ruxandra Cesereanu, “Zavistia: Imaginarul lingvistic violent al extremei drepte românești” (Zavistia: The violent linguistic imagery of the Romanian extreme right wing), *Observatorul cultural* no. 109 (26 Mar. 2002): 15–17.
48. Nicolae Iorga, “De ce atîta ură?” (Why so much hate?), *Neamul românesc*, 6 July 1940; cf. Flor Strejnicu, *Mișcarea legionară și evreii* (The Legionary movement and the Jews) (Sibiu: Imago, 1996), 37.
49. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology*, 152–53.
50. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române*, 851.
51. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology*, 122–25.

52. Benjamin, *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944*, vol. 2, 267.

53. Ion Coja, *Legionarii noștri* (Our legionnaires) (Bucharest: Kogaion, 1997); idem, *Marele manipulator și asasinarea lui Culianu, Ceaușescu, Iorga* (The great manipulator and the assassinations of Culianu, Ceaușescu and Iorga) (Bucharest: Miracol, 1999); idem, *Vin Americanii* (The Americans are coming) (Bucharest: Kogaion, 2001). See the “deconstruction” of these books by Dan Petrescu, *Deconstrucții populare* (Popular deconstructions) (Iași: Polirom, 2002), 138–88.

54. Teșu Solomovici, *România Judaică: O istorie neconvențională a evreilor din România: 2000 de ani de existență continuă* (Romania Judaica: An unconventional history of Romanian Jewry: 2000 years of continued existence) (Bucharest: Teșu Press, 2001), 58.

55. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology*, 184.

56. Florea Ioncioaia, “Veneticul, păgînul și apostatul: Reprezentarea străinului în Principatele române (secolele XVIII–XIX)” (The stranger, the pagan and the apostate: Representation of the stranger in the Romanian Principalities), in *Identitate/Alteritate în spațiul cultural românesc* (Identity/Alterity in the Romanian cultural space), ed. Al. Zub (Jassy: Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza, 1996), 158–77.

57. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 139.

58. In 1886, some fifteen Jewish paupers, women and men, were arrested in Jassy on charges of vagabondage. After they were escorted to Galați, Romanian soldiers threw them into the Danube, on the order of one of their superiors. One Jew drowned, another went mad, and Turkish soldiers saved the others. While in Germany, Adolphe Stern made public this “terrible episode,” as it was described by the newspapers of Lipsca (cf. Adolphe Stern, *Din viața unui evreu-român* [From the life of a Romanian Jew], ed. Țicu Goldstein [Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001], 56. 1st ed. 1915). This type of event is seemingly not accidental in the given area. N. V. Gogol recounts a similar episode in his historical novel *Taras Bulba* (1835): “‘Cursed Yids! I summon you, Cossacks, to the river with them! Let us drown all these cursed people!’... The Cossacks grabbed them and threw them into the waves. Desperate cries filled the sky, yet the relentless Cossacks of Zaporozje would stand and laugh....” (cf. N. V. Gogol, *Taras Bulba*, transl. into Romanian by Al. O. Teodeoreanu and Xenia Stroe [Bucharest: Russian Book Pub. House, 1956], 74). Around 1900, Romanian Prime Minister Petre P. Carp declared at a meeting of the Chamber of Deputies: “We no longer live in an epoch in which we may hurl the Jews into the water” (cf. Gérard Silvain, *Images et traditions juives: Un millier de cartes postales [1897–1917] pour servir à l’histoire de la Diaspora*, foreword by Alain Poher [Paris: Celiv, 1997], 331). Yet the Romanian politician was terribly mistaken. In October and November 1941, when Jews of Bessarabia and Bukovina were transported by rafts across the Dniester,

Romanian soldiers entertained themselves by throwing them into the cold river water: "I can still hear the sobbing and crying of those thrown in the water by the attendant soldiers," remembered some deported survivors. The Jews of another convoy "were forced to enter the waters of the Dniester and about half of those who were on the way, one hundred, were shot in the water." Another testimony: "During the dark night, one could hear the desperate voices and cries of those thrown into the water.... Many of them died by drowning." (cf. Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României*, vol. 2, 254, 290 respectively).

59. Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 76.

60. Victor Neumann, *Istoria evreilor din România: Studii documentare și teoretice* (The history of the Jews of Romania: Documentary and theoretical studies) (Timișoara: Amarcord, 1996), 14.

61. Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei* (Description of Moldavia) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 210.

62. Heitmann, *Imaginea românilor*, 213–20.

63. During the first half of the sixteenth century, Anton Verancsics affirmed that "residents [of the Romanian Principalities] are small welcomers." Around 1653–1657, Paul de Alep maintained that "Walachians, unlike the residents of Moldavia, are loving towards the alien visitor," while in 1742 Markos Antonios Katsaitis noted that, on the contrary, "Moldavians are welcoming strangers, which fact is not to be found among the Walachians." Cf. Daniel Barbu, ed., *Firea românilor* (The nature of the Romanians) (Bucharest: Nemira, 2000), 16, 24, 29 respectively.

64. Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 70.

65. Ibid., 45, 78 respectively.

66. Ibid., 120.

67. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 14–15.

68. Ion Slavici, *Die Rumänen in Ungarn, Siebenburgen und der Bukowina* (Vienna: Karl Prochaska, 1881), 149.

69. Maria Holban et al., eds., *Călători străini despre Țările Române* (Foreign travelers on the Romanian principalities), vol. 5 (Bucharest: Scientific Publishing House, 1973), 279.

70. Ibid., vol. 6, 717.

71. Mihai Spielmann, ed., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 2, part 1, (Bucharest: Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania, Historical Center, 1988), 31.

72. Boia, *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească*, 177.

73. See below, Chapter Five, the section: “The Jew as Warlock”; cf. Andrei Oișteanu, *Cosmos vs. Chaos: Myth and Magic in Romanian Traditional Culture: A Comparative Approach* (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1999), 159–201; idem, *Motive și semnificații mito-simbolice, în cultura tradițională românească* (Mytho-symbolical motifs and significations in Romanian traditional culture) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1989); Robert Graves and Raphael Patai, *Hebrew Myths: The Book of Genesis* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 101–107, 151.

74. Andrei Cornea, *Cuvintelnice fără frontiere* (Words without frontiers) (Iași: Polirom, 2002), 184–85. The translation of Homer is from *Homer’s Odyssey*, transl. by S. O. Andrew (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1953), 226.

75. Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele poporului român, adunate și așezate în ordine mitologică* (The customs and beliefs of the Romanian people, in mythological order), vol. 2 (Iași: Polirom, 1998; 1st ed., Chernovtsy, 1903), 311.

76. See Andrei Oișteanu, “Imagologie etnică” (Ethnical imagology), *Dilema*, no. 369 (2000): 7; Septimiu Chelcea, “Stereotipurile—marcatori ai identității naționale” (Stereotypes as markers of national identity), *Dilema*, no. 396 (2000): 6.

77. Vintilă Mihăilescu, “Imagini ale celuilalt: O perspectivă antropologică” (The image of the other: An anthropological perspective), in *Reflecții asupra diferenței* (Reflections on difference), ed. Irina Culic, István Horváth and Cristian Stan (Cluj: Limes, 1999), 115.

78. Marianne Mesnil, *Etnologul: între șarpe și balaur* (The ethnologue: Between snake and dragon); idem and Assia Popova, *Eseuri de mitologie balcanică* (Essays of Balkan mythology), foreword by Paul H. Stahl (Bucharest: Paideia, 1997), 226.

79. Ion Mușlea and Ov. Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului: Din răspunsurile la chestionarele lui B. P. Hasdeu* (Folklore typology: From the answers to B. P. Hasdeu’s questionnaires) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1970), 527.

80. Marcel Aderca, *F. Aderca și problema evreiască* (F. Aderca and the Jewish problem) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 135–36.

81. Ibid., 177.

82. Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație*, 145.

83. Ibid., 241.

84. Andrei Oișteanu, *Mythos and Logos: Studii și eseuri de antropologie culturală* (Mythos and logos: Studies and essays in cultural anthropology) (Bucharest: Nemira, 1997), 338.

85. Mehedinți, *Creștinismul românesc*, 66.

86. Mircea Eliade, *Textele “legionare” și despre “românism”* (Legionnaire and Romanianism texts) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001), 111.

87. Maria Holban et al., eds., *Călători străini despre Țările Române* (Foreign travelers in the Romanian Principalities), vol. 9 (Bucharest: Romanian Academy Press, 1997), 562.

88. Maria Holban et al., eds., *Călători străini despre Țările Române* (Foreign travelers in the Romanian Principalities), vol. 7 (Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1981), 487.

89. In Greek and Roman antiquity, Pentapolis was a region of Cyrene, in present-day Lebanon, comprised of five cities with a very mixed population from the viewpoint of both religious confession and ethnicity (Greeks, Jews, Romans, etc.).

90. Victor Eskenasy, ed. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 1 (Bucharest 1986), 120.

91. Volovici, "On Several Concepts and Stereotypes," 89–98.

92. Daniel Perdurant, *Antisemitism in Contemporary Greek Society*, ACTA series, no. 7 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1995).

93. Robert D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 237.

94. Dan Simonescu, *Studii și materiale de istorie medie* (Studies and documents of medieval history), vol. 3 (Bucharest 1959), 65.

95. Dan Horia Mazilu, *Noi despre ceilalți: Fals tratat de imagologie* (We about the others: False treaty of imagology) (Iași 1999), 169.

96. B. Fundoianu, *Judaism și elenism* (Judaism and Hellenism), ed. Leon Volovici and Remus Zăstroiu (Bucharest 1999).

97. Stelian Dumitrăcel, *Dicționar: Expresii românești* (Dictionary of Romanian expressions) (Iași: Institutul European, 1997).

98. Petru Caraman, *Descolindatul, în orientul și sud-estul Europei: Studiu de folclor comparat* (Negative carolling in eastern and south-eastern Europe: A study of comparative folklore) (Iași, 1997).

99. Petru Caraman, *Studii de folclor* (Folkloric studies), vol. 3, ed. Iordan Datcu and Viorica Săvulescu (Bucharest 1995), 278.

CHAPTER 1

The Physical Portrait

HOOKED NOSE AND THICK LIPS

“Silenus Face”

In the spring of 1993, American film director Steven Spielberg filmed in Cracow the scenes from *Schindler's List* that reproduced the deportation of the Jews from the city's ghetto, which had taken place in March 1943. In order to contract adequate supernumeraries, notices were posted to announce that “extras with faces of Jewish profile” were wanted for employment.¹ Nevertheless, we may wonder whether such a thing as a typical “Jewish profile” really exists, or whether it is merely one stereotype inspired, this time, by the art of physiognomy. By “Jewish profile” one is supposed to understand the so-called “Silenus face,” which presupposes thick, sensual lips (with the lower lip very often markedly curved towards the exterior), and—above all—a large and hooked nose. “The Jews [from Bukovina],” wrote Romanian ethnographer Dimitrie Dan at the end of the nineteenth century, “have large noses and quite commonly hooked, a particularity that bespeaks of [their] Oriental origins.”²

At roughly the beginning of the ninth century (see, e.g., the *Stuttgart Psalter*), Western mediaeval iconography excelled in the caricatured representation of the Jew through the generous use of diabolic features.³ The emblematic Jew was none other than Judas (sometimes, more sporadically, one may chance upon a Cain or a Caiaphas), and his depiction appears to have brought together all the physiognomic clichés that served as identifying marks: large hooked nose, thick curved lower lip, exophthalmia, pointed beard, red hair, etc. The “Silenus figure” of Judas, marked by a grimace, was in strong disagreement with the beautiful serene face of Jesus. In order to make identification easy and the caricatured traits more visible, Judas was generally represented in profile, while Jesus was depicted *en face*.⁴ Thus exaggerated, the features of the “Semitic face” were subsequently also disseminated in the form of secular images, namely through visual

representations of the “Wandering Jew” between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries as well as through caricatures of “Kikes” in the antisemitic media of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Historians of Christian art, among whom I shall refer especially to Elisabeth Revel-Neher, have observed that, unlike Western religious art, Byzantine iconography does not—with very few exceptions—make use of negative physiognomic lineaments in portraying the Jew, in general, and Judas (or Cain, or Caiaphas), in particular. Judas’ identity is established by means of his actions, not through an exaggeration of the “Semitic features” of his face. Thus has Marcel Dubois condensed the main thesis in his Foreword to Revel-Neher’s book:

In Byzantine art, the representation of the Jew is more objective, more just and more respectful than that which has been current in Western Europe. Byzantine iconography does not fall into deformed imagery or malicious caricature, by which the ostracism and hatred from a society with a purely negative view of the Jew are so often expressed.... In Byzantine iconography the image of the Jew is more biblical than sociological.⁵

The belief that the Jews have a “hooked nose” did not fail to leave its traces in popular language. Peasants from certain regions of Romania (southern Transylvania, for instance), used to designate the hooked nose by the phrase “the Jewish nose” (in southern Bessarabia it is called “a nose like an Armenian’s”).⁶ There is a unique term in English for the cartilaginous knob that makes the beak of pigeons appear hooked: “jewing,” from Jew. It may be due to the same resemblance between the hooked nose and the beak of a bird that in the folk idiom of Romania the black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax europaeus*) is called Jew.⁷ In Lithuania, people with hooked noses and thick lips were nicknamed “Jews” (*Zydas*).⁸ In Western Europe it used to be quite common to say of people endowed with such burlesque features (compounded, as a rule, by red hair, beard, and sidelocks) that they have a “Judas face” (Spanish: *Cara de Judas*, German: *Judas Gesicht*, Dutch: *Judas tronie*, etc.).

Writers, for their part, even authors of Jewish origin, have made use of the stereotypical image of the Jew with the big hooked nose. For Moses Gaster, for instance, the large nose and prolonged face, supplemented by a pointed beard, were typical features of the Jews of Galicia.⁹ “Since I had settled in France,” reflects Heinrich Heine, as reconstructed by Herbert Eulenberg, “I was no longer prepared to expect anybody being reproached for his Jewish

descent. What is more, my nose can, in respect to its straight line, stand against any 'purely Aryan' nose."¹⁰ The Jewish-German poet believed that a "long nose is a type of uniform, by which the King-God Jehovah recognizes his old retainers, even if they have deserted,"¹¹ the way Heine himself did, by being baptized.

For Thomas Mann, it was merely the Jews' "love for matters of the spirit" that "made them appear more like strangers among the Germans" than their hooked nose ever could.¹² When traveling through the province of Bukovina, Nicolae Iorga saw everywhere "Jewish faces," with "hooked noses" and with "sidelocks devoutly descending beside their ears."¹³ In his diary, Mihail Sebastian describes the face of the woman with whom he is in love (the actress Leni Caler) in the following terms: "She is ugly. Narrow forehead, Jewish nose, big mouth...protruding lower lip."¹⁴ In his turn, Romanian novelist Liviu Rebreanu makes the face of one of his characters, Ytzik Shtrul, a Jewish innkeeper from Fălticeni (in northern Moldavia), look like a collection of identifying insignia which are considered to be characteristic of the Jewish nation: he has "very red skin," "spotted with mahogany freckles as big as smallpox pits," has "russet hair, sparse and dirty," and "from the midst of his hairy and reddish face, the hooked thin nose rises bluntly and domineeringly."¹⁵ Marcu Goldstein, the strap maker in one of Gala Galaction's novels, also has a "scraggy and crooked nose."¹⁶ The formula appears to have been borrowed from one of Calistrat Hogaș' depictions of a character called Avrum [i.e., Abraham], an innkeeper from northern Moldavia, who has a "scrawny and hooked nose, with his long face covered by a savage beard that ends in a fork, and still, before all else, with his unavoidable sidelocks..."¹⁷ Isaac Bashevis Singer himself adopts this technique of portrayal. In one of his novels, to give but one example, a feminine character has a "crooked, rabbinical nose."¹⁸ Some British authors also mark their Jewish characters with such physiognomic flaws, meant at times to underline some psychological flaws: "aquiline nose" (George Bernard Shaw, *An Unsocial Socialist*, 1884); "hooked nose" and "hooked beak" (Joseph Conrad, *Nostromo*, 1904); "the Jewish nose" and "his nose had a hook" (G. K. Chesterton, *The Flying Inn*, 1914), and more.¹⁹ In 1935, during her voyage through Nazi Germany, Virginia Woolf is disquieted by the overly Jewish, long and hooked nose of her husband Leonard Woolf.²⁰ Around that time, recalls Eugene Ionesco, Romanian legionnaire students "would prey on people who did not possess a very orthodox nose."²¹

Zeccharias Lichter, the imaginary character of the homonymous novel by Matei Călinescu, who is endowed with the “physiognomy of a metaphysician, and of an enlightened German Jew of the turn of the nineteenth century,” also has a “superlative, Semitic nose.”²² For Romanian-Jewish philosopher Ion Ianoși, the “biological premise” of ethnic identification is “in every respect insufficient for an approximation at all valid.” Notwithstanding this assertion, he describes his father-in-law—a Sephardic Jew—as having “marked Semitic features”: “big hooked nose,” “thick lips,” “swarthy,” etc.²³

In 1881, in order to Judaize the assassin of Tsar Alexander II, thought to be the Russian *narodnik* Ignatio Grinewitsky, the antisemitic journal *Novoye Vremya* [Modern times] describes the latter as “an Oriental type of a man, with a hooked nose.”²⁴ As some antisemites used to maintain, the aquiline nose was a negative element not only from the aesthetic point of view, but also from the ethical one. It was said to bespeak not only the ugliness of the Jew, but also his perfidiousness. For chauvinistic author and politician Maurice Barrès (1862–1923), to condemn Alfred Dreyfus all one had to do was look at “his face, that of a foreign race; his guilt emerges from the race and the shape of his nose.” At the end of the nineteenth century, Barrès had fallen into the pitfall of the “science of skulls” which opposed the “fair dolichocephalous” (the “Aryan race”) to the “dark brachicephalous” (the “Semitic race”).²⁵

Physiognomy and Anthropology

In Antiquity and the Middle Ages, physiognomy was the art of revealing the character of an individual by scrutinizing the features of his face. No physiognomic detail was insignificant, everything had its importance: the breadth of the forehead, the shape of the ears, the distance between the eyes, the position of moles, and so on and so forth. However, most essential for this interpretation were the size and shape of the nose and lips. No matter how inexact this “divine science”—this divinatory art—might have been, the premise for it being that the soul reflected the appearance of the body, a few of its elements remained unaltered over the centuries. For instance, the hooked nose and thick lips more often than not aroused the aversion of the common people, as the “physiognomists” also negatively valorized them. These features of the human face, moreover, were considered physiognomic defects, corresponding to certain moral flaws.

For Bartolomeo della Rocca and Alessandro Achelini, among others, who jointly authored *Chyromantie ac physionomie* (Bologna 1503), the individual

with an aquiline nose was cruel and predatory like the eagle.²⁶ Jean d'Indagine—who published his book on physiognomy and chiromancy in Strasbourg in 1531—claimed that people whose noses were curved like a beak were choleric, contumelious, and tyrannical.²⁷ In *De Humana Physiognomia* (Naples 1586), Giambattista della Porta wrote in his turn that a nose shaped like the beak of a raven or of a cock denoted shamelessness and lechery, while people who have thick lips, curved towards the exterior, scorned honor, and had a deceitful soul.²⁸

In the second half of the seventeenth century, in an attempt to convert the “art” into a “science,” Charles Le Brun proposed a geometrical method, dividing the faces of animals and people into lines and angles. “The quality given by the hunch of the nose in animals,” he claimed, “is also extendable to people.” The large aquiline nose, together with a narrow forehead, was the sure sign of a negative character. The nose that resembled the beak of a parrot betrayed the vainglorious man and the babbler, while the man whose nose was shaped like a raven’s beak was “destined to fall prey to the most despicable passions.” Finally, Le Brun claimed that a hooked nose, curved lips, and large eyes were the clues to an individual’s grasping nature.²⁹ Much the same conclusions were reached at the end of the eighteenth century by Swiss author Caspar Lavater in his *La Physiognomonie ou l’Art de connaître les hommes par la physionomie* (Leipzig 1772 and Paris 1783). Attempting a reformation of “this science [that] appreciate[d] the interior through the exterior,” he emphasized the “perfect connection” that allegedly existed “between the lips and character”; he also gave “special attention to the characteristic angle formed by the tip of the nose with the upper lip” and—most important—devoted himself to a study of “national physiognomies.”³⁰

The present work is a study not of physical, but of cultural anthropology. Though anthropometric measurements are not the subject of this study, yet it would still be worthwhile make a parenthetical comment here. Arthur Koestler once claimed that there was a “popular belief” according to which the Jews “can be instantly recongnized as such” due to certain physiognomic features. The standard portrait of the so-called “typical Jew” would need to consist, in principal, of the “convex nose,” “sensual lips,” “bulging or oblique eyes,” and so forth.³¹ For antisemitic scholars as well, “the particularly convex nose, fleshy lips, with the protruding lower one, and exophthalmia” would be the major characteristics that formulate the so-called “Jewish masking.”³²

"Facial anomalies and malformations of the skull are the calling card that each and every Jew possesses," wrote in the 1930s *Porunca Vremii*, an antisemitic Romanian journal. The caricatures published in such journals also played a role in the creation of a visual stereotype of the Jew. When dealing with the visual and linguistic imagery of the rightwing extremist journals of interwar Romania, Ruxandra Cesereanu unveiled a few types of representations of the Jew: "Beside articles, huge caricatures can be noticed, depicting heavy-bodied, grinning, and libidinous Jews (circumscribed to the image of the ogre), but also rickety, big-nosed, big-lipped and satanical Jews."³³

However, data furnished by anthropologists does confirm, though only slightly, the *opinio communis* according to which, on the basis of a few physical traits, Jews can easily be recognized. For instance, at the beginning of the twentieth century, anthropometric and statistical studies established that only 14 percent of New York Jews had the so-called "Jewish nose."³⁴ Anthropologists reached similar results as regards the shape of the Jewish nose in Poland and the Ukraine.³⁵ In other words, a marked polymorphism, a wide diversity of physiognomic traits can be observed in the case of the Jews as an ethnic group. Owing to the specific historical conditions in which the Jewish Diaspora has evolved, there is, from an anthropological point of view, no one single dominant type of Jew, but several types. Similar conclusions were reached even by some racist scholars (such as Ernest Renan) who were particularly tempted to apply, especially to Jews, a simplifying algorithm: a single physiognomic type corresponds to a single psychological and moral type (and, as a rule, both are repellent).³⁶ "From my experience," Renan wrote in 1833, "there is not a single Jewish type, yet several of them, all absolutely irreducible to one another."³⁷

The vast majority of anthropologists, with some notable exceptions, also reached the same conclusion. In his *Lettres Persanes* (1721), Montesquieu maintained "that nothing is more comparable to an Asian Jew than a European one,"³⁸ referring to the intellectual and ethical portrayal of the Jew, not his physical one. By 1788, American proto-anthropologist John Ledyard recorded the following in the log of his Siberian and Russian journey: "I know of no nation, no people on earth among whom there is such an uniformity of features except the Chinese, the Negroes & the Jews as there is among the Asiatic Tartars."³⁹ Finally, from a visceral Judeophobic perspective, Romanian Iron Guard leader Corneliu Zelea Codreanu noticed the resemblance, at all levels, of the eastern European to the western

European Jew. Finding himself during 1922–1923 in Strasbourg (“a font of Jewish infection”), Codreanu was disturbed to find the same “Hebrew type with a hooked nose,” instead of a hypothetical Gallic type of a Jew. “Between the Hebes of Târgul Cucului [in Jassy] and those of Strasbourg,” he concluded, “I found no discrepancy whatsoever. The same figure, the same manners, the same jargon, the same satanic eyes.”⁴⁰

In 1916, Felix Aderca wrote about the “numerous, profoundly different, indeed *antagonistic* types of individuals who think themselves Jews. Where is the *unity*, proper to all the other living nations, in the diversity of their types? [emphasis in original—A.O.].”⁴¹ This is also the opinion of H. Sănielevici, who endorsed the theory with pseudo-anthropologic judgments (*In slujba Satanei?! [Worshipping Satan?!]*, 1935). In apparently paradoxical fashion, the difference between two types of Jews (Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews, for instance) is, more often than not, greater than the difference between the Jews and the host nation. The face of the “typical Jew” (with his hooked nose, his thick lower lip, curved on the outside, etc.) represents only one single type of Jew, which is not in the least the prevailing one.

The conclusion reached is that the convex nose is a physiognomic characteristic of some people in the Near East (Armenians, Georgians, Syrians, Turks, etc.) as well as of some who reside north of the Mediterranean Sea (Greeks, Italians, French, Spaniards, etc.). Among the Greeks and Turks, for example, the “Jewish nose” is more common than among the Jews. A character in the novel of Panait Istrati, the Bucharest Jewish painter Moritz Feldman, “looked like a real Turk, with his hooked nose.”⁴² With the Armenians, the Georgians, the Ossetes, or the Turks, etc., say anthropologists, “the aquiline nose constitutes the rule, and not the exception,” while “among genuine Semites” (such as genuine, and not mongrel, Bedouins) this shape of nose “is not likely to appear at all.”⁴³

RITUAL HAIR, BEARD, AND SIDELOCKS

In the year 1787, Count Maurice d’Hauterive presented Prince Alexandru Ipsilanti with a memorandum written in consequence of his tour through Moldavia in 1785. Entitled “Mémoire sur l’état ancien et actuel de la Moldavie” [Memorandum on the past and present state of Moldavia], the document demonstrates the French diplomat’s claim to have experienced a cultural shock and to have been completely taken aback at the—to him—eerie appearance of the Moldavian Jew. He sketches a profile of the latter that

seems to have been drawn out of the *Bizarre Pages* of an eighteenth-century poet of the absurd such as Urmuz:

The Jews, whom one can tell from afar by their figure, the quaintest of all that can be found in other countries, have heads square at the top, tapering towards the lower part, and bristling through the black fur cap they wear, out of which two plaited meshes of hair dangle down the cheeks. At the same time, the back part of the skull is worn shaven, and a tiny goatee at the tip of their chins lengthens their faces and gives them the appearance of an Angora goat.⁴⁴

Referring to traditional Jewry of northern Moldavia in the mid-1850s (in the aftermath of an epoch of massive immigration from Galicia), French historian Marcel Emerit provides a significantly caricatured portrayal of the Jews, along similar lines:

Streets of Moldavian towns are increasingly overflowing with these aliens, draped in long, black caftans, and with their sidelocks similar to the ears of a dog, jutting out from what must have been a black hat, now green because of its worn state.... Their long beards are either tar-black or ruddy, and must hold scissors as abomination, their cheeks are flimsy and pale, while their spines are bent, as if to oppose beforehand the impact of cudgels that the Christian gentry never suppresses.⁴⁵

Around that time, in 1840, in another description of the Jews of Jassy, Alecu Russo speaks of “the unavoidable pair of sidelocks that run along temples and get mixed in a filthy beard, both of which are never shaven.”⁴⁶

In fact, this was an epoch which harbored a fairly uniform image of the Jew in central and eastern Europe. Not only was the figure of the Jew similar; so too was his caricatured portrayal. For example, in 1786 a contemporary of Count d’Hauterive, Johann Pezzl, described the *Ostjuden* of Vienna—not those from a forsaken Moldavian borough—in the following manner: “The Polish Jews, all swathed in black, their faces bearded and their hair all twisted in knots resemble scarecrows: a living satire of the Chosen Race.” The inhabitants of enlightened Vienna perceived this exotic attire as being “theatrical,” in the formulation of Larry Wolff.⁴⁷ Eastern European Jews were similarly identified in Paris as well, as having “long, disheveled beards.”⁴⁸ A few Russian writers sometimes held a different image of the Jew. The image of “the plumed hatchling,” employed by Gogol (*Taras Bulba*, 1835) to portray Yankl, “the archetypal Jew of Russian literature,”⁴⁹ was also adopted

by Dostoyevsky (*The House of the Dead*, 1861), by Chekhov (*The Steppe*, 1888), and even by Isaac Babel (*Red Cavalry*, 1926), thus confirming the Dostoyevskyan adage: “We all descend from Gogol’s *Overcoat*.”

In the course of the nineteenth century, influenced by the Jewish Enlightenment movement (*Haskalah*) in central and eastern Europe, part of Moldavian Jewry, especially the youth, embraced “European” deportment and dress. Bukovina, which in 1775 came under the administration of the Habsburg Empire, later to become part of it, was more strongly exposed to this reforming influence which emanated from the Jewish communities of the German-speaking area. Despite this state of affairs, at the end of the nineteenth century, the image of the Orthodox Jew from Bukovina as described by Romanian ethnologist Dimitrie Dan in 1899, differed in no substantial respect from the ones presented above:

The brown hair on the head is cropped short or even shaved with the razor. Sometimes the hair has a fair coloration, or even a red one. Close to the ears, the hair on the head is not cropped, but long plaits are allowed to grow, which are always crimped and are called *peoth*. These locks are of the prescribed length when their ends can reach each other under the beard. The beard and moustaches are never shaven nor cropped, but are worn in their natural length.... By degrees...wigs are being relinquished among married women, who no longer cut their hair before their weddings.⁵⁰

Romanian folk Christmas carols include some remarks regarding the Jews’ hair and beard such as: “An old Jew is sitting, / With his pagan beard.”⁵¹ In 1840, with reference to the fine-looking Jewesses of Moldavia, Alecu Russo noted that “according to the Talmud, married womenfolk are under the obligation of shaving the hair of their skulls.”⁵² Let us mention parenthetically that in 1788 John Ledyard, while traveling across Russia, noticed that the custom of Jewish married womenfolk to have their hair cut was similar to that of eastern European married women who wore their hair braided or hidden under batiks. “This is another of those Eastern customs the offspring of Eastern jealousy. The moment a women is married among them she becomes marked as we do a horse we have bought. To hide the hair, [for Jewish women], is to have it cut off & to have cut off the ears for the same purpose would not have been more ridiculous.”⁵³

In an article published in Vienna in 1877 on “The Jewish Question in Eastern Europe” (focusing on Romania, Poland, and Russia), Jewish author Aaron Liebermann, with bitter humor, wrote that the ritual sidelocks of Jews

were “as twisted and as long as our exile.”⁵⁴ And indeed, this fashion of wearing the hair and the beard are not dictated by some nebulous tradition, but by extremely ancient and precise ritual precepts which bear the authority of the laws that God handed down to Moses and were written down in the Torah. One example is in Leviticus 19:27: “The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ‘You shall not round off the hair on your temples or mar the edges of your beard.’”

From the vantage point of folkloric Christianity, certain Romanian folk legends try to explain *when* and *why* the Jews adopted such habits concerning their hair. Understandably, however, the central character of the story is no longer Moses but Jesus. According to folk legends about the Resurrection, Christ’s resurgence also occasioned the restoring to life of a cock (from the borsch in which it was stewing). As it began to crow and to flutter its wings, the cock bespattered the Jews with droplets of boiling broth, leaving them with freckled bodies (see the next section: “Why Jews Are Freckled”). Certain legends of this type from Bukovina have an uncanny continuation:

The rooster from the cauldron with boiling broth came to life and, with a flutter of his wings, started to crow. Seeing this, the Jews sweated all over in their shoes and, in their fright, they jumped from the table as if chased by wild beasts and tried to flee for their lives. Yet, before they could take to their heels, the rooster splattered broth all over them and, wherever it reached, the broth covered them all in freckles and their heads in scab. And from then on, the Jews clip and shave their heads at the place where the splatter once reached them, and only at the front, where the broth did not reach because of the ears, do they allow their hair to grow, and this is how it came about that they wear the so-called sidelocks.⁵⁵

It is a well-established fact among ethnologists that the cultural distance that separates populations is imposed not only by the difference between “our” gods and “their” gods, but also by the dissimilarity between apparently minor cultural codes. It is not uncommon, therefore, for simple divergences in communal customs, dialects, or bodily appearance to open a wider gap between ethnic groups than differences of religious doctrine. “We” look, above all else, at what and how “they” eat, speak, or wear their hair. The opposition between the “bearded” and the “long-haired” on the one hand, and the “shaved” and the “short-haired” on the other, is often perceived as overlapping the fundamental opposition between the “savage” and the “civilized.” However, this is by no means a hard and fast rule: “Each of the

terms can receive a positive or a negative value in the distinction it establishes between the self and the others.”⁵⁶

In Bulgarian folk legends, for example, the Romanians have always appeared as long-haired, on the basis of a homophonous association between the term *vlas/vlasi* (hair) and the ethnonym *vlah/vlasi* (Walachian’).⁵⁷ Furthermore, a Hungarian legend—interpolated at the mid-seventeenth century by Simion Dascălul in Grigore Ureche’s *Letopiseț* or *Chronicle of Moldavia*—also laid emphasis on the identity-bearing differences between Hungarians and Romanians in Maramureș and Moldavia: these consisted primarily in the different hair-cutting practices of the latter.⁵⁸ We may see this in relation with a deprecating Hungarian saying which attributed to the Romanians an excess of hair: “*Szörös talpu Oláh*” (hairy-soled Walachian).

For Christians, the Orthodox Jews’ manner of wearing their hair, their beards and their ritual sidelocks signified more than mere cultural difference. The following are several popular sayings, common for the area upon which I am focusing. Polish people were in the habit of saying of a repulsive thing: “It is as beautiful as a Jewish beard,”⁵⁹ while of somebody who was over head and ears in debt they would remark: “He kissed the Jew on the beard.”⁶⁰ All across Europe, the legendary “Wandering Jew” achieved a proverbial reputation for the length of his beard. In Finnish folklore he is called the “Cobbler of Jerusalem,” and the saying, “A long beard like the one of the Cobbler of Jerusalem,” was doubled by a comic explanation: “He wanted to swallow a horse and only the tail was left on earth.”⁶¹

All these details, however, go no further than settling the preliminary terms of the “cultural distance.” Quite often, the beard and hair of the Jew conferred upon him a demonic appearance. According to an old German proverb, “honest Jews” are a species of fantastic, fiendish beings, with non-human physiological attributes: they “have hair on their palms” (*Die ehrlichen Juden het Haar in der Hand*).⁶² Even close to our own times, in 1985, a folk informant from southeastern Poland declared that the Jews “looked like devils” because “they dressed in black, wore long beards, had sacks on their backs.”⁶³ An old Polish and German proverb completes this image: “He thought he caught a Jew by the beard, but he held the Devil by his horns.”⁶⁴ Moreover, if the Jew—as we have seen—was fated for the Devil, then his ritual beard and sidelocks were also intended for him. It is not without significance that, for the people, the hairs from an ordinary Jew’s beard as well as those from the beard of a great ancient Jewish king were both “things of the devil.” In a Romanian legend, versified in 1843 by

Moldavian writer Costachi Stamati, the strength of the Tartar khan lay in an enchanted talisman that contained "A few hairs / From Solomon's beard / And other things of the Devil."⁶⁵

Many apparently humorous and harmless verses—which, their signification degraded, were relegated to children's folklore⁶⁶—testify to the relationship between the Jew's beard and the Devil. Such verses were attested in nineteenth-century Romania, especially in Moldavia where the image of the Orthodox Jew was more accessible: "Out pops the Devil from the embers / The Jew he leads by his locks, / Out pops the Devil from under the grass, / The Jew he leads by the beard"⁶⁷; "The Jew with the red beard, / With the mail he sends the Devil, / The Jew with the black beard / Sends the Devil out to grassland"⁶⁸; "You big beard, you, Jew, / Your beard, Jew, / Will make the Devil's brush, / A brush is for whitewashing, / Your beard is for shaking."⁶⁹

"Your beard is for shaking" was not a mere jocular gratuitous verse, invented by children, but the reflection of a dismal social reality. The ruler of Moldavia, Mihail Sturdza, signed an *ofis* (princely decree) in 1847 which constrained the Jews to renounce their traditional costume (*caftan*, *streimel*, beard, sidelocks, etc.). This document made reference to the molestation and indignities that Orthodox Jews were enduring precisely because of their appearance: "They are often subjected to defamation and abuse on the part of the common people, leading sometimes to offensive handling, all these being occurrences that not only cause the Jewish race much grief, but also impede their interests."⁷⁰ It turned out that the *ofis* of the court had no other purpose but that of extorting money from the Jews to the benefit of the ruler and his corrupt functionaries. The numerous threats of expulsion directed at the "sidelocked ones," Nicolae Iorga claimed, with much insight, "did not result in fewer Jews, yet they did, without a doubt, lead to richer functionaries."⁷¹

In 1860, in an official letter addressed to the rabbis of Moldavia on this subject, Mihail Kogălniceanu deemed that the traditional costume of Polish origin was a true "hindrance" in the path of "curbing national antipathies and prejudices," and that it exposed the Jews to the "jokes and even brutalities of the masses."⁷² In his turn, upon arriving from Berlin in 1841–1842 and traveling across Galicia, Bukovina, Moldavia, and Muntenia, Dr. Iuliu Barasch—a partisan of *Haskalah* and, accordingly, a propagator of Jewish modernization—was of the opinion that "this ancient wear has become a genuine monstrosity, which is an obstacle on their [i.e., the Jews'] path" and that "owing to this wear a useless barrier is erected, filled with hatred, between the Christians and the Jews."⁷³

Cases of “offensive handling” of the Jews and of the “jokes and even brutalities of the masses” could be considered those that made up the constant pastimes of gangs of pranksters, who would exert themselves to play various “tricks on the Kikes.” Among these—apart from beatings, throwing of stones, and shouting of abuse—these perpetrators seemed to have thought highly of pulling the Jews by their beards or sidelocks and of throwing bits of molten and sticky tar onto their beards.⁷⁴

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, Greek riffraff from Galați, particularly sailors, used to throw “bits of [smoking] tinder, purposely provided with inflammable matter [i.e., tar]” at the incautious Jews who would “go for a stroll” in the area of the docks. This was a regular preamble to a fight.⁷⁵ It appears that at that time this was a pastime invented by the Greeks and brought to Moldavia by seamen. The Greek Phanariot prince Nicolae Suțu, who ruled Moldavia, recollected the following about the treatment meted out to Jews at the beginning of the nineteenth century in a port town inhabited by Greeks, next to Constantinople:

At that time, the town of Arnautchioi was inhabited by Christians only [i.e., Greeks]. The Jews came only infrequently to the towns in which the Turks did not dwell, because they would end up as targets for all manner of insult.... During Holy Week, no Jew would dare to show his face [on the docks]. When they caught a trespasser, the scapegraces from Arnautchioi tarred his beard and set it on fire; the wretched soul made a dash to throw himself into the sea, in order to save himself from the scorching heat.⁷⁶

An interesting incident is the one described by Mihail Sadoveanu in the novel *Duduia Margareta* [Miss Margaret (1907)], set in a Moldavian village. The tow beard of a “Jew” mask worn by a Romanian peasant in the ritual mummery show *Irozii* (The Herods), is burned at Christmas time: “A hunched Jew, with a tow beard, starts to jump all over the place with frightful screams, spreading his fingers on both sides of his beard. In the hall, old Ilie is waiting for him; he crosses his path and sets his beard on fire with a candle, while all the hirelings huddle, in great mirth.”⁷⁷

For the Judeophobic inhabitants of peripheral quarters or slums, shaking the Jew by the beard (“Let go of my beard, or your stave will burst”),⁷⁸ setting a Jewish beard on fire, or shaving it were not simple amusements, but, as we shall see, acts of a “good Christian.” “In popular belief,” noted Prince Nicolae Suțu, such maltreatment “passed for a feat worthy of all praise.”⁷⁹ A Romanian superstition, attested in Bukovina in 1884, had it that if you

plucked “three hairs from the beard of a red man and put them in a pail full of water, you would have killed three Jews.”⁸⁰ It was equally an act of humiliating one’s enemies, frequently encountered during those times. In the Balkans, for instance, where the moustache is a traditional sign of virility, “to have one’s moustache shaven by one’s enemy” was deemed a significant disgrace.⁸¹

In a Moldavian legend, a Romanian and a Jew challenge one another “as to how many saints one has,” and the winner could pluck several hairs from the other’s beard. Eventually, the Romanian was the victor in this theological dispute, and when he finished clutching the Yid’s beard, there was not a hair left of it.⁸² The true victory of the Christian over the frightened Jew was not in the mere shaking of his beard, but in its being altogether shaven off and the cutting off of the ritual sidelocks. The “cultural distance” would be thus eliminated, and the act had the authority of a conversion (if a forced one) and the prestige of bringing the “lawless pagan” to “our law.” The act of cutting or plucking out beards and ritual sidelocks was itself dressed in ritual garb.⁸³ Numerous historical testimonies attest this act as being quite common. A few examples follow.

In eighteenth-century Poland, Jews who were forcefully converted against their own convictions were stigmatized and an “offensive chastisement” was administered to them: “One of the sidelocks was cut and half the beard was shaved, so that people might know that they were neither Jews nor non-Jews,” states a contemporary Hasidic account.⁸⁴

When sinister Tsar Nikolai I (1825–1855) commenced his de-Judaizing process of forced Christianizing and Russianization of the Jews within the “pale of settlement” established in eastern Russia (Bessarabia included), in addition to the forced conversions to the Christian faith, he took systematic action against two important cultural traits of Judaism: *the book* and *the hair*. In other words, on the one hand the Talmud was once again publicly burned⁸⁵ and, on the other, Jewish men were forced to cut their sidelocks and beards, while Jewish women were forced to relinquish their wigs.⁸⁶ The situation did not change much for the better when Tsar Alexander II (1855–1881) ascended to power. In 1876, for instance, in an official document issued at Lemberg by the Habsburg authorities, Orthodox Jews living in Galicia were notified that they could not travel into Russia, because in that country only the Russian muzhiks were allowed to wear a beard. “It might easily happen,” Mihai Eminescu commented upon this interdiction, “that the Austrian Jew might find himself in the middle of the road with his beard, sidelocks and the

hem of his caftan being forcefully cut off.” “Happy Russia!” Eminescu exclaimed, yet not in irony, but in earnest enviousness.⁸⁷

It is well-documented that the “volunteers” of *hetaeria* during the Greek Revolution of 1821 carried out widespread anti-Jewish actions throughout the Romanian principalities. Eyewitnesses recounted that after pillaging and torturing the Jews of Ploiești, the Greek revolutionaries fled the town for fear of the Turks. Some of them took a wealthy Jew, Leibu the Bachelor, as a hostage. Later, the Jew “came back with half a beard and a side lock cut off.”⁸⁸

In April 1859 (and again in 1860), the reformer Mihail Kogălniceanu, at that time the minister of internal affairs, sent an official letter to the rabbis of Moldavia in which he asked them to apply their entire moral authority to convince their congregations to adopt the “European” and relinquish the “Galician fashion.” The *ofis* was read in every synagogue as well as on the streets of the towns, “to the sound of drums.” Elias Schwarzfeld recounts:

The Christian population and the army, taking this official act the wrong way, armed themselves with scissors, in Jassy as well as in other towns and villages, and roamed the streets and wherever they ran into Jews they would shorten the edges of their caftan, cut off their sidelocks, and would not spare their beards either.... As a result, the military command officers threatened the soldiers with twenty-five strokes of the whip if they did not desist from maltreating the Jews under any pretext, and even found themselves forced to restrain the army in the barracks for a few days....⁸⁹

Anti-Jewish tension was extremely high in Moldavia in those days. Moreover, at approximately the same time as the aforementioned disturbances—the beginning of the same month (April 1859)—a gory pogrom occurred, triggered by an accusation of ritual infanticide, in the town of Galați (see below, the section on “Ritual Infanticide”).

In Ion Calugăru’s autobiographic novel, *Copilăria unui netrebnic*, a character in the Jewish neighborhood of the town of Dorohoi says in a fright during the 1907 peasant uprising: “Maybe once again they are giving orders to have old [Jewish] men’s beards cut off with the shears for sheep.”⁹⁰ Apparently such things did really happen, for in Liviu Rebreanu’s novel *Răscoala* [The uprising] (1932), one protagonist makes a comment to that effect in the context of a discussion of the anti-Jewish riots started by the peasants in Bukovina, in the spring of 1907: “‘It is no great loss if some sidelocks are to be lost!’ says Titu [Herdelea] with a laugh. ‘That’s the only

way to rid the villages a little of them, for they have grown in number beyond all reckoning!’” What is symptomatic in this phrase is the ambiguity between the “cutting of the sidelocks” and the “death of the Kikes,” an ambivalence that would show up again in other lines of dialogue throughout the novel: “And the uprising went on in this way for a few days and descended [from Bukovina] further and further, with its ‘Down with the Jews!’ and its ‘Down with the sidelocks!’”

In an article eloquently entitled “*Să-i lovim în cap pe jidani?*” [Shall we hit the Kikes in the head?], Onisifor Ghibu replies in the negative to the title-question, yet he describes a more than usual life-situation in Moldavia of the 1920s: “You well know there are some who say ‘Let us thump the Kikes on the head,’ because they deprive us of our vigor. Some even have to beat the Kikes here and there, to cut their sidelocks, and to break the windows of their homes. Is that the path to follow? I am of the opinion that it is not.”⁹¹

In 1938, it was Zaharia Stancu’s turn to gloss on the margins of this subject in a political article entitled “Between Ion and Ytzik”:

Ion can bear it no longer. He demands bread for his children and grain for his oxen. And, because the little that he asks cannot be given him, he is urged to pull Ytzik by the sidelocks, which Ion, stultified by poverty as he is, does not shy away from. After Ion plucks out Ytzik’s sidelocks, he will notice that he wears the same old shredded twilled coat on his shoulders, etc.... What will all the Ions in this country do, when they awaken from the humbuggery into which they are being thrown?⁹²

Elie Wiesel, too, in the memoirs of his childhood in his native town of Sighet (Maramureș) in the 1930s, wrote of fanatic advocates trained by A. C. Cuza or legionaries who “would assault Jews in the street, tearing at their beards and side curls.”⁹³ It does not need reminding that the German National Socialists were subjecting “Eastern Jews” who would venture to don their antiquated dress on the streets of German towns to the same kind of violence.⁹⁴ One of the greatest pleasures of German officers and soldiers during World War II was to cut off—sometimes with the bayonet!—the beards and sidelocks worn by *Ostjuden*. They would have their pictures taken in this heroic posture and proudly send them back home. This is how such visual testimonies have survived to our days.⁹⁵

Most of the Jews acquiesced with resignation to humiliating situations of this kind, not daring to undertake as much as the shadow of a counteraction. A typical Jewish proverb could be the ultimate synthesis for this mixture of

cowardice and wisdom: “Better a Jew without a beard, than a beard without a Jew.” The very fact that such a proverb could be born and endure demonstrates the consistency of the circumstances in which the Jew had to choose between the beard and his own life. At approximately the middle of the nineteenth century, some Jews—in relation, let us say, to the “German fashion”—adopted a more carefree opportunism, a compromise position between “reformers” and “traditionalists,” as suggested by another Jewish proverb: “Be a German among Germans and a Hassid among the Hassidim.”⁹⁶ In other words, moderate integration of the Jew into the society in which they lived was recommended, with no sacrificing of the Judaic spirit. In the second half of the eighteenth century Moses Mendelssohn had preached this type of balance—difficult to maintain—to the Jews in the German-speaking area. He is also the alleged author of a social slogan which, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, was widely employed even in circles of the eastern European Jewish “enlightened” (Hebrew: *maskilim*, enlightened scholars): “Be a man in the street and a Jew in your own home.”⁹⁷

In addition to the traditional attire, the Jew’s ritual beard and sidelocks were sure and fast signs of ethnic identification. They have been used as marks of identity not only in Christian iconography, but also in the theater (be it popular or cultured, Romanian or Jewish), whenever an actor was supposed to impersonate a Jew. In certain masked rites enacted in the period between Christmas and the New Year—such as the procession of the “Goat”—there are peasants who “make themselves into Jews”⁹⁸ or “dress like the Kikes.”⁹⁹ Francisc Nistor has printed one of the very few images that are known of such a “Jewish mask” from Maramureș. All the marks of identification mentioned above are represented on this mask: long sidelocks that reach under the chin, moustaches made of horsetail hair, and a goat-like beard—an excessively long one, about 24 cm in length—made of tow.¹⁰⁰ Similar “Kike” masks were donned in “Goat” processions in Moldavia as well:

The Jew Bercu is wearing boots and a long, coarse-stuff peasant coat, with some clothes underneath, in order to make himself a hunchback.... He has a hat with fox brushes sewed on its sides...; this face is covered with a mask made from a goat hide, two sidelocks like those worn by the Jews hanging on both sides, then eyebrows, moustaches, and beard made of hair from a horsetail.¹⁰¹

Again from Maramureș is the photograph, still extant, taken by folklorist Tache Papahagi in 1922 and showing two young peasants masked as Joseph and Mary for the folk religious drama of *Viflaim* (popular Romanian corruption of Bethlehem), which recreates the birth of Jesus. The peasant who plays Joseph is costumed exactly as Orthodox Jews in the area used to look at the beginning of the twentieth century: a black hat and caftan, a beard and long sidelocks; the only thing he had forgotten to replace were his *opinci*, the peasant leather footwear.¹⁰²

With all the elements of their traditional dress (including the ritual beard and sidelocks), the Orthodox Jews also appeared on the stage of the cultured theater in the second half of the nineteenth century. The imaginary characters of Vasile Alecsandri (Herșcu the pedlar, master Moise, Shloime, and Shafar) are unsympathetic and immoral Jews who have a preposterous appearance and speak a corrupt language. The playwright was criticized both by Mihai Eminescu in 1870¹⁰³ and by George Călinescu in 1941¹⁰⁴ for overdoing the Romanian-Yiddish jargon in his plays. The latter also reproached Alecsandri for creating characters that were, “professionally speaking, implausible,” among whom were the Jewish innkeeper and the Greek tenant in *Lipitorile satului* [The village leeches]. In the same epoch (around 1876), bigoted Jews were caricatured even on the stage of the Jewish theater, which was being born in those years under the direction of Avram Goldfaden in Jassy in the garden of a pub named “At the Green Tree.”¹⁰⁵ In a review published in 1876 in *The Jassy Courier* over the signature of Mihai Eminescu himself—the earliest attestation of a Jewish theater in the world—the poet praised the “actor that played the Hasid,” for the talent with which he “represented the Jew, as we see him in all days.” “Another actor,” the reviewer went on, “whom we believe to be the most talented in the entire troupe,” played the part of a young Jewish talmudist, “a *studious theologiae*...his beard black, carefully groomed.”¹⁰⁶

In 1867, again in Jassy, Ioan Lupescu’s play *Paragraful 37 sau Palestina la Iași* [Paragraph 37 or Palestine in Jassy] was performed for the first time. Staged with great success all across Moldavia (in 1875, for instance, it was scheduled to run at the Theater of Focșani), the comedy had as its protagonist a ludicrous Jewish moneylender, Moisilica Hop, who—despite wearing traditional attire as well as a ritual beard and sidelocks—dreams of becoming a Member of Parliament. Instead of Parliament, the hero ends up in jail, just as the motto of the play announces from the very beginning:

Of the mandate he dreams, though he may wear sidelocks,
But the woman's spirit puts him under heavy locks.¹⁰⁷

The play was inspired by a real issue of the time. Its subject was suggested by debates in Parliament and in the press and by the street rioting which went so far, on one occasion, as to devastate the Choral Temple. Such acts were unleashed over the issue of political emancipation of the Jews, occasioned by the newly adopted 1866 Constitution. This Constitutional Act, Article 7 of which stipulated that "Only foreigners of the Christian rite can receive the quality of a Romanian," deferred the emancipation of the Jews in Romania for more than half a century.

The dream of the Jew with sidelocks of becoming a Member of Parliament (as in the abovementioned play), opened for discussion the subject of parliamentary democracy, which—just like capitalism, Communism, constitutionalism, or human rights—has been perceived as "a Jewish invention." In 1908, for instance, the doctrinaire antisemite A. C. Cuza claimed that the Jews were the bearers of new germs of social dissolution: humanitarianism, atheism, socialism, and "democracy with sidecurls."¹⁰⁸ At approximately the same time, in 1905–1906, the years of the democratic-bourgeois revolution in Russia, members of ultra-nationalist organizations such as the "True Russians" and the "Black Hundreds" were taking part in pogroms with the cry: "Down with the Constitution and the Jews."¹⁰⁹

"Romanian democracy," postulated Ștefan Zeletin in 1927, "was devised by aliens."¹¹⁰ Of course, by "aliens" Zeletin had in mind the Jews in particular. In a 1924 study, *Țărănismul, un suflet și o politică* [Peasant-oriented politics, one soul and one policy], philosopher Constantin Rădulescu-Motru maintained that, from a political point of view, the Jews in Romania were "anti-conservatives" and "anti-traditionalists," and that they embraced "democracy" and "parliamentarianism." "Is this a good thing, is this a bad thing?" the Romanian philosopher asks rhetorically and replies: it is best to think that "it is a bad thing."¹¹¹ Furthermore, in the 1920s, leftist scholar Mihai Ralea was himself of the opinion that the Jew's frame of mind was "progressive, justice-oriented, and democratic," but he considered these psycho-ideological traits to be benign, i.e., devoid of nationalist pressures.¹¹² Unlike him, for ultra-nationalist Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, for instance, democracy was "masonry," being "placed in the service of the great national or international Jewish finance."¹¹³ This all the more differs from Romanian philosopher Emil Cioran, who prophesized in 1936 the advent of a dictatorial regime since "the only mission undertaken by Romanian democracy was that

of defending Jews and Judeo-Romanian capitalism.”¹¹⁴ As for Codreanu’s adversary, dictator Ion Antonescu, “democracy” also “meant Judeocracy,” an affirmation made in 1943.¹¹⁵

In 1980, in the thick of the National Communist regime initiated by Ceausescu, a violently antisemitic article (anonymous, but likely to have been written by present-day president of the Greater Romania Party, Corneliu Vadim Tudor) published in issue 509 of the ultra-nationalist journal *Săptămâna* [Weekly journal], Jews are represented as possessing all known vices (“pestilential,” “haughty,” “Gescheft-ridden,” “corrupt,” “unpatriotic.” etc.), as well as the greater vice of being “expounders of democratic tarantella.”¹¹⁶

In his turn, in 1993, after six decades of totalitarianism in Romania, ultra-nationalist Ion Coja found that the best argument against democracy (seen as an “invention of the left”) was that it was presumably a “democratic vote” that had condemned Christ to death.¹¹⁷ It is a commonplace of those who are regretful of Communism, as well as of right-wing national extremists in post-Communist Europe, to perceive democracy as being a “Jewish scheme.”¹¹⁸

WHY JEWS ARE FRECKLED

In a series of Romanian legends that have the Virgin Mary as a protagonist, an episode refers to a physical peculiarity, supposed to be characteristic of the Jews: the freckled face and body. Coming to the place of Jesus’ Crucifixion, the Mother of God finds the “Yids” seated at the table, about to have dinner.

And the Yids boiled a rooster,
And put it in a borsch,
And put it in a bowl,
And said to the Mother of God:
“When this cock
Comes back to life
And when it perches
On the rim of the bowl
Flapping its wings
And singing,
Then shall Jesus the Nazarene
Come back from the dead!”
And the cock did come back to life,

And it did sing
 On the rim of the bowl,
 And it did flap its wings,
 And the Yids were all fully spattered
 And this is how the Yids came to be freckled ever since.¹¹⁹

To account, moreover, for the red color of the freckles, some Transylvanian folk legends have the rooster spatter the Jews with drops of blood.¹²⁰ In some others red is an attribute of the rooster itself, as in the popular saying: “The Yid has been spattered by the red cock.”¹²¹ In the area of German culture, the rooster does not spatter the Jews with either drops of borsch or blood, but with its droppings; this is why, in the popular idiom, freckles are called *Judas’ Dreck*. This folk legend seem to have its origins in an apocryphal New Testament text entitled *Acta Pilati*, in which Judas vilifies Jesus by telling him that he will rise from the dead only when the cock which is presently roasting in his pan rises.¹²²

In a Romanian versified legend, recorded in a village in the south of Moldavia, the Jews believe that Jesus’ departure from this life is irreversible:

The Mother of God rose,
 The Jews saw her,
 And said unto her:
 “Mary, O Mary,
 When bread turns back into wheat’s ears,
 When the glass of wine turns into a grapevine,
 When the white eggs turn red,
 When the cock in the pan rises
 And flaps its wings,
 Then, and only then, shall your son rise again!”
 But barely do they finish their talk
 Than the bread turns again into wheat ears,
 The glass of wine turns into a grapevine,
 The white eggs turn red,
 The cock is alive again
 And it makes them all [i.e., the Jews] blind,
 And Christ the Lord comes back to life.¹²³

At the end of this episode one may notice a sliding of meaning or, more accurately, an overlapping of mythical motives. The drops of boiling water that fly off the cock’s wings onto the faces of the Jews no longer make them freckled (this must have seemed too mild a punishment), but blind them—a

typical correction for unbelieving Jews (see below, chapter 3, the section: “The Blind, Deaf, and Dumb Jew”).

This etiologic legend (from Greek *aitia*, “cause”) has numerous variants, either versified or not. In some of them the fish replaces the rooster;¹²⁴ in others, it joins forces with it: “The trout wriggled its tail and splattered them [the Jews]. The rooster flapped its wings to sing and splashed them again on the face, and this is when they first were speckled on the cheek and they were so ever since.” When Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu published this Moldavian variant of the legend (“Why Are Jews’ Cheeks Freckled?”) in the late nineteenth century, he included it in a species of folk literature for which, he said, “the folklorists have not found an appropriate term, and have provisionally named it ‘the why’ type.”¹²⁵ Irrespective of the regional variant, all legends of this kind invariably reach the unique conclusion: “And this is when *all the Jews* [*jidovi*] came to be speckled on the cheek, and they have had spots on their faces ever since,”¹²⁶ or: “Henceforward [and for this reason] the Yids have freckles.”¹²⁷ This is the punishment for not believing in Christ and the Resurrection.

Freckles on the face of a Christian Orthodox Romanian were considered an infamous sign, one that—like red hair—brings bad luck. Such “marked” people were often “taken for Jews” and for this reason it was believed that the “spots on their faces may multiply.” In Moldavia, for instance, to rid themselves of such marks “of evil omen,” “freckled people” chanted incantations on Saint Peter’s Night (June 29) and “wash their faces at midnight, when the cock crows.”¹²⁸ This example, too, appears to be an overlapping of two independent mythic motifs, one of them canonical and the other apocryphal: on the one hand, there is the evangelical cock that crows on the night when Peter denied Jesus; on the other hand, we have the legendary cock that bestows freckles onto the Jews upon Jesus’ resurrection. Owing to this contamination, people used to believe that the water drawn at midnight on St Peter’s Day was a good magic remedy against freckles.

THE RUDDY MAN AS EVIL OMEN

In Folk Mythology

The various folk beliefs in which the Jew was associated with the “ruddy man” were derived from an observable fact, namely the presence among the Jews not only of freckles, but also of red hair and a beard (“The Jew with the red beard, / In the mail he sends the Devil” went a children’s rhyme).¹²⁹ At

the end of the nineteenth century, folklorist Dimitrie Dan wrote, trying to avoid using a cliché such as “Jews have red hair,” that the Jews in Bukovina had “brownish hair” and that sometimes their hair was “fair, or even red.”¹³⁰

As we have noted, one of the legendary causes of the abovementioned chromatic feature appears to have been the malignant bleeding (*fluxum sanguinis*) inflicted upon Jews as result of the curse that would make their blood trickle down their bodies (“terrific sweats of blood”) and “onto their hair and beard.”¹³¹ In the same context mention may be made of another “Jewish disease”: the *male menses*—an aberrant belief about the Jews, a prejudice in the realm of the biologic which miraculously survived from the Middle Ages until the dawn of the twentieth century.¹³²

The red color of the hair, beard, and skin (i.e., the freckles) was perceived in the folk mentality as a physical anomaly and one that pointed to an analogous moral or psychic anomaly. “Beware of the red man, the glabrous man, and the marked man,” warns a superstition from Moldavia, “for they are ill omens.”¹³³ He who has a red beard is believed to be much worse than the glabrous man. According to a folk story collected by Iordache Golescu at the beginning of the nineteenth century, “when God was distributing beards,” the glabrous man came too late. All kinds of beards had already been given away, except for the red ones. No one was eager to take those, because it was believed that they brought bad luck. “So I,” says the glabrous man in the story, “wishing to find a way round this curse, did not want to get the red beard [and chose to remain glabrous].”¹³⁴

In a Saxon German fairy tale, “Die Drei Rotbärbe,” recorded in Transylvania at the turn of the twentieth century, the hero is advised to shun the three “men with red beards, for there is something unclean about them”; in the end, they prove to be three devils. For the Romanians in Transylvania as well, the “red man” is “the most dangerous of the unclean spirits.”¹³⁵

“The marked men...with their beards red as fire, are very wicked in their hearts and dangerous,” or “Red-haired men are evil” went folk beliefs attested in Moldavia and Bukovina,¹³⁶ for “The evil man is branded with the mark of God,” as a Transylvanian proverb phrased it.¹³⁷ The same belief held true even for red-furred animals. In the same area of northern Moldavia, for example, in keeping with folk tradition people recommended: “keep no red dog by your home,”¹³⁸ and the “red cow” was believed to be an incarnation of the devil who must be driven away through magic incantations.¹³⁹ Hungarians entertained similar beliefs: an ancient Hungarian proverb says, “Red dog, red colt, red man, none of them is any good.”¹⁴⁰ Such superstitions

are in fact millennia old, especially in the Near East. Chaldeans believed that “the temple in which a red dog enters has been deserted by the gods”¹⁴¹; as for the Jews, the “red heifer” was destined for sacrifice (Num. 19:1–3).

Judging by the replies to the questionnaire distributed throughout the countryside by B. P. Hasdeu in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, men who had red hair and beard and/or freckled faces were called *ruddy men*. It was believed that “they are Jews,” or that “they are descended of them,” or that “they have their traits.” The “ruddy men” or “red-haired men” were “stigmatized,” “evil,” “ghoul-like or fiend-like,” “dangerous,” “conniving,” “ill omened” people, men “who would often cast the evil eye on folks.”¹⁴² That Jews and people with red hair generally had the power to cast the evil eye is a superstition found in Western European countries as well.¹⁴³

People in Maramureș made use of a specific incantation against the evil eye cast “by the Jew or the Jewess”: “If it’s a Jew’s doing, / Let his bollocks burst; / If it’s a Jewess’ doing, / Let her tits burst...”¹⁴⁴ An interesting fact is that people believed that the Jew (particularly the “ruddy” one) could cast the evil eye and yet, when he himself suffered from it, could not be cured by any incantations. This taboo was disseminated by word of mouth to generations of women who exorcised by resorting to incantations: “For Jews and Gypsies you shall not work charms [in order to cure the evil eye]” sounds a magic interdiction attested with the Romanians east of Dniester, “for you shall come to no good.”¹⁴⁵ It may be that the evil eye cast by the Jew was popularly known as “the Jewish disease” mentioned (without any details, unfortunately) by Artur Gorovei in his 1931 study on *Incantations of the Romanians*.¹⁴⁶ It is also possible that the “Jewish disease” is in fact one of the popular denominations for syphilis (called *șancru*, *șangăr*, *sfreanț* in popular Romanian), also encountered as “the Jewish leper.”¹⁴⁷ Promoted by many an antisemitic journalist or ideologist, the image of the “syphilitic Jew” was, however, contradicted by others, though not by many. The latter’s arguments ranged from the Jews’ compulsory ritual bath to their habit of consulting doctors, and to the lack of soldiers among the Jews, since it was soldiers who were considered to be the main carriers of these venereal diseases. “As regards venereal diseases,” wrote a Romanian journalist around 1885, “only a few [Jews] are suspected [carriers], because there are hardly any Jewish soldiers to have the disease and spread it from one house to another up to the peaks of the mountains.”¹⁴⁸

An incantation against the evil eye that is somewhat similar to the above was recorded in 1890 in northern Moldavia from a Jewish woman who

chanted incantations, the mother of folklorist Mihail Canianu (alias Moritz Cahana).¹⁴⁹ The practice of incantations for therapeutic purposes by Jewish men and women was certainly not accidental in this area.¹⁵⁰ The belief that the Jewess can cast the evil eye on one and that she also withholds the antidote is paradoxical. In Bukovina, for instance, it is believed that if a child has been breastfed by a Jewess, the evil eye would not be cast upon him. For Macedonian Romanians, it is only Jesus that masters this double power over the child: “It is I that cast the evil eye, / it is I that hold the remedy.”¹⁵¹

In incantations collected in 1939 in the region of the Apuseni Mountains (the western extremity of the Transylvanian Alps, a very conservative ethnical enclave), the “*potca*” (which refers both to the evil eye and to the demonic being who casts it) is itself red (“blazing-red”) and is threatened, cursed, and thrown into the “red sea.” In these ritual magic texts (alterations of which were inconceivable) there is talk of the “Jewish *potca*” or of the evil eye cast by “The Jew’s left eye, / The Jewess’ left eye.”¹⁵² In this last case, the ominous potential (“evil omen”) with which the Jew/Jewess is charged is doubly increased by that of the “left eye.” Indeed, for the magic mentality the left eye, as opposed to the right one, is charged with a malefic, morbid, and demonic symbolism,¹⁵³ in perfect agreement with the general symbolism of *right* and *left*.¹⁵⁴

The ruddy man is sometimes an almighty, maleficent agent. Not only does he cast the evil eye, but he also transmits all illnesses—all the more if he be a stranger who is conceived as “fleeing by, passing through villages,” as in some Romanian incantations: “There was a ruddy man fleeing by, / Of nine villages trekker, / And he puffed on [somebody’s name is mentioned] / And gave him all illnesses.”¹⁵⁵

In proverbs, folk tales and beliefs from Romania (and other regions of Europe as well), the “red man” (like the Jew) appears not only with a negative connotation (“Of the red man beware, for he is a troublemaker”; “God save you from the red man! Shun him like the plague”; “Keep off the red, the glabrous, and the marked man for as long as you live”), but is also demonized: “Keep away from the red man, for he is the Devil’s own”; “Better beware of the red man than of the Devil with his horns”; “The Devil changes himself into a red man” who will dwell on the Red Hill, at the Red Apple Tree, in the Red Sea, etc.¹⁵⁶ The Devil’s own children—which he is in the habit of exchanging with normal babes, not yet baptized—become “red men,” with “red beards and moustaches.”¹⁵⁷ Moreover, according to a Romanian folk belief, “Antichrist is to be born, in the days to come, of a red

woman.”¹⁵⁸ The ethnic identity of this mythical “red woman” emerges from another phrasing of the same belief: “When the world comes to an end..., Lucifer will be born of a Jewess.”¹⁵⁹

As Judas Iscariot—believed to be a leading “forebear of the Jews” and also a hypostasis of the devil—was red-haired and red-bearded (at least so he was pictured in medieval iconography),¹⁶⁰ red men were considered to be creatures of the Devil, too. (In stories, Judas is called “Le Seigneur-Rouge.”¹⁶¹) For this reason, in some regions in France red-haired people were banned from the priesthood.¹⁶² Even among Jews, the ruddy man was attributed some astounding powers and only one of his kin could overthrow him: “For a ruddy Jew [*a roit’n Yid*],” reveals a Yiddish saying, “it takes another ruddy Jew.”¹⁶³

It was usually believed that those who held the magic power of casting the evil eye also possessed that of cursing. In other words, it was not only their look that was charged with negative energy, but also their words. Sometimes both vices were attributed to the “imaginary Jew,” a person of ill omen. The curse pronounced by him, for instance, was considered extremely potent and effective: “People were afraid to harm the Jews, for if a Jew cursed you, bad luck would surely come,” an informant from eastern Poland, an Orthodox Christian, declared. She was quoted by Alina Cała, who published several “true stories” with a profusion of detail about the way in which various curses uttered by Jews came true.¹⁶⁴ Likewise, in Volhinia (the border region between Moldavia, Poland, Ukraine, and Byelorussia), at the beginning of the twentieth century there were attested cases in which Christians came to the synagogue and prayed to the “Jewish God” to curse their enemies.¹⁶⁵ This happened at a time when *cursing* was an act of magic strictly forbidden to Jews by their ancient religious commandments (Lev. 24: 15–16).

In Literature and Politics

The “red Jew,” a cliché of folk mentality, was adopted by high culture. For Gogol (*Taras Bulba*, 1835), for instance, among the “curly, filthy, tattered Kikes” of the Warsaw ghetto (called “the Yids street” in the novel) one day appears “a ruddy Jew, with such freckled cheeks that he resembled a sparrow’s egg.”¹⁶⁶ In his short story, “At the Gypsy Women” (“La Țigănci”), Mircea Eliade resorted to the “bright-red hair” of the Jewish prostitute as a sign of ethnic identity. This is especially significant because the protagonist of the fantastic story is forced—like the fairy-tale hero¹⁶⁷—to pass a typical

initiatory test, that of identifying the girl: “Guess which is the Gypsy, which is the Greek, which is the Jew...”¹⁶⁸

In his short story “Ytzik Shtrul, Deserter,” written in 1919, Liviu Rebreanu chose to add to the portrait of his hero some (stereo)-typical touches and marks of identity. As a Jewish innkeeper from Fălticeni (northern Moldavia), Ytzik Shtrul had a “very red skin,” “sprinkled with tawny freckles, big as chickenpox marks,” and “dirty and thin russet hair,” while “from the center of his hairy reddish face his crooked nose rose abruptly and domineeringly.”¹⁶⁹ The tavern-keeper Avrum in that author’s novel *Ion*, published in 1920, has a “rubescent beard.”¹⁷⁰

The Moldavian Jews in Mihail Sadoveanu’s works of fiction look no different. Master Iosub [i.e., Joseph], the innkeeper in the short story “Comoara dorobanțului” [The treasure of the foot soldier] (1905), has ritual sidelocks, a “red beard and freckled cheek;” Shtrul, the cab driver in the novel *Floare ofilită* [Withered flower] (1905), is depicted “with sidelocks, with russet beard and moustaches, and with a face as if bespattered with blood”¹⁷¹; Master Sholem, the vendor of carbonated water in the short story “Mormîntul unui copil” [The tomb of a child] (1906), has a “thin, red, pointed beard;” he also has “long moustaches, under a great nose, with a face covered with freckles;” Master Avrum, the tavern-keeper in the short story “O umbră” [A shadow] (1906), is described as having a “red beard”¹⁷²; and finally, Mister David, the tradesman in the novel *Baltagul* [The hatchet] (1930), wears his beard and moustache as “the mask of a red hedgehog; tiny splutters of the same color spotted the unfurred part of the cheek.”¹⁷³ In the 1930s, Jewish poet H. Bonciu portrays his co-religionists using the same hues:

In love with her, I remembered her ancestors,
In synagogues, in pews,... I can hear them today....
Their beards are red, and their sidelocks, too,
They bend over a periphrasis from the Talmud.¹⁷⁴

Still more interesting to trace is the way in which the image of the “ruddy man” was used in texts of a political nature. In 1905, for instance, in the journal in which he recorded his travels through Bessarabia, Nicolae Iorga repeatedly described this precise type of Jew: “russet, with freckles,” “with a red beard, tangled and ending in fringes,” barbarians “who seem to arrive straight from fiery Asia.”¹⁷⁵ In an interview granted in 1938 to *Paris Soir*, the poet Octavian Goga, prime minister of Romania at the time, claimed that Ashkenazi Jews, who had a “reddish complexion” and had allegedly invaded

Romania from Poland and Russia, were “barbaric Jews.”¹⁷⁶ This is the classic image formed in Romanian antisemitic circles. In a legionary magazine, Elena Wolf-Lupescu (who bore the nickname “Roșcovana”—“the Reddish Woman”), the mistress of King Carol II, was portrayed as having “brick-red hair framing a freckled face, with big, thick, and red lips, also characteristic of the race.”¹⁷⁷

Crossing the south of Poland by train in those same years, Mihai Ralea avoided any pejorative formulations in describing a certain type of Jew, one of the avatars of “the much labored, for centuries, Ahasuerus”:

always feverish, always in a hurry..., with hair red as fire, with beards just as fiery, with tall black hats..., with long caftans that reach the earth, with sidelocks twisted somewhat coquettishly and absurdly in two or three spirals, always seized by panic as if they were forever late for something. They are the Jews whose age and their wretched experience allow them no illusion.¹⁷⁸

In his book *Memoirs and Polemics*, published in 1942, Victor Eftimiu wrote:

They [i.e., the Jewish authors Ion Trivale, Felix Aderca, Benjamin Fundoianu, Alfred Hefter, Aureliu Weiss, and Mihail Sebastian] have attacked me side by side with antisemitic Christian orthodox believers from nationalist, traditionalist, and Orthodox papers, headed by the late Nae Ionescu.... The abyss between the *red sons of Israel* and swarthy Orthodoxy was bridged by a youth, Mihail Sebastian, an unbaptized Jew and regular *Shabessgoy* [Yiddish for a non-Jew who runs errands for Jews on the Sabbath] of righteous Orthodoxy” [emphasis added—A.O.].¹⁷⁹

On 10 October 1942, Mihail Sebastian glossed bitterly in his diary on the margins of this passage. His collaboration with Nae Ionescu’s newspaper, (*Cuvântul* [The word]), had caused a string of “irrevocable *malentendus*” and made him a prisoner for life of a false and paradoxical image: “the russet collaborator of a Christian Orthodox journal.”¹⁸⁰

Jumping half a century ahead to our present days, we shall note that the chromatic stereotype of identity has not disappeared from political discourse. A politician such as Corneliu Vadim Tudor, for instance, keeps claiming—in a voice like the Prophets of Doom—that Romanian society is presumably manipulated by “russet” representatives of the “Judeo-Masonic conspiracy,” either from within the country or from abroad. In an interview granted to *Cronica română* in 1995, that very same president of the România Mare

[Greater Romania] Party—while preparing to launch his presidential campaign—stated that Emil Constantinescu would lose the electoral competition because he was surrounded by “red-bearded counselors.”¹⁸¹

This latter expression seems to be a verbal cliché that indeed masks a mental cliché. An anonymous letter was published in mid-1997 in *România Mare*, over the signature of “a group of intellectuals,” in which several “impudent Jews” and “offspring of flayed [i.e., circumcised] ones” among the political adversaries were “unmasked.” “Another impudent Jew,” wrote the “group of intellectuals,” “is...[the name of an MP], that red-beard full of lice and with kosher cheese sticking between his yellow teeth.”¹⁸²

The rule is simple, but it operates efficiently at the level of the collective unconscious. The political adversary is charged with the crime of being (what horror!) a “foreigner.” In this manner he becomes not merely a second-class citizen, an “other,” but also a “traitor,” an envoy of “foreign secret services,” an “enemy to the Fatherland.” Everything is according to the principle that not only is “the foreigner an enemy” (Lat. *hospes hostis*), but “the enemy is a foreigner” as well. The particular form this equation has taken is: “the Jew is an enemy” and “the enemy is a Jew.” In the same strain, the boyars and peasants gave the ruler of Moldavia, Mihai Sturdza (1834–1849), the most humiliating of nicknames, “the Red Yid,” on the grounds that he had encouraged the immigration of the Jews: “Mihai Sturdza, long in claws, / Into the country brought the Jews.” This is a fragment from a political satire, banned by the censors, which circulated clandestinely in urban folklore during Sturdza’s reign.¹⁸³

FILTHY, STINKING JEW

What is a stinking Jew?

A good Jewish friend who has just walked out the door

(Romanian joke)

The Racist Explanation

Another very strong prejudice throughout all of Europe concerned the filth of the Jews and the foul smell they were said to give off. Sayings and proverbs synthetically capture this reflex of the collective imagery: “Stinking Jew” or “Stinking Jewess,” “[The Jew] with the smell of a mangy goat,” “Worse [i.e., filthier] than at the Jews’ place” (all these are Romanian sayings and proverbs);¹⁸⁴ “He smells like a Jew” (saying encountered among Hungarians,

Czechs, Poles, Germans, and more);¹⁸⁵ “Clean as a Jew’s bath-water,” “Proud like a Jew of his scabs,” “He scratches like a Jew [i.e., he has lice],” “Smear the ass of a Jew with honey and he will still always stink” (Polish proverbs and sayings);¹⁸⁶ “Two smelly cheeses and one Jew, that makes three stinkpiles” (Polish and German proverb);¹⁸⁷ “He has kissed a Jew” (said of someone whose mouth stinks), “Without salt, it tastes like a dead Jew,” “Smell the Jew,” “He is dirty like a Jew,” “Jews are so rotten that they stink,” “Wherever the Jew creeps, whoever doesn’t see him—smells him” (German expressions and proverbs);¹⁸⁸ “To have the air of a Jew” (old English saying, meaning “to be dirty”).¹⁸⁹ It is interesting that in the popular language of Transylvania and Bukovina the terms *jidan* and *jidov* (Jew or “Yid”) are used to designate a “stinking roach” that secretes a foul smelling fluid.¹⁹⁰ Comparing the Jew (especially an eastern European one) to lice or to a bedbug was a constant trait of antisemitism. Intended to suggest the filth and stench of the Jew and also his parasitical way of life,¹⁹¹ the association between “the Russian-Polish Jew” and the “Russian-Polish lice” was represented on German postcards which circulated all through Europe in 1900.¹⁹² In interwar Romania, even the Gypsies were using this cliché. On 2 February 1938, during the rule of the Goga-Cuza government, it was openly stated at a pro-governmental meeting of the Romany Association of Craiova: “We must fight in order to get rid of the Jewish lice and wipe them off the Romanian coat.”¹⁹³ This manner of asking people to fight is quite paradoxical when coming from the representatives of an ethnic minority which was also considered a filthy parasite. But within less than two years, in December 1939, a governmental measure was adopted with reference to nomadic Gypsies stipulating that vagrancy was prohibited, that health examinations were compulsory, that the hair and beards of Gypsies were to be cut, and also that disinfection and delousing were obligatory.¹⁹⁴ Two years later, during the regime of Ion Antonescu, Jews and Gypsies were deported to Transnistria, where tens of thousands of them died.

One naturally asks exactly what gave rise to such strong and widespread images. One explanation provided by commentators has been the racial one. The “Jew’s filth” has been said to be due to “Jewish diseases,” among them strange blood and skin illnesses; furthermore, menstrual blood flows not only from women, but also from men.¹⁹⁵ This “ethnic disease” (*curso menstruo sanguinis*) is mentioned, on the one hand, in order to offer an explanation for the Jews’ need of blood which is to be satisfied through infanticide, while on

the other hand it is up to the challenge of explaining the alleged stench of the Jews.¹⁹⁶

The state of pathological filth from which the Jew allegedly suffered would naturally produce the foul smell he gave off. In a juridical commentary, *Senatus Consulta Hispaniae*, published in Spain in 1729, the verdict is short and unambiguous: "The Jews are ill smelling and obscene persons."¹⁹⁷ H. S. Chamberlain, the English-German defender of the superiority of the Aryan race (in his *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, 1898, extremely popular in Germany), opposed "Germanism" to what he called "pestilential Judaism." In a polemic article entitled "Chamberlain's Philosophy Concerning Races," Romanian philosopher C. Rădulescu-Motru declared himself vehemently against the racist theories and legends that antisemites were attributing to the Jews.¹⁹⁸ Likewise, especially in Germany, there used to be *soi-disant* racist scholars who practiced a species of "olfactory anthropology," among whom was biologist Gustav Jaeger (in 1880) and anthropologist Hans Gunther (in 1930). They glossed on the margins of the idea that there was such a thing as a hereditary *foetor Iudaicus* and tried to demonstrate that the nature of the Jewish race was such that by necessity Jews gave off an unpleasant odor which was uniquely theirs (*geruchliche Eigenart*).¹⁹⁹ Expressions such as "*Alle Juden stinken*!" (All Jews stink!) became so popular that they even penetrated into children's folklore.²⁰⁰ The German area appears to have been the epicenter of this belief, which—it should be added—was taken over and promoted quite successfully in the Nazi epoch as well.

Certain researchers have, from this particular perspective, tried to psychoanalyze the vocabulary employed by Nazi propaganda.²⁰¹ The German obsession that the Jews were dirty both in the proper sense of the word and in the figurative one ("their physical and moral filthiness," as Hitler would write in *Mein Kampf*, 1923), that they exhale a pestilential stench ("I was repeatedly nauseated by the stench that these caftan-wearers would exhale," the latter noted),²⁰² and that they suffer from venereal diseases (such as syphilis) led the Nazis to their conviction that the Jews *altered the ethnic purity* of German society, and that they *defiled* the Aryan race and *polluted* its blood. Besides, in September 1935 Hitler promulgated the so-called "Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor" which strictly prohibited not only intermarriage, but also sexual intercourse, between Germans and Jews. A similar law was adopted in Romania in 1940 "for the protection of Romanian blood" and for the "Nation's purification from heterogeneous

parasitical elements [i.e., Jews].”²⁰³ Such articles of law put aberrant mental clichés existing in the collective imagination into aberrant judicial terms. Playwright Eugene Ionesco’s father, for example, called his own son “a Jew” simply because he conceived him with a Jewish woman. He confessed this “sin” to his son in very unclear biological and theological terms: “I made a big mistake in this life; I made my blood filthy, I must pay for this sin of blood.” Ionesco’s father was a small opportunist lawyer, a legionaire under a legionary regime, on Antonescu’s side during his period in power, and he used to harass his Jewish neighbor, calling him—small wonder—“filthy Jew.”²⁰⁴

The vocabulary of propaganda was overwhelmed by terms that denoted ethnic *cleansing* and *purification*. It was probably no accident that in Hitler’s Germany deportation of the Jews was euphemistically called *Säuberung* (“hygienization”),²⁰⁵ while the sterilization of the “degenerate” was deemed to be an act of “racial hygiene.”²⁰⁶ In May 1944, the Hungarian minister of domestic affairs, considering that deporting the Jews of northern Transylvania would have an *aseptic* effect on the “body of the nation,” said: “I saw a new town in nationalistic Oradea where there are no longer Jews wandering loose on the streets. Any contagious substance, any possibility of infection has been removed from the body of the nation. The government will continue to take measures regarding this matter....”²⁰⁷

The attempt by the Nazis and their allies to ethnically *purge* the community, to maintain the *purity* of the Aryan race, and to transform Germany (and later on, the whole of Europe) into a region that is *Judenrein* (that is, “*cleansed* of Jews”) denoted also an abysmal fear of filth (attributed to the Jews) and morbid hypochondriac anxieties.

Even the ethnocide that the Nazis enforced (in some German documents termed *ausrottung* = “removal of the rotten part”) might be understood on a more profound level by employing the same type of symbolic meanings: the Jews were gassed in chambers provided with “showers” that were allegedly intended for “delousing,” and the bodies were burned in furnaces, like garbage would have been. Finally, as American researcher Alan Dundes has put it, “the most extreme literalization of the metaphor in question was the conversion of Jewish flesh into *soap*. Thus the once ‘dirty’ Jew has been transformed through the wonders of German technology into ‘clean’ soap!”²⁰⁸ “The Nazi war economy,” wrote Eugen Relgis in 1945, “processed the piles of bodies, extracting soap out of them in order to wash the shirts of the murderers.”²⁰⁹

This is an interesting, although debatable, theory. Until this very day it is unclear whether the manufacture of soap from Jewish corpses was an abominable fact or merely a morbid legend. What is certain, however, is that German soldiers dispatched to all parts of Europe would sell or barter for various goods soap that did not foam and on which three initials were stamped: R.J.S. or R.J.F. Some survivors of the Second World War claim that those initials stood for “*Reine jüdische Seife*” (“pure Jewish soap”) or *Reine jüdische Fetten* (“pure Jewish fat”). The Romanians and the Jews in some areas collected that soap, deposited it in synagogues, and later buried it in a symbolic grave with all the honors that were due to a human funeral. Even today, in the Jewish cemetery at Tîrgoviște (a town in which only five Jews are still alive today), people tend the so-called “grave of the unknown Jew” where the soap that was presumably made of human fat was buried in 1945. The tombstone bears the following inscription: “Here lie buried the victims of Nazi savagery turned into soap. Pray for their souls!”²¹⁰ Similar symbolic tombs can be found in Dorohoi, and in other Romanian towns.²¹¹

The Realist Explanation

“Filth is not the consequence of poverty,” wrote a “popular booklet” entitled *Rachel and Messiah* dating from 1858, “but a vice inborn in the Jewish people. The Romanian is not much amiss when he uses the epithet: *unclean Jidov* [i.e., Jew] to characterize the latter.”²¹² To this “racial” solution another one was opposed, let us term it “realistic.” There were scholars, and Jews among them, who endorsed the theory according to which the great poverty which was the lot of the majority of the Jewish population in the past two centuries, coupled with the precarious sanitary conditions in the ghettos and boroughs (*shtetls*) of central and eastern Europe, presumably led to the Jews’ being in an accented state of filthiness and, implicitly, to their giving off an offensive stench. “It is wrong to consider that stench was natural and endemic among the Jews,” wrote Doctor Ramazzini in 1700 about the “diseases of the ghettos” in Italy, “the stench, which emanates from the low people in their ranks is due to their crowded houses and to poverty.”²¹³

Obviously, up to the pre-modern epoch foulness was not in the least “a vice specific to the Jewish people.” Lack of compulsion to cleanliness is fully attested with all Europeans, the Romanians being no exception. The criticism of some alien travelers through Romanian territory was extremely harsh in this respect: “There are but few Walachian households in which order and hygiene reign. It is only a traveler not so sensitive to stench that can summon

the courage to sit at their table,” wrote Franz Grisellini around 1780. To K. V. F. Hoffmann, in 1832, even the house interiors of boyars seemed unspeakably dirty.²¹⁴ During a visit in Bucharest in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Prussian Richard Kunisch made no ethnic discrimination as regards filth: in front of a “miserable barracks,... filthy Greeks and Armenians, filthy Moldavians and Jews are sitting and chatting.”²¹⁵ Yet, generalizations of any sort are not flattering, neither to Romanians nor to Jews.

The state of poverty and misery of many *Ostjuden*, including those in Romanian territory, is well known. Jewish writers have themselves depicted it, whether in a Northern Moldavian *shtetl* (Dorohoi), described by Ion Calugăru,²¹⁶ or in the Jewish slum in Bucharest, as described by I. Peltz.²¹⁷ As for the dire poverty that reigned in the Jewish quarters of Jassy, many documented it, from Iuliu Barasch in 1842 (“the empty ground of Krakow,” he remarked, “is heaven compared to Tîrgul Cucului—Cuckoo’s Borough, in Jassy”) to Tudor Arghezi in 1930:

In Jassy I explored the vast outlying [Jewish] slums, built up of debris, cardboard, and mould, glued in place with soggy provisional materials. Two, three, maybe four or five kilometers I walked, oppressed with horror. I saw courtyards, hundreds of courtyards, like broken ash pan bottoms; people reduced to the seventh part of a man, glances askance drained by hopelessness, misshapen children in tatters, mothers in rags like puppets at the fair, men like brooms worn to the stick.²¹⁸

It might be that in this text the lampoonist in Arghezi exaggerated the state of dereliction in which the Jewish community lived, as he perhaps intended to counterweigh the extremely popular legend that made millionaires of all the Jews—except for those who were billionaires. However, the portrait painted by the Romanian poet is authentic to a large extent. A similar image appears in Gogol’s description of the “Yids’ street” alluded to above, set in turn-of-the-seventeenth-century Warsaw.²¹⁹ Eminescu, in “Iconostas și fragmentarium” [Iconostas and fragmentarium] (1872), also describes the poverty of the Jewish street in medieval Suceava, but he does this with some understanding and respect for Jewish culture:

The Jewish streets of Suceava looked as strange as a piece of hieroglyphic writing, set in the moonlight. Rows of small, poor houses, placed in monotonous, dull lines, like the laws of the

Pentateuch, or colorful as the torn and worn clothes and stuff in the bag of the Jew. There were pieces of colored glass in the windows, stuck with scraps of paper from Gemarrah, on which the holiday bread is being baked....²²⁰

Unlike Arghezi, Nicolae Iorga sensed morbid pleasure when describing the wretched state in which the Jews of Bukovina and Bessarabia lived at the beginning of the twentieth century. What is compassion in the former becomes immense scorn in the latter: "In a mind-numbing stench, crooked Jewish houses are huddled together, glossy of all that dirt"; "dirty houses, where the Jewish plebes put up"; "the Jews stick around in view in front of the low, filthy booths"; "these miserable slothful paupers, who defile the country"; "dirty taverns" filled with "many species of beasts"; "filthy Jewish inns" and "loathsome coffee houses," where the "dirty caftans, squashing, the German-Semitic babeldom, the stench and uncleanness, the rapacious nastiness" are at home; there is "a stench coming out of the wrecks, like that of caves full of beasts"; "an unspeakable ordure as public toilet for the Yids"; "a Jewish slum, with cheap inns, dime-a-dozen shops, abjection, filthiness, and barbarity."²²¹

Language such as the above is not essentially different from that of Vasile Alecsandri's when, in his text, *Iașii în 1844* [Jassy in 1844], he portrayed "a small and miserable house, where you can see through the broken glass some one dozen Jews thronged on top of each other and working in a foul atmosphere," "an infamous tavern,... with tainted brandy," "a foul dwelling, which fills you with nausea and where some tattered Jew speculates the evil passions."²²² In 1840 it was Alecu Russo's turn to write about the filth of the Jews of Jassy ("of all ages and all sexes") and of the foul smell they gave off. In doing so, he employed the usual clichés: the Jews were allegedly "dirty individuals," "reeking of garlic and of onion," spitting on the floor and wearing "squalid waistcoats." This populace "has something repelling in them, strengthened by the ill-smelling uncleanness with which they are filled to the bone." As for Jewish women, those shortcomings were said to be downright intolerable, being a heavy counterweight to their proverbial beauty: "Jewish women are known throughout Christendom for their beauty, only you should be careful to wash them, bathe them, and perfume them; or else any illusion would be gone."²²³ An ostensible quality in the extreme (the beauty of Jewish women) is doubled and consequently cancelled out by an ostensible fault in the extreme (their filth).

Much the same vocabulary is employed by the Frenchman Raoul Perrin in 1839 (“this ubiquitous race, that is known in the Orient as well for its disorder and impropriety, as revolting and as shameless as ever”),²²⁴ by Mihail Kogălniceanu in 1844 (“mud huts with straw roofs, not whitewashed, inhabited by a swarm of Jews in tatters”),²²⁵ by Dimitrie Bolintineanu in 1857 (“We went to an eating house kept by these unclean people, but as soon as we set foot in their house we were forced to get out, that is how stale the air was inside; we decided to sleep in the coach”),²²⁶ and by Calistrat Hogaș at the beginning of the twentieth century:

When we crossed the threshold [of Avrum the Jew’s inn], a stench made up of all the emanations on this earth pierced me through my brains: you would not have been competent to say whether it smelled of earth, of rotten eggs, of rancid fat, of salty fish, of untanned leather, of hot cheese, of brine cabbage..., it smelled of none of them, and yet it smelled of all these at once and more.... I have nonetheless my nose to praise for having suffered with heroism this pestilential stench, without least of all smirching.²²⁷

A sarcastic tone was also adopted by Willy Pragher at the onset of the 1940s: he maliciously wondered whether “Strada Parfumului [Perfume Street]” in Bucharest is thus named solely “for its being located in a Jewish neighborhood.”²²⁸

Not only the houses, shops, and inns of the Jews were described in this way, but also their schools. In 1901, for instance, a clerk from Dorohoi complained to the authorities that “the Jewish schools are dirty,” and are “genuine hotbeds of disease.”²²⁹ In a report written in 1884, Dr. Jacob Felix, head of the Hygiene Committee at City Hall in Bucharest, was worried about the scarcity of living accommodations for many of the Jews employed in the commercial part of the town, especially in inns: “Golescu’s inn has 122 rooms in which 118 families, that is 590 persons live, most of them being poor and filthy.”²³⁰

Nevertheless, the issue of the filth of the “real Jew” and the unpleasant smell that emanated from him must be considered in more nuances. To the arguments that prove the state of poverty and dirt in which the Jews of central and eastern Europe lived, counter-arguments can equally be brought to disprove them. Many rules of personal, family, and community hygiene, enforced by Jewish religious tradition and abided by for millennia, made the Jew a fairly clean and healthy person. Mention should be made of the

practice of ritual washing of the hands before meals and that of washing, at least once a week (on Fridays), in the ritual bath supplied by the community (*mikveh*, Hebrew for ritual cleansing baths). In addition there were the regulations concerning sanitation in the town or village, the countless detailed rules dealing with the selection and slaughtering of animals, and also the hygiene of preparing and preserving (kosher) food,²³¹ the norms concerning circumcision (Hebrew: *brith milah*) and the sexual life of the couple, the traditional duty of burying the deceased in the shortest possible time, and so forth. Such ritual regulations were obeyed by the majority of the community, made up mostly of the poor Jews as—it was a known fact—the poorer the “real Jew,” the more religiously observant he is. Then there is the argument that the traditional crafts that Jews practiced (tailoring, boot-making, upholstery, jewelry, clock-making etc.) were all relatively clean, and also that there was a relatively large number of doctors, apothecaries, and “barbers” (Yiddish: *roifes*), who were also blood-letters, among the Jews. “There is such a Jewish doctor,” noted Iuliu Barasch in 1842, “in almost every Israelite community in Moldavia.” Around the middle of the nineteenth century, in his travel notes Barasch described the Ashkenazi Jews of Jassy as “lovers of cleanliness,” and wrote of the Sephardi Jews in Bucharest that “they are clean.”²³² This testimony can be considered valid owing to the proven objectivity of Dr. Barasch’s accounts in general and his specialization in “popular hygiene.”²³³ At times it is not the excess of foulness that is attributed to Jews but, on the contrary, their compulsion for cleanliness:

House cleaning [for Passover] is zealous to excess. All furniture is washed in boiled water, walls are whitewashed anew, inside as well as outside, and belongings are aired out and cleansed, to the effect that for Passover all Jewish homes, even those of the paupers, are of outstanding cleanliness.²³⁴

“Even well-off Jewish mistresses” in the Romanian territory do not hesitate to whitewash their houses’ earthworks “by themselves,” notes a German, Rudolf Henke, in 1877.²³⁵ In Jewish households, general cleaning was also performed on a weekly basis, before the Sabbath. In the rural tavern kept by Avrum “the maid scrubbed [tables and benches] with sand and washed them every Friday, until they were white and clean.”²³⁶

The following is a brief testimony that highlights the exceptional significance afforded the practice of the ritual bath in an eastern European *shtetl*:

As they press homeward [on the eve of the Sabbath] the *shammes* calls through the streets of the *shtetl*, “Jews to the bathhouse!” A functionary of the synagogue, the *shammes* is a combination of sexton and beadle. He speaks with an authority more than his own, for when he calls “Jews to the bathhouse!” he is summoning them to a commandment.²³⁷

Ion Călugăru describes the half sacred-half profane show of the ritual bath practiced by the Jews in the town of Dorohoi at the beginning of the twentieth century:

The bath is crammed with people. All through the year, on the eve of any small holiday, old people come with their grandsons to the public bath.... On New Year’s Eve [i.e., Rosh Hashanah], soap flows in waves on the benches of the steam bath, old folk groan with pleasure, sweat, and beat themselves with small oak brooms, and they sit pell-mell. Through the pungent steam people can hardly be seen, swarming with wooden pails of cold water in their hands.... [On Yom Kippur], Tzalic takes his boys to the public bath so they should bathe and show themselves clean in the face of Judgment. In the afternoon, when they come back from the bath, their underclothes and clothes fresh, Tzalic takes Buimash and leaves for the synagogue.²³⁸

Minor-league Bukovinian writer Emmanuel Gregorovița (1857–1915), whose literary specialty is life-scenes of northern Moldavian *shtetls*, also detailed (in short stories such as “Oirakh Gutman”) the ritual practices of cleansing encountered among Jews in the ritual bath (*mikveh*) and the Turkish bath (*merhaz*).²³⁹

At this point, it is most appropriate to look at what Dimitrie Dan, as a Romanian ethnographer whose objectivity is beyond the trace of a doubt, has to say about this issue. Here is how he describes the ritual bath practiced by the Jews of Bukovina at the end of the nineteenth century:

Six weeks passing from birth...the woman goes to the public bath. There she bathes in a tub of hot water. At the same time, a woman clips her hand and toe nails short with a knife, so that not the least bit of dirt should remain under them. Then the woman steps into a pool full of water from a spring, which is there. Into this water, which should be warm, she sinks three times and remains under water long enough for the water to remain still above her head. She comes out of the water and goes home, accompanied by some woman.... [On

Friday] in the afternoon the householders and housewives, separated according to their gender, first the men and then the women, go to the bath and bathe themselves. Then they all dress in clean white linen and in festive clothes.... In the *micfa* [i.e., *mikveh*] bath each Jew must dip three times, in order to be clean. In former times, when the Jews had neither public baths nor *micfe* [i.e., *mikveh*], following their rules of cleansing they had to take such a bath, even in winter in the bitterest cold, with three dips, in rivers, ponds, or other waters.²⁴⁰

It is interesting how, to some Romanians, the frequent employment by the Jews of baths was suspect, or at any rate was not perceived as being a sign of cleanliness but actually of foulness: "It is understandable," they would claim, "that zealous Yids are foul, or they would not otherwise resort systematically to washing themselves."²⁴¹ "In the morning, the [Jewish] child must wash his hands," we read in a novel by Polish author Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz (1758–1841) "not for the sake of cleanliness, but to drive away the unclean spirits who, during the night, seat themselves on his fingernails."²⁴²

When describing the Jews' abidance by the rules of ritual hygiene and the tradition of dipping during the ritual bath, Matei Basarab's *Pravila* [The code of law] (1640) remarks on their state of health: "Among the Jews you shall not find many who are sickly and more, we might say, hardly a soul, because they keep that commandment that Moses gave them."²⁴³ A Romanian journalist wrote in 1885, in an attempted parallel between Jews and Romanians:

[The Jews] know much which is related to hygiene ever since Moses, and the at least weekly bath is not missing from their chores, and for the poor bathing is free and it is offered to them under the name of holy water, while there is among some Romanians a saying that claims that "man should be washed only at birth and on his deathbed...." Beside these cares and this knowledge, [the Yid] rushes to see a doctor at the least sign of an illness. Romanians turn to plants, to old women, disenchantment etc.... I think we have here another fatal reason why the Romanians fade and perish, while the Jews increase in number.²⁴⁴

Some historians (Heinrich Graetz, Simon Dubnow, Josy Eisenberg, Paul Johnson, and many others), among whom are Jews, maintained that the fact that Jews observed an extensive set of rules of hygiene established by tradition increased their birth rate, reduced the death rate, and strengthened their

resistance to epidemics (including the plague of 1347–1350).²⁴⁵ A similar hypothesis was sustained in 1881 by Dr. Moses Roth,²⁴⁶ while in 1901 Romanian physician Victor Babeş, forefather of the study of infectious diseases in that country, did the same.²⁴⁷ Indeed, according to a study sheet edited in Frankfurt in 1855, median life expectancy among Jews was 49, while the same average for non-Jews was only 37. The disparity was more conspicuous in the eastern part of the continent. In continental Russia, for instance, whereas annual mortality among Jews was 14.2 per 1,000, for Orthodox Christians it was more than double: 31.8 per 1,000.²⁴⁸ Mircea Eliade was convinced that the quality of food and drink plays an important part in man's resistance to disease and in the death rates of Romanians and Jews, respectively: "The Romanian people," he wrote in 1937, in the slightly antisemitic undertone of one of his articles, "no longer preserves the legendary resistance that it had centuries ago. In Moldavia and Bessarabia [Romanians] are defeated even at the first attacks of a well-fed ethnic element [= the Jews] that feeds on wheat, fish, fruits, and drinks wine instead of cheap brandy."²⁴⁹

Here are a few of the Talmudic prescriptions concerning the care for the body, which show that maintaining cleanliness and bodily hygiene was regarded by the Jews as a religious duty because the body was the work of God and had to be treated as such: "Any man has to wash his face, hands, and feet every day, out of respect for his Creator"; "'Sanctify yourselves,' that is, wash your hands before the meals, and 'be sanctified,' that is, wash them after the meals, too"; "A man who thinks it below him to wash his hands before meals should be excommunicated"; "Blessed be Thou, O Lord, our God...who commanded us to wash our hands"; "Cleanse the glass before drinking and after you have drunk"; "It is forbidden to live in a town that has no bath"; "Lack of cleanliness of the head leads to blindness, dirty clothing leads to lunacy, body dirt causes ulcers and pains; therefore, beware of any kind of dirt"; "One ought to bathe the small children and then anoint them with oil"; "It is forbidden to live in a city where there is no doctor"; "Bodily cleanliness leads to spiritual cleanliness" and more.²⁵⁰

The Stench of Garlic and Onion

“This country stinks because of the Jews”

Porunca Vremii [The summons of the time]
(Romanian extreme Right newspaper, 1939)

Within the same framework of “realist” explanations, it has been said that the unpleasant smell that allegedly emanated from the Jew was due not only to his “proverbial” filth, but also to the excess of garlic and onion in his diet. A few folk sayings and proverbs illustrate this perception: “He smells of garlic like a Jew” (Romanian and Polish saying);²⁵¹ “The Jews didn’t want *manna*, so they eat garlic [onion]” (Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian proverb).²⁵² In Moldavia, garlic [*Alium satiosum*] is called “Jewish garlic,”²⁵³ while the Romanian idiomatic expression “there is smell of garlic” is an ironic usage for indicating the nearby presence of a Jew.²⁵⁴

Could it be true that traditional Jewish cookery makes use of much garlic and onion? A Spanish chronicler at the end of the fifteenth century spoke of the special “Jewish smell” which was due to the Jews’ way of frying meat in oil (“instead of lard”) with a lot of onion and garlic.²⁵⁵ Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz mocked Polish Jews in one of his novels by saying that they even eat “garlic ice cream.”²⁵⁶

The Talmud recommends the consumption of garlic because “the body likes it, it warms it, it makes the face glow, it kills the tape-worm, it increases the seminal liquid, it kindles love.”²⁵⁷ Yet, who shall establish whether this is dietary excess or not? Do Jews eat more garlic than, say, Romanians? In any case, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, foreign travelers through the Romanian Principalities as well as the Romanians themselves attested to Romanian peasants’ prodigality with garlic and onion in their food.²⁵⁸ The same conclusion was drawn by ethnologists who dealt with the Romanian peasant’s way of cooking at the end of the nineteenth century: “Onion is used in most of the dishes for taste. They also eat it in raw state.... Garlic sauce is used for preparing many dishes as well.”²⁵⁹ Around the middle of the same century, during one of his voyages in Walachia, the German traveler Richard Kunisch holds in contempt the lack of hygiene and the stench of the monks (“they were filthy and exhaled a nauseating stench of garlic”) and of Romanian priests: “Neither their person, nor their clothes are clean, while their preference for garlic and onion makes their presence unbearable.”²⁶⁰

To say of someone that he or she smells of garlic (or of onion) is in fact a deprecating and condescending remark meant to suggest the humble social background—from the “lower world” (village, slum, etc.)—of the person in question. Referring to a village in Bukovina, Queen Elizabeth of Romania (Carmen Sylva) wrote in 1887:

He sits and talks with one of those numerous Jews, with long caftans, with sidelocks and with filthy caps on their heads; the smell of garlic reaches even here, to the upper floor. But, alas! What and where does not smell of garlic here? The house, the village, the Gypsies, the food, everything smells of garlic. One would think that garlic is all they eat in these parts.²⁶¹

The smell of garlic that emanated from the Jew became a literary motif which was not absent from Romanian folk stories. In a “satire from Bukovina” published by Simeon Florea Marian in 1871, garlic is a merchandise and the Jews travel “With our rabbi among us, / With three carts of garlic.”²⁶² In a purported “folk anecdote,” claimed to have been recorded “from the mouth of our Romanian peasant” and published by Theodor Vartic in 1883, garlic became for the Jews a food that had religious significance. “A flower cultivator from Jassy” complains that his merchandise lacks customers. A friend draws his attention to the fact that “the town is peopled mostly by Jews,” who do not like the smell of flowers, but the sound of money and the stench of garlic. “You’d better start growing garlic,” advises this friend, “for this one plant you shall have customers thick as huckleberries, because the Yids, and mostly those Russian, German, and Polish bigots that your town [of Jassy] is full of, and Moldavia, too, are very fond of it for religious reasons, and in reality it makes many babies.” “I would be glad to cultivate for this people,” answers the cultivator, “even ten species of plants, yet of those that might dwindle their generation [i.e., reproduction], for beyond all measure have they been bred by the great lover of Yids,” or “the forebear of Jews in the country,” or else the ruler of Moldavia, Mihai Studza.²⁶³ Around the end of the nineteenth century, Romanian folklorist Mihai Lupescu still wrote that “Jews used to eat a lot of garlic, this is why they are so prolific in child-bearing.”²⁶⁴

The image of the garlic-reeking Jew was to survive even a century later. In 1992, for example, Greater Romania Party leader Corneliu Vadim Tudor, using a paltry artifice, would revert to it in an antisemitic lampoon in the party organ, *România Mare*: “Nobody is going to gas you to death here,” he writes to former Romanian Premier Petre Roman, “yet you may die

suffocated by this garlic stench you inherited from your ancestors.”²⁶⁵ Another example is the statement, in 1999, by the vice-president of the Greater Romania Party, Ilie Neacșu: “The specific stench of contaminated garlic does not leave [the Jew’s] clothes or body, even if he uses all the detergents in the world.”²⁶⁶ Right-wing Austrian politician Jörg Haider used the same kind of cheap irony. In 2001, during a controversial discussion with Ariel Muzikant, the leader of the Jewish community of Vienna, Haider mentioned that he could not understand how someone could be called Ariel (the brand name of a detergent) and yet be a source of so much filth.²⁶⁷ This kind of sarcastic wit, used against political opponents of Jewish origin, is widely known. For example, Karl Marx exhibited his Jewish self-hatred²⁶⁸ by calling socialist Ferdinand Lassalle “Polish Jew” while asserting that the “Jews of Poland are the dirtiest of all races.” In his turn, Engels wrote to Marx in 1856 that “[Lassalle] is a greasy Jew disguised under cosmetics and flashy jewels.”²⁶⁹

The real counter-argument, the one that invalidates the “realist” explanation concerning the birth and survival of the image of the “dirty and stinking Jew,” is in fact the age of this expression. It was not generated by the destitution and lack of hygiene of the majority of *Ostjuden* from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries simply because it was already prevalent in western Europe ever since the early Middle Ages.

A few examples will suffice in order to show just how old is this mental stereotype. Allusions to the characteristic smell or stench of the Jews were found in the writings of Latin epigrammatist Martial at the end of the first century CE. The Latin poet Venance Fortunat, later to become bishop of Poitiers and canonized, wrote in 576 about the “bitter smell” of Jews.²⁷⁰ A text dating from ca. 1220 reiterated a widespread European legend entitled “The Jewess Who Would Become a Catholic.” Meeting her father, the recently baptized Jewess sensed “a pestilential stench that emanated from him,” an odor that—even if she had previously emitted it herself—she had not smelled before conversion.²⁷¹ If a Jew converts to Christianity, his horrible smell disappears instantly, and obviously when a Christian is converted to the Mosaic faith, the reverse effect can be noticed. Around 1630, for instance, the metropolitan bishop of Kiev, Petru Movilă, wrote an account of Princess Anna Korețkaia in which “she gave up her Orthodox religion,” converting to “Jewish unfaithfulness” and observing “the Sabbath, the way Jews do.” On her return to the righteous belief, that is, Orthodox

Christianity, “the Princess’ entire body, from head to toe, started to give off a sort of stench and sweat which flowed on the ground for about half an hour.”²⁷² Eventually, the motif of *foetor Judaicus* can be widely encountered in the works of Shakespeare’s contemporaries.²⁷³

It is very likely that the poverty and dirt of some eastern European Jewish communities, the overpopulated ghettos, poor hygienic conditions of the *shtetls*, and the lavish use of garlic and onion in traditional Jewish cuisine, along with cow or goose fat (instead of lard),²⁷⁴ reinforced the already existing stereotype of the “filthy, stinking Jew.” “As the ghetto could not expand in size,” Arthur Koestler has aptly observed, “the houses were tall and narrow-chested, and permanent overcrowding created deplorable sanitary conditions. It took great spiritual strength for people living in such circumstances to keep their self-respect. Not all of them did.”²⁷⁵ Once more, all these material conditions added strength to the cliché of the “dirty and stinking Jew,” yet they did not engender it. The file of this issue is too thick for me to attempt to resolve it here, yet I believe that one thing must be said without hesitation: at the outset, it was not so much the “real Jew” who had a foul smell, but the “imaginary Jew.”

The Anthropological Explanation
(“He Who Is Different Smells Different”)

The prejudice that the Jew has a foul smell is, I believe, an issue of how otherness is perceived at the level of folk mentality: (they believe that) *the Jew smells different because* (they believe that) *he is different*. His difference, moreover, is not unqualified; the Jew is the prototype of the person who is different. Sainly Christians, too, are different (as compared to common Christians) and, consequently, they smell differently too, yet theirs is a pleasant odor, unlike the Jews who smell differently, but give off an unpleasant odor. According to Christian belief, the non-putrefaction of a corpse and the smell of myrrh that emanates from it are proofs of holiness. Saint John the New of Suceava, for instance, wrote Petru Movilă in 1630, had “a body that would not rot” and “smelled of holy oils.”²⁷⁶

In commenting on medieval apocalyptic literature, both Oriental and European, Ioan Petru Culianu concludes that “the main opposition between good and evil, Paradise and Hell, is strongly olfactory, being expressed in the sensory opposition between fragrant and foul.”²⁷⁷ There is, for instance, the antithesis between the sons of the god Zervan of dualist Iranian theology. Out of the two brothers, Ohrmuzd, is “resplendent and perfumed,” while demonic

Ahriman is “darkened and stinking” (*foetor diabolicus*).²⁷⁸ Still with Iranians, the opposition between Hell (“giving off such an odor that anyone breathing it is tormented, trembles, and falls”) and Heaven (where “the soul of the virtuous one senses that he is among deep herbage and inspires relishing smells”) runs along the same lines.²⁷⁹

Numerous arguments have been proposed in support of the theory that “he who is different smells different.” I shall simply mention that the Jew is not alone in this debasing position. We know from the ancients that, in general, “the other’s dirt stinks,” while our own “smells nice” (Latin: *stercus alterius cuique male olet* and *stercus suum cuique bene olet*).²⁸⁰ The members of the majority or dominant ethnic group tend to perceive those of the minority or marginal group as dirty and foul-smelling. Similarly, for the English the Irish are the ones that stink and are dirty; for Anglo-Saxon Americans, Poles have similar defects; for the whites, the Blacks and the Gypsies are filthy and dirty; and for men—women.²⁸¹ For the Jew, the Romanian is a “stinking Walachian” (in Yiddish: *Vulakh schtink*). True, this reversed expression is less frequently attested and is used as a symmetric counterpart to the defaming “stinking Yid.” For a Hungarian, not only the Jew stinks and is dirty (*büdös/koszor zsidó*), but the Romanian (*büdös/koszor oláh*) as well.²⁸² An opinion poll conducted in 1998 in Transylvania showed that similar stereotypes have survived until this day: Hungarians believe that “Romanians are dirty.”²⁸³ A similar image was entertained by many Germans in the nineteenth century: “The sense of cleanliness is foreign to Romanians.”²⁸⁴ In 1856, commenting on the foul state of the inhabitants of a Romanian village, German socialist Ferdinand Lassalle compared it to that of the Jews who were, presumably, the supreme example of filthiness: “The whole flood may not have been other than a great washing that Jehovah had made the chosen people take.”²⁸⁵

It is true that these beliefs are more strongly held, deeply rooted, and widespread in the particular case of the Jews, but this is because the Jew is *homo alienus*, par excellence. He is the prototype of the “stranger,” of the “other.” Yet all the additional “others” have similar shortcomings. In accordance with these “hierarchical relations,” for the Christian, the Jew would be the one who smelt foully; yet, for the Christian man, the Jewish woman would smell even fouler. Consider, in this connection, a suggestive folk saying of the Swabians: “Abraham stinks of garlic much, / Yet Sarah beats his stench.”²⁸⁶

The Mythological and Theological Explanation

The stench emanating from the “imaginary Jew” is a secondary stereotypical motif, generated by primary motifs: his smell is foul because he was presumably cursed for *deicide*, for being a wizard (“The Jew has so much wizardry as nine cows have hair,” claims an old German proverb that was used by Martin Luther himself),²⁸⁷ for being possessed by the Devil (who also gives off the *foetor Diabolicus*), for being predestined to Hell, or for being associated with the pig (this being operative especially in western Europe).²⁸⁸ From here are derived all defaming denominations of the “stinking Yid” type,²⁸⁹ as well as virulently antisemitic, modern, alleged folklore of the type: “Yids, as has been mentioned before, / Are wrought out of dog’s faeces, / This is why their body exhales such a stench, / And this is why they are so askew-looking.”²⁹⁰

In Romanian folk texts, for their guilt in having tortured and crucified Jesus the Jews, or *Jidovi*, were cursed to have lice grow on their bodies, to rot “all over in their bodies,” and to have “great sweats of blood” and “great ulcers on their heads, which burst open,” causing the blood “to trickle onto the hair and the beard.”²⁹¹ The Romanian folk legend which asserts that after the act of *deicide*, the Virgin Mary cursed the Jews to smell foully gave rise to another folk belief: “From the Great Feast of Virgin Mary [15 August, the Feast of the Assumption] until the Small Feast [8 September, the Birth of the Virgin], the hoarfrost does not fall, and the Jews become odorous.”²⁹² This is counterpart to saying that “they nearly always stink,” because hoarfrost is extremely rare in this late summer period. According to the peasant calendar, “autumn always begins on the Small Feast of Virgin Mary,” and “hoarfrost begins to fall” in October (popularly called *Brumărel*, the “month of the small hoarfrost”), while the true “month of the hoarfrost” (*Brumar*) is in fact November.²⁹³ “As a consequence of that curse,” wrote Moses Schwarzfeld a century ago, “the Jews are foul, they suffer from all sorts of strange and particular diseases, and have a nasty smell or smells, just as do witches.”²⁹⁴

To this cluster of clichés yet another is added: in order to get rid of the stench that they allegedly give off, it is not sufficient for the Jews to wash themselves with water, even baptismal water (“The Jew’s nature is not changed by baptism,” says a proverb circulating in the Slavic world); they would need, it is claimed, to wash themselves in a Christian child’s blood. *Deicide* thus causes *foetor Iudaicus*, and of necessity leads to *infanticide*. As early as 1523, in his non-antisemitic period, Martin Luther taxed as

“humbug” the legends according to which the Jews “make use of Christian blood to cover up their foul smell.”²⁹⁵

It appears that old Jewish and Christian legends influenced similar more recent beliefs. In a medieval legend in rabbinical literature (Midrash), Egyptian astrologers recommended that Pharaoh kill 240 Jewish children and bathe in their blood to cure himself of leprosy. The Jews cry out and pray to God and, in the end, Pharaoh is cured by a miracle. Many engravings accompany this legend in some sixteenth-century editions of the Haggadah (the traditional text read on the night of Passover) printed in central Europe (Prague, Venice, Mantua, etc.).²⁹⁶ A Christian legend relates that Roman Emperor Constantine contracted leprosy as divine punishment for persecuting the Christians. “The foul Jewish doctors,” runs the legend in a seventeenth-century Romanian Chronograph, recommended that he bathe in the blood collected from the slaughter of thousands of innocent babies. When, out of charity, Constantine stopped the murder of the babies, Saints Peter and Paul communicated the true remedy to him in a dream. The emperor summoned the Christian bishop Sylvester to him and “he baptized him and all of a sudden the blight of sores all over his body was cleansed and he remained clean and healthy. And innumerable people, witnessing that miracle, were baptized too.”²⁹⁷ The same legend appears in the Romanian area in another seventeenth-century work, *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul sau Theodosie*.²⁹⁸ The “Donatio Constantini” legend was already attested at the end of the fourth century, but first became famous in Europe through the *Legenda Aurea*, compiled by the Genovese Dominican Jacques de Voragine in the thirteenth century.²⁹⁹

The Polish saying “He’s afraid of water like a Jew”³⁰⁰ seems to refer not so much to ordinary water used for washing as to the ritual water of the baptismal font. Unbaptized, that is, not having being “cleansed” by the baptismal water and possessed by the Devil (also called “the Unclean One” among the Romanians), the Jews were a “filthy heathen kind”³⁰¹ or “filthy beasts.”³⁰² Romanians used to call the Devil “Necuratul” [i.e., the Unclean], or “Unclean and dirty Devil...with the worst stench” (from a curse recorded in 1794).³⁰³ The Jews were “unclean *Jidovi*” (as in a seventeenth-century Romanian manuscript),³⁰⁴ consequently, they smelt foully. The theological perspective, therefore, played an important part in such cases. Pagan heroes of Greek mythology as well were subjected to a similar negative judgment. For instance, in a Romanian version of the *Trojan War* (dated 1766), one reads of “foul Helen” and “unclean Paris.”³⁰⁵ In a 1939 commentary on this

text, Romanian historian of religions Mircea Eliade was surprised to find “how much the vision of the world and the value of life do change from one culture to another”: “Everything that old Hellas eulogized, such as heroic spirit, destiny, and beauty, is not only misunderstood, yet also violently maligned by Christian authors.”³⁰⁶ Unexpected symbolic symmetries emerged at some tragic moments in the history of European antisemitism. If for Christians baptism was a ritual “cleansing,” the Jews sometimes perceived it as an act of theological and physiological “defilement.” This was especially true in post-traumatic epochs, after great evictions or pogroms. In this sense, it is interesting to read the Hebrew chronicles written immediately after the savage massacres in central Europe engendered by the First Crusade in 1096. The expressions “house of impurity” or “unclean place” were used to designate a church, Christians were termed “impure uncircumcised,” and the verb “to baptize” was rendered as “to defile” or “to sprinkle with foul water.”³⁰⁷

BEAUTIFUL, ELEGANT JEWESS

“Dear lass, elegant lass,
Could I love you, I would
But my mother does not want you
Because you are not of the same faith as I.”³⁰⁸

Exotic Eroticism

Common folk, those for whom “the Jew is intelligent,” also believe that “the Jewess is beautiful.” This is another legend from the vast mythology created around the “imaginary Jew.” Appreciative expressions in Romanian, such as “Here’s a beautiful Jewess!” were common among peasants and small-town folk.³⁰⁹ For the peasants of Bukovina, St. Sunday—a holy day portrayed as a beautiful disheveled woman, associated with cleanliness and mirth—is personified by a Jewish woman: “When you dream of her [i.e., of Holy Sunday], she appears to you as a Jewess.”³¹⁰

Here are some fragments from Romanian folk poems recorded in the second half of the nineteenth century:

Truly, said I, upon my soul,
I should look from this day forth,
Upon no Jewess and no Armenian gal,

But only...upon Moldavians.³¹¹

*

I have loved, and I will love
Romanians, Armenians,
And unbaptized Jewesses.³¹²

These erotic preferences are shared by the youth in a “Carol of the Brave,” recorded in a Romanian village along the river Bug, to the east of the Dniester:

Brave Vasile,
Hallelujah,
A good horse he keeps,
Over three countries he reigns,
Three maidens he eyes,
One is an Armenian,
One is a Moldavian,
Still another is a Jewess.³¹³

Let me make the following parenthetical observation: it is an original element in the symbolism of this carol that the Armenian maiden is responsible for a good wheat crop and the Moldavian one for a good crop of grapes, while the Jewess is responsible for the fertility of the sheep.

Erotic attraction towards the Jewess has probably had another, equally acceptable, explanation. Generally speaking, man confers a different kind of sensuality upon the woman whom he considers different (from an ethnic, racial, or religious point of view). The more “different” a girl is thought to be, the greater is the sensuality attributed to her and the greater the “erotic curiosity” she inspires. In North America, this surplus of sensuality is thought to be the attribute of the Afro-American woman (in white people’s folk songs, she is given a name of endearment, Brown Sugar), while in South America the love songs (*morenita*) in which the object of erotic desire is a Negro or a Mulatto girl are extremely popular. Other researchers have arrived at similar conclusions. Romanian scholar Liviu Malița, for example, believes that “the Romanian’s erotic attraction to Hungarian women,” as manifested in the prose of Transylvanian author Liviu Rebreanu, “is also triggered by the fact that she represents something else,” refuting “the entire code by which the male was educated.” By her belonging to another group, “the Hungarian woman becomes somehow more inaccessible and thus more attractive, more enticing.”³¹⁴ In this case, the difference in “cultural code,” claim specialists,

arises not only from an ethnic cause (Romanian man versus Hungarian woman), but also from a social cause (rural versus urban provenience). This is how Mircea Cărtărescu summarizes the theory of a Serbian ethnologist:

It may be that the stereotype of the hot Hungarian woman appeared because the surrounding people, such as the Romanians, were rural, and cherished a traditional view of sexuality; and if a Romanian was once involved with a Hungarian woman, he must have been stunned by the unimaginable things she had shown him, acquired and habitual in urban areas, but unknown to the rural regions.³¹⁵

A jocular saying popular with Romanian nationalist chauvinists says much about this: “Out of this country with the Hungarian men, so that Hungarian women may be left to us!”

In Europe, especially in the southeast, a surplus of sexuality is associated with the woman from the Orient: the Turkish woman (see the image of the full-figured odalisque or that of the belly-dancer, with her erogenous undulations)³¹⁶ and of the Gypsy woman (“with come-to-bed eyes and unveiled rock-hard breasts,” chanted by second-rate fiddlers and poets and apparent in more than usually kitschy paintings).³¹⁷ It is not by chance that in Mircea Eliade’s short story “La ȱgănci” [To the Gypsy girls’ house], written in 1959, the prostitutes are exotic: a Gypsy woman, a Jewess, and a Greek woman.³¹⁸ Exoticism had a great bearing on eroticism in nineteenth-century Romanian author Nicolae Filimon’s novel *Ciocoii vechi și noi* [Boys old and new] (1863) as well. In Phanariot Bucharest, around 1817, “good stuff, and not ordinary whores from the Scaune neighborhood,” in demand by native boyars. “And, indeed, their parties were teeming with courtly ladies as if taken out of Turkish harems”: the Greek Arghira, the Tartar Calmuca, and the German Rosalyn.³¹⁹ See also the sayings that circulate in Romanian folklore, such as, “I have the Romanian, / Because she knows how to cook / And the Gypsy, / Because she knows how to love,”³²⁰ or “When he is young and eager for love, any man takes a Gypsy, because they are more passionate; later, when he wants to raise a fortune and go up in the world, he takes a Jewess, because they are beautiful and are quick of mind; then, when he wants to eat well, he takes a Hungarian; and in his old age, wanting his name to be remembered and charity given in his name after death, he takes a Romanian.”³²¹ This accounts for the paradoxical phenomenon that persons who are negatively discriminated against from the social point of view (Afro-American, Gypsy, and Jewish women, and so on) are the object of positive

discrimination from a sexual point of view. Exotic eroticism seems to be stronger than chauvinistic nationalism.

Dangerous Liaisons

Obviously, an erotic relation of this kind between a Romanian peasant and an “unbaptized Jewess” could most often only take place on the quiet. Old Romanian laws banned or discouraged beyond compromise the “mixing of blood” that occurred in “copulation with a Jewess.”³²² “It is not right for the true believer to copulate with the heretical woman,” stipulated Matei Basarab’s *Code of Law* in the mid-seventeenth century.³²³ In the event of committing a sin with a Jewess, the Christian was threatened with losing his soul, like in a folk anecdote published in 1858, “Rachel and Messiah”:

How can this be? That you should love a Jewess? Why, do you know, my son, that with this love you can forfeit your soul? Do you know that should you hold a faithless woman in your arms, who communes with Christian blood, the earth will burn twenty inches under your feet? Do you know that a sin like that cannot be washed away but by suffering your shirt to be burnt on your body?³²⁴

Prohibition appeared at the very first stages of the erotic relationship. Even dancing with a girl “of another faith” was interdicted: “Round and round under my arm, / Because she is Romanian. / If she were of another faith / She could not pass under my arm.”³²⁵

However, the true scandal would break out only when—and if—the erotic tie took the concrete form of a marriage bond. This was evidently a misdeed on both sides. Judaic precepts are strict over this matter: “Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son” (Deut. 7:3). “What are Jewish parents to do with a daughter who elopes with a Christian lad? What a disgrace!” complains Manasse, a character devised by Ronetti Roman.³²⁶ The family went into mourning for the girl who was declared dead. When the suitor was a Muslim, the situation could end tragically, as in a few carols from Maramureș: the “Jewish innkeeper’s” daughter (like the Romanian daughter, in other versions of the carol) breaks free from the Turk’s clutches and commits suicide, throwing herself into a fountain.³²⁷

A mixed marriage, with the wife “of a different faith” than her husband, was inconceivable in the traditional Romanian village or borough, because the same roof could not shelter two different gods, two different traditions

perceived as incompatible, and—most importantly—two different images of each other in the other's consciousness. "The religion of the Jews [of Moldavia] is the most unimportant thing that makes them different in the eyes of the Romanians," wrote the Frenchman Desjardins in 1867. "It is not as Mosaic Jews" that they cause aggravations, "but as an alien people that has daily connections with another people without ever mixing or getting closer; a people that dresses in a different way and possesses a different language and different habits...."³²⁸

In 1889 folklorist Elena Sevastos attempted to outline the thinking of the Romanian peasant upon this issue:

*[The wife] shall not be of any other faith, for she will shame the kin. That a Romanian lad marry a Gypsy, God forbid: the Romanian does not consider the Gypsy to be human.... Or for a Romanian to wed a Jewess, this has not been heard of, set all in gold and gems though she may be, for this is what the Romanian knows.... [my emphasis—A.O.].*³²⁹

Even marriage with a Christian woman of another nation was a "shameful thing" in the Romanian village or borough. This is confirmed not only by the old eighteenth-century royal ordinances,³³⁰ but also by Romanian scholars in the first decades of the nineteenth century. In 1819, for instance, Moise Nicoară believed that the stranger and the woman ("women with yearning and learning for all wickedness") were two agents of evil, two tools of the Devil. From this perspective, the foreign woman was doubly an agent of evil. Marriage between a Romanian man and a foreign woman was negatively perceived because it was believed that the latter was going to lure the former to the side of the enemies of his nation.³³¹ In 1812 Petru Maior referred to the habit of the Romanians "not to marry women of another tongue." Attempting to defend an illusory ethnic purity of the Romanians, Mihail Kogălniceanu wrote in 1837 that "never were the Romanians willing to marry women of a different people."³³² Unwritten laws were merely reinforced by formal written ones. Both the Callimachi Code of Law (enforced in Moldavia in 1817) and the Caragea Code (adopted in Walachia in 1818) forbade marriages between people "of different laws": "There is a restriction against performing ceremonies of marriage between Christians and non-Christians."³³³ The stipulations of these two codices—modified or reinforced by several ordinances—were valid until 1865, when the Civil Code came into force. An ordinance of 1850, issued by the Royal Council and approved by the sovereign, Alexandru Ghica, advised the authorities "not to authorize

interfaith marriages”—referring not only to those contracted between Christians and Jews, but also between Orthodox and Christians of another rite—since they conflicted with the Canons of the Church.³³⁴ This state of mind was obviously centuries-old. The Italian friar Niccolo Barsi wrote, around 1630, after having traveled for nine months throughout Moldavia: “Under former reigns, had a Moldavian man married a Catholic woman, or had a Catholic man married a Moldavian woman, the Prince would have instantly order to have the man’s head strapped with a red-hot brass circle, thus leading to the man’s death.”³³⁵

The ban on mixed marriages between Romanians and Jews did not end with the old legal codes enacted between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. On the contrary, it was reinforced by the racial legislation of a Romanian state in which dictatorship and ethnocracy held sway (1938–1944). In 1938 Nichifor Crainic, the ideologist of the Ethnocratic State, was of the opinion that “the canonical interdiction imposed by our [Christian Orthodox] Church upon having relations with the Jews is the standing proof of a profound wisdom.”³³⁶ According to Judicial Decree No. 2651 of 8 August 1940 (drafted by Minister of Justice Ion V. Gruia, signed by Prime Minister Ion Gigurtu, and ratified by King Carol II), “marriages between Jews and Romanians of blood are forbidden.” The *Report* that presents the reasons for the drafting and ratification of this law states that the interdiction was necessary “to protect Romanian blood,” as well as for “purifying the Nation from heterogeneous parasitical elements.”³³⁷ The obvious model for the decree had been the Nazi law “For the Protection of German Blood and Honor,” adopted in Nürnberg in September 1935, that forbade marriages and extramarital relations between Germans and Jews.³³⁸ The origins of these ideas must be sought in the racist theory propounded by Arthur de Gobineau according to which the “decadence of the people” was a result of the “mixture of races,” in his *Essai sur inégalité des races humaines* (1854).

In Romania, laws similar to those of 8 August 1940 were preceded and followed by hundreds of articles and studies of ultra-nationalistic and racist propaganda meant to prepare for, and ultimately justify, the release of such regulations. This type of rhetoric is well known. A first emendation was that of “contamination of the ancient blood of the Getae and of Romans with the blood of Phanariots and Gypsies, and eventually with that of Jews,” followed by that of “infiltration of our ethnic group by elements of an inferior race.” This is why “eugenics, that is, the betterment of the race by hereditary mediation, is in high demand,” to be achieved by means of “eugenic laws and

eugenic praxis, of eugenic marriages that lead to fertile births, of the sterilization of some types of men, of the total elimination of dysgenic individuals [i.e., those endowed with inferior hereditary characteristics] from the mechanics of intercourse"; finally, by means of "elimination of all Jewish, Phanariot, and Gypsy features," in view of "the racial cleansing of the Romanian people," of "the physical and moral rejuvenation of our country," of "a rigorous selection based on hereditary traits," and more of this kind. The quotations above are excerpted from a few articles released by Traian Herseni and Constantin Papanace in the organ of the Iron Guard movement, *Cuvântul* [The word].³³⁹ One might think that such concepts could not be written in a lower style, and yet some pieces of advice published in magazines such as *Porunca Vremii* [The summons of the time] in 1939 and 1940 sounded even more appalling to lower-class people: "If you are Romanian, why do you hold a Jewish woman's arm? You will soon be so sorry that you have married Rebecca! How unfortunate will be the child born from your union with Israel! Your relationship with a Jew means betraying your people! Make up for your mistake, break up with the Jew!" etc.³⁴⁰

In traditional thinking, the offspring of mixed marriages was considered cursed. In 1901 Ion Luca Caragiale poked fun at this type of mentality by composing a ridiculous "statement of reasons" for the foundation of a ludicrous—yet quite possible at that time—ultra-nationalistic organization, "The Society of 'Genuine Romanians'": "The man that has children by a woman of another stock, or vice versa, raises monsters at her bosom, who shall half love to distraction the people in the midst of which they saw the light of day, and half hate it passionately. May the Lord of our forefathers save any Romanian man or woman from giving birth to such teratological specimens!"³⁴¹

"A fish and a bird can love each other," says a proverb, "but where will they build a nest?" If marriage between a Jewish girl and a non-Jewish boy, considered to be "against nature," nevertheless took place, the two young people had to flee far away, for "the village could no longer hold them."³⁴² This is an old deep-rooted prejudice, often appearing in higher literature, too. Examples are: Lina and Andrei in Alexandru Pelimon's *Jidovul cămătar* [The Jewish usurer], written around 1860; the couple Havah and Fedya in Sholem Aleichem's *Teyveh de Milchiger* [Tobias the dairyman], (1895); Lelia and Matei in Ronetti Roman's *Manasse* (1900); Hayah and Ștefan in Mihail Sadoveanu's *Hayah Sanis* (1908); Ana and Ionel in Victor Ion Popa's *Take, Ianke and Cadîr* (1933), etc. This is a prejudice that has survived to

this day in conservative circles in central and eastern parts of the continent: “If a Jewish boy should want to marry his non-Jewish girlfriend, he would probably be expelled by his family,” believed an informant from Austria, in 1992³⁴³; or, “A Pole could have his Jewish girl as long as he didn’t marry her,” said an informant from southeastern Poland in 1984, reiterating in brief a generally held folk belief.³⁴⁴ In the tradition of Poles from Silesia, as recorded in the second half of the nineteenth century, it was believed that the young girl who does not give presents to carolers “With her own hand she spoils her luck, / For she’ll never get married, to the end of time, / Though she may want to take even a Jew for a husband....”³⁴⁵ In this case, marriage with a Jew was perceived as the peak of life’s misfortune, or the paradigm of abnormality.

Romanian folk poems also deal with such non-resolvable situations irrespective of whether the erotic relation is between a Romanian peasant and a girl of a different faith, or between a Romanian girl and a “stranger.”

Dear lass, elegant lass,
 Could I love you, I would
 But my mother does not want you
 Because you are not of the same faith as I³⁴⁶

*

Were you a Romanian, my love,
 In my bosom I would carry your love,
But you are not of my faith,

We would love, and may not love [Emphases added—A.O].³⁴⁷

Despite this dire situation, complex anthropological calculations have revealed that the highest proportion of mixed marriages between Jews and non-Jews in Europe was recorded in the Romanian area.³⁴⁸ This parameter has the value of 0.752 in Romania as compared to 0.463 in Poland, 0.508 in Germany, 0.571 in Russia, 0.703 in the case of Sephardi Jews in the Balkan Peninsula, 0.546 for Ashkenazi Jews all over Europe, and 0.684 for Sephardi Jews throughout Europe. With all due caution, we might consider this figure to be virtual indication that the dealings between Jews and the host population were slightly more relaxed in the Romanian area.

There were cases when the site in which interethnic love relations occurred was the pub (*orînda*), quite often leased by a Jew:

At the pub near the heath
 Costache Roșcovan [i.e., the Red] drinks
 With his brother Buzdugan

With three daughters of a Yid.³⁴⁹

*

Down in the valley in the moorland,

Three Jewesses keep the pub.³⁵⁰

It may have been that clients sexually harassed the young wife of the innkeeper or his daughter (as was the case with the “little Romanian Jewess” in Mihail Sadoveanu’s novel, *Floare ofilită* [Withered flower], published in 1905), or to the young, buxom, and quick waitress and wife of “Neumann the innkeeper” in Rebreanu’s novel *Ion* (1920), or the waitress called Nehe, “a swarthy and attractive woman,” in *Stele rătăcitoare* [Wandering stars], a novel by Sholem Aleichem (1909).³⁵¹ With respect to the last three samples of folk poetry given above, we should bear in mind that in 1743, among the reforms initiated by the Phanariot ruler Constantin Mavrocordat, it was decreed that the license of “female tavern-keepers—Jewish women as well as Moldavian, without preference” to sell liquor “either in the borough, or in the country” should be revoked because “it has been brought to our knowledge that they give rise to much mischief, as they are premeditatedly chosen to be women and young girls.” A contemporary chronicler commended this “royal decree” and rejoiced at the fact that “this way the age-old practice of the boyars of placing women in taverns, and choosing the prettiest ones for this job as well, so that wine would sell quickly,” was put to an end.³⁵² In the folk mentality, the maiden and booze go well together:

I saw the lassies were drinking,

And I joined them,

With three of them in merrymaking.

Wine is fine and an ounce is not enough,

Yet the tavern lady is bewitching.³⁵³

Beauty and Elegance

In 1839 two Scottish Christian missionaries recorded the following legend in Cracow: Seduced by the unsurpassed beauty of the Jewish girl Esther, Polish King Kazimir the Great (1333–1370) took her for his wife. Later on, however, after he killed her, “all Jewsses were commanded to veil their faces in public, lest they should ensnare the king by their beauty.”³⁵⁴ The fate of a murdered victim was also shared by Dona Raquel, the beautiful Jewess from Toledo (called “La Fermosa” [The beauty]) with whom Alfonso VIII, King of Castile (1158–1214), had been “madly in love” for seven years, claims a thirteenth-century legend.³⁵⁵ These cases apparently contain a legendary

pattern adopted from the biblical story of Esther, the “beautiful and lovely” Jewess who seduced King Ahasuerus (Xerxes I) of Persia (486–465 BCE) (Esther 2:7).

In 1841, Dr Iuliu (Iehuda) Barasch was traveling from Berlin to Bucharest, crossing Galicia to go to Bukovina and from there to Moldavia and Walachia. Recounting the visits he made to several Jewish communities, the young doctor noted that “the truth of *the old saying about the beautiful Polish Jewish women* was revealed to him,” especially relating to those of Galicia, as well as the truth of their belief “in unique and stainless chastity.”³⁵⁶

Parenthetically let me add that the general opinion about the unsurpassed beauty of Jewish women has survived in Poland up to this day.³⁵⁷ The survival is so much more interesting since the possessors of such beauty can hardly be said to exist in that country now. Only about 5,000 Jews live in Poland today, most of them aged people. This proves that the belief under discussion is deep-rooted and that stereotypes about Jews seem to outlive the Jews themselves. Referring to the respect with which peasants in Ieud (Maramureș, in northern Romania) bear the local Jews “for their knowledge and piety,” Gail Kligman found there the same paradox: “The stereotypes still thrives today, despite there being no more Jews in Ieud.”³⁵⁸

Returning to Iuliu Barasch’s travel impressions, it must be said that he also criticized the exaggerated taste of the “daughters of Israel” for some articles of luxurious jewelry, accessories to their traditional costumes. Among other things, Barasch referred to the *Sternbindel*, a diadem or crown “embroidered with gold, pearls, and diamonds” which “not only is in no way inferior to the ordinary European jewelry, but quite often surpasses it in its luxuriousness, variety, and alluring powers.”³⁵⁹ Barasch advocated the curbing of this luxury, about which the Talmud itself was rather lenient. Talmudic texts would ridicule the luxury practiced by Jewish women (or by women in general), without criticizing it explicitly.³⁶⁰

In 1781, Austrian historian Franz Joseph Sulzer, a collector of Romanian folklore, wrote about the “renowned beauty of Jewish women” in Bukovina and especially in Cernowits. He considered this fact so remarkable that he declared it “the only thing worth mentioning about Cernowits.” Speaking about the Jews in Bukovina and Moldavia, Sulzer added that many of them were well off and that “they dress[ed] after the fashion of Polish Jews.”³⁶¹

At the end of the nineteenth century Romanian folklorist Dimitrie Dan also remarked on the beauty and elegance of Jewish women in Bukovina: “Among women there are faces of classic regularity. The [Jewish] women

wear modern garments of wool, velvet, and silk and adorn themselves with gold and jewels in which they develop an extreme luxury.”³⁶² Even Nicolae Iorga, in a book with strong antisemitic undertones, acknowledged the fact that among the Jews in Bukovina there were “many beautiful women,” whom the men dressed “in tatters for six days a week” but on the Sabbath adorned them “with silks and jewelry, for God’s repose and for people’s eyes.”³⁶³ Iorga would have been less sarcastic if he had known that according to Jewish tradition people dress their best on the Sabbath: “I, Israel,” says the Talmud, “am black during the weekdays, but beautiful on the Sabbath.”

Obviously, the daughters of Tobias the Dairyman, Sholem Aleichem’s character, are very beautiful, especially when their father himself describes them: “God blessed me with beautiful daughters”; “My other daughter, Hudel, is so beautiful! As it is written in the book of Esther: She is as brilliant as a piece of gold. And God also made her very smart.... She knows how to write and read in Russian, in Yiddish, and she also reads books”; “Tobias’ daughters are well known for their beauty all over the world.”³⁶⁴

In 1840 Alecu Russo employed the same type of rhetoric on the Jewish women of Jassy that he had used for its Jewish men: a virtue was granted them only to make the vice stand out more strongly. The women of “aristocratic Jewry”—which, without any inconvenience, we might call our finance—are, “as often as not, quite lovely.” However, “by a law of the Talmud, married women are forced to shave off the hair of their heads.” “Jewish women are known in all Christendom for their beauty, only you have to see that they are washed, bathed, and perfumed, otherwise all illusion is in vain.” Nevertheless, “however fallen the maidens of Zion might be in the opinion of the world,” Russo makes a last concession: “You would quite often be tempted to put together a modernized paraphrase of the *Song of Songs*.”³⁶⁵

Finally, around the middle of the nineteenth century (1854–1857) a German, Moritz Edler von Angeli, did not spare his praise of the “admirable and enchanting beauty” of all Moldavian women. He spoke of the “splendor of creatures of consummate elegance and classical shapes,” referring to all women of Jassy, be they “Romanian, Armenian, Greek, or Jewish,” without distinction.³⁶⁶

The great fire of 1711, that took many human lives in the ghetto of Frankfurt am Main, was perceived by the Jews of that city as a divine punishment. In 1716 officials of the Frankfurt Jewish community issued an order (*Neue Frankfurter Jüdische Kleider Ordnung*) forbidding opulent

weddings and lavish attire. Jewish women, for instance, were no longer allowed to wear precious stones and silk attire.

A contemporaneous similar type of interdiction is attested in Transylvania. In 1741 the members of the City Council of Alba Iulia, the only town in Transylvania in which Jews were allowed to settle, complained that they had been admonished “before the entire country” (which meant before the Diet of Transylvania) because the Jewish women of the town, who were affluent, were wearing extremely elegant garments: “they go out in shining silk dresses, with gold and silver threads [*koronka selyem*].” The city authorities decided “in unanimity” to forbid Jewish women from wearing such clothing.³⁶⁷ There is, indeed, an old Hungarian proverb confirming that Jewish women were perceived as wearing precious clothing and jewelry: “Something precious always hangs from the Jewess.”³⁶⁸

Similar descriptions are to be found relating to other places in Europe. Heinrich Heine speaks of the unique elegance of Jewish women in medieval Germany.³⁶⁹ In his turn, Honoré de Balzac describes the physical perfection of the Jewess Esther (*Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes*, 1838) claiming that Jewish women come from “the land of beauty” and that through them “the sublime paragon of Asian beauty was preserved.”³⁷⁰ An English traveler, Thomas Coryat, wrote in the journal of his 1607 visit to northeastern Italy about the unsurpassed beauty and elegance of Jewish women (in his case, those of Venice):

[In the synagogues of Venice there were] many Jewish women, some of whom more beautiful than any woman I have ever seen, and so very elegant in their dress, adorned with gold chains and rings ornamented with precious stones, which were such that certain of our English countesses would have difficulty in rivaling. They wear wonderful long trains, like the trains worn by Princesses whose ladies’ maids do nothing but look after them: this shows the great wealth some of these Jews have.³⁷¹

It is probable that news of the beauty and wealth of the Jewish women of Venice had reached England during that period, because that was also the time (1595–1600) when William Shakespeare, Thomas Coryat’s contemporary and fellow countryman, was making Antonio, the protagonist of *The Merchant of Venice*, fall in love and even marry the beautiful and rich Jewish woman Jessica, daughter of Shylock the usurer (Act II, Scene 3). “Beautiful, wise, and faithful / This is how I will always remember her,” says Lorenzo (Act III, Scene 6), or “Beautiful pagan woman, sweet Jewish woman! May

God strike me if there is one Christian man who would not do anything to have you!” says Lancelot (Act III, Scene 3).

Unlike the Ashkenazi Jews of Galicia, Bukovina, and Transylvania, those in Venice were, for the great part, of the “Spanish rite” (i.e., Sephardim). In the mid-nineteenth century (1841–1842), Iuliu Barasch also spoke highly of the beauty, elegance, and wealth of the Sephardi women of Bucharest: “The [Jewish] women are of a striking beauty.... The women are looked at with uncommon respect. The wife is treated like a true queen.”³⁷² At about the same time, in 1839, two Scottish missionaries admired the garments and jewelry of the Sephardi women of Bucharest: “The Jewesses whom we saw at the gate [of the Spanish synagogue] were enveloped in silk mantles edged with fur,” and were “richly attired and wearing diamonds on their head,... for the daughters of Judah have the same love for gay apparel that they had in the days of Isaiah” (cf. Isa. 3:18–24).³⁷³ In order to legitimize its fame, the proverbial beauty of modern-age Jewesses was under the obligation of having inherited the alleged beauty of Jewesses of the biblical period: “You are attractive, Leah,” the zealous Jew Manasse says to his niece in the homonymous play by Jewish-Romanian playwright Ronetti Roman, written in 1900. “The Lord has granted you as heritage the beauty of our Matriarchs. Our proud and beautiful queens would walk in this manner on the slopes of Mount Zion.”³⁷⁴ The Jewish female characters in a lesser-known play by Liviu Rebreanu (*Jidanul* [The Yid], 1914) are beautiful (or, at least pretty) and lavishly dressed (or, at least in good taste), as the author himself characterizes them in the *dramatis personae*:

Rebecca—31 year of age. Goodness in person, and of a soft, charming beauty. Attractive exactly because of her unsophisticated dress and manner of talking. She is in many ways similar to a maiden of the Old Testament. Rose—23 years of age. A proud, elegant, nice maiden. Frida—20 years of age. A nice Jewish young lady that dresses in a simple manner, but in good taste.³⁷⁵

The large Jewish Sephardi community of Thessaloniki, which accounted for over half of the total population, settled there in the late fifteenth century, immediately after the expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian Peninsula (1492 from Spain and 1497 from Portugal). In the late nineteenth century, when he studied the appearance of Jewish Sephardi women (mostly wealthy ones) in Thessaloniki, Ion Nenițescu noticed much the same qualities about them as those with which central and eastern Europeans were endowed: “The Jewish

women of this town are not in the least ugly,” he wrote in 1895, after traveling through the Balkan countries.

It is not rare to see on the streets of Thessaloniki really beautiful Jewish women, dressed in clothes that are cut and adorned with great taste and originality, bejeweled profusely with gems of which some are of great worth. Many of them display bracelets in filigree and buckles worked with great artistry by the hardworking and skilled hands of the Aromanian silver and goldsmiths from Olympia.... You could hardly see on the streets of Thessaloniki a Jewish woman who has no silk on her, at least a silk girdle, if more she cannot afford. The rich Jewish women, however, put on silk dresses of several colors on every day of the week.³⁷⁶

Obviously, a couple of centuries ago one of the main elements contributing to the elegance of Jewish women—and not the only one—was silk. But in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries natural silk was very expensive, as it was brought from the Far East or from the great fairs of the West (for instance, Leipzig [Lipsca], transported together with other products by the Lipsan tradesmen). In a list covering maximum prices established in 1627 by the Alba Iulia Diet and ratified by the Prince of Transylvania, Gabriel Bethlen, the price for silk thread was ranked immediately after that of golden and silver threads.³⁷⁷

Very frequently, it was Jewish merchants who brought silk and gave it to dyers (as a rule, also Jewish) and sold it in their shops. “Come on, Mary, to Schmiel’s [shop] / So I can have a muslin dress tailored for you. / Come up, Mary, up the hill, so I can have a silk dress tailored for you,” goes a piece of Moldavian folklore transcribed by none other than M. Eminescu.³⁷⁸ A “shop of the silk merchant”, for instance, is attested in 1735 in the Jewish neighborhood of the borough of Lăpușna, in Moldavia.³⁷⁹ Yet that occupation in itself is much older. Silk garments seem to have already been mentioned in the Bible (Ezek. 16:13). In his Hebrew itinerary, written about 1170, Benjamin of Tudela, when speaking of the Jews of southeastern Europe, described the processing and dyeing of silk thread as a traditional Jewish occupation; in fact, silk became known as “Jewish silk.” It is under this name that it is listed in a customs register dating from 1500, when it was transported by Jewish merchants from the manufacturers in Brașov.³⁸⁰

JEWISH DRESS AND THE STIGMA OF CLOTHING

More than once have I envied the simple life of the Jews in the ghetto, wearing that yellow patch, which may have been humiliating as an idea, yet how convenient and uncompromising. They, at least, did away once and for all with the ghastly comedy of saying their names as if giving themselves up.

Mihail Sebastian, *De două mii de ani* [For two thousand years (1934)]

The Yellow Six-Cornered Star

In 1994, in an interview published by the French magazine *La Vie* (no. 2546 [1994]), Romanian film director Lucian Pintilie briefly mentioned the “Jews who wore the yellow star and who swept through Bucharest” in the early 1940s. In a passage written in his diary, published in *Timputa* (Jassy, no. 10 [1995]), Paul Goma, a Romanian writer residing in Paris, commented on this episode: “I knew—from the things that people know—that the Jews had been subjected to persecutions in Romania..., *yet they had not worn a yellow star*.” Like the rabbi in the famous parable, I must observe that both are right, in their own way.

In consequence of Decree No. 3984 of December 4, 1940, signed by Ion Antonescu, the Jews from Romania were bound to perform “obligatory labor,” while Rule No. 2030 of July 12, 1941, also signed by the Commander of the Romanian State, amended that to include: “In every case [of obligatory labor], the Jews shall wear a yellow armlet, 10 centimeters thick, on their left arm.”

Local initiatives, beginning in July or August 1941, required the Jews of Iași, Cernăuți, Bacău, Huși, and other places, to wear the yellow star. Subsequently, the Ministry of Internal Affairs issued Circular No. 8368 of September 3, 1941, which notified county prefects that all Romanian Jews (men, women, and children) were to wear the distinctive six-cornered star sewn onto the left chest of their clothing. Christened Jews were not required to wear the stigma (most likely an echo of the similar decree issued by Hitler on September 1, 1941).

Within a few days, however, the same ministry on September 8, 1941, by order of Ion Antonescu, sent out a telegram annulling the order, probably at the instigation of Rabbi Wilhelm Filderman, who had contacted government

authorities on behalf of the Jewish communities, and had been granted an audience with Marshal Antonescu himself.

Mihail Sebastian noted in his *Journal* (September 9, 1941):

As for tomorrow morning, we were supposed to wear the “Six-cornered Star.” The order had been given to the [Jewish] community and communicated to the police commissariats. Still, after and audience that Filderman was granted last night with the Commander [Ion Antonescu], it was cancelled. It gives me no pleasure, this cancellation. I had become used to the thought that I should wear a yellow patch with a *Magen David*. I imagined all the troubles, all the risks, all the dangers, yet, after the first moment of panic, not only that I had become resigned, but I had even begun to see a kind of piece of identity in this sign. More than that, still: it was a kind of medal, a badge that attested my dissociation from all the current infamies, my freedom of responsibility, my innocence.

The order was not abrogated in all the Romanian-administered territories. In Moldavian and Bucovinian towns (including Bacău, Iași, Câmpulung, Botoșani, Cernăuți, and others), the Jews continued to wear the ethnic stigma until August 1944.

The situation in northern Transylvania—under Hungarian administration since 1940—was certainly altogether different. On April 5, 1944, immediately after the occupation of Hungary by German troops, and after the Sztojay Cabinet came into power (March 22, 1944), a governmental ordinance was issued that made it compulsory for Jews to wear the yellow star. A storm of anti-Jewish ordinances followed: confiscation of all property, a ban on intellectual, commercial, or industrial activity, the deportation of Jews from county seats, their internment in ghettos, among others. Under the direct guidance of Adolf Eichmann himself, everything took place at lightning speed. Between May 16 and June 3—a span of two weeks—151,180 Jews from northern Transylvania were deported to Auschwitz. Of these, a mere 15,769 (10.4%) were to return in 1945.

This represents, in fact, a centuries-old scenario: whenever an ethnic (or religious) minority was forced to wear a distinctive sign, it was the first symptom that the majority had some radical measure in store for it—forced conversion, expulsion, or carnage.

The Stigmata of the Middle Ages

It was not the Nazis in the twentieth century who invented the ethnic (or confessional) stigma (Gk. “scar, sign of disrepute”).³⁸¹ The earliest record of this kind goes back to the first half of the seventh century, when Caliph Omar decreed that all Jews and Christians (*dhimmis*, non-Islamic believers) should wear a distinctive sign (*giyar*) of identifying colors: a yellow belt for the Jews, a blue one for the Christians. This was only one of all the regulations of segregation and persecution resulting from the so-called “Pact of Omar.”³⁸² The principle applied by Omar was a simple one: if you refuse to obey Islam (from Arabic *aslamah*, “to obey”), you will at least obey the believers of Islam. This edict was renewed in 850 by Caliph al-Mutawakkil (847–861) and remained in force for centuries afterwards. Around the year 900 the Islamic governor of Sicily ordered that all Jews in the island should wear a badge shaped like an ass (or a monkey), while Christians were allotted a badge in the shape of a pig.³⁸³

In Europe, the stigma was at first not applied on ethnic or religious grounds but in order to brand slaves, convicts, or the incurably ill (the lepers, the mad, etc.). The spirit of the Crusades, however, took its toll. As they crossed many unknown provinces, the Crusaders did not have the time to search for those of a different faith. They had to look different, to bear a mark. How else could they have known whom to convert, whom to drive out of the country, and whom to kill?!

The first forms of ethnic or confessional stigmatization in western Europe are on record beginning in the twelfth century. However, only Pope Innocent III (who initiated the Fifth Crusade) and the Fourth Lateran Council (Rome, 1215) which “institutionalized” this type of stigmatization. In various forms, it was to endure in western Europe until the French Revolution. Taking what it could from the Pact of Omar, while changing what needed to be changed, the Lateran Council adopted Canon 68 which stipulated: “At all times and in every Christian province, the Jews and the Saracens, of both sexes, shall be marked and shall be told apart from the other people by the way they are dressed.”³⁸⁴ The “Christian provinces” were free to choose the shape and color of the mark of dishonor. Especially after the Council of Arles (1235), wearing a round piece of yellow cloth (French *rouelle*, Latin *rota*) had generally become the mark of infamy for the Jews in France and Italy. Miniatures dating from the epoch show them wearing their stigma on their belts. In the early fourteenth century, in his book *The Practice [of the Inquisitor]*, Bernard Gui (whose base was in Toulouse) explained the shape

of this mark by claiming that it represented the bread of the Eucharist which the Jews were ostensibly profaning. Others maintained that the stigma was in the shape of a coin, so as “to remind one of the money with which Judas was bought.”³⁸⁵

After Louis IX (another fervent Crusader, later sanctified for his Christian zeal) had confiscated and burnt twenty-four wagons full of volumes of the Talmud in the Place de Grève in Paris in 1242, in 1269 a decree obligating Jews living in France to wear the *rouelle* was enacted. This was the beginning of the end for that country’s Jews. In 1306 Philip the Fair despoiled and expelled them. The second and third waves of expulsion from France followed in 1322 and 1394.

One of the major directions followed by the Jews in their flight from France was southwards to Spain and Portugal where, more or less since the beginning of the fifteenth century, they were forced to wear the same kind of stigmata. The dominant belief in the area at that time was still that the problems related to the Jews could be solved through forced conversion. With the cross in one hand and the sword in the other, Spanish inquisitors descended on the Jewish quarters (*juderias*) with shouts of “Be christened or die!” Some Jews chose the font; others chose the sword. The rest were expelled from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal five years later.

Thirteenth-century English miniatures depict Jews wearing a particular stigma: the tabula—a strip of yellow cloth cut in the classic shape of the table of the law: two adjoining rectangles, with rounded upper corners. This time it was a sacred emblem of Judaism which was converted into a mark of infamy. In this case too, the injunction concerning the stigma (beginning in 1217, under King Henry III) was a foreboding of the persecution and expulsion of the Jews. Indeed, they would be driven out of England towards the end of that century, in 1290.

In the German area, as well as its neighboring areas, the distinctive mark worn by the Jews was a pointed yellow hat (green in Poland), sometimes looking like a toppled funnel, at other times like a cone (German: *Judenhut*; Latin: *pileus cornutus*). The oldest record is a miniature by Mother Superior Herrade von Landsberg in *Hortus Deliciarum* (1175) depicting several Jews (Judeans) wearing the *pileus cornutus* and being tortured by the devils in the flames of Hell.³⁸⁶

The pointed yellow hat was a stigma which the Inquisition placed on the heads of the “unbelievers” (witches, heretics, and Jews), whenever they were exposed in public, in shaming processions, or when they were executed by

burning at the stake. (In addition, the pointed hat has remained to this day an obvious accessory in the costume of the “witch” at fairs, carnivals, or in cartoons. In Anglo-American schools, the “dunce cap” has come to stigmatize laggardly or prankish schoolchildren.) Apart from the *carocha* (“conical cardboard hat, painted with flames and heads of devils,” as Le Sage described it in 1715 in his novel *Gil Blas*, during a scene of burning at the stake in Toledo), another sign of infamy which heretics were forced to wear when they were subject to that form of execution was a yellow garment which Spanish Inquisitors called *san-benito*, because of the resemblance it bore to the frock worn by Benedictine monks. After the public incineration of heretics, their stigmatizing garments (*carochas* and *san-benitos*) were exhibited in the parochial church as trophies of the war waged by the Inquisition against heresy. Such stigmata were worn, however, not only by heretics and witches, but also by the Jews who were put on trial by the Inquisition. The prints made by Goya at the close of the eighteenth century (like the one in his series of *The Caprices* entitled “Por linage a Ebreos” [Because I am a Jew]) provide vivid testimony of this.³⁸⁷

For safety’s sake, in the fifteenth century Jewish men were forced to wear the disk of yellow cloth (*rota*) in addition to the *Judenhut*. In a Papal edict in 1257, Jewish women were obliged to wear a veil with two blue stripes (*oralia*), or a horned head-dress (*cornalia*), or bells at the hem of their dresses—an auditory stigma, much like the rattlers borne by lepers. Since they were looked upon as some kind of “spiritual lepers,” the Jews had to be marked, and thus secluded, to ward off their contaminating Christians. Accused of causing epidemics and calamities, poisoning wells, profaning the Eucharist, and the ritual murder of Christian children, the Jews were forced to wear the marks of infamy so the Gentiles could avoid them, chase them away, or torture them in the flames of pyres, not only in those of Hell.

In Transylvania and Bukovina

It was only natural for the state of affairs in Transylvania to resemble that of central Europe: here, too, the Jews were forced to dress with distinctive markings. In 1233, less than two decades after the Fourth Lateran Council, Hungarian King Andrew III and his son, Béla IV, gave their word of honor to the Papal legate, swearing on the Scriptures that “henceforward the Jews, the Saracens, and the Ishmaelites shall be shown apart through marks and be separated from the Christians.”³⁸⁸ The same decision applied to the counties in the principality of Transylvania, whose governor was the same Prince Béla

IV. The Church Council of Buda (1279) firmly sustained the injunction that Jews should wear a distinctive badge, but King Ladislas IV (1272–1290) was opposed to the enforcement of this edict.³⁸⁹

From the seventeenth century onwards, ethnic stigmatization takes the form of interdiction: the Jews do not have the right to wear those garments which are most characteristic of the ethnic majority, even if such discrimination is sometimes depicted as a privilege. In 1623, for instance, the prince of Transylvania, Gabriel Bethlen, issued an act of privileges in Cluj concerning the Jews of his principality, which read: “In order that they might not debase the garb of Christians, nor some opprobrious mark be made use of, they [i.e., the Jews] are allowed to resort to their [own] dress.”³⁹⁰ The Jews were in fact forced to do what they were “allowed.” In 1650, in Alba Iulia, the Diet of the Hungarian nobility decided on behalf of Prince Georgy Rakoczi II to enforce the injunction that Jews and Greeks residing in Transylvania should wear “clothes according to their state,” in order not to be mingle with the Hungarians and—most importantly—with Hungarian military personnel: “The Jews should wear Jewish clothes, the Greeks, Greek clothes; they should not walk in Hungarian military clothing, under penalty of 200 florins.”³⁹¹ Almost a century later, in 1741, the Town Council of Alba Iulia (the only town in Transylvania which at this time permitted Jews to reside within it) reinforced this decision: “On the basis of the articles which granted privileges, henceforward the Town interdicts everyone [i.e., every Jew] to wear Hungarian clothes”; the Jews had “to dress in the clothes of their own Jewish nation.”³⁹²

After Bukovina was incorporated into the Habsburg Empire in 1775, Empress Maria Theresa took some drastic measures towards “decreasing the number of the Jewish population” in this region. For the discriminatory regulations to be enforced, the Jews had to be easily recognizable; hence they were stigmatized: “In order for the Jews from Bukovina to be distinguishable from the other inhabitants,” the Imperial Commission in Vienna stipulated in 1780 that “they shall be obliged to wear a two-inch yellow ribbon on the hat or on the cap.”³⁹³ The commission’s edict was no innovation in that epoch. In fact, it reproduced a similar provision from “The Edict against the Jews” issued in Rome in 1775 by Pope Pius VI. Obviously, then, the old stigma (the yellow pointed hat, or *Judenhut*) which the Jews wore in central Europe in the Middle Ages (its first record dating from 1175) survived through six hundred years until the end of the eighteenth century, then in its simplified form: a yellow ribbon attached to an ordinary hat. Moreover, one must note

that yellow remained the typical color of the stigmata for the Jews, irrespective of the shape which they might have taken throughout the centuries and across the continent.

This state of things was not destined to endure, however. This was a time when the Enlightenment was in full swing and western and central Europe began to be haunted by the specter of the Jews' emancipation. Already in 1778, Hungarian historian J. Benkő remarked that in Transylvania Sephardi Jews (*Judaei Turcici*) were wearing "Turkish attire," while Ashkenazi Jews (*Judaei Germanici*) wore "clothes of the same kind as the Germans or the Hungarians," and "made bold to do so" despite the injunctions of the law.³⁹⁴ After 1780, the politics of Emperor Joseph II would deviate from those of his mother Maria Theresa. The new strategy was that the Jews in the Habsburg Empire should no longer be segregated but, to the contrary, assimilated. On the basis of "The Edict of Tolerance" issued by the emperor, a new "Systematic Regulation of the Status of the Jewish People" (*Systematica Gentes Judaicae Regulatio*) was drafted which, among other things, stipulated that "all distinctive marks which distinguish the Jews from the others should be abolished..., in conformity with His Majesty's order."³⁹⁵

Moreover, in 1789 the statute applying to the Jews of Galicia was sent to the Province of Transylvania (which from 1790 was to include Bukovina, as well), for enforcement there. Article 47 of this statute stipulated:

As the Jews are in every respect the equals before the state and the laws of all who are subjects, all external marks and distinctive garments, both those hitherto decreed and those established by custom, shall be thoroughly abolished starting with the year 1791, and the clothes that have been hitherto in their use shall be permitted to the rabbis only.³⁹⁶

Whereas for centuries on end the Jews had formerly been forced to wear certain infamous items of clothing, now they were forced to do the opposite, namely, to "thoroughly" renounce even their own distinctive garments, those "established by custom." Even Moses Mendelssohn—who was a promoter of Jewish integration—found the price to be paid too high. He received the imperial edicts of Joseph II with reservations: "If an acknowledgement of the right of citizenship for Jews," wrote Mendelssohn, "entails the obligation to forswear the laws of Judaism, then we might sooner renounce civil rights."³⁹⁷

In Moldavia and Walachia

A similar process of more or less forced assimilation of Jews took place in Moldavia and Walachia, though with a delay of several decades. The first half of the nineteenth century was in fact an epoch of more general transition for Romanian townsmen, tradesmen, and boyars as well. Returning home from Paris or other European capitals, “Frenchified” young men finally managed to impose the “European fashion,” replacing that of the Turks and of the Phanariot Greeks, also worn by Romanian boyars.

As Iuliu Barasch observed, the Jewish attire in Moldavia was at first the “ancient Judeo-Moldavian dress, which looked much like the dress of the country.” In the late eighteenth century their dress began to be heavily influenced by that of Polish Jews, turning into the “Judeo-Polish dress.”³⁹⁸ Since 1832, in accordance with the constitution of Moldavia, the Regulamentul Organic, the “offspring of the Jews” were accepted “in the public schools of the country” solely on condition “that they fashion their dress as well after that of the other schoolboys, without a difference of any kind.”³⁹⁹

In 1840, when he referred to “our Jews,” Moldavian author Alecu Russo noted that they were “unflinching when it [came] to their uniform, which to them [was] an article of law” and that they “would rather die as they were born, with the velvet cap and with all the other remnants of the Middle Ages.” Elsewhere, he wrote: “What these Moldavian and Polish Jews would need is a great man, with sufficient power, to make them change their costume; this would undoubtedly make the [Christian] rabble cease harboring such inimical feelings towards them.”⁴⁰⁰ This awaited “great man” seemed to be Iuliu Barasch himself, a typical representative of the Judaic Enlightenment who, after Talmudic and medical studies in Berlin, took up permanent residence in Bucharest in 1841. Barasch adopted a vehement stand against the “separatist and conspicuous Judeo-Polish habit” which is the cause of “a useless barrier, filled with hatred, [that] rises between Jews and Christians,” and which “has become a genuine monstrosity which holds them [i.e., the Jews] back and annihilates any hope for better days, obstructing them in their internal development.” Dr. Barasch tried to show that this so-called Jewish dress had a history of its own, going back only a few centuries in time, and that its origins were the German and Polish attire, so therefore it was not a “Jewish” or a “national dress” at all, “of great reverence,” imposed by some religious text or ritual tradition.⁴⁰¹

Barasch was not alone fighting that battle. Other emancipated young Jews were putting pressure upon the Romanian authorities, hoping to obtain in this manner, “from above,” modernization of the Jewish dress in opposition to the old traditionalists of their own community. In Moldavia this lobby was led by M. E. Finkelstein who in 1847 wrote a petition on the subject to the sovereign, Mihai Sturdza, and with help from his friend Gheorghe Asachi—in fact, through the latter’s brother Petrache Asachi, “the Prince’s adjutant and his right hand”⁴⁰²—obtained an audience with the sovereign. As a result of these pressures, King Sturdza issued a decree at the end of 1847 that demanded of the Jews that they adopt the “European” instead of the Galician dress, owing to which “they are often subjected to slanders and verbal abuse on the part of the lower people, and sometimes even to offensive treatment, incidents which beset the Jewish nation not only with much grief, but are also prejudicial to their interests.” Traditionalist Jews, however, demonstrated against this measure in front of the royal palace of Jassy and they began to beat the young men who followed the decree. Finkelstein himself—whom traditionalist Jews would call a “baptized Jew”—escaped the “savagery of the fanatics” only by a hair’s breadth. A few days later, the sovereign had to “ease the terms of the decree,” in consequence of which its enforcement was to be “without coercion.” Addressed to the Department of Internal Affairs, this regal address, composed upon the example offered by “the good practice in neighboring states,” refers directly to “several young people of this [i.e., the Jewish] nation who have acquired good learning in foreign countries, where all citizens, irrespective of their creed, dress in the same attire.”⁴⁰³

The 1847 Moldavian decree evidently referred to the state of things in the states of western and central Europe, yet this reformist trend was fairly well known in eastern European states as well. In 1841, for instance, it was another group of *maskilim* (promoters of *haskalah*, Jewish Enlightenment) who submitted to the Russian governors a full-fledged program, comprising eight articles, for the modernization of the Jewish community in western Russia. “Inasmuch as Jewish dress has no relation whatsoever to religious law,” it stated, “the Jews must be ordered to change their dress for the clothing commonly worn throughout the country, according to the social class to which they belong.”⁴⁰⁴ The proposition, therefore, was that clothing no longer mark ethnic differences, but social ones.

In 1859, Mihail Kogalniceanu, then Minister of Internal Affairs, sent a circular letter to the rabbis throughout Moldavia calling upon them to make use to the full extent of their authority in order to persuade believers to adopt

the “European” dress. Not only was this official letter read out in every synagogue, but also on the streets of towns, “to the sound of drums.” Elias Schwarzfeld wrote:

The Christian population and the army, interpreting this circular letter in the wrong way, armed themselves with scissors, both in Jassy and in other towns and villages, scoured the streets, and wherever they ran into Jews they would shorten their caftan, cut off their sidelocks, and would not spare their beard either.... In consequence, the military command threatened the soldiers with twenty-five lashes if they did not desist from maltreating the Jews under any pretext whatsoever, and was even forced to confine the army to barracks for a few days.

In 1860 the reforming minister was forced to reformulate the terms of the document and to send it once again, in Hebrew and Yiddish translation, to every rabbi. This time, the effort was more fruitful.⁴⁰⁵

Adolphe Stern remembers how, around the middle of the nineteenth century, his father—a Jewish jeweler in Bucharest—changed his mode of dress:

The family, which held the power of a tyrant during that time period, did not agree and the scandal reached its climax when my father dressed according to the “German fashion.” An *epikores* [= heretic, a corrupted word from Epicures], nothing less! But once he had taken on this way of perdition, he cared no longer about the stormy reactions he had raised behind him, and went on. And my poor mother was caught in the middle. But deep inside, she was glad to see her husband abandoning those awful clothes that had been brought to the country by Polish immigrants, together with their unbearable jargon.⁴⁰⁶

“Have the Jews in Moldavia ever been forced to wear a particular attire?” Elias Schwarzfeld asks himself in 1891. “This is a matter that may be of the greatest interest to us, although one about which we were unable to find any positive facts until now.”⁴⁰⁷ In Moldavia and Walachia, as throughout all Christian-Orthodox Europe, no ethnic or confessional stigmata were ever enforced, with insignificant exceptions. There were times, however, when the confessional stigma did not consist in imposing, but in interdicting some item of clothing or another, only its absence stigmatized. The following are a few examples.

In 1709, J. W. Bardili, a refugee—together with Swedish King Charles XII—in the Turkish *rayah* of Tighina, wrote the following about the town on the west side of the Dniester:

In the inner city live the Turks, and in the suburbs live the Armenians and the Jews, who are allowed to observe their religious rites [only] within their private homes.... The Jews and the Armenians can be recognized by their habit, because none of them are allowed to wear a turban, which is the item by which the Turks seek to stand out from all the rest.⁴⁰⁸

This is not surprising: wearing a turban or not and the shape and color of this headgear were marks of difference even among the Turks themselves. The distinctive marks were not established by their folk tradition but by prescriptions of the state, as Dimitrie Cantemir affirmed, also at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in his *History of the Ottoman Empire* and *The System of Muhammedan Religion*.⁴⁰⁹ At Constantinople, the wearing of turbans was strictly forbidden to the Christians under penalty of death. In Bucharest, during the first decades of the nineteenth century only well-off boyars dared wear a turban, according to a decree of Prince Grigore Ghica in 1823.⁴¹⁰

Residing in Bucharest between 1710 and 1716 as secretary to Walachian sovereigns, the converted Jew Anton Maria del Chiaro also noted down the fact that in Walachia “there are many Jewish families” which “lead a rather hand-to-mouth existence.” The Jews “are not permitted to wear clothes of any color other than black or dark blue and cannot wear yellow or red pointed shoes [Italian *stivaletti*], but only black.”⁴¹¹ Jewish merchants imported from Turkey boots for all walks of life: colored, for the Turks and the Christians, and black, for the stigmatized Jews. That is why, in 1627, among other merchandise brought to the north of the Danube, there can be found “boots produced in Turkey, made of cordovan [= Morocco leather] of a fine quality, colored in red, yellow, and black.”⁴¹² “Red or yellow pointed leather shoes” were indeed the favorite footwear of the Turks in the Romanian Principalities.⁴¹³ Obviously, the Romanian boyars imitated the fashion of the Turks and were wearing, as Radu Rosetti reminds us, “fine red or yellow leather boots.”⁴¹⁴

“It is quite likely,” Elias Schwarzfeld wrote in 1891, “that there was a time when this ban [which concerned the Jews] may have been in force in Moldavia as well.”⁴¹⁵ Historian Victor Neumann does not exclude the possibility that these items of clothing were due to “the innovations of the

Hasidim on the ritual level.”⁴¹⁶ I am inclined to favor the explanation of Turkish influence in the Romanian Principalities, vassals of the Ottoman Empire. Certain European travelers in eighteenth-century Turkey observed that “Greeks, Armenians, and Jews who wore colors prohibited to these three nations were punished.” The Turks were the only ones who had the right to wear, for instance, yellow leather boots, while a Christian or a Jew who brooked this interdiction risked paying for his boldness with his life.⁴¹⁷

It is likely that the Jews in the Romanian Principalities complained to the Sublime Porte about this taboo against the manner in which they could dress, because an order (Turkish: *hatisherif*) from the Sultan, issued in 1771 and renewed in 1787 and 1803, abrogated this kind of discriminatory interdiction. It required that not only the native Jews but also the other inhabitants of Moldavia “should be given no offense by anybody on account of their apparel and of their habit.”⁴¹⁸ The very fact that it was necessary to abrogate an interdiction was in itself a sign that the interdiction had been applied before. As we have shown above, it appears that some Turkish influences were manifested in the Romanian area, not by imposing certain defaming stigmata on the habit of the Jews but by forbidding them to wear certain items of clothing (turban, colored footwear, etc.). In territories that were not vassals of the Sublime Porte, such as Byelorussia, the Jews could wear turbans, as they do in icons dating from the seventeenth century.⁴¹⁹

On the fresco in the Monastery of Voroneț depicting the martyrdom of Saint John the New of Cetatea Albă, several Jews are depicted wearing a particular kind of hat (a bicorne). Historian Andrei Pippidi believes that

as in the other Genoese colonies, the Jews [of Cetatea Alba] had to wear yellow garments and a hat of a curious shape, with two horns....

This fact may prove that the same discrimination in terms of clothing was still there in sixteenth-century Moldavia; otherwise the onlookers could not have understood this sign.⁴²⁰

Both the premise and the conclusion seem to be erroneous. First of all, in the first decades of the fourteenth century, when the martyrdom of St John the New occurred, Cetatea Albă was not a “Genoese colony” but was under the domination of the heirs of the Tartar Khan Nogai (killed in 1299).⁴²¹

Secondly, as emerges from the images, the painters of the fresco of Voroneț represented Cetatea Albă as being under the rule neither of the Genoese nor the Tartars, but of Ottoman Turks. This was the state of things during the period in which the mural painting was executed (it was finished in 1547)—in 1538 Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent had annexed the region

of Bugeac (in southern Bessarabia) to the Ottoman Empire. Such updating of historical fact was quite customary at the time. In 1643, for instance, in his *Book of Learning*, Metropolitan Bishop Varlaam himself described the martyrdom of Saint John the New in Cetatea Albă as having been incited and carried out by “the ruler of the city, who was a Turk, a great lover and keeper of the Turkish faith.”⁴²² This should not surprise us; updating of this sort could at times verge on the absurd. In a famous early sixteenth-century text, *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul sau Theodosie* [The teachings of Neagoe Basarab to his son Theodosie], Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, at the beginning of the third century, is himself described as fighting “the Turks from Byzantium.”⁴²³

Thirdly, in Voroneț the scene of the Last Judgment shows a few personages in the group of Turks (*lik turski*) who instead of a turban wear two-horned hats identical with those which Pippidi had considered to be ethnic stigmata forced upon the Jews by the Genoese. These personages may well be Jews (in their specific dress), but Jews who were subjects of the Ottoman Empire. After their eviction from Spain and Portugal at the end of the fifteenth century, Sephardi Jews were received in the Empire with open arms.

Finally, I do not believe that the fact pointed to by Andrei Pippidi “can prove that the same discrimination in terms of clothing was still there in sixteenth-century Moldavia.” Should certain ethnic stigmata still have been applied, they would have been represented first at the assembly of Jews (*lik evreiski*), painted nearby the assembly of Turks in the scene of the Last Judgment on the western facade of the church of Voroneț. The Jews in the Last Judgment scene, however, do not wear a bicorné or any other discriminatory item of clothing. I believe that both the image of the group of Turks in the scene of the Last Judgment and in that of The Martyrdom of St John the New, both painted in the church of Voroneț, represent Jews who were not allowed to wear a turban, as we have shown above.

A Sign of Infamy, a Sign of Pride

A few years ago, in an interview, Christian theologian Marcel Dubois, Professor Emeritus of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, discussed his decision to become a resident of Israel (in 1962), later becoming a citizen (in 1974). His rationale included a “sentimental motivation” as well:

In 1942, I had been a Dominican monk for four years. I can remember the evening when the government of Vichy determined to force the Jews in France to wear the yellow star. I was walking in the park of the monastery of Saulchoir, between Paris and Fontainebleau, in an extraordinary setting on the banks of the Seine, together with another monk, who came from a family belonging to the great bourgeoisie of France. His first reaction, on learning the news about the new decree, keeps coming back to my memory, “We, who venerate the body of a Jew every morning, should wear the star ourselves.” I asked to be given Israeli citizenship in 1974, a year after the war of Yom Kippur, as I should have worn the yellow star in 1942.⁴²⁴

A German officer in *Wehrmacht*-occupied Paris felt ashamed as well, when he ran into Jews who wore the yellow star on their chests. In his diary of June 7, 1942, he wrote:

It was on Rue Royale that, for the first time in my life, I laid my eyes on the yellow star, worn by three young girls. I believe that things of this kind do mark a certain date, if only in one’s personal history. Such a show never goes without a reaction. I, for one, immediately felt embarrassed that I was in uniform.⁴²⁵

Taking a great risk, this officer stood to attention in front of the stigmatized Jews and took them by surprise with the military salute that he presented to them. A part of the immense humiliation that they were being subjected to was avenged in this way. “This episode troubled me,” a Jewish physician from Paris remembers, half a century later, “and I kept thinking for a very long time what could be the significance of this gesture?”⁴²⁶ I do not know how many German military men had such feelings or behavior. Not many, this is sure. Yet, there was at least one. His name became famous: Ernst Jünger.

Other Europeans in the epoch felt very much the same way. In Bucharest, for instance, in 1941, ashamed of the antisemitic regulations promulgated by the government of Marshal Ion Antonescu, a diplomat and politician, Constantin Vișoianu, confessed to his friend Mihail Sebastian, “Whenever I see a Jew, I am tempted to draw close to him, salute him, and tell him, ‘Please, sir, believe me, I have had no hand in this.’”⁴²⁷

Ernst Jünger records in his journal that a number of students in Paris strolled the Champs-Élysées wearing the Jewish badge, in his opinion a

gratuitous action in that the young people counted on the hypothesis “that the enemy has a sense of humor.” They were arrested without further ado.⁴²⁸

Such gestures as that of the French students were superb acts of symbolic solidarity. A directive forced on a minority (the stigma that they were obliged to wear prominently) was transformed in the right of the majority: a sign of infamy was transformed into a sign of pride. When everybody wears a mark of discrimination, the discrimination itself disappears. The mechanism of discrimination and terror is not stopped, perhaps, but diverted. Ponderous monstrous systems have a way of becoming vulnerable when faced with the sling of simple and ingenious ideas.

NOTES

1. *Le Monde*, 11 May 1993; cf. Marie-José Mondzain, *Image, icône, économie: Les sources byzantines de l’imaginaire* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1996), 265.

2. Dimitrie Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina: Studiu istoric, cultural, etnografic și folcloric* (The Jews of Bukovina: a historical, cultural, ethnographic and folkloric study) (Cernăuți, 1899), 7.

3. Ziva Amishai-Maisels, “The Demonization of the ‘Other’ in the Visual Arts,” in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999), 44–72.

4. Viorica S. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip: Schiță de istorie culturală* (The stereotype Jew: A sketch of cultural history) (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1996), 125.

5. Marcel Dubois, “Foreword” in *The Image of the Jew in Byzantine Art* by Elisabeth Revel-Neher (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1992), xix.

6. Emil Petrovici, *Atlasul linguistic român* (The Romanian linguistic atlas), vol. 1, part 2 (Sibiu: Museum of the Romanian Language, 1940), 9.

7. *Dicționarul limbii române* (Dictionary of the Romanian language) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1937), s.v. Jidov.

8. Alvydas Butkus, “The Lithuanian Nicknames of Ethnonymic Origin,” in *Indogermanische Forschungen*, vol. 100, ed. W. P. Schmid (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 224.

9. Moses Gaster, *Memorii (fragmente). Corespondență* (Memoirs [fragments]. Correspondence), ed. Victor Eskenasy (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 92, 167.

10. Herbert Eulenberg, *Heinrich Heine* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1947).

11. Sander Gilman, *The Jew’s Body* (New York and London: Routledge, 1991).

12. Thomas Mann, *Despre problema evreiască* (About the Jewish problem), transl. by Janina Ianoși, afterword by Ion Ianoși (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 29.
13. Nicolae Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Bukovina* (The Romanian nation in Bukovina) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1905), 12, 238, 244.
14. Mihail Sebastian, *Jurnal (1935–1944)* (Journal [1935–1944]), ed. Gabriela Omăt, preface and notes by Leon Volovici (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1996), 133.
15. Liviu Rebreanu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 3, ed. N. Gheran and N. Liu (Bucharest: Editura pentru Literatură, 1968), 169.
16. Gala Galaction, *Roxana, Papucii lui Mahmud, Doctorul Taifun* (Roxana, Mahmud's slippers, Doctor Taifun), ed. Al. Ruja (Timișoara: Facla, 1986), 150.
17. Calistrat Hogaș, *Pe drumuri de munte* (On mountain paths) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1988), 83.
18. Isaac Bashevis Singer, *Satan in Goray* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1979), 37.
19. Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of "the Jew" in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations (1875–1945)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 91, 97, 195.
20. Bryan Cheyette, ed., *Between "Race" and Culture: Representation of "the Jew" in English and American Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 6. The "genteel anti-Semitism" of Virginia Woolf, as some of her chroniclers called it, was sometimes manifest under radical appearances. In 1930, for instance, she wrote to a friend: "How I hated marrying a Jew...how I hated their nasal voices & their oriental jewelry and their noses and their wattles," *ibid.*, 136.
21. Marta Petreu, *Ionescu în țara tatălui* (Ionescu in the land of the father) (Cluj-Napoca: Biblioteca Apostrof, 2001), 140.
22. Matei Călinescu, *Viața și opiniile lui Zacharias Lichter* (The life and opinions of Zacharias Lichter), 2d ed. (1969; Bucharest: Eminescu, 1971), 120–21.
23. Ion Ianoși, *Opțiuni* (Options) (Bucharest: Editura Cartea Românească, 1989), 120–21.
24. Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 4, (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 80.
25. Bernard-Henri Lévy, *Aventurile libertății: O istorie subiectivă a intelectualilor* (Liberty's adventures: A subjective history of intellectuals) (Bucharest: Albatros, 1995), 29–37.
26. Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *Aberații: Patru eseuri privind legenda formelor* (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1972), 17. Original French edition published as *Aberrations: quatre essais sur la légende des formes* (Paris: Olivier Perrin, 1957).

27. Kurt Seligmann, *Le Miroir de la Magie: Histoire de la magie dans le monde occidental* (Paris: Editions du Sagittaire, 1961), 297.

28. Baltrušaitis, *Aberații* 19.

29. Ibid., 30.

30. Alexandrian, *Istoria filozofiei oculte* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1994), 216–17. Originally published as *Histoire de la philosophie occulte* (Paris: Seghers, 1983).

31. Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe: The Khazar Empire and Its Heritage* (London: Hutchinson, 1976), 182ff.

32. George Montandon, *Comment reconnaître et expliquer le Juif? Avec dix clichés hors texte, suivi d'un portrait moral du Juif* (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Françaises, 1940), 23.

33. Ruxandra Cesereanu, “Zavistia: Imaginarul lingvistic violent al extremei drepte românești” (Zavistia: The violent linguistic imagery of the Romanian extreme Right), *Observatorul cultural*, no. 109 (26 Mar. 2002): 15–17.

34. Maurice Fishberg, *The Jews: A Study of Race and Environment* (London: Walter Scott Publishing Co., 1911), 79.

35. William Ripley, *The Races of Europe* (London: Kegan Paul, 1900), 394ff.

36. As a matter of fact, antisemites speculatively advanced both the theory of “anthropological uniformity of the Jews” and that of the “diversity of Jewish types.” Here, for instance, Corneliu Vadim Tudor asserts: “I, for one, have not been, am not, and will never possibly be an antisemite. This would amount to denying or burning the Bible. Yet the People of the Book is one thing, and the hordes of adventurers and international swindlers who hold one responsible in the names of Kings David and Solomon are another. Not much, I believe, remains of the People of the Book, that people of commendable shepherds, who sheltered the Virgin Mother of our Redeemer. I am under the strongest conviction that Jews who have for the last millenium wandered on Earth are the Khazars, a Turkish population that converted to Judaism in its entirety. One can by no other means account for the utter diversity of extant Jewish types, among which we also find the curious ruddy, freckled doliocephalous type, such as George Soros, a race that almost certainly is not to be found in Northern Africa or in the Spain of the Sephardim (where the brachicephalous type is dominant), yet, originates with the enormous Turkish populations.” See *România Mare*, no. 477 (3 Sept. 1999; cf. George Voicu, “Teme antisemite în discursul public” (Antisemitic themes in the public discourse), parts 1–7, *Sfera politicii* (Bucharest), no. 80–87 (2000–2001): 8:84. See also George Voicu, *Teme antisemite în discursul public* (Antisemitic themes in the public discourse) (Bucharest: Ars Docendi, 2000).

37. Ernest Renan, *Le Judaïsme comme race et comme religion* (Paris, 1883), 25.

38. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 3:85.
39. Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 347.
40. Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, *Scrisori studențești din închisoare, 9 octombrie 1923–30 martie 1924* (Student letters from prison, 9 October 1923–30 March 1924), (Jassy 1925).
41. Marcel Aderca, *F. Aderca și problema evreiască* (F. Aderca and the Jewish problem) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 36.
42. Panait Istrati, *Neranțula și alte povestiri* (Neranțula and other stories), ed. with a foreword and transl. by Alexandru Talex (Bucharest: Minerva, 1984), 548.
43. Fishberg, *The Jews*, 83.
44. Lya Benjamin, Mihai Spielmann, and S. Stanciu, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 2, part 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1990), 323; Nicolae A. Bogdan, *Orașul Iași: Monografie istorică și socială, ilustrată* (The town of Jassy: An illustrated historical and social monograph), 2d ed. (Jassy, 1914), 412.
45. Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919): De la excludere la emancipare* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 156. First published as *Les Juifs en Roumanie (1866–1919): De l'exclusion à l'émancipation* (Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1978).
46. Alecu Russo, "Iassy et ses habitants en 1840," in idem, *Opere complete* (Complete works) (Bucharest: Cugetarea, 1942), 109.
47. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 114.
48. Béatrice Philippe, *Les Juifs à Paris à la Belle Époque* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1992), 174.
49. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 4:70.
50. Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina*, 7–9.
51. Pamfil Bîlțiu and Gheorghe Gh. Pop, "Sculați, sculați, boieri mari!" *Colinde din județul Maramureș* ("Wake up, wake up, ye wealthy boyars!") Carols from the county of Maramureș) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1996), 278.
52. Russo, "Iassy et ses habitants."
53. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 353.
54. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds., *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 405.
55. Simeon Florea Marian, *Sărbătorile la români: Studiu etnografic* (Holidays of the Romanians: An ethnographic study), vol. 2, ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române 1994), 131–32.

56. Marianne Mesnil, *Etnologul: între șarpe și balaur* (The ethnologue: Between snake and dragon); idem and Assia Popova, *Eseuri de mitologie balcanică* (Essays of Balkan mythology), foreword by Paul H. Stahl (Bucharest: Paideia, 1997), 227.

57. Ibid., 232.

58. Nicolae Cartoian, *Istoria literaturii române vechi* (The history of old Romanian literature) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1980), 278–79.

59. Alina Cața, *The Image of the Jew in Polish Folk Culture* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995), 180.

60. Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “The Stereotype of the Jew in Polish Folklore,” in *Studies in Aggadah and Jewish Folklore*, eds. Issachar Ben-Ami and Joseph Dan, (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1983), 89.

61. Galit Hasan-Rokem, “The Cobbler of Jerusalem in Finnish Folklore,” in *The Wandering Jew: Essays in the Interpretation of a Christian Legend*, eds. idem and Alan Dundes (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1986), 137.

62. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română: Studiu de psihologie populară* (The Jews in Romanian folk literature: a study of folk psychology) (Bucharest, 1892), 69.

63. Cața, *Image of the Jew*, 120.

64. Ibid., 176; Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 62–63.

65. Andrei Oișteanu, *Motive și semnificații mito-simbolice, în cultura tradițională românească* (Mytho-symbolical motifs and significations in Romanian traditional culture) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1989), 240.

66. Idem, “Myth and Rite in Romanian Children’s Folklore,” *International Journal of Rumanian Studies* 6, no.1 (1988): 87–95.

67. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 12; Simeon Florea Marian, “Satire bucovinene contra evreilor” (Satires against the Jews in Bukovina), *Columna lui Traian* 2 (1871): 39.

68. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 13.

69. Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Studii în folclor* (Studies in folklore), vol. 2 (Chernovtsy: Gutenberg Press, 1912), 173.

70. D. Hîncu, ed., *Mărturii: “Chestiunea evreiască”* (Testimonies: “The Jewish problem”), (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 27–28.

71. Nicolae Iorga, “Istoria evreilor în Terile noastre” (History of the Jews of our countries), *Analele Academiei Române: Memoriile Secției Istorice* 36 (1913): 197.

72. Dumitru Vitcu, “Emanciparea evreilor români în gândirea și practica politică Kogălniceniană” (The emancipation of the Romanian Jews in Kogălniceanu’s political thinking and practice), *Studia et acta historiae iudeorum Romaniae*, vol. 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1997), 129–30.

73. Iuliu Barasch, “Evreii în Cracovia, Galitia, Bukovina, Moldova și Valachia: Impresii de călătorie din anii 1841–1842” (The Jews of Cracow, Galicia, Bukovina, Moldavia, and Walachia: Impressions of a Journey in the Years 1841–1842), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 16 (1894): 75–77.

74. See Eugen Herovanu, *Orașul amintirilor* (The town of memories) (Bucharest 1936), in which he remembers such occurrences in his own childhood, spent in Piatra Neamț; cf. Victor Neumann, *Istoria evreilor din România: Studii documentare și teoretice* (The history of the Jews of Romania: Documentary and theoretical studies) (Timișoara: Amarcord, 1996), 224–45.

75. Wilhelm Schwarzfeld, “Modul de tratare a evreilor în Galați, în deceniile trecute” (The manner of treating the Jews in Galați, in the past decades), *Analele Societății istorice “Iuliu Barasch”* 3 (1889): 195.

76. Nicolae Sutu, *Memoriile Principelui Nicolae Sutu, mare logofăt al Moldovei (1798–1871)* (Memoirs of Prince Nicolae Sutu, great *logofat* of Moldavia), transl. from the French by Georgeta Penelea Filitti (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1997), 42.

77. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 6, ed. Cornel Simionescu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1991), 123.

78. Cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 13.

79. Sutu, *Memoriile*, 42.

80. Ion Mușlea and Ov. Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului: Din răspunsurile la chestionarele lui B. P. Hasdeu* (Folklore typology: From the answers to B. P. Hasdeu’s questionnaires) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1970), 503.

81. Irina Nicolau, *Haide, bre! Incursiune subiectivă în lumea aromânilor (Haide, bre! A subjective incursion in the Aromanian world)* (Bucharest: Ars Docendi, 2000), 29.

82. *Cuvinte scumpe: Taclale, povestiri și legende românești* (Dear words: Romanian prattle, lore, and legends), collected by Dumitru Furtună (Bucharest: Romanian Academy and Socec, 1914), 94.

83. The gesture could also have a ludicrous character, when Christian children cut their Jewish schoolmates’ sidelocks; see Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 53.

84. Simon Dubnow, *Istoria hasidismului*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 134. German edition: *Geschichte des Chassidismus* (Berlin, 1931).

85. Andrei Oișteanu, “A History of the Bibliocide,” a chapter in idem, *Mythos & Logos: Studii și eseuri de antropologie culturală* (Mythos & logos: Studies and essays in cultural anthropology) (Bucharest: Nemira, 1997), 311–23.

86. Josy Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor* (A history of the Jews) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1993), 261; Gaster, *Memorii*, 31.

87. *Curierul de Iași*, 18 July 1876; cf. Mihai Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască* (The Jewish problem), ed. D. Vatamaniuc (Bucharest: Vestala, 1998), 181.

88. Israel Sapira, "Istoricul comunității din Ploesti, după izvoare scrise și transmisiuni orale" (The history of the Ploesti community, according to written documents and oral reports), *Analele Societății Istorice "Iuliu Barasch"* 3 (1889): 44.

89. Elias Schwarzfeld, "Evreii din Moldova sub Reglementul Organic: Studiu istoric" (The Jews of Moldavia under the Organic Regulation), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 14 (1891–1892): 222; see also Iancu, *Evreii din România*, 156.

90. Ion Călugăru, *Copilăria unui netrebnic* (A good-for-nothing's boyhood) (Bucharest: Ciornei National, 1936; Bucharest: Editura pentru literatură, 1962). This is an autobiographical novel placed in a northern Moldavian *shtetl* (Dorohoi) in the period 1907–1917.

91. Onisifor Ghibu, "Să-i lovim în cap pe jidani?" (Shall we hit the Kikes in the head?) *Cuvânt Moldovenesc* (Kishinev), 1927.

92. Zaharia Stancu, "Între Ion și Itic" (Between Ion and Ytzik), *Lumea Românească*, 20 Jan. 1938; cf. *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944* (The Jews in Romania in 1940–1944), vol. 2: *Problema evreiască în stenogramele Consiliului de Miniștri*, ed. Lya Benjamin (The Jewish problem in the minutes of the cabinet sessions) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 27–29.

93. Elie Wiesel, *All Rivers Run to the Sea: Memoirs* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1995), 18.

94. George L. Mosse, *Germans and Jews* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1970), 76.

95. Abba Eban, *My People: The Story of the Jews*, vol. 2 (New York: Behrman House, 1979), 169; Eli Barnavi and Miriam Eliav-Feldon, eds., *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992), 228.

96. Moses Schwarzfeld, "Literatura populară israelită ca element etnico-psihologic" (Israelite folk literature as a psycho-ethnic element), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 13 (1889): 237.

97. H. H. Ben-Sasson, ed., *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 845; Josy Eisenberg, *Iudaismul* (Judaism) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995), 135.

98. Mușlea and Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului*, 319, 330.

99. Petrovici, *Atlasul linguistic român*, 110.

100. Francisc Nistor, *Măștile populare și jocurile cu măști din Maramureș* (Folk masks and masked ritual carnival of Maramureș) (Baia Mare 1973), 32, 64.

101. Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile la români: Studiu etnografic* (Traditional holidays of the Romanians: ethnographic study), ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Saeculum I.O., 1997), 383.

102. Tache Papahagi, *Grai, folklor, etnografie* (Language, folklore, ethnography) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), fig. 45.

103. Mihai Eminescu, *Scieri politice și literare: Manuscrise inedite și culegeri din ziare și reviste* (Literary and political writings: unpublished manuscripts and articles from newspapers and reviews), vol. 1: (1870–1877) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1905), 56.

104. George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române, de la origini pînă în prezent* (The history of Romanian literature, from its origins to the present), 2d ed. (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 314–15.

105. Israil Bercovici, *O sută de ani de teatru evreiesc în România (1876–1976)* (A century of Jewish theater in Romania [1876–1976]) (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1982).

106. Eminescu, *Scieri politice și literare*, 363.

107. Iancu, *Evreii din România*, 151.

108. A. C. Cuza, *Naționalitatea în artă* (Nationality in art) (Bucharest, 1908); cf. Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991), 24.

109. Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor*, 283.

110. Ștefan Zeletin, *Neoliberalismul: Studii asupra istoriei și politicii burghezii române* (Neo-Liberalism: studies in the history and politics of the Romanian bourgeoisie), 3d ed., ed. C. D. Zeletin (First ed. 1927; Bucharest: Scripta, 1992), 26.

111. C. Rădulescu-Motru, *Scieri politice* (Political writings), ed. Cristian Preda (Bucharest: Nemira, 1998), 358–60.

112. Mihai Ralea, *Scieri* (Writings), vol. 5 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1988), 66.

113. Z. Ornea, *Anii treizeci: Extrema dreaptă românească* (The 1930s: the extreme Right in Romania) (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1995), 55ff.

114. Emil Cioran, *Schimbarea la față a României* (The transfiguration of Romania) (Bucharest: Vremea, 1936), 133.

115. Benjamin, *Evreii din România între anii 1940-1944*, 511.

116. Voicu, “Teme antisemite.”

117. See *Noua dreaptă*, no. 1 (1993), the journal of the Party of National Right; cf. Michael Shafir, “Antisemitic Candidates in Romania’s 1996 Presidential Elections,” *East-European Jewish Affairs* 26, no. 1 (1996): 101.

118. William Korey, *Russian Antisemitism, Pamyat, and the Demonology of Zionism* (Chur, Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1995), 139.

119. Simeon Florea Marian, *Legendele Maicii Domnului* (Legends of the Mother of God) (Bucharest, 1906), 221; Artur Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții ale poporului român* (Beliefs and superstitions of the Romanian people), ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Socec, 1915; Bucharest: Grai și Suflet, 1995), 116.
120. Marian, *Legendele Maicii Domnului*, 82.
121. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 24.
122. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip*, 152, 282.
123. Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile de toamnă* (Autumn holidays) (Bucharest, 1914), 25; see also Marian, *Legendele Maicii Domnului*, 228; Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele poporului român, adunate și așezate în ordine mitologică* (The customs and beliefs of the Romanian people, in mythological order), vol. 2 (Chernovtsy, 1903; Iași: Polirom, 1998), 339.
124. Pamfile, *Sărbătorile la români*, 154.
125. B. P. Hasdeu, *Etymologicum Magnum Romaniae*, vol. 3 (Bucharest: Socec and Teclu, 1893), col. 2596.
126. Marian, *Sărbătorile la români*, 2:158.
127. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 53.
128. Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile de vară la români: Studiu etnografic* (Summer holidays of the Romanians: An ethnographic study) (Bucharest: Socec, 1911), 152; Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 272.
129. Cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 13.
130. Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina*, 7.
131. Nicolae Cartoian, *Cărțile populare în literatura română* (Popular books in Romanian literature), vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1974), 117; for western Europe see Claudine Fabré-Vassas, *La bête singulière: Les juifs, les chrétiens et le cochon* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 122ff.
132. Willis Johnson, "The Myth of Jewish Male Menses," *Journal of Medieval History* 24 (1998): 273–95; Jacques le Rider, *Modernitatea vieneză și crizele identității* (Iași: A. I. Cuza University Press, 1995), 256. First published as *Modernity and Crises of Identity: Culture and Society in Fin-de siècle Vienna* (New York: Continuum, 1993).
133. Lazăr Șăineanu, *Basmele române* (Romanian fairy tales) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1978), 25.
134. Iordache Golescu, *Istorieare* (Short stories), anthology by Mihai Eminescu, (Bucharest: Jurnalul literar, 1998), 77.
135. A. Fochi, *Datini și eresuri populare de la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea: Răspunsurile la chestionarele lui Nicolae Densusianu* (Folk customs and

superstitions at the end of the nineteenth century: The replies to Nicolae Densuianu's questionnaires) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1976), 121.

136. Șăineanu, *Basmele române*, 25; Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 260; Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 2:40.

137. Mușlea and Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului*, 528.

138. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 47.

139. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:398.

140. Șăineanu, *Basmele române*, 25.

141. Seligmann, *Le Miroir de la Magie*, 5.

142. Mușlea and Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului*, 501–503; Tudor Pamfile, *Mitologie românească: Dușmani și prieteni ai omului* (Romanian mythology: Man's foes and friends) (Bucharest: Socec, 1916), 100.

143. I.-A. Candrea, *Folklorul medical român comparat* (Romanian medical folklore compared) (Bucharest: Casa Scoalelor, 1944), 189.

144. Papahagi, *Grai, folclor, etnografie*, 284.

145. Gheorghe Pavelescu, "Aspecte din spiritualitatea românilor transnistreni: Credințe și obiceiuri" (Aspects of the spirituality of the Romanians from the Trans-Dniester region: beliefs and customs), in *Les Roumains orientaux*, ed. Paul H. Stahl, *Sociétés Européennes* 7 (Paris 1990): 66. Original publication: *Sociologie românească* 5 (1943): 108–148.

146. Artur Gorovei, *Literatura populară* (Folk literature), vol. 2, ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1985), 98. First edition: *Descîntecele românilor: Studiu de folclor* (Incantations of the Romanians: A study of folklore) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1931).

147. Nicolae Paulescu, *Spitalul, Coranul, Talmudul, Cahalul, Francmasoneria* (The Hospital, the Quran, the Talmud, the Kahal, and Freemasonry) (Bucharest, 1913; Bucharest: Antet XX Press, 2001), 99.

148. Fragment of an article published by I. Polescu, *Reforma* (Apr. 1885); picked up and republished by the Jewish journal *Fraternitatea* (5 Apr. 1885): 102. My thanks to Ileana Dinculescu, M.A. candidate at the Center of Jewish Studies of the University of Bucharest, for noticing this article and bringing it to my attention.

149. Mihail Canianu, *Studii și culegeri de folclor românesc* (Studies of Romanian folklore), eds. Al. Dobre and Mihail M. Robea (Bucharest: Minerva, 1999), 141.

150. Dimitrie P. Lupascu, *Medicina babelor: Adunare de descîntece, rețete de doftorii și vrajitorii babesci* (Old women's medicine: Collection of old women's charms [incantations], remedies [medicines], recipes, and witchcraft) (Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1890), 126.

151. Canianu, *Studii și culegeri de folclor românesc*, 126.

152. Gheorghe Pavelescu, *Cercetări asupra Magiei la românii din Munții Apuseni* (Research on magic practices among the Romanians of the western Carpathian mountains) (Bucharest: Institutul Social Român 1945), 136–37.

153. Waldemar Deona, *Le symbolisme de l'oeil* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1965), 197.

154. Oișteanu, *Mythos & Logos*, 267.

155. Gorovei, *Literatura populară*.

156. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 249; Mușlea and Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului*, 501–502, 528; Șăineanu, *Basmele române*, 24–26; Nicolae Steinhardt, *Jurnalul fericirii* (Diary of happiness) (Cluj: Dacia, 1991), 401. In the early 1960s, Steinhardt, a Romanian Jewish writer who had converted to Christianity while in prison (= Romanian *temnița*; from the Russian *temno*, “darkness”), spoke of the darkness of communist prisons “as opposed to the light of Christ.” See also Vasile Bogrea, *Pagini istorico-filologice* (Historical and philological pages) (Cluj: Dacia, 1971), 452.

157. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 433.

158. Hasdeu, *Etymologicum Magnum Romaniae*; Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 6.

159. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 214.

160. Ruth Mellinkoff, “Judas’ Red Hair and the Jews,” *Journal of Jewish Art* 9 (1982): 31–46. This image has survived even in the modern age: a character in a text published by George Orwell in 1933 is “a horrible old Jew, with a red beard like Judas Iscariot,” see *Between “Race” and Culture*, 159.

161. Șăineanu, *Basmele române*, 26, 243.

162. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip*, 125, 152.

163. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura lor populară: Studiu etno-psihologic* (The Jews in their own folk literature: A psycho-ethnic study) (Bucharest: Universala, 1898).

164. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 131–32.

165. *Ibid.*, 140.

166. N. V. Gogol, *Taras Bulba*, transl. into Romanian by Al. O. Teodeoreanu and Xenia Stroe (Bucharest: Russian Book Publishing House, 1956), 172.

167. Ovidiu Bîrlea, *Mica enciclopedie a poveștilor românești* (Little encyclopaedia of Romanian tales) (Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1976), 320–21.

168. Mircea Eliade, *La țigănci și alte povestiri* (At the Gypsy women and other stories) (Bucharest: Editura Pentru Literatură, 1969), 452.

169. Rebreanu, *Opere*, 3:169.

170. Liviu Rebreanu, *Ion* (Timișoara: Facla, 1988), 41.

171. Sadoveanu, *Opere*, 3:99, 142.

172. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 4, critical edition by Cornel Simionescu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1987), 13, 280.

173. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Baltagul* (The hatchet) (Bucharest: Gramar, 1996), 54.

174. Ovid S. Crohmălniceanu, *Evreii în mișcarea de avangardă românească* (The Jews of the Romanian avant-garde movement), ed. Geo Șerban (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 176.

175. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Bukovina*, 7, 93.

176. Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania: Destruction of Jews and Gypsies under the Antonescu Regime, 1940–1944* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), 18.

177. *Timbul eminescian*, no. 219 (8 Oct. 1940).

178. Ralea, *Scrieri*, 262.

179. Victor Eftimiu, *Amintiri și polemici* (Memories and polemics) (Bucharest 1942), 340.

180. Sebastian, *Jurnal*, 476.

181. Shafir, “Antisemitic Candidates,” 93.

182. *România Mare*, 20 May 1997.

183. H. Blumen, “Alta versiune despre goanele din sate” (Another version of the expulsions from the villages), *Analele Societății istorice “Iuliu Barasch”* 3 (1889): 202.

184. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 63.

185. Ibid., 64; Alan Dundes, “Why is the Jew ‘Dirty’? A Psychoanalytic Study of Antisemitic Folklore,” in idem, *From Game to War and Other Psychoanalytic Essays on Folklore* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 93.

186. Caia, *Image of the Jew*, 180; Dundes, “Why is the Jew ‘Dirty’?” 94.

187. Ibid., 94.

188. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 64; Dundes, “Why is the Jew ‘Dirty’?” 92–93; Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 217.

189. Ibid., 2:229.

190. *Dicționarul limbii române*, s.v. “jidov.”

191. For Romanian writer Al. Brătescu-Voinești, Jews were by nature “dangerous parasites” and the attempt to change their character is viewed as futile and preposterous, as is “the attempt to make bedbugs vegetarians”; see his *Huliganism* (Hooliganism) (Bucharest 1938), 178; cf. Jean Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României: Problema evreiască (1933–1944)* (Contributions to Romanian history: The Jewish problem [1933–1944]), Part 1, vols. 1–2, transl. from the Hebrew by Carol Bines (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 149.

192. Gérard Silvain, *Images et traditions juives: Un millier de cartes postales (1897–1917) pour servir à l’histoire de la Diaspora*, foreword by Alain Poher (Paris: Celiv, 1997), 360.

193. Lucian Nastasă and Andrea Varga, eds., *Minorități etnoculturale, Mărturii documentare: Țigani din România (1919–1944)* (Ethnic and cultural minorities, documents and testimonies: The Gypsies of Romania, 1919–1944), foreword by Alexandru Zub (Cluj-Napoca: Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center, 2001), 243.

194. Ibid., 635.

195. Johnson, “The Myth of Jewish Male Menses.”

196. James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 36–39.

197. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 2:262.

198. *Noua Revista Română*, 1 Aug. 1901.

199. Gustav Jaeger, *Die Entdeckung der Seele* (Leipzig 1880), 106–109; Hans F. K. Gunther, *Rassenkunde des jüdischen Volkes* (Munich 1930), 260–67; cf. Dundes, “Why is the Jew ‘Dirty’?,” 95.

200. Ibid., 93–94.

201. Ibid., 92–119.

202. Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, *Jew in the Modern World*, 638.

203. Lya Benjamin, ed., *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944*, vol. 1: *Legislația antievreiască* (The Jews of Romania between 1940–1944, vol. 1: Anti-Jewish legislation) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1993), 51–56.

204. Petreu, *Ionescu*, 128–30.

205. Max Weinreich, *Hitler’s Professors: The Part of Scholarship in Germany’s Crimes against the Jewish People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

206. Eugen Relgis, *Eros în al treilea Reich* (Eros in the Third Reich) (Bucharest: Vatra, 1946), 72.

207. Nicolas M. Nagy-Talavera, *Fascismul în Ungaria și România* (Fascism in Hungary and in Romania) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 267.

208. Dundes, “Why is the Jew ‘Dirty’?,” 103.

209. Relgis, *Eros în al treilea Reich*, 46.

210. Ion Longin Popescu, “Mormântul Săpunului Evreiesc de la Țîrgoviste” (The tomb of the Jewish soap in Țîrgoviste), *Curierul Românesc*, no. 3 (Mar. 1998): 15.

211. S. Stanciu, Lya Benjamin, et al., eds., *Martiriul evreilor din România, 1940–1944: Documente și mărturii* (The martyrdom of the Jews in Romania, 1940–1944: Documents and testimonies), foreword by Moses Rosen (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1991), see esp. the illustrations.

212. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 20.

213. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 2:284.
214. Klaus Heitmann, *Imaginea românilor în spațiul lingvistic german, 1775–1918: Un studiu imagologic* (Das Rumänenbild im deutschen Sprachraum, 1775–1918: Eine imagologische Studie), transl. with a preface by Dumitru Hîncu (Bucharest: Univers, 1995), 127.
215. Richard Kunisch, *București și Stambul: Schițe din Ungaria, România și Turcia* (Bucharest and Istanbul: Sketches from Hungary, Romania, and Turkey), transl. from the German with a preface and notes by Viorica Nișcov (1861; Bucharest: Saeculum I. O., 2000).
216. Călugăru, *Copilăria unui netrebnic*.
217. I. Peltz, *Calea Văcărești* (Vacaresti Road), preface by Ion Simuț (1933; Bucharest: Minerva, 1989).
218. Tudor Arghezi, “Israel,” *Adam*, no. 9 (15 Oct. 1930); quoted in the anthology *De te voi uita Ierusalime: Țara Sfântă și Cărțile Sacre în literatura română* (If I forget thee, O Jerusalem: The Holy Land and the holy books in Romanian literature), eds. Marin Bucur and Victoria Ana Tausan (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1996), 96–98.
219. Gogol, *Taras Bulba*, 172.
220. Mihai Eminescu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 7: *Proza literară* (Literary prose) (Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1977), 239.
221. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Bukovina*; idem, *Neamul românesc în Basarabia* (The Romanian nation in Bessarabia) (Bucharest: Socec, 1905).
222. Vasile Alecsandri, *Proza* (Prose), ed. Georgeta Rădulescu-Dulgheru (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1983), 91.
223. Russo, “Iassy et ses habitants,” 109, 131–32.
224. Neagu Djuvara, *Între Orient și Occident: Țările române la începutul epocii moderne (1800–1848)* (Between Orient and Occident: Romanian principalities at the beginning of the modern era (1800–1848)), transl. by Maria Carpov (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995), 168.
225. Mihail Kogalniceanu, *Tainele inimei: Scrieri literare și istorice* (The secrets of the heart: Literary and historical writings), ed. Dan Simonescu (Bucharest: Albatros, 1987), 59.
226. Cf. Artur Gorovei, *Folticeni: Cercetări istorice asupra orașului* (Fălticeni: Historical research on the town) (Fălticeni, 1938), 122.
227. Hogaș, *Pe drumuri de munte*, 82.
228. Willy Pragher, *Bukarest: Stadt der gegensätze* (Berlin: Wiking Verlag, 1941), 115.

229. Liviu Rotman, *Școala israelito-română (1851–1914)* (The Romanian-Israelite school [1851–1914]) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 104.

230. Ibid., 60.

231. The following are two German proverbs that relate to the quality of Jewish food: “Jews drink water from the springs, Greeks from the drains, and Romans from swamps;” “[This food is so wholesome that] a sick Jew could eat it,” cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 64. Already in the twelfth century, Maimonides explained from a strictly hygienic perspective the biblical interdiction against eating animals which were considered to be defiled: “All the foods which the Torah has forbidden us to eat have some bad and damaging effect on the body.... The principal reason why the *Law* forbids swine’s flesh is to be found in the circumstances that its habits and its food are very dirty and loathsome” (*Guide of the Perplexed*, 3:48).

232. Barasch, “Evreii în Cracovia.”

233. The physician Iuliu Barasch is the author of *Course of Popular Hygiene* (Bucharest: Sf. Sava National College, 1857).

234. Sama Salzberger, *Adevăruri despre Talmud și Judaism: Documente și lămuriri* (The truth about the Talmud and Judaism: Documents and explanations) (1923; Bucharest, 1938), 254.

235. Heitmann, *Imaginea românilor*, 134.

236. Rebreanu, *Ion*, 35.

237. Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog, *Life is with People: The Jewish Shtetl of Eastern Europe* (New York: International Universities Press, 1952), 41; quoted in Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, 157.

238. Călugăru, *Copilăria unui netrebnic*, 218–20.

239. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române*, 640.

240. Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina*, 14–15, 34.

241. Salzberger, *Adevăruri despre Talmud și Judaism*, 255.

242. Harold B. Segal, ed., *Stranger in Our Midst: Images of the Jews in Polish Literature* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996), 55.

243. Pincu Pascal, “Elemente de medicina populara evreiasca din România” (Elements of Jewish folk medicine in Romania), in *Trecut și viitor în medicina* (Past and future in medicine), ed. G. Bratescu (Bucharest: Editura Medicala, 1981), 295–97.

244. I. Polescu, untitled article (n. 148 above).

245. Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor*, 215; Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 1:109.

246. M. Roth, “Memoriu asupra cauzelor mortalităților” [Memorandum on the causes of mortality], *Anuar pentru israeliți* 4 (1880–1881).

247. Harry Kuller, ed., *O istorie a evreilor din România în date* (A chronological history of Romanian Jewry), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 277.

248. Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 356.

249. Mircea Eliade, *Textele “legionare” și despre “românism”* (Legionnaire and Romanianism texts) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001), 58.

250. A. Cohen, *Talmudul* (The Talmud) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 336–42.

251. Cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 63; Cața, *Image of the Jew*, 180.

252. Cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 64; Cața, *Image of the Jew*, 177.

253. Pincu Pascal, “Toponime și legende din județul Neamț” (Toponyms and legends from the Neamț County), *Anuarul grupului școlar* 4 (2000): 172–180.

254. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 23.

255. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 2:169.

256. *Stranger in Our Midst*, 50.

257. Cohen, *Talmudul*, 350.

258. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 23; Valeriu Bologa, “Raportul din 1756 al unui chirurg german despre credințele românilor asupra moroilor” (The 1756 report of a German surgeon on Romanian beliefs about ghosts), *Anuarul Arhivei de Folklor* 3 (1935): 163.

259. Mihai Lupescu, *Din bucătăria țaranului român* (From the cuisine of the Romanian peasant) (Bucharest: Paideia, 2000), 71, 76.

260. Kunisch, *București și Stambul*, 760.

261. Carmen Sylva, *Astra*, transl. by Gion (Bucharest 1887), 273–74.

262. Marian, “Satire bucovinene.”

263. Moses Schwarzfeld, “Anecdote populare românești cu privire la evrei” (Romanian folk anecdotes about the Jews), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 12 (1889–1890): 130.

264. Lupescu, *Din bucătăria țaranului român*, 76.

265. *România Mare*, no. 87 (March 1992); cf. Michael Shafir, “Antisemitism in the Postcommunist Era,” in *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry*, ed. Randolph L. Braham (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 344.

266. *România Mare*, no. 443 (8 Jan. 1999); cf. Mesnil, *Etnologul*, 129.

267. Anat Peri, *Jörg Haider’s Antisemitism*, ACTA series, no. 18 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2001), 10.

268. "Jüdische Selbsthass." This diagnostic was nicked by Theodor Lessing in his well-known *Der jüdische Selbsthass* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1930). Historian Sorin Antohi wrote memorable pages on shame/guilt cultures, on the identity mechanisms that generate "the ethnic self-stigma," and on "self-hatred" of the Jew, the Romanian, the German, etc. See Sorin Antohi, *Civitas imaginalis: Istorie și utopie în cultura românească* (Civitas imaginalis: History and utopia in Romanian culture) (Bucharest: Litera, 1994), 208–85.

269. Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, 350.

270. Israel Lévy, "Le Juif de la légende," *Revue des Études Juives* 20 (1890): 249.

271. Dundes, "Why is the Jew 'Dirty'?", 95.

272. Petru Movilă, *Împăcarea Bisericii Ortodoxe* (The conciliation of the Orthodox Church), ed. Vlad Chiriac (Iași: Polirom, 2002), 37.

273. Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews*, 36–37.

274. At the beginning of the 1940s, in the Hungarian extreme Right press "the Jew" was a "filthy creature," who "gives off the cheap smell of the rags they sell and wear," but also smells of "goose fat." Cf. Nagy-Talavera, *Fascismul în Ungaria și România*, 209.

275. Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, 154.

276. Movilă, *Împăcarea Bisericii Ortodoxe*, 52.

277. Ioan Petru Culianu, *Out of This World: Otherworldly Journeys from Gilgamesh to Albert Einstein* (Boston: Shambhala, 1991), 215, see also 112.

278. Mircea Eliade, *De Zalmoxis à Gengis-Khan* (Paris: Payot, 1970), 111; Ioan P. Couliano, *Les Gnosés dualistes d'Occident: Histoire et Mythes* (Paris: Plon, 1990).

279. Culianu, *Out of This World*, 109–12.

280. Luca Pițu, *Sentimentul românesc al urii de sine* (The Romanian feeling of self-hatred) (Jassy: European Institute, 1997), 268.

281. Dundes, "Why is the Jew 'Dirty'?", 107.

282. Schwarzföld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 64.

283. Sandu Mureșan, "Populația maghiară din Transilvania crede că românii sînt leneși, mincinoși, lași și murdari" (The Hungarian population of Transylvania believes that the Romanians are lazy, liars, cowards, and dirty), *Național*, no. 201 (11 Feb. 1998): 1.

284. Heitmann, *Imaginea românilor*, 127.

285. Ibid., 128.

286. Dundes, "Why is the Jew 'Dirty'?", 108.

287. Schwarzföld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 20.

288. Fabré-Vassas, *La bête singulière*, 119ff.

289. Relating to the abusive term “filthy Yid,” I am in possession of a significant document, namely the sentence in penal case no. 16 395/ 2000, ordained in the public session of 15 November 2000 at the Court of Justice of Timișoara. I acknowledge my gratitude to writer and publicist Boris Marian Mehr for procuring this apparently unimportant document. Here, in short, is what happened. During an inflamed discussion, Gh. Z., a Romanian publicly and repeatedly insulted a Jew, R. C., by describing the latter as a “filthy Yid.” R. C. sued Gh. Z. on the basis of Article 205 of the Penal Code which states that “the blemish on one’s honor or reputation by words, gestures, or by any other means or by holding in contempt” amounts to “the crime of insult” and is “punished by imprisonment of 1 month to 2 years, or by damages.... The same punishment is attainable by the attribution of a flaw, a handicap, or disease, that even if real, should not be emphasized.” Gh. Z. pleaded guilty while witnesses confirmed the offense. The jury decided that “indeed, the two parties were involved in some sort of skirmish, on which occasion the culprit indeed used the term ‘filthy Yid’ against the plaintiff, with the addition of other demeaning words,” as noted in the mentioned file. During the hearing, the defendant’s lawyer pleaded that the expression used by his client does not entail a “demeaning character.” Following deliberation, Gh. Z. was acquitted on the charge of insult, on the grounds that “the action of the culprit does not at all evince the degree of social danger demanded by a sanction.” This also is a fact that illustrates “the image of the Jew in Romanian culture.”

290. *Gârbaciul Ovreilor* (The whip of the Yids) (Bucharest, 1890), 14.

291. Cartojan, *Cărțile populare*, 2:117.

292. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 19; Pamfile, *Sărbătorile de toamnă*, 37.

293. Marian, *Sărbătorile la români*, 1:72–74.

294. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 19.

295. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 1:202.

296. Israel Jacob Yuval, “Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages: Shared Myths, Common Language,” in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999), 88–107.

297. *Cronograf*, transl. from Greek by Patrasco Danovici, ed. Gabriel Strempel; introductory study by Paul Cernovodeanu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1998), 194.

298. *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul său Theodosie* (The teachings of Neagoe Basarab for his son Theodosius) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1971), 175.

299. Jacques de Voragine, *Legenda de aur* (*Legenda Aurea*), vol. 1, ed. Livia Titieni (Cluj: Dacia, 1998), 85.

300. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 180.
301. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 14.
302. *Gârbaciul Ovreilor*, 7.
303. Dan Horia Mazilu, *O istorie a blestemului* (A history of the curse) (Iași: Polirom, 2001), 147.
304. Cartoian, *Cărțile populare*, 2:112.
305. Ibid., 409.
306. *Zalmoxis: Revista de studii religioase, Volumele I–III (1938–1942)*, *Publicată sub direcția lui Mircea Eliade* (Zalmoxis: *Journal of Religious Studies*, volumes 1–3, published under the editorship of Mircea Eliade), ed. Eugen Ciurtin; transl. by Eugen Ciurtin, Mihaela Timuș, and Andrei Timotin (Iași: Polirom, 2000), 306.
307. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 1:84, 281.
308. Artur Gorovei, *Datinele noastre la nuntă* (Our wedding customs) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1910), 14.
309. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 55.
310. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 222.
311. Simeon Fl. Marian, *Poesii populare române* (Romanian folk poems), vol. 2 (Chernovtsy 1875), 207; a close variant is in Ion Pop Reteganul, *Cântice populare* (Folk songs) (Bucharest: Biblioteca Familiei, 1891), 306.
312. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 5.
313. Ion Apostol, “Crăciunul și Anul-Nou la Românii de la Est de Bug” (Christmas and New Year’s Eve with the Romanians to the east of Bug), *Sociétés européennes* 7 (1990): 82.
314. See Liviu Malița’s intervention in the roundtable discussion held in Cluj by the journal *Apostrof* under the name “Imaginarul colectiv: Imaginea maghiarului în cultura română/Imaginea românului în cultura maghiară” (Collective imagination: The image of the Hungarian in Romanian culture/The image of the Romanian in Hungarian culture) in *Apostrof*, nos. 2 and 3 (2001).
315. Mircea Cărtărescu, “Un român la Bruxelles (sau la Haga?)” (A Romanian in Brussels [or in the Hague?]), *Dilema*, no. 477 (3–9 May 2002): 20.
316. Alev Lytle Croutier, *Harem: The World Behind the Veil* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989).
317. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române*, 728.
318. Eliade, *La țigănci*, 452.
319. Eliade, *Textele “legionare” și despre “românism,”* 111.
320. Roger Parham-Brown, “De ce am scris despre romi?” (Why I have written about Romany), “22,” no. 20 (18–24 May 1999): 12–13.

321. Information collected in the field by one of my students, Cristina Toma.
322. *Dicționarul limbii române*, s.v. jidov.
323. Elias Schwarzfeld, "Evreii în legislația lui Matei Basarab al Munteniei" (The Jews in the legislation of Matei Basarab of Walachia), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 17 (1895–1896): 77–104.
324. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 56.
325. Ovidiu Bîrlea, *Eseu despre dansul popular românesc* (Essay on the Romanian folk dance) (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1982), 142.
326. Ronetti Roman, *Manase și alte scrieri* (Manasse, and other writings), ed. with a foreword by Constantin Măciucă (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 99.
327. Bîlțiu and Pop, *Sculați, sculați*, 275.
328. Quoted by Nicolae Iorga, *Problema evreiască la Cameră (o interpelare), cu o introducere de A. C. Cuza și Note despre vechimea evreilor în țară* (The Jewish question in the Chamber [an Appeal], with an introduction by A. C. Cuza and notes on the ancient residence of Jews in Romania) (Vălenii-de-Munte: Typ. "Neamul românesc," 1910), 48.
329. Elena Sevastos, *Literatură populară* (Folk literature), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1990), 150.
330. In a royal act in 1785, Moldavian ruler Alexandru Mavrocordat proclaimed that "from this day forward, no Moldavian should marry a Gypsy woman, nor a Gypsy man a Moldavian woman, but this kind of union and marriage bond should be completely and decidedly forbidden"; cf. *Rromathan: Studii despre romi* ("Studies about the Gypsies") 1, no. 2 (1997): 115.
331. Sorin Mitu, "Strainul în imaginarul social al românilor ardeleni la începutul epocii moderne" (The foreigner in the social imagery of the Romanians in Transylvania at the beginning of the modern era), in *Identitate/Alteritate în spațiul cultural românesc* (Identity/Alterity in the Romanian cultural space), ed. Al. Zub (Iași: Editura Universității "Al. I. Cuza," 1996), 199.
332. Lucian Boia, *Istorie și mit în conștiința românească* (History and myth in Romanian perception) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997), 87–89.
333. Ladislau Gyémánt and Lya Benjamin, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews in Romania), vol. 3, part 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 400.
334. Schwarzfeld, "Evreii din Moldova," 212.
335. Maria Holban et al., eds., *Călători străini despre Țările Române* (Foreign travelers on the Romanian principalities), vol. 5 (Bucharest: Scientific Publishing House, 1973), 79.

336. Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație* (Orthodoxy and ethnocracy), ed. Constantin Schifirnet (1938; Bucharest: Albatros, 1997), 145.

337. Benjamin, *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944*, 1:51–56.

338. It is very interesting to note that during the Third Reich, Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* was staged about fifty times in Germany. The reasons for this unprecedented frequency can be easily guessed. It is even more interesting that the Nazi directors censored the text of the play, cutting the scene in which Christian Lorenzo marries the Jewess, Jessica. See Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews*, 228. The Nazi law "For the Protection of German Blood and Honor" was "retroactively enforced," anachronistically presenting an interdiction of the 1930s and 1940s regarding mixed marriages as having been accepted by Shakespeare towards the end of the sixteenth century. The play was also censored in Israel, for different reasons. In 1980 British director Barry Kyle was persuaded to cut the final scene, in which a suggestion is made of Shylock's conversion to Christianity, *ibid.*

339. January 1941; see Radu Florian, Victor Neumann et al., *Ideea care ucide: Dimensiunile ideologiei legionare* (The idea that kills: The dimensions of legionary ideology) (Bucharest: Noua Alternativă, 1994), 357–59.

340. Cesereanu, "Zavistia."

341. Ion Luca Caragiale, *Opere*, critical edition by Al. Rosetti, Serban Cioculescu, and Liviu Călin, vol. 1 (Bucharest: State Publishing House for Literature and Art, 1960), 517.

342. Sevastos, *Literatură populară*, 150.

343. Herta Herzog, *The Jews as "Others": On Communicative Aspects of Antisemitism: A Pilot Study in Austria*, ACTA series, no. 4 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1994), 8–9.

344. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 71.

345. Petru Caraman, *Descolindatul, în orientul și sud-estul Europei: Studiu de folclor comparat* (Negative caroling in eastern and southeastern Europe: A study of comparative folklore), ed. Ion H. Ciubotaru (Iași: "Al. I. Cuza" University Press, 1997), 168.

346. Gorovei, *Datinele noastre la nuntă*, 14.

347. *Ibid.*

348. Paul Petrescu, "Histoire et symboles dans l'art populaire des Juifs de Roumanie," in *Etudes et Documents Balkaniques et Méditerranéens*, vol. 5, ed. Paul H. Stahl (Paris 1989), 82.

349. Mihail Canianu, *Poesii populare* (Folk poems) (Iași, 1888), 233.

350. Sevastos, *Literatură populară*, vol. 1.

351. Sadoveanu, *Opere*, 3:141; Rebreanu, *Ion*, 138; Sholem Aleichem, *Opere alese* (Selected works), vol. 2: *Stele rătăcitoare* (Wandering stars), transl. by Olga Brateș and Meer Sternberg, (Bucharest: Universal Literature, 1964), 27.

352. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 162–63.

353. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 289.

354. Andrew A. Bonar and Robert Murray McCheyne, *Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews from the Church of Scotland in 1839* (Edinburgh: William & Co., 1844), 480. My gratitude to my friend Alexander Drace-Francis, of the University of London, for directing my attention to this outstanding book, practically unknown in Romania.

355. Lion Feuchtwanger, *Balada spaniolă* (Bucharest: Univers, 1973). Originally published as *Die Jüdin von Toledo*.

356. Barasch, “Evreii în Cracovia,” 194.

357. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 30–35, 70–71.

358. Gail Kligman, *The Wedding of the Dead: Ritual, Poetics, and Popular Culture in Transylvania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 365, n. 31. I thank Gail Kligman, Professor of Sociology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of California at Los Angeles, for the information and explanations she has provided me concerning the image of the Jew in the traditional mentality of the people in Maramureș.

359. Barasch, “Evreii în Cracovia,” 57–60.

360. Cohen, *Talmudul*, 239.

361. Lya Benjamin, Mihai Spielmann, and S. Stanciu, eds. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and Testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 2, part 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1990), 237.

362. Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina*, 7–9.

363. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Bucovina*, 191, 428.

364. Sholem Aleichem, *Opere alese* (Selected works), vol. 4 (Bucharest: Editura pentru Literatură Universală, 1968).

365. Russo, “Iassy et ses habitants,” 109, 131.

366. Heitmann, *Imaginea românilor*, 120–21.

367. Mihai Spielmann, ed., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 2, part 1 (Bucharest: Historical Center, Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania, 1988), 121.

368. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 69.

369. Heinrich Heine, *Proza* (Prose) (Bucharest: Editura de Stat pentru Literatura și Artă, 1956), 181–221.

370. Honoré de Balzac, *Opere*, vol. 7 (Bucharest: Editura pentru Literatura Universală, 1961), 50.

371. Roberta Curiel and Bernard Dov Cooperman, *The Venetian Ghetto* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990), 108.

372. Hary Kuller, *Opt studii despre istoria evreilor din România* (Eight studies on the history of the Jews in Romania) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1997), 308.

373. Bonar and M^cCheyne, *Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews*, 390–92.

374. Montandon, *Comment reconnaître*.

375. Liviu Rebreanu, *Jidanul* (1914), in *Opere*, by L. Rebreanu, vol. 11, ed. N. Gheran (Bucharest: Minerva, 1980), 1207.

376. Ion Nenițescu, *De la românii din Turcia europeană* (Of the Romanians in European Turkey) (Bucharest 1895), 576.

377. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 204.

378. Mihai Eminescu, *Opere alese* (Collected works), vol. 3: *Literatură populară* (Popular literature), ed. Perpessicius (Bucharest: 1965), 179.

379. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 68.

380. *Ibid.*, 184.

381. In an excellent study on the stigma of ethnic identity, Sorin Antohi surveys the semantic aspect of the concept of “stigma,” which “equally covers the miraculous marks of divine election (through the symbolic memory of Christ’s wounds), the external attributes of disease and handicaps, the indelible seal of justice on the bodies of the great delinquents, or the sign of public ignominy imprinted on the person that steps out of the ‘normality’ characteristic of a community.” In the present chapter, I obviously refer to this last manner in which the term is understood. See Antohi, *Civitas imaginalis*, 211; published in French as *Imaginaire politique et réalité sociale dans la Roumanie moderne: Le stigmat et l’utopie* (Paris and Montréal: L’Harmattan, 1999).

382. The issue is a subject of controversy: researchers have been unable to establish with utmost accuracy whether it should be attributed to Caliph Omar I (634–644) or Omar II (717–720); see Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, “Jews and Christians in Muslim Medieval Thought,” in *Demonizing the Other*, 108–117; Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor*, 149; Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 2:45.

383. Lazarus-Yafeh, “Jews and Christians,” 111; Revel-Neher, *Image of the Jew*, 101.

384. Revel-Neher, *Image of the Jew*, 40.

385. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip*, 86.

386. Revel-Neher, *Image of the Jew*, 40, illus. 72; Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor*, 214.

387. Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, “Art as a Source for Jewish Historiography,” *Studia Judaica* 7 (1998): 49.

388. Victor Eskenasy, ed., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania) (Bucharest, 1986), 1:4.

389. Yitzchak Kasnett, *The World That Was—Hungary/Romania: A Study of the Life and Torah Consciousness of Jews in the Cities and Villages of Transylvania, the Carpathian Mountains and Budapest* (Cleveland: The Living Memorial, Hebrew Academy of Cleveland, 1999), 22.

390. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, 1:90.

391. *Ibid.*, 100.

392. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 121.

393. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 2, 202.

394. *Ibid.*, 191.

395. *Ibid.*, 257.

396. *Ibid.*, 338.

397. Simon Dubnow, *Weltgeschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, vol. 7 (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1928), 375.

398. Barasch, “Evreii în Cracovia.”

399. Ladislau Gyémánt and Lya Benjamin, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews in Romania), vol. 3, part 2, (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 24.

400. Russo, “Iassy et ses habitants,” 322, 132.

401. Barasch, “Evreii în Cracovia,” 73–77.

402. Radu Rosetti, *Amintiri: Ce-am auzit de la alții* (Memories: What I heard from others), ed. Mircea Anghelescu (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1996), 160.

403. *Mărturii*, 27; Schwarzfeld, “Evreii din Moldova,” 222; *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 2, 455; Wilhelm Schwarzfeld, “Despre lepadarea vechiului port” (On the changing of the old way of dressing) *Analele Societății Istorice “Iuliu Barasch”* 3 (1889): 159.

404. Reinhartz and Mendes-Flohr, *Jew in the Modern World*, 385.

405. Schwarzfeld, “Evreii din Moldova,” 222–23; see also Iancu, *Evreii din România*, 156.

406. Adolphe Stern, *Din viața unui evreu-român* (From the life of a Romanian Jew), ed. Țicu Goldstein (1915; Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 14.

407. Schwarzfeld, “Evreii din Moldova,” 218.

408. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 17; Holban, *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, 268.

409. Dimitrie Cantemir, *Sistemul sau întocmirea religiei muhammedane* (The system of Muhammedan religion), ed. Virgil Căndea (Bucharest: Romanian Academy Press, 1987), 459.

410. Djuvara, *Între Orient și Occident*, 101.

411. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 32; Holban, *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, 386; Moses Schwarzfelf, "Excursiuni critice asupra istoriei evreilor în România" (Critical enquiries on the history of the Jews in Romania), *Analele Societății Istorice "Iuliu Barasch"* 2 (1888): 107.

412. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 205.

413. Russo, "Iassy et ses habitants," 126.

414. Rosetti, *Amintiri*, 55.

415. Schwarzfelf, "Evreii din Moldova," 218.

416. Neumann, *Istoria evreilor din România*, 37.

417. Schwarzfelf, "Evreii din Moldova," 219.

418. Ibid.; Schwarzfelf, "Excursiuni critice," 108.

419. Amishai-Maisels, "Demonization," 51.

420. Andrei Pippidi, "The Mirror and Behind It: The Image of the Jew in the Romanian Society," in "Jewish Problems in Eastern Europe: First International Conference on the History of the Jews in Romania," *Shvut* 16, ed. Liviu Rotman (Tel Aviv: Diaspora Research Institute, Goldstein-Goren Center for the History of the Jews in Romania, 1993), 75.

421. Cf. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Bucovina*, 22; idem, *Neamul românesc în Basarabia*, 149.

422. Varlaam, *Cazania sau cartea de învățătură 1643* (Cazania or the book of learning 1643) (Bucharest: Fundația Regală pentru Literatură și Artă, 1943), 452.

423. *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab*, 185.

424. Leon Volovici, "An Exclusive Interview with Marcel Jacques Dubois," *Secolul 20*, 7–12 (1990; appeared in print in 1993): 83.

425. Ernst Jünger, *Jurnale pariziene* (Das Erste und Zweite Pariser Tagebuch) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997), 124.

426. Radu Cosașu, "Tot ce am citit mai frumos în această vară (The most beautiful things I have read this summer), *Dilema*, 191 (1996): 12.

427. Mihai Sebastian, *Jurnal, 1935–1944* (Journal, 1935–1944), ed. Gabriela Omăt, preface and notes by Leon Volovici (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1996), 368.

428. Jünger, *Jurnale pariziene*, 125.

CHAPTER 2

The Occupational Portrait

THE JEW AS TRADESMAN

Trade as a Shameful Occupation

In a curious classification of the nations, the Jew (the eternal crooked usurer, tavern-keeper, and merchant) seems to come first at cheating others, at least according to the following Romanian saying: “A Jew cheats two Armenians, an Armenian two Greeks, a Greek two Romanians.”¹ On the basis of this original ethnic-ethnic equation, the chief vice of the Jew is fraud, at which he would be twice as proficient as the Armenian, four times as good as the Greek, and eight times better than the Romanian. Similar proverbs are found among the Poles (“The Pole is cheated by the German, the German by the Italian, the Italian by the Spanish, the Spanish by the Jew, but the Jew is only cheated by the devil”), the Macedonians (“A Jew cheats ten Greeks, a Greek cheats ten Albanians”), or the Russians (“A Jew is worth two Greeks, a Greek two Armenians, an Armenian two nobles of Poltava”).²

“The Jew has not picked up cheating, it comes natural to him,” holds an old Ruthenian proverb, akin to a Polish one: “The Jew is a cheater in all his born days.”³ Being sharp and a good businessman, the Jew is hard to swindle: “You must get up very early,” says a Polish proverb, “if you want to cheat a Jew.”⁴ Or: “If anyone tries to cheat them [i.e., the Jews],” wrote Henryk Sienkiewicz in 1877, “he is himself cheated.”⁵ For Germans as well, “cheating a Jew” represented the ultimate bravado.⁶ You will sooner have him cheat himself, Russians believe: “The Jew is well capable of cheating on himself, if any ploy dawns upon him.”⁷ Proverbs which, to the contrary, express the Jews’ correctness in money matters are more seldom attested: “Let’s love each other like brothers, but let’s settle our accounts like Jews”;⁸ or their readiness to help non-Jews: “When it goes badly with you, turn to a Jew.”⁹ Ukrainians share the same understanding of the Jew: “An old saying has it that a Jew may well steal from his own, if he wanted to” (N. V. Gogol, *Taras Bulba*, 1835).¹⁰ The same holds for the belief that Jews are calculating

in business and will take no blind chances: "The children of Abraham will not venture readily onto thin ice."¹¹

Here one is bound to come across the indispensable corrections. Veronika Görög-Karady is correct in stressing the fact that, to the popular mind, "cheating was considered an integral part of the trading activity, traditionally seen to be opposed to proper work. Peasants, and most members of the other working classes, identify work with physical effort, hence their aversion to white-collars."¹² Alexander Hertz (*The Jews in Polish Culture*, 961) has claimed that in any primitive market structure, not only the Jews, but any small traders, tend to be perceived as "thieves," "crooks," "vampires," and so forth.¹³

In his personal manner, Moses Schwarzfeld said the same at the end of the nineteenth century:

The explanation for this false belief has to be sought not only in the mistaken notion held by the [Romanian] people that the Jew is naturally two-faced and cunning and therefore predisposed to trickery, but also in a historical reason, in a heresy belonging to past ages and which still reverberates strongly in the present, namely in considering trade to be patent robbery.¹⁴

On another occasion, the same author wrote about "the prejudices of Romanians against trade," an occupation which "they believe to be sheer robbery."¹⁵

In Europe during the Middle Ages the state of things was indeed not radically different. The collective imagination of pre-Renaissance Europe gave rise to an "essentially negative" portrait of the merchant.¹⁶ For Thomas Aquinas, "Trade has a shameful aspect." The negative traits of the portrait of the merchant added to the already existing negative image of the Jew.

Early in the eighteenth century, Dimitrie Cantemir tried to elucidate why "all the trade of Moldavia" was in the hands of strangers ("Turks, Jews, Armenians, and Greeks"), while "seldom will you find a trading Moldavian." According to the Romanian prince, there were two motivations for this social and economic phenomenon: "the idleness of our people [the Moldavians]" and, more importantly, the fact that "[the Moldavians] deem any trade to be something shameful."¹⁷ In 1879, during their parliamentary addresses on the "Jewish question," Titu Maiorescu and P. P. Carp used almost the same terms to describe economic relations between Romanians and Jews: *otium* (inactivity) vs. *negotium* (labor).¹⁸ The concepts also appear in free-marketer Nae Cațavencu's political discourse: "We salute work, labor, which are not at

all done in our country!... We do not have a single Romanian merchant, not even one! Even so, all bankrupts are Yids.... This state of affairs is intolerable! When are we going to have our own bankrupts?"¹⁹

The image of "the Jew as an ant" and "the Romanian as a cricket" was indeed very handy. An untalented Romanian journalist had recourse to it in an 1885 article:

While the Romanian carouses, spends and wastes time, the Jew works and saves as would an ant, while the cricket sings and enjoys himself. And the Jews have another advantage, their religious holidays end in the evening and they go back to work, while the Romanian's holidays end in the morning, and after a whole night's feast he wastes the whole day.²⁰

On the other hand, writing from America in 1877, Polish novelist Henryk Sienkiewicz tried to show that Jewish traits (industriousness, courage, intelligence, commercial spirit, etc.) and those of the Poles, being somehow complementary, when combined could form a harmonious social and economic body: "This [Jewish] element in our population should not be made light of, for the Jews possess exactly those traits which the Poles lack, and which, added to our own, would create a quite impressive totality."²¹

When they felt they were up to the challenge, Romanian merchants, upset by the competition, got around to demanding that higher taxes be levied on Jewish merchants, as happened in the mid-1850s.²² On other occasions they boycotted Jewish stores; in 1883, for instance, as a consequence of regional conventions of Romanian merchants, people were asked to buy solely in Romanian stores.²³ Subsequently, in the 1930s, Iron Guard slogans were merciless: "Not even a needle shall be bought from the Jews." That the same slogan had been used half a century earlier by Ion Creangă, was noted in 1937 by Tit Simedrea (bishop of Hotin and afterwards metropolitan bishop of Bukovina) in the course of trying to convince the Romanians that should the Jews be prevented from practicing commerce, they "will leave the country on their own initiative, without the further need of eviction."²⁴ Such ideas, in big print, used to fill the pages of interwar antisemitic magazines such as *Porunca Vremii* [The summons of the time]: "Tradesmen, reconquer trade before it becomes all-Jewish! Romanians, not a single needle from the Jews! Romanian Mother, do not buy from a Jew! The only way to get rid of the Jew is to hit his weak point, that is money! Do you want to get rid of the Jews? Boycott them! Be a true Romanian! No money to the Jews!" and more of the same.²⁵

During the 1920s and 1930s, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu and other leaders of the legionnaire movement organized the so-called “legionnaire commerce,” intended to “crash into the habits of dishonest Jewish commerce by way of competition,” or in other words, as related by Petre Pandrea in his memoirs, “to beat the foreigners on their own playground.”²⁶

The apogee of the Jewish shop boycott—before the confiscations and evictions—came during the Nationalist Legionnaire regime (September 1940–January 1941). Posters were pasted on the display windows of many Jewish-owned shops throughout Romania containing texts of the following type: “He who buys from the Jews is a traitor; he will be photographed and his photo will be published. [Signed]: The Legionnaire Iron Guards.”²⁷

This, of course, was a reflection of the official policy of boycotting Jewish stores throughout Germany, announced by Joseph Goebbels to go into effect on 1 April 1933. But these slogans actually meant to apply in the sphere of the economy and commerce the nationalist and ethnocratic principle defined by Nicolae Iorga back in 1909: “Romania belongs to Romanians, to all Romanians, and only to Romanians.” No wonder that Nichifor Crainic included this principle in the Platform of the Ethnocratic State (which was opposed to the democratic state), and by Octavian Goga (in December 1937) in the political program of the Goga-Cuza government.²⁸

Referring to the creation of unfavorable economic and financial conditions that would make the Jews “leave the country on their own initiative, without the further need of eviction” (to use the phrase of Tit Simedrea), Liberal Ion C. Brătianu, the Romanian premier between 1876 and 1888, used to tell a Romanian folk tale: Taking advantage of a hole in a fence, a fox sneaked into a yard, looted the animals, and got so fat that it could no longer escape through the hole. The householder attracted the fox into a corner of the yard, starved it until it lost weight and was able—and wanted—to leave. “This is exactly what we plan to do with our Jews,” concluded Brătianu.²⁹

The Weberian perspective is called for so as to fully understand the social and economic phenomenon sketched above. Unlike Protestant ethics, Orthodoxy does not contain “*der Geist des Kapitalismus*.”³⁰ With respect to the “nature of Romanians,” Daniel Barbu notes:

In the eyes of Orthodoxy, the sole legitimate occupation is the one that takes caution before trespassing the boundaries of natural economics. Roughly, it is only the peasants’ work that is acceptable to the [Orthodox] Church, and that to the extent that it is neither capable, nor

willing, to extract some profit whatsoever. The only righteous activity is field labor....³¹

I. P. Culianu, in his turn, speaks of the Romanian's "spontaneous and visceral aversion to capitalism." "Romanian writers and ideologues alike," writes this historian of religions, "are virulently reacting against new [capitalist] economic and social structures, deeming that these latter structures are alien. This remote origin of chauvinistic nationalism..., is the one leading to the configuration and triumph of Romanian Fascism."

Culianu then attempts to delineate the image of the capitalist entrepreneur in modern Romanian literature. An obviously negative image surfaces, be it in the novels of Nicolae Filimon, Duiliu Zamfirescu, or Mihail Sadoveanu. The (petty) bourgeois characters in Caragiale's plays, I would add, also waver between ridicule (Dumitrache in *A Stormy Night*, 1879) and cynicism (Cațavencu in *A Lost Letter*, 1884). Against the backdrop of the exaltation of traditional society, comprising boyars and peasants, the image of the social climber emerges "as, ultimately, a representative of capitalist ethics and of free initiative." One of the few exceptions seems to be Ioan Slavici's novel *Mara* (1906), yet, "Ioan Slavici, an Austro-Hungarian subject, was educated in a province [Transylvania] where Calvinistic and Counter-Reformation ethics were as auspicious to capitalism, despite its being opposed by Romanian Orthodox ethics."³²

In 1927, sociologist Ștefan Zeletin wrote:

Romanian culture is directed against our contemporary bourgeoisie and against capitalism, and since it is the Liberals and the Jews who are now in control, as two of the most significant strata of the Romanian bourgeoisie, Romanian culture is at one and the same time anti-liberal and antisemitic.... Liberal and Jewish finance had a common enemy to bring down: Romanian agrarianism. They defeated it by economic means, but not from the point of view of the Romanian spirit and culture. The Romanian economy is beneficial to them nowadays, but their spirit is still alien and inimical to us.³³

"The Jew will not eat before he cheats"

With the Romanians, the expression "He has a Jew's head!" is not only a term of praise but also, quite often, one of disparagement. According to Iuliu Zane, it was applied to a person who "practices deceit."³⁴ There is a similar saying in Hungarian: one says of an underhanded merchant who swindles

others that “He cheats like a Jew.”³⁵ The Romanian saying, “There is no such thing as a stupid Jew” also has a reverse one, which is just as common: “An honest Jew I have not seen.”³⁶ Apparently impossible to find, honest Jews have become a species of fabulous beings, with inhuman physiological features: “Honest Jews,” says a German proverb, “have hairy palms.”³⁷

The issue is presented in terms of survival: “Until he cheats, the Jew won’t eat,” writes Anton Pann in his “collection of proverbs,” which had been “gathered from among the people” in the first half of the nineteenth century (*Povestea vorbei* [The story of the word], 1847). In fact, the Jews’ beliefs do not talk of cheating, but rather of working: “He who has not worked,” goes a Jewish folk saying, “shall not eat,” because “Adam himself did not eat before he worked.”³⁸ The Romanian proverb underlies the idea that a Jew has to cheat a non-Jew. As a rule, this verity is explicitly formulated, as in a little popular book, *Rachel and Messiah*, dating from more or less the same epoch: “They are under an obligation to their Talmud not to eat on the day they are not able to cheat a Christian.”³⁹ Elsewhere, in a different formulation, the “Christian” receives an ethnic identity: “The Jew won’t eat until he cheats a Romanian,” is the form of this saying in the late nineteenth-century anthology of folk anecdotes gathered by Petre Ispirescu “from the mouths of those who know more.”⁴⁰

An almost identical proverb is found in Polish folk culture: “The Jew does not eat breakfast before he cheats.”⁴¹ However, such similitude does not entitle Moses Schwarzfeld to affirm—resorting to opinions voiced by Petre Ispirescu and Alexandru Odobescu—that this Romanian proverb is “either a translation from some foreign language, or an extreme rarity.”⁴² A somewhat similar belief, attested in Bukovina at the end of the nineteenth century, says: “On Monday, the Jews won’t sell anything on credit until they get some money.”⁴³ Both superstitions focus on the magical value of the first sum earned at the beginning of a new period, be it a day or a week.

In the modern age, Romanian intellectuals and politicians have capitalized upon this kind of rhetoric, easily digested by the uneducated, not only, and not always, because they believed in these mental stereotypes but because they were aware of their efficiency and impact on simple people. Political antisemitism (active and conscious) exploited all the clichés of popular antisemitism (passive and unconscious). “The Yid is an inborn speculator,” wrote Romanian author Costache Negruzzi in the mid-nineteenth century.

An eloquent example of a scholar and politician who appropriated such oversimplified stereotypes (such as “the Jews live on double-dealing” or “they are intelligent, but cunning”) is Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga. However, he did this not so much in scholarly history books, addressed to an intellectual elite, but primarily in the electrifying articles published in his newspaper *Neamul românesc* [The Romanian nation], distributed free of charge during 1906–1907 in Moldavian villages by school teachers and country priests. On 5 June 1907, under the title “The Peasant Question and Our Jews,” Iorga wrote in his regular column in that newspaper:

The Jews in Romania, especially those in Moldavia, live on trade, on exchange, *on double-dealing* to the prejudice of others, and they shun any hard work. *They are intelligent but cunning* and, pursuing solely their own interests, seek to corrupt the mores. They are vengeful and cruel, as long as they do not feel a vigorous fist hard pressing on their napes.... [emphasis added—A.O.].

The “vigorous fist,” which the great historian felt was necessary, did not hesitate to strike. Such provocative texts contributed to the anti-Jewish outset of the peasant uprising of 1907, marked by spoliation and pogroms perpetrated by rioters (especially in the month of March) in villages and in the Jewish quarters of some northern Moldavian towns.⁴⁴ The liberal newspaper *Acțiunea* [Action] wrote on 20 May 1907:

We have left the famed Iorga to spread in Bucharest the most dangerous of theories; under the pretext of nationalism, we have let him inflame the youth.... We have left him to imbue the souls of our young with the most subversive ideas, with class and race hatred, and contempt for order and for law. Finally, we have left this dangerous neurotic [*sic!*] to vastly expand his inflammatory gazette, *Neamul românesc*, and we have seen his ravings bear fruit, as this gazette has been distributed free in the countryside.⁴⁵

Nicolae Iorga and *Neamul românesc* were not the only leaders of this diversionary campaign at that time. Commenting upon the anti-Jewish pogroms by Moldavian peasants in the spring of 1907, a character—a journalist—from Liviu Rebreanu’s novel, *Răscoala* [The uprising], says:

This is a safety valve. In thrashing the Yids, the peasants will cool off and will forget about the other landowners and tenants who are not Jews, and yet exploit them just as badly, if not worse.... Observe all the press! Everywhere, here in an undertone, here in broad daylight,

the barbarities of our rebelling peasants are justified, approved, even blessed, with the implied excuse: "Down with the Yids!"⁴⁶

In these cases we are witness to an interesting phenomenon of cultural feedback. Ethnic-image stereotypes (of the kind mentioned above: "the Jew is smart, but cunning and spoiling for fraud") born in the sphere of popular antisemitism have been taken over by promoters of political antisemitism so that, slightly reformulated, they could later be reactivated, ideologized, multiplied through the press, and retransmitted with tenfold power into the cultural sphere that produced them. Wilhelm Filderman, president of the Union of Romanian Jews, was partly in the right when he wrote the following to Prime Minister Ion I. C. Brătianu, in 1921: "the country is not antisemitic. The only antisemitism that exists does not come from the people, but is injected."⁴⁷ Such ideas were circulated in the German (Saxon) press by Transylvanian intellectuals ever since the first half of the nineteenth century: "The intolerance and persecution of those who are of a different faith," wrote German professor J. K. Schüller in 1861, in the newspaper *Transsilvania*, "is not typical of the people, but is imposed on it from outside."⁴⁸ To be sure, some of the prejudices had been "injected" or "imposed from outside," yet the question was one of revitalizing and conveying once more mental reflexes that had previously been adopted from the sphere of traditional culture, which explains the success enjoyed by this phenomenon of cultural feedback. If the clichés disseminated by intellectual antisemitism had been entirely new and artificial, a process of "implant rejection" would have been sure to occur.

However, an antisemitic perspective was not alone in engendering such an outlook and its rhetoric. A similar type of discourse, if molded in a more moderate cast, is to be found in texts written with good will as, for instance, the "historical, cultural, ethnographic, and folkloric study" on the Jews in Bukovina, compiled at the end of the nineteenth century by Romanian folklorist Dimitrie Dan. "The cleverness of their [the Jews'] minds," noted the author in 1899, "is well known and they are unsurpassed calculators having speculative, forever active, minds. For speculative enterprises and associations, they are always ready.... They care more about the amassing of fortune, than about the protection and nourishment of their bodies."⁴⁹ The last remark was probably influenced by the saying mentioned earlier in this section: "The Jew won't eat until he cheats someone."

“We must do justice to the Jews”

Not all psycho-moral portraits of the merchant-Jew in the Romanian principalities were painted in somber colors. In 1787, for instance, after a voyage through Moldavia, French diplomat Count Maurice d’Hauterive realized that his opinion was contrary to the one generally held and felt that “we must do justice to the Jews.” In this spirit, he mentioned the following in a Memorial presented to His Majesty Alexandru Ipsilanti:

[The Jews in Moldavia] are temperate, they pay their taxes unshrinkingly, they get rich unhurriedly, and they do not take their savings across the border. They have turned some national products to good account.... The Jews of this country have distinct morals which set them apart from all the other Jews from Turkey and from the rest of the world. Their greed is not as hated, they are not as cunning, as dirty, and they are not so cursed as in other places. It seems that the vicinity of Poland gives them this emulation of good behavior, which contributes to their well being in both provinces.⁵⁰

The same positive view would be adopted half a century later by the Franco-Russian aristocrat Anatole de Demidoff in a retrospective on his Walachian voyage:

Craftsmen of Bucharest, workers as well as haulers, do not seem to hold in contempt hard labor, yet what indeed does enliven this town are the numberless Jews who reside here. Active, reverent, and optimistic, they exude zest and action, since neither formality nor exhaustion dishearten them, if a minimum wage is detectable. Thus, as soon as you notice the broad-brimmed hat and the black ragged caftan of a Jew, you can say to yourself that here you have at your beck and call, if you only wish so, a well-bodied, intelligent, and unremitting employee, impressionable neither by disdain, nor by anger; and you can give him orders without much hesitation, no matter what the problem is. He will readily answer in German, Italian, in four languages even, and once the deal is sealed you will fully benefit of his energy, of his agility, of his discretion, of his patience, of his eloquence, of his virtues and of his vices, of his soul and of his body, and all for a couple of piastres.⁵¹

The Town without Jews

There are no other less anonymous human beings [than the Jews]. In their absence, cities would be unbearable; they maintain a state of excitement without which any city would seem but a small borough: a dead city is a city that no longer has its Jews.

E. M. Cioran⁵²

In his memoirs, Moses Gaster mentioned that, after the Hovevei Zion [Lovers of Zion] conference in Focșani in 1881, he had had the quite crazy idea of showing “the Romanian Government that the Jews represented an important element in the development of the country.” The original plan was to get rid of the Jews in one of the small towns of northern Moldavia in which they represented the majority of the community by sending them to Palestine. Thus the town would have become a village, economic development would have stopped, and there would have been an *ad oculos* proof of the importance of the Jewish element in Romania.⁵³ Gaster was convinced that the “Jewish element” represented the cause of economic and commercial development and the welfare of the community.

Werner Sombart too used excessive and expressive formulas to prove the Jews’ role as promoters of European capitalism: “When Israel appears on the face of Europe, the place where it appears comes to life, and when it departs, everything which had previously flourished, now withers away” (*Die Juden und das Wirtschaftsleben*, 1911). Probably influenced by the German economist, Viennese author Hugo Bettauer wrote a satirical novel on this topic, called *Die Stadt ohne Juden* [The town without Jews, 1923]. The main idea of this fantasy novel is the economic collapse of Austria caused by expelling the Jews from the country: trade collapses, as do the banks, the economic institutions go bankrupt, the number of jobs decreases, and even women look uglier and do not care anymore about the way they look, as they no longer compete with the beautiful Jewesses.⁵⁴ A film based on Bettauer’s novel was made in 1924, directed by Karl Breslauer.

Unfortunately, Gaster’s crazy plan (1881), Sombart’s rhetorical formula (1911), and Bettauer’s fantastic idea (1923) were taken into consideration in Romania in the early 1940s, after the Jews had been excluded from economic and commercial activities. For example, let us analyze the situation in “one of the small towns in the north of Moldavia,” as Gaster wrote. In January 1941

the Mayor of Botoșani complained to the minister of domestic affairs that the exclusion of the “Jewish element” from economic and commercial activities “proves to be extremely difficult,” as this “has great and negative repercussions upon the economic life of this town, and makes especially the Romanian population suffer.... Strict application of the orders in vigor” regarding the Romanization of the economy, concludes the Mayor of Botoșani, “would mean putting an end to economic, as well to financial life.” In March 1941, the Romanian Bank Union published a declaration regarding the necessity of slowing down “Romanization,” warning against the economic and financial collapse which would otherwise result.

Several months later, the minister of labor himself admitted that “the law for the Romanization of the factories” had to be modified, as “we do not have enough elements ready to replace the Jewish experts.” Under these conditions, even the ultra-antisemitic journal *Porunca Vremii* came to the conclusion that, without the Jews, “our country has but a few craftsmen.” For once, even radical antisemites and the leaders of the Jewish communities shared their opinions: “There is a lack of the ethnic elements [i.e., Romanians] which can replace the Jewish experts,” was written in a statement by the Federation of Jewish Communities addressed to the minister of labor in 1941, and thus “putting into practice the very quickly issued laws [for Romanization] may cause the downfall of the national economy.”⁵⁵

Assuming different forms, the phenomenon was apparent throughout the entire Romanian territory. For instance, during the legionnaire regime (September 1940–January 1941), “the shops of small Israelite merchants,” as related by Petre Pandrea, “were looted of their merchandise and confiscated at gunpoint, while the owners were thrown in the street.” Deva, the hometown of legionnaire Ion Moța “was decreed a holy town” on the basis of the fact that “all its Jews were evicted.”⁵⁶

The situation took an even more dramatic turn in the autumn of 1941 when the Jews of Romania, mainly those of Bessarabia and Bukovina, were deported to Transnistria. At first, Marshall Ion Antonescu’s order was that all Jews of Bukovina should be deported “within ten days.” All economic and commercial activity in Bukovina then collapsed. For example, at the end of 1941 only 510 workshops functioned in Czernowitz out of the initial 4,373. The mayor of the town, Traian Popovici (considered nowadays to be a Romanian Schindler), tried to convince the Romanian and German authorities not to deport the Jews, whose presence was necessary for the provision of public services, especially the craftsmen, but also “intellectuals

and artists,... experts in industry, doctors, engineers, and those employed in the judicial system.” Some people were picked, lists were drawn up, licenses were granted (including the so-called “Popovici licenses”) and thus around 20,000 Jews who were deemed “important for the economy” out of the 50,000 living at the time in Czernowitz were saved from deportation. This is why Traian Popovici was nicknamed “the Jew” and subsequently, in 1942, dismissed from office. After the war, his deeds and courage were recognized in Israel and after his death he became one of those awarded the title “Righteous among the Nations.”⁵⁷

Rationalism and Capitalism

In 1929 Mihai Ralea tried to explain the Jew’s propensity for trading activities as being a species of “social determinism.” In his article “Israel in Romania” he resorted to a set of consecutive arguments from the sphere of “collective psychology.” Lacking instincts and the deep-rooted habits that account for customs,

the Jew is a rationalist, above all. And rationalist in the narrow sense of the word means utilitarian. The Bible and the Talmud testify to this collective psychological trait. He does not let himself be dragged to every place by blind fancies, by hatreds, or by violent feelings. He judges and weighs, he is sober, reserved, and circumspect. Passions do not drive him. Excellent aptitudes for becoming a merchant. As a merchant, he brings his vocation to perfection, or, in the history of human civilization he invents the epoch called capitalism.

Somewhere between Karl Kautsky and Werner Sombart, Mihai Ralea is evidently closer to the latter, considering that the “rationalism” of the Jew has generated “trade and capitalism” and not the other way round. “For the first [Kautsky], reason is the effect, for the latter [Sombart], it is the cause. Both agree, however, that the Jew is a rationalist, no matter whether he was like this from the beginning or became so.”⁵⁸

Around 1960, Felix Aderca brought a simplification on this social and economic phenomenon to play by claiming that the Jews had been “forced to throng in commerce” merely because of the “restrictive laws of antisemitic semi-feudalism and semi-bourgeoisie—which meant no army, no education, no state offices, or advocacy positions.” “Where did it come from, century after century,” the Romanian-Jewish writer asked himself, “the charge that ‘Yids have monopolized commerce,’ which sounds somewhat like the

accusation that, since they could not live on land, ‘fish have monopolized the ponds’?”⁵⁹

“A good deal is impossible without a Jew”

The folk mentality has indeed kept this stereotype alive. The peasants of Maramureș envy the Jews, claims Gail Kligman. “A *șmecher* (a canny person, swindler) is envied, if with derogatory ambivalence, for an ability to get ahead, to avoid being had, in short, for being clever”⁶⁰ “No bargain of some consequence is struck,” wrote folklorist Dimitrie Dan in 1899, “and, what is more, no calf or horse tail is sold without the welcome or unwelcome interference of a Jew.”⁶¹ “The Jew—the good tradesman” is commonly a negatively connoted cliché, if only implicitly so. It is positively valorized especially when uttered by a Jew such as Lazăr Gherson, a character in Petru Dumitriu’s novel *Cronică de familie* [A family saga] (1956): “Listen to this answer! Serious, solid, practical, the answer of a businessman. He would deserve to be a Jew.”⁶² “One cannot make a good deal without a Jew,” is a widespread popular belief which has become a proverb, and it is not by chance that Romanian author Liviu Rebreanu put it in the mouth of a “poor peasant boy,” Toma Pahonțu, a character in his novel *Gorila* [The gorilla], first published in 1938.⁶³

Essentially similar folk proverbs are attested throughout Central and Eastern Europe: “No deal without a Jew’s head,” or “A Jew does not go empty handed to the market” (among the Ukrainians⁶⁴); “The Jew at the fair [is as indispensable] as the priest at baptism” (among the Russians⁶⁵); “There is no market without a Jew,” or “You can spare a Jew in order to seal a business, but you cannot spare more” (among the Hungarians⁶⁶); “unyielding as a Jewish trader” (among the Poles⁶⁷); “You could not possibly bargain with a Jew” (among the Germans); but “Two Jews and two girls can set up a market” (a Polish proverb⁶⁸). The Jew views himself in a similar fashion: “You can’t have your way when you bargain with a Jew,” goes a Jewish proverb.⁶⁹

At times this cliché has proven so powerful that it was taken over by certain idioms, and surely by slang. In English, for instance, the noun “Jew” also means a “usurer or trader who drives hard bargains,” and the verb “to jew (down)” means, mostly in American English, “to bargain to the teeth with” and “to beat down in price.” In their famous *German Dictionary* (1852), the Grimm brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm, maintained that several verbs were derived from the root *Jude*, such as *jüdeln*, which meant “to

practice usury, to swindle, to lend, to bargain with a Jew, etc.” In Savary’s *Commercial Dictionary* (1723), the entry *juif* has the following short and clear definition, which makes any comment superfluous: “This term has different meanings in commerce, yet almost all of them in a negative sense.” In archaic and popular Romanian, the verb *a iudi* (from Judas, “Judean”) meant “to cheat, to swindle.”⁷⁰ In Lithuania, the adjective *zydas* (Jew) and the ethnonymic nickname *Zydas* applied to small merchants, shopkeepers, liars, and cunning and sly persons.⁷¹ A similar phenomenon was mentioned in almost all eastern European countries. G. M. Tamás brings the example of an old Hungarian peasant woman “who said that the grocer of the village had a Jewish occupation, but that he was not a Jew.”⁷² In other words, that tradesman was professionally a Jew but ethnically a Hungarian. The word “Jew” thus became a professional characteristic (as for tradesmen, etc.), as well as a moral one (cheating, etc.)

In the last few decades ethno-sociological surveys have been conducted in Central European countries on the manner in which the Jew is perceived by the average person (Poland: 1975–1978 and 1984; Austria: 1992, and more). It has been noted that all these ambiguous stereotypes have survived to this day. The belief that Jews are very intelligent, cunning, educated, good family men, united,⁷³ very religious,⁷⁴ cowardly (“he is a hero despite being a Jew”),⁷⁵ greedy for money and thirsty for power, hardworking and—on top of everything else—good tradesmen (*Geschäftstüchtigkeit*) crops up in practically all the answers given by the people who were polled.⁷⁶

“Merchant of Feelings”

The mental stereotype that dresses up all Jews in the merchant’s uniform could not fail to show up in the storehouse of modern political antisemitism. In the early 1980s, with the approval of the Communist regime, Corneliu Vadim Tudor depicted a negative portrait of the Jew, whether in editorials he signed in the ultra-nationalistic weekly *Săptămîna* [The week], or in the volume of verse, *Saturnalii* [Saturnalia] (1983). This portrait is composed of a whole range of negative classical attributes, from mercantilism and cupidity to betrayal and deicide: “Gescheft-ridden” with a filthy and greasy caftan, “merchant of buttons and brandy,” “greedy,” having “the fierce eyes of a beast” sheltered in a “den,” “viper,” “alien,” “soft-spoken, countryless miser,” “countryless homunculus,” “you and all your kind of evil-doers,” eager “to crucify a new sanctity [= as that of Mihai Eminescu],” “seller of country and of national traditions,” “Judas and his silver coins,” and more.⁷⁷

Professor Ion Coja, for instance, admits that he is an antisemite because the Jews are such inveterate businessmen that they would have made antisemitism itself “a business, a profit, a bribery!”⁷⁸ In a recent pseudo-study of literary history, Ion Rotaru attempts to minimize the important contribution of Jewish writers to Romanian literature and creates an entire theory according to which “for practically all the Jews, literature and scholarly pursuits are somewhat ‘commercial.’” In the same spirit, the author declares his vexation at the propensity of Jews “for literature, when in fact, by tradition, they are merchants.” Even after 1944 “the Jews still behaved towards literature in their mercantile way,” Rotaru concludes.⁷⁹ In other words, “our Jews” not only “fight like merchants” (as a Romanian folk song has it),⁸⁰ but also “write like merchants.” This would be “Jewish trade, somehow different and more refined than Gypsy racketeering,” the author affirms conclusively. Another Romanian literary historian, Marian Popa, maintains that in the twentieth century there is a “dominant” Judaic culture on a world scale which is therefore perilous, one which has no features of its own, only “an exceptional capacity of absorption, processing, synthesis, and merchandizing [*sic!*] of elements pertaining to other diverse cultures, a fact that grants it volens-nolens a supra-ethnic ecumenism.”⁸¹

“The Yid’s intelligence is purely materialistic and he engages only in finding combinations that might increase his personal fortune without making any physical effort for it, that is, without contributing any kind of productive work,” claims an article entitled “Jewish Intellectualism” published in 1922 in the violently antisemitic paper *Apărarea Națională* [The national defense] edited in Jassy by A. C. Cuza and Nicolae Paulescu. This article did no more than summarize the conclusion of Édouard Drumont: “We can thus explain the quite curious phenomenon by which this people..., dabbling from its very beginnings in intellectual activities, has never indeed produced one genius.”⁸² In that same year, in that same journal, A. C. Cuza launched an altogether different theory, allegedly grounded in anthropology (“anthropologists notice that Yids are of a race that resulted from the amalgamation of many other races”) in order to explain “the sterility of the Jewish nation as regards cultural accomplishments.” Assuming an academic pose he wrote

The science of antisemitism is up to the challenge of showing that this mongrel race [i.e., Jews] cannot by any means be beneficial to the culture of the other nations; the best they can do is to forge the latter culture, and to denigrate its features.⁸³

In 1935, Romanian nationalist poet Octavian Goga, who was to become prime minister in 1937–1938, took the floor of the Romanian Parliament to speak of the same Jews who allegedly lack literary or other cultural talents (“they are not familiar with the Romanian way of thinking, and therefore are prohibited from the right of expressing it as such”), yet are exceedingly talented in business.⁸⁴

“If a Jew is involved in the business, everything is imbued with dishonesty,” declared the antisemitic journal *Europa* in 1993, in its issue no. 119. In mid-1997, in a publication of the *România Mare* (Greater Romania) party, an article demanding the resignation of Minister of External Affairs Adrian Severin, who was found guilty of being (what horror!) a Jew, contained the following: “As a Jew—and it is a known fact that Jews are good tradesmen—[Adrian Severin] ought to know that a bargain is struck between at least two.”⁸⁵ Apart from this stereotype and the practice of publicly unmasking an alleged crypto-Jew, first introduced by the Inquisition, an old and simple principle was resorted to here, reversed as in a mirror: “Any stranger/Jew is an enemy” (Lat. *hospes hostis*), hence “any enemy is a stranger/Jew.”⁸⁶ Post-communist societies have excelled in this type of practice. For the ultra-nationalist magazine *România Mare* in 1998–1999, Romania’s President Emil Constantinescu (1996–2000), was “of foreign ethnic origin: a Russian Jew.” Other political adversaries were taxed exactly the same way. “If they are not Jews (as indeed happens in the majority of cases, according to the conspiracy-centered discourse),” political analyst George Voicu observes with irony, “then they are at least freemasons,” a euphemism meant to disguise blatant antisemitism. “Freemasonry has the tendency to occupy all important state offices in Romania,” a senator of the PDSR (Party for Social Democracy in Romania) and no less than vice-president of the Senate’s Committee for Defense, declared in 1997.⁸⁷ During the 1995 presidential election campaign in Poland, Lech Walesa and his supporters publicly denounced the purported Jewish origin of the opposition candidate, Alexander Kwasniewski. “In Poland,” the latter declared in a dignified speech, “if someone is better educated and speaks other languages, they say you are a Jew. If that’s the definition of the Jew, okay, I’ll be a Jew.” When he was, however, forced to confirm or to refute the “accusation” of being a Jew, Kwasniewski replied: “I’m a Pole and I would like to be proud of being a Pole. But after such a question, that such a question is even raised, I am not so proud.”⁸⁸

THE JEW AS CRAFTSMAN

Like any other cliché, the one according to which “Jews are good tradesmen” contains some truth. Dealing with this important social and economic aspect in all its complexity (it is one of the aspects that made the “Jewish problem” a problem) is outside the scope of the present study, yet we should at least outline the quantitative justification, or lack of any justification, for the cliché in question. We shall not discuss the exceptional cases in which it was incorporated into law, as in Hapsburg Bukovina during the reign of Maria Theresa: “Because the Jews are merchants by nature, they are forbidden to practice all other professions,” stipulated article no. 59 of the *Judenordnung*, an ordinance issued in 1776 in Timișoara and enforced until 1778. After this date, the restrictions imposed on the Jews were amended to some extent and, besides trades, they were permitted to practice certain métiers (as tailors, shoemakers, jewelers, etc.).⁸⁹ Even so, around the middle of the following century, the state of affairs was one very far from normalization. Hungarian politician József Eötvös, an advocate of the emancipation of the Jews in the area, wrote in 1840:

Jews have practiced commerce because access to any other occupation that could provide for their needs had been for a long time forbidden to them.... Why should we not give land to Jews for possession? Why should we deny them access to craft guilds?⁹⁰

The “Israelites of Transylvania” complained in 1842 to the Transylvanian Council that they were “forced to exclusively practice only trading..., because all the other possibilities for earning a living had been closed to them” and that they oriented themselves “towards usury not because of their nature, but because of those decisions according to which all ways of access to other fields and to prosperity had been closed to them.” In other countries, the petitioners concluded, “Jews had been practicing crafts for a long time, and wherever emancipation had become a reality, in all places the Israelites, in ever increasing numbers, turned from trading to the crafts.”⁹¹ Because of administrative restrictions, the percentage of Jewish tradesmen who were registered in Transylvania (as merchants, innkeepers, or tavern-keepers) was relatively large, but decreasing, in that period (69.8 percent in 1813 and 60.6 percent in 1848), while that of producers (craftsmen, farmers) was relatively small, though steadily increasing (2.7 and 17.5 percent in 1813 and 1848 respectively).⁹²

I shall not take into consideration situations in which certain commentators or censuses placed Jewish craftsmen under the heading of “merchants” because they sold their products themselves. Such cases merely display a (sometimes voluntary) vice of classification. In 1838, for instance, in a census done in Bucharest, several Jewish masters (tinkers, glass blowers, blacksmiths) were registered as tradesmen.⁹³ In a comic one-act play, Vasile Alecsandri had a character say that “in Jassy, all the shops you run into are Jewish: ‘*Leiba, tailor for men,*’ ‘*Moisi shoemaker for women*’... [emphasis mine—A.O.],”⁹⁴ while Bukovinian author Emmanuel Gregorovița (1857–1915) writes in one of his short stories of “the metal shop owned by a Jew.”⁹⁵ In this case the “shop” is evidently merely the commercial annex of the workshop where the Jewish tradesman works. This annex is nevertheless more “visible” than the workshop itself. Unfortunately, the tendency to consider “producers of the goods they sold” as tradesmen is also found among certain contemporary commentators.⁹⁶

In 1820, during the reign of Mihai Sutu, a census was conducted of the entire tax-paying population in Moldavia, in which tradesmen and craftsmen were correctly placed under different headings. I have deliberately chosen this census because it was taken after several consecutive waves of Jewish immigration into Moldavia at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, engendered by the three partitions of Poland (1772, 1793, and 1795), by the inclusion of Bukovina in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1775), and by the seizure of Bessarabia by the Russian Empire (1812).

In the town of Jassy, for instance, the census registered 1,809 heads of native Jewish households, of which 168 were listed as merchants. This accounts for about 9.3 percent. We can verify this figure by comparing it to the percentage of tradesmen among the Jews who lived in Jassy as foreign subjects (the so-called *sudditos* or *unthertans*): 1,145 heads of households of which 105 were in trade, accounting for 9.2 percent. This percentage might have been slightly higher, considering that only taxpayers participated in the census; evidently, this left out not only those who were exempt from taxes, but also those who were dodging them. However, such people were to be found in the other social and professional categories as well, so that the error must be confined within safe limits.

As can be seen, the percentages are not too high and, in any case, they would be unable to justify all by themselves the emergence of the stereotype under discussion. What probably played an important role in creating the

image of the “merchant-Jew” was not so much the large number of Jewish, but rather the small number of Romanian, tradesmen. In other words, it may be more significant to have a look at the percentage of Jewish out of the total number of merchants. We possess such data for Romania in the first decade of the twentieth century: Jews accounted for 21.1 percent of the tradesmen in 1902, 26.1 percent in 1906, and 24 percent in 1909. These percentages would be appreciably higher, historian Carol Iancu has good reason to believe, if we took into account the situation in Moldavia alone, where approximately three-quarters of the total population of Jews in Romania used to live at that time.⁹⁷

Instead, the fact that the number of Jewish craftsmen was much greater than that of the Jewish merchants was to a great extent ignored. Radu Rosetti spoke of “the numberless Jewish craftsmen” in Moldavia during this period.⁹⁸ According to the same census of 1820, in Jassy there were 268 registered masters and journeymen (40.5 percent) among native Jews, and 410 masters and journeymen (36 percent) among the Jews who were foreign subjects.⁹⁹ Around the middle of the nineteenth century, J. F. Neigebauer, who, in his position as Prussian consul in Jassy was extremely well acquainted with the situation, wrote:

The great problem that other states have not yet solved, which is that of making the Jews interested in crafts, is solved in Moldavia. A large segment of the Jews in Jassy live by the labor of their own hands as craftsmen. The largest part of glass blowers, carpenters, tailors, shoemakers, or jewelers are Jews.¹⁰⁰

In his turn the Frenchman Emile Desjardins noted that “the Jew [of Moldavia] is a tailor, a tanner, a tinker, a shoe-maker, a clock-maker....”¹⁰¹ The same conclusion was reached in 1839 by two Scottish missionaries traveling through the Romanian Principalities: “Most of the Jews from Foxshany [i.e., Focșani] are craftsmen; very many are tailors and shoemakers.”¹⁰² In Piatra Neamț, for instance, in 1902, 39 of 42 tailors were Jews (93 percent), while out of a total of 40 shoemakers 34 were Jews (85 percent), out of 18 ironsmiths 12 were Jews (67 percent), out of 19 carpenters 12 were Jews (63 percent), and so on.¹⁰³ At the beginning of the twentieth century, Nicolae Iorga himself remarked on the fact that, unlike in other parts of Romania, “in our Moldavia” the Jews “kept the trade,” but also “the crafts.”¹⁰⁴ In major cities of Transylvania and Banat as well (Arad and Timisoara, for example) the same quota of 40 percent of the Jews were craftsmen at the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁵

This state of things was even more eloquent in Walachia. The two Scottish missionaries mentioned above observed that in Bucharest “nine out of every ten carpenters are Jews.”¹⁰⁶ In a taxpayers’ census in the “community of the Polish [i.e., Ashkenazi] Jews,” also taken in Bucharest, in the period 1834–1844, the percent of craftsmen was 73.7 (they were mostly tailors, shoemakers, hatters, carpenters, tinkers, house painters, masons, silversmiths, coppersmiths, glass blowers, carters, etc.), while the percent of tradesmen and moneylenders was only 9.4 (“peddlars,” “chapmen,” “hucksters,” “hawkers,” and “moneylenders”).¹⁰⁷ This ratio between the number of Jewish craftsmen and that of Jewish tradesmen was confirmed by Iuliu Barasch, who had the following to say in 1842 about the “so-called Judeo-Polish community” of Bucharest:

The Jews are, for their largest part, craftsmen, such as tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, tinkers, and so on, and they have earned the great confidence of the Christian inhabitants and of the great boyars as well. Nevertheless, you will find some rich tradesmen among them, or couriers, go-betweens, hucksters, and other parasites of this kind from the world of commerce.¹⁰⁸

Jewish artisans organized their separate guilds and erected their own synagogues, as was the case in Bucharest: Tailors’ Guild Synagogue (founded in 1837), Cobblers’ Synagogue (1855), Metalworkers’ Synagogue (1896), etc. Especially in Walachia, many denominations of professions became patronyms adopted by the Jews. Beside names such as Breslaşu (guild-member), Bacalu or Băcanu (greengrocer), Bărbieru (barber), Sacagiu (hauler), Birjaru (charriot-driver), Făinaru (wheat merchant), Moraru (miller), Casapu or Măcelaru (butcher), Dascălu (teacher), and Crâșmaru (tavern-keeper), Jews have also adopted the names of Romanian crafts and arts: Argintaru (silversmith), Blănaru (fur peddler), Boiangiu (textile dyer), Butnaru-Bodnariu (barrel carpenter), Căciularu (hatter), Căldăraru (bucket carpenter), Croitoru (tailor), Dulgheru (carpenter), F(i)eraru (metal worker), Mătăsaru (silk merchant), Opincaru (traditional shoemaker), Pantofaru (shoemaker), Sticlaru (glass worker), Stoleru (carpenter), Tăbăcaru (tanner), Tinichigiu (tinsmith), Zugravu (wall painter), etc.¹⁰⁹ Speaking of the manner in which the image of the Jew is reflected in the Romanian mirror, it should be emphasized that it was precisely the Romanians who granted these names to the Jews. Employed at an earlier stage as identifiers (for instance, Lazar the Tailor), these gradually became official surnames, transmitted from one generation to another.

It is interesting—even paradoxical—that, roughly speaking, the same distribution of professions is to be found again, about one century later during the first decades of the twentieth century, both in Romania (in 1913, 45 percent of the Jews were industrially oriented, either as craftsmen or workers)¹¹⁰ and at the other end of the world, in the United States. Statistical data collected between 1900 and 1925 relating to approximately one million Jewish immigrants to the United States, for the most part from Central and Eastern Europe, show the following: 10.1 percent were employed in trade and 60.4 percent in industry and crafts.¹¹¹ Moreover, the United States of those years offer proof of the same prejudices as were prevalent in Europe.¹¹² The clichés about the Jews had accompanied them across the Atlantic.

In these circumstances, what remains is to ask what complicated psychological mechanisms have concurred in creating the images of the Jew as *atypical tradesman* and *atypical craftsman*, since the figures seem to indicate the exact opposite. At all events, my conclusion is different from that reached by B. P. Hasdeu in 1866 (“The Jews present us with the spectacle of an entire nation of usurers and shopkeepers”)¹¹³ and closer to the one Carol Iancu has formulated for the situation existing in the Romanian Principalities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries:

With the exception of a small number of assimilated notabilities (bankers and rich tradesmen), and apart from a sparse, more or less assimilated, bourgeoisie (merchants), the majority of Jews were earning their living from manual labor.... They were tailors, shoemakers, tinkers, joiners, upholsterers, turners, masons, cabmen, smiths, porters, nightmen, etc., making up a class of craftsmen and workers which had the features of an underdeveloped populace.¹¹⁴

In 1891, the socialist physician Ștefan Stăncă arrived at a similar conclusion. He appealed to Jewish youth in order to gain their collaboration with a view to listing statistics about the professional categories of the Jews. The asserted purpose of the statistics was that of “counterbalancing antisemitic propaganda, which would judge a population of approximately 300,000 souls on account of the ravenousness of few miserly usurers, leading thus to a condition in which the affluence of workers, cobblers, tailors, builders, painters, saddlers, tinkers, as well as the dire life conditions of petty merchants, are altogether ignored.”¹¹⁵ In the Romania at the turn of the twentieth century, 70 percent of the tinkers,¹¹⁶ 50 percent of the upholsterers, 45.8 percent of the tailors, 16.6 percent of the cobblers, and so on, were indeed Jews.¹¹⁷

This was also typical of the Jewish quarter in a northern Moldavian *shtetl* (Dorohoi) at the beginning of the twentieth century, as described by Ion Călugăru in his autobiographical novel, *Copilăria unui netrebnic* [A good-for-nothing's boyhood], a world populated with "tailors, cobblers or sieve-makers, water-carriers, cart-drivers, or even butchers."¹¹⁸ The same type of people (tailors, shoe-makers, blacksmiths, ironsmiths, tinsmiths, wagon drivers, haulers, lute players, etc.) live in a poor town in Bessarabia (Holești), described around 1909 by Sholem Aleichem.¹¹⁹ Even after years had passed, the situation did not change dramatically: in 1941, for instance, all the tinkers of Czernowitz, with but one exception, were Jewish.¹²⁰

Once more, at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, in an article bearing the precise title, "The Jews as Craftsmen,"¹²¹ Romanian poet Alexandru Macedonski in his turn waded through the all-too-popular prejudices about the Jews' mercantilism. He attempted to prove that they

do not only indulge in monetary speculation, as some of the peoples they live among would say.... Nowadays, all over the world they are glass blowers, tinkers, enamelers, painters, jewelers, joiners, luxury potters, car builders, plasterers, mirror makers; finally, they can have any job and they work hard and fair in all directions. So, what about the legend that the Jew is nothing but a moneylender, a usurer, a banker, a haberdasher, and so on? Like many other legends, this has got to disappear....¹²²

In that same period even some Romanian intellectuals who were not partial to the Jews appreciated Jewish craftsmen. That was the case with Radu Rosetti, who in 1903 wrote the following: "I find it...impossible to speak ill of the craftsman of this race: he is worthy of all respect, he is sober, quiet, tidy, a tireless worker; he leaves no room for criticism...."¹²³

In 1875, Conservative Petre Carp, then minister of public education, addressed himself to the Romanians in a parliamentary session in the following phrases: "Do you want to triumph in the fight with the Jews? Be as industrious, moderate, and economical as they are, and thus you don't have to be afraid of anything.... The solution to the Jewish question is work competition."¹²⁴ From the same tribune, Jewish-Bessarabian Deputy Mayer Ebner (from Kishinev) declared in 1926: "Nobody will ever be under the impression that the productivity of the Jewish industrialist or of the Jewish craftsman can be questioned," while in 1928 Deputy Wilhelm Filderman, of the Union of Romanian Jews, criticized the geography schoolbooks designed for third-graders, which inculcated the minds of children with negative

stereotypes such as “Jews operate in commerce and uncomplicated crafts, which do not require much labor, yet bring in a lot of money in return.”¹²⁵ In the 1940s, Socialist sociologist Alexandru Claudiu praised “the intellectual and the moral qualities,” as well as “the social virtues” of the Jews: “industriousness, moderation, strong will, perseverance” and also, elsewhere, their “industriousness, seriousness, and stability.” Analyzing the social causes of antisemitism and referring to the antisemitism of the rivals, he considered that it was precisely these qualities (most of them being connected to the professional field) which generated anti-Jewish feelings among the Christian workers and tradesmen.¹²⁶

A century later, in 1990, Ioan Petru Culianu commented on the parliamentary statement by Petre Carp referred to earlier: “Petre P. Carp, leader of the [Conservative] Party, which was also supported by Eminescu, was unquestionably one of the most enlightened Romanians of all times. (This is probably why Eminescu was constantly in polemics with him.) Facing the protests of liberals who claimed that Jews should be restricted from free enterprise, because the latter were supposedly taking the place of Romanians, Petre P. Carp would answer: ‘You want to be like them? Then do whatever they are doing.’ What he meant was that the work ethic of Romanians and Jews was dissimilar. If the Romanian craved for well being, he should adopt a capitalist-like work ethic.”¹²⁷

What Radu Rosetti would not say about Jewish craftsmen was openly stated by Mihai Eminescu, in his capacity as publicist. In the 1880s he presented the Jew as a parasite and a speculator, one who swindles and corrupts. Eminescu tried to prove that the Jew was not a producer, but only a trader of goods.¹²⁸ When he nevertheless produced them, the goods were of poor quality and expensive: “If [the Jew] is a craftsman at all, he is superficial, he works only for the eyes,” unlike his Romanian, German, or Czech counterpart. “‘Cheap and bad’ is the slogan of the Jew [i.e., the Jewish craftsman], until he ruins the Christian worker,” Eminescu wrote in 1877, “‘expensive and bad’ is his slogan when he remains alone to control the market.”¹²⁹

Eminescu was not the first to expound this type of idea. The French Consul of Moldavia, Guérault, maintained around the year 1848 that in Jassy the Jews “do everything wrong, but they do everything” (“ils font tout mal, mais ils font tout”).¹³⁰ In similar cases, Judeophobic feelings would at times be combined with Germanophile ones. In 1831, for instance, in a book about Bessarabia and Chișinău (Kishinev), German doctor I. H. Zucker wrote about

the Jewish craftsman—"carpenter, tailor, shoemaker, glass blower, silversmith, tinker"—who, "for less pay would, as often as not, botch the job [*Pfuscherarbeit*]." In this way, this "dirty Polish Jew," Zucker commented, vied with other craftsmen and especially with the "German craftsman" who was said to be "industrious, clean, cheap, yet a drunkard."¹³¹ A century later, Nicolae Iorga would maintain in his turn that the Jewish craftsmen were those who "could with the greatest ease adapt to any environment" and who would "defeat [their competitors] through the swiftness of their often superficial work and by their modest demands."¹³²

Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz has highlighted a similar phenomenon—the emergence of clichés like those above—in the Polish folk mentality. Despite the true professional structure of the Jewish community of Poland, "which included a large group of craftsmen," in folk literature it was common for the Jew to appear, with very few exceptions, as a publican, innkeeper, shopkeeper, peddler, or usurer. Evidently, these occupations were more "present," more "visible" to the Polish peasant. "Jewish contacts with Poles took place chiefly during the time when Jews sold Poles products, and Jews were thus mainly labeled as sellers in the peasant memory and opinion. In that frame of mind, only the most outwardly expressive features of the Jews appear—those felt to be the negative and amusing ones."¹³³

A similar perception of the Jew has survived in this part of Europe to this very day. For example, according to a poll of a representative sample of the Hungarian population in 1995, the strongest stereotypes concerning the Jews proved to be the following: Jews are "materialists" (a different formulation for "the Jews have a mercantile spirit"; 78 percent), "pushy" (66 percent), "cunning" (63 percent), "rapacious" (62 percent), and "greedy" (45 percent).¹³⁴ These stereotypical features of character could rather be said to define the merchant or the moneylender, but could hardly apply to the craftsman.

An ample and far-reaching social and economic analysis of these phenomena is outside the scope of the present study. It is certain, however, that in this respect, no less than in others, reality is correctly reflected not by prejudices and mental patterns transmitted from father to son, but by minute analysis of the professional structure of society. As for the Romanian context, some specialists have published the results of valuable research which overthrow well-established mental reflexes.¹³⁵

THE JEW AS MONEYLENDER

“To be a Jew in the Middle Ages meant not only belonging to a certain nation, but to a certain profession as well. To be a Jew meant to be an usurer and the other way round; the character of the Jew became proper to that of an usurer and the character of the usurer became proper to that of a Jew.”

Karl Kautsky, *Das Judentum* (1890)

In Western and Central Europe, the professional prototype of the Jew was the moneylender. He found his epitomical incarnation in Shylock, the relentless banker in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. “Shylock is an all-encompassing formula, applicable to all the Jews in particular. Shylock is the prototype of the Jews!” wrote B. P. Hasdeu in 1865.¹³⁶ The Shakespearean character has become so representative that his name has entered the everyday vocabulary as a common noun (“shylock” meaning an unscrupulous usurer). The phenomenon is so much the more interesting if we remember that Shakespeare wrote his play at the end of the sixteenth century, more than 300 years after the complete expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290. This is one more argument which demonstrates that anti-Jewish stereotypes were very-well preserved even in those areas (or especially in them) from which the Jews had been driven out. Analyzing “the process of mythologizing the Jew,” Leon Volovici has interpreted this apparent paradox as follows:

The disappearance of Jews from society has not led to the disappearance of antisemitism, but rather to its abstraction through an added emphasis on the mythical character of the Jew.... The predisposition to accept and reproduce negative stereotypes is generated by their persistence in religious tradition and in folklore, their penetration into everyday language, as well as by the presence of shared phantasms.”¹³⁷

In the West during the Middle Ages, Christians were banned from engaging in usury. Full use of biblical authority was made in order to achieve this aim, with passages which substantiated it being quoted either from the Old Testament (Exod. 22:24, Lev. 25:35–37, Deut. 23:20, etc.), or from the New Testament (Luke 6:34ff.). The Church Fathers and, subsequently, an entire chain of Church councils (from Clichy in 626 to Vienna in 1311) have set, as Jacques Le Goff has observed, “one stone at a time to the wall built by the Church to stop the wave of usury.”¹³⁸

Against this general background, it was the Jews who filled this much hated profession, disproving the validity of the famous Aristotelian dictum according to which *Nummus non parit nummos* ("Money does not breed"). This saying spread throughout western Europe from the thirteenth century onwards, in a period when the ideas of the ancient Greek philosopher were being discovered anew, but also—contra tempo—when a powerful bourgeoisie was being born, a class that needed the bankers and their money. I shall not attempt—as Walter Block has successfully done—to "defend the indefensible," i.e., the "scapegoats of economy." With the courage to rehabilitate unpopular professions, Block has demonstrated not only the necessity of the moneylender (or banker, in the last analysis) in a liberal society, but also that the latter "is just as honest as any other businessman"¹³⁹ I shall only claim that the propensity of Jews for amassing money was also due to the fact that, for centuries on end, they were prohibited by law from owning landed property or real estate. Instead of such possessions, the Jews attempted to amass movable valuables which were easy to hide and transport, were of great value, and did not take up much space. Money (or gold and jewelry, respectively) were most appropriate to comprise the treasury of a people always under threat, always driven away from a country, always wandering on roads. Martin Luther observed around 1523 that German society "forced [the Jews] to practice usury."¹⁴⁰ I do not have to dwell on this subject. From the socio-economic as well as cultural-religious perspectives, the phenomenon as a whole has been studied by notable medievalists, among them Jacques Le Goff, in several outstanding works.¹⁴¹

As we have seen, in Romanian folklore the Jew's relationship with money is continuously emphasized in different forms. In a legend from Moldavia, the Virgin Mary curses Judas in the following words: "You and your stock, you will sell yourselves and for money you will kill one another." "Judas became a merchant," continues the legend, "he and his descendants; for money, they would eat one other alive and would sell one another. From Judas' stock come the Judeans, which is to say, the Jews or Yids."¹⁴² In another legend, collected from the folklore of shepherds from Bukovina, God is said to have told the following to the Jews, at the beginning of time: "You shall endure much trouble and persecution; and for this I shall leave money to pour on you like water."¹⁴³ Similarly, in an old Romanian text from 1705, God gave "richness to the Jews."¹⁴⁴ In Romanian mythology, the *Jidovi*, an aborted species of giant androids, "had measureless wealth, money as one could not

carry in ten carts.” “The great wealth of the *Jidovs* is known high and low. In Vilcea they say of a rich man, that he is rich ‘like a Jidov.’”¹⁴⁵ What is more, a similar expression exists in French: “*riche comme un juif*,”¹⁴⁶ and another, conversely formulated, in Polish: “What Jew was ever poor!?”¹⁴⁷ “If one scratches a Sephardi Jew,” goes a proverb, “he might come across coins underneath his skin.”¹⁴⁸ In the Romanian and the Macedo-Romanian folk tradition,¹⁴⁹ legends of the same type as the above coexist with stories that reveal the cupidity of the Jews (in a legend from Walachia, for instance, “a Jew beat up the grave of a Romanian” who had died owing him much money),¹⁵⁰ with vulgar couplets shouted at dances and ending up, through degradation, in children’s folklore (“One dime, two dimes, / A cartful of kikes”),¹⁵¹ as well as with the numberless proverbs which point to the mercantilism of the Jews: “When they have nothing to do, the Jews count money on their fingers,” or “Never owe the Jew a dime.”¹⁵²

The Jew–money relationship came to be a literary motif as well. For instance, with Calistrat Hogaș, described by George Calinescu as “this major minor writer, with all of his senses alert,” the connection is almost sensuous. The senses of the Jew standing behind the counter would vibrate with delight in the presence of living coins:

the Yid grabbed it, turned it, twisted it, clinked it on the counter, scrutinized it close to the candle’s flame, averred to himself that it is neither copper, nor is it defaced, and let it drop in the safe, where its fall awakened a multitude of francs and coins, which erupted with a metallic sound appalled by the latter coin’s arrival, and then continued their profound sleep, together with the newcomer.¹⁵³

Nevertheless, I venture the opinion that in the collective imagination of eastern Europe the “Jew–money” relationship did not develop so much on account of the *moneylending Jew* as of the *merchant Jew*. I do not mean to diminish the importance of the *zaraf*, the moneylender, within the Jewish communities of Christian-Orthodox Europe in general, and of Romania in particular. This occupation, however, did not evolve in Romania as it did in other parts of the continent, a fact largely due to the precarious condition of the local middle classes. Society in the Romanian principalities, to go no further, was mostly structured in two classes at the extremes of society: the boyars and the peasants. Craftsmen, merchants, and entrepreneurs—those who, being in need of capital, were the ones who usually resorted to the services of moneylenders—formed a rather shallow middle-class stratum in the Romanian area, mostly comprised of foreigners.¹⁵⁴

What is more, as Nicolae Iorga has shown, the true “money traders” in the Romanian Principalities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—the ones who lent money to the ordinary people (those with “fees to pay and many needs”) as well as to merchants, boyars, and to the sovereigns themselves—were mostly Turks and Greeks.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, the term *zaraf* is of Turkish origin, while *camatar*, “usurer,” comes from the Greek. On the other hand, the Hebrew word for “moneylender” (*halfan*) did not enter the Romanian language, even if it does appear in some Moldavian chronicles.¹⁵⁶ In 1832, out of the forty-four registered moneylenders of Bucharest, only nine were Jews, i.e., approximately 20 percent.¹⁵⁷

In 1821, the royal secretary in Bucharest, François Recordon, attempted to correct the negative image of the Jewish moneylender to which he had himself been accustomed in France. Speaking of the “Jews’ love for work,” Recordon concluded: “Although the name of the Jew has become proverbial as designating the lowest of usurers, one must not think that all the individuals of this nation are lacking in uprightness.”¹⁵⁸ Moses Schwarzfeld, when reviewing the occupational span of the Jews living in the Romanian area, exaggerated this entrenched cliché in the opposite direction: “Of the entire range of occupations of Romanian Jews, money dealing must almost entirely be excluded, because only sparingly and little by little did they come to commit themselves to such a trade.”¹⁵⁹ Whatever the case, the number of moneylenders was being kept in check by the authorities who artificially imposed an upper limit by legal means. In 1836, for instance, the Administrative Council of Moldavia decided that “the number of moneylenders changing currency should be limited for the town of Jassy to ten, and chosen only from among wealthy and sufficiently trustworthy people, who would vouch in writing to abide by the established rules in every detail.” In the rest of the country, the number of moneylenders was limited through the same administrative regulation to “one or two” in every town.¹⁶⁰

Even in neighboring Catholic Poland, with its large Jewish population, the percentage of Jewish moneylenders decreased considerably since the seventeenth century. As a result of the dramatic pauperization of the Jewish communities of Poland and Lithuania, a process which reached one of its peaks in the second half of the eighteenth century, the occupational structure of the Jews was significantly modified: from *moneylenders*, they became mostly craftsmen and small tradesmen, *borrowers* of money from others, namely from the representatives of the Catholic Church and of the Polish *szlachta*, or aristocracy.¹⁶¹ As Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz has shown, in the

Polish traditional mentality the Jew is first an innkeeper, secondly a tradesman, and only in third place a moneylender.¹⁶² Induced by certain historic realities as well as by stereotypical mental reflexes, this arbitrary representation of the Jewish occupational structure in the old society of Poland is nevertheless significant. Polish folklore, in dozens of hypostases, makes no exception about placing the Jew in the milieu of money. Here are but two examples: The popular piggybanks which peasants bought in the markets were commonly in the shape of a Jew, preserving all the clichés of his traditional image. It was believed that the wooden or clay figurines representing a “typical” Jew would bring prosperity;¹⁶³ some Polish carols which peasants used to sing before Jewish houses started *ex abrupto*: “The little Jew went to the synagogue / And found a satchel of money.” The text of the carol goes on to present how, by striking incredibly hard bargains, the Jew manages to buy a huge quantity of products with the money.¹⁶⁴

Returning to Romania, in another article (“Usury and Usurers,” published in 1907, the year of the peasant uprising and of the anti-Jewish pogroms in Romania), poet Alexandru Macedonski found the courage to contradict an *opinio communis*: “Usury is not a sentiment of the Jewish soul, it is a sentiment of all people, no matter what their religion might be..., [but] it is used to shed an infamous light on a certain class of Israelites.” Against all odds, Macedonski was doing battle with the opinion that prevailed in that epoch and was kindled by dozens of characters in fiction, from Alecsandri’s “Imergold the usurer” and Topârceanu’s “Goldman from the Credit,” to “the Jewish usurer Asher,” devised by Alexandru Pelimon, or Gala Galaction’s banker Simon. This image was indeed circulated not only by two-penny scribblers, such as a certain A. Kălimănescu, in 1865 (“the education and the nature of the Jew causes his heart to beat only at the sound of gold, he is deaf to all the rest”)¹⁶⁵ but also by cultural giants such as B. P. Hasdeu: “Whatever he [i.e., the Jew] be, he is above all a usurer.” No matter what his dealings might be, he is first of all a “usurious Jew.” Hasdeu reached this conclusion at the end of an analysis performed on “three Jews” in world literature: Shakespeare’s Shylock, Balzac’s Gobseck, and Alecsandri’s Moses. For Hasdeu, “the most categorical link” between these characters consisted in the fact that “they are usurers, all three of them.” Usury was the “national occupation” of the Jew, he concluded.¹⁶⁶ Not only was Hasdeu’s conclusion mistaken, so was the very premise on which it rested: Master Moise, a character in Vasile Alecsandri’s play, *The Village Leeches*, is not a

moneylender, but an innkeeper (the “village tavern-keeper,” in the author’s own words).

Alexandru Macedonski was not the only Romanian poet who tried to minimize the dimensions of the legend which is the object of our analysis. Here is what Tudor Arghezi wrote in a pamphlet in 1930:

The legend requires the Jew to be, all in all, a millionaire.... A Jew must have, according to the legend, one bank, three factories, one estate..., the capitals would have an express philosemitic tendency, all the states would mint coins for the Jews alone, those who have the gift of a devastating hypnotism for funds and budgets. This is how it happens that the world actually divides itself into millionaires and Christians, in deadly war one against the other.... A Jew can do whatever he pleases, as long as he has money. Apart from the many things of prime utility, he buys all the luxury items, to his liking—consciousness, patriotism, justice, law—because the Christian cannot ascend to the class of the mighty, that is, of the Jews, except as one “sold”.... The legend also wants the Jews to leap all as one soul to the rescue of one of them, as soon as a millionaire falls into the ranks of Christians. This way, the Jews make up what has been called a *kahal*, a kind of popery, of jesuitry, a Masonry, and it would allow no one from the [nation of] Israel to be lost.

To undermine this false myth, Arghezi goes on to describe the misery in which the pauper “millionaires” lived in the Jewish neighborhoods of Jassy, Pașcani, and Târgu Frumos.¹⁶⁷

Also in the 1930s, Mihail Sebastian used the same type of rhetoric in his novel with autobiographical overtones, *De două mii de ani* [For two thousand years] (1934). Iosef Hechter, the protagonist of the novel, an alter ego of the novelist, opposes to the small number of Jewish bankers (accused of manipulating Romanian politicians with their money) a large army of Jewish craftsmen living in filth from hand to mouth:

To the two Jewish bankers that you were talking about I could oppose twenty, two thousand, two hundred thousand wretched Jewish craftsmen, unhappy, struggling along between their daily bread and their daily hunger. So what? Would that shatter your intuitions? God forbid! Don’t you see that what you call your “intuition” and what I call your “antisemitism” purposely picks those examples which can fuel it and ignores those that might contradict it?¹⁶⁸

In 1935, Sebastian accused his former mentor, Nae Ionescu, of antisemitism and arbitrariness for the way in which the latter, in his famous preface to *For Two Thousand Years*, “establishes in no more than three words an identity between Talmudism and usury.”¹⁶⁹ “From the Talmudist to the gold-weighting and money-lending usurer,” wrote Nae Ionescu, “there is not even one step: they are one and the same thing. The Jews have, therefore, at all times, been exceptional money handlers. This quality of theirs has brought them into the vicinity of kings and of the greatest of all nations.”¹⁷⁰

Karl Marx too solves “the Jewish question” in three words: “What was the profane basis of Judaism? Practical need, self-interest. What is the worldly cult of the Jew? Commercial speculation. What is his worldly god? Money.”¹⁷¹ Almost a century later, though from a declared anti-Marxist position, Nichifor Crainic used the same antisemitic clichés: “Judaism means money-lending.... The Jews’ strength is money.”¹⁷²

Needless to say, the reasoning that has turned every Jew into a money handler and considered all usurers to be Jews has relied on a time-honored stereotype. In France, for instance, this type of thinking has become the image of exaggeration par excellence. When confronted with an obvious exaggeration, the French would commonly employ the saying “Tous les banquiers ne sont pas des Juifs.”¹⁷³

In general, the image of the Jewish moneylender was projected with an excess of emotion on both sides. To the exaggerated conclusion of the type “All moneylenders are Jews” one opposed the reverse conclusion, just as exaggerated: “No moneylender is a Jew.” Obviously, feeling threatened, it was mostly the Jews who spread this second type of message. As we have seen, in 1889 Moses Schwarzfeld believed that “of the entire range of occupations of Romanian Jews, money dealing must almost entirely be excluded.”¹⁷⁴ In an attempt to obtain the civil and political rights of which they were deprived until 1919, the “naturalized Jews” of Romania submitted a petition to Parliament in 1910 which, among other things, claimed:

It was not the Jews who were discovered by inquests and by authorities functioning as moneylenders and village leeches. Popular banks, if they came up against a strong opponent, that opponent was with the moneylenders, yet not the Jewish moneylenders, who were nowhere to be found all across the country. For decades on end, the Jewish moneylender in the countryside was the talk of all; a certain kind of literature also put him on the stage; yet when they examined

things on the ground, it was revealed that the money-holders were not the Jews.¹⁷⁵

In this part of the continent, the principal professional stereotype of the Jew was not so much the moneylender as the tradesman, and—primarily—the tavern-keeper. The place of the moneylender in the collective mentality was to a very large extent occupied by the latter. In Catholic and Protestant Europe, the moneylender (in particular the Jewish one) was associated with Judas Iscariot, with the Devil, and with Hell. That was not only because, on the whole, the Jew was a subject of demonization. Since Heaven was forbidden him (cf. Ps. 15:5), the moneylender could only end up in the fires of Hell. To the same *post mortem* state he is condemned by Dante (see *The Inferno*, 17: 43–78). Again, in the eastern part of the continent, the demonized figure was not so much the *moneylending Jew*, as the *tavern-keeping Jew*. If “money is the Devil’s eye,” then brandy must be his blood.

THE JEW AS MUSICIAN

There were cases in which the locale of the interethnic love relation was the pub (*orânda*), quite often taken on lease by a Jew:

At the pub near the heath
Costache Roșcovan [i.e., the Red] drinks
With his brother Buzdugan
With three daughters of a Yid.¹⁷⁶

*

Down in the valley in the moorland,
Three Jewesses keep the pub.¹⁷⁷

*

“I saw the lassies were drinking,
And I joined them,
With three of them in merrymaking.
Wine is fine and an ounce is not enough,
Yet the tavern lady is bewitching.”¹⁷⁸

Passing through Bucharest in 1825, traveler Robert Walsh wrote with the indignation characteristic of an Anglican reverend: “The town is filled with inns, and, in order to attract customers, there is a number of women in each of them, always ready to dance and sing at the first sign of a customer.”¹⁷⁹

The image of the wife of the tavern-keeper also appears in Polish folklore. As a rule she is named Hayah, an attractive Jewess who would sell vodka to

customers and would not hesitate to dance and sing along with them. At times, she is infatuated with a Christian customer and elopes with him, stealing away with all her husband's goods.¹⁸⁰ At times, clients sexually harassed the young wife of the innkeeper, or his daughter (as happened with the "little Romanian Jewess" in Mihail Sadoveanu's novel, *Floare ofilită* [Withered flower] published in 1905), or "the young, buxom, and quick waitress and wife of Neumann the innkeeper," in the novel *Ion*, published by Rebreanu in 1920, or the waitress called Nehe, "a swarthy and attractive woman," in the novel *Stele rătăcitoare* (Wandering stars), written by Sholem Aleichem in 1909.¹⁸¹ With respect to the three examples of folk poetry given above, we should not forget that in 1743, among the reforms initiated by the Phanariot ruler Constantin Mavrocordat, it was decided that "female tavern-keepers—Jewish women as well as Moldavian, without preference" should have their license to sell liquor withdrawn "either in the borough, or in the country," because "it has been brought to our knowledge that they give rise to much mischief, women and young girls being chosen on purpose." A chronicler of the epoch commended this "royal decree," rejoicing at the fact that this way an end was put to "the age-old practice of the boyars of placing women in taverns, and choosing the prettiest ones for this job, too, so that wine would sell quickly."¹⁸²

But it seems that during this period Jewish women as entertainers could be found not only in the inns of Galician and Moldavian villages, as well as in several small towns ("filled with dust and Jews," as Mihail Sadoveanu said), but also at the princes' courts. In a historical monograph on Jassy, Nicolae A. Bogdan notes the fact that in the years 1753–1756 large feasts were held at the Court of Matei Ghica-Vodă where, according to the chronicler Enache Kogălniceanu, among all the other delights, "Jewesses" were brought to dance at the court, while the king and his lady "feasted their eyes on the sight."¹⁸³ Saxon-German chronicler Georg Kraus mentioned that among the comedians at the court of the Prince of Transylvania, Gabriel Bethlen (1613–1629) were Jewish women and men.¹⁸⁴

Turning to Jews in circumstances such as these might well have been an established habit at the court of sovereigns in the area. Around the year 1836, Prussian officer H. K. B. von Moltke (the future German marshal), invited to dinner at his court in Silistra by Said Mârza Pasha, the Governor of Dobruja and of northeastern Bulgaria, could see a Jew who sang and danced in order to entertain the guests at the pasha's table.¹⁸⁵

By way of digression, it should be pointed out that during the Middle Ages, Jewish minstrels and dancers were at high stake in western and central Europe, distinguished Jewish troubadours being frequently employed by the courts of sovereigns and bishops.¹⁸⁶ The existence of a Jewish musicians' guild in central Europe is mentioned in Prague in the first half of the seventeenth century, contemporaneously with the emergence of other guilds of Jewish tradesmen. In 1484 the municipal officials of Frankfurt-on-Main forbade all Christians to attend and observe Jewish festivals and vice-versa, also forbidding Jewish fiddlers and dancers from performing at Christian weddings and holidays. In 1641, Archbishop Harrach, and then Emperor Ferdinand III of Habsburg, issued licenses permitting Jewish musicians to play exclusively at Christian baptism and wedding ceremonies. Due to competition and collaboration between Jewish and Christian musicians, they influenced each other in the choice of themes and the use of instruments.¹⁸⁷

We get a fuller picture when recalling the names of popular dances, "Jidăncuța" or "Ovreicuța" (The little Jewess), which have permeated Romanian folklore,¹⁸⁸ as well as by the fact that at the beginning of the nineteenth century in Walachia, Jews, both women and men, "spent their Saturdays dancing the *hora* to the music of the lute," which obviously upset the rabbis, for this was "a blatant breaking of the religious prescriptions."¹⁸⁹ In addition, Romanian Jewish immigrants to Palestine took with them the Romanian circle-dance called *hora*, which thus became an Israeli national dance as well.¹⁹⁰ The role played by Jewish professional folk band musicians—apart from those of Romanian and Gypsy stock—in Romanian folk music has been commented upon by ethnologists.¹⁹¹

Mention should also be made here of the "mourning Jewesses" of Thessaloniki and other provinces south of the Danube. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Ion Nenițescu described this guild of Jewish women who extemporized at the deathbed "incredibly sonorous weeping. Among these mourners, some should be hailed as genuine artists, when it comes to bringing in bold relief the good deeds of those they bemoan."¹⁹² Not only Jewish mourners were famous in Thessaloniki, but dancers and singers too. Feasts and social merrymaking were inconceivable without their participation.¹⁹³

It is known that around the middle of the nineteenth century Jacob Psantir (the future historian of the Jews of Romania) founded a band of Jewish musicians, plus "four crafty Gypsies," in Fălticeni (Bukovina) with whom he made the rounds not only through the Romanian Principalities, but also

through Bulgaria, Turkey, Crimea, Bessarabia, etc, playing at parties of grandees or peasants, or at Jewish or Christian weddings. His favorite instrument was the hammered dulcimer (in Turkish, *santur/santir*), from which derived his name. Moreover, it seems that the dulcimer (along with the violin) was one of the main instruments used by the Jewish musicians of that region. A Jew, “Abraham the dulcimer player,” is registered among the “Jews of Cernowitz” in a census of the population of Moldavia in 1774.¹⁹⁴ To enliven a nocturnal party held at his domains in Mokroe village, Dostoyevsky’s character Dimitri Karamazov employed the services of a band of Jewish hammered dulcimer (Yiddish *tsimbl*, Romanian *țambal*), as well as zither players. It is true that he resorted to this ensemble in the absence of Gypsy musicians, who were unavailable at the time (*The Brothers Karamazov*, 1879–1880).

As itinerant fiddlers, roaming through towns and boroughs, Jews were frequently mistaken for vagabonds and beggars (*Müssiggänger, Betteljuden*), and were therefore evicted. In 1781, for instance, the *kahal* addressed General Enzenberg (Governor of Bucovina) in a written complaint, on account of the eviction of several Jewish “musicians” even though they were “honest, settled people.”¹⁹⁵ Around a century later, on the other hand, some Jewish fiddlers would ramble through boroughs and fairs and play their instruments in coffee shops and taverns: “Around that time [1876],” noted Abraham Goldfaden, father of the first Yiddish theater in the world, “in different saloons, [Jewish] performers would entertain the public of the city of Jassy with Jewish musical lore.”¹⁹⁶ Jacob Psantir, Berl Margulies, Selig Berdicever, and Welvel Zbarjer are only a few names. Some of them came from the Galician town of Brody, and were known as Brody Singers (*Broder singer*, in Yiddish).

In Central Europe, Jews who played music in inns were given the frivolous name of “beer fiddlers” (*Bierfiedler*).¹⁹⁷ Others used to join the traditional *hadhoim*, paid for by the host to entertain the wedding guests. A Polish Jewish musician at the beginning of the nineteenth century is the famous character Yankl the innkeeper in Adam Mickiewicz’s poem “Pan Tadeusz” (1834). He also played the dulcimer (“alongside violin and bagpipe players), and he had played at many Christian and Jewish weddings, wandering through the world as a strolling musician and learning to play folk music, Polish mazurkas, and Galician songs:

As a musician, Yankl was renowned,
Once with his dulcimer he wandered round

The country houses and much praise had gained
Both by his playing and his voice well-trained.
Though Jewish he had good pronunciation,
And specially loved the ballads of the nation.
And brought back many from his travel west
Galician songs, mazurkas and the rest.¹⁹⁸

THE JEW AS TAVERN-KEEPER

“I would surely drink palinka,
But it is stored in the barrels of the Yid,
Only the money still is in the purse of the lad”
(Popular song from Maramureş)

The “House of the Lord” versus the “House of the Devil”

In the folklore of Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and to some extent of the Ukraine, there are records of a specific type of carol that focuses on the tavern-keeper. In the case of Romanians, as well as of Poles, carolers wish the Jewish tavern-keeper wealth and well being, just as they do any Christian in the village.¹⁹⁹ However, the benign picture of the tavern-keeper, Jewish or non-Jewish, is far from prevalent in peasant imagery. To remain within the sphere of ritual Christmas customs, namely those still practiced in Polish villages, during the Herod folk plays (traditional with Romanians and other Eastern European peoples) an important role is assigned the tavern-keeper, a “Jew-devil” character. A boy dresses as a hunchbacked and lame Jew, with a beard and ritual sidelocks, wearing a black mask and carrying a pedlar’s sack. On the death of King Herod, the “Jew-devil” addresses “Herod’s soldiers” as follows:

It maybe that I, you fools, shall be your king?
I’ll go to the manor and fetch the still,
I’ll set to make brandy,
I’ll make you go mad drinking.
You’ll drink, I shall live on your folly,
And I shall be your king.
“So be it, Jew,” answer the “soldiers.”²⁰⁰

This posture of the demonic king who enslaves his subjects by means of drinking represents the most common projection of the Jewish tavern-keeper in Polish traditional culture.²⁰¹ This stereotypical image differs in no essential

way from how the tavern-keeping Jew was perceived in Eastern European culture in general or in Romanian culture in particular.

In iconic representations of “Judgment Day” painted on the walls of Romanian churches in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the “tavern-keeper” burns in the “river of fire” next to the “enchanter.”²⁰² It is significant that it is not the *dishonest* tavern-keeper who is specifically doomed to the “torments of Hell” but the tavern-keeper, unqualified. No matter how he might behave, he is destined for Hell with no chance of redemption, for he is considered an agent of the Devil. In view of the fact that in Eastern European villages the tavern-keeper was most often a Jew, his demonization was an additional touch to the demonic portrait of the “imaginary Jew.” The reverse is also true.²⁰³

In Romanian mythical folklore, tobacco is not the only “devil’s grass”; the vine has the same origin. In folk legends that stem from Bogomilian sources and are consequently structured according to the principles of a dualistic theology, wine is considered to be a joint divine-demonic product: initially, wine was a “holy drink,” containing no alcohol, but the Devil poked his tail in “and folks have been getting drunk ever since.”²⁰⁴ In other Romanian folk legends, the Devil is the only one to blame for the appearance on earth of alcoholic drinks: “The Devil is said to have made the brandy,”²⁰⁵ or “[The Devil] taught Noah how to make his wine from grapevines and how to get the strife-begetting and death-begetting brandy from the grape husks.”²⁰⁶ It is not by chance that, in popular speech, brandy or *rachiu* is also called *drachiu* (Romanian *drac*=“devil” + *rachiu*), while the devil is nicknamed *Horilcă* (derivative of *horincă*, another popular name for cheap, poor quality brandy).²⁰⁷

The Devil is guilty not only of concocting the alcoholic drink in *illo tempore*, but also for the fact that people have consumed it on a daily basis until this day. According to folk beliefs, the Devil is the one that “sends [the man] to the tavern and spurs him to make mischief among men.”²⁰⁸ “When the man goes to the tavern, the Angel does not come with him, but remains on the threshold. Then the Devil tempts him to forget about the Angel, who is left outside, and spurs him on to raise hell, to get into a fight, to do harm to somebody, or to turn his mind to thoughts of foul deeds, of sins.”²⁰⁹ One of Mihail Sadoveanu’s short stories, “St. Vasile,” successfully makes narrative matter of the following intrigue, typical of traditional thinking: A “holy man” causes all the taverns of Bukovina to go bankrupt, as “he goes preaching among folks that the brandy’s none other but the Devil,” that it was “an

unclean drink, Satan's own."²¹⁰ Such Romanian beliefs and folk legends seems to go beyond the commonplace ethical perspective, and area more akin to a theological one. The tavern is interpreted as a place of sin, a demonic temple in which the Angel cannot tread. As a Romanian riddle puts it, the tavern is the "Devil's Cottage, in the middle of the village."²¹¹

Since the Church is the "House of the Lord," the tavern is represented in the collective imagination as the "House of the Devil," in which the Jewish tavern-keeper preaches. As an old Romanian saying, transcribed by Iordache Golescu as well as by Mihai Eminescu himself, has it, "the Devil does not erect churches"²¹²; instead, he builds taverns. A certain Bogomilian mentality can be discerned within this symmetrical and dualistic perspective, by way of which the Jewish tavern (the abode of the Devil) is opposed to the Christian Church (conversely, the abode of the Lord). During the first half of the nineteenth century, without any trace of Judeophobic intention, Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz himself speculated on the polarity of the Christian Church and the Jewish tavern in the space of confluence of Russia, Poland, and Lithuania. In his long poem "Pan Tadeusz" (completed in 1843), the tavern held in tenancy by the old Jew Yankl, who also is an "under-rabbi," is situated near the church, and from an architectonic point of view, "it well resembles a Temple," and may indeed be compared "to a synagogue." "It was a Sunday and they'd come from early Mass,/ To drink at Yankl's and the time to pass," is said of Polish nobles and peasants in the poem.²¹³

In an article published in 1879, writing on the phenomenon of "Jewish tavern-keeping" (viewed as an "utter scandal" and a "gangrene of society"), Mihai Eminescu deplored the fact that on Sundays the Romanian peasant prefers the tavern (a place of "prostitution of the soul") to the Church (a place of "elevation of the soul"). "Jewish taverns are places of dotage and of prostitution of the soul, and the liberty to keep them running on Sundays and on Church celebrations leads to the desertion of the Church and to the affluence of the tavern."²¹⁴ The religious discourse could not have been very different. "A good man, says the priest Belciug to a drunkard in Liviu Rebreanu's novel *Ion*, does not spend his days making the Jewish [tavern-keepers] rich while poisoning his own body with their filthy, devilish drinks."²¹⁵ In his account of the Romanian village, Daniel Barbu pointed to the eighteenth century as the epoch in which "the Church started to suffer in its prestige due to the competition of the tavern, which became an alternative place in which collective attitudes were formed."²¹⁶

However negative it may be, we must admit that there is a certain logic in this symmetrical, dualistic perspective, which opposes the *Jewish Tavern* (the Devil's abode) to the *Christian Church* (the Lord's abode). Interwar antisemitic rhetoric also speculated greatly on account of the antithesis between the two central institutions extant in the village. A contemporary caricature depicts Shtrul's tavern, teeming with inebriated peasants, located across from the deserted church, on the sacred Sunday: "Merry Shtrul, thieving Shtrul, / means to overthrow the altar, / and he shrewdly frowns, / because he placed his tavern nearby."²¹⁷ Competition between the Christian Church and the Jewish tavern is not only at a qualitative, but also at the quantitative, level. "The intention of Judaism," wrote the antisemitic journal *Porunca Vremii* in 1941, "is to destroy, and to dote on this people, and as unquestionable proof, there were in Romania 8,722 churches, and 95,000 taverns."²¹⁸

Paradoxically, certain radical nationalists today, instead of recuperating this concept, have promoted a new and rather atypical one: just like the "Kike's tavern," the "Christian Church"—on account of its Judaic roots—is itself a Jewish invention; accordingly, both institutions are equally malefic and demonic. In an article published in 1993 entitled "The Bases of Cleansing," the Ukrainian ultra-nationalistic leader A. Shcherbatiuc claimed that bloodshed is a necessity in the "titanic battle of a cosmic game," in order for the "national idea" to "arouse Ukrainian history from its slumber," to make sure that it does not remain stranded "halfway between the *Kike's church* and the *Kike's tavern*" [emphasis in original].²¹⁹

"The Jewish Tavern"

"Tavern-keeping or the renting of houses for drinks," Moses Schwarzfeld wrote in 1888, "is one of the oldest and most characteristic trades of the Jews in Moldavia. Even in Walachia we do see them in the remotest past occupied in the selling of liquor (*aquavite*) and continuing in this profession, even if on a diminished scale, to this day."²²⁰ Schwarzfeld's last observation appears to be correct. Liviu Rotman too believes that the image of the Jew as the village tavern-keeper is exaggerated. In the 1903–1904 statistics, for instance, Jews accounted for a mere 2.57 percent of the number of tavern-keepers on the territory of Romania.²²¹ "We must not imagine," historian Constantin C. Giurescu has written, "that tavern tenancy was a Jewish specialty."²²²

Documents from the second half of the sixteenth century speak of Jewish merchants who wholesale wine in Moldavia,²²³ yet the earliest attestations of

Jewish tavern-keepers in the Romanian area date back to the mid-seventeenth century. Available data seem to run counter the stipulations set by the ecclesiastical laws of the epoch, which prohibited Christians from accepting food or drink from Jews. "He who shall defile himself through the receipt from the hands of a Jew of wine," or of other goods "that a Christian must not taste"—it was stipulated in *The Law of the Church*, printed at Govora Monastery in 1640—"has the duty to call the priest, from whom he shall receive benediction, and he shall be allowed to touch them thereafter."²²⁴ Nevertheless, around the year 1654 "the first Jewish tavern holder in Moldavia, Mosc the Jew" appears in documents issued on the estate of the Cantacuzino family, of the county of Jassy.²²⁵ To all appearances, he was one of the thousands of Jews from the Ukraine searching for refuge from the pogroms of 1648–1651 perpetrated by the hordes of Cossacks led by the *hetman* Bogdan Chmielnicki. In 1670, an old record entered a certain "Lazăr the tavern-keeper," who had built himself "a house and cellar" in Stoiești (next to the borough of Focșani). In 1738, his descendent, Hersh the Jew, was himself a tavern-keeper in Focșani.²²⁶

At the onset of the eighteenth century, Dimitrie Cantemir discussed the "trading and tavern-keeping" in which Moldavian Jews dealt (*opificium, praeter mercaturam et cauponariam, nullum exercent*). In order to pursue these activities, the Jews "had to pay an additional tax that differed with each year, and was higher than the usual one" (*tributum annuum peculiare, gravius ordinario*).²²⁷ In that same epoch, Anton Maria del Chiaro, royal secretary to the sovereigns of Walachia from 1710 to 1716, wrote about the Walachian Jews that "they lived rather scantily, selling liquor and resorting to other odd jobs to earn a livelihood."²²⁸ In 1717, two Jewish brothers, residents of Pressburg (Bratislava), contracted a lease with the Habsburg authorities authorizing them to set up a plant for manufacturing palinka and beer; in addition, they were granted the monopoly for the sale of these beverages.²²⁹ In 1798, in an official document, the Jews of Oradea specified that "for seventy years," (i.e., from 1728), ever since they were granted the permission of the High Royal Court, they bartered "in taxes and tenancy, kosher wine, beer, and palinka."²³⁰

In 1754, Jews of Arad complained to the local authorities that for many of the Christian holidays (Easter, Christmas, Pentecost, Sundays, etc.) they were not allowed to boil palinka.²³¹ M. A. Katsaitis, a Greek traveler passing through Galați in 1742, described the low shingled houses in which "a lot of Jews lived who sold brandy, wine, tobacco, and were into other trades

too.”²³² The presence of Jewish brandy distillery owners and tavern-keepers in the Romanian Principalities was also substantiated by the German Franz Joseph Sulzer in his *Geschichte des transalpinischen Daciens* (vol. 1, Vienna 1781), in which he noted: “Here [i.e., in Czernowitz], as well as in other places in Moldavia and Walachia, they [i.e., the Jews] commonly get on well, occupied in liquor-producing and in all species of trade.”²³³ In the same period, several Jews in Bucharest kept “distilleries, which they had made at their own expense, on land given them by the Monarchs.”²³⁴ Around 1759, one of these, Pilat, a Jewish community leader, sold his distillery, located in the Brezoianu neighborhood.²³⁵

As they immigrated into Romania, chiefly from the northern and eastern areas inhabited by Slavic peoples (Poland, Ukraine, and Russia), the Jews brought with them the practices of making and drinking liquor produced from grains (corn, rye, and wheat). Consequently, the eighteenth century and the beginning of the next one saw the spread of liquors made of cereals (brandy, rye brandy, and vodka), which monopolized the market to the detriment of plum brandy (with its stronger variant, *slivovitz*), of brandy obtained by fermenting the husks of squeezed grapes (marc brandy), etc. The Jews at first sold the grain brandy they had brought with them from Poland or Ukraine, but later began to produce it themselves in distilleries built on lands belonging to monasteries or to Romanian boyars. An act issued in 1756 mentions the “Jewish distilleries” near the city of Soroca (in northern Bessarabia), where brandy, the import of which was prohibited, was being “boiled.”²³⁶ It is no coincidence that many of the terms in this sphere are of Slavic origin: *cârciumă*, *crâșmă* (both meaning tavern), *povarnă* (distillery), *horilcă* (brandy), *butelcă* (big bottle), *ploscă* (flask), *vadră* (wine cauldron), *velniță* (distillery), *vodcă* (vodka), etc.

In that same period, the Romanian Principalities were allegedly the “granary of Constantinople” (as Austrian Consul Ignatius Stefan Raicevich remarked around the year 1785),²³⁷ actually, as vassals of the Ottoman Empire they were obliged to sell to the Turks their entire surplus from the cereal harvest (the so-called “*zaherea*”) for a mere nothing. Even after the treaty of Adrianople, signed in 1829 between the Russians and the Turks, as a consequence of which Moldavia and Walachia obtained administrative autonomy and self-administration of foreign commerce, Turkey retained its monopoly on purchasing the surplus cereal of the Romanian Principalities. Given the international context, Romanian landowners chose to utilize their surplus stock of cereal much more profitably on their own estates, in the

distilleries administered by Jews or by other foreigners. For this reason, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the boyars and the land-owning monasteries were interested in settling villages and towns with “Israelites, arrived chiefly from Galicia and as poor as Job” (as Mihai Eminescu described them in 1879)²³⁸ in order to lease them the distilleries and the taverns operating on their territories. The brandy, the claim went, was made from “rotten cereals...as well as from rye and buckwheat, for these kinds of produce are not in demand in Constantinople.”²³⁹

This complex socio-economic phenomenon was described in 1876 by the journalist Eminescu, in an article he published in *Jassy* in *Convorbiri literare* (Literary conversations):

We all marvel at the number of taverns in our country—at the number of Jews; the cause is the amount of liquor, the number of distilleries, but this number, where does it come from? Under Turkish rule, there was...a provision about exporting. The export of grains was prohibited. As a result, grains that were not consumed had to be converted into exportable goods—in cattle. Things were put together. The distillery used the surplus and provided food for the animals [i.e., grain husks]. The distillery produced brandy, the brandy had to be consumed, and there was brandy in profusion. Many taverns were established. For them people needed tavern-keepers. Many Jews were brought.²⁴⁰

Unlike in others of his articles, Eminescu admits that the large number of Jewish tavern-keepers is the effect, and not the cause, of the socio-economic phenomenon under discussion.

The model of economic symbiosis employed was extremely simple. One example of its use is found in the diary of Bishop Neophyte I of Crete. In 1746, while inspecting an estate belonging to the Metropolitan Bishopric of the county of Călărași, the bishop entered a brief note in his diary: “Here some Jews keep a distillery and the bishopric collects the rent”²⁴¹ (mss. Library of the Romanian Academy nr. 2106). This legend was even included in the Constitution of Moldavia, *Regulamentul organic* (1831), in the section concerning the “Israelite community”: “The Jews have the right to work in the distilleries...by closing a transaction with the estate owners.”²⁴²

In his efforts to disprove the legend about the “invasion of the Jews into the Romanian Principalities and especially Moldavia,” and to explain the manner in which they had been settled on their lands by boyars and the

monasteries with a view to populating rural areas and settle Moldavian boroughs, Elias Schwarzfeld wrote the following:

Certainly, the Jews who came to settle in villages and populate them were limited in number. They were no farmers, and if they later on took up land tenancy, it was not they who cultivated the land; instead, they became tavern-keepers, they gained control of the village taverns, which were later to be known as “Jewish taverns,” they purchased the mills, the fords, the bridges over waters, the stills for brandy-making, and the distilleries...which people needed, just as they needed ploughmen and day laborers. The Jews were also craftsmen, something of which landlords stood in great need. Finally, it was they also who took possession of fishponds and provided numerous services which the Christian population could not, and they also conducted the little trade—primitive in form, to be sure—which the villages needed.²⁴³

Such Jewish laborers and tradesmen were fairly well appreciated at the time. “They became,” as Nicolae Iorga aptly put it, “co-participants in the making of the Romanian national state in Moldavia.” For example, in an act dating from 1742 the Phanariot sovereign of Moldavia, Constantin Mavrocordat, expressed his gratitude for the services provided by a Jewish merchant in these terms: “We desire that more should come; there shall be no limit to merchants such as these that We shall welcome in this Our country.” With reference to the founding of the Moldavian town of Vlădeni, a document from 1792 stipulated: “Since these Jewish merchants have spared no effort or expense to see that this bargain is struck...it is only right to give them satisfaction.”²⁴⁴ In 1798, content that several Jewish tradesmen and craftsmen had settled in Focșani, Moldavian authorities expressed their hope that “others may be encouraged to come as well.”²⁴⁵

In that same period, however, as they began to be troubled by the competition, Romanian merchants petitioned the sovereign for an increase in the “contribution” paid by Jews (even if the taxes that had been fixed for them were higher to begin with), because “all towns are swarming now with Jews, without either the Ruler or the country having any profit from them.”²⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Mihai Sturdza, the sovereign of Moldavia (1834–1849), himself encouraged the immigration of Jews, while the bishop of Moldavia, Veniamin Costachi (1803–1846), leased them several shops and taverns on land owned by the Bishopric of Jassy. Contemporary town folklore spared neither the former: “Mihai Sturdza, long in claws, / Filled the country up with

Jews,”²⁴⁷ nor the latter: “Where once stood Theotoki and Evghenos, / Now Jews sell their ware, and build nothing but shops.”²⁴⁸

Many foreign travelers through the Romanian Principalities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries wrote about the Romanians’ “fondness for drinking,” noting especially the excessive consumption of “strong drinks.” Around the mid-nineteenth century, the German Adolf Schmidl observed the following about the Romanians of northwestern Transylvania:

On Sunday and on holidays, the entire male population gathers in taverns, which are more often than not in the hands of Jewish tenants.... During the work week, and especially on days when fairs are held, Romanians cannot pass by them without drinking like a lord, and on such days the men and women rival one another.²⁴⁹

It is evident that the inclination for drink was not the aftermath of the tavern, but the other way round.

Occasionally, restrictions were imposed upon the right of Jews to retail beverages and keep taverns—in Transylvania, for example, by successive regulations in 1801, 1810, 1818, 1836, 1845, and more.²⁵⁰ After similar restrictions were introduced in Moldavia at the beginning of the 1840s, the number of Jewish tavern-keepers succumbed dramatically there from 739 in 1839 to only 110 in 1845.²⁵¹ Incensed by the law of 1873, “which forbade the selling of alcoholic drinks by the Jews” (one of the numerous regulations of a similar kind adopted in the Romanian Principalities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), Moses Gaster in his memoirs presented an idyllic vision of the dealings between Romanians and Jewish tavern-keepers: the latter “had been living in perfect harmony and friendship with the population.”²⁵² Around this time, in the 1876 article quoted above, Mihai Eminescu believed that it was not the Jewish tavern-keeper who was guilty for the “craving for drink” which controlled the Romanian peasant, because the “tavern-keeper” and the “tavern” were products of the economic circuit which the publicist had previously detailed. For Eminescu, the actual culprit was the Romanian landowner, who paid his peasants in notes in exchange for which they could buy themselves brandy in the tavern: “The landlord obliged each of his bondsmen to buy a given quantity of brandy a year. Some payments for work were made in brandy.”²⁵³ Sometimes, laws, such as that adopted by the Legislative Diet of Transylvania in 1811, prohibited tavern-keepers from selling alcoholic drinks to Romanian peasants in exchange for cereal or food.²⁵⁴

The Legend of Drink Poisoning

A legend was born in central Europe at the beginning of the fourteenth century according to which the Jews—who may or may not have been in league with other marginal or excluded groups, such as lepers, Muslims, and heretics—were poisoning the wells to kill Christians or render them sick. Around the same time another psychosis was unleashed: Jewish doctors were poisoning their Christian patients. For centuries on end, this stigma was added to the portrait of the “imaginary Jew,” with a high potential for generating spontaneous pogroms and burning at the stake.²⁵⁵

Such legends were not widely circulated in Christian-Orthodox Europe in general and in the Romanian Principalities in particular. One single author, the Frenchman St.-Marc de Girardin, recounted that in 1836 he had apparently heard from a Moldavian that the Jews were poisoning the wells.²⁵⁶ Since this is the only attestation of the legend in the Romanian cultural area, I believe that it is either a borrowing done in the area of contact between the Christian Catholic community (Galicia) and the Orthodox one (Bukovina), or a transfer by the western European author of the well-known cliché from his home country (France) into a foreign cultural area (Moldavia). Instead of these legends, in eastern Europe the same type of mentality (according to which the Jew is a dangerous agent who is trying to overthrow Christendom) imposed another legend: poisoning of drinks by Jewish tavern-keepers. This practice had nothing in common with the “baptizing” of alcoholic drinks with water—a habit so widespread as to be banal, practiced by many tavern-keepers, irrespective of ethnic origin. For instance, another Frenchman, E. Desjardin wrote in his *Les Juifs de Moldavie* (Paris, 1867) that the Jewish shop owners mainly sell brandy, more than usually adulterated with water.²⁵⁷ The legend, however, disseminated another, much more serious, allegation: doctoring alcoholic drinks with toxic substances. An account of some facts from the Romanian area, chronologically arranged, may shed some light on this shady story.

In his study of the professional occupations of the Jews of Moldavia and Walachia, including tenancy of taverns, Moses Schwarzfeld wrote that around the year 1800, “the legend of drink poisonings was not yet known.”²⁵⁸ Indeed, at that time the enlightened Polish politician Stanislaw Staszic made no mention of “poisoning of drinks” by the Jews, even if by 1790 he had described the taverns kept by Jews in Poland in great detail and in sombre colors.²⁵⁹ Had such a legend existed, no doubt he would not have missed the opportunity to mention it. In 1832, even the Regulamentul Organic of Mol-

davia dictated restrictions relating to the sale of wine by Jewish tavern-keepers, because they “would often sell an unclean or altered wine.”²⁶⁰ The perception of alcoholic beverages bartered by the Jews as being “unclean” might have its roots in the fact that Jews themselves were considered “unclean.”²⁶¹ But it can also be traced back to the consideration of kosher food and drink as being tenebrous and defiled.²⁶² In 1798, Jews in Oradea, in western Transylvania, complained that the local authorities interfered with their tavern-keeping “under the pretext that they sell kosher wine.”²⁶³

In 1842, while traversing Moldavia from north to south, Dr. Iuliu Barasch remarked that the province boasted “a profusion of drinking”: “You will find not only the sour country wine,” but also “brandy from taverns doctored with sulfuric acid.” I shall only observe at this point that Barasch referred to taverns in general, not specifically to those operated by Jews. It is quite likely that he did not refer to the latter, because only a few lines earlier he had expressed his dislike of Moldavian taverns, while praising the Jewish ones: “You will not find anywhere such miserable taverns, so dispossessed of everything, as in Moldavia. Relatively better are the taverns kept by Jews, which for this reason have a wider clientele.”²⁶⁴ Still around that time, in 1834, Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz eulogized the correctness of Jewish tavern-keepers of Poland and Lithuania (as well as the quality of their drinks) by means of his character Yankl in the poem “Pan Tadeusz”: “The Jew was old, and through the years had gained,/ A name for honesty. No one e’er complained./ Or gentleman or peasant, nor they should/ For everyone knew Yankl’s drinks were good./ He kept a strict account, nor cheated ever....”²⁶⁵

Conversely, in 1846, villagers of Geoagiul de Sus (in the vicinity of Aiud, Transylvania) complained to the local authorities that the Jews allegedly adulterated brandy by adding sulfuric acid (in Hungarian, “*palinkat vitriollal elegyitik*”), which represented a serious health hazard. The local authorities decided to appoint a commission “charged with investigating the case, and should the commission reveal distillation with a view to risky adulteration of the beverage, the commission is supposed to propose a substance, as practical as possible, in order to divulge the addition.” A few years earlier, in 1839, the village community had already demanded of the Diet of Transylvania that local Jewry be evicted. The fact that their request had not been honored made them resort to this sort of allegation. A contemporary journal from Cluj commented sarcastically on the incident: “The villagers of Geoagiul de Sus ought no longer seek the noxious effect of brandy in vitriol and in such additives, but in the excessive use of this beverage itself.” In its turn, in 1843

the municipal community of Aiud demanded the expulsion of local Jews, alleging that human skeletal remains were found inside their fermentation tanks.²⁶⁶ In this case, the legend of drink adulteration by Jews and that of blood libel seem to overlap.

In 1860, in the wake of a military mission sent by Napoleon III into the Romanian Principalities, Frenchman Gustave Le Cler wrote, *inter alia*: “In this country [i.e., “La Moldo-Valachie”] wheat is not consumed in the form of bread, but in the form of concentrated lamp alcohol [?!], which is sold to the peasant as a drink.”²⁶⁷ The previously-mentioned Frenchman, E. Desjardins, wrote in 1867 that the Jews of Moldavia “do not drink brandy” but they sell it instead, adulterated: “They mix it together with vitriol, and cheat the Romanians, poisoning this way entire villages and boroughs.”²⁶⁸

Still around the mid-nineteenth century, Romanian poet and playwright Vasile Alecsandri mentioned the “bad brandy” consumed in “Jewish taverns.”²⁶⁹ Moreover, in one of his short plays a character—a Galician Jew who kept a tavern near Jassy—confesses that he had sold his customers “brandy mixed with vitriol.”²⁷⁰ In another play, *The Village Leeches*, Moses the tavern-keeper sells the peasants a drink made up of “one part brandy and two parts water mixed with vitriol.” Commenting on the play, B. P. Hasdeu appears to confirm this practice.²⁷¹ Leon Volovici believes that Alecsandri is largely responsible for the emergence of the stereotypical image of the Jew as one charged with all his well-known vices, including that of “poisoner” of the peasant by means of the brandy he sells. This caricatured image of the Jew permeated the inventory of mental clichés not only of the town dweller, but also of the politician. When, for instance, in 1864 the General Assembly debated “the Israelite issue,” Mihail Kogălniceanu addressed members of the Romanian parliament as follows: “Gentlemen, all you have to do in order to become acquainted with the Jews of Moldavia is to go and see the play *The Village Leeches*, and believe me, that play is not fiction, it is the most real truth.”²⁷²

In 1865 a certain A. Kălimănescu published an antisemitic brochure in Jassy entitled *The Kikes in Romania* in which he wrote that, because they are “corrupted and corrupting,” the “Kikes pour vitriol and other concoctions into the brandy they give to the Romanian people, destroying their soul, making them forget about the duty they have to God, destroying their minds to forget about the obligations and rights of a citizen, weakening their bodies and shortening their lives.”²⁷³ Ion Ghica employed the same type of rhetoric when he talked about the “Jewish tavern-keepers” whom “we let corrupt and

murder” the people “with all kinds of poisonous drinks.” In a text written in London in 1884, Ghica put his own thoughts into the mind of an imaginary English friend:

You think we can let them walk free and unpunished who ruin with poisonous drinks the strength and health of a good and useful laborer, day by day and hour by hour, who enfeeble his mind, numb his senses until they reduce him to a state of beastliness, enervate him to delirium tremens, and make his life into a living hell of suffering and pain, to which death would be a thousand times more preferable? We cannot suffer our society to be exploited by such monsters.²⁷⁴

Mihai Eminescu was also among those who thought that tavern keeping was the epitomical occupation for the Jew in Romania. In his articles, published mostly in the years 1876–1881 in the journals *Curierul de Iași* (The Jassy courier) and *Timpul* (The times) of Bucharest, Eminescu accused the “Jewish tavern-keeper” of doctoring and poisoning the alcoholic drinks he sold:

They have introduced and exploited the vice of drinking in villages, have adulterated drinks with poisonous matters, and have thus physically envenomed and morally corrupted our populations.... As a foreign race, they have declared a mortal war upon us and have employed, instead of knife and pistol, the drinks doctored with poison.²⁷⁵

We cannot know which were the “poisonous matters” to which he referred. Only on two occasions did he mention the leeches—Jews who allegedly sold “hemlock brandy [?] in villages,” or caused the Romanian peasant to die “a slow death by vitriol.”²⁷⁶ It should be noted that, according to Eminescu’s journalistic discourse, the Jew adulterates alcoholic drinks not for larger profits but to induce stronger deleterious effects among the Romanians.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, another Romanian classic writer, Ion Luca Caragiale, adopted a wholly different position towards this issue. He distanced himself from the legend of the Jewish tavern-keepers’ poisoning of beverages. In the short story “O făclie de Paști” (An Easter torch), published in 1889, whose protagonist is Leiba Zibal, a Jewish tavern-keeper from a northern borough in Moldavia, the narrator reports of “accusations of poisoning by vitriol” that are due to the villagers’ vileness: “But the people are mean and spiteful in Podeni!...Curses...jeers...oaths...accusations of poisoning by vitriol.”²⁷⁷

In that same period, author Calistrat Hogaș did not dispute the legend of the poisoned brandy; instead—in his characteristic sarcastic manner—he denied that the practice was characteristic of Jewish tavern-keepers alone:

An extremely ludicrous form of patriotism is that which is practiced with us, day in day out, and at every corner; it is shouted about and is written that the Jewish tavern-keeper is poisoning our rural population; so much do they rave and storm on this subject that you might believe that the last word of our national regeneration is to be found at the bottom of Ytzik's or Shloim's flask of brandy. This is a mistake. Ion, our national tavern-keeper, has just as few gods, if not less by any chance, than the Jew best provided with sidelocks...; the only difference might be that the poisonous admixtures of the drinks, instead of being Jewish, would be in the other case fully Romanian; and, although the fact would be, in truth, a great step taken on the path of regeneration, it might however be considered that the Romanian, in his arrant skepticism, attaches very little importance to whether the poison that is his death is Jewish or fully Romanian.²⁷⁸

In Vasile Voiculescu's novel *Zahei Orbul* (Zahei the blind), the leading character's blindness is caused by "poisoned alcohol" consumed in the tavern of the Romanian Stavrache of Brăila. Finally, in a short story by D. D. Pătrașcanu, the wine offered by the priest Grigore "is tasty and unadulterated, unlike the wine of the Yids, without unit of measure and bearing an acrid taste."²⁷⁹

During the first half of the twentieth century, not only was the legend concerning the poisoning of beverages by Jewish tavern-keepers not forgotten, but it even penetrated the official discourse of the Jews, as well as of Romanians. In March 1910, for instance, Uniunea Evreilor Pământeni (The Union of Indigenous Jews) petitioned the Parliament of Romania presenting the groundlessness of the countless claims brought against the Jews. As for the unjust "allegation that Jewish tavern-keepers are poisoning the Moldavian peasants with adulterated brandy," the petition argues:

For years after years the defamation was thrust upon them [i.e., the Jews], under pretence of their being the agents of alcoholism in Moldavia, but when inquiries were made it was publicly revealed that there were no Jewish tavern-keepers in the rural communities—they are prohibited by law to practice this profession in the countryside—

and that they were not the poisoners with *basamac* [poor quality brandy].²⁸⁰

During those years, the greatest proponents of the antisemitic legend of drink poisoning were two professional medics: C. Șumuleanu, and Nicolae Paulescu. “Jews, as if evil spirits,” wrote Paulescu, “adulterate drinks and poison them with diverse ingredients.” In 1911, Șumuleanu reminded his readers that “salicylic acid” was among the ingredients used by the Jews in their wine, while Paulescu maintained in 1913 that some of the Jews fabricated wine with “lees, glycerin, sugar, and alcohol,” wine which the authorities “confiscated and destroyed.” As for “the poisoning of alcoholic beverages,” the two maintained that a certain “tavern-keeper called Iancu” sold brandy “made out of sulfuric ether, in which he dissolved an essential oil, the anemonole [?!], which is very strong, and has an increased caustic effect.” The two also maintained that Jews put vitriol into their drinks, and sell brandy with higher alcohol content (60 to 70 percent), which was more than allowed by regulations (35 to 45 percent), drinks which “the consumers call, in all earnest, vitriols.”²⁸¹

In the pastoral letter addressed to the believers in 1924, Primate Miron Cristea himself raised the issue of “Jewish taverns,” which “have overwhelmed the people, as the maggot obliterates all the greenery in a tree.” “Some Jewish tavern-keepers,” the primate continued, “put lime in the brandy, while others put vitriol, so that it may burn the sense with an added fire.” The primate’s message generated certain polemic echoes in the press of the time, since it was believed that his discourse “inflames antisemitic propaganda.” Starting from this text, a journalist wrote an article using statistical data from which “it could be seen that in our villages many tavern-keepers—a great number—are Christians, from our peasant ranks, versed in the rolling of kegs and the rattling of the measure.” The problem of alcoholism in the Romanian Principalities, wrote the journalist, had nothing to do with the ethnic origin of the tavern-keeper or even with the number of taverns in the rural area: “A man is not a drunk because there is a tavern in the village, just as a woman does not sleep around because she has a coach ready. Both the tavern and the coach show up where there is a demand.”²⁸² Miron Cristea was subsequently to become a Patriarch and, at the beginning of 1938, he was appointed prime minister. During those same years, the extremist right-wing newspaper *Porunca vremii* exultingly announced the fact that “in all the counties in Moldavia, Bessarabia, and Bukovina, establishing that in almost every Jewish tavern the drinks were being

adulterated and that methylic alcohol was used on a large scale, the prefects...ordered the closing of the taverns. The *basamac* was banned in a great many parts, and only wine was authorized for consumption.”²⁸³ The legionaires had evidently taken over this commonplace on the fly. Their leader, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, was convinced that “in order to break all power of resistance in the people, the Jews shall carry out a unique and truly diabolical plan.” Among other things, the “Captain” wrote, “[the Jews] shall poison and benumb [the Romanians] with all kinds of drinks and poisons.”²⁸⁴

From the accounts and texts which have already been presented, one can see that during more than a century there was a considerable number of substances which Jews were said to use in the production of alcoholic beverages in order to adulterate or even poison them: vitriol, lime, lamp alcohol [i.e., denatured spirit], methyl alcohol, salicylic acid, glycerin, sulfuric ether, anemonole, lye (as mentioned in what follows), and “many other materials and artifices.” Vitriol is the substance most frequently invoked for this purpose, already beginning in the first half of the nineteenth century. At that time, however, sulfuric acid (if this is what we interpret as “vitriol”) was too expensive and too difficult to procure for some impecunious tavern-keepers in the villages of Moldavia. Besides, it is difficult to imagine that such practices could have ever won moral and religious acceptance. The ascetic Kabbalah demanded heavy penitence (seventy three days of fasting) for the sin of adulterating wine with water.²⁸⁵

Nonetheless, in the nineteenth century the terminology of chemical substances was liable to generate much confusion. The term “vitriol,” for instance, had—especially for the common people—a rather uncertain signification. For the periphery dwellers in the play *D-ale carnavalului* (Carnival stuff), written by I. L. Caragiale in 1884, and especially for Mitza, a “daughter of the people” come to the capital from the town of Ploiești, the “English vitriol”(?) was “a sort of metal”(?), which “burns everything and mostly the eyes.”²⁸⁶ Nevertheless, concentrated sulfuric acid was called initially “vitriol oil” (or even “vitriol butter”), while the diluted version was “vitriol spirit.” The term “vitriol” did not denote sulfuric acid, but any of its salts (sulfates). In his 1896 dictionary, for instance, Lazar Șăineanu defines “vitriol” as “the name formerly given to all sulfates.”²⁸⁷

A sulfate which peasants and tavern-keepers would often add to alcoholic drinks was alum (a double potassium and aluminum sulfate), popularly called “sour stone” (or “sour salt”). This could be easily procured from any “Jewish

grocery” or “Jewish apothecary.” “Master Shtrul of Tîrgul-Neamţului, groceries merchandiser” as well as “druggist”—a character in one of Ion Creangă’s short stories—sells such substances, healing herbs, “and other poisons.”²⁸⁸ In the first half of the nineteenth century one finds in the customs records of Bârlad, Focşani, Galaţi, and elsewhere Jewish tradesmen who imported “sour stone” for sale in the Romanian Principalities.²⁸⁹ The “sour stone” suspension was used not only for treating the vine against mildew. It was also put in wine to clear it and make it last longer without turning sour. A folk recipe, collected in the north of Moldavia by Dimitrie P. Lupaşcu at the end of the nineteenth century, goes as follows: “For the wine to last long, without being spoilt, throw sour stone into the vessel, at it will keep the wine from getting sour.”²⁹⁰ It is significant that folklorist D. P. Lupaşcu collected this type of recipe not only from the Romanians of Bukovina and Moldavia, but also from the Jews in the same area (this was a novelty among folklore collectors of that time). Thus, among the sixty-seven folk informants queried by Lupaşcu, eight (i.e., 12 percent), declared themselves to be Jews.

Sulfur too was added to the wine (“It is known that sulfur stops the wine from turning sour”) or a sulfate, popularly known as “sulfur must,” as Ion Ionescu de la Brad, the founding father of modern Romanian agronomy, recounted around the middle of the nineteenth century. In order to cleanse the wine and to prevent it from getting sour, “a kind of must purposely mixed with sulfur” was poured into it. “This sulfur must,” the Romanian agronomist went on, “does not boil, is sweet, has a strong heavy smell of sulfur, and no more than two or three carafes poured into a cask will suffice to cleanse all the wine in it.”²⁹¹

This, therefore, is a possible justification for the birth of the legend under discussion. In order for alcoholic drinks to remain clear and not turn sour, some tavern-keepers (Jews included) used certain sulfates (“vitriols”). Later, when the term “vitriol” received the new sense of sulfuric acid (by abbreviating the names of “vitriol spirit” and “vitriol oil”), the legend could be born according to which some tavern-keepers (especially the Jews!) were poisoning the drinks with acid.

Another possible explanation for the emergence of this legend is that tavern-keepers were indeed using sulfuric acid and lime, if not for adulterating drinks then to remove the mouldy smell from wine and brandy barrels. In the mid-nineteenth century, Ion Ionescu de la Brad described this practice:

The smell of fungus, which mars the taste of wine so heavily, can be utterly removed only in the way which follows...: take one part vitriol (*acidum sulfuricum dilutum*) and two parts water, wash the containers with this vitriol water, then lye with ash or with water in which you have put lime, and then rinse with clean water...; after they are dry, burn sulfur inside, as it is wont. In the same fashion indicated, all the vats, pails, tubs, drains, presses, and other equipment used for the making of wine have to be cleaned.²⁹²

The addition of lye in washing the barrels and winepresses could have engendered the legend regarding the introduction of that ingredient into Jewish wine. A carol from Maramureș seems to indicate the longevity of this legend, as it about the Jewish rural tavern-keeper Abraham: "Let us drink wine, and let us drink rum,/ From the barrels of Abraham./ But Abraham is not kind,/ Since he added lye to the wine."²⁹³

Evidently, the fact that many tavern-keepers (including the Jewish ones) were adulterating spirits, or were even counterfeiting them, cannot be contested, yet it is highly improbable that they used sulfuric acid for this purpose. One may more accurately assume that they were using another type of acid to that end, one cheaper, more natural, easier to acquire, and much less harmful—acetic acid, or vinegar, whether obtained by natural fermentation or not. For instance, pyroligneous acid (which contained acetic acid and alcohol) was obtained through the dry distillation of wood, of which an inferior alcoholic drink was made, named by the people "chip wood wine." Around the middle of the nineteenth century there were Jews occupied in the production of vinegar, such as "Leibish who makes the vinegar—Leibiș Esigmacher," found in an 1859 census of the Jews of Piatra Neamț.²⁹⁴ On the same occasion, the Jew Moise Rat is recorded as owning "a mill for vinegar, made of water and spirit" near Jassy,²⁹⁵ while Moise Juster owned an alcohol and vinegar plant in Piatra Neamț.²⁹⁶

However, the main substance used for counterfeiting beverages was the so-called "vinegar essence" or concentrated acetic acid, probably obtained by a chemical method. Romanian peasants in Bukovina used to prepare a kind of brandy out of "vinegar essence." Complaining about the unhealthy "drinks that have begun to be consumed of late," in 1903 folklorist Elena Niculiță-Voronca published the following folk recipe: "People may swear that they will not touch brandy, but at weddings, on church holidays, etc. they still need to drink. For this purpose, they take vinegar essence which they mix with a few pailfuls of water, then they boil some chicory, into which they

pour coffee, peppers, junipers, and cloves and, mixing them all together to a boil, they have drink on the table.”²⁹⁷

Needless to say, the accidental use of some of the substances mentioned above was dangerous: “Whoever handles vitriol spirit,” a text from around the middle of the nineteenth century advises, “let him take heed, lest his cask should be ruined.”²⁹⁸ Some accidents were bound to occur. A document from the end of the nineteenth century recounted how a Jew from the town of Bozieni (in the county of Neamț, Moldavia), “supposing the bottle to contain brandy, he took a sip of vitriol, and after this feat he remained speechless.”²⁹⁹ Intoxication from “vinegar essence” is described by Ion Călugărul in an autobiographical novel about his childhood spent in the Jewish neighborhood of Dorohoi at the beginning of the twentieth century: “The little boy took a drink [of vinegar essence], like a fool, and he suddenly leaned down like a corpse...; he was seized by great pains and fainted. A pox was on Tziporah’s [a Jewish woman’s] head: she had, as it were, been intent on poisoning the little Romanian.”³⁰⁰

The use of certain sulphates (known in those days as “vitriols”) for the preservation of wine and alcohol, the use of sulphuric acid and of lime for the cleaning of casks and barrels for alcoholic drinks, the use of acetic acid for counterfeiting wine and brandy, as well as the sheer accidents that happened are just as many possible explanations for the birth and survival of the legend concerning the poisoning of drinks by Jewish tavern-keepers. All this was possible, since it came across a propitious horizon of expectations. These confused items of information were superimposed upon a well-rooted image in the collective mentality: that of the Jew who “defiles” and “poisons,” and himself drinks beverages thought to be defiled (i.e., a certain view of kosher drinks).

THE JEW AS WAGON-DRIVER

Wagon-drivers with Sidelocks

The great number of Jews who worked as craftsmen and tradesmen across central and eastern Europe was a sure incentive for expansion of the subservient occupation of wagon-driving. A genuine network of *shtetls* had been set up in this geo-cultural area; they were autonomous boroughs, half cities-half villages, inhabited by a population the majority of whom were Jews, whose economic and commercial contribution was considerable. This form of Jewish settlement was a place of seminal importance in the process

of shaping capitalist relations in the area. The wares manufactured by craftsmen evidently needed to be retailed. The best site for this was the fair or *bâlci*. Those which took place in the *shtetls* of a region were an addition to the traditional fairs held on certain long-established holidays, whether of pagan or Christian origin (see Hungarian etymology of *bûlczû*, “holiday celebrating a church’s patron”). It is safe to assume that, through the medium of the Yiddish language, the Jews bear responsibility for the borrowing of the word *iarmaroc* (from the German *der Jahrmarkt*, “annual fair”) by both the Ukrainian and Romanian languages.

Some Jewish craftsmen would simply haul their wares to the fair by themselves. There they would sell them and buy themselves raw materials. Other craftsmen would entrust their wares to tradesmen (very often also Jews) for retailing at the *iarmaroc*. In both cases, transportation was needed for the products that were being purchased or sold, as well as for people. Numerous Jews were to take up wagon-driving; they would drive *cotiga* (a dumpcart), *birja* (hansom cab), or the *haraba* (a large rack wagon). Others became horse traders (or even breeders), as they were needed to supply the needs of transportation: “Since time immemorial the horse has been one of the privileged objects of their [i.e., the Jews’] commerce,” and “in the countryside, the Jew with sidelocks and caftan is often seen riding, even saddleless,” wrote M. Schwarzfeld in 1889.³⁰¹ It seems that archaic or otherwise popular terms which were used to designate “the breeder/the merchant of horses” (such as the *shefar*) entered the Romanian language from German by way of the Judeo-German dialect (according to the Yiddish *shufar* or German *Schäfer*, meaning herder who tends horses). Other Jews specialized in harness making and mending. “Moses the Saddler—Moșe Rimer,” mentioned in a Moldavian document from 1859,³⁰² “Abraham the leather merchant, who dresses [i.e., binds in leather] wagon coverings,” mentioned by a Walachian document of 1842,³⁰³ a saddler named M. Gürtler, who owns “the biggest store for military and civil harnesses,” located on Lipscani Street in Bucharest,³⁰⁴ or Marcu Goldstein the strap maker, a character in a novel by Gala Galaction, *Papucii lui Mahmud* (Mahmud’s slippers)³⁰⁵ are just a few instances of this well-documented occupation. Yet earlier intelligence is also confirmed: during the second half of the seventeenth century there existed in Jassy a neighborhood of saddlers which was also inhabited by Jews once a synagogue had been erected there, attested since 1686.³⁰⁶

Arthur Koestler and A. N. Poliak have included wagon-driving among the few trades that “became regarded as a Jewish monopoly.”³⁰⁷ Although they made reference to the specific cases of Poland and Lithuania, the state of affairs in Maramureș, Bukovina, Moldavia, Bessarabia, and the Ukraine was no different. Marc Chagall’s paintings have made the image of the bearded wagon driver of the late nineteenth-century east European *shtetl* universally known. Then there is Alecu Russo, who in 1840 described, with a caricaturist’s strokes, the “Jewish *harabas*” driving through the city of Jassy:

In a tall huge wagon, with only its breadth to count for one’s idea of elegance, beauty, or comfort, covered over half its length by a gray tarpaulin and, against the country’s custom, with four horses harnessed side by side, horses as stout as a fellow could knock down with a fist not uncommonly hard, some ten, twenty, thirty, or forty individuals of all ages and all sexes huddle together at a time at the back, in front, on the driver’s seat, on the side ladders, sitting up, lying down, crouching, standing, all reeking of garlic and of onion, all spitting, waving hands, talking all at once in a savage vernacular, patched out of every idiom, although German prevails; they are scruffy, unbuttoned and tattered, praying in a hurried babel and beating their breasts with their fists in token of humility or grief.³⁰⁸

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Nicolae Iorga was once again to observe how the Jews of Bukovina tended to monopolize the transportation of goods and people by coach or carriage: “The coach driver is, without fail, a Jew.”³⁰⁹ He wrote sarcastically of the *fiacars* (a corruption of the German *der Fiakerman*, “coach driver”), about the “wagon-drivers with sidelocks” who transported “heavy weights of merchandise with one jade or two,” and about the “bigoted Jews with *peias* [the ritual sidelocks] and *caftan* made of ‘devil’s skin’ who keep shop in the slums and cross the country high and low, ten of them in a one-horse wagon.”³¹⁰ As a rule, this was “a dappled, skinny horse, with protruding ribs and hips, drowsily trotting,” like the mare in one of M. Sadoveanu’s short stories (“Floarea ofilită” [Withered flower], 1905).³¹¹

There also is, of course, a civilized image of wagon transportation as organized by Jews. In May 1848, for instance, a certain Solomon Rosenthal trumpeted and advertised the organization “at great expense” of a line of transportation between Bucharest and Băneasa “formed by two carriages that could carry several people (called omnibus).” “For only one penny’s worth,” Bucharest residents could visit, “for business as well as for pleasure,” the

domains at Băneasa “owned by our Blessed Highness.”³¹² Only a few weeks later “our Blessed Highness” was to abdicate in favor of the revolutionary government, yet people still were in the habit of promenading to Băneasa: “to the forests of Băneasa, / to gather all sorts of berries,” as a contemporary fiddlers’ song put it.³¹³ Here is another example: In June 1883 a Jew, Josef Diamand of Suceava, “a wagon and post service entrepreneur,” was awarded the “Serviciul Credincios” (Faithful Service) Medal First Class, gold, for exemplarily serving the Postal Services.³¹⁴ During the same time period, in a small Moldavian town such as Piatra Neamț, for instance, forty-two cabmen were registered, out of which thirty-five (83 percent) were of Jewish origin. Some of them drove luxurious cabs, chariots, or two-horse carriages.³¹⁵ In Galați, the guild of Jewish cabmen was so numerous and prosperous that in 1860 they erected their own religious institution: Sinagoga Birjarilor (The Synagogue of the Cabmen), situated on Războieni Street.³¹⁶

“The dense net of *shtetls*,” wrote A. N. Poliak, “made it possible to distribute manufactured goods over the whole country by means of the Jewish type of horse-cart.... Only the development of the railway in the second half of the nineteenth century led to a decline in this trade.”³¹⁷

Around 1909, Sholem Aleichem wrote of “a large and high cart that is named *haraba* in Bessarabia.”³¹⁸ In the Romanian area, the “Jewish wagons” (*caruțe jădovești*, as attested on the Jassy–Galați route at the beginning of the nineteenth century)³¹⁹ were quite often called *harabale* (from the Turkish *araba*, “large wagon”), while the driver was a *harabagiu* (from the Turkish *arabadjy*). The *harabas* were, more often than not, comfortless and noisy, unequipped as they were with any suspension gears. In all probability, this state of things lies at the origin of the Romanian word *harababură*, meaning both “topsy-turviness” and “clamor.” The following are a few lines from Vasile Alecsandri’s plays: “In that Jewish wagon from Roman we were made deaf”; or, as a character of Greek extraction expressed himself, “me coming from Herța, with a Jewo harabazio...what o cursed roado!...what o jerkos!”³²⁰ Again in Moldavia (Jassy), and once more in the middle of the nineteenth century, Iuliu Barasch made mention of the “clamorous coaches” and “large enormous chariots, which make a noise that pierces your eardrums.”³²¹ Yet in Egyptian Alexandria, *harabaki* also meant a beautiful fiacre, as in the prose of Panait Istrati.³²²

In the Slavic linguistic area, to the east and north of Moldavia, the word *balagula* entered the respective languages for “wagon driver,” coming from the Hebrew *ba’al agalah* (literally, “master of the wagon”).³²³ The term

circulated in Bessarabia, and also in Moldavia,³²⁴ Bukovina, Podolia, and Galicia. *Balagula* did not only denote the “driver,” but also the “vehicle”: a large heavy-weight wagon—with or without tilt—designated primarily for the transportation of people. In “*Balaguly*,” a short story published in 1936, Polish author Stanisław Vincenz described the Hasidic Jews of eastern Galicia who had practiced this trade for at least three generations. Their wagons moved so slowly and made such numerous stops that in that specified area *balagula* designated “a sluggish laggard,” while the verb *balagulić* meant “to procrastinate endlessly.”³²⁵

Sabbath Interdictions

Many of the fairs were held on Sundays, forcing people to travel on Saturday. For a practising Jew, such an act was unimaginable. The Romanian peasant had an ancient saying: “It is said for those with no luck: ‘This one time did the Jews set themselves agoing and it chanced upon a Saturday’”; this was the phrasing of one of the saws “compiled by the Right-Honorable Justice Iordache Golescu” in the first half of the nineteenth century.³²⁶ A similar proverb is attested with the Greeks.³²⁷

The interdictions imposed by Judaism are fairly numerous, and those connected with the the Sabbath are difficult to observe, especially for an active person. In the biblical age, they were considered so important that they were included in great detail in the Decalogue (Deut. 5:12–15), and their violation was punishable with death by lapidation (Num. 15:32–36). The Talmud presents “forty minus one” categories of activities that are prohibited on the Sabbath, the first interdiction listed being the one regarding travel.

However, at a distance of several centuries or even millenia, some of the taboos began to be perceived as a deterrent. Reform Judaism, beginning in the area of German culture during the second decade of the nineteenth century, abolished some of the interdictions, while making others less drastic. Permission to travel during the Sabbath was one of the main problems raised by the Jewish reformists, including the well-known reform rabbi of Arad, Aaron Chorin (1766–1844). “If it is permissible,” he wrote in a book published in Vienna in 1839, “to board a ship [before Sabbath], provided that there is no danger that [the Jew] will take part in the operation of the ship and violate the Sabbath, then that is also the case with traveling on a train. We don’t have to be alarmed lest the traveler assist in moving the train forward.”³²⁸

Nevertheless, the echoes of reform did not reach the *shtetls* of Eastern Europe very promptly; in fact, in some places they never did. Even so, the more active and less fanatical of the Jews could afford at intervals to transgress religious prohibitions, including those concerning the Sabbath. “The Sabbath kept the Jews in a greater measure than the Jews kept the Sabbath,” wrote Asher Ginzberg (better known by his pseudonym, Ahad Ha-Am), the philosopher from Odessa, around the year 1900.

In the Romanian area, for instance, some Jews “used to spend their Saturdays starting the great round dance to the sound of a kobsa,” which evidently troubled the rabbis, who saw this as “blatant transgression against religious prescriptions.”³²⁹ Others closed their shops on the Sabbath but would “do their buying and selling on the quiet,” as Nicolae Iorga stated, “cheating thus on Jehovah as well.”³³⁰ Other Jews could not bring themselves to miss a Sabbath trip on certain pressing occasions. The Talmud sanctions one single manner of traveling on a Saturday, namely in a boat “on water” (the journey by water being a long one, it could not possibly be interrupted on a Sabbath). When I was a child, I was told that whenever my grandfather Kelman Oigenstein, an apothecary from Bessarabia, could not avoid making a trip on the Sabbath, would sit in the coach or in the train with a bottle of water under his rear. This way, he was traveling “on water”! I thought initially that this was an anecdotal legend, preserved by the unwritten tradition of my family, but a non-fictional text by Mihail Sadoveanu has led me believe that this might have been routine practice by means of which the Jews in the area dodged the prohibition. In his volume *Men and Places* (1908), Sadoveanu recounted the “wise piece of advice” that the innkeeper Solomon of Pașcani (Moldavia) gave to a Jewish coach-driver who was anxious lest “the Sabbath would find him on the road”: “You can make your peace with the Sabbath. According to the Law, on a Saturday we are only allowed to travel on water.... You do this: fill up the horses’ bucket with water from some well, fasten it under your coach, and this way you’d be traveling on water, as the Law itself permits!”³³¹ Moreover, in the novel *Baltagul* (1930), the Jewish merchant David can bring himself to travel on a Saturday only when the snow has begun to thaw, and “water has got under the sledge.” Otherwise, “by reason of our Jewish bonds with God...we are not allowed to walk the roads” on a Sabbath, “unless we are on water.”³³²

It was customary, however, for Jewish drivers of wagons, carts, or coaches to hire a non-Jew during the Sabbath (“*shabes-goy*”—a “Sabbath-Gentile”) who would drive the vehicle in their stead: “[The Jewish coachman] had

made a deal with a [Christian] man that he should go there and replace him, because it was a *shabas*, which meant that he...could not travel himself.” At other times, whenever things could not come to such an arrangement, some less religiously observant coachman would yield for the right price and break the interdiction: “Eight rubles, the price we agreed upon for taking me to Hotin,” Nicolae Iorga commented with irony, “are a tidy sum even to a bigot, who knows the meaning of a well-kept *shabas*.”³³³

Such breach of traditional observance had been unthinkable only a few centuries earlier. Not only was a Jew obligated to observe full repose on the Sabbath, i.e., not to work, and certainly not to travel, but he was also forbidden to employ Christians to vicariously perform his tasks. Moreover, when a Jew organized transportation, he was duty-bound to ensure that Christians who were involved in this effort would also rest on the Sabbath. The following are two unambiguous examples. In 1570, Chaim Cohen, a Jewish merchant of Constantinople, signed a transportation contract with a Romanian entrepreneur from Suceava, with the objective of delivering merchandise from Constantinople to Poland. A year later, the same merchant contracted a similar document “before a law office” with “three wagon drivers of the environs of Lvov,” in which the latter took upon themselves to transport merchandise for him, with their own horses and carriages, from Lvov to “Chilia, Turkish residence.” In both cases, the Jewish merchant stipulated in the contracts the obligation of the wagon drivers to rest on the Sabbath, even if no Jews were involved in the voyage: “[The wagon drivers] must observe repose on all Sabbath days because of those Jews to whom Chaim intends to deliver the merchandise.”³³⁴

THE JEW AS FARMER AND AS SHEPHERD

In Maramureș and Bukovina

“The German is both a farmer and a craftsman,” says a Romanian proverb,³³⁵ while, in the same popular mentality, the Jew can be neither. As we have observed, the typical image of the Jew is of a tradesman, a moneylender, or an innkeeper, while that of the Jew as a craftsman is the atypical one. The image of the Jew as a farmer (or a shepherd) is unimaginable. An old Romanian saying reflects this: “It will happen when the Jews come home from reaping”³³⁶ or “when the Jews go out in the fields to reap,”³³⁷ which meant, of course, never. Similar formulas are found in Polish folklore: “As useful as a Jew at farming,” or “Deft as a Jew with a scythe.”³³⁸

Sayings commonly have a way of being endorsed by historical fact, in this case the fact that Jews were prohibited by law to own land: “Jews are for all times prohibited from buying estates” (Callimachi Code of Law, Jassy 1816); “The acquiring of landed property, vineyards, and Gypsies [i.e., Gypsy slaves] is rightful only for individuals of the Christian rite” (The Caragea Code of Law, Bucharest 1818); “In keeping with the old custom, the Jewish nation shall be banned from holding estates in ownership” (Organic Regulation, Jassy 1832).³³⁹ Jews “cannot scratch the soil,” noted Felix Aderca in 1922, “they are not allowed to work.”³⁴⁰ “Itzic does not plow,” wrote Zaharia Stancu in 1938, “Itzic” referring to the generic Jew. “He does not own a patch of barren land, and does not own two lanky oxen.... Itzic has a fleabag of a shop.”³⁴¹ Where and whenever the legislation about land property suffered exceptions to the rule stated above, and Jews, too, were granted rights of ownership, the above sayings were no longer fully endorsed.

After 1775 the Habsburg administration, during the reign of Emperor Joseph II, granted Jews in Maramureș and Bukovina land—under exceptional terms—in the plains and in mountains, obliging them to work it. This resulted in the Jews undertaking pursuits which were considered as being absolutely outside their national character. What had been prohibited until then became, to a large extent, an obligation. In 1783, regarding Cernăuți, Joseph II signed a clear-cut ordinance: “The same system should be applied in the case of the Jews: either they become honest merchants and craftsmen, or they work the land, or they are evicted from the country.”³⁴²

Some Jews took up land cultivation, forestry, and cattle raising next to Romanians and Ukrainians; others could not adjust themselves and left the region. In Bukovina in the 1780s, for example, out of 714 Jewish families only about a quarter—175 families—remained to work the land in the countryside.³⁴³ Subsequently, in 1807 only 134 Jewish families were still on record as land cultivators in that same region.³⁴⁴ Around the middle of the nineteenth century, after traveling in the area to further his research, Iuliu Barasch wrote the following:

In Bukovina there are fifty-five Israelite families which live exclusively on agriculture. They are not grouped in one place, but live in different villages, scattered among the peasants, among whom they live in flawless harmony. Some of these families are descended from the Jews who have been at the horns of the plough ever since the reign of the great Emperor Joseph II, when he encouraged Jews to take up

farming. They enjoy many privileges, to this day; blessing and prosperity crown the toil of their hands.³⁴⁵

Around that same time, in 1848, 241 Jewish families (13.4 percent of the Jewish population) were engaged in agriculture in the county of Satmar, in northwestern Transylvania.³⁴⁶

Apparently, such agricultural pursuits had not exactly been foreign to some Jews even before the age of Joseph II. According to a document dating approximately from 1820, there were Jews who spoke of their “forefathers” as tilling the Herța estate even during the reign of the sovereign Mihai Racovița and of his son-in-law, Gheorghe Ghica (the first half of the eighteenth century).³⁴⁷ Moreover, in the second half of that century, around 1760, documents attest the existence of Jews who held pastures in tenure and operated cheese dairies in Transylvania (Bran) and Moldavia.³⁴⁸

The Jews of Galiția were not the only ones who were encouraged to come to Bukovina at the end of the eighteenth century; among the immigrants there were also Ruthenians, Lippovans, Hungarians, and Germans. The colonies, “especially rural,” that these people founded, according to Andrei Corbea’s commentaries, “will constitute an important factor in the modernization of the province, which Joseph II so zealously provided for.”³⁴⁹ This time, the immigrants comprised not so much tradesmen and craftsmen of foreign origin, who commonly settled in the towns and boroughs, but land cultivators. Their activity was no longer complementary to that of the Romanian peasants, but in direct competition with them. The grievance of the latter was reflected even in some Romanian folkloric productions: “For the Jews and the Rutherians, / Who found refuge here, / Say it’s them who are the natives, / And we, and the Moldavians, / Are here newcomers.”³⁵⁰

Mihai Emin+escu may also have been referring to the same situation when in 1873 he wrote these lines in his poem “Doina”: “From the Dniester to the Tisza, / All Romanians have complained to me, / That they could not succeed / Because of all the foreigners.” The poet did not refer to the Jews by name, but many people suspected that this was whom he meant when using terms such as “foreigners.” “The poem ‘Doina’ caused us much trouble,” remembers author A. Axelard. “It was the opinion of Christian boys that Eminescu spoke about the Jews in the poem, and, supported by his authority, they used to punch us.”³⁵¹

During the interwar years, right-wing nationalist intellectuals were greatly displeased at the fact that some Jewish people settled in the countryside, especially in some regions in northern Romania. For example, in 1923,

speaking about the Jewish influx (“the most important event occurring on Romanian soil until today”), Simion Mehedinți, a geographer and former minister of education, noted that in Maramureș, Bukovina, and Bessarabia “the flux of Jewish population keeps extending towards the countryside too.”³⁵² In his turn, in 1937 Mircea Eliade complained that “Jewish people conquered the villages in Maramureș and in Bukovina.”³⁵³ “Take the Jews away from our villages...or otherwise we leave!” was a slogan printed in capital letters in the newspaper *Porunca Vremii* in the late 1930’s.

Peasants of Maramureș voiced their dissatisfaction in much the same terms: “In Sălișteea there were only Romanians; there was not the shadow of a Jew, only one was there whom I knew of in [18]59, one called Maier. And from that time on the village has been filled with them, and now they say it’s they who are the freeholders.”³⁵⁴

The Jew as Shepherd

Documents from the second half of the eighteenth century attest that some Jews (like Isaac Sora, for instance, in 1765) were managing “cheese dairy farms” in the mountains, where they produced processed cheese. They procured “cow or sheep milk” from shepherds, paying them not only money, “but also sugar and girdles made of golden thread.” An act of 1776 mentions a Jew from Jassy by the name of Zalman Cașcaval (i.e., processed cheese), while a document from the end of the eighteenth century speaks of Jews of Silistra who pressed cheese in the Mountains of Buzău.³⁵⁵ Also, around 1760, documents attest the presence of Jews who owned or leased fields and ran cheese dairy farms in Transylvania (the Bran area) and in Moldavia.³⁵⁶ Furthermore, during some periods and in certain Romanian areas, the Jews were even shepherds.

“Jewish sheepfolds in Maramureș, and in Bukovina too, are quite numerous and they grow in number by the day,” wrote Tiberiu Morariu in 1930, after undertaking research on the Jews as shepherds in the area, a phenomenon that was first attested from approximately the mid-nineteenth century. “There are quite frequent cases when the head shepherds are Jews”; they are called “kosherers” because they “make kosher cheese.” Morariu also published several photographs of Jewish sheepfolds with Jewish shepherds, even if the latter would not permit their picture to be taken “because their religion does not allow it.”³⁵⁷ At about the same time, in the early 1920s, peasants from Maramureș complained that “the mountains are in the hands of Yids.”³⁵⁸ In these regions of Romania, Jews used to be breeders of animals,

especially sheep and poultry: "If during summer, for instance," wrote Tache Papahagi in 1924 about the villages of Maramureș, "one can see flocks of ducks, and mostly of geese, whitening the orchards and grazing, one may be sure from the outset that there is a Jewish community in that village."³⁵⁹

Until the first decades of the twentieth century, reassures historian Victor Neumann, shepherding among the Jews in the counties of Maramureș and Bukovina came to be an irrefutable economic reality. "Unsanctioned before on a European scale, this aspect enters history as one of the numberless particularities of the Jewish Diaspora. It is more than an attempt at historical recuperation: the eternal nomad was attracted to shepherding, thus, a former occupation of the Jews of Antiquity was regained."³⁶⁰

Jewish shepherding even left its mark in folklore and folk mythology. A particularly knowledgeable writer in matters of folklore, Mihail Sadoveanu, begins his pastoral novel *Baltagul* with a legend collected in Bukovina "from an old head shepherd, who used to be a Jew in his youth, and God in his mercy made him come to know the right creed." Certain Romanian carols speak of "Jewish hay fields"³⁶¹ while in a carol from Bessarabia a "Jewess" has magic powers controlling the fertility of sheep.³⁶² Finally, the most spectacular attestation of the socio-economic phenomenon under discussion is to be found in a variant of the folkloric ballad "Miorița" collected in the county of Vrancea: "Lo, flocks of sheep three, / Are acoming down / With handsome lads three: / One is a Transylvanian, / One is a Moldavian, / And the other is a Jew."³⁶³ Even Jewish musical folklore retains some of these captions. Abraham Goldfaden, a scholar of musical lore known as "the father of the Yiddish theater," noted in his memoirs that during the second half of the nineteenth century Jewish ensembles of fiddlers would interpret in Yiddish renditions of a traditional Jewish song entitled "Poor me, the Shepherd."³⁶⁴

In Bessarabia and Dobruja

The Habsburg land reform experiment that granted land properties to the Jews was repeated in Bessarabia, in the first half of the nineteenth century, by the Russian Tsars. In 1804, Tsar Alexander I offered tax exemption to the Jews engaging in agricultural labor. An *ukase* from that epoch stipulated that the Jews in Bessarabia "should be divided into guilds of merchants, townspeople, and land cultivators, according to their skills."³⁶⁵ A similar law in Transylvania, dating from 1807, divided the Jews into five categories: tradesmen, craftsmen, tenants, farmers, and servants.³⁶⁶ During the reign of

Tsar Nikolai I (1825–1855), sixteen Jewish agricultural colonies were founded in northern and central Bessarabia, in what were later to become the districts of Hotin, Soroca, Bălți, Orhei, and Kishinev. In the respective villages, 1,082 rural households were set up in which approximately 11,000 Jews were settled (almost 14 percent of the total number of Jews living in Bessarabia), and all of them took up agriculture and animal breeding. “What the Emperor of Austria had tried in vain to do [with the Jews of Bukovina],” commented Ion Nistor, “it seems that the Tsar of Russia had really brought to life. Yet it was soon revealed that the Jews had no inclination for farming the land and cattle breeding.... After a while, they began to leave to the towns, selling their lands to the Moldavians.”³⁶⁷ In 1889, it was Jews in Russia who founded “The Society for Manual Labor” (O.R.T.—“Obshchestvo Remeslenovo Truda”) in St. Petersburg. This organization established agricultural colonies in Russia for approximately 120,000 Jews and a network of vocational schools with this profile in eastern and central Europe. After the Communist revolution, O.R.T headquarters moved from Russia, first to Berlin in 1921, then Paris in 1933, and Geneva in 1943, and since 1938 was declared completely illegal in the Soviet Union.

After the assassination of Tsar Alexander II by the Narodnaya Volya movement on 1 March 1881 and the coronation of his son, Alexander III, an immense wave of antisemitism erupted in Russia. The “final solution” was then formulated by a high Russian official in the following terms: “One-third [of the Jews] will emigrate, one-third will be baptized, and one-third will starve to death.”³⁶⁸ In the months that followed immediately after the assassination of the Tsar, pogroms were carried out in Kiev, Odessa, Elisavetgrad, and in other Ukrainian towns with encouragement from the authorities. In France, Victor Hugo published a stirring *Appeal*, in which he condemned the crimes against the Jews, while some publications tried to account for them in terms of the “crime on Golgotha” that the Jews had once perpetrated.³⁶⁹ Used in Odessa for the first time in 1871, the Russian term *pogrom* (massacre) became widespread in those troubled years. In the course of 1881 tens of thousands of Jews fled from Russia into Romania. The situation having become quite critical, the idea was broached to establish farming colonies in Dobruja for the immigrating Jews, as well as for the unemployed throughout the country.

Even certain leaders of the Romanian Jewish community welcomed this idea. In October 1881 the Jewish newspaper *Fraternitatea* (Fraternity, edited in Bucharest by Elias Schwarzfeld) wrote:

We shall persuade the Jews not to wish to be innkeepers in villages, which, according to the laws in force, they cannot be, when they will be allowed to embrace another profession, such as farming for instance, even in Dobruja. Yet, we will not be asked this when we are not in the position to recommend any other occupation. Things have gone so far these days that there is hardly any occupation left which the Jews are not obstructed from adopting by means of all manner of restrictions.

Exasperated by what he called the “parasitism” and “unproductiveness” of the Jews, Mihai Eminescu gave his full consent to the solution of “the involvement in farming of the Israelites.” In a signed editorial in the newspaper *Timpul* (The time) of Bucharest, Eminescu considered that the “proposal relating to the involvement in farming, namely the colonization of Dobruja with Israelites who are to become farmers, would be indeed excellent and warranted.”³⁷⁰ The poet had many misgivings as to whether the Jews would accept such a solution, yet there was also room for some hope: “We do not believe that the Jews, but for some exceptions, will become agriculturists. Customs acquired during centuries are not discarded without pains. Yet, an attempt, however costly, would be recommendable, so that we might see clearly what results it were to reap.”³⁷¹

For Theodor Rosetti (director of the Agricultural Bank and premier of Romania in 1888–1889), this particular solution still seemed viable even two decades later. In a public debate on the “Israelite problem,” initiated by C. Rădulescu Motru, Rosetti wrote in 1900:

I deem it profitable for the Romanian state if the Jewish proletariat could be lured into the practice of agriculture. A solution to this respect would be, in my opinion, the colonization of a part of Dobruja with aid from the Jews. The state could concede terrain there (for money, of course), and the Jews could cultivate the land without anybody disturbing them. It would be an altogether interesting experience. Additionally, Jews will be unlikely to claim being persecuted in Dobruja, since they will be in the same boat with Bulgarians, Turks, Tartars, Russians, etc.³⁷²

It is a verified fact that in that same year of 1900, fifty Jewish young people solicited land allotments in Dobruja from the Presidency of the Ministerial Council, since they wished to settle there as farmers. Some years later, prime minister-to-be Take Ionescu volunteered his opinion in the daily *Adevărul*

[The truth]: “The solution is neither emancipation, nor agricultural colonization, but emigration. Why should we inculcate [to Jews] the principles of agriculture? Their education in the field would require the efforts of several generations, and the result could still be open to discussion.”³⁷³

Another massive wave of Jewish immigration into the Romanian side of Moldavia and into Bukovina occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century. The reasons this time were the gory pogrom in Kishinev (1903) on the one hand, and the recruitment of Jews into the Tsarist army occasioned by the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905) on the other. Traveling through Bukovina and Bessarabia in 1905, Nicolae Iorga wrote:

In Noua-Suliță, Jews now begin to take [from Romanian and Ruthenian peasants] even their occupation as ploughmen, because, ever since the war, quite enough deserters from Russia took shelter here, wretched souls, ready to engage in any labor and with any kind of pay, and the Jewish tenant, a merciful man towards his own kind...gave them work in the beet fields.³⁷⁴

The Romanian historian was commenting upon one chance case, ignoring the social and economic phenomenon in its totality.

By 1913, the percentage of Jewish land laborers in Romania accounted for solely 2.5 percent out of the total active Jewish population. After 1918, once regions such as Maramureș, Bukovina, or Bessarabia were incorporated into the Romanian state, this rose to 6.5 percent. Moreover, on account of the Agrarian Reform of October 1920, a further 4,500 Jews were homesteaded with allotments of 4 to 6 hectares of land.³⁷⁵ When in 1923 the League of National Christian Defense “demanded the expropriation of lands tenanted by Yids,” and “their eviction from rural communes,”³⁷⁶ Jewish parliamentarians protested, deeming the proposition as being

illogical, especially from an antisemitic point of view: They [i.e., antisemites] should have a growing interest in the Jews being occupied in agriculture, so they should not flood, as the antisemites maintain, both commerce and crafts. You mean to Romanize the cities, well then, encourage the relocation of Jews in the countryside. Yet, if what you wish is to exclude the Jews from possession of rural properties, then continue the medieval routine that coerced us to the cities and to the practice of commerce.

Antisemitic parliamentarians such as A. C. Cuza, C. Șumuleanu, and others riotously interrupted this discourse delivered by the Jewish-Romanian deputy Mayer Ebner on 15 December 1926.³⁷⁷

Expropriating the Jews from the land they possessed in rural regions became a political obsession of the ultranationalists in the interwar years. For example, in 1937 Nichifor Crainic especially emphasized that, for the “Ethnocratic State” he was planning to create, “the greatest concern is to keep our land out of foreigners’ clutches.” “Democracy,” he wrote in the Program of the Ethnocratic State, “allowed the Jews to possess a great part of this land and now they are colonizing Romania according to a project of the Jewish Internationale. All this land belonging to foreign people will be expropriated and returned to the Romanian peasants.”³⁷⁸ Expelling all the Jews out of the rural regions by means of expropriation, Crainic wrote in 1938, “is a matter of life and death for us.”³⁷⁹ And indeed, one of the first articles of law issued by Ion Antonescu after the National Legionary State was created on 14 September 1940 was the Decree of 4 October 1940, stipulating “retrocession of the rural Jewish properties to the State patrimony.”³⁸⁰

NOTES

1. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română: Studiu de psihologie populară* (The Jews in Romanian folk literature: A study of folk psychology) (Bucharest 1892).

2. Ibid. 71–72. For similar proverbs see Chapter Three, the section: “Ethnical and Ethical Charactersitics.”

3. Ibid., 70.

4. Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “The Stereotype of the Jew in Polish Folklore,” in *Studies in Aggadah and Jewish Folklore*, ed. Issachar Ben-Ami and Joseph Dan (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1983), 91.

5. Harold B. Segal, ed., *Stranger in Our Midst: Images of the Jews in Polish Literature* (Ithaca, N.Y. and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), 100.

6. Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 3 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 23.

7. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 70.

8. Polish proverb; cf. Alina Cała, *The Image of the Jew in Polish Folk Culture* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995), 179.

9. Polish proverb; cf. Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “Stereotype of the Jew,” 89.

10. N. V. Gogol, *Taras Bulba*, transl. into Romanian by Al. O. Teodeoreanu and Xenia Stroe (Bucharest: Russian Book Publishing House, 1956), 173.

11. Dutch and German proverb; cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 65.

12. Veronika Görög-Karady, "Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore: The Jew in Hungarian Oral Literature," in *Folklore Processed: In Honour of Lauri Honko*, ed. Reimund Kvidleland, *Studia Fennica, Folkloristica*, vol. 1 (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 1992), 122.

13. Yisrael Gutman, "The Popular Image of the Jew in Modern Poland," in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999), 261.

14. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 47.

15. Moses Schwarzfeld, "Excursiuni critice asupra istoriei evreilor în România" (Critical enquiries on the history of the Jews in Romania), *Analele Societății Istorice "Iuliu Barasch"* 2 (1888): 46.

16. Eugenio Garin, ed., *Omul Renașterii*, transl. by Dragos Cojocaru (Iași: Polirom, 2000); originally published as *L'uomo del Rinascimento* (Rome and Bari: Laterza and Figli, 1988).

17. *Descriptio Moldaviae* (Description of Moldavia), 1717; cf. Mihai Spielmann, ed., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 2, part 1 (Bucharest: Historical Center of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania, 1988), 31.

18. Dumitru Murărașu, *Naționalismul lui Eminescu* (Eminescu's nationalism) (Bucharest: Pacifica, 1994), 108. First edition: 1932.

19. Ion Luca Caragiale, *O scrisoare pierdută* (Lost letter), 1884, cf. idem, *Opere*, critical edition by Al. Rosetti, Serban Cioculescu and Liviu Calin, vol. 1 (Bucharest: State Pub. House for Literature and Art, 1959), 186.

20. Fragment of an article published by I. Polescu, *Reforma* (Apr. 1885); see n. 150 in Chapter 1 of this volume.

21. Harold B. Segal, ed., *Stranger in Our Midst: Images of the Jews in Polish Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 100.

22. Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc* (The history of Romanian commerce), vol. 2 (Bucharest 1925), 106.

23. Harry Kuller, ed., *O istorie a evreilor din România în date* (A chronological history of Romanian Jewry) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 207.

24. Jean Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României: Problema evreiască (1933–1944)* (Contributions to Romanian history), transl. from the Hebrew by Carol Bines, vol. 1, part 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 164.

25. Ruxandra Cesereanu, "Zavistia: Imaginarul lingvistic violent al extremei drepte românești" (Zavistia: The violent linguistic imagery of the Romanian extreme right wing), *Observatorul cultural*, no. 109 (26 Mar. 2002): 15–17.

26. Petre Pandrea, *Garda de fier, Jurnal de filosofie politică: Memorii penitenciare* (The Iron Guard movement, a diary of political philosophy: memories from prison), ed. Nadia Marcu Pandrea (Bucharest: Vremea, 2001), 115.

27. S. Stanciu, Lya Benjamin et al., eds., *Martiriul evreilor din România, 1940–1944: Documente și Mărturii* (The martyrdom of the Jews in Romania, 1940–1944: Documents and testimonies), foreword by Moses Rosen (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1991), 53.

28. Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României*, vol. 2, part 1, 9; Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrăție* (Orthodoxy and ethnocracy), ed. Constantin Schifirnet (1938; Bucharest: Albatross, 1997; first ed. 1938), 241.

29. Nicolas M. Nagy-Talavera, *Fascismul în Ungaria și România* (Fascism in Hungary and in Romania) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 69.

30. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, transl. by Talcott Parsons, with a foreword by R. H. Tawney (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1958; originally published in German as *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*, 1920).

31. Daniel Barbu, ed., *Firea românilor* (The nature of the Romanians) (Bucharest: Nemira, 2000), 50.

32. Ioan Petru Culianu, *Mircea Eliade*, transl. by Florin Chiritescu and Dan Petrescu (Bucharest: Nemira, 1995), 169–74.

33. Ștefan Zeletin, *Neoliberalismul: Studii asupra istoriei și politicii burgheziei române* (Neo-Liberalism: studies in the history and politics of the Romanian bourgeoisie), 3d ed., ed. C. D. Zeletin (1927; Bucharest: Scripta, 1992), 123.

34. Iuliu Zanne, *Proverbele românilor* (Proverbs of the Romanians), vol. 6, (Bucharest: Socec, 1901), 178.

35. Görög-Karady, "Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore," 120.

36. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 46.

37. Ibid., 69.

38. A. Cohen, *Talmudul* (The Talmud) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 278–80.

39. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 46.

40. Moses Schwarzfeld, "Anecdote populare românești cu privire la evrei" (Romanian folk anecdotes about the Jews), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 12 (1889–1890): 128.

41. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 178.

42. Moses Schwarzfeld, "Excursiuni critice," 46.

43. Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele poporului român, adunate și așezate în ordine mitologică* (The customs and beliefs of the Romanian people, in mythological order), vol. 2 (Chernovtsy, 1903; Iași: Polirom, 1998), 224.

44. Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919): De la excludere la emancipare* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 262; Radu Rosetti, *Pentru ce s-au răsculat țărani* (For what the peasants arose), ed. Z. Ornea (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1987), 393–95. First ed., Bucharest: Socec, 1907.

45. Quoted in Iancu, *Evreii din România*, 271.

46. Liviu Rebreanu, *Răscoala* (The uprising) (Timișoara: Facla, 1987).

47. Quoted in the Bucharest Jewish periodical *Realitatea evreiască* (The Jewish reality), no. 62–63 (2 Dec. 1997), 13.

48. Cf. Ladislau Gyémánt, “The Limits of the Tolerance in Transylvania during the First Half of the 19th Century: The Jewish Case,” in *The Jews in the Romanian History: Papers from the International Symposium, Bucharest, September 30–October 4, 1996*, ed. Ion Stanciu (Bucharest: Silex, 1999), 70–78.

49. Dimitrie Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina: Studiu istoric, cultural, etnografic și folcloric* (The Jews from Bukovina: a historical, cultural, ethnographic, and folkloric study) (Cernăuți, 1899), 7–9.

50. Maurice d’Hauterive, *Mémoire sur l’état ancien et actuel de la Moldavie, présenté à S.A.S. Prince Alexandre Ipsilanti en 1787* (Bucharest 1902); quoted in Lya Benjamin, Mihai Spielmann, and S. Stanciu, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 2, part 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1990), 323.

51. Anatole de Demidoff, *Voyage dans la Russie meridionale et la Crimée par la Hongrie, la Valachie et la Moldavie* (Paris: E. Bourdin, 1840), 131–32.

52. Emil Cioran, *Ispita de a exista* (The temptation of being) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), 72. First published as: *La tentation d’exister* (Paris: Gallimard, 1956).

53. Moses Gaster, *Memorii (fragmente). Corespondență* (Memoirs [fragments]. Correspondence), ed. Victor Eskenasy (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 95.

54. George K. Anderson, *The Legend of the Wandering Jew* (Hanover and London: Brown University Press, 1991), 40.

55. Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României*, vol. 2, 77–79.

56. Pandrea, *Garda de fier*, 164.

57. *Martiriul evreilor din România*, 197–199; Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României*, vol. 2, 256–65.

58. Mihai Ralea, *Scrieri* (Writings), vol. 5 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1988), 64.

59. Marcel Aderca, *F. Aderca și problema evreiască* (F. Aderca and the Jewish problem) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 13.
60. Gail Kligman, *The Wedding of the Dead: Ritual, Poetics, and Popular Culture in Transylvania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 365, n. 31.
61. Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina*, 9.
62. Petru Dumitriu, *Cronica de familie* (A family saga), vol. 2 (1956; Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1993), 527.
63. Liviu Rebreanu, *Gorila* (The gorilla) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1985), 130.
64. Gogol, *Taras Bulba*, 170.
65. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 73.
66. Görög-Karady, "Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore," 120.
67. Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, "Stereotype of the Jew," 88.
68. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 73.
69. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura lor populară: Studiu etnico-psiologic* (The Jews in their own folk literature: A psycho-ethnic study) (Bucharest: Universala, 1898).
70. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 407, 421.
71. Alvydas Butkus, "The Lithuanian Nicknames of Ethnonymic Origin," in *Indogermanische Forschungen*, vol. 100, ed. W. P. Schmid (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 223–28; Laima Anglickiene, "Zydas pasakojamojoje tautosakoje" (The Jew in narrative folklore), *Liaudies kultura*, no. 5 (1996): 48–52.
72. G. M. Tamás, *Idola tribus: Esența morală a sentimentului național* (Idola tribus: The moral essence of national belonging), transl. by Marius Tabacu and Ștefan Borbély (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001), 84.
73. "If you hit a Jew, all the others cry and unlike them, if you hit a Romanian, the rest of the Romanians laugh," Cilibi Moise would say around 1850; see *De la Cilibi Moise la Paul Celan: Antologie din operele scriitorilor evrei de limba română* (From Cilibi Moses to Paul Celan: An anthology of Jewish-Romanian writers), ed. Țicu Goldstein (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 4. Folk proverbs from Central and Eastern Europe provide evidence of the Jews' spirit of solidarity: "Jews trust one another," "The Jew sides with the Jew and the boyar with the boyar" (German proverbs); "It is common for a boyar to side with a boyar, for a peasant with a peasant, and for the Jew with the Jew," "The Jews are like field bees, one takes the side of all" (Ukrainian proverbs); see Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 77. In 1881, Mihai Eminescu emphasized the negative aspect of "Jewish solidarity": "Accustomed to organize themselves quickly and easily, like any old people, kept together by race solidarity, by interests, and by religion, they [i.e., the Jews] give orders in the synagogue, day by day, for competing with and ruining Christian trade...."; see Mihai

Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască* (The Jewish problem), ed. D. Vatamaniuc (Bucharest: "Vestala," 1998), 157.

74. In this connection I point to a significant linguistic borrowing. The name of the Hasidic sect *Habad*, founded at the end of the eighteenth century by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liady, comes from the acronymic shortening of three kabbalistic *Sephiroth*: *Hokmah–Binah–Da'ath* (Wisdom–Rationality–Intuition). In Russian and Ukrainian, a member of the sect was called a *habadnic*. The term entered the lexicon of the Romanian language under the form of *habotnic*, initially meaning a "bigot Jew" and then, through semantic extension, only "bigot."

75. "He is a hero, too bad he is a Jew" are the terms in which a character in Petru Dumitriu's novel *Cronica de familie* (A family chronicle) is spoken of; he is Second Lieutenant Friedmann, decorated with the Order of the Crown of Romania for heroism during the First World War; see Dumitriu, *Cronica de familie*, 2:115.

76. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, passim; Herta Herzog, *The Jews as "Others": On Communicative Aspects of Antisemitism: A Pilot Study in Austria*, ACTA no. 4 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1994), 5–15.

77. Corneliu Vadim Tudor, *Saturnalii (versuri)* (Saturnalia: Verse) (Bucharest: Albatros, 1983), 26, 49.

78. Ion Coja, *Marele manipulator și asasinarea lui Culianu, Ceausescu, Iorga* (The great manipulator and the assassination of Culianu, Ceausescu, Iorga), (Bucharest: Miracol, 1999), 150.

79. Ion Rotaru, "Evreii și literatura română" (The Jews and Romanian literature), *Sinteze*, no. 20–22 (1998).

80. Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile la români: Studiu etnografic* (Traditional holidays of the Romanians: ethnographic study), ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Saeculum I.O., 1997), 384.

81. Marian Popa, *Istoria literaturii române de azi pe mâine* (The history of Romanian literature from one day to another), vol. 2 (Bucharest: Luceafărul Foundation, 2001), 200.

82. Wilhelm Filderman, *Articole, discursuri, memorii (1921–1948)* (Articles, speeches, memoirs [1921–1948]), vol. 1, eds. Teodor Wexler and Michaela Popov (Bucharest: Dr. W. Filderman Foundation, 2000), 94.

83. Quoted in Iancu, *Evreii din România*, 162.

84. I. Ludo, "De ce n-au evreii talent" (Why do Jews have no talent), *Adam*, no. 90, (1936); cf. *De la Cilibi Moise la Paul Celan*, 296–300.

85. Marian Avram, "Demisia, d-le Severin" (Your Resignation, Mr Severin), *Politica*, no. 277 (29 June 1997).

86. For the “Judaizing” of political opponents, see Leon Volovici, *Antisemitism in Post-Communist Eastern Europe: A Marginal or Central Issue?* ACTA, no. 5 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center For the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1994), 7–8; Michael Shafir, “Antisemitism in the Postcommunist Era,” in *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry*, ed. Randolph L. Braham (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 347–48; Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myths in Post-Communist Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), 97.

87. George Voicu, *Zei cei răi: Cultura conspiraționistă în România postcomunistă* (The evil gods: Conspirative culture in post-Communist Romania) (Bucharest: Polirom, 2000), 73.

88. Quoted in Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation*, 104.

89. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 2, 165.

90. Victor Neumann, *Istoria evreilor din Banat* (The history of the Jews of Banat) (Bucharest: Atlas, 1999), 87.

91. Ladislau Gyémánt and Lya Benjamin, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews in Romania), Vol. 3, part 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 287–88.

92. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, part 1, 55.

93. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, part 2, 191.

94. Vasile Alecsandri, *Opere*, vol. 7 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 576.

95. George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române, de la origini pînă în prezent* (The history of Romanian literature, from its origins to the present), 2d ed. (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 640.

96. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 37.

97. Iancu, *Evreii din România*, 274–75.

98. Radu Rosetti, *Amintiri: Ce-am auzit de la alții* (Memories: What I heard from others), ed. Mircea Anghelescu (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1996), 145.

99. Dumitru Ivanescu, “Populația evreiască din orașele și ținșurile Moldovei între 1774–1832” (The Jewish population in Moldavian towns and villages in the years 1774–1832), in *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae*, II, ed. by S. Sanie and D. Vitcu (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1997), 59–67.

100. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 43.

101. Emile Desjardins, *Les Juifs de Moldavie* (Paris: Dentu, 1867), quoted in Nicolae Iorga, *Problema evreiască la Cameră (o interpelare), cu o introducere de A.C. Cuza și Note despre vechimea evreilor în țară* (The Jewish question in the Chamber [an Appeal], with an introduction by A. C. Cuza and notes on the ancient

residence of Jews in Romania) (Vălenii-de-Munte: Typ. "Neamul românesc," 1910), 48.

102. Andrew A. Bonar and Robert Murray McCheyne, *Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews from the Church of Scotland in 1839* (Edinburgh: William and Co., 1844), 399.

103. Pincu Pascal, "Contribuția evreilor din Piatra Neamț la dezvoltarea economică a orașului" (The contribution of the Jews of Piatra Neamț to the economic development of the town), in *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudeorum Romania*, vol. 6, ed. by S. Sanie and D. Vitcu (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 35.

104. Nicolae Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Bucovina* (The Romanian nation in Bukovina) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1905), 198.

105. Neumann, *Istoria evreilor din Banat*, 125.

106. Bonar and McCheyne, *Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews*, 391.

107. Dinu C. Giurescu, "Evreii bucureșteni: Cîteva atestări" (The Jews of Bucharest: Some records), *Contrapunct* (Bucharest), no. 8 (22 Feb. 1991): 9; Schwarzfeld, "Excursiuni critice," 122.

108. Iuliu Barasch, "Evreii în Cracovia, Galiția, Bucovina, Moldova și Valachia: Impresii de călătorie din anii 1841–1842" (The Jews of Cracow, Galicia, Bukovina, Moldavia, and Walachia: Impressions of a Journey in the Years 1841–1842), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 16 (1894): 45–181.

109. Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România (1919–1938): De la emancipare la marginalizare* (Romanian Jewry [1919–1938]: From emancipation to marginalization), transl. by Țicu Goldstein (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 66.

110. *Ibid.*, 62.

111. Josy Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor* (A history of the Jews) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1993), 313.

112. Martin N. Marger, *Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1991), 191ff.

113. Cf. B. P. Hasdeu, *Industria națională, industria streină și industria ovreiască față cu principiul concurenței* (National industry, foreign industry, and Jewish industry confronted with the principle of competition) (Bucharest, 1866).

114. Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919): De la excludere la emancipare* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 167. First published as *Les Juifs en Roumanie (1866–1919): De l'exclusion à l'émancipation* (Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1978).

115. *O istorie a evreilor din România în date* (A chronological history of Romanian Jewry), vol. 1, ed. Harry Kuller (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 233.

116. Jewish tinkers had no scruples about making or mending the roofs of Christian churches or monasteries. For examples and details see *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 2, 236; *ibid.*, vol. 3, part 1, 47; Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 160, quoting Iuliu Barasch; Gaster, *Memorii*, 94; Miriam Korber-Bercovici, *Jurnal de ghetou (Djurin, Transnistria, 1941–1943)* (Ghetto diary [Djurin, Transnistria, 1941–1943]) (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1995), 113; Ion Luca Caragiale, *Opere*, critical edition by Al. Rosetti, Serban Cioculescu and Liviu Calin, vol. 3 (Bucharest: State Pub. House for Literature and Art, 1962), 519. Jewish craftsmen did not believe that by repairing Christian churches and making church objects they contradicted their own religion. For instance, the Moldavian Jewish craftsmen used to make wax candles for churches until 1826, when Metropolitan Bishop Benjamin forbade them this occupation; cf. Nicolae Iorga, “Istoria evreilor în Terile noastre” (History of the Jews of our countries), *Analele Academiei Române: Memoriile Secției Istorice* 36 (1913). Some Jewish producers of handicrafts also made brass candlesticks or even icons for several churches; cf. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 47.

117. Liviu Rotman, *Școala israelito-română (1851–1914)* (The Romanian-Israelite school [1851–1914]) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 48.

118. Ion Călugăru, *Copilăria unui netrebnic* (A good-for-nothing’s boyhood) (Bucharest: Editura pentru literatură, 1962), 21. First published: Bucharest: Ciornei National Pub. House, 1936.

119. Sholem Aleichem, *Opere alese* (Selected works), Vol. 2: *Stele rătăcitoare* (Wandering stars), transl. by Olga Brateș and Meer Sternberg (Bucharest: Universal Literature Publishing House, 1964).

120. Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României*, vol. 2, 260.

121. On the front page of *Biruința* (Victory), no. 166 (1909).

122. D. Hîncu, ed. *Mărturii: “Chestiunea evreiască”* (Testimonies: “The Jewish problem”) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 93–94.

123. Verax [pseud. of Radu Rosetti], *La Roumanie et les Juifs* (Bucharest: Socec, 1903), 264; cf. Avram Rosen, *Participarea evreilor la dezvoltarea industrială a Bucureștiului, din a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea pînă în anul 1938* (Jewish participation in the process of industrial development in Bucharest, from the mid-nineteenth century till 1938) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1995), 50.

124. Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 141.

125. Ion Șerbănescu et al., eds., *Parlamentari evrei în forul legislativ al României: Documente* (Jewish parliamentarians in the legislative body of Romania: Documents) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 103–104, 147; see also Mihai Eminescu,

Opere, vol. 7: *Proza literară* (Literary prose) (Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1977).

126. Alexandru Claudian, *Antisemitismul și cauzele lui sociale* (Antisemitism and its social causes), ed. C. Schifirneț (Bucharest: Albatros, 2000), 2–3. First edition: Bucharest: P.S.D., 1944.

127. Ioan Petru Culianu, *Păcatul împotriva spiritului: Scrieri politice* (Sin against the spirit: Political writings) (Bucharest: Nemira, 1999), 167.

128. This is the favored image of the Jew in nineteenth-century Europe. “The Jew is of the non-productive race, he is neither a field laborer, nor an industrialist, nor is he a marketer in the true sense,” wrote French Socialist Pierre Proudhon. “He is merely an intermediary, always a fraud, and a parasite, operating in business, as well as in philosophy, by bargaining, by counterfeiting, by double-dealing.... In economy, his whole set of economics is negative, he is the principle of evil, Satan, Ahriman, embodied by the race of Sem.” Cf. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, vol. 3, 370.

129. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 133.

130. Iorga, “Istoria evreilor în Terile noastre.”

131. I. H. Zucker, *Bessarabien: Bemerkungen und gedanken, bei Gelegenheit eines mehrjährigen Aufenthaltes in diesem Lande* (Frankfurt-am-Main 1834); cf. Nicolae Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Basarabia* (The Romanian nation in Bessarabia) (Bucharest: Socec, 1905), 192–212.

132. Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria industriilor la români* (The history of industries among the Romanians) (Bucharest, 1927), 186.

133. Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “The Stereotype of the Jew,” 94.

134. András Kovács, *Antisemitic Prejudices in Contemporary Hungary*, ACTA no. 16 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University, 1999), 16; *O istorie a evreilor din România în date*, 26.

135. Cf. Rosen, *Participarea evreilor la dezvoltarea industrială a Bucureștiului*; Elijah Feldman, *Jewish Artisans in Moldavia* (Jerusalem, 1982); Radu Stefan Vergatti, “Dinamica demografică și aspecte socio-profesionale ale obștii evreiești din Bucharest (1810–1939)” (The demographic dynamics and socio-professional aspects of the Jewish community in Bucharest [1810–1939]), *Revista de Istorie Socială* 2–3 (1997–1998): 165–235.

136. B. P. Hasdeu, *Trei Ovrei: Jupânul Shylock allu Shakespeare, domnul Gobseck allu Balzac și jupânul Moise allu Alexandri* (Three Jews: Shakespeare’s Master Shylock, Balzac’s Mr Gobseck, and Alexandri’s Master Moses) (Bucharest: St. Rassidescu, 1865), 20–21.

137. Volovici, *Antisemitism in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*, 5.

138. Jacques Le Goff, *Banii și viața: Economie și religie în Evul Mediu* (Bucharest: Erasmus, 1993), 23. Originally published as *La Bourse et la Vie: économie et religion au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Hachette, 1986).

139. Walter Block, *Pledoarii imposibile: În apărarea prostituatelor, a spărgătorilor de grevă, a cămătarilor, a patronilor și a altor stigmatizați* (Bucharest: Nemira, 1998), 133. Originally published as *Defending the Undefendable: The Pimp, Prostitute, Scab, Slumlord, Libeler, Moneylender, and Other Scapegoats in the Rogue's Gallery of American Society* (New York: Fleet Press Corp., c. 1976).

140. Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 202.

141. Le Goff, *Banii și viața*; idem, *Negustorii și bancherii în Evul mediu* (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1994), originally published as *Marchands et banquiers au Moyen âge* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1956).

142. Pamfile, *Sărbătorile la români*, 161.

143. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Baltagul* (The hatchet) (Bucharest: Gramar, 1996).

144. Moses Gaster, *Literatura populară română* (Romanian folk literature) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1983), 299.

145. Gh. F. Ciușanu, *Superstițiile poporului român* (The superstitions of the Romanians) (Bucharest: Socec, 1914), 48.

146. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 65.

147. Cața, *Image of the Jew*, 121.

148. Gaster, *Memorii*, 183.

149. I.-A. Candrea, Ov. Densusianu, and Th. D. Sperantia, *Graiul nostru: Texte din toate părțile locuite de români* (Our language: Texts from all the regions inhabited by Romanians), vol. 2 (Bucharest: Socec, 1908), 189 (the legend “Uvreulu și cristinlu” [The Jew and the Christian]). My thanks to my friend Alexander Drace-Francis of the University of London for directing my attention to this legend which he found with commentary in the archive of Moses Gaster.

150. Cf. Tudor Pamfile, *Mitologie românească: Dușmani și prieteni ai omului* (Romanian mythology: Man's foes and friends) (Bucharest: Socec, 1916), 38.

151. Cf. Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Studii în folclor* (Studies in folklore), vol. 2 (Chernovtsy: Gutenberg Press, 1912), 164.

152. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 72–74.

153. Calistrat Hogaș, *Pe drumuri de munte* (On mountain paths) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1988), 86; Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române*, 672.

154. Foreigners, as a rule, occupied the middle ranks of Romanian society, which comprised especially merchants and craftsmen. “Master Itzic,” goes a folk anecdote published in 1880, “had come to practice his trade in the town of P., where such

craftsmen were sparse, because Romanians do not like the craft,” cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 51. In 1836 a young boyar exaggeratedly told a French visitor, Saint-Marc Girardin, that there is no middle class in the Romanian Principalities. In Moldavia, he claimed, its place had been taken by the Jews who “breed more and more.” Furthermore, he went on, “they do not allow a middle class to form, because they bring the peasant to destitution by pushing him onto the paths of vice, while the boyar they teach to despise industry and commerce.” See Neagu Djuvara, *Între Orient și Occident: Țările române la începutul epocii moderne (1800–1848)* (Between Orient and Occident: Romanian principalities at the beginning of the modern era [1800–1848]), transl. by Maria Carpov (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995), 181).

155. Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc*, 2:30, 133.

156. Pincu Pascal, “Catagrafia evreilor din Piatra Neamț din anul 1859” (The census of the Jews of Piatra Neamț in 1859), in *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae*, vol. 4, eds. S. Sanie and D. Vitcu (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 83.

157. Vergatti, “Dinamica demografica,” 187.

158. Schwarzfeld, “Excursiuni critice,” 47.

159. Moses Schwarzfeld, “Istoria evreilor din România” (The history of the Jews in Romania), *Analele Societății istorice “Iuliu Barasch”* 3 (1889): 129.

160. Elias Schwarzfeld, “Evreii din Moldova sub Reglementul Organic: Studiu istoric” (The Jews of Moldova under the Organic Regulation), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 14 (1891–1892): 203.

161. Judith Kalik, “Patterns of Contacts between the Catholic Church and the Jews in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: The Jewish Debts,” in *Studies in the History of the Jews in Old Poland, in Honor of Jacob Goldberg*, ed. Adam Teller (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995), 102–22; Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, vol. 1, 234.

162. Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “The Stereotype of the Jew,” 87–89.

163. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 163; see also the figures on p. 160.

164. Petru Caraman, *Descolindatul, în orientul și sud-estul Europei: Studiu de folclor comparat* (Negative caroling in eastern and southeastern Europe: A study of comparative folklore), ed. Ion H. Ciubotaru (Iași: “Al. I. Cuza” University Press, 1997), 45.

165. A. Kălimănescu, *Jidanii în România* (The Yids in Romania) (Jassy 1865), 12; quoted in Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 319–20.

166. Hasdeu, *Trei Ovrei*, 45.

167. Tudor Arghezi, “Israel,” *Adam* (Bucharest) no. 9 (15 Oct. 1930); reprinted in *De te voi uita Ierusalime: Țara Sfântă și Cărțile Sacre în literatura română* (If I

forget thee, Jerusalem: The Holy Land and the holy books in Romanian literature), eds. Marin Bucur and Victoria Ana Tăușan (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1996), 96–98.

168. Mihail Sebastian, *De două mii de ani...* (For two thousand years...), with a preface by Nae Ionescu, and *Cum am devenit huligan* (How I became a hooligan) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1990), 217.

169. Ibid., 292.

170. Ibid., 19.

171. Karl Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” 1844; cf. Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 351.

172. Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație*, 268–69.

173. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 75.

174. Schwarzfeld, “Istoria evreilor din România,” 129.

175. Hary Kuller, *Opt studii despre istoria evreilor din România* (Eight studies on the history of the Jews in Romania) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1997), 282.

176. Mihail Canianu, *Poesii populare* (Folk poems) (Iași 1888), 233.

177. Elena Sevastos, *Literatură populară* (Folk literature), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1990).

178. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 289.

179. Djuvara, *Între Orient și Occident*, 171.

180. Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “The Stereotype of the Jew,” 87.

181. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 3, ed. Cornel Simionescu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1986), 141; Liviu Rebreanu, *Ion* (Timișoara: Facla, 1988), 138; Sholem Aleichem, *Opere alese*, vol. 2, 27.

182. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 162–63.

183. Nicolae A. Bogdan, *Orașul Iași: Monografie istorică și socială, ilustrată* (The town of Jassy: An illustrated historical and social monograph), 2d ed. (Jassy 1914), 142; Nicolae Cajal and Hary Kuller, eds., *Contribuția evreilor din România la cultură și civilizație* (The Romanian Jews’ contribution to culture and civilization) (Bucharest: Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania, 1996), 369.

184. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 194.

185. Cf. Tudor Mateescu, “Evreii din orașul Silistra în timpul stăpînirii otomane” (The Jews of Silistra during Ottoman rule), in *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudaeorum Romaniae*, vol. 3 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 64.

186. *Călători străini despre Țările Române* (Foreign travelers on the Romanian principalities), V, eds. Maria Holban et al. (Bucharest: Scientific Pub. House, 1973), 183–84.

187. Gerben Zaagsma, "The Klezmerim of Prague: About a Jewish Musicians' Guild," in *East European Meetings in Ethnomusicology*, vol. 7 (Bucharest: Romanian Society for Ethnomusicology, 2000), 41–47.
188. G. T. Niculescu-Varone and E. C. Gainariu-Varone, *Dicționarul jocurilor populare românești* (Dictionary of Romanian folk dances) (Bucharest: Litera, 1979).
189. Schwarzfeld, "Excursiuni critice," 42.
190. Gérard Silvain, *Images et traditions juives: Un millier de cartes postales [1897–1917] pour servir à l'histoire de la Diaspora*, foreword by Alain Poher (Paris: Celiv, 1997), 465.
191. Sal. Segall, *Din folclorul poporului evreu* (From the folklore of the Jewish People), ed. with introductory study by Al. Dobre (Bucharest: Minerva, 2000), lxii.
192. Ion Nenițescu, *De la românii din Turcia europeană* (Of the Romanians in European Turkey) (Bucharest, 1895), 577.
193. Elena Romero Castello and Uriel Macios Kapon, *The Jews and Europe: 2000 Years of History* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1994), 185.
194. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 2, 106.
195. Iorga, *Problema evreiască la Cameră*, 41.
196. Israil Bercovici, *O sută de ani de teatru evreiesc în România (1876–1976)* (A hundred years of Jewish theater in Romania [1876–1976]) (Bucharest, 1982).
197. Zaagsma, "The Klezmerim of Prague"; Gisela Sulițeanu, "On the "Haskala" Movement and the Traditional Music of Jews in Romania," in *ibid.*, 48–66.
198. Adam Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz*, transl. by Kenneth R. Mackenzie (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1992).
199. Petru Caraman, *Colindatul la români, slavi și la alte popoare: Studiu de folclor comparat* (Carolling with the Romanians, Slavs, and other peoples: A study of comparative folklore) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1983), 116.
200. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 156.
201. Magdalena Opalski, *The Jewish Tavern-Keeper and His Tavern in Nineteenth-Century Polish Literature* (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 1986).
202. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 217.
203. See below, Chapter Four, the section: "Demonizing the Jew."
204. Ion Mușlea and Ov. Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului: Din răspunsurile la chestionarele lui B. P. Hasdeu* (Folklore typology: From the answers to B. P. Hasdeu's questionnaires) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1970), 542; Andrei Oișteanu, *Mythos & Logos: Studii și eseuri de antropologie culturală* (Mythos & logos: Studies and essays in cultural anthropology) (Bucharest: Nemira, 1997), 53; Ioan Petru Culianu, *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului*, transl. by Tereza Petrescu, afterword by H.-R.

Patapievici (Bucharest: Nemira, 1995), 14. Originally published as: Ioan P. Couliano, *Les Gnosés dualistes d'occident: Histoire et mythes* (Paris: Plon, 1990), 265.

205. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 331.

206. Tudor Pamfile, *Povestea lumii de demult, după credințele poporului român* (The story of the world of yore, according to the beliefs of the Romanian people) (Bucharest: Socec, 1913), 153.

207. See Ivan Evseev, *Dicționar de magie, demonologie și mitologie românească* (Dictionary of Romanian magic, demonology and mythology) (Timișoara: Amarcord, 1997), 121.

208. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 392.

209. Pamfile, *Mitologie românească*; for other Romanian folk legends that dramatize relationships between the tavern, the Jewish tavern-keeper, the rabbi, brandy, and the Devil, see Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 404.

210. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 4, critical edition by Cornel Simionescu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1987), 127.

211. Niculiță-Voronca, *Studii în folclor*, 165.

212. Iordache Golescu, *Scriseri alese* (Selected writings), ed. with commentary by Mihai Moraru (Bucharest: "Cartea Românească," 1990), 259; Mihai Eminescu, *Opere alese* (Selected works), vol. 3: *Literatură populară* (Popular literature), ed. Perpessicius (Bucharest: 1965), 396.

213. Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz*.

214. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 105.

215. Rebreanu, *Ion*, 30.

216. *Firea românilor*, 71.

217. Maria Holban et al., eds., *Călători străini despre Țările Române* (Foreign travelers in the Romanian Principalities), vol. 7 (Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1981), 18.

218. Anceľ, *Contribuții la istoria României*, vol. 2, 20.

219. Liudmila Dymerskaya-Tsigelman and Leonid Finberg, *Antisemitism of the Ukrainian Radical Nationalists: Ideology and Policy*, ACTA no. 14 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999), 26.

220. Schwarzfeld, "Excursiuni critice," 79.

221. Rotman, *Școala israelito-română*, 50.

222. Constantin C. Giurescu, *Contribuțiuni la studiul originilor și dezvoltării burgheziei române pînă la 1848* (Contributions to the study of the origins and development of the Romanian bourgeoisie until 1848) (Bucharest, 1972), 164.

223. Victor Eskenasy, ed., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 1 (Bucharest, 1986), 57; *ibid.*, vol. 2, part 1, 197.

224. Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 39–40.

225. Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc*, 1:276.

226. *Ibid.*, 2:38.

227. *Descriptio Moldaviae*, vol. 16; cf. Dan Horia Mazilu, *Noi despre ceilalți: Fals tratat de imagologie* (We about the others: False treaty of imagology) (Jassy, 1999), 134.

228. Maria Holban et al., eds., *Călători străini despre Țările Române* (Foreign travelers in the Romanian Principalities), vol. 8 (Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1983), 386.

229. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 30; Filderman, *Articole, discursuri, memorii*, 11.

230. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 2, 448.

231. *Ibid.*, 12.

232. Gh. Crutcescu, *Podul Mogoșoaiei* (Mogosoia Bridge) (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1986), 19.

233. Schwarzfeld, “Evreii din Moldova,” 208.

234. Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc*, 2:41.

235. Vergatti, “Dinamica demografică,” 185.

236. Iorga, *Istoria industriilor la români*, 173.

237. Cf. Pompiliu Eliade, *Înfluența franceză asupra spiritului public în România: Originile. Studiu asupra stării societății românești în vremea domniilor fanariote* (Bucharest: Univers, 1982), 113. First published as *De l'influence française sur l'esprit public en Roumanie* (Paris, 1898).

238. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 29.

239. Iorga, *Istoria industriilor la români*, 173–74.

240. Mihai Eminescu, *Scrieri politice și literare: Manuscrise inedite și culegeri din ziare și reviste* (Literary and political writings: unpublished manuscripts and articles from newspapers and reviews), vol. 1: (1870–1877) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1905), 98.

241. Ms. 2106, Library of the Romanian Academy.

242. Schwarzfeld, “Evreii din Moldova,” 210.

243. Elias Schwarzfeld, *Din istoria evreilor: Împopularea, reîmpopularea și întemeierea târgurilor și a târgușoarelor în Moldova* (From the history of the Jews in Moldavia) (Bucharest, 1914); cf. *De la Cilibi Moise la Paul Celan*, 43.

244. Mazilu, *Noi despre ceilalți*, 225–26.

245. Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc*, 2:105.
246. Ibid., 106.
247. C. D. Aricescu, ed., *Satire politice care au circulat în public, manuscrise și anonime, între anii 1840–1866* (Political satires of public circulation, manuscripts and anonymous texts, between 1840–1866) (Bucharest: Grigore Luis, 1884), 69.
248. Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc*, 2:106.
249. Klaus Heitmann, *Imaginea românilor în spațiul lingvistic german, 1775–1918: Un studiu imagologic* (Das Rumänenbild im deutschen Sprachraum, 1775–1918: Eine imagologische Studie), transl. with a preface by Dumitru Hîncu (Bucharest: Univers, 1995), 168–69.
250. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 2, 129.
251. Ibid., vol. 3, part 1, 43.
252. Gaster, *Memorii*, 159.
253. Eminescu, *Scrieri politice și literare*, 98.
254. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 352–53.
255. Carlo Ginzburg, *Istorie nocturnă: O interpretare a Sabatului* (Iași: Polirom, 1996), 40ff. First published as *Storia notturna: Una decifrazione del sabba* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1989); Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 1:104, 136.
256. Schwarzfeld, “Excursiuni critice,” 115.
257. Eliade, *Influența franceză asupra spiritului public în România*, 104.
258. Schwarzfeld, “Excursiuni critice,” 81.
259. Segal, *Stranger in Our Midst*, 38–42.
260. Schwarzfeld, “Evreii din Moldova,” 204.
261. See the section “Filthy, Stinking Jew” in Chapter One above.
262. In an 1837 act, for instance, it was said that Moldavian inhabitants of Fălticeni are “compelled to buy kosher meat from the Jew, despite their disgust,” see Artur Gorovei, *Folticeni: Cercetări istorice asupra orașului* (Fălticeni: Historical research on the town) (Folticeni 1938), 82.
263. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 2, 448.
264. Barasch, “Evreii în Cracovia.” Iuliu Barasch is not suspected of ethnical subjectivism. This is how an inn kept by a Jew is described in a Romanian folk story (“What Became of Master Itzie”), recorded in the latter half of the nineteenth century: “The viands were cooked with good taste, the eating house was kept very clean and the service was prompt, things that do not come often with Romanians”; see Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 23. It is not difficult to imagine that not all Jewish inns and taverns were like this. In 1857, for instance, while passing through the “Jewish town” of Fălticeni (Bukovina), the poet Dimitrie Bolintineanu and his attendants wished to stay for the night at an inn kept by Jews:

“We went to an eating house kept by these unclean men, yet as soon as we set foot in their house we were forced to get out, that is how foul the air was; we decided to sleep in the coach”; see Dimitrie Bolintineanu, *Călătorii* (Travels), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1915), quoted in Gorovei, *Folticenii*, 122. “Classic filth” and “plagued stench” are once more the distinguishing marks of a Jewish tavern, in a hyperbolic text written by Calistrat Hogaș at the beginning of the twentieth century: “When we stepped over the threshold [of Avrum’s inn], a stench made up of all the emanations on this earth pierced me through my brains: you would not have been competent to say whether it smelled of earth, of rotten eggs, of rancid fat, of salty fish, of untanned leather, of hot cheese, of brine cabbage..., it smelled of none of them, and yet it smelled of all these at once and more”; see Hogaș, *Pe drumuri de munte*, 82. In a short story dating from 1905, Mihail Sadoveanu described in negative terms the inn kept by a Jew in a Moldavian village: “Mista’ Iosub’s inn was a black ugly ramshackle building, with blind and soiled windows, and it was leaning on one side, held up by some big oak props. It could hardly stand up; you were wondering how the wind did not tear it down”; see Sadoveanu, *Opere*, 3: 99.

265. Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz*.

266. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 2, 424, 474.

267. Dumitru Drăghicescu, *Din psihologia poporului român* (From the psychology of the Romanian people), ed. and annotated by Elisabeta Simion (1907; Bucharest: Albatros, 1996).

268. Iorga, *Problema evreiască la Cameră*, 78.

269. Vasile Alecsandri, *Proza*, ed. Georgeta Rădulescu-Dulgheru (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1983), 91.

270. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române*, 314.

271. Vasile Alecsandri, *Opere*, vol. 6 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1979), 466; Hasdeu, *Trei Ovrei*, 43.

272. Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991), 10.

273. Kalimănescu, *Jidanii în România*, 7.

274. Ion Ghica, *Scrisori catre V. Alecsandri* (Letters to V. Alecsandri) (Bucharest: Socec, 1887), 442.

275. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 132, 149–50.

276. *Ibid.*, 159, 139 respectively.

277. Caragiale, *Opere*, 3:29.

278. Hogaș, *Pe drumuri de munte*, 97.

279. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române*, 674.

280. Kuller, *Opt studii*, 282.

281. Nicolae Paulescu, *Spitalul, Coranul, Talmudul, Cahalul, Francmasoneria* (The Hospital, the Quran, the Talmud, the Kahal, and Freemasonry) (1913; Bucharest: Antet XX Press, 2001), 92–93.

282. *Cuvântul liber* (The free word), no. 7 (8 Mar. 1924); cf. Hîncu, *Mărturii*, 113–15.

283. *Porunca vremii* (The summons of the time), no. 981 (1938); cf. *Buletinul Centrului, Muzeului și Arhivei istorice a evreilor din România* (Bulletin of the Center, Museum and Historical Archive of the Jews of Romania) (Bucharest: Center for the Study of the History of the Jews of Romania, 1998), 29.

284. Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, *Pentru legionari* (For legionnaires) (Sibiu: “Totul pentru Țară,” 1936), 154.

285. Simon Dubnow, *Istoria hasidismului*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998; German ed.: *Geschichte des Chassidismus* [Berlin 1931]), 82.

286. Caragiale, *Opere*, 3:254.

287. Lazăr Șăineanu, *Dicționarul universal al limbei române* (The universal dictionary of the Romanian language) (Bucharest, 1896).

288. Ion Creangă, “Moș Nichifor Coțcariul” (Old Nechifor the knave), in idem, *Povești, Amintiri, Povestiri* (Stories and Memories) (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1980), 232.

289. Iorga, *Istoria comertului românesc*, 2:140; Cajal and Kuller, *Contribuția evreilor din România la cultură și civilizație*, 194; *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 519–20.

290. Dimitrie P. Lupașcu, *Medicina babelor: Adunare de descîntece, rețete de doftorii și vrăjitorii babesci* (Old women’s medicine: Collection of old women’s charms (incantations), remedies (medicines), recipes, and witchcraft) (Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1890), 121.

291. Ion Ionescu de la Brad, *Opere agricole* (Agricultural works), vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1868).

292. *Ibid.*, 137.

293. Pamfil Bîlțiu and Gheorghe Gh. Pop, “*Sculați, sculați, boieri mari!*” *Colinde din județul Maramureș* (“Wake up, Wake up, ye wealthy boyars!” Carols from the county of Maramureș) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1996), 383.

294. Pascal, “Catagrafia evreilor din Piatra Neamț,” 76.

295. I. Kara, *Obștea evreiască din Podu Iloaiei: File din istoria unui “ștetl” moldovenesc* (The Jewish community of Podu Iloaiei: Pages in the history of a Moldavian “shtetl”) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1990), 40.

296. *Realitatea evreiască* (Bucharest), no. 109–110 (1–31 Jan. 2000), 13.

297. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 197.

298. *Dictionarul Limbii Române* (Dictionary of the Romanian language), vol. 11, part 1 (Bucharest: Academia Română, 1978), 97.

299. An act issued by the prefect of the county of Neamț sent to the chief physician of the county; cf. the State Archives of the County of Neamț, the Fund of the Sanitary Service, file 11890. I hereby thank pharmacist Mr. Pincu Pascal for bringing this document to my attention.

300. Călugăru, *Copilăria unui netrebnic*, 19.

301. Schwarzfeld, "Anecdote populare românești cu privire la evrei," 139.

302. Pascal, "Catagrafia evreilor din Piatra Neamț," 75.

303. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 2, 274.

304. According to an advertisement in *Amicul Progresului Român* (Friend of Romanian Progress), no. 4 (1895).

305. Gala Galaction, *Roxana, Papucii lui Mahmud, Doctorul Taifun* (Roxana, Mahmud's slippers, Doctor Taifun), ed. Al. Ruja (Timișoara: Facla, 1986), 150.

306. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, 1:122.

307. Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe: The Khazar Empire and Its Heritage* (London: Hutchinson, 1976), 155.

308. Alecu Russo, "Iassy et ses habitants en 1840," in idem, *Opere complete* (Bucharest: Cugetarea, 1942), 132.

309. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Bucovina*, 10.

310. Ibid., 203–204.

311. Sadoveanu, *Opere*, 3:142.

312. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 2, 479.

313. Moses Schwarzfeld, "Literatura populară israelită ca element etnico-psihologic" (Israelite folk literature as a psycho-ethnic element), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 13 (1889): 338.

314. *O istorie a evreilor din România în date*, 209.

315. Pascal, "Contribuția evreilor din Piatra Neamț," 36.

316. Osy Lazăr with Solomon Weinberg, "Din istoria comunității evreilor din Galați" (From the history of the Jewish community of Galați), in *Studia et Acta Historiae Iudeorum Romania* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 18.

317. Koestler, *Thirteenth Tribe*, 155.

318. Sholem Aleichem, *Opere alese*, 2:110.

319. Cf. Iorga, *Istoria industriilor la români*, 93.

320. Vasile Alecsandri, *Opere* (Works), vol. 5 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1977), 355; ibid., vol. 7 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 382.

321. Barasch, "Evreii în Cracovia."

322. Panait Istrati, *Neranțula și alte povestiri* (Neranțula and other stories), edited and translated with a foreword by Alexandru Talex (Bucharest: Minerva, 1984), 563.
323. Koestler, *Thirteenth Tribe*, 155.
324. Pascal, "Catagrafia evreilor din Piatra Neamț."
325. Segal, *Stranger in Our Midst*, 302.
326. Golescu, *Scrieri alese*, 175.
327. Schwarzfeld, "Anecdote populare românești cu privire la evrei," 139.
328. Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, "The Jewish Reform Movement in Transilvania and Banat: Rabbi Aaron Chorin," *Studia Judaica* 5 (1996): 42.
329. Schwarzfeld, "Excursiuni critice," 42.
330. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Bucovina*, 80.
331. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Opere*, vol. 6, ed. Cornel Simionescu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1991), 266.
332. Sadoveanu, *Baltagul*, 66.
333. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Basarabia*, 12.
334. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, 1:43–45.
335. Dumitru Hîncu, "Noi" și germanii "noștri" (1800–1914): *Un studiu imagologic* ("We" and "our" Germans [1800–1914]: An imagologic study) (Bucharest: Univers, 1998), 95.
336. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 51.
337. *Dicționarul limbii române* (Dictionary of the Romanian language) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1937), s.v. "Jidov."
338. Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, "Stereotype of the Jew," 89–90.
339. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 61, 400; *ibid.*, vol. 3, part 2, 24.
340. F. Aderca, *Personalitatea* (The Personality) (Bucharest: Soccec, 1922), 26.
341. Zaharia Stancu, "Între Ion și Itic" (Between Ion and Ytzik), *Lumea Românească*, 20 Jan. 1938.
342. Iorga, *Problema evreiască la Cameră*, 41.
343. Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc*, 2:65.
344. Manfred Raifer, "Die ältesten Judensiedlungen im Kimpulunger Bezirk," in *idem, Ausgewählte historische Schriften* (Czernowitz: Societatea istorico-evreiască, 1938), 109; Tudor Arghezi, *Scrieri* (Writings), vol. 27 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1975), 342.
345. Barasch, "Evreii în Cracovia."
346. Eugen Gluck, "Contribuții privind istoria antisemitismului din Transilvania" (Contributions regarding the history of Transylvanian antisemitism), *Studia et Acta Historiae Judeorum Romaniae* 5 (2000): 136.

347. Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc*, 2:134.
348. Ibid., 31, 39.
349. Andrei Corbea, *Paul Celan și "meridianul" său: Repere vechi și noi pe un atlas central-european* (Paul Celan and his "Meridian": Old and new signs on a central European atlas) (Iași: Polirom, 1998), 25.
350. Ibid., 34.
351. Teșu Solomovici, *România Judaică: O istorie neconvențională a evreilor din România: 2000 de ani de existență continuă* (Romania Judaica: An unconventional history of Romanian Jewry: 2000 years of continued existence), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Teșu Press, 2001), 224.
352. Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building and Ethnic Struggle, 1918–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 194.
353. Mircea Eliade, *Textele "legionare" și despre "românism"* (Legionnaire and Romanianism texts) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001), 55.
354. Tache Papahagi, *Grai, folklor, etnografie* (Language, folklore, ethnography) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 311.
355. Iorga, "Istoria evreilor în Terile noastre."
356. Idem, *Istoria comerțului românesc*, 2:31, 39.
357. Tiberiu Morariu, *Cîteva contribuții la oieritul evreilor maramureșeni* (Some contributions to the sheep-breeding of the Jews of Maramureș) (Cluj, 1930), 12.
358. Papahagi, *Grai, folklor, etnografie*, 327.
359. Ibid., 86.
360. Victor Neumann, *Tentația lui homo-europaeus* (Bucharest: Ed. stiintifica, 1991), 111. English edition: *The Temptation of Homo Europaeus* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).
361. Alexiu Viciu, *Colinde din Ardeal* (Carols from Transylvania) (Bucharest, 1914); Monica Brătulescu, *Colinda românească* (The Romanian colinda [Winter solstice songs]) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 198.
362. Ion Apostol, "Crăciunul și Anul-Nou la Românii de la Est de Bug" (Christmas and New Year's Eve with the Romanians to the east of Bug), *Sociétés européennes* 7 (1990): 82.
363. Ion Diaconu, *Tinutul Vrancei* (The county of Vrancea) (Bucharest: Institutul de filologie și folclor, 1930), 151.
364. Bercovici, *O sută de ani de teatru evreiesc în România*.
365. Ion Nistor, *Istoria Basarabiei* (The history of Bessarabia), ed. Stelian Neagoe (1923; Bucharest: Humanitas, 1991), 202.
366. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 2, 73.

367. Nistor, *Istoria Basarabiei*, 210.
368. Abba Eban, *My People: The Story of the Jews*, vol. 2 (New York: Behrman House, 1979), 120.
369. Béatrice Philippe, *Les Juifs à Paris à la Belle Époque* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1992), 170.
370. *Timpul*, no. 234 (24 Oct. 1881).
371. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 163–65.
372. *Noua Revista Română* (New Romanian Journal), no. 21 (1 Nov. 1900).
373. *O istorie a evreilor din România în date*, 1:287; Andrei Oișteanu, “Evreii, între resemnare și răzvrătire” (The Jews between resignation and rebellion), “22,” no. 21 (3–9 June 1993): 4.
374. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Basarabia*, 6.
375. Iancu, *Evreii din România (1919–1938)*, 62–64.
376. *Ibid.*, 165.
377. Șerbănescu *Parlamentari evrei*, 105.
378. Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație*, 257.
379. *Ibid.*, 173.
380. Lya Benjamin, ed., *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944*, Vol. 1: *Legislația antievreiască* (The Jews of Romania between 1940–1944, vol. 1: Anti-Jewish legislation) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1993), 65.

CHAPTER 3

The Moral and Intellectual Portrait

THE INTELLIGENT, YET CUNNING, JEW

“It is not the character of the Jew that causes antisemitism, but rather antisemitism causes the Jew’s character”

Jean-Paul Sartre

“A Jew’s Mind”

The majority of the clichés which make up the picture of the “imaginary Jew” are negative. Though positive stereotypes are not absent, they are no less false, and the mentality that operates with them is no less baneful. This is all the more true because, as we shall see, some of these clichés are only seemingly positive and, in fact, they explicitly or implicitly highlight negative character traits.

A good example of a seemingly positive stereotype is the “proverbial” intelligence of the Jew. “Intelligent as only Jews may be,” wrote Romanian novelist Panait Istrati in the 1920s.¹ Laudatory exclamations, such as “Smart Jew!” or “A Jew’s head!”² were so frequent among non-Jews that they were taken over by the Jews themselves in their attempt to define their own identity. It is true that the equivalent expression in Yiddish or Ladino—“*a yiddisher Kop*” (A Jew’s head) or “*Mioiu de judio*” (A Jew’s mind)—denotes not so much the intelligence of the Jew as the speculative character of his mind, a certain unique way of tackling and solving an intellectual problem.³ Yet, Jewish popular wisdom has made the situation relative to specific conditions through proverbs of the following kind: “The Jew is smart if he is smart and he is stupid if he is stupid.”⁴

The all-embracing quality of the stereotype of the Jew’s intelligence emerges quite clearly from a widespread Romanian proverb: “It is impossible to find a polite Greek, a stupid Jew, or an honest Gypsy.”⁵ An identical proverb is attested also in Hungarian folklore.⁶ More or less similar sayings are to be found in the traditional culture of other European nations: “Neither

a stupid Jew, nor a lazy hare [will you find]" (Spanish proverb); "Have you ever seen a green cow and a stupid Jew?" "Only a Jew could make something of this muddle" (German saying);⁷ "Wise as a Jew";⁸ "Learned like the Jewish rabbi";⁹ or "As smart as a Jewish rabbi,"¹⁰ the last three being Polish sayings. "Master Rueben," a magus and astrologist, one of the characters in Mihai Eminescu's short story "*Sărmanul Dionis*" [Wretched Dionysus] (1872), seems to embody the model of the wise rabbi in Romanian literature: "an educated Jew, exiled from Spain in Poland," with "judicious comprehension" and "a broad forehead" wrinkled from too much thinking; he has a profound reflection, "like a sage of yore," being "called upon by the Moldavian Prince to teach mathematics and philosophy at the Socola Academy."¹¹

Other sayings, which typically belong to urban folklore, reveal the so-called "exceptionalness" of the Jew, to whom mediocrity would be foreign. "The emotional and spiritual resourcefulness of contemporary Jewry is not common," noted Friedrich Nietzsche in his essay "Vom Volke Israel" [On the People of Israel]; "they are bound to excel in all privileged domains of Europe and be among the winners, and that to the extent that they decide for themselves in what domains to excel."¹² "You [i.e., Jews]," says a character in one of Panait Istrati's short stories, "are either good, or bad, but never mediocre."¹³ "In all things, the Jews are *unique*; you will not find their like on earth," wrote Emil Cioran in 1936 (emphasis added—A.O.).¹⁴ He reiterated the same idea in 1956: "[The Jews] are exceptional by their destiny—an absolute destiny, a destiny in its pure form, which, conferring upon them force and lack of measure, elevates them beyond themselves and does not permit them mediocrity." The Jew, however, is either "very smart" or "very, very stupid.... None of them is stupid," Cioran goes on. "Indeed, stupidity does not find any favor with them: almost all of them are sharp; those who are not, some rare exceptions, do not stop on the threshold of stupidity, but go further: they are the poor in spirit."¹⁵ In other words, the level of stupidity of a stupid Jew would be higher than the level of cleverness of a clever Jew. This *forma mentis* has produced sayings which one is surprised to discover, within a folklore that is rather urbanized, even in recent days (in 1998) in an article by a Romanian writer, published in an important cultural magazine: "When a Jew is smart, he is as smart as ten Romanians, but when he is stupid, he is as stupid as a hundred Romanians."¹⁶ Oftentimes, this saying, while admitting the former statement, is used to emphasize the

latter. Donning a mask of disinterest, here is literary historian Ion Rotaru's gloss on the subject:

I don't know how this happens, though I keep close track of my thinking, but it is the Jews among all other nations that I have encountered—and I strongly refrain from taking sides racially!—who seem to me to be the cleverest of all.... So pardon my noticing, very subjectively of course, that when you come across a simpleton among the Jews he is notably stupid, counterbalancing the other's cleverness, as if by a damned compensation.¹⁷

Once again, an apparently positive stereotype turns out to be a negative one.

In 1892, Moses Schwarzfeld was busy trying to prove that the intelligence attributed to the "imaginary Jew" was actually a genuine feature of the "real Jew." In his study on folk psychology he brought some arguable claims to this effect. Schwarzfeld supported the ridiculous idea that the Jew enjoyed an "atavistic intelligence," or that he was supposed to have a "natural predisposition" that made him an "intelligent and astute man."

By way of summing up, it should be noted that it was not the negative cliché about the Jew's "stupidity," but the (apparently) positive one about his "intelligence," that prevailed. To explain the alleged intelligence of the Jew by means of arguments other than his "natural predisposition," Schwarzfeld brought up for discussion the "culture, which each [Jew] takes pains to acquire. For centuries," he commented, this time justly enough, "compulsory primary education has become one of the Jew's customs."¹⁸ Indeed, no matter how poor or humble they might have been, the religious instruction of Jewish boys—beginning as soon as they began to speak—was part of an immutable tradition. "You know how things are with us," explained a resident of the Jewish quarter of Dorohoi at the beginning of the twentieth century, "just as the child begins to move his tongue, he has to learn to read so that he should know how to pray."¹⁹ "The world survives only through the breath of children who study," says the Talmud.

This phenomenon did not escape the attention of some Romanians as well. A journalist wrote around 1885:

[The Jewess] is the one who takes care of the children's education, which does not differ from one family to another; a three-year-old child is sent to the *belfer*²⁰ so he could be initiated into reading their sacred Hebrew books and in anything relating to their social life. You cannot find a Jew, man or woman, who does not know how to read or

write; then they attend Romanian schools, where they engross in study. A Jew's child is certainly not a child, but a mature man: at eight he is a merchant and has already experienced bankruptcy once; he knows no games, you never see him playing with a ball, knucklebones, kites, or birds, [like the Romanian child] who returns home only in the evening, pretending that he was in school all day and that hard study gives him a headache, instead of admitting that he almost drowned while bathing, or that he almost broke a leg while skating on the pond, and thus he repeats the class for two years in a row while the Jewish child is the one that gets all the school awards.²¹

Finally, Moses Schwarzfeld presented the argument that the Jew had been forced by the specific historical conditions of his life to "sharpen his intelligence." This was the Jew's "only defense weapon" against "peoples who despised and ground him down." Otherwise, he would have been "in danger of perishing in the storm of enemies and of harassment."²² Ten years earlier, in 1882, trying to determine Jewish "psychological ethnic traits" as they were revealed in "Israelite folk literature," Schwarzfeld had defended the same idea, but in different terms:

The Jewish character was steeled during the bitter persecutions of the Middle Ages.²³ His mind, forever focused on the blows to be shunned, has made the Jew keener and more capable of judging the gifts of wisdom, of distinguishing between good and evil, between true happiness and unhappiness. He, who has suffered so much...considers idleness and stupidity to be man's greatest evil and greatest enemy. And then again, nothing is so harshly judged and condemned as stupidity.

Among other things, Schwarzfeld exemplifies his last affirmation through two Jewish proverbs: "The fool is an everlasting nuisance" and "When the Messiah comes all the sick will be healed; only the fool will not be, for he does not know his own flaw."²⁴

In that same year of 1882, Mihai Eminescu believed that, on the contrary, "many bad habits of the [Jewish] nation, many lapses of character" were formed under the pressure of the segregation and regime of persecution under which "[the Jews] had lived in various European countries from the Middle Ages until these days"; these were added to those qualities "which the Jews must have had *ab antiquo*, from their ancestors."²⁵ At about the same time, a similar discussion was being carried on in the German cultural sphere. In

1888, in a disputation with Richard Wagner, author Gustav Freytag wondered which intellectual and moral characteristics would turn out to be “inherent” in the Jew (for instance, his great capacity for sophistry and dialectic) and which were merely the result of unfavorable historical conditions.²⁶ In his turn, Friedrich Nietzsche, speaking of the “bitter living conditions” of the Jewish diaspora, admired the latter’s “accumulation of spiritual fecundity and volition, amassed from generation to generation in the school of suffering.”²⁷

In the eyes of one character in Ileana Vulpescu’s novel *Arta conversației* [The Art of Conversation] (1980), “a flexible and astute mind” such as that of the Jews, as well as the “fears and humiliations of two thousand years of peregrinations” render complete “the psychological chart” of a neurotic nation. A text, seemingly abounding in condescendence concerning the condition of world Jewry in the aftermath of World War II, is further equipped with all sorts of allegations:

I do not find it unnatural that some people [i.e., the Jews] who have been the victims of so many fears and humiliations, leave alone the fears and humiliations of two thousand years of peregrinations, can rebound in a moment and be seized out of their fears and humiliations on the way to hope, wishfulness, exuberance, a sort of inebriation of wanting to show who they are and what they are able to do. Your astute and flexible mind, up to the challenge of forming philosophical systems, of assimilating and of accounting for such philosophical systems, takes the risky path of ideology [i.e., Communist ideology] to which Romanians certainly were reluctant. You saw this ideology as equal to the [sound of] trumpets which preceded the collapse of the walls of Jericho; it was this [clamor] that saved you from the perils of Nazism. You did not occupy high positions all by yourself; they were granted to you; they were granted to you by us [i.e., the Romanians] out of that guilty conscience which we discussed earlier. So many years filled with fears and humiliations were thus rewarded.²⁸

Across the centuries, many scholars have tried to find a reasonable answer to the question whether prolonged antisemitism has influenced the psychological, moral, and intellectual character of the Jews. If this be the case, was this influence positive (as Schwarzfeld believed) or negative (as Eminescu believed)? This would be a long and complicated discussion, impossible to reduce here. Jean-Paul Sartre concluded this discussion trenchantly with his absolutist, and therefore abusive, theory, formulated in

symmetrical and paradoxical terms: "It is not the character of the Jew that causes antisemitism, but rather antisemitism causes the Jew's character."

DANGEROUS INTELLIGENCE

"Jewish intelligence" has doubtlessly been a trait appreciated by Romanians. As an old Romanian proverb claims, "an ounce of brain is better than a cartful of beauty."²⁹ Most often, however, this stereotypical virtue ("The Jew is intelligent") turns into a stereotypical vice ("The Jew is shrewd"). He is "sharp," but also "canny," says the peasant from Maramureș, with some hidden envy.³⁰

"When he is after his own profit," wrote Spanish chronicler Ibn Verga at the end of the fifteenth century, "the Jew is intelligent and cunning."³¹ The Jew is intelligent, hard working, and abstemious: "Through work and savings, and therefore through gold pieces, [the Jew] came to some kind of equality with our aristocracy," also wrote Romanian author Alecu Russo in 1840. Nevertheless, "charlatanry, trickery, and swindling seem to constitute the national character."³² The Jews are "an active and intelligent people," Vasile Alecsandri declared in an address to the Senate of Romania in 1879, yet "tireless workers for the fulfillment of their mission."³³ In an article entitled "Jewish intellectualism" (published in 1922 in the violently antisemitic paper *Apărarea Națională* [National Defense], edited in Jassy by A. C. Cuza and N. Paulescu), it was claimed that

the Yid's intelligence is purely materialistic and he is engaged only in finding combinations that might increase his personal fortune without his making any physical effort for it, that is, without contributing any kind of productive work. The basis of this intelligence is selfishness driven to excess. For this reason, the Yid's intelligence, although intense, is confined within narrow horizons. This is how one may account for so strange a phenomenon, that this people, which has been about for more than three thousand years and which ever since its existence on earth has ceaselessly pursued intellectual occupations, has never produced one genius....³⁴

Romanian writer Ion Alexandru Brătescu Voinești, whose conversion "from pacifism to hooliganism" was saluted enthusiastically by Nichifor Crainic in 1938, held that Jews are intelligent ("sharpening the minds of the pupils"), yet hypocritical (through "their imperious and perpetual need to conceal the truth"). These could be cases of characteristics that are cultivated by Jews (by

the very nature of their faith) to the point of becoming instincts (they possess an allegedly innate “shrewdness” characteristic of parasitical insects). Such “innate and cultivated gifts” would make the Jews very well endowed “for commerce,” for the “political press” (Jews being “bandits of the pen”), and for the “profession of lawyer” (having the “gift to confusingly contort matters according to the interest of the cause in a way that would never cross the mind of a non-Jew”).³⁵

In a short story by the same author (“Contravenție” [Contravention], 1912), Iosif Bailer, a Jewish lamp oil merchant, is altogether an appealing character “because he does not in the least resemble a Jew.... He has not the astuteness, the daring attitude, the cupidity for money of the other Jews.”³⁶ For Emil Cioran, writing in 1936, the Jews were “the most intelligent,” “the best endowed,” and “the most cerebral of peoples,” yet also “the most insolent,” characterized by “vampirism,” “aggressiveness,” “cynicism,” etc.³⁷ “The Jews enjoy the reputation of distinguished minds, from which cunning is surely not absent, pushed to diabolism when the need calls for it,” wrote Felix Aderca in 1937, preoccupied with the image of the Jew in the eyes of Romanians. “This reputation is supported not only by the enemies of the Jews—with the manifest purpose of portraying them as dangerous as they could possibly be—but also by the poor Jews themselves.”³⁸

The positive cliché swings to the opposite pole; however, it retains its stereotypical character. The intelligence of the Jew, it is believed, makes his cunning the more dangerous. Sociologists have noted the existence of this antisemitic theme: “The Jew constitutes a grave threat because he is such a worthy opponent.”³⁹ As Leon Volovici has noted, Emil Cioran speaks in praise of the Jew as being “an adversary he detested because of that enemy’s exceptional, unique power and quality.”⁴⁰

“The Jew is smart,” people say, but he uses this quality to cheat on others, “for *Gescheft*,” to amass riches. This is because for the Jews, says an old German proverb, “smart is rich” (“*Der Reiche ist klug, sagt der Jude*”).⁴¹ It is important for him to be rich now, because, according to a Romanian folk proverb recorded in Oltenia, “the Jew won’t put a dime on the past or on the future, only on the present.”⁴²

THE COWARDICE OF THE JEW

Between Resignation and Revolt

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, French diplomat Thibault Lefèvre described the cowardice, submissiveness, and lack of dignity that, in his opinion, the Jews in the Romanian Principalities had proven to be part of their character. This he did in the following terms: "Nothing disturbs them; no word discourages them, no insult touches them. They receive with submission, or at least in silence, the harshest of observations, the most painful harsh words and sometimes the most unfair."⁴³ Alecu Russo wrote in those same years of the pity which the Jew aroused in him, "that degraded and wandering being, chased from every place, intruding and tedious, this being that society has put on the index," and appeared to continue the idea of the French diplomat: "The Jew [of Moldavia] is beaten and mocked at by the crowds, his crawling baseness stands against the people's intolerance and savage prejudices, he is not endowed with the bitter dignity of fallen races, his fear has come to be proverbial."⁴⁴

However, when the Jew reacted the Romanian put up a show of surprise. In 1823, for example, several Jews dared to defend themselves against the aggression of a group of Romanians. Kostaki the purveyor, a police superintendent, declared on that occasion that the Jews "were supposed to lie down and take the thrashing, for they have no right whatsoever against the Walachians of the country, who so choose to rule and govern in their own country."⁴⁵ In a 1945 memorandum, after describing the "entire range of mauling" to which Jews were subject during the war, Traian Popovici, the ex-mayor of Czernowitz, concluded:

It is strange how the Jews resisted such chicanery, such mistreatment, such impaling. No breakout of revolt, no opposition, no sabotage, no murmur. Resigned to their already millenary destiny, they bore their destiny in a mystical dedication to tragedy, as if they were shadows chased by the furies. In which human residues we should seek a refuge for suffering, this is and will forever be a mystery.⁴⁶

The Jew could not afford the luxury of being brave. Dangers threatened him virtually from every side; on the part of the local, as well as central, authorities, from the part of the population that formed the majority as well as from other minorities, from Catholics as well as Protestants, etc. In the Christian Easter holiday period, the fear from which the Jew suffered became

paralyzing: “He is afraid like the Jew on Good Friday,” claims a Hungarian proverb, or “On Good Friday, stay hidden in your home,” warns a saying of the Lithuanian Jews. Sometimes, for financial reasons, monarchs would step in, “The Jews’ peace is bought from the King,” goes an old German proverb.

Other Folk proverbs and sayings collected from central and eastern Europe complete the image of the fearful Jew: “The Jew wears boots with spurs for fear the hare might bite him” and “One can chase ten big-nosed Jews like hares” (German proverbs); “He’s got the Jews [i.e., he is afraid]” (German expression); “‘Why do you shake, master Iancu?’ ‘It isn’t me, it’s the earth’”; “Master Leiba from the bottom of the cart,” “Let him say what he might, as long as I don’t,” “I do not know, I did not see, I did not go that way” (all Romanian folk sayings about the Jews).⁴⁷

Romanians were not the only ones who noted the fear that possessed the Jews; so did other minority groups living among the Romanians. Author Mihail Sebastian, for example, recalls that when he was a child in his native town of Brăila, the local Greeks would throw stones at him, shouting the well-known insult “yellow Jew.”⁴⁸ This particular insulting phrase has been adopted by the Jews themselves. At the end of the 1950s, for instance, when Nicolae Steinhardt was about to be arrested for interrogation by the Romanian Security, his father told him: “Don’t you be a yellow Jew, don’t shit in your pants.... Be a peasant, you little Jew.”⁴⁹ “It is an elementary truth that the Jew can be beaten by anyone at any time,” Felix Aderca bitterly remarked once, “even the children know that ‘the Yid is a coward.’”⁵⁰ Sholem, the itinerant kerosene peddler in a short story by Liviu Rebreanu (“Cumpăna dreptății” [The balance of justice], 1923), seems to be the prototype of this image.⁵¹ It was the Jewish writer Ronetti Roman who endeavored to enlighten the issue in great detail in his 1898 text “Două măsuri” [Two measures]:

The Jew is a unique phenomenon in the history of humankind: trailing his caftan and sidelocks in contrition and mortification along streets as if he were a shadow, and fearing shadows, his eyes half veiled and hidden to himself, as if he were pondering on a secret that the others may find out.... He remained the same Jew, however, in spite of having been burnt at the stake, of being tormented with unimaginable tools; in spite of being looted, evicted, forced into wanderings, of being the laughingstock of and menaced by the old as the young; he would tremble at night hoping for tomorrow, and tremble still in broad daylight hoping for tonight, yet, going on according to past habits:

more contrite and more ashamed he may be, but it is doubtlessly him, the same Jew.⁵²

These authors were not alone in holding such a view.

In a controversial essay (“Un peuple de solitaires” [A solitary people], 1956), Romanian-born philosopher Emil Cioran reverses the issue. In his paradoxical style, he transformed vice into virtue. The proverbial, ridiculed fear of Jews became the

valiance and noblesse of their fear: Vocational fighter, [the Jewish people] is the most bellicose of all civil peoples.... The comfort of limits is alien [to the Jews]: their wisdom is the wisdom of exile which teaches you how to overcome when all are sabotaging you, how to believe that you are chosen when you have lost everything—the wisdom of defiance. Still, they are notorious for their cowardice! It is true however that no spectacular victory could be invoked by them, yet their existence alone—is that not a continuous, terrible victory, without the prospect of ending? To deny their courage is to overlook the valiance and noblesse of their fear, which with them is not retreat but expansion, the beginning of an offensive. For they, unlike the cowards and the humble ones, have converted this fear into a virtue, into a principle of pride and conquest. This fear is not enfeebled as it is with us, but is sturdy and alluring, forged by thousands of fears transformed into facts.⁵³

It may be that Cioran was influenced in this by Friedrich Nietzsche, particularly by the latter’s assertions in his essay “Vom Volke Israel” [On the People of Israel]. The German philosopher too spoke of “Jewish courage concealed under the guise of subject humility,” and of “their heroism, surpassing the virtues of all saints,” a characteristic based on the principle of “*sperneri se sperni*” (Latin: “despise the fact that you are despised”). Endowed “with certain virtues, that would easily be taken today for vices,” Jews were “to dominate Europe,” thought Nietzsche, but this would not be accomplished “by physical force,” the display of “eye-catching, rattling armors,” “by the conquest of Europe,” nor “by other forms of aggression,” but indeed by “the accumulations of spiritual richness and volition, amassed from generation to generation in the school of suffering.”⁵⁴

For Romanian literary critic George Călinescu, the phobias of the Jews can be explained historically: “During their two-thousand-year drama,” wrote this critic in his review of Jewish-Romanian author Emil Dorian’s novel

Profeți și paiațe [Prophets and Harlequins], “Jews have undergone genuine pogroms and it is difficult to cure them of their phobia.”⁵⁵ Paradoxically, the Jew’s fear sometimes generates desperate courage. At least this is how things are with Leiba Zibal, the innkeeper from northern Moldavia of Ioan Luca Caragiale’s short story “O făclie de Paști” [An Easter torch (1889)]: “Fear frequently has the effects of courage,” maintains Călinescu. “Leiba Zibal belongs to an old species, with wracked nerves and an imagination haunted by perpetuated persecutions. Atavistic fear and suspicion of the *Goy* [Hebrew for non-Jew] is not rare among the Jews.” Drawing the clinical record of the neurasthenia of the “collective Jew” and of Leiba, the “individual Jew,” Călinescu notes two qualitatively different types of fear: “Normal Jews are inhibited in defensive forms, complaining, complying.... Zibal suffers from atavistic fear and chronic terror of traumatic origin.”⁵⁶ This is the source of the uncommon courage of the Jewish innkeeper, who kills the servant Gheorghe on the Night of the Resurrection when, as a rule, it was Jews who were killed.

Yitzik Ștrul is another innkeeper from northern Moldavia, this time a protagonist in Liviu Rebreanu’s short story “Îțic Ștrul, dezertor” [Yitzik Shtrul, army deserter], written in 1920. Initially, he seems to suffer from atavistic fear as well:

Yitzik Shtrul was not born brave, but scared and suspicious. If a child shouted at him, his beard would shake and his heart would tick. In Fălticeni people had nicknamed him “chicken.” The moment the doctor of the recruitment committee decreed “weak, but apt for military service,” Yitzik fainted. Just the thought of going to war terrified him. He was convinced that he would die on first hearing the roar of cannons. A day short of his departure to the garrison, he said goodbye to his wife, to his six children, to neighbors and acquaintances, crying like an old woman.

Later, on the battlefield, paralyzing fear was transformed into the exact opposite—“fierce courage.” Receiving the news from the military brigade commander, Yitzik’s wife wrote him a postcard “begging him to calm his courage, lest he wants his children to grow up without a father.”⁵⁷

Cynophobia and Lycophobia

“When I see them, dogs make me feel an uncontrollable, immense, violent, and sometimes paralyzing terror.”

Matei Călinescu, *The Life and Opinions of Zeccharias Lichter*

The dog is man’s best friend. Not the Jew’s, though. Quite to the contrary; in collective imagery, the Jew’s fear of dogs has become proverbial. In Polish folk proverbs, a cowardly man is “as brave as a Jew against dogs.”⁵⁸

What is the origin of the cynophobia from which Jews suffer? At the end of the nineteenth century, Dimitrie Dan, a folklorist from Bukovina, believed that the Jew does not suffer from a physical fear of dogs but rather from a metaphysical one. For orthodox Jews, the dog was an impure animal, associated with the netherworld. They could not pray with a dog in their homes, nor could they touch it, “as they would thereby become defiled.” If a Jewish woman, after taking the ritual bath, met a dog on her way, she had to return and dip once more in the pool (*mikveh*). “The Jews,” wrote Dan, “hold dear the belief that after death the soul of a man who has sinned during his lifetime will enter a dog. The dog is chased away by the Jews. Consequently, the soul of that sinful man pays bitterly enough for his carnal sins by migrating through these animals and redeems itself only after their death. This belief explains the Jews’ fear of dogs.”⁵⁹ “You shall not hit a dog,” says a time-honored Jewish belief, “because there is no way of knowing whose soul is hidden inside the dog.”⁶⁰

Also at the end of the nineteenth century, Moses Schwarzfeld, another folklorist from Moldavia, tackled the issue of “the terror of dogs by which the Jew is possessed.” The explanation he offered is couched in more pragmatic terms than was Dimitrie Dan’s:

Nothing, it is true, did the Jew fear so much as he did dogs; for the dog was the blindest and commonest instrument in the Christian’s hand, day in day out, until the modern age and even in this age. The little scapegraces would set their hounds on the stooping Jew with his “goods for sale, goods for sale!”; the big ninnies, hands, and householders would not have any less fun when the Jew was in the clutches of their dogs and they would tear up his coat or rip his flesh.⁶¹

There are grounds which seemingly support this motivation offered by Schwarzfeld. Mihail Sadoveanu, the well-known author who was also knowledgeable in the rural customs of northern Moldavia, included a similar episode in his novel *Floare ofilită* [Withered Flower], written in 1905:

“Brother Vasile!” Mihai cried out all of a sudden, “look, I’ve taught Turmei [the dog] to snatch the Jews by the seat of their trousers.... Come and see what a beauty! Just once, snap! And the Jew goes Ouch! And you see him down on the ground, and Turmei turns around him baying, yet bite he does not.”⁶²

Even the dog Bălan, in the homonymous short story by Nicolae Gane, is trained to rip coat tails, this time of Gypsies.

Cynophobia was a “professional disease” from which peddlers suffered, especially those Jewish chapmen who had to take to the roads of unknown villages and towns to make a living. “When the Jew comes into the village, the dogs begin to bark,” goes an old German proverb.⁶³ The cause of the village dogs’ aggressive reaction is not, as has been claimed, the distinctive smell of the Jew, in particular, but that of the stranger, in general. Any stranger to the village, especially one who comes from a different environment (the urban one), receives similar treatment from the village dogs. A French traveler passing through a Romanian village evidently ends up in the same quandary as a Jewish peddler: “A foreigner,... surrounded by twenty dogs, give and take, and they were dead set to find out what a Frenchman’s flesh tastes like.”⁶⁴ Conversely, it was popularly believed that the fact that the village dogs did not bark was symptomatic of a lack of alertness, or of being of the same people. “Frenchmen and Romanians are truly of the same race,” a Romanian peasant explained to General Berthelot in 1918, “because dogs are not likely to bark at French soldiers who pass through a Romanian village.”⁶⁵

“Chapmen, whose number is great,” wrote Alecu Russo about Jassy in 1840, “cry out the merchandise they have with a pack of dogs after them, from lane to lane, from courtyard to courtyard, dogs that seem to have the same savage and brutal prejudices against the Jews, in particular, that our people have.”⁶⁶ Besides, for the Romanian peasant “the man barked at by dogs with hatred is a spiteful sort.”⁶⁷ This quotidian image became a commonplace in the comic register of folkloric literature. “Why should I make fun of what befell the Jewish huckster in the claws and teeth of dogs?” wonders a character in I. Peltz’s novel, *Țară bună* [Good country (1936)]. Folk stories with this as a subject have been rewritten to suit the taste of the

town-dweller and of the petty bourgeois. See the “comic song” “Herșcu Boccegiul” [Herscu the peddler] by Vasile Alecsandri, interpreted by Matei Millo in 1851 at the Jassy Theater,⁶⁸ or the “spicy anecdote” “Cînele ovreului” [The Yid’s dog], versified by George Topîrceanu in the manner of the “popular anecdotes” published by Theodor D. Speranția in 1888:

Once upon a time, one summer,
Don’t ask me for the place,
A Jew showing his merchandise
Into a yard popped he.
And as he passes through the gates,
His luggage on his haunch,
Hop, before him jumps
A cur ugly and large.

The peddler Yitzik is frightened by the dog Grivei, which does not stop barking. The Romanian peasant is forced to intervene, and he

Flings a stone after the cur,
And says he, “Don’t you cower!
Hold your heart, mister!
Don’t you know the saying
From Romanians of old,
That a dog, when he’s barking,
Never tears at you?”
“The proverb I know all right,”
Yitzic says, “Jews have it, too,
I know...but I need to find out
Whether Grivei knows it, too!”⁶⁹

We have seen that the Jew is commonly considered as being clever and that this is a particularly strong and invariable stereotype in the collective imagery. However, in the case of folk stories which scoff at the Jew’s fear, he suddenly becomes naïve, if not downright stupid. The proverbial cowardice of the Jew cancels out his proverbial intelligence, transforming it into its very opposite. In this manner a particularly strong cliché concerning the Jew’s fear is capable of overthrowing another strong cliché, relating to his intelligence. Here is one small example, from a folk story versified by Speranția in 1888: a Jew emits a ghastly cry, complaining about a child hitting him and plucking out his eye. When it is brought to his attention that he was barely hit above the heel, not in the eye, he answers: “Heel it was, and what of that? Nice was it? / If there had been the eye, he would have plucked it out, or what?”⁷⁰

In some folkloric productions, the town is replaced by the forest, the dog by the wolf, and the Jew's cynophobia by lycophobia. The Jew continues to suffer from the same fear and remains just as naïve. In "Pușca jidanului" [The Jew's gun], a story that is quite widely spread in Romanian folklore, a Jew meets a wolf in the forest and aims his stick at it, as if it were a gun, saying to himself that the wolf will think it a firearm and run away. It so chanced that while the Jew was aiming his stick at the wolf, a real hunter actually shot the wolf and killed it.

Look, confound it!
 Who would have thought of it!
 My stick from Dărăbani,
 Which I've had for ten years,
 It was a yardstick, it was a whip,
 Yet never did I think that it was a gun!⁷¹

In Ukrainian folklore too, many stories are attested that have as their theme, as ethnologist Petru Caraman puts it, "the Jew's obsessive fear of wolves," a fear that "takes on incredible aspects of paroxysm."⁷² When Ukrainian peasants wanted to perform negative caroling (to "uncarol") against the Jewish innkeeper in the village, they would try to scare him out by describing in a hyperbolic manner how the inn was besieged by a gigantic wolf: "Next to the inn, close by, the huge wolf is lurking by: / This burly wolf has legs like pillars; / his paws are like huge lids; / his hide so thick, that it might be whip leather; / his tail as bushy as a hemp bundle; / his head as big as a fulling mill; / ears as big as bur leaves; / eyes big as big onions; / teeth sharp and large as adzes; / testicles, like pitchers; / the penis, thick as a lever; / his behind, like the house chimney!"⁷³ They derive a kind of pleasure from frightening the Jew with the coming of the wolf⁷⁴ or with the advent of robbers. The following is the content of a folk story adapted by Vasile Alecsandri around the middle of the nineteenth century: A cart driver has a mind to play a trick on the Jew whom he is transporting in his cart. So he frightens Leiba by telling him that robbers are coming and asks him to hide "on the bottom of the cart," under a rug, as if there was nothing in the cart but a pile of broken glass. Pretending that he is the robber himself, the cart driver hits the rug with a staff, beating the Jew. "The Jew makes [sounds like] Crash! Crash! Crash! He sounds like glass so that the robbers might be deceived."⁷⁵

The wolf also assails the Jew in Polish winter folklore. During the Christmas mummary rituals, the person masked as a Jew limps about,

complaining that he has been chased by a wolf which left him “a leg short.”⁷⁶ It is interesting that in Romanian folk legends the wolf chases not the Jew, but the Devil, biting him by the heel.⁷⁷ This is not the sole resemblance between the image of the “imaginary Jew” and the Devil, and certainly not the only legend about the locomotory deficiencies of the Jew. In fact, a whole mythology developed around that subject. The cliché about the Jew being flatfooted thrived especially well in the region of German culture. Swiss playwright Max Frisch employs it in his play *Andorra*. Advocates of rationalist explanations maintained that this alleged “Jewish malformation” was due to the Jews’ excessive urbanization (or “citification,” as some scholars name the phenomenon), and to their activities (such as commerce) mandating a standing position; thus it was a “professional” disease combined with a “social” one.⁷⁸ Consequently, the Jew allegedly has several deficiencies that would prevent him from being recruited for military service: an ethical vice (cowardice), a psychological one (fear), and a physical one (flat feet).

“The Jewish Army”

At the end of the nineteenth century, when referring to the vices of Jews in general (with special reference to those from Bukovina), folklorist Dimitrie Dan observed that the Jew was allegedly afraid of dogs (and wolves, I shall add) as well as of weapons (and, again, of fighting). He noted: “Their proverbial fear of dogs and particularly of weapons gave rise to many a humorous anecdote.”⁷⁹ Light is shed on both phobias in the folk story mentioned above, “The Jew’s Gun.” In another story, a Jew (a moneylender or a merchant) has to drive his cart through a forest infested with robbers. Lest he should be robbed, he procures weapons for himself like any brave man, yet, when the robbers show up, he behaves cowardly. Here is one such anecdote, included by Alecsandri in two of his texts:

The robbers stopped the horses and drew near the wagon. “Look here, you Kike,” said one of them, “who are these weapons for?” “For the robbers,” answered the moneylender. “We are robbers.” “Here you are, then, if you please,” and the Jew handed them the weapons in an instant.⁸⁰

And this is Alecsandri’s second text in which he incorporates a similar theme: “Look at Leiba the hardhearted, / Who’s wearing a yatagan. / Here’s

Leiba of the coach. / Who hits the road with a gun? / And when he sees a Romanian, / His weapons he hides in straw.”⁸¹

In many other satirical folk texts, the humor is generated by the discrepancy between the semblance of bravery and the cowardice of the Jew when put in a situation analogous to that depicted above:

When the robbers rush,
Our sidelocks bristled up,
And when we made a rush ourselves,
All we got was some flat noses.
We were strong of heart, no doubt,
Yet they almost thrashed us flat,
They with [gun] powder and bullets,
We with dust and with road pebbles,
They would hit us with some cudgels,
We would run without our boots.⁸²

Vasile Alecsandri adopted the subject of this folk tale as well and came up with “*Herșcu Boccegiul*” [Hershcu the Peddler] (1851) As he is “strong of heart, but yellow,” Hershcu describes the dangers that await the Jewish small tradesman who ventures with his cart into “The Forest of Herța, of deadly fame, / For the Jews a fierce enemy.” This forest in the north of Moldavia was one of the places known as “the Jew’s death” and “the foe of the sidelocks”:

Master Yitzik Zarafu [i.e., the moneylender] perished there, who was so very strong of heart and when he got angry...he would go uphill fast as downhill for fright; and master Solomonichi the cart driver, who always carried a big yatagan with him on the road for the volunteers [i.e., hetaerists, Greek volunteers in *hatairia*], and when he ran across them...he would give them the yatagan in a great hurry, lest there might be some danger upon him.⁸³

The expression, “strong of heart, but yellow,” locating the episode in the Forest of Herța, the Jewish peddler’s terror of robbers, together with the other motifs all appear to have been taken over from the character of the “Yid” in popular puppet plays, as in a text transcribed by Romanian folklorist G. Dem. Teodorescu in 1884 in *Crucea de Piatră*, a Bucharest neighborhood.⁸⁴

The tone of raillery of the folk story or the folk mummery play actually conceals a dire reality: the period abounds in documents concerning the killing and looting of Jewish tradesmen and craftsmen while traveling along the thoroughfares that connected the towns.⁸⁵ Such crimes were considered

“convenient” because the Jews were neither Christians nor Romanian citizens, so the looters did not fear retribution, neither from the Church nor secular justice. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, when talking about “the vices of the Moldavians,” Dimitrie Cantemir observed the following: “[The Moldavians] do not consider killing or robbing a Turk, a Tartar, or a Jew a sin, let alone a crime.”⁸⁶

Around 1780, Austrian Consul Ignatio Stefan Raicevich wrote that the Romanians did not think it a sin to rob a non-Christian or even a non-Orthodox Christian.⁸⁷ This *forma mentis* survived into the nineteenth century and to some extent into the twentieth century as well.⁸⁸ “Bandits,” wrote Iuliu Barasch after he crossed Moldavia in 1841, “believed in past ages that they did not have to stand judgment for murder committed against Jews.” Such crimes, added Barasch, “happen not infrequently in Moldavia even these days.” This state of affairs gave rise to the cognomen *ben-hacudeș* [i.e., Hebrew *ben-ha’kadosh*, son of a martyr], borne by someone whose father had been murdered by a gang of robbers.⁸⁹ Obviously, the terror that possessed Jewish travelers was perfectly warranted.

“Have you ever seen a Jew shoot a gun!” says a character in one of Panait Istrati’s prose works.⁹⁰ A series of proverbs and sayings corroborates the stereotypical image of the cowardly Jew, who is by consequence lacking in any bellicose aptitudes: “A green horse, a dutiful Armenian, and a gun-shooting Jew cannot be,” “A riding Jew and a green Greek only the Devil has seen,” “He’s a hero, even if he’s a Jew” (Romanian proverbs),⁹¹ “He’s hurrying like a Jew to war,” “Deft as a Jew with a rifle / sword,” “Women, frogs, and Jews—what warriors they are!” (Polish proverbs).⁹² Whether true or false, the image of the cowardly, pacifist Jew was more widespread within the area of Romanian culture, where it contrasted the (again, true or false) image of the valiant, warlike Romanian. Foreign travelers through the Romanian Principalities shaped this second image, for which Marcus Bandinus coined the synthetic expression of Romanians “being cut for war.”⁹³

One of the most hilarious images is that of a “Jewish army” terrified at the barking of dogs. Two Romanian proverbs condense this image: “When they were to go to war, the Jews wanted the dogs to be tied up first” and “Tie the dogs to the fence and let our army pass.”⁹⁴ In 1890, folklorist Dumitru Stăncescu published the folk story “Jupîn Leibă voinicos, puțintichi cam fricos” [Master Leibă strong of heart, yet a little yellowish]. Upon arriving at the borders of a village, the “Jewish army” asked the mayor “to give them a

couple of gendarmes to protect them from the dogs, until they are on the other side of the village.” When the mayor refused, the Jewish soldiers heroically decided to traverse the village on tiptoe, so that the dogs would not sense their presence.⁹⁵

In 1891, Theodor Speranția versified a similar “folk satirical tale,” calling it “Jidanii la bălălie” [The Jews at war]. The “Jewish army” is parodied using—according to ethnologist Petru Caraman—certain elements “of purely folkloric inspiration”: the Jews “Riding on stalks, / Looked like soldiers born,” the commander of the army rode “a broomstick,” while the soldiers did not blow bugles but blew upon “onion leaves.” The soldiers’ weapons (spears made of linden wood, guns of elder wood, scissors) belong to the burlesque register: “They all wear round their necks / One pair of sharp scissors, / When they see the enemy, / To chop them up bit by bit, / As you do with parsley leaves.” In this Jewish mock epic it is only natural for the army to show the white feather when they hear the first dog bark: “‘Don’t you hear, brother? Hark, a dog is barking! / Make haste, make haste now and chain it, / For our brave ones are afraid, / For the whole army’s afraid!’” When the peasant refuses to go and chain the dog to the fence, the Jewish army resorts to the well-proven solution: “Let us hire some two Romanians, / And let them go with the army / And protect it from the dogs.”⁹⁶ In another folk story, published in 1893, the “valiant” Jewish army is again ridiculed, with its soldiers who “fired their gun and, when they heard the bang, they would themselves fall flat on their bellies, crying out for their parents and wailing that they were dead.”⁹⁷

In the collective imagery, the Jew is an *epitomic tradesman* and a *non-epitomic soldier*. This being the case, he will never fight “soldier-like” but “merchant-like,” as the Jewish character Bercu sings in the mummers’ caroling in Moldavia: “Alack, our wretched Jews! / They fight merchant-like.”⁹⁸ In nineteenth-century central Europe (the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Poland, etc.), soon after obligatory military service for Jews was introduced caricatures began to appear ridiculing the Jewish soldier.⁹⁹ A lithography printed in Vienna in 1848 shows a couple of Jews of the National Guard, armed to the teeth, fleeing in terror from a dog, while two children are playing with it.¹⁰⁰

It appears that most of the satires of this kind—ridiculing the Jew’s terror of dogs (wolves) or of robbers (guns)—made their way into Romanian folklore from the northern and northeastern Slavs. The particular case of the satirical poem “The Jewish War” (in Polish, *Wojna żydowska*) knew

numerous old variants in the Polish, Ukrainian, and Byelorussian languages. In 1892–1893, the well-known Ukrainian poet and folklorist Ivan Franko published, in Polish, an important study on this theme. Under the title “The Jews’ Departure for War,” the satirical poem noted above had first been printed in Cracow in 1606.¹⁰¹ From rural folklore, the plot of this story had migrated into urban folklore, was versified by minor writers, and filled the popular calendars and almanacs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the Romanian collective imagination, the Jew is not the only one to be cast in this humiliating pose. The other prototype of the alien, namely the Gypsy, accompanies him. Indeed, many Romanian folk satirical tales that ridicule the Gypsies’ paralyzing fear of wild animals (including the wolf), or armed enemies. At the turn of the nineteenth century, in his long epic “Țiganiada” [The Gypsyiad], Ion Budai-Deleanu ironically sketched the “Gypsy army” engaged in a battle with the Turkish army. The themes do not much differ from the folk satirical tales that describe the fearing nature of the Jews. For instance, armed to their teeth, the Gypsies demand of Prince Vlad the Impaler that they be escorted by Romanians because they fear being ambushed by thieves on their way to battle.¹⁰²

Interestingly, the European collective imagery as well preserves the motif of the “Jewish army,” especially from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Somewhat paradoxically, this imaginary army was not held in contempt but viewed as a real peril. Midway in the fourteenth century, for instance, Jean de Mandeville (*The Voyages and Travailes of Sir John de Mandeville Knight*, first translated into English in 1496), a widely read author during the ensuing centuries, maintained that somewhere in China, girdled by mountains, were to be found the ten lost Jewish tribes. “In the time of the Antichrist, adds Mandeville, these lost tribes will unite with “all the Jews that dwell in diverse parts of the world,” and their army will attempt “to destroy Christian men.... Christian men shall be in their subjection, as they be under Christian men now.”

The military menace that Jews allegedly represented was also a cover for other manifestations in the collective mentality of the period. At the end of the sixteenth century, for instance, Nicolas de Nicolay wrote that the Jews, who a century earlier had been exiled from Spain and Portugal, were those who taught the Turks how to handle some of the weapons, how to produce ammunition, and how to devise some of their war machines with the sole intent of doing great harm to Christians (*The Navigation into Turkie*, 1585). In any case, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the western

part of the continent tales relating to the “Jewish army” were rather confused. In some of them the Jews were allied with the Turks against the Christians, in others, it was the opposite. Finally, there were stories that claimed Jewish opposition to both Turks and Christians. In a pamphlet dating from 1606 entitled *News from Rome*, for instance, it was claimed that one of the Jewish armies, with the assistance of the Dutch, was trying “to recover the Promised Land,” still under Turkish dominion. “The first army [of the Jews],” maintained the author, “is already arrived upon the limits of Turkey,” accounting for all the war damage.¹⁰³

It should be borne in mind that as regards courage and martial abilities, the image of the Jew in western Europe differed from that of the central- and eastern-European Jew. When westerners did evoke Jewish cowardice and fear, they were almost always referring to the Jews in the Orient. When writing of Jews in the Levant, Henry Blount (*Voyage into the Levant*, 1636), added “absence of courage” to the list of psychological and somatic shortcomings that were already attributed to the Jew (physical degeneration, selfishness, wickedness, and crookedness—especially in the commercial sphere). “The Jewish complexion is so prodigiously timid, as cannot be capable of arms. For this reason they are nowhere made soldiers.”¹⁰⁴

The Real Jew in the Real War

Evidently, in central and eastern Europe the image of the cowardly Jew, fearful, terrified even of his own shadow—an image partially true, yet partially unfair—was likely to be a blow to the pride of the “real Jew.” Several legends have survived within the oral tradition of Moldavian Jews which are indicative of the contrary view, one that holds up as an indisputable fact their courage and loyalty during the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries. Such legends may not be so preposterous. They maintain that the Jews of Roman, Piatra Neamț and Târgu Neamț had, in one way or another, hurried to the rescue of Moldavian princes Alexander the Elder (1400–1432), Petru Rareș (1527, 1538, 1541–1546), or Vasile Lupu (1634–1653) during their wars with the Turks, Tartars, and Poles.¹⁰⁵

Wounded pride gave rise to a legend, created by the Jews themselves, which intended to prove that they had defended the Romanian area from Antiquity onwards, from that epoch, steeped in myth, in which the Romanians were born as a people. In 1846, through the agency of a magazine from Brașov, “several Israelites from Transylvania” appealed to Count Iosif Kemény that he not neglect to write “in his historical studies” (such as, for

instance, *De Judaeis: Die Geschichte der Juden in Siebenbürgen...*) about the alleged feats of arms of their ancestors in Dacia:

In Transylvania, where the slightest note about us does not exist in histories and where we have always been treated as foreigners, we had already proven ourselves in the year 90 CE, when we were summoned by Decebal, king of the Getae, to fight against the Romans. A large number of our ancestors, people say that there must have been around 50,000 souls, came to offer their support through the Dardanelles, the Black Sea, Moldavia, and Walachia, into Transylvania, and they fought and shed their blood near Turda against Trajan, and it was they who gave the name to the city of Aiud, Enyed. Around the year 105 CE our ancestors built [the town of] Tălmăciu near Sibiu, which became the residence of Talmudists.¹⁰⁶

It might be surmised that one of the sources of this legend (which included the belief that Jews founded the fictitious town Talmud, to become Thalmus/Tălmăciu) is the medieval poem “De oppido Thalmus,” composed by the Saxon German priest Johann Lebell around the year 1542 and published in 1779.¹⁰⁷ In 1781, referring to “King Decebal’s Jews,” Austrian historian and ethnologist Franz Joseph Sulzer once again made use of this legend, establishing a connection between Tălmăciu, a Transylvanian borough, and Thalmus, “the well-known Jewish fortress, famous in ancient times as well.”¹⁰⁸

Obviously, what is interesting is not only the image that the Christian forms of the Jew, but also the image the Jew forms of himself, especially when the former affects the latter. This kind of shaping of history through myth had its origin in a conspicuous overthrowing of historical truths. During the wars between the Getae and the Romans, Judeans were indeed present but in the ranks of Emperor Trajan’s army which was comprised of soldiers recruited *ex toto orbe romano*, including Palestine.¹⁰⁹

“Not even one Jew died during the war,” declared Nicolae Iorga in 1910 in a session of the Romanian Parliament.¹¹⁰ A few decades earlier the Frenchman E. Desjardins had noticed that “Jews who are natives of Moldavia employ all their shrewdness in order to avoid the completion of their compulsory military service.... [The Jews] are awful soldiers,” concludes Desjardins, “800,000 souls who take hold not of the plough, or the hoe, or arms, but only of money.”¹¹¹ Despite the portentousness of these words, Romanian Jews had the opportunity to prove their military valor and loyalty to the country only as late as 1876, when they received the legal right to

enlist in the Romanian army as “foreigners non-affiliated to a foreign nationality.”¹¹² And, indeed, they gave full proof of those qualities, despite their not being Romanian citizens, during the wars of 1877–1878, 1913, and 1916–1919. “Yitzik lives in Dudești. And when the trumpets blow, he goes, too, together with every able-bodied man of the country, to fight on the front,” Zaharia Stancu would write in 1938.¹¹³ From 1940 on, however, according to the new anti-Jewish legislation the Jews were (once again!) “excluded from military service.”¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, on 23 June 1941, when Romania has just entered World War II, Wilhelm Filderman, president of the Union of Romanian Jews, appealed to Ion Antonescu to permit the Jews to fight against the Soviet Army and die for the liberation of the Romanian provinces of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina.¹¹⁵ It goes without saying that Filderman’s request was rejected. The Jews were sent across the Dniester to die, not in battle, as Romanian soldiers, but as deportees under the escort of Romanian soldiers. This time the dominant cliché was no longer “the Jew as traitor” but “the Jew as enemy,” who—as Lya Benjamin noted—

under the conditions of the anti-Soviet war, was vested with the title of Judeo-Communism.... In a severely critical moment of Romanian history, the Jew was associated with the national enemy: the Soviet Union.... Although military action was taken against the Soviet Union, the propaganda campaign was nevertheless directed neither at Soviet Russia, nor against the Russian Communist Party, but against Judeo-Communism.¹¹⁶

“It must be understood by all,” wrote Marshall Ion Antonescu from the frontline on 3 September 1941, “that it is not a war against the Slavs, but against the Jews. This is a life and death confrontation. Either we win and thus the world is cleansed, or they win, and we become their perpetual slaves.” With such a perception, the conclusion could not have been but one: “All Jews should be returned to concentration camps.”¹¹⁷

In 1879, the Romanian Parliament voted, as an extraordinary procedure, the block naturalization of 888 “Israelites, who served under the flag during the war for independence (1877–1878).”¹¹⁸ Many of these had been wounded and decorated for deeds of heroism. One of the Jewish heroes who exemplified the spirit of that epoch of national rebirth was Sub-lieutenant Mauriciu Brociner, twice wounded during the fighting in Plevna. Any humble Jew of a Moldavian *shtetl* fancied himself becoming a military hero, with a medal for bravery on his chest. This is the model that Liviu Rebreanu employed in order to devise the character of his short story “Îțic Ștrul,

dezertor” [Yitzik Shtrul, Army Deserter] (1920). A poor innkeeper in the town of Fălticeni (northern Moldavia), from a man who “lived in fear” and was nicknamed “chicken,” he became a soldier “animated by fierce courage.” “He often imagined how the whole [Jewish] neighborhood would acclaim him on seeing a medal of bravery on his chest. And he could almost hear them murmur: ‘Here goes the chicken.... What a mighty man!’”¹¹⁹

The ironical Romanian proverb “He’s a hero, even if he’s a Jew” is perfectly applicable to him. In their very own eyes, the Jews were divided into two groups: the brave (those with whom you could conquer Plevne) and the cowards (those with whom you could not conquer it). A Jewish proverb born at that particular time is symptomatic: “With him [i.e., with a Jew as cowardly as he is] you won’t conquer Plevne” (in Yiddish, “*Mit im vesti nisht annemen Plevne*”).¹²⁰ Panait Istrati sketched, in warm colors, a real character, the Jewish tavern-keeper Herman Binder of Galați, who fought as a field volunteer in the Romanian War of Independence (1877–1878). “Loving the land of his birth, he enrolled voluntarily, and complied with the demands of military service with a glad heart, for three years.” Then, “antisemitic hooligans” forced the “stinking Jew” to emigrate, and he reconstructed his “beloved Romania” in Egyptian Alexandria, where he opened a Romanian tavern. The character and the facts are “historical,” Istrati reassures us in 1927, “though inconceivable to the Fascist mentality.”¹²¹

When Romania mobilized for the Balkan Wars in 1913 (a campaign in which approximately 13,000 Romanian Jews enlisted), Emil Lahovary declared in the Romanian Senate: “We must acknowledge that the Jews have responded with the same goodwill as the Romanian citizens to the call of the country.”¹²² During the War for National Reintegration (1916–1919) too, Jewish participation was enthusiastic. They chose as their model Mauriciu Brociner, the hero of the War of Independence. Immediately after mobilization was decreed in August 1916, the Union of Native Jews issued a passionate appeal to the Jews of Romania which, among other things, declared: “Our sons in the ranks of the Romanian army are shedding their blood for the country. Together with every Romanian, we are gladly offering this sacrifice, because only from the suffering of all will the great and happy Romania of tomorrow be born.”¹²³ 23,000 Jews bore arms (approximately 10 percent of the Jewish population); documents reveal that 882 of them were killed in action, 740 were wounded, and 825 were decorated.¹²⁴ In the Jassy Jewish cemetery alone, 238 heroes of this war are interred. The phenomenon was frequently mirrored in Romanian literature: “In 1916, all Romanian

citizens apt for military service went to the front, with no discrimination. The father of Iancu Stein died in 1916: a Romanian soldier, who lost his life on the battlefield.”¹²⁵

Later, in 1923, within the borders of a “greater and happier Romania,” when the Liga Apărării Național Creștine [The National League for National and Christian Defense] (the pro-Fascist organization of A. C. Cuza, N. Paulescu, C. Z. Codreanu, and their like) was founded, there arose the proposal to expel the Jews from the Romanian Army. Jewish parliamentarians were vehemently opposed: “We, the Jews, do not want to renounce our right to military service.... Jews have attested their patriotism on all battlefields.”¹²⁶

Traitor and Seller of the Country

Despite all these proofs of heroism and loyalty, a full-fledged antisemitic hysteria began during the First World War which blamed Romania’s defeats on the Jews. Once more, the Jew was the scapegoat at hand—*Iudaeus ex machina*. That cliché of the collective mind, the image of the cowardly Jew, played its role to the fullest: Jewish soldiers were accused of “cowardice” and “mass desertion.” From deserters, the Jews would soon be transformed into “spies on the German payroll,” “Germanophiles and Germanophones,” “collaborators with the enemy,” or “traitors and sellers of their country.” Such deprecatory labels were not difficult to apply. Let us not forget that in the collective imagery the Judeans were perceived as being the “descendants of Judas,” the ultimate prototype of the conspirator, the betrayer, and the “serpent nourished in one’s bosom.”¹²⁷ “En masse, we were given the supreme abuse: ‘Cowards and traitors, spies and sellers of their country.’ This is how they presented us all [i.e., the Jews], this is how they judged us all. Even our martyrs, even our heroes...,” wrote Jewish-Romanian author Horia Carp after the war.¹²⁸ “The walls of synagogues were fully covered with the names of our children, brothers, and parents fallen on the front,” wrote then Felix Aderca, “entire pages of the almanac were filled with the names of Romanian Jews who received military honors, and the hooligan press was able to publish, without fear of penalties and without a reply, the statement that we, the Romanian Jews, were all traitors to the country and deserters on the front.”¹²⁹

Another matter of grave consequence was that the extraordinary atmosphere of suspicion directed at the Jewish members of the military was not simply spontaneous. It was kindled by the authorities and the

commanders of the Romanian army, even by the General Headquarters itself through “circular orders.” General Constantin Prezan (whose aide-de-camp was Major Ion Antonescu, the future dictator) signed some of them, and he warned regimental commanders to pay special attention to the Jewish soldiers, “all of them being susceptible of spying and betrayal.” He formulated the order that “part of the machineguns should be disposed in action in such a way as to permit the immediate annihilation of those who might retreat from the battle without an order.”¹³⁰ This state of affairs generated incredible tragedies, crimes, and executions, as well as sentences of hard labor and suicides. “[At the front], the Jews were sent in the front line,” Moses Gaster would write later, “and the soldiers left behind were told to shoot them [in the back], so that one may say afterwards that they were dealing with deserters.”¹³¹ On the other side of the military front, the same dehumanizing methods were used against Jewish and other “foreign” soldiers. “I am stigmatized: Czech—therefore a traitor,” says captain Klapka, a character in a novel by Liviu Rebreanu. “Machineguns, pointing from behind the front lines were invented for people like us, and they were there to raise our courage, in case we should ever falter.”¹³²

Several Romanian writers treated this theme after the war, based on factual cases. The following are only a few of the literary echoes of this kind: Liviu Rebreanu’s short story, “Îțic Ștrul, dezertor” (1921), Horia Carp’s volume, *Din vremuri de urgie* [In times of agony] (1924), Alexandru Sahia’s story, “Execuția de primăvară” [The spring execution] (1933).¹³³ George Călinescu gave a succinct description of the moral aspects involved in Rebreanu’s short story: “The Jew is a pariah, rejected even by the nation on whose behalf he goes to war.” In return, the same Călinescu was “irritated” by the manner in which Jewish-Romanian author Felix Aderca portrayed characters in one of his novels (entitled *1916*, published in 1936) in terms of their participation in the war (Aderca himself was a heroic participant in the military campaigns of 1916 and 1919): “Captain [Costache] Ursu is a hero fighting without confidence,” while “his son is a traitor.” “Instead of pillorying aggression,” pointed out the critic, “[Aderca] holds in contempt resistance...glorifying defects and desertion.” For Călinescu, what motivates this attitude of the author is not the cowardice of the Jews, but their “pacifism,” which changes the nuance but maintains the essence of the belief: “In the manner of many Jewish writers, Felix Aderca is obsessed with humanitarianism, pacifism, and all other aspects of internationalism.” Glossing on the margins of the novel *Vagabonzii* [Vagabonds] (1934) by Jewish-Romanian author Emil Dorian

(himself a soldier who fought on the battlefield at Mărășești), the plot of which is set again during World War I, George Călinescu once more maintained the same view: "Like many other Jews, and out of misunderstood pacifism, that is appealing to *apatrides*, but not to citizens of a nation, the author rebukes all forms of fighting, even fighting imposed for the sake of national patrimony."¹³⁴

Such mentalities and feelings are also expressed in the case of Liviu Rebreanu's characters in his novel *Pădurea spînzuraților* [Forest of the hung]. Lt. Gross, a Jewish member of the multinational Hungarian army, is accused by Hungarian Lt. Varga of holding a "pacifying attitude," "humanitarianism," "internationalism," and "anarchism." This because—as an "alien"—Gross allegedly makes "apologies for betrayal," "his heart is deprived of any national feeling," and he does not have to defend—as does Varga—his country and "ancestral legacy."¹³⁵

A segment of the Romanian population reacted in a manner that echoed that of the civil and military authorities. Beginning on 11 November 1918, after the precipitous retreat of German troops, anti-Jewish riots took place in Bucharest, Brăila, and other Walachian towns, resulting in some dead, many injured, devastated synagogues, and ransacked shops. "A bloodbath was avoided," wrote a contemporary, when, for once! the Jews organized themselves in self-defense formations, commanded primarily by demobilized Jewish officers. Armed with cudgels, they chased away the pogromist hooligans, who fled in fright, with shouts of 'Run, the kikes are coming!'"¹³⁶ For the first time in such situations, it was not the Jews who were afraid; on the contrary, they instilled fear into others. Author I. Peltz included this event in his novel *Calea Văcărești* [Văcărești Road], as did A. Schwefelberg, a lawyer, in his memoirs.¹³⁷ Describing a similar event which happened in Bucharest in 1936, Mihail Sebastian noted in his diary: "Tonight, on Gabroveni Street...[an] atmosphere of battle. Jewish merchants put up the shutters and were waiting for the aggressors, determined to put up a resistance. I believe that this is the only thing to be done. If we are to kick the bucket, let us at least do it with a club in our hands. It is no less tragic, but at least it is less ridiculous."¹³⁸

The reasons for the anti-Jewish riots of November 1918, as publicized in the press and by the politicians, were the same as those aired during the war: the Jews' alleged disloyalty, treason, espionage, collaboration with the German enemy, etc. The most eloquent example of loyalty may well be that of the Jewish hero Herman Aronhauser, executed by the Germans in 1917 for

helping Romanian prisoners escape from the German camp near Tîrgoviște.¹³⁹ Several Romanian writers raised their voice against the anti-Jewish propaganda, among whom was journalist Constantin Bacalbaşa who wrote in 1921:

I have known a great number of Jews who were enemies of the Germans, when many Romanians were their friends. I have known Jewish journalists imprisoned as hostages, while Romanian journalists were writing in German gazettes. I have known Jews who fought on the Moldavian front and returned mutilated, while many Romanians sneaked back to Bucharest and remained in hiding throughout the occupation.¹⁴⁰

Even certain senior officers felt that it was their duty of honor to confirm the loyalty of which Jewish soldiers had proven capable during the war: "Whoever has seen, as I have, Jewish soldiers fighting and suffering next to the Romanian in the Romanian army, seen them wounded and killed like the rest, cannot be an antisemite" (General N. Petala); or, "We hold Jewish citizens in high esteem and in our love because they have contributed to the unifying of our Mother Country and they have acquitted themselves of their duty to the fullest; the Jewish soldiers have fought the savage battles at the side of Romanian soldiers" (Minister of War General Răşcanu).¹⁴¹ This kind of discourse attempted to counter vociferous antisemitic propaganda. On the other hand, a certain J. D. Protopopescu wrote in 1921, in a book suggestively entitled *The Jewish Menace*: "[The Jew], in all countries, furnishes the largest contingent of spies, informers, and traitors. Whenever foreigners invaded the Romanian Principalities or Romania, the Jew was the one who served as a spy and an informer to the foreign armies, either in 1916–1918, or in earlier times."¹⁴² The parliamentary speeches and the writings delivered and written on this theme by A. C. Cuza are also a well-known case, to which W. Filderman, president of The Union of Romanian Jews, gave an adept reply.¹⁴³

Accusing Jews of treason and collaboration with the enemy was not unique to Romania. Under the same pretext the Tsarist authorities, armed with an imperial ukase, deported approximately 500,000 "Jews and other persons suspected of espionage" from the area of the war front in 1915. In the collective imagery of Russia, "Jew" and "spy" were, as Russian poet Alexander Pushkin put it, "indissoluble notions."¹⁴⁴ It is somewhat paradoxical that the Germans themselves claimed to have been "stabbed in the back," blaming their defeat once more on "Jewish traitors." "We

Germans did not lose the war,” they would claim after the Versailles Peace Treaty, “It was the Jews who betrayed us.”¹⁴⁵ Hitler himself was reassured that “had some twelve to fifteen thousand profaning Jews been exposed to lethal gas,” the outcome of World War I would have been altogether different, and “the sacrifice of millions of Germans would not have been in vain.”¹⁴⁶ Such claims were made despite the clear fact that 450,500 Jews fought in the armies of the Central Powers (of which 54,000 were killed in battle), while there were 1,055,500 Jewish soldiers in the ranks of the Triple Alliance (of which 123,500 died in combat).¹⁴⁷

Also paradoxical is the discrepancy between the courage and loyalty displayed by the great majority of Jews living in Romania during a war that they considered to be “of their fatherland,” and the painfully unjust way in which they were perceived by a large segment of Romanian public opinion. Once more, the vices of the “imaginary Jew” prevailed and overshadowed the virtues of the “real Jew.” When Nicolae Iorga—whom we can hardly suspect of being a philosemite—visited the United States in 1930, he was profoundly startled by the strong feelings of nostalgia, love, and loyalty for the country of their birth cherished by Jewish immigrants from Romania. Such feelings were even more deeply rooted in those who had been soldiers, who had taken up weapons to fight in the war for the fatherland’s reunion: “The former [Jewish] soldiers would stand to attention before the [Romanian] colors and at the sound of a hymn that resounded in their souls.”¹⁴⁸

My personal conclusion from the facts presented in this section is that the main reason for the resignation and passivity of the Jews was connected to the specific historic conditions in which this people had been living in the Diaspora during the last two millennia. The paralyzing fear from which the Jew suffered was an “acquired,” not an “innate” flaw. The best proof of this is that once those historical conditionings disappeared, the “Jews’ proverbial fear” disappeared with them. The fact that the State of Israel today boasts one of the strongest and most efficient armies in the world is a conclusive example.

THE GOOD-BAD JEW

"Long live my Israelite nation, and may it be well regarded by the Romanians"

Cilibi Moise, ca. 1850

The "Good Jew" versus the "Bad Yid"

Chauvinists have a macabre saying: "A good Jew is a dead Jew." To other people (Gustav Freytag, for instance, in the novel *Soll und Haben*, 1855), the "good Jew" is whoever integrates himself into the "host society" to the point of disappearance, while a "bad Jew" is whoever refuses to be assimilated. Paradoxically, he who ceases being a Jew becomes a "good Jew." This is one of the "themes" of the European Enlightenment and a usual subject for certain nineteenth-century German authors such as Felix Dahn, Gustav Freytag, Julius von Eckardt, and others.¹⁴⁹

The French expression *être bien juif* has a completely different signification from that of being a decent and honest Jew. It actually means "to be a *genuine* Jew," which, quite to the contrary, means possessing all the flaws attributed to the "Imaginary Jew."¹⁵⁰ In English as well, to be regarded as a "veritable Jew" more frequently means to be indexed under a set of stereotypical vices. "A Jew, mon ami," says a character in one of George Orwell's novels, "a veritable Jew! And he hasn't even the decency to be ashamed of it."¹⁵¹ This is the distance which in common parlance is measured between "Jew" [*ovrei*] and "Yid" [*jidan*] in a Romanian expression of the type "You are no Jew, you are a loathsome Yid,"¹⁵² or in a Russian proverb: "Not every Jew is a Yid, only he is a Yid who is a Yid."¹⁵³

This distinction migrated from the sphere of folk culture into that of political culture. Mihai Eminescu himself used it ("the good Israelite" versus "the bad Yid") in his socio-political journalism during the 1870s.¹⁵⁴ In 1879, he took over a French publisher's formula: "For a long time now, those who know the substance of things have established two classes [of Jews] clearly set apart." On the one hand, there are the "Israelites," a small group of Jews who are "intelligent and cultivated, who settled in our country [i.e., Romania] long ago and have steadily and honestly employed themselves in some profession" and who, despite their not being patriots, could be granted Romanian citizenship, "for the fulfillment of the humanitarian principle set down in Article 44 of the Treaty [of Berlin]." On the other hand, there is the

great mass of the “genuine Yids,” those “who roam through the fields of Poland, of Hungary, and of Romania,” Eminescu quotes from the French publisher, “a race of little interest and one that deserves all the curses and more....”¹⁵⁵

In 1999, Corneliu Vadim Tudor also used this sort of dissociation. To him, “good Jews” are the Jews of biblical times, the People of the Book, while “mean Yids are the hordes of adventurers and international swindlers who hold one responsible in the name of Kings David and Solomon.”¹⁵⁶

No matter how irrational, the thinking that operates with clichés has its own logic. If—goes the rule—“the Jew is smart” but—also by the rule—“he uses this intellectual ability to cheat on those around him,” then—again as a rule—the Jew becomes “an evil and dishonest man,” therefore a Yid [*jidan*]. In the folk idiom, the conclusion is simply “A good Yid I have not seen.”¹⁵⁷ A folk anecdote narrates the origins of this saying from a humorous angle. They say that several Jews were traveling with Rabbi Güterjüd (in Yiddish, “good Jew”). The Jews were somehow separated from the rabbi and began searching for him, asking around whether somebody had seen him. When asked, “Brother, haven’t you seen Güterjüd?” Romanian peasants always answered: “Good Jew? I’ve seen no such thing!”¹⁵⁸ The Jew was not reproached merely for his lack of kindness, but for being the incarnation of wickedness itself. In 1851, for instance, Romanian furriers from Botoșani complained to the authorities that some of their number had come down in the world and become “beggars, and Jews are alone to answer for that, for even the air loathes their wickedness.”¹⁵⁹

“A Jew, Yet a Good Romanian”

Aware of this negative perception, Romanian Jews were understandably troubled by it. Their enlightened leaders tried to counteract prejudices existing on both sides. “We all have to overcome our prejudices,” maintained the opening article in issue no. 1 of *Israelitul român* [The Romanian Israelite], the first Jewish gazette published in Romanian, founded in 1857 by Dr Iuliu Barasch. The same issue published a prayer to God requesting that He bless Romania, and called upon the “Israelites” for donations (“the rich would please give ducats, the poor, coins”) to aid their Romanian brethren. Thus, they hoped, “Romanians...shall see that *the Jews themselves are good*” [emphasis added—A.O.].¹⁶⁰ Even then, a “petty retailer” (as Romanian playwright Ioan Luca Caragiale would have it) such as Cilibi Moise, “who has earned himself a name in the Romanian Principalities,” was interested in

how the Jew would be viewed by Romanians: "Long live my Israelite nation, and may it be well regarded by the Romanians."¹⁶¹

Analogously, in 1879 the inaugural issue of the Jewish newspaper *Fraternitatea* [Fraternity] declared in its editorial that "the purpose of this paper" was "above all else" that of turning the Israelites of Romania into "good citizens and useful to [Romanian] society."¹⁶² After the political emancipation of the Jews in 1919, "good Jews" entertained hopes of being considered "good Romanians." Felix Aderca wrote: "We are Romanians at least as good as the Polacks, the Hungarians, the Bulgarians, and the Gypsy in Romania, who have sought and still seek to give us lessons in patriotism."¹⁶³ The same purpose underlay an article written by Gabriel Schaffer, secretary to Wilhelm Filderman, in the *Curierul Israelit* [The Israelite Courier] in 1923. He attempted to demonstrate that one could be a "good Jew" and a "good Romanian" at one and the same time. "Living on Romanian land and remaining faithful to the Jewish spirit and to Jewish culture, we do not at all impinge on the development of this country. We pour into it all our energy, our talent, our lives, and our blood when the national interest demands, yet we do this as good Jews—there is no antinomy between both feelings, that of a good Romanian and that of an observant Jew."¹⁶⁴

At the other extreme, for Nae Ionescu, one of the important opinion leaders of the right-wing intellectual movement in interwar Romania, the Romanian Jew could not only not be a "good Romanian," he could not be a Romanian at all: "To be Romanian, and not a good Romanian, I mean, to simply be Romanian" he would write in 1937, "comes down to being an Orthodox Christian."¹⁶⁵ This is an ethnic and confessional equation that Alecu Russo had known how to solve almost a century earlier: "As Romanians are divided into Orthodox Romanians and Catholic Romanians, there will be Romanian Jews as well, and thus our country will have a prolific offspring."¹⁶⁶

An expression (and ideational pattern) of the type: "He may be a Jew, yet he is a good Romanian [Ukrainian, Hungarian, etc.]" can be traced all across eastern and central Europe. In *Pan Tadeusz*, written in 1834, Adam Mickiewicz portrayed his character, Iankel the innkeeper, as both a Jew and a good Polack; despite his alien status he was renowned as a good Pole. "Though Jewish he had a good pronunciation, / And was a loyal Pole by reputation, / The honest Jew, / He loved our country like a patriot true."¹⁶⁷ Still glossing on the topic of the "moral essence of the national feeling," Hungarian philosopher G. M. Tamás notes, in his very personal style: "On

hearing such hideous phrases like ‘notwithstanding his Jewishness, he is a good Hungarian, too,’ we barely realize the bearing of this moral conquest. Let us imagine someone saying, in the fifth century BCE ‘notwithstanding his being Persian, he is a good Greek.’ Impossible. *Nota Bene*: not even the phrase ‘he is a good Greek’ existed.”¹⁶⁸

“He is a good man, even if he is a Jew”

Whenever the folk saying “Good Jew? I have not seen such a thing!” noted above was invalidated, that was considered an exception to the rule. While the wickedness of the Jew was phrased in adversative formulations (“The Jew is intelligent, but he cheats”), the exception represented by the model of the “good Jew” was formulated as a concession: “Though she was a Jewess, she was a very good and honest woman” (from the southeast of Poland);¹⁶⁹ or “He is a good man, although he’s a Yid,” “He is a Jew, but he’s a decent chap,” or “He may be a Yid, but he is right.” Another locution mimics surprise: “A Jewess she may be, but she has a soul, like everybody else!”¹⁷⁰ while others express regret: “What a decent man, a pity he is a Jew,”¹⁷¹ “Pity his name is Leibush” (a reply in one of Horia Carp’s short stories),¹⁷² or “peasants found him agreeable, no matter his being a Jew,” we read in one of Liviu Rebreanu’s novels set in Transylvania.¹⁷³ If need be, the formula can be reversed. I hold the Jew in esteem “although he is a Jew” and “although I am Romanian.” “I like Jews,” says a character in a play by Rebreanu, “although I am Romanian born and bred.... They are diligent, smart, and have a quick mind.”¹⁷⁴

“He may be a Jew, but he is decent,” is a common adage among the Poles, as Czesław Miłosz remembers from Vilna of the 1930s.¹⁷⁵ As proof that Christians in western Ukraine did not think and speak in essentially different terms (though perhaps, a little more colorfully), a few characters from Sholem Aleichem’s *Tevye der Milchiger* [Tobias the dairyman] (1895) may bear witness: “Although you are a Yid, you aren’t a bad sort. Yet, one has nothing to do with the other. Beat you we must”; or “I’ve heard you are an honest man, although you are a treacherous Yid!”¹⁷⁶

These are not simply verbal tics; behind them lie centuries of mental clichés. Evidence that such mental and verbal clichés had been common is provided by the fact that Romanians were advised to repress such weaknesses and regrets. In a Romanian manuscript dating from the end of the eighteenth century (significantly titled *Word against the Blinded and Straying Jews*),

one is told straightforwardly: "Let us no longer say 'Oh, what a decent Jew this is,' for great is their hostility to us!"¹⁷⁷

Parenthetically, let us note that this manner of perceiving the stranger was common enough in the cultural area of southeastern Europe, even if (or perhaps because) the stranger appeared to be a decent man. Here is what Byzantine author Kekaumenos advised the young aristocrats of Byzantium in 1075: "If a stranger comes to your town, makes friends with you, and you get on together, do not put your confidence in him; on the contrary, then, if ever, you should have all your eyes about you."¹⁷⁸ The dictum formulated by the great Trojan priest Laocoön, "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes" ("I fear the Greeks even when they bring gifts"; Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 2:49), epitomizes a whole mentality. It is not by chance that when several Jews offered the Romanians their support in 1876, just before the War of Independence, Mihai Eminescu considered that "these gifts of non-Romanians and non-Christians look much like those of the Greeks."¹⁷⁹

"A Jew is still a Jew"

Returning to the image of the Jew in the traditional culture of eastern and central Europe, it must be noted that mistrust of his goodness or honesty is reinforced by proverbs: "Do not trust the Jew, descended from heaven though he may be" (Polish and Ruthenian proverb);¹⁸⁰ "Do not go into partnership with a Jew, though he might fetch you the moon and the stars," and "A Yid is still a Yid, [no matter how good]" (Romanian sayings);¹⁸¹ "The Jew is still a Jew, even if he wears spurs on his boots" (German and Polish proverb).¹⁸² "A Jew is always a Jew," says one of the characters in the short story "Mendel of Gdansk," published in 1897 by Polish author Maria Konopnicka.¹⁸³ Not even his conversion to Christianity (the supreme change!) is perceived as an essential transformation, because "The Jew's character is not changed by baptism" claims a proverb from the Slavic world.¹⁸⁴ This is a manner of thought and speech that became common with all strata of society, from peasant to king. In 1939, King Carol II of Romania wrote in his diary, referring to the Romanian Jewish businessman Max Auschnitt: "A Yid is still a Yid, no matter how nice he might be as a man."¹⁸⁵ The same saying was employed sixty years later by Ilie Neacsu in an ultra-nationalistic magazine: "A Jew is still a Jew. You take him off the streets, you welcome him into your home, you lay the table for him, you host him, and still, he will not feel grateful for your entirely humane deed."¹⁸⁶

Though the fact that this series of proverbs is mainly applicable to the Jew should be borne in mind, yet it is not only the Jew but other “aliens” as well who are targeted: “He may wear a caftan, that does not make him less of a Gypsy,”¹⁸⁷ “The Gypsy is still a Gypsy, for Christmas as for Easter,” and, in the same vein, “An alien remains an alien, no matter what he does,”¹⁸⁸ are popular beliefs from Bukovina, Walachia, and southern Transylvania respectively.¹⁸⁹ Moreover, such sayings (“He is a good man, and it is a pity he is a Jew”), though very common, are not typical only of social relations between Romanians and Jews. Frequently enough, Gypsies are the recipients of the same type of contempt: “What a pity that you are a Gypsy!” (Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, *Răzvan și Vidra* [Răzvan and Vidra]). In well-known historical contexts, the Romanians, in their turn, have been placed by the Hungarians on the “weak” side of the equation, in the place somehow foreordained to the Jews. Such treatment was applied to Romanian writer Ioan Slavici, in his childhood (around the mid-nineteenth century, near Arad in western Transylvania), by neighboring Hungarians: “Here’s a good boy, and it’s a pity he’s a Romanian.” The reply his mother resorted to on similar occasions was milder, yet no less chauvinistic and ethnocentric: “‘Poor things,’ my mother used to say to me,” Slavici remembers, “‘they are not to blame if they haven’t been lucky enough to be Romanians!’”¹⁹⁰

“Some of my best friends are Jews”

American anthropologist Martin N. Marger discusses an apparently paradoxical kind of thinking. He speaks of

the manifestation of the tendency to look at the Jewish ethnic group in a negative light, while expressing positive ideas about some of its individual members. This is a common pattern of thought among the prejudiced, regardless of the group in question, and is best reflected in the familiar “Some of my best friends are...[Jews, Gypsies, Blacks].”

While organizing the Holocaust in central Europe, Adolf Eichmann himself boasted of having “Jewish friends.”¹⁹¹

In 1887, as a counter reaction to the same type of antisemitic cliché, Friedrich Nietzsche ironically remarked “there is not a single Jew among my intimates” but, of course, there were. He continues, forsaking his previous irony: “True enough, yet, there are neither any antisemites among them.”¹⁹² However, in such cases of individual members perceived as being “positive” while belonging to an ethnic community perceived as being “negative,”

Marger wrote that “instead of refuting the belief, which logic would dictate, they serve only as ‘exceptions that prove the rule.’”¹⁹³

Opposition of the “generic” to the “genetic” Jew-as-alien also surfaces in modern Romanian literature. Romanian literary critic George Călinescu, referring particularly to the authors who rallied around the *Viața românească* [Romanian life] literary association, notes:

All Romanian writers, with rare exceptions, are xenophobes and antisemites to the extent that the social problem of the nation’s existence arises, invaded and pressured as it is by too many alien elements; they simultaneously are humanitarians, or, better put, understanding of the foreigner, extracted as an individual. Therefore, Sadoveanu would picture his Romanians as victimized by [generic] Jews from an economic viewpoint, yet the Jew as an individual [as is the case with Sadoveanu’s Hayah Sanis] is regarded with objectivity and human sympathy.¹⁹⁴

In this matter, there have also isolated voices, like that of Wilhelm von Humboldt, who declared: “I love the Jews only *en masse*; *en détail* I rather avoid them.” In the early nineteenth century von Humboldt situated himself, as Hannah Arendt has observed, “in open opposition to the prevailing fashion, which favored individual Jews and despised the Jewish people.” The reason he did so was that being “a true democrat, he wanted to liberate an oppressed people and not bestow privileges upon individuals.”¹⁹⁵ Indeed, that era was marked by a quite different prevailing fashion. The formulation best defining it pertains to the French Revolution, as in Count Stanislas Clermont-Tonnerre’s declaration before the General Assembly: “Jews should be rejected as a nation, yet recognized anywhere as individuals.” This also is the ideological expression of Lenin’s policy, applied during the first two decades of the twentieth century.¹⁹⁶

“If all Jews were like you...”

“The Jews! These brave Jews! I have never before met such good Jews. I sincerely cherished them, deprived of any interest...,” evokes Liviu Rebreanu while reminiscing about some images of old Jews from a childhood scrapbook. “Schan! Tuptil! Three-Lice! Where are you? Where are your wanderings? So much has changed in the world since I last saw you! What a cold, wild, and depressing desert the world has become since our ways have parted.”¹⁹⁷

The model of the “good Jew” is considered an exception to the rule that all Jews are wicked, thieving, and predisposed to trickery, with the exception of the individual about whom the speaker says in the end: “If all the Jews were like you....” He is paid a kind of compliment, offensive by means of the ill-disguised antisemitism that it contains. This commonplace manner of thought was adopted by the Romanian author of Jewish origin Mihail Sebastian in his well-known “Jewish novel” *De două mii de ani...* [For two thousand years..., (1934)]: “‘With Jews such as yourself,’” says Mircea Vieru, a character marked by nationalistic eruptions, “‘peace [between Romanians and Jews] will be possible any moment. More than peace, even love.’ ‘With Jews such as you...I have heard this before,’” replies the protagonist of the novel, an alter-ego of the author, “‘If all Jews were like you... This is such an ancient laudation. And such a humiliating one....’”¹⁹⁸

It appears that the image of the good (and therefore, atypical) Jew is an invention of the Central European Enlightenment, especially of German playwrights of the second half of the eighteenth century, such as Lessing, Kotzebue, Iffland, and Stephanie. The “traveler” of the one-act play *Die Juden* (1749) by G. E. Lessing, is the first in a long series of such “good Jews.” He endeavors “to annihilate the far too unjust prejudices directed at my nation.” “Oh, would not Jews be respected, if they were all like you!” is the last retort, addressed to him just before the curtain drops.¹⁹⁹

“Not all Jews are bad” belongs to the same category. In an article published recently in a Romanian magazine with fairly democratic views and meant to discourage antisemitic prejudices, the author adopts that formula, repeating it several times: “Not all Jews have been bad, nor all Romanians good.”²⁰⁰ Under an appearance of objectivity, this expression actually induces the idea that, if the rule is that the Jews were bad, this did not actually apply to all of them. Let us not exaggerate: the author seems to be saying that some of the Jews were nevertheless good. And the other way round, in the case of Romanians: as a rule they were good, yet not quite all of them. In 1925, W. Filderman, president of the Union of Romanian Jews, wrote:

What is stupid is the pretension of antisemites to believe that...all the Jews have to be served with the same sauce and treated as dangerous. There are good Jews, there are bad Jews, just as there are good Romanians and bad Romanians, good Frenchmen and bad Frenchmen, etc.²⁰¹

Also in the interwar period, Jewish author Felix Aderca favored the same idea:

Like all other peoples, the Sons of Israel are intelligent and daft, are generous and avaricious, are solidary and are loners, are cultivated and ignorant—the qualities and the flaws being distributed by the laws of hazard that govern all of humankind. Naturally, certain historical and social circumstances have accentuated or diminished some traits; in essence, however, the Jews are no different from other people.²⁰²

The affirmations of Filderman and Aderca verge on the commonplace.

Still, truisms cannot be avoided when what is in the realm of evidence is not perceived as such. To “serve the Jews with the same sauce,” to believe that all are the same (in wickedness, as a rule) is an extremely well exploited *forma mentis*. An opinion poll conducted in Hungary in 1995 revealed that a great part of those queried agreed with the idea that “Jews are rather all the same.”²⁰³ Leon Volovici has touched upon this delicate point when referring to the “stereotype of *the exponent Jew*” as “an ancient symbolic creation of European culture,” and also to the Jew’s great degree of “representativity.” He goes on to observe:

A Jew ceases to be an individual, let him do what he will, he will not cease to “signify,” to represent “Jewishness,” to have a “role” in various scenarios, *philo* or *anti*, which is imposed by the others. The concrete reality of the individual...is irrelevant, because *the exponent Jew* is forever held responsible for everything that “the Jews” do, be they religious, atheistic, communists, or even converts.²⁰⁴

As a rule, Jews (as well as Gypsies) are perceived as an agglomerate block; thus, an individual is recipient of all the virtues and, more likely, of all the vices of his nation, according to supposed ethnic and psychological traits and to a misty Herderian *Volkgeist*. The representational force of the Jew also exists in the other direction: the traits of each and every individual are further transposed onto the whole ethnic group. In other words, if a German steals, it means that “a German steals,” while if a Jew steals, it means that “all Jews steal.”

Verbal—and implicitly, mental—phrasings of the kind, “He is a good man, even if he is a Jew,” “If all Jews were like you...,” or “Not all Jews are bad” define an exception (one Jew is good) from the rule (all Jews are bad). In other words, the “real Jew” is but seldom good, while the “imaginary Jew” is always bad. As Polish researcher Alina Cała phrased it, this has been “a way to reconcile everyday reality with the stereotype.” The “good Jew” contradicts the stereotype; consequently, the first term of this equation ought

to be an exception, as the second term (the stereotype) is much too powerful to disappear, or even be altered. "This confrontation," Cală remarks, "was one-directional: it was reality that was adjusted to the image." The same happens when the "real Jew" is, in turn, a collective character. The Jews with whom one lives in close proximity (the Jews next door or the ones in the neighborhood, or the Jews in our little borough, etc.) become "good Jews," unlike the others with whom one is unacquainted, the "town Jews," who are "bad." "In the town they [i.e., the Jews] were unbearable," declares an average informant from a borough in southeast Poland, "but here [in the borough] there were good Jews."²⁰⁵

"This strange operation of 'familiarization,'" Cală sums up, "served to reconcile none too favorable opinions of Jews with daily practice, in which continual hostility would have been impossible to maintain."²⁰⁶ When conditions are exactly the opposite, with the Jews accounting for the majority, they are no less able to cut away from the tyranny of this manner of looking at the "other." A few years ago, in Israel, I met a (*mutatis mutandis*) analogous psychosocial phenomenon, one of "familiarization" with the in-group stranger who manages to penetrate the steel shell of the stereotype, while the out-group stranger continues to be perceived within the limits of the stereotype. There, "our Arabs" (Israeli citizens) were considered "good Arabs," while those outside of Israel were "bad Arabs."

In the confrontation between the "imaginary" and the "real" Jew, the balance of power is totally uneven. The latter does not stand a ghost of a chance. The image of the Jew is so well-rooted that the Jew himself is devoured by it.

ETHNICAL AND ETHICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The boom of geographic discoveries and trading expeditions that began on the eve of the Renaissance and continued throughout that era developed a new taste for describing remote, if not downright imaginary, countries and peoples. "Before being discovered, the savage was first invented," noted Italian folklorist Giuseppe Cocchiara.²⁰⁷ "This witty observation is not without its truth," later commented Mircea Eliade, the historian of religion.²⁰⁸

Knowledge of the savage, or merely exotic, stranger gave a new edge to the (ac)knowledge(ment) of the stranger "from home." Without giving rise to a new literary genre as such, this type of discourse—a collection of ethical and ethnical stereotypes—was nevertheless fairly common during that age.

This is how Gilles Le Bouvier, in *A Book of Countries Described*, written about the middle of the fifteenth century, presents the Europeans: the English are “cruel and bloodthirsty” and greedy merchants into the bargain; the Swiss are “ruthless and rude people”; the Scandinavians and the Poles are “fierce and possessed”; the Sicilians “fiercely keep watch over their wives”; the Neapolitans are “coarse and churlish, bad Catholics and great sinners”; the Castilians are “quick-tempered people, poorly dressed and shoed, their dwellings are in a bad way, and are bad Catholics,” etc.²⁰⁹

In *A Short Account of European Peoples and of Their Characteristics*, a text written at the beginning of the eighteenth century in central Europe (Styria, in western Austria), ten nations are presented hierarchically according to their traits, from most positive to most negative (the Spaniard, the Frenchman, the Netherlander, the German, the Englishman, the Swede, the Pole, the Hungarian, the Russian, the Greek-Turk, etc.). A comparative table is devised, on the basis of seventeen categories: disposition, nature, intellect, vices, passions, knowledge, clothing, maladies, ability in warfare, religion, form of political government, and so on. From the point of view of mental characteristics, for instance, the Spaniard is allegedly “intelligent and wise,” the Frenchman is “cautious,” the German is “spiritual,” and the Englishman is “bad-tempered”; the Pole is allegedly of “limited” intellect, yet not as much as the Hungarian; the Russian is “empty-headed,” while the Greek-Turk is “even less of that.”²¹⁰

“It is not the barbarian and ignorant peoples who should come to know us first, but on the contrary, we are the ones who should...unravel the character, nature, and even physiognomy of contemporary peoples,” wrote the Frenchman Jean-Louis Carra, secretary to the court of the Moldavian Prince, in 1777. By “barbarian and ignorant peoples” Carra was not referring to some exotic populaces of Africa, America, or Asia, but to the Moldavians and Wallachians along the lower course of the Danube. In the spirit of the Enlightenment, Carra envisaged the cognitive act as an empowering act of subordinating someone else. Therefore, “we” are supposed to know “them” before “they” get to know “us”: “It is for us, finally, to know these same peoples before they can know themselves, and seek to know us in their turn”²¹¹

The Romanians were neither conquerors nor great travelers or passionate merchants, but they cohabited and came into contact with many nations. In the preface he wrote for a volume by E. Baican, *Gossip and Anecdotes* (1882), Mihai Eminescu observed: “There is no people the Romanians have

come in contact with that did not become their laughing stock.” Moses Schwarzfeld took over this concept, but in his own manner:

The Romanian calls the foreigners *filthy*, *foreign heathens*, and there is no people which has ever been in contact with the Romanians and was found fair, good, and honest. Thus, the German is a man of the devil, the French is awarded the same flattering epithet, the Jew is *tîrtan* [from the German *Untertan* = subject, vassal], the Greek is a mangy goat, the Serbian is feeble-minded [provincial Romanian, *bleod*, from the German *blöd*, stupid], the Bulgarian has leeks, and we would never come to the end if we were to enumerate every epithet and appellation Romanians contrive against foreigners.²¹²

Dumitru Drăghicescu also commented on this delicate subject in 1907, when he published his book, *Din psihologia poporului român* [On the psychology of the Romanian people]. According to his diagnosis, Romanians suffered from a superiority complex towards some

people less fine, with an intelligence more laggardly and less spirited, and therefore in an obvious state of mental inferiority as compared with the Romanians. As a proof that this is the state of things we have the fact that the irony and humor of the Romanians is chiefly directed at the neighboring peoples. Romanians have always poked fun chiefly at Serbs and Bulgarians, Hungarians and Turks. They have always considered themselves superior to these neighbors. From this consciousness of superiority have sprung all the jokes and ironies made on their account. [At the same time,] the Gypsy is an unexhausted well of humor for the peasants.²¹³

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, in political satires that were circulated underhandedly, orally or in manuscript, to avoid censorship and belonged to a species of city folklore, not only the Jews [*jidani*] were considered “scabby dogs,” but also the other “foreign hordes”: “Tomorrow, after the mangy Greek, / Come, at a round trot, / The Turk, the famished wretch, / The Russian, the foul brute, / And the German, the stinky lickspittle.”²¹⁴

The profile of the Jew has taken on several shapes, among which is the presentation of his vices and virtues as compared to other peoples. Most often, Romanians express the opinion that the Jew uses his intelligence to swindle other people: “A Jew cheats two Armenians, an Armenian two Greeks, a Greek two Romanians.”²¹⁵

Similar proverbs, in which the relationships of Jews with other nations are defined, are to be found among the Russians ("A Jew is worth two Greeks, a Greek two Armenians, an Armenian two nobles of Poltava" or, vice versa, "From two coppers of Jews the devil made an Armenian"); the Poles ("The Pole is cheated by the German, the German by the Italian, the Italian by the Spaniard, the Spaniard by the Jew, but the Jew is only cheated by the Devil"); the Lithuanians ("A Jew cheats three Germans; a Russian, three Jews"); the Macedo-Romanian people ("A Jew cheats ten Greeks, a Greek cheats ten Albanians"); the Germans ("Three Jews cheat an Armenian, three Armenians a Greek, and there are still a dozen Christians left," or "A Jew is worth three Christians and a Yankee three Jews"); the Swiss ("Nine Jews cheat a Swiss and nine Swiss people from Basel cheat one from Geneva"); and the French ("Business take two Jews against a Genoese, two Genoese against a Greek, and two Greeks against an Armenian," and "Three Jews are worth a citizen of Basel, three citizens of Basel are worth one in Geneva").²¹⁶

Sometimes, however, the situation is reversed and the Jew appears in the position of the one who is taken in, like in this Romanian saying: "The Gypsy steals, the Armenian swears, and the Jew pays for the jade."²¹⁷ It is not so much the naïveté of the Jew which seems to be intimated here as his usual status as an object of discrimination and persecution and the fact that he is often held guilty and punished, irrespective of who is the true culprit. In this respect, the Georgians have a similar saying: "Mabshabeli had sinned and the Jews were punished,"²¹⁸ and so do the Ukrainians: "The Jew is to pay all damages."²¹⁹ The Jews themselves have such sayings: "A boyar lost something, a non-Jew found that something, and they both pick on the Jew," or "No matter what, Jews will be hated."²²⁰ The German saying is the most explicit and most grisly of them all: "*Macht nichts, der Jude wird verbrannt*" (It matters not, the Jew must be burned).²²¹

In *Sibyl's Prophecy*, an old text of Slavic origin which circulated in the Romanian cultural area from the sixteenth century and, in the Romanian version, since the seventeenth century, the wise Empress Sibyl (in the text, daughter of the Judean King David) prophetically interprets the common dream of "a hundred great boyars." The nine different suns, which had appeared in the sky in this dream, are explained by Sibyl in terms of ethnic imagery: "The first of the suns is the offspring of the Bulgarians, good, guest-loving, and devout people.... The second sun signifies the Greeks, for they have abjured their faith three times and have mixed with all tongues, usurers that they are and loving well the pieces of silver...." Historians of old

literature concur that the text originated in the first half of the fourteenth century and can be included in the corpus of Bulgarian literature, owing to the fact that the Bulgarians are positively depicted while their adversaries, the Greeks, are negatively portrayed.²²² Besides the Bulgarians and the Greeks, there are profiles of the Catholics, the Arcadians, the Saracens (who “shall lay Jerusalem waste”), the Syrians, the “Iverians” (“who their Church guard well, and fear God”), the “Tartars” (“who shall spill blood on the earth and no one shall stand against them”), and the Jews [*jidovi*].

An extremely interesting fact is that no negative trait of the Jews is presented. According to Sibyl’s divinations, “a woman shall come from them and she shall give birth to a son from Heaven and his name they shall call Jesus.” He will be crucified and buried, then will rise again and “shall send twelve men” who will change the faith all over the world, including the empire ruled by Sibyl. “For I myself,” the prophetess ends the interpretation of her dream, “have until now cherished hopes of giving birth to Christ from this body, and I have guarded my chastity for these fifty years. And now I fathom that I am not the one.”²²³

Obviously, the emphasis is different in this case, as compared to the majority of the texts of that epoch. The Jews are presented not as the people who kill Jesus, but as those who give birth to Him. It is true that, to some, this has been the capital sin of the Jews; but we are now in a different century, a different geographic meridian, and another cultural perspective. For Voltaire and other French Encyclopedists of the eighteenth century, who managed to “secularize” antisemitism, the “Jews deserve to be punished for conceiving Jesus, not for killing him.”²²⁴

Another old Romanian text, dating from the beginning of the eighteenth century (1705), lists an inventory of the gifts distributed by God to various nations: “Trading to the Turks, / Drunkenness and swine-like living to the Russians, / Stoutness and stupidity to the Serbs,²²⁵ / Preaching and lying to the people of Rome, / Filthiness to the Germans, / Scab and lassitude to the Saxons, / Luck with money to the Greeks, / Pride to the Poles, / Beauty to the Circassians, / Bragging to the Moldavians, / Envy to the Romanians, / Heresy to the Armenians, / Richness to the Jews, / Poverty and barrenness to the Gypsies.”²²⁶

I have transcribed this entire text, for it is a suitable example of ethnic imagery, as it contains not only *hetero-images*, but also *auto-images*, if its origin is Romanian. Indeed, Moses Gaster was convinced that this characterization was “autochthonous Romanian, stemming from the people’s

own observation.” An argument to this effect is also that—in contrast to the text below, in which diverse animals are associated with nations from western Europe to central Asia—the 1705 text made no mention of faraway peoples, at “the back of nowhere,” but only of those with which the Romanians were neighbors, or with which they cohabited.²²⁷

“The zoomorphic characterization of peoples,” as B. P. Hasdeu was wont to call it, is not, according to Moses Gaster, specific to Romanian tradition but to the Palaeo-Slavic one. Indeed, the oldest text of this kind discovered in the Romanian area is a Slavic manuscript from the first half of the sixteenth century. It is not part “of a biblical apocryphal legend, namely *The Legend of Abraham*,” as researchers Marianne Mesnil and Assia Popova have maintained,²²⁸ yet it was copied in this collection of miscellaneous works together with that legend.

Entitled *The Wise Man or the Teacher of All the Words of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, the text was arranged in the usual form of questions and answers. To the question “What are the peculiarities of each nation?” an ambiguous answer is offered: to no less than thirty (European and Asian) peoples correspond to as many animals. However, the characteristics of each animal and, implicitly, of the nation symbolically associated with it do not stand out—like in the celebrated Bestiaries (*Physiologos*):

[T]he Italian is a lion, the German an eagle, the Arab a boar, the Turk a dragon, the Armenian a lizard, the Indian a dove, the Syrian a fish, the Georgian a ram, the Tartar a greyhound and a dog, the Cuman a leopard, the Russian an otter, the Lithuanian a bull, the Greek a fox, the Bulgarian an ox, *the Romanian a cat*, the Serbian a wolf, the Hungarian a panther, the German a pure ox, the Ossetian a stag, the Saxon a stallion, the Pole a mole, *the Jew a badger*, the Albanian a beaver, the Egyptian a goat, the Szekler a kite, the Circassian a buffalo, the Persian a crane, the Croatian an asp, etc [emphasis mine—A.O.].²²⁹

In this metaphorical text it is the *cat* that corresponds to the *Romanian* (the Walachian, in the original). Motivated by an obsolescent nationalism, yet a typical one for the second half of the nineteenth century, Hasdeu enumerates the real or attributed characteristics of this domestic animal, discovering all of them in the Romanian. “Love of the country” and “independence” are included for, unlike the dog, the cat “loves the home, the ‘homeland’ from where with the greatest pains, if at all, can anyone drag it out and chase it away, yet it never becomes the slave of one master.”²³⁰ There are some

extenuating circumstances for Hasdeu, since he published and commented on that text in 1879, only a few months after Romania attained its independence.

The Jew (*evreanin* in the text) is symbolically associated with the badger. In this case, no more than in the former, we cannot be sure what were, almost half a millennium ago, the causes of this atypical association: perhaps because the withdrawn, isolated, and morose man (as the “imaginary Jew” is supposed to be) was called a “badger”; or maybe because the badger, like the Jew, is perceived by the people as being cunning and thieving (it steals flour or grains from barns);²³¹ or, finally, because the traditional costume of the Jew at that time included a hat, or *shtreimel*, made of badgers’ fur, for only rich Jews could afford sable.

In Mihail Sebastian’s “Jewish novel” *For Two Thousand Years...* (1934), the protagonist witnesses a scene in the heart of Bucharest of the early 1930s, in which cries of “Death to the Yids!” are uttered. People pass by quietly “without so much as a turn of the head from any of them.... If someone should settle oneself in the middle of the road to call for (let’s say) the ‘death of the badgers,’ I still believe that he would raise a certain amount of wonder from among the passers-by.”²³² Does the author suggest the existence of a symbolic and significant relationship between the Jew and the badger? Or is this rather a chance and gratuitous association, meant to demonstrate precisely the absurdity of thinking along these lines: I don’t care if you shout “Death to the Yids!” but what do you hold against the poor badgers?!

Turning once more to the “gifts” bestowed by the Divinity on various nations, the following is a brief popular invocation in which God is called to give “good things” to Christians and “bad things” to everybody else:

Let God grant health
To Christendom,
The pagans
May go to the dogs,
The Turks,
The pest on them,
The Jews, the scab on them,
All ailments to the Gypsies.²³³

It was in fact God, at the time of the Creation, who distributed the true “ethnic gifts.” This is a subject shared by several folk legends.

One of them has been taken over by Romanian prose author Mihail Sadoveanu and used at the very beginning of his pastoral novel *Baltagul*, [The Hatchet], published in 1930: “The Lord God, after He put the world

together, put an order and a mark upon each people.... [To] the *German* He gave the screw," the *Gypsy*—his fiddle. "In the *Serb's* hand He deposited the hoe," while to the *Turk* He said: "Thou shalt be a simpleton, but power thou shalt have over other nations, by your sword." To the *Hungarian* He handed over some "top boots, and spurs, and resin" to make "handlebars on their moustaches" and told him: "Be proud and enjoy partying with your fellows." "Upon the *Russian* He bestowed the gift of being the greatest drunkard of all and of proving his worth in begging and singing through the fairs." "Among the *Jews*, He summoned Moses and commanded him: Thou shalt write a Law; and when the time comes, make the Pharisees crucify my well-beloved son Jesus; and after this thou shalt endure much trouble and persecution; and for this I shall let money flow to you like waters." Finally, the last to share in the divine gifts, the *Romanians* (in the original, the "mountain people"), were addressed by God as follows: "I cannot give you anything more, just an easy heart, to enjoy what is yours. All things should seem good to you; the one with the fiddle, and the one with the drinking should both come to you, and you shall have beautiful and loving wives." Nichifor Lipan, a character in the novel *The Hatchet*, is said to have learnt this story from the shepherds of northern Moldavia, "from an old head shepherd, who used to be a Jew in his youth, and God took pity on him and made him aware of the true belief."²³⁴

This type of story falls into the greater category of etiologic legends. From them we learn how "ethnic characteristics" were established once and for all. Stereotypical thinking is carried to the limit in this case. Everything has to be reduced to one single "cultural mark" (the *screw* for the German, the *fiddle* for the Gypsy, *drunkenness* for the Russian, *work* for the Moldavian, etc.), or to a small number of such "marks," considered to be defining characteristics of an ethnic group. This ethnic and cultural determination derives from a double authority. On the one hand, it is given by God Himself and, on the other hand, it occurs at the mythical beginning of the world, *in illo tempore*. The first sentence in the Romanian legend explicitly states all these aspects of the issue: "Lord God, after He put the world together, put an order and a mark upon each people." Four "cultural marks" have been selected for the "Jews," all trying to compress their destiny and history to the maximum: 1) the Decalogue; 2) Deicide; 3) persecution; 4) money.

Toward the close of the 1930s, in his elaboration of a "Project on the Research of Folk Mythology," ethno-sociologist Ion I. Ioničă, of the Sociological School of Bucharest (headed by D. Gusti), formulated a few of the subjects referring to the question of different nations in the following

manner: "Their multitude and their differences. Was there a single nation in the beginning, or have all nations existed ever since? What are the features of nations? Kinship and color. The hierarchy of nations. The Gypsy, the Jew, the Hungarian, the Swabian, the Romanian, etc. How can one account for national and ethnic characteristics?"²³⁵

An authentic folk legend, also recorded in northern Moldavia, unfolds the story of the "gifts" distributed by God at the Creation to "the first peoples." According to this legend, the first nations were the Jews, the Gypsies, and the Moldavians (the latter further divided into "boyars" and "peasants"). The Moldavian boyars, the first to come into the presence of the Lord, asked for "wealth." "God gave them wealth." "Then came the Jews, for they were sooner dressed." They asked for the "good." "The good be granted to you!" said God unto them. Since the Moldavian peasants, as is their habit, came later in the day, they were refused both "wealth" and the "good,"²³⁶ for wealth had been given to the boyars, and the "good was taken over by the Jews." Instead, they received "work": "And this is why work is sacred, for it has been given by God." All that was left for the Gypsies was "laughter": "'Be a laughing stock,' said God unto them. And so they remained a laughing stock."²³⁷

As can be observed, the main ethical-ethnic characteristics attributed to the Jew are "good," obtained without "work," and "money," obtained by devious means. Deviousness is also the mark of the Jew in a Hungarian legend entitled "What the Peoples Got from God," recorded at the end of the nineteenth century. This time, God—He who sits on the celestial throne and gives to every people its due—is Jesus Christ. The Turk comes to Him and asks for the "Holy Land." "All right, let it be yours, then Jesus replies." Then comes the German, asking for the same, and Jesus explains that He has already given the Holy Land to the Turk. "Well, it is a *nice thing*," replied the German, and Jesus added: "All right then, let you have the *nice thing*." After Jesus turned down the same request made by the Hungarian, the latter replied, angrily, "Well, *bad luck*!" And Jesus decided "All right then, let you have *bad luck*." When, to the same request, the Jew received the same answer, he exclaimed nervously: "Well, it is a big *cheat*." Jesus replied instantly: "Well then, let the *cheat* be yours." The end of this multiethnic folk tale is typical of etiologic legends: "That is why Hungarians always have bad luck, Germans have all the nice things, Turks have the Holy Land, and the Jews cheating."²³⁸ Considering the negative status meted out to Hungarians

and the positive one enjoyed by the Germans, it is possible that this legend originated in the German cultural area.

Of the same parentage as the abovementioned legends (of the type of “the gifts distributed by God to the peoples) are those regarding the genesis of ethnic groups and races. In a myth that is part of Transylvanian Gypsy lore, God made man out of clay and had him baked in the oven. He over-baked him, and so black was he, being burnt all over. This was the ancestor of the Blacks. Then God set out on another try. This time, however, he did not bake the man of clay long enough, so he was pale. This was the ancestor of the Whites. Finally, in a third assay, God succeeded: this third man was well baked, golden, and tanned. This was the ancestor of the Gypsies.²³⁹ Romanian folkloric mythology too includes episodes of aborted species. Within mythical anthropogenesis, such an aborted species are the “Jidovi,” gigantic androids, monstrous, and anthropophagous.²⁴⁰ This type of script was then transferred from the mythical sphere to a pseudo-scientific one. The ideological forefather of modern racism, J. A. Gobineau, who proclaimed the inequality of races and the supremacy of the Aryan race, maintained that God had created the yellow race in an aborted attempt at anthropogenesis. This is why, according to his account, people of the yellow race are exceedingly ugly, lack intellectual interest, and are solely preoccupied with the satisfaction of their basic needs.²⁴¹

If one takes into consideration all the keywords concerning the Jew in the folk tales presented above (scabby dog, cheating and thieving, money, wealth, and “good” obtained without work, the birth and murder of Jesus, persecution and punishment, the Decalogue, and so forth), that is, all the ethical characteristics that have been noted and which define the profile of the Jew, one gets a cluster of well-known clichés, the old mental reflexes which make up the sketchy image of the “imaginary Jew.” The novelty in the lines above consists in the motivations offered for these stereotypes and, especially, in the relationship between the clichés about the Jews and the others—no less spurious and false—which focus on other nations.

Legends of this kind are extremely interesting because each story presents the likeness of the ethnic group which has generated it (*auto-images*), in comparison to (and rivaling) the images of the nations with whom it has bordered or cohabited (*hetero-images*). After centuries of cohabitation, the ethnic groups mix, cultures overlap and influence each other, vices are borrowed, and virtues are redistributed. In 1836, for instance, an anonymous

Romanian defended the following theory to St.-Marc of Girardin, a Frenchman traveling through Walachia and Moldavia:

Our mores are more or less the same as the mores or, better to say, the vices, of all peoples who have ruled us or have protected us. From the Russians we have borrowed their lechery, from the Greeks their lack of honesty in business, from the ruling Greek aristocracy (the Phanariots) a mixture of degradation and vanity, from the Turks their carelessness and indolence. The Poles have blessed us with divorce and [with] this host of Jews of the lower kind, which you have seen swarming in our streets: these are our vices.²⁴²

THE BLIND, DEAF, AND DUMB JEW

“Let anyone with ears to hear,” are the words with which Jesus concludes several of his parables (e.g., Mark 4:9 and 4:23). From a Christian point of view, the Jew undoubtedly ranks high among those who have no “ears to hear” the teachings of Christ. However, the fact that he does not discern Christian doctrine is considered a fault, not a deficiency. The Jew has a very fine ear, but refuses to hear; he simply closes his ears. In the fourteenth-century *Bréviaire de Paris*, the Jews sleep while the prophet Isaiah announces the coming of the Savior. In an eleventh-century miniature from a manuscript of Monte Cassino, the Jews are stopping their ears with their fingers while an apostle is preaching the Gospels.²⁴³

From the same Christian perspective, the Jews refuse to accept what for the Christians is the pure truth—the messianic nature of Jesus. It is exactly for this that Jesus himself reproaches them in an Essenian apocrypha entitled *The Gospel of Peace*: “You shut your eyes, not to see; you stop your ears, not to hear [God’s Law].”²⁴⁴ It seems that this image survived until modern times. In *Levy and Sarah*, a Polish novel about the Jews written in 1821 by Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, we read the following passage: “When he passes by a church and hears the sound of singing or of bells, the [Jewish] pupil must stop his ears lest these sounds pollute his soul.”²⁴⁵

In medieval symbolism this kind of creature—demonic, sinful, and deaf to evangelizing—was represented by the asp, a fabulous adder born—like the basilisk—from the blood oozing out of the severed head of the Gorgon, Medusa. Together with other mythical beings, the asp is to be found in allegoric medieval bestiaries—such as *Physiologus* and *Fiore di virtù*—which, beginning in the seventeenth century, were profusely translated into

Romanian and disseminated in monastic and clerical circles, also exerting an influence on Romanian folk traditions.²⁴⁶ In the mid-seventeenth century, in a parable included in *The Teachings of Neagoe Basarab for his Son Theodosie*, the asp is depicted as “a beast, which takes after a snake” and which, symbolizing “dark Satan,” is trying to corrupt the faithful man who “lends himself to prayer and talks to God.”²⁴⁷

In the bestiary written by Leonardo da Vinci, the asp is an extremely poisonous and foul-smelling beast, yet paradoxically one that apparently has “big ears and is helped by them more than by its eyesight.”²⁴⁸ Like the “imaginary Jew,” this imaginary beast can, but will not, hear the “word of God.” Since the asp has no fingers with which to plug its ears, it glues one of them to the ground and stops up the other with its tail (this is how it is pictured in a naïve representation in the Chichester Cathedral). “We should not stop the ken of our hearing,” wrote the priest Coresi in 1580 in his collection of sermons in Romanian (*The Homiliary*, vol. 26), “like the asp that stops the hearing of its ears, but we should listen to the word of God with understanding....”²⁴⁹

Still in the framework of that same symbolism, the asp appears in a Psalm in which God is summoned to judge and chastise the sinful and the wicked: “The wicked go astray from the womb; / they err from their birth, / speaking lies. / They have venom like the venom of a serpent, / Like the deaf asp that stops its ear, / so that it does not hear the voice of charmers / or of the cunning enchanter” (Ps. 58:3–6).

The “voice of the cunning enchanter” remained inoperative in this case; since the truth could not enter through the ears, it had to do so through the eyes. According to tradition, the asp was overcome by being shown the charm inscribed in gold letters on red scarves, both of them apotropaic colors.²⁵⁰

In order to present the Jew as an intractable being, insensitive to Christian learning, another disability is ascribed to him in addition to deafness: blindness. It is the blindness of lack of faith attributed to the Jews in the New Testament.

Just like the pagan idols, the Jews have “eyes yet do not see; / They have ears, yet do not hear” (Ps. 115:5–6). Evidently, the deficiencies are not sensorial ones, which may have belonged to the “real Jew,” but psycho-moral ones, those of the “imaginary Jew.” “Why do you not understand what I say?” Jesus asks the Judeans, and he answers himself: “It is because you

cannot bear to hear my message” (John 8:43). With reference to “psychological and moral blindness,” Varlaam, the metropolitan priest of Moldavia, named this syndrome “the blinding of the soul.” “He whose blindness comes from the eyes sees nothing to do evil,” he wrote in the *Book of Learning* (*Cazania*), “and he whose blindness comes from the mind and from the soul does all wickedness, not only in one guise, but in all guises.”²⁵¹

In these terms, the Jew is seen as wandering, deaf and dumb, throughout the world at large. This is a symbolism different from and parallel to that of the “wandering Jew.”²⁵² It is a symbolic drifting of the soul, as an old German aphorism which lays the finger on this metaphor, puts it: “*Verloren, wie'ne Juden-Seele*” (“Lost, like a Jewish soul”).²⁵³ Undoubtedly, from this perspective his last hope remains conversion. Regaining one’s eyesight, hearing, and voice are, in Old Testament rhetoric (Isa. 35:4–6), synonymous and synchronic with the redemption brought by the coming of the Messiah on Earth. The image was taken over and remodeled in Greek-Orthodox discourse, by Bishop Varlaam, among others, in his *Book of Learning* (1643): “Your God shall come and shall redeem you. Then the eyes of the blind shall open, the ears of the deaf shall hear, and openly shall speak the tongues of the dumb.”²⁵⁴

Moreover, it is not by chance that Jesus the thaumaturge prefers to heal the blind (and sometimes also the deaf and the dumb) (Matt. 9:30 and 20:34; Mark 7:35 and 8:23; Luke 18:43; John 9:7, etc.), who then become the first Judeo-Christians. The significance of the metaphor is evident. Passage from unbelief to belief, or conversion from “a belief” to “the true belief” imply the profound transformation of the religious status of a man, which is to be metaphorically assimilated with a blind man’s (re)gaining his eyesight. The reverse transformation is then to be associated with loss of sight: “Jesus said, ‘I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind’” (John 9:39). As with the majority of exegetes of the Gospels, for Bishop Varlaam all Christians are like the blind who have been healed: “The eyes of the blind were opened, and not only the eyes of those two, but of everybody,” or “Let us not be like this blind man ourselves.”²⁵⁵

In the popular romance *Varlaam and Ioasaf*, translated into Romanian in 1648, the monk Varlaam presents Christian learning as a “gem” which “gives light to those with a blind heart, opens the ears to the deaf, and to the dumb gives a voice,” while to those with “unclean” eyes “sight, such as they have it, is lost for good and all.”²⁵⁶

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a monk of the monastery of Cernica, a Jewish convert by the name of Nicolae Botezatu (i.e., “the Baptized”) and therefore one who “has regained his sight” and no longer strays, for “he has found his way,” wrote a “Word for the Confession of Our Lord Jesus Christ, against the *Jews that are Blinded and Lost*” [emphasis mine—A.O.].²⁵⁷ The latter are seen as blind and led by guides who are blind in their turn. They shall all fall into the pit of sin, as in the “Parable of the Blind”: “They are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person leads another, both will fall into a pit” (Matt. 15:14) and phrased somewhat differently in Luke 6:39. This is a parable that Jesus recounts about the Pharisee Jews who, on a different occasion, he calls the “blind teachers” (Matt. 23). This parable was also the origin of one of the proverbs “gathered by the right honorable Justice Iordache Golescu” in the early nineteenth century: “When a blind man leads a blind man, they both stumble.”²⁵⁸

The “Parable of the Blind” made a career for itself in Eastern/Greek Orthodox Christian iconography as well. Around 1730, Dionysus of Furna was teaching icon masters how to picture this image, resorting to the following description: “Bishops, scholars, and Pharisees are preaching and behind them are devils who tie scarves over their eyes, and over the Judeans’ eyes in front of them, listening to them; and other devils, having them all tied with a rope, drag them into Hell.”²⁵⁹ A mural in St Luke’s Church at Rila Monastery in Bulgaria, also an eighteenth-century work, depicts a similar image: a group of “Judeans” tied with ropes is being dragged by demons into Hell’s “river of fire.”²⁶⁰ A similar iconic motif is that painted in 1537 in the scene of the Last Judgment at Moldovița Monastery in northern Moldavia.

The image proposed by Dionysus of Furna is “ideologized” to the highest degree and is a long way from the “neutral” visual representation of the “Parable of the Blind” painted, for instance, by Pieter Brueghel the Elder a century and a half earlier, in 1568. The Christian icon does not give a faithful rendering of Christ’s parable, but comments upon and supplements it. The parable has now annexed two new meanings which, even if not in the letter of the Gospels, are, to some extent, in its spirit: a) Considered a demonic sin, the blindness of the Jews is caused by the devils;²⁶¹ b) The logical consequence of this kind of blindness is a fall, yet no longer into a mere pit but straight into the flames of Hell which, it is true, were anyway intended for the Jews, but only on Doomsday.²⁶²

In fact, in tri-dimensional sculptural representations in the Catholic sphere, Jewry is also personified as a woman blindfolded by the Devil (*Sinagoga*

cieca). Entitled *Altercatio Aecclesiae contra Synagoga*, this parable—initially a literary one, later taken over by the fine arts and street theaters—consists of a theological confrontation between two women who fight for precedence: *the triumphant and clear-sighted Church*, on the one hand, and *the defeated and sightless Synagogue*, on the other hand. With drooping head, fallen crown, a broken spear in her hand, with the Tables of the Law overturned, and accompanied by an impure animal (a pig, a goat, or an ass), the woman who personifies the Synagogue is depicted blindfolded both in three-dimensional representations on the portals of gothic churches of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Notre-Dame de Paris, Strasbourg, Rheims, Bourges, Bamberg, Trier), and in two-dimensional ones in stained glass (Chartres, Marburg, Varrenes-Jarcy, etc.) and in miniatures. These medieval visual representations were later to influence painters such as Rubens in his *The Triumph of Church* and *The Triumph of the New Religion*.²⁶³ As is the rule in Catholic Europe, the Devil is the one who blindfolds the Synagogue with a scarf, or covers her eyes with his hands from behind her back, or blinds her with an arrow drawn from his bow.²⁶⁴

Some researchers of imagology have correctly noticed that in the case of allegorical representations of the theological opposition between *Church* and *Synagogue* in Byzantine art, the latter is not portrayed with degrading symbolic elements, as is the case in the area under Catholic influence.²⁶⁵ However, at least one element—surely the most illustrative and powerful from a symbolic point of view—is also found in the area in which Eastern/Greek Orthodoxy holds sway: the eyes of the woman who personifies the Synagogue are blindfolded with a scarf. In this case, the cause of sightlessness is explicitly no longer the Devil.

Explicitly or not, it is the Devil who causes the symbolic blindness of the Jew. Consequently, the remedy can only come from God. It is God who lifts the veil from the eyes of the woman who portrays *Sinagoga cieca*, as in a miniature in a twelfth-century French manuscript.²⁶⁶ This is a mental image that would survive for centuries on end, becoming a commonplace both in folk legends and in iconic representations, in the collective imagination of the common man and that of the bourgeoisie. In 1689, in a letter recounting the failed attempt of the queen of France to convert the Jews of Avignon, the Marquise de Sévigné first gave vent to her “extraordinary hatred” towards the Jews and wondered at the stench they gave off (one that “annihilates all perfumes”), and then noted the following: “What I feel for them is pity and

horror and I pray to both God and the Church to remove the veil from their faces, which prevents them from seeing that Jesus Christ has come.”²⁶⁷

At this point, attention is drawn to a significant difference existing between the “blind Jews” and the “blinded ones,” those blinded by “God’s wrath,” as Martin Luther phrased it in 1543 in his famous antisemitic work, *About the Jews and Their Lies*. As already indicated, the “imaginary Jew” is blind and unable to see the intense light radiating from Jesus. In other cases, however—in Romanian popular carols, for instance—“Jewish dogs” are blinded, and the same happens to the Jews who search for the “Holy Son” so they could “cut him up”: “May Santa Claus grant / blindness to the Jews, / So they should not find the Son! / God’s will it was, / And the Jews were all blind, / And they did not find the Son.”²⁶⁸ This is what happens in Romanian folk carols in the case of the Jewish emissaries sent by Herod to see the divine babe, but also in the case of the “Jewish sons of bitches” against whom Jesus wages war: “Whosoever saw Him [Jesus] / Was blinded and fell sick.”²⁶⁹

Finally, in Romanian carols, on the occasion of Jesus’ crucifixion, the latter blinds and deafens the Jews, also tormenting their minds. One of the Jews (Joseph of Arimathea, according both to the legend and to Matt. 27:59), collects the blood of Jesus in a “cup of the vocation” (the Holy Grail of medieval legends), yet all the Jews who drink of it lose their minds. In this case, particularly, the blinding or deafening of the Jews is interrelated with the motif of the haemophagous Jew:²⁷⁰

He who drank the blood
Immediately lost his mind,
He who heard Jesus
Immediately was deafened,
He who saw him,
Was blinded, too.²⁷¹

This image is also found in old literature. For instance, in *The Book of Learning for Romanians* (Cazania) by Varlaam, the metropolitan bishop of Moldavia, published in Jassy in 1643, whose comment on the biblical episode of Jesus’ arrest introduces an element of novelty. Come to capture Jesus, the Jews [*jidovi*], “like mad dogs,” were blinded by him and “numbed” (i.e., “they were like the dead”): “And Our Lord Jesus Christ blinded their eyes with His godly power and they could not know him, but were walking about like blind men who cannot see.”²⁷²

No such episode is recorded in the Gospels, yet there is another, with a similar symbolic charge. In the scene of Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, Simon Peter the apostle severs the ear of a Judean, of those come to capture Jesus, with his sword. The man is not, as some commentators maintain, a Roman soldier, but the "high priest's slave" (John 18:10 and Mark 14:47), therefore a Judean with a Latinized name, Malchus. As the only violent gesture recorded by the Gospels in this extremely important scene (a gesture of which Jesus disapproves: "All who take the sword shall perish by the sword" [Matt. 26:52]), we may assume that this is a symbolic act of "deafening" the Judean aggressors, similar to the one of "blinding" them presented above. Moreover, this theory appears to be confirmed by the fact that Jesus, according to the known pattern, cures the pagan, who is then converted: "And He touched his ear and healed him" (Luke 22:51)²⁷³ The unbeliever is also struck dumb, as yet another divine sanction. It should also be borne in mind that Archangel Gabriel left Zechariah (the father of John the Baptist) without the gift of speech, because he doubted the words of the archangel: "You will be silent and unable to speak..., because you did not believe my words" (Luke 1:20). Zechariah regained his ability to speak only when he recognized the miracle performed in the birth of John.

There are several other circumstances in which the "imaginary Jew" was blinded, rendered dumb, or made deaf through divine retribution. Such a case is narrated in an apocryphal legend, "The Dormition of the Virgin Mary," which was widely circulated in the area of Romanian culture from the seventeenth century onwards through the copying and translation of several Slavonic manuscripts (of the Galeatovsky type) as well as of Greek ones (of the Amartolon Sotiria—"Redemption of the sinners"—type). The legend impregnated Christian iconography in the Romanian area,²⁷⁴ and the sphere of folk culture as well. One of the channels through which this was effected were the Missals, for on August 15, the Feast of the Assumption (known as St. Mary's Great Feast in the Orthodox Church), after the liturgy the priest also reads in church the apocryphal legend of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary.²⁷⁵

We shall return to these folk legends in Chapter Five, in the section devoted to hagiocide. For the moment, we shall only delve into one particular episode, which can be summarized as follows. As Jesus' apostles are carrying the Virgin Mary on the bier to her grave, several "pagan Jews" stop the procession and one of them tries to overturn the coffin. At this point St. Mary

(or the “Angel of the Lord,” or the “unseen Power of God”) blinds all the Jews. In this scenario, the loss of sight is the main divine sanction, but in some variants of the Romanian folk legend blindness is compounded by loss of speech: “[The Jews] who spoke lost their voice and the Jews who watched lost their eyesight.” In other variants, loss of sight is doubled by deafness: “the entire pagan flock was left without hearing and without the use of their eyes.” Terrified and stirred by these wonders, the “blinded Jews” asked to be baptized and were cured instantly: “the eyes of all [the Jews] were opened.” Evidently, according to the symbolic parallelism that exists between the quality of one’s eyesight and the measure of his belief, the Jews [*jidovi*] should have better sight after this religious revelation. And indeed, after their christening the Jews “could see even better than before.”²⁷⁶ This is a typical metaphor for initiation, which is also found in Romanian fairy tales. When the Fairies give the old woman back her eyes, her sight does not merely return to its previous condition but she begins to see much better, like a ten-year-old girl.”²⁷⁷

Such legends about the Dormition of Virgin Mary were so widespread in Romanian traditional culture that the portrait of St. Mary, complex as it was, received some additional touches. For instance, to her was attributed the singular quality of being able to heal eye diseases.²⁷⁸ See, for example, the incantations for the curing of cataract (Romanian: *albeață*, the “white cloud”) attested in Moldavia.²⁷⁹ In Transylvania, peasants used to believe that anyone wanting to soothe an eye ache and regain his eyesight had to pray to the Virgin Mary for nine days on end, repeating the following invocation nine times a day: “Holy Mother of God, / Cure me now / And, Mother, give me light / And full health.”²⁸⁰

At the same time, in some rural areas of Romania, when a man was believed to be the object of an evil spell about to leave him with “eyes unseeing,” “ears deaf,” and “mouth dumb,” the one who was magically invoked was invariably the Virgin Mary. Only with her help could the “dispelling incantation” which, chanted by the witch, could “un-blind the eyes,” “un-deafen the ears,” and “un-dumb the mouth” of the of the stricken person be efficacious.²⁸¹

It was also Virgin Mary whose help was invoked at the bathing that took place on the morning of Resurrection Day, in order to work a symbolic healing on girls:

The Mother of God,
From the gates of Heaven...

To me She came...
 My sight She gave.
 I can see now with my eyes,
 I can hear now with my ears,
 I can speak now with my tongue...²⁸²

And again St. Mary was invoked in incantations against the evil eye (*potca*), a disease caused by the evil look of “people with markings,” including the red-haired and freckled Jew.²⁸³

God help me, Holy Mary,
 With the big *potca*, with the small *potca*,
 With the *potca* from the look,
 With the *potca* from the wonder,
 With the *potca* from white eyes,
 With the *potca* from black eyes,
 Come out of the brains,
 Of the bulge of the eyes.²⁸⁴

Sometimes, during incantations and spells against the evil eye or against eye diseases, “saints’ eyes” were employed, the ones represented in church frescoes. One of the strongest ingredients used by the sorcerer, the one that gave “godly powers” to the magic act, was the paint and mortar dust scraped off the eyes of saints or devils painted on the walls of churches (less often, paint was also scraped from the eyes of figures painted on icons, triptychs, or crucifixes). This magical ingredient was used by the enchanter “to blind the enemies,” for “blind” (in fact, “hoodwinked”) men, “so that they would not see the deeds of their unfaithful wives.” In order that they hear nothing, too, “one adds snippets from the bell.” In Romania, as well as in other Balkan countries, to return the sight of those whose eyesight was impaired, “a bit of dust” had to be taken “from the eyes of the saints, from the light of their eyes, and it was sprinkled over their [i.e., the inflicted] eyes.”²⁸⁵

It is an attested fact that in medieval Europe the eyes of Jews portrayed in various paintings were scratched out. Martin Luther himself indirectly offered this novel piece of information. In a work published in 1520, when he had not yet entered his virulent antisemitic period and was still hoping for the massive conversion of the Jews to Christianity, the German reformer maintained that those who persecuted the Jews were like those foolish children who scratched out the eyes of Jews in paintings.²⁸⁶ Luther believed that this custom was practiced to help Jesus in a symbolical way; however, the hypothesis is not to be dismissed that the custom had originally been a

magical practice which ended up, through debasement, in the elusive area of “child’s play.”

All Romanian folk legends referring to the Dormition of Virgin Mary,²⁸⁷ as well as hagiographic texts from the seventeenth century onwards on that same theme,²⁸⁸ have a happy ending: the “blinded Jews” are converted to Christianity and regain their sight. The same happens in the numerous legends in manuscripts which dwell upon the “redemption of the sinners” and “the preternatural wonders of the Holy Lady Mother of God...translated by Agapie, for the common use of Christendom.” In all such legends in manuscripts, the aforementioned scenario appears in the “first wonder,” as, for example, in an 1786 manuscript: “For *the Jews who were blinded*...and who, after believing in Christ and in his all-holy Mother, were cured” [emphasis added—A. O.].²⁸⁹

The principles that govern this type of paradoxical mental scheme of things are the following: the Jew is naturally blind; therefore he wanders in the dark. For him to no longer be blind (and stop wandering in darkness), he must cease being a Jew. The only one way to break this vicious cycle is through baptism. This *forma mentis* gave birth to a certain metaphorical language in which Judaism was associated with blindness, darkness, and straying, and Christianity with clear-sightedness, light, and the right path. The dichotomy of *light/darkness*—a central concept adopted from Iranian dualist religions and perpetuated by Gnosticism—is always present even in Jesus’ discourse: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12 and 12:46). The same metaphor of light that succeeds darkness (*post tenebras lux*) is to be found in the worlds of St. Paul: “The night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Rom. 13:12).

In the mid-seventeenth century, in the chapter of his book entitled “For the Good Deeds, Which Are Called Light, and for the Bad Deeds, Which Are Called Darkness,” Varlaam advised the sinners and pagans to choose between the two kingdoms: “Flee and leave the empire of darkness and hurry to the light of the kingdom of Christ.”²⁹⁰ At the same time, in an archaic formula of anathematizing, “the ones barren of faith” are cursed: “May their souls never see the light!”²⁹¹ In Romanian folk mentality as well, the binome of *light/darkness* is just a hypostasis of the great binome of *God/Devil*: “Light is from God. Darkness is from the Devil.”²⁹²

The mental cliché was soon transformed into a literary one, to be found even in official (secular or ecclesiastic) documents drawn up from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. In 1653, for example, in Alba Iulia, when the Diet of Transylvania reinforced measures against the “Judaizers” it termed Judaism “blind erring.”²⁹³ In 1646, in Tîrgoviste, Matei Basarab, the sovereign of Walachia, granted a land-ownership charter to Tănase, who used to be “of the Jewish law” and had been converted to Christian Orthodoxy by the king himself: “I have taken pity on him and...I have baptized him, and I took him from darkness into the light of Christian law, whose baptism enlightens all Christendom.”²⁹⁴ Reference has already been made to a text in manuscript,²⁹⁵ drafted “against the blind and straying Jews” by a certain Nicolae, a baptized Jew from the monastery of Cernica: “I was born anew,” he confesses in his preface, “when I was thirty eight.”

The same metaphorical style can also be found also in documents of conversion, divorce, or mixed marriages addressed to or released by the Metropolitan See of Moldavia in the first decades of the nineteenth century: the Jew [*Jidovul*] is “lost in the shadow of the Jewish law,” which is a “lost law” and a “black coat of the ignorance of God,” or “that dark coat of disbelief in Orthodoxy,” while the “baptized among the Jews” is viewed as “lighted with Godly Baptism among the Jewish nation.”²⁹⁶ This is the standard rhetoric, taken over by Jews as well.²⁹⁷ Their kinfolk who converted to Christianity “are blinded Jews” who “stray in the dark,” in the words of a Jewish poet in fourteenth-century Spain.²⁹⁸

At this stage, parenthetic mention should be made of a different peasant belief: that there was another prescription for the Jews’ blindness, besides baptismal water. This was not the remedy recorded in the Gospels: “He spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes” (John 9:6; cf. Mark 8:23). According to folk tradition, the Jews used for such purposes the blood collected from the body of the ritually murdered child. In 1726, for example, Jews of the borough of Onițani (Orhei, Bessarabia) were accused of having murdered a Christian Orthodox child, and the blood they collected was sent to the “great *khakham* [wise man] of Cracow,” *The Chronicle of the Ghica* recounts, “so that he might rub with this blood the eyelids of the new-born of their kin.”²⁹⁹ A reflection of this kind of belief became manifest in Russia in 1913, when Jews were arraigned for killing Christians to cure certain eye diseases (conjunctivitis) with their blood.³⁰⁰ It may appear incredible, yet no less than seventy-two (accounting for 40 percent!) of the one hundred and eighty-four informants

from the south and southeast of Poland interviewed between 1975 and 1984 (virtually in our own times!), did not fail to mention the belief that Jews are born blind and that they gain their sight only if their eyes are anointed with the blood of a Christian child.³⁰¹ Apart from explicit reference to the extremely deep-rooted and widespread myth of Jewish *ritual infanticide*,³⁰² this belief sends us to other extremely ancient legends, in which *baptismal water* and *children's blood* compete for best healing powers.³⁰³

All this mythology concerning the absence of sight and hearing bears the marks of biblical influence. However, it comes not so much from the Old Testament episode of the veil donned by Moses across his face when he encounters Jehovah ("He said: 'You cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live'"; cf. Exod. 33:20 and 34:33–35). In this case, the issue is rather that of a "boundary" between the sacred and the profane, which delimits but also protects the mortal from the blinding advent of God in his real image. The prophet Isaiah thinks of himself as "a lost man," for "my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (Isa. 6:5). No more could Semele survive the apparition of incandescent Zeus in his true divine splendor ("Semele's mortal body could not bear the blaze from the skies and it was consumed"; cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, III).

To the extent to which it is authentic, the biblical influence mentioned probably comes from the New Testament episode of the blinding of Saul/Paul. A zealous anti-Christian, on his way to Damascus, the future Apostle experienced how "suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him." "Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing.... for three days he was without sight...." His sight was regained only when, as Paul, he was "filled with the Holy Spirit." "And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized...." (Acts 9:1–18). Henceforward his mission was to travel the world over, convincing people, including the Jews, to "look unto Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2). In this case the loss and regain of the neophyte's sight (as his "death" and "resurrection," his passing "from darkness into light") are sure to signify a profound initiation in symbolic terms. Change of name and christening definitively secures this modification of ontological and theological status.

Once become an apostle (the only one of the first apostles who did not have the good fortune of meeting the live Jesus), Paul himself can inflict blindness on infidels, although not through his own powers but with those of God. He did so during his first apostolic mission in Cyprus, where he

defeated Elymas, a “Jewish magician.” “And now listen—the hand of the Lord is against you,” says Paul, “and you will be blind for a while, unable to see the sun. Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he went about groping for someone to lead him by the hand” (Acts 13:11). Being “filled with the Holy Spirit,” Paul can now induce upon others the experience of initiation that he himself had undergone “on the way to Damascus.”

One symptom of the endurance of the cliché-image of the “blind Jew” is the fact that it has survived for centuries on end, being taken over in Romania even by intellectuals, politicians, and publishers of the interwar period. Its survival is so much the more meaningful because this stereotype has been translated without essential changes, only some adaptations, from the area of traditional culture into a sphere having different cultural coordinates—that of scholarship and of political ideology.

In 1934, in his scandalous preface to Mihail Sebastian’s novel *For Two Thousand Years*, a preface written for “a certain extreme right-wing public,” as Mircea Eliade remembers,³⁰⁴ Nae Ionescu concludes not only that *the Jew suffers* (“*Iehuda patet*”), but also that *he must suffer*. The Jew cannot save himself, because he *was blind, did not keep watch, and did not see* the Messiah in Jesus: “The Messiah has come, Joseph Hechter,” writes Ionescu at the end of his preface, “and you did not know him.”

This is all that was asked of you in exchange for all the goods that God has had for you: to keep watch. And you did not keep watch. Or you did not see, because pride laid scales over your eyes.... Joseph Hechter, do you not feel that coldness and darkness envelop you?³⁰⁵

Rhetorically conversing with an “imaginary Jew” (Joseph Hechter, the protagonist of the novel and the alter-ego of the novelist), Ionescu resorted to a good deal of the classical “stage props” for the stereotype of the “sightless Jew”: he *does not keep watch* (he sleeps instead, while the prophet announces the coming of the Savior), *does not see* (the Messiah in Jesus), *has scales on his eyes* (an allusion to the ecstatic experience of the Apostle Saul/Paul), and *darkness envelops him* (while waiting for the coming of “the Messiah, on the white horse”).

In an article entitled “Judaism and Antisemitism,” published in *Vremea* [*The Times*] in 1934, Mircea Eliade adopts a polemical attitude against his mentor, Nae Ionescu, criticizing him for making, in the preface to his novel, “an unjustified translation from the discourse of the philosophy of history to that of Christian theology,” the latter being “trans-historical.” Eliade also rose up against the “certitude of the Jews’ damnation” and against Ionescu’s

opinion that the Jews have irretrievably obstructed their access to Redemption, (*Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* ["There is no salvation outside the Church"], in Origen's formulation).³⁰⁶ To make such a judgment, wrote Eliade in 1934, means to "tamper with the freedom of God," who "can redeem in any manner and whomsoever [He so pleases]...."³⁰⁷ To make such a judgment, I add, is to contradict St. Paul himself, for whom, even if "Israel has turned to stone" (or "Israel has been blinded," in other translations),³⁰⁸ in the end "will Israel all be saved" (Rom. 11:26). Actually, even Nichifor Crainic believed in 1938 that "the Church is open to all," and that "to limit the Jews from the practice of baptism," considering that "the Aryan doctrine alone is fitted to Christianity," is a beautiful, yet stupid remark made by H. S. Chamberlain.³⁰⁹

Mircea Eliade's position became openly radical in 1937, an election year. In an aggressively xenophobic article entitled "The Blind Pilots," Eliade once again tackled the symbolism of *blind versus sighted*, but changed the context and toppled the terms of the equation. This time, the Jews of Romania "are people...with a *clear vision*," because "they watch over their economic and politic pre-eminence." Instead, in the "*dark epoch*" that followed 1918, "our state's boat is steered by *blind pilots*." "The ruling class" of Romania, wrote Eliade, "*can no longer see*," and the politicians who comprise it were "disabled: they *no longer see, no longer hear, no longer feel*," for they had permitted the invasion of Romania by "allogenic elements" and had led, "with Satanic voluptuousness, to the slow corrosion of the modern Romanian state."³¹⁰ Christ's parable of the blind leading the blind is present here, if only in subtext: "the blind pilots" (the governors) are leading other blind men (the governed) towards the precipice.

In January 1937, Romanian philosopher Constantin Noica did battle with the "internal parasite" of the Romanian character and the external parasite" (i.e., the Jew). "Who is so blind as to confuse them?" He deplored not so much the fact that "our friends the Jews...will bear the brunt of the legionary [i.e., extreme right-wing] movement," as that "they are forbidden to see...everything that is a vehicle for truth in legionarism." In other words, the Jew is presumably blind not only to Christian truth, but also to the legionary truth. As with Nae Ionescu in 1934, Constantin Noica believed in 1938 that the Jews were doomed to suffer; however, this was not because they had not seen the Messiah, but because they could do nothing to contribute to the messianic hope for "the Romanian day of tomorrow," a hope furthered by another "Messiah, on a white horse," Corneliu Zelea Codreanu,³¹¹ who,

together with his comrades (his “apostles”), prays to receive “the power to bear the sins of our nation upon their shoulders.”³¹²

Finally, for antisemites, the Jew is deaf not only “to the words of Jesus” but also “to the call of blood” of the people among whom he lives. In September 1991, for instance, ultra-nationalist Corneliu Vadim Tudor wrote of then Prime Minister Petre Roman that, the latter being a Jew, he is deaf to the call of the people, a call that only ethnic Romanians can hear.³¹³

NOTES

1. Panait Istrati, *Neranțula și alte povestiri* (Neranțula and other stories), ed. and transl. with a foreword by Alexandru Talex (Bucharest: Minerva, 1984), 684.

2. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română: Studiu de psihologie populară* (The Jews in Romanian folk literature: A study of folk psychology) (Bucharest, 1892), 44.

3. For Jewish anecdotes on this subject see Nathan Ausubel, ed. *A Treasury of Jewish Folklore: The Stories, Traditions, Legends, Humor, Wisdom and Folk Songs of the Jewish People* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1964), 7.

4. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura lor populară: Studiu etnico-psihologic* (The Jews in their own folk literature: A psycho-ethnic study) (Bucharest: Universala, 1898).

5. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 44.

6. Veronika Görög-Karady, “Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore: The Jew in Hungarian Oral Literature,” in *Folklore Processed: In Honour of Lauri Honko*, ed. Reimund Kvidleland, *Studia Fennica, Folkloristica*, vol. 1 (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 1992), 120.

7. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 67.

8. Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “The Stereotype of the Jew in Polish Folklore,” in *Studies in Aggadah and Jewish Folklore*, eds. Issachar Ben-Ami and Joseph Dan (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1983), 91.

9. Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “The Motif of the Jew and the Book in the Polish and Jewish Folk Milieu,” in *Studies on Polish Jewry: Paul Glikson Memorial Volume*, eds. Ezra Mendelsohn and Chone Shmeruk (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1987), xlv.

10. Alina Cała, *The Image of the Jew in Polish Folk Culture* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995), 180.

11. Mihai Eminescu, *Opere* vol. 7: *Proza literară* (Literary prose) (Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1977), 101.

12. Yirmiyahu Yovel, *Hegel, Nietzsche și evreii: O enigmă întunecată* (Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Jews) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2000), 300–302.

13. S. Schafferman, “Evrei în viața și opera lui Panait Istrati” (Jews in the life and work of Panait Istrati) *Shevet Romania*, no. 2 (Oct. 1977): 43.

14. Emil Cioran, *Schimbarea la față a României* (The transfiguration of Romania) (Bucharest: Vremea, 1936), 131.

15. Emil Cioran, *Ispita de a exista* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), 82, 69 respectively. First published as *La tentation d'exister* (Paris: Gallimard, 1956).

16. Constantin Țoiu, “Les Juifs bien et les Juifs ordinaires,” *România literară* (Bucharest) no. 20 (1998).

17. Ion Rotaru, “Regret din tot sufletul nenorocita întâmplare” (I earnestly regret the unfortunate event), in *Dialoguri polemice* (Polemic dialogues), no. 1 (19 Feb. 2001), supplement to the online newsletter *Bună dimineața, Israel!* (Good morning, Israel!), edited in Haifa by Uly Friedberg-Valureanu, <http://www.alpas.net/uli/>

18. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 44.

19. Ion Călugăru, *Copilăria unui netrebnic* (A good-for-nothing's boyhood) (Bucharest: Editura pentru literatură, 1962). First published, Bucharest: Ciornei National, 1936.

20. The word *belfer* (“teacher, educator”) entered Romanian from the Yiddish (German: *Behelfer*).

21. Fragment of an article published by I. Polescu, *Reforma*, Apr. 1885; picked up and republished by the Jewish journal *Fraternitatea* (5 Apr. 1885): 102.

22. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 44.

23. One can discern a similar idea in the appeal (signed by B. J. Popper) to the Jewish community of Bucharest, entreating them to support the Revolution of 1848: “[Romanians,] do not doubt a nation...whose character was strengthened through the state of humiliation to which they bowed for so many centuries”; see Ladislau Gyémánt and Lya Benjamin, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews in Romania), vol. 3, part 2, (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 506.

24. Moses Schwarzfeld, “Literatura populară israelită ca element etno-psihologic” (Israelite folk literature as a psycho-ethnic element), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 13 (1889); republished in *De la Cilibi Moise la Paul Celan: Antologie din operele scriitorilor evrei de limba română* (From Cilibi Moses to Paul Celan: An anthology of Jewish-Romanian writers), ed. Țicu Goldstein (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 79–87.

25. Mihai Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască* (The Jewish problem), ed. D. Vatamaniuc (Bucharest: Vestala, 1998), 184.

26. George L. Mosse, *Germans and Jews* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1970), 71.
27. Yovel, *Hegel, Nietzsche și evreii*, 296.
28. Ileana Vulpescu, *Arta conversației* (The art of conversation) (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1980), 279.
29. Anton Pann, *Povestea vorbei* (The story of the word) (Bucharest, 1847).
30. Gail Kligman, *The Wedding of the Dead: Ritual, Poetics, and Popular Culture in Transylvania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 365, n. 31.
31. Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 161.
32. Alecu Russo, "Iassy et ses habitants en 1840," in idem, *Opere complete* (Bucharest: Cugetarea, 1942), 109, 131.
33. Vasile Alecsandri, *Discurs ținut în ședința Senatului la 10 oct. 1879, cu ocasiunea revizuirii art. 7 al Constituțiunei* (A discourse held in the Senate session of 10 October 1879, upon the revision of art. 7 of the Constitution) (Bucharest: Socec, 1879), 4–5.
34. Wilhelm Filderman, *Articole, discursuri, memorii (1921–1948)* (Articles, speeches, memoirs [1921–1948]), vol. 1, eds. Teodor Wexler and Michaela Popov (Bucharest: Dr. W. Filderman Foundation, 2000), 94.
35. I. Alexandru Brătescu Voinești, "Huligansim" (Hooliganism) (Bucharest 1938); cf. *Cuvinte scumpe: Taclale, povestiri și legende românești* (Dear words: Romanian prattle, lore, and legends), collected by Dumitru Furtună, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Romanian Academy and Socec, 1914), 135–47; A. C. Cuza, *Naționalitatea în artă* (Nationality in art) (Bucharest, 1908); cf. Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991), 167.
36. Ioan Al. Brătescu-Voinești, *Intuneric și lumină* (Light and darkness) (1912; Bucharest: "Cartea Românească," 1943), 137.
37. Cioran, *Schimbarea la față a României*, 130–44; see also Marta Petreu, *Un trecut deocheat sau "Schimbarea la față României"* (A past of perdition or "The transfiguration of Romania") (Cluj: Apostrof, 1999), 222.
38. Marcel Aderca, *F. Aderca și problema evreiască* (F. Aderca and the Jewish problem) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 119.
39. Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, *Christian Beliefs and Antisemitism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 120.
40. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology*, 109–10.
41. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 67.

42. Grigore G. Tocilescu and Christea N. Tapu, *Materialuri folcloristice* (Folkloristic materials), critical edition by Iordan Datcu, vol. 3 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 435.

43. Moses Schwarzfeld, "Excursiuni critice asupra istoriei evreilor în România" (Critical enquiries on the history of the Jews in Romania), *Analele Societății Istorice "Iuliu Barasch"* 2 (1888): 113.

44. Russo, "Iassy et ses habitants," 109.

45. Florea Ioncioaia, "Veneticul, păgînul și apostatul: Reprezentarea străinului în Principatele române (secolele XVIII–XIX)" (The stranger, the pagan and the apostate: Representation of the stranger in the Romanian Principalities), in *Identitate/Alteritate în spațiul cultural românesc* (Identity/Alterity in the Romanian cultural space), ed. Al. Zub (Jassy: Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza, 1996), 175.

46. Jean Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României: Problema evreiască (1933–1944)* (Contributions to Romanian history), vol. 2, transl. from the Hebrew by Carol Bines (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 240.

47. For all of these, see Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 66–67.

48. Mihail Sebastian, *De două mii de ani...* (For two thousand years...), with a preface by Nae Ionescu; *Cum am devenit huligan* (How I became a hooligan), (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1990), 29.

49. Nicolae Steinhardt, *Jurnalul fericirii* (The diary of happiness) (Cluj: Dacia, 1991), 14, 25.

50. Aderca, *F. Aderca și problema evreiască*, 151.

51. Liviu Rebreanu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 3, ed. N. Gheran and N. Liu (Bucharest: Editura pentru Literatură, 1968), 220.

52. Ronetti Roman, *Manase și alte scrieri* (Manasse, and other writings), ed. with a foreword by Constantin Măciucă (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 71.

53. Cioran, *Ispita de a exista*, 73–75.

54. Yovel, *Hegel, Nietzsche și evreii*, 296–302.

55. George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române, de la origini pînă în prezent* (The history of Romanian literature, from its origins to the present), 2d ed. (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 851.

56. *Ibid.*, 496.

57. Rebreanu, *Opere*, 3:172–74.

58. Alina Cała, *The Image of the Jew in Polish Folk Culture* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995), 179.

59. Dimitrie Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina: Studiu istoric, cultural, etnografic și folcloric* (The Jews from Bukovina: a historical, cultural, ethnographic, and folkloric study) (Cernăuți, 1899), 14, 31.

60. Sal. Segall, *Din folclorul poporului evreu* (From the folklore of the Jewish People), ed. with introductory study by Al. Dobre (Bucharest: Minerva, 2000), 11.

61. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 370.

62. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 3, ed. Cornel Simionescu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1986), 148.

63. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 77.

64. Vasile Alecsandri, *Balta Albă*, 1847; cf. idem, *Proza* (Prose), ed. Georgeta Rădulescu-Dulgheru (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1983), 207.

65. Guy Gauthier, *Missy, Regina României* (Missy, Queen of Romania), transl. from the French by Andreea Popescu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2000), 175.

66. Russo, "Iassy et ses habitants," 127.

67. Petru Caraman, *Descolindatul, în orientul și sud-estul Europei: Studiu de folclor comparat* (Negative caroling in eastern and southeastern Europe: A study of comparative folklore), ed. Ion H. Ciubotaru (Iași: "A. I. Cuza" University Press, 1997), 420.

68. Vasile Alecsandri, *Opere* (Works), vol. 5 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1977), 51.

69. George Topîrceanu, *Balade vesele și triste* (Ballads happy and sad), ed. Ilie Dan (Bucharest: Albatros, 1986, 64.

70. Moses Schwarzfeld, "Anecdote populare românești cu privire la evrei" (Romanian folk anecdotes about the Jews), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 12 (1889–1890): 133.

71. Ibid., 140–42.

72. Caraman, *Descolindatul*, 162–63.

73. Ibid., 49.

74. See, for instance, Moș Nichifor Coțcariul (Old Nichifor the Knave), a character in Ion Creangă's homonymous short story, who uses this trick to frighten Malca, a Jewish woman; Ion Creangă, "Moș Nichifor Coțcariul," in idem, *Povești, Amintiri, Povestiri* (Stories and memories) (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1980), 237.

75. Alecsandri, *Opere*, 5:74.

76. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 158.

77. Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele poporului român, adunate și așezate în ordine mitologică* (The customs and beliefs of the Romanian people, in mythological order), vol. 1 (Iași: Polirom, 1998), 25. First edition: Chernovtsy 1903.

78. Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), 38–49; Bryan Cheyette, ed., *Between "Race" and Culture: Representation of "the*

Jew” in *English and American Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 86.

79. Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina*, 7.

80. “Istoria unui galbîn” (The story of a gold coin; 1867), cf. Alecsandri, *Proza*, 21.

81. “Surugiul” (The coach driver); cf. Vasile Alecsandri, *Opere*, 5:74.

82. Simeon Florea Marian, “Satire bucovinene contra evreilor” (Satires against the Jews in Bukovina), *Columna lui Traian* 2 (1871): 39.

83. Alecsandri, *Opere*, 5:54.

84. G. Dem. Teodorescu, *Poezii populare române* (Romanian folk poetry) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 141ff.

85. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 1, ed. Victor Eskenasy (Bucharest, 1986), 43, 124; vol. 2, part 1, ed. Mihai Spielmann (Bucharest, 1988); vol. 2, part 2, ed. Lya Benjamin, M. Spielmann, and S. Stanciu (Bucharest, 1990).

86. Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei* (Description of Moldavia) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 210.

87. Pompiliu Eliade, *Influența franceză asupra spiritului public în România: Originile. Studiu asupra stării societății românești în vremea domniilor fanariote* (Bucharest: Univers, 1982), 36. First published as *De l’influence française sur l’esprit public en Roumanie* (Paris, 1898).

88. This mentality survived in the rural area until the late twentieth century: “Oh, well, [it does not matter that they are killed,] they’re just Jews.” See Shmuel Almog, *Nationalism and Antisemitism in Modern Europe 1815–1945* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1990), 124. Among others, Romanian writer Ion Pas depicted this deprecatory bias in the short story “Binder the Gravedigger,” published in 1927. “He is a Jew and it’s no sin [if he is killed],” says Old Radu, a gravedigger in a northern Moldavian borough. Evidently, “Old Radu was an antisemite,” the author of the story said, since he “assured people of the fact that the Jews feed themselves with Christian blood and that they lie in the grave face down [like the ghosts].” See D. Hîncu, ed., *Mărturii: “Chestiunea evreiască”* (Testimonies: “The Jewish problem”) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 150.

89. Iuliu Barasch, “Evreii în Cracovia, Galiția, Bucovina, Moldova și Valachia: Impresii de călătorie din anii 1841–1842” (The Jews of Cracow, Galicia, Bukovina, Moldavia, and Walachia: Impressions of a Journey in the Years 1841–1842), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 16 (1894): 45–181. See also the concluding section of ch. 5, below: “Ritual Xenocide?”

90. Istrati, *Neranțula și alte povestiri*, 584.

91. Cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 38; Schwarzfeld, “Anecdote populare românești cu privire la evrei,” 139.

92. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 179; Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “Stereotype of the Jew”; Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 230.

93. Maria Holban et al., eds., *Călători străini despre Țările Române* (Foreign travelers on the Romanian principalities), vol. 5 (Bucharest: Scientific, 1973), 232; see also Daniel Barbu, ed., *Firea românilor* (The nature of the Romanians), (Bucharest: Nemira, 2000), 15–31.

94. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 37.

95. Caraman, *Descolindatul*, 50.

96. *Ibid.*, 163.

97. *Ibid.*, 50.

98. *Ibid.*; Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile la români: Studiu etnografic* (Traditional holidays of the Romanians: ethnographic study), ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Saeculum I.O., 1997), 384.

99. Almog, *Nationalism and Antisemitism in Modern Europe*, pl. 3.

100. Eli Barnavi and Miriam Eliav-Feldon, eds., *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992), 159.

101. Caraman, *Descolindatul*, 46–50; Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, *Ethnographic Topics Relating to Jews in Polish Studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1989), 48, 56.

102. Ovidiu Birlea, “Folclorul în Țiganiada lui Ion Budai-Deleanu” (Folklore in Ion Budai Deleanu’s Gypsyad), in *Studii de folclor și literatură* (Studies of folklore and literature), ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Literature Publishing, 1967), 497–567.

103. Quoted in James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 95–96.

104. Quoted in *ibid.*, 35.

105. Josef Kaufman, *Cronica comunităților israelite din județul Neamț* (The chronicle of the Israelite communities of the Neamț County), vols. 1–2 (Piatra Neamț 1928–1929); Pincu Pascal, “Toponime și legende din județul Neamț” (Toponyms and legends from the Neamț County), *Anuarul grupului școlar 4* (2000): 172–180.

106. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 2, 414; Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, *Istoria evreilor din Transilvania (1623–1944)* (The history of the Jews of Transylvania [1623–1944]) (Bucharest: Encyclopaedic Pub. House, 1994), 12.

107. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 1, xxii.

108. Nicolae Iorga, “Istoria evreilor în Terile noastre” (History of the Jews of our countries), *Analele Academiei Române: Memoriile Secției Istorice* 36 (1913).

109. Silviu Sanie, *Culte orientale în Dacia romana* (Oriental cults in Roman Dacia) (Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopaedic Pub. House, 1981), 8.

110. Nicolae Iorga, *Problema evreiască la Cameră (o interpelare), cu o introducere de A.C. Cuza și Note despre vechimea evreilor în țară* (The Jewish question in the Chamber [an appeal], with an introduction by A. C. Cuza and notes on the ancient residence of Jews in Romania) (Vălenii-de-Munte: Typ. "Neamul românesc," 1910), 28.

111. Emile Desjardins, *Les Juifs de Moldavie* (Paris: Dentu, 1867), quoted in Iorga, *Problema evreiască la Cameră*, 48.

112. Carol Iancu, *Emanciparea evreilor din România (1913–1919)* (The emancipation of the Jews of Romania [1913–1919]), transl. by Ticu Goldstein (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 120.

113. Zaharia Stancu, "Între Ion și Ițic" (Between Ion and Ytzik), *Lumea Românească*, 20 Jan. 1938.

114. Lya Benjamin, ed., *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944*, vol. 1: *Legislația antievreiască* (The Jews of Romania between 1940–1944, vol. 1: Anti-Jewish legislation) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1993), 47, 95.

115. Filderman, *Articole, discursuri, memorii*, 2:229.

116. Lya Benjamin, "Imaginea evreului în textele mareșalului Antonescu" (The image of the Jew in the texts written by Marshall Antonescu), *Realitatea evreiască*, no. 166–67 (2002): 4.

117. Lya Benjamin, ed., *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944* (The Jews in Romania in 1940–1944), vol. 2: *Problema evreiască în stenogramele Consiliului de Miniștri* (The Jewish problem in the minutes of the cabinet sessions) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 290.

118. Cf. *Monitorul Oficial* (The official monitor), no. 255 (1879).

119. Rebreanu, *Opere*, 3:175.

120. I. Kara, *Obștea evreiască din Podu Iloaiei: File din istoria unui "ștetl" moldovenesc* (The Jewish community of Podu Iloaiei: Pages in the history of a Moldavian "shtetl") (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1990), 19. Some anecdotes, typically Jewish ones, also poked fun at the "heroism" of the Jews. The grave of the unknown hero in a Moldavian *shtetl* bears the inscription: "Itzic Goldenberg—tinker." A visitor asks the guardian of the cemetery what is the explanation for the fact that a name is nevertheless written on the grave of the unknown hero. "Itzic Goldenberg was known as a tinker," answers the guardian, "as a hero he was unknown." An anecdote from Moldavia makes special reference to the participation of Jews in the Russian-Romanian-Turkish war in 1877–1878. "A woman says goodbye to her son who has been mobilized into the army and recommends that he not overwork

himself: ‘You kill a Turk and then you rest.’ ‘And what if the Turk shoots me?’ asks the son. ‘Oh dear me! How will the Turk have anything against my child?!’ the mother bewails.” Ibid., 19.

121. Istrati, *Neranțula și alte povestiri*, 677–79.

122. Dumitru Hîncu and Lya Benjamin, eds., *Evreii din România în războiul de reîntregire a Patriei (1916–1919)* (Romanian Jews in the War for National Reintegration [1916–1919]) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 48.

123. Ibid., 29.

124. Wilhelm Filderman, *Adevărul asupra problemei evreiești din România* (The truth about the Jewish problem in Romania) (Bucharest: “Triumful” Press, 1925), 216; Hincu and Benjamin, *Evreii din România în războiul de reîntregire a Patriei*, 20.

125. Vulpescu, *Arta conversației*, 278.

126. Ion Șerbănescu et al., eds., *Parlamentari evrei în forul legislativ al României: Documente* (Jewish parliamentarians in the legislative body of Romania: Documents) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 105.

127. Already in 1821, when the Turks defeated the Greek Etheria movement, the Greeks and Romanians spread the legend according to which the Jews had played the role of spies and decoys in the service of the Turks. Here is a fragment from an anonymous poem of the time (collected by Vasile Alecsandri and taken over by B. P. Hasdeu in 1868) which describes the Turks’ entrance into Jassy: “They wrecked good merchant’s cellars [i.e., shops] / Advised by Jews, / Their wares they plundered, / To the Jews they sold them! / Which cellar still stood, / The Jews pointed out; / If Moldavian it was, / They would say that it was Greek, / And at once the Turks, in rage / Despoiled it and let it burn, / Letting Christian riches / Into Jewish hands.” Cf. B. P. Hasdeu, *Istoria toleranței religioase în România* (The history of religious tolerance in Romania) (1868; Bucharest: Saeculum, 1992), 71.

128. Horia Carp, *Din vremuri de urgie* (From times of agony) (Bucharest: Jewish Writers Publishing House, 1924), 7.

129. Aderca, *F. Aderca și problema evreiască*, 137.

130. Iancu, *Emanciparea evreilor din România* (n. 112 above), 129ff.; Arnold Schwefelberg, *Amintirile unui intelectual evreu din România* (Memories of a Jewish intellectual from Romania), edited with a preface and notes by Leon Volovici (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 68ff.

131. Moses Gaster, *Memorii (fragmente). Corespondență* (Memoirs [fragments]. Correspondence), ed. Victor Eskenasy (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 17.

132. Liviu Rebreanu, *Pădurea spînzuraților* (Forest of the hung), ed. Niculae Gheran (Bucharest: Minerva, 1978), 65.

133. Rebreanu, *Opere*, vol. 3; Carp, *Din vremuri de urgie*; Alexandru Sahia, *Nuvele* (Short stories) (Bucharest: Editura de Stat, 1948), 71. For commentaries see Iancu, *Emanciparea evreilor din România*, 139–47.
134. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române*, 176, 790–91, 851 respectively.
135. Rebreanu, *Pădurea spînzuraților*, 41–46.
136. Iancu, *Emanciparea evreilor din România*, 113.
137. I. Peltz, *Calea Văcărești* (Vacaresti Road), preface by Ion Simuț (1933; Bucharest: Minerva, 1989), 270 ff.; Schwefelberg, *Amintirile unui intelectual evreu*, 85.
138. Mihail Sebastian, *Jurnal (1935–1944)* (Journal [1935–1944]), ed. Gabriela Omăt, preface and notes by Leon Volovici (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1996), 67.
139. Ion Longin Popescu, “Mormîntul Săpunului Evreiesc de la Tîrgoviste” (The tomb of the Jewish soap in Tîrgoviste), *Curierul Românesc*, no. 3 (Mar. 1998): 15.
140. Constantin Bacalbasa, *Capitala sub ocupația dușmanilor (1916–1918)* (The capital under enemy occupation [1916–1918]) (Brăila, 1921).
141. *Evreii din România în războiul de reîntregire a Patriei*, 24.
142. J. D. Protopopescu, *Pericolul ovreesc* (The Jewish menace) (1921; Bucharest: Steaua, 1922), 37.
143. See A. C. Cuza, *Jidanii în război* (The Jews at war) (Steaua, 1923); Filderman, *Adevărul asupra problemei evreiești din România*.
144. Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 4, (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 69, 142.
145. Max I. Dimont, *Jews, God and History* (New York: New American Library, 1962), 374.
146. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (1923), quoted in Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 472.
147. Barnavi and Eliav-Feldon, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, 210.
148. Nicolae Iorga, *Orizonturile mele: O viață de om, așa cum a fost* (My horizons: A man’s life, as it was), eds. Sanda and Valeriu Rîpeanu (1933; Bucharest: Minerva, 1984), 522.
149. Mosse, *Germans and Jews*, 70–76.
150. Cf. Emile Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française* (Paris: Hachette, 1881), s.v. “Juif.”
151. Cheyette, *Between “Race” and Culture*, 159.
152. Victor Ioan Popa, *Take, Ianke și Cadîr* (1933), Act I, Scene 3 (Bucharest: Univers, 1972), 15.
153. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 70.
154. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 142.

155. *Timpul*, 12 Aug. 1879; cf. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 112.

156. See ch. 1, n. 36.

157. In an article dated 10 Oct. 1876, M. Eminescu maintained that there also exists a variant of this saying with reference to the Greeks: “You cannot find a well-to-do Greek”; cf. Adolphe Stern, *Din viața unui evreu-român* (From the life of a Romanian Jew), ed. Țicu Goldstein (1915; Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 115.

158. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 26. Rabbi Güter Jüd is not merely a character in a Romanian folk story, but also the subject of legends of a historical nature. Tradition has it that before going to war against Russia, Napoleon I, Emperor of France, went to the famous Moldavian rabbi, prophet, and miracle worker, Güter Jüd. He wanted the rabbi to bless him and confirm his victory against the Russians. The rabbi refused, telling him openly that he was going to lose the war. As an omen meant to substantiate that prophecy, Güter Jüd asked that a mare should be killed and her heart removed: “on it the word ‘defeat’ was indeed written.” A variant of that legend was also recorded in France at the end of the nineteenth century. Cf. Wilhelm Schwarzfeld, “Legende și credințe populare” (Folk legends and beliefs), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 18 (1896–1897): 190. According to some commentators, the Hassidic cult “Güte Jüden” (of the “miracle-working rabbis”) had at its core the legendary founder of Hassidism, Rabbi Israel Ba’al Shem-Tov (“Master of Good Name,” known by the acronym “Besht”), himself a great sorcerer, cabalist, and miracle worker; cf. Hary Kuller, *Opt studii despre istoria evreilor din România* (Eight studies on the history of the Jews in Romania) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1997), 329. He was born in 1700, in a small town located on the border between Podolia, Moldavia, and Bukovina. Some Hassidic legends have it that he was born and lived “in the province of Walachia, next to the border” (Simon Dubnow, *Istoria hasidismului* [Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998], 1:89; 2:372. German ed.: *Geschichte des Chassidismus* [Berlin 1931]), the confusion with Moldavia being evident here. According to tradition, the Besht, when he still a youth, became a recluse in a cave in the Oriental Carpathians in Northern Moldavia, where the mystic revelation occurred; cf. Kuller, *Opt studii*, 66–67; Stephen Sharot, *Messianism, Mysticism, and Magic: A Sociological Analysis of Jewish Religious Movements* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 138. It seems, moreover, that some folk place names recorded in this area of the Carpathians refer back to him (“The Jew’s Path,” etc.).

159. Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria industriilor la români* (The history of industries among the Romanians) (Bucharest, 1927), 189.

160. *Israelitul român*, no. 1 (1857).

161. Cilibi Moise, *Vestitul în Țara Românească: Practica și apropourile* (The practice and the allusions), ed. with an afterword by Țicu Goldstein (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 102.

162. *Fraternitatea*, no. 1 (1879); cf. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 194.

163. Aderca, F. *Aderca și problema evreiască*, 138.

164. Gabriel Schäffer, *În oglinda timpului: Culegere de articole publicate în "Curierul israelit" (1921–1945)* (In the mirror of time: A collection of articles published in the "Israelite Courier" [1921–1945]), ed. Puica Schäffer-Strihan (Tel Aviv: Dalia, 2001), 103.

165. Nae Ionescu, *Roza vânturilor* (The wind rose) (Bucharest: Cultura Națională, 1937), 201; see also George Voicu, *Mitul Nae Ionescu* (The myth of Nae Ionescu) (Bucharest: Ars Docendi, 2000), 51.

166. Nicolae Cajal and Hary Kuller, eds., *Contribuția evreilor din România la cultură și civilizație* (The Romanian Jews' contribution to culture and civilization) (Bucharest: Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania, 1996), 22.

167. Adam Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz*, transl. by Kenneth R. Mackenzie (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1992), 148–49, 387.

168. G. M. Tamás, *Idola tribus: Esența morală a sentimentului național* (Idola tribus: The moral essence of national belonging), transl. by Marius Tabacu and Ștefan Borbély (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001), 42.

169. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 62.

170. Călugăru, *Copilăria unui netrebnic*.

171. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 30, 59, 65.

172. Carp, *Din vremuri de urgie*, 57.

173. Liviu Rebreanu, *Ion* (Timișoara: Facla, 1988), 101.

174. Liviu Rebreanu, *Jidanul* (1914), published in idem, *Opere*, ed. N. Gheran, vol. 11 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1980), 675.

175. Harold B. Segal, ed., *Stranger in Our Midst: Images of the Jews in Polish Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 322.

176. Sholem Aleichem, *Opere alese* (Selected works), vol. 4 (Bucharest: Editura pentru Literatură Universală, 1968), 176, 297.

177. Ms. 3171 (1792), Library of the Romanian Academy, Bucharest.

178. Jean Delumeau, *Frica în Occident (secolele XIV–XVIII): O cetate asediată*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1986), 73. First published as *La peur en Occident (XIVe–XVIIIe siècle): Une cité assiégée*, 2 vols. (Paris: Fayard, 1978).

179. Eminescu, *Chestiunea evreiască*, 202.

180. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 70.

181. Ibid., 75; Schwarzfeld, “Anecdote populare românești cu privire la evrei,” 129; Tocilescu and Tapu, *Materialuri folcloristice*, 3:445.

182. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 75.

183. Segal, *Stranger in Our Midst*, 277.

184. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 75; Yisrael Gutman, “The Popular Image of the Jew in Modern Poland,” in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1999), 261.

185. Carol II, King of Romania, *Însemnări zilnice* (Daily notes), vol. 2 (Bucharest: Scripta, 1996), 137.

186. *România Mare*, no. 443 (8 Jan. 1999); cf. George Voicu, *Zei cei răi: Cultura conspiraționistă în România postcomunistă* (The evil gods: Conspirative culture in post-Communist Romania) (Bucharest: Polirom, 2000), 124.

187. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 365.

188. Ernest Bernea, *Cadre ale gândirii populare românești: Contribuții la reprezentarea spațiului, timpului și cauzalității* (Frames of Romanian folk mentality: Contributions to the representation of space, time, and causality) (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1985), 42.

189. Even the Arabs in the Middle Ages had a similar proverb: “If a Negro fell from the sky, he would do it keeping the beat”; in other words: “Even if he dropped from the skies, a black man would still be a black man”; cf. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 2:51.

190. Ioan Slavici, *Lumea prin care am trecut* (The world I went through) (Bucharest: Socec, 1930), 210, 188 respectively.

191. Dimont, *Jews, God and History*, 322 (note).

192. Yovel, *Hegel, Nietzsche și evreii*, 216.

193. Martin N. Marger, *Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1991), 75, 214.

194. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române*, 661.

195. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Cleveland: World, 1958), 30.

196. Harry Kuller, ed., *O istorie a evreilor din România în date* (A chronological history of Romanian Jewry), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 70; Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, 450.

197. Rebreanu, *Jidanul*, 1203.

198. Sebastian, *De doua mii de ani...*, 218.

199. Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, vol. 3 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 173.

200. Andreia Țăranu, "Prejudecăți semnificative" (Significant prejudices), *Dilema* no. 349 (15–21 Oct. 1999): 9.
201. Filderman, *Articole, discursuri, memorii*, 1: 69.
202. Aderca, *F. Aderca și problema evreiască*, 136.
203. András Kovács, *Antisemitic Prejudices in Contemporary Hungary*, ACTA, no. 16 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University, 1999), 10.
204. Leon Volovici, "Jurnalul lui Mihail Sebastian și 'teroarea istoriei'" (Mihail Sebastian's journal and the "Terror of History"), dialogue with Gabriela Adameșteanu, "22", no. 27 (1997): 12–13.
205. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 65.
206. Ibid.
207. Giuseppe Cocchiara, *Il Mito del Buon Selvaggio: Introduzione alla storia delle teorie etnologiche* (Messina: G. d'Anna, 1948), 7.
208. Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries: The Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 39.
209. Delumeau, *Frica în Occident*, 1:74.
210. Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 69.
211. Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 292.
212. Schwarzfeld, "Literatura populară israelită."
213. Dumitru Drăghicescu, *Din psihologia poporului român* (From the psychology of the Romanian people), ed. and annotated by Elisabeta Simion (1907; Bucharest: Albatros, 1996), 409.
214. The satire "Down with the Boyar Government!" (1861); cf. C. D. Aricescu, ed., *Satire politice care au circulat în public, manuscrise și anonime, între anii 1840–1866* (Political satire in public circulation, manuscripts and anonymous texts, between 1840–1866) (Bucharest: Grigore Luis, 1884), 50.
215. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 47.
216. Ibid., 71–72.
217. Ibid., 29.
218. Ibid., 66.
219. N. V. Gogol, *Taras Bulba*, transl. into Romanian by Al. O. Teodeoreanu and Xenia Stroe (Bucharest: Russian Book Publishing House, 1956), 170.
220. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura lor populară*.
221. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 25.

222. Nicolae Cartoian, *Cărțile populare în literatura română* (Popular books in Romanian literature), vol. 1 (Bucharest, 1974), 152.

223. I. C. Chișimia & Stela Toma, eds., *Crestomație de literatură română veche* (Anthology of old Romanian literature), vol. 1 (Cluj: Dacia, 1984) 217–21; see also Cartoian, *Cărțile populare în literatura română*, 1:149–55; Moses Gaster, *Literatura populară română* (Romanian folk literature) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1983), 225–26.

224. Bernard-Henri Lévy, *Aventurile libertății: O istorie subiectivă a intelectualilor* (Liberty's adventures: A subjective history of intellectuals) (Bucharest: Albatros, 1995), 48.

225. Symmetrically with the (apparently) positive cliché regarding the “proverbial” intelligence of the Jew (see section “The Intelligent, Yet Cunning, Jew” above), a negative cliché endured in the traditional Romanian mentality regarding the “proverbial” stupidity of the Serb. In this connection, see also the folk saying: “A green horse and a brainy Serb [do not exist]”; cf. Drăghicescu, *Din psihologia poporului român*, 409.

226. Gaster, *Literatura populară română*, 299.

227. *Ibid.*, 300.

228. Marianne Mesnil, *Etnologul: între șarpe și balaur* (The ethnologue: Between snake and dragon); idem and Assia Popova, *Eseuri de mitologie balcanică* (Essays of Balkan mythology), foreword by Paul H. Stahl (Bucharest: Paideia, 1997), 236.

229. B. P. Hasdeu, *Cuvente den bătrâni: Cărțile poporane ale românilor în secolul XVI* (Sayings from the old: The popular books of the Romanians in the sixteenth century), vol. 2, ed. and annotated by G. Mihăilă (Bucharest: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1984), 152.

230. *Ibid.*, 153.

231. Several German proverbs claim that “The Jews bring as much profit to the world as a mouse in flour” or “as mice in the barn,” cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 70. This association appears in some of T. S. Eliot's interwar period poems, while “the kinship” between rats and Jews is the topic of some Nazi propaganda movies. See Segal, *Between “Race” and Culture*, 85; Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of “the Jew” in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations (1875–1945)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 252.

232. Sebastian, *De două mii de ani...*, 205.

233. Elena Sevastos, *Literatură populară* (Folk literature), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1990), 150.

234. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Baltagul* (The hatchet) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1971), 7–8.

235. Dimitrie Gusti and Traian Herseni, compilers, *Îndrumări pentru monografiile sociologice* (Directions for sociological monographs), eds. Septimiu Chelcea and Iancu Filipescu (Bucharest: University of Bucharest Press, 2002), 248.

236. According to the abovementioned legends from northern Moldavia, it appears that a psychological complex can be delineated: when Divinity presented its gifts, the Romanian came too late and received only what others had left behind. Some Romanian folk songs have a largely similar motif: “When luck was given away, / I was away for my working day. / Cartfuls of luck were given each that day, / Only I was given in a tumbler by drops, / And the tumbler wasn’t good, / Half of it was wormwood, / And the tumbler wasn’t brimful, / Half of it was sorrowful”; or “When people got their bits of luck, / I was away grazing the cows; / And when they got their good fates, / I was walking pigs on the slopes!” see Tudor Pamfile, *Mitologie românească: Dușmani și prieteni ai omului* (Romanian mythology: Man’s foes and friends) (Bucharest: Socec, 1916), 61.

237. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 46.

238. Görög-Karady, “Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore,” 121–22.

239. Mesnil, *Etnologul*, 85.

240. See Chapter Four, the section on “The Jidovi, or the Giants.”

241. J. A. Gobineau, *Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines*, (1853); cf. Ben-Ami Shillony, “The Flourishing Demon: Japan in the Role of the Jews?” in Wistrich, *Demonizing the Other*, 296.

242. Schwarzfeld, “Excursiuni critice,” 47.

243. Viorica S. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip: Schiță de istorie culturală* (The stereotype Jew: A sketch of cultural history) (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1996), 122.

244. *Ibid.*, 67.

245. Segal, *Stranger in Our Midst*, 55.

246. See the chapter “Aspida—surzenia păcătosului” (The asp—The sinner’s deafness), in Andrei Oișteanu, *Grădina de dincolo: Zoosophia* (The garden of the world beyond: Zoosophia) (Cluj: Dacia, 1980), 158–63.

247. Anon., *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul său Theodosie* (The teachings of Neagoe Basarab for his son Theodosius) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1971), 251.

248. Leonardo da Vinci, *Scriseri literare* (Literary writings) (Bucharest: Albatros, 1976), 92.

249. B. P. Hasdeu, *Etymologicum Magnum Romaniae*, vol. 3 (Bucharest: Socec and Teclu, 1893), col. 1873.

250. Oișteanu, *Grădina de dincolo*, 158–63.

251. Varlaam, *Cazania sau cartea de învățătură 1643* (Cazania, or the book of learning 1643) (Bucharest: Fundația Regală pentru Literatură și Artă, 1943), 159–60, 341.

252. See Chapter Four, the section on “The Legend of the Wandering Jew.”

253. I. Braun, *Bibliothek des Frohsinns: Deutsche Sprichwörter* (Stuttgart, 1838), no. 1680; cf. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 62.

254. Varlaam, *Cazania*, 185.

255. *Ibid.*, 185, 340.

256. *Vieța Sfinților Varlaam și Ioasaf* (The Life of the Saints Varlaam and Ioasaf), transl. from Greek by Udriste Nasturel of Fiersati (Bucharest: Universala, 1904), 51–53.

257. Ms. 3171, Library of the Romanian Academy (1792).

258. Ms. 213, Library of the Romanian Academy; cf. Iordache Golescu, *Scriseri alese* (Selected writings), ed. with commentary by Mihai Moraru (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1990), 174.

259. Dionisie of Furna, *Carte de pictură* (Book of icon patterns); introductory study by Victor Ieronim Stoichiță, foreword by Vasile Drăguț (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1979), 156.

260. Ivanichka Georgieva, *Bulgarian Mythology* (Sofia: Svyat, 1985), pl. 109.

261. See Chapter Four, the section on “Demonizing the Jew.”

262. See Chapter Four, the section on “Brimstone and Fire.”

263. Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Viețile pictorilor, sculptorilor și arhitecților moderni* (The lives of modern painters, sculptors and architects), vol. 1, (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1975), 284–85.

264. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip*, 119–22; Elisabeth Revel-Neher, *The Image of the Jew in Byzantine Art* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1992), 106, 109.

265. Revel-Neher, *Image of the Jew*, 109.

266. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip*, 120.

267. *Ibid.*, 196.

268. Dan Octavian Căpraga, *Graiurile Domnului: Colinda creștină tradițională: Antologie și studiu* (The voices of God: The traditional Christian carol: Anthology and study) (Cluj-Napoca: Clusium, 1995), 140; Monica Brătulescu, *Colinda românească* (The Romanian colinda [Winter-solstice songs]) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 288.

269. Simeon Florea Marian, *Legende la Maicii Domnului* (The legends of the Mother of God) (Bucharest, 1906), 292.

270. See Chapter Five, the section on “Ritual Infanticide.”

271. Cepraga, *Graiurile Domnului*, 97; Florentina Afloroaie, “Structuri identitare în sfera obiceiurilor calendaristice de iarnă: Receptarea evreului” (Identity structures in the sphere of cyclical winter celebrations: Receiving the Jew) (M.A. thesis, Center of Jewish Studies, University of Bucharest, 2002), 27.

272. Varlaam, *Cazania*, 76.

273. An apparently minor one, this episode from the Gospels has at times been given special attention. At the end of the fifteenth century, for instance, the Florentine Renaissance painter Benozzo Gozzoli—who painted a visual representation of the entire New Testament on the southern wall of the cathedral of San Gimignano, in Tuscany—portrayed St. Peter cutting off the ear of the pagan Malchus in the foreground of the fresco representing the episode of Jesus’ betrayal and arrest. Another Florentine painter, Fra Angelico, made the same compositional choice in the early fifteenth century, in his fresco entitled “Betrayal of Christ”; cf. Joseph Campbell, with Bill Moyers, *The Power of Myth* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 212.

274. Ioan Petru Culianu and C. Culianu, “Interferences between Iconography and Folklore in Romania,” in *Visible Religion*, vol. 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983), 40–57.

275. See “Sermon for the Dormition of the Holy Virgin” in Varlaam, *Cazania*, 486; see also *Missals for the Month of August*, printed at the monastery of Neamț in 1847; cf. Nicolae Cartojan, *Cărțile populare în literatura română* (Popular books in Romanian literature), vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1974), 141ff.; Gaster, *Literatura populară română*, 284.

276. Marian, *Legendeale Maicii Domnului*, 302–12.

277. I. A. Candrea and Ovid Densusianu, *Din popor: Cum grăiește și simte poporul român* (People’s ways: How the Romanian people talk and feel) (Bucharest: Alcala, 1908), 147.

278. St. Vineri (i.e., St. Friday)—a hypostasis of St. Mary in Romanian folk mythology—has the power to inflict or cure blindness with tears that flow from her eyes.

279. Ion H. Ciubotaru, *Valea Șomuzului Mare: Monografie folclorică* (The valley of Somuzu Mare: A folkloric monograph), *Caietele Arhivei de Folclor*, The Folklore Archive of Moldavia and Bukovina, vol. 10/2 (Iași, 1991), 217–29; Dimitrie P. Lupașcu, *Medicina babelor: Adunare de descîntece, rețete de doftorii și vrăjitorii babesci* (Old women’s medicine: Collection of old women’s charms (incantations), remedies (medicines), recipes, and witchcraft) (Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1890), 35.

280. Marian, *Legendeale Maicii Domnului*, 339.

281. Caraman, *Descolindatul*, 350–51.

282. Simeon Florea Marian, *Sărbătorile la români: Studiu etnografic* (Holidays of the Romanians: An ethnographic study), vol. 2, ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române 1994), 164.

283. See Chapter One, the section on “The Ruddy Man as Evil Omen.”

284. Gheorghe Pavelescu, *Cercetări asupra Magiei la românii din Munții Apuseni* (Research on magic practices among the Romanians of the western Carpathian mountains) (Bucharest: Institutul Social Român 1945), 127–29.

285. Ion Mușlea and Ov. Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului: Din răspunsurile la chestionarele lui B. P. Hasdeu* (Folklore typology: From the answers to B. P. Hasdeu’s questionnaires) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1970), 494–95; see also Robert D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993), xvi.

286. H. H. Ben-Sasson, ed., *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997), 648.

287. See n. 276 above.

288. Varlaam, *Cazania*, 486.

289. Ms. 1361, Library of the Romanian Academy.

290. Varlaam, *Cazania*, 189.

291. Vasile Alecsandri, “Din albumul unui bibliofil” (From a booklover’s diary), *Convorbiri literare* (Literary talks) (Iași), 9, no. 9 (1 Dec. 1875): 336.

292. Bernea, *Cadre ale gândirii populare românești*, 77.

293. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 216.

294. *Ibid.*, 214.

295. See n. 177 above.

296. Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu, “O vecinătate incomodă: cuplurile de convertiți la ortodoxie și vecinii lor în Iașiul primei jumătăți de secol XIX” (An uncomfortable proximity: Couples of Orthodox converts and their neighbors in early 19th-century Jassy), in *Minoritari, marginali, excluși*, eds. Adrian Neculau and Gilles Ferréol (Iași: Polirom, 1996), 125–30; *idem*, “Exil fără recurs,” *Secolul 20* no. 10–12 (1997), and 1–3 (1998): 234–43; Ladislau Gyémánt and Lya Benjamin, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews in Romania), vol. 3, part 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 317.

297. Steinhardt, *Jurnalul fericirii*, 26.

298. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 2:129.

299. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 53.

300. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip*, 145.

301. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 130.

302. See the section by this name in Chapter Five, below.

303. See the legend of Emperor Constantine and Bishop Sylvester; cf. Israel Jacob Yuval, "Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages: Shared Myths, Common Language," in Wistrich, *Demonizing the Other*, 88–107. Another remedy against blindness is contained in a legend that is part of ancient Egyptian tradition. It is related that the Egyptian sovereign Pheron (identified as Pharaoh Menephtah III, in whose reign the People of Israel emigrated from Egypt) lost his sight after having been chastised by a divinity of the Nile. After consulting an oracle, he was cured of blindness by washing his eyes with the urine of a virtuous woman (Herodotus, *Histories*, 2.111; Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica*, 1.59).

304. Mircea Eliade, *Memorii* (Memoirs), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1991), 313.

305. Nae Ionescu, "Preface" to Mihail Sebastian, *De două mii de ani...* (For two thousand years...) (1934; Bucharest: Hasefer, 1995), 24.

306. Eliade, *Memorii*, 312.

307. *Vremea*, no. 37 (22 July 1934).

308. Cf. Joel Carmichael, *The Satanizing of the Jews: Origin and Development of Mystical Antisemitism* (New York: Fromm International, 1993), 14.

309. Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație* (Orthodoxy and ethnocracy), ed. Constantin Schifirnet (1938; Bucharest: Albatros, 1997), 146.

310. *Vremea*, no. 505 (19 Sept. 1937); also in Radu Florian, Victor Neumann et al., *Ideea care ucide: Dimensiunile ideologiei legionare* (The idea that kills: The dimensions of legionary ideology) (Bucharest: Noua Alternativa, 1994), 268.

311. For the messianic character of totalitarian ideologies (whether fascist or communist), see Andrei Oișteanu, "Mituri comuniste, mituri fasciste" (Communist Myths, Fascist Myths), *Dilema*, no. 72 (27 May 1994): 6. For the messianism of the legionary movement and especially that of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, who staged his raids in villages riding a white horse, see Z. Ornea, *Anii treizeci: Extrema dreaptă românească* (The thirties: the extreme right wing in Romania) (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1995), 294; Hans Roger and Eugen Weber, *Dreapta românească: Profil istoric* (The Romanian right wing: A historical profile) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1995), 411ff.; *Vremea*, no. 523 (30 Jan. 1938); Florian et al., *Ideea care ucide*, 292–95.

312. *Vremea* no. 523 (30 Jan. 1938); also in Florian et al., *Ideea care ucide*, 292–95.

313. Michael Shafir, "Antisemitism in the Postcommunist Era," in *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry*, ed. Randolph L. Braham (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 354.

CHAPTER 4

The Mythical and Magical Portrait

BRIMSTONE AND FIRE

“L'enfer c'est les autres”

Since, to the European mind, the Jew used to be *homo alienus* par excellence, the prototype of the “stranger” and of the “other,” his being designated as the most fitting client for Hell came somewhat naturally. “*L'enfer c'est les autres*”—is it not so? He didn't need to be a sinner to end up in Hell; it was enough that he was Jewish. A malicious Hungarian folk song goes: “Jews haven't got a Christ, / Out of Heaven they are cast, / Having their green slippers on, / They go to Hell rolling on.”¹ Although he may desperately struggle to reach Heaven, the Jew invariably ends up in Hell. “He barges in like a Jew to Heaven,” but “He tosses and turns like the Jew in Hell,” say two central and eastern European proverbs.² Evidently, the fact that such a status conferred upon the Jew (the perpetual inhabitant of Hell) was an enduring presence in folklore could be attributed first and foremost to Christian writings—the canonical texts and, above all, the apocryphal ones.

In a sixteenth-century Romanian version of an apocryphal legend, “Virgin Mary's Journey in Hell,” St. Mary asks her guide, the archangel Michael, to lead her to Hell, “to those torments that are great.” There she sees “a river of fire and a great darkness and the sleepless worms and the fiery pitch steaming”; this is where “those Judeans [*jidovi*] who crucified our Lord Jesus Christ” suffer their torments. Even if there are other non-Christians there in addition to the Jews (“all who did not believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, all who renounced the fair Cross and the holy Baptism”), the Judeans are the only ones mentioned as an ethnic unit or denomination among the sinners being tormented by fire and brimstone.³ Moved and appalled by the torments inflicted on souls in Hell, the Mother of God implores Jesus to forgive the “sinning Christians.” Thus she discriminates between Christians guilty of various sins but “have kept Your faith” because “they were baptized in Your name,” on the one hand, and, on the other hand,

the “infidel Judeans,” even if the latter may not have been guilty of any worldly sins: “I shall not pray for the infidel Judeans.”⁴ Here is revealed a religious mentality that may best be expressed through an adage such as “A sinful Christian is better than a sinless Jew.” This is a mental equation that, when the terms are reversed, is not alien to some Jews too, despite Moses Schwarzfeld’s maintaining the existence of the following Jewish proverb: “Better a good non-Jew than a bad Jew.”⁵

Returning to “Virgin Mary’s Journey in Hell,” at the end of this legend Jesus yields to Mary’s supplications and, after his Second Coming, allows Christian sinners to go to Heaven, but only “from the day of my Resurrection on Easter Day, until good Whit Sunday”; after that “they are to go again to their torments [i.e., to Hell].”⁶

When compared to this religious text (apocryphal though it may be), folk beliefs are somewhat milder. From the hemp bundle women lay on the priest’s cross on Epiphany, Virgin Mary weaves a great mesh which she will throw over Hell upon the Second Coming of Christ. The souls that become entrapped in this mesh (it is no longer specified whether they are Christian or Jewish) will be removed from Hell and taken into a kind of Purgatory—a novelty for Christian Orthodox believers, “a place of rest, not one of great happiness as is Heaven, but not one of eternal torment either.”⁷ The distinction existing in the religious text is no longer made and Jews are not explicitly excluded from any form of redemption.

In “The Life of St. Basil the New,” another hagiographic apocrypha which circulated in the Romanian area since the late seventeenth century, and more precisely in its last part: “Witnessing the Tremendous Last Judgment,” St. Gregory—St. Basil’s apprentice—is brought up to Heaven by an angel. He sees there how Jesus administers the Last Judgment, first to the “Judeans” [*jidovi*] who lived “before Christ” (believed to be less guilty) and to those “from the Coming of Christ, to the end,” then to the “Judeans who prayed to idols,” to Ishmaelites, to pagans, to sectarian Christians, etc. All of them are damned to eternal torture in Hell.⁸ Differentiation into roughly the same categories was done by the metropolitan priest Antim Ivireanul at the beginning of the eighteenth century: “[the pagans] are lacking in belief, the Jews are deprived of baptism, while the heretics are taken away from the long arm of the Church.”⁹

In a manuscript written in 1667, translated “from the Old Slavic tongue into Romanian,” he who engages in the reading of “heretical scriptures” and places his trust in them is “hopelessly doomed” and “destined to relentless

judgment...together with the enemies of God, and the Jews who crucified him.”¹⁰

The same image of the doomed Jews appears in Romanian folk carols. In one of them, Virgin Mary tells the child Jesus that “pagan Judeans,” or the “filthy Jewish dogs / by the law forsaken,” shall crucify Him. Christ’s answer is uncompromising:

Let, mother, let them speak of Me,
 Let, mother, let them cut [My cross] for Me,
 For I took care of them, too,
 And found a good place for them, too:
 At the tip of the sword,
 At the bottom of Hell,
 On the blade of the knife,
 In the blaze of the fire,
 Where there are worms that never sleep
 With sharpened hungry teeth
 And with bony heads,
 To put to good use.¹¹

This type of carol seems to have its origins in an apocryphal legend, “The Dream Mother of God Dreamt before Our Lord Jesus Christ was Crucified,” a text whose circulation in the sixteenth-century Romanian area, as well as in all of Europe, has been studied by B. P. Hasdeu.¹² In another type of carol Jesus is depicted as waging a “mighty war” against “those sons of bitches, Judas and the Jews.” Fighting with “cannon” [i.e., thunder], flashes of lightning, and with the word, Jesus defeats His traditional enemies, chasing them away “Through Hell’s gate, / Over the red-hot fires.”¹³

Visual Imagology

The literary motif has survived simultaneously with the iconic one. In miniatures painted during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in western Europe, Jews are often depicted in the scene of the Last Judgment. They are, as a rule, tortured by demons, either being pushed into the gaping mouth of the ophidian monster that personifies Hell, or into an immense tub set on Hell’s fires (see, e.g., Herrade von Ladsberg, *Hortus Deliciarum*, 1175).¹⁴ As a sign of ethnic identification, they will often wear the stigma of that era, the pointed hat (German *Judenhut*).¹⁵ In non-figurative representations of Hell (concentric spaces), the first three circles—the closest to the “*Demones Puteus*” (Demons’ pit”) at Hell’s core—are “*Heretici*,” “*Iudei Infideles*,”

and “*Idolatre*,” respectively (cf. the engraving in *Thesaurus Artificiosae Memoriae*, by Cosmas Rossellius, 1579).

Art historian Elisabeth Revel-Neher is convinced that such iconic representations are characteristic of western European medieval art, not of Byzantine art: “Byzantine art does not know the phenomenon, so common in Western art, of the presence of Jews in representations of the Last Judgement, and yet the origin of these representations is to be found in Byzantium.”¹⁶ However, her too categorical conclusion is a questionable one. According to post-Byzantine books of icon patterns, the Doomsday scene in the “dens of Hell” includes “Judeans [*Iudei*]” who “are plucking out their beards,” “looking at Moses, who points at Christ.”¹⁷ Indeed, a group of Jews (captioned on frescoes as *lik evreiski*, in Slavonic) are doomed to fire and brimstone in Doomsday scenes painted on the walls of the following churches in Bukovina: Probota (frescoes dating from 1532), Humor (1535), Moldovița (1537), Voroneț (1547), and more. The Jews are classically portrayed as plucking out their beards and following Moses who, for identification, holds up the Tablets of the Law. He points to Christ, holding a scroll on which it is written: “This is the Messiah I have prophesied and here He is.”

In the fresco in the eighteenth-century Rila monastery church of St. Luke, in southwestern Bulgaria, there is a deviation from the model dictated by the book for icon-makers: several devils tie the group of Jews (captioned *Iudei*) with ropes and—as in Western medieval miniatures—they are being pulled by those devils into the “River of Fire” which gushes out of the gaping mouth of the hellish dragon.¹⁸

Such demonic interventions are exceptionally rare in Romanian iconography. In the Doomsday scene at Moldovița monastery, Satan, armed with a mace, grabs Herod by the beard and drags him out of the group of Jews to the “River of Fire.”¹⁹ This type of image, however, appears quite frequently in folk satires from the same area of Romania, Bukovina: “The Devil under the grass” draws “a Yid [*jidan*]” to Hell, pulling him by the beard and sidelocks. Asked where he was taking the “accursed Jew [*tîrtan*],” the devil retorts: “To Hell where the Jews are many / To Hershcu well-known, / For this is where their kind belongs / For ever and ever.”²⁰

It is a matter of some novelty that in mural representations of Doomsday in the Romanian cultural area, especially in the churches of Bukovina and Maramureș, the Jews, taken as an ethnic group, are no longer the only sinners, though they remain the greatest ones. They are invariably figured as

leading the file of peoples heading towards Hell. Specialists have concluded that the presence of other ethnic (or confessional) groups, beside the Jews, in the Doomsday scene is an innovation of Moldavian iconography.²¹ At the left of the throne, being prepared for Judgment (*hetimasia*), are painted, as the case may be, the following groups of non-Christians or non-Orthodox Christians: "Jews," "Turks," "Tartars," "Armenians" (considered to be sectarian), "Latins," "Ethiopians," "Arabs" (or "Saracens").²² Above them all hangs, in writing, the fearsome decree on the Last Judgment issued by Jesus to the peoples standing "to the left of the throne": "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Polish scholar Władisław Podlacha attempted to explain the presence of the Jews "at the head of those doomed" to fire and brimstone, as they are represented on frescoes in Romanian monasteries in Bukovina. He attributed this not only to the well-known theological antisemitism (the deicidal people, "whose doors to salvation were shut once and for all"), but also to economic antisemitism. "In Moldavia," he wrote, "Jews made themselves hateful through the practice of usury, this is why in 1579 sovereign Peter [the Lame] ordered the expulsion en masse of the Jews from the country." Grigore Nandris later considered this interpretation to be erroneous, "not only from an ideological point of view, but from an historical one as well." He replaced it, in his turn, with another one no less global and crude: "Religious persecution is unknown during the entire history of Romanian Orthodoxy."²³

Scenes representing Doomsday are also painted on the inner walls of wooden churches in Maramureș dating from ca. 1800. At Biserica-din-deal (the Church on the Hill) at Ieud, for instance, several peoples are represented in the close vicinity of Hell: the Jews, the Turks, the Tartars, and the Arabs.²⁴ Interestingly, those who in Doomsday icons are damned on ethnical (or, strictly speaking, denominational) criteria are placed side by side with those damned on ethical criteria ("the liar," "the miser," "the publican," "she who will not breed," "she who kills her babe," "the conjurer," "she who charms cows not to give milk," etc.). The former are, however, depicted next to the "River of Fire" but not quite in it, as are the latter. Christian sinners are taken to present a greater danger to the moral and spiritual welfare of the indigenous community than do Jews and other non-Christians.

Maramureș is an area substantially inhabited by Greek Catholics, who do not have a bipolar notion of the other world as do the Orthodox, but a

tripartite one: Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory. Some people from Maramureș actually believe that, after death, Jewish souls have a right to be in Purgatory, not in Hell. Jews are respected here and even admired for their religious fervor; consequently, they should not be relegated after death to Hell's fires, the fate of the sinful and of the "godless." On the other hand, not being christened, their souls cannot, after death, enjoy the luxuries of the Garden of Eden. Such beliefs lead to people's conviction that Purgatory is the most suitable place for the Jews to spend their afterlife.²⁵

Needless to say, these visual representations of Doomsday used to have a powerful impact. Not only were they vividly eloquent, but, it must be emphasized, they could also be "read" by the common people who more often than not were illiterate.²⁶ "The vision of the torments in Hell, described in the Virgin Mary's Journey and evoked through the murals on church porticoes," Nicolae Cartoian once aptly noted, "was deeply unsettling for the masses of people and left enduring traces not only in folk traditions...but in carols as well."²⁷

DEMONIZATION OF THE JEW

The Mythic and Folkloric Perspectives

Identification of the Jew with the ruddy man and the solomonar was not the rule, occurring only in some circumscribed instances and some regions of Romania. The phenomenon, however, can be considered symptomatic in that it is illustrative of the peasant's predisposition to associate the "other," the "stranger," with warlocks and demonic characters of mythical folklore. As he is not baptized, the Jew is perceived as being sure and easy prey for the Devil. Romanian folk beliefs also drew a parallel between the synagogue, the Jews, and the Devil. It was claimed that "upon the Jews' autumn holidays," the Devil "must every year steal one Jew from every synagogue, whom he then takes with him back to Hell."²⁸ An almost identical belief is attested in Polish folklore.²⁹

It appears, then, that as far as the popular mind is concerned, the Devil can clearly enter a synagogue at any time and under any circumstances. On the other hand, not only do the people believe that the "Devil does not build churches," as goes a Romanian proverb,³⁰ but he dare not even come near one. All the constituents of which a church is made up force the Devil to steer clear of it, or can even destroy him. The following, selected at random, illustrate this: Romanian folk beliefs such as "Satan is fearful of bells, he

won't come near them, for they are blessed," or "the Devil fears the name of God [and] would run away"; sayings like "The Devil suffers no holy incense," and "The Devil flees from the Cross";³¹ or the names given the Devil by the people: *Ucigă-l toaca* (May-the-bell-board-kill-him), *Ucigă-l tamîia* (May-incense-kill-him), and *Ucigă-l crucea* (May-the-cross-kill-him).³² Similar sayings are directed at the Jew in Hungarian folklore: "Scared like the Jew of the Crucifix."³³ The Jew, therefore, is like the Devil; they both fear the Cross.

According to the logic operating within traditional mentality, women in general and Jewish woman in particular entertained a privileged relationship with the Devil ("The Devil is the hag's stallion"). It was not only Christ who was born of a Jewish woman ("The Mother of God was a Jewess," stated a folk belief in Bukovina),³⁴ but the Antichrist himself: "The world will near its end and then will Lucifer be born of a Jewess,"³⁵ or "The Antichrist will be born, in times beyond time, of a red woman."³⁶ When a house was haunted by the Devil, a ritual was conducted in which the demon was bound and exorcised. To lure the Devil, the enchantress would promise him not only "a babe not yet baptized, / not yet christened," but also a Jewish widow: "Don't sit ye there, / But come ye to me, / For I shall give ye, / One fairer home / And a Jewish woman, / Whose Jew is gone."³⁷

As soon as the Devil was bound by the spell, the sorceress could chase him away, put him to work, or even sell him. Such practices and beliefs were widespread in Bukovina. Around 1900, word spread that

in Suceava there was an old hag, a Jewess, who sold devils. A man went to buy and was shown one in the guise of a big snake, and she wanted to know whether he [the buyer] was afraid. He said no. The Jewess turned him [the devil] into a frog and when it opened one fierce mouth at him, the man fled and was cured of all his need of it.³⁸

In some of the incantations recorded in Maramures, the spirits that loom over maladies sometimes appear as "Jewish daughters": "Three Jewish daughters constipate, and three Jewish daughters bring remedy."³⁹

Finally, in love spells from Transylvania, when the sorceress called a winged she-devil to order, she compared her to a fat married Jewish woman, using the corresponding Yiddish term, *balabuste* (corruption of the Hebrew *ba'alat ha-bayit*, i.e., mistress of the house): "Ye locust, locust, / Enormous *balabuste*, / Listen here to my saying: / Make him, turn him fine lad yonder, / To drink this, and make me his."⁴⁰

When a Romanian witch intends to exorcise the evil spirits that hold sway over some illness, she banishes them to an “afterworld,” sometimes located “where Jewesses comb their hair (and where Christian girls do not),” or to “the Jewesses.”⁴¹ This is still symptomatic of the demonizing of the Jew, since, the coordinates of this mythical, supernatural world, as they emerge in Romanian incantations, are: “Hell’s rock bottom,” “the unquenched fires of the Gehenna,” or “the bottom of the Red Sea,” “where all water courses [i.e., the Sabbatical waters]⁴² converge,” “where Christ’s name is never mentioned,” “where priests do not summon for service,” or “where bells do not toll,” etc.⁴³ In Romanian carols, in the aftermath of Christ’s Crucifixion the Virgin Mary sometimes departs in quest of her son in an afterworld too, sometimes known as “Jewish dominions,” “Jewish alleys,” or “the Jewish town,” where she comes upon the same “three Jewish daughters.”⁴⁴ Eventually, the “faultless,” or the “Rohmani,”⁴⁵ supernatural ancestors who appear in Romanian popular mythology, are “chthonic dwellers of the afterworld” in “a remote Eastern country,” where “it is perpetually hot,” or “in pagan countries,” “alongside the Sabbatical waters,” “far away, over seas, precisely in Jerusalem, where Jews dwell.”⁴⁶ Vasile Bogrea suggested identifying the Sabbatical waters with the old Palestinian correspondent in mythical geography, that of the Sambatyon (from Greek, *Sabbatichos Potamos*), which according to tradition flowed six consecutive days and stopped on the seventh (the Sabbath, which is “holy to the Judeans”).⁴⁷

One can easily observe, therefore, that for traditional Romanian culture “the imaginary Jew” is placed in a country no less imaginary, in an “imaginary Palestine” that frequently takes after the “world beyond.” In his *Chestiunea evreiască* [The Jewish question] (1879), Romanian philosopher Vasile Conta, who is deemed to be “the true founder of Romanian ideological antisemitism,”⁴⁸ himself promoted the idea of an imaginary “Jewish empire”:

[Jews] even have a homeland. True enough, it is not a real homeland, yet an imaginary one, that is Palestine; yet it is a homeland for which they nurture so much passion and patriotism; this is why they cannot have any more love or patriotism for another homeland. I mentioned Palestine, yet do not readily think of Asian Palestine, since according to their beliefs Palestine is the homeland of the Messiah, whose advent is soon to occur in order to grant the existence of the Jewish empire. The Jewish empire that is Palestine could well be established in our homeland as well [i.e., in Romania].⁴⁹

Toward the close of the 1930s, members of the Sociological School elaborated a “Project on the Research of Religious Life” of the Romanian village, under the leadership of Dimitrie Gusti. One of the questions that Romanian peasants were asked to answer was: “Have the devils turned into human beings? Into Jews, or into Gypsies, etc.?”⁵⁰

The tendency referred to earlier—demonizing of the Jew—can be readily proven by the fact that the “real Jew” (and not merely his legendary counterpart) was explicitly associated with the Devil in a large number of Romanian folk beliefs, appellations, and sayings. “The Jew is the Devil’s drill”,⁵¹ “The Jew is the Devil’s own”,⁵² “The Jewish stock, / Devilish, the Devil’s stock”⁵³; “Devil’s skin” was the popular name given the cloth of which the dark caftan worn by the Jew was made.⁵⁴ Then there were the riddles: “Devil dances on the wall, / With his Jewess by the scruff” (i.e., the shadow);⁵⁵ the curses: “Go to the Jews” (i.e., “Go to the devil”);⁵⁶ the witty couplets lads used to cry out at the Sunday dance: “One, two, three times, / To hell with the kikes”⁵⁷; or the folk nursery rhymes, in literal translation: “Out pops the devil from the embers / The Jew he leads by his locks, / Out pops the devil from under the grass, / The Jew he leads by the beard, / Out pops the devil from under the ice, / The Jew he leads by the moustache, / Out pops the devil from the cabbages, / The Jew he leads by the earlobes, / Out pops the devil from a hole, / The Jew he leads by one shoe, / Out pops the devil from under the bridge, / The Jew he leads by the snout, / Out pops the devil from the lawns, / A Kike he has from his horns, / Out pops the devil from the smokestack, / The Jew he rides on his back.”⁵⁸ Finally, there was at the time the apparently paradoxical superstition according to which a Jew who met a Christian on his way was bound to bring the latter good luck, because as the Jew was destined for the Devil, the evil spirits were bound to enter him and would thus shun the Christian.⁵⁹

At the close of the nineteenth century Moses Schwarzfeld was convinced that the opprobrious appellation *tărtan*—an equivalent of “Kike”—given the Jew in Northern Moldavia (as, for instance, by Vasile Alecsandri: “They give the *tărtan* a free course to pounce upon the country”) was just another instance in which a connection was created “between the Jew and the Devil” (cf. the etymological equation *tărtan* = *tartor*, i.e., arch-fiend = devil).⁶⁰ On the one hand, this etymological solution would turn into pleonasms such widespread popular expressions like “*Tărtanul dracului!*” (“A devil of a Kike”) or “*Du-te dracului tărtane!*” (“To the devil with you, Kike!”).⁶¹ On the other hand, philologists agree in general that this appellative is of a

different origin, deriving from the German word *Unterthan* (as in the phrase, *Österreichischer Unterthan*, i.e., “Austrian subject”). This was the name given to the Jews in the Romanian Principalities—between the end of the eighteenth and the end of the nineteenth century—as Jews were “subjects” or “dependents” of foreign powers.⁶²

The demonization of the Jew was not a syndrome typical of the Romanian popular mentality, but a phenomenon of collective psychology widespread both in western and central Europe.⁶³ The following are a few proverbs and sayings, collected in central Europe, which are similar to the aforementioned Romanian ones:

- “If a Jew is baptized, the Devil stands as godfather” (Swabian proverb);⁶⁴
- “The Jew and the Devil sleep in one bed” (Swabian proverb);⁶⁵
- “So long as there are Jews, / The world is full of the Devil. / If the world were empty of Jews, / There would be no more Devil” (couplet recited in southern Austria);⁶⁶
- “Jews and grocers are friends with the Devil” (German proverb);⁶⁷
- “Jews are the Devil’s Christians” (German proverb);⁶⁸
- “He thought he caught a Jew by the beard [or by the leg], but he held the Devil by his horns” (Polish and German proverb);⁶⁹
- “Where there are Jews and embers, bring the Devil” (German proverb);⁷⁰
- “Where the Devil cannot act, the Jew can” (Polish proverb);⁷¹
- “The Jew, the German, and the Devil are children of the same mother” (Polish proverb);⁷²
- “Jews are the Devil’s drill” (Hungarian and Romanian proverb).⁷³

The Political Perspective

In the mid-1920s, Professor A. C. Cuza, of the University of Jassy, called upon the Orthodox Church to disown the Old Testament which, he claimed, presented the supremacy of Satan, “embodied by the Jews.”⁷⁴ In 1928, it was he again who defined an antisemitic dogma of his own production, the “Christian Nationalist Doctrine” or “Cuzism.” At the core of Cuza’s doctrine was Jesus Christ, “the Galilean of Aryan race” [*sic!*], who fought and taught all to fight the Jews, a “people of the Devil.” Jesus replaced the “diabolical dogma” of the “kikes,” based on “deceit and murder” and “evidently inspired by the Devil himself,” with his divine teachings. This type of rhetoric could only point at the “final solution”: “The only possible solution for the Jewish problem,” determined A. C. Cuza, “is the elimination of the Jews.”⁷⁵

As Leon Volovici observed, the doctor and scientist Nicolae C. Paulescu—"an interesting case of obsessive visceral antisemitism"—seconded A. C. Cuza in the foundation of several ultra-nationalistic political movements (such as, for instance, the League of National Christian Defense, in 1923), as well as antisemitic publications (the newspaper *The National Defense*, 1922). However, in some respects Paulescu left A. C. Cuza behind, even preceding him. In 1923 he reduced everything to the terms of a religious dualism. The world was being torn apart by a giant conflict of a Manichean type: "Godly Christianity" versus "Devilish Judaism." In order to settle the "Jewish issue," Paulescu had advanced as early as 1913 a "radical" solution, not hesitating even to speak of "extermination." Since the "kikes" were "robbers and assassins" as well as "evil-doing parasites," there was no other solution but the final one, that of "disinfestation": "Can we exterminate them just as, for instance, bedbugs are killed? This would be the simplest and handiest way of getting rid of them."⁷⁶

Cuza, and especially Paulescu, are malignant cases of protochronism, this two or three decades before the notorious Wannsee Conference held in Berlin in January 1942, where it was decided that "in accordance with the will of Adolf Hitler" the "solution of the Jewish problem" was to become a priority through the "annihilation" (German: *Vernichtung*) of eleven million Jews from all over Europe, among whom 342,000 were to be from Romania, including Bessarabia.⁷⁷ "The doctrines represented by Cuza and Paulescu" Leon Volovici observed, "did not penetrate Romanian political life until the 1930s, when a considerable sector of the Romanian political body began to accept the thrust of these arguments. Eventually these ideas became a part of official state policy."⁷⁸

In those same years, Irineu Mihalcescu, Metropolitan Chief of the Church of Moldavia and Suceava, published *Teologia luptatoare* [Bellicose theology], a book to be widely used by priests and theological seminary students alike and a source of commonplaces cherished by antisemites: "Jews, who in all countries control finance, industry, commerce, and media etc., could not have relinquished such a wondrous instrument of domination such as Masonry, of which they now gain command." Yet "by the introduction of the dissolvent principles of the Talmud, the Kabbalah, and magic...the quick-witted lineage of Judah" transformed French Masonry into "Satan's synagogue." "It is almost unbelievable," a contemporary critic exclaims, "that over fifty years after the first edition such a volume could be published again [in the 1990s], upon the specific demand of many priests,

theology scholars, and intellectuals” under the patronage of the Metropolitan Church of Huși, with the imprimatur of His Excellency Eftimie, “as a sign of good omen, of the purity of the Orthodox belief.”⁷⁹

With much more subtlety, Nae Ionescu—in his preface to Mihail Sebastian’s novel, *For Two Thousand Years...* (1934)—substituted the demononym “Judas” for the ethnonym “Judean”: “Judas suffers because he gave birth to Christ, he saw Him and believed Him not.”⁸⁰ By doing so, the Romanian philosopher relied on a confusion that had persisted for centuries in the collective imagination (moreover, “Judas” is a popular and pejorative name given to the Jews as an ethnic group).⁸¹ Ionescu thus charged the ethnonym with the entire diabolical load carried by the name Judas Iscariot. This name gave birth to two of the folk names given to the Devil: “*Iuda*” and “*Scaraotski*.” “From the kin of Judas,” goes a Romanian folk legend, “come the Judeans, who are the Jewish people, for in the true books they are named Judeans only, which means sons [i.e., descendants] of Judas the traitor.”⁸² It is easy to understand now why Romanian folk legends speak of “Judas’ Jews” and of the devils who “jude [Romanian: *iudesc*] people into evildoing.”⁸³ The almost contemptible ability evinced by Nae Ionescu was readily comprehended by none other than Mircea Eliade: “The sin of Judas is and will be the sin of Judas, and not of Israel, and certainly not of the Judeans.”⁸⁴

Moreover, the same play upon words that overlaps “Judean” with “Judas” is present in the songs of the Romanian legionaries which, despite their often simplistic rhetoric, enjoyed an outstanding popularity in those years. To a considerable extent they even substituted—successfully—the doctrinal program and political discourse of the Legionnaire Movement. Calling upon the “Christians throughout the country” to fight in the “grim war” for the liberation of the land that had been “overrun by the Kikes,” the legionary marches often resorted to the pseudo-ethnonym (Judas) which, especially in martial lyrics, took over strong demonic connotations, calling for the annihilation of the Jews: “Away with you, Judas, the serpent’s breed! / Away with you, Jewish pagans! / Away with you, snakes, raise not your heads, / Or we’ll seize our axes in our hands!”⁸⁵

Mircea Eliade engaged in polemics with the theologian (and publicist) G. Racoveanu regarding Mihail Sebastian’s novel *For Two Thousand Years* and the controversial preface written by Nae Ionescu. In an article published in “*Credința*” [The faith],⁸⁶ Racoveanu maintained that all Jews are damned for eternity and destined to Hell since they do not have faith in Jesus. The basis

for his argument was the Gospel according to John, in which the following address of Jesus is recorded: “And you will die in your sins if you do not believe that ‘I Am Who I Am’” (John 8:24). “Devils and Judas,” concluded Racoveanu, “are not to be redeemed. This is a teaching of the Church.” Eliade disagreed. In his opinion, Jesus was referring in this case to Jews who became sons of the Devil (“You are the children of your father, the Devil,” John, 8:44). “Nevertheless, are all Jews the sons of the Devil?” Eliade asks rhetorically, and replies: “No Gospel says anything like that, anywhere.” “Only a few Jews,” concludes Eliade, “are sons of the Devil and will not find redemption at the End of Days.”⁸⁷ The controversy between Eliade and Racoveanu, comments Jean Ancel, “illustrates the degree of demonization of the Jew in Romanian society, on the eve of the Cuza-Goga government’s taking office.”⁸⁸ Indeed, in the Romania of the mid-1930s this theological dispute is deeply inadequate in an era in which Jewish students were mauled by legionnaire students, in which the enforcement of *numerus clausus* laws was an ultimatum, while antisemitic publications flourished and the center of Bucharest resounded to slogans like “Death to the Yids!” as people passed by undistracted, “without even turning their heads.”⁸⁹ Of course, all these elements surface in Mihail Sebastian’s “Jewish novel” which engendered the purely theological dispute discussed above.

When we eventually go from a subtle essayist (Professor Nae Ionescu) to a career military man (Marshal Ion Antonescu), whatever subtlety the demonizing of the Jew may have possessed with the former disappears without a trace. The conclusion, however, remains the same: “Satan is the Jew,” consequently he must be chased away or annihilated. On 3 September 1941, when he was on the eastern front at the gates of the city of Odessa (Ukraine), the head of state Ion Antonescu sent a telegram to Mihai Antonescu, vice-president of the Council of Ministers. This was no private correspondence, but an official telegram in which Ion Antonescu gave the following directive to all the ministers in his cabinet: “All Jews are to be returned to concentration camps, preferably into those of Bessarabia, because from there we shall drive them into Transnistria.... It must be understood by all, that it is not a war against the Slavs, but against the Jews. This is a life and death confrontation. Either we win and thus the world is cleansed, or they win, and we become their perpetual slaves.” “The very life of the nation,” explained the marshal, depended “on everybody’s victory against Satan. While the war in general and the battles of Odessa in particular have given more than sufficient proof that *Satan is the Jew* [emphasis added—

A.O.]”⁹⁰ Only a few weeks later, at the end of October 1941, Antonescu accomplished a partial “purging of the world” by scoring a resounding victory “against Satan”: approximately 25,000 Jews (men and women, old people and children), the so-called Judeo-Communists, were—at his express order—shot to death, burned alive, or hung in the streets of Odessa.⁹¹

Like any other satanic entity, “the Jewish demon” is presented by Nicolae Iorga as a “serious force, obliterating and invisible, which acts in the help of evil forces and menacingly attempts to glutton over Romania, to enslave its people, to change its character, and to tarnish its spirit.” Fighting “the Jew-demon” is difficult, according to Al. Brătescu-Voinești too in 1938, as this enemy, “that resorts to diabolical craft,” always changes its shape and name. Like any other demon, continues Nicolae Roșu, the Jew can be exorcised with the cross, or with the twisted cross, the swastika—“the protective sign of civilization,” the latter being the sole remedy against the six-pointed star, the “emblem of Judaism, of Freemasonry, and of Bolshevism.” The Communist Jew Trotsky “symbolizes the satanic intolerance of permanent revolution, the revolt of the wandering Jew.”⁹²

The association of Communism with the Jew and of the Jew with Satan subsisted quietly for half a century and resurfaced in 1990, in the pages of a widely circulated Romanian newspaper, in an article entitled “Christianity and Communism”: “Marx had brought in Communism because he was a Jew, and *the Jew is Satan, he is the Antichrist* [emphasis added—A.O.]”⁹³ What follow are some other, even more recent, examples of the renewed association of the Jew with the Devil. Another newspaper of wide circulation published an article reporting on contemporary Satanist movements and macabre rituals practiced by some Romanian youth. The article reproduced the distinctive marks being employed by contemporary Satanists, among them, without any commentary, the Star of David.⁹⁴ Again in 1997, in a book entitled *Breath-taking Revelations on the Scheme by which Masonry Attempts to Destroy Romania*, it is maintained that the “Zionist Movement” (a synonym for the “worldwide Judeo-Masonic plot”) brings “so much misery and suffering upon the world” because its members “worship the Devil, [and] are upheld in their actions by the Devil.”⁹⁵ What is more, extreme right-wing magazines in Romania bristle with this type of rhetoric: “In Romania, the strongest branch of a Masonic satanic sect is active, infiltrating men into each and every one of the top structures of the state...which keeps only Jews in the most important positions”⁹⁶ or “The Apocalypse and the advent of Satan as

ruler of the world is in fact a symbolic image for the establishment of the New World Order, of the end of the Christian world in favor of Masonry.”⁹⁷

THE JEW AS WARLOCK AND RAINMAKER

As one possessed by the Devil and destined to burn in Hell, it should come as no surprise that the Jew has been attributed the status of a warlock. “The Jew oozes witchcraft and idolatry as thick as the hair of nine cows,” says a German proverb.⁹⁸ In western Europe, throughout the Middle Ages, the *perfidii Iudaei* were expelled by sovereigns, victimized by the common people, and burnt at the stake by the inquisitors, forever accused of ritual homicide, of performing black masses, of profaning the Cross and the Eucharist, of poisoning wells and bringing on the plague, of partaking in the Sabbath (“Satan’s Synagogue”), of using amulets and talismans, of practicing occult sciences (astrology, alchemy, the Kabbalah, necromancy), and so forth.⁹⁹

As we go from the medieval mentality of the West to the folkloric mentality of the East, we shall not fail to notice that in eastern Europe too the Jew was identified with a warlock, although this stigma had features that were rather less malignant. The principal magical ability attributed to the Jew by people in the eastern parts of the continent was that of mastering the weather. The Jew was perceived as a *solomonar*—a rainmaker, a warlock who could unleash or stop rain, storms, wind, or hail. “When the Jews walk in the countryside,” Byelorussian peasants used to believe, “it means that there will be a storm.”¹⁰⁰ The Carpatho-Russians held a similar superstition: “It is going to rain, for there are Jews walking around.”¹⁰¹ Polish people were convinced that a Jew, even a dead one, could bring down hail or prevent it from falling in the fields.¹⁰² In 1859, after completing a journey through Moldavia, French physician Eugène Léger wrote the following about the beliefs of the Moldavians: “Always the wretched Jews. Be there rain, be there raging wind, be there hail, the Jew is to blame.”¹⁰³ This type of perception of the stranger (responsible for producing every calamity) has survived to this day: “If something bad comes about, it is him [i.e., the stranger] to whom the people look; a plague, a dry spell, or who knows what else,” an old peasant woman from the county of Braşov affirmed in 1965.¹⁰⁴

It would appear that in eastern Europe the Jew was associated with a type of warlock whose features were less dark, whose destiny was less dramatic, and whose pursuits were less horrendous than those of the warlock-Jew

imagined in western Europe: that bloodthirsty, necromantic, and demonic character. In other words, it would appear that the warlock-Jew imagined by eastern Europeans was somewhat more “sympathetic” and “human”; he was the man who brought the rain. This is true, for sure, yet this is an observation that needs refining. As we shall see in what follows, dramatic aspects, as well as demoniac ones, are not wholly lacking from the magic scenario drawn for the Jew in the eastern part of the continent.

On the other hand, a poor level of urbanization and the persistence of quasi-feudal or pre-capitalist social and economic relations made it possible for sizeable collectivities with traditional ways of life and pre-modern mentalities to survive in this part of Europe until quite late—the beginning of the twentieth century. Within such collectivities, traditional activities such as agriculture, shepherding, etc. were prevalent, and they were strictly dependent upon weather conditions. Prolonged droughts, an excess of rain, hail, or storms could compromise the entire crop and make uncertain the very survival of a given community. In such societies, the man to whom magical powers to control rainfall were attributed was an essential personality, respected and feared, worshipped and demonized. To the magic-prone mind of Romanian peasants, this personality was embodied in a popular warlock with powers to control the weather (the *solomonar*, or rain man) who in his turn was at times associated, and even identified, with the “imaginary Jew.”

In Romanian folk mythology, *solomonars* are medicine men, astrologers, and sorcerers, and their spiritual patron was the biblical King Solomon, whose name they bore. According to the *Chronographs*, whose translation from the Greek into Romanian began in the mid-seventeenth century, Solomon

knew the nature of all there is in the world, of men, of household animals, of birds, of wild beasts, of fishes, of grasses, and of everything we know that exists in this world, beneath the skies and on the earth and in the waters, everything with his wisdom he knew by kind, for his wisdom was a gift from God. Then he also knew the planets and the constellations, and all the purpose of the sky and what lay underneath he knew, and he knew how to bind the devils and how to call them by their names and all the spells there are. Then he also knew every medicine and all the potions, and all the grasses, all those that were good for each ailment.¹⁰⁵

In Talmudic texts Solomon could not only bind the demons, but also order the spirits of the air to unleash or hold back the winds and the rains.

According to Romanian folk beliefs and legends, the rainmakers “are not pure men, but cursed by God, men who have sold their souls to the Archfiend, to be given power over the air.” They are initiated into a “fiendish school” located “under the earth, in a very far country in the East,” where “the Devil himself is the teacher.” “After the first seven years they are taught there, for three years, from books that other folks understand not and know not know to read.” After they “graduate” from the “rainmaking school,” these warlocks receive the “Book of the Solomonar,” a book of spells by means of which they can bridle the dragons of the clouds and ride them through the air. The solomonars are respected and feared by the Romanian peasants, because “they master the winds and the clouds, they go whenever they please, riding on dragons which carry them high up in the skies. When they have a fancy, they stir up the clouds or scatter them, they command the bad weather to stop over some part of the country and crush people’s food in the fields with hail, sometimes doing away with their cattle, too.”¹⁰⁶

The fact that the “Book of the Solomonar” contained spells and magic formulas written in several exotic alphabets, including the “Jewish letters,” led Romanian peasants to confuse it with books of prayer they would see among the Jews. Thus, in the region of Bukovina there was a belief that “the secret of the school of solomonars is known only to the Jews, from the book from which they pray in autumn, at their great feast.” Consequently, “the solomonars are Jews” and “there can be no solomonars from another nation, only from among the Jews.”¹⁰⁷ In the Bukovina area people also used to believe that the solomonars—just like the Jews—“are solomonized by drinking the blood of a small child.”¹⁰⁸ Folkloric sources of a similar nature have induced other ethnologists to believe that the “figure of the Jewish rabbi (or Kabbalist, or hassid), turned into a myth by the people,” must also have contributed to the shaping of the syncretic portrait of the solomonars.¹⁰⁹

In Polish folk mentality, the book was a Jewish mark of identity. Polish peasants believed that the books of the Jews contained secret knowledge, accessible only to the initiated. They were thought to be talismans charged with magical powers, such as the power to quiet stormy seas, extinguish fire, bring good luck, and assure riches.¹¹⁰

If there were Romanian peasants who considered the Jew and the solomonar to be one and the same person, others believed that the Jews (especially those who were grain merchants) were patrons of the solomonars. In other words, that Jews hired solomonars or other warlocks so that, depending on their business interests, they might stop or unleash the rain, or

send hail or a storm on the peasants' fields, who would then be forced "to buy [cereals] from the Jews."¹¹¹

According to many folk beliefs, attested not only in the Romanian area but also with the northern Slavs,¹¹² the Jews control the elements of nature at one precise moment in time, in autumn, "at their great feast," as one already quoted superstition has it. Sometimes these beliefs mention a "Feast of Booths,"¹¹³ actually referring to "The Feast of Tents" or "The Feast of the Tabernacles" (Sukkoth). Celebrated by Jews for eight days in autumn outdoors in improvised huts, not in their homes or in the vicinity of synagogues, this feast left a vivid impression on the minds of Christians. This is an autumnal Judaic feast celebrating the joy after harvesting, whose motivation and rules of behavior were set down in the Old Testament (Lev. 23:33–43). In the framework of ceremonies celebrating the fertility of the earth, the Jewish believers performed ritual dances and recited prayers (*Tefillat Hageshem*) that called for the rain to fall at the right time.¹¹⁴ The notion of such rain-invoking ceremonies reached Christians and, in all likelihood, generated or merely amplified the superstitions under discussion.

Other Romanian folk beliefs (which appear to be rather confused) claimed that the solomonars who attended the "school for solomonars" would leave school one person short. "One always perishes among them there"; he "goes away" because "the fiendish spirit takes him."¹¹⁵ Such superstitions then went through a mutation, also being accounted to the Jews through a process of association (or identification) of the *jidovi* (Jews) with the solomonars, of the synagogue (often called *shul*, [school] in Yiddish)¹¹⁶ with the "school for solomonars," and of the Feast of Tabernacles with the "Feast of Booths." Not only was the lack of clarity surrounding such superstitions not diminished, it even increased once that mutation occurred. They seem to center about some strange human sacrifice, either real or imaginary, having to do with the acquisition of magical control over the weather. Similar suggestions have survived, if in diluted form, in children's folklore as certain magic incantations for stopping storms and excessive rainfall: "With the Knife of Michael [the Archangel] / Cut off the head of the Jew."¹¹⁷ It may be that the "Jew hunt" which used to be practiced in some regions of Romania in religious rain-invoking processions was reminiscent of some archaic xenocidal ritual.¹¹⁸ "The greatest cruelties against the Jews [in Moldavia]," noted W. Schwarzfeld in 1889, "occurred when there was some religious ceremony underway meant to induce the skies to yield rain."¹¹⁹ Unable to decipher in its entirety the magic and mythic underlying significance of such

Romanian folk beliefs and practices, collected around the year 1900, I shall present below a few examples, without commentary.

—“In Bukovina they believe that the secret of the ‘school for solomonars’ is known only to the Jews, from the book from which they pray in autumn at their great feast. Judas [the Devil] knows who is the greatest liar of them all and carries him away with him to the school for solomonars, leaving behind only the shoes of the chosen one as a token. Here he then remains for seven years, but he is not alone, for there are plenty of liars. Some of them, though, do not wish to remain there; they obstinately lock themselves in or try to get out of there by means of their wits; it is they whom the dragon [of the clouds] ‘scatters away,’ leaving them beggars or even dead.”¹²⁰

—“On the Jewish holidays it must rain. When the Jews gather together and get into the booth, they get down to prayers and only eat *matzos* made with Christian blood.... The Jews then pray for rain, for if there is no rain one of them, in each town, has got to ‘kick the bucket,’ to die. When it rains at such a time, you can hear: ‘What joy for the Jews, for, lo, it’s raining!’ In some parts they say that the Jews do pray on these holidays of theirs for rain, for if it rains, from each of their schools [i.e., synagogues], one of them has got to die. Concerning these rains, in parts of Bukovina they say that they last forty days” (folk belief from Bukovina).¹²¹

—“Concerning the autumn holidays of the Jews, people say that when they are all gathered together in the school [i.e., synagogue], all candles are blown out at once and the devil then takes one of them, leaving only his shoes behind as a sign. Then, when the candles are lit again, he who is the highest among them reads the names of all and ascertains who is the missing one. An old woman said that she saw the devil carrying a Jew on his back to a pool, where he might drown him. They [i.e., the Jews] then each hold a rooster in their hands, for the soul, shielding themselves above their heads” (folk belief, probably from Moldavia).¹²²

—“The Devil is said to take a Jew in autumn, on their long day. That day they all take a white hen and candle wax from Christians and protect themselves; and only by the hen that remains can one tell that one of them is no more”; “Every year, during the autumn holidays, the Jews give a Jew as tithing to the Devil” (folk beliefs from Bukovina).¹²³

—The Jews promise to sacrifice every autumn “every tenth Jew” to the Devil, on condition that he should catch Jesus and deliver Him to them, to be killed (legend from Bukovina).¹²⁴

—“Ritual murder that, people [from Moldavia] claim, the Jews themselves perpetrate on a Jew:... On the eve of Yom Kippur, which the Romanians call great fasting, the *hakham*’s duty is said to be the killing of one single Jew throughout the world, namely the one who turns up when they cast lots. Not knowing which Jew is going to be killed, the Jewish women pray to God during the day with tears of blood to spare the lives of their husbands....” (folk belief from Moldavia).¹²⁵

—“They say that when the Jews go on their Feast of the Booths it is going to rain” (belief from Bukovina); “The Jews, when they enter their booths, they pray not for rain, for when it rains out of every synagogue one man has to die” (belief from Moldavia).¹²⁶

— “The devil comes out of a rock
A Jew he carries on his back.
‘Tell me, devil, what you thieved,
For I’ll beat you hanging up.’
‘A fiendish Kike I thieved.’
‘Tell me, devil, where you’re taking him
Where you’re taking him with no shoes
Where you take and where you move him?’
‘To the hell where Jews are many,
Those whom Hersheu knows too well,
For there they shall have home
For good and for all.”

When he published this satire, whose provenance is Bukovina, in 1871, Simeon Florea Marian added the following footnote: “There is a superstition among the people that on the Jews’ ‘Long Day’ the Devil must each year steal one Jew from every synagogue, whom he then takes down to Hell, leaving only his shoes in the synagogue.”¹²⁷

—The following are some more superstitions, gathered in Poland in the 1970s and 1980s, which refer only to the connection between the “Feast of the Tabernacles” (*Sukkoth*) and rain: “When this holiday began, it started to rain, and it did not stop until they had finished”; “The Jewish Feast of the Tents—run away, for there’ll be rain”; “On the Feast of the Booths, the rain washes away scabs [of the Jews].”¹²⁸ In Polish folklore there are also beliefs concerning the “disappearance” each year of a Jew, taken by the Devil from the synagogue to Hell on the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*), as punishment for all the sins committed by the Jewish community that year.¹²⁹ Though there seems to be a certain amount of confusion with *Sukkoth*, this

time no connection between these superstitions and meteorological phenomena is attested.¹³⁰

THE LEGEND OF THE WANDERING JEW

In Western and Central Europe

The legend of the “Wandering Jew” has a lengthy history in western and central Europe. Without going into detail, it may be worthwhile to point out some of the causes of its birth and dissemination, particularly in central Europe, and especially in the mid-sixteenth century.

First, the publication in German of a popular booklet on the “Wandering Jew” which enjoyed great success should be linked to the antisemitic diatribes signed by Martin Luther during the last period of his life. It is extremely likely that the legend originated around the middle of the sixteenth century in Lutheran circles in the northern German states. Furthermore, the character who in the 1602 edition of the pamphlet narrates his encounter with Ahasuerus the “wandering Jew” (in Hamburg, 1542) is the future theologian and bishop of Schleswig, Paul von Eitzen, who was then studying with Martin Luther at the University of Wittenberg. This is the time during which Martin Luther was writing his most trenchant antisemitic book, *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* [On the Jews and their lies], published in 1543.

Second, one explanation for the tremendous success the book enjoyed in the decades succeeding its first printing lies in the expectations of an imminent “end of the world” prognosticated for the year 1666 (containing 666, “the number of the beast,” cf. Rev. 13:18), when the much awaited second coming of Jesus to Earth was envisaged. The alleged arrival in Europe of the “eternally wandering Jew”—who, according to the legend, was to find rest precisely upon Christ’s Second Coming—must have been interpreted as an omen that confirmed premillennial anxieties about the imminent coming of “Doomsday.”

Third, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries the Jews of western Europe were driven in successive waves towards the center of the continent, and then further to the east: in 1290 they were expelled from England; between 1306 and 1394 from France; in 1400 from Prague; between 1420 and 1493 from Austria; in 1492 from Spain; in 1497 from Portugal; between 1498 and 1506 from Provence; between 1424 and 1519 from German territories, and so forth. Under these circumstances, bearded Jews bent under the burden of their belongings could be seen by tens and hundreds of

thousands treading the roads of central Europe, impressing the image on people's eyes and minds of the "Wandering Jew," cursed by fate to find no place or rest. A specter was haunting Europe. A legend that could account for this phenomenon had to follow. It made its appearance towards the middle of the sixteenth century, when the context was ripe for the world to receive it.

It still remains an open question to what extent visual representations of the "Wandering Jew," common in central and western Europe between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, were or were not influenced by other images of considerable likeness, such as the "Fool" of medieval Tarot divination cards or paintings like "The Madman" or "The Prodigal Son" by Hieronimus Bosch.¹³¹

In Transylvania

In Transylvania, a province which maintained close cultural relations with the central-European area, the legend of the "Wandering Jew" circulated quite well during the nineteenth century, particularly in Hungarian and German.¹³² It is by no mere chance that this legend begins and concludes *The Emancipation of the Jews*, a political work by the scholar who participated in the events of 1848, Joseph Eötvös, published in Hungarian in 1840 and in Italian in 1842. Only by conferring political and economic rights on the Jews of central Europe—he justly concluded—could the plight of these people, persecuted and forced to wander perpetually, come to an end.¹³³

It is significant that Eugène Sue's serial novel *Le Juif errant*, first published in 1844, was translated that very year both into Hungarian by Sándor Petöfi, and into Romanian by Timotei Cipariu, who gave it the title *Ovreiul neadormit* [The unsleeping Jew]. For Transylvanian scholars of Romanian nationality, the condition of the "wandering Jew," oppressed and exiled from his country, was perceived to be analogous with that of the Romanian inhabitants of Habsburg Transylvania. Historian Sorin Mitu has only recently highlighted the compassion and empathy with which Transylvanian Romanians related to the Jews' fate during the second half of the eighteenth and especially the first half of the nineteenth century. They equated it with their own social and political status within the Austro-Hungarian Empire as people who were likewise discriminated against, oppressed, wandering, homeless, and having no rights.¹³⁴ The following are examples of such analogies drawn between the image of the Jew (whether biblical or contemporary) and the Romanian's self-image:

—“Like the Jews, who perished in the wilderness for their faithlessness before they entered the land that was promised them, [the Romanian nation] will not come to look upon the land that it has been promised, which is the kingdom of Heaven” (*Gherontie Cotore*, 1746).

—“You shall be as you have been thus far, / As the cursed Jews are, there!... / Who have not a country, but live on the road”; “Behold...the Jews, who do not have a country and are strangers everywhere and on the road at all times. When all is told, even if the country be altogether small and poor, still happier is the people that has a country and lives in it” (Ion Budai-Deleanu, *Țiganiada* [The Gypsyiad], ca. 1795).

—Inspired by Flavius Josephus, Transylvanian poet Ioan Barac (1776–1848) adapted, in popular Romanian couplets, a lengthy poem comprising nine chants on the destruction of the Jews’ Second Temple in Jerusalem and on their dispersion into exile (*Risipirea cea depre urmă a Ierusalimului* [The final dispersion of Jerusalem], early nineteenth century).¹³⁵

—Europe views the Romanians “a lot worse than it does the Jews, who have their Moses” (George Bariț, *Românii și maghiarismul* [Romanians and Hungarianism], 1842).

—“Tomorrow or the next day [we, the Romanians] will be forced...to go on pilgrimage, staff in hand and children behind us, as once the Jews [were forced to go] from fair Palestine; we shall come to a state of real destitution, with no place to lay our heads; we shall fill up prisons, or shall dwindle from starvation and its train of abominable progenies” (Andrei Mureșanu, 1844).

—“Why, Lord almighty, work Thee not a wonder as in the desert / For people of Judea through Thy Chosen, Thy Moses! / To loosen from their fetters a kin who weeps in slav’ry, / Imploring through her tears delivery from evil!” (Andrei Mureșanu, *Un suspin* [A sigh], 1845).

—The Romanian has been scorned by many people, “as only the Judean and the Gypsy” has been (Timotei Cipariu, 1846).

—The kind of attitude shown towards Romanians was “a shameful tolerance, like in the case of Jews” (Romanian deputies in the Hungarian Parliament, 1848).

—“The epoch that began with the year 1659 has been for the Romanians what the bondage in Babylon was for the People of Israel, and the Romanians weep in it even now” (Vasile Erdélyi, bishop of Oradea, 1850).

Although the fate of Romanians in Transylvania might not always have been connected to that of the Jews, and not always explicitly so, the motif of the “Wandering Romanian” or “Countryless Romanian” persisted in the

imagery of identity circulated by Transylvanian scholars until quite late in the day. More specifically, it was constantly present until 1918, when Transylvania was united with Romania. In 1916, for instance, the nationalist poet Octavian Goga published a complete volume of poems— *Cîntece fără țară* [Songs without a country], in which he likened the “country of my soul” to “Canaan where no one cries” and to a Gomorrah where “the fire shall be one day extinguished.” In a poem bearing the precise title “The Countryless,” the poet described himself while building on clichés (which, however, are not explicit) of the image of the “Wandering Jew”:

I am a man deprived of homeland,
A speck of fire swept by a breeze,
A slave loos’d from his clasping strand,
The poorest that ever breathed.

I am a magus of laws new,
A madman whom a star’s made blind,
Who strayed far and wide to bring to you
The stories of my land...

I among you my burden carry,
In dirt befouled and in laughter scorned,
For woe to him bereft of country
That begs that his home be returned.

This type of rhetoric, also employed by other Transylvanian nationalist writers until the Great Union of 1918, was to reverberate, in all its blatant obsolescence, as late as the early 1980s in Adrian Păunescu’s poem “We, the Shepherd and the Rabbi”: “Countryless Jews, / In a frosty world, / Countryless Romanians, / In their own homes.”¹³⁶

Prime Minister Ion I. C. Brătianu also empathetically compared the ordeal of the Romanians to that of the Jews on the occasion of the Constitutional appeal of 1923, which recognized the emancipation and naturalization of Romanian Jewry: “The Romanian people, out of its infinite suffering, understands the lengthier and harsher suffering of the Jews.”¹³⁷

First exiled in Bucharest and then in Paris, Romanian philosopher Emil Cioran (born in the southern Transylvanian village of Rasinari) in 1965 placed the blame on the crisis of displacement. Feeling indeed that he was “deprived of a homeland,” “a wandering *goy* [Hebrew for non-Jew],” he

declared “profound affinity” for the Jews: “Je suis métaphysiquement Juif.”¹³⁸

I shall end this extended digression with two observations. First, it is a known fact that during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, whenever Transylvanian intellectuals identified the Romanians with a “conquering” people the terms of comparison were none other than their forebears, the Romans under Emperor Trajan.¹³⁹ It is significant that whenever the same scholars looked upon the Romanians as a “conquered” people, in their search for prestigious models they did not resort to a parallel with the Dacians but with the Jews, who—like the ancient Romans—were a “great” and “noble” nation, “with a glorious past.” It is not surprising that to the leaders of the Transylvanian School, Trajan was analogous with a Romanian Moses. Samuil Micu and Gheorghe Șincai appear to agree with the French Encyclopedist Paul-Henri Baron d’Holbach: “Each people has had a Moses of its own.”¹⁴⁰

The second observation is that the phenomenon detailed above is not of a singular nature. It can be equally well perceived in the case of other minority or marginal groups, be they ethnic, religious, social, or any other nature. The members of such communities have identified themselves, or have been identified by others, with the Jews. In 1523, Martin Luther asked “his beloved popery” to “treat [him] for a Jew” when they would grow weary of “treating [him] for a heretic.”¹⁴¹ When, in the sixteenth century, French Calvinists were persecuted and victimized by Catholics, they considered their condition to be similar to that of the Jews.¹⁴² Léon Poliakov has even maintained that anti-Jewish propaganda and manifestations lost much of their impetus during that age, to make room for their anti-Protestant equivalents.¹⁴³ Protestants were indeed perceived to be a kind of “semi-Jews,” as Édouard Drumont, the self-appointed antisemitic watchman of late nineteenth-century France, actually called them (*France juive*, 1886). For Romanian scholar Simion Mehedinți in 1941, Calvin was “fanatical as a rabbi,” while Calvinists “were no less cruel than the conquerors of Canaan.”¹⁴⁴

Around 1700 the German Johann C. Wagenseil maintained that the Gypsies were a species of Jews, judging by their itinerant lifestyle. Subsequently, Martin Block was to speak in his turn of the “Judaic extraction” of the Gypsies, given the “similitude of secular destiny” between the two peoples.¹⁴⁵ Even the “Wandering Jew” was at times associated with the Gypsy, himself a vagabond through Europe. In 1941, Mehedinți wrote that “the Gypsies, like the Jews” were “a roaming populace,” “composed of

vagabonds and impervious to measures of hygiene”; that they “play[ed] the role of the parasite in Europe,” and that they ought to be expelled.¹⁴⁶ In the first half of the nineteenth century, when Poland was literally wiped off the map of Europe, renowned poet Adam Mickiewicz identified Poles with Jews, asserting “the fraternity of the two peoples” since they were oppressed and countryless, yet had messianic missions that surpassed national interests.¹⁴⁷ In 1857, after nine years’ exile, the revolutionary leader C. A. Rosetti wrote a letter to “Romanian Israelites” that is suffused with empathy:

Israelites do know the meaning of exile.... This race will always find in my person a true brother.... I have to suffer, as you have, the dire day of the Romanian Maccabees, the day of celebration of the Law, and the day of their defeat, and again the day of the destruction of the Temple, and I await, and you await, in your tabernacles on a foreign land, with perfect faith, the “day of deliverance.”¹⁴⁸

Finally, certain late nineteenth-century socialists—such as the Romanian “worker-poet” D. Th. Neculuță (1859–1904)—identified the exploited proletariat with the “unsettled people,” the Jews whom Moses had led through the desert.¹⁴⁹ Within the reference system of European culture, the Jews have been the wanderers and the oppressed par excellence. Many discriminated and persecuted groups (be they ethnic, denominational, or political) have empathetically identified their own destinies with that of the Jews. Poets too identified with Jews, beginning with the renowned verse written in 1924 by Marina Tzvetava and subsequently used as a motto by Paul Celan in one of his poems: “*Vse poety jidy* (All poets are Yids).”¹⁵⁰ “The poet” and “the Jew,” comments Romanian critic Andrei Corbea “are mutually metaphorical equivalents.”¹⁵¹

In Moldavia and Walachia

The legend of the “Wandering Jew” apparently did not enjoy any conspicuous success in Moldavia or in Walachia. Even so, I have come across an interesting cultivated anonymous version. It was probably a Romanian monk who, around the year 1800, has put the legend into a verse form, preserved in a manuscript of the Moses Gaster Fund under the title: *Evreul călător: Aşabec* [The wandering Jew Ashabec] [*sic!*]. The manuscript, dating from the beginning of the nineteenth century, is today in the Library of the Romanian Academy.¹⁵²

The author of the versified legend insists not so much on the actual story (the incident between Jesus and Ahasuerus, named Ashabec in the title), as on the Jew's post factum lament. This is an indication that the details of the legend's plot were, despite appearances, known in the area during that period. For the sake of the few successful poetical images (alongside countless howlers), and also bearing in mind that it has as yet not been published, I reproduce it below in full translation:

Time flies by wasting all living,
I have, of life, grown weary,
But for me there is no relieving,
I walk the earth eternally.

My punishment, forever undelivered,
Is all the world to wander, short of breath;
My journey's been unending; onward steered,
I am exhausted, and I wish my death.

Centuries pass like days, and yet
I have not earned forgiveness,
Just like my punishment, my guilt was great,
For I proved merciless.

The Savior, while led away,
Bearing His cross was wasted,
And with sad gentle eyes he'd weigh
My house and there he halted.

There on a stone awhile to linger,
The Sinless One alighted,
But cruelly, in insane anger,
I drove Him off, stone-hearted.

I said to Him: "Away from my house, be off, you of bad stock,
Go to your earned doom," spoke I,
And with too much accursed talk
Chased Him away.

“Yourself shall walk unendingly,”
Quoth He, the Savior,
Thenceforth I’ve stumbled erringly,
Through the wide world, a wanderer.

There is no water, no wild place,
No mountain that I’ve left uncross’d
I trek eternally apace,
And the earth whole I have crossed.

Through elements I go light-footed,
Be it day or night, untouchable,
Of rest deprived, unhalted,
I am on the road unstoppable.

Until the world has wasted the last day,
I’ll know of no rest in my journey
Change my God-given fate no one may,
Nobody fathoms my agony.

No one knows what a strain
Is life lived centuries on end,
No one k now under what pain
In dire chastising, I did bend.

During the first decades of the nineteenth century the “vagrancy” of poor Jews (who kept infiltrating clandestinely from Galicia and Podolia mainly into Moldavia, but also into Walachia) was not simply discouraged, but even prohibited by ordinances issued by the sovereigns of the Romanian Principalities. Even the Moldavian constitutional act, *Regulamentul organic*, in force since 1832, set up a committee authorized to “eliminate” from the country those Jews who were considered “vagabonds,” “so that such individuals might not be able to enter Moldavia again.”¹⁵³ This was also the case in 1843, when regulations elaborated upon by the Extraordinary Administrative Council of Moldavia held that “vagabonds” were all Jews who could not produce “evidence of a craft or capital.”¹⁵⁴ It is probable that this socio-economic phenomenon did play a role in the legend’s naturalization on Romanian territory. Discussing the issue of destitute Jews

immigrating throughout the nineteenth century from Galicia into Moldavia, Mihail Sadoveanu seems to have intuited the intermingling of historical and mythological matter: “The ditches along the [Moldavian] roads leading from the parts of Galicia have grown to be places in which the offspring of the Wandering Jew now find their rest and abandon sabots and rags.”¹⁵⁵

An interesting version of the legend was published by Ion Heliade-Rădulescu, in 1836, in the first theater review issued in Walachia. Authored by C. G. Filipescu, it is an “imitation” of a German poet, and the mythic motif is treated in romantic manner. The “strayed Jew, Ashaber,” [*sic!*] is tortured by the devil and forgiven by the angel, both sent by Jesus Christ: “Heartless one, you have chased away the Son of God!” Jesus says unto him. “So shall you be chased away! A black devil escaped from hell shall hunt you from place to place with his flaming whip, O Ashaber, and you will not, O ruthless one, be found worth receiving neither the sweet comfort of dying or the repose of a grave.” Ashaber eventually repents and Jesus sends an angel to bring deliverance, allowing him to sleep until the Second Coming of Christ. “‘You sleep now,’ says the angel unto him, ‘sleep in peace, Ashaber. God’s wrath is not eternal. When you open your eyes again, He shall be here. He whose blood you have seen flowing on Golgotha. He who has now forgiven you!’”¹⁵⁶

Mihail Eminescu was aware of the existence of this rendition and, if we were to take into consideration its Romantic character, he must have appreciated it. In July 1876, immediately after he was assigned responsibility for the literary supplement of *Curierul de Iași*, Eminescu published a second edition, after four decades, of this “imitation of a German story” entitled “Ahasver, jidovul rătăcitor” [Ahasuerus, the wandering Jew]. More than any other legendary character, Ahasuerus is for Eminescu a philosophical metaphor needed to define the perpetual movement of both matter and being throughout the Universe: “In an eternal transition, in a pilgrimage from being to being, such is an Ahasuerus of the forms of the world.”¹⁵⁷ Elsewhere he wrote:

This is one and the same *punctum saliens* to be discerned in thousands of people, deprived of the veil of time, and of space; perfect and inseparable; it prompts the skins to move, and has them advance, it forsakes them, and then forms new ones; yet, the flesh of its figments appears as matter; such an Ahasuerus of the forms engages in a voyage that seems never-ending.¹⁵⁸

A “Faustian” poem, entitled “Ahasveros, în veacul nostru” [Ahasuerus of our times] was written by poet Samson Bodnărescu, one of Eminescu’s intimates: “Vain is your attempt [Yahweh] to shatter me... / You have already punished me, making me immortal like you...” Literary critic George Călinescu deems that this is a text in the style of Eminescu, having “touching resemblances to Eminescu’s poem entitled ‘Mureșan’ (1876).”¹⁵⁹ Though published in 1884, the poem was written in 1869, during Eminescu’s and Bodnărescu’s student days in Vienna.

The image of Ahasuerus in the works of Romanian Romantic poets was influenced by the cultural space of nineteenth-century Germany. And yet, it differs substantially from the image promoted by Richard Wagner, for instance, who employed the literary motif of the “Wandering Jew” both in musical oeuvres (some commentators claim that the character of Kundry, in *Parsifal*, 1882, is the feminine mirroring of Ahasuerus), and in his ideological writings. For the German composer, a Jew can only be redeemed from the “Ahasuerus type” of curse by following “one way”: “a regenerative solution” (*Know Thyself*, 1881), “a complete destruction” that looks like an anticipatory version of the “final solution” devised by Hitler: “Do not hesitate to participate in this act of salvation,” Wagner addresses the Jews (*Judaism and Music*, 1850), “in which destruction plays a regenerative role, and only thus will we eventually be united as fellows. Be aware that there is only one way to get rid of the curse which falls on you: Ahasuerus’ salvation: complete destruction!”¹⁶⁰

Writing in 1926 about the “story of the Wandering Jew” and “the crisis of Judaism,” Romanian Orthodox philosopher Nae Ionescu also came to the conclusion that the suffering—or death—of Judaism would be the only solution: “I believe that the crisis of Judaism is permanent.... The story of the wandering Jew is not only a story; it is the genuine expression of the unrest of this race which has not found its way. Judaism has two possibilities: perpetual suffering or death. *Tertium non datur*.”¹⁶¹ By this text, Mihail Sebastian noted in 1935, Nae Ionescu “anticipated about seven years earlier that ‘Judas must suffer’” in his famous preface to Sebastian’s novel *De două mii de ani...* (1934). Like the “Wandering Jew,” “Judas will be in continuous agony until the end of the world,” wrote Ionescu, convinced of his capacity to prove “that there is no other way” [emphases in the original—A.O.].¹⁶²

In 1895, while studying in Paris, *wunderkind* George Enescu (then only fourteen years of age) composed an oratorio for vocalists, choir, and orchestra entitled *Ahasuerus* (with the sub-title *Legenda* [A legend]). For this

extensive composition (a prologue and three tableaux), Enescu resorted to a text signed by Frenchman, Auge de Lassus. The motto chosen by the Romanian composer runs: “Tu marcheras toi-même. Encore plus de mille ans [You will wander yourself, and for more than one thousand years].”

Eventually, Mircea Eliade too tackled this theme, though not in one of his treatises on the history of religions but in a fantastic tale entitled *Dayan* (Hebrew: “judge”), written while he was in Chicago in 1980. In order to find final peace and rest, the Wandering Jew (“an old, very old gentleman, with a long grey beard, in quaint dress, with a long, ragged gown”) wishes more than anyone else for the End of Days. Ahasuerus initiates the protagonist of the novel, Dayan, a genius student of mathematics at the University of Bucharest, in order to discover with his assistance whether or not the end of the world was expected in 1987. “The fact that I stayed with you for so long,” the old man tells him, “must have a meaning, a deep, and terrible meaning. And at your last judgment, everybody in this part of the world, Christian or not, Jews, skeptics, heretics, you will all be judged according to your *understanding* of my story... [emphasis in the original—A.O.]” With Mircea Eliade the legend all in all preserves its classical elements, yet the manner in which the author interprets the Wandering Jew strikes a new key. “Ahasverus,” explains Dayan, “is a sort of *anima mundi*, or Spirit of the World, yet a lot simpler and more profound. In fact, any one of us can be Ahasuerus. It can be me, it can be one of my colleagues, or it can be you....”¹⁶³

If only implicitly, the legend of the “Wandering Jew” has a distinct etiological nature. It answers the questions of “Why” and “For how long have the Jews been roaming throughout the world at large?” This is due to the fact that, to the popular mind, Ahasuerus is not merely a Jew but the generic Jew, or all the Jews, great grandsons of those who crucified Jesus: “His blood be on us and on our children!” (Matt. 27:25). How could one show one’s love for Jesus more convincingly than by demonstrating repulsion towards His murderers?

Since the legend is not only Christian, but Judeophobic as well, it was only natural that Romanian Jewish writers avoided putting the motif of the “Wandering Jew” to literary use. There are, however, a few exceptions. Abraham Goldfaden, father of the Jewish theater, composed the Yiddish text of the poem “Evige Jude” [The eternal Jew] (Frankfurt, 1880), in which he assimilated the lament of the Wandering Jew to the lament of the Jewish

People as a whole. Later, in 1908, Goldfaden composed the libretto for an opera entitled *Ahasuerus*.¹⁶⁴

In his collection of poems bearing the title *Petre Schlemihl* (Bucharest, 1932), Ilarie Voronca (Eduard Marcus) senses his being rejected by society, being countryless, a “wandering Jew,” and “an Ahasuerus casting no shadow.” “You have dragged me away from courts drenched by rain, / And you have discarded me in December from the stoves with redhot crackling fire, / I wander away from the streets that are filled with noise, / And you have whipped me in market places as you whip old horses.” The poet becomes an “Ahasuerus deprived of his own shadow,” similar to the hero without a shadow from Chamisso (*Merveilleuse histoire de Peter Schlemiehl* [The wonderful tale of Peter Schlemiehl, [1814]). As Voronca would later say to himself: “A poet you are, and therefore you are an Ahasuerus to the end of time.” “The identification with Peter Schlemiehl, who was to become a sort of wandering Jew,” comments literary critic Ovid S. Crohmălinceanu, “deserves much critical attention in the case of the poet Voronca, since elsewhere the work of the author contains no details of his identity in a direct confessional mode,” while another literary critic, George Călinescu, maintains that Ilarie Voronca claims “spiritual lineage” from Benjamin Fundoianu.¹⁶⁵

Assuming a tragic destiny, which indeed was eventually to befall him (he died in a gas chamber at Auschwitz in October 1944), poet Benjamin Fundoianu (Wechsler) signed a few of his texts with one of the names applied to the “Wandering Jew” (Isaac Laquedem)¹⁶⁶ in “Flanders Weeping,” or identified himself with him, most notably in the poem “Ulysses,” published in Brussels in 1933:

I wandered sightless among lost railway steps,
Kept asking, left and right, where lay my journey's end,
That which would have me go, and leave my home behind
Feeding my restlessness on blocks of ice?
Jewish, for sure, still throughout a Ulysses....
An unseen hand plucks off my eyelids,
I cannot get a wink
And have to cry out, until the world comes to an end,
I cannot close my eyes an instant, until the world comes to an
end,
I'm nothing but a witness...¹⁶⁷

According to Augustine's well-known theory, the existence of Jews among Christians must be tolerated because they were to fill the role of "witnesses of truth" (*testes veritatis*): witnesses of Jesus' death and rebirth. The Wandering Jew did, indeed, ideally incarnate the immortal witness of Christ's passion. This meaning is present not only in the text from 1836 ("He whose blood you have seen flowing on Golgotha"), but also, a century later, in Fundoianu's poem: "I cannot close my eyes an instant, until the world comes to an end, I'm nothing but a witness."

WHY JEWS DO NOT EAT PORK

Man Is What He Eats

One of the animals which legend has associated with the Jew is the pig. This does not appear to be a mere attribution of a zoological epithet, but rather a justification offered for an ancient culinary proscription: "The pig...is unclean for you. You shall not eat its meat" (Deut. 14:8). Jews have considered transgression of this interdiction to be the ultimate symptom of the degradation of Judaic culture and religion. A Jewish character in Karl Emil Franzos's novel, *Der Pojaz* (Stuttgart, 1905), obsessively refuses to come near the "unclean city" of Cernăuți (Czernowitz, then known as "Jerusalem on the river Prut") because there "the Jews eat pork."¹⁶⁸

Viewed from the perspective of food anthropology, the difference between "us" and "them" is provided not only by the gods to whom we pray but also by the food we eat. "Jews are different," says an informant from Austria, "because of their religion. You can see this already in their eating habits."¹⁶⁹ In other words, Jews are different not only because they do not believe in Jesus, but also because they are not allowed to eat pork. There is also the fact that they are beef-eaters. To eat beef is a "great sin" and only those "of a heathen sort" (i.e., non-Christians) would do that; at least that is what Moldavian peasants would think, since they "feel sick when they hear of beef; they would much rather fast."¹⁷⁰ The Moldavians' loathing of beef, especially beef "from the Jews," is attested in an act written in Fălticeni in 1837: "[Romanians] are loath to have to buy meat from the Jews."¹⁷¹ This should not surprise us in the least. Centuries of traditional religious lore on both sides produced this "culinary gap" between "us" and "them." For example, *Pravila bisericească* (The Church code of laws printed at the Govora Monastery in 1640) decrees that "A Christian should not taste" food or drink "taken from the hands of Jews." The Christian "is obligated to

summon a priest, in order to be blessed by him, and only afterwards can he touch the food or the drink.”¹⁷²

In traditional communities, food is an important factor of ethnic identification. “Man is what he eats,” Ludwig Feuerbach proclaimed in the middle of the nineteenth century. Anthropologists later adopted this formulation, only not in its materialistic but rather in its cultural sense.¹⁷³ The materialistic perspective led to the rise of many abusive theories. For instance, in 1926, H. Sanielevici thought that “the relentless, tormented, and impulsive activity of Jews” is counterbalanced by their ingestion of mainly azotized plants, such as pods and beans. Furthermore, it is not only what a person is allowed to eat, but also culinary interdictions that define ethnicity: “Man [also] is what he is not allowed to eat.”

For Christians, the Jews’ interdiction against the consumption of pork was so against nature and so meaningless that they sensed a need to give it a meaning or motivation. Invited to dine at a Christian’s table, Shylock the moneylender refuses to eat pork, pleading that the animal was “the habitation which your prophet the Nazarene conjured the devil into” (*Merchant of Venice*, Act I, Scene 3). What Shakespeare has done here is a deviation of meaning, both theological and chronological. An Old Testament interdiction relating to food (Lev. 11:8 and Deut. 14:8) is provided with a New Testament motivation: “And He said to them, ‘Go!’ So they came out and entered the swine” (Matt. 8:32; see also Luke 8:33; Mark 5:13).

This is an example which actually reveals no more than the Christians’ failure to make sense of this prohibition and their obvious helplessness to interpret a food taboo they found to be unaccountable. To understand their stupor over this matter, we must bear in mind the important role, also symbolic and ritual, played by the pig in traditional societies. The sacrifice of a pig around the date of the winter solstice is actually the survival of an ancient agrarian rite of sacrifice.¹⁷⁴

Under these circumstances, in order to “legitimize” the interdiction and give it some kind of meaning, Europeans created an imaginary, strange etiologic legend. In the Romanian legends that are part of the ample cycle on the theme of “Virgin Mary searching for Jesus,” one finds the following episode. Upon hearing that Jesus has been crucified by the “Yids,” the Mother of God sets out in search of him, but when she reaches the place of crucifixion “a Jewess with two children” hides under a trough for fear of her. “If, as you say, thou be / The Virgin Mary /,” say the Jews, “Guess what might be under yonder trough?” “A sow with sucking pigs,” answers the

Virgin Mary, and the Jews make fun of her mistake; yet when they lift the trough they indeed find a sow with two sucklings. The etiological nature of the legend is explicit: "And since then the Jews won't eat pork!"¹⁷⁵ According to some commentators, "the fear of cannibalism" is the mythic-ritual reason for this food prohibition, yet this is hardly the place to reopen this ramified file.¹⁷⁶

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Simeon Florea Marian intuitively maintained that "the source of the legend could be none other but [the apocryphal text] the 'Virgin Mary's Dream,' compiled with some other Christian apocrypha."¹⁷⁷ However, the Romanian folklorist was unable to identify the latter source. This, in all likelihood, is the apocryphal gospel called the "Childhood of Jesus" (or "Gospel According to Pseudo-Thomas"), which, in its Old Slavic version, circulated in the Romanian Principalities in the late fourteenth century.¹⁷⁸

According to this apocryphal text, it was the child Jesus and not the Virgin Mary who transformed a pack of Jewish children hiding from him into suckling pigs.¹⁷⁹ It may be that this miraculous deed was later ascribed to the Virgin Mary. Such borrowings from the "Gospel of the Childhood of Jesus" into the "Miracles of the Virgin Mary" were not a rare event in the seventeenth century.¹⁸⁰ Similar legends (Arne-Thompson 1870), with Jesus once again as a protagonist and also originating in the "Gospel of the Childhood of Jesus," are to be found in the folklore of many European peoples, from Poland,¹⁸¹ Hungary,¹⁸² and Lithuania, all across Europe to Spain, France, and Britain.¹⁸³ Oskar Dähnhardt has collected approximately thirty such popular legends.¹⁸⁴

"Jewish Swine"

In central Europe, another legend explains the same food interdiction. A Hungarian version, collected in the Szeged area around the year 1880, goes: "When Lord Jesus was crucified, a swine-herd was passing there with his swine. Then a pig went up to the cross and rubbed its side against it. But the Jews did not know which side of the pig was rubbed, so from then on they do not eat pork in order to avoid eating from the side with which the pig had touched the cross."¹⁸⁵

Romanians have a legend similar in structure, but with the ending reversed. Since "Judas' Yids" were trying to murder Jesus, the Virgin Mary hid her babe in a pigpen. Because "the pigs warmed him and fed him," Jesus blessed them: "Blessed be the flesh on them and sweet for the mouths of

men!” This ending confers a Christian motivation to an archaic pre-Christian rite, that of sacrificing a pig around the time of the winter solstice: “Ever since have swine been slaughtered before Christmas.” Even so, under this mythical benediction uttered by God *ab origine*, Romanians in Bukovina have taken bacon and pork each year to the church on Easter, so that their produce might receive the priest’s blessing.¹⁸⁶

The two legends are parallel, both associating the pig with moments in the life of Jesus (his death and birth, respectively). In the first (a Christian perspective attributed to the Jews), the pig emerges of this association “defiled,” hence the ritual interdiction of consuming its flesh. In the second (a Christian perspective attributed to Christians), the pig emerges “blessed,” hence the ritual obligation of consuming the flesh of this animal. Finally, in both types of legends, the association of Jesus with the pig imposes an essential parallelism: the Jews hate them both, while Christians love the two of them. Anthropologists, maintains Ioan Petru Culianu, classify peoples as “pig lovers” and “pig haters.”¹⁸⁷ Indo-Europeans would fit into the first category, while Semites fall into the second. We should bear in mind that the Apostles (St. Paul in particular) had to forego the Old Testament interdiction against eating pork; otherwise the Christianization of any of the European peoples would have been compromised.

The abovementioned belief concerning the defilement of the pig due to its rubbing against the Cross is also attested in Transylvania. Romanians from Moldavia used to believe that the Jews would also not eat pike because of its association with the Cross: “They say that all the tools used for torturing the Lord Christ are to be found in a pike’s head: cross, hammer, nails, ladder.”¹⁸⁸ Another belief maintains that “Jews do not eat pike, because it has on its forehead a bone shaped like a cross.”¹⁸⁹ Collected in Moldavia and Bukovina, these beliefs strike one as awkward. They are in contradiction with the fact that fish in general (the clean ones, “which have fins and scales,” Lev. 11:9) and especially pike, have ever since the Middle Ages been a very customary dish for the Jews of eastern and central Europe.¹⁹⁰ The preparation of *gefillte fish* (lit., stuffed fish) for the Sabbath Eve meal engendered in those areas the Jewish proverb: “Without fish there is no Sabbath.”¹⁹¹ “And you eat pike, / Stuffed for Sabbath,” wrote Benjamin Fundoianu in one of his poems.¹⁹² Moritz Feldman, a character in Panait Istrati’s prose works, eats “stuffed pike and piroskas” in a Cairo tavern run by Goldenberg, a Jew from Focșani. “Stuffed pike and piroskas,” comments the narrator, “[are] dishes of biblical origin that every kind Jew offers for the Sabbath” to his kin, “so as to repay

for the other six days of meager nourishment.”¹⁹³ Indeed, the Talmud asks: “When may those who possess less than fifty shekels have the dish of vegetable and fish?” and supplies a simple answer: “Every Friday night of the Sabbath.”

Another Romanian legend accounts for the Jews’ repulsion of crabs: since they are reasonable (or, as the legend has it, headstrong) people, “they wish to know where the beast comes from, and where it goes,” since it advances sideways. The Romanian peasant is indeed aware of something. Orthodox Jews are in fact forbidden from eating crabs, but for different reasons: being a creature of watercourses, with no fins and no scales, the crab is an “abomination” (Lev. 11:12). Another anecdotal motivation refers to the proverbial Jewish fear of weapons: Jews do not eat crabs because the latter are “armed.”¹⁹⁴

The interdiction against eating pork and Jewish avarice are two clichés that overlapped, giving rise to Russian popular sayings of the type: “If the Jew knew that the sow had swallowed half a kopeck, he would eat it,” or “Give the Jew a ruble, and he would eat you a porker whole.”¹⁹⁵ The Jew’s loathing for pork overlapped with the image of the Jew as innkeeper and, in the folklore of Romanians from Bukovina, produced a popular recipe for curing the vice of drunkenness:

Take a slice of bacon and have it placed in a bed in which a Jew sleeps. There the bacon must stay for three nights. When the bacon is put on the bed, he who puts it must recite these words: ‘As the Jew loathes bacon and our food, so will Such-and-such loathe Jewish drink.’ After you remove the bacon away from the bed, cook it, and give it to the drunk, he will never drink again for as long as he lives!¹⁹⁶

This type of folk legend and belief, especially in central and western Europe and rather less poignantly in the Romanian area, seems not to have been simply restricted to justifying why Jews would not eat pork. It is also a case of the paradoxical identification of the Jew with the animal that constituted the forbidden food, a depreciatory identification that took numerous other forms. Such, for example, has been the injurious appellative *maran* (from the Castilian *marrano*, “pork” or from the Arab *mahram*, “forbidden”) employed in Iberia to address Jews who were converted to Christianity. In the German cultural area one must point to the repulsive iconography, dating for the most part from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, representing the Jew as worshipping and riding a sow (*Judensau*), sucking her milk and swallowing

her excrements,¹⁹⁷ and also to the damaging popular expression *Judenschwein* (Jewish swine). In a Nazi song, Christ himself is thus emended: “Wir wollen keine Christen sein, / Denn Christ war ein Judenschwein.”¹⁹⁸

The association between the Jew and the prohibited animal became one of the strongest antisemitic stereotypes, so much so that Claudine Fabré-Vassas justly points to the paradox: “Against the universal law, which associates the other, the stranger, with what he eats,¹⁹⁹ the Jews are associated with the animal whose flesh is forbidden them. “At one blow, identity and prohibition find themselves reconciled.”²⁰⁰ Again, the formula “Man is what he eats” interferes with “Man is what he is not allowed to eat.”

THE JEW AS GOOD OMEN

The Magic of the Beginning of a Journey

The more negative the portrait of the “imaginary Jew,” the more surprising is the fact that—as we have already seen—he is nonetheless attributed positive traits: the Jew is intelligent, cultivated, and skilled in business; the Jewish woman is beautiful, elegant, and virtuous; the Jews are very pious, good family men, they stick together, etc. The characteristic to be discussed at this juncture is a magical trait that has proven very powerful, as indicated by its survival to this day in the popular frame of mind as well as by its persistence despite the antipathy with which Jews have been viewed.

According to an old Romanian folk belief, when a Christian meets a Jew at the beginning of his journey, he will be lucky in all his endeavors: “When you meet a Yid, things will be good for you,” goes this belief in its shortest form, as attested in late nineteenth-century Moldavia and Bukovina.²⁰¹ The same belief is still to be encountered in present-day Poland: “To meet a Jew on the road in the morning means success for the whole day.”²⁰² Quite naturally, similar superstitions have penetrated the folklore of Romanian children: “If he [i.e., the child] comes across a Jew, then he may well be sure he is going to come to good wherever he’s going, if he would just say to him the words: *hep, hep!*”²⁰³

An interesting fact is that, in some cases, this folk belief applies not only to the Jew, but to other “strangers” as well (Gypsies, for example): “The Gypsy has good omens, for when you meet one on the road, you will come to good on your ways” and “If you meet Gypsies or Yids on the road, you shall profit by your journey,” advise two superstitions recorded at the end of the nineteenth century.²⁰⁴ In the oldest record of this superstition on Romanian

territory (1757), the magic potentialities of a “bearer of good omen” were applied to the Jew, the Gypsy and the Turk: “If a Gypsy, a Turk, or a Jew comes his [i.e., a Christian’s] way...he then thinks that things shall be good for him and he shall journey with good luck.”²⁰⁵ Usually the superstition refers to the Jew; the presence of the Gypsy and especially of the Turk (in one single record) is rarer, but could be symptomatic, if only for the fact that these two appear in the more archaic variants of the superstition.

It is not altogether clear what is the logic that generated and then kept such a belief alive. In fact, there are several possible explanations, each with its pros and cons. Instead of bluntly opting for one of them, I shall try to present them in short.

In the first explanation one may invoke—though with much precaution—the positive magic values of “good omen” that one usually associates with dirt. “The Jew is dirty,” it is said, and, consequently, an encounter with him would be a good omen.²⁰⁶ This might be an interesting example as to how a negative stereotype can generate one at the opposite pole. As far the magic qualities of dirt are concerned, let us only bring to mind some known superstitions which have survived in various relic forms all over Europe, not only in traditional societies but also in contemporary urban ones, proof of the force and great age of this type of magic-related thinking. It is believed that meeting (or touching) a chimneysweep is a good omen, that involuntary contact with excrement or the uttering of its name (French: *Merde!*) will bring good luck, etc.

This type of explanation might justify why, in some formulations of the folk belief under discussion, the Jew is doubled by the chimneysweep or by the Gypsy (another “ethnic character” perceived as being dirty): “If a chimneysweep or a Jew appears on the street, it is a sign of good luck” (Polish superstition),²⁰⁷ or “When you are away somewhere...if you meet a Yid or a Gypsy, things shall go right for you” (Romanian superstition).²⁰⁸

The second—and simplest—explanation of the superstition relies on a stereotype with which we have already dealt: “the Jew is wealthy,” his business prospers, money “sticks” to him; consequently, “If a Jew appears on the street, it is a sign of good luck, especially in business,” as is believed in Poland.²⁰⁹ This is a good example of how one positive cliché determines another positive cliché. However, this last signification—“especially in business”—may be a late and simplistic one added to a handy association, when the initial magic meaning was lost or no longer understood. The weakness of this suggested explanation lies in its logic. After all, not all Jews

are wealthy and not all wealthy persons are Jews. The logic of stereotypical thinking was overlapped with magical thinking.

The loss of the initial magic signification is a current phenomenon, due for the most part to the erosion of the magic mentality in the modern world. In our case, ignorance of the initial meaning perplexes common people faced with the discrepancy between the general portrait of the Jew, which is highly negative ("Christ killer"), and its particular form, which is highly positive ("bringer of good luck"). The confusion-generating antinomy appears in the declaration of a rural informant from southeastern Poland: "If you meet a Jew on the road, people said that the Jew brings good luck, though some people said that the Jews crucified Jesus."²¹⁰

Finally, a third explanation of this folk belief cannot ignore the existence of an opposite, yet complementary, superstition: "When you meet a priest [or a monk], things will go badly for you."²¹¹ This is a Romanian folk belief recorded as early as the middle of the eighteenth century²¹² which spread throughout the entire country in several variants: "Run from before me, / O monk, evil eye, / The Devil himself made thee come before me."²¹³ There is another proverb equivalent to this superstition: "No good jesting with the Devil, no good meeting with a priest."²¹⁴ Ion Creangă incorporated it into his story "Moș Nichifor Coțcariul" [Old Nichifor the Trickster], published in 1877. The carter believes that he has found the magic justification for the bits of ill luck that were his lot one after the other during his journey with Malca, a Jewish woman: "It looks as if this morning a priest came in my way, or Hell knows what else!"

The Devil often plays a role in the way this superstition is formulated; this is not without significance. These are the magical remedies against this sign of "ill omen": throw a wisp of straw at the priest, knot your handkerchief, take forty steps back, or spit and say, "Get thee behind me, Satan!"²¹⁵ In similar forms, this belief can be found among other populations in western Europe (the English, the French, the Spanish, and the Germans),²¹⁶ but also in the central and eastern sections of the continent among the Germans (Saxons) in Transylvania, the Slavs to the south of the Danube, the Poles,²¹⁷ the Greeks,²¹⁸ the Ruthenians in Bukovina, the Aromanians of Macedonia, the Russians,²¹⁹ and more. Interestingly, even the Jews in Romania have taken over this superstition, including its remedy,²²⁰ even trying to explain it, by resorting to their own mythology, as a survival of a biblical event (Exod. 5:7–16).²²¹

Only now, I believe, can we see the complete picture. For the peasant of Romania in particular, and of central and southeastern Europe in general, encountering a Jew (i.e., a “bad man”) on the road is considered to be “a good omen,” while meeting a priest or a monk (i.e., a “good man”) is considered “an evil omen.” In magic-related thinking, these two paradoxical and contradicting superstitions are not distinct but complementary, as are the two sides of a single coin. They cannot be understood separately and one must find a unique explanation to satisfy both beliefs within the coordinates of the logic of magical thinking.

Compared to an ordinary—no matter how virtuous—Christian, the priest (or the monk) is believed to be even more virtuous or “nearer to God.” This being the case, the Devil—or in other cases the evil spirit—who keeps watch “at the beginning of the journey” or “at the crossroads,” on the lookout for a man to enter and harm, will flee from the priest and enter the body of the ordinary Christian traveler, who is not so well protected. This is the explanation for the magic gesture of spitting and shouting “Pah! Get thee behind me, Satan!” as a remedy against the encounter with a clergyman, and this is why such an encounter is considered an evil omen.

On the contrary, in the same coordinates of magic-related thinking, an ordinary Christian is “nearer to God,” and therefore better protected from the Devil, than the Jew, who is unbaptized, does not believe in Jesus, is destined for Hell, a “man of the Devil,” of “foul faith,” and so on. Between the Christian and the Jew, the Devil will always choose the latter. This being the case, the Christian traveler may safely continue a journey which has begun with a good omen—the propitious appearance on the scene of a Jew.²²²

This explanation answers to the logic of magical thinking. As a rule, the demons and the evil spirits choose to enter the bodies of the “weaker,” the less-protected beings in a group: the non-Christian stranger, the black animal, the not yet baptized child, etc.²²³ “The small child [i.e., not yet baptized] should not be left alone in the house, for the Evil One will enter him.”²²⁴ If things are seen in this light, one can understand why, in some (older) variants of the superstition, the Jew’s role of “good omen” can also be played, as we have seen, by other non-Christian strangers, such as the Turk or the Gypsy (“The Gypsies, baptized though they may be, are still not of our faith,” says a folk belief from Bukovina).²²⁵ It seems that the Jews themselves held a similar belief. For once, they considered the Christian to be a good omen, because it was he who attracted the Devil, thus freeing the Jew from this danger: “The Jews,” goes a Polish folk belief, “were afraid of the devil.

When they walked somewhere near a forest, they liked to have a Catholic with them.”²²⁶ We can only ask ourselves whether this is indeed a superstition of the Jews or merely one that Christians have laid on their account.

In any event, if we accept the third of the explanations offered above, what seemed to be a positive touch to the portrait of the “imaginary Jew” (his being a good omen), proves to be yet another negative trait of his image: he is a proper vessel for the Devil.²²⁷

The Magic of the First Guest

The superstition discussed above concerning the positive augural prestige bestowed on the Jew proved to be so strong that its “range of action” expanded tremendously, acting upon other zones of the magic frame of mind. For Romanians in Moldavia, a Jew who appears in a dream is considered a beneficial apparition, while a priest’s manifestation is taken to be malefic: “If you dream of a Yid, that is an angel. If you dream of a priest, that is a devil”; “Should you dream of a priest, that is the Devil; if you dream of a bishop, this is the highest among devils.”²²⁸ In 1929 Pierre Bogatyrev recorded similar dream superstitions among the Slavs living in northern Romania. Unable to explain this twice-paradoxical superstition, the author resorted to a simplistic motivation from the sphere of folk oneiromancy: “If you have a good dream, it is a bad sign, and the other way round, if you have a bad dream, it is a good sign.”²²⁹

In Bukovina it is believed that if a newborn is suckled by a Jewish woman, the babe shall have a lucky life and the evil eye will never stick to him.²³⁰ Poles and Byelorussians also entertain a belief, still current to this very day, that the presence of a Jew (or, more rarely, a Gypsy) at the wedding of a Christian couple, whether Catholic or Orthodox, is a very good omen. Wedding and birth are both a “beginning of a journey.” Two Scottish missionaries who visited a small Polish town on the border between Galicia and Bukovina in 1839 were bewildered by the manner in which a Jewish stranger was welcomed by Christian wedding guests: “Hardly had Mr. Calman entered that two young women immediately fell at his feet and kissed his boots, thanking him for the honor he had brought them by setting foot in their house.”²³¹

For want of Jews, substitutes have been used. For instance, it is a sign of prosperity and good luck for the new family when the bride wears “something borrowed from a Jew” or when there are persons at the wedding

who dance bearing Jewish masks, i.e., in traditional costume and appearance.²³² Most often, however, the best man, or another friend of the bridegroom, disguises himself as a Jewish peddler (long tow beard, black caftan, a sack on his back, etc.). Speaking broken Polish like a Jewish haberdasher, and behaving like one, the “Jew” bargains for the bride as if she were a mere commodity: he “purchases” her, dances with her, and then delivers her to the groom.²³³ That is a strange combination of the magic and the comical.

Some rural areas of Romania also preserve the tradition that guests dance “in Jewish fashion” after the “wedding feast,” which implies merely performing the first steps of a Jewish dance such as the “Jewish circle dance” [Hora ovreiască], the Jidovească, or the “Little Jewess” [Jidăncuța].²³⁴ Stelian Dumistrăcel believes that the names of these dances, “which come under a diminutive form (The Little Jewess, The Angry Little Jewess, etc.), increase the note of [ethnic] solidarity, even of sympathy.”²³⁵ Within the aforementioned magical logic, the Romanians also believe that if a priest is chanced upon during any of the walks occasioned by the wedding ceremonies, this would be an ill omen, and immediate magic measures must be taken to neutralize this ill fortune.²³⁶

Superstitions similar in essence have survived outside the rural area, having reached the nineteenth-century middle classes, townspeople, and small merchants: “A Romanian merchant or craftsman from among the commoners believes that if the money he first earns in the morning (*saftea*) is from a Jew, he shall make heaps of money that day. On the contrary, if a priest enters his shop first, or even if he encounters a priest when he is on the road with some business, he is going to meet with trouble.”²³⁷

Finally, the augural role played by the Jew—as a prophet of good fate (Latin *omen fati*) and a bringer of success and prosperity—stands out more distinctly in the typically Slavic custom of the “first guest” (Polish *polaznic*), conducted on the first morning of the New Year (on St. Basil’s Day) or, by extension, on Christmas, and sometimes even on other major Christian festive occasions, including Easter.²³⁸ It was believed that the first living being (generally a human, but it could also be an animal) that chanced to enter a house at the beginning of the year or of a season (once more, the magic of “the journey’s beginning”) foretold the future of the family. If the “first guest” was a woman or a decrepit old man, this was an evil omen for the people in that household, and for their crops and livestock as well.

For the Ruthenians and the Hutsullians of Maramureș and Bukovina (in the village of Prislop, for instance), the ideal *polaznic* was the Jew, because he prophesied good luck and wealth for the entire incoming year. Many times the hazard—typical of actions with an augural value—was avoided; the Jews in the area were in great demand on such days and were deliberately invited to very many houses.²³⁹

The Magic of the Gift of Augury

This tradition seems to have had quite an unexpected success, being practiced even by the highest social classes in the Romanian Principalities:

The first eating of flesh on the first night of Christmas and on Easter had to come from a Jew [for it to be a good omen]. Naturally, not every [Christian] could obtain meat for the holidays from a Jew. The sovereign, however, as well as the Metropolitan Bishop, the ministers, and the great boyars could procure it and it may be that the Jews were even ordered to secure meat for the first meal after fasting.

Indeed, once the fasting period ended, “on the eves of Christmas and Easter” the “head of the [Jewish] community, together with its most notable members” used to bring, in turn, “a few excellent fat capons” to each of the great notabilities of the country.²⁴⁰

To better grasp the immense force of the superstition about “the Jew as good omen,” we should try to picture the full paradox of this magical practice. In order to enjoy good omens during the entire year, the primate of all Walachia (the highest Christian authority of the principality) received the heads of the Jewish community as his “first guests” on the eves of Christmas and Easter, and for his first meat meal after a long and arduous period of fasting feasted upon the meat brought by the Jews as a gift. Let us bear in mind that Easter commemorates Jesus’ death for which, to the traditional mind, the Jews are answerable. This “bizarre custom” was practiced “in the old days” up to the middle of the nineteenth century and was banned by sovereign Alexandru Ioan Cuza, as a Jewish historian from Romania observed, because “he was a constitutional monarch and because these customs no longer had any meaning.” “A wholly analogous custom,” this historian notes, “exists with the Jewish community of Pressburg [present-day Bratislava]. The custom still endures today [i.e., in 1888] and consists of the fact that on St. Martin’s day [i.e., 11 November] the Jewish community presents the emperor in Vienna with four [geese], and the empress, the crown

prince, and the princess with two stuffed geese each, nicely plucked and tied with ribbons in the national Hungarian colors, sent through a delegation of the most notable members together with the president [of the Jewish community].”²⁴¹

Magic belief in the *polaznic* and in the custom surrounding him is extremely widespread among the Slavic peoples in southern Romania (Bulgarians, Serbs) and among those of the north (Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Ukrainians, and Byelorussians).²⁴² In attempting to explain this strange folk custom—whose original significance was lost—some Ruthenian peasants of Bukovina once circulated a concocted and paradoxical legend according to which “Jesus had blessed the Judaic faith, [this makes the Jew a good *polaznic*].” Most Ruthenians, however, believed that the Jew was a good omen in such inaugural moments (such as the beginning of the new year or of the new week), for he is commonly prosperous and a good tradesman.²⁴³

Probably owing to the influence exerted by the magic folklore of the Ruthenians and the Hutsullians in northern Moldavia, this custom was taken over by Moldavian peasants as well. However, in this new context what made the “first guest” a good omen was no longer his being a Jew from all points of view (that is to say, rich or lucky, according to the stereotype), but simply that he was a rich or lucky man, irrespective of his ethnic identity. Here are some superstitions recorded in Moldavia and Bukovina: “As your guest on St. Basil’s Day [i.e., 1 January] will be, a rich man or a poor one, so will you be, in plenty or in need, all the year round”,²⁴⁴ “When a fortunate man enters your house [at the beginning of the week], everything shall go as smoothly as on water for you, but when an unlucky one goes in, you grow poor and you starve”²⁴⁵; or “Much attention shall be given the strangers who first step into the yard [on Christmas Eve].”²⁴⁶

In 1880, on the occasion of the Paris Exhibition, Romanian painter Nicolae Grigorescu unveiled a painting named *Evreul cu gâsca* [Jew with a goose]. The fresh aura of the painting and its blunt realism impressed art critics of the period. Obviously, this was not the first of the artist’s paintings dealing with the same subject, for Grigorescu had signed more paintings and drawings representing Jews of Moldavia and Galicia. In the 1860s, for instance, on his way from France to Romania, he stopped over thrice in Galicia (in 1864, 1867, and 1869), where he etched drawings and sketches of Orthodox Jews. “He was fascinated,” writes Cătălina Macovei, “by these Galician Jews with their specific looks and habits. His interest might have been aroused by Rembrandt’s Jews.”²⁴⁷

The painting *Jew with a Goose* represents a typical eastern European Jew (black caftan, *shtreimel*, beard, ritual sidelocks etc.) holding an official petition in one hand and in the other a live goose.²⁴⁸ The initial title of the work adds some new intelligence: *Evreu din Moldova mergând la Parlamentul României pentru a-și cere naturalizarea* [Moldavian Jew on his way to the Romanian Parliament to petition for naturalization]. No matter how explicit, it is still insufficient to clarify the social and historical conditions that Nicolae Grigorescu had in mind. Some explanations are in order.

As a consequence of Article 7 of the Romanian Constitution of 1866, Jews were excluded from the possibility of acquiring “the quality of a Romanian,” a privilege still granted to “Christian aliens.” At the Berlin Congress following the wars of 1877–1878, the Great Powers made affirmation of Romania’s independence conditional on the modification of Article 7, thus enabling emancipation of the Jews. Eventually, in October 1879 the Romanian Parliament adopted a formal modification: Jews were henceforth permitted to become naturalized citizens. However, this was not a sweeping decree but limited by the fulfillment of certain conditions; nor would it apply immediately but on an individual basis, each particular case being solved in the plene of the Parliament by a special decree. The persons concerned were to apply, presenting a file of documents and an individual petition for naturalization addressed to the Parliament. Under these conditions, the new constitutional provision regarding the emancipation of Romanian Jewry turned out to be without consequence. In the following decades, (1881 to 1900), only twenty-two Jews were naturalized, an average of about one per year. From the Berlin Congress to 1913, the total figure of naturalized Jews stood at 529, this out of a total of Jewish population of several hundreds of thousands. Moreover, this strictly formal system encouraged corruption.²⁴⁹

Starting out from a Moldavian *shtetl* “filled with dust and Jews,” as Mihail Sadoveanu would write somewhere, the Jew in Nicolae Grigorescu’s painting is headed towards Bucharest to present just such a petition to the Romanian Parliament, carrying a goose with him as a gift. Moldavian Jews, and Transylvanian Jews too, were renowned as goose breeders.²⁵⁰ Goose meat was part of the traditional Jewish diet,²⁵¹ and this not only in the modern age or in eastern and central Europe. “Jews are great goose-eaters,” informs us an English cook book around 1599.²⁵² Therefore, the image of a Moldavian Jew carrying a goose was in no way unusual.

The great humor of the situation represented in the painting lies in the fact that the poor Jew believed that a minor gift, such as a goose (and a live one at that!), could be presented to Parliament in order to solve a matter of such grave importance (the “Jewish problem,” so to say). Nicolae Grigorescu’s painting has been interpreted, ever since 1880, as an ironical glimpse at a man trying to survive in a corrupt society. However, considering the information presented in this chapter, it is possible that *Jew with a Goose* has another signification as well. It could well be a case of some reminder of the ancient augural custom, with ritual connotations that presupposed that on occasion Jews give Christians (including the authorities, in this case), as a magic gift, an edible fowl (either a capon or a goose). As already noted, it seems that at least at an official level a stop was put to this custom during the rule of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859–1866), only twenty years or so before Grigorescu painted the picture in question. Obviously, at a popular level the magic custom relating to the *polaznic* survived, as did that of the augural gift offered by a Jew. Seen from this perspective, the situation depicted by Nicolae Grigorescu is not less comical, yet the social and cultural backdrop of reality is always more complex.

THE “JIDОВI” OR GIANTS

The most important cycle of Romanian folk legends about the *Jidovi* is that which, within the framework of mythical anthropogenesis, has them appear as a pre-human species, an aborted population of giant androids annihilated by the Flood. Humans are said to have succeeded them. Even though these legends describe a mythic population, peasants have often confused the *Jidovi*, the legendary Jews, with the *Yids* [*jidani*], the real Jews, ascribing to the former vices attributed to the latter (as, for example, being of “foul faith”). As a Romanian folk superstition has it: “People believe that we do not descend from the *Yids* [*jidani*] [*sic!*], that we are of a second phase of anthropogenesis, and that the *Jidovi* were under a foul faith while we are under a pure faith.”²⁵³

Belief in the archaic nature and, particularly, in the gigantism of the *Jidovi* has generated an array of popular Romanian idioms and sayings of the type: “since the *Jidovi*” (i.e., from time immemorial), “*Jidov*’s work” (i.e., hard work), “to be the kin of the *Jidovi*” (i.e., to be strong and stout), or “this man is so *Jidov*-like, just like a bear,” or even “what a *Jidov* of a Romanian!”²⁵⁴

The following are the main mythic motifs that make up the Romanian legends about the Jidovi, or the Giants, in most cases recorded around the end of the nineteenth century:

(a) "Those men of yore were Jidovi, which means men who were awfully big: head big as a twenty-pound barrel, eyes big as platters, hands big as churns...nails like sickles, the teeth in their mouths like the ploughshare..." It was believed that the large bones which peasants found buried in the ground were "bones of the Jidovi" ("of the Giants").²⁵⁵

(b) The Jidovi are said to have left behind huge buried treasures, as they "had no end of money, a great many riches...such as folks could not carry in ten days. And when one of them died, it was their habit to bury all his treasures with him." "On certain holy days, great fires leap" over the treasures, but these are commonly "evil treasures," ones that are "bound, cursed, enchanted." If you tried to dig them up, "you would come off with some infirmity."²⁵⁶ Romanian folk proverbs generally advise that "a coin found is a coin charmed" and that "a treasure found is no end of misfortune," yet the warning is graver when the money found is believed to have belonged to some Jidovi.²⁵⁷ It is probable that this mythic motif of the legendary treasures of the Jidovi received some of its substance from the belief in the mercantile spirit and wealth of "real Jews." "The great wealth of the Jidovi is common knowledge in the countryside. In Vâlcea, people say of a rich man that he is 'as rich as a Jidov.'"²⁵⁸

(c) Romanian peasants often attributed certain megalithic buildings, ruins, barrows, big city sites, and so forth to the Jidovi of yore. They often bear mythic place names such as Jidova or Jidovina (meaning the "City of the Jidovi," for which the Hungarians in Transylvania use the toponym of Zsidovár). Similar place names are attested in Poland, the Czech Republic, western Ukraine, eastern Austria, and elsewhere. Even the beginnings of metallurgy in Transylvania are attributed to "the nation of the Jews" (most likely, that of the mythical Jidovi), according to a folk legend attested as early as the second half of the eighteenth century.²⁵⁹

(d) A widespread mythic motif in popular tradition is the one that tells about a "Jidov's daughter" who found some ordinary people, "just like the ones in our days," plowing the fields. The girl gathered them in her lap, oxen, plows and all, and went to show her parents the "bugs" she had found "scraping the earth." The mother told her to put them back, "for these are humans," and that, "after the Jidovi will have perished," they "will inherit the earth."²⁶⁰ This mythic motif is to be found in the earliest collections of fairy

tales and legends from the Romanian geographic area (Arthur Schott in 1845, Fr. Müller in 1857). However, its area of dissemination is much wider (see motif A-T 701).

(e) Once, to make the Jidovi perish, God sent the Flood. They all drowned, except for one soul who “put one foot on a mountain, the other on another mountain,” and “clung to the handles of the sky.” “God then sent out flies, which sat on his eyes and when he tried to fend them off, he fell into the water and drowned.” “This is how the race of the Jidovi perished.”²⁶¹

In different periods, scholars have held various views as to the origin and signification of these mythic motifs. A brief survey of their main opinions will prove instructive. In 1868 B. P. Hasdeu began a polemic with those who claimed that Romanian place names of the “Jidova” type attested the presence, unbroken since ancient times, of Jews in the area between the Carpathians and the Danube. Instead, he ventured another, equally improbable, explanation: presumably, there had been several places called Suzidava in the territory of Dacia; because of the consonance of “s” and “z” this place name had suffered a clipping, “first into Szidava, then into Jidova.”²⁶² At the beginning of the twentieth century, Nicolae Densușianu, a prisoner of his own artificial mythological system, believed that the Jidovi of the Romanian folk tradition were nothing less than the “ancient Egyptians,” with “Novac, emperor of the Jidovi,” who “plowed the Jidovi furrow,” being none but Osiris himself.²⁶³

Still, the most spectacular theory would appear to be that proposed by Lazăr Șăineanu in 1887. He identified the Jidovi not simply with the “Giants,” but also with the “Tartars” who, in folk tradition, were one avatar of the “Ogres.” True, there has at times been some confusion in the minds of people between the “Jidovi or the Giants,” on the one hand, and the “Tartars or the Ogres,” on the other, but such occurrences are infrequent and irrelevant. Starting from the wrong premise (Jidov = Tartar), Șăineanu arrived at a mistaken conclusion and a false historicist explanation. He believed that popular tradition had preserved in the “Tartar Jidovi” memories of the Khazars, a Turkish people to the north of the Caucasus Mountains who converted to the Mosaic religion in the eighth century and who had invaded eastern Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²⁶⁴

“Search a Russian and you’ll find a Tartar inside him,” goes an aphorism attributed to Napoleon, which had quite a career in its own days.²⁶⁵ Assimilating the Jidovi with the “Tartar” Khazars, Șăineanu seems to have paraphrased Napoleon: “search a Jidov and you’ll find a Tartar inside him.”

He also seems, unwares, to have reiterated an old German proverb: “*Jud und Tartar ist einerlei Waar*” (Jew and Tartar are one and the same).²⁶⁶

Folklorist Elena Niculiță-Voronca was convinced that Șăineanu’s theory was a “fallacy” taken over “from authors who find their way around only through books.” However, what she proposed in its stead was another bookish solution, a good deal more perplexing and artificial: “The Yids [*jidanii*] that the people remember are Titans—namely Cronus and his brothers, the Phoenician gods—themselves Jews.”²⁶⁷

In 1896, under the influence of an article published in 1890 by Bulgarian scholar A. T. Iliiev, “Bulgarian Traditions Regarding the Giants, Called Hellenes, Jidovi, and Latins,” Lazăr Șăineanu gave his theory a fundamental twist. This time he came to the conclusion that “every ancient and pagan race [in our case, the Jidovi] is identified by popular fantasy with giants from the past, to whom the origin of all monuments of primitive architecture may then be safely attributed.”²⁶⁸ Balkan legends cognate with the Romanian ones presented above have as their giant heroes not only Jidovi (as in Bulgaria or Serbia), but also Hellenes (as in Greece), or Latins.²⁶⁹ Gheorghe Brătescu has also claimed that the Romanian term “Jidov” comes from a presumably ancient term *jigan* or *gigan*, derived from the Latin *gigas*, *gigantis* (huge, gigantic).²⁷⁰

Finally, discussing the “local legend” of the Flood, ethnologist Romulus Vulcănescu advanced the autochthonous and protochronistic theory according to which the diluvial legends of the Giants (i.e., Jidovi) which circulated in Romanian folk tradition originated in an “older European or Indo-European layer of the myth, which anticipated the Judeo-Christian legend of Noah’s Flood.”²⁷¹

The Judaic source of some of the mythic motives under discussion seems to be the simplest and yet the least credited solution. It would probably account for the synonymy “Jidovi or Giants” circulated by Romanian folk tradition,²⁷² as well as for their being involved in the legend of the Flood. The existence of “the race of Giants” on earth (“the famous Giants of yore” or the “mighty Giants, whose height was two thousand ells”) is mentioned in the canonical texts of the Old Testament (Gen. 6:4; Num. 13:32–33; Baruch 3:26–28), along with apocrypha (the Book of Enoch) and other Hebrew texts.²⁷³ The disappearance of this race of giants in the Great Flood is chronicled in Genesis and the Book of Baruch, as well as in the Book of Enoch, which circulated and was reproduced in the Romanian area from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries onwards.²⁷⁴ Like in the canonical and

apocryphal texts, in Romanian folk tradition the two floods are seen as one and the same: “It [i.e., the giants’ flood] was in the days of Noah” flood.”²⁷⁵

At times, the biblical texts about the giants and the Romanian legends about the Jidovi share not only the same mythic motifs, but even the same figures of speech: “and to ourselves we seemed like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them [i.e., to the ‘giants’]” (Num. 13:33), as compared to a folk belief from Vâlcea: “We, the people of these days, are like little flies when placed next to the Jidovi.”²⁷⁶

If we accede to the idea of the Judaic origin of several mythic motifs in the Romanian folk tradition concerning the Jidovi, we must also acknowledge the fact that these overlapped with local mythic motifs such as the story of the Jidov’s daughter who gathers people in her lap (A-T 701) and the attribution of megalithic buildings to “the race of the Jidovi.”

NOTES

1. Veronika Görög-Karady, “Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore: The Jew in Hungarian Oral Literature,” in *Folklore Processed: In Honour of Lauri Honko*, ed. Reimund Kvidleland, *Studia Fennica, Folkloristica*, vol. 1 (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 1992), 119.

2. Alina Cața, *The Image of the Jew in Polish Folk Culture* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1995), 177; Görög-Karady, “Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore,” 119.

3. B. P. Hasdeu, *Cuvente den bătrâni: Cărțile poporane ale românilor în secolul XVI* (Sayings from the old: The popular books of the Romanians in the sixteenth century), vol. 2, ed. and annotated by G. Mihăilă (Bucharest: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1984), 256–58.

4. *Ibid.*, 262ff.

5. Moses Schwarzfeld, “Literatura populară israelită ca element etnico-psihologic” (Israelite folk literature as a psycho-ethnical element), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 13 (1889); republished in *De la Cilibi Moise la Paul Celan: Antologie din operele scriitorilor evrei de limba română* (From Cilibi Moses to Paul Celan: An anthology of Jewish-Romanian writers), ed. Țicu Goldstein (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 79–87.

6. Hasdeu, *Cuvente den bătrâni*, 268.

7. Simeon Florea Marian, *Legendele Maicii Domnului* (The legends of the Mother of God) (Bucharest, 1906), 315; idem, *Sărbătorile la români: Studiu etnografic* (Holidays of the Romanians: An ethnographic study), vol. 1, ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1994), 130.

8. Ms. 1064, Library of the Romanian Academy, from 1742; see also Nicolae Cartoian, *Cărțile populare în literatura română* (Popular books in Romanian literature), vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1974), 213; Moses Gaster, *Literatura populară română* (Romanian folk literature) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1983), 288.

9. Antim Ivireanul, *Opere* (Works), ed. Gabriel Ștrempel (Bucharest, 1972), 188.

10. Ms. 1570, Library of the Romanian Academy; cf. Cartoian, *Cărțile populare*, 1:334.

11. Cf. G. Dem. Teodorescu, *Poezii populare române* (Romanian folk poetry) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 52; Alexandru Rosetti, *Colindele religioase la români* (Religious carols of the Romanians) (Bucharest, 1920), 37.

12. Hasdeu, *Cuvente den bătrâni*, 284ff.

13. Gheorghe Pavelescu, "Cercetări folklorice în sudul județului Bihor" (Folkloric research in southern Bihor), *Anuarul Arhivei de Folklor* (Folklore Archive yearbook) 7 (1945): 87, 94.

14. See Andrei Oișteanu, *Mythos & Logos: Studii și eseuri de antropologie culturală* (Mythos and logos: Studies and essays in cultural anthropology) (Bucharest: Nemira, 1997), 234.

15. Elisabeth Revel-Neher, *The Image of the Jew in Byzantine Art* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1992), 104 and figs. 72, 78.

16. Ibid., 80.

17. Dionisie of Furna, *Carte de pictură* (Book of icon patterns); introductory study by Victor Ieronim Stoichiță, foreword by Vasile Drăguț (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1979), 176.

18. Ivanichka Georgieva, *Bulgarian Mythology* (Sofia: Svyat, 1985), fig. 109.

19. Władisław Podlacha and Grigore Nandriș, *Umanismul picturii murale postbizantine* (Humanism in post-Byzantine mural painting), vol. 1: Władisław Podlacha, *Pictura murală din Bucovina* (Mural painting from Bukovina), transl. and annotated by Grigore Nandriș; vol. 2: Grigore Nandriș, *Umanismul picturii murale postbizantine din estul Europei* (Humanism in post-Byzantine mural painting of Eastern Europe), transl. and annotated by Anca Vasiliu (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1985); see 1:258.

20. Simeon Florea Marian, "Satire bucovinene contra evreilor" (Satires against the Jews in Bukovina), *Columna lui Traian* 2 (1871): 39.

21. Podlacha and Nandriș, *Umanismul picturii murale postbizantine*, 2:145.

22. Ibid., 1:258–64; 2:133–45.

23. Ibid., 1:158; 2:139.

24. Tache Papahagi, *Grai, folklor, etnografie* (Language, folklore, ethnography) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 13.

25. Gail Kligman, *The Wedding of the Dead: Ritual, Poetics, and Popular Culture in Transylvania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 162.

26. Andrei Oișteanu, *Motive și semnificații mito-simbolice, în cultura tradițională românească* (Mytho-symbolical motifs and significations in Romanian traditional culture) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1989), 216–18.

27. Cartoian, *Cărțile populare*, 1:99.

28. Marian, “Satire bucovinene,” 39; Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele poporului român, adunate și așezate în ordine mitologică* (The customs and beliefs of the Romanian people, in mythological order), vol. 2 (Chernovtsy, 1903; Iași: Polirom, 1998), 172.

29. Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “The Stereotype of the Jew in Polish Folklore,” in *Studies in Aggadah and Jewish Folklore*, eds. Issachar Ben-Ami and Joseph Dan, (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1983), 93.

30. Grigore G. Tocilescu & Christea N. Tapu, *Materialuri folcloristice* (Folkloristic materials), critical ed. by Iordan Datcu, vol. 3 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 333.

31. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:408, 420.

32. Ion-Aurel Candrea, “Tabu în limbă: Nume interzise” (The language taboo: Forbidden names), in *Omagiu lui I. Bianu* (Homage to I. Bianu) (Bucharest, 1927), 71–78.

33. Görög-Karady, “Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore,” 119; Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română: Studiu de psihologie populară* (The Jews in Romanian folk literature: a study of folk psychology) (Bucharest, 1892), 66.

34. Robert D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993), 427.

35. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:214.

36. Artur Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții ale poporului român* (Beliefs and superstitions of the Romanian people), ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Socec, 1915; Bucharest: “Grai și Suflet,” 1995), 6.

37. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:397.

38. Ibid., 394.

39. Antoaneta Olteanu, *Școala de solomonie: Divinație și vrăjitorie în context comparat* (The school of solomonars: Divination and witchcraft in a comparative context) (Bucharest: Paideia, 1999), 547.

40. Sanda Golopenția, *Desire Machines: A Romanian Love Charms Database* (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1998), 284.

41. Gh. F. Ciausanu, *Superstițiile poporului român* (The superstitions of the Romanians) (Bucharest: Socec, 1914), 247; Gh. I. Neagu, *Cîntece și jocuri de copii* (Children's games and lore) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 52.

42. These Sabbatical waters are a typical river of the afterworld which, in Romanian popular mythology, "flows into Hell, hence the curse of 'Go to the Sabbatical waters!,' meaning 'Go to Hell'"; cf. Simeon Florea Marian, *Înmormîntarea la români: Studiu etnografic* (Burial among the Romanians: An ethnographic study) (Bucharest: Academia Română, 1892), 459.

43. Artur Gorovei, *Literatura populară* (Folk literature), vol. 2, ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1985), 125. First edition: *Descîntecele românilor: Studiu de folclor* (Incantations of the Romanians: A study of folklore) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1931); Vasile Bogrea, *Pagini istorico-filologice* (Historical and philological pages) (Cluj: Dacia, 1971), 473.

44. Monica Brădulescu, *Colinda românească* (The Romanian colinda [Winter-solstice songs]) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 301; Bela Bartok, *Melodien der Rumänischen Colinde (Weinachtslieder)* (Budapest: Musica, 1968), 259.

45. Oişteanu, *Mythos & Logos*, 109.

46. Marian, *Sărbătorile la români*, 2:237–39.

47. According to Flavius Josephus, *Bellum Judaicum*, 7.5 and Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis*, 21.11; cf. Bogrea, *Pagini istorico-filologice*, 451. A similar account is to be found in the Talmud.

48. Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991), 14.

49. Vasile Conta, *Opere complete* (Complete works) (Bucharest, 1914), 648.

50. Ileana Vulpescu, *Arta conversației* (The art of conversation) (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1980), 226.

51. Papahagi, *Grai, folclor, etnografie*, 90, 323.

52. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 61.

53. Grigore G. Tocilescu, *Materialuri folcloristice* (Folkloric materials) (Bucharest, 1900), 1462.

54. Alecu Russo, "Iassy et ses habitants en 1840," in idem, *Opere complete* (Complete works) (Bucharest: Cugetarea, 1942), 103–34.

55. Cf. Artur Gorovei, *Cimiliturile la români* (Riddles of the Romanians) (Bucharest, 1898), 380.

56. Cf. *Dicționarul limbii române* (Dictionary of the Romanian language) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1937), s.v. Jidov.

57. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 12.

58. Ibid.; Simeon Florea Marian, *Romanian Folk Satires* (Bucharest, 1983), 205–10; Teodor T. Burada, *Opere* (Works), vol. 3: *Folclor și etnografie* (Folklore and ethnography) (Bucharest: Editura Muzicală 1978), 194.

59. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 13; Gorovei, *Credințe și superstiții*, 116; see the section: “The Jew of Good Omen.”

60. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 10.

61. B. P. Hasdeu, *Trei Ovrei: Jupânul Shylock allu Shakespeare, domnul Gobseck allu Balzac și jupânul Moise allu Alexandri* (Three Jews: Shakespeare’s Shylock, Balzac’s Mr Gobseck, and Alexandri’s Master Moses) (Bucharest: St. Rassidescu, 1865), 38.

62. They were also called “sudiți” (from the Italian *suddito* [“subject”] and the Latin *subditus*; see Stela Marieș, *Supușii străini din Moldova în perioada 1781–1862* (Foreign subjects of Moldavia in the period 1781–1862) (Iași: Al. I. Cuza University Press, 1985), 40, 130.

63. In Serbian legends, the role of the man-eating ogre is played by the Jew (*jidov*), and in Russian ones, the denomination *jid* also has the sense of “devil”; see Lazăr Șăineanu, *Basmele române* (Romanian fairy tales) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1978), 532, 656; see also Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 60–78.

64. Alan Dundes, “Why is the Jew ‘Dirty’? A Psychoanalytic Study of Antisemitic Folklore,” in idem, *From Game to War and Other Psychoanalytic Essays on Folklore* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 96.

65. Ibid., 98.

66. Ibid.

67. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 62.

68. Ibid.

69. Cața, *Image of the Jew*, 176; Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 62–63.

70. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 69.

71. Cața, *Image of the Jew*, 176.

72. Ibid.

73. Görög-Karady, “Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore,” 119; Papahagi, *Grai, folklor, etnografie*, 90.

74. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology*, 74.

75. Radu Florian, Victor Neumann, et al., *Ideea care ucide: Dimensiunile ideologiei legionare* (The idea that kills: The dimensions of legionary ideology) (Bucharest: “Noua Alternativă,” 1994), 190–95.

76. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology*, 29.

77. For a facsimile of the minutes, see Oișteanu, *Mythos & Logos*, 260.

78. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology*, 30.
79. Ștefan Postelnicu, "Antisemitismul și teologia ortodoxă românească" (Antisemitism and Romanian Orthodox theology), *Contemporanul*, no. 37 (2000): 14.
80. Nae Ionescu, "Preface" to Mihail Sebastian, *De două mii de ani...* (For two thousand years...) (1934; Bucharest: Hasefer, 1995), 22.
81. Cf. Lazăr Șăineanu, *Dicționarul universal al limbei române* (Universal dictionary of the Romanian language) (Bucharest, 1896).
82. Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile de toamnă* (Autumn holidays) (Bucharest, 1914), 30.
83. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:51, 407, 421.
84. "Creștinătatea față de iudaism" (Christianity facing Judaism), *Vremea*, no. 349 (1934); cf. Mircea Eliade, *Textele "legionare" și despre "românism"* (Legionnaire and Romanianism texts) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001), 115.
85. *Cîntece legionare* (Legionary songs) (Bucharest, 1937); facs. ed. (Karlsfeld, Germany, 1977).
86. No. 195 (1934).
87. "Creștinătatea față de iudaism"; cf. Eliade, *Textele "legionare,"* 110–16.
88. Jean Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României: Problema evreiască (1933–1944)* (Contributions to Romanian history), vol. 1, part 1, transl. from the Hebrew by Carol Bines (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 130.
89. Mihail Sebastian, *De două mii de ani...* (For two thousand years...), with a preface by Nae Ionescu; *Cum am devenit huligan* (How I became a hooligan), (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1990), 205.
90. Lya Benjamin, ed., *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944* (The Jews in Romania in 1940–1944), vol. 2: *Problema evreiască în stenogramele Consiliului de Miniștri* (The Jewish problem in the minutes of the cabinet sessions) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 290.
91. Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania: Destruction of Jews and Gypsies under the Antonescu Regime, 1940–1944* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), 177–82.
92. Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României*, 1:151.
93. *Adevărul de duminică* (The Sunday truth), 18 Feb. 1990.
94. *Evenimentul zilei* (The event of the day), 19 Mar. 1997.
95. George Voicu, "Paradigma conspiraționistă" (The conspirative paradigm), *Sfera politică* 5, no. 74 (2000): 54.
96. *România Mare*, no. 437 (Nov. 1998).
97. *Puncte cardinale* (Cardinal points), no. 9 (Sept. 1998); cf. Voicu, "Paradigma conspiraționistă," *Sfera politică*, 3, no. 72 (1999): 67–69.
98. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 62.

99. Cf. Jean Delumeau, *Frica în Occident (secolele XIV–XVIII): O cetate asediată*, 2 vols. (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1986). First published as *La peur en Occident (XIVe–XVIIIe siècle): Une cité assiégée* (Paris: Fayard, 1978); Carlo Ginzburg, *Istorie nocturnă: O interpretare a Sabatului* (Iași: Polirom, 1996). First published as *Storia notturna: Una decifrazione del sabba* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1989); Viviana Paques, *Les sciences occultes d'après les documents littéraires italiens du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1971); Alexandrian, *Istoria filozofiei oculte* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1994). First published as *Histoire de la philosophie occulte* (Paris: Seghers, 1983).

100. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 137.

101. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 63.

102. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 135, 142.

103. Moses Schwarzfeld, "Istoria evreilor din România" (The history of the Jews in Romania), *Analele Societății istorice "Iuliu Barasch"* 3 (1889): 152.

104. Ernest Bernea, *Cadre ale gândirii populare românești: Contribuții la reprezentarea spațiului, timpului și cauzalității* (Frames of Romanian folk mentality: Contributions to the representation of space, time, and causality) (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1985), 43.

105. Gaster, *Literatura populară română*, 224.

106. I.-A. Candrea, "Preminte Solomon" (Wise Solomon), in idem, *Cercetări folklorice* (Folkloric investigations), vol. 1 (Bucharest, 1947), 104–105; Traian German, *Meteorologie populară* (Folk meteorology) (Blaj, 1928), 141–48; Oișteanu, *Motive și semnificații mito-simbolice*, 166–259.

107. German, *Meteorologie populară*, 143–46.

108. Elena Niculită-Voronca, *Studii în folclor* (Studies in folklore), vol. 2 (Chernovtsy: Gutenberg Press, 1912), 172. See also Chapter Five, the section: "Ritual Infanticide."

109. Ivan Evseev, *Dicționar de magie, demonologie și mitologie românească* (Dictionary of Romanian magic, demonology, and mythology) (Timișoara: Amarcord, 1997), 432.

110. Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, "The Motif of the Jew and the Book in the Polish and Jewish Folk Milieu," in *Studies on Polish Jewry: Paul Glikson Memorial Volume*, eds. Ezra Mendelsohn and Chone Shmeruk (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1987), xlvii ff.

111. Tudor Pamfile, *Văzduhul, după credințele poporului român* (The atmosphere, according to Romanian folk beliefs) (Bucharest: Socec, 1916), 125, 144.

112. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 136, 180–81.

113. Dimitrie Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina: Studiu istoric, cultural, etnografic și folcloric* (The Jews of Bukovina: a historical, cultural, ethnographic and folkloric study) (Cernăuți, 1899), 30.

114. Lya Benjamin, Irina Cajal-Marin, and Hary Kuller, *Mituri, rituri și obiecte rituale iudaice: Culegere de texte și comentarii* (Judaic myths, rites, and ritual objects: A collection of texts and commentaries) (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1994), 102–103.

115. German, *Meteorologie populară*, 145.

116. The synagogue as “school” derives from its Hebrew name, *beth ha-midrash*, lit., “house of study” [of holy subjects].

117. German, *Meteorologie populară*, 164.

118. Elie Wiesel, *All Rivers Run to the Sea: Memoirs* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1995), 23.

119. Wilhelm Schwarzfeld, “Acte de netoleranță” (Deeds of intolerance), *Analele Societății istorice “Iuliu Barasch”* 3 (1889): 194. See also Chapter Five, the section: Ritual Xenocide?

120. See German, *Meteorologie populară*, 146.

121. See Pamfile, *Văzduhul*, 113.

122. See Niculiță-Voronca, *Studii în folclor* 2:172–73; for the Devil fleeing the rooster, see idem, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:420.

123. See Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:34, 419.

124. See Tudor Pamfile, *Mitologie românească: Dușmani și prieteni ai omului* (Romanian mythology: Man’s foes and friends) (Bucharest: Socec, 1916), 23.

125. Wilhelm Schwarzfeld, “Legende și credințe populare” (Folk legends and beliefs), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 18 (1896–1897): 192.

126. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 274.

127. Marian, “Satire bucovinene,” 39.

128. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 136, 180–81.

129. Ibid., 125–27.

130. Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, “The Stereotype of the Jew,” 93.

131. Andrei Oișteanu, “‘Evreul imaginar’ în cultura românească: Legenda jidovului rătăcitor” (‘The imaginary Jew’ in Romanian culture: The legend of the Wandering Jew), *Euphorion*, no. 4 (1998): 8–10.

132. Alexander Scheiber, “The Legend of the Wandering Jew in Hungary,” in idem, *Essays on Jewish Folklore and Comparative Literature* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985), 134–55.

133. D. Hîncu, ed., *Mărturii: "Chestiunea evreiască"* (Testimonies: "The Jewish problem") (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 140–45; Scheiber, "Legend of the Wandering Jew in Hungary," 135.

134. Sorin Mitu, *Geneza identității naționale la românii ardeleni* (The birth of national identity of the Romanians of Transylvania) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997), 123–27.

135. Eli Barnavi and Miriam Eliav-Feldon, eds., *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992), 73.

136. Adrian Păunescu, *Iubiți-vă pe tunuri* (Make love on cannons) (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1981), 257.

137. Wilhelm Filderman, *Articole, discursuri, memorii (1921–1948)* (Articles, speeches, memoirs [1921–1948]), vol. 1, eds. Teodor Wexler and Michaela Popov (Bucharest: Dr. W. Filderman Foundation, 2000), 117.

138. E. M. Cioran, *Cahiers (1957–1972)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 254; see also Marta Petreu, *Un trecut deocheat sau "Schimbarea la față României"* (A past of perdition or "The transfiguration of Romania") (Cluj: Apostrof, 1999), 243; Ion Vartic, "'Evreul' Cioran" (Jewish Cioran), 22, no. 36 (5–11 Sept. 2000): 15.

139. For details, see the well-known excesses of "historic and linguistic Latinism" of which the representatives of Școala ardeleană (the Transylvanian School) were guilty.

140. Ion Lungu, *Școala ardeleană: Mișcare ideologică națională iluministă* (The Transylvanian School: A national ideological movement) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1978), 151.

141. Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 202.

142. Joel Carmichael, *The Satanizing of the Jews: Origin and Development of Mystical Antisemitism* (New York: Fromm International, 1993), 87.

143. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 1:175–76.

144. Simion Mehedinți, *Creștinismul românesc* (Romanian Christianity), ed. Dora Mezdrea (Cugetarea, 1941; Bucharest: Anastasia, 1995), 30.

145. Alexandru I. Gonta, *Satul în Moldova medievală: Instituțiile* (The village in medieval Moldavia: Institutions) (Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1986), 303–304.

146. Mehedinți, *Creștinismul românesc*, 201–202.

147. Roland Modras, *The Catholic Church and Antisemitism: Poland, 1933–1939* (Chur: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1994), 21.

148. *Israelitul Român*, May 1857.

149. Dumitru Theodor Neculută, *Spre țărmul dreptății: Poeziile unui muncitor* (To the shore of justice: Poems of a worker) (Bucharest, 1945).

150. John Felstiner, "All Poets are Yids: The Voice of the 'Other' in Paul Celan," in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999), 244–56.

151. Andrei Corbea, *Paul Celan și "meridianul" său: Repere vechi și noi pe un atlas central-european* (Paul Celan and his "Meridian": Old and new signs on a central European atlas) (Iași: Polirom, 1998), 151.

152. Library of the Romanian Academy, Ms. 1119. The name in the title is a corruption of Ahasuerus.

153. Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919): De la excludere la emancipare* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 47. First published as *Les Juifs en Roumanie (1866–1919): De l'exclusion à l'émancipation* (Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1978).

154. Ladislau Gyémánt and Lya Benjamin, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews in Romania), vol. 3, part 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 309; see also Introduction, above, n. 58.

155. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 6, ed. Cornel Simionescu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1991), 264.

156. *Gazeta Teatrului Național* (Budapest), no. 3 (1836).

157. Mihai Eminescu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 7: *Proza literară* (Literary prose) (Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1977), 378.

158. *Ibid.*, 283.

159. George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române, de la origini pînă în prezent* (The history of Romanian literature, from its origins to the present), 2d ed. (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 126.

160. Gottfried Wagner, *Moștenirea Wagner: O autobiografie* (The Wagner heritage: An autobiography), transl. by Victor Eskenasy (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1997; Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 62–64.

161. "Criza iudaismului" (The crisis of Judaism), *Cuvîntul*, no. 514 (1926); see Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology*, 101.

162. Sebastian, *De două mii de ani...*, 293, 8 respectively.

163. Mircea Eliade, *Proză fantastică* (Fantastic tales), vol. 5, ed. with an afterword by Eugen Simion (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1992), 129–83.

164. Marie-France Rouart, *Le Mythe du Juif errant dans l'Europe du XIXe siècle* (Paris: José Corti, 1988), 100.

165. Ovid S. Crohmălniceanu, *Evreii în mișcarea de avangardă românească* (The Jews of the Romanian avant-garde movement), ed. Geo Șerban (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 119; Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române*, 866.

166. Commentators have provided several possible explanations for the name Isaac Laquedem. Two of the most plausible refer to corrupted Hebrew terms: Isaac “the Old” (see Rouart, *Le Mythe du Juif errant*, 19) or Isaac “who goes to the east” meaning Isaac “the Traveler” (see George K. Anderson, *The Legend of the Wandering Jew* [Hanover and London: Brown University Press, 1991], 59).

167. Benjamin Fundoianu, *Poezii* (Poems), transl. by Virgil Teodorescu (Bucharest: Editura pentru literatură, 1965), 117, 180.

168. Corbea, *Paul Celan și “meridianul” său*, 16.

169. Herta Herzog, *The Jews as “Others”: On Communicative Aspects of Antisemitism: A Pilot Study in Austria*, ACTA series, no. 4 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University, 1994), 7.

170. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:236.

171. Artur Gorovei, *Folticeni: Cercetări istorice asupra orașului* (Fălticeni: Historical research on the town) (Folticeni, 1938), 82.

172. Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 39–40.

173. Marianne Mesnil, *Etnologul: între șarpe și balaur* (The ethnologue: Between snake and dragon); idem and Assia Popova, *Eseuri de mitologie balcanică* (Essays on Balkan mythology), foreword by Paul H. Stahl (Bucharest: Paideia, 1997), 203.

174. James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion*, 2 vols. (New York and London: Macmillan, 1894).

175. Marian, *Legende de Maicii Domnului*, 220–21; Rosetti, *Colindele religioase la români*, 40–42.

176. Claudine Fabré-Vassas, *La bête singulière: Les juifs, les chrétiens et le cochon* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 103; Görög-Karady, “Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore,” 124; Luca Pițu, *Sentimentul românesc al urii de sine* (The Romanian feeling of self-hatred), 2d ed. (Jassy: European Institute, 1997), 249.

177. Marian, *Legende de Maicii Domnului*, 107.

178. Émile Turdeanu, *Apocryphes slaves et roumains de l’Ancien Testament* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), 55–60; idem, *La littérature bulgare du XIV^{ème} siècle et sa diffusion dans les Pays Roumains* (Paris, 1947), 62–63.

179. Ivanov, *Livres et Légendes Bogomiles* (Paris, 1976), 220. In the Romanian version of the *Arab Evangel of the Saviour as a Child*—a version we owe to Cristian Bădiliță—the child Jesus turns the few children who hide from him in an oven into goat kids [*sic!*]; see *Evangelii apocrife* (Apocryphal evangels), transl., introductory

study, notes, and commentaries by Cristian Bădiliță (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1996), 137.

180. Cartoian, *Cărțile populare*, 2:82.

181. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 114, 177.

182. Görög-Karady, "Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore," 123.

183. Fabré-Vassas, *La bête singulière*, 107–109; for representations of the motif in medieval iconography, see illustrations 7–9.

184. Oskar Dähnhardt, *Natursagen*, vol. 2 (Leipzig and Berlin, 1909).

185. Görög-Karady, "Ethnic Stereotypes and Folklore," 124.

186. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:51, 236.

187. Ioan Petru Culianu, *Out of This World: Otherwordly Journeys from Gilgamesh to Albert Einstein* (Boston and London: Shambhala, 1991), 118.

188. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:477.

189. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 83.

190. Zorica Herbst-Krausz, *Old Jewish Dishes* (Budapest: Corvina, 1988), 42–46.

191. Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe: The Khazar Empire and Its Heritage* (London: Hutchinson, 1976), 157.

192. Fundoianu, *Poezii*, 268.

193. Panait Istrati, *Neranțula și alte povestiri* (Neranțula and other stories), ed. with a foreword and transl. by Alexandru Talex (Bucharest: Minerva, 1984), 575.

194. *Cuvinte scumpe: Taclale, povestiri și legende românești* (Dear words: Romanian prattle, lore, and legends), collected by Dumitru Furtună (Bucharest: Romanian Academy and Socec, 1914), 49.

195. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 68.

196. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 19.

197. Isaiah Shachar, *The Judensau: A Medieval Anti-Jewish Motif and its History* (London: Warburg Institute, 1974); Fabré-Vassas, *La bête singulière*, 113–19 and illustrations 10–14.

198. "We will be no Christians, since Jesus Christ was a Jewish sow." See Norman Manea, "Note la o dezbatere" (Notes on a debate), 22, no. 35 (1999): 9–10.

199. Indeed, for Romanians the German is a "wurst-bender" and the Italian is a "frog-eater," while to the foreign mind the Romanian is a "polenta-eater."

200. Fabré-Vassas, *La bête singulière*, 108.

201. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 153.

202. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 137.

203. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 13. As can be seen, the exclamation "Hep! Hep!" seems to have once been charged with a certain magical significance. Later on, however, it became a banal interjection used especially by

children as an offence hurled at Jews. Its initial meaning can be seen from the gravity with which Romanian peasants used to pronounce it, as shown in a personal story published by folklorist Moses Schwarzfeld: “In the county of Fălciu [in Moldavia], on the road between Vaslui and Huși, in 1881 I happened to see the peasants who were reaping leave their work behind and, upright and stiff, solemnly sing to a group of Jews huddled in a wagon: ‘Hep, hep, / Two prickly pears, / With the Jew by the ears...’” (ibid., 12). In 1875, Romanian poet Vasile Alecsandri maintained that the exclamation “Hep, hep!” used to address the Jews in Moldavia and which “infuriates” them, demonstrates “the historical truth that the Romanians are descended from the Romans”: “When the Romans under Titus conquered Jerusalem and leveled Solomon’s temple, they killed the Yids [*judani*] shouting ‘haep, haep!’.... How did it happen that this tradition has remained with us and with none other of the Latin stock?... Let the Jews explain it!” (Vasile Alecsandri, “Din albumul unui bibliofil” [From a booklover’s diary], *Convorbiri literare* [Literary talks] [Jassy], 9, no. 9 [1 Dec. 1875]: 336). As on almost every occasion, Schwarzfeld contradicted Alecsandri and claimed that “if anywhere, Germany is the place where this ‘Hep, hep’ is most familiar” and that, without excluding a “historical layer, a primitive meaning,” it probably was “a simple injurious exclamation” which “lacks an immediate meaning.” (Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 11). In 1888, Schwarzfeld tried, by means of a questionnaire, to find out from members of the Jewish community where and with what sense “the apostrophizing ‘hep, hep’ is used.” (see Oișteanu, *Mythos & Logos*, 182). Lazăr Șăineanu maintained that ‘Hep!, hep!’ was the cry by means of which hunters used to chase the game (Șăineanu, *Dicționarul universal al limbei române*). According to Shmuel Almog and Paul Johnson, this is an expression used by shepherds of Franconia, adapted to harass the Jews (see Shmuel Almog, *Nationalism and Antisemitism in Modern Europe 1815–1945* [Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1990], 8; Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* [New York: Harper and Row, 1988], 317). It seems, however, that the exclamation “Hep! Hep!” addressed to Jews is an old medieval formula that also survived in nineteenth-century Germany. Germans shouted it, for instance, during the anti-Jewish pogroms which occurred in 1819 in several towns in Germany and spread outside its borders (to Denmark, for instance; see Jacob Katz, *Die Hep-Hep-Verfolgungen des Jahres 1819* [Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 1994]). According to Josy Eisenberg and other historians, the word “Hep” is an acronym from the Latin expression “Hierosolyma est perdita” (Jerusalem is lost; see Josy Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor* [A history of the Jews] [Bucharest: Humanitas, 1993], 280; Almog, *Nationalism and Antisemitism*, 8) Some historians claim that the expression was employed by the Roman legions led by Titus during the conquest of Jerusalem in 70 BCE (see also

Lion Feuchtwanger, *Josephus*, 1926), while others maintain that it was used by the Crusaders, possibly during the First Crusade (1096–1099), or after the loss of Jerusalem by the Latin kingdom in 1187. Jews having been massacred by the Crusaders during the First Crusade, whatever Jewish population was in the Holy City in 1187 fought on Sultan Saladin's side. It appears that subsequently the Crusaders made use of the acronymic expression "Hep" to inflict vengeance on the Jews of Europe. This expression is assumed to have survived until the nineteenth century. "Rather unlikely when considered by itself," Léon Poliakov claims, "this interpretation demonstrates that the memory of the persecutions of the summer of 1096 was not extinct in Germany" (Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* [The history of antisemitism], vol. 3 [Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000], 299).

204. Teodor Bălășel, "Legende și superstiții despre tigani" (Legends and superstitions about Gypsies), *Sezătoarea* 1, nos. 7–8 (1892): 215; Mihai Lupescu, "Superstiții" (Superstitions), *ibid.* 1, no. 1 (1892): 18.

205. Al. Lambrior, *Carte de cetire* (A reader) (Iași, 1882), 199.

206. See Chapter One, section "Filthy, Stinking Jew."

207. Cața, *Image of the Jew*, 137.

208. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 13, 333; Lambrior, *Carte de cetire*, 199.

209. Cața, *Image of the Jew*, 137.

210. *Ibid.*

211. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 13–14, 44, 278; Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:258.

212. Pamfile, *Mitologie românească*, 100; Lambrior, *Carte de Cetire*, 199.

213. *Dicționarul Limbii Române* (Dictionary of the Romanian language), vol. 7, part 2 (Bucharest: Romanian Academy Press, 1974).

214. Ion Mușlea and Ov. Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului: Din răspunsurile la chestionarele lui B. P. Hasdeu* (Folklore typology: From the answers to B. P. Hasdeu's questionnaires) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1970), 527.

215. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 278; Pamfile, *Mitologie românească*, 100–101; I.-A. Candrea, *Folklorul medical român comparat* (Romanian medical folklore compared) (Bucharest: "Casa Scoalelor," 1944), 59; Lupescu, "Superstiții," 18.

216. See Pamfile, *Mitologie românească*, 101.

217. Candrea, *Folklorul medical român comparat*, 59.

218. Tache Papahagi, *Mic dicționar folcloric* (A little folkloric dictionary) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1979), 400.

219. Pamfile, *Mitologie românească*, 101.

220. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura lor populară: Studiu etnico-psihologic* (The Jews in their own folk literature: A psycho-ethnic study) (Bucharest, 1898); Dan, *Evreii din Bucovina*, 35.

221. Candrea, *Folklorul medical român comparat*, 61.

222. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 14.

223. For the latter two, see Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 24, 28.

224. Bălășel, "Legende și superstiții," 52.

225. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele* 1:317.

226. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 121.

227. See above, in this chapter, the section: "Demonization of the Jew."

228. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:431, 258 respectively; see also 2:96.

229. Pierre Bogatyrev, *Actes magiques, rites et croyances en Russie subcapathique* (Paris, 1929), 57.

230. Information collected on location by one of my students, Cristina Toma.

231. Andrew A. Bonar and Robert Murray McCheyne, *Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews from the Church of Scotland in 1839* (Edinburgh: William and Co., 1844), 434.

232. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 162.

233. Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, "Changes in the Polish Village Wedding: The Introduction of a Jewish Figure into the Final Ceremony," in *Studies in Marriage Customs*, eds. Dov Noy and Issachar Ben Ami, vol. 4 (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1974), 133–40.

234. Elena Sevastos, *Literatură populară* (Folk literature), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1990), 318; Mușlea and Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului*, 588.

235. Stelian Dumitrăcel, "Germanul în mentalul rural românesc" (The German in the Romanian rural mentality), in *Identitate/Alteritate în spațiul cultural românesc* (Identity/alterity in the Romanian cultural area), ed. Al. Zub (Iași: "Al. I. Cuza" University Press, 1996), 225.

236. Elena Sevastos, *Literatură populară* 1:162.

237. Michel Asiel, "Material tradițional: Amintiri privitoare la Muntenia și în special la București: Un obicei ciudat" (Traditional material: Reminiscences on Walachia and Especially on Bucharest: An uncanny custom), *Analele Societății istorice "Iuliu Barasch"* 2 (1888): 193.

238. In the Krakow region in Poland it was a custom to buy and present for Easter wooden or clay figurines (or piggy banks) depicting the traditional image of a "Galician Jew," which were said to bring prosperity; see Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 163.

239. Bogatyrev, *Actes magiques*, 57.

240. Asiel, "Material tradițional," 193.
241. Ibid., 194.
242. Cața, *Image of the Jew*, 161–62; Bogatyrev, *Actes magiques*, 55–57; Petru Caraman, *Colindatul la români, slavi și la alte popoare: Studiu de folclor comparat* (Carolling with the Romanians, Slavs, and other peoples: A study of comparative folklore) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1983), 399ff.; idem, *Descolindatul, în orientul și sud-estul Europei: Studiu de folclor comparat* (Negative caroling in eastern and southeastern Europe: A study of comparative folklore), ed. Ion H. Ciubotaru (Iași: "Al. I. Cuza" University Press, 1997), 14–16.
243. Bogatyrev, *Actes magiques*, 56–57.
244. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 215.
245. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:223.
246. Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile la români: Studiu etnografic* (Traditional holidays of the Romanians: ethnographic study), ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Saeculum I.O., 1997), 281.
247. Catalina Macovei, *Nicolae Grigorescu* (Bucharest: Parkstone Press, 1999), 41.
248. Ibid., 41–43.
249. Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 212–13.
250. Papahagi, *Grai, folclor, etnografie*, 86.
251. Herbst-Krausz, *Old Jewish Dishes*, 50–53.
252. Quoted in James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 36.
253. Niculiță-Voronca, *Studii în folclor*, 2:209.
254. *Dicționarul limbii române*, 21; Căusanu, *Superstițiile poporului român*, 46; Stelian Dumitrăcel, *Dicționar: Expresii românești* (Dictionary of Romanian expressions) (Iași: Institutul European, 1997), 115.
255. Lazăr Șăineanu, *Studii folklorice* (Folkloric studies) (Bucharest, 1896), 196; Tudor Pamfile, *Povestea lumii de demult, după credințele poporului român* (The story of the world of yore, according to the beliefs of the Romanian people), (Bucharest: Socec, 1913), 157–58.
256. Căusanu, *Superstițiile poporului*, 48; Tudor Pamfile, *Mitologie românească: Comorile* (Romanian mythology: The treasures) (Bucharest, 1916), 8–10, 35–36; Virgil Ciobanu, "Omorul ritual" *din punct de vedere istoric și medical* ("Ritual murder" from an historical and medical point of view) (Bucharest, 1924), 163.
257. Vasile Alecsandri, *Poezii populare ale românilor* (Folk poetry of the Romanians) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 107.
258. Căusanu, *Superstițiile poporului*, 48.

259. The folk legend is recorded by mineralogist Jan Fridwaldszky, a Jesuit who, after living and journeying through Transylvania for a few years, published *Minerologia magni principatus Transilvaniae* (Cluj, 1767). The following is the relevant passage: “The people in all places, without exception, say that it was the Jewish race that began them [i.e., the first iron and steel works in Transylvania], so it might be that that village of yours which is now called Thalmis was once called Thalmud; the corresponding sound [of the names] and what can be read about the ties Decebal had with the Jews, and the fact that he granted them the right to build a city in the mountain passes of transalpine Walachia does nothing if not corroborate the collective opinion.” (See *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign travelers in the Romanian Principalities], ed. Maria Holban et al., vol. 9 [Bucharest: Romanian Academy Press, 1997], 540). As for “the ties Decebal had with the Jews,” this is another legend, circulated even by the Transylvanian Jews themselves (see Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, *Istoria evreilor din Transilvania [1623–1944]* [The history of the Jews of Transylvania (1623–1944)], [(Bucharest: Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1994], 12), which has been dealt with in Chapter Three, section: “The Cowardice of the Jew: The Real Jew in the Real War.”

260. A. Fochi, *Datini și eresuri populare de la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea: Răspunsurile la chestionarele lui Nicolae Densusianu* (Folk customs and superstitions at the end of the nineteenth century: The replies to Nicolae Densusianu’s questionnaires) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1976), 169–70; Ciobanu, “*Omorul ritual*,” 158–59.

261. Fochi, *Datini și eresuri populare*, 171–72; Niculiță-Voronca, *Studii în folclor*, 2:279; Pamfile, *Povestea Lumii*, 138.

262. B. P. Hasdeu, *Istoria toleranței religioase în România* (The history of religious tolerance in Romania) (1868; Bucharest: Saeculum, 1992), 62.

263. Nicolae Densusianu, *Dacia preistorică* (Prehistoric Dacia) (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1986), 133–40.

264. Lazăr Șăineanu, “Jidovii sau Tătarii sau Uriașii” (The ‘Jidovs’ or the Tartars or the giants), *Convorbiri literare* (Literary talks) 21 (1887): 521–28; Koestler, *Thirteenth Tribe*.

265. Irena Grudzinska-Gross, *Cicatricea revoluției: Custine, Tocqueville și imaginarul romantic* (The scar of the revolution: Custine, Tocqueville and the Romantic imaginary) (Bucharest: Athena, 1997), 68–70.

266. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 71.

267. Niculiță-Voronca, *Studii în folclor*, 2:209.

268. Șăineanu, *Studii folklorice*, 210–15.

269. Ciausanu, *Superstițiile poporului român*, 46.

270. Gheorghe Brătescu, *Către sănătate perfectă: O istorie a utopismului medical* (For perfect health: A history of medical utopia) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1999), 17.

271. Romulus Vulcănescu, *Mitologie română* (Romanian mythology) (Bucharest: Romanian Academy Press, 1985), 427.

272. "Giants are synonymous with Jidovi in the language of the people," Șăineanu, "Jidovii sau Tătarii sau Uriașii," 524.

273. Robert Graves and Raphael Patai, *Hebrew Myths: The Book of Genesis* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 101–107, 151.

274. Turdeanu, *Apocryphes*, 37, 39, 42, 434. For the episode of the Giants' extinction in the Flood in the Ethiopian apocryphal Book of Enoch, see Victor Kernbach, *Miturile esențiale* (The essential myths) (Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1978), 257–58.

275. Fochi, *Datini și eresuri populare*, 72.

276. Șăineanu, *Studii folklorice*, 196.

CHAPTER 5

The Religious Portrait

DEICIDE

“The Supreme Sin”

Throughout the centuries, the most efficient way to arouse and perpetuate Judeophobia has been the charge of deicide. How can you express your love of God more persuasively than by showing your repulsion towards His murderers? For “God [also] hates the Jews forever,” John Chrysostom claimed around 400 CE. “If it is incumbent on a good Christian to detest Jews,” wrote Erasmus of Rotterdam in the early sixteenth century, “then we all are good Christians.” At about the same time Martin Luther was convinced that Jews had to be destroyed or expelled “for the honor of our Lord and of Christendom, so that God might see that we are Christians.”¹

During the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries in western and central Europe the actualization of deicide would occur in the week preceding Easter (frequently on Good Friday) by the performance in a public area of the *Mystery of Jesus’ Passion*. This type of dramatized performance, known under its German name of *Passionspiel*, was so efficient and persuasive that when it ended the audience would “do justice” by killing several Jews and putting Jewish houses to the torch. In order to restrict the disastrous effects of such excesses, in 1338 the local authorities of Freiburg, for instance, censored some of the anti-Jewish scenes in the spectacle, while in 1469 Frankfurt Jewish households were placed under protection after the public performance of the Passion Play.² It is likely that similar situations engendered the Hungarian proverb: “He is as scared as a Jew on Good Friday.”³

An interesting, yet isolated, episode occurred in Moldavia at the onset of the period of the Organic Regulations. This is the case of the ironical performance of Jesus’ Passion enacted by some Jews on the eve of Easter, 28 March 1836, in Târgu Ocna (in the county of Bacău), a little town in which a population of some 5,000 Christians and 109 Jews was recorded. On

Resurrection Day a few inebriated Jews, scantily disguised, derided Christ's Crucifixion by bearing one of them on an improvised cross. Seen by Christian residents, they were subsequently imprisoned and judged, first by the Criminal Acts Department and then by the legislative body of the Moldavian Divan itself. The result was completely out of proportion with the stupid prank of some inebriated never-do-well: the decision was that "four [offenders] be hung, and four more be sent away for forced labor as a life sentence." The sentence was pronounced on the basis of the Royal Laws (i.e., Basilicale, laws promulgated by St. Basil the Great in the fourth century), the deed being identified as "the looting of things sacred" (*hierosolia*), a crime punishable by the death sentence. As a consequence of a petition addressed to the prince of Moldavia, Mihai Sturdza, on behalf of "the whole Israelite population of this Principality" the death sentence was commuted to forced labor for life. This should not strike one as being a mysterious, obscure Jewish practice, since it is indeed the only case of this kind attested within the Romanian area; indeed, it is the only one known anywhere in Europe. As a matter of fact, during the public inquiry of 1836 even residents of Târgu Ocna issued a signed declaration, under oath, which maintained that "with the exception of this profanation, no other evidence pointing to guilt of the Jews is to be found."⁴

In both Romanian ancient and folk literature Jews were accused of committing the ultimate and unforgivable sin: "The Jew [*jidul*] is the murderer of Christ"⁵; "The Jewish sons of bitches tortured [Jesus]"⁶; or "The Jews flocked / All with forks and hatchets, / So they may kill God."⁷ In folk carols, the tortures that "those Jewish [*jidovi*] sons of bitches" inflict on Jesus are, roughly speaking, analogous to the ones described in the Gospels: "Those Jewish sons of bitches, / Those ogres, / They racked Him. / With thorns they beat Him, / His Holy Face they spat on, / Rushes under His nails they thrust, / On the cross they crucified Him, / Nails in His palms they hammered, / Nails in His palms and the soles of His feet. / The Son [Your Son, Mary,] is dead / And in Heaven He sits to the right of God the Father."⁸

In the Romanian cultural area, it may easily be inferred, this motif was bound to have its iconic representations too. For example, in the early nineteenth-century frescoes of the Orthodox church in the village of Tichindeal (near Sibiu) the torments to which Christ is subjected are similar to those endured by the Transylvanian rebel Gheorghe Doja in 1514 (a red-hot iron throne and crown). The legend of the image reads: "When the Jews [*jidovi*] mocked at Our Lord Jesus Christ." Another fresco shows "The Divan

of the Jews [*jidovi*]" (the Sanhedrin) judging Christ.⁹ In such cases, *jidov* (or *jid*) archaic Romanian ethnonyms of Slavic origin which of themselves do not have a discrediting connotation, are not used pejoratively. The Romanian folk legends say that "Lord Christ was also a *jidov*."¹⁰ The charge of deicide brought against the generic Jew is also implied in folk sayings recorded in central European countries such as Poland: "You torment me like the Jews did Jesus" and "Everyone is against me like the Jews against Jesus" are two examples.¹¹

Several Romanian folk legends have drawn upon the evangelical legend of the murder of Christ. One of them calls to attention the custom of painting Easter eggs red. Here is a late nineteenth-century version from Bukovina recorded by Simeon Florea Marian: "They say that one day, while Our Lord Jesus Christ was in a temple preaching the Word of God, the Judeans [*jidovi*], who could not suffer him and those who had been on His trail for quite a long while, tried to seize him and kill him." Divining their intention, Jesus stepped out of the temple and walked away. The Jews then surrounded him and began to fling stones at him. "Yet, Our Lord Jesus Christ, instead of fleeing from them, uttered some secret words, after which all stones cast at him by the Judeans were transformed into red eggs." Frightened by this miracle, the Judeans took to their heels. "And henceforward people have begun to paint Easter eggs red, to remind themselves of this occasion."¹²

According to another legend, forty days after Jesus' birth the Virgin Mary took the child to the Temple of Jerusalem "so that He might have the absolution prayers read to Him."¹³ The day before, on her way to Jerusalem, Mary had been attacked by "many Judeans...led by Tryph [or Tryphon], one of the high officials in the city of Jerusalem," who tried to murder Baby Jesus. Thereupon the "angel of the Lord" made Tryph lose his mind, all the Jews fled in great terror, and Tryph asked to be baptized. Since then, February 1st is celebrated as the Day of St. Tryph the Madman, and whoever does not observe it and works on that day is said to go mad.¹⁴

Finally, another Romanian folk legend relates that one evening, while Jesus was inside a house, the Jews who were attempting to capture and kill him stuck a green bough in the ground outside the house, so that they might identify it on the morrow. In the morning, however, a similar bough was found before each of the houses, so the Jews could not find and kill Jesus. In order to commemorate this event, every year, around the First of May (Arminden, i.e., May Day), Christians stick a green bough in the ground before their houses. At the end of the nineteenth century poet George Coșbuc

versified this legend in a poem named "Armingenii," his innovation being the metaphor of the blindfolded Jews, though this was merely a symbolic blindfolding: "And God blindfolded the kin / Of the evil-prone Jews, / So nowhere might they find / Such ways and means / As to kill He who was born of God..."¹⁵

Obviously, these three folk legends share a few details: the attempt by the Jews to kill Jesus is always bound to fail, and all the legends are etiological. In other words, the legends presented above establish and legitimize three ritual customs, whose significance is established by three different events in which Jesus escaped the death the Jews had planned for him.

The Curse

Owing to the "deicidal crime," two other stereotypical vices have now been added to the portrait of the "imaginary Jew": the fetid smell which his body is said to give off after the curse pronounced by Virgin Mary, (consider the offensive appellative "stinking Jew"), and eternal wandering throughout the world to which, according to folk tradition, he had been condemned by the curse of Jesus Christ himself.¹⁶

True expiation of the guilt of deicide occurs in the netherworld where "the Jews who crucified Our Lord Jesus Christ" are allocated "a river of fire and a great darkness and the sleepless worms and the fiery pitch steaming," according to descriptions of Hell in a sixteenth-century Romanian version of the apocryphal legend *Virgin Mary's Journey in Hell*,¹⁷ but also in iconic representations of Doomsday in frescoes on the walls of Romanian churches.

Some of the legends and apocryphal works are even more explicit, as they ascribe to each Jewish tribe the punishment corresponding to the passion it had inflicted on Jesus. This is the case of the apocryphal text entitled *On the Curse on the Twelve Jewish Tribes*, included in an eighteenth-century Romanian miscellany. In a fashion similar to that of western European tradition,¹⁸ it dwells upon the sins which each of the twelve Jewish tribes are supposed to have committed, as well as the forms of eternal damnation to which they were condemned, an uncanny reinforcement of *lex talionis*. The Jews of the tribe of Simon, for instance, the ones who "nailed Jesus to the Cross and crowned him with a crown of thorns" suffer "all the year round" from "headaches" and from "a dryness of the hands and legs." Those of the tribe of Dan, who cried out at Jesus Christ's trial "His blood be upon us and upon our children," have "great sweats of blood." The punishment of the Jews of the tribe of Gad, who weaved the crown of thorns, is to have "great

ulcers on the head, which burst,” so that the blood “drips on their hair and beard,” and so forth.¹⁹

Herod, the “king of the Judeans,” was condemned to even harsher punishments “for killing the babes of Bethlehem and for the sorrow of the mothers”²⁰ according to an apocryphal legend included in a *Book of Learning* from 1753.²¹ The “seven scourges” to which Herod was condemned for trying to murder Baby Jesus were: “lice were ceaselessly coming out of him, day and night,” “the skin and flesh of his body all disappeared,” “hunger seized him so he would eat day and night, and his appetite never surfeited,” “his whole body rotted,” etc.

The Prescription of the Crime

In the terms of John Chrysostom (late fourth century), there could be “no expiation possible, no indulgence, no pardon” for Jews by dint of the “odious murder of Christ.”²² In the Middle Ages, however, the accusation of deicide was already beginning to lose ground. The generic Jew continued to be abominated for the same reason, quite naturally, but now he was more of an abstract, “imaginary” Jew. It was more difficult for the medieval Christian to passionately hate the “real Jew,” his contemporary fellow townsman, for an execution—be it even that of Christ—carried out one thousand five hundred years earlier by the “imaginary Jew.” It seemed that after a millennium and a half even the “crime of crimes,” the killing of God, could be prescribed. In order to be absolved of the accusation of deicide, Jews in Spain used to swear to the truth of various legends that claimed that their ancestors had nothing to do with the Crucifixion: they either arrived in the Iberian Peninsula before the Crucifixion, or were part of a Judaic tribe that was opposed to the Crucifixion of Jesus.²³

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Christians of the Renaissance were learning Hebrew and studying the Kabbalah. In 1523, early in his reformist period, when he was writing *Das Jesus Christus eyn geboren Jüd War* [Jesus Christ Was a Jew by Birth], Martin Luther hoped to convert the Jews en masse and believed that persecuting them estranged them from Christianity. Calvin was considered to be a “Judaizer,” for Calvinist Protestants, persecuted and victimized by Catholics, used to look upon Jews with empathy. In circumstances such as those fleetingly sketched here, it should come as no surprise that in 1710 Jacques Bosnage, a Calvinist priest, published in the liberal Netherlands the first book on the *History of the Jews* that was not written from a Judeophobic standpoint. The same theologian

also published another volume entitled—not without calculation—*A Treatise of Universal Tolerance*, in which he hazarded to pose a question unthinkable before that time: “Those who cried ‘Crucify Him, Crucify Him!’ have been punished, their temple destroyed, their city the same; why are all generations after them to be considered guilty?”²⁴ This was an age when theologically grounded Judeophobia was being replaced by economically, and, respectively, biologically (racially) based variants. In that same eighteenth century Voltaire was accusing the Jews not for killing Jesus, but for giving birth to Him. Friedrich Nietzsche did the same toward the close of the nineteenth century in his *Zur Genealogie der Moral* [On the Genealogy of Morals, 1887].²⁵

However, it took two and a half centuries after the half-rhetorical question put by Rev. Bosnage for the Church itself—the main accuser until then of the Jews as a “deicidal people”—to take an epoch-making step, a gesture of huge symbolic value. In the documents (*Nostra Aetate*) issued by the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (1962–1965), the main count of indictment is: “Judean authorities and their followers brought Jesus to His death.” It is, however, admitted that “those deeds that were committed during His Passions can be set down neither to all the Jews living at that time, nor to the Jews of today.”²⁶ Those guilty of the crime of deicide are, in principle, the same, but their number has decreased substantially.

This step forward was a rather hesitant one, and many hard-core antisemites refuse to take it even today. In 1997, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, head of the România Mare [Greater Romania] ultranationalist political party with parliamentary representation, wrote the following in one of his magazines: “I love Jesus Christ too much not to think every day of those who mocked Him, who spat on Him, who flung stones at Him, who hoisted Him on the cross and who hammered nails into Him. *The Jews did this. The Jews of 2000 years ago and the Jews of all times* [emphasis added—A.O].”²⁷

The very last statement (accusing the “Jews of all times”—who include the “Jews of today”—of deicide) would itself indicate that the Romanian politician is aware of the erosion of popular hatred. Extreme right politicians and intellectuals of the 1930s, too, were disturbed by the attribution of the guilt for killing Christ only to “Jews of that epoch.” In an article entitled *Rasă și religie* [Race and Religion] (1936), Nichifor Crainic wrote: “The crime that was committed on Golgotha lives on as the poisonous substance of the Talmud ever since. This is because it is a well known fact that Talmudism is the cult of hatred against Jesus Christ.” Hatred against Jesus-killers must

be perpetually awakened and nourished: “This is but the paranoiac urge [of the Jews] to dominate, to subjugate, to blackmail, to give shape to the first fascist slogan in the history of humanity: The Jews are the chosen people of God. For what merits or missions could they have been chosen? For hitting, spitting at, and flogging and crucifying the Savior?”²⁸ Journalist Ion Cristoiu wrote an editorial in *Azi* [Today], a newspaper which he edited, on Jewish guilt for the murder of the Savior.²⁹

Like a latter-day prophet of doom, C. V. Tudor prophesied anti-Jewish pogroms at the end of the millennium: “I can sense that the barbaric intolerance of some of the Jews can trigger extremely violent reactions in these four years that separate us from the end of the millennium.” As a matter of fact, fanatical supporters of the “redeemer of the nation” even demand, in verse very redolent of patriotism, that he should take a step forward to “ethnic cleansing” and “the final solution”: “May you live for years on end, / And redeem us from the Gypsies, / from Hungarians and Jews and such... / Let us obliterate them all, / By the hand of a Tribune of the People such as Vadim, / Because with him as our President, / Our country is sure to advance.”³⁰ Tudor obviously sees himself as a second Messiah, sent by Heaven to defend the first Messiah from the murderous Jews: “Good God has a plan for me, which is that of *reminding them* [i.e., the Jews] *that they cannot crucify Jesus Christ infinitely* [emphasis added—A.O.].”³¹ He is neither the first nor the last to persecute Jews on the grounds of an alleged divine mission. Hitler trod the same path, even though in his case it was not the Judean Jesus but a God of an uncertain nature who motivated him: “I am well reassured that I act in accordance with the will of the almighty Creator. By rejecting the Jews, my struggle is part of God’s design.”³²

To me it seems to be evident that a demagogue such as Tudor does not believe in the humbug that he utters publicly, while employing clichés for purely electoral purposes. Still, it is precisely the endurance, the resistance to erosion, of these clichés in the collective unconscious that is disquieting, particularly in its effects: such discourse can still attract hundreds of thousands of votes today. This “luminous and honest Christian” as Tudor thinks of himself, received the vote of 32 percent of the Romanian electorate in the presidential elections of 10 December 2000. It may be that this high percentage was not substantiated by the antisemitic rhetoric of *Greater Romania* magazine but by the reception among the populace of the populist demagoguery practiced by Corneliu Vadim Tudor. “Even so,” concluded Leon Volovici, “the indifference of the electorate as regards the violently

antisemitic and xenophobic message of the latter is no less grave and it should be a sign of alarm....”³³

A public opinion poll conducted in Germany in 1992 showed that 4 percent of those polled held “the Jews in general” (or, to use the hobbyhorse of Corneliu Vadim Tudor, “the eternal Jews”) guilty of the death of Jesus. Another 15 percent of Germans (or 26 percent of Catholic Germans) held “the Jews of the time” responsible.³⁴ The results of another opinion poll conducted in Hungary in 1994 show that almost one third of the persons interviewed hold the Jews guilty of deicide, a guilt that can be neither forgotten nor forgiven. Some 26.6 percent of those interviewed answered that they totally or partially agreed with the statement that “the crucifixion of Jesus was an unforgivable sin of the Jews.”³⁵ Most likely, in other central and eastern European countries the situation is even more alarming, this on the basis of the results of another opinion poll from 1991 taken by the American Jewish Committee. By means of a comparative survey, this poll tried to highlight the attitudes towards Jews assumed by Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, and Slovaks immediately after the demise of the Cold War. One of the conclusions of this sociological analysis was that “More negative feeling towards Jews exists in Poland than in either Czechoslovakia or Hungary. Overall, Czechoslovakia ranks second in this regard, with Hungary manifesting the least anti-Jewish feeling.” Later on, at the end of the 1990s, the situation deteriorated in Hungary, according to the Hungarian sociologist András Kovács.³⁶

HAGIOCIDE

St. John the New

Another way of keeping the deicide of the Jews alive was through the charge of hagiocide. The most interesting example for the Romanian area is the martyrdom of St. John the New, an event that occurred in the first half of the fourteenth century: more specifically around the year 1300 according to Nicolae Cartoian, 1320 according to Bishop Melchizedek, or 1330 according to Nicolae Iorga.

In 1402 Alexander the Righteous transferred the relics of St. John the New from Cetatea Albă (southern Bessarabia) to Suceava (northern Moldavia). At about the same time, at the command of the same monarch, the monk Grigore Țamblac, “presbyter of the great Church of Moldo-Walachia,” wrote *The Martyrdom of St. John the New* in Slavonic. The legend, in short, goes as

follows. John of Trapezunt, a Christian Orthodox merchant, is led into a religious conflict with the ruler of Cetatea Albă (a descendant of the Tartar Khan Nogai, killed in 1299), owing to the machinations of a Catholic (in the words of the text: “of the Latin heresy”), and probably Genoese, ship captain. The ruler challenges John to a public theological debate, demanding that he renounce his Orthodox belief and adopt the infidel religion. When John refuses, he is beaten and tortured. In his agony, he is tied to the rear of an untamed horse and dragged all through the city.

And when...the saint came among the Jews’ dwelling places (*iudeiskaia jilishcia* in the Slavonic original), the Jews began to whoop and turned to look and threw at the saint whatever they chanced to have at hand at that moment, and the yells they gave out were altogether odd and riotous. And one of them, dashing into the house and taking out a sword, overtook the saint and instantly cut off his holy head and, freeing the rest of the body from its ties, he let it lie thus next to the head in scorn, and none of the devout [i.e., Christians] dared touch it.³⁷

At night, a light and three angels “with faces of light” appeared above John’s body. Imagining that these were Christian believers come to bury John, “one of the Jews,” a “son of the vipers,” tried to shoot an arrow at them, but a “pillar of fire came down from the sky over the saint’s body.” The Jew remained glued to the ground, bow in hand, until morning. The ending is a classic one: seeing these miracles, the Jews were only too willing to be baptized.³⁸

The legend was very popular in Moldavia. In 1547, it was painted in detail on the frescoes on the southern façade of the church of Voroneț. In 1534, drawing upon Grigore Țamblac’s work, archimandrite Theodosie of the monastery of Neamț wrote a *Panegyric for the Saintly and Virtuous Great Martyr John the New* in Slavonic, a text that would be reprinted numerous times during the following centuries. The legend was so widespread as to be included in *The Lives of the Saints* and was also adopted by Varlaam, the Metropolitan of Moldavia, in his *Cazania* [Book of Learning] (1643). Varlaam made use of Grigore Țamblac’s early fifteenth-century version, yet also interposed details in the legend which were relevant to the middle of the seventeenth century: it no longer treated of the Tartars, but of the Turks; their leader was called a “qadi”; the religious dispute was conducted between Islam and Christian Orthodoxy, etc. Here is the most important episode of the legend, in Varlaam’s version:

While it [i.e., the horse] was trotting on a Jewish street dragging the saint behind, the Jews gave out great roars of laughter and hurled oaths at the saint and, whatsoever they happened to have at hand, that they threw at the saint. Laughter and roars they made. And one among them sneaked inside his house and got hold of a sword, and once he got next to the saint, without tarrying he cut off his holy head.³⁹

Finally, as was also the case with the legend of the Wandering Jew, a nineteenth-century verger rendered the legend into verse, of which the following is a short fragment:

Then they tied you
To an untamed horse,
Through the city they dragged you
And your holy body crushed.
All Christians that beheld you,
They were in great distress,
And all the filthy Jews
To every evil prone
Your holy body scourged,
And great roaring laughter they made.
And one of them, more cursed,
A sword he got in hand,
Your holy head he severed,
And your body untied.
And you remain forsaken
And not one heeded you.⁴⁰

This time we know precisely by whom, when, and where the verse was written: by the “most sinful man of all of them living,” Picu Pătruț, a church attendant from Sălișteța Sibiului (southern Transylvania), in 1842.

Simeon Florea Marian, and later Tudor Pamfilie, have commented on the history and legend of St. John the New of Suceava,⁴¹ called St. John of the Summer, whose saint’s day was celebrated on 24 June (thus replacing the important Day of the Birth of St. John the Baptist), in contrast with St. John of the Winter, whose day of celebration was 7 January. He became the “Patron Saint of Bukovina” but was adored—through mass pilgrimages to Suceava—by Christians in all the neighboring regions: Bessarabia, Moldavia, Transylvania, Maramureș, Galicia, Podolia, Carpatho-Ukraine, and elsewhere.⁴²

The two Romanian folklorists have also described the folk traditions and beliefs pertaining to the saint, and the wondrous acts that have been attributed to him. In these Romanian folk legends, several mythologems can be identified that are also found in other hagiographic narratives, especially those about the life of Jesus Christ. This is so not only because the life of Jesus used to represent the paragon for the life of a Christian saint, but also because—in the Christian mentality—the *hagiocidal Jew* was modeled after the *deicidal Jew*.

The image of Jews rejoicing at the fate of St John is adopted from the well-known episodes in which the Jews mock Jesus (“the moral crime”): “But the rulers scoffed at him.... The soldiers also mocked him” (Luke 23:35–36). The Jew (*Jidovul*) who guards the corpse of St. John the New, who is paralyzed when trying to shoot an arrow at the angels that come to raise the saint to Heaven, has his counterpart in Romanian folk legends about the resurrection of Jesus. The Jews (*jidovi*) who guard the Savior’s body are petrified when they attempt to fling stones at the “Angel of the Lord” who arrived to bring Jesus back to life. “And the guards, who were set by the Jews to guard Jesus Christ’s tomb, have been standing like rocks next to this tomb ever since, as can be seen to this day.”⁴³ Similarly, the Jews who came to arrest Jesus were “numbed,” that is, “they were like dead men,”⁴⁴ as were those charged with keeping watch over St. Peter in jail.⁴⁵

St. George and Other Saints

Another quite common mythic motif bears a certain resemblance to the manner in which the Jews are said to have murdered St. John the New by tying him to an “untamed horse.” A similar event occurs in a folk legend from Bukovina, narrating the torments of St George: “They say that the Jews (*jidovi*) held a terrible grudge against St. George, as he was a Christian and a saint. That was why more than once they did their best to find ways and means to lay their hands upon him and put an end to his life.” After they captured him, they made him consecrate their synagogue (“the house where Jews prayed”), but St. George graced it with “the censer God of Heaven had given him,” so that all “unclean demons” lying in the earthenware that hung on the walls of the synagogue were chased away. “Seeing this, the Jews took counsel together over the kind of death which should be meted out to the saint. And in the end they made up their minds: let his legs be tied to the rear of a wild horse, which shall then be set free.”

The image of hagiocide attributed to the Jews seems identical with the one in the legend of St. John the New, but one element of the mythic equation is changed and upsets it altogether. Unlike St. John the New, a merchant of Trapezunt, George is a “military saint.” He is a soldier in the Roman army and, consequently, “has a way with horses.” Therefore, “instead of letting the Jews tie him to the horse’s legs,” St George “throws himself on the horse in a trice, and off he goes, without waiting for the Jews who are left gaping behind.”⁴⁶

Although Romanian folk legends retain some elements of a historical nature—namely, that St. George was a Christian soldier in the army of the anti-Christian Emperor Viclețian [i.e., Diocletian]⁴⁷—other aspects are replaced by clichés. For instance, George is not martyred by the Romans but by the Jews, those who also have killed Jesus. As compared to the legend from Bukovina discussed above, that originating from Oltenia is somewhat altered. But those who wish the saint’s death are always the same: George “was a soldier with a dark horse,” who “scourged the Jews” and “worshipped none of their gods”; this is why “they threw him in a pit of quicklime.”⁴⁸

The Jews are also held responsible for the attempt to murder some of the apostles: James, Phillip, Peter, etc.⁴⁹ A Romanian folk legend claims that “the Jews wanted to behead [Apostle Phillip], as Apostle James had been beheaded, too.” According to ancient Jewish historians Josephus and Hegesippus, Apostle James “the brother of Jesus”—who became the bishop of the “Judeo-Christians” in Jerusalem—was not beheaded, but thrown from the top of the Temple and clubbed out of his misery in the year 62 CE. A Romanian *Chronograph*, translated from the Greek in the seventeenth century, records the same *modus operandi*: “In the days of Nero, as the Jews in Jerusalem saw St. Jacob, *brata bojiia* [Slavonic: the brother of the Lord], that he announced the name of God...they began to harbor enmity for him. And when they knew that he was in the church, the Jews encircled him and threw him down from the wing of the church and there they killed him.”⁵⁰

Traditional mentality which, ignoring the historical dimension of the facts, operated only within the mythical dimension, placed the guilt of hagiocide not only upon the New Testament Jew, but also on contemporary Jews. An assertion by a peasant in southeastern Poland (recorded only a few decades ago) is not only humorous, but also defining for this kind of thinking: “I read in the *Breviary* that, before the war [i.e., World War II], the Jews tortured saints. They gave them to the dogs, stabbed them....”⁵¹

St. Mary

A few comments on legends of the Assumption of Mary should be illuminating at this point. Their source is not the *Proto-Gospel of Jesus*, as erroneously indicated by art historian Victor Ieronim Stoichiță,⁵² but another apocryphal work, *John the Theologian on the Assumption*. This apocryphal Gospel, attributed to John the Apostle, dates from the fifth century (with an anterior Gnostic version) and had been widely disseminated, especially in the area of Byzantine influence. Researchers are of opinion that the origin of this text is either the Old Testament story of Uzzah, killed by Jehovah for daring to touch the Ark of the Covenant with his hand (2 Sam. 6:1–8), or the New Testament story of Saul of Tarsus blinded by Jesus for persecuting Christians (Acts 9:1–18).⁵³ The relevant episode for our discussion is as follows.

When “the day came for her [i.e., Virgin Mary] to leave this world and ascend to the heavens,” every apostle (including those already dead) were miraculously transported to Bethlehem, and then to Jerusalem, to the house where Mary was lying. “The Jews [*iudeii*] and their priests gathered firewood and made ready to set fire to the house which sheltered Virgin Mary and the apostles,” in order to burn the body of the Virgin and kill the apostles. But “when the Jews came to the door, a great tongue of fire, lit by an angel, came from inside and burnt a great many Jews.... Then a schism was created among the Jews and many of them believed in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ because of the wonders that had been worked.”

After the soul of Virgin Mary ascended to Heaven, “the twelve apostles placed her virtuous and holy body in a coffin.... But just as they were raising her, there came a Jew, Jephonias by name, sturdy of limb and body, and charged at the coffin [to knock it down]. Then an angel of the Lord cut off both his arms from the shoulder with a sword of fire, and let them hang in the air at the side of the coffin.” Faced with this wonder, Jephonias cries out: “Blessed Virgin Mary, you, who gave birth to Christ the Lord, have mercy on me!... And in the twinkling of an eye, the arms, which were hanging by the coffin of the Lady, returned to join Jephonias’ body. And he had faith and worshipped Christ, the Son of God born of Mary.”⁵⁴

In later versions, be they learned ones (such as the *Wonders of Virgin Mary* or *Missals for the Month of August*) or folk legends, the Jews who, alongside Jephonias, sought to overturn the catafalque in which Virgin Mary lay were chastised together with him: “[The Jews (*jidovi*)] who spoke lost their voice and the Jews who watched lost their eyesight.” Their infirmity, like that of Jephonias, is cured by Virgin Mary after the Jews convert to the

“true belief”: “The faithless Jews then began to be baptized one after the other. And when whoever among them was christened, that very moment he was relieved from the disease that had seized him. And so, several thousand of faithless Jews were baptized and became Christians that day” (folk legend from Bukovina).⁵⁵ In some old Romanian texts the name of the blinded Judean is Ofona, instead of Jephonias. In *Întrebări și răspunsuri* [Questions and Answers], a 1748 manuscript translated from the Slavic,⁵⁶ the question arises: “What was the name of the Jew who drew near to the coffin of Virgin Mary in order to overthrow it, and whose hands were then severed by the Archangel?” The answer supplied is, “Ofona.”⁵⁷ A significant fact is that in one of the folk legends on this subject, published by Simeon Florea Marian, the Jew who tries to “overturn the bier” of Virgin Mary loses his neutral name of Jephonias and receives one with extremely negative connotations: “a Jew named Judas, a descendant of Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus Christ.”⁵⁸ Once again, the hagiocide Jew follows in the footsteps of the deicide Jew.

In any event, the presence of Jews in church at the catafalque of a great saint or a great hierarch of Christianity became a recurring theme. This was especially true when Jews do not come to overturn the bier, but to pray to it. To show, for instance, how well beloved the metropolitan bishop Veniamin Costachi of Moldavia had been, the chronicler notes that upon his death in 1846 he was mourned not only by the Christian townspeople, but even by the Jews: “Poor Jews eagerly came into the church to kiss the bier.”⁵⁹ It is a fact that in 1803, in Jassy, Veniamin Costachi sheltered the Jews to protect them from the raging pogrom unleashed by an accusation of ritual murder.

In Cernăuți (Czernowitz), in 1926 things happened very much in the same way upon the death of Bishop Vladimir de Repta. On this occasion, “the Jewish community and its institutions,” wrote the newspaper *Ostjüdische Zeitung* “flew the flag at half-mast.” When the funerary cortege stopped in front of the synagogue, Chief Rabbi Dr. Mark solemnly uttered in Hebrew: “In front of this holy temple, decorated and illuminated in your honor, in front of the scrolls that, in times of war, you took under your protection when they were threatened with profanation, I send you the salutation of the Jewish people Cernăuți, all of whom respected and loved you.”⁶⁰

The reverse image too was not foreign to people in the Romanian area, for instance that of a “[Christian-Orthodox] monk presenting his funeral discourse of praise upon the death of a Jewish rabbi.”⁶¹

I shall not deal here with the evolution and the diffusion over time of all the mythic motives that make up the apocryphal legend of the Assumption. Nor shall I touch upon the possible influences—from the spheres of both high and low culture—which must have been exerted on the motif of “the severed arms that grow in place again.” Others have done so before me: Moses Gaster, Nicolae Cartojan, Dumitru Stănescu, and—more recently—Ioan Petru Culianu.⁶² The fact remains that the apocryphal text *Wonders of Virgin Mary*, as Nicolae Cartojan has remarked, used to be “one of the most widely read texts, not only in the medium of the monasteries and among the clergy, but also among the high gentry.”⁶³ The legend of the Assumption influenced the collective imagination in the course of the nineteenth century through the Missals from which the priests used to read the apocryphal legend in the church after Mass, on the fifteenth of August, when the Feast of the Assumption (“St Mary’s Great Feast”) was duly celebrated in all of Christendom.

However, it was not the story alone, but also the iconic representation of the Jew with the severed arms, surrounded by the apostles beside the catafalque of Virgin Mary, that left its mark upon the mind of the Romanian peasant. This iconic motif enjoyed great success and was much reproduced both on wooden icons⁶⁴ and on frescoes in the churches of the Romanian Principalities,⁶⁵ including that of Curtea de Argeș. Byzantine and post-Byzantine books of icon patterns (including that of Dionysus of Furna) maintain visual representation compatible with the apocryphal legend: “Virgin Mary lying breathless on a bed, arms folded on her chest...and by the bed a Jew with severed arms and the arms hanging by the bed, and in front of him an angel with a naked sword...around her the other apostles and holy bishops etc.”⁶⁶

As a researcher of Byzantine art has noticed, the first sequence of the action (Jephonias’ attempt to overturn the catafalque) is merely suggested, the second section (retribution of the profaner) is represented in the iconic image, whereas the third sequence (the christening of the Jew and the curing of his arms) is entirely absent, any suggestion of it being completely lacking. “Nothing suggests the possibility of the Jew’s conversion and, finally, the lifting of the punishment. The intention [of the iconic motif] is thus clearly negative.” The same researcher, however, emphasizes the fact that, unlike Western iconography, that of Byzantium employs no element that would negatively valorize or parody Jephonias, despite the fact that, from a

theological point of view, he appeared predestined to such a fate.⁶⁷ This is a laudable constant of Christian Orthodox iconography.

ICONOCIDE

Profanation of the Eucharistic Host and the Cross

One unfaltering way of bringing keeping alive the accusation of deicide was the secondary allegation of “killing” by Jews of a symbolic substitute for Jesus: either by profaning the Eucharistic Host (a typical charge brought against the Jews in the Middle Ages) or desecrating the iconographical representation of Jesus. In both cases, it was considered that hypostases of deicide were at stake since, from the viewpoint of Christian dogma, the Eucharistic Host and the icon do not symbolize, but actually are, *Corpus Domini*. In all cases blood, as a token of life, would spring from either a Host trampled underfoot or a stabbed icon. As related in the Gospels, this was also the case with Jesus’ death: “But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. One of the soldiers, however, plunged his spear into Jesus’ side, and at once blood and water poured out” (John 19:33–34). This is but another way of saying that Jesus lives on even after his passing away.

As noted at the outset of this chapter, deicide has been the most efficient motivation for inducing and kindling Judeophobia. However, it lost much of its edge in the Middle Ages. It seemed that after a millennium and a half even the “crime of the crimes,” the murder of God, could begin to be prescribed. Deicide had become history, if not a simple legend. To recharge it with force and signification, one had to rejuvenate it.

In Rome, during the first half of the eleventh century, “a terrible cyclone” was deemed to have occurred because on Good Friday “Jews were about to profane the image of the crucifix in their synagogues.” Inquiring into the case, Pope Benedict “condemned the authors of this vile act to death; and as soon as they were beheaded, the fury of the wind came to an end” noted one contemporary.⁶⁸ This seems to be the earliest record of an allegation of iconocide against the Jews.

Accusations of profaning the Host were made especially after 1215, when the Fourth Lateran Council adopted the doctrine of transubstantiation, according to which the sacramental wine and bread are transformed into the very blood and body of Christ. With few variations, the scenario that provided the backdrop for the accusations would always remain more or less

the same: several Jews would convince or, more often, bribe a Christian to bring them a piece of the Host from the church. Then, in one of their houses or in the synagogue, the Jews violated the Host (most times in the presence of a crucifix), stabbing it with a knife, burning it, or trampling it underfoot. In that same period, in the so-called “black liturgies,” warlocks were charged with performing more or less the same type of ceremonies.⁶⁹ According to Christian legends, the Host bled or was transformed into Jesus (sometimes Jesus the child) and the Jews, faced with these wonders, asked to be baptized. For this theme, see Paolo Uccello’s painting, “The Desecrated Host Bleeds and Soldiers Try to Force the Door of the Jew’s House.” Jews suspected of such acts were burnt at the stake; at times the entire local community was massacred or evicted.⁷⁰

In that part of Europe in which the Orthodox Church was supreme such accusations of profaning the Eucharistic bread are but sparsely attested. As for the Romanian area, such indictments have endured, as expected, in Transylvania, populated by powerful Catholic and Protestant communities. Elie Wiesel remembers that in the 1930s the Jews of Sighet (Maramureș) were cursed for having “profaned the Host.”⁷¹ Incidentally, some folk beliefs of this kind have been preserved, like the one recorded around 1900 in Bukovina which, significantly, was a frontier region between the Orthodox and Catholic areas. The beliefs are no longer targeted at the Jews but at other “strangers”—the Ukrainians:

If anyone wants to have luck at shooting, let him put in his gun the Eucharist bread he takes on Easter Day from the church and let him fire his gun, and he shall hit anything he fancies, but it’s a great sin. He is shooting the body of Our Lord Christ! A young Ukrainian [i.e., Hutsullian] put the Eucharist bread on a tree and shot, and blood came out of the bread.⁷²

Even accusations of profaning the crucifix are typical of western and central Europe, not the eastern part of the continent. A few exceptions are attested, but they are late and irrelevant ones. For instance, in western Russia in the early twentieth century (approximately 1905–1906) manifestos were circulated inciting people to participate in pogroms because the Jews had “pillaged a convent and tied crosses to the necks of dogs.”⁷³ The Jew is not the only non-Christian to have played a role of this kind. Several chroniclers recount that, after converting to Islam, one of Moldavia’s kings, Ilie II Rareș (1546–1551), “broke that cross to pieces, on which he had sworn, and threw it in the privy” to give people proof of the sincerity of his choice of religion,

or placed “a wooden cross under his feet, on which he spat three times and just as many times pushed it away with his foot.”⁷⁴ Treading on the cross or on the icon was, in eastern Europe, a gesture expressing disavowal of God and of initiation in the craft of sorcery.⁷⁵

The Stabbed Icon

Christian Orthodox Europe gave birth to and spread the legend of the Jews profaning icons bearing images of Jesus or of Virgin Mary holding the child. Strangely, this legendary motif, so challenging in its nature, did not also become an iconographic motif in the Byzantine area. “Even the importance given [in Byzantium] to the icon, and its sacralization,” writes Elisabeth Revel-Neher, “did not cause the Jews to be associated with it [in Byzantine iconography] and accused of its profanation.”⁷⁶

In these areas, profanation of icons was habitually set down to the “imaginary Jew,” not to the “real Jew,” as happened with desecration of the Host in Catholic and Protestant Europe. The rejuvenation of deicide occurred through the agency of the legend: a new one (iconocide) recharged the old one (deicide). The Jews were no longer portrayed as killers of Jesus, but as killing his (living!) icon. The best-known legend of this kind circulated throughout the entire Byzantine area and was disseminated by means of Greek, Russian, and Romanian chronicles and stories between the eighth and the eighteenth centuries. The legend enjoyed prodigious success in the Romanian area. This was due to the fact that the “stabbed icon”—believed to be holy and to work miracles—was brought in 1515 by the sovereign, Neagoe Basarab, “from Tsaringrad” (present-day Istanbul) to the church at the monastery of Argeş. This is the legend associated with it as recounted by a contemporary, Gavriil Protul, in *The Life and Deeds of St. Niphon, Patriarch of Constantinople*, a panegyric written in Greek in 1517–1521:

And he [Neagoe Basarab] brought the icon that worked miracles from Tsaringrad, in the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ the Almighty, which was previously damaged by a Jew with his knife. And as soon as he stabbed it, a stream of blood came out of the knife-mark and blood smeared the clothes of that Jew; and he, out of fear, could not see that blood was on his clothes, seeing only the blood that was on the icon. And being seized with such a fear as this, he threw the icon into a pit in a cellar, for he in that cellar had covertly stabbed the holy icon. Hence he came out as if he knew nothing of this wonder, and as soon as he met people and, when they saw that his clothes were so

dreadfully stained with blood, they caught hold of him and asked: “What is this supposed to mean?” And, when he saw his bloodied clothes, he was eager to make true confession of the miracle of the icon, and they all rushed to the pit together and took out the icon. And blood kept flowing from the knife-wound, so that the water turned all red from the blood. Oh, great are your miracles, Lord Jesus Christ, Our God! Upon seeing this, the Jew believed in Christ, the Son of God, and asked to be baptized, he and his whole household. So many other Jews who had seen that great wonder with their own eyes also asked to be baptized. For which wonder it is everywhere written down and heralded.⁷⁷

It comes as no surprise that the legendary motif of “the stabbed icon” was also included in *The Teachings of Neagoe Basarab for his Son Theodosie*, an early sixteenth-century work. In this particular case, emphasis is no longer placed on the facts (a sign that the details of the story were well known), but on their theological significance. Jesus is said to have been “slain” twice by the Jews, first through the Crucifixion and a second time by means of the stabbing of the icon.

And all who were on earth disbelievers and did not believe in You [Lord Jesus], not at the beginning and not later, they came to the icon of Your face and stabbed Your imperial body with the yataghan. O, wonder, behold blood coming out of it and flowing, as before. And You, my Maker, could not rest for the unbelieving nation of the Jews, not at first, and not after.... We pray for Your passions, we pray for Your Crucifixion, we pray for the wounds of Your Kingdom, Ye who have suffered all on the Cross for us men. And once again do we pray for the wounds of this second time, which you suffered in Your holy icon at the hands of the unbelieving Jews, and we worship Your Resurrection, Our Lord God....⁷⁸

During the first decades of the eighteenth century the legend was reproduced in full in *The Chronicle of Cantacuzino*⁷⁹ and in abbreviated form by chronicler Radu Popescu in *The Histories of the Rulers of Walachia*: “King Neagoe also brought an icon from Tsaringrad [1515 CE], the image of our Lord Christ, which a Jew had stabbed with a knife, in the face of the Lord, and blood had come out. Even today it can be seen on the icon, for it is in Argeș, in its monastery.”⁸⁰ Moreover, the legend was recounted by Paul of Alep, secretary to Patriarch Macarius of Antioch, in the journal of their travel

through the Romanian Principalities. He even provided a description of the icon, which he had seen in the monastery of Argeş (Walachia), on 14 January 1657. Paul of Alep maintained that the story of the “murder” of this image of Christ by a Jew is to be found “in all Greek chronicles of that time” and is even “described on the margins of the icon.”⁸¹ Thus did the icon incorporate its own legend.

To close this discussion, I shall outline a few coordinates on the margin of this subject, with the intention of offering suggestions as to the ancient age of the legend in question and its Byzantine roots. In the year 1200 a Russian pilgrim, Antoni, Archbishop of Novgorod, recounts seeing in the cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople “the icon of the All Holy Virgin holding Christ; a Jew had stabbed Christ with a knife and blood had flowed.” “In the diaconikon,” the Russian pilgrim went on, “we kissed this blood of Our Savior come out of the icon.” In 1393, yet another Russian traveling through Constantinople, one Alexander, a secretary to the Tsar, saw in the monastery of Periolept the “icon of the Virgin, which a Jew had transfixed [with a knife]...whence blood came out of it which can be seen to this day.”⁸² It appears, therefore, that in Byzantium the legend of the “icon stabbed by the Jew” had known several versions relating to different icons.

The following legend was attested in ninth-century Byzantium in a form strikingly similar to the Romanian legend of the “stabbed icon” from the Monastery of Argeş (found in early sixteenth-century documents). A Jew thrusts his dagger into an icon of Jesus at the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Even after it is thrown into a well, the icon continues to bleed. Caught unawares, the Jew confesses his sin and is baptized.⁸³ The fact that such a legend was attested in ninth-century Byzantium is indicative of an organic connection between the motif of iconocide and the phenomenon of iconoclasm. During the first decades of that century, iconodules were persecuted and proscribed in the Byzantine area, particularly in Constantinople, while icons were destroyed or burned. Only as late as 843, on the first Sunday of Lent (commemorated to this day in the form of a feast called the Triumph of Orthodoxy), was reinstatement of the cult of images solemnly celebrated in the same Cathedral of Hagia Sophia.

The organic connection between the legend of iconocide and iconoclasts is reinforced by the following item of information. In 787, at the Seventh Ecumenical Synod in Nicene, the patriarchs who formed the party of iconodules presented a document that narrated an act of iconocide, this as part of their anti-iconoclast argumentation. This case of iconocide was said to

have taken place in a synagogue in Beirut in the first decades of the fourth century, during the reign of Constantine the Great. The legend contained the well-known epic motifs: the Jews were said to have “crucified” Jesus’ image in the icon; the blood of the Savior flowed out of it; the Jews were converted to Christianity and the synagogue was transformed into a church.⁸⁴ It seems that the temporary victory of the iconodules over the iconoclasts at the Synod of Nicene (which was to remain in effect until the Synod of 815) was, to a significant extent, due to this argument. In consequence of these proceedings, the cult of icons was solemnly reinstated; they could be now venerated (*proskynesis*), but not adored (*latría*).

Scholars of the history of religions have not yet fully demonstrated the influence that Judaism and its precepts (“You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above...; you shall not bow down to them or serve them”) had on the rise of iconoclasm. What is certain, however, is that there were iconoclastic emperors, such as Leo III the Isaurian (717–741), who were accused of “sympathy for Judaism” while others, like Michael II (820–829), were suspected of being of Jewish origin. A Byzantine chronicler, Theophanes, wrote about Michael II that he oppressed the Christians and alleviated the burden on the Jews because “he loved and esteemed them more than all other mortals.”⁸⁵

The extremely likely correlation between the historical phenomenon of iconoclasm and the mythology of the iconocidal Jew prompts us to consider not only the traditional perception of Jewish antipathy for the image of Christ on an icon, but also for the icon as such.

Other Strangers as Destroyers of Icons

The protagonist in this type of legend has been preeminently the Jew, yet he is not altogether alone. Another “stranger” could well take his place, a non-Christian one as a rule (a Turk, a Tartar, or an Arab) or a non-Orthodox Christian. In the Monastery of Neamț in northern Moldavia, for instance, the extant tradition was that a Turk allegedly stabbed an icon representing Virgin Mary with child. In some Polish monasteries a similar legend has survived in which the protagonist is a Tartar. By 1657 Paul de Alep informs us that at the onset of the seventeenth century Hungarian soldiers allegedly threw into the flames precisely the icon of the Monastery of Argeș (“but it remained untarnished”), about which previous accounts hold that it had already been stabbed by a Jew.⁸⁶

Finally, *The Daily Missal for the Month of April* contains a legend about a “famous Saracen” (from the city of Ramel, in Syria), who shot an arrow from his bow at an icon representing St. George. “Yet the arrow did not fly at the icon,” the text goes on, “but up it went and, falling from that height, hit the Saracen in the arm and wounded it. Thereupon, he came out at once and went home, in great pain from his arm and losing much blood.” The Saracen would be healed only if he believed in St. George and if he salved his wound with oil from the votive light under the saint’s icon. After he was cured in that manner, the Mohammedan fell “at the priest’s feet [and] begged him to make him worthy by bestowing the Holy Baptism upon him.” The Christian priest “baptized him at night, in secret, for fear of the Saracens.”⁸⁷ Needless to say, St. George is not Jesus; the former does not manifest himself in person in the icon, like the latter. For Christians, transubstantiation is an attribute of divinity. Hence the modification of the typical plot: since blood can no longer flow from the icon, whoever tries to destroy it has blood gushing out from himself.

Paradoxically, those who, as a token of victory, scratched out the eyes of Christian Orthodox saints in the churches of Bukovina during the seventeenth century were Catholic Polish soldiers.⁸⁸ The practice was also found among the Hungarian troops who besieged the Monastery of Argeş in 1610, recounts Paul of Alep.⁸⁹ Radu Rosetti relates how Ottoman troops profaned the icons and churches of Moldavia in 1821, when they put an end to the Hetairist revolt: “The Turks desecrated the churches in a savage manner, turning them into stables for their horses and shooting at or cutting to pieces with their swords the icons within; in many of them the traces of such devastation are still to be seen.”⁹⁰ Indeed, at the beginning of the twentieth century Romanian historiographer Nicolae Iorga saw saints with their eyes scratched out by the spears of Ottoman soldiers in the frescoes painted on the walls of Bessarabian churches.⁹¹

According to a medieval legend, a Jewish merchant places an icon (or sculpture) of St. Nicholas as a guardian for his fortune. Thieves, however, empty his house. Upon returning home the Jew, filled with anger, beats and whips the image representing the saint. St. Nicholas restores all the stolen possessions to the merchant who, in the face of this wondrous act, converts to Christianity. In the thirteenth century, this story was incorporated by Jacques de Voragine, the archbishop of Genoa, in *Legenda Aurea*.⁹² During that same period the theme was also developed in religious theatrical presentations,⁹³ as well as in the stained-glass windows of gothic cathedrals of France.⁹⁴ A

similar legend has been recorded in Romanian folklore too, but there a Turk replaces the Jew. However, other legends are attested in Romania in which an innkeeper does some mischief to a wonder-working icon representing St. Nicholas. No mention is made of the ethnic origin of the innkeeper, yet in the popular idiom “innkeeper” quite often meant Jew.⁹⁵

I believe that the success enjoyed in the Romanian area by the legend of the profaned icon was due to some folk superstitions having deep roots in this region. On the one hand, it was strictly forbidden to destroy an icon or set it afire, no matter how old or riddled with woodworm it might be. “The best thing is to take it out on a holiday and throw it onto the surface of running water,” from where it will flow down the “River of the Other World” (Apa Simbetei) into the realm of the mythical fathers. Furthermore, the Romanian peasant believed that if an icon fell, was cracked, broken, split, etc., that would be an ill omen, a sign of “a mortal evil” or of “the greatest mischief that would befall the house.”⁹⁶

RITUAL INFANTICIDE

“What I would begrudge antisemitism, before all else,”... affirms the protagonist of the novel, “is its lack of imagination: ‘Masonry, usury, ritual murder.’ And then what? Alas, how little this is! Alas, how poor!”

Mihail Sebastian, *For Two Thousand Years...*, 1934

In Europe

Whenever there was a need to replace or double the allegation of deicide, so as to further fuel antisemitic sentiments, the strongest claim against the Jews was neither that of iconocide, nor that of hagiocide, but the charge of *ritual infanticide*. The efficacy of this type of indictment is self-evident. From their former abstract state, all the terms of the equation become painfully concrete. This time, the presumed victim is an innocent child, known to the entire community. The presumed murderers are no longer some “imaginary Jews,” who may have killed “who knows when” and “who knows where,” but “real Jews,” those who live “in our very borough.” Finally, this time a “physical” murder is on the agenda, not a symbolic one (iconocide) or one committed at an uncertain or an immemorial time (hagiocide and deicide, respectively).

It should be emphasized, however, that the infanticide legend was not a completely autonomous one. It was born out of the legend of deicide to

which it retained an ancillary position, functioning as a rejuvenator. This accounts for the claims that the supposed victim was habitually a boy, that the “ritual murder” took place on Good Friday (when Jesus’ death is commemorated) and that the *modus operandi* reenacted, so it was supposed, some elements of Jesus’ Passion and Crucifixion.

Throughout the ages, the Jews were not the only ones accused of practicing such barbaric rituals. This accusation used to be an infallible method of vilifying and discrediting the “other” or anyone who happened to be a religious adversary. In the Roman Empire, for instance, it was the Christians themselves, particularly during the second century CE, who were accused of practicing ritual homicide and anthropophagy. Such accusations were motivated by the fact that Christianity (*religio illicita*) was at that time a Judaic sect of increasing popularity, and thus increasingly dangerous. Rumors of this type, more efficient than throwing the Christians *ad leonem*, were substantiated with quotations from the Gospels: “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:53).

It would take only a few centuries and, as they felt themselves to be sufficiently strong, the Christians in their turn began to utilize such accusations, directing them at their own adversaries, the heretical sectarians ranging from the Marcionites to the Paulicians, from the Bogomils in the Balkans to the Cathari and the Waldenses. When, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Inquisition launched the crusade against witches, they would be prosecuted for sacrificing their own children (*pueros eorum ei immolant*) in order to consume their flesh and blood in rituals.⁹⁷ During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Russian Church attributed similar practices to members of a heretical sect called *scoptzi* (as in Romanian *scopiți*, “castrated”), also known as “Musicals.” After being exiled to the Romanian Principalities, “allegedly, whenever a child was born out of the intercourse between a *scopt* and a woman, which was unnatural, the child was rolled in flour, stabbed with daggers, and the flour that sucked up its blood would later be used in a special service.”⁹⁸ Members of other heretical Christian sects, who conducted rituals of a Gnostic type, were persecuted by the Russian Church on the grounds that they were murdering babes and burning candles made from tallow removed from their bodies.⁹⁹

Let there be no mistake, even if the Jews did not stand alone under the accusation of ritual manslaughter throughout the centuries, they were the main victims of this calumny. The legend of infanticide performed by the

Jews was the strongest, the most enduring (it persisted for over eight hundred years, from the mid-twelfth to the mid-twentieth centuries), as well as the one that had the severest consequences and caused the greatest bloodshed. In Europe, stories about Jews who kidnapped Christian children, put them to death barbarously, and used their blood to prepare the Passover *matzoh* (unleavened bread) or for some other ritual purposes would give birth to genuine collective psychoses. These psychoses made antisemitism soar to paroxysmal levels and led to inquisitorial trials, executions, burnings at the stake, and the massacre and expulsion of entire Jewish communities.

Jews were accused of practicing ritual homicide and cannibalism ever since antiquity, when the calumny was first spread between the second century BC and the first century CE by the Greeks, most likely by the Greek community in Alexandria.¹⁰⁰ Nonetheless, the legend was recreated and relaunched in the Middle Ages, only to have a dazzling career. The earliest medieval record of Jews accused of and condemned for the crimes of ritual infanticide and haemophagy comes from Norwich, England, in 1144. This was only the wick that ignited the bomb.

The bloodthirsty and anti-Jewish spirit of the Crusades created the propitious atmosphere for a tremendous deflagration in every western European country. Trials, expulsions, and pogroms, all based on such charges, came one after the other: in Germany at Würzburg in 1147, Erfurt in 1199, Wolfsheim and Fulda in 1235, and Oberwesel in 1287; at Saragossa (Spain) in 1182; at Blois (1171), Paris (1180), and Valréas (1247) in France; and in England at Glouchester in 1168, Bury St. Edmunds in 1181, Bristol in 1183, Winchester in 1192, 1225, and 1235, and Lincoln in 1255. By the end of the fifteenth century such denunciations were customary throughout all of western Europe.¹⁰¹ The phenomenon got so far out of hand that Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II (in 1236) and Popes Innocent IV (in 1247) and Gregory X (in 1272) judged it their duty to intervene with all the weight of their authority. In a papal bull, Innocent IV trenchantly declared:

Although Holy Scripture teaches the Jew “Thou shalt not kill”...they are unjustly accused that on the Passover they partake of the heart of a murdered child.... If a corpse happens to be found anywhere, the blame for it will, with ill will, be laid on them. They are persecuted on the basis of these inventions or of others like them.¹⁰²

Pope Gregory X employed similar terms some decades later: “It is totally false (as some Christians have asserted) that Jews secretly kill Christian boys and sacrifice these boys’ hearts and their blood. For the law of the Jews

expressly prohibits them from sacrificing or consuming [human] blood. Jews may not even drink or eat the blood of [kosher] animals that have a cloven hoof.”¹⁰³

In 1965, in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, the sanctification of the infant Simon of Trent (declared a saint at the end of the fifteenth century for having been killed by the Jews in 1475 for ritual purposes) was annulled after half a millennium. The Bishop of Trent (northern Italy) banned the cult of “little Simon,” ordered that his relics be removed from the church, and officially announced that the whole hideous episode, which had cost many Jews their lives over the centuries, was to be declared one vast fraud.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, in 1985, pilgrimages to the tomb of the infant Andreas (Anderl) von Rinn, in Austria, were proscribed. Andreas, who died 1462, was another assumed victim of the practices of ritual homicide attributed to the Jews, this time in the Tyrol. Already in 1961 Pope John XXIII stated that the case of Andreas von Rinn was a mere legend and that “it is evident that the occurrence had nothing to do with the Jewish people.”¹⁰⁵

From the fifteenth century onwards, the cases of Jews accused of ritual murders have gradually migrated towards the east of the continent, so that between the fifteenth and twentieth centuries such occurrences are attested primarily in central and eastern Europe. Between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries, several successive waves of mass expulsions and migrations relocated Jews eastwards from western and central Europe. The legend of ritual infanticide was relocated in its turn, accompanying those waves of migration. In 1554, after the mass arrival of Jews from the Iberian Peninsula in southeastern Europe, sultan Suleiman the Magnificent was obliged to issue a decree against people who accused Jews of ritual murder.

King Boleslaw the Pious (1247–1279) openly welcomed Jews to Poland. In spite of the fact that the first records of ritual murder charges date from around 1400, such accusations had been proscribed by law as early as 1264 by means of a decree of privileges that Boleslaw granted the Jews (an act known as the Statute of Kalisz), later also endorsed by King Kasimir the Great in 1334. The Polish sovereign must have taken as his model the similar German acts and Papal bulls of 1236, 1247, and 1255, composed and issued to check the bloodthirsty specter that was haunting Europe at that time. Here is a passage from the Statute of Kalisz: “It is absolutely forbidden to accuse Jews of drinking human blood.” If nonetheless the accusation is brought, but proves to be unfounded, “the accuser shall suffer the punishment that would have awaited the Jew.”¹⁰⁶

In the five-and-half centuries that separate events in Krakow (1407) from those in Kielce (1946), hundreds of charges of ritual infanticide were recorded in Poland, followed by trials and executions or by pogroms. It was particularly the indictments made in Galicia and Podolia in the mid-eighteenth century (1746–1753) that exerted a definite influence upon those recorded in the Romanian-speaking provinces of Bukovina, Moldova, and Bessarabia.¹⁰⁷

The last great trial of this kind took place in Kiev between 1911 and 1913. This was the infamous “Beilis Case,” a show-trial directed by the Okhrana, the Tsarist secret police. Yet even in the twentieth century the terms of the verdict remained ambiguous: whereas defendant Mendel Beilis was acquitted, the accusation of the Jews in general on the charge of ritual homicide was upheld. Such arraignments also persisted in antebellum Romania¹⁰⁸ and continue even in present-day Romania,¹⁰⁹ alongside other central and eastern European countries such as Austria, Hungary, Poland, and more.¹¹⁰ After the tragedy of the Holocaust and the return of the small number of Jewish survivors from the Nazi concentration camps, one can only express surprise that charges of ritual infanticide, followed by genuine anti-Jewish pogroms, continued to be recorded in central European countries such as Slovakia (Tapolcany, 1945), Poland (Kielce, 1946), and Hungary (Miskolc, Budapest, and Hajdunánás, 1946, 1948, and 1956).¹¹¹

It is not my intention to deal here with the topic of blood libel as a whole, i.e., the charge of ritual homicide in all its diversity and complexity. Others have done this, with good results.¹¹² Without losing sight of the central and eastern European context, I shall concentrate on the blood libel against the Jews in the Romanian area and in the impact this type of accusation has had on traditional and political mentalities in Romania (especially since there still does not exist any thorough study dealing with these issues).

In Transylvania

Though records of accusations of ritual infanticide in the Romanian area date from a relatively late period, mostly from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, yet they were synchronous with the rest of eastern Europe.¹¹³ In Transylvania, for example, the earliest document in which Jews are charged with and condemned for the crime of ritual murder dates back to 1714: a Transylvanian Saxon from Țara Bîrsei was “hewed in four,” having been accused that “he hacked the body of a housemaid, and the blood he sold to the Jews.”¹¹⁴

During a mock trial conducted in the autumn of 1791, four Jews from the county of Satu Mare (northwestern Romania) were accused of having killed a child aged thirteen, from the borough of Pir, for ritual purposes. They were sentenced “to perish from the ranks of the living, through beheading.” However, an appeal was filed, the defendants were discharged, and those who by coercion or torture had obtained the false testimonies about ritual infanticide were condemned in their stead.¹¹⁵ Surely, the policy of religious tolerance pursued since 1780 by Emperor Joseph II had played an important role in the legal settlement of this case.

Even so, nineteenth-century Transylvania continued to record many charges of infanticide against the Jews. Listed below are some better known examples: Solnocul Interior (1810), Deda (1825), Tîrgu Mureş (1828), Veneţia de Sus, Făgăraş county (1841), Miercurea (1844), Cluj (1845 and 1846), Alba Iulia (1846), Beiuş (1862), and Sîngeorzu de Pădure (1863).¹¹⁶ An important trial was conducted in 1882 and 1883 in Tiszaeszlár (a Hungarian settlement to the northwest of present-day Romania, closely bordering on Transylvania). The fifteen Jews initially accused of taking part in a murder of a ritual nature, whose victim was a fourteen-year old girl, were eventually found innocent and discharged.¹¹⁷ A conclusive role in this decision was played by a Romanian physician (the famous Victor Babeş, then twenty-nine years old) who, after performing an autopsy on the remains, presented evidence that excluded the idea of blood being drained from the body.

The Tiszaeszlár blood libel had strong reverberations in Transylvania as well as all over central Europe. It left its mark not only on the traditional culture of the Christian peoples in the area, but also on Jewish folklore. Born in 1928, in Sighet (Maramureş, in northwestern Romania), Elie Wiesel remembers his mother singing “a sad song” about the framed trial of the Jews from Tiszaeszlár, more than half a century after the event.¹¹⁸ It is significant that in a violently antisemitic book he published in 1913, under the heading of the ritual infanticide allegedly practiced by the Jews Nicolae Paulescu refrained from presenting in detail the “murder of Tisza-Elzlar” [*sic!*] since “it is notorious for all readers.”¹¹⁹

However, the belief that Jews performed ritual murders was not solely the province of official policies, but also that of popular judgment. When, in 1828, Jews in the region of Tîrgu Mureş wrote to the authorities, taking them to task for the abuses they committed by means of a charge of ritual homicide (the unwarranted maltreatment and arrest of several Jews, the stoning to

death of another by local people, etc.), the police and the administrative authorities exculpated their illegal proceedings by claiming that they acted on the “general opinion that Jews make use of Christian blood.”¹²⁰ A similar conclusion was reached by Romanian physician and theologian Virgil Ciobanu in a study published in 1924 on the legend of the Jewish practice of infanticide: “In Transylvania,” he writes, “the belief in the ritual killings [practiced by the Jews] is shared, with a few minor exceptions, by all strata of society.”¹²¹

Such a conclusion is only partly correct. It should be noted that in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth centuries a significant part of society in the Habsburg Empire and, implicitly, in Transylvania, was opposed to the dissemination of the deceitful legend of Jewish ritual infanticide. The actions taken to combat it were not solely those of the civil authorities (in the Empire, Jews had obtained political emancipation in 1867), but also of clerical authorities. In 1792, a few months after the trial of the Jews of Pir (Satu Mare)—which, thanks to the press of Vienna and Budapest, resounded throughout the Empire—the government of Transylvania appealed to the bishops of all Christian denominations to preach to their diocesan flocks, with the help of their subordinate clergy, that charges of ritual murder were groundless.¹²² Moreover, in 1825, during the trial of Jews from Deda (the proceedings were conducted in Reghin), it was the testimony of the village Orthodox priest, in corroboration with other evidence, that led to the discharge of the arrested, who had been kept in chains. Significantly, in 1828, the Jews of Tîrgu Mureș—who were under suspicion of infanticide (an allegation that was proven groundless)—petitioned the governor of Transylvania to issue a circular letter stating that ritual murder was a superstition, as the famous Menasseh ben Israel had demonstrated in the seventeenth century. His book, *Vindiciae Judaearum* (Amsterdam, 1656), had been translated into German by Moses Mendelssohn, printed in Berlin in 1782, and reprinted in Buda in 1820.¹²³

Politicians and intellectuals were divided into two camps. One of them, for electoral purposes, manipulated the anti-Jewish popular feelings; the others tried to combat the belief that Jews would commit infanticide. At the end of the nineteenth century, for instance, the Hungarian deputy for Tiszaeszlár (where the well-known “ritual murder” trial was conducted in 1882–1883) was György Onody; it was no coincidence that he was also the founder of the Hungarian Antisemitic Party, one of the first of its kind in the world.¹²⁴ At the opposite pole was Eötvös Károly, a jurist, politician, and publisher, and

the main counsel for the defense at the Tiszaeszlár trial. What is more, in 1904 he published a three-volume work that acquired a certain fame, *The Great Trial that Has Lasted a Thousand Years*, comprising numerous documents (including those relating to the 1791 trial of the Jews of Pir) overtly denouncing the false charges of ritual infanticide brought against the Jews during almost a millennium.¹²⁵

During the period under discussion the number of trials against Jews accused of infanticide seems to have been smaller in Transylvania than in Moldavia. Yet, a much more important fact is that as a rule there were considerably fewer cases of bloodshed in the wake of such charges in Transylvania, when compared with Moldavia. As historian Ladislau Gyémánt has correctly pointed out, the press played an important role in shaping Transylvanian public opinion on this matter. Indeed, even as early as the first half of the nineteenth century, newspapers with a liberal profile, irrespective of the language in which they addressed their readers, were putting up a fight against mentalities of medieval provenance and the anachronistic prejudices regarding the Jews. "For the entire period of three decades preceding the juridical emancipation of the Jews in 1867, Hungarian, Saxon, and Romanian newspapers," Gyémánt stresses, "are unanimous in condemning the prejudices and the violent outbursts, wherever they may occur."¹²⁶

The following two examples, when placed side by side, I expect, shall be conclusive. On 16 February 1847, the Romanian-language *Gazeta de Transilvania* [The Transylvanian gazette], published in Braşov, printed an account of some "ugly extremities" committed by Romanians against the Jewish community of Galaţi (Moldavia) during the 1846 Easter holidays. In a disapproving tone, the article describes this pogrom, which lasted for several days with Jewish casualties being a few dead, many wounded and beaten, a synagogue profaned and destroyed, and houses and shops devastated and pillaged. In order to end the violence, the press account continues, the intervention of the Austrian and English consuls was necessary, followed by that of the police, who imprisoned some of the "bandits."

As far as the Moldavian press was concerned, instead of campaigning against the popular prejudices that engendered such tragic events, the journalists at *Albina românească*—a journal edited in Jassy by Gheorghe Asachi—joined battle with those of their colleagues who exposed such prejudices. They were "news-hounds," with "their pen dipped deep in soot," from "Transylvanian papers of all tongues." "For lack of resounding stories, of catastrophes, and of other such spicy affairs," these papers were trying to

denigrate Moldavia, “which enjoys the deepest tranquility.” It might be true, the Moldavian journalists admitted in an undertone, that “as the carnival got underway” the Romanians “had a bit of a scuffle” with the Jews of Galați, whose “windows got wrecked” and “other disorders, worth grieving for, may have ensued.” Yet, “thanks to the eager and bold measures taken by the local rulers,” the incidents “were thoroughly appeased, leaving no other trace than the lines of soot of the aforementioned [Transylvanian] gazettes.”¹²⁷

In Moldavia and Walachia

In Walachia, and especially in Moldavia, charges of ritual murder were, more often than not, accompanied by violent rioting or even pogroms. In 1710, for instance, in Țirgu Neam, five Jews were lynched and another twenty-two were put in chains for the alleged crime of abducting and killing a Christian child, “for they need blood on the Passover.” This is the earliest record of such a case in Moldavia. Realizing that violent acts against them were about to take menacing proportions and extend into the whole region, the Jews of Piatra Neamț sent emissaries to the sovereign, Dimitrie Cantemir, in Jassy. Cantemir, in his turn, sent two aides “to inquire whether the thing be true or not.... The men came and inquired and searched well and could see that false and untrue it was.” The decision taken was for “the Jews to be set free” and for the monk who had framed the so-called ritual murder “to be put in a madhouse for the entire length of his life.”¹²⁸

In 1726, a similar indictment of Jews from Onițcani (Orhei) was staged, again in Moldavia but to the east of the river Prut, together with a notorious trial in Jassy, in which the king was again involved, but for utterly different reasons. I shall return to this event. During the era of the Greek Phanariot rulers, such occurrences occurred over and over again in the Romanian Principalities. A scholar of that period, Pompiliu Eliade, wrote the following in 1898:

People impute to them [i.e., the Jews] all manners of strange things: on the Jewish Passover week and on the week of the Christian Easter, people keep their children locked up in their houses for fear that the Jews might abduct them and drain out their blood, to put it in their “*matzoth*”; and if any child happens to disappear some time, the whole population demands loudly, as one soul, that all Jews should be subjected to tortures.¹²⁹

Some old Romanian texts, dating from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, have proven to be significant for the subject under discussion. Pamphlets, handwritten or printed, were warrants for the rumors and oral beliefs concerning Jewish infanticide. A Romanian manuscript dating from 1784, entitled *Customs: Jewish Rules in All Months* [of the Year],¹³⁰ surveys several uses which the Jews supposedly had for Christian blood: the “Jewish *matzoth*,” “food, dishes of blood,” the “bewitching of Christians so they [i.e., the Jews] could have mercy and good gifts from them,” the wedding ritual, and the ritual for anointing the dying.¹³¹

Another text of this kind (originally written in 1716 in the Polish-Lithuanian area and printed in Jassy in 1803) is *Argument against the Jews upon their Law and Customs* that appeared over the signature of a certain monk, Neophyte the Cavesolavite. The author appears to have been a former rabbi (Noih Belfer) who converted to Christianity under the name of Nicolae Botezatu (“the Baptized”) and adopted the name Neophyte when he donned the monk’s habit. Yet, this identity may well have been a stratagem, quite a customary one during that epoch, intended to enhance the supposed legitimacy and credibility of the work. The first chapter claims to disclose a sinister ritual practice and unveil a prodigious secret, which only a “former rabbi” could have known: “The secret, once concealed and now revealed, about the Jews, concerning the blood which they take from Christians and what they do with it, with proof from Holy Scripture.” The book turned out to be a “bestseller,” going through ten printings, the second in 1818 and the last in 1936. In addition, partly among monastic circles, it was recopied in dozens of versions. The collection of manuscripts of the Library of the Romanian Academy alone holds twenty-eight such codices. The text circulated in all Romanian cultural spheres, including Transylvania.¹³² It is extremely significant that the work appeared under the patronage of the Metropolitan Bishop of Moldavia. In the *exordium*, we are informed that *Argument against the Jews* was printed “with the blessing and at the expense of the All Holy Reverend Iacov [Stamate], Metropolitan Bishop of all Moldavia, in the printing shop of the Holy Metropolitan Seat of Jassy, in the Year of our Lord 1803, February 8.” It is also noteworthy that enlightened Romanian intellectuals such as Ion Heliade Rădulescu and C. A. Rosetti published articles in *Românul* [The Romanian], a liberal organ, directed against such antisemitic lampoons. Their campaign led in 1858 to the banning by the Romanian authorities of the publication *Praștia* [The Slingshot] (1837; the

first edition was issued in 1836 by the Monastery of Neamț) which circulated the blood libel legend against the Jews.¹³³

In the wake of an arraignment on the charge of ritual murder in April 1801, a great mass uprising took place in Bucharest during which—according to a contemporary document—the Jews were chased about “like hares.” The mass riot resulted in 128 Jewish casualties, dead and wounded, and the shops in the Jewish district were devastated and pillaged. To protect the Jews from suburban bigotry, the sovereign, Alexandru Moruzi, was forced to gather them at police headquarters.¹³⁴ An even more vehement pogrom broke out in Jassy and Bucharest in 1803, and continued into the following year. Commentators agree that the publication of *Argument against the Jews*, with the sanction of the Metropolitan See, was a powerful incentive for the new popular outbreak in 1803. The new Metropolitan Bishop of Moldavia, Veniamin Costachi (1803–1846), gave refuge to the Jews in his church and went out to meet the pogromists, holding the cross in his hand: “Only by walking over my dead body,” the bishop is said to have cried out to the enraged mob, “will you see your villainous plan against the Jews come true.”¹³⁵ It is claimed that Veniamin succeeded in calming the masses by a “public reading in the streets of Saint Basil’s expiatory prayers.”¹³⁶

On 19 April 1804, alarmed by the course that the riots had taken, the sovereign, Constantin Ipsilanti, sent a written order (“*pitac*”) to the Metropolitan See, asking for the assistance of “an institution in part responsible for those acts of violence,” as historian Violeta Barbu has put it.¹³⁷ By appealing to the new Metropolitan Bishop to intercede, the Walachian ruler was in effect asking the priests to convince their flocks of “rogues and simpletons” that “mistaken are they in their belief that the Jewish people are killing Christians purposely, to take blood from the murdered,” and that among the “givens of the Jewish law” there were “no such things, nor could any culprits be revealed at the inquest.”¹³⁸

Over the span of a mere forty-four years (1803–1847), no less than five cases of Jews prosecuted for ritual murder occurred in a small quiet borough such as Piatra Neamț: an average of one case every nine years! It is a fact that during the nineteenth century the largest number of charges of this kind, and with the most serious consequences, were attested in Moldavian towns (such as Jassy, Roman, Galați, Piatra Neamț, and others).¹³⁹ This being the case, the violent rioting in Galați on Easter of 1859 and on Yom Kippur of 1868 are symptomatic cases: the record shows that there were dead and wounded, several synagogues were destroyed and pillaged, Scrolls of the Law were

burnt, houses were devastated, and shops were ransacked, while the authorities, instead of punishing the instigators, arrested the Jews themselves. In 1856 banker Anselm Salomon Rothschild (1803–1874) appealed to Prince Alexandru Cuza to protect the Jews of Galați.¹⁴⁰ Terrified by these events and not knowing what to defend first, “the Jews massacred on Romanian soil or the Romanians’ own honor,” scholar Ion Heliade-Rădulescu wrote the following lines in an article published in *Naționalul* [The National] on 11 April 1859 under the title of “The Massacre of Galați”:

The population...found a pretext for thieving, for killings, and for the most inhuman crimes; many Jews [*hebrei*] were killed and even more injured and battered, the Jewish houses all violated and ransacked. Two synagogues [were] broken into and stripped bare, the cult vessels and the Law or the Torah trampled under foot.... Jews will not eat children in England, in France, in Germany, Jews will eat children nowhere where human beings have begun to become human; nor still in Austria or Russia will Jews eat children. Wherever else are they accused of such an inhuman deed? Where peoples are still barbaric or half-barbaric.... The Jews, and we say this out of our innermost conviction, are not, nor have ever been, the people or the nation to eat people or children of whatever race or faith; one will find no such inhuman and barbarous precept in their religion; the stock whence they are descended was not a stock of savages and anthropophagi. Quite to the contrary....

Even if Ion Heliade-Rădulescu deplored the situation, like the European liberal scholar influenced by the benevolent ideals of the revolution of 1848 that he was, he could not surpass his own limitations. The “stranger” was always the one customarily found guilty of all evils, the Jew being the favored scapegoat. In this case, the “stranger,” the Jew, is seen in the role of the victim, and is deserving of empathy. However, Heliade-Rădulescu is unable to go to the bitter end. He cannot believe that the Romanians (“the pure Romanian stock”) could be guilty of such prejudices and violence. The guilt lies with other “strangers,” a “mob made up of various elements and nationalities.” “Galați is a town in Moldavia,” he attempts to argue, “but the inhabitants, for the most part, are strangers and, moreover, oriental strangers, who come with their vain beliefs and their ignorance and are famed for their keenness to draw knives, to massacre, and to plunder. No, wherever the Romanian element is pure, Romanians no longer lend their ears to the

calumny of fanaticism and of men that are ignorant, corrupt, perverted, etc.”¹⁴¹

“Even in Russia the Jews do not eat children,” Heliade-Rădulescu wrote in 1859. The Romanian scholar, however, was bitterly mistaken about public belief in Russia, where until much later, in the first decades of the twentieth century, it was still believed that Jews were committing infanticide in order to make ritual use of the infants’ blood. This belief served as an incentive for the pogrom of 1903 in Kishinev, the capital of Bessarabia (part of the Tsarist Empire at the time) and during the Beilis Trial in Kiev, between 1911 and 1913.

The person considered to bear moral responsibility, up to a point, for the pogrom in Kishinev was extreme right politician, P. A. Crușevan. A Russianised Moldavian, he had been conducting, through the agency of his paper, *Bessarabetz* [The Bessarabian], an extensive campaign for the “cleansing” of the area of its Jews by expulsion and physical extermination. Crușevan even invited the ultranationalist Romanian MP A. C. Cuza, a professor at the University of Jassy, to Kishinev to hold several incendiary conferences at which he presented his antisemitic doctrine. They both agreed that St. Bartholomew’s Day was to be reenacted on Easter, 6–8 April 1903. Indeed, Crușevan’s newspaper announced just before Easter that in the borough of Dubăsari, on the banks of the Dniester, the Jews had perpetrated ritual murder upon a Christian boy. Symptomatically, it was the carefully prepared and aroused masses of Kishinev and its environs, not those of Dubăsari, who invaded the Jewish quarters, weapons in hand. Apprehensive about this turn of events, the leading rabbi of the Jewish community in Kishinev asked the Orthodox bishop to publicly deny the absurd piece of news. However, “this high priest,” wrote a Russian journalist on 1 June 1903 in an article entitled “The Massacre of Jews at Kishinev,” “publicly stated that he himself believed the story of Jews using Christian blood for ritualistic purposes,”¹⁴² Thus did he add fuel to the flames of the pogrom. In addition, the military did not intervene at all on the grounds that the governor was “waiting for orders” from Tsar Nicholas II. Not having received them, the policemen, instead of taking measures for the Jews’ protection, pointed out Jewish dwellings to the rioters. The Jews found themselves absolutely abandoned as they faced the hysterical masses. The consequences were commensurate: approximately fifty dead, hundreds seriously injured, eight hundred houses and six hundred shops destroyed and pillaged, etc.¹⁴³ Many

Russian writers (among them Leo Tolstoy and Maxim Gorky) took a stand against those responsible of the pogrom.

The long epic Hebrew poem "The City of Slaughter," which gained fame among the Jewish communities of eastern Europe, was written immediately after the pogrom by the no-less-famous poet Haim Nahman Bialik, who did not decry in it neither the violence of the simple people nor the indolence of the authorities, but the passivity and the resignation of the Jews themselves.¹⁴⁴ "What will they...shadows on the wall," God asked Himself in Bialik's poem. "Why stretch out their hands to me? / Has none a fist?"¹⁴⁵ The 1903 Kishinev pogrom (together with Bialik's poem) shocked the Jews in this part of the continent and intensified their emigration to western Europe, America, and Palestine.¹⁴⁶ "Zionism is the daughter of antisemitism," remarked Adolphe Stern in 1910, borrowing an idea voiced by Theodor Herzl.

Among those who remained were the founders and organizers of the first Jewish self-defense units. This act was to trigger a historical process, one that transformed the century-old mentality of the Jews. The new mentality showed its true potential in the establishment of the Haganah (self-defense force of the Jewish community in Palestine) in 1920, or in the 1943 uprising of the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto.¹⁴⁷

In Romania, the first self-defense units that proved their efficiency were those organized in the Jewish district of Bucharest during the rioting of November 1918. Armed with clubs, the Jews eventually managed to chase away the pogrom hooligans who, while running terror-stricken, cried "Run for your lives, the Yids are coming!" One single Jew was killed, there were many wounded and much devastation and pillage, but, according to contemporary testimonies, "a slaughter had been avoided."¹⁴⁸

Traces in the Traditional Mentality

By far the best known "ritual murder" trial in the Romanian area was that conducted in Moldavia in 1726. Everything started from a supposed crime of infanticide said to have been committed in the Bessarabian borough of Onițani (Orhei County). The "faithless Jews" (as Ion Neculce called them) were said at that time "to have stolen a [Christian] child, of about five, on Easter Day." Then they allegedly put him in a barrel, pricked it in several places with special instruments ("three of them, fastened to a wooden handle") and collected all the blood in the barrel.¹⁴⁹ "The blood they portioned out, putting it into kegs, and they sent one to the great *hakham*"¹⁵⁰ of

Krakow, and to the *hakham* of Dubăsari, and one keg full of blood they buried in the cellar.” The trial set up for the four Jews accused of ritual murder took place in Jassy. It was presided over, in state, by the sovereign of Moldavia, Mihai Racoviță, who tried to blackmail the Jews and, as the chronicler writes, to “rob them of their money.”

In the end, for lack of evidence but also owing to international diplomatic pressure, the defendants were discharged. “Because of his greed for money,” *The Chronicle* recounts, “for he has shown no eagerness for the heavenly laws,” “banishment comes” to Mihai Racoviță from Istanbul immediately after the conclusion of the juridical farce in September 1726. The event and its spin-offs had a powerful impact on society, so much so that the story was retold in no less than three eighteenth-century Moldavian chronicles, as well as in other documents of the period.¹⁵¹ For example, the French ambassador at the Sublime Porte gives the following version of this episode:

The ruler of Moldavia revived an ancient invention against the poor Jews, so many times brought to life by despoilers. The Jews in the principality [i.e., Moldavia] were accused of having killed a Greek [i.e., Christian-Orthodox] child, to add his blood to their *matzoth* and, under this pretext, like an Attila reborn, he destroyed their synagogues, burnt their books, beat the alleged murderers on their soles, and made them all pay large sums of money. This sovereign should not have ignored the fact that the charge of ritual murder is no longer believed today in civilized countries; had he had some knowledge of history, he would have known that the accusation of ritual homicide was, for the first time in history, brought by the Romans against the Christians.¹⁵²

Such histories, to which Christians were especially sensitive, were bound to become folk legends.

The collective memory has preserved unchanged to this day not only the ritual motivation of infanticide, but also some “technical details” (the barrel with nails, for instance).¹⁵³ “On Jewish feasts,” goes another folk belief from northern Moldavia recorded at the beginning of the twentieth century, “all that Jews will eat is the *matzoth* made with Christian blood; they abduct a child, put him in a barrel into which spikes were hammered, and toss it around so that the child dies after his blood has been drained away through the wounds created by the piercing spikes.”¹⁵⁴

Folklorist Elena Niculiță-Voronca remembers that such folk beliefs were still very much alive in northern Moldavia during her childhood (around

1865): "When I was a child and I saw a Jew [*jidan*] carrying water in a water-cart, I used to hide, for I had heard about the spiked barrel in which the Jews killed children, to drink in their blood."¹⁵⁵

It seems that this mental pattern has survived to this very day, covering a much larger ethnic and cultural zone than the one inhabited strictly by Romanians. Here, as an example, is what peasants in southeastern Poland (the Przemysl region) believed no more than ten or fifteen years ago:

On Easter they [i.e., the Jews] have to have Catholic blood for *matzoth*.... They murdered children for blood.... The Jews had an instrument for drawing out blood: a barrel with nails. Inside the barrel was a man. As the barrel rolled down the street, the nails pierced the victim and they got the blood."¹⁵⁶

Similar beliefs, including the detail of the blood-collecting "instrument," the barrel or the trough with nails, have survived in the postwar age in southeastern Europe as well: in Bulgaria (Sofia) and Greece (Thessaloniki), as my fellow cultural anthropologists in these countries have certified. "On Good Friday," according to a Greek belief, "those crucifiers [of Jesus] put Christian children in a trough lined with spikes and drink their blood."¹⁵⁷

The superstition about Jewish ritual homicide seems to have been so strongly ingrained and widespread that it has come to influence several folk legends. They say that, when you look at them carefully, the marks on the moon portray Cain and Abel, the "first men, the sons of Adam and Eve." According to Romanian legends, the first murder in the history of mankind was committed by a haemophagous "legendary Jew," Cain, who, as can be seen on the surface of the moon, "forces him [i.e., Abel] to lean over a barrel, so that his blood be drained away." "Here, brother," Abel tells Cain, "drink blood; you have been thirsty for my blood and you have murdered me."¹⁵⁸ A legend which is also attested by Alecu Russo in his *Amintiri* [Memoirs], goes as follows: "I would see the face of a wounded man [Abel], he was stretched on a bed...and his gurgling blood would drop into a broken vase, while the murderous brother [Cain] was sentenced by the will of God to drink of the innocent blood until the vase flows over, and this is how it has been from the beginning of the world."¹⁵⁹

In a popular tale, "Frumoasa Lumii" [Beauty of the World], collected by the young Eminescu in the 1860s, there appears a "Jewish merchant" who intends to eat three children, who in their turn had eaten the golden bird: "The Yid suddenly called the children, so he could cut and then eat them. (And no Christian would have done something like that!). He sought them

continuously, but did not succeed in finding them. Seeing there was no chance to get to them, he went on his way....”¹⁶⁰ The infanticidal Jew is here contrasted to the Christians, who would not have “done something like that.” In addition to his image as a “child-eater” and “the Devil’s own,” the Jew in this tale also preserves some other stereotypes: he is a merchant, he negotiates, he is motivated by money and loves gold, is shrewd (“and there is no one as shrewd as their race”), is literate (while the Romanian is not), hates Christians (“the Yid still nurtures hate for the Christian”), knows the use of poison (“he gives him something, and suddenly the man drops dead”), pretends being baptized, and more.

The motif of the “blood-collecting barrel” was not the only one to migrate from the legend of Jewish infanticide to Romanian folk legends; that of the “blood *matzoth*” came with it. This legend says that “at Lenten time, the Jews [or the “pagans,” depending on the text] made bread mixed with blood.” As it was the Lenten season and they had nothing to eat, Christians were about to “defile themselves” and “turn themselves into pagans” upon eating “foul bread, mixed with blood.” Then St. Theodore saved the Christians, teaching them “not to eat one bite from the pagans, for all their victuals were poisoned and unclean,” but to prepare themselves a ritual course, “*coliva*, that is, boiled wheat sweetened with honey.... And from this people have adopted the custom of taking *coliva* to the church every year on St. Theodore’s day.”¹⁶¹

Stories about the infanticidal and haemophagous Jew were orally transmitted and mostly told to children, so we can easily imagine not only the immediate, but also the intermediate and long-term effect they had upon them. When they were disobedient, Romanian children were threatened with “Here comes the Yid with the sack,”¹⁶² so the Jew was nightmarishly perceived in the children’s imagination as a human-faced bugaboo, an evil spirit who steals children away in his sack and then kills them to make ritual use of their blood. Similar formulations were used to frighten children in Hungary: “Be bad, and the Jew with the bundle will take you.” This image was all the more credible, since Jewish chapmen (bearded, clothed in black, and carrying a bundle) were to be seen daily on village pathways and at seasonal fairs in this part of the continent. Thus did the “imaginary Jew” exactly overlap the “real Jew.”

The Jew is not alone in this condition. In Romania and Bulgaria the same role can easily be played by the Gypsy (“Here comes the Gypsy with the sack”), and in Hungary by the Devil himself: “If you are bad, the Devil will take you.”¹⁶³ The child-scaring formulas (themselves a folkloric species well

worth studying) were more explicit and more frightening in Poland. A disobedient Polish child would be told: "Watch out or the Jew will grab you and make *matzoth* out of you," or he or she was offered Jewish *matzoth*, together with the admonishment: "Partake of the *matzoth*, they are kneaded out of your own blood."¹⁶⁴

However, not only the lives of Christian children were believed to be threatened, but those of adults as well. An old German proverb says that "With the Jews, better a pig than a man" (because they will refrain from killing pigs, but not from killing men),¹⁶⁵ and a folk belief recorded in Maramureş in 1920 would claim that "Only the Jew [*jidul*] would not think it a sin to kill a man."¹⁶⁶ In Romania, people were advised to be careful of Jews in popular sayings of the type: "Eat with the Jew and sleep with the Armenian," or "Eat with the Jew, but do not sleep under his roof," and if you nevertheless did so, "do not sleep alone."¹⁶⁷ Note also the negative meaning of the folk saying, "You go to bed and you wake up with the Yids!"¹⁶⁸ These beliefs, however, were mild when compared to the church canons dating from the middle of the seventeenth century which pronounced an anathema on whoever "shall take secret counsel with the Jews [*ovrei*] and shall call them brother or shall eat with them, being of another kin."¹⁶⁹ In the eighteenth century, the provinces of Banat and Transylvania used to enforce such interdictions through secular laws: "The Jews are not permitted, under any pretext, to give shelter to a Christian over night" or "to keep Christian servants, to provide jobs that require them to live and eat in the Jew's home."¹⁷⁰

Similar segregation measures intended to protect Christians from the "Jewish peril" had been imposed on Catholic Europe ever since 1215, when Pope Innocent II, at the Fourth Lateran Council, forbade Christians to live together with Jews or in their vicinity, eat with Jews, have sexual relations with them, turn to Jewish doctors, work for Jews, and so on. And in order to bring all these into effect, it was necessary that the Jews be easily identified; consequently, they were obligated to wear a distinctive mark on their clothing.¹⁷¹

Traces in the Political Arena

Since the 1903 pogrom in Kishinev, twentieth-century Romania has no further records of bloodshed or court trials grounded on accusations of ritual murder (unlike the other countries in the area). However, the legend has continued to flourish in the articles and discourses of some Romanian

journalists, scholars, and politicians. The stereotype had been too deeply ingrained in the popular mind for centuries on end for it not to be speculated upon. Here is an example from the end of the nineteenth century whose protagonist was the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Deșteptarea* [The awakening], one Mr Polihroniade, a participant of distinction in “The Romanian-European Antisemitic Congress” that convened in Bucharest between 7–9 September 1886. In the spring of 1897, around Easter, Polihroniade reproduced and circulated throughout the entire country, in thousands of copies, an etching that represented the “ritual infanticide” that had supposedly taken place in 1882 in Tiszaeszlár, in the immediate proximity of Transylvania. The etching showed a strangled girl on the floor of a synagogue and some Jews taking her blood “for the *matzoth* to be made.”¹⁷²

A few years earlier, as a result of persistent demands made by Rabbi M. Beck of the Choral Temple, the minister of domestic affairs disposed of similar confiscated postcards which were being circulated in Bucharest.¹⁷³ A lithoprint representing the blood libel of Tiszaeszlár is described by Romanian author I. A. Bassarabescu (1870–1952) in one of his short stories: “The sun fell on an old lithoprint, with a visible frame. Some rabbis torture a young girl stretched on a table, and drain her blood.” In the 1930s this particular section was reproduced in schoolbooks of Romanian literature intended for high schools. On 26 July 1938, Wilhelm Filderman addressed a letter of protest to the minister of education, on the grounds that such schoolbooks were a source of antisemitic incitement.¹⁷⁴

At the beginning of the twentieth century, in a courageous intervention in his publication *Noua Revistă Română* [The new Romanian review] against the racist theory of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, philosopher Constantin Rădulescu-Motru also tackled the issue of medieval mental clichés that survived within contemporary antisemitic propaganda, presenting the Jews as vampires and ritual murderers.¹⁷⁵ However, his voice remained a somewhat isolated one at the time.

In 1922, the newspaper *Apărarea Națională* [National defense], edited by Professor A. C. Cuza (one of the *agents provocateurs* of the pogrom in Kishinev) and Dr. Nicolae Paulescu, published in each of its issues “authentic cases” of ritual murder committed by the Jews in various countries throughout the centuries. The series concluded:

There are other innumerable cases proven and described by authors on the basis of contemporary evidence. Almost all of them demonstrate

the same thing: the killing is carried out in a barbarous manner, the victim is tortured, most often by repeating the torment of Jesus Christ, the blood of the victim runs into vessels, or on sheets, which are burned as the resulting ashes are used in all kinds of barbaric rites.

Similar examples taken from history could be quoted *ad infinitum*.¹⁷⁶

This cycle of articles met with a polemic reply signed by Virgil Ciobanu, a physician and theologian who in 1924 published a book on the “blood libel” seen from “an historic and medical point of view.” “History shows us,” he wrote in that work, “that the accusation of ritual murder has always been a weapon targeted against people of different convictions, whenever no other crime could be put to their account.”¹⁷⁷ In 1923 Shama Salzberger published a book intended to contradict, *inter alia*, the blood libel legend which had previously been defended by Paulescu in his profusely antisemitic volume published in 1913.¹⁷⁸

To Nicolae Paulescu, the alleged cases of “ritual murder” practiced by the Jews were not only sheer “quotes from history” but also a metaphor of the Romanians being “strangled” by “an infamous race of evildoers.” In 1923, trying to convince the readers of the same publication that “the expulsion of the Jews [from Romania] presents itself with urgency,” Paulescu wrote that what the “Jewish bastards,” the “leeches stuffed with Romanian blood,” wanted was that “Romanians should die quietly (as in the ritual murder).” The same metaphor, centered on the image of the murderous and hemophagous Jew, could frequently be heard in the marches sung by Romanian legionnaires (members of the extreme right movement) that were quite popular in the 1920s and the 1930s: “Look how Judas’ claws / Push into my body deep. / Look at my blood oozing, / Look at the Jews drinking it!”

An atypical attitude was that of Nae Ionescu, in his preface to Mihail Sebastian’s novel *De doua mii de ani...* [For two thousand years...], first published in 1934. The philosopher admitted that the story of the Jewish “ritual murder” was only a “tale.” “Yet why do the Jews cry?” Ionescu asked rhetorically. Have not Christians had similar tales laid to their account? “And the Jews, are they totally blameless, have they played no part in the spreading of these tales? I say, history does nothing if not repeat itself.” Aside from the historical fact that it was the Romans, not the Jews, who had set down such “tales” to the first Christians, there is still the cynicism which Nae Ionescu was capable of in this paragraph and in the entire text quoted above, including its conclusion: “You suffer because you are a Jew; you would cease to be a Jew the moment that you ceased to suffer; and you could not get away

from this suffering unless you ceased being a Jew. It is, of course, an oppressing fatality. Yet, precisely because of this, there is nothing to be done. Judas will agonize till the end of time.”¹⁷⁹

In a way, Mihail Sebastian answered Nae Ionescu in the very volume which the latter prefaced, pointing to the stereotypical and superficial nature of the accusation: “What I would reproach antisemitism, before all else...,” affirms the protagonist of the novel, “is its lack of imagination: ‘Masonry, usury, ritual murder.’ And then what? Alas, how little this is! Alas, how poor!”¹⁸⁰

In the Communist Countries after the Holocaust (1945–1963)

Apart from the accusation of using blood for ritual purposes, a series of other aspects (either real or imaginary) made the “imaginary Jew” appear as an extremely suspect creature: the particular way in which animals are slaughtered in Jewish communities, with the ritual interdictions concerning their blood, alongside the mysterious rules concerning kosher food (for instance, the use of separate dishes for meat and dairy products).

Christian peasants and small-town dwellers have not looked upon those rules from the perspective of cleanliness and culinary hygiene—quite the opposite is the case. In 1817, for example, Romanians from the town of Botoșani complained to the ruler of Moldavia that “the Jews have been defiling our wells” by washing their “unclean vessels” there.¹⁸¹ Such examples compounded the effect of legends about Jews who polluted wells, Jewish physicians who killed Christians, Jewish tavern-keepers who poisoned drinks, and so forth. A whole mythology, though uncertain and perplexing, had been created within the span of several centuries which makes the Jew appear as a suspect individual, connected to such concepts as ritual infanticide, haemophagy, vampirism, cannibalism, uncanny culinary habits, filth, microbes, infested blood, poison, murder, witchcraft, demonic rituals, etc. With such a “police profile” at hand, one could say absolutely anything about the Jew and common people were bound to believe it. This is what accounts for the extraordinary tenacity and vitality of the blood libel legend, and of other similar stories.

The mental stereotypes associated with the profile of the “imaginary Jew” are many. It seems, however, that none has been so deeply rooted and so long-lived as the blood libel. This has been a prejudice that has known little change, if at all, in its main features (they were merely adapted), despite traversing epochs and civilizations as essentially different as medieval

England (1144) and post-communist Romania (1996). Moreover, it seems that no other stereotype has been so efficient and so brutal, generating so much hostility. It is one thing to believe and say about the Jews that they are parasites and speculators, that they are dirty and stinking, that they are arrogant and despise Christians, that they are cowards and traitors to their country, that they love money and try to rule the world through finance, and so on; it is quite another to believe and say about the Jews that they kidnap Christian children and kill them in order to use their blood for certain ritual practices. No superstition of those relating to the Jews is so abominable and, at the same time, so concrete. The “architect” of this “emotional bomb” was a genuine genius of evil—because this is the kind of accusation that always and instantaneously unleashes antisemitic hysteria, an immense amount of hostile feeling directed at the Jews living within the host community, and in most cases these are given vent in acts of maximum aggression. It should come as no surprise that, over the centuries, most accusations of infanticide were followed by bloody anti-Jewish pogroms.

What may cause surprise, nevertheless, is the fact that this perverse social mechanism did function, anachronistically, around the middle of the twentieth century in East European countries—immediately after the horrible tragedy of the Holocaust, at a time when left-wing political regimes were being established and developed. After the assassination of six million Jews, one-quarter of whom were children, it defies reason that the small number of surviving Jews returning from the Nazi concentration camps could have been lynched by their host communities following charges of ritual infanticide or similar accusations which were, as often as not, fabricated by Communist activists. In the years 1945–1948, approximately 2,000 Jews (of which 1,500 were in Poland alone) were victims of pogroms in the countries of Communist Europe. Below are a few instances of how these accusations were staged.

On 4 July 1946, in the Polish town of Kielce to the south of Warsaw, an eight-year-old boy (accompanied by his father) complained at the local police station that he and some other Christian children had been held against their will in the cellar of a Jewish house, so that they might be killed for ritual purposes. The police searched the house in question (which did not even have a cellar) but found no evidence to corroborate the accusation. However, worked into a state of frenzy by rumors and led on by police agents and Polish soldiers, the mob stormed the houses of the Jews. The consequences of this unimaginable pogrom were 42 dead Jews (some shot, others slaughtered

by axes), 50 wounded, houses laid waste, etc. Hardly a year had passed since the return to the town of the two hundred Jews who had survived the Nazi concentration camps (before the war, Kielce had a Jewish population of 18,000). The official communiqué issued after the event by the Communist authorities speaks of a “large-scale anti-Jewish provocation” staged by “an organized reactionary group.” The pogrom of Kielce, together with other bloody upheavals, caused the first large wave of immigration of Polish Jews to the United States, western Europe, and Palestine. By September 1946, 100,000 Jews had fled Poland.¹⁸²

During the immediate postwar period, in September 1948, Jews were also accused of infanticide in eastern Hungary, in Hajdunánás. This small town is situated approximately thirty kilometers from Tiszaeszlár, the site of the well-known ritual murder trial conducted in 1882–1883. Furthermore, as Hungarian scholar János Pelle has demonstrated, several analogous indictments, together with other antisemitic occurrences, were attested in this particular area of eastern Hungary during the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries.¹⁸³

At the beginning of May 1946, certain disturbances were caused in the open-air market of Budapest (located in Teleki Square), traditionally dominated by small tradesmen of Jewish origin, when news spread that several people had been taken ill after eating sausages. The incident was transformed into collective hysteria after a well-launched rumor was spread: the Jews, presumably, had sold “sausages made with the flesh of Christian children” (some claimed to have found human nails in the sausages). Picked up by a Budapest daily,¹⁸⁴ the news spread throughout the country. Only a few days later (21 May), at the weekly fair held in Kunmadaras, a village in eastern Hungary, a genuine pogrom was mounted against the Jews who allegedly made “sausages from children’s flesh.” And all this without even one child being declared missing. Local police agents were on the pogromists’ side. The rioting resulted in three dead and many injured, to say nothing of routine pillaging. In cases such as this, the alleged infanticide was no longer attributed to ritual purposes. The state of hunger and destitution that followed the war was capitalized upon to launch the accusation of anthropophagism against the Jews, together with the claim that their fortunes had been made by abducting Christian children and selling products made of their flesh.

Moreover, in that very same period, Hungarian Communist activists were doing their best to account for the poverty and hunger rampant in that country

by blaming them on Jewish speculators. Taking advantage of the wave of popular anger that had arisen against “anthropophagous” Jewish tradesmen, the Hungarian Communist Party wanted to offer an example to kindle “the struggle against speculators.” On 30 July 1946, an aggressive mass demonstration was organized in Miskolc (the second largest industrial center of Hungary), in the course of which two Jewish millers were lynched, being accused of “starving the people.” Two days later, the enraged crowds also lynched a Jewish policeman, because he had made a few arrests among the pogromists. The intervention of Soviet troops was necessary to limit the dimensions of the pogrom in Miskolc.¹⁸⁵

Violent riots directed against Jews accused of infanticide also erupted in postwar Slovakia: in Presov and Tapolcany, in 1945, and in Bratislava, in 1946 and 1948. On 24 September 1945, for example, in the Slovak town of Tapolcany, Jewish-Hungarian physician Károly Berger was accused of attempting to murder twenty Christian children by vaccination. Anti-Jewish riots ensued, with dead and wounded, ransacked houses and shops—a pogrom which the Czechoslovakian police and army found impossible to bring to an end. Again, the alleged “infanticide” was stripped of any religious significance, yet the mechanism did function very well even in this manner.

Stalin himself must have learned a lesson from the events in Tapolcany (as well as from many other previous incidents). This became obvious when, at the beginning of 1953, he ordered the NKVD to build up a file against the “assassins in white robes.” This was the era of a new wave of expurgations among the ranks of Jewish Communist activists in East European countries. In 1952, for instance, Ana Pauker (Rabinsohn), secretary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party and minister of external affairs, was dismissed and then arrested and interrogated by the Romanian Securitate (Secret Services). Rudolf Slánský, secretary-general of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and a Jew, together with ten other Communist leaders (most of them, too, were Jewish) were condemned to death and executed. At the beginning of 1953, numerous high-ranking political figures of Jewish origin were removed from the leadership of the Communist Party of Hungary. In July 1952, a group of over a hundred renowned Soviet Jewish intellectuals were arrested and interrogated; thirteen of them were later executed.

In that same climate of terror, on 13 January 1953 several leading Jewish physicians found themselves accused by the Communist party media of having assassinated several Soviet leaders (among them A. A. Zhdanov, in

1948), and plotting to assassinate others as well. According to Nikita S. Khrushchev, Stalin presumably threatened the person conducting the investigation of this case in these terms: “If you do not obtain confessions from the doctors, we’ll have your head.” This episode stirred up strong collective emotions and was the outset of an aggressive official campaign of discrimination against Jews. As an expert on Soviet Jewry has claimed, “For the first time since the October Revolution [1917] the smell of pogroms was in the air.”¹⁸⁶ Only after Stalin’s death in March 1953 did an official communiqué declare the “assassins in white robes” innocent and the case was closed. Not definitively, however. The Soviet press would inevitably come up with instances of Jews who allegedly acted in accordance with the blood libel legend in Dagestan and Uzbekistan (1961–1962), in Georgia (1962), and in Lithuania (1963).¹⁸⁷ This kind of organized terror and open antisemitism, against a background in which the most elementary rights to religious life and cultural identity were absent, led Elie Wiesel to call Soviet Jewry “the Jews of silence.”¹⁸⁸

These were apparently to be the last occurrences of this political diversion; Europe seemed to be shaking it off for good. Since the 1960s the Catholic Church has on several occasions declared past cases of “ritual infanticide” whose victims have been sanctified to have been fraudulent.

The Blood Libel in Post-Communist Romania

The blood libel legend persists even today in some central European countries such as Austria,¹⁸⁹ the Czech Republic,¹⁹⁰ Hungary,¹⁹¹ Poland,¹⁹² Romania, and elsewhere. As an example of how this legend has survived in public discourse, I shall bring the case of Romania. Michael Shafir has pointed out that from time to time some psychotic politician or publisher looking for sensational material would resurrect the ghost of Jewish “ritual murder.” In the first years of the post-Communist era (1990–1992), Romanian newspapers with an ultra-nationalist, anti-liberal, and xenophobic agenda (such as *România Mare*, *Europa*, and others) would often refer to this legend.¹⁹³ Nevertheless, the most interesting media case occurred only a few years ago, in late 1995 and early 1996. Several Romanian newspapers (*Adevărul*, *Ziua*) claimed that a network of Israeli traffickers in living flesh has been buying small children (seven to twelve months old) from Bucharest and Jassy in order to smuggle them illegally across the border. Initially, the purpose of this alleged traffic had no ritual character: the babies were presumably intended for adoption or for transplants of vital organs.¹⁹⁴

Against this background of mystifying news, never authenticated, some editors of the magazine *Baricada* announced that “under the cover of the Mossad,... the Jewish Mafia of [human] flesh” was clandestinely smuggling the “little Romanians” across the border. Once in Israel, they were killed “for blood.” “It will be no longer possible,” the Bucharest weekly concluded pathetically, “that any of the little ones be brought to Romanian soil or be brought back to life.”¹⁹⁵

Several details in this scenario call for some remarks. First, the protagonists were not simply a few detestable criminals—this would not have been quite so serious. After all, there are black sheep in any fold. In this case, however, the protagonists were a “Jewish Mafia network,” supported by none other than the Israeli secret services (the Mossad). Moreover, newspapers have claimed (the information has not been confirmed) that the head of the network was none other than the “personal secretary” of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (who had been assassinated shortly before). Obviously, among the accomplices of the Israeli criminals there had to be a few Israelis of Romanian origin, and even some Jews in Romania. Secondly, newspapers at first wrote of traffic in children “for adoption,” then, presumably, “for organ extraction” (which presupposed the murder of the children) and finally, without any explanation or argument, reached their ultimate target point: the children were murdered “for blood,” because, “as is already well-known, the Jewish *matzoth* need the kosher blood of tender Christians.”¹⁹⁶

Nota bene! We are in the year 1995, in the capital of a European country. This case proves once more the enormous survival power of this tale, used to scare children or put them to sleep. Only the upsurge of several diplomatic and press scandals was able to force the retraction of these stories and the resignation of the editors involved.

What is more, the ultra-nationalist Romanian press (*România Mare, Politica, Europa*, etc.), as well as certain books issued by various phantom publishing houses, claim that “Judaean-Masonry” is responsible for producing the HIV virus, with a view to destroying mankind through AIDS. On the streets of Bucharest and Cluj I have seen posters maintaining the same aberrations: “Drugs, AIDS, para-psychological weaponry, etc.” are the lethal instruments by means of which Jews “mean to destroy national identity and to enfeeble the physical and psychological characteristics of individuals.”¹⁹⁷ We may have entered upon a new millennium yet are apparently not too distantly removed from the medieval mentality which had produced the

accusation that the Jews were those who spread the plague by poisoning wells.¹⁹⁸ Furthermore, for Romanian ultra-nationalists the Jews are the cause of all the evils of the century. The “international Jewish lobby” is said to have imposed upon NATO the war against Yugoslavia (according to, among others, publicist Cristian Tudor Popescu, editor-in-chief of the influential daily newspaper *Adevărul*—The Truth), while “world Jewish finance” has been blamed for having commanded the execution of “three great nationalist Romanians”: Nicolae Iorga (1940), Nicolae Ceaușescu (1989), and Ioan Petru Culianu (1991), this according to Professor Ion Coja of the University of Bucharest.¹⁹⁹ Other commentators have claimed that Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu was apparently murdered by lead poisoning in 1889 by a Jewish doctor.²⁰⁰ With the intent of unveiling the criminal nature of “greater Jewish conspiracies,” Judeophobia assumes hallucinatory forms: Jewry, maintains a book released in 1997, is at the bottom of several assassinations, among which should be mentioned Mihai Eminescu, King Carol I, I. C. Brătianu, Octavian Goga, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, and the thirteen leaders of the Iron Guard movement, together with Marshall Ion Antonescu and the National Communist president Nicolae Ceaușescu....²⁰¹

Compared to the state of things in Romania between the two world wars (when, according to official statistics, there were approximately 850,000 Jews living there), the novelty today lies in the fact that it is not so much the Jews of Romania who are now accused (unless, sometimes, it is of complicity) but rather “world Jewry,” and the various forms of its organization: the “Israeli Mafia,” the “network of the Mossad,” “Judaeo-Masonry,” the “Jewish world lobby,” “great Jewish finance,” etc. This is just another mold on which the “imaginary Jew” is shaped. This is so because the “real Jew” can no longer be used as a bugbear in Romania, for he can surely be said to be an endangered species: there are only approximately 12,000 Jews still living there, of which two-thirds are over 70 years of age. The antisemitic show must go on, even without Jews!

RITUAL XENOCIDE?

Symbolic Human Sacrifice

Throughout the ages, the bloodthirsty rites of human sacrifice have been subject to a train of modifications towards a “softening” of the ritual: from the immolation of the worthiest member of the community, to that of a man considered to be “second-class” (an invalid, a prisoner, a foreigner, etc.).

Later, after passing through a stage of animal sacrifices (see the substitution of a deer on the altar for Iphigenia, and that of a ram for Isaac) and one of food offerings (Plutarch, *Numa*, XV; Ovid, *Fasti*, 3.333), the ritual degenerated to such a degree that at times it became a sacrificing of simulacra or a simulation of sacrifice.²⁰² A similar development can be discerned in the ritual sacrifices performed by the Dacians and the Getae. If initially the person sacrificed had to be either the “most beautiful and the bravest of the Getae” (Aeneas of Gaza, *Theophrastus*), or “the worthiest of those who are occupied with philosophy” (Clement of Alexandria, *The Carpets*, 4.8), later the victims of this “savage cult” of the Getae were merely foreign prisoners (Jordans, *Getica*, 41).

Therefore, when the ritual lost some of its actuality and when the human price was deemed to be too high, the criteria for choosing the victim also underwent some changes, and the “sacrifice” began to be chosen among “second-class” people. The sacrificial victims were often strangers, people generally treated with hostility (as the dictum puts it, *hospes hostis*, “the stranger is an enemy”). As notorious examples of ritual xenocide, suffice it to mention the foreigners sacrificed on the altar of the goddess Artemis in Colchis, on the eastern shore of the Black Sea (Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, 4.45), as well as the ritual of beheading strangers when the reaping season drew to a close, performed by the legendary Lityrses, king of Phrygia. Simulacra of this last ritual survived in Europe in the shape of folk customs and legends until the dawning of the twentieth century.

Surely, xenocidal practices could survive mainly in societies with a traditional and archaic frame of mind, in isolated ethnic and cultural enclaves. Mikhail Sholokhov began his novel *The Silent Don* with an act of ritual xenocide in a Cossack village on the river Don in the late nineteenth century. The Cossacks kill a Turkish woman on the outskirts of the village, convinced that she, a non-Christian, had caused the epidemic that was taking its harsh toll of the community’s cattle.²⁰³ Such practices may be long past, yet the mentality that generated them has not wholly disappeared. In the traditional mentality, the stranger continued to be the intractable alien who, by his very presence, brings about natural disasters: “The stranger is not looked at with friendly eyes, for nobody knows what is in him, what kin he is from,” an old woman from a village in southern Transylvania said only three decades ago. “A stranger will be a stranger, no matter what his deeds. If any harm should befall us, people will look at him again: a disease, maybe, or the

drought, I don't know what else. But the [strange] man cannot be at ease, even though he might happen to be a decent man."²⁰⁴

An interesting fact is that numerous reminders of archaic rituals of human sacrifice have survived in folk productions and performances (*The Legend of Master Manole*, for instance). At the same time, some feeble echoes seem to indicate ancient practices of ritual xenocide. The scarcity of historical documentation induces me to review here several folk records.

In all Greek variants of the ballad whose theme is the building of a bridge over a river, one idea comes up with regularity: no construction can be raised unless a man is sacrificed, with the explicit condition that he should not be an orphan, a cripple, a beggar, and especially not a traveler or a stranger: "If you don't offer a man, the wall will not build itself / And don't think of sacrificing an orphan, a stranger, or a wanderer."²⁰⁵

This interdiction proves that it was indeed common practice to resort to sacrificing such "second-class" people. Those who are most often mentioned in this role are travelers and strangers, or else preferably non-Christian outsiders: Jews, Turks, Arabs, or Gypsies. "Even today," Lazăr Șăineanu wrote at the end of the nineteenth century, "the peasants of Zakynthos (Greece) believe that, in order to make bridges or cities stronger, one ought to slay a man, particularly *a Turk or a Jew*, at the site, and to bury him inside the building" [emphasis mine—A.O.].²⁰⁶ Traces of similar practices and beliefs have survived to this day in the folklore of the shepherds in southeastern Poland (to the north of Bukovina and Maramureș, areas in which Jewish shepherds have lived together with Romanian ones): "In order for a sheep farmer to be successful," goes a belief recorded around 1980 [!], "a Jew should be walled up in the sheep-house."²⁰⁷

According to a legend attested in northern Moldavia, the stream near Sulița (in the county of Botoșani) is "in constant uproar" and overflows, "as token of its demand of a man's life." The waters could not be subdued until Moldavian Prince Stephen the Great put there "in the whirlpool [at the dike's foundation] a Gypsy and a cock."²⁰⁸ In a legend from Herzegovina which refers to the building of the dam near the river of Mostar, it is said that a Gypsy woman was walled in the foundations of the dam, so that it should not break down again. In another variant from the same area, cocks are sacrificed instead of human beings.²⁰⁹

By the end of the nineteenth century, this ritual was much milder in the Romanian area, reduced to strictly symbolic gestures. Yet, at the level of the still active magic ritual mentality little had changed. For the edifice to be a

lasting one, some Romanian builders would wall “shadows of Gypsies or Yids” in the foundations, which meant that they sealed therein a thread (or a reed) the length of the symbolically sacrificed person’s shadow. The belief was that this magic act (based on the symbolic homology between the shadow and the soul) had the power to steal the soul, and the man who had been the object of this act “dies and, after the building is finished, he turns into a ghost.”²¹⁰ A man who “has lost his shadow,” says a folk belief, “shall die within forty days.”²¹¹ Ovidiu Papadima has shown that this archaic custom has been attested in Romania since the middle of the nineteenth century and that it was found in all areas of the country, but he made the mistake of assuming that the “custom of sealing the shadow” is typical only of the Romanian area.²¹² This type of symbolic immolation is attested virtually throughout all of southern and eastern Europe (Greece, Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and—of course—Romania).

In Hungary, I have come across a strange case of overturning the belief in the xenocidal ritual through its association with the legend of infanticide: those who were said to need a Christian’s blood in order to place it in the foundations of a new synagogue were now none other than the Jews themselves. This was the motivation given for the ritual killings they were said to commit around Easter, according to several informants interviewed about charges of ritual infanticide leveled against Jews in eastern Hungary in the spring of 1948.²¹³

An interesting fact is that the practice of sacrificing a stranger by sealing him in the foundations of a building has been shared with the “strangers” themselves. Thus, an article in *Echo de Liège* of 1 October 1865 maintains that “whenever they have to build a fortress, the Turks sacrifice a Christian child.”²¹⁴ Sometimes, it is especially emphasized that the Turks kill Christians, namely those of the Orthodox rite, and seal their bodies (or skulls) inside certain buildings.²¹⁵

Romanian ethnologist Adrian Fochi, who has analyzed numerous variants of the legend of “sacrificial immolation” in Europe and Asia, reached the conclusion that at times “the choice [of the victim for sacrifice] conveniently settles on the kind of persons who are prone to become the victims of any variant of fanaticism, be it religious, racial, or pseudo-patriotic. The smallest price to pay tends to be chosen, as can be seen. As yet, they do not go into the field of animal substitution, but we are not too far from it.”²¹⁶

Other traces of ritual xenocide seem to have survived in the magic rituals intended to exert an influence on weather phenomena. In the nineteenth

century, brick-making Gypsies, who knew how to bring about the drought, were beaten and even killed in order to “set the rains free.”²¹⁷ At the same time, magical incantations related to weather—which by downgrading have ended up in children’s folklore—seem to have preserved traces of archaic practices of human sacrifice meant to prevent crop-destroying natural disasters (storms, hail, excessive rains, etc.): “With [Archangel] Michael’s sword, / With the axe given by God, / Chop the man’s head off.”²¹⁸ In some variants the sacrificed person receives an ethnic identity: “With Michael’s knife / You behead the Jew”²¹⁹; “With the sword of Michael / Pass the club to me / Slaying Judas I shall, / Judas is now dead, / Water is now free”²²⁰; or “With Michael’s sword / I’ll behead the Turk.”²²¹ In 1879, on the basis of this last recitative, B. P. Hasdeu was certain that he had discovered in it an “authentic mention of [the ruler] Michael the Brave,” and of his fighting the Turks.²²² Vasile Bogrea fell into the same trap in 1921 and was followed by I. C. Chițimia, in 1971,²²³ as well as others. My opinion is that should the variant be about a ruler at all, then he cannot be Michael the Brave but rather the “great ruler of the army of angels,” Archangel Michael, who wields the “sword of death,” “with which he takes away people’s souls.”²²⁴

There might be a connection between the incantations presented above and the folk belief which claims that if it does not rain during the “Jewish feasts” one Jew in each borough “shall have to bite the dust.”²²⁵ Similar superstitions are to be found in Bukovina and Moldavia: “There is a belief that when it is time for the Jews to keep their ‘Feast of Tabernacles’ it is going to rain,” or “When it rains, somebody [a Jew] from each synagogue will have to die.”²²⁶ Evidently, the reference is to the Jewish festival of Sukkoth, when Jews do indeed pray and joyfully dance and rejoice with the Scroll of the Law, and in ancient times offered sacrifices to bring forth the rain in good time. The prayer for rain (*Tefilath Ha-geshem*) is addressed “To Him who makes the wind blow and the rain fall.”²²⁷

The Hunt for Jews

It may well be that the “hunt for Jews” which used to be practiced in some regions of Romania during religious rain-invoking processions, may also be a reminiscence of some archaic xenocidal ritual.²²⁸ In general, the Jew, as a “non-believer,” was thought to profane Christian ceremonies or services (such as the ones during Christmas, Easter, Epiphany, etc.). Consequently, he was “exposed to most savage beatings and maltreatment.” Yet, it is interesting that the greatest excesses of brutality towards Jews occurred

during the least Christian of ceremonies, namely those meant to put an end to the drought. This is what Wilhelm Schwarzfeld noted, in 1889, about Jassy and Moldavian boroughs in general:

The greatest cruelties against the Jews took place when there was some religious ceremony underway meant to induce the skies to yield rain, when the priests, as is the custom of their faith, went out with their icons in the street. Not only that every Jew, even the speck of one, had to keep away from the streets, but they had to keep their shops closed, just as closed as they had to keep the doors and windows of their houses. Hardly did the people see a shop door ajar than they rushed in and broke the bones of those Jews upon whom they could lay their hands. And had any one of them ventured to peep out of the window of his house, a shower of stones would fly at him. These cruelties were committed by the lower people of Moldavia, because they thought the Jews to be infidels who by their very presence profaned the saints and icons.²²⁹

Schwarzfeld also described the ominous atmosphere in the streets of Moldavian boroughs during Christmas: “On Christmas nights, almost no Jew would dare go out in the street, even during the reign of Cuza-Vodă, for they were fearful of being harassed by the *Irozi* [personages of folk drama, on Christmas]. Likewise, [Jews] could not attend Epiphany services.”²³⁰

Things were not essentially different in twentieth-century Maramureș: “they beat us on Christmas Eve or threatened us at Easter,” Elie Wiesel remembers about the “outbreaks of anti-Jewish hatred” recorded in the town of Sighet during the 1930s.²³¹ The same happened in Hungary (see the Hungarian proverb, “He’s scared like the Jew on Good Friday”),²³² Poland,²³³ Germany,²³⁴ France, Italy,²³⁵ and in other western and central European countries.

Passions ran high at times, culminating in genuine pogroms with dead and wounded, plundered houses and shops, and profaned synagogues. This is what happened in Galați in the Christmastide of 1846, during and after the masked ritual folk play *Turca*. The following is part of a report about this incident of “ugly intemperance” published by a journal in Brașov:

The Moldavians, inflamed, threw themselves upon the Jewish houses, smashed their shops, trampled their merchandise under their feet. From that moment, Jewish persons began to be molested, irrespective of sex and age. Towards evening, the number of rioters rose to several

hundred, of which some got into fighting parties and others spurred the youth on the Jews.... A crowd of those threw themselves upon a Jewish synagogue, broke the windows and pillaged whatever was finest inside. On the third day of Christmas, the rioting went even further....²³⁶

These events were unleashed when, harassed and insulted by the people wearing masks, a few Jews began to strike back: "Some Jews," wrote the journalist, "took the matter seriously and started to exchange blows with the Moldavians [wearing masks]."²³⁷

For the Romanian mentality of that period, such a reaction on the part of "strangers" was not something to be put up with. In 1823, when several Jews from Walachia had the nerve to defend themselves from the blows of Romanians, a certain Costache, a royal purveyor and chief constable, gave the following mind-boggling explanation for the public's behavior:

They [i.e., the Jews] should have yielded to the blows, for they have no right to defend themselves against the "native Walachians" who so choose to rule and govern in their homeland, and this is valid in general for any foreigner, who is forbidden to defend himself against a national. If they don't like it, they are free to return to from whence they came; we do not need them, because we, the patriots, are rulers in our own country now and we shall know what to do to relieve ourselves of these foreigners.²³⁸

Nevertheless, one must bear in mind that, on the one hand, these affirmations by the public official are reproduced—most likely with added overtones—by the Prussian consul in Bucharest and, on the other hand, that this was an era of post-Phanariot rule, when xenophobic feelings were at high tide.

In 1868, Austrian writer Karl Emil Franzos, a former schoolmate of Mihai Eminescu in the Gymnasium of Cernăuți, referred to the *rumänische Judentodtschlagenkunst* ("the Romanian art of beating the Jews to death").²³⁹ What he had in mind were, without doubt, the anti-Jewish riots that had begun in Romania during the Christmastide of 1867 in Bîrlad, and had continued throughout 1868 in Vaslui, Bacău, Galați, and more—excesses of violence that gave rise to strong negative reactions all over Europe.²⁴⁰

Obviously, "the art of beating the Jews to death" was not a specifically Romanian trait. Russians and Ukrainians also practiced it successfully. "The pogrom is a slave specialty," says the Nazi governor of Cracow disdainfully in Curzio Malaparte's novel *Kaputt* (1944).²⁴¹ Ilya Ehrenburg's character

Julio Jurenito organizes a prank ("Solemn sessions of extermination of the Jewish communities in Budapest, Kiev, Jaffa, Alger"), which would comprise

alongside traditional pogroms, that the honorable audience enjoys so much, the following actions, organized in the spirit of the age: the burning of Jews, burying them alive, the shedding of Jewish blood over the fields, as well as modern procedures such as "evictions," "cleansing of suspect elements," etc., etc.

To these "solemn sessions" to which entrance is free are invited diverse antisemites, among them "Russian liberals" alongside "cardinals, bishops, archimandrites, English lords, Romanian boyars, French journalists, the Hohenzollerns, [and] Greeks of no distinguished title."²⁴²

Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin mocked the habits of "Russian liberals" of the second half of the eighteenth century in his historical novel *The Captain's Daughter* (1836): "Billiards is very important for our fellow soldiers," says an officer of the Tsarist army. "When, for instance, during the military maneuvers, you arrive at a small, poor town, what can you do to waste your time? You cannot beat the Yids to death all the time. You can instead go to an inn and play billiards there."²⁴³ The beating of Jews—as a Russian and Ukrainian national sport—also appears frequently in Sholem Aleichem's works, such as *Tevye der Milchiger* [Tevye the dairyman] (1895): "Although you are a Jew, you are not a bad man. But this has nothing to do with it. We have to beat you."²⁴⁴

An exception proves the rule. The stipulated right of the Jew to "walk in the streets of the village without obstruction or hindrance" on a certain feast day is proof of the dangers that lay in wait for him on any other day of the year. In *Oameni și locuri* [People and places] (1908), a non-fiction account, Mihail Sadoveanu described the events during the festival of St. Mercurie (*Mercuria*, the fourth day of Easter) the patron saint of a church in the borough of Rădășeni in northern Moldavia: "Then even the Jews can walk without obstruction or hindrance on the streets of the village, and, looking at them, the townsman of Rădășeni can once more say to himself: 'Only once in a whole year can they make merry in this town of ours, poor souls!'"²⁴⁵

The Burning of the Effigy

This is the fitting moment to introduce the Easter custom of making large, life-sized puppets representing Judas. To create this effigy, articles of

clothing taken or stolen from Jews were used, as were some (stereo)typical signs of ethnic identification: a beard, sidelocks, hooked nose, etc. On the Thursday and Friday preceding Easter the effigy was hung on a tree or a pole in front of a Jew's house (who had to pay to have it removed), or, as often as not, in the central square of the town. Then it was dragged through the streets and set afire, or thrown into the river.²⁴⁶ Most times, the maltreatment of Judas' effigy was also an occasion for the maltreatment of Jews. This custom represented their symbolic destruction, for "from Judas's kin," a Romanian folk legend tells us, "come the Judeans, or the Yids [*jidani*]." ²⁴⁷ It should be noted, however, that the magic custom of hanging and burning or drowning an effigy of Judas on Easter was not a unique Romanian practice; it was often attested in Catholic and Protestant Europe (Spain, France, Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Moravia).

This ritual of symbolic Judeocide was nevertheless also attested (albeit, less frequently) in some Orthodox areas of the continent (Ukraine, Greece, or Romania). Here is how the Great Chancellor of Moldavia, Nicolae Șuțu, described it as it was actually enacted at the beginning of the nineteenth century in a Greek port near Constantinople:

During the Passion Week, [for fear of all kinds of rogues,] no Jew dared to show himself. Renowned throughout the Bosphorus, those scamps had received permission to burn a Jew in effigy on Holy Friday. For this deed they would bedeck a manikin in a Jewish costume, chosen to be all in tatters, with a dilapidated sack hanging from his shoulder, and carried it in procession in the entire town all through Good Friday, droning out all kinds of invectives of the coarsest kind against the people of Israel. This way they raised the money for the wood that was to build the pyre.... A huge blazing bonfire was thus kindled until the break of dawn in the large square of the church and the burning of the manikin, carried out to the cheers of the common people, revenged Christendom for the original sin of the Jewish nation.²⁴⁸

In Moldavia and Walachia, such a ritual was not performed in pre-modern times, or at least no data to the contrary are available. It seems to have been imported by means of Greek sailors at a relatively late date, approximately in the first half of the nineteenth century. This macabre ritual was practiced in Romanian ports on the Danube during Eastertide, especially in Galați, a thriving free port at that time. In the course of 1840, for instance, 929 ships docked at this port, of which the majority—410—were Greek.²⁴⁹

In 1897 Elias Schwarzfeld wrote about the Greek sailors of Galați:

During the days of Easter as well as, quite often, on other Christian holidays [the Greek sailors] would conduct ceremonies as absurd as they were dangerous. The fanaticized and incited mobs would put together some straw or wooden puppet in the shape of a Jew, dress it in Jewish clothes, and put it on show atop some mast, shouting and clamoring around it; on other occasions they would drag it to the heart of the town, beat it with their fists, cudgels, or knives, would fling stones at it, would fire [guns] at it, would pluck out its beard and sidelocks and would mock at it in all kinds of ways; finally, the sailors performed a real auto-da-fé, to the shouts and screams of the people who had gathered in large numbers. As the purpose of this ceremony was to take revenge upon the Jew for the Passion Christ had suffered, it should not be difficult to understand that among such a crowd, which the repeated practice of these exercises had rendered fanatical, one spark was enough to set the spirits on fire. From the Jew of straw they went to the flesh-and-blood Jew, and abhorrent and revolting acts were committed.²⁵⁰

Indeed, such barbaric rituals often ended in pogroms in the Jewish quarters. In the spring of 1840, for example, when the Judeophobic spirits of the population of Galați had already been kindled by the accusation of ritual murder in Damascus, the Romanian authorities were forced to order police and army forces to take to the streets to “ban the burning of the straw puppet in public,” “lest acts of violence towards the Jews should arise.”²⁵¹ Only a few months earlier (in September 1839), two Scottish missionaries passing through Galați recorded that this custom was still being practiced, despite its being forbidden by the authorities of Moldavia: “The Ionic Greeks also burn a Jew in effigy every year at Easter, though the Government [of Moldavia] has at last forbid it.”²⁵²

The following is a lengthy description of a similar episode in Galați at Easter of 1853, as reported in a German newspaper published in Berlin:

The sailors of one of the many Greek ships that are stationed in the port of Galați put together a puppet as large as life, representing a Jew, on which they placed an inscription that bore the name of one of the richest Jews living here, and they hung it on the first day of the feast on the mast of their ship. Despite police interdiction, the puppet hung there on the mast until the next day, following which all sailors, armed

with daggers and pistols, dragged it in grand procession up to a church in the town and set fire to it in public with the wildest cries of hatred against the Jews. The army force intervened, yet the sailors threatened that they would give rise to a bloodbath if the army opposed what they had a mind to do. The Greek consulate and the local authorities, unable to put a check to these riots, succeeded nevertheless in pouring oil on the troubled waters and limited the uproar to the regrettable scenes depicted above, not permitting them to achieve larger proportions. In view of the great number of sailors who were stationed in the port at that moment, a nascent uproar would have certainly have spread, with great ease, over the whole town. This would have amounted to a real catastrophe. The excesses in 1846 [which had occurred in Galați, during Christmas] had begun in the same fashion....²⁵³

Significantly, in all these cases the biblical character of Judas had completely vanished from the ritual scenario, without anyone's missing its presence. It had been successfully replaced by the generic Jew. The symbolic murder of the "imaginary Jew" of straw and wood was only naturally followed by the actual murder of the "real Jew" of flesh and blood.

"The Jew is Not Human"

A common denominator of the examples recorded above is the presence of the stranger and, most importantly, of the Jew—the stranger par excellence. Throughout all of the Middle Ages in Europe he had been held responsible for droughts, tempests, earthquakes, and epidemics. In such critical situations, the *Iudeus ex machina*, the Jewish "scapegoat" emerged, and it was believed that his ritual immolation would put an end to the disaster. Furthermore, the Jew was regarded as a pariah, a "second-class man." "By the concept of 'man,'" folklorist Tache Papahagi wrote in 1925, "the people of Maramureș understand a 'Romanian' or, generally, a 'Christian,' never a 'Jew.'" This is verified by a sarcastic popular saying whose provenance is Maramureș: "Ion, whom did you chance upon on the road? 'A man and a Jew [jid].'"²⁵⁴

The Jew was not alone. The Gypsy, another typical "stranger," was afforded the same kind of underrating: "Neither is the willow a tree, / Nor the Gypsy a man."²⁵⁵ This formula was readily applied to the Jew as well. An antisemitic short rhyme, "Vâscul și jidanul" [The Mistletoe and the Yid], in which a parallel was developed between the parasitical nature of both the

mistletoe and the Jew, ended with the couplet: "Among trees, you see / The mistletoe is not a tree / Nor is the Jew and his law / A man among men."²⁵⁶

Similar prejudices can be found among the intellectual elite. Richard Wagner believed, in the middle of the nineteenth century, that the Jew must choose between being a man and a Jew: "To become a man signifies above all to the Jew to discontinue his being a Jew" (*Das Judenthum in der Musik* [Judaism in music] 1850). Half a century later, Wagner's son-in-law, Houston Stewart Chamberlain quoted him approvingly (*Richard Wagner*, 1901).²⁵⁷ In the eyes of other intellectuals, the Jew is eventually somewhat of a man, but still a Jew: "Are you Joseph Hechter, a *man* from the lower course of the Danube...? No. You are a *Jew* from the lower course of the Danube...." (Nae Ionescu, in 1934)²⁵⁸, or "the Jew is first a *Jew* and then a *man*" (Emil Cioran, *The Transfiguration of Romania*, 1936). "The phenomenon takes place both in their conscience and in ours," believes Cioran. He dwells, with overwhelming racism, upon "the huge precipice that separates a non-Jew from a Jew," "two beings who are essentially different." "The Jew is not our fellow man, and no matter how intimate we are with him, a precipice separates us under any circumstance, and no matter what we wish for. It is as if they descended from a different species of monkeys than we did...."²⁵⁹

In a recent book, Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine tried to demonstrate that Emil Cioran, even in his "philosemitic" essay written in the aftermath of the war (*Un peuple de solitaires* [A solitary people], 1956), maintained that the Jew is less of a man: "Being a man is a tragedy, being a Jew is altogether a different tragedy."²⁶⁰ Reviewing the book of the French scholar, Ion Vianu noted that this is, however, an incomplete quotation from Cioran's essay. Actually, the continuation of the passage is: "This is why the Jew has the privilege of experiencing twice his human condition."²⁶¹ "Horrible!—concludes Ion Vianu, angered by Laignel-Lavastine's inaccuracy—"Did Cioran deny the fact that the Jews are human beings? Not even Hitler could do that."²⁶² However Ion Vianu, in his turn, was also inaccurate. Hitler actually did deny that, as did Cioran too, though not in 1956 but, as noted above, in 1936.

This mental cliché survives in the subtext even when (or precisely when) the Jew's belonging to the human race is being reasserted. "After all, the Jew's a human being too, isn't he?" says a character in the short story "The Antisemite," published in 1897 by Polish author Gabriela Zapolska.²⁶³ "Are not the Jews human beings such as we are?" asks one of Ilya Ehrenburg's

characters in vexation (*Julio Jurenito*, 1921) and receives the prompt reply: "Of course they are not!"²⁶⁴

It is probable that Cioran obliquely paraphrased an adage expressed by Wilhelm Dohm in 1783: "The Jew is more a man than he is a Jew."²⁶⁵ Several decades earlier, Montesquieu had already established the connection between man's belonging to a species and to a nation: "I am a man because of nature, and a Frenchman because of chance." In 1796, trying to convince the Council of the Netherlands to pass the law declaring the emancipation of the Jews, deputy Hahn made a statement that is symptomatic of the mentality of the era: "No argument in the world can hide this truth: Jews are human beings."²⁶⁶ In 1868, another deputy, a member of the Romanian Parliament, Petre Carp, defended more or less the same idea: "Do not forget, sirs, that if a person is a Jew, he does not cease to be a man."²⁶⁷ Only a decade later, when the Jewish banker Mauriciu Blank petitioned Parliament to grant him Romanian citizenship, Petre Carp declared in the plenary session: "I am personally acquainted with Mister Blank, and I know that he drinks like us, plays cards like us, swears like us, so I see no reason whatsoever that he should not be a Romanian like us."

Later, in the 1920s, irritated by this type of argumentation, the chief of Nazi propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, admitted that "Jews are indeed humans, to the extent that fleas are animals."²⁶⁸ It is indeed a falsified view, to which Cilibi Moise had earlier attempted to put an end: "He who distinguishes between man and his kin is not a man himself."²⁶⁹ Some of the characters in a play by Liviu Rebreanu are of a similar opinion: "Eventually, it does not matter if you are Romanian or Jew, it only matters to be a man" and "Nowadays nobody cares whether you are a Jew or not. You should be a good man, that is all. Nothing else matters."²⁷⁰

Petre Carp's speech to the Romanian Parliament is not a simple exercise in parliamentary rhetoric. Unconsciously, however, the Romanian politician resorted to a time-worn literary motif. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, William Shakespeare has Shylock convince his interlocutors in a similar manner that his being a Jew does not after all render him less human:

I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections and passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us,

shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. (*The Merchant of Venice*, Act III, Scene 1).

Three-and-a-half centuries later, around 1940, Benjamin Fondane wrote a poem entitled “Exodul” [Exodus], on a significantly similar topic: even if on my Jewish figure “everybody in the wide world spat,” I had “nevertheless a human figure like you.”

Then, recognize, I had a human figure, too / resembling yours, / a mouth like your mouth, that used to beg in the same manner, / my eye got inflamed, crying its salty drop / when dust hurt it, / or when entrapped and fancying, / that on my skin would hurry, pierced by a brazen prick, / a fresh trail of blood, as red as your blood. / Oh, and I was equally cruel / and thirsty for tenderness, / and thirsty for power, for gold, for wishes or torment, / indeed, I was evil like you, and afraid like you, I was / haughty in time of peace, inebriated by success, terrified / and tortured by failure. / Indeed, I was human like the rest of you.²⁷¹

Fundoianu seems to paraphrase Shylock’s monologue, even seeming to imitate him at times: “If you prick us, do we not bleed?” (Shakespeare) and “that on my skin would hurry, pierced by a brazen prick, / a fresh trail of blood, as red as your blood” (Fundoianu). As a poet and theatergoer, Fundoianu was familiar with the works of Shakespeare. He must have frequently discussed them with Lev Shestov, who devoted his first book to Shakespeare’s literary works.²⁷²

The following stanza from a song of outlaws in Moldavia, published in 1888, is indicative of the difference in status which caused Christians and non-Christian strangers to be perceived and treated in antithetical manners: “When I laid my hands upon a Christian, / Out of his ten lei five I held; / But when the Turk or the Yid I beheld, / My heart burned inside me with a yearning; / Their heads to get I could not tarry; / And when I had grabbed them thoroughly, / I gave them to the crows.”²⁷³ This, however, is not the rule. In some outlaw songs, such as those about Codău, a highwayman from Bukovina, dating from around 1880, the “boyars and the Yids [*jidani*]” are not killed, only their pockets are picked: “For he won’t kill people, / He’ll just flail the pockets / Of boyars and of Yids / Whatever money he hits, / With the poor he splits.”²⁷⁴

Flagrant injustice was also inflicted when aliens were being judged by the Divan, as exemplified by this fragment from a rhymed chronicle entitled

"Istoria Țării Românești dă la leat 1769" [The history of Walachia in the year 1769]: "Both beadles held to their cudgels, / And judged with them, / Armenians and Jews / Were left nothing but their skin."²⁷⁵ Sometimes ethnic murder was looked upon with (self-)irony: "A poor Christian has murdered a bandit of a Yid,"²⁷⁶ or with black humor, as in the negative caroling in Polish folklore: "Alas, my dear brothers, what have you done, / You've killed two Jews, there close to Krzanów, / And of a third, in the fir tree of Baranów, / Pierced you the head with a bullet from the rifle? / Ah, lackaday, bim bam bum!..."²⁷⁷

"A negative parody of the traditional caroling procession with a decorated plough strewn with negative wishes and invectives addressed to the Jews," recorded by Petru Caraman in the northern Moldavian town of Fălticeni in 1934, concludes with a macabre curse: "...Where your house is now, / We'll mow with our scythes next summer! / So that not even the trace of a Yid is left. / Happy New Year, for ever and ever!"²⁷⁸

Moldavian peasants used to believe that "he who kills takes upon himself all the sins of the murdered one and carries them on his back in the other world."²⁷⁹ This rule of equity, however, did not apply if the person killed was a non-Christian. In 1595, after having massacred the Jewish merchants who were subjects of the Ottoman Empire, Transylvanian ruler Sigismund Bathory proclaimed "that Jews cannot remain in Transylvania, Moldavia, and Walachia, and everybody has a right to kill them, wherever they are found."²⁸⁰ A French monk wrote in 1620 that Turks permitted Christians in southwestern Europe "to kill them [i.e., the Jews] without being punished."²⁸¹ At the beginning of the eighteenth century, when referring to "the vices of the Moldavians," Dimitrie Cantemir noted the following: "[Moldavians] do not conceive of killing or robbing a Turk, a Tartar, or a Jew, as a sin, so much the less as a lawless deed."²⁸² For the Moldavians, killing a non-Christian seemed to have been a sort of Christian duty, and he who treated them more kindly was thought to have forsaken the "true belief." In other words, for such crimes, simply because they were committed against non-Christian strangers, one was not likely to have even the slightest quarrel with the *Church* and "so much the less" with *Justice*. After traveling through Moldavia in 1841, Iuliu Barasch wrote: "In past ages, even bandits thought that they should not even be sued for murder committed against Jews."²⁸³ Among the Ukrainians, the eastern neighbors of the Moldavians, it was a popular belief that not only did murdering a Yid [*jid*] not charge one with any sins, but it also "unburdened your soul of forty sins."²⁸⁴ The Germans held a strikingly similar belief: "The

perishing of the Jews means the deliverance of the Christians.”²⁸⁵ So was the belief of certain Romanian peasants: “They [i.e., the Jews] can be killed from time to time for their sins,” Nicolae Iorga records the opinion of a young peasant from northern Bessarabia, “and for much greater sins which are not theirs.”²⁸⁶

That, writes Sorin Alexandrescu, is how religious crimes, and eventually religious wars, are justified to our very days: “The killing of the infidel...is bereft of sin.”²⁸⁷

NOTES

1. Joel Carmichael, *The Satanizing of the Jews: Origin and Development of Mystical Antisemitism* (New York: Fromm International, 1993), 46, 77, 84.

2. Jean Delumeau, *Frica în Occident (secolele XIV–XVIII): O cetate asediată*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1986), 147. First published as *La peur en Occident (XIVe–XVIIIe siècle): Une cité assiégée*, 2 vols. (Paris: Fayard, 1978).

3. Moses Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română: Studiu de psihologie populară* (The Jews in Romanian folk literature: A study of folk psychology) (Bucharest, 1892), 66.

4. Radu Rosetti, “Un proces de sacrilegiu la 1836 în Moldova” (A trial of sacrilege in 1834 in Moldavia), *Annals of the Romanian Academy* (Bucharest) 31 (1909).

5. Tache Papahagi, *Grai, folklor, etnografie* (Language, folklore, ethnography) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 90.

6. Grigore G. Tocilescu, *Materialuri folcloristice* (Folkloric materials) (Bucharest, 1900).

7. Alexiu Viciu, *Colinde din Ardeal* (Carols from Transylvania) (Bucharest, 1914), 72.

8. Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile la români: Studiu etnografic* (Traditional holidays of the Romanians: ethnographic study), ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Saeculum I.O., 1997), 154.

9. Silviu Secrieru, “Iconografie originală la Țichindeal” (Original iconography at Țichindeal), *Curentul* (Bucharest), 25 Aug. 1999: 17.

10. Șezătoarea” [a review] 3 (1894): 29.

11. Alina Cała, *The Image of the Jew in Polish Folk Culture* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995), 177.

12. Simeon Florea Marian, *Sărbătorile la români: Studiu etnografic* (Holidays of the Romanians: An ethnographic study), vol. 2, ed. Iordan Datcu (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române 1994), 131.
13. In the Orthodox Christian calendar, February 2 is a “red-letter day,” the Feast of the Welcoming of the Lord (Stretenie, in Slavic).
14. Marian, *Sărbătorile la români*, 1:176.
15. *Ibid.*, 2:315.
16. See Chapter One, the section “Filthy, Stinking Jew” and Chapter Four, the section “The Legend of the Wandering Jew.”
17. B. P. Hasdeu, *Cuvențe den bătrâni: Cărțile poporane ale românilor în secolul XVI* (Sayings from the old: The popular books of the Romanians in the sixteenth century), vol. 2, ed. and annotated by G. Mihăilă (Bucharest: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1984), 256–58.
18. Claudine Fabré-Vassas, *La bête singulière: Les juifs, les chrétiens et le cochon* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 168.
19. Nicolae Cartoian, *Cărțile populare în literatura română* (Popular books in Romanian literature), vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1974), 117.
20. *Ibid.*, 116–17.
21. Library of the Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Ms. 701.
22. Carmichael, *Satanizing of the Jews*, 46.
23. Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 166.
24. Viorica S. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip: Schiță de istorie culturală* (The stereotype Jew: A sketch of cultural history) (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1996), 195.
25. Yirmiyahu Yovel, *Hegel, Nietzsche și evreii: O enigmă întunecată* (Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Jews) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2000), 286.
26. “Nostra Aetate,” from “Documents of Vatican Council II,” *Secolul 20* (Bucharest), nos. 1–3 (1996): 43.
27. *România Mare*, no. 356 (1997).
28. *Ibid.*, no. 191 (1994).
29. *Azi*, 28 Apr. 2000.
30. *România Mare*, no. 444 (1999); see George Voicu, *Zei răi: Cultura conspiraționistă în România postcomunistă* (The evil gods: Conspirative culture in post-Communist Romania) (Bucharest: Polirom, 2000), 224.
31. *România Mare*, no. 302 (1996).
32. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (1923); see Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds., *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 693.

33. Leon Volovici, “Antisemitismul și ‘sindromul postcomunist’” (Antisemitism and the post-Communist syndrome], interview by Andrei Oișteanu, 22, no.1 (4–8 Jan. 2001): 10–12.

34. Bernard Wasserstein, *Vanishing Diaspora: The Jews in Europe since 1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 268.

35. Ferenc Erös and Zoltan Fabian, “Ideologie și atitudini” (Ideology and attitudes), *Sfera politică* (Bucharest), no. 32 (Oct. 1995): 22–27.

36. Renae Cohen and Jennifer L. Golub, *Attitudes toward Jews in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia: A Comparative Survey* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1991), 1; András Kovács, *Antisemitic Prejudices in Contemporary Hungary* (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, ACTA series, no. 16, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999).

37. Bishop Melchisedec, *Viața și scrierile lui Grigore Țamblac* (The life and writings of Grigore Țamblac) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1884), 96.

38. I believe that Grigore Țamblac’s text—set down in the first years of the fifteenth century—may be considered the oldest record of a stable Jewish community (*iudeiskaia jiliscia*) in the Romanian area, in the first decades of the fourteenth century. Researchers commonly set its first appearance around the middle of the sixteenth century; see Victor Eskenasy, ed., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Documentation Center of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania, 1986), xxiv, 30–31; Victor Neumann, *Istoria evreilor din România: Studii documentare și teoretice* (The history of the Jews of Romania: Documentary and theoretical studies) (Timișoara: Amarcord, 1996), 23–25, 59.

39. Varlaam, *Cazania sau cartea de învățătură 1643* (Cazania or the book of learning 1643) (Bucharest: Fundația Regală pentru Literatură și Artă, 1943), 456–57.

40. Picu Pătruț, *Miniaturi și poezie* (Miniatures and poetry) (Bucharest, 1985), 124. As the text in this volume was censored, I have completed the missing lines resorting to Picu Pătruț’s manuscript, *Stihos adecă Viers* (Verse), 729–35, which is in the possession of Mr. Mihai Ghibu, to whom I hereby express my gratitude.

41. Simeon Florea Marian, *Sântul Ioan cel Nou de la Suceava: Schiță istorică* (St. John the New of Suceava: A historical outline) (Bucharest: Carol Göbl, 1895); Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile de vară la români: Studiu etnografic* (Summer holidays of the Romanians: An ethnographic study) (Bucharest: Socec, 1911).

42. Marian, *Sântul Ioan cel Nou*, 128.

43. Idem, *Sărbătorile la români*, 2:132.

44. Varlaam, *Cazania*, 76.

45. Marian, *Sărbătorile la români*, 1:170.

46. Ibid., 2:300.
47. Ibid., 2:298.
48. A. Fochi, *Datini și eresuri populare de la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea: Răspunsurile la chestionarele lui Nicolae Densușianu* (Folk customs and superstitions at the end of the nineteenth century: The replies to Nicolae Densușianu's questionnaires) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1976), 283.
49. Marian, *Sărbătorile la români*, 1:168; 2:316.
50. Gabriel Strempel, ed., *Cronograf*, transl. from Greek by Patrasco Danovici, with an introductory study by Paul Cernovodeanu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1998), 173.
51. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 152.
52. Dionisie of Furna, *Carte de pictură* (Book of icon patterns); introductory study by Victor Ieronim Stoichiță, foreword by Vasile Drăguț (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1979), 178.
53. Alifa Saadya, "Convert or Desecrator? The Image of the Jew in the 'Jephonias Episode' in Icons of the Dormition," in *SICSA Annual Report, 1999* (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999), 23–26.
54. *Evangelii apocrife* (Apocryphal evangels), transl., introductory study, notes, and commentaries by Cristian Bădiliță (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1996), 245–61.
55. Simeon Florea Marian, *Minunile Maicii Domnului: Studiu folkloristic* (The miracles of Virgin Mary: Folkloristic study) (Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1904), 306–308.
56. Library of the Romanian Academy, Ms. 3806.
57. Alexandru Ciorănescu, "Întrebari și Raspunsuri" (Questions and answers), in idem, *Cercetări Literare* (Literary research), vol. 1 (Bucharest, 1934), 70.
58. Marian, *Minunile Maicii Domnului*, 306.
59. Doru Radosav, *Sentimentul religios la români: O perspectivă istorică (sec. XVII–XX)* (Religious sentiment among the Romanians: A historical perspective [17th–20th centuries]) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1997), 146.
60. Dumitru Hîncu, "Unele particularități ale evreilor din provinciile integrate: Evreii bucovineni" (Some particularities of the Jews in integrated provinces: The Jews of Bukovina), in *Contribuția evreilor din România la cultură și civilizație* (The Romanian Jews' contribution to culture and civilization), eds. Nicolae Cajal and Hary Kuller (Bucharest: Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania, 1996), 94.
61. Mihail Gheorghiadă Obedenaru, *La religion chez les peuples latins: La religiosité des Roumains* (Montpellier, 1879); see Dumitru Drăghicescu, *Din psihologia poporului român* (From the psychology of the Romanian people), ed. and annotated by Elisabeta Simion (1907; Bucharest: Albatros, 1996), 281.

62. Moses Gaster, *Literatura populară română* (Romanian folk literature), (Bucharest: Minerva, 1983), 281–87; Cartoian, *Cărțile populare*, 2:141–59; Dumitru Stănescu, *Minunile Maicei Domnului* (The miracles of the Mother of God) (Bucharest: Ancora, 1925); Ioan Petru Culianu and C. Culianu, “Interferences between Iconography and Folklore in Romania,” *Visible Religion* 2 (1983): 44–46.

63. Cartoian, *Cărțile populare*, 2:153.

64. Culianu and Culianu, “Interferences between Iconography and Folklore in Romania,” figs. 7–11.

65. Andrei Paleolog, *Pictura exterioară din Țara Românească* (Exterior painting in Walachia) (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1984), 100.

66. Dionisie of Furna, *Carte de pictură*, 179.

67. Elisabeth Revel-Neher, *The Image of the Jew in Byzantine Art* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1992), 81–83, 109.

68. Georges Duby, *Anul 1000* (The year 1000) (Iași: Polirom, 1996), 153.

69. Carlo Ginzburg, *Istorie nocturnă: O interpretare a Sabatului* (Iași: Polirom, 1996), 49, 76. First published as *Storia notturna: Una decifrazione del sabba* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1989); Viviana Paques, *Les sciences occultes d'après les documents littéraires italiens du XVIe siècle* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1971), 192.

70. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip*, 146, 160; Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 152; H. H. Ben-Sasson, ed., *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 483; Eli Barnavi and Miriam Eliav-Feldon, eds., *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992), 158.

71. Elie Wiesel, *All Rivers Run to the Sea: Memoirs* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1995), 19.

72. Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele poporului român, adunate și așezate în ordine mitologică* (The customs and beliefs of the Romanian people, in mythological order), vol. 1 (Chernovtsy, 1903; Iași: Polirom, 1998), 287.

73. D. Hîncu, ed., *Mărturii: “Chestiunea evreiască”* (Testimonies: “The Jewish problem”) (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 127. The image of the Jew who destroys or profanes the “insignia” of Christianity has not completely disappeared from the collective imagination. In the modern age, it also reappears in *belles lettres*. In 1935, for instance, Romanian author Victor Papilian published a short story, “Ura” (Hatred) in *Gîndirea* (a magazine edited by Nichifor Crainic). The protagonist of the story, the Jew Goldenfun Zanwel, is obsessed with the idea of mastering the world by means of a universal system based on the theories of Marx, Freud, and Einstein. He attempts to gather together all the crosses in the universe in order to set them on fire. See Leon

Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991), 175.

74. Dan Horia Mazilu, *Noi despre ceilalți: Fals tratat de imagologie* (We about the others: False treaty of imagology) (Iași, 1999), 99; A. D. Xenopol, *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană* (The history of the Romanians of Dacia Trajana), 4th ed., vol. 3 (Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopaedic Pub. House, 1988), 52.

75. Antoaneta Olteanu, *Școala de solomonie: Divinație și vrăjitorie în context comparat* (The school of solomonars: Divination and witchcraft in a comparative context) (Bucharest: Paideia, 1999), 178.

76. Revel-Neher, *Image of the Jew*, 109.

77. Tit Simedrea, *Icoana junghiată de la Argeș* (The stabbed icon from Arges Monastery) (Sibiu, 1940), 1–2.

78. *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul său Theodosie* (The teachings of Neagoe Basarab for his son Theodosius) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1971), 242–43.

79. Stolnicul Constantin Cantacuzino, *Istoria Țării Românești: Cronicari munteni* (The history of Walachia: Walachian chroniclers), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1984), 102.

80. Radu Popescu, *Istoriile domnilor Țării Românești: Cronicari munteni* (The histories of the Rulers of Walachia: Walachian chroniclers), vol. 2 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1984), 44.

81. Anon., *Călători străini despre Țările Române* (Foreign travelers on the Romanian principalities), vol. 6 (Bucharest: Scientific Pub. House, 1976), 168.

82. Simedrea, *Icoana junghiată*, 8.

83. Revel-Neher, *Image of the Jew*, 36.

84. *Ibid.*, 35.

85. *Ibid.* 13.

86. *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, 6:168.

87. Costion Nicolescu, ed., *Sf. Mare Mucenic Gheorghe* (The great saint George) (Bucharest, 1999), 15.

88. Idem, *Neamul românesc în Bucovina* (The Romanian nation in Bukovina) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1905), 29, 48.

89. *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, 6:168.

90. Radu Rosetti, *Amintiri: Ce-am auzit de la alții* (Memories: What I heard from others), ed. Mircea Angheliescu (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1996), 111.

91. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Basarabia*, 172–73.

92. Jacques de Voragine, *Legenda de aur (Legenda Aurea)*, vol. 1, ed. Livia Titieni (Cluj: Dacia, 1998), 40.

93. Léon Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului* (The history of antisemitism), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 59.

94. Thomas Wright, ed., *Miracle de Saint Nicolas et d'un juif*, in *Early Mysteries, and Other Latin Poems of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (London: Nichols and Sons, 1838).

95. Tudor Pamfile, *Sărbătorile de toamnă* (Autumn holidays) (Bucharest, 1914), 159–70.

96. Artur Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții ale poporului român* (Beliefs and superstitions of the Romanian people), ed. Iordan Datcu (First ed.: Bucharest: Socec, 1915; Bucharest: Grai și Suflet 1995), 110, 148 respectively.

97. Ginzburg, *Istorie nocturnă*, 76–77.

98. Moses Gaster, *Memorii (fragmente). Corespondență* (Memoirs [fragments]. Correspondence), ed. Victor Eskenasy (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 45.

99. Shmuel Almog, *Nationalism and Antisemitism in Modern Europe 1815–1945* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1990), 60.

100. See Posidonius and Josephus Flavius, *Contra Apione*.

101. Fabré-Vassas, *La bête singulière*, 149ff.; Delumeau, *Frica în Occident*, 2:166ff.; Alan Dundes, ed., *The Blood Libel Legend: A Casebook in Anti-Semitic Folklore* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 101ff.

102. Josy Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor* (A history of the Jews) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1993), 213; Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 1:64.

103. Kenneth R. Stow, *Alienated Minority: The Jews of Medieval Latin Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 238.

104. Dundes, *Blood Libel Legend*, 189.

105. Ibid., 343; Herta Herzog, *The Jews as “Others”: On Communicative Aspects of Antisemitism: A Pilot Study in Austria*, ACTA series, no. 4 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1994), 12.

106. Eliav-Feldon, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, 119; Martin Gilbert, *Jewish History Atlas* (Jerusalem: Steimatsky, 1992), 57.

107. Gilbert, *Jewish History Atlas*, 56–57; Simon Dubnow, *Istoria hasidismului*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 120–27. German edition: *Geschichte des Chasidismus* (Berlin, 1931).

108. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism*, 25.

109. See the magazine *Baricada*, 14 Nov. and 19 Dec. 1995, as well as Michael Shafir’s reply, “Antisemitism și fariseism” (Antisemitism and Pharisaism), 22, no. 3 (17–23 Jan. 1996): 4–5.

110. Herzog, *Jews as "Others,"* 12; János Pelle, *Az utolsó vérvádak: Az etnikai gyűlölet és a politikai manipuláció kelet-európai történetéből* (The last ritual murder accusations: Racial hatred and political manipulation in the history of eastern Europe) (Budapest, 1996); Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 56–57, 107–30.

111. Pelle, *Az utolsó vérvádak*.

112. See, e.g., Dundes, *Blood Libel Legend*.

113. Michael Shafir, "Anti-Semitism in the Postcommunist Era," in *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry*, ed. Randolph L. Braham (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 333–86.

114. Mihai Spielmann, ed., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 2, part 1 (Bucharest: Historical Center, Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania, 1988), 25.

115. Lya Benjamin, Mihai Spielmann, and S. Stanciu, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews of Romania), vol. 2, part 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1990), 355.

116. Ladislau Gyémánt, "The Limits of the Tolerance in Transylvania during the First Half of the 19th Century: The Jewish Case," in *The Jews in the Romanian History: Papers from the International Symposium, Bucharest, September 30–October 4, 1996*, ed. Ion Stanciu (Bucharest: Silex, 1999), 70–78; Ladislau Gyémánt and Lya Benjamin, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews in Romania), vol. 3, part 1, (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 564, 578, 601; idem, eds., *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România* (Sources and testimonies concerning the Jews in Romania), vol. 3, part 2 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1999), 426.

117. Neumann, *Istoria evreilor din România*, 147.

118. Wiesel, *All Rivers Run to the Sea*, 18–19.

119. Nicolae Paulescu, *Spitalul, Coranul, Talmudul, Cahalul, Francmasoneria* (The Hospital, the Quran, the Talmud, the Kahal, and Freemasonry) (First edition Bucharest, 1913; Bucharest: Antet XX Press, 2001), 44.

120. Gyémánt, "Limits of Tolerance."

121. Virgil Ciobanu, "*Omorul ritual*" *din punct de vedere istoric și medical* ("Ritual murder" from a historical and medical point of view) (Bucharest, 1924).

122. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 83.

123. Ibid., 565.

124. Pelle, *Az utolsó vérvádak*.

125. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 2, 355.

126. Gyémánt, "Limits of Tolerance": 76.

127. *Mărturii*, 24–26.

128. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 2, 523.
129. Pompiliu Eliade, *Influența franceză asupra spiritului public în România: Originile. Studiu asupra stării societății românești în vremea domniilor fanariote* (Bucharest: Univers, 1982), 104. First published as *De l'influence française sur l'esprit public en Roumanie* (Paris, 1898).
130. Library of the Romanian Academy, Ms. no. 1155.
131. Violeta Barbu, "The Polemic Theology during the Second Half of the 18th Century: A Religious Dimension of the Difference," in *The Jews in Romanian History: Papers from the International Symposium, Bucharest, September 30–October 4, 1996*, ed. Ion Stanciu (Bucharest, 1999), 19–26.
132. Ibid.
133. Harry Kuller, ed., *O istorie a evreilor din România în date* (A chronological history of Romanian Jewry), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 170; Adolphe Stern, *Din viața unui evreu-român* (From the life of a Romanian Jew), ed. Țicu Goldstein (1915; Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 20.
134. Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc* (The history of Romanian commerce), vol. 2 (Bucharest 1925), 105; *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 284–88.
135. Moses Schwarzfeld, "Excursiuni critice asupra istoriei evreilor în România" (Critical enquiries on the history of the Jews in Romania), *Analele Societății Istorice "Iuliu Barasch"* (Annals of the Historical Society "Iuliu Barasch") 2 (1888): 116.
136. Rosetti, *Amintiri*, 42.
137. Barbu, "Polemic Theology."
138. Ibid.; *Mărturii*, 44, 63; *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 307.
139. Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919): De la excludere la emancipare* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1996), 44–45, 63, 104–105, 330–32. First published as *Les Juifs en Roumanie (1866–1919): De l'exclusion à l'émancipation* (Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1978).
140. Nicolae Iorga, *Problema evreiască la Cameră (o interpelare), cu o introducere de A. C. Cuza și Note despre vechimea evreilor în țară* (The Jewish question in the Chamber [an Appeal], with an introduction by A. C. Cuza and notes on the ancient residence of Jews in Romania) (Vălenii-de-Munte: Typ. "Neamul românesc," 1910), 47.
141. *Mărturii*, 43–47.
142. Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, *Jew in the Modern World*, 409.
143. Almog, *Nationalism and Antisemitism in Modern Europe*, 56–61.
144. Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World*, 410–11.

145. Author and reporter F. Brunea-Fox adopted the title *The City of Slaughter* when he wrote a book on the pogrom perpetrated by the legionnaires in Bucharest in January 1941; see F. Brunea-Fox, *Orașul măcelului: Jurnalul rebeliunii și crimelor legionare* (The city of slaughter: The diary of the legionary rebellion and murders), with a preface by A. L. Zissu (Bucharest, 1944).

146. Béatrice Philippe, *Les Juifs à Paris à la Belle Époque* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1992), 25.

147. Andrei Oișteanu, “Evreii, între resemnare și răzvrățire” (The Jews between resignation and rebellion), 22, no. 21 (3–9 June 1993): 4; Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor*, 322; Max I. Dimont, *Jews, God and History* (New York: New American Library, 1962), 383–85.

148. Carol Iancu, *Emanciparea evreilor din România (1913–1919)* (The emancipation of the Jews of Romania [1913–1919]), translated by Țicu Goldstein (Bucharest: Hasefer, 1998), 113.

149. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 52–54.

150. Lit.: “wise man,” a sage and erudite scholar of Jewish Law.

151. See Ion Neculce, *Letopiseșul Țării Moldovei* (The chronicle of the country of Moldavia) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1980) 265; *Cronica anonimă a Moldovei* (The anonymous chronicle of Moldavia) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1975), 102; and especially *Cronica Ghiculeștilor* (The chronicle of the Ghica) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 1965), 238–45; see also *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 52–54.

152. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 1, 54.

153. The barrel with nails is an ancient instrument of torture, not necessarily associated with accusations of infanticide leveled against the Jews. A Hungarian legend has it that, at the beginning of the eleventh century, the pagans killed the first Christian bishop of the Hungarians, Gellért, by putting him in such a barrel and rolling him into the Danube from the top of the mountain (today Mount Gellért in Budapest). A Gypsy knave was killed in a similar manner in a Romanian tale collected in Banat in the early nineteenth century; see Lazăr Șăineanu, *Basmele române* (Romanian fairy tales) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1978), 226.

154. Tudor Pamfile, *Văzduhul* (The air) (Bucharest, 1913), 113.

155. Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Studii în folclor* (Studies in folklore), vol. 2 (Chernovtsy: Gutenberg Press, 1912), 172.

156. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 129.

157. Robert D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 236.

158. Tudor Pamfile, *Povestea lumii de demult, după credințele poporului român* (The story of the world of yore, according to the beliefs of the Romanian people), (Bucharest: Socec, 1913), 115–16; Ion-Aurel Candrea, *Iarba fiarelor: Studii de folklor* (The herb that opens locks. Studies in folklore) (Bucharest: Cultura Națională, 1928), 70–72; Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții* (n. 96 above), 168.

159. Alecu Russo, *Scrieri* (Writings), ed. Petre V. Hanes (Bucharest: Academia Romana, 1908), 101.

160. Mihai Eminescu, *Literatura populară* (Popular literature), annotated by D. Murărașu, 2d ed. (Craiova: Scrisul Românesc, [1941]), 452.

161. Marian, *Sărbătorile la români*, 265–68; Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 241–42.

162. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 14.

163. Veronika Görög-Karady, “The Dialectics of Stereotypes and Commonplaces in Folklore: The Jewish Figure in the Hungarian Version of Two Fairy Tales” (unpubl.). Traditionally, in central and eastern Europe those accused of such abominable deeds were the Gypsies. In Hungary in 1782, two hundred Gypsies were hung after being accused of having stolen and eaten children, reported Mihail Kogălniceanu in 1837, in his *Schiță asupra istoriei, moravurilor și limbii Țiganilor* (Sketch on the history, the mores, and the language of Gypsies; appeared in French as *Esquisse sur l’histoire, les mœurs et la langue des Cigains*) (Berlin: Behr, 1837).

164. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 56.

165. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 63.

166. Papahagi, *Grai, folklor, etnografie*, 323.

167. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 17–18.

168. Vasile Bogrea, *Pagini istorico-filologice* (Historical and philological pages) (Cluj: Dacia, 1971), 486.

169. *The Code [Pravila] of Govora*, 1640; see Elias Schwarzfeld, “Evreii în legislația lui Matei Basarab al Munteniei” (The Jews in the legislation of Matei Basarab of Walachia), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 17 (1895–1896): 77–104.

170. “Judenordnung” (Timișoara, 1776); the ordinance updated regulations from 1724 and 1772; see *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 2, 161.

171. Oișteanu, *Mythos and Logos*, 229–45.

172. Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 251.

173. *O istorie a evreilor din România* 1:219.

174. S. Stanciu, Lya Benjamin et al., eds., *Martiriul evreilor din Romania, 1940–1944: Documente și Marturii* (The martyrdom of the Jews in Romania, 1940–1944: Documents and testimonies), foreword by Moses Rosen, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Hasefer,

1991), 242; Jean Ancel, *Contribuții la istoria României: Problema evreiască (1933–1944)* (Contributions to Romanian history: The Jewish problem, 1933–1944), vol. 1, transl. from the Hebrew by Carol Bines (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001), 150.

175. Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866–1919)*, 270.

176. Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism*, 25.

177. Ciobanu, “*Omorul ritual*,” 100.

178. Shama Salzberger, *Adevăruri despre Talmud și Judaism: Documente și lămuriri* (The truth about the Talmud and Judaism: Documents and explanations) (1923; Bucharest 1938); Nicolae C. Paulescu, *Fiziologia filozofică: Talmudul, Cahalul, Franc-Masoneria* (Bucharest, 1913). French edition: *Physiologie philosophique* (Paris, 1914).

179. Mihail Sebastian, *De două mii de ani...* (For two thousand years...), with a preface by Nae Ionescu; idem, *Cum am devenit huligan* (How I became a hooligan), (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1990), 16, 24 respectively.

180. Ibid., 62.

181. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 3, part 1, 403.

182. Wasserstein, *Vanishing Diaspora*, 24–26.

183. Pelle, *Az utolsó vérévadak*.

184. *Világ*, 12 May 1946.

185. Pelle, *Az utolsó vérévadak*.

186. Chimen Abramsky, quoted in Wasserstein, *Vanishing Diaspora*, 56.

187. Dundes, *Blood Libel Legend*, 234.

188. Elie Wiesel, *The Jews of Silence* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966).

189. Herzog, *The Jews as “Others,”* 12.

190. Peter Vasicek, “The Leopold Hilsner Affair of 1889 and Its Echoes in the Czech Republic and Austria 1999–2000,” in SICSA, *Annual Report 2000* (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2000), 10–15.

191. Pelle, *Az utolsó vérévadak*.

192. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 56–57, 107–30.

193. Shafir, “Anti-Semitism in the Postcommunist Era,” 349.

194. The image of the Jew who steals Christian children to use them—dead or alive—for non-ritual purposes is not a singular one. In 1968 in Orleans there were riots against Jewish merchants suspected of kidnapping young French women and selling them to bawdy houses in the Near East.

195. *Baricada*, 14 Nov. and 19 Dec. 1995, as well as Michael Shafir’s reply “Antisemitism și fariseism.”

196. *Baricada*, 14 Nov. 1995.

197. *România Mare*, no. 387 (1997); see also George Voicu, "Teme antisemite în discursul public" (Antisemitic themes in the public discourse), parts 1–7, *Sfera politicii* (Bucharest), nos. 80–87 (2000–2001): part 6, 47.

198. In this one respect there exists a certain similitude and synchronism between the countries of central and eastern Europe and the Islamic countries in the Near East. Following the anti-Jewish campaign (consisting of accusations of ritual infanticide) mounted in the Communist countries of Europe in the years 1945–1963, a similar campaign was begun in Arab states: Egypt (1967, 1971, 1973, 1978); Lebanon (1971); Iraq (1971), and more. See *Blood Libel Legend*, 234. In 1993–1996, in a fashion that had much in common with what was happening at that very time in Romania, allegations were made in the Egyptian press according to which Jews in Egypt, together with Israelis, were plotting to contaminate Egyptians with AIDS and other "terminal diseases," that the State of Israel had been using organs for implants which had been taken from Egyptian prisoners of war, or that Jewish doctors in Egypt had been persuading Arab women to terminate their pregnancy, with the intention of curbing the demographic growth of the country, and more of the kind. See Rivka Yadlin, "Anti-Jewish Imagery in the Contemporary Arab-Muslim World," in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999), 314–15. Recently, the government paper of Saudi Arabia, *Al-Riyadh*, no. 354 (13 Mar. 2002), claimed that nowadays the "Jews Use Teenagers' Blood for 'Purim' Pastries." Obviously, the human blood used must come from a non-Jewish youth (Christian or Muslim).

199. Ion Coja, *Marele manipulator și asasinarea lui Culianu, Ceaușescu, Iorga* (The great manipulator and the assassinations of Culianu, Ceaușescu and Iorga) (Bucharest: Miracol, 1999).

200. Cătălin L. Cernăianu, *Recurs Eminescu: Suprimarea gazetarului* (Appeal for Eminescu: Suppressing the journalist) (Bucharest: Semnele Timpului, 2000).

201. Traian Romanescu, *Marea conspirație evreiască* (Greater Jewish conspiracies) (Bucharest: Logos, 1997). Extensive excerpts from this book were republished in *România Mare*, no. 374 (12 Sept. 1997). There are some hints which point to the true author of the book being Radu Theodoru, see Voicu, "Teme antisemite în discursul public," 6:48.

202. Ion Taloș, *Meșterul Manole* (The Master Manole) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1975), 112 ff.

203. Mihail Sholokhov, *Donul liniștit* (The silent Don), transl. by Cezar Petrescu, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Univers, 1986), 7–10.

204. Ernest Bernea, *Cadre ale gândirii populare românești: Contribuții la reprezentarea spațiului, timpului și cauzalității* (Frames of Romanian folk mentality: Contributions to the representation of space, time, and causality) (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1985), 42–43.

205. Adrian Fochi, *Valori ale culturii populare românești* (Values of Romanian folk culture), edited by Rodica Fochi, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1987), 427, 442.

206. Lazăr Șăineanu, *Studii folclorice* (Folkloric studies) (Bucharest, 1896), 50.

207. Tiberiu Morariu, *Cîteva contribuții la oieritul evreilor maramureșeni* (Some contributions to the sheep-breeding of the Jews of Maramureș) (Cluj, 1930); *Cața, Image of the Jew*, 186.

208. *Cuvinte scumpe: Taclale, povestiri și legende românești* (Dear words: Romanian prattle, lore, and legends), collected by Dumitru Furtună (Bucharest: Romanian Academy and Socec, 1914), 33.

209. Mircea Eliade, *Comentarii la Legenda Meșterului Manole* (Comments on the legend of Master Manole) (Bucharest: Publicom, 1943), 31.

210. Ion Mușlea and Ov. Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului: Din răspunsurile la chestionarele lui B. P. Hasdeu* (Folklore typology: From the answers to B. P. Hasdeu's questionnaires) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1970), 229.

211. Gh. F. Ciușanu, *Superstițiile poporului român* (The superstitions of the Romanians) (Bucharest: Socec, 1914), 180–81.

212. Ovidiu Papadima, *Literatură populară română* (Romanian folk literature) (Bucharest: Editura pentru Literatură, 1968), 613–15.

213. Pelle, *Az utolsó vérvádak*.

214. Ciușanu, *Superstițiile poporului român*, 40.

215. Paul-Henri Stahl, *Histoire de la décapitation* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1986), 83, 87.

216. Fochi, *Valori ale culturii populare românești*, 1:424.

217. Oișteanu, *Mythos and Logos*, 89–91.

218. For examples and comments, see *ibid.*, 79ff.

219. n German, *Meteorologie populară* (Folk meteorology) (Blaj, 1928), 164.

220. Emilia Comișel, *Folclorul copiilor* (Children's folklore) (Bucharest: Editura Muzicală, 1982), 126; Ion Ghinoiu, *Obiceiuri populare de peste an. Dicționar* (Folk customs over the year) (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1997), 235.

221. Tudor Pamfile, *Jocuri de copii* (Children's games), vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1907), 105.

222. Hasdeu, *Cuvente den bătrâni*, 37.

223. Bogrea, *Pagini istorico-filologice*, 266; I. C. Chițimia, *Foclorul românesc în perspectivă comparată* (Romanian folklore from a comparative perspective) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1971), 295.

224. Tudor Pamfile, *Văzduhul, după credințele poporului român* (The atmosphere, according to Romanian folk beliefs) (Bucharest: Socec, 1916), 151.

225. *Ibid.*, 113.

226. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 274.

227. See in greater detail in Chapter Four, the section: “The Jew as Warlock and Rainmaker.”

228. Wiesel, *All Rivers Run to the Sea*, 23.

229. Wilhelm Schwarzfeld, “Acte de netoleranță” (Deeds of intolerance), *Analele Societății istorice “Iuliu Barasch”* 3 (1889): 194.

230. *Ibid.*, 193–94.

231. Wiesel, *All Rivers Run to the Sea*, 19.

232. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 66.

233. Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 59.

234. Delumeau, *Frica în Occident*, 147.

235. Stow, *Alienated Minority*, 240.

236. *Gazeta de Transilvania* (Transylvanian gazette) no. 5 (1847); see *Mărturii*, 24–25; see also Elias Schwarzfeld, *Din istoria evreilor: Împopularea, reîmpopularea și întemeierea târgurilor și a târgușoarelor în Moldova* (From the history of the Jews in Moldavia) (Bucharest, 1914), 52–54.

237. *Mărturii*, 24.

238. Florea Ioncioaia, “Veneticul, păgînul și apostatul: Reprezentarea străinului în Principatele române (secolele XVIII–XIX)” (The stranger, the pagan and the apostate: Representation of the stranger in the Romanian Principalities), in *Identitate/Alteritate în spațiul cultural românesc* (Identity/Alterity in the Romanian cultural space), ed. Al. Zub (Jassy: Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza, 1996), 175.

239. Andrei Corbea, *Paul Celan și “meridianul” său: Repere vechi și noi pe un atlas central-european* (Paul Celan and his “Meridian”: Old and new signs on a central European atlas) (Iași: Polirom, 1998), 95.

240. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, vol. 2, part 2, 96ff.

241. Curzio Malaparte, *Kaputt*, transl. and afterword by Eugen Uricaru (1944; Bucharest: Univers, 1999), 103.

242. Ilya Ehrenburg, *Julio Jurenito* (Bucharest: Universal Literature Publishing, 1968), 135.

243. A. S. Pushkin, *Opere complete* (Complete works), vol. 4 (Moscow: Pravda, 1954).

244. Sholem Aleichem, *Opere alese* (Selected works), vol. 4 (Bucharest: Editura pentru Literatură Universală, 1968), 176.

245. Mihail Sadoveanu, *Opere* (Works), vol. 6, ed. Cornel Simionescu (Bucharest: Minerva, 1991), 277.

246. Constantinescu, *Evreul stereotip*, 51; Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 163 and illustrations 15, 16, and 22.

247. Pamfile, *Sărbătorile de toamnă*, 30.

248. Nicolae Suțu, *Memoriile Principelui Nicolae Suțu, mare logofăt al Moldovei (1798–1871)* (Memoirs of Prince Nicolae Suțu, great logofăt of Moldavia), transl. from the French by Georgeta Penelea Filitti (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1997), 42–43.

249. Iorga, *Istoria comerțului românesc*, 2:150.

250. Elias Schwarzfeld, “Din istoria evreilor în România” (From the history of the Jews in Romania), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 19 (1897–1898): 47–48.

251. *Ibid.*, 49.

252. Andrew A. Bonar and Robert Murray McCheyne, *Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews from the Church of Scotland in 1839* (Edinburgh: William and Co., 1844), 375.

253. *Neue Preussische Kreuzzeitung*, no. 124 (1853); see Schwarzfeld, “Din istoria evreilor în România,” 54.

254. Papahagi, *Grai, folklor, etnografie*, 87.

255. Mușlea and Bîrlea, *Tipologia folclorului*, 527.

256. In *Porunca Vremii* (The summons of the time), quoted in Ruxandra Cesereanu, “Zavistia: Imaginarul lingvistic violent al extremei drepte românești” (Zavistia: The violent linguistic imagery of the Romanian extreme right wing), *Observatorul cultural*, no. 109 (26 Mar. 2002): 15–17.

257. See Gottfried Wagner, *Moștenirea Wagner: O autobiografie* (The Wagner heritage: An autobiography), transl. by Victor Eskenasy (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2001; German edition, Köln: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1997), 66.

258. Nae Ionescu, in the Preface to Sebastian, *De două mii de ani....*

259. Emil Cioran, *Schimbarea la față a României* (The transfiguration of Romania) (Bucharest: Vremea, 1936), 130.

260. Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, *Cioran, Eliade, Ionesco—L’oubli du fascisme: trois intellectuels roumains dans la tourmente du siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002), 444.

261. Emil Cioran, *Ispita de a exista* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), 58. First published as *La tentation d’exister* (Paris: Gallimard, 1956).

262. Ion Vianu, "Fragmente dintr-un jurnal de lectură" (Fragments of a reading diary), 22, no. 21 (21–27 May 2002): 16.

263. Harold B. Segal, *Stranger in Our Midst: Images of the Jews in Polish Literature* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), 254.

264. Ehrenburg, *Julio Jurenito*, 137.

265. Shulamit Volkov, "Exploring the Other: The Enlightenment's Search for the Boundaries of Humanity," in *Demonizing the Other: Antisemitism, Racism, and Xenophobia*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999), 148–67.

266. Eisenberg, *O istorie a evreilor*, 254.

267. *Mărturii*, 60.

268. Simon Epstein, "When the Demon Itself Complains of being Demonized," in *Demonizing the Other*, 236–43.

269. Cilibi Moise, *Vestitul in Țara Românească: Practica și apropourile* (Renowned in the Romanian Principalities: The practice and the allusions), ed. with an afterword by Țicu Goldstein (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2000), 136.

270. Liviu Rebreanu, *Jidanul* (1914), published in L. Rebreanu, *Opere*, vol. 11, ed. N. Gheran (Bucharest: Minerva, 1980), 731–32.

271. Benjamin Fundoianu, *Poezii* (Poems), transl. by Virgil Teodorescu (Bucharest: Editura pentru literatură, 1965), 276–79.

272. Michael Finkenthal, "Benjamin Fondane's Elective Affinities with English Literature," in *Euresis: Cahiers roumains d'études littéraires 1999–2000* (Bucharest: Univers, 1999–2000), 142–48.

273. Elena Sevastos, *Literatură populară* (Folk literature), vol. 1 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1990), 120. The poetic image does not vary from one version to another; it is only the stranger/foreigner who is different. In the folk ballad "Codreanu," collected by Vasile Alecsandri in the mid-nineteenth century, the stranger/foreigner in the tableau that we refer to is a Greek, yet "some singers," Alecsandri informs us in a footnote, "mention a Turk instead of a Greek"; see Vasile Alecsandri, *Poezii populare ale românilor* (Folk poetry of the Romanians) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1982), 110–12. It was by chance that the Walachians to the south of the Danube encountered by the Jewish traveler Benjamin of Tudela in the twelfth century exhibited precisely the opposite behavior: "they call the Jews their brethren, and when they met with them, though they rob them, they refrain from killing them as they kill the Greeks" (*The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, critical text, transl. and commentary by Marcus Nathan Adler [London: H. Frowde, 1907], 11).

274. Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinele și credințele*, 1:454.

275. *Cronici și povestiri românești versificate* (sec. XVI–XVIII) (Romanian chronicles and stories in verse [16th–18th centuries]), ed. Dan Simonescu, (Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1967), 134.

276. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 66.

277. Petru Caraman, *Descolindatul, în orientul și sud-estul Europei: Studiu de folclor comparat* (Negative caroling in eastern and southeastern Europe: A study of comparative folklore), ed. Ion H. Ciubotaru (Iași: “Al. I. Cuza” University Press, 1997), 46.

278. *Ibid.*, 51.

279. Gorovei, *Credinți și superstiții*, 79.

280. *Izvoare și mărturii referitoare la evreii din România*, 1:65.

281. Poliakov, *Istoria antisemitismului*, 1:168.

282. Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei* (Description of Moldavia) (Bucharest: Minerva, 1981), 210.

283. Iuliu Barasch, “Evreii în Cracovia, Galiția, Bukovina, Moldova și Valachia: Impresii de călătorie din anii 1841–1842” (The Jews of Cracow, Galicia, Bukovina, Moldavia, and Walachia: Impressions of a Journey in the Years 1841–1842), *Anuarul pentru israeliți* 16 (1894). This mentality survived in the rural area until much later, into the twentieth century: “Oh, well, [it does not matter that they are killed,] they’re just Jews” (Almog, *Nationalism and Antisemitism in Modern Europe*, 124). Among others, Romanian writer Ion Pas depicted this deprecatory bias in his short story “Binder the Gravedigger” published in 1927: “He is a Jew and it’s no sin [if he is killed],” says Old Radu, a gravedigger in a borough in northern Moldavia. Evidently, “Old Radu was an antisemite,” the author said, for he “assured people of the fact that the Jews feed themselves on Christian blood and that they lie in the grave face down [like the ghosts]” (*Mărturii*, 150).

284. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 63; Cała, *Image of the Jew*, 175.

285. Schwarzfeld, *Evreii în literatura populară română*, 70.

286. Iorga, *Neamul românesc în Basarabia*, 16.

287. Sorin Alexandrescu, *Paradoxul român* (The Romanian paradox) (Bucharest: Univers, 1998), 222.

Index

Achelini, Alessandro, 41
Aderca, Felix, 22, 23, 44, 65, 149,
198, 234, 236, 252, 253, 259,
264, 265
Aeneas of Gaza, 427
Ahad Ha-Am; *see* Ginzberg, Așer,
196
Ahasverus (Xerxes I), 340
Alecsandri, Vasile, 11, 27, 55, 72,
155, 166, 184, 194, 233, 241,
242, 243, 244, 318
Aleichem, Sholem [pseud. Solo-
mon Rabinovitz], 91, 93, 95,
159, 170, 260, 433
Alexander I, Tsar, 41, 201
Alexander II, Tsar, 51, 202
Alexander III, Tsar, 202
Alexander the Elder, 248
Alexander the Righteous, 385
Alexandrescu, Sorin, 441
Alexandru, Tiberiu, 9, 14
Alfonso VIII, King of Castile, 93
al-Mutawakkil, Caliph, 101
Ancel, Jean, 322
Angeli, Moritz Edler von, 95
Andreas (Anderl) von Rinn, 403
Andrew III, King of Hungary, 103
Antim Ivireanul, 311
Antonescu, Ion, 13, 57, 67, 69, 99,
112, 148, 205, 250, 253, 322,
426

Antonescu, Mihai, 17, 322
Antoni, Abp. of Novgorod, 397
Arendt, Hannah, 7, 263
Arghezi, Tudor, 28, 71, 72, 167
Aronhauser, Herman, 254
Asachi, Gheorghe, 107, 407
Auschnitt, Max, 261

B

Babel, Isaac, 46
Babeș, Victor, 77, 405
Bacalbașa, Constantin, 255
Baican, E., 267
Balzac, Honoré de, 96, 166
Bandinus, Marcus, 245
Barac, Ioan, 332
Barasch, Iuliu (Iehuda), 1, 2, 49,
71, 74, 94, 97, 106, 107, 157,
183, 194, 198, 245, 258, 440
Barbu, Daniel, 141, 175
Barbu, Violeta, 410
Bardili, J. W., 109
Bariț, George, 332
Barrès, Maurice, 41
Barsi, Niccolo, 90
Basil the Great, St., 379
Bassarabescu, I. A., 418
Bathory, Sigismund, 440
Beck, M., 418
Beilis, Mendel, 404, 412
Beke, Paul, 20

Béla IV, 103
 Belfer, Noih; *see* Botezatu, Nicolae, 409
 Benedict, Pope, 393
 Benjamin of Tudela, 98
 Benjamin, Lya, 250
 Benkö, J., 105
 Berger, Károly, 423
 Berthelot, Henri Mathias, 240
 Bettauer, Hugo, 147
 Bialik, Haim Nahman, 413
 Blaga, Lucian, 7, 18
 Blank, Mauriciu, 438
 Block, Martin, 334
 Block, Walter, 163
 Blount, Henri, 248
 Bogatyrev, Pierre, 351
 Bogdan, Nicolae A., 170
 Bogrea, Vasile, 317, 430
 Boia, Lucian, 20
 Bolesław the Pious, 403
 Bolintineanu, Dimitrie, 73
 Bonciu, H., 64
 Bosch, Hieronymus, 331
 Bosnage, Jacques, 382, 383
 Botezatu, Nicolae, 409
 Brătescu, Gheorghe, 359
 Brătescu-Voinești, I. Al., 323
 Brătianu, Ion, 11, 18
 Brătianu, Ion I. C., 141, 145, 333, 426
 Breslauer, Karl, 147
 Brociner, Mauriciu, 250, 251
 Budai-Deleanu, Ioan, 247, 332

C

Cahana, Moritz, 62
 Cața, Alina, 63, 265, 266
 Caler, Leni, 40
 Călinescu, G., 55, 237, 253, 263, 339, 341
 Călinescu, Matei, 16, 41, 239
 Călugăru, Ion, 75
 Calvin, John, 334, 382
 Campi, Antonio Angelini di, 25
 Canetti, Elias, 28
 Canianu, Mihail; *see* Cahana, Moritz, 62
 Cantacuzino, Alexandru, 14, 177
 Cantemir, Dimitrie, 19, 20, 109, 139, 177, 245, 408, 440
 Caragea Vodă, 89, 198
 Caragiale, Ion Luca, 91, 142, 185, 188, 238, 258
 Caragiale, Mateiu, 142
 Caraman, Petru, 29, 242, 246, 440
 Carmen Sylva; *see* Elizabeth, Queen of Romania, 79
 Carol I, King of Romania, 426
 Carol II, King of Romania, 65, 90, 261
 Carp, Horia, 252, 253, 260
 Carp, P. P., 139, 159, 160, 438
 Carra, Jean-Louis, 267
 Cărtărescu, Mircea, 87
 Cartojan, Nicolae, 315, 385, 392
 Cașcaval, Zalman, 200
 Ceaușescu, Nicolae, 25, 29, 426
 Celan, Paul, 335, 369
 Celebi, Evlia, 20
 Cerri, Urbano, 25
 Cesereanu, Ruxandra, 43
 Chagall, Marc, 193
 Chamberlain, Houston Stewart, 68, 289, 418, 437
 Charles XII, King of Sweden, 109

Chaucer, Geoffrey, 27
 Chesterton, G. K., 40
 Chiaro, Anton Maria del, 109
 Chițimia, I. C., 430
 Chmielnicki, Bogdan, 177
 Chorin, Aaron, 195
 Cilibi, Moise, 257, 258, 438
 Ciobanu, Virgil, 406, 419
 Cioran, Emil, 15, 22, 23, 56, 229,
 234, 237, 333, 437, 438
 Cipariu, Timotei, 331, 332
 Claudian, Alexandru, 160
 Clermont-Tonnerre, Stanislas, 263
 Cocchiara, Giuseppe, 266
 Codreanu, Corneliu Zelea, 15, 43,
 56, 141, 188, 252, 289, 426
 Cohen, Chaim, 197
 Coja, Ion, 17, 57, 152, 426
 Constantine, Emperor, 84, 111
 Constantinescu, Emil, 66, 153
 Conta, Vasile, 317
 Corbea, Andrei, 199, 335
 Coresi, 277
 Cornea, Andrei, 20
 Coryat, Thomas, 96
 Coșbuc, George, 380
 Costachi, Metropolitan Veniamin,
 49, 180, 391, 410
 Costachi, Veniamin, Metropolitan,
 391
 Cotore, Gherontie, 332
 Crainic, Nichifor, 12, 13, 14, 22,
 23, 90, 141, 168, 205, 233, 289,
 383
 Creangă, Ion, 189, 349
 Cristea, Primate Miron, 187
 Cristoiu, Ion, 384
 Crușevan, P. A., 412

Culianu, Ioan Petru, 23, 24, 81,
 142, 160, 345, 392, 426
 Cuza, A. C., 53, 56, 67, 141, 152,
 205, 233, 252, 255, 319, 320,
 322, 412, 418
 Cuza, Al. Ioan, 9, 67, 353, 356,
 411, 431

D

Dahn, Felix, 257
 Dähnhardt, Oskar, 344
 Dan, Dimitrie, 38, 46, 60, 75, 94,
 145, 150, 239, 243, 381
 Dante Alighieri, 169
 Dascălul, Simion, 48
 Datcu, Iordan, 29, 210
 David, King of Israel, 258, 269
 Decebal, 249
 Demidoff, Anatole de, 14, 146
 Densușianu, Nicolae, 358
 Desjardins, E., 89, 156, 182, 184,
 249
 Diamand, Josef, 194
 Diocletian, 389
 Diodorus Siculus, 427
 Dohm, Christian Wilhelm, 438
 Doja, Gheorghe, 379
 Dorian, Emil, 16, 237, 253
 Drăghicescu, Dumitru, 268
 Dreyfus, Alfred, 41
 Drumont, Édouard, 152, 334
 Dubnow, Simon, 76
 Dubois, Marcel, 39, 111
 Dumitriu, Petru, 150
 Dundes, Alan, 2, 69

E

Ebner, Mayer, 159, 205

Eckardt, Julius von, 257
 Eftimie, P. S., 321
 Eftimiu, Victor, 65
 Ehrenburg, Ilya, 432, 437
 Eichmann, Adolf, 7, 100, 262
 Eisenberg, Josy, 76
 Eitzen, Paul von, 330
 Eliade, Mircea, 16, 17, 23, 24, 63,
 77, 85, 87, 200, 266, 288, 289,
 321, 340
 Eliade, Pompiliu, 408
 Elizabeth, Queen of Romania, 79
 Emerit, Marcel, 45
 Eminescu, Mihai, 10, 18, 26, 51,
 55, 71, 98, 151, 160, 175, 179,
 181, 185, 199, 203, 229, 231,
 257, 261, 267, 338, 339, 415,
 426, 432
 Enescu, George, 339
 Engels, Friedrich, 80
 Enzenberg, Gen., 172
 Eötvös, József, 154, 331, 406
 Eötvös, Károly, 406
 Erasmus of Rotterdam, 378
 Erdélyi, Vasile, 332
 Esigmacher, Leibiș, 190
 Eulenberg, H., 39

F

Fabré-Vassas, Claudine, 347
 Felix, Iacob, 44, 73
 Ferdinand III of Habsburg, 171
 Feuchtwanger, Lion, 28
 Feuerbach, Ludwig, 343
 Filderman, Rabbi Wilhelm, 99,
 145, 159, 250, 255, 259, 264,
 265, 418
 Filimon, Nicolae, 87, 142

Filipescu, C. G., 338
 Finkelstein, M. E., 107
 Fochi, Adrian, 28, 429
 Fondane, Benjamin, 439
 Fortunat, Venance, 80
 Franko, Ivan, 247
 Franzos, Karl Emil, 342, 432
 Frederick II, Holy Roman
 Emperor, 402
 Freytag, Gustav, 232, 257
 Frisch, Max, 243
 Fundoianu, Benjamin, 28, 65, 341,
 342, 345, 439

G

Gabriel Bethlen, 98, 104, 170
 Galaction, Gala, 40, 166, 192
 Gane, Nicolae, 240
 Gaster, Moses, 3, 39, 147, 181,
 253, 270, 271, 335, 392
 Gherson, Lazăr, 150
 Ghibu, Onisifor, 53
 Ghica, Alexandru, 14, 89
 Ghica, Gheorghe, 14, 199
 Ghica, Grigore, 14, 109
 Ghica, Ion, 14, 27, 184
 Ghica, Matei, 14, 170
 Gide, André, 7
 Gighetu, Ion, 90
 Ginzberg, Asher [Ahad Ha-Am],
 196
 Girardin, St.-Marc de, 182, 276
 Giurescu, Constantin C., 176
 Gobineau, Arthur de, 90, 275
 Goebbels, Joseph, 141, 438
 Goga, Octavian, 64, 67, 141, 153,
 322, 333, 426

Gogol, Nikolai Vasilievici, 45, 63,
71, 138
Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, Olga, 161,
165
Goldfaden, Avram, 55, 172, 201,
340
Goldstein, Marcu, 40, 192
Golescu, Iordache, 60, 73, 175,
195, 279
Goma, Paul, 99
Gorky, Maxim, 413
Görög-Karady, Veronika, 139
Gorovei, Artur, 12, 61
Goya, Francisco José de, 103
Graetz, Heinrich, 76
Gregorovița, Emmanuel, 75
Gregory X, Pope, 402
Grigorescu, Nicolae, 354, 355, 356
Grimm, Jakob and Wilhelm, 150
Griselini, Franz, 71
Gross, Jan T., 254
Gruia, Ion V., 90
Guérault, 160
Gui, Bernard, 101
Gunther, Hans, 68
Gusti, Dimitrie, 273, 318

H

Haider, Jörg, 80
Harrach, Abp., 171
Hasdeu, Bogdan Petriceicu, 1, 10,
20, 59, 61, 158, 162, 166, 184,
262, 271, 312, 358, 430
Hauterive, Maurice Conte d', 19,
44, 45, 146
Hechter, Iosef, *see* Mihail
Sebastian, 167
Hefter, Alfred, 65

Hegesippus, 389
Heine, Heinrich, 39, 96
Heitmann, Klaus, 2
Heliade-Rădulescu, Ion, 338, 411,
412
Henke, Rudolf, 74
Henry III, 102
Herseni, Traian, 91
Hertz, Alexander, 139
Herzl, Theodor, 413
Hitler, Adolf, 68, 69, 256, 320,
339, 384, 437
Hoffmann, K. F. V., 71
Hogaș, Calistrat, 40, 73, 164, 186
Holbach, Baron Paul-Henri d', 334
Hugo, Victor, 202
Humboldt, Wilhelm von, 263

I

Ianosi, Ion, 41
Ibn Verga, 233
Iffland, Auguste-Guillaume, 264
Iliiev, A.T., 359
Indagine, Jean d', 42
Innocent II, Pope, 417
Innocent III, Pope, 101
Innocent IV, Pope, 402
Ionesco, Eugène, 40, 69
Ionescu de la Brad, Ion, 189
Ionescu, Nae, 65, 168, 259, 288,
289, 321, 322, 339, 419, 420,
437
Ionescu, Take, 65, 203
Iorga, Nicolae, 16, 22, 40, 49, 64,
72, 95, 141, 144, 156, 161, 165,
180, 193, 196, 197, 204, 249,
256, 323, 385, 399, 426, 441
Ipsilanti, Alexandru, 44, 146

Ipsilanti, Constantin, 410
Ispirescu, Petre, 143
Istrati, Panait, 44, 194, 228, 229,
245, 251, 291, 345

J

Jacob, Max, 150
Jaeger, Gustav, 68
John Chrysostom, St., 378, 382
John of Trapezunt, 386
John the New, St., 28, 110, 111,
385–89
John the New, St., 81
John XXIII, Pope, 403
Johnson, Paul, 7, 76, 299
Joseph II, Emperor, 105, 198, 199,
405
Josephus Flavius, 332, 447
Jüd, Güter, 300
Jünger, Ernst, 112
Juster, Moise, 190

K

Kălimănescu, A., 184
Katsaitis, M. A., 177
Kautsky, Karl, 149, 162
Kekaumenos, 261
Kemény, Iosif, 248
Kligman, Gail, 94, 150
Klüger, Carol, 12
Koestler, Arthur, 42, 81, 193
Kogălniceanu, Enache, 10, 170
Kogălniceanu, Mihail, 8, 10, 14,
49, 52, 73, 89, 184
Korețkaia, Princess Anna, 80
Kotzebue, August von, 264
Kraus, Georg, 170
Kunisch, Richard, 71, 78

Kwasniewski, Alexander, 153

L

Ladislav IV, King, 104
Lahovary, Emil, 10, 251
Laignel-Lavastine, Alexandra, 437
Landsberg, Herrade von, 102
Lassalle, Ferdinand, 80, 82
Lassus, Auge de, 340
Lavater, Caspar, 42
Lăzărescu, Don Amedeo, 17, 18
Le Bouvier, Gilles, 267
Le Brun, Charles, 42
Le Cler, Gustave, 184
Le Goff, Jacques, 162, 163
Le Sage, Alain-René, 103
Lebell, Johann, 249
Ledyard, John, 43, 46
Lefèbvre, Thibault, 235
Léger, Eugène, 324
Lenin, V. I., 263
Leonardo da Vinci, 277
Lessing, G. E., 264
Lichter Zacharias, 41
Liebermann, Aaron, 46
Louis IX, King of France, 102
Lupașcu, Dimitrie P., 189
Lupescu, Ioan, 55
Lupescu, Mihai, 79
Luther, Martin, 83, 163, 281, 284,
330, 334, 378, 382

M

Macedonski, Alexandru, 159, 166,
167
Macovei, Cătălina, 354
Maior, Petru, 89
Maiorescu, Titu, 139

Malaparte, Curzio, 432
 Malița, Liviu, 86
 Mandeville, Jean de, 247
 Mann, Thomas, 40
 Manuilă, Sabin, 13
 Marger, Martin N., 262, 263
 Maria Theresa, Empress, 104, 105, 154
 Marian, Simeon Florea, 1, 79, 329, 344, 380, 387, 391
 Martial, 80
 Marx, Karl, 80, 168, 323
 Mârza Pasha, Said, 170
 Matei Basarab, 76, 88, 286
 Mavrocordat, Constantin, 93, 170, 180
 Mazilu, Dan Horia, 27
 Mehedinți, Simion, 13, 24, 200, 334
 Mendelssohn, Moses, 54, 406
 Mesnil, Marianne, 271
 Michael II, 398
 Michael the Brave, 27, 430
 Mickiewicz, Adam, 172, 175, 183, 259, 335
 Micu, Samuil, 334
 Mieckiewicz, Adam, 172
 Millo, Matei, 241
 Mitu, Sorin, 331, 368
 Moltke, Helmut Karl Bernhard von, 170
 Montesquieu, 43, 438
 Morariu, Tiberiu, 200
 Moruzi, Alexandru, 410
 Moța, Ioan, 148
 Motru, C. Rădulescu, 203
 Movilă, Petru, 80, 81
 Müller, Fr., 358

Mureșanu, Andrei, 332
 Muzikant, Ariel, 80

N
 Napoleon III, 184
 Neacșu, Ilie, 80
 Neagoe Basarab, 84, 111, 277, 395, 396
 Neculce, Ion, 413
 Neculuță, D. Th., 335
 Negruzzi, Costache (Constantin), 143
 Neigebauer, J. F., 156
 Nenițescu, Ion, 97, 171
 Neophyte I, Bp. of Crete, 179
 Neophyte the Cavaocalivite, 409
 Nero, Emperor of Rome, 389
 Neumann, Victor, 109, 170, 201
 Nicholas II, Tsar, 412
 Nicoară, Moise, 89
 Nicolae Botezatu, 279
 Nicolay, Nicolas de, 247
 Niculiță-Voronca, Elena, 190, 359, 414
 Niemcewicz, Julian Ursyn, 76, 78, 276
 Nietzsche, Friedrich, 229, 232, 237, 262, 383
 Nikolai I, Tsar, 202
 Nistor, Francisc, 54
 Nistor, Ion, 202
 Nogai, Khan, 386
 Nogai, Man, 110
 Noica, Constantin, 289

O
 Odobescu, Alexandru, 143
 Oigenstein, Kelman, 196

Omar, Caliph, 101
Orwell, George, 257

P

Pandrea, Petre, 141, 148
Pann, Anton, 143
Papadima, Ovidiu, 429
Papahagi, Tache, 55, 201, 436
Papanace, Constantin, 91
Pătruț, Picu, 387
Pauker (Rabinsohn), Ana, 423
Paul of Alep, 396, 399
Paulescu, N., 152, 187, 233, 252, 320, 405, 418, 419
Păunescu, Adrian, 333
Pelimon, Alexandru, 91, 166
Pelle, János, 422
Peltz, I., 71, 240, 254
Perrin, Raoul, 73
Petala, N., 255
Petőfi, Sándor, 331
Petru Rareș, 248
Pezzl, Johann, 45
Philip the Fair, 102
Pintilie, Lucian, 99
Pippidi, Andrei, 110, 111
Pius VI, Pope, 104
Podlacha, Władisław, 314
Polescu, Ion, 291
Poliak, A. N., 193, 194
Poliakov, Léon, 334
Popa, Marian, 152
Popa, Victor Ion, 91
Popescu, Cristian Tudor, 426
Popescu, Radu, 396
Popova, Assia, 271
Popovici, C. Aurel, 12
Popovici, Traian, 148, 235

Pragher, Willy, 73
Prezan, Constantin, 253
Protopopescu, J. D., 255
Protul, Gavriil, 395
Psantir, Iacob, 171, 172

R

Rabin, Yitzak, 425
Racoveanu, G., 321
Rădulescu-Motru, Constantin, 11, 23, 56, 68
Raicevich, Ignatius Stefan, 178, 245
Rakoczi II, Prince Georgy, 104
Ralea, Mihai, 56, 65, 149
Ramazzini, 70
Rășcanu, Ioan, 255
Rat, Moise, 190
Rebreanu, Liviu, 40, 52, 64, 86, 93, 97, 144, 150, 170, 175, 236, 238, 250, 253, 254, 260, 263, 438
Recordon, François, 165
Relgis, Eugen, 69
Renan, E., 43
Revel-Neher, Elizabeth, 39, 313, 395
Rimer, Moșe, 192
Roman, Petre, 79, 290
Roman, Ronetti, 88, 91, 97, 236
Rosen, Moses, 26, 207
Rosenthal, Solomon, 193
Rosetti, C. A., 10, 335, 409
Rosetti, Radu, 11, 14, 109, 156, 159, 160, 399
Rosetti, Theodor, 203
Rossellius, Cosmas, 313
Roșu, Nicolae, 14, 323

Rotaru, I., 152, 230
 Roth, M., 77
 Rothschild, Anselm Salomon, 411
 Rotman, Liviu, 176
 Rubens, 280
 Russo, Alecu, 9, 27, 45, 46, 72, 95,
 106, 193, 233, 235, 240, 259,
 415

S

Sadoveanu, Mihail, 26, 50, 64, 91,
 93, 142, 170, 174, 193, 196,
 201, 240, 263, 272, 338, 355,
 433
 Sahia, Alexandru, 253
 Șăineanu, Lazăr, 1, 28, 188, 358,
 359, 428
 Salzberger, Șama, 419
 Sanielevici, H., 44, 343
 Sartre, Jean-Paul, 228
 Savary, 151
 Schmidl, Adolf, 181
 Schott, Arthur, 358
 Schwarzfeld, Elias, 52, 108–109,
 180, 202, 435
 Schwarzfeld, Moses, 1–3, 83, 139,
 143, 165, 168, 176, 182, 192,
 230–31, 239–40, 268, 311, 318
 Schwarzfeld, Wilhelm, 327, 431
 Schwefelberg, A., 254, 299
 Sebastian, Mihail, 40, 65, 99–100,
 167–68, 236, 254, 264, 272,
 288, 321, 339, 400, 419–20
 Sevastos, Elena, 89
 Severin, Adrian, 153
 Sévigné, Marquise de, 280
 Shafir, Michael, 424

Shakespeare, William, 81, 96, 162,
 166, 343, 438, 439
 Shaw, George Bernard, 40
 Sima, Horia, 14
 Simedrea, Tit, 140, 141
 Simonescu, Dan, 27
 Șincai, Gheorghe, 334
 Singer, Isaac Bashevis, 40
 Slavici, Ioan, 20, 142, 262
 Solomon, King, 49, 258, 325
 Sombart, Werner, 147, 149
 Speranția, Theodor D., 241, 246
 Spielberg, Steven, 38
 Stalin, I. V., 423, 424
 Stamate, Iacob, 409
 Stamati, Costachi, 49
 Stâncă, Ștefan, 158
 Stăncescu, Dumitru, 245
 Stancu, Zaharia, 53, 198, 250
 Stănescu, Dumitru, 392
 Staszic, Stanisław, 182
 Stein, Iancu, 252
 Steinhardt, Nicolae, 236
 Stephanie, 264
 Stephen the Great, Prince of
 Moldavia, 428
 Stern, Adolphe, 108, 413
 Stoichiță, Victor Ieronim, 390
 Sturdza, Mihai, 49, 66, 107, 180,
 379
 Sue, Eugène, 331
 Sulzer, Franz Joseph, 94, 178, 249
 Șumuleanu, C., 187, 205
 Suțu, Nicolae, 50
 Sylvester, Bp., 84

T

Țamblac, Grigore, 385, 386
 Teodorescu, G. Dem., 244
 Theodosie, Archimandrite, 84,
 111, 277, 386, 396
 Theophanes, Byzantine chronicler,
 398
 Tolstoy, Leo, 413
 Topîrceanu, George, 241
 Tott, François de, 19
 Trajan, Emperor of Rome, 249,
 334
 Trivale, Ion, 65
 Tudor, Corneliu Vadim, 57, 65,
 71, 79, 151, 258, 290, 383–84,
 385, 387

U

Unamuno, Miguel de, 4
 Ureche, Grigore, 48
 Urmuz, 45

V

Varlaam, Metropolitan of Moldavia, 111, 278, 281, 285, 386
 Vartic, Theodor, 79
 Vasile Lupu, 248
 Vianu, Ion, 437
 Vincenz, Stanisław, 195
 Vișoianu, Constantin, 112
 Vlădescu, Toma, 15
 Vladimir de Repta, Bp., 391
 Voicu, George, 153
 Voiculescu, Vasile, 186
 Voinești, A. B., 233
 Volovici, Leon, 8, 14, 18, 162,
 184, 234, 265, 320, 384
 Voltaire, 270, 383

Voragine, Jacques de, 84, 399
 Voronca, Ilarie, 341
 Vulcănescu, Romulus, 29, 359
 Vulpescu, Ileana, 232

W

Wagenseil, Johann C., 334
 Wagner, Richard, 232, 339, 437
 Walsh, Robert, 169
 Weiss, Aureliu, 65
 Wiesel, Elie, 53, 394, 405, 424,
 431
 Wolff, Larry, 45
 Wolf-Lupescu, Elena, 65
 Woolf, Virginia, 40

Z

Zamfirescu, Duiliu, 142
 Zapolska, Gabriela, 437
 Zeletin, Ștefan, 56, 142
 Zucker, I. H., 160