JEWISH SPACE
IN
CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Day-to-Day History

EDITED BY

Jurgita Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė
and Larisa Lempertienė

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Introduction

Jewish forms of settlement and their meaning

Joachim Schlör

The function of this introduction is to present some ideas about Jewish forms of settlement and their meaning. When I use the term "meaning", I want to say, basically, that a house or a street or a city quarter is more than just a house, street or quarter. There is a reason, and mostly more than one, for a house to be built in a certain way; there are more functions connected with a street than just a thoroughfare and transport (for example, that one can freely walk on it without being attacked), and the specifics of an urban quarter cannot be measured only in length, width or density, but also in terms of the feeling of belonging or in terms of certain social, cultural or religious rules and practices.

The research of Jewish forms of settlement – a historical reconstruction, as well as the analysis of its representation in art or literature – seems to be, in my view, a good approach in building a bridge between the two main fields of research in Jewish studies: forms of settlement reflect both the *inner* discourse on questions of spirituality, thought and belief, and subjects of an *outer* narrative about the relationship between Jews and Jewish communities with the non-Jewish world. The whole wide field can only be covered through a close and systematic inter-disciplinary co-operation. Historical debates about the forms of settlement, living, movement in space, and discussions about the borderlines between "public" and "private" spaces, or about certain constructs such as "ghetto", "Jewish quarter", "Jewish street" or "*shtetl*", contain and produce information both about the *inner* aspects of laws and the way they are observed (or not), and about the *outer* aspects of a given place.

In his *Judensiedlungen in mittelalterlichen Städten Südwestdeutschlands* Helmut Veitshans asked the question, "Can the Jewish settlements inside of cities help us to draw conclusions about the meaning and function of Jews in urban life; in other words, is the Jewish settlement an expression of the legal, economical, social and political position of the Jews in an urban community?"[1] The question implies that the analysis of any form of settlement – in the city or in the countryside, founded by the free will

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[1] Veitshans H., *Kartographische Darstellung der Judensiedlungen der schwäbischen Reichsstädte und der württembergischen Landstädte im Mittelalter. Arbeiten zum historischen Atlas von Südwestdeutschland* (Stuttgart: 1970): 1.

of a community or given to a community by the powers, in close neighbourhood or widely dispersed – can tell us more than *concrete facts*, such as population density, occupational structure or historical development. To continue Veitshans' question, can the analysis of forms of settlement help us to draw conclusions about the aspects of inner life of a given community, about its self-image, its relationship to the place of residence on one hand, and to the other, ever-present, ever-absent place – Jerusalem, Zion, *Eretz Israel* – on the other hand?[2]

The variety of Jewish forms of living, which resulted from many different ways, in which Jews tried to live in harmony with the Jewish laws, and also in accordance with the laws and conditions of the outside world, – this variety constitutes our field of research as a mosaic of differences. There is no single form of Jewish settlement. It means that the outer form of houses, streets and quarters is more than just the everyday-life backside of a bigger, universal, unchanging unit such as religion; daily experiences of a life under so many different conditions have indeed contributed, in their variety, to the processes of changes in law and religion. At the same time, the search for the right way to observe the laws under so many different conditions substantially influenced the manifold ways in which Jews built houses, used streets, and lived in certain forms of settlement. Certain elements of communal life are universal: a cemetery, a synagogue, a house of learning, a ritual bath, a courthouse, a slaughterhouse, a school – all of them are established, wherever Jews live. But this "wherever" is indeed important.

The different perception and use of space is not just a theme for literature. Its research in the context of European-Jewish history requires knowledge of the laws laid down in the Talmud or later basic texts such as the *Shulkhan Arukh* by Joseph Caro; it requires knowledge about the historical and political conditions that result in practical alterations or adaptations in the style of building, as well as in religious practice, as a wide range of *minhagey ha-makom* (local customs) can show us. On the historical and sociological level we also need to study the archives, from police regulations to planning offices. One could say that in the confrontation of these two different coordinate systems lies the spatial dimension of Jewish history. To put it differently, in the space-centred description of the relationship between the Jewish law and the laws of the surrounding world we can find the "place" of Jewish history in Europe. This is especially true regarding the example of the *eruv*. A certain space, which during the week has the same appearance and the same function for Jews and non-Jews, on the Sabbath changes its meaning for the Jews because of the Jewish law, whereas for their non-Jewish neighbours it does not. We have very interesting examples from the Polish lands occupied by Prussia after 1795 and 1815, when reformers from Berlin came to these eastern regions and decided to start modernisation with the

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[2] See Pinthus A., *Die Judensiedlungen der deutschen Städte. Eine stadtbiologische Studie*. Diss. Th. (Hannover: 1931).

destruction of city walls – not knowing that in this process they also destroyed the existing *eruvs*.[3] In this situation the traditional communities had to decide whether they should accept this change, forget about the *eruv* and throw themselves into the processes of acculturation and assimilation – or if they should resist the temptation and stay behind the old borders and partitions, in order to preserve their Jewish identity. The *eruv* has a space-constructing function, but in such a situation it turns into the proof-stone for the future of a community and its religious orientation. This shows, I would argue, that it is impossible to talk about houses, streets, neighbourhoods and quarters without respecting the religious and cultural dimensions they contain – and it is also impossible, or at least not very useful, to treat and describe Judaism as "placeless". The forms of mixtures mentioned in the Talmudic tractate *Eruvin* have a topographical dimension. The difficulties arising for "a Jew who is part of the practical life", as Wilhelm Nowack has put it,[4] to observe the laws and at the same time to find a practical way to do so, are typical for the situation of any Jewish community and its individual members throughout the centuries – and even more so in times of change and modernisation. Debates about the maintaining of an *eruv* can be read as symbolic for the direction that a Jewish community will take in the future.

Let us discuss the notion of borders. The partition between Jews and non-Jews, if we leave Eastern Europe for a while, is an oft-described issue in Venice. An official note turns the historical and literary figure of the creation of a ghetto into the prototype of a certain kind of perception. What happens when a secular power forces the Jews in the space controlled by it to live in a certain, well-defined area? What kind of urban topography do we find? Where are the borders or zones of contact? For more than three centuries Jews "commuted" between the country and the lagoon; their life situation was determined by an ongoing process of attraction and rejection. The decision of the Venice Senate of March 29, 1516 creates a new quality in this relationship: "All Jews have to reside in the complex of houses which can be found in the ghetto near San Girolamo, and so that they do not walk around the whole night, there will be two gates: one on the side of Ghetto Vecchio, where there is a small bridge, and one on the other side. Each gate has to be opened every morning with the sound of the Marangona bell, and closed again every evening at midnight by four Christian watchmen who will have to be hired and paid by the Jews for this work and entitled to a prize that Our Collegium finds appropriate."[5] This exact topographic description has set an example for so many "ghettos" in the following centuries; and the opening of the walls, some

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[3] This is discussed at length in Schlör J., *Das Ich der Stadt. Debaten über Judentum und Urbanität, 1822–1938* (Göttingen: 2005).

[4] Nowack W., *Die Mischna. Text, Übersetzung und ausführliche Erklärung, mit eingehenden geschichtlichen und sprachlichen Einleitungen* (Gießen: 1926): 1.

[5] Gallimani R., *Die Kaufleute von Venedig. Die Geschichte der Juden in der Löwenrepublik* (München: 1990): 67.

280 years later, has become an icon for the idea of liberation: the ghetto existed until Napoleon's troops reached Venice. On Messidor 19, 1797, the provisional municipality issued a decree: "In order to demonstrate that there shall be no more partition between them and other citizens of the town, those doors which in the past have closed the area of the ghetto shall be immediately taken away."[6] For the (Christian) majority Venice has become a model of a possibility to separate the Jews, and for the Jews themselves – of a possibility to survive in separation and to develop inner creativity even in the ghetto. This very ambivalent experience has stored the feeling of "living in a (virtual) ghetto" in Jewish memory for many centuries to come.

Today the notion of "ghetto" is nothing but negative. It has become the keyword for separation and restriction of contacts between Jews and Christians. Indeed, in the 20th century the ghettos of Nazi occupation in Poland and Lithuania were the last step before deportation and extermination. But Manès Sperber has shown us a different way to think about the historical experiences of life in separation. There is certain dialectic between forced separation and the development of Jewish identity: "In order to survive an oppression which aims at inhuman humiliation, without losing your own dignity, you have to fight daily for the right to respect yourself and the group you belong to."[7] The inhabitants of the enclosed Jewish quarters had to practice this daily, by force, and they gathered the strength to live two different forms of existence: one – in the eyes of the enemy outside, and the other – among themselves, behind the walls. According to Sperber, "mimicry" became the law of Jewish life. It is a provocative thesis that this kind of "mimicry" should contain an element of freedom, because from the outside it merely served as a confirmation of prejudice. However, in the words of Sperber, "Herded together in a narrow space, usually close to stinking sewers and disgusting heaps of manure, in small lanes where the sun never shone, they lived, worked, and prayed under the protection of smaller or bigger powers. In the Jewish street, the outcasts re-personalised themselves."[8] Between de-personalisation outside, and re-personalisation inside and under the "protection" of the ghetto, a person lived two different lives: "Right inside of their quarter, closed off by heavy chains whose guardians prevented them from entering the city, inside of their own walls the inhabitants of the ghetto were not unhappy to be Jews. The harder life was made for them, the more profoundly they believed to be actually chosen – and that the arrival of the Messiah would be imminent."[9]

I think that this ambivalent and even contradictory description of the *meaning* of life in separation has been used quite often – and maybe too often without a look at the sources of social and cultural history – for descriptions of the *shtetl*. Life in the

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[6] Ibid. 387.

[7] Sperber M., "Bis ans Ende aller Tage?", *Churban oder die unfaßbare Gewißheit*. Essays (München: 1983): 17.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid. 18.

shtetl has been researched and described by Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog in an anthropological study "Life is with People".[10] The starting point here is religion, or rather religious practice which leads to a certain form of life, a certain life-cycle, and certain forms of belonging – and the spatial expressions they find. The research of these expressions gives insight into the relationship between the "inner" and "outer" constitutions: where is the synagogue? Where are the other institutions? What is their relationship to the order and system of the whole place? Are there any secular laws to be followed in building, placement and forms of forced distance or possible neighbourhoods? Of course we know that the picture delivered by Zborowski and Herzog is an idealised one. But the romanticism or folklorisation of the *shtetl* images has its own history and its own literature, a field of research in its own right. In his memoirs Sperber describes the idea of the Hassids in his *shtetl* of Zablotów that one day they will cross the gap to *Eretz Israel* on a bridge made of cigarette paper. When researchers have discovered that indeed there was a cigarette paper factory in Zablotów, what implications could be drawn from that? What is real? And what is the relationship between the two realities?

The last aspect I would like to talk about is a special relationship between modern Jews and the modern city. Not only in Western Europe, but also in Central and Eastern Europe Jewish life in the 19th and 20th centuries has been heavily urbanised, with Odessa, Warsaw and Lódź as just a few examples besides Berlin, Budapest or New York. Statistician Jakob Lestshinsky in 1929 celebrates the "urban" peculiarity of the Jews: "The revolution in technique and industry which in the course of the 19th century changed the face of the entire world, has created new means of transport, has created new connections between faraway places of the earth, has transferred the centre of economical life from the countryside to the city and has made the urban classes the main carriers of human history – this revolution has also brought with it the spreading of Jews all over the world, their urbanisation and concentration in compact masses." And he continues: "The urban revolution has heightened the influence of this oldest and already heavily urbanised nation in Europe, has opened the widest possibilities for the financial and commercial potentials and experiences stored in Jewry, and has created a mightily expanded field for Jewish mobility, mental alertness and activity. After hundreds of years in which the Jews had to live the miserable life of a foreign urban people among native, long-established, immobile peoples, who were bound to their fields from which they earned their living – after so many years the Jewish nation has finally found itself in the modern city, in its own element, in its particular circle of action."[11] Only in the big cities, Lestshinsky argues, can Jews develop a

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[10] Zborowski M., Herzog E., *Life is with People. The Culture of the Shtetl*, introduction by Margaret Mead (New York: 1962).

[11] Lestschinsky, J., "Die Umsiedlung und Umschichtung des jüdischen Volkes im Laufe des letzten Jahrhunderts", *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, vol. 30/II, 1929: 123–156; 124.

feeling of not only equality and emancipation, but also "home" (*Heimatlichkeit*): the occupations that Jews had been accustomed to, long despised, suddenly became precious and important, life around them became "more Jewish" (*verjüdischt*): mobile, active, adaptable, changing, flowing. The "dynamic figure" of the Jewish trader, a foreign figure in the countryside, becomes a harmonic appearance on the city streets, and everyone wants to be like him. We find similar celebrations of life in a big city in the writings of Arthur Ruppin – and we know that this hope for harmonic integration into urban life was far too optimistic. Still, I would suggest this area as a new field of research. Much has been said about hatred for the city, about an aversion towards urban life in European cultures, in Germany, Poland or France. Time has arrived for the studies about love for the city, or more generally, about the emotions attached to places, smaller or bigger.

With the rise of the Zionist movement, new concepts of the Jewish forms of settlement have been developed. In *Eretz Israel*, the *kvutza* and kibbutz have become new icons for an independent Jewish life, free from the restrictions of the Diaspora past, and the city of Tel-Aviv has become an embodiment of the Hebrew revival.[12] However, a closer look might show us that even in Israel the dialectic tension between the *inside* and the *outside* has not been solved yet. (What is the relationship between a kibbutz and the neighbouring Arab villages, or between Tel-Aviv and Jaffa – not to mention Jerusalem?) In Europe, on the other hand, with the end of communism and the foundation of new Jewish communities and institutions, new questions have arisen. What is this revitalisation about in terms of space? There is a phenomenon of re-creation of Jewish space in Cracow's Kazimierz or in Berlin's Scheunenviertel, which has been called a "virtually Jewish" space already.[13] And whereas it seemed that the processes of integration and even assimilation were irrevocable at least in the West, we read the news about North London's orthodox Jewish communities who want to create a new *eruv* around their settlements in the British capital. Our understanding of the world is still an understanding of space and place. This conference has shown how important it is, and will be in the future, to study the many different aspects of this relationship between Jewish religion, history and culture and their reflection in the manifold forms of settlement.

[12]　Schlör J., *Tel-Aviv. From Dream to City* (London: 1999).

[13]　Gruber R. E., *Virtually Jewish. Reinventing Jewish Culture in Europe* (Berkeley et al.: 2002).

The Jewish living space in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: tendencies and ways of its formation[*]

Jurgita Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė

The present article is an attempt to join the scholars analysing the Jewish living space in Eastern Europe in various respects. For some time already, among the forms of former Jewish settlement in towns, the *shtetl* and its environment has received most attention, different interpretations and sentimental assessment.[1] In the latest research, having coped with the peculiar historical memory of the *shtetl* formed by sentimental nostalgia and traumatising events, this phenomenon is increasingly treated through the reflection on historical reality, referring to demythologisation of the *shtetl* or its transformations in the Soviet period. However, in many cases in the research of the Jewish living space the attention is focused on the 19th century and later periods. The advance in the research of history, urban planning, architecture and social topography of Lithuanian cities and towns have enabled us to contribute to the studies of the Jewish living space in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (hereinafter – GDL) before the end of the 18th century.[2] Though in this context the place of the

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[*] The English translation was made by Aušra Simanavičiūtė.

[1] In this context I will mention just several works by the authors representing different views: Zborowski M., Herzog E., *Life Is with People: The Culture of the Shtetl* (New York: 1995); Teller A., "The Shtetl as an Arena for Polish-Jewish Integration in the Eighteenth Century", *Polin*, 17 (Oxford: 2004); Klier J., "Polish Stetls under Russian Rule, 1772–1914", *Polin*, 17 (Oxford: 2004); Roskies D. K, Roskies D.G., *The Shtetl Book. An Introduction to East European Jewish Life and Lore*, second, revised edition (New York: 1979); Orla-Bukowska A., "Shtetl Communities: Another Image", *Polin*, 8 (London / Washington: 1994); Bergman E., "Jüdische Städte und Bezirke in Polen in der Zeit vom 15. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert", *Wiener Jahrbuch für Jüdische Geschichte, Kultur und Museumwesen*, 5 (2000–2001); Зельцер А., *Евреи советской провинции: Витебск и местечки 1917–1941* (Москва: 2006).

[2] Meilus E., *Žemaitijos Kunigaikštystės miesteliai. XVII a. antra pusė – XVIII a. Raida, gyventojai, amatai, prekyba* (Vilnius: 1997); idem, "Žemaitijos Kunigaikštystės miestų ir miestelių gaisrų liustracija", *Lietuvos miestų istorijos šaltiniai*, 2 (Vilnius: 1992); Miškinis A., *Vakarų Lietuvos miestai ir miesteliai*, vol. III, book I (Vilnius: 2004); idem, "*Lietuvos urbanistikos paveldas ir jo vertybės*", vol. II, *Rytų Lietuvos miestai ir miesteliai*, book I (Vilnius: 2005); Šešelgis K., *Lietuvos urbanistikos istorijos bruožai (nuo seniausių laikų iki 1918 m.)* (Vilnius: 1996); Baliulis A.,

Jews in the local space and its influence on the processes of urbanisation is already frequently discussed, attempts to reveal the tendencies of formation of the Jewish living space itself are rare. On the other hand, there are no extensive studies specially addressing the tendencies of separation of the Jewish living space in Lithuania,[3] and generalising the existing conclusions of research in local history and urban planning related with this problem.

The aim of this article is to distinguish the forms of the Jewish living space in the GDL, to establish the factors that influenced their formation and variations in the broad chronological period from the settlement of Jews (the late 14th century[4]) till the late 18th century. It is possible to raise this problem only taking into account its two immediately related aspects. First is the analysis of the situation of a city or town and the localisation of Jews in the urbanistic landscape. This aspect related with social

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Milulionis S., Miškinis A., *Trakų miestas ir pilys. Istorija ir architektūra* (Vilnius: 1991); Rimša E., *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės miestų antspaudai* (Vilnius: 1999), and many other studies; Gudavičius E., *Miestų atsiradimas Lietuvoje* (Vilnius: 1991).

[3] In many cases some hints at the building of the Jewish living space in the GDL can be found in studies devoted to the history of Jews in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, e.g. Piechotkowie M., K., „Dzielnice Żydowskie w strukturze przestrzennej miast Polskich", *Żydzi w dawnej rzeczypospolicie* (Wrocław / Warszawa / Kraków: 1991); Goldberg J., "De Non Tolerandis Iudaeis. On the Introduction of the Anti-Jewish Laws into Polish Towns and the Struggle Against Them", Yeivin Sh. (ed.), *Studies in Jewish History* (Merhavia: 1974); Piechotka K., M., *Heaven's gates. Wooden Synagogue in the Territories of the Former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth* (Warsaw: 2004). As a separate object of research, the Jewish living space in the GDL is chosen relatively seldom; see Piechotkowie M., K., „Dzielnica żydowska i Wielka Sinagoga w Wilnie", *Lithuania Kwartalnik*, 2(3), 1991; Rupeikienė M., *Nykstantis kultūros paveldas: Lietuvos sinagogų architektūra* (Vilnius: 2003); Bardach J., „Żydzi w Birżach radziwiłłowskich w XVII–XVIII wieku", *Przegląd historyczny*, t. LXXXI, z.1–2 (Warszawa: 1990); Urbaitytė R., „Kauno miesto santykiai su žydais 18 amžiuje", *Kauno istorijos metraštis*, 5 (Kaunas: 2004). In the context of the problem raised, demographic research is very important: Błaszczyk G., „Liczebność Żydów na Żmudzi w XVI–XVIII w.", *Biuletyn Żydowskiego instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, 1 (1987), 1–4 (1988), Stampfer S., "The 1764 Census of Polish Jewry", *Annual of Bar-Ilan University Studies in Judaica and the Humanities*, vol. XXIV–XXV, *Studies in the History and Culture of East European Jewry* (Jerusalem: 1989); idem, "Some Implications of Jewish Population Patterns in Pre-Partition Lithuania", *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, vol. XXXVIII, Teller A. (ed.), *Studies in the History of the Jews in Old Poland* (Jerusalem: 1998).

[4] The first written source showing the activity of the organised Jewish community in the territory of the GDL is the privilege of 1388 granted by Grand Duke Vytautas to the Jews of Breść (publication of the source see in Лазутка С., Гудавичюс Э., *Привилегия евреям Витаутаса Великого 1388 года* (Москва / Иерусалим: 1993); one year later the privilege was granted also to the Grodno community (the text of the privilege is published in Бершадский С., *Русско-еврейский архив. Документы и материалы для истории евреев в России*, 1–2 (Санкт-Петербург: 1882) т. 1, № 2).

topography necessarily depends on wider contexts of the problem: the legal position of the Jews in the state, its local variations, and the initiatives of town owners and citizens or burghers. All this should be recognised as an outer factor contributing to the building of the Jewish living space; in Christian environment it was more important than the needs of the Jewish community. With regard to the cities of the GDL, the research of the Jewish living space ramifies into the research of the effect of society's anti-Jewish initiatives and their influence on the forms of the Jewish living space. The second aspect of the research is the regional spread of the Jewish community in the state. The conclusions about the trends of Jewish migration and the factors determining their choice are particularly urgent, because due to the uneven spread of the Jewish community in different regions of the GDL, local conditions of formation of the living space were not equal.

The social development of the community and the settlement of Jews in the state

In comparison with other Central and Eastern European countries, in the Lithuanian state the first Jewish communities settled relatively late. It is thought that in the late 14th century, when Witold (Vytautas) the Great granted the first privilege to Jews (1388), their communities existed in Breść, Grodno and Troki (Trakai). The settlement of Jews in Lithuania chronologically coincided with several crucial processes of society's development, which inevitably influenced the tendencies of the formation of the Jewish living space.

1. In comparison with other European states, the process of Christianisation of society was belated (the official Christianisation of the state took place in 1387) and slow; in some layers of society it lasted till the early 17th century. A unique thing was that the adaptation of society to the Western Christian civilisation and Jewish settlement in the state took place in parallel.

2. Jewish settlement in the GDL in the late 14th century chronologically coincided with the final stage of town formation, as well as with the granting of the first privileges of the German Magdeburg rights. However, the spread of cities as centres of trade and industry that had begun already in the late 14th century, became a general phenomenon only in the 16th century (before 1500, only 76 settlements of town type in the entire GDL are mentioned in the sources);

3. In the middle of the 14th century, commodity production of crafts began in large centres (at that time – only Wilno (Vilnius) and Kernavė,[5] when the production of a craftsman was aimed at a market rather than a closed patrimonial economy;

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[5] Gudavičius E., *Miestų atsiradimas Lietuvoje* 65.

4. Beginning with the receptive privilege of Witold the Great for the Breść community (1388) and, possibly, the privilege regulating local needs for the Grodno community, an impetus was given for the formation of the legal and social situation of the Jews.

There are no sufficient data about the settlement of Jews in towns in the late 14th–15th centuries. In two known privileges from this period, communities were assigned a living space: Jewish in Grodno (1389)[6] and Jewish – Karaite in Troki (1441).[7] Its early segregation shows that the model of interrelations of burghers and Jews, and the forms of dividing the space typical of towns of mediaeval Europe were introduced as reception. It was common in an "ideal" town of mediaeval corporative structure that different groups were settling by establishing separate colonies,[8] distinguished according to confessional and, more rarely, ethnic features. Already in this period one can notice another feature of separation of the Jewish living space, characteristic of Polish towns in the early phase of Jewish settlement – it was the settling of Jews on the premises of the castle, in this way declaring their exceptional legal jurisdiction.[9] The cases of Grodno and Troki are the only ones reflecting the formation of a defined and sanctioned Jewish living space till 1495 – the year of the expulsion of Jews from the GDL. Unfortunately, in both cases it is not known who initiated the separation of the Jewish living space in the towns under formation.

This problem remains urgent, as in the case of a small community, it was often not strictly localised in the town space even in the 16th century. This conclusion can be drawn from the inventory of Jewish houses in state towns taken in the 1550s–60s.[10] Referring to this inventory, one can distinguish two forms of Jewish settlement in state towns – an unlimited living space (spread in the town territory) and formation of a quarter. Before the second half of the 16th century, the Jewish living space was not limited, if the community living in the town was not large (e.g. Vladimir,[11]

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[6] Бершадский С., *Русско-еврейский архив*, т. 1, № 2.

[7] *Сборник старинных грамот и узаконений Российской Империи касательно прав и состояния русско-подданых караимов* (Санкт-Петербург: 1890)

[8] Bogucka M., „Z zagadnień socjotopografii większych miast Polski w XVI–XVII w.", Gieysztor A., Rosłanowski T. (ed.), *Miasta doby feudalnej w Europie środkowo – wschodniej. Przemiany społeczne a układy przestrzenne* (Warszawa / Poznań / Toruń: 1976): 168.

[9] Piechotkowie M., K., „Dzielnice Żydowskie w strukturze przestrzennej" 308, Bergman E., „Jüdische Städte und bezirke in Polen" 82.

[10] Бершадский С., *Русско-еврейский архив*, т. 2, № 28.

[11] According to the data of M. Vladimirski-Budanov, in Vladimir the relation was 28 Jewish houses for each 243 Christian houses. See Владимирский-Буданов М., "Литовские евреи", *Журнал министерства народного просвещения*, CCXXXVII (январь 1885); Бершадский С., *Литовские евреи. История их юридического и общественного положения в Литве от Витовта до Люблинской унии* (Санкт-Петербург: 1883), and idem, *Документы и регесты к истории литовских евреев* (Санкт-Петербург: 1882): 171.

Pińsk,[12] Kleck[13]). Whereas in Breść [14] and Grodno,[15] where the earliest and largest communities in the period under discussion existed, as well as in Kremeniec, with approximately the same number of Jews, quarters densely inhabited by Jews had been formed. In Grodno, comparatively densely inhabited by Jews, three streets of the quarter were distinctly separated: Jewish (*Żydowska*), Synagogue (*Szkolna Żydowska*), and Jewish Narrow – (*Żydowska ciasna*) (1560).[16] In this town Jews did not live on any of the main streets (with the exception of the plot of land owned by the Jew Abraham on Parsonage (*Plebańska*) Street).[17] The Jews of Breść were concentrated on both sides of Jewish Street and Sandy Street leading to the market (1566),[18] and on other streets of the town, like in the above-mentioned case of Grodno, only isolated Jews lived. The Jews of Kremeniec were concentrated exclusively in the *jurydyka* of the estate, where they occupied the majority of houses (1552).[19] One can see that till the middle of the 16th century, the uninhibited life of Jews in towns (except Grodno, Breść and Kremeniec) was often determined by the smallness of the Jewish community in the town.

Requests of Jews themselves to assign them a living space in the town were scarce. The smooth assigning (1633) of a quarter of three streets: Jewish (*Żydowska*), Butchers (*Jatkowa*), St. Nicholas (*Świętego Mikołaja*) upon the request of Jews themselves in Wilno was an exception. Most often the separation or limiting of the Jewish living space was determined by burghers' initiatives seeking to control the spread of Jews in the town and oust the economically active competitor from the most lucrative business places.

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[12] The data about the proportion of Jewish and Christian houses are markedly different: Sergey Bershadsky mentions 24 Jewish house owners in the town (Бершадский С., "История виленской еврейской общины", *Восход*, 7 (1881): 108); according to Michail Vladimirsky-Budanov, in Pinsk the relation was 41 Jewish houses for each 666 Christian houses (Владимирский-Буданов М., "Литовские евреи" 171).

[13] When Christians had 132 houses (Владимирский-Буданов М., "Литовские евреи" 171).

[14] In Breść Litewski – 106 Jewish house owners and a synagogue (Бершадский С.*,* "История виленской еврейской общины", 7 (1881): 107). M. Vladimirsky-Budanov gives the relation of houses of Christians and Jews in Breść Litewski: 42 Jewish for 1.125 Christian (Владимирский-Буданов М., "Литовские евреи" 171).

[15] According to S. Bershadsky's data, in the middle of the 16th century there were 48 Jewish house owners and a synagogue in Grodno (Бершадский С., *История виленской еврейской общины*, 7 (1881): 108); according to M. Vladimirsky-Budanov, 63 Jewish houses for each 543 Christian houses in Grodno (Владимирский-Буданов М., "Литовские евреи" 171).

[16] Бершадский С., *Русско-еврейский архив*, т. 2, № 113.

[17] In the middle of the 16th century, 24 streets were known in Grodno, the main four streets were leading from the bridge in the direction of Podol (*Lietuvos architektūros istorija*, vol. 1, *Nuo seniausių laikų iki* XVII *a. vidurio* (Vilnius: 1988): 64.

[18] Бершадский С., *Русско-еврейский архив*, т. 2, № 231.

[19] Jews lived in 48 of 55 houses of the *jurydyka*; ibid., № 26.

Definitions of the Jewish living space in historical sources

To describe the Jewish living space in the towns of the GDL, the definition of "privileged streets"[20] was applied, separating the Jewish part from "unprivileged" streets, "not belonging to them", "public streets,[21] on which they were forbidden to settle. The several streets assigned to Jews were understood by the society of the GDL as a privilege, as besides the towns with "privileged" parts, there were towns that did not admit Jews.

We can talk about a "Jewish street", as a form of community life widespread in towns, from the middle of the 17th century, when Władisław Waza incorporated the rights granted to the community of Cracow (more precisely, Kazimierz) into the general privilege of Jews in the GDL. It forbade Christians to take over the real estate mortgaged by a Jew in the Jewish quarter, and to live in the Jewish part ("Christians themselves shall not live [in the quarter])"[22]. This *Privilegia de non tolerandis Christianis*[23] was aimed at retaining the confessional homogeneity of the inhabitants of the Jewish quarter for the purpose of segregation. The privilege was granted as a reaction to complaints of the Jews living "separately in our towns and cities… on privileged streets, separated and segregated from Christians".[24] One can notice that the motivation of Jews[25] in asking to limit the settlement of Christians or to take over their property in their quarter was almost identical to the arguments of limiting the spread of urban Jews.

In the context of cohabitation of Christians and Jews in the towns of the GDL it is quite obvious that the granting of *Privilegia de non tolerandis Christianis*

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[20] "Streets granted by separate privileges", *Археографический сборник документов, относящихся к истории Северо-западной Руси, издаваемый при управлении Виленскаго учебного округа*, т. 8 (Вильна: 1870), № 74 ; "settled on their own privileged street" (ibid., № 115); "their own limits and streets" (*Акты, издаваемые виленскою археографическою комиссиею для разбора древних актов* (hereinafter АВАК), т. 8 (1875): 346–350); "special street" (*Архив Юго-западной России*, ч. 5, т. 1 (1869): 25).

[21] АВАК, т. 8 (1875): 346–350; *Археографический сборник документов*, т. 8 (1870), № 74.

[22] АВАК, т. 5 (1871), № 471.

[23] M. and K. Piechotka mention that in Poland, Poznań and Kazimierz at Cracow had this privilege (Piechotkowie M., K., *Dzielnice Żydowskie w strukturże przestrzennej miast Polskich* 311). Without specifying, the authors mention all communities of the GDL as having received the *Privilegia de non tolerandis Christianis* (see ibid.). The inclusion of the privilege to the Kazimierz community into the general privilege granted to the Jews of the GDL allows us to assert that the prohibition for Christians to settle in Jewish quarters established by this privilege must have been officially in force at least in state towns.

[24] АВАК, т. 5 (1871), № 471.

[25] Supposedly Christians "damage, plunder and do harm to them (Jews – J.Š-V.) in every possible way, and Jews can never feel safe because of them" (ibid.).

was determined by the nature of economic activity of Jews, the beginning of their sinking into debts, and the consequent circumstance – an attempt to avoid Christian settlement in Jewish quarters, in this way declaring also from the Jewish side the need to live in a part of the town inhabited exclusively by Jews. The fact that the goal of separating the Jewish and Christian living spaces was not attained in the towns of the GDL is shown by the tendencies of forming the Jewish quarters. Quite often Jews were assigned one side of the street, and the other one was left for Christians (e.g. in Kiejdany (Kėdainiai),[26] Wilno[27]). Such principles of the formation of a quarter do not allow us to speak about its closed character.

The tendencies of the spread of Jewish communities in the GDL

The incessant spread of Jews in the state and their settlement in towns began after Grand Duke Alexander's permission for the Jews whom he himself had expelled to return to the GDL in 1503. After Alexander's unsuccessful campaign of "purifying" the society by trying to replace Judaic Jews with Catholic Germans, merchants and craftsmen, and a wave of granting the Magdeburg privileges, Jews returned and settled in towns that had changed and had become self-governed.

Up until the turn of the 17th–18th centuries, the process of the spread of Jewish communities was the most rapid in the Belarusian part of the GDL, in whose cities and towns the largest number of Jews and their communities was concentrated. The second feature typical of the spread of all non-Christians (including the Tartar Muslim community of the GDL), particularly till the middle of the 16th century, was the formation of a dense network of communities in the royal (state) lands. An exception was a numerous Jewish community in the private town of Ostróg (in 1563–66 the preliminary number of its members reached approximately 2.000).[28] The formation of communities in private towns (with individual cases recorded already in the early 16th century), as part of the general process of the spread, was

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[26] In the town Jews were allowed to live in the Old Market, on Jewish Street and the right side of Crooked Street, and not allowed to live on the left side of the same street. *Археографический сборник документов,* т. 8 (1870), № 78.

[27] While forming the Jewish living part in 1633, in addition to St. Nicolas and Jewish Streets, they were allowed to settle on one side of Butchers Street bordering on the latter (Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė J., Petrašiūnaitė L., „Vilniaus geto ieškojimai: atkūrimas ar įkūrimas", *Naujasis židinys – Aidai,* 7/ 8 (2002): 372).

[28] The data have been established according to the documents of distribution of state taxes for the Jewish communities, compiled by the Treasury of the GDL in 1563 and 1566; see Бершадский С., *Русско-еврейский архив,* т. 2, №178, 259.

becoming more frequent. Upon the joining of Volhynia and the lands bordering on Poland, which belonged to the GDL, to Poland during the Lublin Union (1569), the Lithuanian Jewish community decreased almost by one third; in these districts operated five (Vladimir, Tykocin, Ostróg, Kamieniec and Luck communities) of 13 communities mentioned in the documents of distribution of state taxes of 1563–66. In the territory of present Lithuania in this period we can only see the rudiments of formation of Jewish communities and regular appearance of Jews as objects of state monopoly, and later – as lessees of landed property. The unevenness of the spread of Jews in the territory of the GDL can be illustrated by the following example: in the middle of the 17th century, the number of Jews living in all Samogitia was about four times less than in the town of Pińsk.[29] In Western Lithuania the same tendencies as in the eastern and south-eastern *powiat* before the middle of the 16th century were repeated: Jews more often lived in royal cities and towns, but gradually they began to settle in estates and private estates of small gentry in the Samogitian Bishopric.[30] The Jew called Nurek, who in 1681 was granted the right to settle in Szawle (Šiauliai) and live there till the end of his life (*"ad vitae suae tempora,* we ensure that we shall not allow no one *in posterum* to live and build a house there"[31]) became a character of a legend telling about his extraordinary merits to local Catholics.

A rational explanation of the phenomenon of the arrested spread of Jews in the present territory of Lithuania still does not exist. Hypothetical also are the arguments why Jews did not settle in the most attractive city of the state – the capital Vilnius. I have in mind the hints found in historiography regarding the privilege *de non tolerandis Judaeis* granted to the city,[32] or the hints in the historical sources about the nostalgia of Vilnius residents for the times when Jews did not live in the city. The arrested spread also cannot be explained by the specific features of the economic development of the region, or the orientation of commercial routes. Contemporary research provides us more information on the fact that the banishment of Jews from cities and towns was one of the factors arresting their spread in the western regions of the GDL.

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[29] Błaszczyk G., „Liczebność Żydów na Żmudzi w XVI–XVIII w.", *Biuletyn Żydowskiego instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, vol. 1 (Warszawa: 1987), vol. 1–4 (Warszawa: 1988).

[30] More extensively about the tendencies of the spread of Jews in Samogitia, see Błaszczyk G., „Liczebność Żydów na Żmudzi".

[31] АВАК, т. 5 (1871), № 44.

[32] Historiography contains some references to the privilege obtained by the Vilnius citizens in 1527 prohibiting Jews from living in the town (e.g. Piechotkowie M., K., "Dzielnica żydowska i Wielka Sinagoga w Wilnie"; Бершадский С., "История виленской еврейской общины", 10–11 (1886): 138), but its content is still unknown.

The processes of concentration of Jews in the present territory of Lithuania that took place at the turn of the 17th–18th centuries, were determined by demographic and economic conditions – Jews came to be invited as urbanizers and tax payers, so that they would revive towns and cities that were not only agrarianized, but also greatly devastated because of epidemics and wars (the 17th century, so-called period of "Deluge", the plague of 1710–11). These circumstances conditioned two parallel processes: mass migration of Jews to the present territory of Lithuania and the consequent demographic changes in its cities and towns. Though the first general census of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of 1764 already registered their spread in new areas (present Lithuania), but even in the second half of the 18th century we cannot definitely speak about the spread of Jews in the entire GDL or their settlement in many Lithuanian cities and towns. According to preliminary calculations, in the second half of the 18th century there were approximately 1.100 settlements with the status of a city or town in the entire territory of the GDL,[33] whereas in the first general census of Jews of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, as few as 422 communities of various size[34] and different place in the structure of Jewish self-government were registered. In other words, Jews lived only in one third of cities and towns, and in earlier periods these numbers must have been smaller. Bishop of Samogitia Motiejus Valančius (1801–75) in his "Booklet of Grown-Up Persons" presented a list of all places in Samogitia not yet inhabited by Jews.[35]

The census of 1764 already reflects the change of the centres of attraction. In the *wojewodstwos* of Breść and Nowogródek, favoured by Jews since the earliest times, their number was smaller than in the newly emerging centres of attraction: Troki *wojewodstwo* (21,19% of the total number of Jews) with Grodno *powiat*, traditionally densely inhabited by Jews, Wilno *wojewodstwo* (17,49%) or even Samogitia (9,79%).[36] The attraction of Troki *wojewodstwo* was determined by the fact that until the middle of the 17th century as much as 45% of all privileged cities and towns in the present

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[33] This is the number of towns of the Great Duchy of Lithuania before the partitions. Baliulis A., Meilus E. (eds.), *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės kasdienis gyvenimas : Lietuvos istorijos skaitinių chrestomatija* (Vilnius: 2001): 461.

[34] These and other data are presented in the article according to the research of the sources of the Jewish censuses of 1764–65 carried out by the author. More see in Verbickienė J., doctoral thesis *Jews in the Society of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: Aspects of Cohabitation*, submitted at Vilnius University, 2004.

[35] Valančius M., *Paaugusių žmonių knygelė* (Kaunas: 1920): 39–40.

[36] Cf. in the Breść *wojewodstwo* lived 13,85%, in Nowogródek – 13,31%, in Minsk – 9,03% of the total number of Jews of the GDL. These data are presented according to the research of the sources of the Jewish censuses of 1764–65 carried out by the author. More see Verbickienė J., *Jews in the Society of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania*.

territory of Lithuania were concentrated there. The same tendencies remained urgent
in the 18th century, when Jews settled in Wilno and Troki *wojewodstwos* and in
Samogitia. Until that time in these areas the densest network of towns of the GDL
had been formed (in the late 18th century as much as 77% of all Samogitian cities
and towns enjoyed market privileges, and respectively Troki *wojewodstwo* – 93%,
and Wilno – 73%).[37] The latter fact allows us to assert that with the emergence of
possibilities of wider spread, Jews began to concentrate in the economically strongest
wojewodstwos of the country.

The analysis of the data of the census shows that while settling in the present territory
of Lithuania, Jews gave preference to cities and towns, which already had Jewish
communities. As a result, several distinct centres of attraction were distinguished,
and in some towns large Jewish communities were formed. For example, in five (of
total 28) communities with more than one thousand members (Jurbork (Jurbarkas),
Rosiene (Raseiniai), Kielmy (Kelmė), Kiejdany, Kroże (Kražiai))[38] in Samogitia
almost one half of the Jews living in these *wojewodstwos* were concentrated; one
third of all Jews living there belonged to the same number of large communities in
Wilno *wojewodstwo*. The concentration of Jews in large urban centres was typical
of all Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, in which even 53% of Jews lived in large
communities having from 501 to 1.000 and more than 1.000 members; only 20%
lived in medium communities (from 301 to 500 members), and approximately 26% –
in small communities with less than 100 members.[39] Though small communities
(less than 300 members) constituted the majority (ca. 59% of the total number of
communities), for example, in Lithuania only one third of all Jews registered in
the population census belonged to them.[40] Meanwhile, in the western regions of the
GDL, where the number of communities was smaller (ca. 42% of all communities
existing in the country), the larger part of all Jews (ca. 48%) lived.[41]

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[37] Meilus E., "Lietuvos miestų ir miestelių išsidėstymo raida (17 a. antroje pusėje – 18 a.)",
Lietuvos TSR aukštųjų mokyklų mokslo darbų rinkinys. Urbanistika ir rajoninis planavimas,
15, *Lietuvos teritorijos apgyvendinimo raida* (1988): 71, 74.

[38] The data were established referring to the documents of the census of Samogitian Jews;
Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas, "*Archives of the History of the Lithuanian State*"
(hereinafter referred to as LVIA), Senieji aktai (Early Acts, hereinafter referred to as SA),
b. 3738.

[39] Leszczyński A., *Sejm Żydów Korony 1623-1764* (Warszawa: 1994): 45.

[40] Verbickienė J., *Jews in the Society of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania*.

[41] The data are presented referring to the sources of the 1764–65 census of Polish-Lithuanian
Jews: LVIA, SA, b. 3730, 3726, 3727, 3732, 3733, 3734, 3738, 3739, 3740, 3741, 3742, 3745,
3751, 3749.
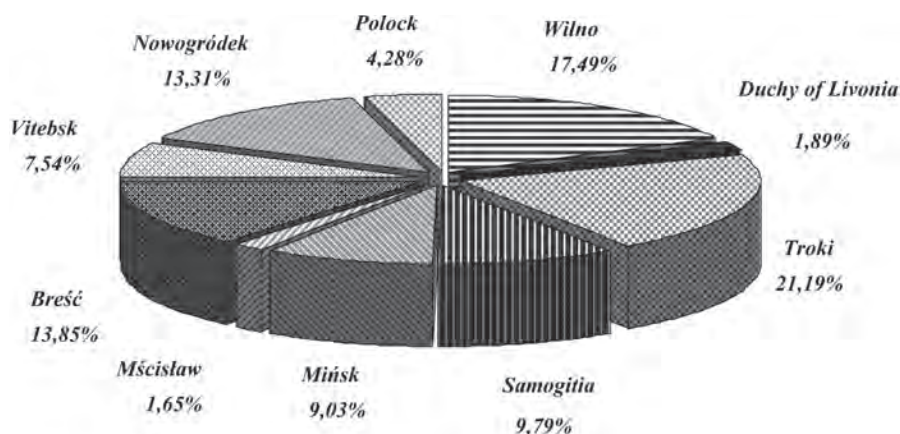
Scheme 1.1. Distribution of the number of Jews in the wojewodstwos of the GDL (1764/ 65)[42]
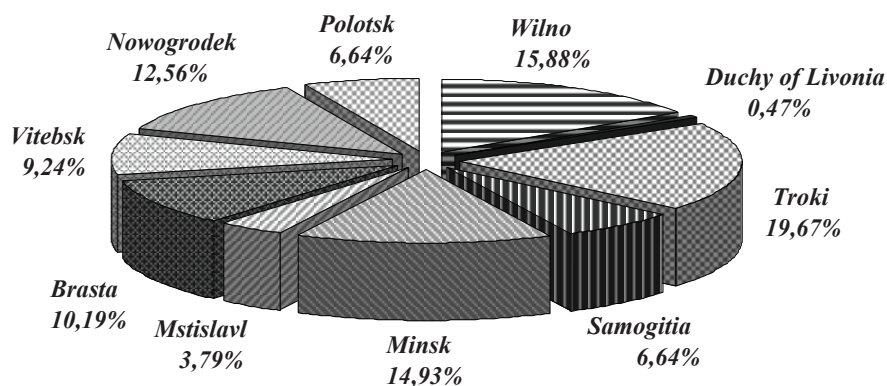
Scheme 1.2. Distribution of the Jewish communities in the wojewodstwos of the GDL [43]

While comparing the new regions of Jewish settlement with the earlier inhabited eastern and south-western parts of the state, one can see an obvious tendency that a smaller part of Jews lived in the already existing large communities; on the other

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[42] The scheme has been compiled referring to the research of the sources of the 1764–65 census of the Polish-Lithuanian Jews; more see in Verbickienė J., *Jews in the Society of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania*.

[43] The scheme has been compiled referring to the research of the 1764–65 census of Polish-Lithuanian Jews; more see in Verbickienė J., *Jews in the Society of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania*.

hand, in *powiats* of these regions the number of large communities was smaller by almost one half than in the present territory of Lithuania. In the second half of the 18th century, Jews settled in towns evenly in the entire territory of the GDL, or Jews looking for new possibilities of activity in towns or villages became members of the already existing large communities. In many cases, in the region of arrested spread of Jews till the 18th century, private towns that admitted Jews already in the 17th century (e.g. Kiejdany, Birże (Biržai), Wiżuny (Vižuonai), Stare Żagory (Senoji Žagarė)) became the major centres of attraction. In these towns the life of Jews was sanctioned by privileges, with an established order of relations with Christians in the town.

Meanwhile, the policy of the owners of the towns and cities that attracted Jews with new possibilities, but did not have Jewish communities, was often not consistent with regard to Jews. Evidently, the burghers who had taken into account the experience of other towns were quite active, while part of the cities and towns in present Lithuania did not agree with the settlement of Jews in their territory and even suburbs.[44] For example, in the 18th century in Władislawów (since 1934 – Kudirkos Naumiestis), in almost equal intervals of 20 years permission for Jews to live in the town alternated with prohibitions from settling not only in the town, but also in the suburbs and environs. The inconsistent and ambiguous policy of the owners of towns and cities with regard to Jews shows that while the towns were undergoing stagnation, Jews were allowed to live in many towns and cities of present Lithuania not of good will, but because of the obvious need for town rehabilitation.

An example of the limitation of Jewish settlement and inconsistent policy with regard to Jews is the privileges of Jewish settlement in Władislawów. In 1643, upon granting the Magdeburg rights to the city, at the burghers' request Queen Cecilia Renata included a prohibition, "by no means to allow Jews to live (except markets and fairs, when they come to the city with their goods)… in the city itself, as well as in its suburbs and environs".[45] August II of Saxonia, while rehabilitating Władislawów (1724),[46] allowed Jews to settle there, but exactly two decades later, upon reconfirming the privileges granted to the town, the former prohibition by Cecilia Renata was repeated.[47] In 1766, in Stanislaw August Poniatowsky's confirmation of privileges for Władislawów, clear limits of the established Jewish living quarter were already

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[44] E. Meilus indicated the resistance of burghers to Jewish settlement as one of the reasons arresting Jewish settlement in Samogitia (before the 1730s–50s); see Meilus E., *Žemaitijos kunigaikštystės miesteliai* 48. According to G. Błaszczyk's data, until the middle of the 17th century Jews in Samogitia lived only in 23 houses in different towns and cities (Błaszczyk G., „Liczebność Żydów na Żmudzi" vol. 1: 30).

[45] *Lietuvos magdeburginių miestų privilegijos ir aktai*, vol. 2 (Vilnius: 1997) (hereinafter referred to as LMMPA), No. 125.

[46] Ibid. No. 130; *Lietuvos Metrika* (hereinafter referred to as LM), Knyga 163, L. 30–31.

[47] LMMPA, vol. 2, No. 131.

mentioned, and places where they could be allowed to live were discussed.[48] The permission granted to Jews to settle in the emptying Wielona (Veliuona) (1715) well illustrates a group of reasons that opened new possibilities for the spread of Jews: "none of the Christians… dare or can settle here or build houses due to unrest and turmoil, …thus, since another way of settling… this town cannot be found, though Jews are not allowed to live here according to an old custom, we consider it proper, as *parcendo tempori et necesitati publicae*, that in this town of Wielona heterodox Jews arriving from any place… should establish a new colony on burghers' plots."[49]

The forms of the local Jewish living space were established with regard to the functions attributed to Jews by the Christian part of society. The conditions of settlement for the Jews rehabilitating the emptying towns and cities in the 18th century were different than for Jews-competitors one or two centuries earlier. The processes of Jewish spread in the present territory of Lithuania in the early 18th century gave the first impetus for this urbanistic situation, which can still be observed in Lithuanian towns. Their Jewish heritage is concentrated in the central part of the towns, around the market square.

The Jewish living space and restrictions of their spread

One may distinguish several forms of the Jewish living space typical of the towns of the GDL in different periods: (1) unlimited living space; (2) a Jewish quarter in the town, when along with the presence of a more concentrated part of Jews, part of the community is spread in other areas of the town; (3) prohibition to settle, or expulsion of the existing community – a town without Jews; (4) with certain reservations one could distinguish one more form of limiting Jewish settlement in towns: without limiting their settlement or spread, Jewish economic activity of any kind was strictly limited or even prohibited in the town ("should not have… any trade"[50]). Mixed limitations

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[48] "Forever we confirm the plots and buildings on Market Square and two streets, i.e. High Street and Kowno Street, acquired [by Jews]" (15 11 1766) – ibid., No. 132.

[49] LMMPA, vol. 2, No. 74. There are more analogous remarks, e.g. in 1724 in Władisławów and Wierżbołów (Virbalis; until the 18th century – Nowa Wola), Jews were allowed "to settle down and receive plots for the building of houses and inns", "so that the plots would not stay empty and taxes to the Republic, as well as the *starosta*'s revenues would not disappear"; LM, Knyga 164, L. 30–31.

[50] *Археографический сборник документов*, т. 3 (1867), № 121. Correspondingly, in 1737 the settlement of Jews in Janiszki (Joniškis) and Radziwiliszki (Radviliškis) was sanctioned without the right to trade. In 1761 and 1762 they were allowed to trade in fairs, but forbidden to sell spirits (Tyla A., Miškinis A., "Joniškis", *Lietuvos TSR urbanistikos paminklai*, 4 (Vilnius: 1981): 86).

of both the living space and economic activity were applied in many towns,[51] and the burghers regarded these fields as closely interrelated.

As one can judge from the 16th–18th century sources, even with the presence of large communities in towns, the Jewish living space tended to be limited by a narrow quarter of one or, at most, three streets. The place for the quarter was allotted on more remote streets, though often leading to the market or not very far from it. Jews did not avoid settling in the part allotted to them, but also sought other means of spreading in the town: they settled on the streets surrounding the quarter, the main streets or market. In addition to the quarter more densely inhabited by Jews (in which Christians also lived), spacious *jurydykas* of the church and the nobility became another place of Jewish concentration in towns. In towns of the GDL with quite developed parts outside the town jurisdiction, the process of spread of Jews, regardless of burghers' initiatives, became uncontrollable. The attempts of weak towns to control the spread of Jews did not correspond to the actual possibilities of putting them into life.

Jurydyka, which was considered one of the features of a town's weakness, became a reserve of Jewish settlement in inner towns uncontrolled by burghers, which in its turn created favourable conditions for Jews to live outside their quarter.[52] *Jurydykas* were used in expanding the living space, particularly in settling in more lucrative places of the town. As one can judge from the examples of Jewish settlement in towns, *jurydykas* (of the *starosta*, nobility or church) were the simplest way for Jews to concentrate in the town, without having permission or an allotted part. For example, in 1593, when Jews received a privilege to settle in noblemen's houses (*jurydykas*)[53] in Wilno and buy them,[54] they spread in the city starting to live in rented buildings.[55] After an unsuccessful attempt to settle in the former territory of Kowno Castle, in the

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[51] A unique fact was that the limitations of economic activity were proclaimed also in those towns where Jews were allotted very few plots to live (e.g., in Orsza they were allowed to have only one *krom* (АВАК, т. 29 (1902), № 210). In Minsk Jewish trade could take place only in ten houses (*Собрание древних грамот и актов городов минской губернии, православных монастырей, церквей и по разным предметам* (Минск: 1848), № 158.).

[52] E.g., "Jews live in many houses and brick houses of dukes, monastic orders, landlords and noblemen" (АВАК, т. 20 (1893), № 315); in Breść the payment of *czynsz* was obligatory "from their plots to our treasury or town, or the person, on whose plot they live" (ibid., т. 5 (1871), № 507).

[53] In the second half of the 16th century S. Bershadsky acknowledged the increasing noblemen's *jurydykas* in Wilno as one of the most important conditions of Jewish settlement in the capital (Бершадский С., *История виленской еврейской общины*, 10–11 (1886): 137).

[54] АВАК, т. 29 (1902), № 243.

[55] On March 2, 1633 (a quarter was assigned for Wilno Jews on February 19, 1633) Wilno burghers complained that Jews "*contra iura et privilegia civitatis Vilnensis*, without the agreement of the Wilno magistrate, having rented premises as guests, engage in various businesses"; *Археографический сборник документов*, т. 4 (1867), № 50.

middle of the 18th century Kowno Jews defended their rights to live "*in loco Stabularum Nostrorum seu area Castrensi… starosta's jurydyka*".[56] Treaties signed "for ages" regarding the life of Jews in a *jurydyka,* upon the establishment of the annual *czynsz,* guaranteed the long-term expansion of the Jewish space in the city and a possibility of the community's increase and its more comfortable life. The existence of *jurydykas* was one of the most important reasons, regardless of the burghers' ingenuity, that condemned their initiatives to failure.

The treatment of the Jews concentrated in a *jurydyka* was determined by the city's inner needs and interests, the chosen forms of the spread of Jews and their combinations; however, the burghers rarely dared to take sanctions against the Jews living in a *jurydyka*. One of exceptional examples of this kind of relations was the events of 1753 in Kowno, when the city's *starosta* began to put into life the privileges granted to the city – a city without Jews: "he ordered those Jews to clear out of the market and all streets of Kowno… from the estates and plots of clergymen and laymen and the city".[57]

While gradually expanding the limits of their living space in towns, Jews assimilated the suburbs as well. If in 1690 the inventory list of the houses under the jurisdiction of the city and the *kahal* of Wilno does not yet reveal the beginning of the process of adapting the city's suburbs to a wider spread of the community,[58] already in 1764–65 the sources of the census of Jews in the Commonwealth of Both Nations allow us to assert that this process was gradually gaining pace. At the time of the census, the close suburbs of Wilno, Antokol[59] and Sznipiszok had already become the places of life and business of a significant part of the Jews belonging to the Wilno *kahal*; Jews lived in several houses outside the Troki Gate of the city wall.[60] The progress and urgent character of this process is also proved by the data of the later 1784 census of Jews: apart from the aforementioned suburbs, Jews lived outside the gates of Milosierna, Tatarska and Rudnicka streets and in the close suburb of Lukiszki.[61]

As the settling of Jews in Kowno was complicated, their particularly large concentration emerged in the private suburban area of Wiliampol (Milkalnis Slabada).

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[56] Lietuvos Mokslų Akademijos biblioteka "*Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences*" (hereinafter referred to as MAB), Rankraščių skyrius (Manuscript Department, hereinafter referred to as RS), F. 198–154.

[57] MAB, RS, F. 198–154, L.1v.

[58] Ibid. vol. 10, No. 86.

[59] In 1766, the Bishop of Wilno allowed the Jews of Antokol to build a synagogue (АВАК, т. 13 (1886), № 73).

[60] More see in the documents of the 1764–65 census of Jews in Wilno *wojewodstwo*: LVIA SA b. 3727, 3730.

[61] Tamulynas A., "Demographic and Social-Professional Structure of the Jewish Community in Vilnius (Based on the Census of 1784)", Lempertas I. (ed.), *The Gaon of Vilnius and the Annals of Jewish Culture* (Vilnius: 1999): 335.

So many Jews were concentrated in private Wiliampol as did not even live in the city itself. The scale of their settling in the suburb is revealed by the description of the second part of the city parish on the other side of the Neris during the visitation of the Kowno Deanery in 1782: "Milkalnis is an estate with a small village, to this estate belongs the Jewish Slabada near the city, at the Neris river; more than 300[62] Jewish houses and a wooden synagogue are built there."[63]

A result of extreme initiatives of burghers (and not only them) was a town without Jews. Such turn in its development was possible either by prohibiting Jews from settling in the town (not letting them in), or by expelling the already existing community. It seems that there were certain precedents of effective elimination of Jews as competitors, when any Jewish economic activity was prohibited without limiting the settlement and spread of Jews in the town. Privileges of such content, most probably taking into account burghers' arguments, were granted even in the early 18th century, when the spread of Jews in the territory of present Lithuania was already encouraged.[64] Despite the fact that the means of controlling the Jewish living space were not effective, attempts to resort to an act well-known in Europe and Poland – to clear the town from Jews – were scarce. Very few such cases are known: in Merecz (Merkinė), 1646), Kowno (1682 and 1753)[65] and Troki (1646).

The most impressive case was the expulsion of Jews from the latter town, achieved in 1646 by the Karaite community in Troki, which indicated the motives of economic nature.[66] After the success of this action initiated by Karaites (because of which Jews were banished from the town till the end of the 19th century, except in brief intervals), having realised its advantage, Christian burghers enthusiastically supported the Karaites, and together they controlled how the prohibition was applied.[67] The burghers of Żyrovicze protected against Jan Sobieski's privilege of 1684, prohibiting Jews not only from settling in the town, but also from "putting up for the night".[68] Though the history of settlement of the Kowno Jewish community still remains vague,[69] the

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[62] *Vyskupo Igno Jokūbo Masalskio Kauno dekanato vizitacija. 1782 m.* (Vilnius: 2001): 91.

[63] Ibid. 89.

[64] An example of such cases is the above-mentioned circumstances in Janiszki or Radziwiliszki.

[65] It is not clear if a Jewish community was formed in Kowno before the early 18th century; until that time individual Jews living in the city were periodically mentioned.

[66] "So that Jews would not be allowed to damage the Karaite trade in any way", АВАК, т. 29 (1902), № 4.

[67] August 5, 1824 – the complaint of Troki burghers and Karaites about the Jews who had settled in the town and their competition (MAB, RS, F. 301–162). Other sources address this problem as well: MAB, RS, F. 301–163, 164.

[68] *Регесты и надписи. Свод материалов для истории евреев в России (80–1800)* (Санкт-Петербург: 1910), т. 2 , № 1125.

[69] On the analysis of the main sources of the problem, see Urbaitytė R., "Kauno miesto santykiai su žydais 18 amžiuje".

city's society should be considered as intolerant of Jews. On April 6, 1682,[70] while protecting the city's privileges, Jewish settlement was prohibited, and the privilege obtained from the Chancellery of the GDL (February 7, 1682) allowing unlimited Jewish trade in Kowno, was cancelled.[71]

Regulation of the living space in towns

The means of controlling the spread of Jews were persistently sought in the town environment. The analysis of sources allows us to distinguish the following most frequent means of limiting the Jewish living space: establishing the existing state of Jewish spread as not to be subject to change in the future (*status quo*),[72] distinguishing the streets on which Jews were not allowed to live (mostly representational, and the market square), prohibiting them to acquire real estate under the town's jurisdiction. In many cases these limitations were applied as additional means to control the spread of Jews outside the limits of the quarter already allotted to them.

Burghers were particularly adamant in applying the prohibition for Jews to live and engage in business on the main streets and markets of towns, and this prohibition remained in force till the late 18th century, and in the case of Wilno, even till the middle of the 19th century. For example, the Jews of Nowogródek were forcibly expelled from the street where they had settled without permission, as "we do not want to have Jews among Christians on Polish Border Street" (1564);[73] in Grodno Jews were unwanted on Castle (*Zamkowa*) Street[74] ("we want to have it free from the settling [of Jews]", 1633). Officials of the Birże court received an instruction from Krzysztow Radziwiłł (1609), which ordered to move the Jews from the market square, should some rich merchants want to settle in their houses. Having received remuneration for the buildings, a Jew had to settle in the part assigned to the community.[75] With the mediation of the Hetman of the GDL and the keeper of Breść and Mohilev Leon Sapiega, Sigismund Waza

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[70] MAB, RS, F. 198–134.

[71] Jews had already begun to settle on the plots of land in front of the Kowno Castle; more see MAB, RS, F. 198–130, L. 1.

[72] For example, Stephen Bathory, who confirmed the settling of Jews in Mohilev, supported the burghers' request not to allow Jews "to settle in houses". By this decision (of March 5, 1585), newly arriving Jews were prohibited from settling in the town, and those who had settled there before the granting of the privilege could stay to live in the town (*Археографический сборник документов*, т. 3 (1867), № 153.

[73] *Собрание древних грамот и актов городов минской губернии*, № 21.

[74] АВАК, т. 1 (1865), № 22.

[75] Kiaupa Z., Kiaupienė J. (eds.), *Instrukcijos feodalinių valdų administracijai Lietuvoje XVII–XIX a.* (Vilnius: 1985), No. 5, Art. 7.

agreed (1626) to move Jews from the Mohilev market. They were assigned plots of the size equal to the one they had "on the street where their synagogue is located, so that they would build houses all together rather than individually."[76]

The struggle against the spread of Jews in the city that lasted for more than two centuries was unsuccessful[77] for the burghers and magistrate of Wilno. "Since the number of Jews in Wilno increased greatly, [they] cannot fit… on these narrow streets",[78] on March 29, 1742 by a special privilege of the grand duke, "while administering real justice, in all Our city and its suburbs, except two public streets: one from High Gates [Ostra Brama] to the Cathedral,[79] and the other from the Troki Gate as far as to [the Church of] St. John,"[80] all Jews were allowed to settle.[81] Provided that in the future Jews should not be allowed to build houses, to buy or rent premises on these two main streets of the city,[82] property was left for those Jews who had acquired it before the announcement of this prohibition.[83] It was a case when, having failed to control the spread of Jews in the city and even having allowed them to settle there without limitations, the city persistently sought to retain the "purity" of at least its representational streets. Putting into life the prohibition for Jews to settle and make business on the prestigious streets undoubtedly hindered their economic activity. The protection of the main streets and the market from Jews resulted in various solutions of this problem, e.g. the Jews of Kiejdany, who were not allowed to live on the streets of the town and the market, were allowed to rent burghers' trade counters and shops in these parts of the town.[84]

One of the reserves of the spread of Jews outside the allotted quarter (in addition to *jurydykas*) was acquisition or rent of property under the town's jurisdiction, or keeping or taking over of mortgage in the case of an insolvent debtor. For the first time (in the known acts) burghers' approval of the acquisition of houses or land under the town's jurisdiction by Jews was legitimised in 1569. Then, upon granting self-government to

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[76] *Белорусский архив древних грамот*, 1 (Москва: 1824), № 32; in Kretynga (Kretinga) Jews were prohibited from repairing and building houses in the market square, "where craftsmen should be" (1771; LMMPA, vol. 2, No. 14).

[77] Documents regulating the life of Jews in Wilno were thoroughly discussed by S. Bershadsky (Бершадский С., *История виленской еврейской общины*, 5, 6 (1887)).

[78] MAB, RS, F. 105–652, L. 15.

[79] Presently Aušros vartų, Didžioji and Pilies streets.

[80] Presently Trakų, Dominikonų, Šv. Jonų streets.

[81] MAB, RS, F. 105–652, L. 15.

[82] The 1823 prohibition for Jews to live on these streets was repeated in tsarist Russia, and not lifted until 1861; Дубнов С., "Запрещение евреям жить на главных улицах города Вильны (1832)", *Пережитое*, 1 (Санкт-Петербург: 1909): 8.

[83] Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė J., Petrašiūnaitė L., *Vilniaus geto ieškojimai* 373.

[84] "Supplement to the Privileges of the Town of Kėdainiai, March 9, 1666", *Археографический сборник документов*, т. 8 (1870), № 74.

the town of Peszczatka (where Jews were prohibited from administering real estate), burghers were left a right to decide – to allow or not allow Jews to acquire houses and land. Having received the burghers' approval regarding the acquisition of property, Jews were obliged to obey the Magdeburg law (sic!).[85] In this way the formation of a *jurydyk*a on a plot administered by a Jew was eliminated. In the legal, obligatory or taxation respect the town remained homogeneous.

The relation of real estate and town taxes, in other words, the loss of a taxpayer, when property was transferred to a person without the status of a burgher, drew Jews closer to the noblemen or clergymen who had *libertacja* (*libertatio*). For example, the *horodnyczy* of Minsk was not allowed to buy a house in Minsk on the grounds that "highborn noblemen and heterodox Jews cannot buy either plots of land or houses in the city" (1679);[86] in an assembly of Janiszki burghers it was decided that "[burghers] should not sell any of their [real] estate… to noblemen, priests and Jews, as it is a great loss for the city in payment of taxes (April 15, 1737).[87] As one can see from the presented examples, the limitations for Jews to acquire property under the town's jurisdiction referred to the problem of not only controlling their spread, but also that of the town taxes.

The control of the spread of Jews in private towns was also inefficient. For example, it was indicated[88] that in 1666 in Kiejdany there were few Jews living outside their quarter, who had Bogusław Radziwiłł's permission to administrate the mortgaged property of burghers. It was expected that in three years these Jews would gradually move to the quarter allotted for the community. However, already in 1686 Kiejdany burghers compiled a rather long list of the Jews living outside the quarter and running the former property of burghers. The burghers, having emphasised the threat of their own expulsion from the town, indicated the same centres of attraction for Jews as in many other towns: "They are buying the best houses in the market and main streets of the town."[89] The property and economic relations, as well as those related with administrating the town's property between burghers and Jews rising in private and state (royal) towns obstructed the practical accomplishment of the idea of a closed Jewish quarter lucrative to burghers.

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[85] In the second half of the 18th century, the court of commissioners ascribed the Jews having any property under the town's jurisdiction in Pińsk (acquired "*by illegal means, their typical lies and Jewish persuasions*") to the town's jurisdiction (АВАК, т. 7 (1874), № 42). A possible judicature of a Jew at the Magdeburg court (under the Statute) was provided for in general Jewish privileges.

[86] *Собрание древних грамот и актов городов минской губернии*, № 170.

[87] LMMPA, vol. 1, No. 76.

[88] *Археографический сборник документов*, т. 8 (1870), № 78.

[89] Vilniaus Universiteto biblioteka "*Library of Vilnius University*", Rankraščių skyrius (Manuscript Department), F. 4–(A 210) 16486, L. 1v.

The problem of "*Jewish streets*", as an expression of non-mixing and isolated life of Christians and Jews, remained unsolved in the towns of the GDL. The long-term process of regulating the Jewish living space in towns embraced various segments of coexistence of Jews and burghers – separation of Jews and Christians, unfavourable images and fears, economic competition and seeking of profit, when in the hope of making a profit prohibitions were evaded. The phobia of impoverishment of Christians, having emerged in towns and quite widespread, manifested itself in the form of arguments for limiting the spread of Jews.

Conclusions

The means of controlling the spread of Jews in urban environment were not effective in state or private towns, but their nature undoubtedly influenced the main tendencies of the formation of the Jewish living space. Without regard to the largeness of the community, there were attempts to put Jews into a quarter of one or at most three streets. A place for it was allotted on remoter streets, often leading to the market or not very far from it. The Jewish living space in the towns of the GDL was not homogeneous; there were attempts to combine its different forms: a quarter of several streets, streets most densely (but not exclusively) inhabited by Jews, their spread in other more lucrative parts of the town (mainly in *jurydykas*), and since the second half of the 18th century – in city suburbs. On the state scale the spread of Jews was not even, and was determined by social, economic initiatives and those coming from town owners or burghers. Specifically, when Jews were assigned the function of urbanizers and revivers of towns, their settlement in newly opened areas was less controlled.

A more densely inhabited quarter was only one of the forms of the Jewish living space, while the actual Jewish living space did not fit inside its boundaries. The nature of economic activity conditioned the separation of the Jewish living space even in village settlements, when those who worked in estates declared their belonging to the communities of towns or cities, in which they in fact did not live.

THE SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY OF A *SHTETL*: JEWS AND LITHUANIANS IN DARBĖNAI, 1760–1940

ERIC L. GOLDSTEIN

On June 14, 1908, readers of the *Forverts* (Forward), New York's largest Yiddish daily newspaper, were greeted by bold headlines announcing a "DREADFUL SLAUGHTER OF JEWS" in Darbėnai, a small Lithuanian town located along the Baltic coastal strip near the German border. According to the front-page story, which quoted a cable received from Berlin, hundreds of heavily armed "Russian" peasants attacked members of the Darbėnai Jewish community and set fire to eighty houses and two synagogues. During what was described as a bloody pogrom, three Jews were killed, twenty-eight wounded, and approximately 600 left homeless and "scattered in the streets among the ruins." The cable also described how the Russian authorities failed to intervene during the massacre to protect local Jews from the "hooligans and their devilish work." Editors of the *Forverts* added rhetorical flourish to the report by remarking how the "scenes of Kishinev, Odessa, Gomel, Zhitomir, Białystok, [and] Siedlic ha[d] been refreshed in the unfortunate little town." Like these other famous examples of anti-Jewish brutality, they wrote, the pogrom in Darbėnai revealed both "inhuman violence…on the part of the murderers" and a policy of "standing by and calmly observing on the part of the police."[1]

In the days following the front-page article about the violence in Darbėnai, the *Forverts* began to step back from its initial report, questioning the reliability of the Berlin cable that had announced the pogrom. Some of the other dispatches coming from Europe mentioned only a fire in the town, not an anti-Jewish riot, and two reports in English-language papers included fanciful details that tended to cast doubt as to whether a pogrom had indeed taken place. On June 19, the *Forverts* finally confirmed through foreign contacts that the report had been erroneous. The town had suffered a disastrous fire, but not a pogrom.[2]

The *Forverts* claimed that the false report regarding Darbėnai was the result of a mistake made by a German Jewish organization that was providing aid to the victims of the fire. But the emphatic language of the cable, as well as the speed with

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[1] *Forverts* (New York, June 14, 1908): 1. See also a similar report in the English-language *American Hebrew* (New York, June 19, 1908).

[2] *Forverts* (June 15, 1908): 1, 4; June 19, 1908: 1. See also the coverage in the *Yidishes Tageblat* [Jewish Daily] (New York, June 14, 1908) 1; June 19, 1908: 1. Unlike the *Forverts*, the *Tageblat* had cast doubt on the report from its first appearance.

which the *Forverts* proclaimed the "pogrom" in Darbėnai to be a second Kishinev, suggest that the episode was not simply a matter of erroneous reporting. First of all, the initial report of a pogrom was too detailed and dramatic to have resulted from a simple miscommunication. Second, the editors of the *Forverts*, most of whom were of Lithuanian origin, ought to have known that the report from Germany contained many problematic details that did not comport with the social and demographic realities of the region. The non-Jewish farmers in the area around Darbėnai were not "Russians," as the cable had claimed, but ethnic Lithuanians. Moreover, mass violence against Jews in the small towns of Lithuania, although not unprecedented, was much less common than in the larger urban centers of southern Russia, where social upheaval and economic competition spurred anti-Jewish sentiment.[3] The episode revealed not only the monolithic image of Eastern European Jews as an ever-persecuted people, but also the strong emotional pull this image had on German and American Jews, who were willing to advance it even in the face of questionable evidence.

Jews in Western countries who were primed to see the pogrom victim as the typical Eastern European Jew were in part responding to their own needs as they went about integrating into their host societies. On the one hand, they required an image of Eastern Europe that reflected favorably on the comparatively free and enlightened communities in which they lived. In the case of recent immigrants from Eastern Europe, a focus on persecution in the "old home" was a justification for having made the difficult decision to leave. On the other hand, images that emphasized persecution in Eastern Europe also – ironically – betrayed an element of nostalgia for pre-immigration experiences and for pre-modern Jewish life more generally. Not that the emancipated Jews of Germany or the United States envied the sorry plight of their brethren living under the yoke of Tsarist rule. Yet a Jewish society facing constant hostility from the outside world was also one where social boundaries were clearly drawn and where individuals had relatively few questions about where they stood in the wider world. For those struggling with the rigors and uncertainties of acculturation and integration in the West, it was attractive to imagine a place where the lines between Jews and non-Jews were self-evident.

The cultural and emotional factors that helped produce the false report of a pogrom in Darbėnai in 1908, then, were reflective of the larger forces shaping a stereotypical image of the *shtetl* that had existed among many Jews since the late 19th century. According to historian Adam Teller, the *shtetl* has usually been perceived in popular

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[3] Staliūnas D., "Anti-Jewish Disturbances in the North-Western Provinces in the Early 1880s", *Eastern European Jewish Affairs*, 34 (Winter 2004): 119–138. For an account of a rare pogrom in the small Lithuanian town of Vaškiai, see Žaltauskaitė V., "Smurtas prieš žydas Šiaurės Lietuvoje 1900 metais. Įvykiai ir interpretacijos", Sirutavičius V., Staliūnas D. (eds.), *Kai ksenofobija virsta prievarta: Lietuvių ir žydų santykių dinamika XIX a.–XX a. pirmojoje pusėje* (Vilnius: 2005): 79–98.

Jewish consciousness as "a quintessentially Jewish place where Yiddish was the dominant language, life was lived to Jewish rhythms, and the outside, non-Jewish world impinged only rarely (and then often negatively, to persecute the Jews)."[4] This image was not only prevalent among Western Jews, but also among the modernizing class of Eastern European Jews, such as the early producers of modern Yiddish literature, who were responsible for its wide dissemination.[5] Ultimately, the view that the *shtetl* was a place where Jews lived in stark spatial and social isolation from non-Jews, and where occasional external assaults were the bitter counterpoint to a vibrant internal cultural and religious life, filtered down into scholarly accounts of Eastern European Jewish life as well.[6]

In recent decades, scholars of Eastern European Jewry have begun to correct this mythologized view of the *shtetl* through a series of specialized articles and monographs based on archival research. Moshe Rosman and Gershon Hundert, in their studies of 18th century private towns and Jewish-magnate relations in Poland, for example, showed *shtetl* Jews of the period not only to have been important players in Polish society, but also to have wielded significant social and economic power in their extensive interactions with non-Jews.[7] While some works on the *shtetl* have begun to separate myth from reality, however, what is striking is the number of contemporary works that continue to emphasize the *shtetl* as a closed community with little significant interaction between Jews and non-Jews. Yaffa Eliach's monumental history of the Lithuanian town of Eišiškės (in Yiddish, Eishyshok) includes full chapters on the interior facets of *shtetl* life like the bathhouse and the cemetery, but does not devote a single chapter to the theme of Jewish-gentile relations, either positive or negative.[8] Ben-Cion Pinchuk, while acknowledging that *shtetl* life was not as internally cohesive

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[4] Teller A., "The Shtetl as an Arena for Polish-Jewish Integration in the Eighteenth Century", *Polin*, 17 (2004): 25.

[5] Miron D., "The Literary Image of the Shtetl", *Jewish Social Studies*, 1 (1995): 1–43; Roskies D., "The Shtetl in Jewish Collective Memory", *The Jewish Search for a Useable Past* (Bloomington, IN: 1999): 41–66.

[6] The most famous text that conveys this image of the *shtetl* is Zborowski M., Herzog E., *Life is With People: The Culture of the Shtetl* (New York: 1995), originally published in 1952.

[7] Rosman M. J., *The Lord's Jews: Magnate-Jewish Relations in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth During the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: 1990); Hundert G. D., *The Jews in a Polish Private Town: The Case of Opatów in the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: 1992). Other works that revise the traditional view of the *shtetl* include Rothenberg J., "Demythologizing the Shtetl", *Midstream*, 27 (Mar. 1981): 25–31; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett B., introduction to Zborowski M., Herzog E., *Life is With People,* ix-xviii; Estraikh G., Krutikov M. (eds.), *The Shtetl: Image and Reality* (Oxford: 2000), and Polonsky A.(ed.), *The Shtetl: Myth and Reality* (Oxford: 2004), published as *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, 17 (2004).

[8] Eliach Y., *There Once Was a World: A 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshok* (Boston: 1998)*.*

as popular portrayals have suggested, has focused on the Jewish majorities in many towns to argue that the *shtetl* was essentially a "Jewish town", devoid of meaningful interethnic and inter-religious contact. According to this view, if Jews enjoyed a measure of status and authority in these towns, it was only because they succeeded in creating their own "Jewish islands in a non-Jewish ocean."[9]

Part of the reason these views have continued to flourish is that little research of the type undertaken by Rosman and Hundert – based on intensive work in relevant archives – has yet been done on *shtetls* during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the period when Russia was the dominant power controlling the fate of Eastern European Jewry. Because Jewish political and social status is seen as having declined precipitously under Russian rule, there has been much room, even for those who accept the revised portrait of *shtetl* life in 18th-century Poland, to believe that the relatively powerful role *shtetl* Jews played in the broader society and the extensive contacts they had with non-Jews during that period must have declined as well. Indeed, there is still a widespread belief that *shtetl* Jews settled into a pattern of isolation during the Russian period, one that protected them from the currents of the modernizing society around them and that persisted through the political changes of the interwar period until the bulk of such Jewish communities were destroyed in the Holocaust.[10]

The present article utilizes the wealth of material available in Lithuanian archives, as well as some more conventional sources, to reconstruct the social geography of the town of Darbėnai and to gain an understanding of Jewish-Lithuanian relations unclouded by the mythologized image of the *shtetl*. By social geography, I mean the way in which the town itself – its layout, architecture, the location of its institutions and the organization of its housing and population – can be read as a mirror of the social relations between the two dominant groups living there. The evidence points to a complex system of group relations, one in which Jews and Lithuanians occupied very distinctive roles and arenas, and yet one in which these two groups interacted to a far greater extent and in more important ways than previous scholarship on *shtetl* life has suggested. A picture also emerges of a Jewish population that – even in the face of legal and economic restrictions – often wielded significant social power in the *shtetl*, not because it was a sheltered "Jewish island", but because the concentration of Jews in the vital economic activities and their usefulness to succeeding ruling regimes often gave them natural advantages in the *shtetl* environment.

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[9] Pinchuck B.-C., *Shtetl Jews Under Soviet Rule: Eastern Poland on the Eve of the Holocaust* (Oxford: 1990): 16; and idem, "How Jewish was the Shtetl?", *Polin*, 17 (2004): 109–118.

[10] For a critique of this assumption, see Rothenberg J., "Demythologizing the Shtetl" 25–31; and Kassow S., "Communal and Social Change in the Polish Shtetl, 1900–1939", Dotterer R., Moore D. D. and Cohen S. M. (eds.), *Jewish Settlement and Community in the Modern World* (Selinsgrove: 1991): 56–92.

Though my observations about Jewish-Lithuanian relations are based on the evidence drawn from the physical environment, however, my approach takes particular note of change over time. Tracing the evolution of Darbėnai from the first arrival of Jews around 1760 through the years of Tsarist domination and the period of Lithuanian independence that ended in 1940, one can discern a dramatic shift in the place each group occupied in the town's landscape and social hierarchy, a shift that began with the end of serfdom in 1861 and increasingly favored the Lithuanians after the establishment of the Lithuanian Republic in 1918. These shifts suggest that the world of *shtetl* Jews was anything but stagnant during the 19th and 20th centuries, and that like their American and German brethren, they had their own difficult challenges of modernization to confront.

By no means is this portrait intended to claim any paradigmatic status for Darbėnai or to represent "*shtetl* life" as a unitary phenomenon. To the contrary, my contention is that *shtetls*, while perhaps sharing many features in common, were also different from one another and should be examined in a way that takes into consideration variations in size, regional setting, ethnic composition, and political and economic factors. Certainly, a study of Darbėnai will yield some insights about Jewish-gentile relations that are applicable to Lithuania as a distinct region.[11] But it will also push us to look beyond broad generalizations about Jewish persecution and the *shtetl* as an insular "Jewish town" to uncover a Jewish experience rooted in a particular setting and in the day-to-day activities of ordinary people.

Drawing and crossing lines

Darbėnai (in Yiddish, Dorbian) is mentioned in written sources as early as 1591 as a manor and a village located on state lands in Žemaitija (Samogitia), part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. During the 17th century, it functioned as an administrative center for a large estate encompassing the neighboring towns of Palanga and Šventoji, where fishing and amber-producing industries existed.[12] Apart from its administrative function – later lost, when Palanga became the estate center – Darbėnai itself was purely an agricultural settlement. The ruler of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, August II, granted Darbėnai marketing privileges in 1701, but apparently the privileges

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[11] Among the major works are Eidintas A., *Žydai, lietuviai ir holokaustas* (Vilnius: 2002), published in English as *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* (Vilnius: 2003); Truska L., *Lietuviai ir žydai nuo XIX a. pabaigos iki 1941 m. birželio* (Vilnius: 2005); idem, Vareikis V. (eds.), *Holokausto prielaidos: antisemitizmas Lietuvoje / The Preconditions for the Holocaust: Anti-Semitism in Lithuania* (Vilnius: 2004); Sirutavičius V., Staliūnas D. (eds.), *Kai ksenofobija virsta prievarta*.

[12] On Darbėnai as an estate center, see Elertas D., Vačiulytė L., "Amber Collecting Regulations in Coastal Lithuania until the Middle of the 19th c.", http://www.pgm.lt/Gintaras/elerto.en.htm.

were not exercised. Although Darbėnai was called a town as early as the 1730s, it was not until about three decades later, when the first Jews arrived, that the settlement was formally laid out as a town and took on trade functions.[13]

Jewish individuals lived in Žemaitija intermittently since the 1550s, but Jews did not arrive in particularly large numbers until the middle of the 18th century, when Western Lithuania was beginning to recover from a massive depopulation that had accompanied a series of wars and plagues. Landowners, anxious to reestablish trade and infuse new life into the towns they controlled, offered favorable conditions for Jewish settlement.[14] The welcoming of Jews to Darbėnai by the *starosta* of the Palanga estate, Count Eberhard Christoph Mirbach (1710–69), was calculated to take advantage of the town's neglected trade privilege and therefore to make the town more profitable. The first Jews probably arrived from Mirbach's nearby family estate, Laukžemė, where a small group of Jews had resided since the late 17th century.[15] These initial arrivals were also joined by Jews coming from other towns in Žemaitija, as well as from across the border in Prussia and from the neighboring Duchy of Kurland, where Jews faced obstacles to permanent settlement.[16] By 1764, there were twenty Jewish households – some with multiple families – in Darbėnai, and an additional four households in nearby villages that were under the jurisdiction of the Darbėnai Jewish community.[17]

Because of their distinct roles in the feudal economy, Jews and non-Jews occupied largely different spaces within the emerging landscape of Darbėnai. Most of the local Lithuanian peasants were engaged in agriculture for the benefit of the estate and lived in surrounding villages that were also part of the estate complex. Yet there was also a significant Lithuanian population within the town itself. When the town was first laid out in the middle of the 18th century, Lithuanian farmstead owners occupied about thirty small plots north and east of the town center. Jews, because of their association with trade and crafts, were given several plots around the newly created marketplace, where they were also given a plot for a synagogue. The marketplace was not totally in Jewish hands, however. According to the plan drawn in 1781 as part of the estate

[13] For the general background on the town, see Miškinis A., "Darbėnai", *Vakarų Lietuvos miestai ir miesteliai,* I (Vilnius: 2004): 56-75.

[14] See Meilus E., *Žemaitijos kunigaikštystės miesteliai XVII amžiaus II pusėje–XVIII amžiuje: Raida, gyventojai, amatai, prekyba* (Vilnius: 1997). For a summary in English, see idem, "The Small Towns of Žemaitija in the 17th and 18th Centuries", *Mare nostrum*, 1 (1999): 25–50.

[15] Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka "Library of Vilnius University", Manuscript Department, – Senieji aktai (Early Acts, hereinafter refered to as SA), F. 4, b. 12126, L. 32–33. On Mirbach, see *Deutschbaltisches Biographisches Lexikon, 1719–1960* (Köln/Vienna: 1970): 523.

[16] See *Jewish Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Courland." Kurland seems to have been a major point of origin for Jews coming to Darbėnai. See the Darbėnai revision list of 1816, Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas "Lithuanian State Historical Archive" (hereinafter to as LVIA), F. 515, ap. 25, b. 405, L. 39v.

[17] LVIA, b. 3725, L. 190–191.

inventory completed in that year, there were a few non-Jewish dwellings on the western side of the square and a large church on the southwest corner, as well as neighboring properties designated for church-owned buildings, such as a parsonage and a home for the sick and poor (*špitolė*). Still, the Jewish plots, located on the east side and the northern end of the west side of the marketplace, did make up one contiguous block.[18]

What the 1781 and subsequent estate inventories suggest is that Jews and Lithuanians in and around Darbėnai lived in distinct, but not totally separate spaces. Most Lithuanians lived in the outlying villages and most Jews lived in the town, but there were significant exceptions on both sides – the many Lithuanian farmsteads within the town and the presence of several Jewish households in the countryside, where Jews lived and worked mainly as tavern owners. In Darbėnai itself, while Jews clustered together, their close proximity to Lithuanian dwellings and institutions like the church must have meant that the two groups came into frequent contact and shared access to local resources like streams, lakes, mills, and forests.

The advent of Russian rule in 1795 had little impact on this basic pattern. As the town grew during the 19th century, both the Jewish and Lithuanian enclaves expanded while also becoming intertwined in more complex ways. By the 1870s and 1880s, there was still sufficient residential separation between Jews and Lithuanians for Tsarist records to refer to the distinct parts of town in which they lived. For example, an 1873 dispute over the ownership of local pasture land produced a town plan that showed the Lithuanian farmsteads clustered in the north and east sections of Darbėnai, but which left the center of town, where Jews lived, totally blank, since Jews had no relevance whatsoever to the disposition of pasture lands.[19] Similarly, when the center of the town burned in 1882 and was reconstructed, the surveyor of Kovno *gubernia* drafted a map showing the so-called "Jewish *platz*," including not only the Jewish sides of the marketplace but also the radiating streets of Laukžemė, Vaineikiai, and Skuodas, where many Jews lived. Although a few Lithuanians also lost property during the fire, the labeling of the map indicated the strong identification of the urban center with Jews.[20]

Yet, if distinct residential districts based on the distinct economic roles played by Jews and Lithuanians persisted through the 19th century, an 1816 inventory that lists Darbėnai residents house by house helps us understand the limits of residential segregation in the town. One the one hand, Jews did tend to live and work on separate

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[18] Lietuvos Mokslų Akademijos biblioteka "Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences" (hereinafter referred to as MAB), F. 11-43, Da-120.

[19] Lietuvos Valstybės Centrinis "Lithuanian Central State Archives" (hereinafter referred to as LCVA), F. 1250, ap. 3, b. 1238, L. 72.

[20] Kauno apskrities archyvas "Kaunas Regional Archives" (hereinafter referred to as KAA), F. I-51, ap. 5, b. 64, L. 11.

sides of the marketplace from Lithuanians, and on the radiating streets Jews usually occupied the plots closest to town, while Lithuanians held those further away where there was more farming land. In each of these locations, however, there was also a zone of contact where Jews lived next door to Lithuanians, and in some cases, where single Lithuanians or Jews lived between two members of the other group. The 1816 figures reveal that in that year, eight of the thirty-seven Jewish householders had one Lithuanian neighbor and four had two Lithuanian neighbors. (In addition, two Jews had one neighbor who was a member of the small German colony in the town).[21] Thus, 32% of the Jewish population in 1816 lived next door to Lithuanians, with the figure rising to 38% if we calculate the percentage of Jews living next to non-Jews of various nationalities. These zones of contact presumably increased during the early 20th century, when Jews expanded their area of residence onto the streets of Kretinga and Palanga on the south side of town, where previously only non-Jews had resided.[22]

Leaving residential patterns aside, it becomes apparent that the overlap between the Jewish and Lithuanian space was even greater in Darbėnai, when we consider the large number of economic interactions that took place in the course of a normal week, which brought large numbers of Jews and Lithuanians into each other's territory. The town's chief function as a marketing center meant that it relied on a steady influx of Lithuanian customers to patronize its stores and to buy and sell in the outdoor market stalls. Lithuanian townsmen and villagers patronized the Jewish stores, craft workshops and open-air stands on the marketplace, especially on the days when the market was held (see fig. 1.). Four annual fairs, one lasting two days, brought non-Jewish buyers from an even larger radius than the typical market day.[23] Market and fair days also filled the Jewish owned taverns with Lithuanian customers, who included not only men, but also entire families.[24]

Just as Lithuanians came to the Jewish-dominated urban center to buy goods and sell some of their own produce, they also regularly welcomed Jews who came to their villages to conduct business. By the middle of the 19th century, a large number of Darbėnai Jews worked as peddlers selling notions, household goods, fish and dairy products and buying up flax, rags, bones and animal hides from peasants. Many remained in the country during the entire week, subsisting on eggs and dairy products, eating bread provided by their customers, and sometimes even sleeping in

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[21] LVIA, F. 716, ap. 4, b. 126, L. 6–9.

[22] Interview with Ona Benetienė, in Ruzgailienė R., "Žydų masinės žudynės Darbėnų miestelyje, 1941–1944", unpublished paper, 2002, 16. The author thanks Ms. Ruzgailienė, librarian of the Darbėnai branch of Motiejus Valančius Public Library of the Kretinga District Municipality, for sharing this paper.

[23] *Памятная книжка Ковенской губернии на 1864 год.* (Ковно: 1864): 96. According to D. Afanasiev, there were five fairs in Darbėnai in 1861. See Афанасьев Д., *Материалы для географии и статистики России*, т. 11, *Ковенская губерния* (Санкт-Петербург: 1861): 739.

[24] On Jewish-owned taverns in Darbėnai, see *Vilniaus žinios*, Mar. 29, Apr. 2, 1905: 3.

Fig. 1. The marketplace of Darbėnai, seen here c. 1915, was one of the main points of contact between the Jews and Lithuanians from the town and surrounding region. With its prominent church situated among Jewish owned shops and taverns, it also reflected the complex social landscape of the town (Photo courtesy of Hagai Yacobi, Karmei Yosef, Israel).

non-Jewish homes or barns.[25] In addition to the peddlers, a small number of Jews made their permanent residence in nearby villages, such as Šlaveitai, Senoji Įpiltis, Naujoji Įpiltis, Sukė, Kalgriaužiai and Laukžemė, despite periodic efforts of the Tsarist officials to expel them.[26] Aside from running inns for travelers between Kurland and points south, these Jews were also involved in managing estates and in other rural occupations such as dairy farming and shingle making.[27]

[25] For a portrait of peddling in this region of Lithuania, see a memoir from the nearby town of Židikai in the archives of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (New York), American Autobiographies Collection (RG 102), box 5, folder 33, 7–8. On peddling among European Jews more generally, see Diner H., "Entering the Mainstream of Modern Jewish History: Peddlers and the American Jewish South", *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History* (Hanover, NH: 2006): 91–92.

[26] See, for example, the Darbėnai Jewish birth records from 1885–90, LVIA, F. 1226, ap. 1, b. 1319.

[27] For professions, see the 1892 box tax list, KAA, F. I-49, ap. 1, b. 1892; and the memoir by Yitzchak Yacobi about Jewish dairy farmers near Darbėnai in Benjamin R. Guss' oral history file, Saint John Jewish Historical Museum (Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada). For background, see Abramowicz H., "Rural Jewish Occupations in Lithuania", in idem, *Profiles of a Lost World: Memoirs of Eastern European Jewish Life Before World War II* (Detroit: 1999): 41–76.

Business brought Jews and Lithuanians into personal contact in still other ways. Jews held mortgages on some of the local non-Jewish farmsteads and made regular visits there to collect their payments.[28] Some were also involved in early forms of manufacture and employed non-Jewish laborers to assist them. Ayzik Wolffsohn (1811–92), whose son David (1856–1914) later succeeded Theodore Herzl as the head of the World Zionist Organization, owned a snuff manufactory in Darbėnai during the 1860s and 1870s in order to supplement his meager income as a *melamed* (Hebrew school teacher) and assistant state rabbi. As one of the younger Wolffsohn's childhood friends recalled, most of the snuffmaking "was done by a [Lithuanian] farmer, and I remember how David often used to tease him as he helped in the manufacturing."[29] Perhaps most importantly, Jews involved in illegal cross-border trade – a widespread practice – often relied on Lithuanian helpers to smuggle their goods past the customs officials.[30]

The close residential proximity and economic interaction between Jews and Lithuanians in Darbėnai suggests that members of the two groups also experienced a certain degree of social interaction. Often, writers who discuss Jewish-Lithuanian interaction specify that contact was limited to the economic sphere and did not include social relations.[31] This may be true of more intimate forms of socializing (social visiting, strong friendships, participation in the same organizations), but it does not take into account the myriad ways in which Jews and Lithuanians did interact simply by sharing certain spaces. Despite the clear boundaries of language, culture and religion that separated Jews and Lithuanians, the conduct of good business relied on a degree of cordiality, familiarity and development of relationships with returning customers. In some cases, business opened the door to particularly personal encounters. On Sunday, when farmers and their families came into town to attend church, many

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[28] Jacobs H. A., "Three Oceans", (unpublished autobiography): 11–13. The author thanks Mrs. Sara Yablon of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, for providing a copy of this manuscript.

[29] Stoch W. Sh., "Erinnerungen an David Wolffsohn", Central Zionist Archives (Jerusalem), W105/II, folder 6. For an account of Wolffsohn's childhood in Darbėnai, see Cohn E. B., *David Wolffsohn: Herzl's Successor* (Philadelphia: 1944): 1–10.

[30] Levy A., *The Behr Tree, 1683–1949* (Taunton: 1949): 28.

[31] For example, Aleksandras Pakalniškis in his study of the town of Plungė declares that "Jews did not mix with the Samogitians". See Pakalniškis quoted in Eidintas A., *Jews, Lithuanians and the Holocaust* 57. Such assumptions have often informed the portrait of the *shtetl* more broadly, although recently scholars have begun to reexamine the historical record and to focus more on all types of interaction between Jews and non-Jews. See Teller A., "The Shtetl as an Arena for Polish-Jewish Integration"; Galas M., "Inter-Religious Contacts in the Shtetl: Proposals for Future Research", *Polin*, 17 (2004): 41–50; Orla-Bukowska A., "Maintaining Borders, Crossing Borders: Social Relationships in the Shtetl", *Polin*, 17 (2004): 171–195; Klier J., "What Exactly Was a Shtetl?", Estraikh G., Krutikov M. (eds.), *The Shtetl: Image and Reality* 25–26, 29–30.

would rent rooms from Jews where they could change into their "Sunday best."[32] This arrangement, which likely included Lithuanians returning to the same Jewish houses week after week, provided an opportunity for the interaction between the two groups to push beyond the purely economic, as did the presence of Lithuanian employees in Jewish businesses or the welcoming of Jewish peddlers into non-Jewish homes for the night.

Besides bringing a steady stream of Lithuanian worshipers into the Jewish-dominated urban center, the location of the church on the marketplace also meant that Jews had some contact with Christian clergy and were aware of happenings at the church. In 1831, for example, after the local priest Juozas Gricevičius was charged by Russian officials with participating in the Polish rebellion of that year, all thirteen members of the *kahal*, the Jewish self-governing body, along with the leaders of the Christian town-dwellers' community, were called before the Russian officials and interrogated as to what they had seen the priest do while the town was under siege by rebel armies.[33] We also know from surviving revision lists that at least a few Darbėnai Jews converted to Catholicism during the 1820s.[34] According to the memoirs of one Darbėnai Jew, the local priest in the 1880s was the son of a Jewish convert to Christianity.[35] Such conversions would have been impossible if not for at least a small degree of social interaction between Jews and Lithuanians. Thus, social relations, like residential patterns and economic trends, reveal that although the two groups occupied distinct spaces, those spaces had critical points of overlap and exchange.

Space and social power

A landscape divided into areas controlled by members of different ethnic and religious groups while also containing places of contact and interaction was one in which a complex set of power relations existed. How did the various resources, buildings and institutions controlled by Lithuanians and Jews reflect their respective social statuses within the town? Did one group have a greater control over public space in Darbėnai, marking it as the dominant force in *shtetl* life? To what extent did points of contact between the groups represent mutual dependence that complicated assertions of dominance by either side?

In answering these questions and in understanding the dynamics of social power within the town of Darbėnai, it must first be noted that although Lithuanians and Jews

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[32] Interview with William D. Blechman (Englewood, New Jersey, USA), June 29, 1986.

[33] LVIA, F. 437, ap. 1, b. 618, L. 63–64v, 79–85v. See also Slesoriūnas F., *1830–1831 metų sukilimas Lietuvoje* (Vilnius: 1974): 226–227.

[34] 1834 Revision List for Telšiai District, LVIA, F. 515, ap. 15, b. 1153, L. 263, 270.

[35] Jacobs H. A., "Three Oceans" 2.

were the two most numerically significant populations in the town, they were not the only groups exercising influence over its social landscape. During the 18th and 19th centuries, significant power was exercised by the Polish and German noble families who owned or managed the estate, Tsarist government officials who enforced Russian control over the area after 1795, and a small colony of ethnic Germans who were engaged in milling and other vital crafts and services. The role played by these groups – particularly the nobles and the Tsarist officials – decisively shaped the relations between Darbėnai's Jews and Lithuanians.

Before the 1860s, when the feudal system was dismantled, the most powerful individuals in the Darbėnai social order were the noblemen who governed and later owned the town and the larger Palanga estate, of which it was a part. In the 1760s, when Jews first appeared in the town, Darbėnai was governed by Count Mirbach, who was technically the *starosta* – an appointed administrator of state lands – rather than the landlord. But because the arrangement allowed him to profit personally from the success of the estate, Mirbach functioned very much in the same role and with the same interests as a landowner. By the time Russians had seized control of the area in 1795, the estate had become a private holding. After changing hands a number of times, it was eventually purchased by the Polish count Michał Tyszkiewicz (1761–1839) in 1824. Although the power of Tyszkiewicz and his heirs diminished in the course of the 19th century as Russian authorities seized greater power and eventually abolished serfdom, the family's ownership of the estate continued until the land was eventually nationalized by the new Republic of Lithuania in the years after World War I.[36]

Because Jews had been welcomed to Darbėnai around 1760 by Count Mirbach, and because their role was to directly serve his financial interests by expanding trade, leasing taverns and paying rents and taxes to the estate treasury, they brought to the social landscape the tremendous advantage of noble patronage. The houses and shops they built around the central marketplace, larger and better constructed than the modest dwellings of the Lithuanian townsmen and financed by the noblemen's money, reflected the ways in which Jewish status was elevated by Mirbach's backing. This elevated status was accentuated even more by the fact that the facilities provided by the estate for the Jews were built with the labor of their Lithuanian neighbors. In 1777, three Lithuanian residents of Darbėnai complained that Mirbach unfairly "forced them to build [the] inns of the Jews, breweries, and other unnecessary buildings."[37] On occasion this resentment led to physical attacks on Jewish property, such as happened when three peasants from the nearby villages of Lazdininkai and Šlaveitai caused a disturbance in

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[36] On the Tyszkiewicz family, see Kanarskas J., „Grafai Tiškevičiai XVI–XX a.", *Žemaičių žemė,* 2003/4 (41): 14–19.

[37] LVIA, SA, b. 14781, L. 856.

a Jewish-owned tavern in Darbėnai and were arrested for "mercilessly beating Jews."[38] Jews continued to benefit from noble patronage during Tsarist times, especially after the estate was purchased by the by Tyszkiewicz family. In the wake of a devastating fire that destroyed much of Darbėnai soon after the family acquired the town, Count Tyszkiewicz approved the rebuilding of structures occupied by local Jews, including a wooden synagogue and eleven Jewish houses, all at estate expense.[39]

Tsarist officials began to chip away at the power of non-Russian estate owners after the Polish insurrection of 1831, and by 1864, with serfdom gone and another insurrection put down by the Russian government, the Tyszkiewicz family had lost much of the direct role it had once played in local life. As a result, Jews no longer benefited as greatly from the patronage the nobles had once bestowed on them. Even as the Tsarist bureaucracy began to assert itself more in town affairs with an ever-increasing body of regulations and controls, however, Jews continued to enjoy certain advantages from a strong relationship with the governing authorities. With very few ethnic Russians living in the region, the local government sometimes depended on Jews – who were more literate in Russian than the Lithuanians and were more centrally involved in urban affairs – to head the local management board and to serve as clerks for the municipality. There is little evidence that Jews in these positions were able to act in ways that significantly benefited the local Jewish population or, for that matter, to do anything other than carry out the orders of their Russian superiors. Yet their selection for these offices did suggest that, to some extent, they enjoyed the favor of the Tsarist officialdom.[40]

Among a small group of local Lithuanians, especially those living within the boundaries of the town, the prominence of Jews within the town landscape and the power they seemed to wield was thought to be the result of an unholy alliance with the Russian authorities. In 1900, when a fire broke out in Darbėnai, a writer for the illegal Lithuanian press argued that the fire equipment had been used to protect the synagogue while nine Lithuanian farmsteads had been allowed to burn.[41] Similarly, a protest lodged with Kovno *gubernia* officials by the Lithuanian Ivan Piktuižis in 1910 claimed that Jews prospered as purveyors of alcohol in Darbėnai and were allowed to carry on businesses in the choicest and most central locations because of favorable treatment from the government. Piktuižis claimed that the Jewish clerk of

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[38] Jablonskis K. (ed.), *Lietuvos Valstiečių ir miestelėnų ginčai su dvarų valdytojais* (Vilnius: 1961), II: 173–174 (document 38).

[39] Tyszkiewicz account book (1829), LVIA, F. 716, ap. 4, b. 127, L. 3v; List of synagogues in Telšiai district in 1848, KAA,. F. I-49, ap. 1, b. 1861, L. 96; List of synagogues in Telšiai district in 1869, KAA, F. I-49, ap. 1, b. 9516, L. 50.

[40] Z. Kagan, for example, was the *starosta* of the Darbėnai towndwellers' management board in 1904, and from at least 1910 to 1915 the office was held by Eliash Levi. See KAA, F. I-49, ap. 1, b. 23567, L. 3, 6v, 11, 12v; F. I-49, ap. 1, b. 28506, L. 8-12; F. I-49, ap. 1, b. 32610, L. 1–3.

[41] *Tėvynės Sargas*, 2–3 (Tilsit, 1900): 73.

the municipality, Yudel Golos, demanded higher taxes from non-Jewish owners of taverns and beer shops, making it impossible for Lithuanian enterprises to compete.[42] Government investigators found these charges to be false, but the controversy did underscore the way that Jews' dominance in business and urban affairs could frustrate any Lithuanian who attempted to break into local trade or commerce. Such tensions were exacerbated by the emergence of a growing nationalist movement among Lithuanians, which argued that they could only achieve a healthy, stable existence and throw off the yoke of Tsarist tyranny if they were to expand beyond agricultural pursuits and develop business enterprises of their own. As early as 1893, writers for the Catholic nationalist newspaper *Žemaičių ir Lietuvos Apžvalga* (Samogitian and Lithuanian Review), published across the German border in Tilsit (Tilžė), chastised the peasants of Darbėnai for allowing the mill and shops of their town to be controlled by Germans and Jews, respectively.[43]

If several Lithuanians, especially those active in the nascent Lithuanian nationalist cause, decried Jewish control of town resources under Tsarist rule, this portrayal of power dynamics within the local landscape did not resonate strongly with most of the Lithuanian inhabitants of the Darbėnai area during this period. Both in the rural district surrounding Darbėnai and in the town itself, Lithuanians remained almost exclusively engaged in farming before World War I, and were therefore not driven by a strong sense of economic competition with local Jews. Unlike Piktuižis, most Lithuanians of the period had little interest in owning a shop or tavern in the urban center. They happily patronized Jewish merchants and tavern keepers on their visits to the marketplace, maintained strong relationships with Jewish peddlers who traveled in the countryside, and generally saw the interaction between the two groups as mutually beneficial.[44]

Moreover, after serfdom was abolished in 1861, Lithuanians no longer found themselves in the demeaning position of having to perform mandatory labor that benefited local Jewish residents. With the advantages Jews had enjoyed under the feudal system now diminished, Lithuanians generally felt a greater sense of control and dominance within their own distinct sphere of influence – the villages surrounding the town of Darbėnai and the less urban areas on the town's outskirts. This was true even after Russia's repression of the Lithuanian population increased in the wake of the failed Polish rebellion of 1863–64, in which many Lithuanians took part. The

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[42] Petition of Ivan Ivanovich Piktuižis to the chief of Kovno Province, Dec. 28, 1910, KAA, F. I-49, ap. 1, b. 28590, L. 1–12.

[43] *Žemaičių ir Lietuvos Apžvalga*, 10 (Tilsit, 1893): 78.

[44] Writing just after World War I, Joshua Bloch, a native of Darbėnai, argued that Jews and Lithuanians had always had very cordial relations, an impression that was likely drawn from his own childhood experiences. See Bloch J., "Di lage fun di iden in der Lite" [Jewish situation in Lituania], *Yidishes tageblat* (Aug. 3, 1919): 4.

following story recorded by Lithuanian ethnographer Ignas Končius illustrates this point well: following the defeat of the insurrection, Russian officials ordered the cutting of the forests along the main roads into Darbėnai so that rebels could not hide so easily in the future. The job was given to a Jewish contractor who assembled a crew of Lithuanian workers to cut down the trees. The work carried on smoothly until the workers reached a tree to which a roadside religious shrine was attached. At that point neither food nor vodka provided by the Jewish boss could convince the workers to cut any further and desecrate the shrine. Freed from the bonds of serfdom, the Lithuanians could now use their sheer numbers and their power as essential laborers (or perhaps in other situations as farmers) to counterbalance the influence Jews wielded as key economic players in the town.[45]

Contributing to this increasing sense of equilibrium between Jews and Lithuanians in the social landscape of Darbėnai was the way in which Russian government policies balanced Jewish economic advantage with a host of restrictions that limited Jewish status and authority. The Tsarist desire to remove Jews from the roles they had played under the feudal system helped diminish their economic influence in the countryside. Although many Darbėnai Jews continued to trade with peasants in the villages, only very few now wielded the power they once enjoyed as leaseholders and estate managers. Russian statutes also aimed to restrict Jewish economic access to the border, which was a source of livelihood for many. In 1843, when the government cracked down on smuggling by issuing an expulsion order for Jews living within fifty *versta* of the German frontier, the entire future of the Darbėnai Jewish community was thrown into question. Some of the Jewish residents took part in a government plan to relocate Jews to Southern Russia as farmers, but in large part the scheme failed and many returned. Ultimately, even though the expulsion was never carried out, the episode left the community shaken, depleted of financial resources, and with a much weaker grasp on the local economy.[46] To some extent, the Jews of Darbėnai never recovered. By the end of the 19th century, although the marketplace still stood as a symbol of Jewish economic predominance in the town, it had lost much of its vitality as many Jews emigrated and an increasing number of Jewish merchants became peddlers – 68% of all employed Jews by 1892 – who scattered to the countryside in order to eke out a living.[47]

Finally, Russian regulations also diminished Jews' prominence in the physical landscape of Darbėnai during this period by placing greater control on the construction of Jewish communal buildings. When the Jewish bathhouse burned down in 1843, it took three years for Tsarist officials to approve the use of tax money to repair the

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[45] This story, recorded by the Samogitian folklorist Ignas Končius, is related in Kviklys B., *Mūsų Lietuva*, IV (Boston: 1968): 289.

[46] KAA, F. 1-49, ap. 1, b. 1943, L. 102–104.

[47] See the Darbėnai box tax list of 1892, KAA, F. I-49, ap. 1, b. 1892.

structure.[48] In other cases, no such permission was granted. The plan of 1781 showed the Darbėnai synagogue located on the marketplace, diagonally opposite the church. By the early 20th century, however, local Jews were worshiping in a much less prominent *beyt midrash* (study house) located behind the row of shops that lined the eastern side of the market. Although this building was nicely constructed of bricks, it was totally hidden from public view and was accessible only through a small alleyway.[49] Apparently, the original synagogue had burned down and local Jews were never permitted to rebuild it. Meanwhile, Russian officials did not stand in the way of an 1843 project to replace the town's destroyed Catholic church with a larger, more prominent version that towered over the marketplace.[50] Although Lithuanians endured their own share of religious restrictions under Russian rule, their church, as a central Christian institution, was allowed to retain its dominance in the physical landscape in a way that the synagogue was not.

Under Tsarist rule, then, the landscape of Darbėnai was not one in which either Jews or Lithuanians totally dominated. Because the two groups continued to inhabit largely distinct spaces, each was able to exercise a degree of power and control over its own surroundings. As a result, and also because of the complimentary roles each group played in the ecology of the town, conflict and competition between them was largely avoided during this period. In the many areas in which the two groups did meet or share space, there were sufficient checks and balances that kept either group from feeling totally dominated by the other. The marketplace, one of the most significant points of contact between Jews and Lithuanians in Darbėnai, betrayed this complexity of power relations with the imposing Lithuanian church surrounded by Jewish shops and taverns. This sense of equilibrium survived through the period of World War I, when the fall of the Tsarist regime and the rise of the independent Republic of Lithuania initiated a transformation of social relations in Darbėnai and a transformation of the landscape that reflected those relations.

An interwar shift

Darbėnai came through World War I in favorable circumstances compared with many other Lithuanian towns and cities. As the town was occupied by the Germans very early in the conflict, there was no time for Russian officials to deport local Jews to the interior of the country, as they did in places farther to the east.[51] After the frontlines

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[48] KAA, F. I-49, ap. 1, b. 1380, L. 24–24v, 168–179, 388–395.
[49] MAB, F. 11-43, Da-120; interviews with William D. Blechman, June 29, 1986; Lipman Bloch (Holon, Israel), July 27, 2005; and Ruth Levine Saffir (Petach Tikvah, Israel), Aug. 2, 2000.
[50] Miškinis A., „Darbėnai" 60.
[51] On the deportation of Jews from Lithuania during World War I, see Abramowicz H., *Profiles of a Lost World* 182–184.

moved deeper into Russia, Darbėnai settled into a quiet routine. Although German soldiers were quartered in the town, they did not treat the residents harshly. William Blechman, who was a child during the occupation, described the soldiers as bearers of luxuries like chocolates that the local people had never before experienced.[52] Trade was interrupted by the war, but some local Jews made money renting rooms to German officers who were sent to Darbėnai to recuperate in the healthy climate provided by the local pine forests. Most importantly, the Germans built a railway through Darbėnai that linked it with Memel (Klaipėda) in the south and Libau (Liepāja) in the north, a development that would help place the small town on a firm economic footing in the years after the war.[53] Although more than 100 Lithuanian Jewish communities suffered from wartime expulsions, fires, and other forms of devastation, Darbėnai made it through the war unscathed.[54]

While the physical landscape of the town was not significantly transformed by the war, however, its demography did begin to change considerably in the decade following Lithuanian independence in 1918. At the end of the war, Jews made up approximately 65% of the town's population, 10% more than when the Russian census of 1897 was taken.[55] Figures from the 1923 Lithuanian census show a decline in the proportion of Jews, but at 59% of the population they still represented the dominant element in the town.[56] Beginning in 1925, when Lithuanian land reform was introduced, however, the population of Darbėnai began to shift toward Lithuanian dominance. Between 1925 and 1930, the estate lands still held by Countess Zofia Tyszkiewicz (1874–1958), the surviving heir to Darbėnai's longtime landowning family, were divided and distributed to members of the Lithuanian population. The choicest plots were given to volunteers for the Lithuanian army, but others were made available to peasants who wished to leave the villages and reside in the town. Thus, within a matter of years, the urban population of non-Jews grew dramatically.[57]

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[52] Interview with William D. Blechman, June 29, 1986.

[53] Ibid.

[54] See "Di virkung fun di milkhome" [The effects of the war], American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Archives (New York), collection 19/21, file 159, 15. On the situation in Darbėnai, see collection 21/32, file 252.

[55] Some reports put the immediate postwar Jewish population at as low as 37%, but a document produced by the Jewish communal leaders of Darbėnai in 1919 that uses the 37% figure reveals that this was a clerical error. The actual population count presented in the document was 740 (crossed out and replaced by 800) Jews out of a total population of 1200. This would put the Jewish population at somewhere between 62% and 67% of the total. See LCVA, F. 1129, ap. 1, b. 13, 182; and F. 1129, ap. 1, b. 16, 31. For the 1897 census statistics, see Levin D., ed., *Pinkas hakehilot Lita* [Lithuanian Jewish communities book] (Jerusalem: 1996): 209.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Interview with Birutė Paulauskaitė (Darbėnai, Lithuania), May 6, 2006. LCVA, F. 1250, ap. 4, b. 5/52, 5/54 and 5/65.

Fig. 2. Bunim Ziman's ironware shop in Darbėnai, c. 1935. Two Lithuanian employees, at left, pose with members of the Ziman family. As Lithuanians began to move in larger numbers to the urban center during the interwar period, many found work in Jewish-owned businesses (Photo courtesy of Tiporah Ziman Toker, Netanya, Israel).

The rapidly increasing population of Lithuanians in the urban area meant that members of the two groups now often came into even closer and more regular contact. With significant areas of the town being developed for residential use by the newcomers, Jews and Lithuanians increasingly lived near one another, especially on the various streets that radiated from the marketplace. Jews also began to employ a growing urban workforce of young Lithuanians in their stores and manufacturing enterprises. Although many of the smaller groceries and "colonial goods" stores remained family run, several of the larger businesses, like Bunim Ziman's ironware shop, employed Lithuanian clerks and helpers (see fig. 2).[58] Mote Bloch, a local merchant who bought up rags and sold them for reprocessing, employed a crew of six Lithuanian women to sort his stock by type of fabric. Many Lithuanians also worked in a seasonal matzah factory owned by Shevach Golos, where they not only interacted with Jewish employers but also gained some insight into Jewish religious culture.[59] In addition to the Lithuanians employed in Jewish businesses,

[58] Interviews with Ziporah Ziman Toker (Netanya, Israel), July 10, 2000 and July 24, 2005.
[59] Interviews with Lipman Bloch, July 27, 2005; and Konstancija Skrikienė (Darbėnai, Lithuania), Apr. 25, 2004.

there were also a large number of Lithuanian girls who found work in Jewish houses as domestic servants.[60]

The growing Lithuanian presence in the town also introduced a higher level of social interaction between the two groups, especially among young people. The construction of a Lithuanian public school created an arena where Jewish children – especially Jewish girls who often did not pursue Jewish education beyond a certain age – got to know their Lithuanian contemporaries from both Darbėnai and the surrounding villages. School relationships spilled out of the classroom, leading children to play and study together. Stanislava Zaburienė, a native of the village of Barkeliai, remembered that after school she would often visit the home of the Vishkin sisters on the Darbėnai marketplace. Their parents, who dealt in soap and cosmetics, would give her pretty soapboxes to keep. Sometimes, while waiting for her parents to come in from the village to get her, Zaburienė would do her homework at the house of another Jewish friend.[61] Such contacts continued as children grew older. Young Jewish and Lithuanian women struggling to survive economically during the difficult years of the 1930s attended a local knitting school together in order to learn a marketable trade.[62] Antanas Mazalas, who was born in the village of Auksūdys, became friendly with a Darbėnai Jew named Abelson when the two served in the Lithuanian army together.[63] Although Jewish and Lithuanian teenagers usually restricted intimate forms of socializing to their own groups, they did occasionally attend each other's dances. In rare cases, such encounters resulted in romantic relationships across ethnic and religious lines.[64]

Yet if increasing urbanization among local Lithuanians led to greater social interaction and familiarity with Jews, it also produced growing competition for dominance in town affairs. Urbanization during the years of Lithuanian independence was part and parcel of the process by which Lithuanians expanded beyond their traditional agricultural roles in order to build a new, multifaceted national life. As a result, they assumed control of much of the municipal infrastructure and began to create several new institutions to anchor their expanding urban presence. Since 1913, a small Lithuanian cooperative had existed in Darbėnai where farmers could sell their produce and buy farm implements and a host of general goods. After independence, the enterprise joined the new Lithuanian network of consumer associations known as

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[60] Interview with Ona Macienė (Darbėnai, Lithuania), Apr. 25, 2004.

[61] Interview with Stanislava Zaburienė, in Ruzgailienė R., „Žydų masinės žudynės Darbėnų miestelyje" 10.

[62] Interview with Chasya Shubitz Stein (Bat Shlomo, Israel), July 26, 2005.

[63] Interview with Antanas Mazalas, in Ruzgailienė R., „Žydų masinės žudynės Darbėnų miestelyje" 21.

[64] Interview with E. Venclovienė, in Ruzgailienė R., „Žydų masinės žudynės Darbėnų miestelyje" 20; Interview with Stanislavas Zobernius (Darbėnai, Lithuania), April 26, 2004.

"Lietūkis" and soon became a formidable competitor with the Jewish-owned shops.[65] By the early 1920s, the cooperative's success was reflected in its purchase of the large store of Feige Hinde Ziman, a Jewish hardware merchant who had died shortly after World War I and whose family had occupied the plot on the northeast corner of the marketplace since the 18th century.[66] During the same decade, local Lithuanians also founded a credit bank, a dairy and an electromagnetic power station. Because these institutions were created to further Lithuanian economic independence, Jews had absolutely no role in their management.[67] Finally, the regular use of public space for military exercises, patriotic demonstrations and the erection of nationalist monuments, as well as naming local recreation areas, such as Vytautas Park, after Lithuanian historical figures, underscored the growing dominance of Lithuanians over the town's public culture in the interwar period.[68]

The decline of Jewish influence over the Darbėnai landscape was hastened by the rising emigration of local Jews. Jews had been leaving Darbėnai for the United States, Canada, England, South Africa and Palestine since the 19th century, but never before had there been such a net loss of the town's Jewish population. Although the United States closed its doors to immigration in 1924, Canada's Maritime provinces remained an important destination for Darbėnai Jews. There was also an increasing stream of emigrants to Palestine during these years, made up mostly of the young. Between 1923 and 1940, as the Lithuanian population of Darbėnai more than doubled, the Jewish percentage of the town's population dropped from 59% to 36%.[69] Jews remained the most visible group involved in trade and commerce throughout the period, but their position had been decidedly weakened. By the late 1930s, Jewish-owned enterprises like Yankel Hendler's soda factory and Bentsel Stoch's wool carding mill, established early in the century, had disappeared from the scene.[70] "The real estate that belonged to the Jews was slowly transferred into the hands of the gentiles," wrote Yitzchak Yacobi (né Itsik Jakob), one of the émigrés to Palestine who followed the decline of Darbėnai's Jewish population through

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[65] See *Viltis*, Mar. 21, 1915, 3; LCVA, F. 599, ap. 3, b. 2287; and F. 387, ap. 4, b. 973–974.

[66] Interview with William D. Blechman, June 29, 1986.

[67] On the electromagnetic power station and the dairy, which were managed by the same board, see LCVA, F. 388, ap. 2a, b. 2664; and F. R-771, ap. 2a, b. 461. On the credit bank, see F. 387, ap. 4a, b. 3896.

[68] Kanarskas J., „Darbėniškiai laisvės ir išbandymų metais: Darbėnams – 400 metų", *Švyturys* (Kretinga), Oct. 8–16, 1991; Miškinis A., „Darbėnai" 65–66, 68.

[69] Levin D. (ed.), *Pinkas hakehilot* 209.

[70] Both are mentioned in *Visa Lietuva: Informacinė knyga 1931 m.* (Kaunas: 1932): 245, 347, but do not appear among the industrial plants nationalized by the Soviets when they occupied the area in 1940 (see LCVA, F. R-763 and F. R-771).

letters from his parents. "The new owners opened businesses, competed with the Jew, and urged their people to prefer them over the Jews."[71]

The remaining Jews of Darbėnai responded to the growing Lithuanian control of public culture by creating their own parallel society, with institutions that mirrored their Lithuanian counterparts – drama and athletic societies, nationalist parties and organizations, schools – but with a more marginal status within the town's public life. While young Lithuanians, for example, joined the *Jaunasis ūkininkas* (Young Farmer) movement, Jews learned farming at a kibbutz near Darbėnai run by *Hechalutz* (Pioneer), a Zionist youth organization that promoted settlement in Palestine.[72] This did not mean that Jews had no role in the new public life of Darbėnai after the rise of the Lithuanian independence. Jews, as we have seen, served in the Lithuanian military. There was also one local Jew, Note Smushkovich, who served a term on the town council and another, Volf Gershon, who worked as a teacher in the Lithuanian public school.[73] But Jews who took visible leadership roles in town affairs were extremely rare, and clear limits were drawn with regard to Jewish participation in public culture. When the Lithuanian president, Antanas Smetona (1874–1944), arrived in Darbėnai in 1928 to help mark the 10th anniversary of Lithuanian independence, the local rabbi, Israel Isser Levine, was among the dignitaries that met him at the train station. Later that day, however, Jews took no discernable role in the dedication of an independence monument on the marketplace. Instead, they staged their own separate celebration, where they displayed both Lithuanian and Zionist emblems in front of the alleyway to the synagogue (see fig. 3).[74] Although the event was ostensibly designed to make a statement about Jews' membership in the Lithuanian nation, it succeeded in making the opposite statement, revealing Jews' growing alienation from mainstream society and its public rituals.

As significant as the decline in social power was for the Jews of Darbėnai during the interwar years, it was not total. Despite the emergence of some Lithuanian-owned shops, Jews continued to physically dominate the town center. Their role as employers of Lithuanian clerks, laborers and domestic workers also marked their relatively high status within the economic hierarchy of the town. Although Jews did

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[71] Yacobi Y., "Bere Meyer ha-gadol" [The great Bere Meyer], unpublished Hebrew manuscript. The author thanks Hagi Yacobi of Karmei Yosef, Israel, for making this manuscript available.

[72] On Lithuanian associational life in Darbėnai during this period, see Kanarskas J., "Darbėniškiai laisvės ir išbandymų metais". On the Darbėnai kibbutz, see LCVA, F. 591, ap. 1, b. 35; and interviews with Ziporah Ziman Toker, July 10, 2000 and July 24, 2005.

[73] Kanarskas J., "Darbėniškiai laisvės ir išbandymų metais".

[74] Interview with Ruth Levine Saffir, Aug. 2, 2000. These two different celebrations are documented in photographs received by the author from Chedva Pun Chervonitz of Jerusalem.

Fig. 3. Jews in Darbėnai celebrated the tenth anniversary of Lithuanian independence near the entrance to the synagogue in 1928. The celebration, which mixed Lithuanian and Zionist symbols, was separate from the ceremonies held by the non-Jewish population of the town (Photo courtesy of Chedva Pun Chervonitz, Jerusalem).

find themselves excluded from much of the town's nationalist-inspired public culture, this did not amount to an outbreak of anti-Semitism. Darbėnai was particularly notable in this regard, because at a time when marketplace riots against Jews and blood libels were rife in the larger towns of the region, Darbėnai experienced little or no anti-Jewish activity. Compared with larger urban centers, Darbėnai and its surroundings still had many residents who maintained a traditional way of life. Thus, despite a growing urban middle-class who saw the Jews as competitors, there was still a significant proportion of the Lithuanian population who gladly patronized Jewish merchants and continued to see their relationship with Jews as mutually beneficial. As late as 1940, when Darbėnai resident Efroim Jakob petitioned the government to allow him to operate a flourmill in a village on the outskirts of town, he was supported in his request by fifty-seven Lithuanian farmers who testified to the benefit the Jewish-owned enterprise would bring them.[75] Although on the national level, the Lithuanian Rifleman's Union (*Šiaulių sąjunga*) propagandized

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[75] LCVA, F. 388, ap. 2a, b. 2276.

against Jews as the enemies of the Lithuanian state, in Darbėnai the local branch treated Jews cordially, regularly employing the local Jewish photographer to take their portraits and even inviting the Jewish community to contribute financially to the building of a Riflemen's meeting house.[76]

Conclusions

The social landscape of Darbėnai continued to reflect the complex relationship between the town's Jews and Lithuanians during 1940 and 1941, when Lithuania experienced successive occupations by the Soviets and the Germans. The events of those tumultuous years – including the participation of local Lithuanian partisans in the killing of Darbėnai's Jewish women and children – deserve intensive scholarly treatment of their own, and will therefore not be discussed in detail here.[77] What should be emphasized, however, is that the prewar tensions and rivalries between Jews and Lithuanians in Darbėnai are not, in and of themselves, a sufficient explanation for the behavior of Lithuanians who participated in the killings of Jews in 1941. True, the growing sense of competition between the two groups certainly made Jews accessible as a scapegoat for the loss of Lithuanian independence, and was definitely a factor that allowed the perpetrators to rationalize their involvement in the killings. But without the particular traumas inflicted on Lithuanians by the Soviet regime and without the leadership of the Nazis in conducting the campaign of mass murder, it is implausible that the tensions between Jews and Lithuanians in Darbėnai would have produced the same result.[78]

Overall, despite the tragic fate of Darbėnai's Jewish community, the history of Jewish-Lithuanian relations in the town over almost two centuries demonstrates that Jews were far from a persecuted, isolated group often depicted in popular and scholarly portraits of Eastern European *shtetls*. Of course, Jews did primarily occupy their own distinct spaces within the *shtetl* environment and their status remained circumscribed by a host of economic and legal restrictions. But despite these limitations, Darbėnai

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[76] Vareikis V., "Anti-Semitism in Lithuania", Truska L., Vareikis V. (eds.), *Holokausto prielaidos* 149–50; LCVA, F. 561, ap. 1, b. 1294, L. 32v. Several photographs of the Darbėnai Rifleman's branch taken by the Jewish photographer Leib Bruckus are held in the collections of the Kretinga Museum.

[77] For a summary of events during the Holocaust in Darbėnai, see *Yahadut Lita,* IV (Tel-Aviv: 1984): 262–263.

[78] On the importance of the Soviet occupation in radicalizing anti-Semitism in Lithuania, see Truska L., "The Crisis of Lithuanian and Jewish Relations, June 1940–June 1941", in idem, Vareikis V. (eds.), *Holokausto prielaidos* 173–208.

Jews interacted extensively with their non-Jewish neighbors and wielded a degree of social power within their town that is seldom recognized in the existing literature. Even during the interwar years, when the rise of an independent Republic of Lithuania and a growing urban population of Lithuanians began to challenge their economic standing and their role in public life, Darbėnai Jews hardly conformed to the image of *shtetl* dwellers under siege that the New York Yiddish press had found so compelling in the summer of 1908.

The *shtetl* space in the 19th century:
a sociological approach

Artur Markowski

Contemporary Jewish studies wrestle with defining the concept of the *shtetl*.[1] The works of historians, cultural scholars or sociologists only agree that the notion of the *shtetl* refers to the socio-spatial construction of a small settlement: a town.

The attempts to build the definition of the *shtetl* referring to the quantitative approach (defining the percentage of Jewish population that inhabits a particular town) are evidently unreliable.[2] Other efforts aiming to define the *shtetl* are divided into two groups. The first characterizes the *shtetl* as the Jewish part of a town,[3] the second – as a whole town that is populated (among other groups) also by Jews.[4]

Without focusing on the complex nuances of specific definitions, we must add that this kind of approach is influenced also by the diversity of defining bases. Thus, the *shtetl* may be observed through "spatial lenses" (as a Jewish district),[5] "social

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[1] Klier J. D. , "What Exactly Was a Shtetl?", *The Shtetl: Image and Reality. Papers of the Second Mendel Friedman International Conference on Yiddish* (Oxford: 2000): 23; A. Polonsky, "Introduction. The Shtetl: Myth and Reality", *Polin*, 17 (Oxford: 2004): 3–23.

[2] Compare the quite unfortunate statement of the editor of *Journey to a Nineteenth – Century Shtetl. The memories of Yekhezkel Kotik,* Assaf D. (ed.) (Detroit: 2002): 20, and also the apt remarks of Rafał Żebrowski in Żebrowski R., entry "sztetł" in *Polski słownik judaistyczny. Dzieje, kultura, religia, ludzie*, 2 (Warszawa: 2003): 654.

[3] A view presented especially by Russian researchers: Соколова А., "Архитектура штетла в контексте традиционной культуры", Лукин В., Соколова А., Хаймович Б. (сост.), *100 еврейских местечек Украины. Исторический путеводитель. Выпуск 2: Подолия* (Санкт-Петербург: 2000). Among Western researchers only Heiko Haumann claims, "Shtetlekh were Jewish centers in usually non-Jewish peasant surroundings…" (Haumann H., *Historia Żydów w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej* (Warszawa: 2000): 70. Among Polish researchers this view is presented by Alina Cała, entry "sztetł" in Cała A., Węgrzynek H., Zalewska H., *Historia i kultura Żydów polskich. Słownik* (Warszawa: 2000): 338.

[4] Żebrowski R., *Polski słownik judaistyczny*; Unterman A., *Encyklopedia tradycji i legend żydowskich* (Warszawa: 1998): 273, Zborowski M., "shtetl" in *Encyklopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: 1996): 1471, Hoffman E., *Sztetl* (Warszawa: 2001): 19.

[5] Соколова А., "Архитектура штетла" 45.

lenses" (as a Jewish community)[6] or "mixed lenses" (as a socio-economic-spatial conglomeration).[7]

For the needs of this article, we intend to regard the *shtetl* through the prism of the broadest, as we believe, definition: **as a socio-economic-religious conglomeration situated in a certain defined physical space that does not have a clearly rural structure**. Hence, the approaches of urban sociology and the sociology of space seem to be the most accurate.

The notion of space is defined ambiguously by sociologists. It is comprehended as a description of a location (the physical space of a town) or a social space. However, it is worth emphasizing that the social space is notably connected with space in its physical meaning.[8]

Diverse factors that exerted an influence on the *shtetl* space in the 19th century are related to the individual (as a creator or an element that changes the space) or to environment (geographical conditions). They may be divided in the following way:

Table 1. Factors that influenced the *shtetl* space in the 19th century

Social	National	Geographical	Historical
Religion	Legislation related with settlement	Landform elements	Former functions of the location
Customs and tradition	Economic legislation	Natural resources	Administrative-political changes
Characterization of the group active in a given space	Politics of territorial administration	Transport routes	Ownership changes
Social conflicts	Social politics	–	–
Power and structure of collective memory resources	–	–	–

[6] Entry *shtetl* in Gove P. B. (ed.), *Webster`s Third New International Dictionary* (Springfield: 1993): 2108.

[7] Markowski A., "Przestrzeń Wasilkowa przełomu XIX i XX wieku jako przestrzeń sztetł. Zarys problemu"*, Zemło M. (ed.), *Małe miasta. Przestrzenie* (Supraśl: 2003): 55–56; and idem, "Przestrzeń społeczna sztetł na przełomie XIX i XX wieku. – studium przypadku Wasilkowa na Białostocczyźnie", Jasiewicz K. (ed.), *Świat nie pożegnany. Żydzi na dawnych ziemiach wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej w XVIII–XX wieku* (Warszawa: 2004): 342–343.

[8] Jałowiecki B., Szczepański M., *Miasto i przestrzeń w perspektywie socjologicznej* (Warszawa: 2002): 601–605.

According to the culturalistic approach represented by Florian Znaniecki, reciprocally permeating conditions of the construction of the *shtetl* space in the 19th century were related to the characteristics of the community that created, modified or absorbed the space of a small town. It was related with the geographical conditions that the physical space offered,[9] which was occasionally burdened with the visible remnants of the past (former functions, owners, etc.). However, the most prominent part in this aspect was played by the state. Through legislation it became the crucial regulator of the activities of the individual, who acted as an element of the state in the social and physical space.

Contemporary sociological theories account for a multidimensional analysis of space. Theories drawing on a number of perspectives appear to be essential for the recognition of the *shtetl* space and for the building of its definition. These perspectives are the following: culturalist,[10] macro-structuralist and structuralist-functionalist, and to a certain extent humanist.[11] Their methodological positions are presented in the table below.

Table 2. Main sociological perspectives and their theoretical assumptions that may be used in the research of the *shtetl* space

Perspective	Period of activities	Representatives	Theoretical assumptions
Culturalist	From 1938	Florian Znaniecki Aleksander Wallis Paul H. Chombart	Research of the humanist principle Space in the consciousness of the people who act in it Space experienced by an individual Evaluation of the space Cultural archetypes in the space Symbolism of the space
Macrostructural and structural-functional	From 1972	Manuel Castells Robert Pahl Jan Turowski	City as a system of production, consumption, exchange Functional spheres of the city Racial and class segregation in the city's space
Humanist	From 1960	Kevin Lynch Amos Rapport Raymond Ledrut	Actor's paradigm Symbolic behavior City as a system of signs

Author's compilation based on B. Jałowiecki and M. S. Szczepański, *Miasto i przestrzeń w perspektywie socjologicznej* (Warszawa: 2002): 37–38.

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[9] See the analysis of Znaniecki's views in Czekaj K., "Aleksander Wallis o szkole chicagowskiej i socjologii poznańskiej, czyli krótka rozprawa o Parku Burgessie i Znanieckim", Jałowiecki B. et. al. (eds.), *Przemiany miasta. Wokół socjologii Aleksandra Wallisa* (Warszawa: 2005): 139; and Walmsley D. J., Lewis G. J., *Geografia człowieka. Podejście behawioralne* (Warszawa: 1997): 254.

[10] Jałowiecki B., Szczepański M., *Miasto i przestrzeń w perspektywie socjologicznej* 37–38.

[11] Ibid.

Depending on the choice of the methodological position and sociological perspective, the *shtetl* may be perceived in two ways. From the outside it may be perceived as a multicultural, multi-religious and multi-ethnic settlement of urban character situated in a "desert", occasionally with rural inhabitants. In this case, the difference of its economic functions will be salient (the place of exchange for the neighboring peasantry), as well as its function of being a contact place of Jews with the nearest Christian settlements.[12] Such an approach has a definite value for the economically conditioned analysis of the behavior of local communities.

Nevertheless, microanalysis, an attempt to "enter" the interior of a small town, and the perception of the *shtetl* as a complex socio-economic-spatial organism seems to be more compelling. Our further analysis will go in this direction.

Production of the physical space

The shape of the physical space of the *shtetl* and the rules of its functioning in the Polish Commonwealth in the 19th century were mainly related to the geographical and physical factors. The modifications in the physical space of the *shtetl* stemmed mostly from the national factor – legislation concerning the settlement of Jews in cities and towns.

Jewish settlement on the Polish territory dates back to the 12th century. Maria and Kazimierz Piechotkows divide it into several periods. They are distinguished by the increasing influx of settlers and changes in the state policy towards Jewish settlement from the time of the Piast Dynasty until the beginning of the 19th century.[13]

According to Eleonora Bergman, until the end of the 18th century there were four types of Jewish urban settlements on the Polish territory.[14] Referring to the type of space formation, they may be divided into focused (creation of a more or less closed district – it takes place in three cases enumerated by Bergman) and dispersed (one case concerning royal or *starosta's* cities).

By the end of the 19th century, state legislation became a significant factor influencing the mode and possibilities of producing the physical space of a *shtetl*.

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[12] This approach is presented by Heiko Haumann in his *Historia Żydów w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej.*

[13] Piechotkowie M., K., "Dzielnice żydowskie w strukturze przestrzennej miast polskich", *Żydzi w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej* (Wrocław et al.: 1991): 306–320. See also the introduction to the album by Maria and Kazimierz Piechotkowie, *Oppidum judaeorum. Żydzi w przestrzeni miejskiej dawnej Rzeczypospolitej* (Warszawa: 2004).

[14] Bergman E., "Jüdische Städte und Bezirke in Polen in der Zeit vom 15. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert", *Wiener Jahrbuch für Jüdische Geschichte, Kultur und Museumswesen*, 5 (2000–2001): 77.

The attempts to expel Jews from arenda in the 1780s, the ban on city settlement[15] and the establishment of *rewir* (Jewish district) were the major factors in producing the *shtetl* space in this period.

Assuming the perspective "from-the-outside", we should notice that the expulsion of Jews from rural communities in the 19th century resulted in a clear segregation of space for the whole society of the Polish Commonwealth. This fact places, as we have already underlined, the issue of Jewish space in the framework of urban sociology. It also prompts us to take the structuralist perspective.

The settlement of Jews in *shtetls* was concentrated in clearly defined districts, most frequently near the synagogue complex. The space inhabited by Jews – *rewir* – was then a result of a consensus made between the authorities and the community board (*dozor bozniczy*), rather than an effect of natural social behavior related to the choice of place for settlement.[16] The severe and repressive state control over the production of Jewish physical space in *shtetls* lasted from 1809 (*rewir* in Warsaw) until 1862 (the Emancipation Act).[17] However, the state was not able to modify completely the model of Jews' behavior in the aspect of space production in small towns. A number of communities evaded the writ of compulsory displacement to *rewir*. Some community boards postponed the move to the allocated district by prolonged polemics; others bribed local authorities.

Adopting the structuralist-functionalist perspective, we need to emphasize that the establishment of a *rewir's* borders most frequently was in the hands of local authorities. A significant part was played by historical factors (location of the Jewish settlement center), economic factors (location of the marketplace) and frequently by individual undertakings of the local community (the lack or presence of a conflict between the Jews and the Christians). In other words, the process of spatial separation of a group of people (i.e. Jews) took place. The separation was sanctioned by the state. It was accompanied by a similar process of religious and cultural separation that stemmed from the differences between Jews and Christians in this sphere.

It is worth mentioning that not all small towns (*shtetls*) established a *rewir*. Without state interference into Jewish settlements, the control over the production of space was less strict and the segregation proceeded more naturally.

The physical space of the *shtetl* was formed in a two-fold way. Referring to the main factor distinguishing the inhabitants of the *shtetl* (the division into Jews and

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[15] Eisenbach A., „Mobilność terytorialna ludności żydowskiej w Królestwie Polskim", *Społeczeństwo Królestwa Polskiego. Studia o uwarstwieniu i ruchliwości społecznej pod redakcją Witolda Kuli,* II (Warszawa: 1966): 182.

[16] More about the conditions of choice of place of settlement see in Walmsley D. J., Lewis G. J., *Geografia człowieka:* 166.

[17] Eisenbach A., „Mobilność terytorialna" 193–215, idem, "Jidn in Warszawer Firsztentum" (Jews in the Duchy of Poland)*, YIVO Bleter*, 10 (1936): 95

Christians), we indicate that the space of the former was produced under the clear control of the state (as an institution). Christian space was generated, as we believe, more freely.

Production of the social space

Social space, defined as a field of mutual relations between individuals or a territory populated by a social group of certain specific traits, which has marked it in a certain specific way,[18] is a fairly complicated phenomenon with regard to its production.

In reference to the issue of the *shtetl*, state legislation (that also formed the physical space), historical factors (collective memory) and, above all, social factors exerted substantial influence on the production of the social space.

Specific features of a Jewish community and its cultural and religious distinction significantly influenced the shape of the social space of the *shtetl*. The peculiar caste system of the Jewish social organization in the 19th century, underlined by Aleksander Hertz,[19] resulted in breaking the religious homogeneity of small towns. Until the 17th-18th century it was based on Christian religions. The division brought an element of multi-religiousness, which provided a fertile ground for traditional communities (that populated *shtets*) to establish and strengthen clear socio-religious divisions.

Additionally, specific Jewish economic features (and their difference from the Christian ones) influenced the construction of the social space. Supporting the conception of social order, Jews occupied niche sectors in the economic structure of towns. Playing a role in exchange and craftsmanship in the broad sense, they constituted the missing link in the chain of economic inter-dependencies.

Religion, culture and tradition were obviously the crucial factors that influenced the production of the social space. These aspects, on which the culturalist perspective puts great emphasis, shaped the fundamental norms of social life, leaving an imprint on the organization of everyday life, work and contacts with another, non-Jewish environment.

In the second half of the 19th century (more exactly, from the 1880s onward), the second wave of industrialization began in the territory of the Polish Commonwealth. It prompted significant changes in the sphere of living conditions and hygiene. It altered the infrastructure of small towns (construction of plants, regulation of rivers). It also destroyed the traditional feudal social system, replacing it with the class structure. These changes incited transformation in the sphere of mentality. Transformation of consciousness affected both Jews and gentiles.

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[18] Jałowiecki B., Szczepański M. , *Miasto i przestrzeń* 303.
[19] Hertz A., *Żydzi w kulturze polskiej* (Warszawa: 2003): 91–123.

Among other things, it provoked the process of secularization. It greatly shattered the socio-economic mechanism of the *shtetl* that worked quite efficiently until the end of the 18th century. Differentiation in the Jewish community itself resulted in visible and multidimensional disturbance of various places of the social space. In certain group systems, class and professional differences replaced religious and feudal ones. In many communities, the tradition was lost upon the arrival of a fabric chimney. It introduced the epoch of industrialization.[20]

Assimilation and accustoming to the space

Assimilation in the Jewish and Christian spaces was spurred by identical stimuli but, due to many reasons, it manifested itself in different ways. All inhabitants of the *shtetl* craved to possess the space they occupied, to mark it with their characteristic symbols, finally to get accustomed to it and modify it according to their own needs and demands. It was reflected mainly in the functionality of houses (that were predominantly wooden in the 19th century). We may differentiate between the types of a Jewish house and a Christian house. Our distinction is not drawn on the basis of the general type of construction,[21] but according to the typical parts of a house. A Jewish house was often characterized by the following elements: a porch – a vestibule – often including *sukka* ("*kuczka*") or functioning as a shop (Russian *лавка*) that was directed toward a street, and numerous niches and annexes, "glued" to the body of a building. These were frequently built in order to evade the taxes that should be paid in case of enlargement of a living space. They occasionally had the same function as other rooms or contained small looms or shops. If they were defined as annexes, no tax was levied on them.[22] Christian houses did not have any annexes; their construction was limited to the body of the building. Specific features of the production and occupation of Christians – who were mainly peasants or laborers – did not demand the use of the house. These differences may be described as assimilation of the social space – adjustment or adaptation of the appearance and functions of a residential building for the needs of a particular social group (social space).

Assimilation in a small town's space consisted of the location of a building in relation to other objects of the *shtetl*. Its position in respect to the nearest transport route played an important role. The majority of houses in the *shtetl* had the shape of a rectangle, if seen from above. A house had two sides – a longer one and a shorter one that was called a gable. The location of a building in relation to the street depended on

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[20] Markowski A. *Przestrzeń Wasilkowa* 64–66.

[21] In small *shtetls* Jewish and Christian houses were usually built by the same masters; hence, the construction is similar (with a few exceptions).

[22] Such a situation occurred in the Bialystok region, see: State Archive in Bialystok, *Inspektor fabryczny powiatu sokólskiego,* passim.

the size of a land parcel, which was determined by its location in a *shtetl*. The space near the marketplace and main streets was limited due to its price and high demand. Its largest part was usually divided among as many users as possible. That is why the houses in the center were situated with the gable directed toward a street or the marketplace, regardless of the social status of their owners. It was *pomiara wloczna*[23] (land measurement) from the 16th century and the measurement of allotments in a *shtetl* that played the pivotal role in the assimilation of space in a small town. It seems that its influence is visible even today, as it is very difficult to change the spatial arrangement of the *shtetl*. The size of the plots on the streets diverging from the marketplace could be changed only by dividing (usually by halving) or merging 2 or 1,5 parcels. Such a conclusion may be drawn from the analysis of various fiscal sources of *shtets* in the Polish Commonwealth and the territories that were directly incorporated into the Russian Empire after 1795. On some streets, the same last names often appear beside one another.

Characteristic arrangement of buildings and space is the crucial – and quite often the sole – source testifying to the variegation and real image of "small Jewish towns". Today we can recognize the Jewish district of a *shtetl* from its demolished buildings. They leave empty areas, incompatible with contemporary urban conceptions. *Eruv khatsrot*[24] is no longer designated today by a string hanging on poles – its borders mark an empty, barren space.

The structure and evaluation of space

The social space of *shtetls* was not homogeneous. It actually consisted of a number of mutually overlapping or encompassing types. Taking the below plan of a small town's physical space as a model, we may distinguish the social space of the Jewish, the Orthodox or the Catholic, and in many other cases also the Muslim. Adopting another categorization, we may determine the social space of the poor and the wealthy, or of peasants, merchants, and craftsmen typical of the *shtetl*. A relevant criterion would be the designation of the central and peripheral space and the border space or,

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[23] *Pomiara wloczna* (land measurement) was a 16th century royal project aimed to measure the land and assess its value and expected revenues. It resulted in various changes in the size of parcels or fields.

[24] *Eruv khatsrot* – "mixed ownership of courtyards" – operates in the following way: during the Sabbath all the residents of an area (it may mean several houses, the whole street or even the whole small town) join into one private area. Although it is forbidden to carry anything during the Sabbath, carrying is allowed within the whole *eruv* area (Unterman A., *Encyklopedia tradycji i legend żydowksich* (Warszawa: 1998): 88). For more, see: 85-97; Kośka M., "Obyczaje żydowskie w świetle prawa obowiązującego w XIX wieku w Królestwie Polskim", Woronczak J. (ed.), *Studia z dziejów kultury Żydów w Polsce. v. 1, Żydowskie gminy wyznaniowe* (Wrocław: 1995): 40–43.

finally, of the *sacrum* and *profanum* spheres. Spaces of temporary character, i.e. *eruv khatsrot*, seem to be another issue.

The *shtetl* space may also be analysed from the point of view of its forms.[25] With regard to urban spaces (to some extent the *shtetl* was perceived as such) sociologists distinguish the following forms: the spaces **of production, consumption, power, symbolism, and exchange**.[26] Moreover, space may be analyzed on various scales: that of the whole *shtetl*, a borough, a street or a parcel, or even a house. The attempt to analyze the social and physical space using of a wide range of scales offers us a possibility to accurately comprehend the complicated system of inner and outer group interactions. In the humanistic perspective, it also allows us to emphasize the role and meaning of an individual. The individualistic approach has a great influence on creating the *shtetl* myth, which we will develop further. The drawing below presents a plan (model) of the 19th century *shtetl*. Places crucial for our analysis (temples, cemeteries, the Jewish district) are marked on it. The model is based on the most common spatial construct of the *shtetl*, established by the Magdeburg law or its modifications.
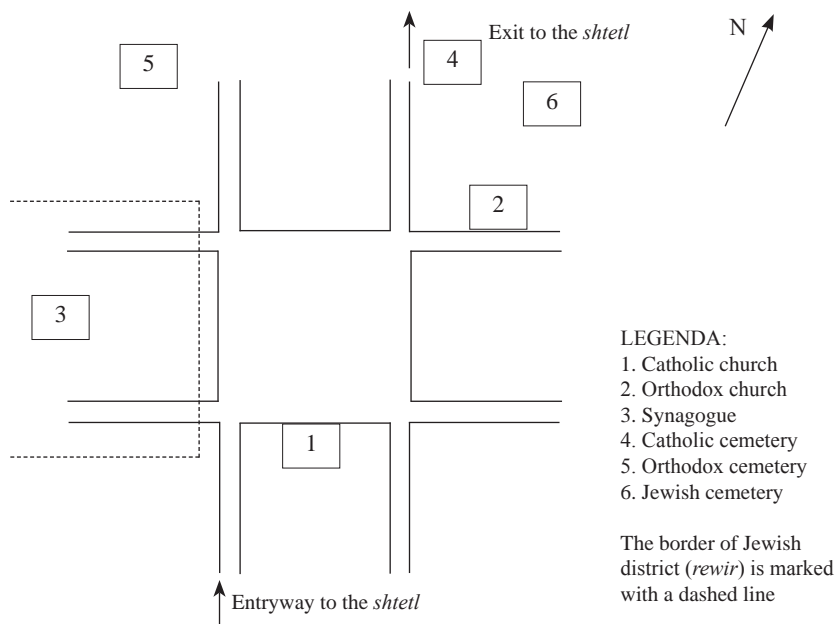
Pict. 1. Sketch of a model (plan) of the *shtetl* space

The social spaces of Jews and gentiles can be easily distinguished in the 19th century *shtetl*. The basic categories determining them are: the place of residence, the location of temples and places of religious cult, and the spaces of cemeteries (also closed). In the small towns of the Polish Commonwealth, the Jewish social space was determined by a designed district (*rewir*). This fact facilitates the analysis based on empirical material. The issue became more complicated in the case of the Polish lands that were directly incorporated into the Russian Empire after 1795. In the Tsarist Russia, *rewir* was not introduced. As a result, the reconstruction of Jewish settlements and the division of their social space requires an arduous examination of fiscal sources.[27] In the most common situation, Jews occupied the space around a marketplace (according to their professional preferences). Christians settled on the edges and suburbs of the *shtetl*.[28] The Christian space, usually divided into Catholic and Orthodox, was generally located around temples. As we have mentioned, religion was the essential driving force behind the formation of the social space, interconnected with the physical one. Due to hardly perceptible cultural barriers, as well as legislation and professional features, Christians of different denominations did not create hermetic areas in the *shtetl*.

We will attempt to characterize the social space of a *shtetl* with respect to its inhabitants' wealth and occupations. Rural settlement was concentrated on the outskirts of the *shtetl*. Sparsely situated buildings and a possibility to have access to larger plots of land determined the arrangement of rural community. Craftsmanship and trade were concentrated in the center and near the main transport routes, thus they were utterly urban in character. The center was populated by the well-off. The poor inhabited the peripheries.[29] At the turn of the 19th and the 20th centuries, the center (which was the busiest place with the inhabitants of the *shtetl* rushing in and out with their daily activities) was inhabited by the local financial elite. In this area land was the most expensive, not only because of its actual economic value. It was probably collective memory (until the end of the 18th century, an enterprise located in the area near the marketplace brought the greatest profit), prestige, or maybe tradition that motivated people to settle in this area. In Galicia such a model gradually changed, and at the beginning of the 19th century wealthy burghers already settled in the suburbs.[30]

Non-rural space partially merged with the social space of the wealthy. The profitability of non-agricultural activities was higher than that of small-scale farming. Small towns were also populated by a group of peasants called *łyki*.[31] Agricultural

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[27] Compare Markowski A., *Przestrzeń społeczna sztetł...* 347.
[28] Compare Piechotkowie M., K., *Oppidum judaeorum.*
[29] Compare monographs and diaries about the history of specific Jewish communities.
[30] Broński K., „Rynek i place Stanisławowa w XIX i XX wieku. Przemiany przestrzenne i funkcjonalne”, *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej,* 4 (1993): 607.
[31] Kaczyńska E., *Pejzaż miejski z zaściankiem w tle* (Warszawa: 1999): 71.

space overlapped to some extent with the space of the poor. With some exceptions, peasants who inhabited the peripheries of the *shtetl* constituted a more deprived and underprivileged group.

Space may also be analyzed with reference to its forms. They are closely related with the modes of production of space. The forms can be distinguished and classified on the basis of their role in the process of production, reproduction of manpower and reproduction of the social relations of production.[32] The space of production (both agricultural and non-agricultural) was located on the outskirts of the *shtetl*. Frequently overlapping with the space of consumption, it interwove with a form of symbolic space. The space of power, narrowly understood as the terrain of power institutions, was in fact limited to the municipality and jail. All that was encircled by the space of exchange.

Taking Znaniecki's definition of the social space as a certain value into account,[33] we may distinguish the spheres of *sacrum* and *profanum* in a *shtetl*. They are intrinsically related with the notion of symbolism of space form. According to Mircea Eliade, for a religious person space is not homogenous – it constitutes a collection of qualitatively different elements that may be divided into the holy areas (*sacrum*), which are powerful and important, and the amorphous – unholy – areas (*profanum*), in fact deprived of structure and distinctness.[34] For various religious groups, the spheres of *sacrum* and *profanum* may be different in their topographical location, but their types and function are very similar. All inhabitants of the *shtetl* were actually subjected to the division into *sacrum* and *profanum*. Eliade argues that there is no pure lay experience, as an individual is not able to desacralize himself/herself completely; he or she always has religious evaluation of the world. The spheres of *sacrum* are the places of connection with a supernatural force (e.g. with God). They functioned as specific gates or links between heaven and earth. Temples, cemeteries, places of processions may be thus treated as such. It was the ceremony of consecration that distinguished the places of *sacrum* from those of *profanum*.

The above presented kinds of space typical of social groups create a lucid picture of the social space of the *shtetl*. However, the situation was more complicated, as all

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[32] Jałowiecki B., Szczepański M., *Miasto i przestrzeń* 353.

[33] Znaniecki writes, "*Grating a human being with a law to be in a certain space pertains to his or her social status. Space value is an element of certain non-spatial system of values, in reference to which it possesses a specific content and meaning. It may be a religious system, ethical, technical-productive, economic, social. (...) Human teams, especially created by organized groups, usually possess (in the sphere of collective ruling and acting) certain spatial values. They treat them as common "value" not in a purely economic sense but in this more general meaning that they "rule" them together, using them to carry on collective activities or authorizing them use them while performing certain individual activities.*" Quoted from Jałowiecki B., Szczepański M., *Miasto i przestrzeń* 305

[34] Eliade M., *Sacrum, Mit, Historia* (Warszawa: 1969): 62.

kinds of spaces, being located in one and the same territory, overlapped and merged. Another hindrance was the introduction of the category designating location (center-periphery) and the obvious specificity of the Jewish district that had its own center and often created a form of a temporary symbolic space – *eruv khatsrot.*[35]

While analyzing the forms, kinds and types of space, we may easily notice the formation of places of accumulation of many kinds of social spaces in the same territory. They were concentrated primarily around the marketplace that was the center – i.e. the most visible, most frequently attended, most representative and most salient (due to its location) place in a small town. The marketplace was a very heterogeneous space that had various meanings for different social groups and, what is important, these meanings differed greatly. An additional function of the marketplace as a center is its integrating role or, from the perspective of the ecological approach, its function of coordinating decentralized activities.[36] Another similar center was formed by the synagogue complex with a synagogue, a ritual bath and houses of prayer (No. 3 on the plan) – the center of a Jewish district. The sphere of *sacrum*, the Jewish district, and the space of production overlapped there. The homogeneity of the social group using this space is certainly a relevant difference. We may clearly see that the second of these places of accumulation of meanings and forms became an increasingly important place in the whole *shtetl* because of the homogeneity of the group of its users. It developed its function more rapidly and less accidentally than the marketplace. From the point of view of economic and social functions, it had a more fundamental meaning for a *shtetl*. Districts with the role of the consumption space, although they occupied quite an extensive territory, had the least significant social function.

Spaces along the border were an important issue. They functioned as the inner and outer borders of the whole *shtetl*. The outer borders were based on the natural forms of terrain, such as forests or rivers, or ended on agreed grounds. The entryway into a small town was a breach in the border space of the *shtetl*. The inner borders are difficult to be established today, as they most often existed only in the minds of the living. *Rewir* – the Jewish district – was one of the most accentuated.

The space of a house may be considered from various points of view – it is complex and multifaceted. It was feasibly the most friendly or even intimate space for the inhabitants of the *shtetl*. It was variously marked: in the case of the Catholic – by a cross hanging in the most important room, the Orthodox – by an icon, the Jewish – by a *mezuzah*[37] nailed to a door-frame. Similarly, the inner space of temples, which symbolized a transition from *sacrum* to *profanum*, had a strictly defined order and

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[35] More in Bergman E., *The Revir*.

[36] Jałowiecki B., Szczepański M., *Miasto i przestrzeń* 382.

[37] *Mezuzah* is a tiny scroll of parchment that includes two first handwritten paragraphs of *Shema* prayer. It is placed in a box on the right side of door-posts (Unterman A., *Encyklopedia tradycji* 178.).

meaning. Passing through the door of a temple was a kind of interruption of spatial continuity – it elevated the visitor to a higher level that was closer to the divine forces.[38] It is worth recalling that the analysis of the space of a house, its functions and architecture in *shtetls* in Ukraine was presented by Ałła Sokołowa.[39]

The *shtetl* space, divided and adopted by various social groups, was in fact situated in one and the same territory (which was marked by a piece of land). There were places desired by different social groups, or places that were temporarily possessed by these groups, or violated by transport routes.

The Jews' space had the character of a district. It was more consolidated – better, or more exactly, defined. An instinctive attachment to one's "own" space, its emotional treatment (my house, my street, my district) was, as may be argued, a subconscious source of reluctance or potential conflict, if one's "own" space was violated by "others", both for the Jews and the Christians. However, in this situation Christians were more powerful, as they controlled a greater area of this space. By controlling the space between a Jewish district and, for instance, a cemetery, they created an obstacle or made it difficult for Jews to access the necropolis. They did not do it by some consciously introduced restrictions. The necessity to pass through an "alien" space that belonged to another community was an obstacle in itself. The space, divided into "better" and "worse" with regard to its location and the value of parcels, probably aroused subconscious envy. However, it was Jews who most often inhabited the most lucrative places. This fact stirred up envy and, consequently, dislike and aversion among Christians.

While constructing buildings important for their own community (a synagogue, a ritual bath) and organizing the space for their own needs, Jews probably felt co-responsible for their *shtetl*. In such a situation, especially with ideological anti-Semitism spreading at the turn of the 19th and the 20th century, the conflict over the *shtetl* (physical) space was very likely.

As Christians clearly dominated in the conflict over the physical space (territory), Jews – better established in the divisions of the social space – probably tried to transfer conflicts into this sphere, hoping for victory. We will leave this issue, however, as a hypothesis, as it demands a scrupulous and detailed research.

The myth of the *shtetl* space

Myth, understood as a false opinion about something or somebody and believed without reason, or as an embellished, invented story about a certain figure, thing, or a

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[38] Eliade M., *Sacrum, Mit* 65.
[39] Соколова А., "Архитектура штетла" 55–84.

fact,[40] also functions in reference to the issue of the *shtetl*. The stereotype of the *shtetl* is integrally related with it. The process of mythologization and creation of stereotypes of "a small Jewish town" concerns both the Christian and the Jew. The images of Christian inhabitants of the *shtetl* and their descendants are usually well known and presented in the media and popular writings. The process of mythologization and creation of stereotypes among Jews seems to be more gripping.

The formation of the *shtetl* myth began in belles-lettres in the 19th century, at the time when *shtetls* still functioned and its inhabitants lived peacefully.[41] Gradually, secular elements were added to the picture of a traditional Ashkenazi community, which lived according to well-established rules in a patriarchal family in their own ancient Jewish district. They somewhat expanded an optimistic portrait of "a small Jewish town".[42] The *shtetl* myths that function nowadays have come into being after the tragic events of the Shoah, among the groups and communities that populate the corners of the world.

Being passed on in memoir books (in Hebrew: *pinkas ha-zikkaron*), myths allow us to confront the image of the *shtetl* that was preserved in its inhabitants' memories. This image was restored after the years of wandering, the Shoah, and peculiar "orphaning" of a social group, often of relatives from a hometown, who were largely exterminated in the war years. These are images deformed by pain, suffering, war experience, sometimes by academic literature, but also by the flaws of human memory. They are not directly related to the *shtetl* space of the 19th century, but they still refer to the memory of what was to a large extent constructed in the 19th century.

Many of the memoir books include "memory" plans of the *shtetl*. They were analyzed by Olga Goldberg – Mulkiewicz.[43] Her works are very significant in the research of *shtetl* history. Extensive sources – more than a hundred of plans found in memoir books – resulted in a thorough analysis of the subject. Its only drawback is the lack of references to actual plans and comparison of myth and reality.

The main difference between the *shtetl* myth and the real *shtetl* at the turn of the 19th and the 20th centuries is the mode of alienation of the Jewish space, or rather its radical separation from the entire space. In fact, as we have argued, the Jewish space merged or overlapped in many aspects with the non-Jewish space. On the plans and in memoir books these two words exist (rarely co-exist) one next to the other. It was probably the experience of the Shoah (which in many cases is combined with aversion to Christians – the "other" inhabitants of the *shtetl*) that resulted in the willingness

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[40] *Słownik Wyrazów Obcych*, Pakosz B. et al. (eds.) (Warszawa: 1991): 565.

[41] O. Goldberg–Mulkiewicz, *Księga pamięci a mit żydowskiego miasteczka*, „Etnografia Polska", V. XXXV, 2 (Warszawa: 1991): 195.

[42] Ibid. 196.

[43] Ibid.; idem, „Itineraria miasteczek żydowskich", Paluch A. K. (ed.), *The Jewish in Poland*, 1 (Kraków: 1992).

of Jews to dissociate themselves from everything that is non-Jewish and might have contributed to the tragedy, or to stay passive or indifferent.

The mythologized space was defined by religious symbols, such as the cross (symbolizing a church), the Star of David (symbolizing a synagogue), or the symbols of an Orthodox church. The forms of the space of power, or the most important one – of exchange (which was limited only to the marketplace) – also had its signifiers. The production space was sometimes marked by sawmills, plants and mills. The clear division between Jews and gentiles is manifested in memoir books by a more detailed presentation of the Jewish space in comparison with the Christian one. The topography of the streets is almost always altered. The perception of the *shtetl* from the point of view of the Jewish space usually has deformed proportions. The main street was the one that crossed the Jewish space. Other ones, which might have been more important, seemed to be irrelevant in the minds of survivors.

The myth almost creates an image of a small town in a small town. It results in the attempts to define the *shtetl* as a district of a purely Jewish character in a bigger, multicultural center.

Images of *shtetls* included in "memory" plans seem to idealize and simplify not only the space, but also the notion of the *shtetl*. Everything is simple, clear and obvious in them. The streets belong either to Jews or gentiles; similarly the houses or mills. Nobody mentions the incredibly complicated social relations that cannot always be reduced to the simple division into Jews and non-Jews. Nonetheless, the images of the *shtetl* together with its chronicles included in memoir books seem to be a valuable but still rarely used source.

The synagogue as a house of elections

Eleonora Bergman

At the end of 1821, Czar Alexander I, following the tendency of the government of the Polish Kingdom (Congress Kingdom) to establish tight control over all strata and segments of society, issued a decree that terminated the activities of *kahals*, traditional autonomous representations of Jewish communities since the ancient times. Instead, new governing bodies were to be called into existence, with a strange name, when we think deeper about it: *dozory bóżnicze*[1] (synagogal supervisors). "Supervision" implies control over a community's property, while "synagogue", in the name thus constructed, takes us back to pre-partition Poland, when a synagogue was a synonym for a community. It reminds us of the Council of Four Lands established in the late 16th century – eventually, the ultimate Jewish authority in the Polish Commonwealth, until the end of its existence in 1764. The Council was originally established in order to make the collection of taxes more efficient. In the end, it had to deal with all the problems of Polish Jews and was accused of having created a "state within a state".

On a smaller scale, a similar thing happened to the *dozory*. At the beginning, their responsibilities were reduced to religious matters, and it was because of certain financial privileges that the state authorities were able to find candidates, mainly among the poorer strata of the Jewish population, whose priority was their own personal profit (members of the *dozory* did not have to pay a community tax). In the course of time, especially in Warsaw, wealthier people began to see in the *Dozór* a chance to influence the community, and in 1870 it was taken over by those who sought to bring profit to the community. The *Dozór* became an autonomous government with different departments and divisions. In 1873, the governor of Warsaw province wrote, "The Jewish *Dozory* ... are some sort of community leaders. In some cases, they take responsibility in solving conflicts between the members of the community and its separate groups; very often, the members of the charitable institutions are hostile to rabbis, not only in the community, but also in religious matters."

Jakób Kirszrot (1848–1920), a renowned Warsaw lawyer, in his fundamental book on the Jewish laws in Poland, stated, "Although *dozory bóżnicze* exist in the country since 1821, until today [1916] there has never been any law that would appropriately regulate their attributes and procedures. Such a law is badly needed." The Municipality of Warsaw was particularly concentrated on this subject, and prepared a vast instruction

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[1] *Dziennik Praw*, No. 28, Vol. 7 (n.d., n.p.): 275–278.

manual for the *Dozór Bóżniczy* of the Warsaw Districts. The document consisted of 343 paragraphs, and was signed by the mayor Teodor Andrault de Langeron (?–1885) on October 10/22, 1851; however, even these instructions were not finally approved by an appropriate authority, and thus were not obligatory. The instructions stated that it was "the only representation of the Jewish community and an intermediary between this community and the government in whatever concerns spiritual and charity matters, etc." In 1916, the German occupational powers issued a special decree, which did not regulate all the issues,[2] but remained the legal basis for the organization of the Jewish community authorities even in the interwar period. It was not changed until 1939.

Initially, all the *Dozory* were to consist of three members and a rabbi. The members were to be elected. The elections to any *Dozór* always raised emotions, and in the Jewish community of Warsaw, "the youngest amongst its sisters in Europe", they had a very special character.

First, the history of Jewish settlement in Warsaw was very complicated. For the purpose of this paper, I will only recall that from the late 18th century until 1862, there were several restrictions for the Jews, which resulted, on the one hand, in creating some concentrations of Jewish population. On the other hand, however, they did not affect the Jews living in poorer neighbourhoods. After 1862, some Warsaw Jews took advantage of their new freedoms by moving to the more favourable streets.

Table 1. Jewish population statistics

Year	Total population	Jewish population	%
1820	100.000	22.000	22,0
1832	123.500	31.000	25,1
1856	156.000	41.000	26,3
1864	223.000	72.000	32,3
1887	439.200	150.558	34,3
1911	797.200	301.268	37,8
1914	884.500	337.000	38,1

From the outset, in Warsaw the basic number of *Dozór* members proved to be insufficient, and therefore in 1821 it already had six members. In 1855 there were eleven, and in 1908 – seventeen. Besides the members of the *Dozór*, there were also other community officials, such as cantors, sextons, ritual slaughterers and cemetery staff. But they were employed rather than elected. Rabbis were employed, too, although not recognized by the Hassids. Because of its vast territory that had to be

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[2] Both quotes from Kirszrot J., *Prawa Żydów w Królestwie Polskiem* (Warszawa: 1917): 43–74 (57).

supervised, Warsaw was divided into five synagogal districts, and each one of them had a rabbi; however, around the mid-19th century each district already had two rabbis, and in the early 20th century – three rabbis. In the interwar period, the Warsaw Jewish community (which was then the official name of the community's governing body) employed 17 rabbis.

Elections to the community authorities took place in synagogues, which usually were the only buildings fit to house all those qualifying to participate in the elections. In Warsaw, the number of houses of prayer increased according to the changes in Jewish settlement. There were 100 such houses in 1815, 142 in 1858, 201 in 1869, 340 in 1907, and 442 in 1926.

From the early 19th century, the opening of such an institution required permission from the police and a onetime payment to the *Dozór*, and later to the Community Board, as it was renamed in 1870. The *Dozór* was obliged to control private synagogues, dispersed over a large area, which resulted in large travelling and correspondence expenses. Thus, from 1851, a special annual fee had to be paid, 5 or 10 roubles, depending on the number of users of a house of prayer. This fee did not change until 1914. It is also worth mentioning that the office of the *Dozór* from the very beginning was always connected to some house of prayer (we know six subsequent locations of the office). It was only in 1898 when the then board of the Jewish community succeeded in building its new seat. From 1905, it also housed the Jewish Museum named after Mathias Bersohn (1823–1908).[3]

So, starting in late 1821, the Jewish community in Warsaw, as elsewhere in the Polish Kingdom, used to hold elections to its governing body every three years. At the beginning, all "fathers of families", up to 6.000 in the early 1830s, took part in elections. Afterwards, the Governmental Commission on Spiritual Affairs introduced a financial census. The Commission stated that the participation of all residents makes the election procedures difficult, and emphasised that the relatively wealthier members of the Jewish population used the participation of the fifth – in the other words, the poorest – class, to their advantage. As a result, approximately 90% of Warsaw Jews were excluded from elections.

There was a direct connection between the *Dozór* and places of public worship in Warsaw, because the number of authorized electors depended on the number of synagogues. In 1839, the *Dozór* itself selected one representative for each of the 102 houses of prayer that existed in the city at that time. In 1844, electors were to be chosen among"... the permanent inhabitants of Warsaw, sympathetic and faithful to the Government, persons of

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[3] Podhorizer-Sandel E., „Zniszczenie zabytków kultury i sztuki żydowskiej w Warszawie", *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 2–3 (86–87) (Warszawa: 1973): 232; the catalogue of the museum collection was compiled in 1939; it listed 1.221 works of art, including paintings of interiors of synagogues in Zółkwa, Kleck, Grodno and Shargorod. The fate of the collection after 1939 is not known.

good name, well known, trusted by the community, directly or indirectly contributing to its charitable institutions, regular state and city tax payers..."[4] There were 138 candidates, among them Yitzchak Meir Rothenberg Alter (1785–1866), known as the *Gerer rebbe*, or *zaddik* from Gora Kalwaria, the founder of the most important Hassidic dynasty in Poland. These elections marked the beginning of the "Hassidic era" for the authorities of the Warsaw Jewish community. It lasted until 1870.

On August 4/16, 1850, the Government Commission on Internal Affairs wrote to the mayor of Warsaw: "In order to receive correct results of the elections, which means to have the [members of the] *Dozór* elected according to the will and with the consent of all the community, you will invite as electors some of the heads of households, but coming from all classes of the Jewish population, and none other than those nominated by the Jewish inhabitants."[5] Following this direction, in 1851, the Warsaw Municipality issued instructions for the *Dozór*, which introduced a new system of elections. Despite the fear of an excessive number of electors, the Commission decided that they should be "heads of households from all classes of the Jewish population, permanent inhabitants, adults..." (i.e. 25 years old). The Commission let the Municipality nominate an employee for the task of controlling proper conduct at the elections. The Municipality limited the number of electors to about 1.000, so that each synagogue had to choose ten of its members – heads of households regularly paying community taxes.[6]

According to the mayor's decree of August 8/20, 1851, all "managers of synagogues" were obliged to provide names, professions and addresses of ten electors of various classes, whom they knew to be permanent inhabitants and of good conduct. (As for addresses, only mortgage numbers were given, which were sufficient to identify a house.) The owners of synagogues were obliged to send the protocols of the elections of electors, signed by themselves and at least six heads of households. The pattern of a protocol included the following data:

Table 2. The pattern of a protocol of 1851

Number	Family name and given name of the elector	Age	Address (mortgage number)	Profession	Elected by a synagogue (mortgage number)	Remarks

[4] Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych "*Main Archive of Old Documents*", (hereinafter referred to as AGAD), Centralne Władze Wyznaniowe Królestwa Polskiego "*Central Religious Authorities of the Polish Kingdom*", (hereinafter referred to as CWW), file No. 1726 (formerly 1736), [Akta] tyczące się Gminy żydowskiej w Warszawie; the same title refers to files No. 1723–1733, formerly 1733–1743, respectively, p. 205.

[5] AGAD, CWW, file No. 1727 (formerly 1737), under the date 4/16.08.1850 (no page number).

[6] AGAD, Komisja Rządowa Spraw Wewnętrznych (*Governmental Commission of Internal Affairs*, hereinafter referred to as KRSW), file No. 6580, [Akta] t.s. Gminy Starozakonnych w Warszawie, 1867–68, p. 7.

In this way, 968 electors were announced; they had to choose 15 candidates from among themselves, and these were finally to select five members of the future *Dozór*. (Interestingly enough, of these 968, approximately 50% were involved in trade; there were about 160 producers of various goods and all kinds of craftsmen, not always identifiable; 7 bankers and 11 moneychangers; 59 owners of houses, and others.) Eventually, 614 persons participated in the elections.[7] Referring to the list, we can determine that there were 107 synagogues in Warsaw and 4 in Prague, which also means that not all of them selected ten electors. As we can also learn from the list, the electors usually lived at the same address where their synagogue was located, or in its vicinity. The only exception was the "German Synagogue" – five of its ten electors lived nearby, but the other five in quite distant places. We should not be surprised: at that time it was the only progressive synagogue in the city (not even Reform yet), and several of its members, usually well-off or belonging to free professions, were permitted to live anywhere, unlike the majority of Warsaw Jews. It might be interesting to mention the fact that approximately ¼ of those 107 synagogues were located on one street (Franciszkańska), which will be later described as a "fortress of uncompromising, intricate and rigorous ritual canons, not permitting a single sunbeam penetrate its ancient walls."[8]

In 1855, the rules of elections changed again. This time it was the Government Commission on Religious Denominations and Public Education that decided that each synagogue should designate three electors, who were required to have a good command of both spoken and written Polish. The same condition was stipulated in 1858; however, this time a synagogue had to nominate one elector for each 100 synagogue members. If a synagogue had fewer members, it was to select one elector for 50 members. The list included 142 houses of prayer with the total number of 7.733 members (contributors) – heads of households, from whom 253 electors were selected.

The system of elections adopted in 1851 resulted in turning the synagogues, at least temporarily, into some sort of political clubs. This system was in effect until 1871, when the financial census was introduced. As has been mentioned, in the early 19th century, the Jewish population of Warsaw was divided into five categories, of which the fifth were the people who could not afford any contribution to the community. In 1864, the number of categories already increased to fourteen, of which the last four were not able to pay 15 roubles required for the election census seven years later. These last four categories constituted almost 85% of the community taxpayers. As a result, only 400 people qualified as electors, and only 308 of them voted. There is probably no need to clarify that the electors were only men, and this situation did

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[7] AGAD, CWW, file No. 1727 (formerly 1737), pp. 756, 759, 829–943.

[8] Archiwum Państwowe m.st. Warszawy "*State Archive of the City of Warsaw*", (hereinafter APW), Zbiór rękopisów, Ms. No. 330:16; Rozenrot A., *Żydowskie dzielnice przedwojennej Warszawy* (Dolny Śląsk: 1949).

not change until 1939. However, from 1870, at least those women who were paying the community tax were allowed to participate in the elections through their male plenipotentiaries. In 1891, the number of electors reached 1.206, in 1897 – 1.550. [9] In 1916, it was about 3.000, less than 1% of the Jewish inhabitants of Warsaw.[10]

From 1871, the connection between the synagogues and the Community Board was limited to the collection of license fees. In 1916, Samuel Hirszhorn (1876–1942), member of the Warsaw City Council, wrote, "The community does not spend any money; on the contrary, it makes profits, because every Jew who wants to pray, has to pay..."[11] However, in the course of time, this profit became relatively less substantial, and by the turn of the 19th century it constituted less than 1% of the community income, while the area to be supervised was constantly growing.

Until the outbreak of the Second World War elections took place only three times, in 1924, 1931 and 1936. There was no financial census. All men above 25 qualified as voters, above 30 – as electable. The system of voting was based on the lists of political parties, but in many cases elections took place in synagogues...[12]

There was always some room for manipulation on the part of the authorities, which ultimately had to accept the *Dozór*'s staff. For example, in 1837, because of the protests of some of the middle-class electors against one person, the authorities held additional elections. They deliberately recruited thirty electors among the poorest, who voted for another person, and the latter was eventually accepted.[13]

The results were always unsatisfactory for some part of the electorate. Anonymous letters flooded the state authorities after every election. In 1851, the President of the Commission on Internal and Spiritual Affairs received a letter, which read: "For twelve years already, two Jews of Warsaw, Abram Winiawer [sic!] and Jacob Tugendhold, have joined their forces and want to cheat all the Warsaw Jews. When it comes to elections, they themselves nominate electors who vote for them (i.e. Tugendhold and Winiawer), although the majority of the community is not favourably inclined toward them. When 100 Jews gather, they only get 15 votes, but remain in their posts. ...We are begging the Honourable Mr. General to look into this matter. ...Please endorse the

9   Schatzky J., *Di geshikhte fun yidn in varshe* [The history of the Jews in Warsaw], vol. III (New York: 1953): 174, 181.

10   Hirszhorn S., *Samorząd Miejski a Gmina Żydowska w Warszawie* (Warszawa: 1916): 16.

11   S. Hirszhorn, *Samorząd Miejski* 8.

12   Sakowska R., "Z dziejów gminy żydowskiej w Warszawie 1918–1939", *Studia Warszawskie,* vol. XIV – *Warszawa II Rzeczypospolitej*, (Warszawa: 1972): 163–192.

13   AGAD, CWW, file No. 1724 (formerly 1734), 28.9.1837: "Concerning the Jew Dawid Bauerertz, whom I had the honour to recommend on requests from some Jews from the Prague suburban community as the sixth member of the *Dozór Bóźniczy*... in order to follow the above mentioned instructions [KRSW, of July 14,1837] I assembled, with the help of the Head of the Police of District 12, thirty six of the poorest Jews, with whom I proceeded with elections, and after having collected their secret notes I found out that they elected... Icek Beniamin Gesundheit... ."

nomination of those who receive the biggest number, which means the bigger half [sic!] of the votes, ... so that this unfortunate community could get rid of these two." The letter was signed "Elyakim, son of the Truth".[14] About Abram Winiawer (dates of life not known), we do not have much to say, except that he belonged to one of the oldest and richest of Warsaw's Jewish families, trading mostly in wine. About Jacob Tugendhold (1791 or 1794–1871), however, we know that he was an ardent *maskil* and a proponent of assimilation, from 1820 – a censor of Hebrew books, from 1821 – the founding director of the first state-sponsored elementary schools for Jewish children. Two years after this letter had been written, he became the director of the School of Rabbis, whose graduates formed the core of the Polish Jewish intelligentsia.

Maskils blamed Hassids, and the latter blamed their "civilized" brethren for any unsatisfactory results of elections. In a letter of 1859, Hassidic members of the new *Dozór* were called thieves, and one of their leaders, Yitzchak Meir Alter – a bandit, and in general Hassids were blamed for cheating the government. (In 1859, Alter became the founder of Gur, the most important Hassidic dynasty in Poland.) In 1864, the electors nominated by the synagogue on Daniłowiczowska Street were accused – no doubt, by the Hassids – of "not obeying any rules" and being intent on paralysing the elections.[15]

A synagogue was usually a house of gathering, prayer and learning. Its role as a house of elections was no less important in the times of transformation of the Jewish community. The activity of the authorities of the 19th-century Jewish community of Warsaw, from the establishment of the *Dozór*, could be divided into several periods, when it was ruled by Misnageds (1821–39), then by Misnageds and Hassids (1840–70), followed by the assimilationists (1870–1926).[16] At the same time, the system of elections reflected the changes in the Jewish community of Warsaw, as well as served as a stimulus or brake for changes.

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[14] AGAD, CWW, file No. 1727 (formerly 1737), p. 752.
[15] AGAD, CWW, file No. 1732 (formerly 1742), pp. 754–756; file No.1731 (formerly 1741), pp. 319–348.
[16] Żebrowski R., "Gmina w Warszawie", *Pamiętanie. Zabytki żydowskie Warszawy* (Warszawa: 2001): 55–72.

Jewish cemeteries in 19ᵗʰ-century Germany between "tradition" and "assimilation": a paradigmatic development for Central Europe?

Ulrich Knufinke

Although the history of the buildings and landscape architecture of Jewish cemeteries in Germany is a relatively new field, it may be interesting for several reasons. It is well known that the oldest Jewish cemeteries in Germany date from the Middle Ages, and that since the 17ᵗʰ century there has been a constant line of examples of cemeteries and cemetery buildings.[1] Their landscape architecture and their structures represent a historical development of Jewish sepulchral culture, reflecting functional innovations and stylistic changes, as well as possibilities and requirements of Jewish communities in non-Jewish environment. This article attempts to give an overview of the development of cemeteries and their buildings especially in 19ᵗʰ century Germany by explaining very few examples. Thus, it will be only a sketch.

A traditional German Jewish cemetery, typical of the Ashkenazi cemeteries of the 17ᵗʰ and 18ᵗʰ centuries, is still preserved in Fürth in Franconia.[2] The cemetery was established in 1607 and enlarged later. An engraving published in 1734 shows

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[1] A comprehensive bibliography on Jewish burials is published by Wiesemann F., *Sepulcra Judaica. Bibliographie zu jüdischen Friedhöfen und zu Sterben, Begräbnis und Trauer bei den Juden von der Zeit des Hellenismus bis zur Gegenwart* (Essen: 2005); see also Künzl H., *Jüdische Grabkunst von der Antike bis heute* (Darmstadt: 1999); for Germany see e.g. Brocke M., Müller Ch. E., *Haus des Lebens. Jüdische Friedhöfe in Deutschland* (Leipzig: 2001). On Jewish cemetery buildings in Germany see the author's dissertation: Knufinke U., *Bauwerke jüdischer Friedhöfe in Deutschland* (to be published in 2006) and his short article: idem, "Bauwerke jüdischer Friedhöfe in Deutschland. Eine Skizze", Biegel G., Graetz M. (eds.), *Judentum zwischen Tradition und Moderne* (Heidelberg: 2002): 31–48.

[2] See Habel H., *Stadt Fürth. Ensembles, Baudenkmäler, archäologische Denkmäler* (München: 1994): 356. Presumably the *tahara*-house was demolished in order to erect a new cemetery hall in the second half of the 19ᵗʰ century. On the most famous Sephardic cemetery of the 18ᵗʰ century see e.g. Alvares Vega L., *The Beth Haim of Ouderkerk aan de Amstel. Images of a Portuguese Jewish cemetery in Holland* (Ouderkerk aan de Amstel: 1994). On the largest Sephardic cemetery in Germany see Studemund-Halévy M. and Zürn G., *Zerstört die Erinnerung nicht. Der jüdische Friedhof Königstraße in Hamburg* (Hamburg/München: 2002).

Fig. 1: A traditional Ashkenazi Jewish cemetery in Fürth, Franconia (Kirchner P. Ch., *Jüdisches Ceremoniell. Beschreibung jüdischer Feste und Gebräuche* (Nürnberg: 1734, reprint Leipzig: without year), engraving no. 14).

the cemetery in a didactical way (fig. 1).[3] The plot is surrounded by a stone wall. The entrance gate leads to a courtyard in front of the graveyard. The tombstones, all similar in shape and size, are arranged in irregular rows.

Next to the entrance the *tahara*-house is situated. Presumably it was built in the late 17th century.[4] It is a modest half-timbered building. The *tahara* is taking place on its ground floor.[5] The body is lying on a *tahara*-table. The members of the *Hevra Kaddisha*

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[3] Kirchner P. Ch., *Jüdisches Ceremoniell. Beschreibung jüdischer Feste und Gebräuche* (Nürnberg: 1734, reprint Leipzig: without year), engraving no. 14.

[4] The first engraving of the cemetery depicting also the *tahara*-house was done by Boener in 1705; see Habel H., *Stadt Fürth* 356.

[5] For religious laws and customs concerning Ashkenazi Jewish burials see e.g. Steines P., "'… mit den Trauernden um Zion und Jerusalem…' Tod und Begräbnis im Judentum", Mraz G. (ed.), *Triumph des Todes?* (Eisenstadt: 1992): 140–155; Roth E., "Zur Halachah des jüdischen

are purifying the body. A well is dug in front of the *tahara* house; and the chimney indicates that inside there is an oven to warm the water for the cleansing of the body. In the foreground of the engraving we see a solemn procession bringing the deceased to the grave, where he is laid into a coffin and then lowered into the grave. A sermon, *hesped* in Hebrew, can be held either there or at the entrance to the cemetery.[6]

It is a major responsibility of the *Hevrot Kaddishot* to ensure that the Jewish law and traditions are respected.[7] Their members held a position of high social status in Jewish communities. Burial societies were an important part of the self-organisation of Jewish social institutions.[8] Thus the burial place, its appearance as a whole, as well as the design of the tombstones and buildings and the celebration of the burial ceremonies was the utter responsibility of Jewish authorities.

Of course, this type of cemetery is not just typical of Germany in the Baroque period, where it can be seen in many examples. In Màd, Hungary, for example, we find a very similar burial place. Unfortunately, its entrance building is a ruin today (fig. 2). Another cemetery dating from this period is preserved in Eisenstadt (Austria). Here presumably a *tahara*-house never existed, the cemetery was located in direct neighborhood of the Jewish settlement, so that there was no fear of defiling the dead body on the way to a cemetery far away.

In the second half of the 18th century, ideas of enlightenment began to influence the cemeteries. The fear of infections led to new burial laws for Christians as well as for Jews. Since then, it was often forbidden for Christians to bury their dead inside the cities.[9] Thus, new Christian cemeteries were established outside the settled areas.

Friedhofs", *Udim. Zeitschrift der Rabbinerkonferenz in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 4 (1974): 97–120; or Gotzmann A., "Die religionsrechtlichen Grundlagen des jüdischen Friedhofs", *Deutsche Kunst und Denkmalpflege*, 48 (1990): 61–72.

[6] In the Jewish cemetery of Prague there is a balcony for a preacher at the *Hevra Kaddisha* house next to the entrance. In earlier times, a special niche was erected at this place. See Pařík A. et al., *Prague Jewish Cemeteries* (Prague: 2003): 12.

[7] On *Hevrot Kaddishot* see e.g. Segall J., "Die Chewra Kadischa in Deutschland", *Zeitschrift für Demographie und Statistik der Juden*, 2 (1925): 9–13.

[8] See Goldberg S. A., *Crossing the Jabbok. Illness and Death in Ashkenazi Judaism in Sixteenth-through Nineteenth-Century Prague* (Berkeley: 1996); Reinke A., *Judentum und Wohlfahrtspflege in Deutschland. Das jüdische Krankenhaus in Breslau 1726–1944* (Hannover: 1999); or Zürn G., *Die Altonaer jüdische Gemeinde (1611–1873). Ritus und soziale Institutionen des Todes im Wandel* (Münster: 2001).

[9] On the development of cemeteries and burials in general see e.g. Ariès Ph., *Geschichte des Todes* (München: 1997); on cemeteries in Germany see Boehlke H. K. (ed.), *Vom Kirchhof zum Friedhof. Wandlungsprozesse zwischen 1750 und 1850* (Kassel: 1985); Happe B., *Die Entwicklung der deutschen Friedhöfe von der Reformation bis 1870* (Tübingen: 1991); or Fischer N., *Vom Gottesacker zum Krematorium. Eine Sozialgeschichte der Friedhöfe in Deutschland seit dem 18. Jahrhundert* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: 1996).

Fig. 2. Màd, Hungary: Jewish cemetery, view from south-west (photo: Ulrich Knufinke, 2005).

Since traditionally Jewish cemeteries were situated far away from towns and villages, they were not a target for the enlightened hygienists. However, the custom of burying the dead within one day, which was also a Christian custom in those days, sparked protests. During the 18th century, the fear of burying the seemingly dead arose as a result of the ideas of the Enlightenment movement.

In 1772, the Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin decreed that bodies of Jews should only be buried after watching them for three days to prevent the burial of the seemingly dead. This edict corresponds with similar orders for Christians. The Jewish communities considered this an attack on their religious tradition.[10] They asked Rabbi Jacob Emden (1697–1776) and the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn (1729–86) for advice. Emden responded in the traditional way, stressing the fact that early burial was

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[10] Silberstein S., "Mendelssohn und Mecklenburg", *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland*, 29 (1929): 233–244, 275–290; Wiesemann F., "Jewish Burials in Germany – Between Tradition, the Enlightenment and the Authorities", *Leo Baeck Yearbook*, 37 (1992): 17–31; Krochmalnik D., "Scheintod und Emanzipation. Der Beerdigungsstreit in seinem historischen Kontext", *Trumah. Zeitschrift der Hochschule für jüdische Studien*, 6 (1998): 107–147, or Heinrich G., "Akkulturation und Reform. Die Debatte um die frühe Beerdigung der Juden zwischen 1785 und 1800", *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, 59 (1998): 137–155.

an integral part of Jewish religion. Mendelssohn held a different view. In his opinion, the Jewish religious tradition was not against a later burial, if this could ensure that the seemingly dead would not be buried alive. He recommended "building a vault on the burial ground, where the bodies can be cleansed in the customary way, watched over for three days and then buried."[11] In Mecklenburg-Schwerin this recommendation was not followed. Instead, the Jewish community reached a compromise with the government, also following an advice of Mendelssohn: a doctor had to confirm the fact of death before the burial. Although the Jewish tradition was not broken, this was an early governmental intervention into inner Jewish religious affairs. From that time on, the *Hevra Kaddisha* was not the sole entity responsible for the end of a Jew's life.

Another example of a governmental interest in Jewish cemeteries was the erection of a "ceremonial house" in Wörlitz in 1790.[12] Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff (1736–1800), architect of the Duke of Anhalt, designed the cemetery buildings in his modest early neo-classicist or neo-Palladian style.[13] They were not hidden, as was usual for Jewish buildings at that time, but instead stood in a visible position amid the landscape. The ceremonial house had rooms for the *tahara* and an apartment for a keeper. For the first time in Germany, a prime position was given to a Jewish cemetery building, although any Jewish signs or symbols were avoided. It was an integral part of the landscape which the Duke and von Erdmannsdorff were creating, inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment.[14]

At the same time, the generation of Mendelssohn's pupils continued the discussion regarding early burial. The *maskils* turned it into one of the fundamental questions of Jewish emancipation. Accepting the prevalence of common interest rather than

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[11] Translation by the author, following Silberstein (1929): 282: "*Sollte aber der Landesherr auf Seinen Befehl bestehen; so können Sie nichts Besseres tun, als nach dem Beispiel unserer Vorfahren auf Ihrem Begräbnisplatz ein Gewölbe bauen, wo die Abgeschiedenen nach hergebrachter Sitte können gereiniget, drei Tage lang bewacht, und alsdann erst begraben werden.*"

[12] See Knufinke U., "Jüdische Friedhofsbauten in Sachsen-Anhalt. Ein Überblick", Bernd Gerhard Ulbrich and Eva J. Engel (ed.), *Judentum: Wege zur geistigen Befreiung* (Dessau: 2002): 79–101.

[13] The original drawings, presumably done by von Erdmannsdorff, are held at the Anhaltische Gemäldegalerie Dessau, Graphische Sammlung (*Painting collection of Anhalt in Dessau*), Inv.-Nr. Z 206; published in *Friedrich Wilhelm von Erdmannsdorff 1736–1800. Sammlung der Zeichnungen* (Dessau: 1986).

[14] On the design of landscape of the Enlightenment in Dessau-Wörlitz see e.g. Biegel G. (ed.), *Wörlitz. Ein Garten der Aufklärung* (Braunschweig: 1992); or Bechtoldt F.-A. and Weiß T. (eds.), *Weltbild Wörlitz. Entwurf einer Kulturlandschaft* (Ostfildern-Ruit: 1996). In 1789 von Erdmannsdorff and the Duke of Anhalt-Dessau also built a new and unique synagogue for the Jewish community: a round "Vesta-temple" as an allusion to Roman-classical buildings. This synagogue is one of the first in Germany to be built in an open visible position: it marks the border between the small town of Wörlitz and the park. On the synagogue see e.g. Thies H., "Das architektonische Konzept der neuzeitlich-modernen Synagoge", Biegel G. and Graetz M. (eds.), *Judentum zwischen Tradition und Moderne* 7–29.

religious tradition became the touchstone for the question whether Jews could be citizens with the same rights and duties, integrated into a secular state and society.

In a supplement to one of the earliest journals of the German *Haskala*, an essay by Marcus Herz (1747–1803) was published in 1787.[15] Herz, Moses Mendelssohn's last physician, wanted to break off with the old tradition and move on to rationality. "If neither religion, nor morality, nor politics, nor intelligence command us to bury our dead four hours after the disappearance of signs of life, it will be advisable to follow the example of our cultured and enlightened neighboring peoples to refrain from following this custom."[16]

As a direct result of these ideas, the *Gesellschaft der Freunde* ("Society of Friends"), an association of *maskils,* began to plan a Jewish mortuary in Berlin.[17] In 1798, a project was published, drawn by Salomo Sachs (1772–1855), the first Jewish architect known in Prussia.[18] Sachs designed a building of early German neo-classicist style, typical of the Berlin school of neo-Classicism of Friedrich Gilly and Heinrich Gentz (fig. 3). He planned rooms for laying out the bodies, but no *tahara* room: ritual purification apparently was to remain the responsibility of the traditional *Hevra Kaddisha*. Unfortunately, the project was not put into life.

In Frankfurt am Main, a further step was taken to give a Jewish cemetery a representative character: next to the city's new Christian cemetery, a Jewish cemetery was built at the same time. The architect Friedrich Rumpf (1795–1867) and the

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[15] Herz M., *Über die frühe Beerdigung der Juden. Des Sammlers vierten Jahrgangs erste Zugabe* (Berlin: 1787). On the Berlin circles of *maskils* see Pelli M., *The Age of Haskalah. Studies in Hebrew Literature of the Enlightenment in Germany* (Leiden: 1979).

[16] Translation by the author, following Herz M., *Über die frühe Beerdigung*: 32–33: "*Wenn also weder die Religion noch die Sittenlehre, noch die Staatskunst, noch die Klugheit uns befiehlt, unsere Todten vier Stunden nach dem Verschwinden der Lebenszeichen zu begraben; so ist es allerdings sehr rathsam, nach dem Beyspiel unserer gesitteten und aufgeklärten Nebenvölker endlich einmal diesen Gebrauch zu unterlassen.*"

[17] The author's thanks to Dr. Sebastian Panwitz, Berlin, whose dissertation on the "*Gesellschaft der Freunde*" is in print. He gave me information about the *Gesellschaft* and about the planning of the mortuary in Berlin. See also Knufinke U., "Jüdische Friedhofsbauten um 1800 in Deutschland: Architektur als Spiegel der Auseinandersetzungen um Haskala, 'Emanzipation' und 'Assimilation'", *Pardes. Zeitschrift der Vereinigung für Jüdische Studien*, 11 (Potsdam: 2005): 68–101.

[18] Oppenheimer D., *Plan zu einer mit Königlicher Allerhöchster Bewilligung allhier zu errichtenden Leichen- und Rettungs-Anstalt* (Berlin: 1798). On Salomo Sachs see his autobiography: Sachs S., *Mein fünfzigjähriges Dienstleben und literarisches Wirken. "Ich büße für meinen Glauben"*, ed. by Werner Heegewaldt and Oliver Sander (Teetz: 2005, commented edition of the first print Berlin: 1842). Sachs was one of the first teachers in Schinkel's famous Berliner Bauakademie and later the first Jewish civil servant in the Prussian building authorities. His design of the mortuary is the earliest design of a Jewish building done by a Jewish architect in that period.
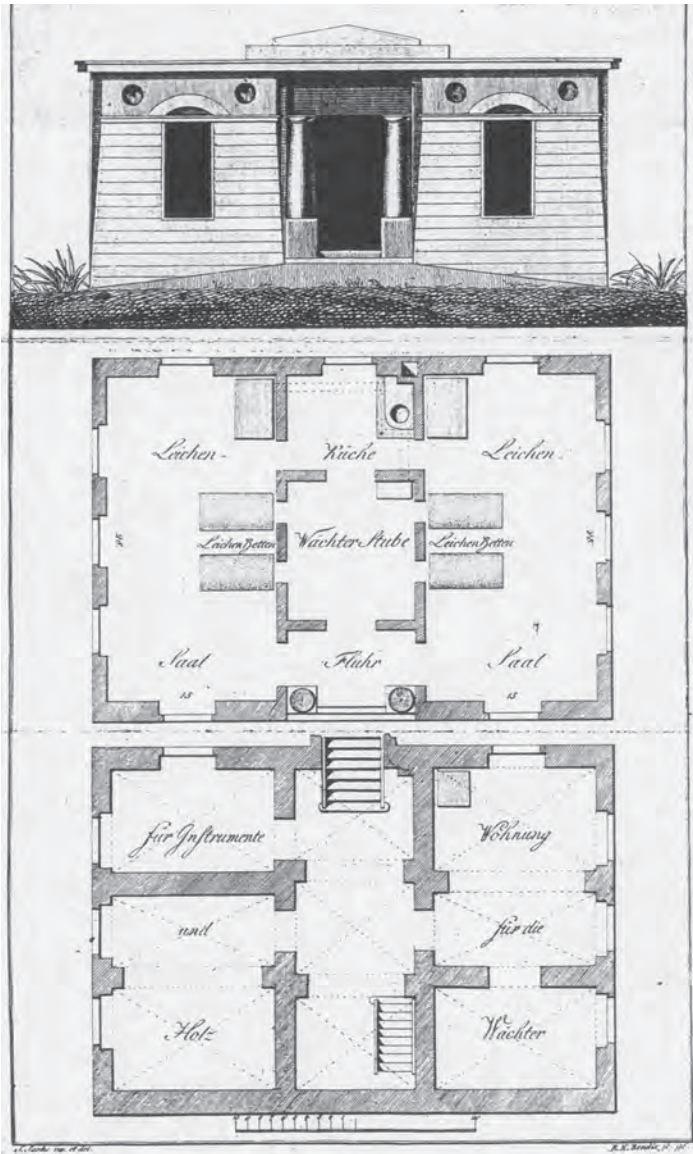
Fig. 3. "Leichen- und Rettungs-Anstalt", Jewish mortuary of the "*Gesellschaft der Freunde*" in Berlin, designed by Salomo Sachs, 1798 (Oppenheimer D., *Plan zu einer mit Königlicher Allerhöchster Bewilligung allhier zu errichtenden Leichen- und Rettungs-Anstalt* (Berlin: 1798): without page number.

gardener Sebastian Rinz (1782–1861) designed the entire complex in 1828 (fig. 4).[19] It is one of the most important cemetery ensembles of the neo-classicist period in Germany.[20] The Jewish area is clearly separated from the Christian site by high walls. A Doric portico emphasizes the entrance, leading to an open courtyard. On the left and the right side, two assembly rooms were originally situated, presumably one for the funeral ceremonies for men, the other for women. Another passage is the entrance to the graveyard. Having an assembly room may be a result of changes in Jewish burial customs: a larger community of mourners could now have a special place for prayers, rather than gathering between the graves. Since the middle of the 19th century, these changes caused the erection of a new type of building – the cemetery hall.

To erect a Jewish and Christian cemetery side by side on one site, in the same style and as one complex, may be considered an example of true "assimilation" and "equality". Later on, it was common to establish Jewish cemeteries next to Christian ones, which in most cases were divided by walls or hedges. Of course, this was also a result of hygienists' demands to concentrate burials in one site outside the settlements. But several Jewish reform communities of the late 19th century even gave up formal separation – their graveyards were situated within the plots of communal cemeteries, for example in Eisenach (1867) and Weißenfels (1883) or in the Zentralfriedhof of Vienna (1878/79).

Another new aspect of the Jewish cemeteries of the early 19th century can be explained by looking at the cemetery in Schönhauser Allee in Berlin, designed by Friedrich Wilhelm Langerhans (1780–1851) and opened in 1827.[21] Straight alleys with trees divide the graveyard geometrically into sections, demonstrating the new order of enlightenment and rationality in contrast to the condemned confusion of pre-emancipation Jews. This gave an opportunity for a new distinction in a Jewish cemetery nearly unknown among the traditional ones, where equality in death was the rule. Graves along the alleys and the wall were much more representative than those in the fields, and getting a place there became a question of money and not just merit. In this way, the new cemeteries of the period expressed the social differences in the Jewish community, just as contemporary Christian cemeteries did. The changes in the

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[19] Beil J. A., *Der neue Friedhof von Frankfurt am Main nebst allen darauf Bezug habenden amtlichen Verordnungen und Zeichnungen* (Frankfurt am Main: 1829).

[20] See Happe B., *Die Entwicklung* 139–142; or Bettina Erche, *Der Frankfurter Hauptfriedhof* (Frankfurt am Main: 1999).

[21] See file *Bauakte Schönhauser Allee* 22/25, vol. 1, Bauaktenarchiv Pankow-Prenzlauer Berg, Berlin. See also Müller Ch.E., "Jüdischer Friedhof Berlin Schönhauser Allee. Inventarisation und Erforschung", *Anspruch der Steine. Jüdischer Friedhof Berlin Schönhauser Allee* (Duisburg/Berlin: 2000): 14–60; Hüttenmeister N., Müller Ch. E., *Umstrittene Räume: Jüdische Friedhöfe in Berlin. Große Hamburger Straße und Schönhauser Allee* (Berlin: 2005). Similar cemeteries with geometrical alleys were established in München (Thalkirchner Straße, 1816) and Magdeburg (1816) for the first time.

Fig. 4. Entrance buildings of the Jewish and of the Christian cemetery in Frankfurt am Main, designed by Friedrich Rumpf, 1828 (photos: Ulrich Knufinke, 2004).

appearance of the cemetery in Schönhauser Allee correspond with another change: the reform-oriented leaders of the Jewish community took over the responsibility for the burial and the graveyard; for this purpose a new society was founded and the burial order was published in German.[22] The traditional *Hevra Kaddisha* of Berlin was dissolved at the same time.[23]

It should be mentioned that parallel to the changes in the design of cemeteries and their buildings, new forms of tombstones became fashionable. In addition to the traditional Hebrew inscriptions, at least the name and the dates of life of the deceased were written in German on the back of the tombstone. Later, German texts replaced the long Hebrew inscriptions on the front. The form of the tombstones adapted common neo-Classicistic examples. Though the traditional Jewish symbols

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[22] "Neue Beerdigungs-Anordnung in der Israelitischen Gemeinde zu Berlin", *Sulamith* (1826): 337–344.

[23] See Hüttenmeister/Müller, *Umstrittene Räume*: 169–196.

Fig. 5. Hannover, Jewish cemetery An der Strangriede, designed by Edwin Oppler, 1864: cemetery chapel, view from south (photo: Ulrich Knufinke, 2006).

were not forgotten, symbols inspired by Greek and Roman antiquity could also be found.

A very influential new Jewish cemetery was inaugurated in Hanover in 1864 (fig. 5).[24] Edwin Oppler (1831–80), one of the most successful Jewish architects of that time in Germany, placed a courtyard along the street, flanked by a keeper's house and a *tahara* house.[25] The elongated assembly hall to the south is like a threshold in front of the burial ground. Like in Schönhauser Allee in Berlin, the graveyard is divided into four rectangular fields by alleys with rows of trees, and in the centre a round place is situated. Another path leads along the walls, where family graves (e.g. of Edwin Oppler's family) were built.

Extending the construction program of Jewish cemetery buildings and giving them a representative character raised the question of an adequate design and even a specific style. Oppler believed that a German Jew should build in the "German" style to prove that historically he belonged to German society. "In a German state, the German Jew

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[24] See Schulz P., *Der jüdische Friedhof An der Strangriede in Hannover* (Hannover, typescript); the author thanks Dr. Schulze for his help.

[25] On Oppler see Eilitz P., "Leben und Werk des königl. hannoverschen Baurauts Edwin Oppler", *Hannoversche Geschichtsblätter Neue Folge*, 25 (Hannover: 1971): 131–310.

Fig. 6. Budapest, Jewish Farkasreti-Cemetery, cemetery chapel, view from north (photo: Ulrich Knufinke, 2005).

has to build in the German style."[26] He mixed, therefore, late Romanesque and Gothic elements, forming an intermediate style. The entire complex was considered exemplary. Oppler was asked to write an article about designing Jewish cemeteries in a German handbook for builders.[27] Remarkably, in his advices Oppler followed all the traditional rules, but he did not refer to them explicitly. Writing for mostly non-Jewish architects, perhaps he did not want to explain halakhic laws. The cemetery and its buildings may be seen as a signal for the wish of Jews to be accepted as part of the German society and bourgeois culture, though at the same time they expressed the wish to adhere to their religious traditions – for them Jewishness should not be a question of nationality and culture, but a personal religious affair.

The Farkasreti-cemetery in Budapest is an example of the spread of this concept (fig. 6). Presumably it was established in the last decades of the 19th century. Its

[26] Translation by the author, following Harold Hammer-Schenk, "Edwin Opplers Theorie des Synagogenbaus. Emanzipationsversuche durch Architektur", *Hannoversche Geschichtsblätter Neue Folge*, 33 (Hanover: 1979): 110–117, here p. 106: "*Der deutsche Jude muß also im deutschen Staate im deutschen Style bauen*."

[27] Oppler E., Haupt A., "Synagogen und jüdische Begräbnisplätze", *Deutsches Bauhandbuch II: Baukunde des Architekten, zweiter Theil* (Berlin: 1884): 270–285.

main alleys start at a cemetery chapel, and the worthiest graves are erected along this way.

In the synagogue architecture of the second half of the 19th century, the historicist question of style also led to remarkable results.[28] Edwin Oppler's "German", neo-Romanesque – neo-Gothic style for Jewish buildings, was not the only answer to this question. In Magdeburg, a cemetery hall was built in the so-called "neo-Moorish" style by Johann Heinrich l'Hermet (1806−84) in 1866, nearly at the same time as Hannover.[29] The building is put back several meters from the street, like a barrier in front of the graveyard. The higher part in the middle enclosed the assembly-hall, the eastern wing served as a hearse-shed, and in the western wing rooms for the *tahara* and an apartment for the guard were located. Later, a separate small building for cleansing the dead bodies was erected. Although at the time of its consecration the cemetery was far away from the city, the building had a representative character.

Its "neo-Moorish" design – pointed horse-shoe arches, colored tile stripes, cast-iron Alhambra-capitals – can be seen in many Jewish buildings of that time: the style had to signify the "Jewish" meaning of the structure with regard to the geographic origin of the Jewish people. This idea – the signification of a building's function or purchaser by its style – was typical in the period of Historicism. It replaced the older concept of stylistic assimilation of Jewish ritual buildings, such as the neo-classicistic example of Frankfurt. Neo-Moorish elements can also be found in synagogues since the 1830s. Cemetery buildings of this style were built until the end of the 19th century, e.g. in Mainz (1881), Köthen (1888) and Halle (1893–94) in Germany, in Karlovy Vary (late 19th century) in the Czech Republic and in Zürich in Switzerland (1891, fig. 7).

At the same time, another historicist style was used to design Jewish cemetery buildings. The cemetery hall in Bamberg (Franconia) is an example of the so-called neo-Renaissance style.[30] It was built by an unknown architect in 1885. The high assembly hall is situated in the centre of the building. Rooms for the *tahara* are in the left wing; an apartment for the guard is situated in the right wing. All the details, round arches, cornices and lisenes at the corners are designed in a modest Renaissance style.

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[28] See Hammer-Schenk H., *Synagogen in Deutschland. Geschichte einer Baugattung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert (1780–1933)* (Hamburg: 1981); Krinsky C. H., *Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning* (New York: 1985); or Künzl H., *Islamische Stilelemente im Synagogenbau des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main: 1984).

[29] See Brülls H., *Synagogen in Sachsen-Anhalt* (Berlin: 1998): 138–140; or Knufinke U., "Bauwerke jüdischer Friedhöfe…".

[30] See files at Stadt Bamberg, Hauptamt-Registratur XI 1310/4 (*Archive of the Municipal Building Authorities*).

Fig. 7. Zürich, old cemetery chapel, designed by A. Chiudera and T. Tschudi, 1891, view from southwest (photo: Ulrich Knufinke, 2002).

Especially in south Germany, e.g. in Nuremberg (1864), Regensburg (1871), Munich (a cemetery in Thalkirchner Straße, 1881−82) or in Würzburg (late 19th century), but also in other regions quite a large number of Jewish cemetery buildings were erected according to this scheme and in the same style, e.g. in Vienna, in the first Jewish part of the Zentralfriedhof (1878–79),[31] in Prague, New Cemetery (1890)[32] or in Wrocław, the cemetery in Kosel (1903).[33] Obviously it was not an aim of the architects and the communities to give these buildings a sacred appearance − they were rather searching for a style that could reflect Jewish self-confidence, using neither the so-called Christian styles nor the Moorish style. This might be a reason for choosing a form that is reminiscent of profane but very representative Renaissance villas.

Taking part in the funeral became more and more an act of representation during the 19th century. Thus it raised the problem of providing a place for *cohens* to attend funeral ceremonies. For *cohens* it is not allowed to get in contact with dead bodies for the reasons of ritual purity. So they should not enter cemeteries or stay under the same

[31] See Steines P., *Hunderttausend Steine. Grabstellen großer Österreicher jüdischer Konfession auf dem Wiener Zentralfriedhof Tor I und Tor IV* (Wien: 1993).

[32] See Pařík A. et al., *Prague Jewish Cemeteries*: 99–119.

[33] See Ehrlich R., P., "Israelitische Friedhofsanlage für Breslau", *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung*, 23 (1903): 168–169.

Fig. 8. Berlin, Jewish cemetery in Weißensee, cemetery chapel, designed by Hugo Licht, 1879, view from south-east (photo: Ulrich Knufinke, 2006).

roof with dead bodies. Different solutions fulfilling this religious prescription, but at the same time giving the *cohens* the opportunity to stay with the mourners, were found. In some places they attended the ceremony standing in the courtyard in front of the hall. Edwin Oppler intended this solution for the cemetery chapel in Hannover. Open porticos, as in Magdeburg, may have had a similar function. In Bamberg, the cemetery hall has an apse on the east side. There is a small gap in the roof between the apse and the hall, which can be opened if a *cohen* is in the hall – so that he would not be under the same roof with the dead body in the apse. In Nuremberg and Cologne, a gap cuts off a *cohens* room from the building, visible even in the walls and the floor.

The ongoing enlargement and differentiation of Jewish cemetery buildings and landscape architecture culminates in some metropolitan cemeteries of the late 19th and

Fig. 9. Prague, New Jewish cemetery, cemetery chapel, designed by Friedrich Münzberger, 1893, view from east (photo: Ulrich Knufinke, 2004).

the early 20th century. In Berlin-Weißensee, opened in 1879, there is a large building complex at the entrance, designed by the architect Hugo Licht (1841–1923).[34] The prayer hall looks like a Renaissance chapel (fig. 8). The huge plot is divided by geometric alleys with enormous mausoleums at some crossings. The ideals of town planning of Haussmann's boulevards in Paris are transferred to the representative city of the dead. To build a mausoleum for eternalising the memory of members of rich families became common in Jewish cemeteries all over Europe, and similar iconographic ideas can be found in various examples in Vienna, Berlin, Rome or St. Petersburg.[35]

Similar cemeteries – bourgeois cities of the dead – were also erected in many other cities: in Prague (New Cemetery, 1890, fig. 9), Budapest (Kozma utca, 1891),

[34] See file *Bauakte Herbert-Baum-Straße 45,* Bauaktenarchiv Pankow-Weißensee, Berlin; or Melcher P., *Weißensee. Ein Friedhof als Spiegelbild jüdischer Geschichte in Berlin* (Berlin: 1987) and many other publications.

[35] The history and architecture of mausoleums of Jewish cemeteries has not been well researched until now. The author intends to do a documentation project in the future in cooperation with all interested researchers and institutions.

Fig. 10. Vienna, Zentralfriedhof, Jewish cemetery Tor IV, cemetery buildings, designed by Ignaz Reiser, 1928, view from west (photo: Ulrich Knufinke, 2006).

Wrocław (Kosel, 1903) or in St. Petersburg's Preobrazhensky Cemetery, with an early modern building from 1908, or later in Vienna, Zentralfriedhof gate IV (1928, fig. 10) with an expressionistic or art-deco mortuary.

Summing up the development of buildings and landscape architecture of Jewish cemeteries in Germany during the 19th century, enormous changes can be notified, caused by or parallel to the ideas of the Enlightenment, legal emancipation and civil assimilation. The Jewish cemetery is no longer an inner Jewish affair, but is under the supervision of non-religious governmental authorities. At the same time, the cemetery becomes a place of representation: within the community – by pompous burials and graves, for society at large – by representative buildings and a park-like composition. But cemeteries are also places of keeping one's own religious traditions. Although non-orthodox cemeteries of the late 19th century had lost all appearances of a traditional Jewish cemetery from pre-emancipation times, they conform to the Jewish law. Obviously these processes are not specific for Germany, where they began early at the time of Mendelssohn's pupils. They can be seen everywhere in Central European cemetery architecture, depending on the level and desire for assimilation of the Jewish communities and their members into non-Jewish elites. Presumably the architects and gardeners had the German examples in mind, when they designed new cemeteries in other countries. To obtain a deeper insight into these developments and interdependencies, a full documentation of Jewish cemetery architecture would be necessary, which is an aim of further international and interdisciplinary cooperation in research.

The house on the corner: Frankists and other Warsovians in the struggle for spatial benefits in late 18ᵗʰ-century Warsaw (1789–92)*

Ekaterina Emeliantseva

"I am telling you that these neophytes [i.e. Frankists] will go to any length to quickly suck somebody else's wealth dry, even if it means renting a house on some corner and getting the better of a Catholic. And thus this Jew in a *kontusz* [a short Polish coat][1] will always get the upper hand first."[2]

Thus wrote an anonymous citizen of Warsaw in 1790 about those followers of the Jewish pseudo-messiah Jacob Frank (1726−91), who had converted to Catholicism some thirty years earlier.[3] His complaint about the new competitors indicates that

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[1] On the name of the traditional Polish coat, see "Kontusz", in Gloger Z. (ed.), *Encyclopedia Staropolska Ilustrowana*, 2 (Warszawa: 1958): 79–80.

[2] [Anonym], *Dwór Franka czyli polityka nowo-chrzczeńców odkryta przez neofitę jednego dla poprawy rządu roku 1790* (Warszawa: 1790): 16. For the edited version, see Woliński J., Michalski J, Rostworowski E. (eds.), *Materiały do dziejów Sejmu Czteroletniego* (hereinafter referred to as MDSC), vol. 6, no. 19 (Wrocław: 1959): 176–182.

[3] The basic works on the Frankist movement in general still are Gershom Scholem's studies on Jewish mysticism: Scholem G., *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: 1971); idem, "Die Metamorphose des häretischen Messianismus der Sabbatianer in religiösen Nihilismus im 18. Jahrhundert", in idem, *Judaica 3. Studien zur jüdischen Mystik* (Frankfurt a. M.: 1970): 198–218; idem, "Redemption through Sin", in idem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism: And Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (New York: 1971): 78–141. On the Polish Frankism, see Kraushar A., *Frank i Frankiści Polscy, 1726–1816: Monografia historyczna osnuta na zródłach archiwalnych i rękopismiennych* (Kraków: 1895); Bałaban M., "Studien und Quellen zur Geschichte der frankistischen Bewegung in Polen", *Livre d'hommage à la mémoire du Dr. Samuel Poznański* (Warszawa: 1927): 25–75; Duker A. G., "Polish Frankism's Duration. From Cabbalistic Judaism to Roman Catholicism and from Jewishness to Polishness", *Jewish Social Studies*, 4 (1963): 287–333; Weinryb B. D., *The Jews of Poland: A Social and Economic History of the Jewish Community in Poland from 1100 to 1800* (Philadeplhia: 1976): 236–261; Hoensch J. K., "Der 'Polackenfürst von Offenbach'. Jakób Józef Frank und seine Sekte der Frankisten", *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistsgeschichte*, 42 (1990): 229–244; Haumann H., "Der 'wahre Jakob'. Frankistischer Messianismus und religiöse Toleranz in Polen", Erbe M. et al. (eds.), *Querdenken. Dissens und Toleranz im Wandel der Geschichte. Festschrift zum 65.*

both close economic contacts and conflicts about spatial benefits in the Polish capital shaped the relations between the Frankists and other Warsaw inhabitants.

The privileged house on the corner, this striking symbol of economic success and social advancement, with which Warsovian residents identified the Frankists, may thus be understood as a metaphor for the characteristic "Frankist social space," an expression of the ambiguous nature of the group's social position. Then, a significant characteristic of the Warsaw Frankists was the fact that they occupied the social spaces in between the traditional religious and corporative spheres. In a subversive way their specific way of living questioned those boundaries, which have had such a strong bearing on the thinking of citizens in 18th-century Warsaw, even if these boundaries may not have been as clearly marked in social practice – as will be demonstrated below by the conflict between the Frankists and the municipal authorities during the Four-Year *Sejm* which took place in Warsaw between 1788 and 1792.

My focus here will be to approach these conflicts from the spatial point of view. Analyzing social conflicts and distribution of power from the spatial perspective, Pierre Bourdieu points out that the physical place and position that an actor acquires in an appropriated physical space are the best indicators of the actor's position in the social hierarchy. That is, the structure of the social space manifests itself in different contexts in the form of spatial contradictions, while the occupied or appropriated space functions as a metaphor for social space.[4] Using Bourdieu's idea of appropriated

Geburtstag von Hans R. Guggisberg (Mannheim: 1996): 441–460. For the recent research on the Frankist doctrine, see works by Jan Doktór, Harris Lenowitz, Rachel Elior and Stefan Schreiner: Doktór J., *Śladami mesjasza-apostaty. Żydowskie ruchy mesjańskie w XVII i XVIII wieku a problem konwersji* (Wrocław: 1998); Lenowitz H, *The Jewish Messiahs. From the Galilee to Crown Heights* (New York and Oxford: 1998); Elior R., „Słowa Pańskie Jakuba Franka: mistyczna automitografia – nihilizm religijny i wizja wolności mesjańskiej jako urzeczywistnienie mitu i metafory", Galas M. (ed.), *Duchowość żydowska w Polsce. Materiały z międzynarodowej konferencji dedykowanej pamięci professora Chone Shmeruka, Cracow 26–28 kwietnia 1999* (Kraków: 2000): 237–246; Schreiner S., "'Der Messias kommt zuerst nach Polen'. Jakob Franks Idee von Polen als gelobtem Land und ihre Vorgeschichte", *Judaica*, 2 (2001): 242–268. On Jacob Frank's teachings, see also very instructive articles: Maciejko P., "The Literary Character and Doctrine of Jacob Frank's 'The Words of the Lord'", *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts*, 9 (2003): 175–210; idem, "Christian Elements in Early Frankist Doctrine", *Gal-Ed: On the History and Culture of Polish Jewry*, 20 (2006): 13–41. On the gender aspects in Frankism, see Rapoport-Albert A., "Al maʿamad hanashim bashabbeta'ut" [On women's position in Sabbatianism], Elior R. (ed.), *The Sabbatian Movement and Its Aftermath: Messianism, Sabbatianism and Frankism*, 1 (Jerusalem: 2001): 143–327. Klaus Davidowicz's works about Jacob Frank are informative, yet merely descriptive: Davidowicz S. K., *Zwischen Prophetie und Häresie. Jakob Franks Leben und Lehren* (Wien et al.: 2004); idem, *Jakob Frank, der Messias aus dem Ghetto* (Frankfurt am Main: 1998).
[4] Bourdieu P., "Physischer, sozialer und angeeigneter physischer Raum", trans. Schwibs B., Wentz M. (ed.), *Stadt-Räume* (Frankfurt et al.: 1991): 25–34, here 26.

space, I center my analysis of the Frankist social position on their place within Warsaw urban structure and the conflicts about spatial benefits.

The spatial implications of the Frankist social position have never been the main subject of any study.[5] However, this approach to Frankist history allows for more differentiated insights into the general process of Jewish acculturation, within which a specifically Frankist way of integration into the Catholic society of Early Modern Poland can be observed.[6]

My basic source is limited almost entirely to the available town registers and surveys of the city's houses and inhabitants conducted between 1784 and 1792.[7] Most of these records are incomplete and contain mistakes. Also, it must be taken into account that not all Frankists could be identified in these sources, since their names alone would not be sufficient for that purpose.[8]

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[5] On the patterns of Jewish urban residence in Early Modern Poland-Lithuania, see Hundert G. D., "Jewish Urban Residence in the Polish Commonwealth in the Early Modern Period", *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, 26/1 (1984): 25–34; idem, Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century. A Genealogy of Modernity (Berkeley/Los Angeles: 2004): 30–31; in particular, cf. Frick D., "Jews and Others in Seventeenth-Century Wilno: Life in the Neighborhood", *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, 12 (2005): 8–42, for Poznań cf. Teller A., „Warunki życia i obyczajowość w żydowskiej dzielnicy Poznania w pierwszej połowie XVII wieku", Topolski J., Modelski K. (eds.), *Żydzi w Wielkopolsce na przestrzeni dziejów* (Poznań : 1999): 57–70; idem, *Chaim be-cawta. Ha-rowa ha-jehudi szel Poznan be-machacit ha-riszona szel ha-mea ha-szwa esre* [Living together. The Jewish quater of Poznań in the first half of the 17ᵗʰ c.] (Jerusalem: 2003). For the socio-topography of the Polish cities in early modern period in general, see Bogucka M., "Die Städte Polens an der Schwelle zur Neuzeit: Abriss der soziotopographischen Entwicklung', Rausch W. (ed.), *Die Stadt an der Schwelle zur Neuzeit* (Linz: 1980): 275–286; cf. also for the modern period Pióro Z. (ed.), *Przesztrzeń i społeczeństwo. Z badań ekologii społecznej* (Warszawa: 1982).

[6] On the debate over spatial implications of the relations between Jews and non-Jews and the role of the term 'ghetto', see the discussion by Heyde J. and Steffen K., "The 'Ghetto' as Topographic Reality and Discursive Metaphor", *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook*, 4/212 (2005): 423–430. Cf. also Heyde J., "'Ghetto' and the Construction of Jewish History. The Case of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Considerations about a Research Project", *Jewish History Quarterly*, 212 (2004): 511–518.

[7] Archiwum Głowne Akt Dawnych "*Mains Archive of Old Documents*" (hereinafter referred to as AGAD), Warszawa Ekonomiczne "*Warsaw Economical Records*" (hereinafter referred to as WE), no. 751: Księga miejska miasta Warszawy (1791–1812); no. 29A: Taryfa łokciowego miasta obojga Warszawy, 1784; no. 15–17: Protokoł rewizyi miasta wolnego Warszawy... uskutechniony, 1792; no. 23–28: Wymiary possessijów i gruntów miasta stołecznego Warszawy z roku 1790.

[8] Few of them were noted in the survey of Warsaw inhabitants conducted in 1792 as *neofita* (neophytes, i.e. converted Jews). This remark in connection with a certain name, whose bearer was known as a Frankist, is more likely to identify them as such.

For the description of Frankist social spaces and their spatial implications, I shall first briefly outline the history and the social profile of Warsaw Frankists in late 18th–century Warsaw, before focusing on their living conditions and the conflict with the city administration during the last *Sejm* of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Between religious boundaries and corporative privileges: the social space of Warsaw Frankists

Orthodox Jews regarded the messianic movement of the Frankists as the worst heresy in Jewish history: the Frankists had radically broken with the rabbinic tradition and declared the foundations of the Jewish faith invalid, i.e. these mystics believed in the possibility of salvation in exile, too. To the Frankists, Poland – the southeastern border area, from which many of them originated – had become the country where the messiah was to arrive.[9] By radically violating religious laws, the Frankists were even trying to accelerate his arrival, a practice that culminated in rather notorious sexual orgies.

Frank's radical opposition to the rabbinic authority finally led him to convert to Catholicism: after Frankists had been condemned and violently attacked by Orthodox Jews, and the rabbinic authorities addressed the Christian asking for help in condemning this "heresy", the only way out left for the Frankists was to cooperate with the Catholic church.[10] Between 1759 and 1760, over 500 of Frank's adherents and some other Podolian Sabbatians,[11] who also opposed the rabbis, adopted the Catholic faith in Lwów, Warsaw, and Kamieniec-Podolski.[12] Subsequently they had to leave their homes in the Podolia and Red Ruthenia regions, and from the late 1760s on, began to settle down in Warsaw.

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[9] On Poland in Frank's teachings, see Schreiner S., "Der Messias kommt zuerst nach Polen".

[10] On the beginning of the Frankist movement, see Maciejko P., "Baruch Yavan and the Frankist Movement: Intercession in an Age of Upheaval", *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook*, 4 (2005): 333–354.

[11] Upon the emergence of the Frankist movement in the middle of the 18th century, the crypto-sabbatian tradition was still very strong among the Polish Jewry, particularly in the southeastern area bordering on the Ottoman Empire: several communities there were dominated by the followers of the Jewish pseudo-messiah Sabbatai Tsevi (1626–76). These Sabbatians practiced their beliefs secretly, in private only, and did not publicly question the rabbinic authority. It was only after Jacob Frank appeared in that area that they also joined his openly anti-rabbinic movement. Cf. Doktór J., „Warszawscy frankiści", *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, 2 (2001): 194–209, here 195; Scholem G., "Le mouvement sabbataïste en Pologne", *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 143 (1953), vol. 1: 30–90, vol. 2: 209–232.

[12] For the recent research on the conversion of Polish Frankists, see PhD theses by Maciejko P., "The development of the Frankist movement in Poland, the Czech lands and Germany (1755–1816)" [forthcoming].

Their affiliation with Jacob Frank's community was the main unifier of the Frankists, who otherwise were a socially heterogeneous group.

On November 2, 1759 Frank reached Warsaw accompanied by six of his followers. Among them were Frank's closest adherents and later prominent Warsaw Frankists, Jeruchim Lippman and Nachman Lewi − after baptism known as Jędrzej Dębowski and Piotr Jakubowski.[13] Sometime before, a group of some 20-30 Frankists headed by Lejb Krysa (Dominik Antoni Krysiński) had also settled down in Warsaw.[14] Together with Krysiński or somewhat later, Frank's other close associates, the brothers Salomon, Nathan and Jehuda Szor from Rohatyn (after baptism Franciszek, Michał and Jan Wołowski) also came to Warsaw and became Frankist leaders for the following decades.[15] Subsequently, Frank's other followers joined these two groups, which later on grew into a notable community. However, after Frank was sentenced to imprisonment in the monastery of Częstochowa and after his release in 1773 moved finely to Germany, and settled in Offenbach am Main,[16] a group of 200 to 400 of his most devoted adherents followed him from Poland to Offenbach.[17] The majority of the Warsaw community, though, remained in the capital of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

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[13] Doktór J. (ed.), *Rozmaite adnotacje, przypadki, czynności i anekdoty pańskie* (Warszawa: 1996): 63–65 (no. 50–54). Nachman ben Samuel Lewi from Busk who is referred to in the Frankist Chronicle as "Rabbi Nachman" was one of Frank's closest and oldest companions. According to the Chronicle, he was the matchmaker in Frank's wedding in Nikopol on Danube on June 11, 1752 and converted in 1757 together with Frank and his other three associates – Jeruchim ben Lippman from Czortków was also one of them − to Islam. Ibid. 47 (no. 2), 54 (no. 29), 95, 100.

[14] Kraushar A., *Frank i Frankiści* vol. 1: 161–163, 317. Jehuda Lejb Notowicz Krysa from Nadworna was baptised together with Frank on September 17, 1759 – just a week after the closing of the second disputation between the Frankists and the Orthodox Jews in Lwów, where he represented the Frankists. Kraushar A., *Frank i Frankiści* vol. 1: 148–160, 327–328; Bałaban M., "Studien und Quellen zur Geschichte der frankistischen Bewegung in Polen"; Weinryb B. D., *The Jews of Poland* 249–254. He also was one of the leading "antitalmudists" in the previous disputation in Kamieniec-Podolski in 1757. Kraushar A., *Frank i frankiści*, vol. 1: 78.

[15] Salomon and Jehuda were among Frank's twelve brethren who were chosen by him in 1759 and received the names of Łukasz and Jan. Doktór J. (ed.), *Rozmaite adnotacje* 58–59 (no. 43), 102–103; cf. idem „Warszawscy frankiści" 198, 209. Jan Wołowski stayed in Warsaw at least from the end of 1759. Doktór J. (ed.), *Rozmaite adnotacje...* 65–66 (no. 57); cf. Kraushar A., *Frank i frankiści* vol. 1: 182; Doktór J., „Warszawscy frankiści" 198.

[16] In 1760, virtually right after his baptism, Jacob Frank was sentenced to lifelong imprisonment in the monastery of Częstochowo. Released in January of 1773 by the Russian army, he traveled to Brno and Vienna before settling down in Germany. Cf. Scholem G., "Frank, Jacob, and the Frankists", *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 7 (Jerusalem: 1971): 55–72.

[17] Cf. Werner K., "Versuch einer Quantifizierung des Frank'schen Gefolges in Offenbach am Main 1788–1818", *Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge*, 14 (1986): 153–212, here 199.

The exact number of Warsaw Frankists cannot be clearly determined; figures vary greatly, depending on the source. Church records mention up to 2.000[18] in all Poland around 1760; anti-Frankist pamphlets speak of 6.000[19] in Warsaw alone in the 1780s. These numbers must be, however, greatly exaggerated. Only the lower limit can be stated, as some 600 Frankists converted in 1759−60 in Lwów, Warsaw and Kamieniec-Podolski.[20] For the later periods, it must be taken into account that the families of the converted Frankists grew, and also some relatives, who at first remained Jewish, converted years later.[21] Frank also got some new adherents in the late 1760s.[22]

The Frankists owe their religious unity to no small degree to close family ties; the core of the community was formed by a relatively small number of families that all originated from the same region, the little towns of Podolia and Red Ruthenia.[23] United by their family background, they also shared vital economic interests: several families were active in the business of beer and liquor production.

The social composition of the Warsaw community was not homogeneous, though. Even at the start, it consisted of learned rabbis and wealthy merchants, as

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[18] The figure of 2.000 refers to the number of baptized Jews in 1759–60. In his history of the Disputation between the Frankists and the Orthodox Jews in Lwów in 1759, Konstanty Awedyk indicates the number of 2.000 baptized Frankists, including women and children. Gaudenty Pikulski, however, refers to just 1.000, only male neophytes. Cf. Awedyk K., *Kazanie po dysputach contra talmudystów… w kościele karedralnym lwowskim miane. – Historia o contra-talmudystach wszystkie dawniejsze okoliczności nawrócenia ich do wiary swiętej i dalszych postępków opisujące* (Lwów: 1760): 91; Pikulski G., *Złość żydowska przeciwko Bogu y blizniemu… na trzy części opisana* (Lwów: 1760): 318. Kraushar's sources refer to more than 500 baptized Frankists. Cf. "Cathalogue omnium Contratalmudistarum, hic, Leopoli, tam ex fonte, quam simul cum cerimoniis, baptisatorum, in anno 1759 et subsequent. Conscriputs", in Kraushar A., *Frank i frankiści* vol. 1: 327–277.

[19] As their source of this information the anti-Frankist Pamphlets indicate the census of the Warsaw population in 1780 implemented by Fransiczek Witthof, the president of the Old Town, which is unknown to me. [Anonym], *Dwór Franka* 20. It is striking that the figure of 6.000 Frankists nearly equals the number of the Warsaw Jews of that period and must therefore be greatly exaggerated. Cf. Eisenbach A., "The Jewish Population in Warsaw at the end of the Eighteenth Century", Bartoszewski W., Polonsky A. (eds.), *The Jews in Warsaw. A History* (Oxford et al.: 1991): 95–126, here 108.

[20] Cf. Weinryb B. D., *The Jews of Poland* 254.

[21] As, for example, a certain Tomasz Łabęcki, who converted to the Catholic faith together with his wife and children in Warsaw in 1787. According to Teodor Jeske-Choiński, his baptism record included the fact that his father had already been baptised some time before. Cf. Jeske-Choiński T., *Neofici Polscy. Materiały historyczne* (Warszawa: 1904): 30, 88.

[22] Doktór J (ed.), *Rozmaite adnotacje* 70–71 (no. 71), 72 (no. 74).

[23] Some of them originated from Walachia, Bukovina, Hungary, and Turkey. Doktór J., „Warszawscy frankiści" 197.

well as simple innkeepers and retailers. By the end of the 18th century, Warsaw Jews, who had converted under Frank's appeal, consisted of civil servants, high-ranking officers, physicians, music teachers, and also tailors and servants, and quite a few inn- and shopkeepers.[24] Yet as diverse as their community proves on closer inspection, the Frankists were widely perceived as a homogeneous group by people in their surroundings. To the Polish public, the wealthy core of alcohol vendors and merchants from several families – like Wołowski, Najemski, Łabęcki, Szymanowski, Krysiński, Zieliński – represented all Frankists.[25]

In spite of all differences in occupation and social status, their position in-between the corporative boundaries of early modern Polish society was common to all Warsaw Frankists, although certainly to a different degree and in various forms on the individual level. For them, being baptized meant the demand to totally abandon their traditional way of living, which was based on Jewish rites.[26] In practice, this proved difficult; eating habits in particular proved very hard to change from one day to the next,[27] and at least some Warsaw Frankists continued to prepare, among other things, traditional Jewish dishes (e.g. *kugel*) for their family celebrations.[28] The sons of the first converts, who were educated in the 1770s and 1780s in the Warsaw Piarist School, as for example the brothers Jan (c. 1770–c. 1840) and Franciszek Ksawery (c. 1755–1824) Krysiński or Antoni Łabęcki (1773–1854), had certainly adapted more to the Polish-Catholic majority in this regard.[29]

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[24] This information is based on the data from the town register and surveys of the Warsaw houses and inhabitants conducted between 1784 and 1792: AGAD, WE, no. 751, 29a, 15–17, 23–28; from the Warsaw civil birth, marriage and death records for the period of 1808−25, Archiwum Państwowe miasta stołecznego Warszawy "*The State Archive of the Metropolitan City of Warsaw*" (hereinafter referred to as AP), Warsaw, Acta Stanu Cywilnego "*Civil status records*" (hereinafter referred to as ASC), cyrkuł (*district*) no. III, IV, V, and from *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (hereinafter referred to as PSB) (Kraków [etc.]: since 1935).

[25] Cf. [Anonym], *Katechizm o Żydach y neofitach. Czym oni są:… y co z nimi zrobić należy? dla poprawy formy rządu do deputacyi przesłany* (Warszawa: 1792): 19–20. For the edited version, see MDSC, vol. 6, no. 92: 466–480.

[26] At first they actually aimed to receive permission to continue some of their Jewish customs (wearing beards and earlocks, Jewish clothing and names, rejection of pig's meat, celebrating Sabbath and studying Zohar) after baptism, along with the Christian duties. Weinryb B. D., *The Jews of Poland* 249.

[27] Cf. Goldberg, "Die getauften Juden in Polen-Litauen im 16.-18. Jahrhundert. Taufe, soziale Umschichtung und Integration", *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 30/1 (1982): 54–99.

[28] Cf. Dr. Ad. Jellinek, "Nachkommen von Frankisten in Warschau", *Das Jüdische Literaturblatt*, 11 (1882): 107.

[29] Cf. Doktór J., "Warszawscy frankiści" 202; Ziółek J., "Krysiński Jan", *PSB* 15: 478–479; idem, "Krysiński Franciszek Ksawery", *PSB* 15: 480; Władysław Sobociński, "Łabęcki Antoni", *PSB* 16: 171–172.

Even though Frank's leadership and the cohesion of the Warsaw commune was permanently challenged by internal conflicts,[30] their conversion led them into a simultaneous affiliation with the religious commune of Jacob Frank on the one hand, and the Catholic community of Poland on the other. This peculiar situation forced the Frankists to split their religious practice into a public profession of faith to the Catholic church and the privately practiced Frankist creed; they used to meet secretly in Warsovian houses to study cabbalistic texts and visited frequently their messiah in his residences – first in Częstochowa, Brno and from 1786−87 on in Offenbach am Main (Germany). It was there that some of Frank's adherents participated in the infamous sexual orgies. Otherwise, the Warsaw Frankists attended Catholic services and had their children baptized.

In this respect, they may be compared to those *marranos* and *conversos*, who combined public affiliation with the religious community of their social environment with the secret practice of Judaism.[31] What distinguished the Frankists from these groups was their faith, which questioned rabbinic authority in the most radical form. Furthermore, in the 1760s and 1770s, Frank's mystical-messianic teachings and Christian beliefs had syncretistically merged. During his 13-year-long forced stay in the monastery of Częstochowa, the center of Mariolatry, his ideas on the *shekhina* took on new forms. In fact, Frank announced to his followers that the *shekhina* was hidden as the Virgin Mary in the famous icon in Częstochowa.[32]

This dual religious affiliation puts the Frankists on the boundary of traditional religiousness in 18th-century Catholic Poland. Their contemporaries failed to classify the Frankists among the established categories of religious affiliation, as one anonymous Warsovian burgher wrote about them in 1790, "What do they believe in? ...

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[30] There are quite a few references in the Frankist sources to the clashes within the Warsaw group, as well as to the conflicts between the community and Frank. Doktór J. (ed.), *Rozmaite adnotacje* 74 (no. 81), 77–78 (no. 91, 93), 80 (no. 98); idem (ed.), *Księga słów pańskich. Ezoteryczne wykłady Jakuba Franka* (Warszawa: 1997), vol. 1: 64 (no. 174), vol. 2: 89 (no. 1182A, 1183), 126 (no. 2155). Cf. Doktór J., „Warszawscy frankiści" 198–200; idem, *Śladami mesjasza-apostaty* 179–182, 199–202.

[31] The religious practice of the *marranos* and *conversos* varied greatly in different regions. Christian influence is also present in their practice and belief. Still, they have never questioned the rabbinic authority in such radical form. The literature on *marrano* and *converso* religiosity is too vast to be cited here, see for example Roth C., *A History of the Marranos* (New York: 1974): 168–194; Gitlitz D. M., *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews* (Philadelphia et al.: 1996). On the Sabbathian impact on *conversos*, see Goldish M., "Patterns in Converso Messianism", idem, Popkin R. H. (eds.), *Jewish Messianism in the Early Modern World* (Dordrecht: 2001): 41–63.

[32] Doktór J. (ed.), *Księga słów pańskich*, 2: 152 (no. 614); Doktór J., *Śladami mesjasza-apostaty* 182–190; idem, "Erlösung durch Sünde oder – Taufe", *Judaica*, 1 (1999): 18–29. Cf. Maciejko P., "Christian Elements in Early Frankist Doctrine".

I could not answer, since I do not know. I only do know that they are neither Catholics nor Jews. The one they have left behind, the other they have not reached."[33]

Baptism thus allowed the Frankists to find their way into the hierarchy of Warsaw's urban society, which was based largely on corporative privileges: the city's administration was divided into the Old Town, the New Town and fifteen jurisdictions (*jurydyka*), jurisdictional enclaves belonging to the nobility or clergy.[34] Both the Old Town and the New Town had their own municipal authorities, and their populations were obliged to enroll in the town register and thus belong to the artisan and merchant guilds. It was only these citizens who were allowed to pursue commercial activities in the city without restrictions. However, the population of the jurisdictions, which were mainly located outside the old city walls, was not subject to the municipal law, as the jurisdictions were treated as private property of the nobility and clergy. These social groups enjoyed immunity, and the municipal law could hardly be enforced on their land.[35] The population living in the jurisdictions was thus not subject to the municipal law, only to their patron, and challenged the privileges of the Old and New Town.[36]

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[33] [Anonym], *Dwór Franka* 5.

[34] There were four other *jurydykas* on the other side of Vistula, in Praga quarter. Zahorski A., „Roz-wój przestrzenny Warszawy", in Kieniewicz S. (ed.), *Dzieje Warszawy*, vol. 2: *Warszawa w latach 1526–1795* (Warszawa: 1984): 296–331. According to Eisenbach, there were five *jurydykas* in Praga. Cf. Eisenbach A., "The Jewish Population in Warsaw at the end of the Eighteenth Century" 111.

[35] The privilege of the nobility to buy land and houses in the cities goes back to the Statute of 1550. In Warsaw, the noble and clerical *jurydykas* existed until 1791, when after several attempts they were finally abolished and the city was administratively divided into seven equal districts. Bardach J. (ed.), *Historia Państwa i Prawa Polski od połowy XV w. do roku 1792* (Warszawa: 1957), vol. 2: 63, 259–260; Szymkiewicz S., *Warszawa na przełomie XVIII i XIX w. w świetle pomiarów i spisów* (Warszawa: 1959): 61–65. Besides *jurydyki* − quite large grounds of the institutions (the Church and the Crown) and private grounds of the noble and the clergy, − there were also numerous small private possessions of individual houses – so called licenses *(libertacja)*. There could be also very different combinations of property rights for the grounds and buildings – as for example a *jurydyka* of the noble on the grounds of the Crown. The legal status of the private noble property in town was not always clear, since not all noblemen's possessions – grounds and houses – were properly *jurydykas* or *libertacjas*, there were always a ground for the conflicts with the municipal authority. Sometimes noblemen's houses were clearly on the municipal grounds, but the city authorities were not able to assert their rights against the noblemen. For more details see Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości w miastach XVIII w.* (Warszawa/ Łódź: 1987): 13–23.

[36] This fact more frequently occurred in smaller noble jurisdictions; bigger *jurydykas*, however, usually had their own municipal authorities. It could also vary from *jurydyka* to *jurydyka*, and sometimes the residents living in a certain noble jurisdiction were subject to the municipal organs. As for example, the patron of *jurydyka* Bielino, the crown-marshal Franciszek Bieliński, decreed that the people living in his jurisdiction are subject to the Magistracy of the Old Town in matters of capital punishment. Contrary to that, the patron of *jurydyka* Ordynacka, Jan Chodkie-wicz, tried to forbid his people to go to the municipal court. Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele*

The city's spatial hierarchy and layout reflected this complicated legal structure of Warsaw's urban society, insofar as the former centre of the city – the marketplace of the Old Town − was no longer the commercial and representative midpoint of the city. This function was transferred to the areas just behind the old city walls – the streets Długa, Podwale, Miodowa, Senatorska, Krakowskie Przedmieście, where the palaces of high nobility and upper class bourgeois dominated the cityscape.[37]

The Frankists entered urban society at a critical time: corporative privileges were losing their social significance, and a process of social differentiation along the lines of the urban population's material situation intensified even more than in previous times.

The rapid demographic growth in the Polish capital since the middle of the 18th century only accelerated this process: in spite of all restrictions of the municipal law, the jurisdictions and numerous noble and clerical possessions were developing into centres of craftsmanship and trade and competed seriously with the Old Town's guilds. In only three decades, Warsaw's total population doubled from between 30.000 and 40.000 in the early 1760s to 81.300 thirty years later, largely due to an influx of newcomers from Poland and abroad. This rapid demographic growth occurred mostly in the jurisdictions, where two thirds of the city's population lived around 1790. Polish Jews in particular – due to the *de non tolerandis Judaeis* act of 1527, – and Polish Catholics who could not register with the Warsaw guilds found their dwellings mainly in the properties under the jurisdictions other than municipal.[38]

The nobility itself was active in trade and commerce: the resolutions of the Polish parliament from 1773 through 1775, which officially allowed the noblemen to be involved in trading and crafts while retaining their right to vote, only legalized the status quo.[39] Then in Warsaw the nobility was so dominant in some branches that

nieruchomości 13–14; cf. Zahorski A., "Ustrój miasta", Kieniewicz S. (ed.), *Dzieje Warszawy*, vol. 2: *Warszawa w latach 1526–1795* (Warszawa: 1984), vol. 2: 354–390; Biernacka-Gruszecka J., „Władze jurydyki Grzybów (1650–1791)", *Warszawa XVIII wieku*, 3 (Warszawa: 1975): 191–211; Niedziałkowska-Korzon M., „Władze miejskie Nowej Warszawy", ibid. 173–190.

[37] Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 89–92.

[38] From 1527 to 1797 the privilege "*de non tolerandis Judaeis*" legally prohibited the Jews to settle down in Warsaw. Nevertheless, they constituted up to 12% of the city's total population in 1797, living mostly in the jurisdictions. Węgrzynek H., „Żydzi w Warszawie przed XIX wiekiem", *Żydzi Warszawy. Materiały konferencji w 100. rocznicę urodzin Emanuela Ringelbluma (21 listopada 1900 – 7 marca 1944)* (Warszawa: 2000): 27–40; Bergman E., „Czy był rewir żydowski w Warszawie w latach 1809–1862?", ibid. 75–80. Cf. Eisenbach A., "The Jewish Population in Warsaw": 108. At the end of the 18th century the houses owned by the city and the burghers constituted in Warsaw just ca. 25% of the Warsovian possessions in total. Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 85.

[39] The ban on trading was introduced for the Polish nobility in the Statute of 1501. Cf. Jedruch J., *Constitutions, Elections and Legislatures of Poland, 1493–1977. A Guide to their History* (Washington: 1982): 194.

the Old Town guilds had practically ceased to exist, as for example the guild of beer producers. According to the calculations of the last representatives of this guild, there were more than 80 breweries owned by the nobility and clergy in the second half of the 18th century in Warsaw. The guilds could not stand this competition: in the late 1760s the last four masters of the beer producers' guild of the Old Town and six of the New Town submitted their decision to close the guild to the administration of the Crown: for the nobility and clergy, as they argued, were not willing to pay them the quarterly fee, according to the agreements made with the guilds.[40]

This development also benefited the Frankists producing and selling alcohol. As beer pricing and quality criteria were no longer tied to the statutes of the guilds, the business expanded quickly, especially on the western periphery of Warsaw − in the jurisdictions of Grzybow, Bielino, Waliców, and the holdings of the *starosta* (a district official appointed by the king) of Warsaw, on the possessions of clergymen or noblemen in the streets Elektoralna, Ogrodowa, Chłodna, Krochmalna, Grzybowska, Żelazna, Waliców, Ceglana and Nowolipie. In 1784 the majority of Warsaw breweries were located there.[41] Those Frankist families who in the first decades of the 19th century bought the majority of local breweries, which had formerly belonged to burghers of German origin, finally moved to this area.[42]

Along with their families, they settled down in neighboring streets and often lived in the same houses. The brewers Brzeziński, Jasiński, Kapliński, Krysiński, Matuszewski, Naimski, Piasecki, Piotrowski, Szymanowski, Wołowski, Zawadzki and Zieliński became the most successful and well known.[43] It was in the first decades of the 19th century that their economic success allowed them to enter the class of nouveaux riches that began to form at the end of the 18th century. Their social status was based not on traditional corporative privileges, but on economic power.

In the 18th century, however, the majority of them were not yet registered as alcohol producers, just as small-scale alcohol vendors, tavern keepers and retailers. They lived scattered throughout different jurisdictions, most of them as tenants (*komórniki*) in the possessions of the nobility and clergy.[44]

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[40] AGAD, WE, no. 2: Actus commissionis Sacrae Regiae Mtis boni ordinis, 1765–1767: 477–482.

[41] At least 40 from 70 in the whole city, which I could identify in the municipal survey of the Warsaw houses liable for paving taxation (*łokciowe*). Solec became another centre of beer production. AGAD, WE, no. 29A.

[42] Cf. *Przewodnik Warszawski na rok 1826 w Warszawie* (Warszawa: 1826), część handlowa, Piwowary: 20; AGAD, WE, no. 15–17, no. 23–28.

[43] Cf. *Przewodnik Warszawski na rok 1826 w Warszawie*, część handlowa: 20; AP, ASC, cyrkuł no. III, IV, V (1808–1925).

[44] Cf. AGAD, WE, no. 15–17.

Frankist Dwellings in Warsaw between 1790 and 1809

The tavern on the corner:
Frankist spatial presence in late 18th–century Warsaw

Due to the lack of a sufficient quantity and quality of sources, it is difficult to trace back the patterns of residence of all Warsaw Frankists.[45] Furthermore, it is not always obvious whether a certain person was of the Frankist origin, since quite a few names that Frankists received after their baptism were common Polish names and alone cannot indicate their affiliation with the group.[46] Some remarks can be made, however, about those from the prominent Frankist families, which later became well known beer producers.

A certain Jan Wołowski[47] appears in the city surveys as the only one (or at least one of a few) Frankists who acquired possessions (*posesja*)[48] in Warsaw before 1790. He possessed one of the cheapest types of contemporary Warsovian houses and not in the best street of the town[49] − a small wooden one-floor-house with two windows to the street with a garden and stables, just c. 30 m long, built on the grounds of the *starosta* Komorowski in the western district of Warsaw, at Nowolipki St. 2384. His neighbors, the noble Marianna Zarzycka and Wacław Karer, possessed much bigger parcels.[50]

The majority of Warsaw Frankists, however, seem to have lived in that period as tenants in the possessions of the nobility and clergy, as for example another Wołowski −

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[45] There is only a limited number of sources, which could provide information about the living area of Frankists in Warsaw, namely the paving tax registers from 1784 and from 1790, and the survey of the Warsaw population from 1792. AGAD, WE, no. 29A, 23–28, 15–17. These registers, however, are not complete and contain many mistakes. Cf. Szymkiewicz S., *Warszawa na przełomie XVIII i XIX w.* 22; Daniela Kosacka, *Północna Warszawa w XVIII wieku* (Warszawa: 1970): 82; Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 44.

[46] Only in the census of the Warsaw population of 1792 some Frankists were registered with a remark "Neophyte", but not all of them. Cf. AGAD, WE, no. 15–17.

[47] He certainly could have been that particular Jan Wołowski, one of the three sons of Elisza Szor from Nadworna. The Wołowski clan was, however, so big that this person may as well have been just another Wołowski.

[48] "Possession" (*posesja*) in the 18th-century Warsaw meant all buildings including, for example, the house, stables or pigsties, the mill or brewery, garden etc. built on one parcel of land, while the land itself could belong to another person or institution.

[49] While a good stone house in Warsaw could cost up to several ten thousand złoty, the price of a wooden house would not exceed 20.000 złoty, some of them would even cost only several hundred złoty. Zielińska T., „Siedziba szlachecka w dużym mieście polskim XVIII stulecia", *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 3 (1981): 313–332, here 318.

[50] AGAD, WE, no. 29A: 236, no. 27: 343. On the types of houses in late 18th-century Warsaw, see Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 54–55; idem, „Siedziba szlachecka".

a tavern keeper in the best street of the city, Krakowskie Przedmieście. In 1792 he lived there with his wife and two servants in the huge possession, so called palace,[51] of the noble Szymanowski located on the clerical grounds at Krakowskie Przedmieście St. 411 with other 90 lodgers, who were mainly Christian artisans. Wołowski could have lived either in the palace, or in one of the several outbuildings located in the street or in the backyard; his tavern (*szynk*) must have been situated somewhere there too.[52] He certainly chose one of the best locations in town for his business – Krakowskie Przedmieście Street, one of the central streets, which connected the Old Town with the southern districts and provided good opportunities for selling alcohol. This was, however, also one of the most expensive places to rent, especially for a tavern in Warsaw.[53] So, those Wołowskis who could afford to pay the rent in this place not only for living, but also for operating a tavern, must have had a certain capital. But could they afford to buy or rent the whole possession?[54] Could they get access to such lucrative property that was in great demand? Or were they just not interested in acquiring the whole possession? These questions need further research and must be left open for the moment.

Frankists from another big clan – the Krysiński − kept their tavern in a huge palace owned by nobles in one of the best streets in town: two Krysińskis and another Frankist, Młodzianowski, lived in 1792 in the representative Miodowa Street, No. 489, together with other 143 tenants.[55] Almost the whole Miodowa was occupied by the possessions of the aristocracy with several houses of the burghers.[56] The palace Krysiński dwelled in, was built in 1740s by the noble Potocki on the corner of the streets Miodowa and Długa, had since then changed several owners and was by that time in possession of the king's nephew, prince Stanisław Poniatowski.[57]

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[51] In 18th century Poland, the meaning of the term 'palace' (*pałac*) could vary from city to city; in Warsaw it usually referred to a huge stone house in possession of the higher nobility. Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 63–69.

[52] AGAD, WE, no. 15: 200, no. 23: 352.

[53] In late 18th-century Warsaw (c. 1760–80), the annual rent for a chamber (*izba*) in a wooden house (*dworek drewniany*) amounted to 36-96 Polish złoty, for a chamber in a stone house (*kamienica*) – 60-200 złoty, for a tavern chamber (*izba szynkowa*) with outbuildings in a stone house – 540 złoty. In Krakow, a chamber in a stone house cost 20-40 złoty, and a tavern – 70 to 100 złoty. Zielińska, „Siedziba szlachecka" 317.

[54] In the second half of the 18th century the price of a palace in the central streets of Warsaw could be more than hundred thousand złoty, as, for example, the palace of the Mycielski at Długa St. 591, which was estimated at 131.554 zloty. Zielińska, „Siedziba szlachecka" 318.

[55] AGAD, WE, no. 15: 258–259, no. 23: 411.

[56] Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 90–92.

[57] On this palace, see Kwiatkowsk M., „Architektura pałacowa i willowa w Warszawie XVIII w.", *Warszawa XVIII wieku*, zeszyt 3: 32–33, 111–112; cf. Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 91.

While one of the Krysińskis and Młodzianowski were operating a tavern there, the second Krysiński was registered as the auditor of the royal army. It was probably Franciszek Ksawery Krysiński who later became the general auditor of the royal army and was ennobled in 1793 with his two other brothers who were also very successful in their military careers.[58] Franciszek Ksawery lived alone with a servant. His relative, another Krysiński, had at that time a wife and two children, ran a tavern and employed 9 men and 4 women. Młodzianowski also had an inn and lived there with his wife, 4 men and 6 women.[59] The social status of their co-dwellers in Poniatowski's possession was very different – from a noble governor (*wojewoda*) to a smith and tailor. Several other alcohol vendors and several Jews lived there as well.

A certain Józef Lanckoroński, a representative of another known Frankist clan,[60] with another five tenants dwelled in a small wooden house in possession of the lieutenant of the royal army Stanisław Matuszewski in a less representative Western district of Warsaw, at Elektoralna St. 761, which was located on the clerical grounds.[61] With his wife and five servants he ran a tavern and a spice shop.

Several houses further down the same street, at Elektoralna 773, on the corner to Żelazna, a certain Pawel Wołowski also had a spice shop and a tavern. He also lived in a small wooden house, which belonged to a nobleman, the captain of the cavalry guard of the Crown, and was built on the clerical grounds.[62]

Southwards from him, in house No. 1330 on the corner of Świętokrzyska and Zielna streets, owned by the burgher Mateusz Retych and located on the grounds of *jurydyka* Bielino, lived Michał Wołowski with his family and 4 servants. Along with 3 other tenants he probably occupied the attic rooms of the stone house or small huts within the possession, since the owner occupied the main house.[63]

Not far from him, also in the same *jurydyka*, at Pańska St. 1199, in a house owned by the carpenter Michał Wolff, Franciszek Brzeziński had a tavern; he lived there with his family and servants, along with 7 other tenants.[64]

Several houses further, at Nowy Świat St. 1296, in a small stone house on the ground of the noblewoman Chodkiewiczowa, the wife of the *starosta* of Żmudź

[58] Ziółek J., "Krysiński Franciszek Ksawery"; Szenic S. , *Cmentarz Powązkowski, 1790–1850. Zmarli i ich rodziny* (Warszawa: 1979): 164–165.

[59] AGAD, WE, no. 15: 258–259.

[60] Cf. Jeske-Choiński T., *Neofici Polscy* 85.

[61] AGAD, WE, no. 15: 413, no. 24: 223. There were quite a few possessions of officers in this area, in the neighboring streets, and the barracks of the crown cavalry guard located in Chłodna – in Elektoralna, Ogrodowa, Grzybowska, Granicza and Krochmalna. Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 99.

[62] AGAD, WE, no. 15: 417; no. 24: 234.

[63] AGAD, WE, no. 16: 143, no. 25: 313.

[64] AGAD, WE, no. 16: 124, no. 25: 194.

(Samogytia), which was probably part of *jurydyka* Ordynacka, another Frankist Batłomiej Zieliński, who also ran a public house, took his lodging.[65]

In the southern district, at Wspólna St. 1648, the Frankist Woychiech Najemski rent his dwelling from the lower nobleman Skurkowski, whose possession was built on the clerical ground. Along with 3 other artisans, he lived there in a wooden dwelling with his wife and four servants.[66]

Not far from him, also on the southern outskirts of the city, at Mokotowska St. 1675, on the corner to Ujazdowska, the alcohol vendor Adam Łabęcki with his wife and 8 servants, along with a family of another artisan, took up residence in the house of the ennobled cupbearer and later the king's cellar master Antoni Luciński (Lociński).[67] However, this house owned by the noble was built on the ground that belonged to the Old Town. So, it is difficult to answer the question whether this Łabęcki lived under the municipal or other jurisdiction, since the privileges of the nobles competed with those of the city. Although Łabęcki's housing was quite remote from the centre of the city, it was still very attractive for selling alcohol, since Luciński's house was located at the crossing of the main streets which connected this area with the centre, the western district and the commercial area on Vistula, Solec.

Franciszek Zalewski, another Frankist tavern keeper, presumably lived under the jurisdiction of the Old Town in 1792. His family along with some other four tenants, Christian artisans, occupied house No. 2602 in Bugay Street, which belonged to the ennobled financier Piotr Blank.[68]

So, apparently the majority of the identified Frankists in the 1780s and 1790s lived in the houses owned by the noble and under other jurisdiction than that of the municipal authority, which could be legal or alleged. Few of them occupied houses subject to the jurisdiction of the Magistracy of the Old Town, but still owned by the noble, and hardly anyone lived within the old city walls. Quite often they were able to rent very profitable tavern chambers in the main streets of the city. Despite the hostility between the Orthodox Jews and the Frankists, they lived next to and sometimes in the same house with the Jews.

What implications about the Frankist social position can be drawn from this pattern of residence? In that period, there was obviously no Frankist neighbourhood in Warsaw; they lived intermingled with other Warsovians – Christian and Jewish alike, especially those who apparently did not have the full citizenship of the Old or New Town. Then the majority of Warsaw Frankists did not acquire the legal status

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[65] AGAD, WE, no. 16: 124, no. 25: 285. On the proprietors of *jurydyka* Ordynacka, see Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 36.

[66] AGAD, WE, no. 16: 275, no. 26: 137.

[67] AGAD, WE, no. 16: 287, no. 26: 160. On Antoni Luciński (Lociński), see Zielińska T., *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości* 135–136.

[68] AGAD, WE, no. 16: 268, no. 29A: 256.

of burghers – their names are absent in the town registers. None of the prominent Frankists became citizens of the Old Town before 1789[69] and in this period there are only few names which could belong to the Frankists in the register of the New Town − as for example those of Jan Brzeziński from Brzezanka in Podlasie and Józef Matuszewski from Moravia who acquired the citizenship of the New Town in 1773.[70] A certain Antoni Piotrowski from Brzezany in Podolia and Józef Zalewski from Lwów became citizens of New Warsaw in 1789,[71] and Michał Brzeziński from Moravia − in 1790.[72] Since there are no other indications in the register as to the name and place of origin, it must be admitted that they could also be of non-Frankist origin. Whatever the case, apart from these few possible exceptions, the majority of Warsaw Frankists were apparently just inhabitants without the full range of burgher's privileges. Whether they could not obtain these rights or did not need them cannot be answered with certainty. It was probably both: on the one hand, it was not easy and quite expensive, especially obtaining the citizenship of the Old Town; on the other hand, to have full citizenship also became less essential for living and trading in the city.[73] Then Frankists could profit well from the complicated and often contradictory legal issues in Warsaw – just like the majority of the population of Warsaw in that period.

The position of the Frankists was to a certain degree quite similar to that of the Warsaw Jews, only the Frankists could not be expelled from the city in critical times under the same pretext as the Jews, who were legally prohibited from residing in the areas under the direct city's jurisdiction.[74] For this reason, during the tax debates in the fall of 1789, they were publicly reproached for the first time during their nearly

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[69] AGAD, WE, no. 746, 747, 748, 749: Stara Warszawa. Lata 1671–1789. Księgi przyjęć do prawa miejskiego Starej Warszawy.

[70] AGAD, WE, no. 754: Nowa Warszawa. Lata 1729–1794. Księgi przyjęć prawa miejskiego 64.

[71] AGAD, WE, no. 755: Warszawa. Lata 1729–1794. Księgi przyjęć prawa miejskiego 42v-43.

[72] AGAD, WE, no. 755: 47v. It is possible that under the names of Matuszewski, Jasiński or Piotrowski in the town register of New Warsaw of that period were several other Frankists, but again, this would also be a very small part of the whole community.

[73] Zienkowska K., "Obywatelstwo miejskie Starej Warszawy przed Sejmem Czteroletnim (przyjęcia do prawa miejskiego w latach 1745–1788)", Kula W., Leskiewiczowa J. (eds.), *Społeczeństwo polskie XVIII i XIX wieku. Studia o uwarstwieniu i ruchliwości społecznej* (Warszawa: 1970): 5–35.

[74] On the conflicts between the Jews and the Warsaw burghers during the Four-Year *Sejm* and the anti-Jewish excesses in 1790 in particular, see Zienkowska K., "'The Jews have killed a Tailor:' The Socio-Political Background of a Riot in Warsaw in 1790", Bartoszewski W., Polonsky A. (eds.), *The Jews in Warsaw. A History* (Oxford et al.: 1991): 127–150; idem, "Citizens or inhabitants? The attempt to reform the status of the polish Jews during the Four Year's *Sejm*," *Acta Poloniae Historica*, 76 (1997): 31–52.

30-year-long presence in Warsaw for their "foreign", "sectarian" behavior.[75] Their ambiguous social status, which did not conform to the traditional municipal order, and their ways of living, which encompassed elements of different traditions − Jewish, Frankist, and Catholic, − caused public comment.

Anxious owners against successful tenants: Old Town citizens and Frankists in the struggle for spatial benefits in Warsaw

It was in the atmosphere of general social changes during the last *Sejm* of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which took place in Warsaw in 1788−92, that the Frankists became the subject of public discussion.

Like in pre-revolutionary France in 1787−89, in the late Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth the king and the deputies were engaged in passionate debates about urgent state reforms.[76] Mainly the new tax laws, which generally affected all social groups, but above all the nobility, the clergy and the Jews, provoked a flood of pamphlets, comparable to the French *cahiers de doléances*.[77]

Furthermore, these reforms caused changes in the traditional social structure: the conflicts about privileges[78] between the citizens and the nobility, between the gentry and the magnates, between the administrative units of the Old Town, the New Town and the jurisdictions, and finally between the Jews and the Catholics, manifested themselves in the pamphlets composed during the last parliament.[79]

The Frankists were also the subject of several pamphlets: while the first two anonymous polemics published in 1790 were dedicated exclusively to the Frankists,[80]

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[75] For the accusations, see, for example, [Anonym] D.S., *List przyiaciela Polaka niegdyś w Warszawie, a teraz w Wrocławiu mieszkaiącego, do obywatela warszawskiego, wyiawiaiący sekreta neofitów poprawy rządu wyciągaiące pisany dnia 2. miesiąca kwietnia, roku 1790* (Warszawa: 1790), for the edited version, see MDSC, vol. 6, no. 18: 169–175.

[76] On the history of Poland of that period, see Kieniewicz S., Kula W. (eds.), *Historia Polski*, vol. 2, 1764–1864 (Warszawa: 1958); Davies N., *God's Playground. A History of Poland in two volumes*, rev. ed. (Oxford: 2005).

[77] Cf. Eisenstein E. L., "The Tribune of the People: A New Species of Demagogue", Chisick H. et al. (eds.), *The Press in the French Revolution* (Oxford: 1991): 145–159; Birn R., "The pamphlet Press and the Estates-General of 1789", ibid. 59–69; Popkin J. D., *Revolutionary News in the Press in France, 1789–1799* (Durham/London: 1990).

[78] Tax exemption and legal immunity for the nobility in the city and the exclusion of burghers from the executive were the most important issues in these debates. Cf. Kieniewicz S., Kula W. (eds.), *Historia Polski*, vol. 2 244–287.

[79] On the pamphlets in general, see Berdecka A., Turnau I., *Życie codzienne w Warszawie okresu oświecenia* (Warszawa: 1969): 295–304.

[80] [Anonym] D.S., *List przyiaciela Polaka*; [Anonym], *Dwór Franka*.

the following two, also anonymous pamphletists treated the Frankists together with other groups – Jews and beggars.[81] The accusations expressed in these polemics were particularly related to the economic activities of the Frankists: they would not be engaged in crafts, but only in typically "Jewish" businesses – trade, alcohol sale and tavern keeping;[82] they would not buy houses in the city in order to avoid taxes, and finally they would compose a very separate group and not integrate into the society of Warsaw burghers. Published anonymously, these polemics nevertheless explicitly articulate the interests of well-to-do Warsovian citizens. In addition, these attacks were a consequence of some earlier debates, namely the disputes about the tax reform in 1789, which also affected Warsaw burghers.

It was in the spring of 1789 that an anonymous burgher in a letter addressed to the municipal authorities of Warsaw for the first time accused the Frankists of not being "real citizens" of Warsaw.[83] The concerns of this Warsovian about the legal status of the Frankists originated, however, from his strong fear of social disorder and from seeing his own social status and economic success endangered. Moreover, his letter refers to the planned increase in the alcoholic beverage tax (*czopowe*), which was discussed by the parliament in March 1789, and obviously threatened to affect the author personally. Criticizing the tax increase, this burgher proposes that the new taxes should be borne not only by the owners of the taverns, to which he obviously belonged, but also by the persons renting them, namely the Warsaw Frankists who ran several pubs in the city. Though he greatly exaggerates in pointing out that Frankists ran numerous taverns in the city and just one Frankist kept more than 10 taverns, he is quite right in mentioning that the taverns they kept were situated in the best locations. Subsequently, this Warsovian proposes a special taxation for the Frankists: he argues that the Frankists do not have citizenship and do not possess any property in the city. Therefore, in this case the alcoholic beverage taxes apply not to the citizens, but only to these tenants. Finally he stresses the fact that the Frankists were only converts, i.e. not "real Christians", and therefore should pay a double tax,

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[81] [Anonym], *Zwierciadło polskie dla publiczności... dnia 10 listopada 1790 r. odkryte w Warszawie MDCC XC* (Warszawa: 1790), for the edited version, see MDSC, vol. 6, no. 29: 235–268; [Anonym], *Katechizm o żydach y neofitach*.

[82] Alcohol sale or tavern keeping was regarded by contemporaries as "typically Jewish" occupations, which Frankists continued to practice after their baptism. The surveys of the city indicate, however, that there were numerous Christian Warsovians of various occupations (caterers, hairdressers, servants, musicians), who made extra money by selling alcohol in the tavern chambers. The musician Woyciech Lanckoroński, one of the Warsaw Frankists, also kept a tavern – at that time by no means an extraordinary way of living for the Christian population of Warsaw. AGAD, WE, no 17: 161–162, no 29A: 321.

[83] [Anonym], "Reflekcyje względem projektu o obrócenie propinacyj na skarb koronny podanego" [first half of 1789?], *MDSC*, vol. 2, no. 19: 101–102.

as the Jews were obliged to do.[84] During the previous decades, however, this burgher
had obviously rented his property to some tenants – perhaps even to Frankists without
any problems and was satisfied with the profits he made. The tax rise only caused
him to protect his privileges against the Frankists and redefine his mode of access to
the most profitable space in the city.

Some months later, the magistracy of the Old Town articulated similar claims
on the Frankists. The conflict between the established municipal magistracy and the
Frankists was also a conflict of interests based on economics and spatial benefits.
When the stove tax for Warsaw's Old Town was supposed to be doubled in 1789,
the municipal authorities attempted to extend this demand of the Crown to the
numerous possessions outside its jurisdiction.[85] The tax increase primarily affected
the magistrates themselves, all of them long-established patricians. This social class
was well-off, but not quite willing to carry the tax load all by itself. It wanted to see
the well-to-do Frankists bear their share too.

The Frankists, meanwhile, paid this tribute not to the town, but to their noble
patrons, as their taverns and dwellings were located in the jurisdictions or in the
property owned by the nobility.

The road chosen by the municipality to achieve its goal and to subject the Frankists
to its authority is notable. In an economically motivated conflict of interests, the town
authorities reproached the Frankists for their wrong social behavior – not integrating
themselves into the society they lived in. In a petition to the Crown, they were
distinguished from the "real citizens" and listed among the foreigners.

> Besides the foreigners who are ganging up from various countries and squeeze money
> from the land, there is in Warsaw another numerous group of unaffiliated people (*ludzie
> luźni*) busying themselves in trade (*handle*) and selling alcohol (*szynk*). They constitute
> some separate body, are totally unwilling to integrate into society and obey the law of
> their patriarch, who is living abroad. In spite of the fact that by pressing themselves into
> various trades and business of the public houses and thereby driving regular townsmen
> from these sources of prosperity, this sort of people refuses to be an integral part of the
> city: none has acquired property and thus paid tribute to the treasury, all their wealth,
> which is considerable, they hide in bags in order to be able to leave the country any
> time they please. [...][86]

The fact that the Frankists did not buy houses in the old town was presented by the
authorities as incompatible with the status of citizenship:

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[84] Ibid.
[85] "Do Prześwietnej Deputacyi prez Najjaśniejszego Króla Jegomości i Najjaśniejsze Stany
Rzepltej do miasta Warszawy wybranej, podane dnia 5 listopada 1789", *MDSC*, vol. 2, no. 42:
174–201.
[86] Ibid. 187.

[...] a citizen is obliged to swear by oath that he will pay all taxes of the Republic and the town. Secondly, he is obliged to acquire property according to his means and to integrate himself completely into the city. [...][87]

The meaning of "integration" is based here mainly on the medieval city law. The significance of the city law in Warsaw of that period was however very limited, due to the legal and administrative division of the city. Social integration, therefore, was not equal to the legal status of full citizenship. Of course, the possession enabled the burghers to participate in the city's self-government. But the number of townsmen without full citizenship and also of those citizens who did not own a house was significant already in previous times and grew even more in the second half of the 18th century.[88]

Referring to the fact that the Frankists did not own houses in the Old Town, they were discredited by the authorities as "unaffiliated people" (*ludzie luźni*). This was supposed to confirm that they were not part of the Warsaw citizenry. In the Poland of that time the same term also applied to peasants not permanently bonded to a plot of land, who earned some money as day laborers in the cities, to beggars and crooks – members of the lower classes, basically, who did not have a home. Generally, this expression referred to the marginal social status of the groups outside the firm estate hierarchy.[89]

In the same breath, the municipal authorities mystified the Frankists as subjects of an unknown ruler in order to argue their "non-affiliation" and their "foreign behavior". Frank is thus presented here as an authority rivaling that of the Crown and the municipality; it is to him that the Frankists paid tribute. Indeed, Frank's followers often traveled abroad and brought considerable amounts of money to his residence in Offenbach am Main, Germany, which were then used to fund his extravagant household.[90] The city authorities thus judged the Frankists' frequent travels as a proof of their disloyal, "foreign" behavior vis-à-vis both the Crown and the municipality.

But the Frankists were not the only ones whom the authorities regarded as "non-residential foreigners": craftsmen and merchants living in the jurisdictions and not

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[87] Ibid.

[88] Cf. Zienkowska K., „Obywatelstwo miejskie Starej Warszawy…" About 70% of the population in Poland's large and medium-sized cities of the period were "inhabitants" and did not own houses. Cf. Bogucka M, Samsonowicz H., *Dzieje miast i mieszczaństwa w Polsce przedrozbiorowej* (Wrocław et. al.: 1986): 465–466; Gierszewski S., *Obywatele miast Polski przedrozbiorowej. Studium źródłoznawcze* (Warszawa: 1973): 31–38.

[89] On this category, see Grodziski S., *Ludzie luźni. Studium z historii państwa i prawa polskiego* (Kraków: 1961); Zahorski A., "Ludność", Kieniewicz S. (ed.), *Dzieje Warszawy*, vol. 2: *Warszawa w latach 1526–1795* (Warszawa: 1984): 271–296, here 289.

[90] This fact occurred in 1775, in 1778. The Frankist chronicle even refers to the amount of 3.000 Ducats which Frank received from his Warsaw adherents in 1778. Doctór J. (ed.), *Rozmaite adnotacje*: 76–77 (no. 90), 80 (no. 99), 89–90 (no. 198).

registered with the old-town guilds and corporations, and the lower nobility engaged in trade, but also not paying any tax to the municipality, were given the same tag:

> Finally, there is a large number of people who make their living off usury, peddlers, shopkeepers, masons, carpenters, gardeners, carters and hairdressers, all pretending to belong to the honorable estate of the gentry (*szlachta*).[91] Since they are non-resident, they do not contribute to the municipal tax base, and even make much larger profits during their stay in the city than the actual citizens.[92]

The binary opposition made here by the Magistracy between the "integrated" citizens and "non-integrated" dwellers, where the Frankists are listed among Warsaw's inhabitants of a very different social and legal status, demonstrate clearly enough their position in between the established categories: they were not inferior in economic terms. In social terms their position was ambiguous, as they did not belong to the city's corporations, but they apparently were well integrated beyond them.

It is quite obvious that in order to emphatically demand the preservation of their legal privileges, the city's authorities in their petition chose to exploit the Frankists' unique position in between the established social categories by accusing them of the separatist behavior of foreigners.

What is surprising in this petition is the fact that the Frankists are not directly linked with the Jews − the link only appeared later, in further discussions in the spring of 1790 and onwards, when a number of anonymous anti-Frankist pamphlets came out, accusing the Frankists of being crypto-Jews. Apparently, at this time the Magistracy was not yet sure which instruments would be more effective to get their demands through to the Frankists.

Conclusion: the "House on the Corner" as a physical place and social space of Frankists in 18th-century Warsaw

There are two crucial aspects in the conflict between the Frankists and the municipal authorities of the Old Town:

One is the subversive character of the "Frankist social spaces," which through their ambiguous nature challenge the traditional notions and ideas highly estimated

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[91] The subject of aristocratic pretensions here refers to many members of the lower nobility who since 1775 were officially allowed to retain their right to vote and their title, could ply their trade and practice their craft, yet were exempt from paying taxes. Jedruch J. , *Constitutions, Elections and Legislature of Poland* 194.

[92] „Do Prześwietnej Deputacyi prez Najjaśniejszego Króla Jegomości i Najjaśniejsze Stany Rzepltej do miasta Warszawy wybranej, podane dnia 5 listopada 1789" 187.

by the Frankists' contemporaries. Moreover, their contemporaries failed to categorize them within the traditional social structure; they were neither full citizens nor just foreigners or a group of inferior status; neither pure Catholics nor Jews. The Frankists' ambiguous social position corresponds to the physical space they appropriated in the city − living and running business in the central places of the city, but outside the direct municipal jurisdiction. They succeeded in establishing themselves in the urban economy of the late 18ᵗʰ-century Warsaw by running several taverns and shops, but certainly not to the extent the rhetoric of the burghers' polemics would suggest – as the modus of their access to the city space demonstrates. Nevertheless, their gradual economic success challenged the notions of the long-established burghers about their privileges – especially in such critical times as the last years of the Commonwealth, they were vulnerable to attacks.

And second, it can be observed that social change for the Warsaw inhabitants also meant a struggle for urban spaces, which were reoccupied and reorganized in the process. In this struggle the magistrates attempted to defend their position, which was traditionally manifest in the ownership of a city house. However, the spatial benefits, which according to the medieval city law would extend only to such houses, had reached the houses in the new trade centers outside the municipal jurisdiction. Simultaneously, other social groups that had formerly been excluded from utilizing profitable Warsaw houses, gained access by other means, namely by renting them. Their social status was based not on traditional corporative privileges, but on economic power – as was the case with the Warsaw Frankists.

The territorial and social space of the ChaBaD Hassidic movement in Belarus in the first half of the 19th century

Barbara Holzer

The late 18th century was a time of dynamic development of the Hassidic movement in the territories under the rule of the Polish Republic and in the areas of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania occupied by Russia. The teaching of Baal-Shem-Tov (c. 1700–60) conquered new terrains thanks to emissaries sent to Podolia, Volhynia and Poland, and also to the north, to Lithuania and Belarus. As Rabbi Joseph Schneersohn (1880–1950) admitted in his memoirs, Lithuania was the hardest fortress to capture. "Lithuania was not only the center of Jewish learning, but also the center of opposition to Hassidism. The opposition came from two directions. From the Misnageds who already before the time of Baal-Shem-Tov's revelation raised a storm of protest against this new way of life, and from the Frankists, with whom Baal-Shem-Tov and his disciples had many discussions in public."

In Belarus, after the administrative changes effected within the framework of the Russian state, separate organizational structures of Jewish communities consolidated. The development of Hassidism in Belarus, similarly to Lithuania, was linked to schisms and conflicts between the supporters of Hassidism and their opponents, the Misnageds. A kind of division of territory took place; Polotsk province (subsequently renamed Mohilev province) became a bastion of the Misnageds, while the Hassids consolidated their influence in Vitebsk province, especially after *zaddik* Menachem Mendel (1730–88) left Vitebsk for Palestine in 1777. These were mainly followers of ChaBaD (a Hebrew acronym for *chochma, bina* and *da'at,* as these *sefirot* form the name ChaBaD) Hassidism. In the conflict over religious domination, not only divergences in rituals or customs, but also territorial borders – according to provinces – were defined.

The two sides of that dramatic conflict found support in differently structured rabbinic organizations: the regional Mohilev *vaad* with its centralized authorities and the local *kahal* organizations in Vitebsk (previously Polotsk) province, where power was in the hands of provincial rabbis. ChaBaD leader Shneur Zalman (Alter Rebbe) (1745–1812) was not only a spiritual leader – a *zaddik*, an authority on issues

of *halacha* – a *rav*, but also the official representative of the *kahal* organization, responsible, among other things, for collecting taxes.[1]

The spreading of ChaBaD in the Belarusian territory and beyond its borders was related to the intellectual and organizational activity of the movement's first leader, Shneur Zalman. His will and ability to neutralize his opponents, the Misnageds, allowed the emerging religious and social movement to survive. The most important element of his teaching was the focus on the function and place of man in the process of understanding God. This had major consequences for the social ideas of ChaBaD. However, there were many moments of crisis in the early period of ChaBaD; Shneur Zalman's two arrests by the Russian authorities, the schism among his followers in the case of Aaron Halevi Horowitz (1766–1828), and finally the matter of succession to *zaddik* Zalman.

During the leadership of Zalman, and Dov-Ber subsequently known as Mittel Rebbe (1773–1827), the ChaBaD movement conquered new social spaces and new lands for its followers, despite internal conflicts as well as persecution from the Russian authorities. Dov-Ber owed his successes to his fervency in expressing the emotional, charismatic ChaBaD message.[2] With the developing rivalry between Dov-Ber in Lubavich and Aaron Halevi Horowitz of Starosiele, the circle of followers became narrower, but these were enthusiasts who recognized him as the leader. Dov-Ber demanded from his disciples an extraordinary *bitul*, obedience (self-abnegation) through contemplation. He acquired numerous skills in spreading the esoteric ethos on several levels, for the religiously uneducated and for the educated. The treatises with his teachings were more often in Yiddish than Hebrew, which made them all the more easily accepted by uneducated people. His teaching won him crowds of enthusiasts prepared to defend Judaism and the "lifting of the spirit" according to the visions of Ezekiel – the elevation of the Divine Chariot – *Merkava*.

The movement created by Shneur Zalman was developed and modified by his successors in the first half of the 19th century. The activity of Dov-Ber and his halachic treatises continued the work of Shneur Zalman. The third ChaBaD leader, Menachem Mendel (the Zemach Zedek) (1789–1866), chose a similar road, and also had a sizable written output.

Dov-Ber developed the forms of teaching and organizing the Hassidic movement, and leading it in difficult times of a crisis among the community of Russian Jews after the Napoleonic wars, struggling with starvation and forced resettlements from villages to towns. Menachem Mendel had to face a different disaster: the ruthless compulsory enlistment of cantonists into the army.

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[1] Fishman D. E., *Russia's First Modern Jews*. *The Jews of Shklov* (New York, London: 1995): 14–18.

[2] Loewenthal N., *Communicating the Infinitive*. *The Emergence of the Habad School* (Chicago: 1990): 5.

Materials on ChaBaD can be found in the Belarusian archive in Minsk. The interest of Russian authorities, sparked by denunciations and continuing in the conditions of the Russian administration's general repressive attitude, found expression in official documents. Preserved documents include court verdicts, translations of Dov-Ber's private documents, a permit for Menachem Mendel and his son to leave Lubavich and other police information from a surveillance operation that lasted 6 years.[3]

Some of the most important materials for us were excerpts from account books kept by the rabbi's associates. The books were meant to testify against the rabbi, proving that "while increasing his power, he increases his income by burdening his congregation with illegally imposed taxes."[4]

Translations into Russian of documents in Hebrew seized by the police were commissioned by the officials dealing with the case of rabbi Dov-Ber. They were prepared by official translators. Some of the translations feature the rabbi's declaration that they conform to the original. Thanks to the declared donations (*pidyonim*), these documents give an idea of the geographical distribution of the Hassidic rabbi's supporters. They prove that the *zaddik*'s influence stretched far and wide. Individual donations were small, most often a few rubles. The numbers of donors from different regions of the Russian state are interesting. According to the estimates of Russian officials in the years of Dov-Ber's court case, in one year his emissaries collected approximately 10.000 rubles, and about 4.000 rubles were collected locally. Since the donations were small, if one is to believe the Russian authorities' estimates, then the donors must have been numerous.

The surviving lists of names of *pidyonim* donors from 1821, most probably excerpts from the rabbi's account books, suggest that emissaries sought supporters for the Lubavich court among Jews in small settlements, towns and cities of the zone of settlement (Vitebsk, Mohilev, Mśtisław), but also in distant regions of Russia, beyond the zone of settlement. The list includes workers from factories in Tula, Kaluga and Riazan.[5]

Dov-Ber and Menachem Mendel undertook welfare activity. One example was assistance to Jewish families resettled by force from villages to towns. There were several such operations in the Belarusian provinces.[6] One surviving document is a record of the decision to hold a collection in 1825 for those resettled from Mohilev and

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[3] Schneersohn J., The *"Tzemach Cedek" and the Haskala Movement* (New York: 1969): 85.

[4] These were voluntary donations, i.e. *pidyonim* (redemption money). They were contributed together with a piece of paper carrying the name of the donor and the target of the donation.

[5] Национальный Исторический архив Белоруси "National Historical Archives of the Republic of Belarus" (hereinafter referred to as NIAB), Minsk, Cat. No. 1297-1-611.

[6] Loewenthal N., *Communicating the Infinitive* 109. Shneur Zalman was the first to organize, as early as 1810, the collecting of money for the Jews being displaced from villages.

Vitebsk provinces, and also for the needs of emissaries to St. Petersburg in connection with this matter. The initiative was Dov-Ber's, and his close associates were responsible for collecting the money. "[One needs to] send honorable persons to the capital – St. Petersburg, to establish contact with the social delegates,[7] so that it becomes possible to influence the large Council[8] and numerous honorable persons within it... The emissaries [to St. Petersburg should receive funds] for the expenses related to their stay in such a great city, and also for fur clothing for the emissaries. God knows how long this could stretch out in time and what sum the above-mentioned expenses could reach. In this way the undersigned from these two provinces[9] have made it known by means of the announcement below, that a [donation] be made from Mohilev province [in the amount of] 60%, and from Vitebsk province 40% [of the collection]."[10]

Dov-Ber was also in charge of organizing Jewish farming colonies, for example in Shchedrin in Minsk province, and on a much greater scale in Kherson province. This campaign was aimed at providing support for the Jews resettled from the villages and also at transferring money to help the settlers relocate, though some of them, for example from Vilna or Grodna provinces, were not supported by the ChaBaD Hassids. The number of colonies and Jewish families joining them soon grew. In the final period of his life Dov-Ber and also Menachem Mendel established communities among the Jewish colonists in Kherson and Ekaterinoslav provinces. There are some surviving police reports from Vitebsk from 1841 concerning Mendel's activities, prepared for the office of the third department [secret police] of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Information collected by the county chief of police portrays him as follows:

"1) Mendel the Jew, a merchant of 3 guilds, has his permanent residence in Mohilev province, Orshansk county, he is the grandson of that rabbi who was known from the case in St. Petersburg [a reference to the arrests of Shneur Zalman].
2) Mendel belongs to the class of Jews called the Hassids, he is a devout man in his faith, and the Hassids respect and value him. Jews from Mohilev, Vitebsk, Chernikhov, Poltava, Minsk and Vilna provinces come to him on Jewish holidays, to the town of Lubavich, and then he delivers his teachings, telling them to comply with the law [of their faith] and to persist in it."[11]

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[7] The "deputies" were appointed in 1807, three years after the first displacements of Jews from villages. They were meant to represent the interests of the Jews in the provinces and in the capital. Several of those elected in 1818 remained delegates until 1825; they were Michel Eizensztadt and Markus Feitelson.
[8] It is not clear if this means the Council of Ministers, the Council of State or some other central state body.
[9] i.e. Vitebsk and Mohilev province.
[10] NIAB, Cat. No. 1297-1-611: 49.
[11] NIAB, Cat. No. 1297-1-129947: 6.

Dov-Ber encouraged his supporters to take up new occupations among Jewish workers – weaving, spinning, and also to treat farming not only as a recommendation of the tsarist administration, but also as a form of religious life.[12]

The literature on these issues also mentions the campaign to set up colonies in *Eretz Israel*, continued by the first *zaddiks*. The colony in Hebron was one of the first to be organized. The surviving correspondence from ChaBaD emissaries to *Eretz Israel* suggests the existence of animated relations with emigrants through spiritual and material support, with assistance funds being sent to the settlers. *Halukka* collections were also held among other Hassidic groups, e.g. that of Avrom of Kalisk (1741–1810). The collections that the Hassids organized, later sending the money to *Eretz Israel*, became the basis for accusations of their collaboration with the Turkish sultan, a serious charge in the eyes of the Russian police.[13]

The structures of the social organization of Jews in Belarus, in existence since before the partitions, proved to be lasting. Though once Russian law was introduced, collective gathering of taxes for the state treasury was no longer in force, and each *kahal* was individually responsible for taxes, Jewish district assemblies (*Vaadei galil*) were called on important matters. During Dov-Ber's leadership, provincial assemblies of representatives of local communities were held in eastern Belarus.

The council that gathered at the market in Lubavich is mentioned several times in the sources, which also mention that a collection was held there with Dov-Ber's permission. The rabbi appointed trusted people to collect and transfer the money, including an influential resident of Chashniki, Berek Rapoport.[14]

ChaBaD followers were also *shtadlanim* at the tsar's court in St. Petersburg. Back in the times of Shneur Zalman's arrests, some Hassidic tales featured people who allegedly passed him information in prison and interceded for him by speaking and giving gifts to top tsarist officials. Similarly during arrests of *zaddi*ks in the times of Dov-Ber and Menachem Mendel, other Jewish delegates, called deputies, did their best in St. Petersburg to resolve the conflicts with the authorities by various means. The role of the *shtadlanim* was also important during the mass-scale forcible resettlement of Jews from the villages to towns in Vitebsk and Mohilev province.

Some of the surviving reports include attachments with lists of names of Hassids registered with individual prayer houses. Each prayer house had such a list because of the fees paid for places during prayers. It is possible to estimate on this basis what percentage of the population were Hassids in the towns of Minsk province.

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[12] Loewenthal N., *Communicating the Infinitive* 142

[13] Hielman notes that Dov-Ber did not manage to provide full assistance to the settlers in Hebron, but a synagogue was built there with ChaBaD support. Hielman H., *Beit Rebbe* (Tel-Aviv: n.d., photog. rep. of Berdichev: 1902): 133–135.

[14] NIAB Cat. No. 1297-1-14745: 22 and onwards. The dispute was being solved by the third department of the office of the Smolensk, Vitebsk and Mohilev governor-general.

According to the list of Hassids – men from the towns of the Minsk province, in Minsk there were 97 registered followers of the Lubavich rabbi and 99 followers of the Lakhovich rabbi – *karliners*. There were three prayer houses, two on Troitsky Hill and one on Nemizhskaya Street. Two belonged to the Lubavich Hassids, and one to the Lakhovich Hassids. Interestingly, the number of Lakhovich Hassids was higher than that of the ChaBaD. Despite persecution from the Misnageds, Hassidism was maintaining its posts in Minsk.

In the county seat of Ihumen, there were 61 Lubavich Hassids and 33 Lakhovich Hassids. In other county seats: Rakov, Stolin, Koydanov, a few dozen men in each town declared they belonged to ChaBad. On some though not all lists of the Hassids in the prayer houses, the names were split into Lubavich and Lakhovich Hassids. In total, out of 424 men listed, 209 were followers of the Lubavich rabbi. Lakhovich Hassids, meanwhile, accounted for 40% of the overall number of Hassids. Koydanov, as the residence of the *karliners' zaddik*, brought together only followers of the Lakhovich option.[15] Rakóv and Stolin were dominated by Lubavich Hassids. In other towns mentioned in the documents, such as Mir, Mozyr, Neswezh and Nowogródek, the divisions were not taken into account. It is known, however, that ChaBaD was making progress in Mir in the early 19th century.

The ChaBaD communities had their representatives in large provincial cities, in Minsk, Vitebsk and Mohilev, but most of the faithful lived in small towns. The sources often mention county seats, including Bobrujsk, Borysow, Horodek, Dzisna, Śmiłowicze, Tulchin, Dubrowna, Rogaczów, Homel. It is worth mentioning the small town of Kopyś in Mohilev province, where a famous Hassidic printing house operated. There were also small ChaBaD communities in Vilna, Polock and Dynaburg.

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[15] Solomon Hayim Perlow (1797–1862) was a *zaddik* at the time.

Between tradition and modernity: the Polish shtetl in the first two decades of the 20TH century

Konrad Zieliński

The turn of the century, the revolution of 1905 and its aftermath brought significant changes to Jewish life. Modern political movements based on class and nationalist ideology appeared in towns and villages, and marked changes could be observed in places where lifestyle had not been changing for decades. The inflow of Jews from the provinces outside the Kingdom of Poland and the views advocated by the newcomers gained popularity among the Polish Jews. Some of these ideas provided answers to the question about the future of Polish Jewry.

In 1915, the whole territory of the Kingdom of Poland was seized by Germans and Austrians. The impact of the First World War and the occupation of the Central States on the country's economy and living conditions was unequivocally negative. However, the relative liberalism of the new authorities, along with the global events, such as the Russian revolutions, was a catalyst for changes. It resulted in the secularisation of the Jewish community, or at least of its most active part, and its emancipation from the long and steady influence of the Orthodox and from the Polish domination. Similar processes could be observed in Galicia; however, the transformation of the political situation in the territories of the Kingdom of Poland made the changes of the *shtetl* life in "Russian Poland" exceptionally fast and intensive.

The paper examines some aspects of Jewish life in the Polish *shtetls* in the first two decades of the 20th century, focusing on the activities of social, educational and cultural institutions, as well as the Polish-Jewish relations.

Preliminary remarks

With several exceptions, the topographical image of the *shtetl* and its topography remained unchanged at the beginning of the 20th century. Several landmarks, such as a market, a synagogue, a *beit midrash* and a cemetery, informed the visitors and newcomers that they were in the *shtetl*.[1] However, it turned out that changes had

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[1] Prokop-Janiec E., „Obraz sztetł w polskiej literaturze", Meducka M., Renz R. (eds.), *Kultura Żydów polskich XIX I XX wieku* (Kielce: 1992): 124–125.

occurred in the social life and mentality of the *shtetl* inhabitants. The intensity of these changes depended on many factors: geographical location, distance from the big cities and main routes, economic conditions, legal status of the Jewish population, influences of the Orthodox and authority of rabbis, proximity of Hassidic courts and, last but not least, migratory movement. The last factor was exceptionally important during the turbulent years of the First World War and its aftermath. Indeed, as many researchers have argued, the *shtetl* should not be studied in a vacuum, but should rather be seen in its specific context, including all the above-mentioned factors.[2]

In the majority of small towns in the Kingdom of Poland during this period, Jews constituted a significant part of the population. The percentage of Jews varied: in some towns the Jews constituted 30–60% of the population, and in the others, such as Przytyk in Radom, or Kossów in the Lublin *gubernias*, they constituted up to 95% of the total population.[3] We must underline that even if the percentage of Christians was relatively high, Jews constituted the actual core of urban population. It resulted from the fact that Polish or Ukrainian residents living in towns were engaged in agriculture, and in that period hardly ever had any relation to the urban social-political and cultural life. The Jews were involved in business and trade and constituted the majority of craftsmen, workers and salesmen. Such a situation was particularly evident in the eastern part of the Kingdom of Poland. On the whole country's scale, a larger number of Jews lived in the eastern rather than the western provinces of the Kingdom of Poland (Łomża, Siedlce and Lublin).

Table 1. The religious structure of the population of the Kingdom of Poland, 1913.

Gubernia	Total number of population	Catholic %	Evangelic %	Orthodox %	Jewish %	Others %
Kalisz	1.316.621	81,84	8,40	0,50	9,09	0,16
Kielce	1.041.526	88,24	0,32	0,41	11,02	–
Lublin	1.579.413	65,53	2,69	17,15	14,61	0,03
Łomża	650.112	81,41	1,07	1,08	16,41	0,03
Piotrków	2.267.858	68,28	12,77	0,72	16,18	2,04
Płock	705.543	82,22	6,99	0,47	10,12	0,19
Radom	1.149.280	84,39	1,15	0,39	14,05	–

[2] Kassow S. D., "Community and Identity In the Interwar Shtetl", Gutman Y., Mendelsohn E., Reinharz J., Shmeruk Ch. (eds.), *The Jews of Poland Between Two World Wars* (Hanover: 1989): 199.
[3] Wasiutyński B., *Ludność żydowska w Polsce w wiekach XIX i XX. Studjum statystyczne* (Warszawa: 1930): 19–37, 44–68, 75–77.

Table 1. *continued*

Gubernia	Total number of population	Catholic %	Evangelic %	Orthodox %	Jewish %	Others %
Siedlce	1.024.124	86,19	1,67	10,67	16,66	0,69
Suwałki	652.125	80,41	5,96	2,25	11,29	0,09
Warsaw	2.668.711	72,64	4,78	1,77	20,18	0,63
Total	13.055.313	75,39	5,35	3,71	14,97	0,68

Source: Strasburger E. (ed.), *Rocznik statystyczny Królestwa Polskiego z uwzględnieniem innych ziem polskich. Rok 1915* [The Statistical Yearbook of the Kingdom of Poland and Other Polish Lands: 1915] (Warszawa: 1916): 10–14, 28–34.

Table 2. The Jewish population in Galicia, 1921.

Voievodship	Total number of Jews	% of Jews	% of Jews in cities	% of Jews in towns	% of Jews in villages
Kracow	152.926	7,7	26,0	20,9	1,8
Lvov	313.206	11,5	37,2	34,8	3,3
Tarnopol	128.965	9,0	40,2	21,4	2,4
Stanislawow	141.524	10,8	39,6	20,6	3,5
Total	518.021	9,9	34,5	25,0	2,8

Source: Bohdan Wasiutyński, *Ludność żydowska w Polsce w wiekach XIX i XX. Studjum statystyczne* (Warszawa: 1930): 92.

According to the demographic and economic structure, the Jewish population of the Kingdom of Poland, as well as Galicia, represented the eastern type of Jewry.[4] This type was described as Orthodox, with predominance of craftsmanship, trade and small business in the professional structure and noted for relatively high population growth, which was caused by several factors: lower children mortality rate due to better medical care (it was much easier to find a doctor in a town than in a village) and early marriage.[5] The *shtetl* intelligentsia was also formed; however, in many cases it meant the religious intelligentsia, i.e. rabbis and teachers of religious schools, *zaddiks*. In the course of time the situation changed, and among the local "big-wigs", such as rabbis and wealthy merchants, appeared people with higher secular education, sometimes very distant from the Orthodox style of life. A significant part of those

[4] Mendelsohn E., *Żydzi Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w okresie międzywojennym*, transl. Tomaszewska A. (Warszawa: 1992): 43.
[5] Wróbel P., „Przed odzyskaniem niepodległości", Tomaszewski J. (ed.), *Najnowsze dzieje Żydów w Polsce* (Warszawa: 1993): 26; Garncarska-Kadary B., *Żydowska ludność pracująca w Polsce 1918–1939* (Warszawa: 2001): 259.

who settled in the Kingdom of Poland, were immigrants from the western part of the Russian empire, so-called *litvaks*.

Politics, culture and education

The period of 1900–20 saw a noticeable rise in the intensity of the social and political life of the Polish Jews. During this period such political movements as *Agudat Ha-ortodoksim* (Orthodox League), socialist fractions and, first of all, the Zionist movement emerged in many *shtetls*. The modern political movements based on class or nationalist ideology penetrated the territory of the Kingdom of Poland in the 19th century, and the pioneers of these movements were Jewish refugees, displaced persons and immigrants from Russia; however, at the beginning of the 20th century and after the 1905 revolution, the process of penetration of modern ideology among the Polish Jewry grew significantly. The anti-Jewish riots and pogroms of the revolutionary years of 1905–07 made more and more Jews look for a new ideology in order to solve the "Jewish question" and ensure the safety of the Jewish people in the future.[6] The inflow of newcomers from Russia, not only displaced persons and refugees after 1881, but also economical immigrants, was an important factor of the changes in the *shtetl* life in the Polish lands.

The outbreak of the First World War, the Russian evacuation in the summer of 1915, and, later, the liberal policy of the new German and Austrian occupiers encouraged the development of social-political and cultural life. In fact, the economic policy of the Central States caused a decline in economy, but Jewish participation in the local administration, distribution of financial aid from Austria, Germany and the Western states, as well as trade and business connections with the new rulers of the country were conducive to creating the new elites. The war years had an effect on the hierarchical status of the Jewish community. It turned out that the *kehila* was not able to solve all the problems, and "the new people" received a chance to gain a prestigious position in the community. Zionists, folkists and socialists appeared among the people responsible for aid distribution and charity organizers. Although we cannot generalize, one thing is certain: the authority of a rabbi or a *zaddik* was seriously undermined.[7]

The policies of the Germans and Austrians were much more liberal than the tsarist regime. In 1915, the new authorities announced laws regulating the status of the

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[6] On pogroms during this period see, for example, Kopówka E., *Żydzi siedleccy* (Siedlce: 2001): 19–23, 119; Archiwum Akt Nowych "*Archive of the New Documents*", Warszawa, Komitet Narodowy Polski, no. 20884, p.107.

[7] Zieliński K., "The Changing Shtetl in the Kingdom of Poland During the First World War", *Polin. Studies in Polish Jewry*, 17 (Oxford / Portland: 2004): 129.

Jews in the Kingdom of Poland. In March 1915, the Austrians decreed that citizens' rights and obligations did not depend on any particular religious affiliation. All the churches and religious groups legally recognized in the Habsburg monarchy and the occupied territories were to have equal rights and obligations.[8] Similar regulations were announced in the territory occupied by Germany.[9]

However, the most important thing was the fact that after 1915, a large number of Jews serving in the German and Austro-Hungarian armies and occupational administration appeared in the Kingdom of Poland. The confrontation of their lifestyle with that typical of Polish Jews, who were used to locking themselves away in the *shtetl* and the Jewish quarters and being discriminated by the Russian authorities, Poles and Ukrainians, provided a very important experience for the local Jewish population. "Modern Jews" from Germany and the Habsburg empire played an important role in the social and political life of the Jewish population in the Kingdom. Many foreign artists participated in the theatre and music scene; many foreigners joined the audience. There were some foreigners among the organizers of welfare and charity committees, and among the pioneers of political parties. Some of them, both artists and politicians, travelled beyond the city limits and became involved in the cultural and political life of the provincial towns. Zionists and socialists, with the help of Russian refugees from the Russian empire and *litvaks*, organized drama troupes, regarding this kind of activity as a very useful political campaign and a highly effective propaganda tool. Indeed, politics was a catalyst for many cultural undertakings. In the opinion of many, it was thanks to culture that the socialist and Zionist ideas attracted young people in the *shtetl* very quickly.[10]

Not only the development of cultural undertakings showed that the *shtetl* life was constantly changing. The influence of a given political group in the *shtetl* was determined by election results and nominations to the municipal authorities. Though Jews had served in the municipal councils in the tsarist times, it was only under the occupation of the Central States that the proportion of Jews and non-Jews in these councils changed in favour of the Jewish population. According to the Russian regulations and the legal status of the Jewish population in the Russian empire, Jews were reluctantly approved as municipal employees and as a rule did not become members of the town board.[11] In 1916, the population of the Kingdom of Poland was able to participate in free elections to local self-governments for the first time. In fact, the electoral law was a convenient measure to limit a number of seats for

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[8] See "Rozporządzenie Naczelnego Wodza armii z 7 marca 1915, dotyczące spraw wyznaniowych", *Dziennik Rozporządzeń c. i k. Zarządu Wojskowego w Polsce* 1915, no. 2.

[9] Wróbel P., "Przed odzyskaniem niepodległości" 123–124.

[10] See, for example, Zieliński K., "The Changing Shtetl" 127.

[11] *Das Russische Gemeindegesetz für die Gouvernements des Königreichs Polen* (Piotrków: 1916): 18–19, 29–31.

Jewish councillors, but formally Jews were treated as equal with Poles.[12] Despite all the limitations, thanks to elections and nominations held in smaller towns, Poles and Jews gained a possibility to control their towns and cities. While it is true that the laws favoured the wealthy social strata, the elections held in 1916 provided an opportunity for agitation and propaganda to many parties, including left-wing and Jewish groups.[13] The Jews hoped that Jewish councillors would be able to defend them and represent their interests. Some political milieus, the assimilated Jews and the so-called new assimilators, saw in the elections the best way to "civilization" and "granting citizenship" to the Jewish masses.[14]

The proportions in the municipal councils were not equal to the proportions of Jews and non-Jews in a given town. Moreover, the structure of Jewish representation in the city councils in 1916 did not reflect all social strata and political divisions of the Polish Jewry at that time. The fact that the majority of Jewish councillors from 1916 until 1918 represented the ideology of assimilation should not come as a surprise. Taking into consideration the lack of public experience and ignorance of the Polish language amongst the potential candidates of other political groups, victory belonged to those who were famous for their charity, were fluent in Polish and had good contacts with the Poles and occupiers. However, in the course of time it turned out that despite the successes of the assimilators and the Orthodox, the nationalist ideology found stronger support with the Jewish public, as evidenced by the results of the city elections in 1918. Zionists of different factions won the majority of mandates. A similar situation was observed in smaller towns, where the city boards were nominated by the occupiers.[15] The results of the first elections in independent Poland in 1919 showed the bankruptcy of the assimilators' policy, as well as serious weakness of the Orthodox.[16]

During the war, the residents of the Polish lands, including Jews, put an unprecedented amount of energy into public activities: social aid, education, politics and local self-government. To aid the people more afflicted by the war, a whole network of social self-help committees was established. These committees organized shelters for the homeless, communal kitchens and food distribution centres, orphan and medical aid stations. Sometimes this work established common links between the Poles and the Jews,

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[12] See, for example, Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv, Freiburg im. B., Generalgouvernement Warschau 1915-1919 , no. PH 30II/ 49, p. 17–19.

[13] Zieliński K., "The Changing Shtetl" 125.

14   *Myśl Żydowska*, 2 (Lublin: 1916).

[15] Lewandowski J., „Społeczność żydowska Lublina w czasie i wojny światowej", Radzik T. (ed.), *Żydzi w Lublinie (Materiały do dziejów społeczności żydowskiej Lublina)* (Lublin: 1995): 136–137; Maj E., *Narodowa Demokracja w województwie lubelskim w latach 1918–1928* (Lublin: 2002): 31–32; Zieliński K., *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie na ziemiach Królestwa Polskiego w czasie pierwszej wojny światowej* (Lublin: 2005): 381–383.

[16] Mendelsohn E., *Żydzi Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej* 81.

more often it became a source of conflict, but in general the population of Poland did not remain passive. The development of local autonomous agendas, rescue committees, Polish patriotic manifestations and political activity could be considered as the conditions conducive to the above-mentioned changes in the Jewish communities.

In the case of Jews, to a large extent the new political reality provoked changes in the political scene and development of cultural activity; the newcomers evoked an interest in politics among the *shtetl* inhabitants. However, the contacts of the local population with the new authorities, its officials and soldiers, as well as with the artists, lecturers and researchers, were interesting for both sides. The newcomers introduced new values and patterns of behaviour into local communities; on the other hand, Jews from Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bohemia, as well as delegates of foreign rescue committees and Jewish organizations, encountered Orthodox religiosity, traditions and folk customs that had long been forgotten in their own countries.[17]

As it turned out during the First World War, at least some Jews felt that secular education should supplement religious one. In 1916, one could read in newspapers connected with assimilation and the modern political movements that independent social and educational work began in almost every township in the Kingdom of Poland, and that "every victory gives young Jewish people a new shot of enthusiasm and deepens its aspiration for education".[18] In fact, during the occupation of the Central States, the network of private and public secular Jewish schools significantly increased.[19] However, the symptoms of emancipation among the Jewish youth in *shtetls* had appeared earlier.

Both in the Russian empire and in the Kingdom of Poland, the revolution of 1905 triggered off not only serious riots and tsarist repressions, but also, within several years, liberalizations of school regulations. The Poles and the Jews received the right to establish a type of schools with their national language of teaching. The Zionists took advantage of temporary liberalization and established a network of Hebrew schools, including elementary, high and vocational schools. The majority of them were located in cities and bigger towns; however, some enthusiasts ventured to establish such institutions in very small towns. For example, in 1906, a few enthusiasts attempted to establish a vocational school in Chęciny in the Kielce *gubernia*; however, the local Orthodox stopped this initiative.[20] In bigger towns such initiatives succeeded, but in the majority of *shtetls* the influence of the Orthodox before the war was too strong. As late as 1916, in Gniewoszów in the same *gubernia* the first secular library and a

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[17] See, for example, Carlebach A., "A German Rabbi Goes East", *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, 6 (New York: 1961): 67–68.

[18] *Myśl Żydowska*, 25 (1916).

[19] Zieliński K., *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie* 202–203.

[20] Caban W., Szabat B., "Żydzi wobec rządowego szkolnictwa elementarnego w Księstwie Warszawskim i Królestwie Polskim w latach 1808–1914 (na przykładzie Kielecczyzny)", Meducka M., Renz R. (eds.), *Kultura Żydów polskich* 225–226.

Hebrew course for teenage boys from the local *beit midrash* were organized in secret. We could indicate more similar situations; however, as we can read in the Orthodox newspaper *Jüdisches Wort* (Jewish Word) in 1918, "the number of yeshiva students in Poland had decreased dramatically".[21] *Myśl Żydowska* (The Jewish Thought), a progressive weekly connected with the new assimilators and Zionists, noted that the number of teenage boys coming from Orthodox families and attending high schools in Lublin grew systematically.[22] A growing number of parents began to feel that secular education as a means of social advancement was as attractive for their children as the study in a *beit midrash* and a career as a rabbi.

According to the Jewish law and the traditional educational restrictions in Jewish society, women were deprived of a possibility to study the Torah and Talmud; thus, the establishing of the network of religious schools for girls, *Beit Jacob* (The House of Jacob), should be considered as a real *novum* in the Orthodox Jewish school system. The first *Beit Jacob* school was established by Sarah Shenirer (1883–1935) in Krakow in 1917. Taking into consideration all the difficulties in establishing such schools – not only the lack of curriculum, textbooks and teachers, but also the initially negative attitude of the Jewish conservative milieus towards Shenirer, the fact that in 1924 there were 19 *Beit Jacob* schools in Poland must be regarded as a success.[23]

It should also be emphasized that during and after the war many women without husbands or fathers became the breadwinners in their families. Theatre and other forms of cultural expression became very popular among them. Some of them became engaged in charity committees or even political organizations. Especially the young Jewish women found this kind of activity – unknown or relatively new in the traditional Jewish society dominated by men – very attractive.[24]

The modern national, political and cultural movements posed a danger to the Orthodox circles, which, however, did not remain passive. A Polish version of *Agudat Yisrael* (Israel's League) was founded in the Kingdom of Poland in 1916.[25] The main aim of *Aguda* was to defend the traditional style of life and religion. Although popular branches of *Aguda* began to appear on a larger scale after 1918, the right conditions for establishing a relatively modern political structure for the Orthodox group had

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[21] Zieliński K., "The Changing Shtetl" 122.

[22] *Myśl Żydowska*, 25 (1916).

[23] Seidman H., *Renesans religijny kobiety żydowskiej: Sara Szenirer – człowiek i dzieło* (Łódź: 1936): 8–17. See also Cała A. (ed.), *Ostatnie pokolenie. Autobiografie polskiej młodzieży żydowskiej okresu międzywojennego ze zbiorów YIVO Institute for Jewish Research w Nowym Jorku* (Warszawa: 2003): 166–167.

[24] Hyman P. E., *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History. The Roles and Representation of Women* (Seattle / London: 1997): 53–54.

[25] Bacon G., *The Politics of Tradition: Agudat Yisrael in Poland, 1916-1939* (Jerusalem: 1996): 21–22.

been created in the earlier period. The activity of the Orthodox Jews, including their attempts to reorganize the religious educational system, were a no less important symptom of changes than the development of the Zionist and socialist movements. The latter mainly attracted young people in larger industrial towns; however, the revolutionary movement in Germany and Russia, especially the Bolshevik revolution, really strengthened the socialist movement on the whole. The socialist Bund and the left wing of *Poaley Zion* (Workers of Zion) gained considerable popularity and established their branches in many Polish *shtetls*.[26]

The radical views observed amongst the Jewish population in the Kingdom of Poland and the economic conflict between the Poles and the Jews[27] were one of the most important reasons that damaged the Polish-Jewish relationships. The Jews fell victim to the widespread spy-mania in Polish society; their itinerant occupations especially exposed them to accusations of espionage and sabotage. It is true that many Jews, particularly in Eastern Poland, did join the Red Army or Bolshevik administration during the war of 1920.[28] However, only a small proportion of the Jewish population adapted themselves to the situation and supported the Bolsheviks, while the rest experienced all the harshness and adversity of life under the Bolshevik rule.[29] In fact, in many cases the accusations of espionage and Bolshevism was a pretext for depriving the Jewish inhabitants of their civic and residence rights. After November 1918, because of anti-Semitism in Poland, to which a severe economic crisis gave added impetus, the Poles subjected almost all Jews without exception to close scrutiny.[30]

In any case, the very fact that modern political movements based on class or nationalist ideology appeared in the *shtetl* indicated certain changes. This process resulted in the secularisation of the Jewish community and its emancipation from the long and steady influence of the Orthodox. Very often it was accompanied by cultural undertakings.

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[26] Laqueur W., *A History of Zionism* (New York: 1976): 302–302; Schatz J., *The Generation. The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communists of Poland* (Berkeley / Los Angeles / Oxford: 1991): 22.

[27] Zieliński K., *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie* 78–99, 206–244.

[28] Szczepański J., *Społeczeństwo Polski w walce z najazdem bolszewickim 1920 roku* (Warszawa / Pułtusk: 2000): 386–388.

[29] See, for example, Mishkinsky M., "The Communist Party of Poland and the Jews", *The Jews of Poland* 66; Rothenberg J., "Jewish Religion in the Soviet Union", Kochan L. (ed.), *The Jews in Soviet Russia since 1917* (London / New York / Toronto: 1970): 162–165; Schapiro L., "The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement", *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 40 (London: 1961): 167.

[30] Lutosławski W., *Bolshevism and Poland* (Paris: 1919): 4–5, 23–31; Zieliński K., "Population Displacement and Citizenship in Poland, 1918–1924", Baron N., Gatrell P. (eds.), *Homelands. War, Population and Statehood in Eastern Europe and Russia 1918–1924* (London: 2004): 98–118.

Puławy Case

Very favourable conditions for the development of politics, cultural and educational activity were formed in Puławy, a mid-sized town in the Lublin *gubernia*, with a population of 5.306 inhabitants in 1897. In that year Jews constituted 73,2% of the total population of Puławy, while in 1913 – 61,6%. In 1921, there were 7.205 inhabitants, of which 44,7% were Jews. The increase of population was a result of the economic changes taking place in the western provinces of the Russian empire and independent Poland.[31]

The location of Puławy was relatively convenient and conducive to development. As a result of opening a railway line that connected Lublin with Warsaw, many new industrial plants were established. The proximity of a Russian fortress in Ivangorod-Dęblin guaranteed the market and demand for the services of inhabitants of Puławy and its environs. In addition, the town was situated a dozen or so kilometres from Kazimierz on the Vistula, a beautiful small town, which even before the First World War had gained popularity among artists, painters and tourists. There were several Jewish students at the Agricultural Institute in Puławy: in the school year 1912/1913, the Jews hardly constituted 10% of students of the Institute. Most of them came from Russian and Lithuanian provinces, and among them were Zionists. It is worthy to mention that *litvaks*, generally wealthier and better educated than the average *shtetl* inhabitant in Poland, had long been present in the economic life of Puławy. Some of them appeared in the town shortly after 1881–82. Because of migration that began with the war, and after the Russian evacuation in the summer of 1915, some people from Warsaw and a small number of Jewish refugees from Russia sought shelter in Puławy.[32] This influx of "new people" also provided a fresh impetus for the development of political and cultural life.

However, before the war, "Russian Jews", as the local inhabitants labelled them, began to distribute books, brochures and newspapers to young people. In 1908, a Jewish public library was founded in the town, while in the relatively big city of Lublin, such an institution was established only in 1916.[33] The young intelligentsia in Puławy quickly "infected" the local youth with Zionist and secular culture. Music and literary soirées, lectures and theatre performances became more and more popular among the young people of Puławy, including those coming from

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[31] Zieliński K., „Rewolucja w sztetl? O żydowskich środowiskach małomiasteczkowych w Królestwie Polskim pod koniec XIX i w pierwszych dekadach XX w. (na przykładzie Puław)", Jaroszyński F. (ed.), *Historia i kultura Żydów Janowca nad Wisłą, Kazimierza Dolnego i Puław. Fenomen kulturowy miasteczka – sztetl (Materiały z sesji naukowej)* (Janowiec nad Wisłą: 2003): 71.

[32] Ibid. 74–77.

[33] *Myśl Żydowska*, 24, 25 (1916); *Ziemia Lubelska*, 440 (1916).

the Orthodox families. *Litvaks* used to lend not only belles-lettres and poems, but also *Der Judenstaat* (Jeish State) by Theodor Herzl, History of the Jews by Graetz, Dubnow's articles and Hebrew and Jewish-Russian newspapers and periodicals to adolescents. One of the initiators of Puławy's cultural life, Jacob Rashel, mentioned that before 1914, the Jewish students of the Agricultural Institute organized the Purim Ball. It was the first time in the history of Puławy when Jewish girls and boys danced together. The next day, according to Rashel, was "the Doomsday". The rabbis cursed the participants of the Ball and appealed to their parents for stricter control over their offspring.[34]

Before 1914, there were at least 5, mostly private, elementary schools for Jewish children – an extraordinary fact, taking into consideration the size and the character of the town. One of these schools was coeducational; in the others the Hebrew, Russian, Polish and Yiddish languages were taught. An elementary school was opened by the local *kehila* in 1898; however, very soon a conflict between the school board and the rabbinate broke out. According to the Orthodox and Hassids, there were too many secular subjects in the school curriculum. There were also language and professional courses for Jewish adults, the majority of them run by people connected with the Zionist movement.[35]

No two *shtetls* were alike. Regional differences were reflected in the institutional and educational situation, as well as in political topography. Yet, serious differences arose not from economic and social factors, but from personalities involved. The case of Puławy seems to be an excellent example of this statement; however, we cannot omit such factors as the geographical location and economic potential.

Conclusions

In the case of the *shtetl*, a very important factor of changes was the migration movement initiated by the war. Many of those who had been displaced, such as students, workers from evacuated factories, soldiers, prisoners of war and refugees, returned to their hometowns or were forced to look for a new place of settlement. Repatriates sometimes found it difficult to resettle in the hierarchical "old world". There were times when the new ideas that they had brought with them fascinated and attracted young people, and this led to a clash between the younger and older generations. The older Jews, in general, did not accept "modern" activities. The Orthodox perceived any non-religious activity among the youth as a symptom of the decline of tradition and morality.[36]

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[34] See Zieliński K., „Rewolucja w sztetl?" 75.

[35] Ibid. 79-81.

[36] Zieliński K., "The Changing Shtetl" 121.

In many *yizker-bikher* (memorial books) we find the words describing "a true war which took place between the parents and their offspring". Some families went into mourning, when their son or daughter joined the Zionist or socialist organization. It is worthy to mention that girls and young women engaged themselves in this kind of activity.[37] Undoubtedly, the participation of *shtetl* women in such undertakings could be treated as a symptom of the new times, a special *signum temporis*. Sometimes the most active Zionists and activists of the cultural and educational life came from Orthodox families. For young people, the events related with the war meant the "spring era" and the beginning of a "new life".[38]

As has been mentioned, the Orthodox did not remain passive. Initially, they tried to put an end to the young people's activity and resolve the matter by force. As one of the activists involved in establishing the Jewish public library mentioned in his memoirs, even in Puławy they were forced to hide books and newspapers because of the local Hassids. For this reason the collection was called the "wandering" or "underground" library.[39] Later, during the war, the conservative Jewish milieus reached for more modern means to defend their values: the establishing of the Orthodox political party *Aguda*, attempts at reorganizing the religious educational system and participation in the town elections. Although the Orthodox Jews had a strong influence on the life of the *shtetl*, they failed to stop the activity of young people and mobilize strong public opinion against them.

The conflict between two generations is reflected not only in memoirs and diaries,[40] but also in Jewish literature.[41] In her essay on Russian-Jewish prose, Zsuzsa Hetényi writes, "In literature, changes are represented in new thematic focuses. Progress is shown in the conflict between two generations, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters. Religious tradition and folkloric tradition is counterposed to oblivion. The assimilated intellectual with his double identity is the precursor of the typical hero of the 20th century."[42] We can find examples of this process not only

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[37] Shtokfish D. (ed.), *Hurbana ugevurata shel ha-ayara markushov* [Martyrdom and Extermination of Shtetl Markuszów] (Tel-Aviv: 1955): 63–65, 78, 87–88; Kaplinsky B. (ed.), *Pinkas hrubieshov* [Hrubieszów Memorial Book] (Tel-Aviv: 1962): 338.

[38] Bernstein M. (ed.), *Pinkas zamshch* [Zamość Memorial Book] (Buenos Aires: 1957): 589; Bakalczuk-Felin M. (ed.), *Yizker-bukh khelm* [Helm Memorial Book] (Johannesburg: 1954): 75.

[39] *Yizker bukh pulav* [Puławy Memorial Book](New York: 1964): 108–109, 141–179.

[40] Kahan A., "The Diary of Anne Kahan. Siedlce, Poland, 1914–1916", *YIVO Annual*, 18 (New York: 1983): 312–313, 357–358; Cała a. (ed.), *Ostatnie pokolenie* 72–74, 166–169, 256–257.

[41] See, for example, Balin C. B., *To Reveal Our Hearts. Jewish Women Writers in Tsarist Russia* (Cincinnati: 2000): 8; Shmeruk Ch., *Historia literatury jidysz. Zarys* (Wrocław / Warszawa / Kraków: 1992): 72–80.

[42] Hetényi Z., "Russian-Jewish Prose in 1882–1917", *Central and East European Jews at the Crossroads of Tradition and Modernity* (Vilnius: 2006): 152.

in Jewish or Polish-Jewish literature, but also in books by Polish authors featuring Jewish characters.[43]

Emancipation of a certain part of the Jewish population in the Polish lands began in the mid–19th century. However, the events that accompanied the turbulent beginning of the 20th century were special catalysts for changes in typical tiny s*htetls*. The countrywide and worldwide events that marked the first two decades of the 20th century, such as the 1905 revolution, the boycott led by the National Democracy, the outbreak of the First World War, relative liberalism of the Germans and Austrians, Balfour Declaration, revolutionary movements in Russia and Germany, and the strengthening of Polish nationalism, made a strong impact on the Jewish life. The basis of these changes was the economy of the Polish lands and the professional structure of the Jewish population. The clash between "the old" and "the new", the confrontation between the style of life of "modern Jews" and *Ostjuden*, the development of nationalist Jewish ideology and, last but not least, the growing conflict between the Poles and the Jews, characterized the Polish territories in this period. All these factors seriously changed the traditional Jewish life.

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[43] See, for example, Wróbel J., *Tematy żydowskie w prozie polskiej* (Kraków: 1991): 10–46.

CREATING SPACE FOR WOMEN IN INTER-WAR JEWISH VILNA:
THE ROLE OF THE *FROYEN-FAREYN*

ELLEN KELLMAN

Der Vilner Yidisher Froyen-fareyn (The Vilna Jewish Women's Union) came into being in 1924, in response to a crisis that had begun in Poland in the early 1920s, when the forces of economic depression and rising anti-Semitism severely curtailed employment opportunities for the Polish-Jewish youth in the factories, professions and government service. Its founders were feminists who saw a need for a non-partisan organization that could address the educational and social needs of impoverished Jewish girls and women from both working-class and middle class backgrounds. The primary mission of the *Froyen-fareyn* was to prepare women to enter the skilled trades, in order to enable them to achieve personal autonomy through productive employment.[1] In fulfilling this mission, the *Froyen-fareyn* created its own educational center in the heart of Jewish Vilna. In addition to an array of training courses in the skilled trades (especially the needle trades) and home economics for teenage girls and adult women, the organization's *fakhshul* (vocational school) offered its pupils instruction in biology, literature, Jewish history and other academic subjects, excursions into the countryside and to nearby summer resorts, cultural programs and a lending library of Polish and Yiddish books. An additional project of the *Froyen-fareyn* was a daycare program that served children of the working poor, such as those of market sellers and factory workers. The organization's programs were primarily supported by the American Joint Distribution Committee and the Vilna Ladies Relief.[2]

Headquartered at Wielka St. 30 (*Breyte gas* in Yiddish), which is Didžioji St.10 in today's Vilnius, the *Froyen-fareyn* was part of the movement for Jewish productivization in Vilna. As opportunities for Jews in the professions and government service steadily dwindled, and many unskilled Jewish workers faced prolonged

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[1] Information on the history of the *Froyen-fareyn* is taken from two articles by Fania Tsemel, a member of the board of directors. "Di entshteyung fun Vilner yidishn froyen-fareyn" [The Founding of the Vilna Jewish Women's Union] appeared in Yeshurin E. H. (ed.), *Vilne – a zamlbukh gevidmet der shtot Vilne* [Vilna – An anthology dedicated to the city of Vilna] (New York: 1935). "Der Vilner yidisher froyen-fareyn" [The Vilna Jewish Women's Union] appeared in Grodzenski A.I. (ed.), *Vilner almanakh* [Vilna almanac] (Vilna: 1939).

[2] Tsemel F., "Di entshteyung fun Vilner yidishn froyen-fareyn" 338.

unemployment, several local educational organizations initiated programs to prepare Jewish youth to enter the skilled trades.

The ideology of productivization had been introduced in Vilna at the turn of the 20th century, when the city was still under Tsarist rule, by the organization *Hilf durkh arbet* (Help through Work).[3] Its original purpose was to enable impoverished Jewish children, especially orphans, to enter the skilled trades by providing them with vocational training and employment. *Hilf durkh arbet* established high quality training courses in carpentry, furniture making, shoemaking and tailoring in the years prior to World War I.[4] The organization was forced to curtail its educational activities during wartime, but it re-established itself afterwards and continued to operate throughout the interwar period. Under the direction of Avrom Klebanov, and with the financial support of IKO (Jewish Colonization Organization), the school offered training courses for male and female students in carpentry, engraving, lithography, wood-carving, embroidery, a wide variety of tailoring specialties, knitwear manufacture and the manufacture of foodstuffs and other goods for household use. There were 3-year programs for pupils between the ages of 14 and 18 and many shorter courses for déclassé adults, i.e. unemployed professionals who were obliged to enter the trades in order to feed their families.

The idea that Jews should engage in the production of goods rather than trading in merchandise produced by others was advanced by the ideologues of the *Haskala* (Jewish enlightenment) in the 19th century. Their objective was for Jews to become involved in the manufacture of goods as industry developed in the empires of Central and Eastern Europe. With the goal of transforming traditional Jewish means of earning a living, they advocated secular academic education for the Jewish youth. By the century's end, however, it was obvious that children born into the large Jewish underclass had little opportunity for secular education of any kind, let alone the elite education that *Haskala* ideologues had had in mind. *Hilf durkh arbet* aimed to provide such children with the means to earn their livelihood by contributing productively to society as artisans.

The notion that their children would choose to learn trades instead of pursuing higher academic education was anathema to many middle class Jewish parents during the interwar period, yet severe economic and social conditions, and the hope that skilled trades-people could find employment more readily than university graduates in Poland brought a good many middle class pupils to the vocational schools run by *Hilf durkh*

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[3] Under czarist rule, the organization was also known in Russian as *Trudovaya Pomosh*. After Vilna became part of the Second Polish Commonwealth, it was known in Polish as *Pomoc Pracy*.

[4] Abramovitsh H., "Di Vilner gezelshaft hilf durkh arbet" (The Vilna organization 'Help through work'), idem, *Farshvundene geshtaltn* [Profiles of a lost world] (Buenos Aires: 1958): 327–339.

arbet and the *Froyen-fareyn*. Avrom Klebanov wrote persuasively about the need for vocational training for Polish-Jewish youth in an article that appeared in Efim Yeshurin's collection *Vilne*. (The underlying aim of this publication was to persuade American Jews to donate money to support Jewish communal institutions in Vilna).

> "At the present moment, when all the sources of traditional Jewish livelihood are disappearing, there can be no doubt that the most pressing task facing the suffering Jewish population is *ibershikhtung* (the transformation of one class into another). We must approach this task immediately, because the current, and most importantly, the future social order is based upon labor: physical, skilled CUT: (Polish *fachowo*) and mental. The skilled tradesperson will always have work, even in times of economic crisis, while the merchant, shopkeeper and middleman are condemned to extinction. Although this fact is so clear as to be undisputed, it has not yet penetrated the mentality and consciousness of the majority of the Jewish population, especially those of the middle-income group. This class is still pursuing illusions in general education. "*Gimnazye-mania*" (mania for attending *gimnazjum*) is still a prevailing illness among Jewish parents, in spite of the fact that even those students who finish university have absolutely no chance of employment, not to mention those who finish only high school."[5]

In two articles on the history of the *Froyen-fareyn* published in 1935 and 1939, spokesperson Fania Tsemel concurred with Klebanov's point of view. She wrote that the founders of the organization were cognizant of the fact that World War I had left a significant portion of the Jewish population of Vilna without the financial means to pursue their former business, vocational or professional interests: "[They saw that] it was not enough to give a hungry person a meal or a needy person an article of clothing. [...] Help must now be tangible and constructive [...]. It must fundamentally solve the problem of Jewish groundlessness, [by] making the Jew and primarily the Jewish woman productive. Under the slogan 'Immediate constructive aid for the Jewish woman', the founders set to work with nothing except a desire to improve the material situation of Jewish women and their families."[6] With respect to the process of *ibershikhtung*, she remarked: "Fourteen or fifteen years ago [...], when the founders of the *Froyen-fareyn* spoke out [about this], it sounded like heresy. It was necessary to enter into a pioneering battle until [we] succeeded in breaking through the Chinese wall of prejudice that predominated in the mind of the Jewish woman with respect to work and the skilled trades."[7]

It is pertinent to consider the motivation of the *Froyen-fareyn* in founding a separate school for the vocational education of women, when the long-established *Hilf durkh*

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[5] Klebanov A., "Di profesyonele shuln bay 'Hilf durkh arbet' in Vilne" [The professional schools maintained by 'Help through work', Yeshurin E. H. (ed.), *Vilne* 288.

[6] Tsemel F., "Di entshteyung fun Vilner yidishn froyen-fareyn" 332–3.

[7] Tsemel F., "Der Vilner yidisher froyen fareyn" 281–282

arbet school already offered a similar program. The two official organizational histories written by Tsemel do not refer to this decision, but other related materials shed light on the matter. For instance, in the lead article in the feminist journal *Di Froy* (The Woman),[8] published in Vilna on May 1, 1925 and edited by Khane Blankshteyn, a founding member of the *Froyen-fareyn*, Basia Lakerman admonished Jewish women for not insisting on the right to full participation in Jewish communal life. Comparing the situation of women within the Jewish community and the situation of the Jewish minority vis-à-vis Polish society in general, she wrote:

> "The situation of (Jewish) women with respect to equal rights is […] very similar to that of Jews (in general): first, the scope of their rights is limited; and second, support is lacking for the exercise of those rights that *have* been achieved. And we must admit that the fact that women have not yet crystallized an appropriate stance on these issues is the greatest obstacle on the road toward emancipation.
> For instance, we women are the most active participants in communal organizations that work to protect children and aid orphans, in philanthropic institutions and the Zionist movement, etc. We work actively everywhere, but we play the role of fundraisers, while men *run* the organizations. This is just one example, but it shows very clearly how we are unable to make use of the rights that we have. In this respect we are even more backward than our grandmothers were: their names were associated with (the running of) study houses and free loan societies. Working-class activist women have also not allowed themselves to be stifled. In our case, this (powerlessness) is not caused by modesty or diffidence, but is, rather, a consequence of our fear of standing at the helm."[9]

Indeed, if one examines the photographs of boards of directors of most of the Jewish communal organizations in Vilna that appear in the album *Yidishe Vilne in vort un bild* (Jewish Vilna in Word and Image) of 1925, *Vilner almanakh* (Vilna Almanac) of 1938 and Leyzer Ran's monumental *Yerushalayim d'Lite* (Jerusalem of Lithuania), which appeared in 1974, one finds that women are a tiny minority in these leadership bodies. While its most prominent members continued their work in other organizations as well, the activists of the *Froyen-fareyn* saw the need for an organization directed by women that would serve women's needs.

Although officially *umparteyish* (not aligned with any political party), the Vilna *Froyen-fareyn* was evidently modeled on the Warsaw-based feminist organization *Farband fun Yidishe Froyen in Poyln* (Union of Jewish Women in Poland), known as *Froyen-farband*, which came into being immediately after women were granted voting rights under the Second Polish Commonwealth. The Labor-Zionist feminist leader Puah Rakovsky and several of her associates from the Zionist women's organization

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Bnos Tsien (Daughters of Zion) led the effort to transform the mainly middle class-based *Bnos Tsien* into a new organization with the broad goal of persuading all classes of Jewish women "to take advantage of our rights" under the newly established state.[10] According to Rakovsky, the newly-formed *Froyen-farband* had no formal ties to the Zionist movement. It sought to organize the masses of Jewish women, and it did not subscribe to any party so that its ranks could include women of all trends. As a Jewish national union with a positive position on the Land of Israel, the association had a special section for practical work in Palestine. But its main goals were to educate the lowest classes of Jewish women, to make young Jewish women productive, and to evoke in them an understanding of economic independence, a sense of society, and an interest in the collective.[11]

Early in 1924, th founding chairwoman of the Vilna *Froyen-fareyn*, Tatyana Epshteyn, requested help from the *Froyen-farband* in setting up the new organization. Rokhl Shteyn, the chair of the *Froyen-farband*, visited Vilna for that purpose.[12]

Writing in 1935, Tsemel described the accomplishments of the *Froyen-fareyn* in Vilna in broad terms:

> "During the ten years of its existence, the *Froyen-fareyn* has developed markedly, and has branched out in its activities so much that it is now one of the most respected of all the cultural and communal institutions in Vilna and the surrounding province. There is not one communal, political or cultural issue about which the *Froyen-fareyn* does not take an influential position."[13]

The central task of the *Froyen-fareyn* was, nevertheless, the vocational education of Jewish women. In 1935, 300 students from the ranks of the poorest strata of the Jewish population were receiving training in the needle trades through a variety of courses organized by the *Froyen-fareyn*. They included formerly middle-class girls and women and other unemployed and déclassé individuals.[14]

The *Froyen-fareyn* conceived of its educational role more broadly, however. While acknowledging that *ibershikhtung* was making higher education inaccessible to Jewish

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[10] Rakovsky P. (ed.Hyman P.), *My Life as a Radical Jewish Woman*, (Bloomington, IN: 2002): 133.

[11] Ibid. 83.

[12] Tsemel F., "Di entshteyung fun Vilner yidishn froyen fareyn" 333. Rokhl Shteyn CUT: (dates of life unknown) was a Zionist leader and a member of the Warsaw City Council at the time. The *Froyen-farband* also called itself *umparteyish* (unaffiliated with any party), but many members were active in the Zionist movement. For more on the *Froyen-farband*, see Rakovsky P., *My Life as a Radical Jewish Woman* chapter 3.

[13] Tsemel F., "Di entshteyung fun Vilner yidishn froyen fareyn" 334.

[14] Ibid. 335.

youth in Poland, the organization strove to enrich the intellectual life of the girls and women it educated. Supplementing its vocational courses with additional lectures in academic subjects, encouraging pupils to use its library of Yiddish and Polish books and to attend cultural events organized especially for them, the organization sought to raise the cultural level of the *masn-froy* (woman of the masses).[15]

In addition to its educational work, the *Froyen-fareyn* CUT:in was active in electoral politics in Vilna. In June 1927, in protest against the lack of female representation and the absence of advocacy for women's interests within the Jewish National Bloc, the largest Jewish voting bloc in Vilna, the *Froyen-fareyn* fielded its own Jewish Women's List for election to the Vilna City Council.[16] Its platform advocated education for girls in the skilled trades and the establishment of daycare centers and programs to prevent unemployed women from turning to prostitution.[17]

> The first position on the list was filled by Tatyana Epshteyn, the chairwoman of *Froyen-fareyn*. Nine other members of the *Froyen-fareyn* appeared on the list.[18] The Women's List was an innovation in Vilna, and was apparently organized late in the campaign. The results of the election were disappointing; none of the candidates on the Women's List won a mandate.[19] In an article discussing the election results, the newspaper *Vilner tog* (Vilna Day)[20] commented that the *Froyen-fareyn* had put out its own list because it was angry at the Jewish National Bloc, but that the inadvertent result was that the Jewish National Bloc got even more votes than it would otherwise have done. (additional footnote needed here: *Vilner tog*, June 21, 1927, 2)

In the city council election that took place in June 1934 there was no Women's List. The *Froyen-fareyn* had apparently made peace with the Jewish National Bloc, because two representatives of the *Froyen-fareyn* appeared on its list in the second municipal region. The Bloc won two seats on the city council in the second region,

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[15] Ibid. 336.

[16] The Vilna Collection in the Archives of the YIVO Institute contains an assortment of election handbills for the Vilna City Council elections and elections to the *Sejm* and Senate of Poland. Election handbills and leaflets issued by the *Yidishe froyen-liste* [The list of Jewish women] are found in the Addendum to Record Group 29, Box 1, Folder 32.

[17] The candidates also promised to fight for the following demands in the City Council: full recognition of (and support for) Jewish schools; protection for widows and orphans; repeal of unfair taxes; immediate introduction of sewers and electricity in poor neighborhoods; and inexpensive public transport between city and suburbs.

[18] Position No. 2 was held by Khane Blankshteyn; position No. 3 was held by F. Komisarova; position No. 4 by N. Vaserman; position No. 5 by Dr. Z. Levande; position No. 6 by M. Berger; position No. 7 by Sher-Antokolski; position No. 8 by S. Aronovski; position No. 9 by Khane Kats; position No. 10 by S. Broydo.

[19] *Vilner tog*, June 21, 1927, 1–2.

[20] The newspaper was later known as *Undzer tog* (Our Day*).*

but neither of the *Froyen-fareyn* candidates had a high enough position on the list to win a seat.[21]

The last election to the Vilna City Council before the outbreak of the Second World War took place on May 21, 1939. That year only one *Froyen-fareyn* activist, Khane Blankshteyn, stood for election, but she ran on the list of the Labor-Zionist bloc known as *Poyle-Tsien, Hisakhdes un Tsienistishe Arbets-grupirungen* (Labor-Zionists, Confederation and Zionist Workers' Groups). She held the second position on this list but failed to win a seat.

While members of the *Froyen-fareyn* were unable to win seats on the Vilna City Council in the elections of 1927, 1934 and 1939, the organization persisted in taking part in electoral activities, and eventually made certain gains. Its participation in the city council campaigns and advocacy of issues directly relevant to the needs of Jewish women and families undoubtedly made elected leaders aware of the need to emphasize these issues.

The programs of the *Froyen-fareyn* flourished in Vilna throughout the 1930s, while the organization continued to pressure the Vilna Jewish community to make space for women's participation in its political apparatus.

The start of World War II changed Jewish communal life in Vilna utterly. The record shows that the *Froyen-fareyn* was active until practically the last moment before the German invasion of Poland. On July 30, 1939 Khane Blankshteyn, a founding member of the *Froyen-fareyn*, died. A large funeral was organized, at which several members of the *Froyen-fareyn* delivered eulogies. A month later, just days before World War II was to begin, members of the organization visited Blankshteyn's grave in the Zaretshe cemetery to lay wreaths there.

The description of a cultural event that took place at the *Froyen-fareyn fakhshul* CUT [already glossed on page 1]:(vocational school) offers a glimpse into the social relationships between the adult women who led the *Froyen-fareyn* and managed its vocational school and the young women who were educated there. An article signed simply *A shilerin* (a girl pupil) appeared in the Vilna daily *Undzer tog* (Our Day) on March 31, 1939, in which the author reported on an *ovnt* (cultural evening) that had taken place at the school on March 10. The formal portion of the program began with the reading of a Yiddish story by Itshok Leibush Peretz and the recitation of a poem by Moyshe-Leyb Halpern. The poem caused such a stir among the audience that they demanded that the recitation be repeated. This was followed by more contemporary

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[21] In the second electoral region in Vilna, F. Komisarova held position No. 2 and Khane Kats held position No. 8. See the Vilna Yiddish daily *Tsayt* (Time), June 8, 1934, 2. See also an editorial by Fania Tsemel that appeared in *Tsayt* on June 6, 1934, page 2, in which Tsemel urges all Jewish women to vote for the list of the Jewish National Bloc, on the grounds that the Jewish National Bloc alone represents women's interests and fights for children's education, equal rights for working women and help for the most impoverished, unprotected women in the society.

Yiddish poetry, some original poems and an essay entitled "School, Pre-school and Club" by one of the students. Another pupil read her essay comparing the works of the classic Yiddish writers. This was followed by declamations of Yiddish poems by a student chorus. The students presented bouquets of flowers to the director of the school, several teachers and one of the board members of the *Froyen-fareyn*, all of whom had helped the girls prepare for the event. The group proceeded to spend the next several hours eating, singing and socializing. In closing the event, Sore Zaydshnur, a board member of the *Froyen-fareyn*, remarked that she was very pleased that the young women were able to spend a cheerful, pleasant evening together, and have a respite from "sorrowful reality" for even a few hours. Already looking forward to the next cultural evening, the group dispersed in a cheerful mood.

Events such as this one took place frequently and comprised an important element of the program of the CUT: *Froyen-fareyn's fakhshul*, but not but not only because they gave the pupils an opportunity to learn about Yiddish literature. Tsemel described them as "intimate family evenings, where the leadership spends time with the pupils like members of one large family."[22] In founding its own school and making of it a place that fostered a supportive yet challenging atmosphere for women's education, the *Froyen-fareyn* made a significant contribution to Jewish life in interwar Vilna.

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[22] Tsemel F., "Di entshteyung fun Vilner yidishn froyen-fareyn" 336.

Music halls and Jewish identities in Budapest
at the turn of the century

Miklós Konrád

In 1896, Hungary celebrated a thousand years of its existence. The country's Jewish population had a particular reason for participating enthusiastically in the millennial celebrations: in 1895, twenty-eight years after the Emancipation, the so-called *Reception*, granting legal equality to the Jewish denomination, was enacted. The act marked the conclusion of the Hungarian Jews' struggle for legal equality. The patriotic fervor of the Hungarian Jews reached new heights. "The laws of our religion", proclaimed *Egyenlőség* (Equality), the main weekly of Neolog movement, in January 1896, "have been supplemented, in this holy land, by a new law, which states: 'Be faithful to your homeland steadfastly, oh Hungarian'. Today an eleventh commandment has been added to the other ten."[1] The process of fusion between Hungarians and Jews, *Egyenlőség* repeatedly proclaimed, was now completed. As an article published in March claimed, "Jewry has now become so inseparable from the Hungarian nation that there is no longer a difference between the two."[2]

Alongside such pathos, there was a lively demand for entertainment. Music halls in the predominantly Jewish districts of Budapest were one possibility. In January 1896, one music hall, the *Café Jockey*, attracted customers by staging a *biblische Operette* (biblical operette) called *Rabbi Joselmann*. The now-lost operetta, written by the "father" of Yiddish theatre, Avrom Goldfaden (1840–1908), was performed in Yiddish by the *deutsch-jüdisch-polnischen Theatergesellschaft* (German-Yiddish-Polish Theatre Society), and there was a packed house each evening.[3] The play, which related the life of the great advocate of the German and Polish Jews during the reigns of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I and Charles V, was also staged in March in the famous – and notorious – *Blaue Katze*, and then in December, in the *Reich's Orpheum*.[4] In April, the *Blaue Katze* began showing *Josef in Egypten*, announced as a *Charakterbild* (character picture). It was performed by the already mentioned Yiddish traveling vaudeville troupe. The very same week, one could also see the

[1] Fleischmann S., "A reczepczió és a millennium", *Egyenlőség*, *Melléklet* (January 10, 1896): 3.

[2] Timár S., "Néppárti pamflet-világ", *Egyenlőség* (March 27, 1896): 1–2.

[3] "Café Jockey", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (January 20, 1896): 5.

[4] "Blaue Katze", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (March 20, 1896): 7; "Reich's Orpheum", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (December 20, 1896): 6.

company playing *Bar Kochba*, Goldfaden's famous historical drama on the stage of the *Jockey Orpheum*.[5]

The list could go on and on. In addition to the Yiddish-speaking troupe, which performed in July in the *Orpheum Valerogarten* another operetta by Goldfaden called *Die Opferung Isaak's* (Abraham's offering),[6] the music halls also had in-house composers of one-act farces. In March, Moritz Fischer, manager of the *Etablissement Imperial*, put on a piece of his own composition. The title of the *Singspiel* (musical play) was *Unsere Leute in Neu-Jerusalem* (Our People in New Jerusalem). In April, one could see at the *Etablissement Imperial* a *parodistisches Singspiel* (parody musical play) called *Der Talmudmann* (The Talmudic scholar), in November at the *Mandl Café Der Purimball*, and at the *Reich's Orpheum* two *hochkomische Singspiele* (hilarious musical plays) , one called *In der koscheren Restauration* (In the kosher Restaurant) and the other *Der Schuster als Rabbi* (The Shoeman as a Rabbi). [7]

These music halls were located in the Jewish quarter of the Hungarian capital. Narrowly speaking, this meant the inner parts of the Sixth and Seventh districts, the area around Király Street, where Jews made up three quarters of the population in 1891.[8] More broadly speaking, it meant the whole of the Sixth and Seventh districts as well as part of the Eighth District. The Jewish population of these three districts – almost seventy-five thousand people in 1891, growing to more than one hundred and fifty thousand in 1910[9] – represented in both years almost three quarters of Budapest's total Jewish population.

At the end of the 19th century, many among the local Jewish inhabitants of these inner parts of the Sixth and Seventh districts still differed considerably from their non-Jewish fellows in terms of dress, language, and customs. Yiddish was still often spoken on the streets, mixed with German or – more rarely – Hungarian. Religious leaflets and prayer-books were sold on small counters placed in front of the houses. Between second-hand clothing shops, textile warehouses, kosher restaurants and Neolog or Orthodox butcher shops, one could see, in the windows, woodcut portraits of famous rabbis, phylacteries, prayer shawls, collections of Jewish anecdotes, copies

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[5] "Blaue Katze", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (April 1, 1896): 5; "Orpheum Jockey", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (April 1, 1896): 5.

[6] "Orpheum Valerogarten", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (July 10, 1896): 5.

[7] "Im Etablissement Imperial", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (March 10, 1896): 6; „Etablissement Imperial", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (April 10, 1896): 4; „Mandl's Café Löffelmann", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (November 1, 1896): 4; „Reich's Orpheum", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (November 10, 1896): 6.

[8] Kőrösi J., Thirring G., "Budapest fővárosa az 1891-ik évben. A népleírás és népszámlálás eredményei", *Budapest székes főváros statisztikai hivatalának közleményei*, XXV/2 (Budapest: 1895): 47.

[9] Thirring G*.,* "Budapest félévszázados fejlődése 1873–1923", *Budapest székes főváros statisztikai közleményei*, 53. Táblázatos rész (Budapest: 1925): 19.

of the Talmud, as well as collections of heated sermons given by ambitious young Neolog rabbis.[10] On the night of *Purim*, Király Street, a street full of music halls, evoked the world of Chagall's pictures, or as the Jewish poet József Kiss put it in 1874, "the garish colors of a piece of the Middle Ages" transported into "modern life".[11] At the end of the 19th century, some changes did naturally happen, but the atmosphere remained basically the same. As a matter of fact, the journalist Vilmos Balla would still write in 1927 that "neither the objects, nor the people, neither the customs, nor the atmosphere have changed much around here."[12]

The Jewish population of these districts was predominantly lower middle-class, light years away from the upper middle-class Jews – many with noble titles or even made barons – of the Fifth District. They were retailers, craftsmen, minor public officials, tailors, grocers, brokers, and porters. "Poor Jews have their homeland here", wrote the writer Tamás Kóbor in the novelized recollections of his childhood in the 1870s.[13] More than forty years later, the situation was unchanged: "We see nothing but misery here", wrote a journalist of a short-lived Orthodox weekly in 1914.[14] Whereas in the 1870s it was sometimes risky to walk through the streets of these districts by night, by the 1900s it was a safe place. But poverty remained.

Although these lower middle-class Jews formed the larger part of Budapest's Jewish population, we know precious little about how they saw themselves as Jews, about their relationship towards Hungarian society. Documentary sources are particularly scarce, they did not write about themselves and little was written about them. A substantial amount was written about the identity of Hungarian Jews at the time. But when Jewish (or non-Jewish) middle-class journalists, publicists, and writers referred to "Jews", they meant the cultivated (upper) middle-class. As a result, hardly anything was written about lower middle-class Jews. In fact, when they were mentioned, the emphasis tended to be rather on the area in which they lived.

The accounts of Jewish authors were descriptive, colorful and folkloristic.[15] With the exception of Tamás Kóbor, their common characteristic was to describe the streets rather than their inhabitants. In their own genre, these accounts are quite enjoyable,

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[10] Hevesi L., *Karczképek az ország városából* (Budapest: 1876): 158; X [Ignotus], „Antisémitaság", *A Hét* (February 3, 1895): 69.

[11] Szentesi R. [Kiss J.], *Budapesti rejtelmek*, III (Budapest: 1874): 144.

[12] Balla V., *A kávéforrás* (Budapest: 1927): 95.

[13] Kóbor T., *Ki a ghettóból*, II (Budapest: 1911): 227.

[14] Radó I., "Zsidó munkanélküliek. A nagy számlálás epizódjaiból", *Hitőr* (March 27, 1914): 8.

[15] Hevesi L., *Karczképek az ország városából*; Szentesi R., *Budapesti rejtelmek*; Viharos [Gerő O.], *Az én fővárosom. Képek Budapest életéről és lelkéről* (Budapest: 1891); Lenkei H. (ed.), *A mulató Budapest* (Budapest: 1896); Ego [Fried M.], *Pest és a pestiek* (Budapest: 1908); Porzó (Ágai A.), *Utazás Pestről – Budapestre 1848–1907. Rajzok és emlékek a magyar főváros utolsó 65 esztendejében* (Budapest: 1908).

but although they paint a probably more or less accurate picture of life on the streets in the Jewish quarter, they do not really scratch beneath the surface.

When non-Jews wrote about the Jewish quarter or spoke of it in the Parliament, it was most often about its music halls that they expressed opinions. Condemnation was the norm: the music halls were regarded as dens of immorality and as a major hurdle to the process of Magyarization. When, in 1891, the topic was raised in the Parliament, the Prime Minister, Gyula Szapáry, deemed parliamentary discussion of the issue to be such a "tasteless thing"[16] that he refused even to speak on the matter.

But this is precisely what I should like to do. The music halls of the Jewish quarter were dependent on the local clientele; they offered people what they wanted and were willing to pay for. By looking at such places of entertainment, we may begin to understand something of the identity of Budapest's lower middle-class Jews.

The topic is particularly salient given that the local entertainment sector was even more dominantly Jewish than the area where it was situated.

At the time, the simpler and cheaper venues were called either *Brettli*, from the German word for stage, or *Sängerei*, also from the German for musical, or *Chantant* from the French for the same meaning. Most often, they were simple cafés offering some entertainment to attract the customers. The somewhat more elegant music halls were known as *Orpheum*, a term used in both the Hungarian and Austrian part of the Monarchy. As for the show, there was no great difference between the two. The audience was predominantly male; men sat at tables drinking and watching the various performances on stage (ventriloquists, imitators of animal sounds, jugglers, magicians and conjurers), music hall singers, or one-act dramas. The shows at the distinguished *Somossy Orpheum* were relatively innocent, an article written in 1906 spoke of more "spicy things" at the *Folies Caprice*, while noting laconically that the audience at the *Café Tátra* in Király Street "had no time for prudishness".[17]

But all of these places had something in common: the vast majority – often almost 100 percent – of the owners, the tenants, the managers, the musicians, the conductors, the composers of one-act shows, and the actors were Jewish. And even more importantly, the audience was overwhelmingly Jewish as well.

Not exclusively, of course: it is well known that aristocrats, for instance, were also fond of the *Blaue Katze*. When he passed through Budapest, even the Prince of Wales – the would-be King Edward VII – visited the place. Alongside gentile lower middle-class burgers in their Sunday best, the members of the aristocracy could also be seen mingling with Jewish merchants at the *Folies Caprice*, and sometimes they would even put in an appearance at the rather shady *Mandl Café*.

Nor was the Jewish clientele entirely homogeneous in the social sense. Alongside Jewish horse-dealers, Jewish industrial barons also sometimes dropped into the

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[16] *Képviselőházi Napló 1887–1892*, XXIV (Budapest: 1891): 373.

[17] Vári R., "Utazás a budapesti mulatóhelyek körül", *Reflektor* (November 17, 1906): 5–6.

Folies Caprice. At the *Wertheimer Café*, Jewish ladies from the Fifth district brushed shoulders sometimes with rag-and-bone men wearing caftans. Or at least they had the desire to mix there occasionally with the riff-raff. Though an article published in *Egyenlőség* in 1897 declared that only those who were close to the actors "in language and spirit" could have fun at the Yiddish farces of these dodgy places,[18] another article published in the same weekly the next year, while also condemning the music halls, recognized that middle-class Jewish women were quite "grateful" to their husbands if they took them to one or another of these places.[19]

There is no doubt, however, that much of the audience at the music halls – 90% according to Gyula Weiszburg, general secretary of the Jewish Community of Pest[20] – was Jewish. And it is quite clear that, with the exception of the *Somossy Orpheum*, Budapest's refined bourgeois public was not really to be found among regular music hall guests. "This is the poor entertainment of poor people", wrote the journalist Béla Tóth in 1901.[21]

The predominantly Jewish character of the milieu is well demonstrated by the fact that instead of Jews adapting to the non-Jews, here, the reverse tended to be true. When Sándor Rott, star actor at the *Folies Caprice*, fell in love with a non-Jewish actress from Vienna named Berta Türk, she converted to Judaism before their marriage.[22] Another actor at the – *Folies Caprice*, Adolf Schönberg, did the same. "This Schönberg was born Christian, it is only when he married, that he converted in due form to Judaism to please his Jewish wife."[23] Schönberg was well known for his roles in Yiddish farces. This means that he learned Yiddish or, more exactly, the *Jüdisch-deutsch* spoken in Budapest. Josephine Weiss, the only non-Jewish member of the company at the *Folies Caprice*, also learnt Yiddish, having been taught the language for years by other members of the company.[24]

We know very little about the content of the farces and one-act pieces shown at the music halls. Our most detailed sources are the newspapers which listed the music hall programs, especially the German-language *Internationale Artisten Revue* published in Budapest from 1891 until 1914. During 23 years, this weekly presented the programs of almost all the music halls, giving the names of the actors, of the traveling troupes, and generally – but not always – the titles of the one-act pieces. The authors' names,

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[18] Haber S., "A »gajdosok«", *Egyenlőség* (February 7, 1897): 6.

[19] Szántó M., "Az Orpheumokról és sängerájokról a zsidóság szempontjából hazánkban", *Egyenlőség, Melléklet* (15 May 1898): 2.

[20] Weiszburg G., "A zsidó faj kultúrértéke", *Hitközségi Szemle* (April 1911): 166.

[21] [Tóth B.], "Esti levél. A gajdosok", *Pesti Hírlap* (December 14, 1901): 8.

[22] Rott S., "Életem legszebb zsidó élménye", Kecskeméti V.(ed.), *Zsidó évkönyv az 5692-3 bibliai évre* (Budapest: 1932/33): 323.

[23] Bródy I., *Régi pesti dáridók. Egy letűnt világ regénye* (Budapest: 1940): 15–16.

[24] Gyárfás D., *Orpheum. Egy színész élete* (Budapest: 1920): 37.

especially in the case of the Yiddish pieces performed by the traveling troupes, were most often omitted. Sometimes, the *Internationale Artisten Revue* also published a short notice summarizing the plots and occasionally even a critique.

We will probably never know much more about these pieces. Much of the repertoire played by the Yiddish traveling troupes has disappeared by now. We have some information about the pieces they played in Budapest in those cases where the titles given in the Hungarian newspapers can be connected with a piece mentioned in the literature of Yiddish theatre. Of the many hundreds of one-act pieces written by the Hungarian Jews working for the music halls, only a few have survived: just eight of hundreds of pieces written by Antal Oroszi under the name of *Caprice*, just two of the more than ninety sketches written by István Haáz under the name of *Satyr*, and only one of the more than hundred sketches written by Henrik Leitner. It is probable that the authors of these sketches – thus Herr Jürgens, whose main job, besides writing sketches for the *Folies Caprice*, was to sell the tickets at the music hall entrance – were not aiming at immortality.

Nevertheless, these few pieces of information do tell us something.

Between 1890 and 1914, we can identify a dual dynamic.

According to the statistics, at the 1891 census, 74.2% of Jews in Budapest declared Hungarian to be their native language. In contrast, in the same year, a parliamentary representative declared that there was "not a single place of entertainment in Hungary's capital where this type of comedy is performed in Hungarian".[25] The language knowledge declared by an individual to the census-taker (which may or may not be accurate) and his or her inner relationship with that language were clearly two different things. Obviously, the music hall shows were performed in the language that was most familiar to the audience. And at that time, that language was not Hungarian. "In the 1890s, Budapest's night clubs and music halls performed shows almost exclusively in a foreign language", recalled the 1910 yearbook of the Budapest state police.[26] As the titles of the works and the published critiques clearly indicate, this "foreign" language was Yiddish or German. The best-known, partly or fully Yiddish-language music halls (or "jargon music halls", as they were known at the time) were the *Folies Caprice*, the *Blaue Katze*, the *Wertheimer Café*, the *Mandl* (also called sometimes *Grand Café Löffelmann*), the *Tátra*, the Imperial, the *Etablissement Armin*, the *Pruggmayr* (or *Herzmann's Orpheum* after 1889), the *Orpheum Jockey*, the *Orpheum Valerogarten*, the *Reich's Orpheum*, the *Café Hunyadi*, the *Café Marokko* and the *Café Mehádia*.

It was only in the second half of the 1890s that the advance of the Hungarian language began. Even so, the process was a slow one. "They all attract a huge audience", wrote Béla Tóth in 1897 about the Yiddish troupes staying in Budapest.[27]

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[25] *Képviselőházi Napló 1887–1892*, XXIV (Budapest: 1891): 368.

[26] *Jelentés a budapesti állami rendőrség 1910. évi működéséről* (Budapest: 1911): 244.

[27] Tóth B., "Gajdosok", *Pesti Hírlap* (February 2, 1897): 2.

In 1898, *Egyenlőség* was still complaining that "with few exceptions" the language of the music halls was "Polish-Jewish German".[28] In 1901, when a Hungarian-language cabaret was added to the program of the *Fővárosi Orpheum*, the show soon had to be closed due to a lack of interest.[29]

Yet in a country enthralled by the vision of the Hungarian nation-state, the music halls too were under considerable external pressure. The *Mulatók Lapja* (Newspaper of the Music Halls) had already concluded in 1890 that in Hungary "all other sentiment is pushed aside and fades away, beside national chauvinism. [...] Thus it would be most appropriate if the Budapest music halls would put their programs together in accordance with Hungarian requirements".[30] The *Mulatók Lapja* was abandoned after just two issues.

The pressure was also manifest in actions taken by the authorities. In 1897, Béla Rudnay, the Budapest police chief, issued a decree requiring music halls to ensure that half of every show be performed in Hungarian.[31] "The music halls", wrote the 1898 yearbook of the Budapest state police, "very quickly became accustomed to the new order, and thanks to our constant supervision, they are complying quite rigorously with the new rules."[32] Well, it depends on what "rigorously" means. Music halls certainly observed the new rules – in their own way: the German- and Yiddish-language music halls began their shows two hours earlier, with Hungarian songs and sketches being performed to empty halls, before the arrival of the audience and the start of the "real" show.[33]

Sometimes external pressure was more direct. In December 1901, a small group of university students, members of a university association close to the conservative National Party, traipsed around the German- or Yiddish-language music halls, disturbing performances and demanding the owners to include Hungarian language shows in their programs.[34]

But success proved elusive. The excited youths made the mistake of dropping into the *Café Tátra*, a popular venue among local toughs, whose owner was prepared for the arrival of the young men and had decided to settle the conflict in his own way.[35] The result, as reported in the conservative *Budapesti Hírlap* (Budapest Paper), was as follows: "At first four students went into the music hall, then several minutes

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[28] Szántó M., "Az Orpheumokról..." 2.

[29] Alpár A., *A fővárosi kabarék műsora 1901-1944* (Budapest: 1979): 18.

[30] Igazmondó, "Mulatóhelyeink figyelmébe", *Mulatók Lapja* (February 16, 1890): 2–3.

[31] *A Budapest fő- és székvárosi állami rendőrség 1897. évi működése* (Budapest: 1898): 234.

[32] *A Budapest fő- és székvárosi állami rendőrség 1898. évi működése* (Budapest: 1899): 200.

[33] Nagy E., *A kabaré regénye* (Budapest: 2000): 11.

[34] Nagy J., *Magyar keresztény ifjúság* (Budapest: 1902): 91; "A német lebujok", *Budapesti Hírlap* (December 13, 1901): 1.

[35] "Elvert kuruckodó joghallgatók", *Pesti Hírlap* (December 14, 1901): 10.

later, eight more, who, however, had no time to take their seats, because owner Zsak Grüner attacked the young men, shouting in German: 'Out with these anti-Semitic dogs!' Thereupon professional wrestlers, waiters and others attacked the new arrivals with iron rods, knouts, and billiard cues. They picked up beer bottles from the tables and pelted them at the Hungarian students, while the wrestlers knocked them to the ground. Finally, the students found their way outside, their clothes torn and their winter coats and hats missing."[36]After that night, the students wisely decided to put an end to their demonstrations.[37]

Thus, external pressure was of doubtful effect. Even so, the music halls gradually did switch to Hungarian. In fact, as time passed, even the music hall managers began urging for change. They were increasingly concerned about their poor reputation and wished to increase their social esteem, as well as attract a wider and wealthier audience.[38] Respectability could be won through Magyarization.

But the advance of the Hungarian language was above all a natural process. This is well demonstrated by the linguistic chaos of the transitory stage of acculturation, the conscious use of this turmoil on music hall stages. This was not only an easy source of humor; it was also undoubtedly appreciated by an audience living in a similar linguistic confusion. As the writer Lajos Nagy wrote about one of his high school classmates and his brothers and sisters, "I found the case of these six young adults and teenagers interesting: they did not speak Yiddish well, because they were Hungarian, they did not speak German well, because they were Jews born in Galicia, and they did not speak Hungarian well, because their parents spoke German and lived on Király Street."[39] *Die Klabriasparthie*, Antal Oroszi's most successful work, originally performed in Yiddish in 1889, was put on stage five years later in "*ungarisch-jüdisch*".[40] In a surviving one-act piece by István Haáz, performed at the Folies Caprice in 1912, Jewish characters also happily mixed the languages together. "Good morning, *sholem aleikhem*, Herr von Fuchs!" was the village cantor's greeting to the chairman of the Jewish community.[41]

The music halls' switch to Hungarian did not precede audience demand − it was made in reaction to it. As the Jewish poet Zoltán Somlyó recalled, "After the German show, one or more guests would jump up, a shop assistant or a cabby who had dropped in the *Wertheimer* for a few minutes, and they would demand in a loud voice that

[36] "Magyar szó az énekes kávéházakban", *Budapesti Hírlap* (December 14, 1901): 6.

[37] *Jelentés a Budapest fő- és székvárosi állami rendőrség 1901. évi működéséről* (Budapest: 1902): 74.

[38] "Beköszöntő", *Mulató Budapest* (October 30, 1901): 2; „Olvasóinkhoz!", *Reflektor* (November 3, 1906): 2-3; W. J., „A variété fejlődése", *Reflektor* (November 17, 1906): 4.

[39] Nagy L., *A lázadó ember* (Budapest: 1977): 451.

[40] D. K., "Folies Caprice", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (January 1, 1894): 5.

[41] Satyr [Haáz I.], *Szégyen! Gyalázat! Népies bohózat egy felvonásban* (Gyoma: 1912): 21.

Hungarian be spoken! The bar-owners realized that a new era had dawned. Now they too demanded that the 'artists' include Hungarian pieces in their shows."[42] As a journalist wrote in 1902, "Music halls are also being compelled to Magyarize their shows, otherwise they cannot make a living."[43] In 1906, reported the Budapest state police yearbook, the *Folies Caprice* presented more and more shows in Hungarian, not only to comply with the rules, but also "in its own well understood interest, that is, to satisfy the increasing demand of the audience".[44] By 1910, the greater part of the performances held at the Folies Caprice were in Hungarian.[45] By the 1910s – twenty years after the date indicated by the official statistics – most of Budapest's lower middle-class Jews had indeed switched to Hungarian. They did not just know Hungarian, they also laughed in Hungarian.

In addition to linguistic acculturation, the music hall pieces also reflect a further change. Over time, there was a fall in the number of works with titles referring explicitly to Jewish topics, to the Jewishness of the characters. The repertoire was more and more characterized by pieces such as *Eine Pikante Affaire* (A Piquant Affair), *Im Boudoir der Tänzerin* (In the Dancer's Boudoir), *Pour le plaisir d'amour* (For the Pleasures of Love), "When Mother's Not At Home", *In Flagrante* (Caught Red-Handed), *Freie Liebe* (Free Love), or "Collective Fatherhood".

Of course, the characters in these works may also have been Jewish. For instance, the piece by István Haáz mentioned above was called *Shame and Disgrace*. Half of the characters were Jewish, half non-Jewish, but the main character was a Jew called Ábrahám Hirschl.

According to my hypothesis, the main aspect of the change was that while in the early 1890s, pieces with titles explicitly referring to Jewish topics were set in a relatively closed Jewish world, as time passed, the pieces placed more and more Jewish and non-Jewish characters alongside one another. At the same time, in pieces caricaturing lower middle-class Jews, the emphasis often switched from "Jewish lower middle-class" to simply "lower middle-class". Jewish characters appear in only four of the eight surviving pieces written by Oroszi. And even in some of those, we find nothing very different from the spicy sketches so fashionable at the time; they often present nothing specifically "Jewish", apart from the names of the protagonists. One example is a one-act sketch titled *Mundi Rosenkranz auf der Hochzeitsreise* (Mundi Rozenkranz on Honeymoon Journey), performed at the Folies Caprice in 1895. By popping up in the most unexpected circumstances, a wine merchant named Moritz

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[42] Somlyó Z., "A pesti kuplé hőskora", *Párbaj és kultúra. Válogatott publicisztikai írások* (Budapest: 1986): 364.

[43] Komor G., "A vidéki színészetről", Henrik I., Frigyes H. (eds.), *Magyar Színészeti Almanach az 1902. évre* (Budapest: 1902): 45.

[44] *Jelentés a budapesti állami rendőrség 1906. évi működéséről* (Budapest: 1907): 162.

[45] *Jelentés a budapesti állami rendőrség 1910. évi működéséről* (Budapest: 1911): 242.

Fleck constantly prevents Mundi Rosenkranz, on honeymoon with his new bride, Malvine, from consummating his marriage. Finally, Rosenkranz is accused of being an anarchist who wants to blow up the hotel of which he is a guest. A policeman takes him and his wife to the police station, but, as he says, "Endlich wer'n Sie allein sein! (Finally, it' only us both again!"[46]

"The Manicurist", "The Fake Fiancé", "The Seamstress", "The Model Policeman", "The Dog Washer", "The Private Detective": inspired by everyday life in Budapest, many of the sketches written by Jewish authors and performed by Jewish actors in front of a mainly Jewish audience also indicate that in the last decade before World War I, Budapest's lower middle-class Jews underwent acculturation in the cultural sense too.

Thus, a change in the relative importance of topics and languages is irrefutable. Nevertheless the diversity of the programs remained a characteristic feature of the music halls.

This was true, on the one hand, in the linguistic sense: in 1906, performances at the *Wertheimer Café* were still based on Yiddish works. "Everything else", explained an article on music halls in Budapest, "is simply to round out the performance. Here, jargon rules, so that anybody who does not understand that idiom will not grasp a single word."[47] Three years later, the *Internationale Artisten Revue* still deemed the *Wertheimer Café* to be a centre of "Polish-Jewish Muse".[48] Between 1908 and 1911, the Tarnopol-born Pepi Littmann (Peshe Kahane), a star of Yiddish inns and cafés all over East and Central Europe, recorded two records in Budapest. The titles of the Yiddish songs were: *Messiach per Automobil* (Messiah by Automobile), *Schojmer Jisruel* (The Israel's Guardian), *Kol Jisroel Chaverem* (All Jews are Friends) and *Das Talesl* (The Little *Talit*).[49] There is no doubt, though, that with the passing of time, it was increasingly difficult for little Yiddish cafés to get along, not only because of the gradual Magyarization of their audience, but also because they could not compete with the more elegant music halls and the increasing number of motion picture theatres. A number of Yiddish-speaking music halls closed down, so did the *Mehádia Café* in 1911, and the *Mandl Café* in 1912. "The *Mandl*", wrote *Magyar Kabaré* (Hungarian Cabaret) half-ironically, "should not have gone out of business. It is all the fault of the Jewish community, which did not subsidize the *Mandl,* whereas it must be considered one of the elements sustaining racial culture."[50] Nonetheless, various East European Yiddish theater companies still continued to perform at the Budapest music halls in

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[46] Caprice, "Mundi Rosenkranz auf der Hochzeitsreise", *Caprice* (1902) No. 26: 15–20; No. 27: 15–20; No. 28: 15–20; No. 29: 15–20.

[47] Vári R., "Utazás a budapesti mulatóhelyek körül" 6.

[48] "Budapest", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (February 20, 1909): 5.

[49] http://www.phonomuseum.at/index2.php?showID=cm_jewishsongs.

[50] Whist, "A Mandl szomorú tragédiája", *Magyar Kabaré* (December 20, 1912): 25.

the years preceding World War I. In the first half of 1914, Pepi Littmann still sang for months on the stage of the quite chic *Royal Orpheum*.

On the other hand, diversity was also striking in term of content. Despite the scarcity of available sources, the overall picture is clear: the various pieces covered almost all the options of modern Jewish experience.

The East European Yiddish traveling troupes performed various, probably somewhat irreverent "*biblische Parodie*" (biblical parody), as well as tear-jerking melodramas and mischievous farces set in the East European *shtetl*s. But they also performed "serious" plays, for example works by Avrom Goldfaden, including the above mentioned *Bar Kokhba*, a historical drama permeated with the ideology of the proto-Zionist movement *Hovevei Zion* (Zion's Lovers). The denunciation of rabbinic forces using religious arguments to force Jews to accept their bondage was a metaphoric condemnation of modern Jewish assimilation.[51] Besides Goldfaden, the traveling troupes performed the works of many modern Yiddish dramatists including Jacob Gordin's *Der yidisher kenig lir* (The Jewish King Lear) in 1904 and David Pinsky's *Der Eibiger Yied* (The Eternal Jew) in 1909.[52]

Some of these plays aimed only to entertain; others bore an ideological – Zionist – message. But all had something in common. Whereas Neolog Jews (and Hungarian law) defined Jewry on an exclusively denominational basis, the plays performed for decades in Budapest by various Yiddish traveling troupes were set in a world, the world of *yiddishkeit* or that of the ancient times, where the protagonists were self-evidently part of the Jewish peoplehood.

The music halls' in-house authors wrote parodies, transforming Romeo and Juliet into *Romeo Kohn und Julie Lewi*, Macbeth into *Mucki Macbeth*, Sidney Jones' successful musical *The Geisha* into *Die Rose des Ostens* (The Rose of East) or Wilhelm Kienl's opera *Der Evengelimann* (The Evangelic Man) into *Der Talmudmann*. This is a perfect example of how Jews actively appropriated elements of the dominant culture and made it their own instead of simply adopting it. They composed pieces on the rebirth of the Jewish state – sometimes in an apparently Zionist spirit and sometimes seeming to mock the Zionists. They wrote one-act pieces on Hungarian and international political realities affecting Jews, pieces which were sharply critical of the opponents of the *Reception*, while supportive of Albert Dreyfus. They composed works, in which rabbis were sometimes shown in a positive, sometimes in a negative light. In February 1892, the *Internationale Artisten Revue* praised actor and author Josef Armin to the skies for his moving interpretation of a

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[51] Baumgarten J., *Le yiddish* (Paris: 1993): 111; Wolitz S. L., "Forging a Hero for a Jewish Stage: Goldfaden's *Bar Kokhba*", *Shofar*, Vol. 20, Issue 3 (Spring 2002): 53–65.

[52] Naturally, the *Internationale Artisten Revue* gave the titles of these sketches in German: *Ein jüdischer König Lear*; *Ezra der ewige Jude*. "Etabl. Wertheimer", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (February 20, 1904): 5; "Wertheimer Mulató", *Artista Közlöny* (October 31, 1909): 8.

virtuous rabbi in *Freund Fritzl*.[53] In a parody of Romeo and Juliet written by Oroszi and presented a few months later, the figure of the rabbi – a caricature of Meyer Kayserling, an erudite rabbi of the Jewish community of Pest – was mocked in such a disrespectful manner that even the *Internationale Artisten Revue* demanded its censure.[54] Interestingly, both plays were a great success. One in-house author wrote a *patriotische Singspiel* (patriotic music play) for the 25th anniversary of the coronation of Franz Joseph. Another presented a parody of Ferenc Herczeg's exuberantly nationalistic drama *Ocskay brigadéros* (The Brigadier Ocskay), which was undoubtedly pretty far from the original drama's "heated nationalistic atmosphere", as Herczeg characterized his own play.[55] The in-house authors wrote farces depicting the rural Jewry. This, for instance, is the topic of "Shame and Disgrace", one of the surviving works of István Haáz, where the protagonist is a poor village cantor who fiercely professes his Jewishness and adheres to the religious rules, while sometimes making use of a prostitute, constantly insulting the chairman of the Jewish community, and being infinitely proud of his Hungarianized physician son. They wrote sketches about the audience, the city's lower middle-class Jews. And, of course, they wrote about the city's upper middle-class Jews, doing so in such a sarcastic manner that the family of Zsigmond Schossberger, the first non-converted Hungarian Jew to be baronized – who was regularly caricatured by Schönberg at the "Folies Caprice" – offered the actor one hundred thousand forints if he would select a different victim. Schönberg rejected the offer.[56]

The in-house authors wrote pieces in Yiddish, German, Hungarian, and idiosyncratic mixtures of the three languages, ironically reflecting both the audience's – and their own – somewhat questionable knowledge of Hungarian. But they also wrote lyrics, such as the following: "I have a son, may God keep him, he'll be more Hungarian than his father."[57] They wrote blatantly obscene music hall songs, but also a song called "Kossuth's Farewell", about Lajos Kossuth, leader of the Hungarian revolution of 1848. As one eye-witness at the rather seedy *Sängerei* later recalled, the tune reduced the audience to tears.[58] This audience was made up of those lower middle-class Jews who – to leave for a moment the world of music halls – constituted a firm electoral base for Vilmos Vázsonyi, a Jewish politician and the parliamentary representative of the Sixth District, who was just as natural about his Jewishness as he was enthusiastic about the assimilation of the Jews into the Hungarian nation.

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[53] "Etablissement Armin", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (February 24, 1892): 4.

[54] "Folies Caprice", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (September 20, 1892): 4.

[55] "Folies Caprice", *Internationale Artisten Revue* (April 20, 1901): 5; Herczeg F., *A gótikus ház* (Budapest: 1939): 149.

[56] Bródy I., *Régi pesti dáridók* 15.

[57] Rott S., *A „Kis Rott"-ról* (Budapest: 1941): 44.

[58] Fenyő M., *Önéletrajzom* (Budapest: 1994): 95–96.

In short, this audience was moved by the fate of both Bar Kokhba and Lajos Kossuth. It enjoyed farces in Yiddish, while at the same time applauding a song that expressed faith in the linguistic acculturation of the Jews.

Thus the specific character of the lower middle-class Jewish identity seems to have been its apparently quite harmonious multiplicity. There existed – simultaneously – bonds that were, theoretically, substantially divergent from each other, a reason why we tend to consider them antagonistic and, in essence, mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, in everyday life, these bonds obviously managed to coexist somehow. It would be interesting to know – although we never will, of course – what thoughts and emotions came to the minds of shop assistants, merchants and tailors of Király Street when they heard about such notions as "orthodoxy" or "Neology", "assimilation" or "Zionism" – supposing, that is, they even gave a conscious thought to these ideological alternatives that we consider to be paradigmatic of modern Jewish history. There is no doubt that even the lower middle-class Jewish audience of the music halls could not help but confront in some way the dilemmas of modern Jewish life. But while it is quite possible that a play like *Die Klabriasparthie* (Klabria's Party) was such a huge success not only because it was so funny, but also because its underlying motif – exclusion and integration – echoed the audience's experience, it seems rather unlikely to me that this audience would have spent much time worrying about the nature of its "identity".

The music hall sketches were sharply criticized in Jewish magazines and by Jewish notables and parliamentary representatives. This was not just because the shows continued to be performed in German or Yiddish – albeit at a declining rate. Nor was it only because the critics frowned upon the mocking of religious and secular leaders or regarded the triviality of the shows as inconsistent with the ideal of *Bildung*. That is to say, the criticism was not simply because the Jewish characters of the music hall farces deviated from the Neolog middle-class ideal type of the modern Jew.

The main reason why the Neolog denominational magazines as well as the Zionists were critical of music hall humor was because they saw in it self-ridicule, self-denial, and self-hate. Many people since then have interpreted Jewish jokes in a similar manner. In my view, on the contrary, the music hall pieces offered a way, by means of humor, to resolve the tensions stemming from minority status. Not with self-mockery, but with (self-) irony.

The space of Jewish sport in interwar Poland

Diethelm Blecking

Shortly after the end of the Second World War, *Sąd Społeczny* (the Citizen's Court) of *Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce* (the Central Committee of Polish Jews) gathered in the ruins of the Polish capital, Warsaw, to discuss the case of Stanisław Rotholc. Stanisław Szepsel Rotholc (1912–1996) was a member of the Jewish order police in the Warsaw ghetto, and the Court of Honour accused him of collaborating with the Germans, physically assaulting fellow Jews and bringing them to the *Umschlagplatz*, the gathering point for deportation to extermination camps. In autumn 1946, the courtroom witnessed a dramatic argument. In his cleverly conducted self-defence Rotholc denied ever having sent any persons for deportation. The Court Presiding Officer countered with the statement that the members of the ghetto Jewish police were bound by duty to bring five persons a day to the *Umschlagplatz*. Rotholc replied, "Correct. But I took no notice of it!" Then the Presiding Officer asked him, "And how did you manage that?" Rotholc: "The Germans admired me as a sportsman and they didn't resent me for it! The only thing that protected me was that fact that my name was Rotholc!" The Presiding Officer: "You mean, you were a privileged person simply because you were a well-known sportsman?" Rotholc: "Yes!"[1]

This verbal duel took place in a trial, which aroused attention all over the country because the accused was not just anybody, but a well-known Jewish sports personality in the era between the two World Wars. In 1933, Rotholc, a flyweight boxer, became the first Jewish victor at the Polish boxing championships.[2] In the following year he won the bronze medal for Poland at the European championships. Rotholc represented Poland 16 times on the international stage, and at the end of the 1930s he fought in front of crowds of thousands against German boxers, who were already wearing swastikas on their vests. His – albeit unsuccessful – participation in the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin caused a scandal, because the Jewish sports organisations had boycotted the games. This cost the champion his membership in the left-wing Printers' Union. Nonetheless, he continued to represent Poland in an international match against Finland in 1939. There is strong evidence that he saved the chairman of his club *Gwiazda* (Star), a man named Tytelbaum, from deportation.[3] Shortly afterwards Tytelbaum was

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[1] Szapsi Rotholc File, Archiwum Żydowski Instytut Historyczny Warszawa, Sygn. 313/09: 210–211.

[2] *Nasz Przegląd Ilustrowany* (Warszawa: 30.4.1933): 5.

[3] Szapsi Rotholc File 235.

murdered in the Ghetto by Germans. A similar fate awaited Rotholc's wife Maria, who managed to flee the ghetto only to be murdered in the suburbs of Praga along with a member of the Polish-Jewish resistance organisation *Żegota* (cryptonym of *Rada Pomocy Żydom* – Council for the Support of Jews). Rotholc survived the war and escaped the Shoah with a false Polish identity card. He was deported to the industrial Ruhr area in Germany, where he worked as a forced labourer in a labour camp. The conflicting evidence for and against him failed to save him from being convicted by the Court of Honour, which excluded him for two years from the Jewish community and suspended his rights as a citizen for three years.[4] This judgement was annulled in the summer of 1948, and Rotholc was also rehabilitated as a sportsman. He was 36 at the time, and it appeared that he might well be able to further his brilliant sporting career as a coach. But Rotholc was already a broken man; he emigrated with his small son, who had survived the Holocaust by hiding away with Polish citizens, from Poland via Belgium to Canada, where he died in 1996.

I have described this tragic story (which has previously been used as a basis for a literary adaptation[5]) in such detail, because it is a clear and living example of the rich sports activities of Jews in Poland between the two World Wars, – an aspect which would otherwise only appear as a pale reconstruction based on the decaying documents in the Polish State Archive and the Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

The figure of the Jewish champion embodies all three levels of Jewish sport in Poland. Internationally Rotholc was a well-known representative of Polish boxing; indeed he was so well known that the Germans in the ghetto had no difficulty in recognising him.[6] On the national level he had been the Polish champion on several occasions and was a major sports personality in the country. Within the Polish Jewish community he was enthusiastically celebrated as an undisputed star. His club *Gwiazda* was based in Warsaw.

Gwiazda was a socialist-oriented Zionist club and part of the left-wing *Poaley Zion* (Workers of Zion) within the spectrum of the politically and socially fractured world of Jewish clubs in Poland. Boxing and football were the disciplines, in which the *Gwiazda* clubs played an outstanding role[7] in the multi-ethnic sports network

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[4] Szapsi Rotholc File 286

[5] Stanisławczyk B., *Czterdzieśi twardych* (Warszawa: 1997): 11–54.

[6] Rotholc was so well known as a public sports personality that, when he was deported to the Ruhrgebiet, he was extremely worried that someone would recognise him and he would never leave the camp alive. "The Germans treated boxers from the occupied areas like gladiators. They were forced to box in the officers' messes until they dropped dead." Cited from Stanisławczyk B. *Czterdzieśi twardych* 38.

[7] The international class of *Gwiazda*-Warsaw in boxing also sheds light on the correspondence with the Berlin boxing club *Heros*, which was the champion of Berlin on several occasions. For this reason, during the planning period for competitions in Warsaw in January 1933, the

in Poland[8] in the years between the two World Wars, at the time when 36% of the population belonged to national minorities: Ukrainians, White Russians, Lithuanians, Germans[9] and – the largest minority of all – 3.100.000 Jews, around 10,1% of the total population in Poland.[10] The social structure of the Polish Jews was characterised by an unusually high proportion of the lower middle class (64%); it also comprised a huge number of craftsmen and self-employed traders (one-person firms) who, socially, could rather be assigned to the proletariat. The proportion of the population, which might be regarded as "classically" proletariat, was 22%; the self-employed and the intelligentsia comprised 10%, whilst the proportion of middle-class citizens was around 3% – almost non-existent.[11] Given the social composition of the overwhelming majority of Polish Jews, it is not surprising that the sports scene was enlivened by other left-wing Jewish sports organisations. To the "right" of *Gwiazda* was *Hapoel* (Worker), which could be assigned to the right wing of *Poaley Zion*, moderate Jewish socialists. But there were also Jewish sports clubs operating to the left of *Gwiazda*, the so-called *Jutrznia* (Morning Star) clubs belonging to the Marxist anti-Zionist Bund. All three working-class sports organisations were members of the Socialist Workers' Sports International,[12] a fact which did not prevent them from quarrelling among themselves. *Jutrznia* in particular took its radical position from the international workers' sports movement and, at first, argued against the idea of competitiveness and competitions in sport. Within this context *Jutrznia* campaigned for a ban on boxing. But as early as the 1930s it began to back-pedal on this point, because young workers in particular showed a strong preference for competitive sports, especially football. The central organ of *Jutrznia*, the so-called *Arbeter-Sportler* (Worker-Sportsman),

committee of the Warsaw club made an urgent plea for help to "strengthen the team", because the team from Brünn in Warsaw "had represented itself very badly". See YIVO archive, New York, Zajd collection, RG 28, box 6, folder 60.

[8] For an overview, see Rokicki J., "Sport", Tomaszewski J., Żbikowski A., (eds.), *Żydzi w Polsce, Dzieje i Kultura* (Warszawa: 2001): 427–440.

[9] For German sports organisations between the two World Wars, see Bogusz A., *Niemieckie stowarzyszenia sportowie Łodzi 1824–1939* (Łódź: 1992) and Jurek T., *Kultura fizyczna mniejszości Niemieckiej w Polsce w latach 1918–1939* (Gorzów Wlkp./ Poznań: 2002); for Ukrainian clubs, see Zaborniak S., "Powstanie i działalność ukraińskich klubów sportowych w Galicji i na kresach Wschodnich w II RP (1919–1939)", *Річник Університету Прикарпацького Івано-Франківськ*, 362 (Івано-Франківськ: 2006): 80–85.

[10] Kessler V., "Ethnische Minderheiten", Lawaty A., Orłowski H. (eds.), *Deutsche und Polen, Geschichte-Kultur-Politik* (München: 2003): 450–455.

[11] Pickhan G., *Gegen den Strom, Der Allgemeine Jüdische Arbeiterbund "Bund" in Polen 1918–1939* (Stuttgart/München: 2001): 183.

[12] Zaborniak S., Pezdan I., Rejman A., "Kultura fizyzna w środowisku żydowskim na świecie i w Polsce w latach 1896–1949", Nowakowski A., Zaborniak S. (eds.), *Miscellanea z dziejów kultury fizycznej* (Rzeszów: 2003): 58.

called on the clubs to "organize football teams and to make them compete in the general and regional football leagues".[13] This now also applied to boxing and other competitive sports disciplines.

Competitive sports had long been a characteristic of the middle-class *Maccabi* clubs, the classical representatives of "muscular Jews", based on the concepts put forward by Max Nordau,[14] which were aimed at embodying the idea of strong and self-confident Jewishness in sport. The *Maccabi* clubs were based on Zionist philosophy and supported emigration to Palestine. Since 1921 they were part of the international *Maccabi* world association. The association began to organise the Jewish Olympic Games in 1932, the so-called *Maccabiads* in Palestine and Winter *Maccabiads* in Europe. *Maccabi* clubs in large cities, such as Warsaw and Łódź, were classical clubs comprising several different sports like football, athletics, rowing, weightlifting and boxing, all of which participated in competitive events in Poland. The Jewish clubs were extremely successful in boxing, weightlifting and table tennis, and among their members were national champions and record holders.[15]

On the eve of the Second World War, the organised Jewish sports movement comprised around 30.000 members in 250 clubs.[16] In addition, there were around 65.000 members of Jewish youth organisations, who were also involved in sports and gymnastics activities.[17]

As a rule, Jewish sports clubs took part in competitions and leagues organised by the Polish sports associations. Thus, for example, there were no less than 164 Jewish clubs in 15 sections of the Polish Football Association.[18] *Gwiazda*, *Hapoel* and *Jutrznia* were organised on the national basis, as was the large *Maccabi* association; the latter had first set up a national umbrella association in 1930, which was led till the beginning

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[13] Gechtman R., "Socialist Mass Politics through Sport: The Bund's Morgensthern in Poland 1926–1939", *Journal of Sport History*, 26 (Seattle: 1999): 350.

[14] Max Nordau (1849–1923) formulated the programme of "muscular Jewishness" in a Jewish gymnastics paper as early as 1903 (*Jüdische Turnzeitung*, 4:8 (Berlin 1903): 137–138).

[15] Blecking D., "Marxismus versus Muskeljudentum, Die jüdische Sportbewegung in Polen von den Anfängen bis nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg", *SportZeiten*, 1:2 (Göttingen: 2001): 39.

[16] Żebrowski R., *Dzieje Żydów w Polsce, Kalendarium* (Warszawa: 1993): 122. The figures are unreliable. Jacobs points out that in the 1930s a preliminary survey carried out by YIVO in Vilna revealed that there were 190 *Maccabi* clubs, 107 *Jutrznia* clubs and 44 *Gwiazda* clubs, as well as further 100 *Hapoel* clubs: a grand total of over 400 Jewish sports clubs! See Jacobs J., "Sport: An Overview", YIVO 2006 (URL: http://www.yivoinstitute.org/dowloads/sports_overview.pdf). Rokicki claims that in 1937 there were 200 *Maccabi* clubs with an almost inconceivable membership of 150.000; see Rokicki J., "Maccabi", Tomaszewski J., Żbikowski A. (eds.), *Żydzi w Polsce* 302.

[17] Marcus J., *Social and Political History of the Jews in Poland, 1919–1939* (Berlin/New York/Amsterdam: 1983): 271–281.

[18] Zaborniak S., Pezdan I., Rejman A., „Kultura fizyczna w środowisku żydowskim" 60.

of the Second World War by Henryk Rosmarin,[19] a former member of the *Sejm*.[20] It is easier, therefore, to grasp the real nature of the Polish sports movement from its activities on the town level. Rzeszów, the so-called "Jerusalem of Galicia",[21] had a population of around 15.000 inhabitants at the turn of the 20th century,[22] of whom 9.000 or 60% were Jews.[23] Its history begins with the foundation of the *Bar Kochba* club[24] (there are no extant details of the precise date). Nonetheless, in July 1910, the *Głos Rzeszowski* (The Voice of Rzeszów) published a report of a match between the members of *Bar Kochba* and the Polish club *Resovia* (Rzeszów).[25] After the Habsburg-Polish "*Kleiner Ausgleich*"[26] ("Minor Compromise") at the end of the 1860s, several Polish and Jewish self-help, leisure and cultural organisations were set up in Rzeszów, all of which gave the cultural life of the town a considerable boost. Sporting activities also played a certain part in the Jewish Boy Scout organisations and in Jewish academic circles, which had grown up in the town. On the Polish side there was the *Sokół* (Falcon) club[27] and the *Resovia* sports club, with whom there were active exchanges

[19] Henryk Rosmarin was born on October 13, 1882 in Peratyn in the region of Tarnopol and died in Tel-Aviv in 1955. This lawyer was a member of the Polish parliament from 1922 to 1935. At the outbreak of the Second World War he fled via Rumania to Palestine and was the General Consul of Poland in Tel-Aviv from 1940 to 1945 (see Rokicki J., "Rosmarin Henryk"; Tomaszewski J., Żbikowski A. (eds.), *Żydzi w Polsce* 402.

[20] See Rokicki, "Sport" 431–434.

[21] Haumann H., *Geschichte der Ostjuden* (München: 1998): 61.

[22] Thus, Rzeszów was one of 31 "large towns" with more than 10.000 inhabitants in the backward agrarian region of Galicia. In addition, there were 151 small towns with fewer than 3.000 inhabitants, and 147 medium-sized towns with between 3.000 and 10.000 inhabitants (see Andlauer T., *Die jüdische Bevölkerung im Modernisierungsprozess Galiziens (1867–1914)* (Frankfurt/M.: 2001): 47. On the difficult path to modernisation and its effects on the Jewish population in Galicia before the First World War, cf. further Andlauer.

[23] Bonusiak A., *"Bar Kochba" i inne* (Rzeszów: 2004): 6.

[24] Its full title was *Żydowskie Towarzystwo Gimnastyczne i Sportowe Bar Kochba* (The Jewish Gymnastics and Sport Club *Bar Kochba*). Established in Berlin as early as 1898, the first Jewish sports club in Europe took the name of the freedom fighter Bar Kochba, who lived in 200 AD. See Max Nordau's interpretation of the name in *Jüdische Turnzeitung*, 4:8 (Berlin: 1903): 138.

[25] Bonusiak A., *"Bar Kochba" i inne* 4.

[26] On the "Minor Compromise/*Kleiner Ausgleich*", which led to a political and cultural domination of Poles in Galicia, cf. Röskau-Rydel I., "Von der Revolution bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg (1848–1914)", Isabel Röskau-Rydel (ed.), *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas, Galizien* (Berlin: 1999): 105–108.

[27] The Polish *Sokół* gymnastics clubs were politically very close to the Polish National Democratic Movement. For general studies on the Polish *Sokół*, see Ryfowa A., *Działalność Sokoła Polskiego w Zaborze Pruskim i wśród wychodźstwa w Niemczech (1884–1914)* (Warsaw/Poznań: 1976), and Blecking D., *Die Geschichte der nationalpolnischen Turnorganisation „Sokół" im Deutschen Reich 1884–1939* (Münster: 1987), on Galicia see Blecking, *Die Geschichte der nationalpolnischen Turnorganisation „Sokół"* 41–45.

not only in competitions, but also in membership. A good example of this was the career of the first captain of the Polish football team, Józef Heublum, who soon moved over to play for *Resovia* and, having retired from active participation, returned once again to *Bar Kochba*. Heublum was murdered in his home by the Gestapo during the Nazi occupation in the Second World War.[28] Joint competitions, the fluctuation in membership between the clubs and the joint representation of the town by sportsmen from both *Resovia* and *Bar Kochba* were clearly nothing unusual. For several years in Rzeszów there was even a rare example of a Polish-Jewish sports club, *Samson*, which was a Jewish working-class club.[29] After the First World War *Bar Kochba* strengthened its dominant position in both the Jewish community and the town itself. The founding of a working-class Jewish club was no threat to the dominant position of *Bar Kochba*, which extended the spectrum of its sporting activities to include athletics (which had long been practiced in the club), as well as basketball, volleyball, lawn tennis, table tennis and chess. From 1929 onwards, the focus of Jewish cultural life in the town was *Beyt-Am* (Folks-house), the Jewish community centre, which had both a stage and facilities for presenting sports events. Here the club's boxing section, which was set up in 1934, and the football section (which was the dominant section in the club) were able to celebrate their successes on the national and international level. The famous *Gwiazda* boxing team from Warsaw with its star Rotholc even made a guest appearance in Rzeszów. The fortunes of the *Bar Kochba* football team, however, declined; many of the players moved to other clubs, and the section was dissolved in 1937. The first obvious tensions between the Jewish club and *Resovia* came to the surface in 1929; the result was that, on two occasions, the Jewish club refused to take the pitch in the second half.[30] Despite these difficulties, at the end of the 1930s it was still the largest sports club in Rzeszów with a membership of 800, compared with *Resovia*, which could only boast 500 members. Of the 34.000 inhabitants of the town, there were still 12.800 Jews (but the proportion had sunk to 37,8%). Due to the extension of the municipal boundaries at the beginning of the 20th century, the proportion of the Jewish population declined radically.[31] However, the fact that the Jewish club was still by far the largest sports organisation in the town demonstrates the eminent status, which it enjoyed in both the life of the small town and the Jewish community itself.

The opposite example of a Galician town was Łódź, which was a boomtown already in the 19th century; its population exploded by 623% from 767 to 478.000

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[28] Bonusiak A., *"Bar Kochba" i inne* 19.

[29] Ibid. 4.

[30] There is no written evidence as to whether these events had anything to do with the growing tensions between Poles and Jews during the economic depression. Bonusiak first mentions a growing "unhealthy" atmosphere in Rzeszów at the end of the 1930s; see Bonusiak A., *"Bar Kochba" i inne* 34.

[31] Bonusiak A., *"Bar Kochba" i inne* 7.

inhabitants between 1820 and 1914.[32] In the 1930s, Łódź was an industrial metropolis with a population of around 680.000, of whom 57,1% were Polish, 33,8% Jewish and 8,9% German.[33] The Jewish population in Łódź, however, reflected the specific social structure of Polish Jews: a huge proportion (78%) was engaged in crafts and small trades, and the remaining 22% in industrial enterprises, both small and large.[34] During the First World War, the first congress of the Jewish sports clubs from the entire territory of Poland occupied by Germany (Łódź was also occupied) took place in the *Hazomir* Hall (hall of the Jewish music society *Hazomir* – Singer).[35] After 1918, the industrial city developed a range and variety of sports clubs, which was unique in Poland: 81 Polish, 27 Jewish and 18 German clubs offered their members an opportunity to take part in no less than 25 different sports disciplines. Representatives from all national groups were present in sixteen different regional sports associations: they not only organised the town championships, but also arranged the participation of athletes – both men and women – from Łódź in the Polish national championships. Officials from Jewish clubs in the Polish table tennis association were even elected to the association's governing body. Table tennis and weight-lifting were the domains, in which Jewish athletes won Polish championships and set new records of Poland: *Maccabi* athletes in table tennis and athletes from *Bar Kochba* in weight-lifting. From 1930, Łódź not only had its own individual section in the Polish *Maccabi* association, but also published its only journal, the *Głos Maccabi* (Voice of *Maccabi*). Jewish clubs covered the whole political spectrum from the Zionist *Maccabi* clubs to the radical left-wing *Jutrznia*, which was set up in 1925 – it was very close to the Bund and recruited its members from amongst the Jewish working class. In fact, it even participated in the Workers' Olympiad of socialist working-class athletes, which took place in Vienna in 1931. Whereas Jewish athletes were quite happy to train in Polish clubs – the best-known example being the fencer Roman Kantor, who represented Poland at the 1936 Olympic games in Berlin, – there seem to be no examples of exchanges in the opposite direction. In 1930, the multicultural sports scene in Łódź began to be politicised, when the German *Turner* (Gymnastics) club – a member of the German *Turner* movement in Poland – set up its own section of the German *Turner* club and oriented itself to the nationalistic

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[32] Puś W., "Die Berufs- und Sozialstruktur der wichtigsten ethnischen Gruppen in Lodz und ihre Entwicklung in den Jahren 1820–1914", Hensel J. (ed.), *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Lodz 1820–1939, Eine schwierige Nachbarschaft* (Osnabrück: 1999): 33.

[33] Mroczka L., "Die Berufs- und Sozialstruktur der wichtigsten ethnischen Gruppen in Lodz und ihre Entwicklung in den Jahren 1918–1939", Hensel J. (ed.), *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Lodz* 47.

[34] Mroczka L., "*Die Berufs- und Sozialstruktur*" 56.

[35] For the section on Łódź cf. Bogusz A., *Żydowskie stowarzyszenia sportowie Łodzi 1897–1939* (Łódź: 1992), and Bogusz A., "Körperkultur und Sport bei den Lodzer Deutschen und Juden", Hensel J. (ed.), *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Lodz* 347–368.

irredenta slogans from Berlin. At the German gymnastics festival in Breslau in 1938, 60 German athletes from Łódź were among the group of Germans from Poland, who marched past Adolf Hitler. The Jewish athletes in Łódź reacted to the Nazi seizure of power in Germany with a protest and an appeal to boycott a friendly match between a Berlin football team and a Polish team in Łódź in April 1933; this was so successful that the game had to be cancelled. In 1937, in the wake of the repressive measures taken against Jewish organisations in the whole country,[36] the Polish administration in Łódź also began to take repressive measures, at first against the left-wing clubs in the city. Having dissolved *Jurtznia*, it moved in on the members of the *Maccabi* club, who not only returned their medals and trophies as a protest against the anti-Semitic actions, but also agitated against competing for the Polish sports award. Under pressure from the authorities, the spokesmen of this action were expelled and disqualified from holding public offices in sport for life. Thus, on the eve of Hitler's invasion of Poland, multicultural sports activities in Łódź ended in a skirmish between different nationalities and various sides taking up positions for further disputes. As Bogusz has written, "In the summer of 1939, a few sportsmen and club officials from Łódź left the town to settle in the Reich. In September of the same year, they returned in army uniform – some of them even in Gestapo uniform. Very soon they would be taking up new positions in the prisons of Radogoszcz and in Danziger Straße, where they could distinguish themselves by keenly engaging in the interrogation of the Polish population in Łódź. Amongst those interrogated were their own club mates."[37]

To sum up, it can be said that Jewish sport – organised in middle-class, performance-orientated, multi-discipline clubs – not only became a core activity in Jewish communities in Galician towns, but also was regarded as a representative symbol of Jewish power and strength. In particular, the successful boxing team from Rzeszów, which drew attendances of up to 800 spectators in the 1930s, is proof of the representational value and the cultural capital of the town's Jewish community.

In the industrial city of Łódź, the structures of Jewish clubs reflected the fractured spectrum of the Polish Jewish community and simultaneously the integration of Jewish sport into the multicultural network of Polish sport as a whole. After the death of Piłsudski in 1935, there were increasing repressions, which first hit left-wing Jewish clubs. But anti-Semitic tendencies were also felt in the *Maccabi* camp, which responded by rejecting the demands made by the Polish state and Polish sports organisations. This was the beginning of the end of the multicultural social experiment.

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[36]   *Gwiazda* and *Jutrznia* clubs were banned in many places, sportsmen's passports were confiscated and Jewish sportsmen (including Rotholc) were excluded from the list of athletes invited to prepare for international competitions; see Blecking, "Marxismus versus Muskeljudentum" 45.

[37]   Bogusz A., "Körperkultur" 364.

Jews and sport in interwar Vilna

Jack Jacobs

Observant Jews in 19th century Europe frowned on any activity by Jews that was perceived as conflicting with fulfillment of Jewish religious obligations. As a result, traditional Jews of that era generally discouraged participation in organized sport. At the beginning of the 20th century, however, the dismal physical condition of East European Jewry led some Jewish medical authorities to argue that physical activity was necessary to the health of the Jewish population. The impetus to create Jewish sport clubs in Vilna – which eventually led to the emergence of a new Jewish space in that city – was initially rooted not so much in emerging national identity or in reaction to anti-Semitism, as was the case elsewhere in Eastern Europe, as in the concern on the part of leading figures in Vilna's Jewish community with the physical well-being of the Jewish population.[1] Thus, the study of the Jewish sport scene in Vilna provides insight not merely into recreational patterns, but also into the nature and political physiognomy of the inter-War Jewish community's leadership, and into the ways in which Vilna's Jewry was distinctive.

In or around 1910, a group of prominent Jews in Vilna, concerned with the medical studies suggesting that East European Jews were in extremely, and increasingly, poor shape, created a commission within *Vilner gezelshaft "kinder-farzorgung"* (Vilna's Children's Care Society), which operated under the working hypothesis that physical education could stop and reverse the physical degeneration which was perceived to have affected Vilna Jewry.[2] Among those active in this commission were well-known

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[1] A manuscript written in 1921 and focused on the development of physical education among Vilna's Jews describes the physical state of Jews in the Russian Empire in the period leading up to the creation of Jewish sports clubs by referring to medical authorities (Shteynberg Kh., Bernshteyn A., *Di fizishe dertsiung bayn yidn in vilne* [Physical education among Jews in Vilna] (YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York [henceforth: YIVO], Record Group [henceforth: RG] 29, File 86: 1). One doctor is cited as noting that 40% of Jews were very weak, a second is quoted as proclaiming that Jews were the weakest among the peoples of European Russia, and yet another physician is quoted as having concluded that Jews were the shortest living people in Russia. Fatalities due to diabetes were reported to have been considerably higher among Jews than among Catholics. As the authors of this manuscript suggest, this and comparable data were used to substantiate the conclusion reached by Jewish doctors in Vilna in the years preceding the First World War that Jewry had been undergoing a process of physical degeneration.

[2] Shteynberg Kh., Bernshteyn A., *Di fizishe dertsiung* 2. The Children's Care Society was established in 1908 (Ran L., *Jerusalem of Lithuania. Illustrated and Documented* (New York: 1974): 304).

physicians, such as Dr. Shmuel Levanda (b. 1874) and Dr. Herts Kovarski (b. 1869), and other leading citizens, such as Mrs. Stefania Shabad, wife of the particularly well-known doctor and community leader Zemach Shabad (1864–1935), who was widely respected by the Jewish population.[3] The commission took upon itself three different tasks. It decided, first of all, to help the Jews willing to become trained gymnastics teachers. By early 1912, there were approximately 30 individuals who had expressed interest in such training.[4] The commission, secondly, organized hikes for Jewish children, and, in the years 1910, 1911, and 1912, arranged many such undertakings. The commission of the Children's Care Society, finally, encouraged Jewish schools in Vilna to introduce physical education into their curricula – and it had some success in this endeavor. The first Jewish schools in Vilna to introduce gymnastics as a subject of instruction were the City *Talmud Toyre*, an institution that had operated in Vilna beginning with 1691, and the school for girls that was established by the Children's Care Society in 1908 and that was later named after Shimen-Shmuel Frug.[5] The City *Talmud Toyre*, moreover, also began during this period to allow its premises to be used in the evening by Jewish youths and adults who wanted to obtain physical exercise. Jewish gymnasts began to give public displays. However, an attempt to organize a formal Jewish gymnastics club in Vilna in the period preceding the First World War was blocked by the Czarist authorities.

In Vilna, as in other areas of the Russian Empire occupied by the German military during the First World War, the occupying authorities proved to have a somewhat more tolerant attitude towards the Jewish population, in certain respects, than had representatives of the Czar. In 1916, for example, the German authorities permitted a group of Jewish residents of Vilna to create a *Maccabi* club, officially known as the *Yidisher turn un sport-fareyn in Vilne* (Jewish Gymnastics and Sport Society in Vilna) − though, to be sure, the Germans only agreed to the legalization of this club after prominent community activists had intervened on behalf of the proposed Jewish sport group.[6]

Unlike the informal gymnastics group which had been sparked by the activities of the Children's Care Society in the pre-Great War period, and which had used

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[3] For biographical material on the Jewish doctors of Vilna mentioned here see Goldshmidt A. I., "Yidishe doktoyrim velkhe praktitsern itst in vilna" [Jewish doctors who practice in Vilna now], Jeshurin E. H. (ed.), *Vilne* (New York: 1935): 385–397, 404–406.

[4] It should be noted that the first of these individuals, i.e. the first Jew in Vilna to be trained as a teacher of gymnastics, began his training, with the material support of the commission described above, by studying under the local leader of a non-Jewish sport group, the *Sokół* (Falcon) club.

[5] Shteynberg Kh., Bernshteyn A., *Di fizishe dertsiung* 3; Ran L., *Jerusalem of Lithuania* 285, 313. Cf. Goldshmidt A.I., "Yidishe doktoyrim" 405–406.

[6] "Brief fun Vilna" [Letter from Vilna], *Haynt* (June 7, 1926).

Russian as its command language, *Maccabi Vilna* used Yiddish for such purposes.[7] This ultimately made it possible for *Maccabi* to reach far broader segments of the Jewish population than had the earlier grouping. As late as 1933, after all, Yiddish was the native tongue of 85% of Vilna's Jews.[8]

The creation of *Maccabi Vilna* was part and parcel of a trend toward the establishment of Jewish sport clubs that went on more or less simultaneously throughout Central and Eastern Europe, and must be seen as part of that larger and wider phenomenon. But Vilna Jewry was distinctive, in many respects, and Vilna's distinctiveness was as apparent in the orientation and typography of its Jewish sport clubs as in other phenomena. The Maccabi groups in Warsaw and many other major Polish cities in the 1920s and 1930s were particularly attractive to Polish-speaking Jews, for example, and were made up disproportionately of a specific, highly acculturated, segment of the Jewish community. The decision made by *Maccabi Vilna* to use Yiddish as its command language, on the other hand, made it potentially accessible to the Yiddish-speaking population – that is, to the overwhelming bulk of Vilna's Jewish community.

Maccabi Vilna's use of Yiddish was also indicative of another difference − which became apparent over time − between that group and *Maccabi* clubs elsewhere in Europe. *Maccabi* groups in most European cities tended to have a Zionist or pro-Zionist orientation. *Maccabi Vilna*, on the other hand, seems to have been characterized by a somewhat broader democratic and Jewish-conscious, but not explicitly Zionist worldview. This would explain why *Maccabi Vilna*, at least at one point, allegedly resisted joining the *Maccabi* World Union.[9]

The initial reactions of the Jewish community – which was deeply concerned with the economic plight of war refugees and with other pressing issues – to the creation of *Maccabi Vilna* ranged from indifference to hostility, and the turnout for the very first events sponsored by *Maccabi Vilna* was tiny.[10] However, the prestige of Vilna's Jewish doctors, who threw their support behind *Maccabi*, helped to change this response.[11] Dr. Zemach Shabad, for example, delivered a public lecture in Vilna on "The Significance

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[7] Shteynberg Kh., Bernshteyn A., *Di fizishe dertsiung* 5.

[8] Dawidowicz L. S., *From that Place* and *Time. A Memoir 1938–1947* (New York, London: 1989): 37.

[9] Z. A., "Der barg-arop fun di makabis"[Decline of *Maccabi* Clubs], *Naye folkstsaytung*, (The New People's Newspaper) VIII, 343 (November 20, 1933): 6.

[10] Shteynberg Kh., Bernshteyn A., *Di fizishe dertsiung* 6.

[11] The role played by Vilna's Jewish doctors in fostering physical education was fully consistent with, and, indeed, no more than a specific example of the active role that many of Vilna's Jewish doctors played in cultural, civic, and political life. Dr. Jacob Vigodski, for one, while not known to have played a leading part in the Jewish sport clubs of Vilna *per se*, served as a key figure in Vilna's Zionist movement, as chairman of Vilna's Jewish Community, and as a deputy in the Polish *Sejm* (Goldshmidt A. I., "Yidishe doktoyrim" 381–382).

of Physical Education among Jews" in April 1918, thereby encouraging the members of *Maccabi* and lending his name to their efforts.[12]

To be sure, political events in the period from 1918 to 1921 made it exceptionally difficult for *Maccabi Vilna* to operate. When, however, conditions allowed, *Maccabi Vilna* resumed its activities. In the early 1920s, it allegedly attracted over 500 members. Tellingly, the soul of *Maccabi Vilna* from 1921 until his death in 1938, first as chairman and later as honorary chairman, was the physician Eliyahu Globus (1872–1938), who is not known to have been tied to the Zionist movement.[13] For some of this period, the vice chairman of *Maccabi Vilna* was also a physician, Dr. Leyb Kheyt (1887–1925), and so were several other members of the organization's board.[14] Perhaps even more tellingly, the chairman of *Maccabi Vilna* in the brief period between the death of Dr. Globus and the beginning of the Second World War was David Kaplan-Kaplanski, who served on the boards both of the YIVO (*Yidisher visnshaftlekher institute* – Jewish Scientific Institute) and of Vilna's *Tsentraler bildungs komitet* (Central Education Committee), an entity which ran Vilna's secularist – Yiddishist – schools, and who had also been associated with the founding of the *Folkspartay* (People's Party)[15] – a party which believed that the Zionist aim of creating a Jewish homeland in Palestine was unrealistic, and which did not advocate mass Jewish emigration from Poland. Throughout the inter-war period, *Maccabi Vilna*, while certainly open to Zionists, was not led by Zionists, and had a different political complexion than superficially comparable organizations in other cities.

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[12] During a later period, Shabad served as an editor for the Yiddish language version of *Hamakabi,* the organ of the World Union of *Maccabi*. The Yiddish version was issued in Vilna as a supplement to *Folksgezunt* (People's Health), published with the support of the World Union of OZE (Jewish Health Preserving Society)

[13] Goldshmidt A. I., "Yidishe doktoyrim" 403. Cf. the letter from the management of the *Yidisher turn- un sport fareyn 'Makkabi' vilne* [Jewish Gymnastics and Sports Association *Maccabi Vilna*] to the management of the *Yidisher doktoyrim fareyn* [Association of Jewish Doctors], February 3, 1938, YIVO, RG 29, File 86. The respect in which Dr. Globus was held is symbolized by the fact that there was a Jewish sport club operating in Vilna after the start of the Second World War known as *Sport-klub 'globus'* (Letter from the Secretary of the *Sportklub 'globus'* to the management of the *Shtern* Society, September 12, 1940, YIVO, RG 29, File 86). Dr. Shmuel Levanda also worked on behalf of *Maccabi Vilna* in the inter-War years (Goldshmidt A. I., "Yidishe doktoyrim" 406).

[14] Shabad Z. , "Di yidishe doktoyrim in vilne onhoybndig fun der tsveyter helft fun nayntsnten yorhundert" [The Jewish doctors in Vilna Beginning with the 2nd half of the 19th century], in Jeshurin E. H. (ed.), *Vilne* 734; Grosman M., *Yidishe vilne in vort un bild. Ilustrirte almanakh* [Jewish Vilna in words and pictures: an illustrated almanac] (Vilna: 1925): 74.

[15] U-S., "Yidisher sport in Vilne" [Jewish sport in Vilna], Grodzenski A. I. (ed.), *Vilner almanakh* [Vilna almanac] (Vilna: 1939): col. 239; Dawidowicz L. S., *From that Place and Time* 109, 130.

Over time, *Maccabi Vilna* not only sustained its gymnastics section, but also developed sections devoted to soccer, rowing, chess, cycling, skiing, hockey, boxing, and "light athletics" – that is running, discus tossing, high jumping, long jumping and comparable activities. It also sponsored cultural activities, including a successful wind orchestra, which had 25 members, and, in the late 1930s, a chorus, which was directed by Yankef Gershteyn.

An article published in 1939 notes that *Maccabi Vilna*'s rowing section, first established in 1925, had become the largest section of the organization. At least in its early years, the rowing section was characterized by the fact that it was highly attractive to Jewish professionals. Doctors, lawyers, journalists, and engineers made up a notable portion of its membership.[16] The rowing section, which operated autonomously, had a building of its own on the banks of the Vilija, had access to over 50 vessels, maintained a swimming pool, and, at one point, attracted a membership of 800.[17]

Maccabi Vilna was successful. But *Maccabi* did not long remain the only Jewish sport club in Vilna's Jewish community.[18] To be sure, *Maccabi* remained the largest such club in Vilna. A number of other groups, however, carved out specific constituencies in the inter-war period. *Yidisher akademisher sport-klub*, a.k.a. *Żydowski Akademiczny Klub Sportowy* (*ŻAKS*) (Jewish Academic Sport Club), for example, which was created in 1924, operated in conjunction with the Jewish Students Association of Stefan Bathory University, and served Jewish students from that and other universities. *ŻAKS*, which was not officially affiliated with a political movement, also attracted, over time, some Jewish working youth and gymnasium students. By 1930, *ŻAKS* had more than 350 members, of whom 60% were university students. It had sections devoted to activities such as soccer, "light athletics", gymnastics, swimming, table tennis, winter sports, tennis, rowing, boxing, hockey, and fencing.[19] Tellingly, the club was not able to cover its own expenses, and is known, in one instance, to have applied for a grant from the Jewish community.[20] The support it received is underscored by the fact that the gymnastics section of ŻAKS met in the building of the organized Jewish community in the period immediately following its creation.[21]

16 "Brief fun Vilna".
17 U-S., "Yidisher sport in Vilne", cols. 241–242.
18 The Jewish Workers' Art Association of Vilna established a sport section as early as 1918 ("Statut fun der sport-sektsie baym yidishen arbeter kunst-fareyn in Vilna" [Bylaws of the Sport Section of the Jewish Workers' Art Association in Vilna], July 17, 1918, YIVO, RG 29, file 86).
19 Shraybman, a member of *ŻAKS*, won a Poland-wide title in swimming. Leyb Radzeli, another *ŻAKS* member, was at one point Vilna's table tennis champion (during an era in which that sport was exceptionally popular and taken quite seriously).
20 Ran L., *Jerusalem of Lithuania* 268.
21 Grosman M., *Yidishe vilne in vort un bild* 77.

   The adherents of various Jewish political movements also established sport clubs in Vilna. Arcadius Kahan, in an article describing and explaining the vast range of voluntary associations in Jewish Vilna, attributes what he describes as the "hypertrophy of organization in the Jewish community" to, in his words, "the aggressive and competitive existence of the various ideologies and the zealous spirit of their adherents".[22] This is fair enough as an explanation for why, in 1927, a branch of the Bundist-oriented *Arbeter-gezelshaft far fizishe dertsiung 'morgnshtern' in poyln* (Workers' Society for Physical Education "Morning Star" in Poland) was founded in Vilna.[23] A questionnaire completed by the Vilna *Morgnshtern* some nine years after its establishment notes that it had 152 active members at that time, of whom 50 were men and 102 were women, and also had 38 passive members.[24] In addition, the Vilna *Morgnshtern* had a group for children with 68 participants. The class composition of Vilna *Morgnshtern* differed starkly from that of *Maccabi*'s rowing section. Vilna *Morgnshtern*'s members worked as tailors, metal workers, construction workers, seamstresses, and in other working class jobs.[25] The questionnaire reveals that the club's income was derived from dues, from events, and from fund raising, and that no subsidies were received at that time from the city, from the Jewish community, from *Morgnshtern*'s national body or other sources.[26] Activities – of which gymnastics was far and away the most significant – were conducted in Yiddish.[27] Vilna *Morgnshtern* had a reading room, a

[22] Kahan A., "Vilna. The Sociocultural Anatomy of a Jewish Community in Interwar Poland", in the collection of pieces by Kahan, Weiss R. (ed.), *Essays in Jewish Social and Economic History* (Chicago and London: 1986): 153.

[23] For information on the founding and orientation of *Morgnshtern* see Jacobs J., "Creating a Bundist Counter-Culture: Morgnshtern and the Significance of Cultural Hegemony", idem (ed.), *Jewish Politics in Eastern Europe: the Bund at 100* (New York: 2001): 59–68.

[24] Information in the following section is derived primarily from the questionnaire distributed by YIVO's "Optsvayg far der yidisher sport-bavegung" [Branch for the Jewish sports movement], submitted by the *Arbeter gezelshaft far fizisher dertsiung 'morgnshtern' in poyln, vilner opteylung* [Workers' society for physical education "Morgnshtern" in Poland, Vilna section], and accessioned by the YIVO on January 19, 1936 (YIVO, RG 1.1, File 600).

[25] The employment distribution of Vilna's Jewish community in the 1920s and 1930s is briefly discussed in Kahan A., "Vilna. The Sociocultural Anatomy" 151.

[26] Vilna's *Morgnshtern* had received subsidies earlier in its history. A published notice points out that the city had lowered the size of *Morgnshtern*'s grant for 1930–1931 from 2000 zloty to 625 zloty (*Arbeter-sportler* [Worker-Sportsman], 10, Vol. II, 5 (June 10, 1930): 1). I became aware of this and other specific sources dealing with Vilna's *Morgnshtern* cited below as a result of my examination of the notes on Vilna gathered by Yisroel Zajd (Yisroel Zajd Collection, YIVO, RG 1467).

[27] At other points in time, Vilna's *Morgnshtern* had sections devoted to table tennis, light athletics and other activities ("Banayte arbet fun vilner 'morgnshtern" [Renewed work of the Vilna *Morgnshtern*], *Naye folkstsaytung*, VII, 20 (January 18, 1932): 5). It is significant that neither soccer nor boxing were emphasized by Vilna's *Morgnshtern*, presumably because of

sport library, and engaged in cultural activities as well as in sports *per se*. It fostered, for example, a mandolin orchestra, a chorus, and a drama circle.

By 1933, *Morgnshtern* boasted that it had become the second largest Jewish sport group in Vilna.[28] In the mid-1930s, Vilna *Morgnshtern* claimed that it was still growing and that its competitors had shrunk.[29] But Vilna *Morgnshtern* seems never to have become as large as *Maccabi Vilna*. It may well be that it was precisely because *Maccabi Vilna* was attractive to Yiddishists and because it was not led by avowed Zionists that *Maccabi Vilna* retained a considerable number of Jewish working youth – *Morgnshtern*'s natural constituency – long after the creation of a local branch of *Morgnshtern*.[30] Though *Maccabi Vilna* was by no means a socialist organization, and drew, to some extent, on a different class constituency than did *Morgnshtern*, the ideological differences between *Maccabi Vilna* and Vilna *Morgnshtern* were not as large as the differences between *Maccabi* in, for example, Warsaw, and the Bundist sport organization in that city. Vilna *Morgnshtern*, it can be presumed, found it somewhat more difficult to convince its potential constituency of the allegedly problematic stances taken by the pro-Yiddish and non-Zionist local branch of *Maccabi* than did the *Morgnshtern* chapter in the Polish capital.[31]

(differing) ideological objections to these activities. *Morgnshtern*, however, did sponsor soccer teams (*Arbeter-sportler*, 10, Vol. II, 5 (June 10, 1930): 1).

[28] Khaykin Sh., "Birgerlekher un proletarisher sport in vilne" [Bourgeois and proletarian sport in Vilna], *Naye folkstasytung*, VIII, 343 (November 20, 1933): 7.

[29] "Di algemeyne farzamlung fun 'morgnshtern' in vilne" [The general meeting of *Morgnshtern* in Vilna], *Naye folkstsaytung*, XI, 79 (March 16, 1936): 5.

[30] Sh. N., "Sport-plebistsit fun 'vilner tog" [Sport plebiscite of the *Vilner tog* – Vilna's Day], *Naye folkstsaytung*, VIII, 321 (October 30, 1933): 5.

[31] Vilna's *Morgnshtern* attempted to underscore the differences between itself and its competitors by criticizing the "sport neutralism" (i.e. the lack of clear political commitments) of both *Maccabi Vilna* and *ŻASK* (Khaykin Sh., "Birgerlekher un proletarisher sport in vilne", loc. cit.). On at least one occasion, Bundists publicly suggested that *Maccabi Vilna* ought to cooperate with the worker sport movement rather than with the *Maccabi* movement ("Dos emese ponim fun varshever 'makabi'. vuhin geyt der vilner 'makabi'?" [The true face of *Maccabi* Warsaw: Where is *Maccabi Vilna* Going?], *Arbeter-sportler*, 5 (November 1, 1929): 7). Late in 1938, Yisroel Zajd, a member of the Executive Committee of the Poland-wide *Morgnshtern* movement, was in Vilna, met with the chairman and vice-chairman of *Maccabi Vilna* and proposed that that organization establish contact with *Morgnshtern's* central body (see the section on Vilna in the Yisroel Zayd Collection, YIVO Institute, RG 1467). There is no indication that *Maccabi Vilna* accepted Zajd's suggestion. At one point in the late 1930s, *Morgnshtern* was forced (by the Polish government) to cease its activities in Vilna (U-S., "Yidisher sport in vilne", 244). By mid-1938, however, *Morgnshtern* was once again permitted to operate in that city ("Vilna un ostraviets – naye opteylungen fun 'morgnshtern'" [Vilna and Ostrovets – new sections of M*orgnshtern*], *Naye folkstsaytung*, XIII, 137 (May 9, 1938): 5).

Maccabi, *ŻAKS*, and *Morgnshtern* seem to have dominated the Jewish sport scene in Vilna. There were, however, other Jewish sport clubs at various points in time. In 1932 – after *Hapoel* (Worker) clubs affiliated with the Right Labor Zionist party had already been formed in Warsaw, Białystok, Lódź and in Galicia – a *Hapoel* club was established in Vilna.[32] At some point, the Zionist-Revisionist movement also established a sport club in Vilna, known as *Kadime* (Forward).[33]

By the mid-1930s, the phenomenon of Jewish sport clubs had become rather widespread in Poland – and, in Vilna, was thought to be a subject worthy of sustained and serious study. Late in 1934, the YIVO, which was created and based in Vilna, initiated efforts to establish a branch specifically devoted to the Jewish sport movement.[34] This branch – with which all of the Jewish sport clubs in Vilna cooperated – publicly announced its intention to organize a central archive of materials concerned with Jewish sport movements, a sports library, and a reading room. It also declared that it would issue publications, act as an advisor for athletes, and aid those Jewish sports organizations operating in outlying areas.[35] The YIVO group developed a detailed questionnaire and distributed it to Jewish sport clubs throughout Poland. The questionnaire asked for information on each club's affiliations, activities, and facilities, the date of its founding, the language in which work was conducted, the number of

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[32] N.S[verdlin], "A por verter tsu der antshteyung fun sport-klub 'hapoel' in vilne" [A few words on the establishment of the *Hapoel* sports club in Vilna], *Tsayt* (Time) (November 10, 1932): 2.

[33] Rogoff D., "Sport in vilna", *Forverts* (Forward) (September 8, 2000): 20. So far as can be determined, there was no branch formed in Vilna of the Left Labor Zionist *Shtern* /*Gwiazda*, a Jewish sport movement which operated elsewhere in Poland in the interwar years (Cf. Jacobs J., "Jewish Workers' Sports Movements in Inter-War Poland: Stern and Morgnshtern in Comparative Perspective", Kugelmass J. (ed.), *Jews, Sports and the Rites of Citizenship* (Champaign: 2006)). Did the active functioning of a Yiddishist *Maccabi* in Vilna, a Yiddishist *Morgnshtern*, and a Right Labor Zionist *Hapoel* club simply leave no room for *Shtern*, given the size and composition of the Jewish community of Vilna? In addition to the explicitly Jewish clubs in Vilna, it ought to be noted that there was also at least one club sponsored by the *Elektrit* radio factory, which had both Jewish and non-Jewish members (U-S., "Yidisher sport in Vilne" 244). The number of Jewish sport clubs in Vilna was dwarfed by the number of Polish sport clubs. At a point when there were 3 Jewish sport clubs, there were 35 Polish clubs operating in the city of Vilna (Jeshurin E. H. (ed.), *Vilne* 377).

[34] The first indication that YIVO was hoping to create a special section devoted to research on Jewish sport was a meeting held in Vilna in December of 1934 chaired by Dr. Kh. Kovarski of YIVO's Psychological-Pedagogical section ("An opteyl far yidishn sport un fizisher dertsiung baym yivo" [A section for Jewish sports and physical education at the YIVO], *Naye folkstsaytung*, IX, 371 (December 9, 1934): 1).

[35] "Optsvayg far der yidisher sport-bavegung" [Branch for the Jewish sports movement], *Yedies fun yidishn visnshaftlekhn institut* [Bulletin of the Jewish Scientific Institute] (December 1935): 7.

active and of passive members, the genders and professions of members, publications issued, and so forth.[36] A report published early in 1936, however, indicates that no more than forty-eight clubs had submitted responses to the questionnaire.[37] Minutes of a meeting held in May of 1937 demonstrate that, though the YIVO had established contact with the Poland-wide coordinating bodies of *Maccabi*, *Morgnshtern*, and of the Left Labor Zionist sport movement, the *Robotnicze Stowarzyszenie Wychowania Fizycznego "Gwiazda"* a.k.a. *Arbeter-gezelshaft far fizisher dertsiung "shtern"* (Workers' Society of Physical Education "Star"), which did not have a local affiliate in Vilna, the total number of questionnaires that had been completed and returned to YIVO was still so small that academically valid conclusions could not be drawn on the basis of the data in hand. Only 13 of the 107 branches of *Morgnshtern* in Poland had submitted responses, for example, as had a mere 11 of the 44 branches of *Gwiazda*, and 31 of the 190 *Maccabi* clubs.[38] This disheartening result seems to have led the project to fizzle out.

Nevertheless, the project is of considerable symbolic significance insofar as it suggests that the participation of Jews in sport activities was considered to be a notable endeavor by certain sectors of Vilna's Jewish population in the period immediately preceding the beginning of the Second World War, including Vilna's Yiddishist intelligentsia. Whereas traditional Jewish religious authorities both in earlier eras and in the years between the two World Wars had no use for or interest in Jewish sport *per se*, key Jewish communal leaders in Vilna who were both secularized and acculturated – a considerable and influential proportion of the total – actively fostered the emergence of organized Jewish sport clubs in the 1920s and 1930s. In sum, the study of the microcosmic world of Jewish sport clubs in inter-War Vilna reveals that Vilna's enlightened and progressive Jewish leaders nurtured a Jewish space which was both modern, and decidedly distinctive, in *Yerushalyim d'Lite*.

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[36] A copy of the questionnaire is in the YIVO Archives, RG 1.1, file 600. A marginally different version of this questionnaire was published by the YIVO in its bulletin ("Optsvayg far der yidisher sport-bavegung", *Yedies fun yidishn visnshaftlekhn institut* (March 1935): 10–11).

[37] "Fun optsvayg far der yidisher sport-bavegung" [From the branch for the Jewish sports movement], *Yedies fun yidishn visnshaftlekhn institut* (January-March 1936): 11.

[38] Minutes of a meeting of YIVO's section devoted to the Jewish sport movement, May 5, 1937 (RG 29, file 86, YIVO).

Mūsų gydytojas: the social and cultural aspects of the Jewish medical doctor in Lithuanian countryside before the Second World War[*]

Mordechai Zalkin

National and ethnic narratives, as well as national historiography, are dichotomous by nature. The historical pictures, which are drawn in these schools, are usually characterized by concentration on the central political, cultural and economic role played by a given national or ethnic group in the period under discussion. Consequently, the interactions with other ethnic or national groups, especially the minorities, are totally ignored or considered as marginal and unimportant. A typical "victim" of this kind of attitude is the widespread image of the inter-relations between Jews and non-Jews in the Eastern European countryside before the Second World War, or the popular clear-cut imaginary distinction between the "Jewish space" and the "non-Jewish space" in the *shtetl*. Thus, the main purpose of this paper is to examine the above-mentioned historical picture, which, in our opinion, is more of an anachronistic nature and based on the assumption that human memory is amazingly short-lived.

Historically, the boundary lines of the traditional Eastern European Jewish community were defined, first and foremost, by the mutual relationships between the local population and the Jewish inhabitants on the one hand, and by the changing political situation and the balance of power between the local political forces (church, magnates, city council, etc.) and the state's authorities, on the other.[1] In other words, these boundaries were, to a certain extent, of a flexible nature and were changed frequently according to the political, economic, religious and social conditions, on which the Jews had a minimal effect, if at all.

On the surface, in such a situation no room is left for a "neutral zone", i.e. an area that is excluded from the local ethnic and political "game". However, it goes without saying that a necessary precondition for the possibility of the very existence of any given human community is a certain type of cooperation among the majority of local inhabitants. Such cooperation is based on the principle that most individuals contribute their shares to the entire puzzle of the local existence, for instance, to the necessity of satisfying the general

[1] Bartal I., and Opalski M., *Poles and Jews: a Failed Brotherhood* (Hanover: 1992).

basic daily needs.[2] However, such cooperation, though limited, always has different side effects on other social and cultural aspects of local life. Against this background, historians have already indicated to the multifarious nature of the relationships between Eastern European Jews and the surrounding society, as well as to the ongoing and significant effects of different points of contact between those two ethnic groups on the entire contemporary reality.[3] Thus, for instance, in spite of the traditional occupational profiles characteristic of each ethnic group, daily economic interactions always served not only as a "technical" meeting point between the members of different social and ethnic groups, but also as a platform for mutual understanding of the "other".[4] One of the above-mentioned necessary "shares" and points of contacts, which is considered crucial to the very existence of any human society, is the medical one. In our context, this perspective was not given an appropriate attention, at least in my humble opinion, in the historical research regarding the relations between Jews and non-Jews.[5]

To a certain extent, the medical sphere represents the abnormal reality in the field of occupations in rural Lithuania, especially in Žemaitija (Samogitia), before the First World War. Though these areas were Lithuanian by the ethnic origin of its inhabitants, in most cases the health services were provided by non-Lithuanian physicians, i.e., by Jewish, Polish, German and Russian doctors. This situation resulted from several reasons, to mention but a few: 1) The discriminating policy of the Russian authorities aimed at suppressing any type of intellectual, cultural and political progress of the Lithuanian people;[6] 2) The limited access of most rural Lithuanian population to any type of modern educational systems and the proportionally low literacy rate among local native Lithuanians.[7] In a way, the high percentage of Jewish doctors in these areas represents the other side of the same coin, i.e. a high literacy rate among the local Jewish population,[8] and the

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[2] On such cooperation in late 19th century Vaiguva, see Freidman E. E., *Sefer ha-zihkronot* [Memories] (Tel-Aviv: 1926): 44–46.

[3] See Cala A., *The Image of the Jew in Polish Folk Culture* (Jerusalem: 1995).

[4] See, for instance, Hundert G. D., *Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley – Los Angeles: 2004): 32–56; Liekis Š., *A State within a State? Jewish Autonomy in Lithuania 1918–1925* (Vilnius: 2003).

[5] Although many doctors served also as pharmacists, I have not discussed here this aspect of their profession. I will examine the phenomenon of Lithuanian Jewish pharmacists in a separate essay.

[6] *Aušra*, 6 (1886); Udrenas N., *Book, Bread, Cross and Whip: The Construction of Lithuanian Identity in Imperial Russia*, Diss. (Brandeis University: 2000): 18–68.

[7] Ibid. 61; Богданов И., Грамотность и образование в дореволюционной России и в СССР (Москва: 1964): 132.

[8] Stampfer Sh., "Literacy among East European Jewry in the Modern Period: Context, Background and Implications", Almog S. et. al. (eds.), *Transition and Change in Modern Jewish History* (Jerusalem: 1987): 459–483.

tendency of the traditional Jewish society to concentrate in urban centres.[9] Thus, for instance, as reported in the January 1900 edition of the Lithuanian newspaper *Varpas*, medical services in the Lithuanian town of Kėdainiai were provided by four doctors: one white-Russian, two Jewish and one military.[10] Likewise, in 1892, the only doctor in the southern parish of Rudamina was a Jew;[11] in 1894 all doctors in the northern town of Žagarė were Jewish,[12] and in 1900 there was only one doctor in Linkuva, the Jew Bliumas.[13] In the interwar period this tendency even intensified and the presence of Jewish doctors in all Lithuanian medical institutions was quite noticeable.[14] Thus, for instance, in the years 1922–24 most doctors in the northern town of Joniškis were Jewish.[15]

The Jewish involvement in the medical services in Lithuania was not a new phenomenon. As far as we know, it goes back to at least the late 17th century. In 1682, doctor Jacob Gordon served as the head of the Vilnius Jewish community. His son, Aharon, who graduated from the medical faculty of the University of Padua in 1695, offered his medical services in Vilnius to Jews and non-Jews alike.[16] They were followed by other well-known 18th century Jewish doctors, such as doctor Jacob Leibushits,[17] a colleague and a close friend of the famous medical professor Joseph Frank; doctor Solomon Polonos[18] and doctor Judah Horowits.[19] Since the beginning of the 19th century we witness a rapid increase in the number of Lithuanian Jewish doctors, mainly due to permission granted to the Jews to study in the medical faculties of local universities, as well as the spread of the enlightenment ideology among local Jews. Among the famous Jewish graduates of the medical faculty of Vilnius University at the beginning of this century were Isaac Seiberling, Joseph Rosensohn,

[9] See, for instance, Hundert G. D., *The Jews in a Polish Private Town: The Case of Opatow in the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore–London: 1992).
[10] A-s, "Korespondencijos: Kėdainiuose", *Varpas*, 1 (1900).
[11] Dzūkelis, "Iš Lietuvos: Iš Rudaminos parap.", *Varpas*, 1 (1892).
[12] Dvylis, "Dvylos gromatos", *Varpas*, 8 (1894).
[13] Vėžys, "Korespondencijos, Kauno gub.: Panevėžio pav. Linkava", *Ūkininkas*, 6 (1900).
[14] For a comprehensive survey of Jewish doctors in interwar Lithuania, see Bliudz B., *Der goirl fun yidishn dokter in Litte* [The fate of the Jewish doctor in Lithuania] (Tel-Aviv: 1974): 12–33.
[15] Butautis T., *Joniškio krašto žydų gyvenimas tarpukariu (1918-1940 m.)* (Šiauliai: 2003): 8–9.
[16] See Klausner I., *Vilna, "Jerusalem of Lithuania": Generations from 1495–1881* (Tel-Aviv: 1988): 42.
[17] On him, see Finn S. J., *Kiriya Ne'emana* [A Faithful city] (Vilnius: 1915): 258–259.
[18] Kon P., "Einer fun di ershte Yiddishe doktoirim in Vilne" [One of the first Jewish doctors in Vilnius], *Yivo Bletter*, 1 (1931); idem, "Zu der biografye fun doctor Polonos" [To the biography of Doctor Polonos], ibid. 5 (1935): 53–57.
[19] Klausner I., *Vilna* 87.

Mendel Rotenberg and Samuel Kushelevski.[20] The closure of the University of Vilnius after the 1831 Polish-Lithuanian uprising did not have a significant effect on the number of students of medicine among Lithuanian Jews. By the middle of the century these numbers even increased dramatically as a result of the continuous outbursts of cholera plague and the growing demand for military doctors.[21] Thus, for instance, during the Balkan wars in the late 1870s, many Lithuanian Jewish doctors served several years in the Russian army.[22]

However, the majority of the above mentioned doctors lived and worked in major urban centres and offered their services to the local Polish and Lithuanian nobility, the Russian administration and the small stratum of the local Jewish economic elite.[23] Thus, till the last quarter of the 19th century, the lower urban socio-economic strata, as well the rural population as a whole, hardly enjoyed any professional medical services. This situation began to change only in the last quarter of the 19th century, when more doctors made their living in the position of a "village doctor". The demand for these positions was quite high due to the growing number of graduates of medical faculties, as well as ex-military doctors, who were looking for a medical position.

However, as far as the medical services are concerned, the situation in the then rural Lithuania was a bit more complicated. Local inhabitants, Jews and non-Jews alike, made use of several types of health services. Beginning with midwives and traditional healers, mostly old women, following by popular *feldshers*, who acquired their basic medical qualifications either from a local mentor, during their service in the Russian army or in one of the special schools for civil *feldshers* established in the Russian empire since 1829;[24] and ending with professional doctors, who graduated from a medical faculty in one of the universities.[25] The first category – popular medicine – is

[20] Shatzky J., *Kultur-Geschichte fun der Hascole in Lite* [Cultural history of the Lithuanian Jewish Enlightenment] (Buenos Aires: 1950): 58–62; Zalkin M., *A New Dawn: The Jewish Enlightenment in the Russian Empire – Social Aspects* (Jerusalem: 2000): 178–184.

[21] See Zaltsman S., *Ayarati* [*My shtetl*] (Tel-Aviv: 1947): 97; Nathans B., *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia* [Berkeley: 2002]: 60–61.

[22] On the military career of the Panevėžys-born doctor Mosses Sobol, see Zalkin M., "Isaac Rumsh – Between 'Enlightenment of the Periphery' and 'Peripheral Enlightenment'", Tzur E. (ed.), *Old World – New People: Jewish Communities in the Age of Modernization* (Beer Sheva: 2005): 203.

[23] About this situation in Rudamina, see Dzūkelis, "Iš Lietuvos: Iš Rudaminos parap."

[24] See Kossoy E., Ohry A., *The Feldshers: Medical, Sociological and Historical Aspects of Practitioners of Medicine with Below University Level Education* (Jerusalem: 1992). One of the most famous Jewish *feldshers* was the journalist Moses Zeipert (1851–1922), who studied in Vilnius and served as a Feldsher in several *shtetls* till his emigration to America in 1886.

[25] Mandelker Frieden N., *Russian Physicians in an era of Reform and Revolution, 1856–1905* (Princeton: 1981): 28.

beyond the scope of this paper.[26] The second category – the *feldshers* – was already examined extensively in the research literature. In this paper I would like to analyse certain aspects of the third category, i.e., the social aspects of what was known as the rural professional Jewish doctors.

Who were these doctors? To begin with, most of them were not born in the towns and villages in which they lived and worked. In most cases they were of an urban origin, studied in different types of the formal educational system, and continued in one of the medical faculties either in Vilnius University or in any other university, in Lithuania or abroad.[27] As has been noted before, upon graduation most of them faced the difficulty of finding a medical position, a problem typical to the then white-collar professions in Lithuania, such as schoolteachers. Due to the limited number of positions in city hospitals, as well as of medical positions in the main urban centres, in which the priority was given to non-Jewish physicians, many Jewish doctors had to begin their professional career either as military doctors;[28] in the few Jewish hospitals, which were established in Vilnius, Kaunas, Ukmergė and Panevėžys, or as general practitioners in peripheral towns and villages.[29] For many of those who belonged to the third category, this was their first close and direct encounter with the rural population. And this encounter was rather complicated, not to say traumatic. The contemporary urban Jewish population, and mainly its intellectual segments, regarded the rural population, Jewish as well as non-Jewish, as inferior in all possible aspects, especially the cultural one. Thus, in one of his letters, the Vilnius-born Jewish teacher and poet Judah Leib Gordon (1830–1892) described his town of residence, Panevėžys (not a small village!), in terms of a cultural desert and a wilderness.[30] But this feeling of strangeness was not limited to the cultural sphere. Basically, these doctors were not familiar with the entire world of the countryside life. In order to understand that sense of alienation, let us look at a scene from the memoirs of Dr. Fruma Gurevich (1899-???), who lived and worked in the north-western region of Mažeikiai in the interwar period:

> Occasionally I paid a visit to patients who lived in poor collapsing huts in remote and distant villages. Through a low door I entered a small clay-floored half-dark bedchamber,

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[26] On this phenomenon see, for instance, Silberman E. L., "Ele Toldot Ba'al Hamaggid" [The biography of the editor of the Hebrew newspaper *Hamaggid*], *Hamaggid* (June 16, 1875): 6; Kotik Y., *What I have Seen… The Memoirs of Yechezkel Kotik*, Asaf D. (ed.) (Tel-Aviv: 1998): 134–135; Chemrinsky H., *My Town Motele* (Jerusalem: 2002): 72–73.

[27] See, for instance, Gurevitch F., *Zichronoteha shel rofa* [The memoirs of a doctor] (Tel-Aviv: 1981): 9–10.

[28] Among these were Leib Davidowitz, Leon Mapu, Abraham Halperin and Moses Berman.

[29] A typical example is doctor Isaac Ip. He was born in 1885 in Kaunas, graduated from a medical school in Switzerland, and began his medical career as a general practitioner in Radviliškis and Eržvilkas. On him, see Bliudz B., *Der goirl* 75–77.

[30] *Igrot Judah Leib Gordon* [The letters of Judah Leib Gordon], I (Warsaw: 1894): 44.

and hardly noticed the sick woman, lying on a long simple wooden bed covered with straw. Piles of potatoes were scattered underneath the bed. Everything around was grey: the sick woman's face, her clothes, the beddings. A worn-out red pillow, stuck in a small window with broken glass, could hardly stop the cold wind from blowing into every corner of the room. In the remote dark corner I noticed a group of small children cuddling each other.[31]

Furthermore, this feeling of alienation seems to have had an immediate effect on the way these doctors regarded the local population. Thus, many of them developed a very limited degree of basic brotherhood feelings with their local Jewish coreligionists, not to mention the non-Jewish local peasants. Therefore, most of them, like their teachers and rabbis' counterparts, did not even consider the possibility of a permanent residency in the periphery, and made all possible efforts to return to the urban centres, as is exemplified in the following table:

Name	University	First Position	Final Position
Elhanan Elkes	Konigsberg	Berezhina	Kaunas
Benjamin Berger	Kiev	Vilkija	Kaunas
Baruch Fleishman	Kiev	Ariogala	Kaunas
Abraham Kapor	Paris	Širvintos	Kaunas
Josepf Epstein	Harkov	Smorgon	Vilnius
Moses Epstein	Zurich	Šeduva	Panevėžys
Shechna Mer	Moscow	Pasvalys	Panevėžys
Haim Medalia	Heidelberg	Darbėnai	Marijampolė
Ephraim London	Warsaw	Kalvarija	St. Petersburg

But this feeling of alienation was not characteristic to one side only. For the local inhabitants these doctors were culturally strangers as well. Since most of them did not master the local dialect, as well as the local world of ideas, beliefs and customs, their encounters with their non-Jewish patients were characterized by constant misunderstandings.[32] Thus, for instance, in 1890 a Jewish doctor had to leave his position in Kudirkos Naumiestis because he could not communicate with most of the local population.[33] Incidentally, he was replaced by Dr. Volpe, a Prussian Jew, who, in his turn, was replaced by another Prussian Jewish physician, Dr. Blichstein. Dr. Fruma Gurevich, whose memoirs I have already quoted, communicated frequently with her rural patients in the Russian language.

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[31] Gurevitch F., *Zichronoteha shel rofa* 32
[32] Ibid. 22–24.
[33] Sidaras, „Iš Naumiesčio", *Varpas*, 9 (1890).

As far as the local Jewish population was concerned, the situation was even more complicated, but for different reasons. Technically, due to their knowledge of Yiddish, these doctors could communicate verbally with the local Jews. However, the problem here was of religious-cultural nature rather than linguistic one. Like the majority of teachers, most doctors belonged to the cultural circles of the *Haskalah*, the Jewish enlightenment. This by itself was a sufficient reason for many rural Jews, who were traditionally more conservative than their urban coreligionists, not to have any contacts or relationships with them. Moreover, many doctors spent several years in different universities, institutes which were considered by many Jews not only as a non-Jewish environment, but also, in fact, of a Christian missionary nature. Thus, most of them were not exactly adherents of the daily Jewish religious life. Therefore, from the outset, they were suspected of being agents of a heretic ideology, secularism and even worse… As an illustration, let us listen to the response of a mid-19th century traditional Jewish grandfather, when he heard of his grandson's intention to study medicine in a university: "I have a lot of respect for sciences, especially medicine and astronomy. But never forget that you are a Jew".[34] Against this background, it is understandable why many rural Jews still believed that a prayer or some other traditional-religious practices has a much better curing potential than has any modern Jewish doctor.[35]

This was the reason why, in addition to the proportionally high fees charged by professional doctors for their services, many Jews tended to consult the local familiar popular healer, or even the Feldsher, instead of pay a visit to the professional doctor's clinic. A typical example of this tendency was the attitude of the Jews who lived in the Lithuanian *shtetl* of Aukštadvaris, known also as Visoki Dvor, towards the local medical services.[36] At the beginning of the 20th century, medical services in this small town were provided by three "agents": traditional healers, popular mainly among old people; professional doctors, visited mostly by the local elite families; and Feldshers, whose most clients belonged to the middle socio-economic strata. However, since the last quarter of the 19th century, with the rapid development of professional medicine, more and more Jews tended to seek a remedy for their pains and illnesses in the medical clinic, disregarding the doctor's religious commitment.[37]

Therefore, it is not surprising that in such an atmosphere of prejudices and mutual hostility, most Jewish doctors found themselves in a very unique situation. From

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[34] *Пережитое*, 4 (Санкт-Петербург: 1913): 227

[35] Zaltsman S., *Ayarati* 97-99; For a detailed description see Ginsburg S.M., *Historical Works: Jewish Struggles and Achievements in Tsarist Russia*, I (New York: 1937): 229–237.

[36] Abramowicz H., *Profile of a Lost World: Memoirs of East European Jewish Life Before World War II* (Detroit: 1999): 90.

[37] On the cultural and religious profile of Jewish doctors in interwar Kelmė, see Karbalnik I., B.-Sh., *Kelm – ets karut* [Kelmė – A cut-down tree] (Tel-Aviv: 1993): 16–17.

the professional perspective the demand for their services was constantly growing, sometimes, such in the case of doctor Chezkelis Rakuzinas of Viekšniai, due to the most modern medical instrumentation they possessed such as Roentgen cabinets.[38] From the personal perspective however, they were rejected by most segments of the local population. This was the background for the development of the medical sphere as a "neutral zone". Professional medical services, as well as the people who provided these services, were regarded in the professional perspective only, and were almost totally detached from their religious and ethnic context.

This attitude was also prevalent in the young, sometimes nationalistic, late 19th century Lithuanian press. In the newspapers *Aušra* (The Down), *Žemaičių ir Lietuvos Apžvalga* (Samogitian and Lithuanian Review), *Ūkininkas* (Farmer), *Tėvynės Sargas* (Sentinel of the Homeland) and *Varpas* (Bell), the "Jewish Question" in Lithuania was discussed frequently. Many authors who took part in this discourse emphasized, in many cases, the negative image of the local Jews. Thus, for instance, in an article published in the August 1898 edition of *Tėvynės Sargas*, the author portrayed the image of a stereotypic Jew, named Moses, as a seller of illegal *vodka*, as well as of stolen property; as a merchant who cheated his clients, and as a devoted community member who always supports his coreligionists in any dispute with their non-Jewish neighbours even if he knew that they were guilty.[39] Another article, published in the February 1899 edition of the same magazine, accused a Jew of selling a high dose of *anodija*, a mixture of ether and alcohol, in order to poison the local peasants.[40] A favourite subject of this genre was the supposed Jewish intention to gain control over every possible aspect of life in Lithuania, first and foremost – the economic one.[41]

Yet, if the idea of Jewish economic dominancy was historically and realistically baseless, the situation in the medical services could be used as a solid platform for such accusations, mainly due to the high percentage of Jewish medical doctors serving in all types of clinics and hospitals. However, surprisingly enough, the medical sphere was almost totally absent from this type of publications. Even though the inter-ethnic tension was steadily increasing, the prominent presence of Jewish doctors in every region of Lithuania was rarely mentioned in the publicist discourse, and had only a minor effect, if at all, on the public opinion. A brief survey of the way the Lithuanian press covered the outburst of cholera plague in the summer of 1894 in the northern town of Žagarė, could support my hypothesis. A typical report published in the newspaper *Žemaičių ir Lietuvos Apžvalga*, described the high mortality rate among

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[38] Gydytojo Rakuzino receptai, Viekšnių vaistinė-muziejus, Nr. 1320-1471, GK 3667–3779
[39] Eketis, "Mauszos aimana", *Tėvynės Sargas*, 8 (1898).
[40] Eketis, „Įvairios žinios", *Tėvynės Sargas*, 2 (1899).
[41] Ašakaitis, „Iš Lietuvos", *Aušra*, 5 (1886); Veversis, „Iš Lietuvos", *Aušra*, 10 (1884); Paibe-lis, „Iš Lietuvos: Pagirys", *Žemaičių ir Lietuvos apžvalga*, 23 (1895); Vargdienio draugas, „Iš Lietuvos: Liudvinavas", *Ūkininkas*, 10 (1896).

local Jews. The reason for this phenomenon was, due to the reporter's opinion, the low level of hygiene in the local Jewish houses.[42] The fact that most local doctors were Jews was not even mentioned. The local reporter of the newspaper *Varpas*, on the other hand, totally ignored the suffering of the local Jews, but chose to emphasize the negative contribution of the local Jewish doctors to the rapid spread of this horrible disease.[43] Yet, such an accusation was quite exceptional and did not characterize the contemporary discourse.

Undoubtedly, in this case, the Lithuanian press reflected the widespread perception of the Jewish doctors among different circles of the Lithuanian society. In their book about the *feldsher*, Kossoy and Ohry argue that "The attitude of the Russian uneducated poor classes to their physicians vacillated between confidence and violent hatred, mainly because they considered doctors as servants of the generally oppressive regime".[44] In the Lithuanian case, however, the local population, mainly in the rural areas, regarded the Jewish physician as OURS, or MŪSŲ in Lithuanian, not in the religious or national perspective, but purely in the medical sense. Against this background, it is understandable why, being a certain type of an alien, the Jewish doctor could function as a social agent of modernity. The above-mentioned Dr. Gurevich noted that her advices and instructions were more popular among rural population than among educated urban people.[45] For her common patients, the fact that these advices were given by a Jewish doctor was totally irrelevant. They judged her only according to her dedication, her patience and her professionalism. Gurevich emphasized this point mainly against the policy of formal discrimination of Jewish doctors in contemporary Lithuania.[46]

As a matter of fact, the irrelevancy of the doctor's religion or ethnic origin, as long as he or she was considered as having the healing ability, was not a new phenomenon in Lithuania. Traditional Jewish healers were very popular among the non-Jewish population, and as Shmaryahu Levin emphasizes in his memoirs, in his hometown Svisloch, the Jewess Feiga Riva was most popular among all sectors of the local society.[47] However, one has to remember that Feiga Riva and her colleagues were never suspected of having any intention to promote a non-traditional agenda.

In conclusion, the initial examination of the Jewish-Lithuanian relationship through the medical perspective put a question mark on the entire idea of a defined and isolated "Jewish space". In fact, this term is part and parcel of the modern Jewish national and Orthodox historical narrative, as well as an indirect outcome of the post-Holocaust

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[42] „Iš Lietuvos: Žagarėje", *Žemaičių ir Lietuvos apžvalga*, 17 (1894).

[43] Dvylis, "Dvylos gromatos".

[44] Kossoy and Ohry, *The Feldshers* 156.

[45] Gurevitch F., *Zichronoteha shel rofa* 25.

[46] Ibid. 18.

[47] Levin Sh., *Mi-zichronot chayai* [From my life's memoirs] (Tel-Aviv: 1944): 162.

Jewish popular historical perspective. Yet, all the above-mentioned arguments and hypotheses are just opening remarks and preliminary insights into a future research. At the same time, already at this point they illuminate, to a certain extent, another aspect of the complicated, emotionally loaded subject of the Jewish-Lithuanian relationship before the Second World War.

The Jewish village of Degsnė: a case study

Rūta Binkytė, Milda Jakulytė-Vasil, Giedrius Jokubauskis

With the restoration of Lithuania's independence and the consequent intensification of studies of national ethnic minorities, a fuller picture of the history of Lithuania began to develop, and at the same time new questions arose. The stereotype of "a Jewish merchant" entrenched in society and historiography appeared to be in need of correction. We aspire to disclose a rather new theme in historiography – the phenomenon of a Jewish farmer. The Jewish community of Degsnė, which we have chosen for our study, is interesting in other aspects as well. One such aspect, the Jewish business of caring for mental patients, sheds light on the general trends in period psychiatry in the Vilna region. Another such aspect is the nature of Lithuanian and Jewish cohabitation, which contributed to the survival of the urban structure of the village.

The main issue of our research is how and why this settlement of Jewish agricultural workers employed in the supervision of mental patients arose and operated. Another aspect of the problem is how this village of farmers survived/made ends meet. The issue of the appearance of ethnic Lithuanians in the village of Degsnė is related to the fact how and why Lithuanians arrived there (the dimension of communal relations). The subject of the study is the history of the Jewish village of Degsnė (from its establishment in the mid-19th century until the Shoah when the history of Degsnė as a Jewish village ended).

The main purpose of this research is to study the social reality of the village of Degsnė and to show the stages of development in the history of the village, to analyse the unique although not exclusive phenomenon of the Jewish village in the mid-19th and early 20th centuries in the context of land reforms and the development of psychiatry, as well as to study how the political-economic and social reality affected the village life.

While analysing the history of Degsnė, we are focusing on thee aspects:

1. Revealing the pre-conditions and antecedents for the formation of the Jewish agricultural village of Degsnė;

2. Analysing the history of Degsnė with regard to the history of a colony of mental patients;

3. Presenting the Jewish-Lithuanian relations in the history of Degsnė.

This study was carried out referring to archival documents, periodicals from the interwar period and field research material gathered in the Lithuanian ethnic region

of Dzūkija in 2004 by an expedition of university students organized by the Centre for Studies of the Culture and History of East European Jews.

In 1795, when Lithuania became part of the Russian Empire, laws enacted by the tsar came into force, including those concerning the "Jewish problem". The situation of Jews was already perceived as a problem, and special sets of laws discriminating against this ethnic minority had been issued. The "Jewish Regulations" which appeared in 1804 included various resolutions aimed at more precisely defining the social situation of Jews and assigning them to one of the social classes: burghers or farm workers. According to the lawmakers, they were aimed at integrating Jews into society. An important group of laws directly concerned Jews living in rural locations. Their commercial activity was blamed for impoverishing non-Jewish residents, and measures were taken to "correct" this situation. Jews were required to move from rural locations in 3 years if they were involved in commercial activities there. Enforcement of this law was postponed, but it was repeated in 1823 by the "Commission on Jewish Affairs", and in 1835 – by the "Regulations for Jewish Affairs," which also called for the banishment of Jews from the Russian Empire, barring their residence within 50 kilometres of the western borders.

Along with these sanctions, the tsarist Russian government highly encouraged Jews to work the land. They were promised a tax relief for a specific time period and state lands in sparsely populated Russian territories and dependent Lithuania. At this time, thousands of Jewish families from Vilna (Vilnius) and Kovno (Kaunas) provinces addressed the government with requests for plots of lands for cultivation. Jews who received plots established themselves in agricultural settlements in Vilna and Kovno provinces. Others who did not receive land there left for Kherson province in southern Russia where their requests were granted. A document has been found which makes it clear that a year before the village of Degsnė was established, Jews had been requested again to make a rapid decision to take up farming; otherwise they were threatened with sanctions, such as forced assignment to social classes. The tsarist Russian policy of that period accounts for the appearance of Degsnė: first, it intended to "put in order" the chaotic situation of Jews by assigning them to a clear social class, and second, it had to stop the supposed impoverishment of villagers by encouraging the establishing of villages occupied exclusively by Jews.

A portrait of Degsnė (historical facts)

In 1844, 17 Jewish families filed requests to receive land for cultivation. In 1848, their applications were satisfied and the village of Degsnė was established. Each Jewish family additionally received an aid of 50 roubles for settling in.

Fig. 1. A typical Jewish house in Degsnė (photo: Centre for Studies of the Culture and History of East European Jews, 2004).

While comparing interwar sources and current appearances, one has to conclude that the architectural appearance of the village has changed little. The village is situated on either side of the only road and all the houses are wooden. (In the interwar period there were 36 houses in the village.) A wooden synagogue stood in the middle of the village and a *heder* operated next to it. Approximately 200 people (33 families), mostly Jews, lived in the village, the exception being a single Lithuanian family who worked rented land.[1]

Lithuanians, who now make up the majority of village residents, continue to practice agriculture. The survival of Degsnė as a populated village after the Second World War owes to the fact that the Jews of Degsnė took into their homes Lithuanians from the neighbouring village of Pučkoriai, who had been left homeless after a fire. Naturally, this fire that caused such strong emotions and suffering is still remembered by contemporary Degsnė residents and has become an inseparable part of the collective history of Degsnė. "When our village burned down, we came here and the Jews took us in. The same Jew came to us, you know, I don't understand Jewish very well, but he talks with my husband, talks and says that we should come to them" (recounted by Mrs. Keršienė, born 1919).

While explaining why Jews took Lithuanians into their homes, contemporary residents of Degsnė related that before the great fire, many residents of Pučkoriai were acquainted with Jews from Degsnė. The Jews hired the poorer residents of Pučkoriai for farm work. "They all [Jews] had land. They had different [amounts of] land. We worked their land, too. The Jews didn't work; they used to hire children from our village to work in the fields." (Mrs. Keršienė). So the decision by the Jews

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[1] Lietuvos Valstybės Centrinis archyvas "*Lithuanian Central State Archive*" (hereinafter referred to as LVCA) F. 51, ap. 12, b. 2001, L. 150. Lunewski W., "Kolonja dla psychiczne chorych we wsi Deksznie", *Nowiny psychjatryczne*, Rok VIII, Kwartal I-II (1931–32); Wirszubski A., "Opieka rodzinna nad umyslowo chorymi w Wilenszczyznie", *Noviny lekarske*, Rocznik 39, zeszyt 2 (1927): 51.

of Degsnė to take into their homes the residents of Pučkoriai who had been deprived of their own homes was not made on the spur of the moment: relations between the populations of the two villages had existed earlier.

Farm work

The very goal of the creation of the village of Degsnė preordained that farm work should be one of the main occupations of the Jews there. Degsnė Jews had plots of different sizes, varying from 9 to 50 hectares (those with 12–18 hectares made up the majority, and only two farmers had 50-hectare plots).[2] The land was not fertile.[3] "There were those who hired [a Lithuanian who] lived with them and worked the land, but they themselves didn't work. They took in lunatics, crazy people. That's how it was with the Jews, they [lunatics] used to do all the work. They knew how to milk and feed the cows and they did everything, those lunatics used to take care of all the work. The lunatics herded the animals" (Mrs. Keršienė).

Referring to the oral history of Degsnė and archival sources, there is every reason to suppose that farm work as a form of economic activity was cultivated from the establishment of the colony until the Holocaust. Nonetheless, farm work was an unusual occupation for Jews. They had no experience and lacked opportunities to study agriculture. This is what led the Jews to look for additional occupations.

Side occupations

Another, quite original, source of income for Degsnė's Jews was providing care for mental patients. "The Jews kept fools, lunatics as we say. They were well paid for that. There were lunatics in almost every home, they were in almost every home. The Jews took care of them and the government paid [for the patients]. The government paid for their care. The Lithuanians and those lunatics used to do the farm work for the Jews" (Kazimieras, born 1914).

It becomes evident from recollections of residents that so-called lunatics lived not only with Jewish families, but also in a special two-storey building, an exotic kind of asylum that belonged to the Jewish man Trotsky. "...The Trotsky family had two houses. There was a home here and this one here. And this is where they kept all the lunatics. Here all those lunatics, he kept them here. There were a lot of them, a full house. He [Trotsky] had one house and another. Well, and here is where those lunatics

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[2] LVCA, F. 51, ap. 12, b. 2004, L. 59–60.
[3] LVCA, F. 51, ap. 12, b. 2004, L. 150; Lunewski W., "Kolonja dla psychiczne chorych".

Fig. 2. Jewish village of Degsnė (photo: Centre for Studies of the Culture and History of East European Jews, 2004).

lived, a two-storey house, large rooms, here is where they lived and worked the land for them, the lunatics [worked] the land for the Jews" (Marijona, born 1937).

According to the notions of psychiatry current in the 19th and early 20th centuries, work was a form of therapy. Colonies dedicated to the care of mental patients were a rather frequent phenomenon at that time: for a lack of mental hospitals, another way to treat these patients was discovered – homecare with families. This happened in the Vilna region spontaneously.[4] Degsnė village, located in the Vilna region, also began taking on mental patients for homecare. Patients were sent to this village (also known as Degsnė colony at various times) not just from the Vilna region, but also from locations in and around Warsaw, Lódz, Grodno, Nowogródek and Białystok.[5] Although the tsarist government did not support this colony, economic conditions encouraged its growth, since the cost of patient care was much cheaper than at hospital. Moreover,

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[4] Šurkus J., *Psichiatrijos vystymasis Lietuvoje* , d. 1 (Kaunas: 1960): 249.
[5] Wirszubski A., "Opieka rodzinna nad umyslowo chorymi" 51; LVCA, F. 51, ap. 12, b. 2004, L. 150v, 150; Lunewski W., "Kolonja dla psychiczne chorych".

the lack of beds at hospitals compelled to keep the patients wherever possible, even with no medical supervision.[6] A doctor was assigned to look after the patients only in the 1920s; he used to travel to the village just once or twice a month.[7]

In Degsnė, an attempt was made to create an exclusively Jewish colony of mental patients, since the residents could provide an environment conforming to the Jewish traditions, religion, kosher food requirements and language for the patients.[8]

The exact date when patients began to be treated this way (homecare in family settings) in Degsnė is not known. One group of investigators claims that it began in the second half of the 19th century; others give the more precise date of 1875.[9] Around 1930 the residents of Degsnė village reported that by that time already the second generation began to practice patient care, which had begun in the village 50[10] to 80[11] years before. Doctor Stanislaw Fekesz indicates in an article that, according to the story told by local residents, originally only a few farmers took on patients for homecare, more or less by chance.[12] Neighbours who realized that it was profitable also expressed an interest in patient care. Before the First World War, approximately 100 patients were under care in Degsnė.[13] Some researchers believe that the real figure was higher, amounting to 200.[14] The colony of mental patients existed until 1915, when the front approached the village during the First World War. Mental patients running around inconvenienced the military commanders, by whose order of July 6, 1915 the colony was liquidated. Although some families resumed patient care in 1917,[15] it was not before 1926 that the colony officially renewed its activity.[16]

In 1926, when the colony was officially re-established, no one except for the interested parties (care-providers) provided care for the mental patients. There was no social or medical supervision and the state provided no support for the colony.[17]

In the inter-war period, 44 Degsnė residents were involved in patient care. According to the surviving population data, they had 132 patients.[18]

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[6] Šurkus J., *Psichiatrijos vystymasis Lietuvoje* 250.

[7] Lunewski W., "Kolonja dla psychicznie chorych" 185.

[8] LVCA, F. 51, ap. 12, b. 1467, L. 12–12v. W spawie kolonji w Dekszni, 01 07 1931.

[9] Lunewski W., "Kolonja dla psychicznie chorych" 186.

[10] Ibid. 185.

[11] Fekesz St., "Opieka rodzinna nad psychiczne chorymi na terenie powiatu wileńsko-trockie-go", *Zdrowie publiczne* 1 (1934): 9.

[12] Šurkus J., *Psichiatrijos vystymasis Lietuvoje* 249.

[13] Wirszubski A., "Opieka rodzinna nad umyslowo chorymi" 51.

[14] Fekesz St., "Opieka rodzinna nad psychiczne chorymi" 9.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Šurkus J., *Psichiatrijos vystymasis Lietuvoje* 250.

[17] Ibid. 505.

[18] LVCA, F. 51, ap. 12, b. 2004, L. 59–60.

Fig. 3. A former asylum of mentally ill, held by Trotskis – Degsnė (photo: Centre for Studies of the Culture and History of East European Jews, 2004).

Stanislaw Fekesz, who visited the colony in 1929, described his unpleasant impressions. Sanitary conditions were poor and there was a lack of toilets, as well as general lack of cleanliness and air conditioning. In almost every home he found a separate room with bars on the windows set aside for disturbed mental patients. Some patients were bound in chains or constrained in straightjackets. Seeking to make a profit, some farmers took in as many mental patients as possible. One village resident had around 50 wards in his care. He built several buildings for the patients and created something akin to his own hospital, hiring unqualified personnel to look after patients. Some patients slept on the floor or even in animal pens.[19] There were around 200 patients in Degsnė colony in 1929.[20] For every patient, a monthly fee of 40 to 70 złoty was received.[21]

Degsnė residents cared for 3 to 15 patients per family – except for the family previously mentioned with 50 patients, an example that other residents sought to emulate.[22] Each family tried to care for as many patients as possible, regardless of lack of resources to take care even of themselves, let alone the patients. Around 1933, Lithuanians living in the village (there were two Lithuanian families at that time) began to complain about the Jewish occupation. Lithuanians complained that Jews were persecuting them and wanted to deprive them, by any means, of any possibility of caring for patients, and so "deprive [Lithuanians] of [their] last bite of bread." Lithuanians claimed that the conditions they could create for

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[19] Fekesz St., "Opieka rodzinna nad psychiczne chorymi" 9–10.
[20] Rudziński H., "Zdrowotność publiczna na Wileńszczyźnie. Opieka nad umysłowo chorymi i niedorozwiniętymi", *Pamiętnik Wilenskiego towarzystwa lekarskego* Rok VIII (1932).
[21] Wirszubski A., "Opieka rodzinna nad umyslowo chorymi" 51.
[22] Lunewski W., "Kolonja dla psychicznie chorych" 187.

the patients were superior in many respects, and that Jews lived in shacks, which were too small to accommodate even their own families.[23]

In an attempt to regulate the activities of the Degsnė colony, the Health Department drew up a set of rules and the number of mental patients was limited to 8 per family. Only patients of the same sex were allowed in one family. Medical supervision and an administrative board were organized for the colony.[24] The administration consisted of three people who assigned patients to families.[25]

In 1933, the Family Patient Care Association of the Vilna Region was established, with all care providers from the colonies in the Vilna region eligible for membership. The association's rules indicated that only the assigned doctor could accept a patient into a colony, and only he could assign a patient to a family. Only mental patients who had been hospitalised could be accepted into family care. An office, reading room, workshops for men and women, a pharmacy and an index-card file system were set up at the colony.

In 1935, the newspapers *Haynt* (Today) and *Radio* featured several articles describing the poor conditions at the colony. One article told a story of how the sister of a female patient came to visit and could not find her at the house of the care provider. It was only after her sister went to the police that the patient was discovered in wretched condition at the house of a poor farmer. Another story tells of a female patient from Białystok who married a young man also from Białystok. Relatives, who knew nothing of the marriage and continued to pay the monthly fee to the care provider, decided to take her back home, but they found out that she had been living nearby, close to Białystok, for three years.

There were various other scandals in Degsnė as well. One of probably the most notorious took place in 1936, when village residents complained to the assigned doctor during his visit that the director of the colony administration and the nurse were demanding bribes from the residents in exchange for assigning patients for homecare.[26]

The assigned doctor tried to fight against Degsnė's worsening reputation. He demanded retraction of the newspaper articles and performed his own "investigation" into the bribery scandal. Unfortunately, nothing could be found to attest to what finally became of these scandals.

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[23] LVCA, F. 51, ap. 12, b. 1467. Prośba do Pana Dyrektora Departamentu Służby Zdrowia Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych. 16 09 1932, 13.

[24] Šurkus J., *Psichiatrijos vystymasis Lietuvoje* 507.

[25] Fekesz St., "Opieka rodzinna nad psychicznie chorymi" 11.

[26] LVCA, F. 358, ap. 1, b. 2, L. 60–69.

Conclusions

The conclusion can be drawn that the main pre-condition for the establishment of the village of Degsnė was the policy of the tsarist administration, which sought to turn Jews into farmers. The transfer of Jews to village settings was not their voluntary choice, but rather something forced upon them. As Jews did not have agricultural experience, and the land which they were allotted was little suited to successful farming (infertile land dominates in the Dzūkija region), they were forced to take up side occupations, namely the care of mental patients.

The principles of the treatment, supervision and care of mental patients applied to the wards living in the village of Degsnė were completely in conformance with the methods and conception of psychiatry prevalent at the time.

If we view the care of mental patients in Degsnė as a specific source of income, we can distinguish two ways, in which this form of activity was beneficial to Degsnė's Jews: first, the families of patients paid direct and established fees to caretakers, while the patients themselves were used as labour force (taking into account that work therapy was applied as a form of treatment at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries).

Up until January 1941, Degsnė was an exclusively Jewish village. Both the local inhabitants and the patients were of a single ethnicity and religion. The situation changed completely after Jews took in Lithuanians from a neighbouring village, whose houses had burned down. This is a unique occurrence, because, on the one hand, from the perspective of orthodox Judaism, cohabitation of Jews and non-Jews under one roof is almost inconceivable for religious reasons, and on the other hand, the difficult economic circumstances and lack of space in the homes of the Jews of Degsnė must have made the option of accommodating Lithuanians in Jewish homes appear almost impossible at first sight. In this sense, the episode is unique and extraordinary, although broader studies are needed to reveal whether this was indeed a single occurrence or if it reflected a wider trend.

In conclusion it can be said that Degsnė, as a village settlement of Jewish farmers, is not absolutely singular in itself, but still is a rather rare phenomenon reflecting complicated processes at work in the Jewish communities and certain turnabouts in the Jewish policy of the Russian tsarist administration. Objective historical facts – Lithuanians finding refuge with Jewish families and Degsnė Jews caring for those afflicted with the maladies of the psyche – clearly set Degsnė's history apart not only from the Jewish history of Lithuania's Dzūkija region, but also make Degsnė unique in the context of Lithuania as a whole.

The Jewish book shop in the urban landscape of Eastern Europe at the end of the 19th century*

Hagit Cohen

In 1864, Alexander Zederbaum (1816–1893), editor of the Hebrew newspaper *Hamelitz* (The Eloquent), wrote in his paper that the Jews of Russia were not accustomed to buying books in bookshops for lack of money and leisure time; rather, only itinerant booksellers who peddled their wares from door to door managed to reach the pockets and hearts of their customers.[1]

Jewish bookshops opened on Jewish streets primarily in the second half of the 19th century. One may see this phenomenon as part of the development of book industry in the Russian Empire as a whole. In 1864, the number of bookshops in Russia amounted to a mere 611, but by 1894 it had risen to 3.000. Bookshops were concentrated in capital cities; however, from the middle of the 19th century, bookshops were also opened in the provinces by large commercial companies. The development of the Russian printing industry was aided by the modernization of transportation and postal services.[2]

In the period under review, Jewish bookshops played various roles. Along with the sale of books to customers, bookshops also operated as publishers, lending libraries and social meeting places. Book commerce is situated at the junction of diverse areas of life: economics, beliefs and ideologies, education and knowledge, politics and so on. One may thus view the bookshop as a microcosm, which reflects social and cultural processes in the society of its time.

In this article, I intend to describe a group of booksellers who operated in Eastern Europe in the second half of the 19th century. These people were active in various cities: Odessa, Bobruysk, Vilna, and Warsaw in the Russian Empire, and Lviv and Cracow in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Among them are those who merit an entry or a paragraph in the historiography of Eastern European Jewry, and others who have sunk into anonymity and have been forgotten. I shall describe their activity as merchants and publishers in the light of the following questions:

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* The English translation was made by Robert Binder.

[1] Zederbaum A., *Dat ha-mol* [The publisher's opinion], *Hamelitz*, 48 (December 3, 1864): 726

[2] Brooks J., *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861–1917* (New Jersey: 1985): 92.

How did they undertake their commercial activity?
Which books did they sell in their shops?
Who were the customers of these booksellers?
Did the books they offered to the public reflect the booksellers' literary taste and worldview?

However, I would like to preface this topic with a methodological discussion. Booksellers rarely left any archives that can shed some light on their activity. The lack of archival material has turned the restoration work into a complex task of collecting the available fragments of information, which after much effort can be connected to form a significant picture. Various types of sources were needed in order to restore the booksellers' world and the patterns of their activity. The first type was the booksellers' own printed catalogues. The earliest catalogues that we examined were printed in the 1870s, and the latest – in the 1890s. There are catalogues that include several dozens of books; others list hundreds and even thousands.

Referring to eighteen of these lists, we analysed the inventory of bookshops – the content and statistical analysis of titles – and followed the trends of publications during three decades (the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s). There is, of course, a methodological problem in relying on booksellers' catalogues as a source that reflects reading habits. Not always is the product of the printing press a reliable indicator of the reading patterns of the public. Not every book published was actually successful. Nevertheless, along with this methodological difficulty, there are grounds for claiming that booksellers' lists do reflect the reading habits of the public: the booksellers' lists indicate what was offered for sale, and not merely what was published.

Booksellers, as it will appear further on, operated on the basis of commercial considerations. The books were kept in their shops because they wanted to make a profit on them. The catalogues therefore should reflect supply and demand. In addition, the combination of book lists with other information related to the activity of the catalogue makers allows us to see the complexity of a cultural phenomenon.[3]

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[3] Robert Darnton, the famous historian of the book and researcher of the French Enlightenment, commented on the difficulty of reconstructing reading habits on the basis of a quantitative and analytical analysis of publications. He claimed that the subject categories determined by researchers are sometimes vague and not necessarily true to the reception of the work by readers of the period. A similar criticism was voiced by Carlo Ginzburg, who recommended the advantages of qualitative research in studying the mentality of the reading public. It seems to me that a careful statistical analysis of publications should actually contribute to the study of the reading and book culture as long as it is anchored in sources and other methods. In this study, the integration of quantitative-statistical analysis and prosopography of the booksellers have deepened our understanding of the place of the bookshop in the changing social and cultural landscape of Eastern European Jewry in this period. See Darnton R., "History of Reading",

An additional type of source is the booksellers' letters that have been preserved in personal archives of writers and various public figures, such as the well-known *Haskala* (Enlightenment) author, Judah Leib Gordon (1830–1892), the nationalist philosopher Ahad Ha'am (Asher Hirsh Ginzberg; 1856–1927), the midrashic scholar, resident of Lviv Solomon Buber (1827–1906), and others.[4] Along with these sources, we made wide use of period Hebrew newspapers, especially advertisements on the back pages of newspapers that publicized booksellers. In order to complete the picture, we turned to the autobiographies and memoirs of the communities that can tell us of the booksellers' activities.

With this description of the sources and research methods in mind, let us enter the doorway of the Jewish bookshop.[5]

A portrait of a *maskil* as a bookseller – a collective biography

In 1892, the Warsaw bookseller Abraham Zuckerman (1843–1892) passed away at the relatively young age of 49. He left behind him, according to the testimony of his wife, "a small but poor shop and his good name". In a booklet that his family

P. Burke (ed.), *New Perspective on Historical Writing* (University Park, PA: 1992): 43; Ginzburg C., *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of Sixteenth-Century Miller* (New York: 1984).

[4] The papers of Ahad Ha'am, Solomon Buber and Judah Leib Gordon are held in the Jewish National and University Library (hereinafter referred to as JNUL).

[5] For the new approaches and methods in the research of reading culture see, for example, Rose J., *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Class* (Yale University Press: 2001).
For studies of reading and book culture in the Jewish civilization see Baruchson Sh., *Sefarim ve kor'eim: tarbut ha-keria'h shel yehude Italyah be-shilhe he-renesans* [Books and Readers – the reading interests of Italian Jews at the close of the Renaissance] (Bar Ilan University Press: 1993); Bonfil R., "Reading in the Jewish Communities of Western Europe in the Middle Ages", Cavallo G. , Chartier R. (eds.), *A History of Reading in the West* (Oxford: 1999): 150–178; Gries Z., *Ha-sefer ke-sokhen tarbut: ba-shanim 1700–1900* [The book as an agent of culture 1700–1800] (Tel-Aviv: 2002). There were several studies at the beginning of the 20th century which tried to trace the reading habits of the Jews in Eastern Europe, among them the pioneering research of Niger S., *"Di yidishe literatur un di lezerin"* [Yiddish literature and the female reader], *Der Pinkes*, 1 (Vilna: 1913): 85–144. For recent studies on this topic see Szmeruk Ch., *Le toldot sifrut hashund* [The history of the *shund* literature in Yiddish], *Tarbitz*, 52 (1983): 325–350; Roskies D. G., "Yiddish Popular Literature and the Female Reader", *Journal of Popular Culture*, X (1976−77): 852–858; Zalkin M., *Ba-'alot ha-shahar: ha-haskala ha-yehudit ba-imperya ha-Rusit ba-me'ah ha-tesh'a esre* [A new dawn – the Jewish enlightenment in the Russian Empire: social aspects] (Jerusalem: 2000): 243–252; Parush I., *Reading Jewish Women: Marginality and Modernization in Nineteenth-Century Eastern European Jewish Society* (Waltham, 2004)

published in 1902, his relatives sketched Abraham's character and described his activities as a bookseller. They wrote:

> "The founder of our company published many books at his own expense. He and Mr. Eliezer Isaac Schapira were the first in Warsaw to establish bookshops offering *Haskala* books. There were neither prayer books nor *bubbe-maises* [popular Yiddish fiction] in our father's bookshop, but it had the works by Mapu, Kalman Schulman, Smolenskin, J. L. Gordon […], Isaac Baer Levinsohn […]. There are some men who in their youth and adolescence would come to him to buy some book or other, and he would refuse to sell it to them claiming that the book was not appropriate for their age. He did not look for profit, even though he lived a life of poverty."[6]

The bookseller Zuckerman is presented by his sons as an outstanding figure, a man who lived a life of poverty, but devoted himself to the distribution of Jewish *Haskala* literature in Russia and Poland. We learn that he was a pioneer in the development of *Haskala* bookshops in the city of Warsaw, but credit for this must also be given to the bookseller Eliezer Isaac Schapira (1835–1915). The shops of these two on Nalewki Street, the centre of commercial life of Jewish Warsaw, were situated next to one another.

Zuckerman and Schapira belonged to a group of booksellers who operated in Eastern Europe in the 19th century and the early 20th century. These booksellers worked in various geographic regions: Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Congress Poland and Galicia. However, despite the geographic distribution, it is possible to draw a collective profile: their worldview, their commercial patterns of work, and the selection of books in their shops justify their being viewed as a group.

I shall focus here primarily on the activity of Zuckerman and Schapira from Warsaw, Isaac Michaelovsky from Vilna, and Aaron Faust of Cracow (1866–1907), but I shall refer to other booksellers as well.

These booksellers earned their living with the spread of Jewish Enlightenment in Eastern Europe as agents of *Haskala* newspapers and as producers and sellers of *Haskala* literature. Zuckerman, for example, was the chief agent of the newspaper *Hashahar* (The Down) and publisher of *Hattaot Ne`urim* (Sins of Youth, 1875)*,* the agonizing autobiography of Moses Leib Lilienblum (1843–1910).[7] Schapira was the

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[6] H'almana Zuckerman, *Mikhtav galui le khavrei Ahiasaf* [Zuckerman's widow and her sons To the Members of Ahiasaf] (Paris: 1902); Mrs. Zuckerman to Ahad Ha'am, 1902, Ahad Ha'am Archive, JNUL, Arc 4° 791/825.

[7] Zuckerman arrived in Warsaw in 1875, after spending several years teaching and selling books in Kovno. He opened his shop in 1875. From an advertisement that he published in the newspaper *Hatzefira* at the time of opening the shop, we learn that alongside selling books and newspapers, Zuckerman also dealt in publishing and printing. Zuckerman had business contacts with various cities in the Russian Empire and even beyond it. He conducted corre-

chief agent of the newspaper *Hamaggid* (The Preacher) and publisher of the well-known *Haskala* poet and author, Judah Leib Gordon.[8] Michaelovsky from Vilna distributed the newspaper *Hamaggid* in Lithuania.

These booksellers took part in various projects related to the spread of Enlightenment. In 1874, the "Society for the Promotion of Enlightenment among the Jews of Russia" (the first officially recognized organization established by Russian *maskilim* (enlightened ones) in 1863) decided to retranslate the Pentateuch into Russian and to publish it in a bilingual (Hebrew-Russian) edition. The translation work was assigned to Judah Leib Gordon, the secretary of the society, and to the *maskil* Yonah Gerstein (1827–1891) from Vilna. Since the society had difficulties in raising the amount of money needed for the publication, it launched a wide campaign to enlist subscribers. *Maskilim*, educators and also Jewish booksellers took part in the campaign, among them Zuckerman, Schapira and Michaelovsky. Their letters of this period to Gordon reveal the process, through which the bilingual Pentateuch was delivered to the Jewish streets, as well as the difficulties encountered by the distribution system.[9]

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spondence with authors and *maskilim* in Eastern Europe, among them Judah Leib Gordon, Solomon Buber, Abraham Ber Gottlober , and Shalom Abramowitz. Zuckerman was also involved in literary activities as an author, translator and publicist, and even worked as an assistant to A. B. Gotlober, who published the Hebrew newspaper *Haboker Or* (The morning light) in Warsaw. Shatzky J., *Geshicte fun di Yidden in Varshe* [The history of the Jews in Warsaw], 3 (New York: 1953): 285; Cohen H., *Ba-hanuto shel mokher ha-sefarim- chanuyot sefarim yehudiyot be-Mizrach Eropah ba-machtsit ha-sheniyah shel ha-mea hatsha-es're* [At the booksellers store – Jewish bookstores in Eastern Europe at the end of the 19th century], MA Thesis (Bar Ilan University: 2000): 59–69.

[8] In 1885, Shapira published the second edition of Gordon's book *Olam K'Minhago* (The world according to its custom), and in 1886 published a collection of Yiddish poems by Gordon, entitled *Sichat hulin– Lider in der Folk Shprach* [Day-to-day discussions – songs in folk's language]. The two men corresponded with one another for twenty years, until Gordon's death in 1892. The contacts between them touched every field of literary and publishing endeavour. Schapira even distributed Gordon's books that were produced and printed by others. In the course of many years, their relations became built on understanding and trust. Kressel G., *Leksikon ha-safrut ha-ivrit* [Encyclopaedia of modern Hebrew literature], 2 (Merhavyah: 1967): 68; Werses S., *"Yad yemin dokhah yad smol mekarevet- al yakhasam shel soferim maskilim le lashon ha – yiddish"* [How maskilic writers viewed Yiddish], *Chulyot. Journal of Yiddish Research*, 5 (Winter 1999): 32–38; for additional sources see Cohen H., *Ba-hanuto shel mokher ha-sefarim* 69–83.

[9] For further discussion on the translation and distribution of the bilingual Pentateuch see Greenberg L., *The Jews in Russia*, 1 (New Haven: 1965): 110–111; Stanislawski M., *For Whom Do I Toil? Judah Leib Gordon and the Crisis of Russian Jewry* (New York: 1988): 117; Gordon J.L., *Mikhtav la-khotmim* [Letter to the subscribers], *Hatzefira* (March 31, 1873); E. I. Shapira to J.L. Gordon, June 22, July 13, 1875, J.L. Gordon Archive, JNUL, Arc.4° 761; Michaelovsky to J.L. Gordon, January 20, August 8, 1875. J.L. Gordon Archive, JNUL, Arc.4° 761.

Each bookseller was informed about his colleagues' activity. In the course of their work they moved to various centres of the Jewish book industry and took part in joint publishing ventures. Zuckerman from Warsaw visited the printing houses of Vilna, and also initiated joint publishing activity with the booksellers Ephraim Deinard from Odessa and Kaplan from Bialystok. Deinard and Zuckerman together published an album of pictures of Russian Jewish personalities.[10] Zuckerman and Kaplan were the chief agents of Gordon's poems. Aaron Faust from Cracow was well known to Warsaw merchants. The names of various booksellers are often found next to one another on the margins of advertisements as agents and distributors of Hebrew books and newspapers. This proximity sometimes led to competition and conflicts. The conflicts were based on distribution rights and the setting of prices. Thus, for example, in 1885 Schapira sent a letter to Gordon complaining that the latter had granted the distribution rights to the jubilee edition of his poems to Schapira's competitors, Zuckerman and Faust, and caused Shapira losses.[11]

A customer who entered these booksellers' shops in Warsaw or Lviv found a similar selection of books in Hebrew and Yiddish. One might say that the selection of books reflects an autonomous Jewish culture. The existence of such an autonomous culture is apparent in the selection of books in foreign languages sold by the booksellers.[12] In fact there was little in the way of literature in foreign languages in their shops. Michaelovsky wrote in 1875 that he did not keep "Russian books" in his shop.[13] When Moses, the son of Abraham Zuckerman, informed his customers in Odessa in 1889 that he had begun to sell

[10] Deinard E, *Zichronot bat ami* [Memoirs of My Nation's Daughter] (Arlington: 1918): 162–163.

[11] E. I Shapira to J.L. Gordon, *Sivan* 5645, J.L. Gordon Archive, JNUL, Arc. 4° 761.

[12] Cohen H., *Ba-hanuto shel mokher ha-sefarim* 156-161. The foreign languages in the catalogues are primarily German, Russian and some Polish. Foreign literature in the catalogues fell into four categories: a) liturgical literature, b) textbooks and dictionaries, c) history and Jewish studies, d) fiction. Liturgical literature, some of it bilingual, included traditional literature along with works published by Reform writers or Russificationists. The shelf of books on history and Jewish studies included the works of researchers of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* in the German language, among them Adolph Jellinek, Isaac Marcus Jost, Judah Miezes and Henrich Graetz. One could also find the journal of Jewish studies, *Monatschrif fur Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums.* Jewish academic studies also appeared in Russian. Foreign-language fiction dealt mostly with Jewish topics. German Jewish historical novels appeared in Eastern European catalogues as early as 1874. These works were written by a group of authors, educators, rabbis and communal leaders in Germany, such as Marcus Lehman (1831–90), the orthodox editor of *The Israelite*, and others of the various Reform circles, such as Ludwig and Feibus Philipson and Hermann Rakendorf. For more information on the German Jewish historical novel see Ben Ari N., *Roman im he-avar: ha-roman ha-histori ha-yehudi ha-germani min ha-meah ha-19 ve yetsirata shel sifrut leumit* [A romance with the past: The Jewish German historical novel in the 19th century and the creation of national literature] (Tel-Aviv: 1997): 40–51.

[13] I. Michaelovsky to J.L. Gordon, August 8, 1875, J.L. Gordon Archive, JNUL, Arc. 4° 761.

many books in the Russian language, "so that the customer need not go to another shop to find books in the language of the country," it was considered to be a great innovation.[14] Literature in foreign languages, mostly in German and Russian, which was on sale dealt for the most part with Jewish topics, with the exception of books in the bookshop of Faust, who already in the 1870s sold non-Jewish literature, mostly in German. At the beginning of the 20th century, German was dominant in his stocks; even the works of Polish writers, such as Henrik Sienkiewicz and Eliza Orzeszkowa, were sold in German translation, though the number of Polish books was greater than in the previous decades.[15] Another indication of the autonomy of Jewish culture was the small extent, to which the selection of books reflected the geographic location of the shops. In the shops of Zuckerman and Schapira in Warsaw, for example, there was no sign of books in the Polish language. This was to change only at the beginning of the 20th century.[16]

Booksellers saw themselves as disciples and apostles of Jewish Enlightenment literature. Zuckerman's sons emphasized their father's total devotion to the distribution of *Haskala* literature. In 1875 Schapira wrote in a similar spirit:

> "I shall not commit a sin of lying, claiming to be the first bookseller in this country who has set out to distribute only books of the *Haskala* among Hebrew readers in our country, despite the fact that I did not make a profit in the early years."[17]

Similar expressions are found in the writings of Faust. In 1870, he wrote that he was "the only bookseller in the entire Austrian Empire who sells *Haskala* books," and his shop in Cracow was the centre for all lovers of the Hebrew language and literature.[18] Michaelovsky accorded himself the credit of being the first to distribute the book *Ashmat Shomron* by Abraham Mapu. In the "cultural war" that erupted between the Orthodox and the *maskilim* between 1868 and 1871, Michaelovsky was a passive sympathizer with the camp of the *maskilim.* In his letters to Gordon, Michaelovsky continually attacked and defamed Jechiel Brill (1836–1886), the editor of the Orthodox Hebrew newspaper *Halebanon* (Liban). In this period Gordon's battle with the rabbis reached its peak, as did the attacks against him that were printed in the newspaper *Ha-Lebanon.* In his letters, Michaelovsky tried to encourage Gordon and to support him in his struggle, even supplying him with scandalous details about the life of his enemy Brill.[19]

[14] Zuckerman M., *Reshimat sefarim khadashim ve-yeshanim* [List of old and new books] (Odessa: 1889): 3

[15] Faust A., *Reshimat sefarim* [List of books], *Hamaggid* (June 20, 1877): 230; idem, *Katalog shel sefarim khadashim ve yeshanim* [Catalogue of old and new books] (Cracow: 1893, 1910).

[16] Cohen H., *Ba-hanuto shel mokher ha-sefarim* 156–161.

[17] E. I. Shapira to J.L.Gordon, 1875, J.L. Gordon Archive, JNUL, Arc.4° 761.

[18] A. Faust to J.L.Gordon, 1870, J.L. Gordon Archive, JNUL, Arc.4° 761.

[19] I. Michaelovsky to J.L. Gordon, June 18, 1868, L.J. Gordon Archive, JNUL, Arc.4° 761; M. Stanislawski, *For Whom Do I Toil?* 93–98.

In various articles that Zuckerman published in the newspaper *Hashahar* in the 1870s, he expressed social criticism of the spirit of the radical *maskilim.* Zuckerman's impressions were based on his years of wandering in the Lithuanian *yeshivas*. The antagonism existing in Jewish society, claimed Zuckerman, was not between the *maskilim* and those who were faithful to the tradition, but rather between the rich and the poor Jews who had been abandoned to their fate. Even among the *maskilim* could one find those who were morally corrupt. Zuckerman noted specifically his affinity and enthusiasm for the protest songs of Judah Leib Levin (1844–1925).[20]

Zuckerman's sons noted their father's educational commitment to young customers. Equivalent testimonies are found regarding other booksellers, for example Faust. Faust's shop is remembered by the citizens of Cracow as a meeting place of the city's *maskilim*. Among those who frequented Faust's shop was the journalist and writer Gershom Bader (1868–1953). The young Bader took his first steps as a book buyer in Faust's shop. He wrote in his memoirs:

> "Faust sensed my hunger for books. He knew that my father could not buy for me all the books that I wanted. He therefore loaned me his books for free – without charge. At first, I didn't know how to choose books for myself. I used to go over Faust's lists in alphabetical order and read without discrimination, until Faust saw how afflicted I was and began to choose appropriate books for me."[21]

Another issue is the relationship of these booksellers to Jewish literature that did not pertain to the *Haskala* (i.e. religious literature and popular Yiddish literature). Examination of the sources shows a problematic and ambivalent attitude. Zuckerman's sons note that their father tried not to sell prayer books in his shop. Indeed, Zuckerman did not include prayer books in his catalogue. A modest announcement in the newspaper *Hatzefira* (The Siren)*,* however, indicates that the bookseller also sold some religious literature. This tendency to minimize the sale of religious books (or at least not to display them) is typical of others as well. Schapira, for example, declared his fidelity to *Haskala* literature, but in practice he also sold religious literature. On the eve of the New Year 5650 (1889), Schapira wrote to Gordon that "due to much work today in selling the High Holiday prayer books" he neglected his obligations as a publisher.[22] This ambivalence is perhaps most clearly expressed by Faust. This bookseller presented a respectable selection of

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[20] Zuckerman A., *"Hazut kasha"* [Grave vision] , *Hashahar*, year no. 7, booklet no. 9 (1876): 493–498; idem, "Andralamusia", ibid., 285–290. For further discussion on the radical *Haskala* see Feiner S., *Haskala ve-historia: le toldoteha shel hakarat avar yehudit modernit* [Haskala and history – The emergence of a modern Jewish awareness of the past] (Jerusalem: 1995): 374–403.

[21] Bader G., *Mayne Zichroyne's* [My memoirs] (New York 1950): 97

[22] In the forward to his 1883 catalogue, Shapira mentioned the existence of religious literature in his shop, although he did not list it in the catalogue. Shapira E. I., *Reshimat sefrei haskala yeshanim ve khadashim* [List of old and new Haskala books] (Warsaw: 1883).

religious literature on his lists. However, his *Haskala* bias is revealed between the lines. In 1877, Faust published a long list of books in the Hebrew newspaper *Hamaggid.* Under the headline "Books on Ethics and Cabbala" appeared two works by Rabbi Nathan from Niemirow (the pupil and scribe of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav) – *Kinat Hashem Tzva'ot* (The Jealousy of the Lord of Hosts) and *Makhnia Zeidim* (He Brings Low the Arrogant). The two publications were sharply critical of the *Haskala*. Faust actually sold these works at a price of ten kreuzers each; however, on his lists he could not help adding a personal note regarding these two works, as a kind of subtitle outside the body of the composition, saying that these books were written "by a hypocritical fool."[23]

As for popular literature in Yiddish, the claim of Zuckerman's sons that their father would not sell *bubbe-maises* may have been true for him, but did not conform to the general reality. The truth of the matter is that the lists of Faust, Schapira, Deinard, and Zuckerman Jr. clearly reflect the meteoric rise of popular Yiddish literature with the work of such authors as Shomer (Nahum Meir Shaikevich, 1849–1905), Ozer Blaustein (1840–1898) and their colleagues. Zuckerman's partner Ephraim Deinard aptly described this phenomenon:

> "When I opened my bookshop in Odessa at the beginning of 5641(1880), it did not occur to me to bring this trash into my shop. Only after a full year, during which I realized that my firm could not survive without it, was I forced to introduce this garbage into my bookshop… When someone came to buy a Yiddish book, I always interrogated him as to his desire and purpose in reading the rubbish of Shomer… All of them always answered that they wanted to enjoy a good book."[24]

There is no doubt that booksellers were subject to financial pressures and demands of making a living. To a great extent, as is illustrated by the sale of religious and popular Yiddish works, these pressures dictated their patterns of activity and required them to operate in opposition to their literary taste and worldview.

Like many of the *maskilim*, Zuckerman found his place in the nationalist camp of *Hibbat Zion* (Love of Zion). He expressed his enthusiasm for the ideas of *Hibbat Zion* in his only novel, *Bat Zion* (Daughter of Zion, Warsaw, 1891). The heroes of the novel find spiritual rest in the Land of Israel, where they devote themselves to working the land. If in the past booksellers had corresponded frequently with Gordon – especially in the period of his public activity, when he worked as a secretary of the "Society for

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[23] Faust A., *Resimat sefarim* 230. For further discussion on the writing of Rabi Nathan from Niemirow against the *Haskala* see Feiner S., *Haskala ve historia* 247–248.

[24] Deinard E., *Zichronot bat ami* 135. Booksellers were not opposed to *Haskala* literature in Yiddish. In his foreword to Gordon's Yiddish poems *Sichat Hulin*, Shapira pointed out the importance of Yiddish as a reading language for the masses, and expressed his disappointment for the objection of the Hebrew writers to express themselves in that language. Werses S., *Yad yemin dokhah* 35.

the Promotion of Enlightenment" in St. Petersburg (1872–77), from the 1880s onward they addressed their letters to a new cultural activist Ahad Ha'am. Not by chance the letters of Faust, Zuckerman's sons and Schapira are found in his archi-ve. Schapira reported to Ahad Ha'am on his loyalty to the national idea and regretted his lack of ability to devote himself to nationalist activities because of his problems in making a living. Faust notified Ahad Ha'am of his willingness to distribute *Hashiloah* (Shiloh) in Galicia. Zuckerman's sons negotiated with Ahad Ha'am on the matters of book distribution and marketing.[25]

Booksellers and the modernization of the Jewish book market in Eastern Europe

Zuckerman died in 1892, when modern Jewish publishing was emerging. *Ahiasaf*, the first secular Jewish publishing house in Eastern Europe, was founded in 1892, and the second, *Tushiya* (Wisdom) – in 1895. Their establishment was related to the phenomenon of the national revival movement, as well as to the processes of modernization that affected the Jewish book market in the 19th century.

Every national movement, wrote Iris Parush, tends to give literature a central role in the process of national revival. The leaders of this movement claim that literature can express the national spirit and emphasize the national unity of the people. One of the expressions of the national revival movement is the strong tendency of its leaders to be an inseparable part of the literary community, along with the tendency of authors and poets to show their great involvement in national ideological battles. It is sufficient to note the involvement of Ahad Ha'am, Nahum Sokolov (1859–1936) (editor of the newspaper *Hatzefira*), the Zionist leader Max Nordau (1849–1923), and many others in literary and publishing matters.[26] In this context, one may understand the establishment of the *Ahiasaf* publishing house in 1891 and Ahad Ha'am's involvement in its management and editorial policy.

We shall now examine how the above-described booksellers coped with the processes of modernization that began on the Jewish book market in this period.

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[25] E. I. Shapira to Ahad Ha'am, *Nisan* 5645, Ahad Ha'am Archive, JNUL, Arc. 4° 791/ 1031. A. Faust to Ahad Ha'am, November 10, 1896, Ahad Ha'am Archive, JNUL, Arc. 4° 791/732. Faust was active in the *S'fat Emet* (Language of Truth) Society in Krakow, which worked to develop Jewish nationalist identity through the study of the Hebrew language and Jewish history. He also took part in drafting the bylaws of the *Sefat Emet* (The language of truth) Society. On the Activities of the Jewish national movement in Krakow at the end of the 19th century see Bauminger A. (ed.), *Sefer Krakov ir va'Em be'Israel* (Jerusalem: 1959): 282–283.

[26] Parush I., *Canon sifruti ve-ideologya le'umit: bikoret ha-sifrut shel Frishman be-hashva'a le- vikoret ha-sifrut shel Klozner u-Brener* (Jerusalem: 1992): 10.

In 1902, Abraham Zuckerman's widow wrote an angry letter to Ahad Ha'am, offended by the injustice she thought had been done to her by the *Ahiasaf* Hebrew publishing house in Warsaw, of which Ahad Ha'am was one of the directors. For many years, she wrote, the Zuckerman family struggled to maintain the modest bookshop that her late husband had left behind, but the plan of the *Ahiasaf* publishing house to open a bookshop on her street (Nalewki Street in Warsaw), "facing my very door, right at my own window" would ruin her financially and bring about the total collapse of her shop. The widow concluded her letter with a request of help from Ahad Ha'am asking him to use his influence on the directors of the publishing house and to prevent them from implementing their plan. The Zuckerman family did not let matters end with this letter, but began a public fight against their competitors, albeit without success: the *Ahiasaf* bookshop opened and operated until at least 1905.[27]

The dispute of the Zuckerman family with the *Ahiasaf* publishing house was a marginal episode in the history of the Jewish book market in Warsaw, but it illuminates the changes that took place in the printing and Jewish book industry upon the appearance of modern Jewish publishing in the last decade of the 19th century. One may point out two models formed by modern secular Jewish publishers in Eastern Europe: one was the publication of books with an ideological orientation, such as those of *Ahiasaf* and *Moria* (Moriah Mountain), which was founded in 1902. Both operated in the spirit of Ahad Ha'am and published books on Jewish topics. The other model was commercial publication, guided by considerations of economic profit, e.g. *Tushiya* (1895) and *Central* (1911) publishers. Modern publishing brought new methods of production and marketing to the Hebrew book market: wide use of advertising in order to advance sales, an effective distribution system, and the publishing of book series instead of individual books, while the publishing activity of earlier booksellers was generally limited to the production of relatively few books.[28]

In the new marketing system, the old booksellers often became agents and representatives of publishing houses in their city. Aaron Faust became the chief agent of *Tushiya* Publishers in Cracow. The Zuckerman family commented on this:

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[27] Mrs. Zuckerman to Ahad Ha'am, February 26, 1902, Ahad Ha'am Archive, JNUL, Arc 4° 791/825, Zuckerman's widow and her sons. The Zuckermans' bookshop operated at least until 1915, under the management of the mother of the family and two of Abraham Zuckerman's sons.

[28] Jakubovitch B., *Hasot ve hafets sefarim rabim: korot hotsat ha-sefarim Central-Merkaz, Varsha 1911–1933* [Publishing and distribution of many books – the history of *Central-Merkaz* publishing company, Warsaw 1911–1933], MA Thesis (Tel-Aviv University: 1997): 26–88; Grunberger M. W., "Publishing and the Rise of Modern Hebrew Literature", Gold L.S. (ed.), *A Sign and a Witness: 2000 Years of Hebrew Books and Illuminated Manuscripts* (New York: 1988): 114–124.

"Our shop has been one of the first to sell *Ahiasaf* books. It seems that we have paid several thousand roubles to *Ahiasaf* Publishers for their books, and they are always displayed in the bookshop window, before the eyes of all passers-by. *Ahiasaf* books are also found in most of the other shops on this and other streets."[29]

In the field of marketing and distribution, the *Ahiasaf* publishing house introduced another innovation. It began to employ travelling agents who distributed its books in outlying cities. This method was widespread among the large Russian publishing houses, such as *Lektor* (Lector) and *Kultura* (Culture), which distributed multi-volume encyclopaedias in this way.[30] This distribution network harmed the commercial links between booksellers and their customers in outlying areas. The complaint about dispossession appears with greater force in Mrs. Zuckerman's letter:

"Does it mean so little to *Ahiasaf* that they took from me nearly all my customers that I had in Russia, Poland and abroad? Do they also want to take away from me by force other customers and individuals in Warsaw, who buy prayer books and Pentateuchs?"[31]

Additional evidence of the undermining of family businesses may be found in Mordecai Ehrenpreis's memoirs about his father's printing house in Lviv in the early 1890s:

"Massive publication of Hebrew books, for which tremendous funds were allocated, began in the entire country. My father's business, which was relatively modest, began to decline dramatically."[32]

In short, publishing houses thwarted the commercial and publishing activity of booksellers. However, the modernization of the Jewish book market in Eastern Europe in the 19th century was also related to the expansion of book offer and the addition of new sectors to the circle of readers. In the final part of this study I shall discuss these trends as they were reflected in the Jewish bookshops.

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[29] Zuckerman's widow and her sons, *Mikhtav galui le khavrei Ahiasaf* 6.

[30] Ben-Yishai A. Z., "Siferut ve itonut Ivrit be Rusia bi tekufat ha-mahpekh ve hakhareia" [Hebrew literature and journalism in Russia in the period of revolution and thereafter], *Heawar – Devoted to the History of the Russian Jews*, XV (May 1968): 165–166.

[31] Mrs. Zuckerman to Ahad Ha'am, February 26, 1902, Ahad Ha'am Archive, JNUL, Arc 4° 791/825.

[32] Ehrenpreis M., *Bein mizrakh u ma'arav* [Between East and West] (Tel-Aviv: 1953): 21; Miron D., *Bodedim bemoadam – le diokana shel ha-republika ha sifrutit ha-ivrit bresit ha-meah ha esrim* [When loners come together – a portrait of Hebrew literature at the turn of the twentieth century] (Tel-Aviv: 1987): 66–67.

Books and readers

Who were the customers of Zuckerman, Schapira, Faust, Deinard and Michaelovsky? Did the booksellers direct their activity to a fixed group of traditional customers, or did they succeed in reaching new broader sectors of readers? The booksellers' catalogues contained a wide selection of books. In some shops, manuscripts and rare Hebrew books were sold under the same roof as popular pamphlets in Yiddish and innovations in modern Hebrew literature. Booksellers made an important contribution to the distribution of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (modern Judaic studies) in Eastern Europe, both as distributors and as publishers. These studies in Hebrew, German and Russian were sold in all the shops that I researched.

For the reading public in Eastern Europe, the Hebrew newspapers of the period played a very important role in popularising the studies of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums.* The journals *Hamaggid* and *Hashahar* published the studies of Solomon Judah Rappoport (1790–1867), Samuel David Luzatto (1800–1865) and Zechariah Frankel (1801–1875). In the Russian Empire, Samuel Joseph Fuenn (1818–1890) published his work *Nidchei Yisrael* (The Outcasts of Israel, Vilna, 1850) with the purpose of paving an alternative way to *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* in an Eastern European enlightened version. Many in Eastern Europe identified with the moderate trend of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* founded by Frankel.[33] Abraham Zuckerman distributed Henrich Graetz's (1817–1891) *History of the Jews* throughout the Russian Empire and published Samuel Joseph Fuenn's dictionary *Otsar Leshon Ha-Mikra V'ha-Mishna* (A Thesaurus of the Bible and the Mishnah, Warsaw, 1884–88), Zuckerman also published Fuennn's biographical lexicon *Knesset Yisrael* (The Gathering of Israel, Warsaw, 1886–90), which included biographical surveys of prominent Jewish figures from the period of the *gaons* through the Enlightenment. Booksellers took an active part in the distribution of the books of the *Hevrat M'kitzei Nirdamim* ("Awake the Sleeping" Society) established in 1864, whose purpose was the publication of rare Hebrew manuscripts and their distribution at a low price.[34]

The bookshops offered a rich collection of popular science literature in Hebrew. The reading public was familiarised with various scientific approaches that were widespread in Europe in the 19th century. On the same shelf stood the books of Judah Leib Zosnitz that attacked the materialistic concept of science, and the work

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[33] Feiner S. (ed.) *Me-haskala lohemet le-haskala meshamert: mivhar mikhteve S. J in* [S. J Fuenn – from militant to conservative haskala] (Jerusalem: 1993): 37–38; Feiner S., *Haskala ve historia* 262–263.

[34] Kresel G., *Ha-manifest ha-rishon shel Hevrat M'kitzei Nirdamim* [The first manifest of *M'kitzei Nirdamim* Association], *Areshet* 4 (1966): 463–473.

of Moses Meirovich, *Mekor Haim* (Origin of Life, Warsaw, 1881), which dealt with Darwin's theory.[35]

Booksellers' correspondence and memoirs reveal the structure of the buying public: writers and learned people who needed a research study or a rare book for their work, fellow book dealers, and young enthusiasts of the *Haskala*, such as Gershom Bader and Ahad Ha'am, who found spiritual nourishment in the bookshops. Ahad Ha'am took his first steps in the city of Odessa in Deinard's shop in 1881, where he bought essentially philosophy and history books and language-learning manuals. Ahad Ha'am first met the members of the national organization *Bnei Zion* (Sons of Zion) in Deinard's bookshop.[36] Evidence of the existence of a young reading public is found in the foreword to his book list written by Faust in 1893. In his introduction, the bookseller scolded youths, "both big and small," for their "invalid" habit of collecting book lists from booksellers when they have no intention or ability to buy a book on the list.[37]

Did booksellers serve only young and adult persons who were lovers of the Hebrew language? Certainly not. Booksellers turned to a varied public of men, women and children, but only at the beginning of the 1890s. A statistical analysis of the titles published during three decades shows that a relative decline in Hebrew books of original and translated fiction, Jewish studies, books of history and sciences began in the 1890s. In comparison to the previous decades, there was no decline in the absolute number of Hebrew books, but the proportion of them in the catalogues decreased. On the other hand, there was a rise in the number of religious books and Yiddish books. If religious books constituted 40% of all books in the shops in the 1870s, they made up 60% of the stock in the 1890s.[38] Considering the original character of the bookshops that we studied – i.e. as distribution centres of modern secular Hebrew books, – one may say that in the course of time these shops greatly changed their character. How can we understand these processes? We assume that these changes in the bookshops indicate the widening of the circle of readers and the formation of a popular reading culture. If in the 1870s booksellers appealed to a limited public of the lovers of the Hebrew language, in the 1890s they began to sell large quantities of Yiddish books and religious books in order to supply the needs of the public at large. An examination of book prices in the catalogues even shows that in the 1890s there was a drop in the prices of Yiddish books and

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[35] For a detailed discussion of the selection of science books in Hebrew and Yiddish in Jewish bookshops in Eastern Europe at the close of the 19th century see Cohen H., *Ba-hanuto shel mokher ha-sefarim* 129–138.

[36] Goldstein J., *Ahad Ha-Am* (Jerusalem: 1992): 61–67.

[37] Faust A., *Katalog shel sefarim* 177–178. For a detailed discussion of the reading material of young *maskilim* in Eastern Europe in the 19th century see Parush I., *Reading Women* 101–135.

[38] Cohen H., *Ba-hanuto shel mokher ha-sefarim* 160–178.

religious books. Acquiring these was cheaper for the customer of the 1890s than for the customer of the 1870s.[39]

The appearance of a popular reading culture was supported by an increase in literacy among both men and women. A survey of literacy conducted among the Jewish population of Ukraine in 1926 showed an increase in literacy rate among women between the age of 40 and 55. Referring to this survey, we find that in the 1880s and onward there was a steady rise of female readers of Yiddish – a trend that continued into the beginning of the 20th century. We used the data of the survey of 1926 in order to show the extent of reading in Yiddish among men and women from the second half of the 19th century until the beginning of the 20th century. We did this on the assumption that the learning of languages took place primarily until the age of 25. The age spans in the survey of 1926 range from 4 to 100. The data presented here reflect literacy among 25-year-olds in the course of various decades.[40]

The result is that from the 1880s there was a steady increase in women readers of Yiddish – a tendency that continued into the early 20th century. If in 1871 only 25% of women read Yiddish, by 1896 their number reached 45,5%. Among men the increase trend was expressed twenty years earlier, i.e. in the 1860s. A major gap that existed between men and women in this respect was reduced almost completely at the beginning of the 20th century.[41]

It follows then that the increase in popular publications in Yiddish was supported from the outset by a suitable level of reading ability, which encouraged men and especially women to join the circle of readers.

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[39] Ibid. 162–166.

[40] These figures are taken from the study by Stampfer Sh., *Yediat kro v'ktav etzel yehudei mizrah eiropa b'tekufa ha-hadasha"* [Literacy among Eastern European Jews in the modern era], Almog Sh. , Bartal Y., eds., *Tmurot b'historia ha-yehudit ha-hadasha: kovetz ma'amarim shai l'Shmuel Etinger* [Changes in the new Jewish history: a collection of articles presented to Shmuel Ettinger] (Jerusalem, 1988): 460–480. Stampfer noted that until the second half of the 19th century, most of the printed Jewish material was a linguistic challenge to the majority of Jews, since relatively little was printed in Yiddish, as opposed to what was printed in Hebrew. He claimed that specifically at the beginning of the 19th century, many books written in Yiddish did not reach the broad public. For additional discussion of literacy among Eastern European Jews see Corrsin S. D., "Language Use in Cultural and Political Change in Pre-1914 Warsaw: Poles, Jews and Russification", *Slavonic and East European Review*, 68/1(1990): 69–90; idem, "Aspects of Population Change and of Acculturation in Jewish Warsaw at the End of the 19th Century: The Censuses of 1882 and 1897", *Polin*, 7 (1992): 122–141; Perlmann J., "Russian Jewish Literacy in 1897: A Reanalysis of Census Data", *Proceedings of the Eleventh World Congress of Jewish Studies*, 3 (The World Union of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem: 1994): 23–30.

[41] Cohen H., *Ba-hanuto shel mokher ha-sefarim*163–174.

In short, Jewish bookshops precisely reflect the cultural developments that began among Eastern European Jewry in the 19ᵗʰ century. These processes are: the development of a mass reading culture fostered by a huge rise in Yiddish literacy and the formation of the Jewish reading public interested in modern literary approaches; the growing strength of the Jewish national movement, which pressed for the modernization of the Jewish book market. We sought to examine these processes from the perspective of modest cultural agents who operated "behind the scenes". In doing so, we have added additional voices to the cultural history of the Jews of Eastern Europe.

THE CONSTRUCTED JEW.
A PRAGMATIC APPROACH FOR DEFINING A COLLECTIVE CENTRAL EUROPEAN IMAGE OF JEWS[*]

ESZTER B. GANTNER, MÁTYÁS KOVÁCS

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the socialist regimes one can witness noticeable phenomena in Central and Eastern Europe in the forms of Jewish festivals, programs, restaurants or sightseeing. Jewish culture, or at least the juggling with certain well-known elements of Jewish culture in the emerging and flourishing Jewish cultural space can be taken in the very act principally in Berlin, Cracow and Prague. The main criterion of this cultural space is that in many cases it is not related to Jewish personalities, organizations and institutions. Thus the state of the space organized from the outside of Jewish culture and life is mainly defined by non-Jews and non-Jewish institutions. It is remarkable how the flourishing of this Jewish cultural space is noticeable mainly in countries like Poland and Germany, where there has been no considerable Jewish presence since the Holocaust.

Since the 1980s several studies examined this phenomenon,[1] concentrating mainly on the USA, Western Europe and more precisely on former West Germany. It is no mere chance that after long decades of silence the interest in Jewish culture as well as in the Holocaust gained widespread interest in the USA and also in West Germany. When the film "Holocaust – The Story of the Family Weiss"[2] appeared on television in 1979, it broke the silence that surrounded the Holocaust and was the very first action to turn broad attention to Jewish culture and through this to the loss of Jews itself.

The Paris-based historian Diana Pinto was the first to describe the Jewish cultural space in the European context and to outline the reason of the demand for Jewish or pseudo-Jewish culture. In her essay[3] she interpreted the Jewish space as the emerging remorse of Western societies since the 1980s over the loss of their Jews. In

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[*] The article translated with the help of Daniel Katona and Michael Miller.

[1] See, e.g. Rabinbach A., Zipes J. (eds.), *Germans and Jews Since the Holocaust. The Changing Situation In West Germany* (New York: 1986), Gilman Sander L., Remmler K., *Reemerging Jewish Culture in Germany* (New York: 1994), Webber J. (ed.), *Jewish Identities in the New Europe* (London, Washington: 1994), Bodemann M. Y., *Gedächtnistheater. Die jüdische Gemeinschaft und ihre deutsche Erfindung* (Hamburg: 1996).

[2] Directed by Marvin Chomsky, 1978–79.

[3] Pinto D., "A New Jewish Identity for Post-1989 Europe", *JPR Policy Paper*, 1 (London: 1996).

her opinion, filling up the Jewish space is an attempt of Western society to integrate Jewish remembrance and history as well as the Holocaust in their national culture; however, this does not suppose the physical presence of Jews.

Opposing the notion of Pinto, which also implies the participation of Jewish actors in this cultural space, Michal Y. Bodemann uses the expression *Judaising milieu* referring to the determining role of non-Jewish actors:

> Literature is full of Jewish topics, Germans are reading Jewish stories in an imaginary Yiddish milieu with Yiddish-like gestures, (…) even the original Eastern-European Jewish *klezmer* music itself is not only popular in contemporary Germany, but also almost exclusively played by German musicians.[4]

In addition to exposing and drawing a possible interpretation of the theses found in the quoted researches, we direct our attention primarily on the constructed Jewish spaces of Central Europe established in the shadows of religious Jewish life and culture. This essay has two focuses. Firstly, after outlining the historical and theoretical background of Jewish space, we introduce our theory of the funding elements of **the constructed Jew**, a common Central European image of Jews. Secondly, we put the position of the Hungarian capital Budapest into a new light as a possible counter-image to the tendencies of Berlin, Cracow or Prague. We also analyse if Budapest, the unquestionable centre of Hungarian Jewish culture and the home of the region's largest continuous community, is influenced by the impulses coming from the outside of the religious community's life.

Jewish cultural space

As Tibor Mester has argued, "Contemporary space theories conceptualise the city space as an encyclopaedia of knowledge attached to everyday practices, routines, roles, forms, memories, pictures and other representations, which is pro- and re-created by the interaction of certain social groups in this space. Within this, the cognitive approach defines the city space as a space mentally organized by the insiders – thus a reality perceived and felt or interlaced and filled with the values of people."[5]

In other words, each minority creates its own space. Insofar as a minority defines a given territory with buildings of a specified function – as in the case of Jews, since *sine qua nons* of the Jewish religious practice are such institutions as the synagogue, the *mikva*, kosher shops etc., – a physically labelled space becomes also a symbolical

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4 Bodemann M. Y., *Gedächtnistheater* 52.
5 Mester T., "Pécsi városlakók mentális térképei – egy kutatás tapasztalatai", Böhm G., Mester T., Kovács N., Tímea (eds.), *Terek és szövegek. Újabb perspektívák a városkutatásban* (Budapest: 2005): 71.

one. This place, where the members of the community live their everyday life attached to the special institutions, also creates a common basis of identification.

After the Holocaust one cannot circumvent the question, to what extent the space remains representative, what kind of symbols it can bear, if it still bears any, once the community that had used it vanished, and if these symbols still have any meaning in the absence of a community.

The Jewish space/*judaisierenes Milieu* indicates an intellectual space, which is filled with interest in Jewish issues and with the interpretation of Jewish topics by non-Jewish surroundings. However, while Pinto emphasizes the (re)discovery and the way of interpretation of Jewish culture in European countries, Bodemann takes the activity of non-Jewish actors as the basis for his definition:

> This Judaising milieu is populated by proselytes, German members of German-Jewish or German-Israeli institutions and associations and several 'professional-almost-Jews' tinkering away inside or outside them.[6]

Incorporating this into her own theory, Ruth Ellen Gruber expands the notion of Jewish cultural space *ad infinitum*, which makes an adequate description of the phenomenon even more difficult:

> I think of this 'universalization' of the Jewish phenomenon and its integration into mainstream European consciousness, this emergence of a 'Judaising terrain' and 'Judaising milieu' in all their widely varied, conscious and unconscious manifestations, as a 'filling' of the Jewish space which encompasses the creation of a Virtual Jewishness, a Virtual Jewish World by non-Jews – 'Virtual Jews'.[7]

These determinations focus primarily on Western Europe, thus on one hand, they do not reflect on the peculiarities of the Central or Eastern European Jewish space, and on the other, the widely defined notions are incorporating every phenomenon that can be labelled as *Jewish*. Accordingly, the subject matter of our study is not the Jewish space defined vaguely by Pinto or the researchers above, but the phenomenon of the Jewish space related to the physical space.

The Jews as a group possess determinate symbols and create their own spaces physically as well as symbolically. In Central Europe the Jewish space in a physical sense (the ancient Jewish quarter) and also the buildings in a symbolical sense (synagogue and other community buildings) are filled up with Jewish content as sets in the absence of a living Jewish community. Hence by a constructed Jewish cultural space we mean a space, in which Jewish elements are assigned by non-Jewish actors. Furthermore, this

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[6] Bodemann M. Y., *Gedächtnistheater* 51.
[7] Gruber R. E., "A Virtual Jewish World", Kovács A. (ed.), *Jewish Studies at the CEU: II. Yearbook (Public Lectures 1999–2001)* (Budapest: 2001): 69.

space thrives around ancient synagogues and other buildings of former religious purpose. The ancient functional (ritual, etc.) buildings, the fact itself that once they played a decisive role in the life of a community legitimate the Jewishness of the cultural space built around them – even after the vanishing of the community. The "newcomers" to this space – non-Jewish organizations, tourist offices, etc. – repeatedly neglect the existence/non-existence of the community, as well as community/religious interpretations of the area or buildings.[8] So the bases of Jewishness of the so-called Jewish quarters are the buildings and the mental images related to them. These images restore some kind of a desired ancient past, showing a *homogenous* image of Jews.

Our interpretation is a transition between the vague perception of Pinto/Bodemann/Gruber and the theory of Richard Papp.[9] The latter, a Hungarian cultural anthropologist, in his essay "Is There a Jewish Renaissance?" states that the symbolical Jewish space coexists alongside the closed ritual community on the traditional *halakhic* system of values and norms that is connected to the practice of the ritual forms of life and to the cultural spaces "invisible" and "closed" to outsiders.

We analyse the constructed Central European Jewish spaces with the help of a trilateral model of (i) the cultural and historical origins of the Jewish cultural space in Central Europe, (ii) the contemporary constructions within this space including our idea of **the constructed Jew**, and (iii) introducing Budapest as a possible counter-image to Central European homogeneity of these spaces.

Jewish cultural space in Central Europe

"'Central Europe' is a case in point. Much ink has been spilled about where Central Europe is; in other words, how it is to be geographically defined. Yet the lines which are drawn around territories are not as important in this instance as the lines which link cities. The easiest way of defining the cultural world of Central Europe around 1900 is as the set of connections which linked Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Brno, Trieste, Cracow, Berlin, Breslau, Lemberg and Czernowitz, among others. Urban culture is thus as much about networks as it is about boundaries."[10]

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[8] A synagogue without a Torah scroll loses its ritual function for religious Jews. In everyday language the synagogue is often referred to as a church, as the "House of God" as a Christian interpretation, instead of the original "place of assembly". It is well demonstrated by the case of the synagogue in Óbuda, a district of Budapest: though it is used as a television warehouse, in vernacular it is referred to as a synagogue.

[9] Papp R., *Van-e zsidó reneszánsz? Kulturális antropológiai válaszlehetőségek egy budapesti zsidó közösség életének tükrében* (Budapest: 2004): 164.

[10] Beller S., "Big-city Jews: Jewish Big City – the Dialectics of Jewish Assimilation in Vienna c. 1900", Gee M., Kirk T., Steward J. (eds.), *The City in Central Europe* (Aldershot, Brookfield: 1999): 145–159.

Central Europe was greatly influenced by German culture as well as the prevalent presence of Jews. The latter is important, because the Jews as a group are often related to a kind of "Central Europeanism" in social sciences.[11] Internationalism and multilingualism[12] could help Jews act as a cultural mediator,[13] as the assimilated Jewish middle class had an incontestable effect on Central European culture and mentality. By means of its culture-generating capability, the Jewish intelligentsia and urban middle class created a modern, accepting and open substance simultaneously in Central European cities, which is still a subject of research. This heritage became part of the self-concept of these cities and its elements can also be found in the Jewish cultural space.[14]

One of the principal characteristics of Central Europe, and more precisely of the late Habsburg Empire was **heterogeneity**: various cultures, nations and ethnic groups lived side by side in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The Jews in this region were also characterized by plurality: besides the urbanized Jews, assimilated to the given national language and culture (Czech, Hungarian, etc.), one can find a broad spectrum ranging from the traditionalist communities who spoke Yiddish, or the Jewish proletariat engaged in Zionist political movements, to the upper middle-class Jews, well known from literature. Innumerable forms of life characterized Central Europe.

In contrast to the former plurality in today's Berlin, Cracow and Prague one may find a tourism-overwhelmed interest in Jewish culture. The object of this essay is to examine the marketing of the local and European Jewish heritage in the forms of festivals – and to trace its programs back to their initial elements.

The construction of the Jewish cultural space

In the examined cities festivals are organized without exception in the constructed Jewish spaces. When their programs are announced, the areas where a large Jewish population once indeed lived are still referred to as Jewish districts or even ghettos. But at the same time, the notions of ghetto and Jewish district are very often confused. To make a difference we use the definition of the Encyclopaedia Judaica:[15] the ghetto is a residence of Jews determined by laws, separated from the non-Jewish surroundings

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[11] Hanák P., "Alkotóerő és pluralitás Közép-Európa kultúrájában", *Budapesti Negyed*, 22 (Budapest: 1998): 251–270.

[12] Diner D., "Scope and Meaning of 'Secondary Conversions'", presentation at the conference *From Pre-Modern Corporation to Post-Modern Pluralism – Diasporic Cultures and Institutions of the Jews between Empire and National State Empires and Jews*, Simon Dubnow Institute (Leipzig, February 22–24, 2003).

[13] Beller S., "Big-city Jews" 74.

[14] Like, for example, the elements of the Jewish coffee-house culture in the form of cabarets, jokes and literary adaptations.

[15] *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 7 (Jerusalem: 1971): 542–543.

by a wall or a gate. The phenomenon of the ghetto first appeared in the 16th century Venice and then spread all over Europe until the 19th century, only to be "reinvented" during World War II.

A Jewish district, on the contrary, is a spontaneously evolved residential area. It is not separated from its environment in any ways; its natural borders are determined by spontaneous city development. That is why the perception of the Jewish district is tied to the residents populating it. For a traditional Jewish perception, as long as the institutions of symbolical-religious content are used adequately to their purpose, they are "alive". The secular Jewish perception, in contrast, regards the Jewish district as a cultural heritage, a melting pot of multiple secular Jewish identities. This confusing inner-Jewish discourse scrambles the non-Jewish reading as well.

> "...And One Does Not Even Need a Jew for It", says the title of György Csepeli's book,[16] in which the author examines amongst others the stereotypes of Jews. The same can be said – of course with some distortion—about these festivals: one does not even need a Jew for it. In Cracow, Prague and Berlin the Jewish population practically disappeared during World War II. (Even the Russian-Jewish immigration after the fall of the Berlin Wall, in the case of the German capital, does not change this fact.) What could be the reason for holding the biggest Jewish festivals in these Central European cities? A Jewish festival without Jews? The same can also be said about Cracow, Prague, Berlin and mostly Budapest with regard to the fact that their festivals have very little to do with the so-called living Jewish culture. The set of *topoi* that we call **the constructed Jew** is strongly related to the Jewish district facility, created in non-Jewish social consciousness.

The constructed Jew[17] is made up of the triad of the Holocaust, *yiddishkeit* and 'the good old times' *topoi*. The fact that the festivals' programs consist predominantly of events that are directly related to one of these shows how profound the three basic elements are. There is no Jewish festival in Central Europe that would not remember the Holocaust, Hasidic Jewry and the nostalgic cohabitation[18] of Jews and non-Jews at the time of the idealized, peaceful turn of the century (and sometimes well before or in the interwar period).

From the three *topoi* mentioned above the Holocaust is the least necessary to be explained here. Since 1945 and especially since 1990, accepting the reality of the Holocaust and offering the Jewish minority compassion and support became part of the public commitment of every social group or political power that defines itself as

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[16] Csepeli G., *...és nem is kell hozzá zsidó. Az antiszemitizmus társadalom-lélektana* (Budapest: 1990): 27–28.

[17] Not to be confused with Alain Finkielkraut's imaginary Jew (*Le Juif imaginaire*), in Finkielkraut A., *A képzelt zsidó* (Budapest: 2001).

[18] See Fenyvesi Ch., *Mikor kerek volt a világ* (Budapest: 2001).

democratic. Because of the psychical weight of the things that happened this may be today the alpha and omega of thinking of Jewry.

The piping times of peace can be invoked as sightseeing (Berlin: "The Jewish theatre in the Weimar Republic"), concerts (Budapest: "Mahler- and Gershwin-night") or a book presentation (Cracow: "The wonderful world of Hayim Nahman Bialik"). But it can be anything that goes back to the times of the Jewish/non-Jewish coexistence before the Holocaust that one yearns nostalgically for. On the other hand, it is important to mention that the *topoi* and their representations – besides the nostalgia – contain a latent understatement of responsibility and the parry of moral questions as well. So these times become yearned-for dreams, from which many were woken up by the Holocaust, which they would now rather forget.

The ("Catholic-born") chief organizer of the Cracow festival Janusz Makuch said[19] that he received his first deep impressions of Jewishness while reading Singer's novels. It may not be surprising that in order to attract visitors, the Cracow festival uses the *yiddishkeit topos* much more than elsewhere.[20] But it is no mere chance – which also shows the universality of this *topos* – that in the three other cities Jewish cultural festivals use *yiddishkeit* in the same way. In Berlin one can listen to the concert "*Tangele* – Yiddish Tango", in Budapest to Donizetti's "Elixir of Love" in a Hassidic (sic!) reading, in Cracow to the lecture series "From the Time of the Hassids" ("The Hassidic Conquest of Eastern Europe", "In the Court of the *Zaddik*", "The Beginnings of Hasidism in Poland", etc.), in Prague one can dance until dawn in a *klezmer*-disco. And what is more, one will hardly ever find a festival without an international cantors' concert.

Yiddishkeit as a *topos* principally means the pseudo-resuscitation, the replay of the memory and traditions of the Eastern European Hasidism destroyed in World War II.[21] Everything related to it, may it be cuisine or culture, sightseeing or folklore, is a priority on the current program organiser's list. (The detailed list of the *topoi* and the related programs mentioned above can be found in the first appendix, with some pictures taken from the "everyday life" of the constructed Jewish cultural space in the second appendix.)

These *topoi* and the festivals give a rough social perception of Jewry. The constructed Jew is present in each of the four cities, and as they are determining points in Central Europe, we can conclude that the performing of the constructed Jew and the attitude of acting upon it is general in the region.

The image of Jews that is presented/played in festivals is homogenous; the festivals ignore, with some exceptions, the cultural diversity of the Jews. They give no place

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[19] *EJP*, European Jewish Press, Conflict Over Cracow Jewish Festival, July 12, 2005, http://www.ejpress.org/article/culture/1537

[20] Of course, we do not mean that it is due to Janusz Makuch; it is rather due to the commonplace association of an Eastern European ghetto-like former Jewish district with the Hassids.

[21] Papp R., *Van-e zsidó reneszánsz?* 162–171 (on the ghetto, *shtetl* and *yiddishkeit*).

for alternative interpretations; Jews do not have other legitimate perception as the given scheme is sold as chosen, dominated by the triad of Holocaust, Hasidism and the good old times.

The districts mostly populated by Jews at the turn of the century today become imaginary ghettos, as one and a half centuries of assimilating politics – a set of *topoi*. After all, there is nothing more left for the festivals' visitors and inquirers than this Central European "theme park". This unexpressed (and unnoticed) conflict is well described in the American context by Raphael Samuel:

> The charge is that [the metropolitan intelligentsia] wants to commodify the past and turn it into tourist kitsch, presenting a 'Disneyfied' version of history in place of the real thing.[22]

As we have demonstrated before, the situation is similar in Berlin, Cracow and Prague. And as long as festivals remain the only living channel of Jewish appearance, there will hardly be anything more to listen to than the constructed Jew.

Jewish heritage and the constructed Jewish cultural space of Budapest

Budapest is home to Central Europe's largest historically continuous Jewish community. András Kovács' *Jews in Contemporary Hungary*[23] and Zvi Gitelman's *Reconstructing Jewish Communities and Jewish Identities in Post-Communist East Central Europe*[24] both analyse the possibilities of regaining individual and communal identity, and moreover, both of them emphasize the pluralism of Jewish identity after 1989. This pluralism determines the self-definitions inside the Jewish communities, the relation with other Jews and the evolving local Jewish culture. The peculiarity of this pluralism is that today's communities reformed after 1989 try to find their diachronic place in the history of the Hungarian Jewish religious interpretation, though their organizational framework and financial support is determined by foreign patterns and institutions.[25]

While analysing the cities of the region, we have described how local communities affect the constructed Jewish cultural space. Budapest differs from Berlin, Cracow or Prague not only in the fact that the presence of strong official Jewish institutions

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[22] Samuel R., "Theme Parks – Why Not?", Miles M., Hall T., Borden I. (eds.), *The City Cultures Reader* (London, New York: 2000): 106–108.

[23] Kovács A. (ed.), *Zsidók a mai Magyarországon* (Budapest: 2002).

[24] Gitelman Z., "Reconstructing Jewish Communities and Jewish Identities in Post-Communist East Central Europe", Kovács A. (ed.), *Jewish Studies at the CEU: I. Yearbook (Public Lectures 1996–1999)* (Budapest: 2001).

[25] Vincze K. Z.*A zsidó valláshoz való "visszatérők" Budapesten – A hagyománytól való elszakadás és a báál tsuvá jelenség kérdései*, Manuscript of a doctoral dissertation (2005): 43.

affects the space, but also in the fact that the grass-roots Jewish subculture itself creates its own ways of interpretation.

Due to its continuous community and its remaining Jewish organizational structures Budapest is a reservoir of several different processes. The presence of a Jewish cultural space defined by official institutions is undeniable – non-Jewish organizations take only a small part in it.[26]

The contradiction is that the reading of Jewishness of the official Hungarian-Jewish associations not surprisingly conforms to the expectations of the assimilated adult generations that were raised on the *kultúrzsidó* (culturally Jewish) concept[27] of the 1960s and of the non-Jewish society. Of course, it does not reflect on the new generations, which may have evolved new self-definitions and for whom the religion itself, Israel and the new forms of identities are natural. That is why the appearance of Jewish subcultures in Budapest is not surprising. The epicentres of this (like cafés *Szóda*, *Szimpla*, *Sark* etc.) can also be found in the former Jewish district and ghetto, in the inner 7th district. However, it was not the sole reason for their becoming a "Jewish place". There is an interaction taking place, because with their presence and their admitted Jewish identity they enhance the Jewish character of these meeting-places, giving them a new interpretation compared to the traditional religious one. The newest example of this is the reinterpretation of "Tartuffe" of the *Budapesti Zsidó Színkör* (The Jewish Drama Group of Budapest) presented in *Sark* café. In the play by Moliére the actors and actresses – using the classical piece as a frame – reflect on the *genius loci* and on their own Jewishness as well.

This subculture flourishing in the older Jewish district may be explained by its inner-city location, atmospheric ruined buildings and cobbled narrow streets, while in Újlipótváros, another district of Budapest (the 13th), where the Jewish population is dense,[28] one would be unable to find places like *Sark* or *Szóda* – though all those markers that could make a district Jewish are present.[29]

The two districts may be distinguished by the antonyms orthodoxy/neology, or rather dissimilation/assimilation. This discrepancy, the wide range of Jewish identities may give a new basis for the vitalisation of the Jewish cultural space against all homogenising tendencies.

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[26] Except, for example, the Holocaust Memorial in Páva Street.

[27] Endre Sós, the leader of the community between 1957–66, announced the concept of being "culturally Jewish", but of Hungarian nationality. It is passed on to the assimilating tradition in Hungary since 1867. Csorba L., "Izraelita felekezeti élet Magyarországon a vészkorszaktól a nyolcvanas évekig", Lendvai L. F., Sohár A., Horváth P. (eds.), *Hét évtized a hazai zsidóság életében*, II (Budapest: 1990): 140.

[28] Ladányi J., "Zsidóság, szegregáció", *Élet és Irodalom*, 52 (Budapest: 2002): 10.

[29] It has functioning synagogues, a numerous Jewish population and local memory that dates from more than a century ago, which was shaped by *Mogendovid*-signed houses and by the traditions of the assimilated, wealthy Jewish middle class. Benedek M., *Naplómat olvasom* (Budapest: 1965), Kaffka M., *Állomások* (Budapest: 1917/1957).

In contrast to Berlin, Cracow or Prague, the official Jewish organizations do shape the Jewish cultural space in Budapest. At the same time, even if it seems a paradox, the Hungarian Jewish organizations themselves, which have been institutionalising a long-term assimilation strategy since the last third of the 19th century, transmit a homogeneous image of Jews to the public and to the Jewry itself, and in doing so, hinder the unfolding of plurality. So, if we talk about the homogenisation of Budapest's Jewish cultural space, it is due as much to external actors as to biased conceptions inside official structures.

Conclusions

The Jewish cultural heritage of the four cities is related mostly in terms of how they processed and presented this in the past few decades. The elaboration of the constructed Jew by tearing out certain elements and universalising them is an essential phenomenon in all of the analysed cities. We have also mentioned that in Prague and Cracow the local community is socially insignificant, and though there is a comparatively larger one in Berlin, the situation is almost the same.[30] The examples indicate the paradox that even if the side of Jewish actors is dominant (as in the case of Budapest), the opinion leaders still express themselves referring to the created model, accepting the homogenising image that ignores the diversity of Jewish existence and is ingrained in the non-Jewish environment.

After the changes of 1989–90, the process of reconstruction of national consciousness started, in which the (re)discovery of the culture of Central European Jews can also be integrated. The value of their own traditions was realised not only by the local Jewish communities, but also – as part of the *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (mastering the past) – by the non-Jewish majority. The ways of discovering Jewish culture and its institutionalisation (just think of the scientific institutes for the research of Jews in the ex-socialist countries, or the institutions of the Holocaust's national reception, such as Holocaust memorials) were and still are defined by the non-Jewish society. This was the case, for example, with the controversy about the Holocaust Memorial in Germany, in which predominantly non-Jewish organizations, institutions and personalities participated,[31] albeit most of them ignored the opinion of the Jewish community. But this very example also points out that the interpretation of Jewish culture is mainly defined by the Judaising context.[32] The homogenous image of the Jews and the constructed pseudo-Jewish culture not only oppose the process of Jewish self-interpretation, but also obstruct the development of an authentic and plural Jewish cultural space.

[30] Lackmann Th., *Jewrassic Park* (Berlin: 2000).
[31] Schneider R. Ch., *Fetisch Holocaust. Die Judenvernichtung – verdrängt und vermarktet* (Berlin: 1997).
[32] Bodemann Michal Y., *Gedächtnistheater* 52.

Extract from the programs of the Berlin, Budapest, Cracow and Prague Jewish Cultural Festivals in 2005 highlighting the three above-mentioned *topoi*

APPENDIX

'Good old times' as a *topos*

Location	Program title	Program genre
Berlin	Sammy Gronemann and the German-Jewish Tohu-wabohu	performance
	Kurfürstendamm in the 1920s	performance
	Russians? Jews? Charlottengrader (Charlottenburg in the 1920s)	performance
	Hommage à Paul Graetz	cabaret
	Aspects of the 1920s	performance
	Brecht/Weill: Mahagony-Songspiel	concert
	L'heure bleue – The blue hour. Jewish cabaret- and chansonsinger of the 1920s	concert
	Berliner chamber music in the 1920s	concert
	Meeting in Scheunenviertel	concert
	Berlin, Alexanderplatz	city tour
	The Potsdamer Platz	city tour
	Jewish theatre (in the Weimar Republic)	city tour
Budapest	Two treasures – *klezmer* and Hungarian folk songs	concert
	Blue rhapsody (Gershwin-night)	concert
	Mahler-night	concert
Cracow	*In memoriam* Rafael F. Scharf	discussion
	The Jews of Cracow – history in photographs	performance
	700 years of Cracow Jewry	exhibition
	The wonderful world of Hayim Nahman Bialik	book presentation
	Genealogy	workshop
Prague	Goldberg variations	performance

Yiddishkeit as a *topos*

Location	Program title	Program genre
Berlin	Bucovina Club: *Kosher nostra*	concert
	Tangele – Yiddish tango	concert
Budapest	International cantor concert	concert
	Donizetti-Szilágyi: Elixir of Love (in a Hassidic reading)	performance
	Solem Aleichem: Marienbad (performed in Yiddish)	performance
	The Wailing Walls (3 acts: Cain and Abel, The Wailing Walls, Yiddishe Mame)	dance performance
Cracow	Basic Judaism: Talmudic thought	presentation
	Time of the Hassids – The Beginnings of Hassidism in the Polish Lands	presentation
	Basic Judaism: Jewish medical ethics	presentation
	Time of the Hasids – Rebe Hayim Halberstam and his descendants	presentation
	Time of the Hassids – In the court of the *Zaddik*	presentation
	Basic Judaism: Is it possible to read the Torah in Polish?	presentation
	Time of the Hassids – Chabad Hassidism. Between mysticism and messianism	presentation
	Time of the Hassids – The concept of nothingness in Hassidism	presentation
	Time of the Hassids – My encounter with Hassidism	presentation
	Matzevot – the language of symbols	presentation
	Time of the Hassids – The Hassidic conquest of Eastern Europe	presentation
	Time of the Hassids – Hassidic themes in Yiddish literature	presentation
	A cantor's tale	movie screening
	From the *shtetl* to Jerusalem	exhibition
	Jewish Betrothal	exhibition
	Inspired by Jewish culture	exhibition
	Cantor concert	concert
	Traditional Jewish songs	concert
	Discovering Kazimierz	artistic workshop
	Judaica in the collection of the National Museum of Cracow	presentation
	The *Remu* cemetery	cemetery tour

Location	Program title	Program genre
	Cemetery tour	cemetery tour
	Shtetl – following the traces of Jewish villages	city tour
	In the footsteps of Balaban – a walk around Jewish Kazimierz	city tour
	Visiting Synagogues in Kazimierz	city tour
	Yiddyszland Galitzye: First steps in Yiddish	language course
	Yiddyszland Galitzye: Singing together in Yiddish	singing course
	Yiddyszland Galitzye: *Zychroines* – recollections	workshop
	Hassidic dance	dance course
	Klezmology	workshop
	Traditional Jewish songs	concert
Prague	I. B. Singer: Magician from Lublin	performance
	A. Levenbook: Stuffed fish	performance
	L. Feuchtwanger: Spanish ballad	performance
	E. Rovner: She returned one night	comedy
	Klezmer night: *klezmer* and world music discotheque	concert

Holocaust as a *topos*

Location	Program title	Program genre
Berlin	Georg Hermann: From a Berliner storyteller to the witness of anti-Semitism	performance
Budapest	Barbwire children	concert
	Wreathing memorials in the garden of the Dohány street synagogue	commemoration
	KZ Oratorio	performance
Cracow	Hitler's list	performance
	Battlefields of memory	performance
	The Work – My hometown concentration camp – Process B7815 (Film trilogy of a Survivor from Cracow)	movie screening
	"Sanatorium under the sign of Hourglass" – a tribute to Bruno Schultz	concert
	Brave Old World: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto	concert
	Ghetto – Theo Bikel teaches songs of Gebirtig	workshop
Prague	Tabori: *Mein Kampf*	performance

Jewish heritage production and historical Jewish spaces: a case study of Cracow and Berlin

Magdalena Waligórska

Jewish heritage productions are proliferating across Europe, re-claiming the historically Jewish spaces. As Jewish cuisine, folklore and music are conquering their niche in the urban cultures from Paris to Saint Petersburg and from Rome to Stockholm, the old Jewish quarters are reviving and becoming successful tourist-magnets. However, the increasing popularity of the cultural activities that pertain to Jewish tradition causes many controversies. When non-Jews handle the heritage of Eastern European Jewry, particularly in the places that witnessed the Shoah, and where the Jewish communities were almost entirely wiped out, the questions of the appropriation and commodification of culture inevitably trouble the observers. Does the revival of the Jewish heritage replace the lacking revival of Jewish life?[1] Does it produce "phantom" Jewish spaces, where stereotypes and simplifications endanger Jewish culture?[2] Does the overload of pubs and restaurants, which accompanies the heritage boom in the Jewish districts, abuse the symbolical locus of Jewish identity?[3]

Present-day Jewish heritage production has inspired a number of authors to examine the agency of this revival and the mechanisms that have brought it about.[4] Too little attention, however, has been devoted so far to the space where the Jewish heritage boom is happening. The space of the Jewish heritage production in today's Europe is not a mere backdrop to the cultural production, but has a greater meaning also as a factor that legitimates the revival. The way in which the spaces of the Jewish revival are employed for the purposes of cultural production, and how they become "discovered" or "reinvented" by the revival, differs in various places across Europe.

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[1] Gruber R. E., „Wierzchołek nieistniejącej góry", *Tygodnik Powszechny* (Kraków: July 3, 2005).

[2] Slobin M., *Fiddler on the Move, Exploring the Klezmer World* (Oxford: 2000).

[3] Halkowski H., "Rodzinny dom w knajpę przemieniony, czyli o kiczu na Kazimierzu", *Midrasz* (Warszawa: March, 2006): 16–19.

[4] For instance, Eckstaedt A., *„Klaus Mit Der Fiedel, Heike Mit Dem Bass..."*: *Jiddische Musik in Deutschland* (Berlin/Wien: 2003); Gruber R. E., *Virtually Jewish: Reinventing Jewish Culture in Europe* (Berkeley: 2002); Kirshenblatt-Gimblett B., „Sounds of Sensibility", *Judaism*, 47, no. 1 (American Jewish Congress, New York: 1998): 49–78; Sapoznik H., *Klezmer!* (New York: 1999); Strom Y., *The Book of Klezmer* (Chicago: 2002).

This text explores two examples of this kind of revival: the scene of Jewish heritage music in Cracow and Berlin. In the last 15 years both of these urban centres have been rediscovering the legacy of Ashkenazi Jews. Artists and cultural organizers started to draw not only on the spatial potential of the Jewish spaces, but also on the myths that it had inspired. Thus, musicians, painters and sculptors uncovered for themselves the mysterious and abandoned Jewish quarters, often resorting to clichés and romanticising. Alongside with this process, important changes began to take place in the rediscovered Jewish areas: increased tourism not only brought about regeneration and investments, but also led to interferences in the architectonic structure and "Disneylandising".

The revival of Jewish music has played a crucial role in triggering the interest in Jewish heritage in general. Being an accessible and popular medium, *klezmer*[5] music quickly became a recognizable symbol of Jewish legacy in Europe. *Klezmer* is the traditional instrumental music of the Ashkenazi Jews, which accompanies the celebrations like weddings, bar mitzvahs, certain religious holidays and dancing events. In the 1980s, after the American *klezmer* bands touring Europe had popularised the genre, *klezmer* left the narrow niche it had been occupying after the Second World War, and turned into a trendy genre of world music. Secular in nature, and not requiring any background knowledge to enjoy it, *klezmer* appeals to a wider audience than just those interested in Jewish culture. Therefore, it constitutes an important representation of Jewish culture and, at the same time, a modern medium of memory.[6]

The fact that heritage productions taking place in the historical Jewish spaces became such powerful representations of Jewishness raises many moral and philosophical questions. The nature of the re-enactment of Jewish culture after the Shoah involves the same duality that Roger Chartier ascribed to all representations. In his definition, every representation envisages something that is absent, but constitutes at the same time a presence.[7] On one hand, therefore, what is doing the representation is not the same as what is represented, because it can only be an image, a symbol of something that is not there. In this sense, representations, such as the *klezmer* revival, point to the post-Holocaust void in Europe. On the other hand, however, a representation is a material entity or an artistic act, which is out there and exists on its own rights. In other words, it is more real than the thing it stands for.

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[5] Klezmer is a Yiddish contraction of two Hebrew words: *kley* – vessels and *zemer* – song. The word literally meant "the vessels of song", which was understood as a musical instruments and later became an expression for a Jewish musician; today it also signifies the musical genre. For the history of the genre see, for example, Rogovoy S., *The Essential Klezmer* (Chapel Hill: 2000); Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*; Strom Y., *The Book of Klezmer*.

[6] Nora P., "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Memoire", *Representations*, 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (University of California Press, Berkeley: 1989): 17.

[7] Chartier R., *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations* (Cambridge: 1988): 7–8.

The *klezmer* revival embodies the same definitional schizophrenia. On one hand, it is a means of "mediated knowledge" about Jewish life in Europe. On the other, it is a substitute for it, something that has occupied the space in lieu of the missing Jewish culture. Whether defined as a symbol for the absence, or an independent presence, the *klezmer* revival triggers controversy. If considered as a medium of *knowledge* about the past, its use of clichés undermines its historical objectivity. But how can representations operate without stereotypes? The conventionalised images and symbols secure the recognizability of the representation. On the other hand, though, conventionalised images cannot embrace the complexity of the historical facts that they aspire to represent. In the case of the *klezmer* revival, many nuances of Jewish life get lost or distorted in the *shtetl* cliché adopted by some artists.

The use of historical Jewish spaces in heritage production matters greatly for how this representation of Jewishness is received. A space-centred analysis of the revival can, therefore, shed new light on where, how and under which conditions heritage productions become successful, as well as how they make use of the historical *loci* that they occupy. Historians rediscovered space in the last decades, noticing that "history takes place" and cultures are imagined through the locations where they take shape.[8] The spatial turn in historiography proved the need to consider space equally important as temporality. Just as history cannot happen without a particular location, neither can culture.

The focus on simultaneity, palimpsest-like quality of reality, and many-layered perception of spaces is the contribution of the spatial turn to history-writing.[9] This marriage of geography and history permitted to examine for the first time the importance of space for human emotions, values and myths.[10] The discovery of humans' affective ties with the environment, or *topophilia*,[11] became the starting point for the analysis of space as the locus of memories. And the belief that there are as many places as there are actors, perspectives and representations that define them, allowed for a more pluralistic perception of space.[12]

Following this approach, I will look at the space of the *klezmer* revival as a subject of myth-making and rival representations, and a place whose authenticity is employed to legitimise the "virtually Jewish"[13] heritage production.

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[8] Schlögel K., *Im Raume Lesen Wir Die Zeit. Über Zivilisationsgeschichte Und Geopolitik* (München: 2003): 70.

[9] Among the pioneers of the spatial turn in the 1970s were Yi-Fu Tuan, Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja and David Harvey.

[10] Tuan Y.-F., *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (London: 1977).

[11] *Topophilia*, or people's love for a place, is a term coined in: Tuan Y.-F. , *Topophilia. A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: 1974).

[12] Schlögel K., *Im Raume Lesen Wir Die Zeit.*

[13] The term "virtually Jewish" comes from: Gruber R. E., *Virtually Jewish: Reinventing Jewish Culture in Europe*. The author used it to denote Jewish heritage productions performed by non-Jews in the present-day Europe.

Fig. 1. Street musicians playing next to an old Jewish cemetery in the Jewish district of Cracow, 2006 (photo: Magdalena Waligórska).

1. Jewish spaces and the Jewish cultural revival

In the case of a revival that pertains to a certain historical past, the historicity of the place becomes a powerful means of legitimisation for any revivalist activities. Where authenticity matters, the historical character of the space is a big advantage for the agents of the revival, especially in the case where the authenticity of their effort is being questioned, as it happens with the *klezmer* revival in Europe, where many of its participants are not Jewish.

While the American revival has been almost entirely contained within the Jewish community and deeply related to the Jewish identity of its participants, the European *klezmer* scene refers to the **spatial** roots of the genre. Many European musicians identify with *klezmer* music not through the ethnic bonds, but through the spatial bonds, that is, they recognise *klezmer* as their music, because it comes from the same *place* as they do (if not from the same ethnic group).

The relation between space and heritage production is not uni-directional, though. It is not only the space that grants authenticity to cultural practices, but these practices also help to generate the identity of the space by rediscovering its past. This dialectical process has been taking place in the case of two spaces of Jewish heritage production in Cracow and Berlin.

Jewish space in Kazimierz (Cracow)

The revival of Jewish culture in Europe might be taking place in the absence of the actual Jews, but not in a total vacuum. What provides a powerful engine for the phenomena like the *klezmer* revival is the material presence of the Jewish element in European cities: the historically authentic spaces embody the essence of the "Jewish spirit", which stirs the imagination of the present-day artists. Most of the revivalist efforts concentrate on the old Jewish quarter and thereby gain their legitimacy. The way in which the revivalists refer to the historicity of the Jewish space also contains the element of creativity. The mental process of discovering the Jewish past of the urban spaces does not resemble archaeological excavations, but often conflates facts with myths and involves an active re-invention of the past.

The Cracovian revivalists are lucky because in Cracow there is an architecturally distinct and well-preserved Jewish space – the historical district of Kazimierz. It was founded in 1335 as an independent town on the outskirts of Cracow. It took its name from Casimir the Great, the king known for his particular benevolence towards Jews, as well as for his love affair with a beautiful young Jewish lady Esther. The new town that he founded was not meant to be a Jewish town, because at that time Jews had been living for centuries in the centre of Cracow, but rather as a rival town to Cracow

which, according to Casimir's plan, was to expand into an educational centre and, in the course of time, take over the royal functions of Cracow.

The new Kazimierz in the shade of the old Cracow soon proved to be of great importance to the Jews. In 1495 the Jews of Cracow, accused of provoking a serious fire, were expelled from the centre of Cracow. Their Cracovian ghetto was soon destroyed and university buildings were erected on these central and attractive parcels of land. The Jews, in their turn, moved to Kazimierz, which at that time was enclosed on an island separated from Cracow and the surroundings by the Vistula River. Around 1/5 of the entire town became the new Jewish district, the rest was Christian and built up with numerous churches, convents and monasteries. The Jewish Kazimierz prospered well over several centuries. It became an important centre of Talmudic studies, famous for its yeshiva and the outstanding rabbis who worked there: Moses Isserles (1510–1572),[14] Natan Nata Spira (1583–1633)[15] or Joel Sirkes (1583–1640).[16] The synagogues of Kazimierz were designed and decorated by Italian architects. In the 16th century the town received the privilege of *non tolerandis Christianis*.[17]

The Jewish Kazimierz prospered according to the changing fortune of the whole region and the country. Weakened by the move of the capital to Warsaw and by the numerous wars of the 17th and 18th century, and finally the partitions, it managed to raise itself from ruins under the Austrian rule. Even though various tendencies influenced the character of Jewish life in Cracow – from the emancipating impulse of the *Haskala*, to the traditionally oriented Hassidism – Kazimierz retained the character of a distinctly Jewish district until 1941. Although by that time the district had become associated with the Jewish lower classes, as the affluent Cracovian Jews moved to more prestigious districts, Kazimierz was still the heart of Jewish religious and institutional life.

The Jewish population of Kazimierz had to leave the district in March 1941 as the Nazi authorities of Cracow forced all the Jews into the ghetto on the other side of the river in the Podgórze district. Since that time, it was the Polish Christian population that lived in Kazimierz among the remnants of the culture that had perished in the Shoah. When the Cracow ghetto was liquidated in 1943, the history of Jews in that city almost came to an end.

In the period between 1945 and 1989 Kazimierz was dilapidating and gaining a bad reputation as the city's slum area. The people who settled there after the war belonged mainly to the working class. Already before the outbreak of the Second

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[14] Known also as *Remu*, the most famous rabbi of Cracow and the rector of the Yeshiva; his work *Mappa* belongs to this day to the canon of the Orthodox Jews all around the world.

[15] Known also as *Megale Amukot*, a wonder-worker and the first cabbala teacher in Cracow.

[16] Known also as *Bach* from the initials of his work *Bait Hadash*.

[17] Bałaban M., *Historja Żydów w Krakowie i na Kazimierzu 1304–1868*, 2 vols. (Kraków: 1991 [1931]).

World War, Kazimierz was the ghetto of poverty; in the communist times this state of affairs continued with the local authorities expressing no interest in revitalizing the district or protecting its Jewish heritage.

As the ownership relations became clarified after 1989, a new era began for the Jewish district. The tourist boom and the influx of foreign investment have gradually turned Kazimierz into a fashionable cultural alternative to the city centre and sightseeing must. The artistic bohemia and student life moved to Kazimierz from the commercialised Old Town to create there a new seat of the local avant-garde. Thanks to the new private owners of the houses, renovations quickly followed. The synagogues and Jewish community buildings, having been returned to the Jewish community, soon underwent restoration. It was in this climate of change that the *klezmer* revivalists discovered Kazimierz.

Klezmer in Kazimierz

There are historical records of *klezmer* musicians living and performing in the Jewish Kazimierz. In fact, it is in Cracow that the first known use of the word *klezmer* as a term for a musician occurs in a Jewish community document from 1595.[18] This tradition, however, did not survive intact until the Holocaust, as the disintegration of the *klezmer* bands in Galicia had already taken place at the end of the 19th century, due to massive emigration and the Russian pogroms against the Jews of Galicia during the First World War. Unlike in the eastern part of Galicia, in Lwów and Przemyśl, the *klezmer* tradition in Cracow is difficult to trace in the 20th century. On the basis of the earliest recordings of Jewish music on the Polish lands (starting from 1902), we can state that *klezmer* recordings were quantitatively marginal in comparison with Yiddish songs or cantorial music. Moreover, there is no trace of any such recording activity in Cracow, although there is some in Warsaw and Tarnów.[19] The *klezmer* revival in Cracow refers, consequently, to a tradition which, already well before the Second World War, was on its way out.

The interest in Jewish culture in Cracow from the outside of the Jewish community surfaced in 1988, with the first Jewish Festival in Kazimierz. Initiated by a handful of people fascinated with Jewish culture, the festival started as a show of Polish films in Yiddish, but in time it expanded to a week-long event which now hosts not only concerts of Jewish music, ranging from cantorial singing and Yiddish theatre songs

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[18] Feldman W. Z., "Remembrance of Things Past: *Klezmer* Musicians of Galicia, 1870–1940", *Polin Studies in Polish Jewry. Focusing on Jewish Popular Culture in Poland and its Afterlife*, 16 (Oxford: 2003): 29.

[19] Aylward M., "Early Recordings of Jewish Music in Poland", *Polin Studies in Polish Jewry. Focusing on Jewish Popular Culture in Poland and its Afterlife*, 16 (Oxford: 2003): 59–69.

to modern *klezmer* hip-hop, but also numerous workshops, lectures, exhibitions and walking tours. It has become the greatest manifestation of Jewish culture in Poland, which draws the attention of not only the Polish media, which run a live broadcast of the final concert, but also international audiences.

For nine days in July, when the Jewish Festival takes place, the organizers mobilise all the available performance spaces in the Jewish district: cultural institutions, synagogues and even the streets. It is one of those rare moments when all Cracow synagogues are open. Some of them, such as *Tempel* Synagogue and *Kupa* Synagogue, host concerts, lectures and workshops.

The prestige of the festival attracts the greatest stars of *klezmer*, such as the "Klezmatics", "Brave Old World", David Krakauer and others. The director of the festival has a hard time selecting the bands which are to be invited to the festival, because playing at the Cracow festival has become the dream of every *klezmer* band, and not only in Europe. In fact, in 2004 the Cracow festival was exported overseas and had its "mini-version" in New York City at the Makor/Steinhardt Center. In this way Kazimierz became the spatial reference point for Jewish heritage production in other places too.

Both the organizers of the festival and Cracow's *klezmer* musicians stress the importance of the historical space for their work. The head of the festival Janusz Makuch said:

> Cracow has turned into a symbol, a reference point on the map. Thanks to the fact that Kazimierz has never been destroyed, because it was Podgórze that was used as the ghetto, seven synagogues and all of its architectural essence is still here. However strange this may sound, these walls still contain the energy of the people who used to live here; and I believe in what Kuncewicz[20] wrote, that bodies burn, but souls don't. We face a mystery here; there is a positive energy for us here.[21]

The Jewish past of the district becomes the element that endows the cultural production generated there with special meaning. The revivalists understand their work as the continuation of the Jewish culture in the place of the greatest concentration of "Jewish energy". One of the musicians went so far as to ascribe agency to the place saying that the place *urged* the band to deal with Jewish culture: "[In the 1980s] you could sense this energy here, as if something pressed on you from the outside, as if it was waiting to be set free… then the energy sprang out and is blossoming here now."[22]

The existence of this clearly defined Jewish historical space results in the fact that most of the *klezmer* concerts take place within that space, with a certain concentration

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[20] A Polish writer and literary critic.
[21] Janusz Makuch, April 18, 2004.
[22] Jerzy Bawół, April 18, 2004.

of the tourist-targeted concerts in Jewish-theme restaurants around the area of Szeroka Street, and with more avant-garde concerts aimed at younger local audiences around Plac Nowy. In this way the Jewish historical space has been divided into two different stages for two different kinds of heritage performances. Whether sentimental and kitschy or hip and modern, the concerts in Kazimierz draw their authenticity from the special aura of the Jewish space.

Jewish spaces in Berlin

Some critical observers named Berlin the Jewish Disneyland.[23] One of the reasons why the revival of Jewish culture received such a disparaging name might be the fact that the whole phenomenon seems to be much more displaced in Berlin than in Cracow, for there is no place in Berlin, which could be called **the** Jewish district.

The history of Jews in Berlin is long and impressive, and the city does not lack visible signs of Jewish material culture. In fact, it is impossible to speak about Berlin's cultural heritage without the immense contribution of German Jews to it. And, in a way, it is this intensive participation of the Jewish artists in German high culture that makes the attempts to represent Jewish culture as a distinct culture much more complicated in Germany than in Poland.

The Jewish spaces in Berlin are numerous and scattered all around the city. Among the areas with a considerable percentage of the Jewish population before the Second World War were: Spandauer Vorstadt, Prenzlauer Berg, Ku'damm, Bayerisches Viertel, also called the Jewish Switzerland, and Scheunenviertel.[24] But it was only the last one that emerged as the focus of the *shtetl*-oriented nostalgia of today. Joachim Schlör interpreted this phenomenon of reducing the history of Berlin Jewry to one specific site as an attempt to spatially isolate the Jewish element, which was inherently woven into the history of the entire city.[25]

Why Scheunenviertel is such a convenient location for Berlin's imagined Jewish district? While the bourgeoning Jewish middle classes lived all around Berlin, the early 20th century Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe settled in Scheunenviertel, which resembled the *shtetl* that they knew. The poor refugees from the east, escaping pogroms in Russia and waves of anti-Semitic violence, made their way westwards. Many of them headed to America at that time. For others, Scheunenviertel substituted for the temporary Promised Land.

[23] Weiss I., "Jewish Disneyland – Die Aneignung Und Enteignung Des 'Jüdischen'", *Golem: Europäisch-Jüdisches Magazin*, 6 (Berlin: 2002).

[24] Eckhardt U., Nachama A. (eds.), *Jüdische Orte in Berlin* (Berlin: 2005): 166.

[25] Schlör J., "Auf Der Suche Nach Dem Ort Des Judentums", *Kritische Berichte*, 3 (Marburg: 1996): 6.

In 1925, there were 140.000 Jews in Berlin, including 40.000 foreigners, mostly *Ostjuden* who lived in Scheunenviertel. This *shtetl* microcosm within a large urban Jewish population lived according to the customs imported from Eastern Europe, which seemed entirely exotic to the assimilated Berlin Jewry. While the German post-*Haskala* Jews celebrated their holidays in the synagogues, the *Ostjuden* in Scheunenviertel celebrated also in the streets. Their traditional dress, the Yiddish that they spoke and folklore that they practiced made them much more conspicuous as Jews and were more likely to provoke anti-Semitic violence, like, for example, the 1923 pogrom which took place in Scheunenviertel.[26]

The myth of Scheunenviertel as a *shtetl* in the middle of a metropolis is problematic for two reasons. First of all, the district with its cheap rents and overpopulated houses attracted not only Jews, but also poor immigrants from the German countryside who hoped for a new life in the capital city: domestic servants, craftsmen, and prostitutes. Secondly, Scheunenviertel was just one of many Jewish spaces in Berlin, hence stereotyping Jewish life in Berlin as Scheunenviertel life is simply wrong.

But to see how pervasive the myth of the *shtetl* was, we should turn our attention to the accounts of the contemporaries who, already back in the 1920s, fell under the sinister charm of Scheunenviertel. Alexander Granach, an immigrant from Galicia who made a career as an actor in Berlin, described the district in the following way:

> Suddenly, in the midst of Berlin I found myself in the surroundings like Lvóv…Small, narrow and dark streets with fruit and vegetable stands on the corners, women with made-up faces and big keys in their hands stroll down the streets, like in Zosina-Wolia Street in Stanisław, or Szpitalna in Lwów. Many shops, restaurants, stands with eggs, butter, milk, and bakeries have the sign *Kosher*. Jews walk around dressed like in Galicia, Romania and Russia.[27]

Walter Mehring wrote in 1929 that Berlin bordered on Galicia – so powerful was the impression of the foreignness of the district. Scheunenviertel, where the underworld and criminality coexisted with Hassidic religiosity, stand in clear contrast to the wealthy Jewish areas in Oranienburger Street and around the New Synagogue. Although Eastern Jews performed many important functions in the Jewish communities of Berlin, from rabbis and cantors to Torah-scribes and producers of ritual objects, the Berlin Jewry shunned the "backward" district and its inhabitants who formed the "confessional proletariat" of Berlin. The Jews undergoing assimilation in Berlin felt that the immigrants from the East disrupted the process of full acculturation of Jews into German society. With the conspicuous

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[26] Eckhardt U., Nachama A. (eds.), *Jüdische Orte in Berlin* 33.

[27] Stiftung Scheunenviertel (ed.), *Das Scheunenviertel. Spuren Eines Verlorenen Berlins* (Berlin: 1996): 63.

way of their customs, *Ostjuden* endangered the mimicry of Berlin Jews who did not wish to outwardly appear Jewish.[28]

At the same time, however, the "exotic" and "authentic" *Ostjuden* were the source of fascination for those who saw in them the carriers of the unspoiled Jewish tradition. Consequently, the *shtetl* in the centre of Berlin became the inspiration for many artists, who decided to address their audience in Yiddish, or to represent the world of Eastern Jews. One of the liveliest cultural offspring of this Yiddish renaissance was the Yiddish theatre and cabaret. *Quarg's Vaudeville-Theater,* in the beginning of 1880s, staged the first Yiddish play in Berlin. Scheunenviertel itself, between 1901 and 1918, had three official Yiddish theatres: *Concordia-Theater* in Brunnen Straße, *Puhlmann-Theater* in Schönhauser Allee and Flora Brick's *Residenz-Ensembles* in Sophien Straße. In fact, there were many more "underground" theatres which performed without the required special permit, such as Isaak Fischler's theatre in the Hotel *Oberlaender* in *Grenadier Straße* and Leo Löwenthal's *Theater des Centrums*, which had a permit to stage plays, but only with a cast of up to four people (though the limit was repeatedly exceeded).[29]

Soon Scheunenviertel turned from a mere stage of Yiddish-language popular culture to a symbol. Walter Mehring (1896–1981) was the first playwright who brought Scheunenviertel on stage with his "Merchant of Berlin" staged in 1929 in *Theater am Nollendorfsplatz*. Around that time Yiddish cultural productions moved beyond the borders of Scheunenviertel. In the early 1920s a group of enthusiasts founded the Eastern Jewish cultural association *Progreß,* which started with concerts of Yiddish, Polish and Russian songs, and soon grew into an ambitious and versatile cultural institution. Several years later, in 1930, the first Yiddish cabaret *Kaftan* opened in Berlin. It quickly became the meeting place not only for poor refugees from Scheunenviertel, but also for the bourgeoning Jewry from the western districts of Berlin, who still felt attached to Yiddish and, finally, for the Zionist elite who wanted to manifest their solidarity with the *Ostjuden*.[30]

This first wave of fascination with Yiddish and the culture of Eastern European Jews ended in Berlin with the dawn of Nazism, although concerts of Yiddish songs were still taking place within the artistic activities of *Jüdischer Kulturbund* (Society for Jewish Culture) which existed between 1933 and 1941. Scheunenviertel has not survived in the same form till today. The urbanistic changes, particularly Hitler's plans for the destruction of Scheunenviertel, implemented both through demolition and mass deportations of the inhabitants, and, finally the damage of the war and the new

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[28] Heid L., "Ostjüdische Kultur Im Deutschland Der Weimarer Republik", Schoeps J. H. (ed.), *Juden Als Träger Bürgerlicher Kultur in Deutschland*. *Studien Zur Geistesgeschichte* (Stuttgart, Bonn: 1989): 329–55.

[29] Sprengel P., *Populäres Jüdisches Theater in Berlin von 1877 bis 1933* (Berlin: 1997).

[30] Ibid.; also Heid L., "Ostjüdische Kultur" 329–55.

architectural vision of the times of the GDR all contributed to this metamorphosis. Some of the streets of the Scheunenviertel of one hundred years ago no longer exist; most of them have changed beyond recognition. There are hardly any material signs of Jewish life in the district. The myth of the place survives only in guidebooks or through art installations like Shimon Attie's "Writing on the Wall" – old pictures of Scheunenviertel projected on the walls of present-day buildings.

Klezmer in Berlin

After the Second World War, the musical traditions of Scheunenviertel found their way back to Berlin thanks to a handful of Yiddish-speaking Jewish artists like Lin Jaldati, who started performing there. Next to some non-Jewish folk bands which also dealt with Yiddish songs, they sustained the continuity of Eastern Jewish folklore for a couple of decades, until, also thanks to their efforts, Jewish music started to attract more and more musicians and audiences.

The beginnings of the real *klezmer* boom, however, go back to 1987, when the first edition of the Days of Yiddish Culture in East Berlin took place. The organizers of this festival decided to put the heritage of Eastern European Jews at the centre of their attention. Although the festival did not use the historical space of Scheunenviertel, the focus on the Yiddish language, and the special editions of the festival dedicated to Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine and Romania indicate that the organizers wanted to evoke Eastern European traditions, which once existed in Scheunenviertel, rather than the contribution of the assimilated German Jews to German high culture.

The *klezmer* revival, which was partially the offspring of the Days of Yiddish Culture, referred to Scheunenviertel as well. In 1992 *Hackesches Hoftheater* (*Hatskeshe's* Courtyard Theatre) opened and started staging Yiddish plays and concerts of Jewish music "on the historical site". Although, technically speaking, located outside of the historical Scheunenviertel situated between today's Almstadt Straße and Max-Beer Straße, the theatre pertained to the traditions of Scheunenviertel and to the Jewish history of *Hackesche Höfe* (*Hatskeshe's* Courtyard). Before the Second World War, more than a quarter of the buildings in this complex was occupied by Jews. It was also there, in 1909, that Jakob van Hoddis (Hans Davidsohn, 1887-1942) founded the *Neue Club* (New Club)*,* a group of literary expressionists, many of whom were Jewish.[31] This tradition became the reference point of the theatre, which between 1992 and 2005 served as the centre of the *klezmer* revival in Berlin. Virtually every group in Berlin played there, and the theatre gained its own established local audience, which, apart from tourists, attended the performances in large numbers. Many concerts were

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[31] Eckhardt U., Nachama A. (eds.), *Jüdische Orte in Berlin* 27–8.

Fig. 2. Concert of a German klezmer band "Tantz in Gartn Eydn" in a ballroom in Lubars, outskirts of Berlin, 2006 (photo: Marcin Piekoszewski).

sold out in advance. Yiddish theatre performances, however, were much less popular and the theatre had to close at the beginning of 2006 due to financial problems. There are plans to reopen it at another location, though.

The myth of Scheunenviertel served also as an inspiration for the Days of Jewish Culture in Berlin in 2005, which took the golden 1920s as its key theme. The musician and writer Andre Herzberg combined storytelling and songs in his programme *Treffpunkt* Scheunenviertel (Meeting Place – Scheunenviertel), in which he referred to the texts of Joseph Roth,[32] Alfred Döblin[33] and Alexander Granach. It is noteworthy, however, that the events of this festival took place not in the historical Scheunenviertel, but in a tent built in the inner yard of *Centrum Judaicum – Neue Synagoge* in Oranienburger Straße. It seems, therefore, that even though the myth of Scheunenviertel is an important reference point for the Jewish heritage scene in Berlin, the revivalists do not make use of the Jewish space in the same way as Cracovians do.

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[32] Writer and journalist born in a Jewish family in Brody, near Lvóv (1894–1939); between 1920 and 1933 he worked in Berlin.
[33] (1878–1957) German doctor and novelist of Jewish origin, the author of the renowned expressionist novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929).

Even though the area of Spandauer Vorstadt with the New Synagogue and a couple of Jewish restaurants, cafes and shops gives the taste of the Jewish presence, with the closure of the nearby *Hackesches Hoftheater* the area ceased to be the centre of the *klezmer* revival. The musicians organise their concerts independently, often in the fashionable districts of Prenzlauer Berg and Kreuzberg, where the "historicity" of the space does not play any role. A clear spatial reference to Jewish space is made, therefore, only on the level of myth.

2. The space and its representations

However, if we want to treat the revival of the *shtetl* myth as a representation, it is also fruitful to turn our attention to the rival representations that pertain to the same space and sometimes appear as counter-reactions to the vision of a Jewish space.

The fact that one geographical space can exist in public imagination under many different images is particularly visible in the cities. The cities are "porous", writes Svetlana Boym, and this porosity reflects "the layers of time and history" and "is a spatial metaphor for time in the city, for the variety of temporal dimensions embedded in physical space".[34] Karl Schlögel adds that the city is "a bewildering simultaneity of times",[35] and that there are as many cities as there are perspectives of the city. Even various names for one city (Cracow, Krakau, Kroke) each stands for one segment of the history, tradition and culture of the place, and therefore can constitute rival representations of the same reality. Thus, the cities with a troubled history, and especially those that suffered from war destruction, resemble a palimpsest, where the texture of the city is overwritten, and overwritten again.[36]

This porosity of the cities makes it possible both in Cracow and in Berlin to represent the Jewish spaces in various, sometimes conflicting, ways. It is enough to pick a particular time period in the history of these places, or a perspective of one group or another to see that one physical space is able to accommodate many different myths.

"*Żydoland*" and the myth of the homely Polish Kazimierz

Today Kazimierz has more than one face. Its Jewish past, naturally, left the most dominant impact on this quarter of the city: especially in the material culture, but also

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[34] Boym S., *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: 2001): 76–7.

[35] In original, "Die Stadt ist… das verwirrende Nebeneinander der Zeiten", see Schlögel K., *Im Raume Lesen Wir Die Zeit* 307.

[36] Ibid. 306–8.

in legends, myths and stories related to this historically-Jewish space. The reference to the Jewish history of Kazimierz makes it possible for present-day tourist operators, entrepreneurs and restaurant owners to exploit the cliché of the *shtetl*, creating what the German journalist Henryk Broder named a *"Żydoland"*[37] – the Polish version of the Jewish Disneyland.

However, the more ubiquitous this representation becomes, the more vociferous are its rival representations. The period of time between 1945 and 1989, ignored by many authors as a gap in the history of the district, generated its own myths: the myths of the Polish Kazimierz. The inhabitants of Kazimierz, disappointed and exasperated with the tourist boom in the district and the cultural revival, which does not in any way improve their daily life, turn to the memory of the Kazimierz from before 1989.

The Kazimierz of the communist era, even though neglected and falling into ruin, stands for a poor but homely neighbourhood, where the local proletariat created a quasi-provincial community, and where the high culture of Cracow found a unique audience. The myth of Kazimierz of that time is populated with noble drunkards and culturally aware prostitutes, who contributed to the dark but inspiring atmosphere of the district. Now that the district is rediscovering its Jewish heritage and Jewish-theme hotels and restaurants push the poor tenants out of the attractive tourist zone of Kazimierz, the myth of the happy days in the proletarian neighbourhood emerges together with the grievances of the evicted residents.

The presence of artists who settled in Kazimierz in the early 1960s constitutes an important part of the myth of the Polish Kazimierz. Local authorities, pressured by one of the MPs, gave over three houses in the centre of the Jewish district to Cracovian artists. A number of renowned Polish painters, writers, architects and musicians moved into this unique colony in Kazimierz, among them the famous composer Krzysztof Penderecki and the actor Jerzy Fedorowicz. Some of them warmly recollect the "proletarian" Kazimierz:

> I moved to Szeroka Street in 1962. Frankly speaking, I was afraid to live here. One heard about the district's terrible reputation, about the '*lumpenproletariat*'. At the beginning I was paralyzed with fear, but it turned out that our neighbours were entirely harmless…They used to say about the people from Kazimierz that they were the most uncultured ones in Cracow, but as soon as they saw us on the other end of the street, they would immediately take their hands out of their pockets as a sign of respect. Possibly they felt honoured by having artists as their neighbours.[38]

A local newspaper recently launched a series of reportages about the inhabitants of Kazimierz and opened an internet forum for those who feel nostalgic for the

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[37] Broder H. M., "Juden in Krakau. Reise nach Zydoland", *Spiegel Online* (April 5, 2006).
[38] Barbara Penderecka, as quoted in Radłowska R., "Kazimierz. Reaktywacja. Na takich sąsiadów czekam", *Gazeta Wyborcza* (July 9, 2003): 5.

olden days in the district. This memory campaign turned out to be very successful; the internet forum "My favourite Kazimierz and the ghosts of the past" beat all records of popularity. And the image of the district emerging from the memoirs of the inhabitants stands in vivid opposition to the "mainstream" image of the revived Jewish Kazimierz.

Wasze ulice, nasze kamienice (Your streets, our houses) is a popular Polish saying, which anti-Semites ascribe to Jews who, according to the common myth, controlled most of Poland's immobile property before the Second World War. The phrase reverberates in the press accounts of today's Kazimierz with the titles like "Our streets of empty houses", which are dedicated to the residents evicted by the developers who had taken over the buildings. Again, according to the popular conviction that can be heard in the streets of Kazimierz, the developers are mainly Jewish.

In this situation, the Kazimierz from before 1989 appears as a place where life was poor, but predictable and secure. The accounts of the inhabitants paint picturesque images of a horse butcher's in Wolnica Square, where women would start queuing at 6 am to buy an entire horse head. People in those narratives knew each other well, lived close together and helped each other. The sense of equality and fraternity in this vision stands in clear opposition to today's precariousness of life and rampant capitalism. One of the inhabitants recollects:

All Cracow used to call us the people from the margins, saying that we were just drunkards, pimps, thieves and whores. But we would queue for hours to get the tickets to a theatre play! The queue was sometimes 150 metres long… And all of them queued: the drunkards and the down-and-outs, the decent and the honest, and the indecent and the dishonest. When finally seated in the theatre, everybody was equal. They were all the people of Kazimierz who came for a bit of culture.[39]

The new cultural life of Kazimierz does not appeal to the old inhabitants. The new pubs and restaurants populated with the city's students and yuppies are not meant for the poor residents of Kazimierz. In fact, they are expected to move out and free the space for more cultural revival. The ongoing gentrification of the district and the fact that the new investments irreversibly change the infrastructure of Kazimierz, where crafts, industry and trade are being replaced by catering and tourism, results in dissatisfaction of the long-time residents of the district. The saliency of the importance of the Jewish heritage in Kazimierz, which accompanies the revival, is also difficult to accept for this group of people. For many of them the history of the district began only after the war, and the Jewish past of Kazimierz was to a certain extent removed from their vision of the place.[40]

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[39] Radłowska R., "Kazimierz. Reaktywacja. Dlaczego tu mieszkają, dlaczego odchodzą? Nasze ulice pustych domów", *Gazeta Wyborcza (Kraków)* (June 27, 2003): 7.

[40] Murzyn M. A., *Kazimierz. Środkowoeuropejskie doświadczenie rewitalizacji* (Kraków: 2006).

The representation of the homely and poor Kazimierz is clearly a reaction to the dominant image of Kazimierz shaped by the *klezmer* revival and the cultural and commercial interest in Jewishness. The myths idealizing the Polish Kazimierz between 1945 and 1989 overlap with the myths of the Galician *shtetl* and render different meanings to the same space. And even though the myth of the *shtetl* seems to be much more pervasive, because it is enforced by the booming tourist industry in Kazimierz, the need for counter myths is particularly strong, especially on the part of those who feel dissatisfied with the recent changes in Kazimierz.

Rival representations in Berlin

Scheunenviertel today does not manifest its Jewish past in any way. Unlike in Kazimierz, there is hardly any cultural activity going on there that would remind one of its former inhabitants. Instead, the district is populated with art galleries and designer shops pertaining to the new rather than to the old, to the modern and alternative rather than to the sentimental. In this respect, Scheunenviertel refers to its more recent history as part of East Berlin and the image of subversive and funky surroundings.

A departure from sentimentalization is also advocated by some Jewish cultural institutions. Even though not all the *klezmer* artists evoke the *shtetl* cliché, "Jewish Disneyland" provokes a counter reaction in some circles of Berlin's Jewry. Institutions like the *Jüdischer Kulturverein Berlin e.V.* (Jewish Cultural Association) try to generate a counter vision of Jewishness in Berlin – that of a living community with versatile interests and political involvement. What they want to make clear in particular is the fact that Jewish culture is more than Yiddish culture, and while Jewish heritage production, in their opinion, often revolves around stereotypes, the culture of the living Jews is moving in all possible directions. Irene Runge, the head of the association, finds the Yiddish-speaking cultural revival artificial, unstimulating and alien to modern Jews:

> I think that Jewish culture in Germany is very often treated like an antique grand piano, like an antique culture, in which nothing should be changed, where you have your sculptures, characters, you dress in a particular way and you sing in a particular way. Of course, when we want to speak of any culture at all, it must be in movement. And this, I believe, is not taking place.[41]

To act against this fossilised representation of Jewish culture, the Jewish Cultural Association organises events focused on contemporary Jewish themes and takes steps to mobilise the Berlin Jewish community for a cultural revival from within the community.

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[41] Irene Runge, January 16, 2006.

The representations that compete with the *shtetl* myth in Berlin seem to be going in two directions. The first is a new spatial look of Scheunenviertel, which gestures towards a bohemian spirit and modernity. The second constitutes more of a counter movement within the Jewish community, which distances itself from the attempts to treat Jewishness as a museum item, and strives for a modern image of Jews in Berlin.

3. *Klezmer* venues in the cultural, educational and commercial context

After the presentation of the spatial reference point of the Jewish-theme heritage productions, it is time to move on to the actual sites of cultural production and the particular contexts, in which *klezmer* music is performed. Concerts of *klezmer* music take place as part of various events, which could roughly be distinguished into three planes: the community plane, the cultural/educational plane and the plane of commercial activities. The different character of these activities also entails different locations and audiences.

In Berlin, the Jewish community is large enough to create a demand for music for Jewish religious celebrations, such as weddings and bar mitzvahs. Although, in many cases, bands from abroad, for example from Israel or the UK, are the favourites for such occasions, local bands sometimes also perform there. The reason why Berlin *klezmer* bands are not always the first choice is that there is a demand within the Jewish community for more modern and versatile wedding music, which *klezmer* bands are believed not to be able to deliver. It is worthy of notice, however, that Berlin *klezmer* bands sometimes play at non-Jewish or mixed weddings, too.

Apart from private parties, *klezmers* also perform in the community house, where, along with concerts, one can also attend a course of Yiddish singing run by a *klezmer* musician. *Klezmer*, therefore, is one of the genres that accompany the Jewish community life alongside modern Israeli music, cantorial music and others.

Klezmer music also appears in a number of cultural events, such as the annual Days of Jewish Culture in November/December and other musical festivals, like the multicultural open air *Heimatklänge* (The Sounds of Homeland) Festival in June/July. The Jewish Museum in Berlin hosts *klezmer* concerts as well, either as part of the museum programme, or as weekly events in the museum restaurant, which every Monday offers an "oriental buffet" together with a *klezmer* concert.

The majority of *klezmer* concerts, however, take place in the commercial sector: starting from prestigious locations, such as the philharmonics, the opera house, or theatres, and ending with small clubs and bars all around the city. Churches host *klezmer* concerts as well, sometimes as a cultural expression of an inter-religious dialogue, and sometimes on more commercial terms. Quite a unique venue for *klezmer*

music is also the *Lab-Saal* in Lübars – a dancing hall on the outskirts of Berlin, where one of the bands runs its *klezmer* dancing project.

Finally, a *klezmer* event that escapes all of the categories described here is the monthly get-together of the *klezmer* musicians called the *Klezmer Stammtisch* (regulars' table). *Stammtisch* is meant only for insiders and is not advertised to the public. This extraordinary tradition began ten years ago and was meant to offer the musicians a possibility of exchanging ideas and also of learning from one another. These monthly jam sessions, which take place in a small pub in the district of Prenzlauer Berg, are also meant to inspire a sense of a *klezmer* community in Berlin.

Because of the small size of the Cracow Jewish community and the fact that most of its members are already of an advanced age, the demand for Jewish wedding music in Cracow does not really exist.[42] Consequently, most of the *klezmer* production is contained either within the sphere of cultural activities of such institutions as the *Centrum Kultury Żydowskiej* (Centre of Jewish Culture) and the *Muzeum Galicja* (Galicia Jewish Museum), or on the stages of numerous Cracovian clubs and theatres.

While *klezmer* in Cracow is usually associated with the area of Szeroka Street in Kazimierz, where the Jewish-theme restaurants indeed offer a selection of *klezmer* concerts every night, many concerts of the more recognised artists take place also at other locations. The club *Alchemia* in Plac Nowy has had a long tradition of avant-garde *klezmer* concerts, repeatedly hosting the two most prominent Polish *klezmer* bands: *Kroke* (Cracow) and the "Cracow Klezmer Band"; it is also one of the key venues during the Jewish Festival where the late-night *klezmer* jam sessions take place. Another original venue for concerts, still within the historical Jewish space in Cracow, this time in the Jewish ghetto in Podgórze, was the former *Apteka Pod Orłem* (pharmacy "Under the Eagle"), once the only pharmacy in the ghetto, now converted into a museum. Before it became a branch of the Historical Museum of Cracow, the pharmacy used to host performances and concerts of Jewish music. Now it continues to be an important place for Holocaust commemoration events. But in addition to the places associated with Jewish history, there are also a number of theatres and clubs outside of Kazimierz, where *klezmer* bands perform.

The commercial face of *klezmer* is, however, very visible, particularly in the Jewish district. The concerts advertised in Szeroka Street are a way to attract visitors to the Jewish-theme restaurants and to offer those craving a Jewish experience a packet appealing to all the senses – "Jewish style" food and a live concert in the authentically Jewish surroundings. The fact that the food might not be kosher, or that the band plays "If I Were a Rich Man"[43] instead of classically *klezmer horas* and *bulgars* does not

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[42] After the year 2000, the average age of the community members in Cracow rose to 72, and in the post WWII years there was only one Jewish wedding held in Cracow. After Edyta Gawron, cited in Murzyn M. A., *Kazimierz* 391.

[43] The leitmotif from the famous Broadway musical „The Fiddler on the Roof".

seem to matter so much to the customers. Next to "Schindler's List" guided tours and the carved figurines of bearded Jews, these daily *klezmer* concerts commodify the Jewish past of Cracow into a saleable product aimed at tourists.

Another by-product of the tourist boom in Kazimierz is the saturation of the Jewish district with pubs and bars, which has reached a critical point in the last few years. The restaurants and clubs began to mushroom here after the Jewish Festival popularised Kazimierz in Poland and abroad. Although not all of them refer to the Jewish past, the overload of commercialised nightlife in the district alarmed many cultural organizers, including the head of the Jewish Festival Janusz Makuch:

> This place is selling itself like a prostitute! It has turned into the biggest beer-drinking site in Cracow. Unfortunately, I am partially responsible for that, because it all started with the festival. Kazimierz became famous all over the world and people started coming here. Hundreds of pubs opened and the real ambience of this place has been trampled down.[44]

The commodification of Jewish memory in Cracow is very clearly visible in Kazimierz. The *klezmer* revival definitely has its share of blame for these tourist oriented activities, but even though the majority of *klezmer* concerts in Kazimierz are meant only as entertainment, highbrow cultural productions are also being staged there. And it is the dedication and maturity of these artists and cultural organizers who are trying to counterbalance the commodification of Jewish music that makes it impossible to write the revival in Kazimierz off as only kitsch.

4. The space of revival and the space of commemoration

The Holocaust commemoration is yet another cultural practice, which intersects with the *klezmer* revival. This is for two reasons: firstly, both commemorative and revivalist efforts happen in the same place – the Jewish historical space, – and secondly, *klezmer* has often been used in the past years as the musical background for commemorative celebrations.

In addition to the monumental Holocaust commemoration sites in Berlin, such as the *Holocaust Mahnmal* (Memorial), the Jewish Museum, or the *Neue Synagoge*,[45] Scheunenviertel has also been employed as a commemorative space. Between 1991

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[44] Radłowska R., Niemczura E., "Kazimierz. Reaktywacja", *Gazeta Wyborcza* (June 23, 2003): 1.

[45] See Carrier P., *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989. The Origins and Political Function of the Vel' D'hiv' in Paris and the Holocaust Monument in Berlin* (New York, Oxford: 2005), or Young J. E., *At Memory's Edge. After-Images of the Holocaust in the Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven, London: 2000).

and 1993 the Jewish American artist Shimon Attie launched his extraordinary project "The Writing on the Wall" there. His idea to project a number of old photographs of Scheunenviertel from the 1920s and 1930s on the present-day houses had an aim to bring back the ghosts of that district and "peel off the wallpaper of today and reveal the history buried underneath".[46] What inspired Attie was the discrepancy between what he "felt" and what was physically left of the former district of the *Ostjuden*; in other words, between the myth of Scheunenviertel that he was familiar with, and the actual space which did not venerate this myth in any way. Attie's idea was therefore to intervene in this public space, to literally touch it with his installation, and to provoke a response of the present-day inhabitants. Each photograph ran as a separate installation for one or two evenings to recreate the memory of the Jewish past of the district among the passers-by and residents. Even though they did not remember the original inhabitants of Scheunenviertel, now they were supposed to remember the installation, thus building a kind of meta-memory.

In fact, the tendency to commemorate the German Jews through artistic forms that allude to Eastern European Jewry has become quite pronounced in the last decades. While the Holocaust commemoration events in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, such as for instance the anniversaries of the *Kristallnacht* pogrom, used to be accompanied by concerts of either classical or synagogue music, as the *klezmer* revival established itself in Germany, most of these commemorative events have begun to include *klezmer* music. Most of the German musicians whom I interviewed have been invited to play at such events, for example, in concentration camps or sites of deportation.

Some *klezmer* artists even prepare special commemorative programmes or records. A good example in Germany is Giora Feidman, whose Holocaust commemoration programme in 1995 was made into a film entitled *Wenn du singst, wie kannst du hassen*? (When you sing, how can you hate?). The documentary shows Feidman's concert in a German synagogue mixed with images of Jews projected against the present day pictures of Kazimierz. Feidman records a part of the concert in Auschwitz and in one of the barracks in Birkenau, where he gives a short speech to his young German students about how to handle the Holocaust in art. In a well-articulated way, Feidman refers to the spaces of commemoration, trying to create via his performance a musical site of commemoration – universal and transcendent.[47]

Another artist who tours both Germany and Poland with a clearly commemorative programme is the Norwegian actor and singer Bente Kahan, who performed, for example, at the German Opera for *Yom Hashoa* (Holocaust Memorial Day) in 2005. Her repertoire includes several programmes which refer to the Holocaust, such as "*Wir wollen wachen die Nacht* (We Will Watch the Night): Song and Poetry from the Holocaust", the musical drama "Voices from Theresienstadt", or the autobiographical

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[46] Shimon Attie as quoted in Young J. E., *At Memory's Edge* 70.

[47] Scheffler U. J., *Wenn Du singst, wie kannst Du hassen?* (Germany: 1995).

and very personal project "Home", in which Bente Kahan commemorates members of her own family who perished in the Holocaust. Kahan's performances are popular in Germany and appreciated especially as a commemorative form. For example, *Neue Westfalische* (New Westfalian Paper) wrote in 2001, "Bente Kahan gave us insight into German history which moved the audience more than pictures or books on the Holocaust… [It] encourages the audience to reflect."[48] Thus the musical form of commemoration becomes a convincing alternative to the more conventional representations of the Shoah.

Cracow, like Berlin, is also one of the crucial spaces of Holocaust commemoration in Europe. First of all, its location in the vicinity of Auschwitz turns it into a transit point for Holocaust tourists, but also a stage for many commemorative initiatives.

Interestingly enough, Shimon Attie, who staged the commemorative installation in Scheunenviertel, decided to proceed with his project also in Cracow. In 1996, he realised his project, "The Walk of Fame"*,* which was directed against conflating the fiction of "Schindler's List", shot in Kazimierz, with the actual history of Cracow's ghetto. Since Spielberg, for technical reasons, placed the ghetto in Kazimierz and not in Podgórze, many people who had seen the film were misguided as to where those historical events really took pace. The filmic images, in this way, distorted the historical facts, and fiction annulled memory. Attie reacted to this spatial confusion with an installation consisting of 24 Hollywood-like stars built into the ground in Szeroka Street and bearing the names of Jews who had actually been on Schindler's list. His idea to mock "the flow of history into celebrity" turned out to be quite controversial, but with its ironic overtones it was one of the first critiques against reinventing history in Kazimierz.[49]

In the past years, Polish artists also discovered the Jewish space in Cracow for commemorative installations. And thus, in December 2005, the Podgórze Memorial opened on the square, from which the Jews of Cracow were transported to the death camps. This unorthodox memorial consists of 33 large empty chairs located around the square and includes a mark on the pavement indicating the walls of the ghetto.

One of the first sites where commemoration met with the *klezmer* revival in Cracow was the pharmacy "Under the Eagle" in the former ghetto. In 1994, the pharmacy-based museum invited several artists to prepare a commemorative musical spectacle. Andrzej Róg was one of them. His work on that project turned into a deep fascination with the forgotten Hebrew and Yiddish songs. What started as an occasional commemorative event, evolved into a systematic research into Jewish music, which soon resulted in the artist joining a renowned *klezmer* ensemble.

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[48]   Bente Kahan, *Voices from Theresienstadt*, available from http://www.bentekahan.com/ p_voices_from_theresienstadt.php (accessed July 19, 2006).

[49]   Young J. E., *At Memory's Edge* 85–9.

The space of the Holocaust commemoration overlaps with the space of heritage production, both in Cracow and Berlin, but the two phenomena do not just coexist separately in the Jewish space. The commemorative efforts involve a number of *klezmer* musicians who contribute, with their music, to the forms of Holocaust commemoration. In this way, over the last decades, *klezmer* music has turned into *the* musical representation of the Shoah.

5. Heritage production as a Jewish Space

The relation between the Jewish space and heritage production has yet one more dimension. The activities of the revivalists have not only rediscovered the past of the Jewish locations, or, in the case of Scheunenviertel, ascribed the status of *the* Jewish quarter to a particular stereotyped location, but also have created a virtual space of encounter between Jews and non-Jews. The extent of non-Jewish involvement in Jewish culture has not escaped the attention of the theorists of Jewish identity, such as Diana Pinto, who coined the term "Jewish Space" to denote this new phenomenon.[50]

"Jewish Space", as defined by Pinto, is not to be confused either with Jewish community life, or with the museum-like effort to preserve or reconstruct Jewish historical sites. It is rather "an open, cultural and even political *agora*", where Europeans channel their interests in Jewish themes. The emergence of Jewish Space in Europe is closely connected to the democratic changes in Eastern Europe and the process of coming to terms with the Holocaust. Particularly in the countries which, according to Pinto, "carry the 'presence of the absence'", such as Poland or Germany, the need for a Jewish Space is very pronounced. As this growing need to deal with Jewishness cannot be met by the small European Jewish communities, the Jewish Space is often implemented by non-Jews. Such a development has one major drawback, namely the temptation to concentrate on the Jewish absence and to represent Jewishness as annihilated and dead. To avoid this trap, the living Jewish communities should enter the Jewish Space and make it more future-oriented. Dealing with Jewishness in European art, cinema, literature, or exhibitions should not resemble taxidermy but biology, postulates Pinto.

From this perspective, heritage production in post-Holocaust Europe can be seen as one of the ways to fill in the Jewish Space. The crucial function of such activities is not a mere depiction of the Jews from the past and their culture, but a meeting of Jews and non-Jews, who can confront one another on the artistic level. Contrary to many critics who discard non-Jewish rendering of Jewish culture as mere kitsch,

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[50] Pinto D., *The Third Pillar? Toward a European Jewish Identity* (1999); available from http://www.ceu.hu/jewishstudies/pdf/01_pinto.pdf (accessed May 02, 2006).

Diana Pinto believes that the phenomenon of Jewish Space is beneficial for the Jews as a means of forming their new Jewish identity. Pinto argues:

> Rather than perceiving this reality as an impoverishment, Jews should consider this structural condition as a major positive challenge, indeed a challenge unique to Europe. For it is only here that Jews must confront historically charged 'others', whose ancestors were very much present, if not always responsible, during the Holocaust and before that during the centuries of European anti-Semitism…The Jewish Space can only acquire meaning as a living space at the very heart of all identity stakes. It cannot exist without Jews, but neither can it exist only with them, for the Space is not the equivalent of a community. It is an open cultural and even political *agora* where Jews intermingle with others *qua* Jews, and not just as citizens.[51]

Jewish Space, therefore, as a site of interaction is likely to become an arena of conflicts and clashes, but it is also a place where painful issues from the past can be debated and tensions relieved. Examining this ideal model of Jewish/non-Jewish interaction and creative exchange, one wonders to what degree the *klezmer* revival forms part of this cultural meeting point. I have argued here that the revivalists sustain a very strong bond with the physical Jewish space, but to what degree is the *klezmer* scene itself a Jewish Space?

A series of in-depth interviews that I have carried out with the actors of the *klezmer* revival both in Berlin and Cracow suggest that people involved in the revival of Jewish culture appreciate its potential as a meeting point for Jews and non-Jews. The medium of heritage production, even though it might be used by non-Jews, symbolises Jewish presence and prompts those involved to reflect on the painful issues of, for example, anti-Jewish violence. Thus, at least in certain cases, it encourages a more profound examination of the past and of the national stereotypes.[52]

It is not only *klezmer* musicians and cultural organizers who have become involved in the exchange of ideas going on in the Jewish Space. The consumers of Jewish heritage revival also tend to become more interested in Jewish culture via the contact with Jewish music.[53] For example, half of the young people who work as volunteers at the Jewish Festival in Cracow belong to the first generation in their families, which is interested in Jewish culture. This generation of "pioneers" of Polish-Jewish dialogue owes their interest and involvement in Jewish culture to the existence of the Jewish Space in Cracow. Sixty per cent of them also believe that the cultural event in which they take part has a

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[51] Ibid.

[52] For a more elaborate analysis see: Waligórska M., "A Goy Fiddler on the Roof", *Polish Sociological Review*, 4, no. 152 (Warsaw: 2005): 367–82.

[53] See the survey results among the participants of the workshop held during the Cracow Jewish Festival in 2004 in Saxonberg S., Waligórska M., "Klezmer in Kraków: Kitsch or Catharsis for Poles?", *Ethnomusicology*, 50, no. 3 (Champaign, IL: 2006).

very strong impact on the Polish society in reducing anti-Jewish prejudice.[54] However, this conviction, subjective as it is, indicates that the participants of the revival of Jewish heritage see cultural events in the Jewish space not merely as an entertainment, but as a step towards better relations between the Poles and the Jews.

Thus the *klezmer* revival seems to have a chance of becoming an *agora*, where the process of challenging the stereotypes and negotiating identities takes place. Last but not least, the *klezmer* scene is also literally a meeting space, because it gives the non-Jewish musicians and cultural organizers an almost unique opportunity to meet Jews, especially in countries like Poland, where the Jewish community is so tiny.

Conclusions

The discovery of Jewish spaces in Cracow and Berlin accompanied the discovery of Jewish heritage for the local cultural scene. For the Cracovian musicians, Kazimierz has become a quasi-magical site of "Jewish energy", while some of its long-time inhabitants prefer to see the district only as a regular Polish residential area. But the new Kazimierz has also the potential of becoming something more than just the venue of conflicting memories. It might emerge as a meeting platform for Jews and non-Jews. Cracovian *klezmer* revivalists like to quote Raphael Scharf, who pointed out that Kazimierz is probably the only place on earth where the streets of Corpus Christi and Rabbi Meisels intersect.[55] Likewise, for many of the participants of the *klezmer* revival, Kazimierz is such a unique crossroads between the two religions and two cultures.

In Berlin, the myth of Scheunenviertel allows the present day *klezmers* to connect to the traditions of Eastern European Jewry, and thus legitimise the revival of Yiddish culture there. Unlike Kazimierz, however, Scheunenviertel is no stage for the Jewish heritage production, but rather it inspires the artists as a mythical ghetto of the romanticised *Ostjuden*. The actual performances take place all around the city and do not necessarily employ historically Jewish places as a backdrop.

Jewish heritage revival in Berlin and Cracow is not only inspired by the Jewish space, but also constitutes a space in itself. It offers a perfect site for enacting memory: whether in "authentic" Jewish locations, or just in an atmosphere of nostalgia about the lost Jewish life. Paraphrasing Karl Schlögel, one could say that not only history, but also "heritage takes place". Moreover, if we conceptualise cultures by means of the locations where they are shaped, one could risk a hypothesis that the space of Jewish

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[54] The survey carried out by the author at the Jewish Festival in Cracow in 2006 on the sample of 35 volunteers working at the festival.

[55] Scharf R., *Poland, What Have I to Do with Thee…, Essays without Prejudice* (London, Portland: 1998).

heritage production might now encapsulate for many people the essence of Jewish culture. But if space becomes the metonymy of culture, how is it actually "read"?

This short study of the spaces of the *klezmer* revival suggests that the Jewish spaces are "read" and interpreted in many different ways. The plurality of meanings ascribed to these places corresponds to the palimpsest-like nature of every historical site. Kazimierz and Scheunenviertel, therefore, reveal to their various "readers" different layers of meaning. The spaces of heritage production appear as "virtually Jewish" sites of commercialised culture, places of Holocaust commemoration, or spaces of learning and cross-cultural exchange. However, to give justice to these spaces, we cannot stop our analysis at only one of these layers, but we should acknowledge them all in their "bewildering simultaneity".

The space of the Jewish town in Zalman Shneur's poem *Vilna**

Valentina Brio

In the rich literary heritage of Zalman Shneur (1887–1959), outstanding poet of the epoch of Jewish "national rebirth" of the early 20th century, one may come across a small poem entitled "ווילנה" (Vilna). Written in Hebrew, the poem is devoted to the city of Shneur's residence in the period from 1904 to 1906, when he contributed to the newspaper *Hazeman* (The Time).

There, at the end of 1905, the poet's first book *Im shkiyat ha-hama* (At sunset) came out, followed by a collection of short stories *Min ha-hayim u-mavet* (From Life and Death) two years later, which earned the author his literary success. Shortly afterwards Shneur went to Europe to study, and it was in Berlin that he received the news about the outbreak of World War I. After the war, in 1919, in association with Shlomo Zaltsman, Shneur co-founded publishing house *Hasefer* (The Book), which in the same year published in a separate edition the poem *Vilna* written by Shneur in 1917 in Berlin.

Shneur's recollections of the Vilna period go back to the period after World War II. He arrived in Vilna "on a carefree summer day of 1904 and was stupefied by 'the hills around it',[1] old parks, a Jewish street with an arch over it, Gaon's *beyt midrash* and a solemn tree at his grave, Strashun's library, modest and attractive girls."[2]

The poem *Vilna* is one of the first urbanistic works in Jewish literature. Referring to this peculiarity of the poet's literary heritage, Yosef Klausner noted, "Shneur is a city poet… The diversity of life of the modern city has surpassed the most vivid imagination. The horizons of life on a modern street have expanded *ad infinitum*… He has taken our poetry from 'behind the corner'… He has taken it into an open space – into the big world, into the Jewish capital."[3] Opening with an invocation, an excited address to the city, the poem begins and ends with the image of the city as a

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[1] Here Shneur cites a famous quotation from *Tehilim* (Psalms), 125:2.

[2] Shneur Z., *H. N. Byalik u-vney doro* [H. N. Byalik and His Contemporaries] (Tel-Aviv: 1958): 325. *Beyt-midrash*, lit. "house of study" – a room for studying religious literature and praying. Gaon – the Vilna Gaon, Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman (1720–97), a rabbi, one of the most outstanding spiritual authorities. Strashun Matityahu (1817–85) – a Jewish scholar and mercenary, who collected a unique Judaic library open for public use.

[3] Klausner Y., *Zalman Shneur ha-meshorer veha-mesaper* [Zalman Shneur – A Poet and a Prose Writer] (Tel-Aviv: 1947): 6–7.

respectable elderly woman in a patched coif and an old apron – the mother and the grandmother, whose shoulders have been loaded with everyday troubles and sorrows of the recent war.

> Vilna, our great grandmother, the city and mother in Israel,
> Jerusalem of the *galut*, the consolation of the Eastern people in the North![4]

The author draws on the tradition: the language cliché *ir ve-em be-Israel* (the city and mother in Israel, i.e. the central city for the surrounding towns; this use has lost its relation to the context of the original – 2 Sam. 20:19). In Hebrew, the language of the poem, the expression "city-mother" comes naturally: the word "city" and its name *Yerushalayim* (Jerusalem) are both of the feminine gender, as well as its synonyms "Zion", "daughter of Zion", and "daughter of Judea". Undoubtedly, this reveals the traditional biblical perception of Jerusalem as a woman, a widow (cf. *Eikha* (Lamentations of Jeremiah), Book of Prophet Isaiah, etc.; also *kinot* – liturgical lamentations; the author refers to these motives at the end of the poem). In this way Vilna is included in the TaNaKh space.

> It is your patched coif, like the roof of an old synagogue,
> Which, in the eyes of your grandchildren, rises higher than gilded cupolas;
> Your worn apron, embroidered with lions and crowns,
> As if the sacred curtain [of the Temple], many a time you wiped their tears,
> And with your famous Purim honey gingerbreads and Passover dainties
> Sweetened their woes and consoled them with the elevated works of your writers (p.3)

Using the images that have become deep-rooted in the tradition, Shneur narrows down the space of the city to the space of a house. The Jewish house is the woman's kingdom, "*eshet hayl*'" – the kingdom of a virtuous wife, where everyday and elevated matters stand side by side, and where the common is made sacred. The Jewish space of the city is a house, and the house is expanded to the whole city, as if supporting Gaston Bachelard's thesis that "the house is an entire world".[5] The image is supplemented with the "faces of the Vilna Gaon and Moshe Montefiore, receiving guests", i.e. their portraits in the houses of townspeople. Likewise, as the poem develops:

> Even your watermen have scooped from the sources of your Sages.
> Every wall has absorbed traditions with the smell of Saturday viands.
> On its bank the Vilija quavers out Saturday's hymns of the 'little husband',
> Poplars recite in whisper the verses of the poet Mikhal (p. 3)

The incomplete verse cited above demonstrates the sense, image and content intensity of the poem. Shneur follows the Biblical tradition, where the water carriers (along with woodcutters) represent the lowest social strata in the Jewish community.[6] By this the author refers to the learnedness and spirituality of all town dwellers. The "little husband" in the excerpt above is another reference to the legendary *hazzan* (cantor) Yoel David Loewenstein (1817–50), who was gifted with a unique voice and musical talent.[7] Saturday, the fundamental basis of the Jewish traditional way of life, given in the Sinai Revelation (the 4th Commandment in the Decalogue), becomes a metonymy designating Vilna as a city that preserves its traditions (the way it was seen by many in the early 20th century).[8] The mention of Mikhal, i.e. the poet Mikha Yosef Lebenson (1828–52), as well as the reference to the Vilna Gaon (rabbi Eliyahu ben Shlomo-Zalman) conveys the spiritual aura of the city. The poem abounds in real personal and place names, as well as locations that can be recognized nowadays. In addition, it also bears a significant "extra-textual context" (according to Mikhail Bakhtin).[9]

This is followed by personal recollections; the defined space becomes populated, as Shneur enumerates different groups of town dwellers according to their social status and age. Chapter 2 gives an overall view from the heights of the Castle Hill:

> Towers and streets hulk in soaring golden dust,
> Is it not the dust of legends that flick in your air till the present time,
> Is it not the martyr bonfire of Count Potocki?
> Or are the carriages of Khmelnitsky and his gang rushing to smash you?..
> Or are these the dead-beat horses of Napoleon, fleeing to save his life on a frosty day?
> (p. 3)

The solidification of the special and topographical plane corresponds to the solidification of the historical plane. The Castle Hill – the highest point, from which the author looks upon the city – is also the historical and legendary beginning of the city (such initial ambivalence is certainly of great importance). Due to these reasons the author apparently does not describe the city at this point, limiting himself to a sketchy stroke (since "the towers and streets" are to be found in any city) and concentrating on the historic events that were significant for the Jewish Vilna. This look from the heights of history becomes more concrete in the later stages of the poem.

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[6] On the perception of this image by Jewish poets, see the following article: Копельман З., "К источникам одного стихотворения Х. Н. Бялика" , *Солнечное сплетение*, № 8 (Jerusalem: 1999): 138–142. I express my gratitude to Zoya Kopelman for the valuable comments she has made upon reading the manuscript of the present article.

[7] See, e.g., Cohen I., *Vilna* (Philadelphia, Penna: 1943): 102, 437–440.

[8] Nakhman Shapira expressed this opinion in his book: Šapira N., *Vilnius naujoj žydų poezijoj* (Kaunas: 1935): 11.

[9] Бахтин М., *Эстетика словесного творчества* (Москва: 1979): 369.

The author makes references to Catholic processions; then his look is directed **downwards**, to the foot of the Castle Hill and to magnificent ruins, a testimony of the pagan times of Lithuanian history – the Temple of Perun (Perkūnas), Gediminas' dream. The layers of the epoch are perceived as a materialized chronotopos, while on the **upper** "layer" children are playing cricket at the remains of the ancient wall. The "historical excursus" reaches its completion – symbolically, of course. And then the look is directed to Troki (Trakai), home to the Karaites – the "lost brothers", which invokes certain reflexivity on the part of the author. In this way the spatial volume is extended widthwise and lengthwise, horizontally and vertically.

The high viewpoint of the city also determines the space of the entire city and even goes beyond its limits. However, it is not so much the space proper (which in fact is truncate, in the shape of debris, remains), but rather a historical chronotopos – compressed time preserving the past in the present. From this viewpoint, the entire city is presented only once. One has to point out one peculiarity of Vilna as a multicultural city – constant redistribution of space. It becomes evident in the comparison of the image of the city in different literary sources: what pertains to the **own** is in the centre of attention and also in the centre of the city, while the **other, alien** is on the periphery (both of the narration and the space). For example, in Polish poetry of the 1920s–30s, one may come across Jewish districts located on the periphery, in the suburbs, as well as in the city. To designate the relationships between the major and secondary elements of the city space, the authors employ various topographical schemes, which is stipulated by the presence of **miscellaneous** cultural languages, as has been pointed out by Vladimir Toporov.[10]

Shneur's work is somewhat different in this respect: in his poem, an alien space interposes, reminding of itself (for it is the *galut*) and thus creating dramatic collisions. From the hill, from the general panorama the author-character of the poem descends into the hub of the city life (Chapter 3):

> In morning light, in the greenish-grey light of Lithuania
> To get lost in the winding lanes and observe Jewish youths,
> Hasting in the *heder*, tenderly-faced, with sad eyes (p. 5)

He sees in them the "captive princes of Judea", emaciated and ailing, similar to "the sprouts of the palm, transplanted from the native soil into Polesye swamps"; only in books do they find their native space: "the radiance of the sun of Galilee that hides between the black letters", "the smell of the sea and the hills" (p. 5). In the author's image the reader finds a significant (for Shneur) series of spatial comparisons: a hot and sunny country (native soil) and a swamp, twilight, greyness (alien soil); hence the

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[10] Топоров В., "Vilna, Wilno, Вильна: город и миф", *Балто-славянские этнолингвистические контакты* (Москва: 1980): 10.

lack of vital force (these comparisons will also be found in other works by Shneur, for example, in his poem *Li-tslilei ha-mandolina* (To the Sounds of Mandolin, 1911).

In the next stanza, the **elders** emerge as a conceptual parallel to the **youth**. However, there is no opposition between the generations of fathers and sons; the **elders** is a common metaphor of the people of the *galut* in Jewish literature and art;[11] both bear the stamp of exile, both are in an unbecoming situation, in an alien space, and the author contemplates over what they have lost and what they have preserved from their world and their essence, thus deepening the content and the symbolism of the image.

> I felt sorry for the elders I had met wandering.
> Those who had to bare their grey pitiful heads,
> Passing through the gates of *Ostra Brama*, a holy place of arrogant gentiles
> And they passed, as if through the poles of shame, daily… (p. 5)

He says that not only Catholic priests, but also gilt statues look at their backs with contempt. Indeed, Shneur touches upon a sensitive issue. While the Christians have the custom of doffing their heads in certain places, under no circumstances will the rightful Jews bare their heads, as the hat symbolizes the recognition of the power of the Almighty. Here the poet refers to the *Ostra Brama* (Lith. *Aušros Vartai*, Eng. The High Gate), the major Catholic symbol of the city. (I would point out here that the images of the church and the *Ostra Brama* in particular are central in Polish literary typology of the city, and are found among the major ones in Lithuanian literary typology, alongside the Gediminas Tower). It is known that the Jews often avoided passing through the Gates of Dawn and took another route. Polina Vengerova described this situation in her recollections of her stay in Vilna in the early 1860s: "*Ostrobrama* was particularly magnificent, with the portal of high architectural value. Neither a Christian, nor a Jew was allowed to pass through the Gates with their heads covered... The majority of faithful Jews avoided appearing there, even though the Gates were situated in the centre of the city."[12] The gates usually mark the border of the city (even if it is a former one), and here the symbolism of the **own** and the **alien** is enhanced.

Behind these gates (corresponding to the real address in the city!) is a place of equal importance, this time for the Jewish world: an old typography "The Widow and the Brothers Romm" (one of the oldest Jewish typographies founded in 1799). For the author the building itself has a special aura, and is likened to a fantastic live

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[11] See, e.g. Казовский Г., "Штетл versus мегаполис в творчестве еврейских поэтов и художников в Америке, *Зеркало*, № 17–18 (Тель-Авив: 2002): 4.

[12] Венгерова П., *Воспоминания бабушки. Очерки культурной истории евреев в XIX веке* (Иерусалим-Москва: 2003): 255. The Polish writer Józef Ignacy Kraszewski wrote about it in the 19th century; see Kraszewski J. I., *Pamiętniki* (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk: 1972): 103.

creature. Shneur underscores the non-fortuitous nature of the juxtaposition of these two important Vilna locations:

> But behind these gates rattles the 'Widow's' typography,
> Knowing no rest day or night, as if the Jewish revenge
> Seethes and boils in the heart, welling upon [the gates], –
> The memory of our Sanctity versus their Sanctity (p. 6)

Shneur builds a comparison of two Sanctities: one as an object of worship, and the other as an object of constant lifetime creativity. The language of the original has the expression *reshut mul reshut*; *reshut* may be translated not only as "power", but also as "bulwark, stronghold". Naturally, in this context they have to be understood in the spiritual sense. Shneur seeks to express the spiritual space of the city as well. This, in essence, constitutes the main compositional and stylistic principle of the poem, where the non-Jewish collides with the Judaic, own, where everything is sharpened and bared – both external and internal contradictions. Here the word "revenge" does not bear a banal sense. In response to humiliation, the immense spiritual wealth and spiritual life of these crooked elders finds its expression on the reverse side – and **literally**, on the other side of the gates – of their outward abjection.

Shneur once was a staff member of the editor's office, situated in the building of the well-known typography, and he knew the place well. "The typography 'The Widow and the Brothers Romm' is downstairs, and the editor's offices above it are buzzing like a beehive every day: writers, type-setters, proofreaders, accountants, subscribers, traders of paper and typographic materials, and merely Vilna idlers, who come to immerse themselves into the literary atmosphere. This house was not at rest even at night time. The beat of typing machines was like the beat of the heart that has grown old over these two generations, but is still strong enough to rejoice upon seeing the numerous grandchildren and to provide them with its warmth, the warmth of an aged grandmother."[13]

The rhythm of the functioning typography is like the heart of the Jewish people – a bright and a precise image, the centre of meaning in Shneur's poem.

> Day and night this House sets type and prints and sends
> All Jewish books which were exiled and wandering in the knapsacks of their creators.
> And the creeks of Jewish letters, pleasant and dear to the soul,

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[13] Shneur Z., *H. N. Byalik* 315. The typography had various addresses during the long period of its activity; in the period from 1900 to 1940 it was situated behind these gates on a small street (see Аграновский Г., Гузенберг И., *Литовский Иерусалим. Краткий путеводитель по памятным местам еврейской истории и культуры в Вильнюсе* (Vilnius: 1992): 48–49 (photographic illustrations).

Give a drink and nourishment to the Jews scattered around the world,
Merge with the waves of the Neman and the Dnepr to the Black sea,
Reach the ices of Siberia to warm up the frozen Jewish heart (p. 6)

According to the author's idea, it is letters and books that assemble and unite all Jews into one community with a single heart – into a people. Meanwhile, the space of the Jewish city is extended to the entire *galut*, thus affirming the status of Vilna as its capital and centre.

The author-character does not leave the tense space of his poem, even when he goes out "to have a rest in the alleys of the Pushkin park". It is evening, "the heavens hover all around in the *talit*, bordered with stars at the edges" (p. 8). At night the city is concealed, one can only see its "dozing roofs", and the moon sheds light on the statue in the niche of the Cathedral:

Michelangelo's Moses sits in his heavy beauty,
The Wisdom of the Lawgiver is in his face, and the bravery of the warrior is in his muscles. (p. 8)

Shneur merely "transfers" the well-known statue from the Roman Church of San Pietro in Vincoli to Vilna! This corresponds to his artistic objective. Like all statues in the niches of the central portal of the Vilna Cathedral, the local Moses (who is depicted standing and holding the tablets of the Law) was created by Italian sculptor Tommaso Righi in 1785–91,[14] much later than the great Michelangelo lived.

Rome as a city in the sub-context of Shneur's poem "To the Sounds of Mandolin" is also remarkable in this respect, as it develops the theme of stolen property and the impossibility to regain it. There is a complicated type of citations: not so much an immediate reflection of the reality or myth of the city, but rather **the text**, which is **cited** there, i.e. an intermediate textual reality.[15] This type of citations is related to the biblical style (as well as the style of traditional commentaries), which is also characteristic of Shneur's poetics.

Another place that is sacred for Christians becomes the place of sorrow and bitterness for the Jews. This finds expression in an ireful monologue addressing Moses, in which he is urged to serve his people and is even called a traitor.

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[14] The Cathedral was rebuilt many times. Among its reconstructing architects were Italian masters. In the late 18th-early 19th century (after a severe thunderstorm of 1769, which caused serious damage) it acquired its final view and shape from Wawrzyniec Gucewicz (Gucevičius) assisted by Michał Szulc, who completed the work after Gucewicz's death (for detailed information see Venclova T., *Wilno* (Vilnius: 2001): 81–83, and the Index.

[15] See an article devoted to this topic in Левинтон Г.А., "Город как подтекст (из «реального» комментария к Мандельштаму)", *ПОЛУТРОПОN. К 70-летию В.Н. Топорова* (Москва: 1998): 730–755.

Draw yourself up, holy man, and step out on Jewish streets!
And may anyone on your way follow your mighty huge steps,
And the night fog, like the smoky Pillar of Fire in front of you.
And sit down in the yard of the synagogue by the old well,
And raise your hand of Lawgiver, the hand of the conqueror of the pagans,
And raise your powerful voice, the roar of a lion that would thunder
In the palace of the pharaoh, among the sphinxes, would cut the rocks and the Red Sea,
Till it awakens and hurries to you from all alleys, from all cellars –
Every Jewish house, sleeping a dead sleep, from baby to old man…
Renew their spirit as it was in the days of the past… (p. 9)

The motive of a resuscitating statue (Moses) is evolved from the theatricality of the city space, the architectural and sculptural intensity of the predominantly baroque city. Topographically situated like an amphitheatre around the "stage", the city presents itself like a spectator of the spectacle that looks dramatic to the author.

A widespread legend (which can be frequently found in guidebooks) is related to the statue of Moses by Michelangelo. Having completed his work (which with interruptions lasted for almost 40 years), the great Master was so satisfied that he expressed his joy passionately: having seized the stone prophet by the knee, he exclaimed, "And now, speak!" The meaning of "resuscitation" of the statue in Shneur's poem is essentially the same: here Moses is also summoned to perform his prophetic mission: to "raise his voice" and awaken his people.

Besides the well-known motive of the resuscitating statue (portrait), Moses' image in Shneur's work also represents the poetical world of crying and *kinot* (lamentations over the destroyed Jerusalem, in which (frequently on Jeremiah's behalf) the proto-fathers and proto-mothers of the Jewish people are called upon as the intercessors for the people with the Almighty.[16] But in Shneur's poem (unlike in the *kinot*) the monologue ends upon reaching its apogee; the majestic picture of the rebellious prophet is dispersed and the reality comes back: "you are stone", "a speechless statue with a frozen look". However, the intensity of feeling and the monumentality of depiction do not disappear from the poem suddenly, but in the next Chapter 5 get new expression in the phantasmagoria of sleepless thoughts, the surreal space of a morbid dream, in which the images of Moses are changed by the crying Jews and the Tablets of the Law, collapsing like high mountains (p.10).

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[16] *Kinot le-tisha be-av* [Mourning prayers on the 9th Av] (Jerusalem, PLA Publishing House: no year): 83–84, 104 et al. *Kinot* (sg. *kina*) – cries, lamentations; here – designation of the genre. *Kinot* are traditionally held on the 9th day of the month Av (which usually falls on July-August), the annual remembrance day of the Destruction I (586 BC) and II (70 AD) of the Temples in Jerusalem, the day of mourning and fasting.

The emotional tone of these chapters and the images of the night city return the reader to the bitter reality – the *galut*. The new two-part image of Vilna is born: "the grandeur of the Torah soars above its head, and the shame of slavery is under its feet" (p.10).

The author-character finds himself at the railway: this is also a border demarcating the "own" and the "alien" spaces; in front of him are the "rails, dividing the heart of this city", and he himself wishes to leave the *galut* city, where his compatriots look like slaves: to flee to the endless spaces opening up from the railway station, to freedom, to the beauty and riches of France, Germany, Italy and Greece. However, he realizes at once that to leave this city is impossible, just like one is unable to run from himself. Even though Vilna is but a "backwoods", it preserves the true spirit and the way of life of the people, their deep-rooted traditions, and one feels a wish to merge with them and build a house here:

> You will not find anything better, do not flee from here!
> You raise your eyes to the stars above, while happiness is under your feet (p. 11)

For Shneur, the Jewish Vilna means the complexity and inconsistency of the Jewish fate itself.

In the final Chapter 6, Shneur returns to the reality of the recent war and post-war period:

> How can I console you, old mother, downtrodden, poor, mourning?
> Who has torn your apron, who has dishevelled you hair, dear? (p.12)

Both the imagery and the nature of the intonation naturally take us to the topos of the destroyed Jerusalem: "You have shared Jerusalem's glory, now share her destiny" (p. 12).

Undoubtedly, the image of "Vilna-grandmother" is subtly connected with the images of *Eikha* – Lamentations of prophet Jeremiah. Shneur's poem is also imbued with the strength and energy of the expression of *kinot* – lamentations over the destroyed Jerusalem, poetically developing Jeremiah's motives. The emphasis on the development of this theme, the diversity of rhymes and variations of word units with the same root in their poetics is dear to Shneur, well versed in the Scriptures and their traditional interpretations.

Apparently, the coif that has fallen off (or has been thrown off) the old-woman's – Vilna's – head is metaphorically related to the crown (aureole) that has fallen off Jerusalem's head, Judea, a motive symbolising the loss of dignity, which is characteristic of the *kinot* and is found once again in Jeremiah (e.g. Jer. 5:16).

The dishevelled hair on the elderly woman's head is a stable metaphor of a demolished house, destruction of the entire order of the Jewish life. In the times of

World War I, the Vilna Jews suffered particularly severe hardships, worsened by deportations, which the authorities of the Russian empire were carrying out from the front-line area.[17]

Like in the beginning, the author addresses the city in the space of a house with the words of consolation and hope, prayer and blessing, literally repeating the words of prophet Isaiah to Jerusalem (1st verse, Is., 40:1), thus creating in the final verse a paraphrase of Chapter 40 of the Book of Isaiah (cited with outtakes):

> Console, console my people, and you, city-mother, console yourself!
> Put on your new coif, a starched apron,
> The clothes of a virtuous wife… Bake the festive dainties…
> …Look, the sons and grandsons are coming back…
> …and will… sing an anthem…
> …and in it will sound your new hopes… (p. 13–14)

Shneur's poem symbolically finishes with a morning prayer, full of hope, transferring the city into the spiritual space of the Temple, which will be erected in accordance with Jewish prayers.

The events of the beginning of the century, of World War I, drew the poet's attention to this city, situated at the crossroads of both Europe and the Jewish history. Sensitive to the pulse of history, Shneur created a monument to the vanishing Vilna.

Despite all projections to the archetype of the city (Jerusalem), it is Vilna, and not the city in general, that Shneur captured at a certain historical moment and simultaneously in all historical time. This complicated and controversial space contributes to the unity of the poetic image of this world, while artistic conventionality serves to recreate the Jewish soul of the city.

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[17] On this see Cohen I., *Vilna* 358–371; Greenbaum M. *The Jews of Lithuania. A History of a Remarkable Community 1316–1945* (Jerusalem-New York: 1995): 211–214.

Jewish sights: exoticization of places and objects as a way of presenting local "Jewish antiquity" by the inhabitants of little towns[*]

Alla Sokolova

 "…I will show you, there are some dilapidated houses, you will see two or three houses. Have you got a camera with you?"
"We can probably take one with us."
"Please do, because this is unique, it is a unique thing, for historians, this is unique… Because they came from Kiev television, they filmed it – the Jewish shop… You will see a *magenduvid*[1] there." (Baltsky Mikhail Mordukhovich, b. 1949, native of town Tulchin, Vinnitskaya oblast [region], Ukraine. Recorded on July 15, 2005, Tulchin, Vinnitskaya region, Ukraine. Index in API: Tul_05_057.[2])

Constructing the Jewish "covenantal landscape"

The map of the lost "Jewish world" of Eastern Europe has been designed by the generation of Jews who came from Eastern Europe and survived the Second World War. Dealing with histories of their own families, the authors of memoirs and Memorial Books have succeeded in turning vague images of the past into recognizable portraits of specific settlements. Most of the latter have formed the so-called "genuine Jewish townships".

American researchers Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Hercog have studied the recollections of native little town Jews currently residing in the USA, and have put

[*] The English translation was made by Julija Korostenskaja. The article is based on the interviews recorded in 2004–05.
[1] The informant refers to the Star of David (Heb. *Magen David*, lit. "shield of David"), the commonly known Jewish symbol.
[2] The first, last and patronymic names of the informant have been changed. The recording of this interview, as well as other recordings used in the present article, is held in the Centre "Petersburg Judaica" (hereinafter referred to as API). The list of interviews cited in the article is given in the Appendix.

forward a research concept referred to as the *shtetl* (Yiddish for a "Jewish little town").[3] Applying the methods of cultural anthropology, the authors have in fact reconstructed the Kasrilovka of Sholem Aleichem:[4] they have reinterpreted the features that served as an object of satire in literature as a feeling of nostalgia for the "Jewish world".

"The evolution of the *shtetl* into a covenantal landscape" which, according to David Roskies, "reached its logical conclusion in the *yizkor* books",[5] has been researched much more extensively than the practices dealing with the localization of the *shtetl*. Only by placing oneself in the architectural environment used by local people for the mental reconstruction of the "genuine Jewish township", may one get an idea of the metamorphosis of the *shtetl* into the "visible landscape of memory", i.e., trace the process of transferring the imaginary Jewish space of the past onto the "topographical level".[6] Their oral evidence about the past lets one understand how miscellaneous elements of architectural and natural landscape, both existing and lost, are used in such mental reconstruction and representation of the local cultural landscape.

Localization of the Jewish covenantal landscape

It seems that the need for the localization of the Jewish covenantal landscape prompts the local community or its leaders to acknowledge the symbolic value of

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[3] The first edition of the book dates back to 1952 and is called *Life is with People: The Jewish Little-town of Eastern Europe* (New York, International Universities Press: 1952). In the same year the New York publishing house "Schocken Books" published the same book under a different title: *Life is with People: The Culture of the Shtetl*. In the present article the work in question is cited from the following source: Zborowski M., Herzog E. *Life is with People: The Culture of the Shtetl* (New York, Schocken Books: 1995).

[4] A series of sketches by Sholem Aleichem is titled *Kasrilovka. In the Small World of Small People*. As pointed out in notes by A. Frumkin, the series was first published under the title *Town Kasrilovka* in 1901. (Шолом-Алейхем. *Собрание сочинений в 6 томах*, т. 4 (Москва: 1960): 279–652, 662.

[5] Roskies D. G., *The Jewish Search for a Usable Past* (Bloomington: 1999): 64. *Yizkor* books – Memorial Books (Yid. *Yizker bikher*, also Heb. *Sifre Zikhronot*), published by native inhabitants of various townships and little towns of Central and Eastern Europe, who currently live mainly in the USA and Israel. Memorial Books are devoted to Jewish history of townships and little towns, whose natives have merged into such communities.

[6] Patrick H. Hutton refers to the book *La Topographie legendaire des evangiles en Terre Sainte* by Morris Halbwachs, who has researched the use of geographical location as the basis for the establishment of the tradition of commemoration, as an "inaugural" exploration into the process of moving the mental map onto the topographical level, where it becomes the visible landscape of memory. See Хаттон П., *История как искусство памяти* (Санкт-Петербург: 2003): 205.

"ordinary" constructions, trivial from the architectural viewpoint. Even if it has nothing to do with the idea of preservation or restoration of the historical architectural environment, such acknowledgement, as a rule, is stipulated by the realization of the profoundness of the split between the past and the present, which was caused by the tragic events.[7] In this sense, the notion of architectural heritage takes on a deeper meaning than the meanings formed by the romantic perception of the "architectural antiquity" as national property, whose value is determined in terms of local achievements in the spheres of architecture and construction.

Field research carried out in 2004 and 2005 in several settlements of Vinnitsa region, Ukraine, has allowed us to depict the specifics of their commemoration, the former being based on the localization of the "Jewish world". Until recently the region of former Transnistria,[8] the Romanian zone of occupation, where many Jews managed to survive the Second World War in their own houses, preserved remarkable fragments of planning and construction of towns and little towns in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The localization of the Jewish "covenantal landscape" in such settlements turns not only Jewish cemeteries and places of annihilation of Jews during the Second World War, but also, for example, the districts of an old trade centre, into memorable places. Thus, the mental map of the "lost Jewish space" is primarily a map of streets which usually take one to non-existing buildings (at least, in their original state): for example, in Shargorod,[9] to the Juice and Wine factory, placed in the synagogue building dating back to the late 16th century.

Sights of "Jewish antiquity"

Local dwellers (both Jews and non-Jews) often employ the exoticization of historical architectural heritage as an instrument for mental reorganization and

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[7] To illustrate his point on how the restoration of a symbolically meaningful centre of social life becomes a matter of primary importance, Kevin Lynch provides an example of the restoration of the old centre in Warsaw, which was destroyed during the Second World War. See Линч К., *Образ города* (Москва: 1984): 150.

[8] In accordance with the German-Romanian treaty of August 30, 1941, the province formed by Romanian authorities in the region between the Dnestr and the South Bug rivers was given the name Transnistria.

[9] Shargorod, a town and a district centre of Vinnitsa region, Ukraine, used to be a little town of Podolia province until 1923. For more on Shargorod, see Лукин В. et.al., *Сто еврейских местечек Украины. Исторический путеводитель*, 2. Подолия (Санкт-Петербург: 2000): 399–450.

representation of cultural landscape.[10] The nature of such reorganization seems to be stipulated by their encounters with various visitors: Jews living in other cities or countries, who come to pay a visit to their native places, representatives of various Jewish organizations, researchers of Jewish history and culture, filming crews, and anyone interested in the local Jewish colour.

Virtually any native dweller easily assumes the role of the connoisseur of Jewish sights and expresses his or her opinions on the uniqueness of locations or constructions that correlate with the notes of professional guides that are in store for "lovers of the antiquity". This is true of the majority of visitors: they tend to perceive the historical construction of the city as the decorations that can be used to reconstruct the events of the past.[11] The modern traveller or researcher cannot help the temptation to deduce the ethnical colour in any samples of architectural heritage that appear to him unusual. It seems that it was this peculiarity of the perception of architectural "monuments of antiquity", characteristic of the traveller of the 19th-early 20th centuries, that made him similar to the "White Master"[12] preoccupied with the search for the exotic. One may only be surprised that even in the present time, during their encounters with visitors keen on "Jewish antiquity", most local dwellers easily switch to a language which allows them to distance themselves from the most ordinary things so that, in the process of exoticization, they could present the latter as unique, i.e. "Jewish sights".

The legend recorded in Tulchin town[13] and describing an argument between the Jews and Potocki, the owner of Tulchin, about which party was to build a synagogue (fig. 1), was retold to answer the questions how long the Jews lived here, and whether it was Potocki himself who had allowed them to settle down in the town. The narrator rated the information regarding the biggest synagogue[14] and its precise location in the town as the most important for the traveller who was willing acquaint himself with "Jewish antiquity":

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[10] In the present article, the term **exoticization** is defined as the representation of something ordinary as exotic (curious, strange, unusual). See http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/exoticization

[11] For example, "the patina of time", which marks notable Jewish districts in Vorms and Barcelona, Venice and Vilnius, is perceived as a visual characteristics of the peculiarity of the "traditional Jewish world".

[12] For more on this, see Sokolova A., "'Белый господин в поисках экзотики': еврейские достопримечательности в путевых записках и искусствоведческих очерках (19 – нач. 20 в.)", Русско-еврейская культура (Москва: 2006).

[13] Interviews with native dwellers of Tulchin were recorded by the participants of the Field School organized by the Centres "Sefer", Moscow, and "Petersburg Judaica", St.Petersburg, in 2005.

[14] In the late 1920s, the synagogue was closed and after some time converted into a granary. In 1947, the building (dating back to probably the 18th c.) was totally destroyed. The author's personal archive contains copies of measurement diagrams of the ruins of this building made in 1947.

Fig. 1. A postcard depicting the Main Synagogue of Tulchin.

Inf.:[15] And here was… in the old… I will now [tell you] the most important thing. Here was a Jewish synagogue, here, you see where this building is, where the fence is, behind the fence was … a Jewish synagogue. And then, in the old times, there were a great many Jews, millionaires, and they wanted to build a synagogue, and Count Potocki said, "No, I will build the synagogue…" … They [Jews and the Count] generally were friends, but [for a long time] could not agree… Anyway, [finally] they agreed [that] both would be building it…

(Solodenker Grigoriy Nakhmanovich, b. in 1925, Tul_05_060)

The list of Jewish sights in Tulchin also includes "the Jewish bath"[16] and the building of another synagogue, situated "at the New Market" and used after the end of the war as a dormitory of a technical secondary school until its demolition in the 1980s. While mentioning the incomplete construction of a new building on the site of the destroyed synagogue (fig. 2), one of the informants has noted that, "they've been building it here, and will not finish it: they start building it and then they quit. This place is… as if God has forbidden it to be built. God does not let them build this building" (Kupervasser Dora Nikolayevna, b. 1947, Tul_05_021). According

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[15] Hereinafter, the abbreviations "Inf." and "R." stand for "Informant" and "Researcher" respectively.

[16] The reference is made to a bath that had a *mikvah*.

Fig. 2. Tulchin. Spartak Street. Unfinished construction of a technical secondary school built on the site of the destroyed synagogue (photo: A. Sokolova, 2006).

to general opinion, the visitor ought to see the so-called "Gliklich Palace",[17] which houses the Sochnut representative office[18] and the Registry Office (fig. 3), as well as the building of the former Jewish school, closed in 1939. In addition, several informants have identified one building of no interest from the architectural point of view as a notable monument of "Jewish antiquity" (fig. 4).

> Inf.: On the right side you will see… a house, you know, an antique house with columns, on the left side – [another house]. Even my son has looked at it and says, there is even a title somewhere, and he even read it there. And there is even an inscription in Jewish. This house is like that, and with blinds it looks so marvellous.
> (Miranovskaya Galina Markovna, b. 1943, Tul_05_100)

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[17] Natives of Tulchin are aware of the fact that the building was a dowry of the daughter of Y. Rosenfeld, the owner of the brick factory, when she got married to a certain Gliklikh. According to Viktor Svyatelik, a native dweller of Tulchin, well versed in its history, the mansion known as the Gliklikh Palace was property of Rosenfeld's daughter.

[18] The informant refers to the office of the Jewish Agency in Ukraine.

Fig. 3. Tulchin. Lenin Street. The mansion called "The Gliklikh Palace"(1910), which belonged to merchant Rozenfeld's family (photo: A. Sokolova, 2006).

This house is a two-storied building constructed probably in the second half of the 19th century. The first floor is built of stone, and the second floor is wooden. It does not seem possible to characterize this building as a sample of vernacular architecture, unlike, for example, the above mentioned house "with columns",[19] whose architecture is typical of ordinary houses of trade centres in built-up areas of little towns of this region in the 19th century.

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[19] It seems that the emergence of the term "vernacular architecture" was largely stipulated by the tendency of scholars researching miscellaneous folk elements in architecture to see the latter as a manifestation of local tradition. For example, Nold Egenter points out that while reconstructing "the evolution of vernacular architecture based on its own immanent criteria, we might gain new insights into ways of life which are quite different from ours today" (Egenter N., *Theory – and for Whom? Some notes regarding the construction and function of theories in the field of vernacular architecture*, http://thedesignershub.com/archi%2Djournal/). According to Dell Upton, those working in the field of vernacular research have managed to eliminate the need for "such an exclusive label as vernacular architecture" (Upton D., "The Power of Things: Recent Studies in American Vernacular Architecture", *American Quarterly,* Vol. 35, No. 3 (1983): 262–279, 264). In his article, Upton does not use the term "folk architecture" and avoids defining "vernacular architecture" as "a category in which some buildings may be fit and others not" (Upton D., ibid. 263).

Fig. 4. Tulchin. Lenin Street. The building of the printing house with metal blinds, which was referred to in the interview as a landmark (second half of the 19th century); (photo: A. Sokolova, 2006).

The façade of the house mentioned in the interview above, is more likely to correspond in character to "exemplary façades", albums of which, although published in the capital and sent to the provinces in 1809–12, were very rarely referred to during construction works.[20] In Tulchin, only two more buildings may be attributed to the constructions of this type. The above-mentioned "marvellous" house was labelled as such thanks to its metal blinds dating back to the early 20th century. The blinds closed the windows of the first floor and consisted of relatively small metal plates decorated with six-petal stars and revealing the name of the manufacturer of the blinds, Abram Rubin, as well as the addresses of his shops in Odessa (fig. 5). By the will of several connoisseurs of Jewish sights in Tulchin, these little stars have been turned into the *magenduvids*, six-pointed stars each formed of two, often interlaced, equilateral triangles; and the inscription in Russian is rendered as "an inscription in Jewish". The blinds are usually offered for photographing:

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[20] For more detailed information on the implementation of exemplary projects see Белецкая Е.А. et. al., *«Образцовые» проекты в жилой застройке русских городов XVIII–XIX вв.* (Москва: 1961).

Fig. 5. A decorative tablet with "magenduvids" and the name of Abram Rubin, the manufacturer of the blinds, as well as addresses of his shops in Odessa (photo by A. Sokolova, 2006).

> Inf.: …Make a photo of these blinds there…, some time ago… here was a printing-house, and before the war usurers used to run their store…, old Jews. But this is all that has been left, you see? That's all. (Mekler Naum Aronovich, b. 1939, Tul_05_102)

While mentioning the "Jewish" street names that have gone out of daily use in their conversations with visitors, the informants thus localize the world of Jewish antiquity within the current architectural environment of the town and turn Tulchin streets into "covenantal". Besides, upon mentioning old place names, the narrators are encouraged to awaken their own spatial imagination and, while employing it, to supply the fragmentary images of antiquity emerging in their memories with full meanings.

> Inf. 1: So I say…, when here was a bath, it [was] a very interesting bath, especially because of… because of steam, and in general Jews used to come, to wash themselves there, and our street was called *Bud-gos* (Bath Street)… and those other ones – it was called *Kaptsunivke-gos* (Kaptsunivke Street).
> Inf. 2: The poor…

Inf. 1: The poor liked it.
R.: And was it considered any richer here?
Inf. 2: Well, more [well-to-do].
Inf. 1: Small kids fought with each other – threw stones.
Inf. 2: What can I say – there was great poverty. And then, when there was this poverty, we did not understand that it was better. And it was very good and joyous here for us, and the girls on the carts… over there, where the carters were – used to nibble sunflower seeds. So, that was so… olden times it was… and it was fun.
(Solodenker Grigoriy Nakhmanovich, b. 1925, Solodenker Riva Shlemovna, b. 1928, Tul_05_060).

The *shtetl*

The informants are often ready to provide their own treatment of the formation of the architectural and planning structure of the settlement, which they use in order to localize Jewish antiquity. According to their interpretation, the peculiarities of the local historical architectural environment and natural landscape may be presented as conditioned by Jewish presence, even if Jews are seen as heirs of the Turks.[21]

R.: That is, in general, did Jews live all together?
Inf.: All the years they used to. Beside each other – by one meter. I [put] a pot for you on the steps, you [put] a pot for me on the steps. They used to build houses like this all the years.
R.: Why so, did they say?
Inf.: Jews have always stuck together… That's why.
R.: Why is it so?
Inf.: Because a while ago it was called not Shargorod, but Little Istanbul. The Turks were here […] We have loopholes, a fortress where Turks were… Has Inna showed you? The synagogue was built about 500 years ago, and the monastery, and the Catholic church as well… were built at the same time.
(Kosman Nikolay Aronovich, b. 1939., Shar 04-05_02)

The informant tries to define the territory of the *shtetl*, i.e., the place in which apparently "there was not a single Russian", by means of different elements of architectural environment and landscape: "from the mill to the recreation centre,

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[21] The idea of Turks taking part in the urbanization of the region is also shared by local dwellers of Ukrainian towns. For more information, see Sokolova A., "Contemporary Images of the Shtetl Amongst the Ukrainian Population of Urban-Type Settlements and Villages of Podolia", *Moving in the USSR* (Helsinki: 2005): 130–160, 136.

and further away there was a wasteland…" (Kosman Nikolay Aronovich, b. 1939, Shar 04-05_02). He behaves in the same way when presenting the *shtetl* as a specific "miraculous" place that is emphasized in the surrounding world.

> Inf.: …So then they were building a synagogue, a Catholic church and a monastery. Well, haven't you seen [that] they all form a triangle? Old people used to say that hurricanes and all, they never happen here. Everything takes place quietly here – around, in the regions, even in our region, you see over there – the wiring has been damaged.
> (Kosman Nikolay Aronovich, b. 1939., Shar 04-05_02)

The living environment of the *shtetl* is often presented as homogeneous. The rich and the poor *shtetl* inhabitants appeared to be next-door neighbours, even though they were parishioners of different synagogues. The pre-war settling situation of the Jews in the former little town of Ozarintsy[22] has been described by its native in an interview in the following way:

> R.: And was there a place were poor people lived and where richer ones lived?
> Inf.: There was, indeed. It was called *intergesl* (back street) – *es intergesl*. That one was the upper, and that one – *intergesl*. Beneath… – it was behind these streets where the poor lived. And they even had their own synagogue. Over there, near the big synagogue is debris – there used to be another synagogue; that was a synagogue for… for this kind of people. And there, higher, was also… (where the office of the collective farm is, still higher) was a synagogue for the special ones, it was called *Kliuz*.[23]
> (Vainfeld Musia, b. 1925 Mog_04_03)

Goishe-gos (Non-Jewish Street)[24] found its place within the boundaries of the *shtetl*. This peripheral street probably received its name from the fact that it had been incorporated into the planning structure of the trade centre, which was perceived as "the Jewish world".

Describing ritualized daily evening walks along the main street of Shargorod, in which Ukrainian suburb dwellers took part as well, a Jewish informant thought it was relevant to bring to the listener's attention a special element of the architecture of "a genuine Jewish house", viz., *prizbys*.[25] At the turn of the 20th century, the main streets of Shargorod were predominantly formed by houses with galleries, either on the ground level or placed higher on the ground floor, the latter still being too narrow and

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[22] Ozarintsy – formerly a little town, currently a village in Vinnitsa region, Ukraine.

[23] From Yid. *kloiz* – a small congregation, originally a house of study.

[24] Some Jews born in Shargorod recall that it used to be the name of one of the peripheral streets of the old trade centre, which had long been populated by Ukrainians. Many Ukrainians, owners of the houses situated on this street, consider themselves hereditary townsmen.

[25] *Prizbys* from *prizby* (Ukr. Sg. *prizba*). *Prizba* is a protruding relatively low ground floor, which strengthened the lower part of the house wall.

Fig. 6. Shargorod. Karl Marx Street. A building with a gallery raised above the ground level (photo by A. Sokolova, 2006).

frequently too high to be used as a bench (fig. 6). Although it was more comfortable to sit on the stairs leading to the galleries, in order to mark the space of the main street as the space of "Jewish antiquity", the informant found it appropriate to refer to the *prizba* (Ukr.), adding to the word a Yiddish ending. In the general opinion, the *prizba* was a traditional element of an ancient house.

Inf.: Well, they… it was common – girls, usually friends, anyway they go for a walk up and down, with lads or without. While the old people sit on… what is it in Jewish – *prizbys*. Do you know what *prizbys* is? They sit and… so, "now this one went by, now that one went by", you know, how they begin to discuss… It was not necessarily that Jewish women used to sit there…
R.: And there, in the centre, did anyone else live…?
Inf.: Well, they came… They came and sat over there, where Jewish houses are on these… [*prizbys*]… Chairs were taken out for them and little benches – everything.
R.: So it was not only the owners of the houses who used to sit there?
Inf.: No…
Sob: Chairs were taken out and everybody could sit down?
Inf.: Necessarily…, one has to sit on something. And so along all length <of the street>, they used to sit so on both sides and look…. how the young went out for a walk.
(Kosman Nikolay Aronovich, b. 1939, Shar_04-05_02)

It seems that the above mentioned custom[26] of the town / Jewish people to take "chairs and little benches" out of the house (in the speech of the given informant, the relevant norms of that time are marked by the word "necessarily") at the signifier-signified level demarcates the transformation of the space of the main street of the town into the space of *Yiddishe-gos* (Jewish Street)[27]

"The Jewish world" of the big town

Like the *shtetl*, the space of "Jewish antiquity" may also be found in the mental reconstruction of relatively big towns, such as, for example, Tulchin, Mohilev-Podolsky, or Vinnitsa. Natives of Tulchin visualize the space of the "Jewish town" as divided into two parts. One of them, the *shtetl*, looks closed, while the other, on the contrary, is open to all cultural innovations. Unlike Shargorod – the ideal *shtetl*, most residents of Tulchin do not associate its covenantal place *Yiddishe-gos* with the centre, but rather with Kaptsanovka, situated behind its boundaries. Yet, all informants say that long ago, "before the revolution", the centre used to be populated with the so-called "rich" Jews, while the poor lived in Kaptsanovka.[28]

> R.: Have you heard such a name, "Kaptsanovka"?
> Inf.: I know. Kaptsanovka – it was related with the lowest people, lowest professions. You will not equal, for the example, a carpenter to a doctor… [There] could live a joiner, a tailor, a bricklayer. But there was this attitude – these are from Kaptsanovka. It was several streets.
> […]
> Inf.: The rich considered themselves the highest [class]. Here, in the centre, could live a rich tailor, a dental technician, a midwife, [if she] had any authority for them, furriers, you see… and they used to say about those from Kaptsanovka, "Whom can you talk with there, they are poor…"
> (Makovecky Nukhim Shayevich, b. 1917, Tul_05_037).

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[26] It seems that this custom was determined by the fact that, in accordance with the traditions of European town culture, the boundary between public and private spaces was weakly expressed. For example, in Podolia townships, the first room from the street, regardless of whether it served a store and a workshop or a hall and a living room, is more likely to be defined as a public rather than private space.

[27] In Yiddish, the word combination "Jewish street" is synonymous with the expression "Jewish community".

[28] The informants vary their pronunciation of this word and use *Kaptsanovka, Kaptsanivka,* and *Kaptsunivka* interchangeably.

Such structuring of the space of "Jewish antiquity" is typical of those little towns, which, sometimes even more successfully than district towns, were implementing the standards of everyday life imposed on administrative centres by the authorities of the Russian Empire. In Tulchin the pressure of the imperial culture was felt through the deployment of a military garrison.

Kaptsanovka

It is Kaptsanovka, the imaginary space of "Jewish antiquity", rather than the old name of a street or several districts like, for example, *Shil-gos* (Synagogue Street) , *Richke-gos* (River Street) and *Kaptsunivke-gos*, the latter being the proto-homeland of Kaptsanovka, that, according to one of the informants, is "the most interesting district" of Tulchin. Like the boundaries of the *shtetl*, the boundaries of Kaptsanovka fluctuate greatly. The territory of Kaptsanovka is frequently defined as the opposite of the "centre". Then, in addition to the districts situated in the vicinity of the Old Market place, *Kaptsunivke-gos*, it also includes *Bud-gos* – the districts at the bath and the *mikvah*; *Shil-gos* – the districts along the street connecting the centre of Tulchin with an 18th century synagogue, as well as *Richke-gos*. In the "poor districts" of Kaptsanovka, the locations of synagogues, the main poles of the Jewish space, are distinctly defined.

Inf.: No, we did not live in a poor district. We lived in what was considered a centre…
R.: In the centre?
Inf.: In the centre… We had poor districts: over there, where was one synagogue, another one… the poor was called Kaptsanivka.
(Brutman Mira Isaakovna, b. 1926, Tul_05_019)

It was not by accident that Kaptsanovka became the main depository of images of "the antique Jewish life" of Tulchin. The reason may possibly be found in the fact that the majority of the informants interviewed in Tulchin have "come from the poor Kaptsanovka" or from former little towns situated in the vicinity of Tulchin. Many of them spent their childhood on the "decent" streets of the town, while others settled down in the centre after the end of the war since *Kaptsunivke-gos*, as well as *Shil-gos* and *Bud-gos*, had virtually been razed to the ground. For such informants, Kaptsanovka was to become the point of convergence at which, according to Halbwachs, "individual recollections are restored thanks to their connection with the system of coordinates of the social memory".[29]

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[29] On the concept of collective memory in Halbwachs, see Хаттон П.., *История как искусство памяти* 201.

It may be suggested that in the construction of Kaptsanovka, the architectural image of *Kaptsunivke-gos* has become the key image due to the specific peculiarities of ordinary construction around the Old Market, which contributed to the spatial isolation of *Kaptsunivke-gos*. In the early 19th century, its districts began to turn into slums, following the reconstruction of the town-planning structure of Tulchin of the late 18th century. It may well be a result of this reconstruction that the little town had turned into a city and thus the beginning was laid for the collapse of the *shtetl* into the Centre and Kaptsanovka, the "ghetto" for poor Jews.[30]

In the 19th century, construction activities of the more well-to-do merchants and artisans were mostly to be found in the main trade street of Tulchin and around the New Market.[31] The Old Market was obviously populated with the less successful and less law-abiding merchants.

Inf.: One should not go there because there… everything was there. There gathered…, the cattle also gathered there, all illegal goods also accumulated there. And everything was like that there. Those who made money lived there. Who had money enough to burn. And that's it, that's why there were no…
R.: So did they live there or only…?
Inf.: Yes, and there also were houses…
R.: And did they live there?
Inf.: They both lived and kept the guard there as well. Well, what guard… Russians kept the guard there. They hired people who guarded that cattle there, … dirty manufacture. Like the hideout, that's how it was called there – *malina*, so that nobody would know. There was a militiaman, and he was bribed. … They were very much… were very rich, the Jews were rich…
(Mekler Naum Aronovich, b. 1939, Tul_05_102)

The lifestyle of *Kaptsunivke-gos*, which was adjacent to the Old Market, seemed strange, to say the least, to all those who had grown up in other districts.

Inf.: …they used to swear in Kaptsanovka. And I did not live there…, I only rarely came to visit a relative of mine. I saw what was there… – there people were not like ours.
R.: And why did you see it? Because they swore?
Inf.: They swore, they were somewhat… They dressed badly. They had many children, these parents. They walked barefoot. Poor… So I saw that there they were different – a lot of children ran barefoot. That's what they are – Kaptsanovka.
(Feigina Klara Nukhimovna, b.1919. API.Tul_05_016)

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[30] It should be noted that during the Nazi occupation, the Tulchin ghetto was allotted a street situated within the boundaries of Kaptsanovka.

[31] A synagogue was built there, probably in the mid-19th century, which, although it could not compete in terms of size with the main synagogue situated in *Shil-gos*, whose curator was an appointed rabbi, was nevertheless dominating in the construction of the New Market.

The re-assessment of backwardness and poverty, which allowed both those born in Kaptsanovka and *shtetls* to be proud of the place of their "origin", took place thanks to Jewish literature. The latter established the connections between the image of the *shtetl* and the concepts of "Jewish poverty" and "Jewish antiquity".

Exoticization of the house-building tradition of the *shtetl*

A great number of peculiarities of the construction and localization of the space of "Jewish antiquity" in former townships and little towns of this region, as well as of the majority of other regions of Eastern Europe, may be clarified by means of a historical-architectural reconstruction. This is possible due to the fact that the surviving fragments of their architectural environment date back to mainly the late 18th-early 20th centuries, when the cultural potential of any little town was virtually determined by the potential of its Jewish enclave.[32] It is not surprising then that the limits of the Jewish enclave usually spread up to the boundaries of the trade centre, and both sides perceived these boundaries as the boundaries of the "Jewish world". The architectural environment of the trade centre was tailored by the templates of Western town culture. The specific architecture of ordinary houses constructed crudely from local materials in built-up areas can be treated as a result of applying these templates within the framework of the house-building tradition of the *shtetl*. The extinction of this tradition was related to the severe control of the authorities over private construction initiatives or with their curtailment, as a result of "Soviet urbanization".[33]

Given the fact that they have been formed under the influence of local architecture, judgments of locally born Jews about the proper arrangement of the living space are of particular interest. It may seem that the locally born may "not have noticed" the process of extinction of the house-building tradition of the *shtetl*. However, this is not so. Exemplary houses for the visual reconstruction of the image of Kaptsanovka are associated with those "Jewish houses", which "you may have [seen] somewhere in little towns – there still are old houses to be found" (Solodenker Grigoriy Nakhmanovich, b. 1925, Tul_05_060). Understandably, having survived till the outbreak of war

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[32] The concept of cultural potential has been put forward by V.L. Glazychev as "a measure of the ability of town's community to re-create and to maintain the conditions of its development" (Глазычев В. Л., *Городская среда. Технология развития* (Москва: 1995).)

[33] The last period of activities in the sphere of private construction in the region may be attributed to 1900–10, which was followed by a long break (until the 1980s). Taking into consideration the fact that many of the informants remember the image of the pre-war ordinary house-building of this and earlier periods, one may suggest that their recollections contain those ideas of the comfortable living space which were apparently relevant for the house-building tradition of the early 20th century.

in *Kaptsunivke-gos*, as well as in *Bud-gos* and *Shil-gos,* century-old shacks were typologically similar to those houses of the late 18th-early 19th centuries, which determined the nature of the architectural environment of *shtetl*s.[34]

> R.: And in Kaptsanovka, what kinds of houses were there, do you remember?
> Inf.: Ordinary ones. … Most of them… those were houses like mine [in *Glavne-gos*],[35]
> and in general, they lived very poorly.
> (Makovecky Nukhim Shaevich, b. 1917, Tul_05_037)

These houses, both "ordinary" and "unique" from the viewpoint of a locally born dweller, let the traveller visualize the image of Kaptsanovka, that is, to understand how "poor Jews" used to live. "The inspection" of Kaptsanovka may start from any Tulchin street, from the very first "century-old shack". In their references to the examples of "purely Jewish architecture", which determined the appearance of Kaptsanovka, just like any *kleyn shtetl* (small town), native born dwellers point to buildings with *prizbas*, annexes and small verandas, houses with stores and craftworks on the ground floor (fig.7), as well as "long" houses built for several families to live in, with many entrances and exits, as if allowing their owners escape unnoticed in case of danger.

> Inf.: You see, here is the first one. You haven't seen this – it's a masterpiece… now I
> will show you more. … You have not seen this before… By the way, it was shot in a
> film, by the Kiev studio. This one here is also a Jewish house, a shabby hut.
> Inf. 2: This is a purely Jewish house.
> Inf. 1: This is purely Jewish architecture. It has – it was photographed for television. It is
> more than one hundred years old – one hundred and fifty. It used to be a workshop.
> Inf. 2: They came from America, a rabbi, my son, did photographs for America…
> (Baltsky Mikhail Mordukhovich, b. 1949, Tul_05_057.)

The exoticization of such houses by native local dwellers points to the fact that they were acknowledged as the house-building heritage of the *shtetl* – a distinctive cultural phenomenon. This is why the owner of a modern flat in Mohilev-Podolsky or Tulchin may be surprised to see the planning of the house in Chernivtsy which he has

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[34] Many informants agree upon the fact that such buildings could only survive in those former little towns, which were converted into villages in the Soviet times and thus escaped reconstruction. However, they are only partly correct: given the fact that the construction of Soviet recreational and administrative buildings took place in suburban areas, until recently even district centres frequently preserved remarkable fragments of the historical construction.

[35] The informant has provided a detailed description of the house, which used to belong to his family and was situated in the central street of Tulchin, Lenin Street, formerly Bolshaya ulitsa (Russ. Big Street) – the latter name is to be found on the plan of Tulchin of the late 18th-early 19th century, – which the informant refers to as *Glavne-gos* (Yidd. Main Street). However, the official old name was not used when speaking in Yiddish.

Fig. 7. Tulchin. Pushkin Street. A house with stores on the ground floor (second half of the 19th century), identified by the informants as a monument of "Jewish architecture" (photo by A. Sokolova, 2006).

known since childhood (as he inherited it after the death of his cousin's grandfather)[36] if, in his opinion, this house was built in accordance with the house-building tradition of "genuine Jewish townships".

> Inf.: The houses are set close one to another, because it is a characteristic little town, it is just one house close to another – adjacent.
> R.: And did they explain why they built them so close?
> Inf.: Compactly… I don't know why, they built them because… You see, when there is one wall, then three are needed, so he annexed it… The houses are dilapidated, from the swamp with straw, *valki* they were called, *valki*. They were built from the marsh. Wattle and daub, a wattle and daub house.
> R.: And this one too?
> Inf.: Yes, but of course, I have already reconstructed it. I have an apartment in Mohilev-Podolsky …. It would have fallen down, but I have put bricks all around it… and made a new roof... And there I haven't repaired anything. There I have two rooms… These poles – they built them. Why did they do so, I have wondered. It could have been done somehow, so that these poles would protrude over there… But… this oak, and a live oak… it has lived for so long.
> (Veprik Nikolay Shlemovich, b. 1943, Chern_05_01)

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[36] Chernivtsy – formerly a little town, now a town in Vinnitsa region, Ukraine.

The acknowledgment of the house-building tradition of the *shtetl* as the possession of "the Jewish people" allows the leaders of local Jewish communities to use the semi-destroyed houses of a certain type as a peculiar resource for the attraction of visitors' attention to the "construction" of a modern Jewish community. The majority of native local dwellers regards the state of "shabby shacks" as a fairly natural state for "ordinary" old houses and finds it appropriate to demonstrate them to various visitors. Then, the attention to buildings, which may not even have a plaque "under protection of the state", contributes to the transformation of the latter from "ordinary" ones into "unique" ones, valuable monuments of "Jewish antiquity". Although the initiatives for the preservation of such buildings are scarce,[37] the exoticization is possibly the first step in the realization of the necessity to turn at least one example of the local house-building tradition of the *shtetl* into a museum.

Appendix

1. Baltsky Mikhail Mordukhovich, native of. Tulchin (b.1949). R.: K.Viktorova, O.Zhironkina. API. Tul_05_057.
2. Solodenker Grigoriy Nakhmanovich, native of Tulchin (b.1925). R.: M. Kaspina, A. Sokolova, S. Pakhomova. API. Tul_05_060.
3. Solodenker Riva Shlemovna, native of Tulchin (b.1928). R.: M. Kaspina, A. Solokova, S. Pakhomova. API. Tul_05_060.
4. Kupervasser Dora Nikolayevna, native of Bershadi (b. 1956), resident of Tulchin since 1976. R.: Y. Myakgova, S. Egorova. API. Tul_05_021.
5. Miranovskaya Galina Markovna, born in the Pechora concentration camp (b.1943). R.: A. Solokova, B. Khaymovich, V. Fedchenko. API. Tul_05_100.
6. Mekler Naum Aronovich, native of Tulchin (b.1939). R.: A. Solokova, V. Chaplin. API. Tul_05_102.
7. Kosman Nikolay Aronovich, native of Shargorod (b.1939). R.: A. Solokova. API. Shar_05_01.
8. Vainfeld Musia, native of Ozarintsev (b.1925), currently resident of Mohilev-Podolskiy. R.: A. Sokolova, O. Filicheva. API. Mog_04_03.
9. Makovetsky Nukhim Shayevich, native of Tulchin (b. 1917). R.: S.Yegorova, M. Myakgova, M. Treskunov. API. Tul_05_037.

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[37] One of such rare initiatives resulted in the establishment of the Jewish Museum in the town of Shargorod. For a certain time the museum was situated in one of the houses of ordinary construction of the trade centre of the little town; however, it did not take long before the museum was destroyed.

10. Brutman Mira Isaakovna, native of Tulchin (b. 1926). R.: K.Viktorova, A.Kushkova. API.Tul_05_019.
11. Feigina Klara Nukhimovna, native of Tulchin (b.1919). R.: M.Treskunov, V. Fedchenko. API.Tul_05_016.
12. Veprik Nikolai Shlemovich, native of Chernevtsev (b.1943). R.: A. Sokolova, API. Chern_05_01.

THE TAVERN AS A PLACE OF COMMUNICATION IN HUNGARIAN JEWISH LITERATURE

RITA HORVÁTH

The tavern and the Jewish tavern-keeper (*arendant*) play a prominent role in Eastern European Jewish literature of the 19th century and in 20th century family novels depicting the previous century. This attention is justified historically, since from the 17th century to the first half of the 19th century, the overwhelming majority of rural Jews made their living as retail merchants, distillers and lessees of taverns. The right to keep taverns was restricted to the landed gentry and aristocracy, who typically leased out this right, often preferring Jewish tenants.[1] One can observe, however, that while the historical prominence of Jewish tavern-keepers is reflected in their recurrent appearance in literature, their literary status remains limited: they are relegated to minor characters and only very rarely chosen as protagonists.

Magdalena Opalski, who examines the motif of Jewish tavern- and innkeepers in 19th century Polish literature, demonstrates that the portrayal of these characters is highly stereotypical.[2] She asserts that the tavern-keeper came to embody "a synthesis of features held to be characteristic of a rural Jew earning a living by means of non-agricultural pursuits"[3] and as such his "literary features … seem to be more clearly defined than is the case with other, less familiar, Jewish characters."[4]

Opalski enumerates and describes elements of this literary stereotype in her book, *The Jewish Tavern-Keeper and His Tavern in Nineteenth-Century Polish Literature*. According to Opalski, the tavern-keeper's most vital trait is his ability to move between and thus bridge antithetical realms, both social and mythical. The village tavern, which is usually situated at a crossroads, becomes a point of contact between the outside world of the traveler and the local society. It also provides a meeting place

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[1] On the role of leasing taverns see Carmilly-Weinberger M., *A zsidóság története Erdélyben* (Budapest: 1995): 125–132. This historical description is especially useful, since the center of Illés Kaczér's family novel, the tavern that Sholem leases is in Transylvania.

[2] Opalski M., *The Jewish Tavern-Keeper and his Tavern in Nineteenth-Century Polish Literature* (Jerusalem: 1986).

[3] Ibid. 10. Opalski calls attention to the fact that "the rural Jews referred to as 'middlemen,' factors, 'merchants' and 'moneylenders' often turn out to be tenants of the local tavern as well" (ibid.).

[4] Ibid. 9.

for different segments of the local population. Illés Kaczér's novel-sequence entitled *Zsidó Legenda* (Jewish Legend)[5] defines the tavern in terms of the abundant flow of information it facilitates: "There were plenty of reports and rumors, for the inn was visited by all sorts of people who have heard this or that or the other, the inn being the first stop for news, hearsay, beliefs, and opinions."[6]

The tavern is a site of all manners of mobility – economic, social, and mythical – which are viewed in a traditional society as constituting a constant threat to prevailing norms. The tavern-keeper, "as the landlord's middleman, … is pivotal to the economic livelihood of the surrounding estates," while "as a merchant, he furthers the free movement of goods"[7] and ensures the flow of cash both in and out of the tavern. "The tavern is also seen as a place where the transcendental, the world beyond, touches our reality.[8] In traditional societies, however, there are places specially designated for such a contact between the transcendental and the everyday world, namely, places of worship: churches and prayer houses. Therefore, taverns are inevitably deemed improper places of contact, or rather places of improper contact – in other words, places of contact with the devil.[9] The tavern is conceived of as a place of iniquity, a venue that fosters dangerous desires, such as mobility and alcohol.

The tavern-keeper, who presides over the gateway between reality and the underworld, is often accordingly depicted as having devilish characteristics. "Typically, the Jewish innkeeper suffers from some sort of handicap betraying a form of kinship with the world below. Lameness is the most common. The innkeeper is also often characterized by a loss of one eye, a squint, left-handedness, and other disfigurements, which have similar mythological connotations."[10] The tavern-keeper is further

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[5] Kaczér I., *Ne félj, szolgám Jákob: A Zsidó legenda első könyve* (Tel-Aviv: [1953]). Idem, *Jerichó ostroma: Kaczér Illés Zsidó legendája, második regény* (Tel-Aviv: 1954). Idem,, *Három a Csillag: Kossuth Lajos zsidaja [and] Három a csillag második könyve* (Tel-Aviv: 1955–56).
Idem, *The Siege* (translated from the Hungarian by Lawrence Wolfe, New York: 1953).

[6] Idem, *The Siege* 350.

[7] Opalski M., *The Jewish Tavern-Keeper* 11.

[8] Ibid. 11–13.

[9]   I quote Helen Epstein's description of the Jewish tavern-keeper to demonstrate how much her words are permeated with Christian religious terminology, such as "confession", and how she perpetuates the contrast of Christian places of worship with the Jewish tavern: "The Randar [the name of the *arendants* in the Czech lands] probably heard more confessions than the village priest, and his tavern – the only community gathering place apart from church during the long winters – competed with the Church for money and souls." Epstein H., *Where She Came From: A Daughter's Search for her Mother's History* (Boston: 1998): 28–29.

[10] Opalski M., *The Jewish Tavern-Keeper* 13.

associated with the "other world [through] his nocturnal activity."[11] Neither are tavern cellars free from subterranean connections.[12]

The tavern-keeper's routine cheating habits are also tied to his deceptive and devilish character: "The tavern-keeper operates under various covers and aliases, easily shifting identities, taking advantage of trickery and disguise. In daily life the taverner's standard trick consists of diluting vodka (liquor) and cheating on the bill."[13]

Another binary, which is basic to traditional societies, is the one between the ordered realm of civilization and that of the chaotic wilderness. Village taverns are usually situated "close to uninhabited terrains or on the edge of thick forests and dangerous swamps."[14] Thus, the Jewish tavern-keeper can cross, with relative ease, another well-established boundary of Western civilization.

Foreign ethnicity deepens the enigmatic mythical nature of the Jewish tavern-keeper and his family,[15] especially in small villages, where the family members of the tavern-keeper were oftentimes the only Jewish residents. Hence, the tavern becomes an "ideal setting for encounters with the unknown, crime, conspiracy, mystery, witchcraft, as well as for radical change in the social condition",[16] and "the tavern-keeper is invariably at the heart of smuggling that goes on across both real and mythic boundaries."[17]

Thus, as a consequence of crossing various traditionally established boundaries, the tavern-keeper, particularly a foreign one, is seen in mythical light. His intense mythical aura is responsible for the emergence of his stereotyped depiction, which in turn limits the character's literary potential to develop into a round character, an individual protagonist. There is yet another reason why the tavern-keeper was rarely a developed, multi-faceted figure. The tavern provided an apt and plausible venue for drawing together antagonistic social, and mythical realms, and as such was crucial in developing the plot; but it was not seen as holding any particular interest in itself.

Opalski examines 19th century Polish literature, which is replete with examples of grossly anti-Semitic stereotypes of the tavern-keeper. It is thus highly interesting to find a similarly pejorative stereotype of Jewish tavern-keepers in Jewish novels written in Yiddish. Just think of the taverns and tavern-keepers presented by Der Nister in his *Di mispokhe Mashber* (The Family Mashber). He describes 4 taverns,

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[11] Ibid. 14.
[12] Ibid. 13.
[13] Ibid. 14.
[14] Ibid. 13.
[15] "In the case of the Jewish tavern, the mythological character is conveyed independently by three mutually reinforcing factors—the foreign ethnic element, the tavern as a site and vodka as a drink" (Ibid. 12–13).
[16] Ibid. 12.
[17] Ibid. 14.

ranging from the "relatively distinguished" Nosn-Note's inn[18] through Sholem-Aron's[19] and Yone's tavern to Zakharye's standing-only bar in the butchers' district.[20] All the depictions of taverns and tavern-keepers in *Di mispokhe Mashber* are consistent with the blatantly pejorative literary stereotype described by Opalski. As an effective tool for plot developing, Yone retains close connections with all sorts of criminals, while "stolen objects could not find a better hiding place than in his tavern."[21] He takes care of all of Reb Dudi's dirty work, to enable the Rabbi to retain his power.

In Hungarian Jewish literature, the figure of the Jewish tavern-keeper also comes up quite frequently.[22] It appears in family novels, such as Anna Lesznai's *Kezdetben volt a kert* (In the Beginning, There Was the Garden) and in István Szabó's film "Sunshine", which also has a family novel structure. In family novels, we typically hear little about poor village tavern-keepers; the story of the novels really commences with their sons or sons-in-law who develop fabulous careers in the 19th century, with the making of the family fortune, viz. with the founding of the family business.

Illés Kaczér's family novel, a tetralogy entitled *Zsidó Legenda*, is a great exception to this rule. Sholem ben Yoirish, the protagonist of the first two books – *Ne félj, szolgám Jákob: A Zsidó legenda első könyve* (Fear Not My Servant Jacob) and *Jerichó Ostroma: Kaczér Illés Zsidó legendája, második regény* (The Yellow House) – is the village tavern-keeper. Most of the action takes place in the tavern and its immediate vicinity. Only towards the second half of the second book does the novel gradually shift its focus onto the generation of Sholem's children, who, according to form, embark on large business ventures. The first book of Kaczér's tetralogy depicts the settling down of Sholem and his family in Hungary after narrowly escaping a blood libel in Galicia. Three squires invite the head of the family to replace their deceased tavern-keeper whose orphans are too young to take over the lease in Lápfalva. Even the name of the settlement, signifying "Swampvillage", indicates that it is a backward place located in the middle of nowhere. The novel follows the family as it puts down roots in Lápfalva, with the home coming to

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[18] Der Nister, *The Family Mashber* (translated from the Yiddish by Leonard Wolf, New York: 1987): 231.

[19] Ibid. 196–203.

[20] Ibid. 400.

[21] Ibid. 402.

[22] The tavern-keeper is for instance an important character of Hassidic tales. Just think of the two memorable tavern-keepers – Mózsi Oroszlán, the pugnacious and wild tavern-keeper from Téglás and Chajim Weinstein, a tavern-keeper in Galicia, who was pursued by Satan – in a sequence of Hassidic tales entitled "*Nefelejts*" in Szabolcsi L., *Magyar Hászid Történetek* (Budapest: 1996): 49–97. Anna Szalai in her *Házalók, árendások, kocsmárosok, uzsorások a reformkori prózában* (Budapest: 2002) describes and analyzes the tavern-keepers in the prose of the so-called Reform Era in Hungary.

serve as a safe haven for the next generation, a sure base in times of need. Sholem's daughter, who was all but 10 years old at the time of her family's flight before the blood libel, states confidently, "But this time we have somewhere to go,"[23] when at the end of the second novel the Jews of "Ötvár" (Szatmárnémeti) are accused of causing a cholera epidemic.

Positioning a tavern-keeper as a protagonist, a fully developed character rather than a mysterious stereotype, is just one of the many ways Kaczér deliberately subverts (often playfully) the existing literary tradition. Aside from the protagonist, Sholem, Kaczér refers to and describes a great many other Jewish tavern-keepers, who conform to certain elements of the literary stereotype or share and thus highlight some of Sholem's characteristics. We find for instance a witty and outspoken village innkeeper, Semáje, the tavern-keeper of Kakszentmárton, who on one occasion, while buying spirits from a rich, selfish, and hypocritical merchant and distiller, says to him: "*Sie warden auch auf der anderen Welt brennen, reb Leiser*."[24] This portent might be interpreted as a compliment, meaning that Lazarovich would go on with his trade over there [in the other world], but was in fact meant as an insult:[25] "you will burn … over there in the fire of the Gehenna."[26] Moshe Doved Treues, meanwhile, is a tavern-keeper in Batiz who also owns a butcher shop. Like Sholem, he is a serious Talmud scholar. The two characters also share similar values, so much so that they each want their daughters to marry the same groom, whose Torah studies they plan to support. Having an incomparably better *yihes* as the descendant of Rashi, Moshe Doved Treues easily won this 'competition' of which he had remained unaware owing to Sholem's secrecy.

We encounter Jonas, the Jew of the Baron of Ecsed, who is stricken with rheumatism,[27] are introduced to the tavern owned by an Armenian in Csenger, and even learn the history of the tavern in Lápfalva in terms of its successive lessees:

> The old tavern (*csárda*) had seen more than one Jew measuring out good cheer to the peasants of three Hungarian villages. Sixty years before it was the Jew Abris, then for twenty-odd years the Jew Moses (*Mózsi*), then [after Mózsi's death] for seven years the Jew Sholem.[28]

Kaczér also offers character portraits that conform closely to the existing literary stereotype. Sholem's predecessor, Mózsi, cheats a little with the measures, with

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[23] Kaczér I., *The Siege* 594.

[24] Idem, *Ne félj, szolgám Jákob* 135.

[25] Idem, *The Siege* 105.

[26] My translation from the Hungarian original of "égni fogsz, … odaát, a gyehenna tüzén," because I needed a word-by-word translation (Kaczér I., *Ne félj, szolgám Jákob* 135).

[27] Kaczér I., *The Siege* 211–212.

[28] Ibid. 287.

the mixing, and in his recording of the amount of liquor consumed. Tavern-keeper Herskovitch, Sholem's adversary, fully fits the stereotype. He is an unremittingly diabolic figure, an accomplice to murders and robbery, and related with bandits and highwaymen as a receiver of stolen goods. His very appearance recalls the devil:

> Herskovitch was a scraggy little old man, with a big wry nose and an upward crinkle in his chin. His trimmed goatee was an extension of the crinkle, so that it almost met with the tip of his nose. The expression in his piggy eyes held entreaty, and Malkeleh [Sholem's wife] was sorry for him.[29]

Herskovitch can be regarded as a stereotyped evil double of the protagonist. He enters the novel simultaneously with Sholem to get a hold of the tavern in Lápfalva for his son-in-law. He did not succeed, but he represents a constant threat. Moreover, the writer makes repeated, seemingly irrelevant references to him to keep his figure in the reader's mind.

Against the background provided by these other tavern-keepers we can fully appreciate to what extent Kaczér subverts the literary stereotype in his protagonist's portrait. First of all, the tavern-keeper's roles as intermediary and merchant are mainly assigned to Sholem's wife, Malkeleh. It mainly falls to her to maintain good relations between her family and the gentry as well as the peasants.

> It was Malkeleh's task to smooth things over, and she did everything in her power to foster and maintain good relations with the gentry. On a Friday afternoon, if her cheesecakes happened to be a success, she would send a small tin of them to Lady Susannah at Gyekenyes and another to Lady Clementine at Sarberek. If the stuffed goose she killed for the Sabbath happened to have a fine, big liver, she would personally take it over to the manor at Denghelegh, to be effusively blessed by her ladyship there. Before Passover, Malkeleh never omitted to send the gentry a gift of unleavened bread wrapped in a snow-white serviette. The Purim pastry was also very popular with the gentry, though it was prepared in the Jewish way, with plenty of walnuts, raisins, cinnamon and cloves.
> It was Malkeleh's task too to keep up friendly relations with the peasant women. She had a small pharmacy in a wooden box, and also a book of prescriptions for coughs, stomach-ache, and the like; and of course she knew what to do when the children came down with the measles. The peasant women came to Malkeleh with their domestic troubles as well. They considered it quite natural that their men should drink to drown their sorrows and, having drunk too much, to be more sorrowful still and to seek relief in thrashing their wives and children; yet it did them good to pour out their hearts to someone. They always left Malkeleh comforted and refreshed.[30]

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[29] Ibid. 385.
[30] Ibid. 255–256.

Sholem's wife engages in small-scale business dealings as well:

Malkeleh also enabled the [peasant] women to earn a little money. She bought from them homespun material, embroidered towels, and varicolored rag-mats, partly for the household and partly for the girls' bottom drawer.

Malkeleh had a small income of her own. Her main source of revenue was goose feathers, which were stripped by Aunt Feiga and the children and sold to Zishe in Hodasz. Sometimes Yiteleh would need a few coppers of which Sholem had better not know, or Mailech wanted to buy stock, or Yossef was hard up for something. Malkeleh's fund was always there for these purposes. But she was also generous with it, as with words of comfort and encouragement, when approached by poor wretches, mostly women, from far and near.[31]

Kaczér also undertakes to undermine the common portrayal of the rural Jew, who according to the stereotype does not engage in any productive labor and morally corrupts the peasants. In the novel, the poet and liberal reform politician Ferenc Kölcsey reiterates this very accusation, which was widespread in all of Eastern and Central Europe:

One morning de Kölcsey, the worshipful County Deputy himself, came in to buy something and had a long talk with [Sholem's daughter] Yiteleh. He liked this alert Jew girl and even remarked, in the presence of her uncle, that if all Jews were like him and his niece, it would be all right. Unfortunately, however, there was a great influx from Galicia. The Galicians engaged in usury, distilled spirits, and were stultifying and debasing the peasantry with drink. Markus Nikolsburger [Yiteleh's uncle] was very flattered by this august praise, but Yiteleh thought of her father in Lápfalva and began to feel ashamed of his business.[32]

In contrast to most Jewish lessees of taverns, Sholem, who is a Hassidic Jew from Máramaros,[33] is also a tiller of the soil. Among the Hassidim agricultural work is valued, and Sholem sees it as an exalted means of approaching the Creator. He lovingly refers to plowing like writing letters to God. Sholem held idealized notions of agriculture, believing that "to till the soil and write letters to God in furrowed lines was a finer occupation [than selling liquor]."[34] This conviction, however, does not compel him to look down on his main source of livelihood:

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[31] Ibid. 256.

[32] Ibid. 415.

[33] Máramaros County in the Habsburg Empire was a very poor region in Sub-Carpathia (one part of the territory of the former Máramaros County today belongs to Romania, and the other to the Ukraine). Many Hassidic Jewish peasants lived there.

[34] Kaczér I., *The Siege* 340.

Sholem on his part saw nothing shameful in inn-keeping. The inn gives him and his family bread, and that is the chief thing. It brings a lot of trouble, but it also brings a measure of peace, and you can study and teach the young under the barrels of fruit brandy. The important thing was that the measures should be honest and the blending correct. Otherwise selling spirits was no more disgraceful than making rope or mixing ink. There were those who hanged themselves and there were those that were hanged innocently, and there were those that were blackened with ink, especially by malicious officials. Yet no one said that ropes and ink were not useful and necessary things. It was the same with drink: it exists because it has to exist. If anyone wanted drink, you were obliged to give it to him, for if the Jew did not give it, the Armenian, the Swabian, and the Serb would. Of course it would be better to be able to dole out purer and more abiding happiness. But so long as misery exists on earth, King Lemuel's proverb remains valid, "Give intoxicating drink to him that is lost and wine to him whose heart is bitter, so that he may forget his poverty and not remember his wretchedness."[35]

Kaczér not only shows how Sholem alleviates the suffering of a dying serf and demonstrates that the receiving society does not let Jews become simple farmers,[36] he also shifts the emphasis within Judaism by privileging Hassidism over other trends and movements. He offers Hassidism as a strong model and basis for the construction of Jewish identity.

The most significant aspect of the stereotype that Kaczér subverts is the tavern-keeper's affiliation with the devil. By displaying and explaining Sholem's passionate religious observance in minute detail, the writer demonstrates that the Jewish tavern-keeper indeed has transcendental connections: he serves God with great enthusiasm.[37]

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[35] By drawing upon Lawrence Wolfe's English translation, I have re-translated this passage from the Hungarian original because I needed a more exact translation than Wolfe's. See Wolfe's English translation: Kaczér I., *The Siege* 339-340. See the Hungarian original: Idem, *Jerichó ostroma* 69–70.

[36] "To till the soil and write letters to God in furrowed lines was a finer occupation [than selling liquor.] But you see, Malkeleh, they won't let us do that. I reclaimed the toad-puddle, grew flax, maize, and corn on it, and now they have told me off. I must let the marsh come back, else there will be trouble" (Kaczér I., *The Siege* 340).

[37] There are few other works which depict such deep religiousness in Jewish tavern-keepers. Another rare example is Jakob Kaufmann's *Der böhmische Dorfjude* which was published in 1841 in Leipzig. Wilma Iggers quotes Kaufmann's description of the tavern-keeper Simon in her *Die Juden in Böhmen und Mähren: Ein historisches Lesebuch* (München: 1986): 101-102. In contrast to these infrequent sympathetic descriptions most Jewish literary depictions show tavern-keepers in a different light. Helen Epstein summarized the stereotype as follows: "It was for that proximity to and fraternization with the Christian world, and because he did not always close his tavern down on the Sabbath, that the tavern-keeper was looked down upon by pious Jews, even if he was rich and could buy a seat in the front row

Sholem's tavern is popular and busy; Kaczér gives an overview of its patrons:

There were plenty of visitors: pilgrims, market venders, soothsayers, knife throwers, chanting beggars with mutilated bodies, card sharpers, pickpockets, actors, bear tamers; discharged soldiers and deserters, poachers and bandits, drovers and itinerant glaziers, Slovak pot-menders and journeyman artisans, blood-letters and purveyors of enlightenment to the serfs; and mingled with this kaleidoscope of humanity, yet somehow apart, there came the Jews, all sorts and conditions of them: young and old, well-shod and barefoot, saintly and unsaintly; rabbis and rabbinical students, *schnorrers* (beggars), marriage brokers, carriers, produce buyers, contractors and peddlers; strangers from Russia, the Bukovina and Galicia, and strangers from other parts of Hungary, for Gershom counted as a stranger even in his native land; in between Jew and Gentile, yet blending with the endless procession, were the gypsies, gypsies with hooded wagons, gypsy tinsmiths, gypsy musicians; and there were Jewish "gypsies" too, who came playing their fiddles and singing in Yiddish, Hebrew, Russo-Polish, or a mixture of all three. In the course of the years all sorts and conditions of people came and went at such an inn. The more remote it lay from the main routes, and the more primitive and neglected the tracks leading to it, the more variegated was its clientele.[38]

Kaczér also counts religious holidays among the visitors: "Before Purim, the tavern beside the swamp had noble visitors: King Ahasuerus and his court. They enjoyed the tavern-keeper's attention for about two weeks. When the Holiday ended, the party moved on, and only the shadow of the Minister Haman remained in the house. The dark plotter had a very heavy shadow."[39]

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of the synagogue. His tavern was situated outside the community and – in contradiction to Kaufmann's portrait of the pious Simon – he was often considered an *amhoretz*, an ignorant man unschooled in Talmud and Torah" (Epstein H., *Where She Came From* 42). Opalski shows that in many anti-Semitic works whose authors know very little about Judaism, "the village taverner, and especially the small-town taverner, is not infrequently described as a 'Talmudic scholar' assistant to a rabbi, or even a rabbi, a man closely connected with Jewish religious institutions […]. In the literary plot, however, the taverner's religion is most often seen as an ideology stimulating his capitalist activities, responsible for his ethos, and even providing the tavern-keeper with sophisticated tricks that serve him in his daily business dealings" (Opalski M., *The Jewish Tavern-Keeper* 51). The anti-Semitic stereotype is only interesting here as it also made its way into Yiddish literature. I have already mentioned an example of this: the tavern-keeper Yone, a central character of Der Nister's *The Family Mashber*, who is a frequent guest at Reb Dudi's house, takes care of all the dirty work so that the Rabbi can maintain his power.

[38] Kaczér I., *The Siege* 209.

[39] "Purim előtt előkelő látogatói voltak a lápmenti csárdának. Ahasvéros Király és udvara tette tiszteletét. Mintegy két hétig élvezték a csárdabérlő figyelmességeit. Amikor az ünnep elmultával elvonultak végre, már csak Hámán miniszter árnyéka maradt a házban. A sötét cselszövőnek igen

As is customary in family novels, Kaczér elaborately describes social conditions.[40] He shows how the serfs and the gentry, while frequenting the same tavern, avoid all contact with one another, drinking in separate rooms. While the tavern invites a loosening of social boundaries more than anywhere else in a traditional society, this particular boundary remains steadfast. Kaczér conveys the local power-relations, which have Jews maneuvering in the antithetical worlds of the peasants and the gentry. He describes as well how Jews generally function within their own community. Kaczér also challenges a stereotype, whereby the tavern serves as a site of immediate interpersonal connection; Kaczér demonstrates that even the tavern can only very rarely facilitate real human contact based on compassion between Jews and Gentiles.

Kaczér's novel is at once a historical novel featuring real historical figures as minor characters, and a family novel.[41] Since family novels are effective devices of identity construction, it is important to discern what sort of Jewish identity Kaczér's novel promotes by thoroughly subverting the Eastern European literary stereotype of the Jewish tavern-keeper. Drawing heavily on the Eastern European literary tradition situates Hungarian Jewish literature as an integral part of Eastern European literature. Sholem's Hassidic, *Ostjude* background similarly serves to stress Hungarian Jewry's ties with Eastern-European Jewish communities.

In writing a novel that serves as an encyclopedia – at once of the entire Jewish tradition and the Jewish history in the Habsburg Empire in the second half of the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries – Kaczér enables highly assimilated Jews to feel a sense of community with their own past and with other, more traditional communities. The novel's implied reader is a highly assimilated Hungarian Jew, someone who is not at home in the Jewish tradition, since Kaczér takes great care to weave into the text explanations of different elements of Jewish tradition, religious concepts, customs, and ethnographic, social, and historical facets of Jewish life.[42] By

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sulyos árnyéka volt." (Kaczér I., *Ne félj, szolgám Jákob* 185.) I have translated this paragraph since it is missing in Wolfe's translation.

[40] Szalai A., "Hagyomány és újítás: a pesti zsidónegyed közösségi életében az 1830-as években Kaczér Illés Zsidó legendájában", *Budapesti Negyed* XII/4 (Budapest: 2004): 185–210, draws upon this very quality of the novel. Szalai presents and analyzes the social and communal life in the ghetto of Pest in the first part of the 19th century as it is presented in Kaczér's novel sequence.

[41] As is customary in family novels, Kaczér's work is deeply connected with his own auto-biography. His father was a tavern-keeper (Szalai A., *Hagyomány és újítás…* 186) and he is from the region that provides the setting for the first two books of his novel sequence *Szatmár*. For more on Kaczér's autobiography and the genesis of his novel sequence, see Anna Szalai's article entitled "Az országutak népe: Kaczér Illés 'Zsidó legendá'-jának forrásvidékéről", *Irodalomismeret* (Budapest: November 2002): 39–58.

[42] For example, when Kaczér includes utterances in Yiddish or in Hebrew, he does not translate them, but ensures that their meaning can be gathered from the context. For example, when we

relating the story of a family's settling down and gaining prosperity in Hungary, in other words, telling the story of gradual assimilation, the novel actually provides a model for, and encourages dissimilation.

In this paper I have focused primarily on the subversion of one literary stereotype, but Kaczér subverts many other stereotypes and conventions as well. Most importantly, while he religiously guards certain conventions of classical family novels, with for instance a family that gains in stature moving into the house of a declined family,[43] he subverts many elements of classical generation novels. The subversions within the family novel genre must be understood in the light of the time in which Kaczér wrote his novel sequence. He had luckily left Hungary for England in 1938, and was writing his "Jewish Legend" just before, during, and after the greatest crisis of European Jewish history: the Holocaust.

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hear for the first time about Moshe Doved Treues, Kaczér gives us details about Hungarian Hassid naming customs and also a genealogy which mirrors centuries of Jewish history: "Sholem liked this Treues. His name was reminiscent of the maternal surnames that were customary in [the North-East, as Sholem Leies, Yossef Perls.] But he somehow looked more western. In fact, his mother's name was not Treue (Faith), but Zissah. The Jews sometimes referred to him as the "Frenchman," and unassuming as he was, he was proud of this appellation. According to a family tradition, his ancestors had come from no less a place than Troyes, the native town of Rashi. They had left definite notes to the effect that the family was related to the great Rabbi Shlomah Yitzchok." (Kaczér, *The Siege* 105-106) "During the centuries which they spent in German lands, the people from Troyes read the name of their place of origin according to German pronunciation. So, over time, they changed their name from Troyes into Treues, also in writing" (Kaczér I., *Ne félj, szolgám Jákob* 135; my translation, as Wolfe's translation does not contain these two sentences).
Szalai emphasizes this explanatory quality of Kaczér's writing and calls attention to the fact that the explanations are not didactic insertions, but rather constitute integral parts of the text (Szalai A., *Hagyomány és újítás* 43).
[43] The model of classical family novels is Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*. There, the decline of the Buddenbrooks is prefigured by the decline of the family whose house they bought. In Lajos Hatvany's *Urak és emberek* (Gentlemen and Men), which is the most typical classical generation-novel written in Hungary in the first half of the 20th century and which was so closely modeled after the already famous *Buddenbrooks* that it was mockingly called *Judenbrooks*, the disappearance of the Sterns prefigures the decline of the Bondy family.

Jews – subjects of the "Minkovtsy State" (on the history of Jewish book printing in Ukraine)*

Benyamin Lukin

The interest in the book, having increased among the Jews of Poland in the second half of the 18th century, at the end of the century reached Podolia, a remote province in the southeast of the country. Publishing enterprises of the neighbouring regions[1] obviously could no longer cope with the increased demand of the Podolia Jews for traditional books, which had already seen a number of publications, as well as for modern ones, primarily mystical, ethical and Hassidic writings. The demands of the local Jewish book market on the one hand, and local political, economical and social conditions favourable to book publishing organizations on the other, encouraged the appearance of Jewish printing houses in Podolia. In the period of twenty years (1789–1809), a number of Jewish printing houses were established in succession in seven towns of the region: Mezhirov, Minkovtsy, Medzhibozh, Mogilev, Ianov, Solobkovtsy, and Kalius.[2] A printing house in Bratslav, standing apart in this series, was established somewhat later, in 1821.

A common phenomenon that emerged in a limited territory at a certain time presupposes the existence of common favourable conditions. Preliminary acquaintance

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* The English translation was made by Julija Korosrenskaja.

[1] Below we enumerate those Jewish printing houses of the nearest regions of Ukraine, from which books freely reached Podolia both before and after the partition of Poland: in Volhynia – Belozerka, Dubno, Zhitomir, Zaslav, Korets, Kremenets, Kupel, Liudvipol, Mezherich, Oleksinets, Ostrog, Polonnoe, Poritsk, Radzivilov, Slavuta, Sudilkov; in Kiev region – Berdichev, Belilovka, Boguslav, and Skralevka. Hereinafter the basic information on printing houses is given in accordance with the bibliographic index by Vinograd Y., *Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri: reshimat ha-sfarim she-nidpesu be-ot ha-ivrit me-reshit ha-dfus ha-ivri bi-shnat 1469 ad shnat 1863* [Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book: Listing of Books Printed in Hebrew Letters Since the Beginning of Hebrew Printing circa 1469 through 1863], 1, 2 (Jerusalem: 1993–95). Here and hereafter the Russian names of towns that were situated in the Russian empire in the period under discussion are given in English transliteration, while the names of Galician towns are given in their Polish form.

[2] Usually the town of Solobkovtsy is not mentioned in the lists of Jewish printing houses due to the wrong transcription of the Jewish name of the town "Slafkovits" as "Slavkovitse". There are also sources that point to the presence of Jewish printing houses in the towns of Podolia: Bar, Zbrizh, and Shargorod (see, for example, Боровой С., "Нариси з історії єврейської книги на Україні", *Бібліологічні вісти*, 1-2 (Київ: 1925): 50); however, the publications of these printing houses have not been registered until the present day. The town of Zbrizh is pointed out by certain authors as a result of the misspelling of a Galician town Zbarazh in Hebrew. In the latter there was a Jewish printing house indeed.

with the historical situation at the turn of the 19th century in those towns of the region where Jewish printing houses were established supports this supposition. The purpose of the present research is to bring to light the historical conditions that favoured the development of Jewish typographical business in Podolia.

Since the Jewish publishing enterprise in the small town Minkovtsy (Pol. *Mińkowce*) turned out to be the largest one in the region both in terms of the scope of book publishing as well as the longevity of functioning, a closer look on the situation that had formed in this town may cast light on the general conditions in Podolia, where Jewish printing houses were set up and ran from the end of the 18th till the first third of the 19th century.[3] The present article focuses on the analysis of the socio-cultural image of the Minkovtsy community and those specific historical circumstances that contributed to its transformation into one of the centres of Jewish book printing.

Despite the fact that the history of Jewish book printing in the western provinces of the Russian Empire has been the researched from various perspectives for more than a hundred years, the task of the reconstruction of the historical context is posited for the first time. An exploration of the known phenomenon from a new viewpoint has called for the use of new archival and literary sources that, at first sight, might be regarded as distant from the issue of the history of Jewish book printing. The main groups of sources for each of the three chapters of the article are strikingly different, which corresponds to the topical and methodological differences of the three parts of the research. References to the sources cited in the chapter "Jewish book publishing in Minkovtsy" and in the Conclusions contain information on relevant publications devoted primarily to the history of Jewish book printing.

A socio-cultural portrait of Jewish community of Minkovtsy in the 18th century

The settlement of Minkovtsy, situated 60 km northeast of Kamenets-Podolskii, on the way to Vinnitsa, received the status of a town as early as in 1637.[4] The Jews

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[3] Despite the fact that the example of Minkovtsy seems quite representative, the author is planning to carry on with his endeavours, extending them to other Jewish printing houses of the region.

[4] Minkovtsy (Pol. Mińkowce), presently a village of the Dunaevtsy district in the region (oblast) of Khmelnitskii, in the periods from 1923 to 1931, and from 1935 to 1959 was a district centre and until 1923 – a town of Ushitsa district of Podolia *gubernia*. The town was situated in the broad valley surrounded by high hills, on the banks of the Ushitsa river (a tributary of the Dnestr), in the sector of the road between Dunaevtsy (21 km) and Novaia Ushitsa (13 km).
In the 17th century the royal estate of Minkovtsy became the property of the family of Polish feudal lords Stanisławskis. In 1637 Adam Stanisławski surrounded the settlement by a bank and

apparently did not settle there until the early 18th century, after the destructive epoch of the Cossack wars had finished. The earliest evidence of the existence of a Jewish community in Minkovtsy was found in the list of the allocation of the pool tax from the Jews of the Polish Kingdom in 1735.[5]

This and similar financial documents related to the activities of the Council of the Four Lands (*Vaad Arba Artsot*) allow one to assess the level of well-being of the community. Thus, in the sum total of 9.036 złoty (the basic Polish monetary unit) of the pool tax of the Jews of Podolia voievodship, the Minkovtsy share made up more than 5%, making it the third largest out of 37 communities that paid the tax in 1735.[6] The participation of the community in the allocation of the tax and a high share of payment point to its relative well-being. Subsequently the Minkovtsy share in the payment of the pool tax slightly decreased, but nevertheless remained higher than average.[7]

A comparison of the data of the pool tax and that of the 1765 Jewish census allows for a more objective approach in assessing the level of well-being of the community.[8] According to the census, there were more than 38.000 Jews (38.384) in Podolia voievodship, and in Minkovtsy – about 380 (378), which equalled 1% of the total number of the Jews of the voievodship. In the proportional distribution of the sum total of 28.000 *złoty* of the tax among the communities, the Minkovtsy community was to pay about 1% of the sum total, which amounted to approximately

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[5] a moat and succeeded in gaining privileges for the town from King Władysław IV on the basis of the Magdeburg privilege with the right to organize two fairs per year and weekly bazaars; see: *Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego*, VI (Warszawa: 1885): 448–449.

[5] Dyspartyment pogłównego żydowskiego, 1735, Biblioteka Czartoryskich, Cracow (hereinafter referred to as BC) 1079 (copy in the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem, hereinafter referred to as CAHJP, HM/476). This is the earliest list of the distribution of the pool tax among the Polish Jews, which included Jewish communities of Podolia voievodship.

[6] From the sum total of the tax on the Jews of Podolia voievodship, viz., 9.036 *złoty*, the biggest payments were assigned to Medzhibozh (1.050 złoty) and Proskurov (730 *złoty*). Besides Minkovtsy, the sum of 500 *złoty*, the third biggest in size, was assigned to the Letichev community (Dyspartyment pogłównego żydowskiego, ibid.).

[7] In 1753, Minkovtsy's share of 459 *złoty* was the third biggest in the district after those of Dunaevtsy (991 *złoty*) and Tarnoruda (506 *złoty*) and the twelfth in the voievodship; see: Dyspartyment pogłównego żydowskiego, 1753, BC 1079 (copy in CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM/477). In 1756 the share of 444 złoty was the fourth biggest payment in the district and the eighteenth in the voievodship; see: Dyspartyment pogłównego żydowskiego, 1756, BC 1079 (copy CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM/478). In 1764, during the last distribution of the tax, Minkovtsy's share of 600 złoty turned out to be the fifth biggest in the district and the eighteenth in the district among more than eighty Jewish communities, see: Muszyńska J., "Dyspartyment pogłównego żydowskiego w Koronie w 1717 roku", *Czasy Nowożytne*, 5 (Warszawa: 1998): 119–131.

[8] See *Архив Юго-Западной России*, ч. 5, т. 2, (вып. 2): *Переписи еврейского населения в юго-западном крае в 1765-1791 гг* (Киев: 1890): 145-146.

280 złoty. However, during the allocation of the tax, members of Podolia *Vaad* (Council) considered not only the number of inhabitants in each town, but also the level of their community's prosperity. The allotted sum of 600 *złoty* corresponded to their "objective" assessment of the well-being of Minkovtsy.

What was the prosperity of the community based on? What were the main sources of income of the Minkovtsy Jews?

The answers to these questions may be found in the surviving economic documents of the owners of the town in 1740–70, magnates Jan Tarlo and, from 1753 onwards, Michał Rzewuski.

The main income was derived from the rent of trades, lease of merchant duty and taxes, as well as alcohol manufacture and trade. In a contract of 1744 between the owner of the town and Jews-lessees, the following income items are listed: the rent of the town brewery and two mills, the leasing of trade, fair and bridge taxes, and collection of a real estate tax from stores which had the right to free sale of vodka as well as brewing of mead and beer.[9] A more detailed account of the items of income of the town in question, corresponding to the main spheres of the employment of Jews, is given in a 1748 complaint of the community seniors about a new town lessee who had racked up exactions. Those were the charges on boilers and distilleries, taxes on the sale of vodka, beer and mead, on baking bread, a tax on raising pigs, a real estate tax on trade stores, taxes on grain purchase and trade at fairs, collection of animal fat from slaughterers and so on.[10]

Major trades rented by the Minkovtsy Jews are given in the lease contracts of 1750–60. Those list saltpeter and gun powder manufacture, maintenance of the town brewery and noblemen's distilleries in the town and villages, exploitation of the mills in the town as well as four villages, maintenance of the guest house owned by the noble in the market square and inns in Minkovtsy as well as nearby villages (*Minkovtsy kliuch*).[11]

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[9] See Count Jan Tarlo's yearly rent contract from 1744 to 1745 with lessees on the sum of 4.100 złoty in the file "Kontrakty na arendę przez Żydów korczm i browareń, 1745–73", Центральний державний історичний архів України, Львів, '*Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Lviv*', hereinafter referred to as ЦДІАУ), f. 181, op. 2, f. 2217 (copy in CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM2/8298.22).

[10] "Skarga kahału żydowskiego w Mińkowcach na arendarza Abramka Moszkowicza", 1748, ЦДІАУ, f. 181, op. 2, f. 2750 (copy in CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM2/8298.31).

[11] "Kontrakty na arendę przez Żydów korczm i browareń", ibid.; "Kontrakty na arendę przez Żydów prochowni w m. Mińkowce" , 1766–68, ЦДІАУ, F. 181, op. 2, f. 2175 (copy in CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM2/8298.21). Villages were populated with families of sub-contractors of Minkovtsy lessees who were engaged in the exploitation of village mills, inns, and wineries. Thus, for example, according to the census of 1765, 9 persons resided in Kruzhkovtsy and 5 lived in Antonovka (*Архив Юго-Западной России* 146).

Lists of the real estate taxes in 1760–70[12] clarify the data on the spheres of employment of the Jews, enumerating specific professions and allowing one to form an impression about the construction plan of the town, as well as social stratification of the Jewish population. According to the list of 1764,[13] 25 large Jewish houses with boilers for alcohol production formed a rectangular market square in the centre of the town and were levied with a boiler-charge tax that exceeded the usual state tax. These houses were home to the local elite including community seniors and major lessees. (Apart from the Jewish houses, a guesthouse, which belonged to the owner of the town and was rented by the Jews, also faced the market square, and so did 3 townsmen houses.) In the centre of the square 25 Jewish stores were situated. They had to pay a somewhat lower tax, while the lowest estate tax was levied on 22 so-called "back" Jewish houses, which did not have direct access to the market square of the town. These houses were mostly inhabited by traders, bakers, wine producers and slaughterers.

The place itself was almost exclusively populated by Jews, while its suburbs were inhabited by Christians. In 1770, the number of houses registered in the centre of the town and in the suburbs constituted 80 and 57 respectively.[14] Christian town-dwellers, who resided in the periphery of the town, were mostly engaged in olericulture and agriculture; some owned trades, including a smithy and a furriery.[15]

The figures below show the number of the population of the Jewish community of Minkovtsy in the period from 1760 to 1780 as registered by relevant censuses of the Jews:[16] 298 (378 with Jews living in villages) in 1765, 173 (209) in 1775; 312 (391) in 1784; 319 (389) in 1787; and 398 in 1789. A significant decrease in the number of Jewish population, as evidenced by the data of the 1775 census (the number of the Jewish population living in Minkovtsy constituted less than a half of the figure

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[12] "Wykaz kahałów zydowskoch", ЦДІАУ, F. 181, op. 2, f. 2218 (copy in CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM2/8298.22).

[13] "Wykaz kahałów zydowskoch", ibid.

[14] *Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego* 449.

[15] A joint complaint on the Jewish lessee was also submitted by Christians, members of the town council; among them were two "farriers" and two "furriers". See "Skarga kahału żydowskiego w Mińkowcach na arendarza Abramka Moszkowicza", ibid.

[16] For the censuses of the Jewish population for the relevant years, see *Архив Юго-Западной России* 145–146; 233; 432; 548, 637. As has often been mentioned in historical literature, one should use the absolute data of censuses with reservation. Thus in Minkovtsy, for example, according to the 1765 census, one family had less than one child, which speaks volumes about the fact that most children managed to hide from the inspectors. Obviously the real number of Jews in the town was not 298, as registered in the census, but more than 400. Adult dwellers found it more difficult to avoid inspection. Thus, for example, during the 1787 census inspectors discovered 96 and 18 hiding Jews coming from the town and villages respectively.

registered 10 years ago) and supported by the lists of estate taxes,[17] was probably caused by the plague epidemics of 1770–71, which took the lives of tens of thousands of Podolia inhabitants.[18] In the late 1780s, with a hundred Jewish houses,[19] Minkovtsy represented a town of an average size, typical of Podolia.

The economic documents listed above allow us to supplement these socio-economical characteristics of the community with some features of its cultural image. The obvious evidence of the literacy of Jews is their signatures at the bottom of complaints and contracts, made in Hebrew in accordance with the accepted formula (in this respect one should point out that, in contrast to the governing council of the community, none of the town-dwellers and members of the town municipality could sign a joint complaint on a greedy lessee).[20] Among the Jews inhabiting the town were those who were able to set up individual trades and manage the town economy in general. They were artisans skilled in all professions which were necessary for a town: tailors, hatters, furriers, as well as rarer specialists: a jeweller, a boiler-maker, a brandy-distiller and a gunpowder-maker. Two elite houses were run by two barbers who were also skilled in medicine, and in one of the "backward" houses lived a sorceress.

The Jewish community of the town had established its traditional institutions and even had an autonomous governance – the *kahal* (the governing council of the community), a rabbi, a cantor, three *shameses* (synagogue beadles), four *shoikhets* (slaughterers) and two *menakers* (removers of veins from meat), etc.[21] In 1776, on the steep bank of the Ushitsa river the Jews built the Big wooden synagogue,[22] which had become the most outstanding building in the town. (The old wooden church was dilapidated and was demolished shortly afterwards, while a Catholic church was not built until the early 19th century.) Somewhat later a female gallery (*ezrat nashim*) was annexed to the main body of the building on the level of the second floor. It was connected to the praying hall by a narrow opening. The interior of the synagogue

[17] In real estate tax lists of the early 1770s some houses were inventoried as empty, see "Wykaz kahałów zydowskoch", ibid.

[18] See, for example, a piece of contemporary research: Alexander J. T., *Bubonic Plague in Early Modern Russia* (Oxford: 2003): 107 et. al.; on plague epidemics in Podolia settlements, see Гульдман В.К., *Памятники старины в Подолии* (Каменец-Подольский: 1901): 327–331.

[19] See *Архив Юго-Западной России* 548.

[20] See the aforementioned contracts and the complaint – footnotes 10 and 11.

[21] The census of Jews of 1765 was signed by rabbi Yosef Itskovich; Gersh Iosifovich, the "quarter" (i.e. the *parnas* of the community elected for the period of one quarter); and Avraam Leibovich, the synagogue sexton (i.e. *gabai*) (*Архив Юго-Западной России* 145-146); for the names of these and other "synagogue beadles", "slaughterers" and "sinewers", i.e., removers of veins from the meat are also listed in estate tax lists, see footnote 12.

[22] The date of construction – 1776 – is enciphered in the legend inscribed on the cartouche of the wall paintings of the synagogue: *Gomlim Khasadim shel Emet* (Those Providing Unconditional Mercy).

photographed in the 1920s[23] provides the best evidence of the peculiar cultural and psychological images of the community. The walls of the synagogue and the cupola were decorated with polychrome frescos tier after tier, and the lower tier was inscribed with texts of prayers and psalms. The most characteristic pictorial motives are to be found in the paintings of the cupola. The northern side depicted a battle between a lion and a unicorn and a carriage passing through the gates. Above them was the depiction of Paradise with animals painted in the cartouches. The western side featured the leviathan curled into a circle, with a city inside it and the legendary *shor* (i.e., a wild bull) next to it.[24] These images as if drew the Messiah times closer, responding to the general mood of the tense anticipation of the arrival of the Messiah and redemption from the *galut* (the Exile). The symbolic depictions of Minkovtsy synagogue are imbued with an air of mysticism, which is particularly characteristic of the Jews of south-eastern provinces of Poland in the 18th century.

The mystical search for the way out of the *galut* was intense in Minkovtsy, as evidenced by the fact that a secret community of the followers of Jacob Frank (1726–1791) had been formed. Following the dispute in 1759, a list of Frankists who had converted into Catholicism in Lwów, includes the names of fifteen Minkovtsy Jews.[25]

We do not know any facts about the presence of secret Shabbateans in the later period. Minkovtsy get virtually no mention in early Hassidic literature; apparently, religious authorities of the community of the latter half of the 18th century were not to be found among the leaders of Hassidism.

Rare archival documents allowed us to reconstruct the main features of the socio-cultural portrait of the Jewish community of Minkovtsy on the eve of its encounter with a new owner of the town. By that time (the 1780s), thanks to the long-term activity of

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[23] The photographs from S.A. Taranushenko's collection (The Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Department of Manuscripts, f. 278) depict the exterior, interior, and the paintings of the synagogue. The exteriors of this and other synagogues were photographed by art historian Piotr Zholtovsky in his exploratory examinations of Podolia towns, organized in 1920s-1930s by Stepan Taranuschenko, Director of the Museum of Ukrainian Art in Kharkov.

[24] Traditional Jewish symbolic images, including those presented by the paintings of the synagogue in Minkovtsy, are thoroughly discussed in the articles by Dr. Boris Khaimovich, researcher of folk art; see, for example, Хаймович Б., "Геральдический орел в художественной культуре восточноевропейских евреев", *Вестник Еврейского университета*, 3 (21) (Jerusalem: 2000): 87–111; "Еврейское народное искусство южной Подолии", Лукин В., Соколова А., Хаймович Б. (сост.), *100 еврейских местечек Украины. Исторический путеводитель. Выпуск 2: Подолия* (Санкт-Петербург: 2000): 85–116; "К вопросу о семантике мотива 'трех бегущих зайцев' на еврейских памятниках", *Еврейский музей* (Санкт-Петербург: 2004): 95–108.

[25] See "Cathalogus omnium Contratalmudistarum…" in Kraushar A., *Frank i Frankisci Polscy*, 1 (Kraków: 1895): 330–360. It should be pointed out that the exact number of Frankists in Minkovtsy is unknown; 14 persons identified as Minkovtsy Jews probably came from two or three families.

Fig. 1. Murals of the western wall and the dome of Minkovtsy synagogue, c. 1920. V.I.Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, MS dept., f. 278 (S.A.Taranushenko), No. 603.

the Jewish community, the urban character of the settlement had been fully formed. The Minkovtsy market with Jewish workshops and trade stalls was the nucleus of the economic structure of the feudal estate. However, Minkovtsy was bound to become a full-fledged town not only in the economic, but also in the cultural respect, in the next stage of its history, as a result of the joint activity of the Jews and the new owner of the town in the field of book printing.

Count Marchocki – "father of the people" of the "Minkovtsy state" and his subjects, the Jews

In 1788, the small town of Minkovtsy, along with several villages (in total about 6.000 acres) went into possession of a Polish noble Ignacy Marchocki (1755–1827).[26]

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[26] Except mentioned otherwise, the basic information on Ignacy Marchocki is borrowed from the article by Josef Rolle "Hrabia Redux". See Dr. Antoni J., "Hrabia Redux", *Opowiadania*, ser. IV, t. II (Warszawa: 1884): 1–75. (This historical sketch is devoted to Marchocki and is based on archival data).

Unlike the preceding owners-magnates, who had possessed large latifundias, the estate that the retired major Marchocki had inherited from his uncle was his only land property at the time. In the small Jewish town, the centre of the agricultural estate, Marchocki had decided to fulfil his ideas of the ideal organization of the city – the capital of the state, based on the foundations of freedom, lawfulness, and education. These ideas were practically implemented when, after the Second Partition of Poland in 1793 and the annexation of Podolia to the Russian empire, he placed poles with the inscription "Border of the Minkovtsy state on the Russian Kingdom" at the borders of his estate, introduced his own banknotes and established his own militia. Wearing a long beard and dressed in a purple toga embroidered in gold, Count Ignacy Scibor Marchocki looked and felt himself a patriarch and "father of the peoples" inhabiting his estate. His conceptions of the city, the state and the tasks of the ruler were based on the works of his favourite ancient authors and French encyclopaedists, as well as the data obtained from the Roman law and the statements of the Four-Year *Sejm*.

In one of his first legal acts, Marchocki practically abolished serfdom in his estate, replacing the corvée with a moderate estate tax, and substituting mutual responsibility for individual responsibility in the face of the law; under the threat of a fine he banned referring to a peasant as a *muzhik*, a bond slave or a boor. Afterwards, in his explanatory note to the gubernia's administration, Marchocki wrote that, "…having entered the ownership of my patrimonial land, having the intention to lead a humble life, distanced from the secular routine…, [I] wished to totally engage myself in land and… improve arable farming, teaching sciences to my peasants… conformable to their country life, thus willing to facilitate and improve their citizenship, as far as possible, to turn bondage into reasonable freedom, I gave them rights,… made a peaceful agreement with my peasants-ploughmen, in as much as this could meet their concepts of simplicity. As Solon said about Athenians, 'I gave them the law not as it should be, but as the Athenians could forbear'".[27]

One of the major legislative works by Marchocki is "The Law of the Town of Minkovtsy" (1791),[28] which opens with a glorification of the cities, designated to

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[27] We provide an abridged version of a letter by Marchocki written in the *gubernia* chancellery, see Case of the Special Chancellery at the Minister of Police "Об аресте помещика Подольской губернии графа Мархоцкого И. за неповиновение местны м властям в 1815 г. и за устройство празднеств хлебопашества в честь богини Цереры в 1815–1819 гг.", Государственный архив Российской Федерации, '*State Archive of Russian Federation, Moscow*' (hereinafter referred to as ГАРФ), F. 1165, op. 1, f. 26 (copy in CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM2/9443.6).

[28] Jgnacy hrabia Śćibor Marchocki, *Prawo miasta Mińkowiec* [1796?] – 32 pages. On the title page of this legal act the date of publication is not given; instead, the text finishes with the date of granting the "Prawo" ("The Law"): "Działo się w Miescie Dziedzicznym Mińkowcach dnia 29 Grudnia 1791 roku" (p. 32). Rolle assumes that "Prawo" was issued after 1795 due to the fact in this period Marchocki granted himself the title *hrabia* – "Count". (Dr. Antoni J., "Hrabia Redux" 20).

benefit their residents, to promote the development of arts, crafts, and trade. To achieve this, they ought to follow reliable rules, which the author presented in detail on thirty-two pages. According to the introduced law, the owner of the town virtually abandoned charges collected from his townspeople, except for a constant and moderate estate tax. The townspeople were granted the freedoms of trade, crafts and construction. New settlers enjoyed particular privileges. These paragraphs referred to the Jews as well. To provide for the town municipality, a magistrate with elected members was established (the only condition for the election of the head of the magistrate and clerk being that they be literate).

A separate 6th Chapter of "The Law" was dedicated to a specific group of residents of the town, the Jews,[29] and was apparently intended for bringing remarkable changes in the legal and economical state of the Jews of the town. The *kahal* was virtually ignored; it no longer represented Jews to the owner of the town. Like other town dwellers, the Jews were elected to the town municipality, had to follow its resolutions, and each one of them was under the jurisdiction of the town court. Acknowledging the fact that the Jews constituted the trade element necessary for the town, the owner had introduced scrupulous regulation, which in fact was alien to Jewish trade. According to Marchocki's views, Christian townspeople were to be engaged in handicrafts held in artisan workshops. Marchocki devoted several sections of "The Law" to the organization of such workshops, restricting the sphere of handicraft trade of the Jews to the minimum.

It is known that Marchocki's proposed reform of the town municipality was successful: alongside two representatives of the Polish nobles and two of the peasants, two Jewish representatives participated in the proceedings of the Supreme Court, which also examined Jews' cases.[30] However, it is hardly possible that the owner managed to change the naturally formed system of employment of various population groups. Thus, in 1811 the state inspection registered in Minkovtsy 28 Jewish artisans, among whom were a carpenter, a metalworker, a *shmukler* (a manufacturer of ropes, cords, laces, etc.) and a jeweller; some artisans were listed as new residents, possibly, invited by the owner himself. In total the 1811 inspection registered 118 Jewish families residing in Minkovtsy, of which the overwhelming majority, 92 families,

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[29] Rozdział VI. O Żydach w tymże Mieście, 13–15. This chapter is translated into English from the Russian translation done by the author of the article and is presented in Appendix 2 of the present article.

[30] After Ignacy Marchocki's death, his son, upon coming back from exile to Minkovtsy, restored the Supreme Court in its former structure, which was immediately made known to the police. See "По рапорту Ушицкого исправника об учреждении помещиком Мархоцким в имении своем судилища под названием Юстициариум, 1833", Центральний державний історичний архів України, Київ, '*Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Kyiv*' (hereinafter referred to as ЦДІАУ), f. 442, op. 1, f. 1497 (copy in CAHJP, HM2/ 8924.8).

ascribed to the class of townspeople, lived on the income received from small trade. In 1828 five merchants were registered in Minkovtsy: three of them sold textile and clothes, two traded in cattle and dried fish and owned inns.[31] It is natural to assume that, having descended from the heights of legislation onto a real small town, despite his intensive economical reforms, Marchocki could rely only on those trade and artisan resources that he had at his disposal. Marchocki established a number of factories and manufactories, viz., carriage, cloth, paper, anise oil, lacquers and paints manufactories, and set up manufactories of saltpeter and bricks as well as silk industry, which derived from raising silkworms. Lacking any other trade element, Marchocki could do nothing but employ Jews, at least for the purpose of delivery of raw materials and sale of goods.

Not positing the task to provide an account of all Marchocki's innovations, below we will enumerate just some of them: intensive construction of four seasonal residences as well as public buildings – a town hall at the market square with check measures and weighs; the Supreme Court, which, like the Acropolis, rose above the town on a high hill; a medical resort, which gained popularity thanks to invited physicians – a homoeopathist and an allopathist; a "Music Academy" – in fact, an orchestra and a chorus that, among other musical works, performed those composed by Marchocki; a pharmacy, a hospital for the poor, an orphanage, a public school, a communal granary, and others.[32] Marchocki was particularly enthusiastic and resourceful in arranging theatrical harvesting festivities dedicated to Roman goddess Ceres, patroness of agricultural community. Necessarily held every year despite the prosecution of the church and *gubernia's* administration, such festivities attracted thousands of peasants as well as invited landowners and representatives of the local Catholic and Orthodox churches.[33]

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[31] "Список купцов г. Ушицы и повета, январь 1828 г.", Российский государственный исторический архив, Санкт-Петербург, '*Russian State Historical Archive, St. Petersburg*' (hereinafter referred to as РГИА СПб.), F. 18, op. 4, f. 363 (copy in CAHJP, HM2/9315.8). Below we provide the names of Minkovtsy merchants of 1828: Zeilik Ioselevich Volfenzon, Mortko Iankelevich Kaiterman, Ios Kalmanovich Burdman, Leiba Shaevich Oksman, Hayim Gershkovich Bertongorn.

[32] In the preparation of the article and primarily referring to archival materials and the cited work by Rolle, I also used the following articles and publications: Копылов А., "Миньковецкое государство", *Русский вестник*, 1 (Москва: 1895): 175–195, 5 (1895): 85–119; А.Г., "Борьба местной епархиальной власти с языческим чествованием древней богини Цереры", *Подольские епархиальные ведомости*, 33, 34, 38, 41–43 (Каменец-Подольский: 1889); О.Л., "Праздник Цереры (Из воспоминаний польского шляхтича о событиях в Юго-Западном крае 1819–1824 гг.)", *Киевская старина*, 12 (Киев: 1897): 311–331; Грищук Б., *Поділля колиско і доле* (Lviv: 1988): 16–22, 80–105; and idem, *Граф Мархоцький і Миньковецька держава* (Хмельніцький: 1992): 1–27.

[33] See the descriptions of festivities in the published sources listed in footnote 32. Below we provide the description of festive celebrations in accordance with the 1816 report by Archbishop

In Marchocki's opinion, the establishment of a printing house came to be one of the most urgent and significant innovations. For this purpose, in 1792, a professional typographer Wiesiolowski arrived in Minkovtsy. In his printing house, Marchocki began to publish his legislative acts, religious sermons, opening speeches, medical guides for the people and even classical works of literature.[34]

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of Podolia and Bratslav Ioannikii from the archive case "О буйственных и неблаговидных поступках помещика Подольской губернии, графа Мархоцкого", РГИА СПб., F. 797, op. 2, c. 5552, 1816, pp. 4–6.

"The custom of blessing [the harvest]… was introduced by landowner Ignacy Marchocki not earlier than some twenty years ago, yearly, on the 15th day of August, i.e., on the holiday of the Assumption of Our Lady, and was referred to Marchocki as a reaping or sowing farming festivity, which was celebrated in the following way: in the morning upon the gathering in Minkovtsy town of all Greek and Russian priests and dwellers with processions and farming devices of all villages of landowner Marchocki, and the municipality of the estates, having arranged the people into rows, that is girls, after them wives with sickles, and after these – unmarried men, and after these married ones with scythes, flails and rakes; after the people – ploughs, also in two rows, which may amount to two hundred; after the ploughs a highly paved cart, covered with carpets, led by four or six bullocks, in the corners with four rye and wheat sheaves…, at the end of the procession the clergy, in this order after midday… followed in the field till the appointed place, before each peasant community and before the cart music was playing, an old man was riding a horse, and the clergy sang public prayers… Upon reaching their destination, where on both sides shelters of branches were placed for the people, and for the landowner, the nobles and the clergy – pavilions, the priests, upon consecrating with water and sprinkling it on seeds that had been prepared for this, which the senior priest takes with his hand and throws at the ground in a cruciform way; after that, upon kissing the cross and congratulating landowner Marchocki, two pavilions are divided: Marchocki with the landowners and the nobles who have gathered for this ceremony – into one, and clergy with bishops, poorest nobles, most honourable artisans and townsmen – into the other: on the snacks, while the music is playing, plough once or twice. After the snacks, the nobles and the clergy go to the town Minkovtsy, while peasants return to Minkovtsy at sunset in two rows, holding in their hands lanterns of four colours, different from each feudal manor, and each third – burning torches, following in front of them the mentioned arranged cart, in which sit four girls (according to the number of four feudal manors of Minkovtsy, Otrokov, Pobujna and Antonovka) with heads decorated in wreaths twined from ears, and sing songs, appropriate for the end of reaping, beginning of sowing, and the usefulness of those. Having come to Minkovtsy, the chief officers of those manors take the girls off the cart and lead them to stop, as earlier, in front of the wife, and after her death, in front of Marchocki's daughter, dressed magnificently, sitting in an armchair on the carpeted gates of the house which serves the dinner for the gathering, and representing the pagan goddess Ceres. Accepting the wreaths from the heads of those girls, she ties ribbons around their heads and grants money to them; after this ceremony the festivity ends in dinner."

[34] Not giving the exact date of the opening of the printing house, Jusef Rolle reports that typographic presses were set in Minkovtsy in the period between 1792 and 1796 (see Dr. Antoni J., "Hrabia Redux" 19).

Jewish book publishing in Minkovtsy

Initiated by Marchocki, the publishing business could not escape the attention of the Jews, since the owner of the town had made the output of his typographical business part of the daily life: banknotes, miscellaneous forms as well as stamped paper intended for the submission of petitions and various proclamations. There were well-to-do people among the Jews, who shared the idea of setting up a Jewish book-publishing enterprise and were ready to make investments. The external conditions were fairly favourable for the fulfilment of this project: one the one hand, put into practice by the owner, bold and comprehensive reforms created an air of the independence of the inhabitants from the gubernia and central administrations; besides, the issue of censorship over the Jewish book had not yet been raised.[35] On the other hand, in the 1790s, Minkovtsy gained credibility of the regional Jewish centre: the rabbi of the community Kopel Hirsh was appointed to the post of the Head of the Rabbi Court of the district centre of Ushitsa, and in 1796 he was elected District Rabbi.[36]

According to the report submitted by Podolia governor Ivan Essen, Jewish printing houses in Minkovtsy were opened in 1792 and 1802 "by permission of landowner Marchocki".[37] "The list of Jewish printing houses", compiled in the Ministry of Public

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The first publications of Marchocki's printing house date back to 1796. The most thorough list of the publications of this printing house has been compiled by Tatyana Solomonova, research employee at the Vinnitsa Regional Museum of Local Lore. It comprises 15 publications, opening with a legal act on the organization of hereditary estates: Marchocki Ignacy Ścibor, *Ustawa dla urządzenia ziem dziedzicznych* (Mińcowce: 1796), and finishing with a religious sermon: Marchocky I., *Mowa religiina na dzień stycznia (Januarius) 1825, w swiatyni mińkowieckiej przez… /obywatela Marchockiego miana/* (Minkovtsy: 1825). I express my sincere gratitude to Tatyana Solomonova for the materials she allowed me to use before their publication. Among the works of literary classics, published by the typographic press in Minkovtsy, the authors of publications about Marchocki refer to the first translation into Polish of "Hamlet" and a translation of "The Iliad".

[35] The first step in the organization of the censorship of Jewish publications was taken by Paul I: in October 1797 he "conveyed his wish to assign to Riga's censorship two Jews for the inspection of the books in the Yiddish language brought to Russia…", "Об учреждении в Риге цензуры еврейских книг", РГИА, СПб., F. 1374, op. 2, с. 1430 (copy in САНЈР, НМ2/7779.3). On censorship policy in the period under discussion, see Эльяшевич Д.А., *Правительственная политика и еврейская печать в России, 1797–1917* (Санкт-Петербург / Иерусалим: 1999).

[36] According to these notes in the archival document, his name is Kopel Hirsh Judkovich, see "О выборах уездных раввинов и общинных правлений в Подольском наместничестве, 1796 г, ЦДІАУ, Київ, F. 210, op. 2, с. 24 (copy in САНЈР, Jerusalem, НМ2/9309.6). Here and hereinafter the Jewish names and book titles are given in English transliteration.

[37] V. D., "Печатное дело в Малороссии в начале XIX ст.", *Киевская старина*, 9 (Киев: 1900): Документы, известия и заметки, 88.
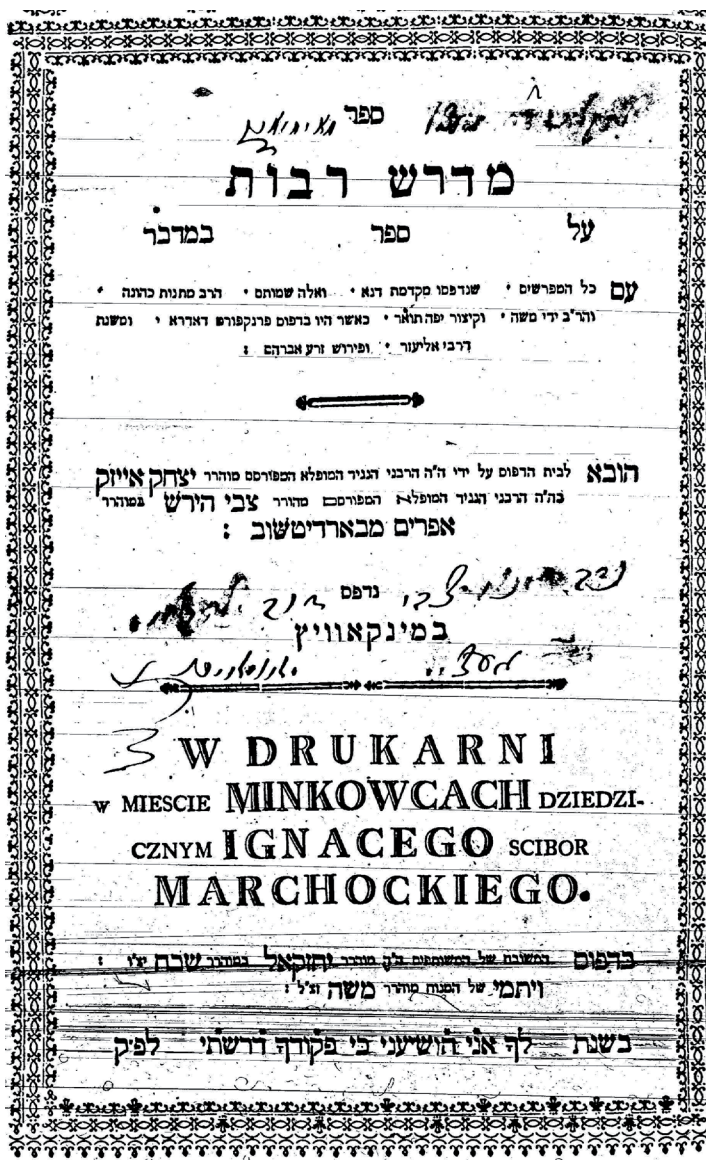
Fig. 2. The title page of the Midrash Rabbot to Numbers (Minkovtsy, 1799). The National Library of Israel, microfilm FI 9540.

Education in 1827, enhances the degree of the involvement of the owner of the town by maintaining that the Jewish printing house was "established [in] 1792 by the will of landowner Marchocki".[38] Hayim Fridberg, author of the seminal work on the history of Jewish book-publishing in Poland, believes that in the early stages Marchocki provided his printing press for the Jews, who had not yet established a printing house of their own.[39] Fridberg may have come to this conclusion owing to the following inscription in Polish on the title pages of Jewish books published in Minkovtsy: "w drukarni w miesćie Mińkowcach dziedzycznym Ignacego Scibor Marchockiego" ("in the printing house of Mińkowce, the inherited town of Ignacy Scibor Marchocki"). What does not raise any doubts is the fact that the financial interest in the enterprise subject to paying him a tax was not the only reason why Marchocki supported the initiative of the Jews. Raised on the ideas of the Enlightenment, he could not have ignored the thought that the establishment of the printing house contributed to the honour and glory of his town. Hence, possibly, the inscription in Polish, placed on the title pages of the books in Hebrew either by request or by demand of the owner.[40]

We should also note Marchocki's live interest in the texts of the Old Testament, which received its expression in numerous citations from Ecclesiastes and other biblical books, which he used in sermons, as well as inscriptions on festive gonfalons. Deciphering the notes left by Marchocki, Doctor Josef Rolle, connoisseur of the old times of Podolia, has also found numerous excerpts from such sources as Books of Maccabees, Solomon's Proverbs, David's Psalms and others.[41] Such interest to ancient Jewish wisdom points to Marchocki's favourable attitude towards collaboration with Jewish publishers.

Sharing the above-mentioned view expressed by Fridberg we assume that in the first years of publishing, both Polish and Jewish books were produced in the same facilities, using the same equipment, set under the guidance of Polish printer Wiesiolowski.[42] Most sources attribute the foundation of Polish and Jewish printing houses in Minkovtsy to 1792. Books in Hebrew and Polish began to be published

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[38] J. G[essen], "К истории еврейских типографий. Крещенные евреи Зандберг и Фоделло", *Еврейская старина*, 2 (Санкт-Петербург: 1909): 255.

[39] Fridberg H. D., *Toldot ha-dfus ha-ivri be-polania* [The history of Jewish book printing in Poland] (Antwerp: 1932): 82.

[40] See, for example, title pages of the following books: *Sefer Amtakhat Beniamin* (1796); *Midrash Rabot al Sefer Shmot* (1799), in the same series commentary to the books of Torah published in Minkovtsy in 1799: *Midrash Rabot al Sefer Vaikra, Midrash Rabot al Sefer Bemidbar.*

[41] See on this: Dr. Antoni J., "Hrabia Redux" 41–42.

[42] On the basis of archival data, Tatyana Solomonova wrote on the movement of typographer Wiesiolowski in 1792 in Minkovtsy in her article: Соломонова Т., "Книговидання у маєтках польскої шляхти Поділля: польське, єврейське, старообрядницьке (XVII – перша третина XIX ст.)", *Освіта, наука і культура на Поділлі*, 6 (Каменец-Подольский: 2006): 126–136.

practically simultaneously – the first Jewish book appeared around 1795,[43] and the
first Polish book – in 1796.[44]

   Jewish books were first published under the supervision of specialist-typographer
Ikhiezkel, son of Shevakh, who came from Mezhirov accompanied by two typesetters
in 1795.[45] The Mezhirov typographer received financial support from local Jews Iosef
and his son Moshe, consequently known as Moshe Madpis (the printer). The three
co-owners published two manuscripts that had not been published before: in 1795,
Barukh she-Amar, a collection of halakic rules for writing philacterias and *mezuzas*,
compiled by Shimshon, son of Eliezer; in 1796 – *Amtakhat Benjamin* (mystical
commentaries to the book of Ecclesiast) by Benjamin, son of Aharon, Maggid in
Załoźce and Zaleszczyki, a disciple of two famous *zaddiks*, Dov Ber from Mezherich
and Iehiel Mikhel from Złoczów, the work that was never published again,[46] as well
as other books that had been published before.

   Alongside local Jews, among the workers of the printing house were such
specialists as typesetters and press operators from Mezhirov, Sukhostav, and Korets.
Among religious authorities who had recommended early publications for the printing
house were the famous Hassidic rabbi Levi-Yitshak from Berdichev and Minkovtsy
rabbi Yakov Tsvi (also known as Kopel Hirsh), son of Iehuda-Leib, aforementioned
head of the Rabbi Court in Ushitsa and a rabbi of Ushitsa district.[47]

   According to the official "reports", at the turn of the century, the chronology of book
publishing in Minkovtsy strictly corresponded to state resolutions regarding the censorship
of Jewish books: Jewish printing house "produced no printing from 1798 to 1799 till the
register of books allowed for printing had been obtained from Riga censorship", and then

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[43] Yeshayahu Vinograd places the title of the book *Barukh she-Amar* first in the register of
publications of the typographer in Minkovtsy with the comment "doubtful": Vinograd Y.,
Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri vol. 2 (1995): 457.

[44] Established by Tatyana Solomonova (see footnote 34).

[45] Until 1795 Minkovtsy editions were not registered. The Jewish printing house in Mezhirov,
the first one in Podolia, began to function in 1789, starting with a halakhic work by Yitshak
Aisik Shor *Likutei ha-Kemakh*; see Vinograd Y., *Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri* 456. In 1794, 10 books
were published in Mezhirov, and in 1795, after Moshe Madpis had left, the publishing proc-
ess in Mezhirov was discontinued till 1802. I base my description of the formation of Jewish
book-publishing in Minkovtsy on the historical reconstructions by Hayim Fridberg; see Frid-
berg H. D., *Toldot ha-dfus ha-ivri* 82–83, and Yaari A, "Likutim bibliografiim. Ha-dfus ha-ivri
be-Minkovets" ["Bibliographical notes. Hebrew printing house in Minkovtsy"], *KiriatsSefer*
[The City of Book], 19 (Jerusalem: 1942): 267–276.

[46] Shimshon ben Eliezer, *Barukh she-Amar* (1795); Beniamin ben Aharon mi-Zalozhits, *Am-
takhat Beniamin* (1796).

[47] This is his full title, cited in the recommendations (*haskamot*) on the reverse of the title page
of the book *Amtakhat Beniamin* (1796). The recommendations to later editions (1799–1803)
are signed by Yakov Tsvi, the then Head of the Rabbinic Court in Minkovtsy.

"from 1800, by the demand censorship in town of Radzivilov, until 1802" and, finally, "restored by the authority of the Personal Supreme Decree of February 9, 1802".[48] In the opinion of *gubernia* clerks, from 1802, there were two Jewish printing houses functioning in Minkovtsy: one of them belonged to Esther, daughter of Moshe (Estera Moshkova), and the other – to Mordekhai, son of Shevakh (Mordka Shelvakhovich).[49]

Judging by the dating of Minkovtsy books, at the turn of the century the publishing process was virtually independent of censorship policy. Three publications appeared in 1797, four – in 1798, and one in each of the years 1799 and 1800. A two-year gap in 1801–02 coincided with the most liberal period in the history of Russia's censorship. Let us bear in mind that on March 31, 1801, by the decree of Alexander I, free book publishing was allowed in private printing houses, and by the decree of February 9, 1802, preliminary censorship was abolished and the establishment of "free printing houses" was allowed.[50] While reconstructing the history of publishing in Minkovtsy on the basis of data found in the books themselves,[51] we become convinced that the pulsation of the publishing process during this period was conditioned not so much by the twists of censorship policy, but rather by local circumstances. Two deaths in succession of both Minkovtsy companions of typographer Yehezkel in 1797–98 and the transfer of the book-printing business to Moshe Madpis' inheritors explain the slowdown of publishing activities.[52] The break in 1801–02 may be explained by the return of Yehezkel to Mezhirov and the move to the same town of Minkovtsy printer Iekhiel Mikhel Kahan, who had taken with him typographic materials and printing boards featuring flowers, used for the decoration of the titles of Minkovtsy publications. In the same period the inheritors of Moshe Madpis sold the inherited part of printing equipment to the printers of Belozerka (a town in Kremenets district), providing them with manuscripts originally intended for publication in Minkovtsy.[53]

In 1803, after a two-year break, two Jewish printing houses were opened simultaneously in Minkovtsy. Having brought from Mezhirov his printing press, printer Avraham-Mordekhai, son of Shevakh (apparently, brother of Yehezkel, mentioned

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[48] J. G.[essen], "К истории еврейских типографий" 255. The reference here is made to the Emperor's Decree of 9.2.1802 on the abolition of censorship committees and assigning the censorship responsibility to governors.

[49] V.D., "Печатное дело в Малороссии в начале XIX ст." 88.

[50] Жирков Г.В., *История цензуры в России XIX–XX вв.* (Москва: 2001): 38.

[51] Books published prior to 1805 (on the title pages, on the reverses, and in "colophons" – final comments) generally provide the names of the authors; those who submitted the manuscript for the publication; rabbis who recommended the manuscripts for the publication; publishers as well as typesetters, press workers and the editor. These data allow us to trace the formation of the book printing business in Minkovtsy. Later, probably due to the fear of censorship persecutions, the names of publishers and workers of the printing house were rarely provided.

[52] See, for example, Yaari A., "Likutim bibliografiim" 268.

[53] Ibid.

in the official report), published *Sefer ha-Mefoar* by the famous Cabbalist Shlomo Molkho, a collection of halakhic midrashes *Sifrei* and other books.[54] In the same year, in the printing house opened by Menakhem Mendl, son of Avraham Shevakh, *Yesod Iosef* and *Likutei Iosef* – the works by Iosef Ioska, another disciple of the Maggid of Mezherich and the Maggid of Złoczów – were published.

The third Jewish printing house was opened prior to 1818. It belonged to Chaim, son of Itskhak, who published books both in Hebrew and Yiddish. In 1818 the book *Nakhalat Tsvi* was published in Yiddish. This was a work on Jewish ethics with the narration of the plots from the book *Zohar* by Tsvi Hirsh, son of Yerakhmiel. Possibly, it was in this printing house that in 1819 the only edition of *Magen David*, a Cabbalistic work by David, son of Shmuel from Derazhnia, was published.[55]

Books published in Minkovtsy were valued in the Jewish world for their high quality; reputable rabbis recommended the Minkovtsy printing houses to those willing to publish a manuscript.[56] Throughout this period, in 1801, 1807, 1813, and 1823, the publishing of Jewish books in Minkovtsy was interrupted and then renewed several times for intervals ranging from two to four years, which was due to the death or moving of publishers. Obviously, the activities of the next Minkovtsy publisher would start from the publication of a new, previously unpublished, manuscript. The person who submitted the manuscript to the printing house for publication may also have been responsible for partial coverage of the publishing expenses.

In 1827, the year of death of the owner of the town, the publishing of Jewish books in Minkovtsy was discontinued.[57] Throughout the period of thirty-two years more than forty books were published, among which were prayer books, collections of psalms and *slikhot*, books of TaNaKh, books of midrashes, Cabbala books, Hassidic books, books on Jewish ethics and others.[58] The four aforementioned works by Hassidic authors have survived till the present day thanks to their only edition published in Minkovtsy.

The print runs of Minkovtsy printing houses, as well as those of the majority of Jewish printing houses in Ukraine, were not large, and probably did not exceed 1.000 copies (today Minkovtsy publications are a bibliographic rarity). With such print runs the commercial profit of the book publishing enterprise could not have been high, which forced its owners to close or sell the enterprise from time to time. It is believed

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[54] Ibid. 269, and Vinograd Y., *Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri* 458

[55] Ibid.

[56] See Iehuda ben Avraham Yitshak Avida, *Mahberot Minei Kedem* 15.

[57] An exposition of folk beliefs *Raziel ha-malakh* was the last book published in 1827.

[58] The most thorough list of Jewish books published in Minkovtsy is given in Appendix 1. In the compilation of the list the author has used reference materials collected in the framework of the project on identification and cataloguing books in Hebrew by the staff of the Bibliographic Institute (*Mifal Bibliografi*) at The National Library of Israel in 2006, as well as the above-mentioned articles and the following publications: Vinograd Y., *Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri*; Fridberg H. D., *Toldot ha-dfus ha-ivri*; Yaari A., "Likutim bibliografiim" 267–276.

that book publishing in Minkovtsy became the most long-term and fruitful publishing project of the Podolia Jews thanks to the support and patronage of the owner of the town. For the sake of comparison, we provide data on the functioning periods and the number of publications of other Jewish printing houses of Podolia: Mezhirov (1789–1823), 28 books, Medzhibozh (1800–27), 24; Ianov (1802–03), 2; Mogilev (1802–25), 30; Solobkovtsy (1804–07), 5; Kalius (1809), 3; Bratslav (1821–22), 7.

After the death of Ignacy Marchocki, the Minkovtsy estate was inherited by his son Karol, who, after the Polish uprising in 1830–31 was exiled to Kursk and then to Perm and who did not return to Minkovtsy except for a brief visit in 1832.[59] In the same year the Jews may have made an attempt to restore the publishing business in Minkovtsy, having published a work on Jewish ethics *Reshit Khokhma*, which was to become the last Minkovtsy publication.[60]

In 1836, the town of Minkovtsy became the state property. [61]

Conclusion

The increase of attention to the book in the 18th century is a common phenomenon, characteristic of Poland in general and the Jewish population of Poland in particular. However, while the growth of interest among the non-Jewish population was caused primarily by the dissemination of Enlightenment ideas coming from elite circles, in the Jewish sphere the analogical process did not bear an ideological tint, but was rather stimulated by the tastes and demands of a major part of traditional Jews.

The first generations of researchers, from Avraham Harkavi to Saul Borovoy, attributed the success of the spread of Jewish book printing to the objectives of the propaganda of Hassidism.[62] However, with the accumulation of the data concerning the publications of local printing houses, the researchers came to the conclusion that Hassidic works proper formed but a relatively small part in the overall book production, while the goals of the propaganda of Hassidism or, to be more precise, oppositions to it, were not decisive in the formation of the book industry. This was

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[59] "По отношению генерала Ридигера о задержанном вблизи австрийской границы помещике Подольской губернии местечка Миньковец Кароле Мархоцком", ЦДІАУ, Київ, F. 442, ор. 782, с. 161.

[60] Avraham Yaari and Yeshayahu Vinograd point to the possibility of a wrong dating of the book *Reshit Khokhma* – a mistake amounting to a 10-year-span; it may be more accurate to date its publishing to 1822.

[61] See "По рапорту Ушицкого исправника", ЦДІАУ, Київ, F. 442, ор. 1, f. 1497 (сору – CAHJP, HM2/ 8924.8).

[62] See Гаркави А., "Из истории культуры русских евреев", *Сборник в пользу начальных еврейских школ* (Санкт-Петербург: 1896): 164; Боровой С., "Нариси з історії єврейської книги на Україні", *Бібліологічні вісті*, 1–2 (1925): 48; 1 (1926): 36–38.

clearly demonstrated by Hayim Liberman, connoisseur of the Jewish book, on the example of the printing houses of Volhynia.[63] An overview of contemporary registers of the publications of Jewish printing houses allows one to extend his conclusions to account for the majority of Podolia printing houses.[64] An unquestionable exception is the printing house in Bratslav set up by Rabbi Natan Shternharts, the closest disciple of Rabbi Nakhman from Bratslav, whose only goal was to publish the works of the founder of Bratslav Hassidism.[65] At the same time, the research of the process of Jewish book publishing in its relation to the development of Hassidism remains urgent to the present day, since the production of the printing houses in Podolia (those in Minkovtsy included) undoubtedly reflects the reading circle and the demands of the Hassids, who constituted the core of the Jewish population of Podolia.

In the conclusion of the present research, it remains to be pointed out that the conditions, in which Jewish printing houses existed in Minkovtsy in the period of four decades, were not extraordinary. The formation of other Jewish printing houses in the region took place within the common framework of the historical context at the turn of the 19th century, determined by the political and censorship conditions that maintained a relatively liberal attitude toward the province.[66] Among the favourable local circumstances one should name a relatively high level of the living standards of the community and the presence of well-off businessmen, intensive economic development of the settlement, the status of the community with respect to settlers of other confessions, and the interest of the owner of the settlement in the development of Jewish book-publishing branch.

"Free" Jewish printing houses of Podolia, like those in Minkovtsy, "died a natural death" before "the defeat of Jewish printing business" in 1836. Apart from the change in local conditions, we see common reasons in the competition of larger printing houses of Volhynia as well as in the censorship pressure that had increased

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[63] See the article by Liberman H. , "Bedia ve-emet bi-dvar batei ha-dfus ha-hasidiim. Le-ofiam shel batei ha-dfus ha-ivriim be-Ukraina, Rusia ha-Levana ve-Lita ad shnat 1836" [Invention and Truth with Regard to Hassidic Printing Houses. On the Nature of Hebrew Printing Hauses in Ukraine, Belorus and Lithuania till 1836 Asaf D. (ed.), *Tsadik ve-eda* [*Zaddik* and the devotees] (Jerusalem: 2001): 186-209.

[64] The most exhaustive registers of publications of Jewish printing houses are compiled in the framework of the project of identification and cataloguing of books in Hebrew, which is carried out by the Institute of Bibliography at the National Library in Israel. Bibliographic materials collected by the Institute by the early 1990s were used as the foundation for the above-mentioned bibliographic index by Yeshayahu Vinograd. A look through the registers of the publications of the majority of Podolia printing houses points to the absence of any definite ideological trend.

[65] On the publishing activities of Rabbi Natan Shternharts, see: Yaari A., "Likutim Bibliografiim: ha-dfus ha-ivri be-Braslav", *Kiriat Sefer*, 13 (Jerusalem: 1936): 528–532.

[66] On this, see Эльяшевич Д.А., *Правительственная политика и еврейская печать в России* 59–124.

with Nikolai I's accession to the throne. After the suppression of the Polish uprising in 1830–31, the formation of new printing houses in formerly privately-owned little-places, now confiscated by the state, became an unrealistic enterprise. The statement "On the censorship of Jewish books and on Jewish printing houses" in 1836 virtually terminated the activities of the "free" Jewish printing houses.[67] Due to this, the book publishing enterprise in Minkovtsy, whose historical image reflected numerous features characteristic of the majority of "free" Jewish printing houses of Ukraine, seems to us a significant cultural symbol marking the epoch that had gone by.

APPENDIX 1

Jewish books published in Minkovtsy

‫1.שמשון בן אליעזר, ברוך שאמר, [דיני כתיבת התפילין], ([מינקוביץ], [תקנ"ה])‬
Shimshon ben Eliezer, *Barukh she-Amar* (Blessed Be He Who Spoke) [laws of tefillin writings] ([Mińkowce], [1795])

‫2. בנימין בן אהרן מזלוזיץ, אמתחת בנימין, [חסידות], (מינקוביץ, תקנ"ו)‬
Beniamin ben Aharon mi-Zalozhits, *Amtakhat Beniamin* (The Sack of Benyamin) [Hassidic book] (Mińkowce, 1796)

‫3. מאיר בן יהודה ליב פופרש, אור הישר, [תפילות עפ"י הקבלה], (מינקוביץ, תקנ"ז)‬
Meir ben Iehuda Leib Poprash, *Or ha-Iashar* (The Right Light) [prayers according to the Cabbala] (Mińkowce, 1797)

‫4. עבודת הימים, [תפילות, מחזור], (מינקוביץ, תקנ"ז)‬
Avodat ha-Yamim (The Everyday Service) [prayer-book] (Mińkowce, 1797)

‫5. זכריה מנדל מירוסלב, דרכי צדק, [חסידות], (מינקוביץ, [תקנ"ז])‬
Zkharia Mendel mi-Iaroslav, *Darkei Tsedek* (The Paths of Righteousness) [Hassidic book] (Mińkowce, [1797])

‫6-8. תנא דבי אליהו, [מדרשים], (מינקוביץ, תקנ"ח)‬
Tana de-Vei Eliyahu (The Arrangement of Elijah) [Midrashes] (Mińkowce, 1798)

‫9. [שמעון עקיבא בר בן יוסף], מעשי ה', [מעשיות מהזוהר], (מינקוביץ, תקנ"ח)‬
Shimon Akiva bar ben Yosef, *Maasei Ha-Shem* (The Deeds of the Lord) [texts from the "Zohar"] (Mińkowce, 1798)

‫10. מדרש רבות, [מדרש רבה], (מינקוביץ, תקנ"ט)‬
Midrash Rabot (The Large Midrash) (Mińkowce, 1799)

‫11. [נביאים וכתובים, (מינקוביץ, תק"ס)‬
[*Neviim u-Khtuvim*] (The Prophets and the Writings) (Mińkowce, 1800)

‫12. חק לישראל, [חוק לישראל], (מינקוביץ, תקס"-)‬

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67 Ibid. 125–184.

Khok le-Israel (The Law for the Jewish People) [collection of sacred texts for everyday reading] (Mińkowce, 180?)

13. **ספרא דאדם קדמאה**, [רזיאל המלאך], (מינקוביץ, תקס"ג)

Sifra de-Adam Kadmaa (The Book of Primordial Man) [Cabbala book] (Mińkowce, 1803)

14. יוסף יוסקא בן יצחק, **יסוד יוסף** [קבלה], (מינקוביץ, תקס"ג)

Yosef Ioska ben Yitshak, *Yesod Yosef* (The Foundation of Joseph) [Cabbala book] (Mińkowce, 1803)

15. יוסף יוסקא בן יצחק, **ליקוטי יוסף**, [חידושים ופלפולים], (מינקוביץ, תקס"ג)

Yosef Ioska ben Yitshak, *Likutei Yosef* (The Collection of Joseph) [conclusions in matters of tradition law] (Mińkowce, 1803)

16. **מדרש תנחומא** [מדרש תנחומא (מינקוביץ, תקס"ג)

Midrash Tankhuma [Midrash to the book of Exodus] (Mińkowce, 1803)

17. שלמה מולכו, **ספר המפואר** [דרשות, קבלה], (מינקוביץ, תקס"ג)

Shlomo Molkho, *Sefer ha-Mefoar* (The Magnificent Book) [sermons according to the Cabbala] (Mińkowce, 1803)

18. צבי הירש בן שמואל זנויל, **מרגליות התורה**, [נביאים וכתובים], ([מינקוביץ], [תקס"ג])

Tsvi Hirsh ben Shmuel Zanvil, Margaliot ha-Tora (The Pearls of Torah) [The Prophets and the Writings], [Mińkowce, 1803]

19. **ספרי**, [מדרש הלכה], (מינקוביץ, תקס"ג)

Sifrei (Books) [Halakhic midrash for the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy], (Mińkowce, 1803)

20. **ספרי**, [מדרש הלכה], (מינקוביץ, תקס"ג)

Sifrei (Books) [Halakhic midrash for the books of Numbers and the Deuteronomy], (Mińkowce, 1804)

21. **מדרש רבה. בראשית**, (מינקוביץ, תקס"ד)

Midrash Raba. Bereshit (The Large Midrash. Genesis), (Mińkowce, 1804)

22. **מדרש תנחומא**, [מדרש תנחומא], (מינקוביץ, תקס"ה)

Midrash Tankhuma [Midrash to the book of Exodus] (Mińkowce, 1805)

23. **חמישה חומשי תורה** (מינקוביץ, תקס"ו)

Hamisha Humshei Tora (Pentateuch) (Mińkowce, 1810)

24. **מענה לשון** [תפילות. חולים ומתים], (מינקוביץ, תק"ע)

Maane Lashon (The Right Response) [prayers for the disabled and the dead] (1810)

25. **סליחות כמנהג פולין קטן ופולין גדול ליטא ורייסין** (מינקוביץ, תק"ע)

Slikhot ke-Minhag Polin Katan ve-Polin Gadol, Lita ve-Raisen (The Penitential Prayers in the rite of Little Poland and Great Poland, Lithuania and Russia) (Mińkowce, 1810)

26. **ספר תהלים** [תנ"ך] (מינקוביץ, תקע"א)

Sefer Tehilim (Psalms) (Mińkowce, 1811)

27. **סליחות** (מינקוביץ, תקע"א)

Slikhot (The Penitential Prayers) (Mińkowce, 1811)

‫28. קינות לתשעה באב‬ (מינקוביץ, תקע"ב)
Kinot le-Tisha be-Av (Lamentations for the 9th of Av) (Mińkowce, 1812)

‫29. נתן נטע בן משה הנובר, שערי ציון‬ [תיקונים ותפילות], (מינקוביץ, תקע"ב)
Natan Note ben Moshe Hanover, *Shaarei Tsion* (Zion's Gates) (Mińkowce, 1812)

‫30. סליחות‬ [תפילות, סליחות] (מינקוביץ, תקע"ב)
Slikhot (The Penitential Prayers) (Mińkowce, 1812)

‫31. סדר שלום עליכם ואתקינו סעודתא‬ [תיקונים. שבת], ([מינקוביץ], [תקע"ז])
Seder Shalom Aleikhem ve-Atkinu Seudata (Order – Peace upon You and Let us prepare
   for meal) [order for Shabbat preparations] ([Mińkowce], [1817])

‫32. אליהו בן משה די וידש, תוצאות חיים‬ [מוסר], ([מינקוביץ], תקע"ז)
Eliyahu ben Moshe Di Vidash, *Totsaot Khaim* (Issues of Life) [Jewish ethic book]
   ([Mińkowce], 1817)

‫33. צבי הירש בן ירחמיאל חוטש, נחלת צבי‬ [מוסר וסיפורים מהזוהר] (מינקוביץ, [תקע"ח])
Tsvi Hirsh ben Yerakhmiel Khutsh, *Nakhalat Tsvi* (Heritage of Zevi) [Jewish ethic
   book with texts from the *Zohar*], (Mińkowce, [1818])

‫34. דוד בן שמואל מדרזני, מגן דוד‬ [קבלה] (מינקוביץ, [תקע"ט])
David ben Shmuel mi-Derazhnia, *Magen David* (Shield of David) [Cabbala book]
   (Mińkowce, [1819])

‫33-36. אורחות צדיקים‬ [מוסר] (מינקוביץ, [תק"ף])
Orkhot Tsadikim (Ways of the Righteous) [Jewish ethic book] (Mińkowce, 1820])

‫37. שמשון בן אליעזר, ברוך שאמר,‬ [הלכות סת"ם = דיני כתיבת התפילין], ([מינקוביץ], [תק"ף])
Shimshon ben Eliezer, *Barukh she-Amar* (Blessed Be He Who Spoke) [laws of *tefillin*
   writings] (Mińkowce, [1820])

‫38. תיקוני הזוהר‬ [קבלה] ([מינקוביץ], [תק"ף])
Tikunei ha-Zohar (*Zohar* additions) [collection of additions to the *Zohar* on Genesis]
   (Mińkowce, [1820])

‫39. אליהו בן משה די וידש, יוסף פוייטו, ראשית חכמה הקצר,‬ [מוסר] (מינקוביץ, תקפ"ב)
Eliyahu ben Moshe Di Vidash, Yosef Poito, *Reshit Khokhma ha-Katsar* (Basis of
   Wisdom. Brief Version) [Jewish ethic book] (Mińkowce, 1822)

‫40. זרחיה היווני, ספר הישיר,‬ [מוסר] ([מינקוביץ], תקפ"ו)
Zarakhiya ha-Yavani, *Sefer ha-Yashir* (The Book of the Righteous) [Jewish ethic
   book] (1826)

‫41. רזיאל המלאך‬ [אמונות עממיות] (מינקוביץ, תקפ"ז)
Raziel ha-Malakh (The Angel Raziel) [collection of popular mystical texts]
   (Mińkowce, 1827)

‫42. אליהו בן משה די וידש, יוסף פוייטו, ראשית חכמה הקצר,‬ [מוסר] (מינקוביץ, תקצ"ב)
Eliyahu ben Moshe Di Vidash, Yosef Poito, *Reshit Khokhma ha-Katsar* (Basis of
   Wisdom. Brief Version) [Jewish ethic book] (Mińkowce, 1832)

‫43. מחזור עם טייטש מכל השנה‬ (מינקוביץ, ?)
Makhzor Im Taytsh mi-Kol ha-Shana (?) (Prayerbook for the Whole Year with Yiddish
   translation) (Mińkowce, ?)

Appendix 2

Count Ignacy Ścibor Marchocki
Law of the town of Minkovtsy
(Given in the hereditary town Minkovtsy on December 29, 1791)
Section 6. On the Jews in the same town

1. Residing in Minkovtsy, the Jewish community must have, similarly to Christian townspeople, a special book kept in the Magistrate, and there all Jewish residents should be carefully registered by their names and nicknames. All cases (except for spiritual and divorce-related cases, which may only be resolved at the rabbis') are to be totally dependent on the magistrate, and must be resolved in due jurisdictions, selected in accordance with the type of the case, and there one should insist on a sentence passed by the court, for which the governing council of the community or the general meeting of Jews annually select among them two just and prudent housekeepers, and on the day of elections to the presidium of the magistrate they are presented to the town manager to be registered in the minutes. These selected ones must be present on behalf of the Jews and the governing council of the community at all gatherings, town meetings, in order to defend and support the interests of the Jews and express their opinion on general resolutions concerning the course of dealing, and sign them; and the resolutions which will be signed by these two delegates will have the effect with respect to the Jews as well, and the Jews must fulfil them.
2. In the cases between a Jew and a Jew, similarly to those between a Christian and a Jew they, if they want, may be present and express their opinion, and if they do not take part, the case will be resolved and a sentence will be passed; but if these representatives want to be present at this, they will not be able to appeal against it.
3. All Jews are provided with rights of all kinds in trade, every possible assistance and protection.
4. The greatest freedom and support will be available to those Jews who (having such an opportunity) will run trade, especially to those of them who will trade in big lots in bullocks, vodka, hides, honey, wax, fabrics and other local goods, and from this trade will bring money to his region; no less will it be available to wholesale merchants, trading abroad and bringing from there goods obtained first-hand.
5. The magistrate will impose such an order with respect to the Jews so that one will not disturb the other in the way of life, and so that one will not intrude in the trade of the other; for this appropriate services will see that wholesale merchants do not sell goods in fore-arms and pounds, but exclusively in wholesale quantities, pieces, metric centners; those who trade in broadcloth will not have *blavats*, likewise those who keep *blavats* will not trade in broadcloth, the spices shop must not have clothes and etc., in short, every merchant trades in the kind of goods he registers,

for example, a wine seller, an iron seller, a spices seller, a seller of fur clothes, a broadcloth seller, a seller of *blavats*, a seller of haberdashery, a glass seller, etc.

6. A distinction must be maintained: the true merchant is a wholesale trader selling goods in bulk, bought first-hand, and the one who buys goods from other merchants is a semi-merchant, and there are also store-keepers.

7. I also allow the Jews, without any restrictions, to run inns upon the official propination, and sell honey, beer, and vodka and other beverages in them; however, these traders will not enjoy the same respect as trading merchants and cannot expect the same attitude towards them.

8. With respect to construction, the same rights are granted to them as to Christian townspeople (as pointed out in Section 2, points 4, 5, 6 for Christian townspeople), with the substitution of the land tax for the poll-tax.

9. Jewish bakers and slaughterers may openly and freely perform their work without anybody's interference, as well as sell their merchandise.

10. Production is not allowed for the Jews, skilled at other crafts, as not belonging to the workshops and untrained, and is strictly prohibited, except for those items which are of need to the Jews themselves – this they may produce and repair.

11. The Jews have no right to use and grant any titles, such as rabbis etc., without obtaining for that purpose privileges of the owner.

T<small>HE</small> J<small>EWISH LIVING SPACE IN THE</small> G<small>RAND</small> D<small>UCHY OF</small> L<small>ITHUANIA</small>:
<small>TENDENCIES AND WAYS OF ITS FORMATION</small>

J<small>URGITA</small> Š<small>IAUČIŪNAITĖ</small>-V<small>ERBICKIENĖ</small>

The aim of the present article is to distinguish the forms of the Jewish living space in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, to establish the factors that determined their development and variations in the broad chronological period from the settlement of Jews (end of the 14th c.) till the late 18th c. The problem is divided into two aspects: first, the analysis of the situation of a town or city and localization of Jews in the urban landscape; second, the regional spread of Jews in the state and the factors that encouraged it. The article is based on archival and published sources and generalizes the conclusions of the studies in urban history, urban planning and social topography of the towns of the GDL, which have greatly advanced in the recent period.

The basic shift in the uneven spread of Jews in the state took place at the turn of the 17th–18th centuries, when many owners of towns allowed Jews to settle in agrarianized and emptying towns. When Jews were assigned the function of urbanizers and revivers of towns, their settlement in newly opening areas was less controlled. The means of controlling the spread of Jews in towns used by burghers and their efficiency is discussed in the article. A conclusion is drawn that the Jewish living space in the towns of the GDL was not homogeneous, and in its separation several possibilities were combined: a quarter of one-three streets, a part most densely inhabited by Jews, their spread in other more lucrative parts of the town (mainly in *jurydykas*) and from the second half of the 18th century – in city suburbs. A more densely inhabited quarter was only one of the forms of the Jewish living space, while the actual Jewish living space did not fit inside its boundaries. The means of controlling the spread of Jews applied in urban environment were not efficient in state or private towns.

T<small>HE SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY OF A</small> *<small>SHTETL</small>*: J<small>EWS AND</small> L<small>ITHUANIANS</small>
<small>IN</small> D<small>ARBĖNAI</small>, 1760–1940

E<small>RIC</small> L. G<small>OLDSTEIN</small>

The *shtetl* is often understood in Jewish consciousness as a Jewish space, where non-Jews figure only occasionally as perpetrators of attacks on the Jewish population. Focusing on the town of Darbėnai, Lithuania, this article argues that Jews and non-Jews had far more extensive

interactions in the *shtetl* and its surroundings than is normally assumed. It examines the changing places held by Jews and Lithuanians in the landscape of the town from the 1760s through 1940, and explores how those shifts reflect changing power dynamics. Before World War I, the two groups played largely complementary economic roles and occupied distinct yet overlapping spaces, minimizing competition. After the rise of the Lithuanian Republic in 1918, Lithuanian control over the town's landscape expanded and the position of Jews declined. Overall, however, the Jews of Darbėnai do not conform to the common image of *shtetl* Jews as a group living in isolation from and in fear of their non-Jewish neighbors.

THE *SHTETL* SPACE IN THE 19TH CENTURY: A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

ARTUR MARKOWSKI

The paper is devoted to the *shtetl* space that is analyzed from the sociological viewpoint. Starting from theoretical assumptions of the sociology of space, I am attempting to systematize and characterize the modes and stages of the production of space of the Jewish *shtetl*. The attempt to make a micro-level analysis allows us to define the *shtetl* as a socio-spatial phenomenon. The article is believed to be an important stage in understanding the notion of the *shtetl* and in creating its definition that transcends the framework of a simple historical or cultural analysis.

THE SYNAGOGUE AS A HOUSE OF ELECTIONS

ELEONORA BERGMAN

Synagogues were always perceived as houses of prayer, learning and gathering. The latter includes also their social dimension. In the 19th century, the Jewish inhabitants of Warsaw used to organize their places of common worship close to their places of residence, which resulted in a large number of small synagogues. They became a basis for the development of a system of elections to the Jewish Community Board. In 1839, the rule was one deputy, in 1851 – 10 deputies from each synagogue. These rules kept changing. Election results were almost always contested. Dissatisfied electors expressed their opinions in various ways, of which some documentation has been preserved. Elections took place every three years from 1822 until 1916, and then only three times in the interwar period. With time and with the growth of differentiation within the Jewish population of Warsaw, synagogues tended to turn into political clubs, in addition to their other traditional roles.

Jewish cemeteries in 19th-century Germany between "tradition" and "assimilation": a paradigmatic development for Central Europe?

Ulrich Knufinke

The time of early German *Haskala* and emancipation around 1800 caused fundamental changes. The old burial traditions became a subject of enlightened discussions, influencing the landscape architecture of cemeteries and the design of their buildings.

During the 19th century, an "assimilation" of Jewish and non-Jewish cemeteries can be observed. Jewish cemeteries were designed in a strict geometric order. In some cities, Jewish and Christian cemeteries were built in direct neighborhood, sometimes by the same architect. The architecture of cemetery buildings increasingly had a representative character, and a new type of buildings developed as a result of the changes in burial customs. Large assembly halls for a community of mourners were built. Giving the Jewish cemetery a representative character raised the question of an adequate architectural style. Cemetery halls were erected in all historicist styles. Their design reflects Jewish self-confidence, as well as non-Jewish expectations. The article tries to analyze these interdependencies. Finally the question is discussed, whether the development in Germany may be called paradigmatic for all Central Europe.

The house on the corner: Frankists and other Warsovians in the struggle for spatial benefits in late 18th-century Warsaw (1789–92)

Ekaterina Emeliantseva

This essay discusses the social conflicts and distribution of power in late 18th-century Warsaw from the spatial point of view: using the case of Warsaw Frankists, it shows that social change in the last decades of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth meant for Warsovians struggle for urban spaces, which were reoccupied and reorganized in the process.

Analyzing the conflict between the Frankists and the municipal authorities over spatial benefits within Warsaw's urban structure, which took place during the Four-Year *Sejm*, the essay shows how the physical space the Frankists occupied within the city was connected with their social position: renting tavern chambers in the most profitable places but outside the direct municipal jurisdiction was the Frankists' way to circumvent the restrictions of the traditional municipal order and to succeed in establishing themselves in urban economy and society of Warsaw. Nevertheless, in such critical times as the last years of the Commonwealth, the Frankists were vulnerable to attacks. Their ambiguous social status – they were neither full citizens nor just foreigners or a group of inferior status, neither pure Catholics nor Jews –

challenged the notions of the long-established burghers about their privileges and caused public comment: during the tax debates in the fall of 1789, they were reproached for their "foreign", "sectarian" behavior.

The territorial and social space of the ChaBaD Hassidic movement in Belarus in the first half of the 19ᵀᴴ century

Barbara Holzer

In the late 18th century the teaching of Baal-Shem-Tov conquered new terrain. A kind of division of territory took place; Polotsk province (subsequently renamed Mohilev province) became a bastion of the Misnageds, while the Hassids consolidated their influence in Vitebsk province. The spreading of ChaBaD in the Belarusian territory and beyond its borders was related to the intellectual and organizational activity of the movement's first leader, Shneur Zalman. The movement was developed and modified by his successors in the first half of the 19th century, Dov-Ber and Menachem Mendel. The lists of names of Hassids registered with individual prayer houses make it possible to estimate what percentage of the population were Hassids in the towns of Minsk province. The ChaBaD communities had their representatives in large provincial cities, in Minsk, Vitebsk and Mohilev, but most of the faithful lived in small towns. Emissaries sought supporters in the zone of settlement, but also in distant regions of Russia. Dov-Ber and Menachem Mendel undertook welfare activity and assistance to Jewish families resettled from villages to towns, supported Jewish farming colonies and encouraged supporters to take up new occupations as workers and farmers or to set up colonies in *Eretz Israel*.

Materials on ChaBaD can be found in the Belarusian archive in Minsk. The interest of Russian authorities found expression in official documents and excerpts from account books kept by the rabbi's associates. Collective gathering of taxes for the state treasury was no longer in force, and each *kahal* was individually responsible for taxes.

Between tradition and modernity: the Polish *shtetl* in the first two decades of the 20ᵀᴴ century

Konrad Zieliński

The turn of the century, the revolution of 1905 and its aftermath brought significant changes to Jewish life. Modern socialist and nationalist movements appeared also in the *shtetl*, where lifestyle had not been changing for decades. One year after the outbreak of the First World War, "Russian Poland" was seized by Germans and Austrians. The impact of the war on the

country's economy was negative. However, the relative liberalism of the new authorities, along with the development of Zionist movement, the Russian revolutions and Polish independence, was a catalyst for changes. The gap between "the old" and "the new", as well as the growing conflict between the Poles and the Jews characterized the Polish territories in this period. It resulted in partial secularisation of the Jewish community and its emancipation from the long and steady influence of the Orthodox and the Polish domination.

Creating space for women in inter-war Jewish Vilna: the role of the *Froyen-Fareyn*

Ellen Kellman

The Vilna Jewish Women's Union came into being in response to a crisis that began in the early 1920s, when the forces of economic depression and rising antisemitism severely curtailed employment opportunities for Polish-Jewish youth in the factories, professions and government service. The founders created a non-partisan organization to address the educational and social needs of impoverished Jewish girls and women. Its primary mission was to prepare women to enter the skilled trades, in order to enable them to achieve personal autonomy through productive employment. The Women's Union created its own educational center in the heart of Jewish Vilna, offering training courses in the skilled trades, an academic program and a daycare program for children of the working poor. While cooperating with other organizations, the Women's Union remained outside the strictures of any political party. The organization ventured into the arena of Jewish communal politics on many occasions, however, in order to promote the needs of women and families as a political issue. Its programs for women flourished in Vilna throughout the 1930s, while the organization continued to pressure the Jewish community to make space for female participation in its political apparatus.

Music halls and Jewish identities in Budapest at the turn of the century

Miklós Konrád

The large and ever-growing historiography of Hungarian Jewry has until now completely neglected to study Budapest's lower middle-class Jews in the Dualist era. Although they formed the larger part of Budapest's Jews – living concentrated in three districts of the capital, whose Jewish population amounted to more than 150.000 in 1910, – we know precious little about how they saw themselves as Jews, about their relationship towards Hungarian society. Documentary

sources are particularly scarce, they did not write about themselves and little was written about them. By looking at the music halls of the Jewish districts, this paper tries to understand something of the identity of Budapest's lower middle-class Jews. It shows their gradual linguistic and cultural acculturation during the years 1890−1914. But it also demonstrates that the specific character of the lower middle-class Jewish identity was its multiplicity, the simultaneous existence of bonds, which were, theoretically, substantially divergent from each other, but which obviously managed to coexist somehow in everyday life.

The space of Jewish sport in interwar Poland

Diethelm Blecking

Before the Second World War, organised Jewish sports clubs in Poland had around 30.000 members in 250 clubs. To this we must add around 65.000 members of Jewish youth organisations, who were also active in physical education and activities. The space of Jewish sport in Poland was widely differentiated and split both politically and sociologically. It ranged from the left-wing workers' sports clubs belonging to the Bund (*Jutrznia*/Morning Star), workers' sports clubs attached to the left-wing *Poaley Zion* (*Gwiazda*/Star), to the middle-class *Maccabi* clubs that followed a Zionist programme.

The article aims to reconstruct the structure of Jewish sport in Poland and reveal its political and ideological roots and/or links to the various fractions in Jewish civil society. Using the examples of Rzeszów in Galicia and Łódź in central Poland, the article describes the concrete activities of Jewish sports clubs in an urban setting.

Jews and sport in interwar Vilna

Jack Jacobs

The impetus to create Jewish sport clubs in Vilna was initially rooted not so much in the awakening of Jewish national identity or in reaction to anti-Semitism (as was the case elsewhere in Eastern Europe), as in the concern on the part of leading figures in Vilna's Jewish community with the physical well being of the Jewish population. Jewish physicians who were active in cultural, political, welfare and other activities on behalf of the Jewish community, played particularly pivotal roles both in fostering the emergence of Jewish sport clubs in Vilna, and in leading certain of the clubs which emerged from their efforts. The Jewish sport clubs of Vilna, moreover, differed from the Jewish clubs in other East European cities with significant Jewish populations not only in their origins, but also in their ideological orientation, in their range, and in relative strength.

Mūsų gydytojas: The social and cultural aspects of the Jewish medical doctor in Lithuanian countryside before the Second World War

Mordechai Zalkin

Extensive literature, both popular and scientific, is dedicated to the question of the public sphere of the Lithuanian *shtetl* before the Second World War. The common image that emerges from this literature is of a society divided dichotomously along the ethnic-religious lines, while no room is left for an interim neutral space. The tragic "epilogue" of the Jewish existence in Lithuania also contributed to the crystallization of this image.

In this essay the author reconsiders this assumption, mainly by examining the inter-ethnic reality of the *shtetl* through the perspective of the local medical services. Due to their unique cultural, as well as religious identity, the countryside's medical doctors, most of them Jews of urban origin and modern cultural identity, constituted a certain type of a "neutral social zone", identified by both Jews and non-Jews as lacking of any ethnic, religious or political orientation. Thus, the medical doctor served as an "agent" of modernization, and played a major role in the process of mutual understanding between the different, often hostile local ethnic groups.

The Jewish village of Degsnė: a case study

Milda Jakulytė-Vasil, Rūta Binkytė, Giedrius Jokubauskis

The Jewish village of Degsnė in Lithuania is unique for two reasons: because of the occupation of the local Jews, who practiced both farming and mental patient care, and also for the extraordinary nature of relations between Jews and Lithuanians. The village of Degsnė appeared as a result of the contemporary Russian tsarist policy aimed to "put into order" the chaotic situation of Jews and to abolish the threat of poverty for villagers by encouraging the establishment of Jewish villages. The lack of knowledge and skills in agriculture forced Jews to take up secondary businesses. From the very beginning of the establishment of the village, Jews were involved in caring for mental patients. This was of benefit to Jews for two reasons: the relatives of the patients paid for the supervision of the afflicted, and the patients helped them to perform agricultural work. Lithuanians from neighbouring villages also helped Jews in farming. Relations between Lithuanians and Jews were not based exclusively on economic considerations. This was revealed by the fact that after the fire of January 1941, which destroyed the neighbouring village of Pučkoriai, the Jews took those who had been left homeless into their own homes. The same Lithuanians who continued to live in Jewish houses after the Shoah conserved these buildings, and thus Degsnė has retained its authentic urban structure until the present day.

The Jewish book shop in the urban landscape of Eastern Europe at the end of the 19th century

Hagit Cohen

What did book lovers find, when they entered the doorway of Jewish bookshops in Warsaw, Odessa and Krakow at the end of the 19th century?

This article deals with the development of modern Jewish culture in Eastern Europe through the microcosm of the Jewish bookshop. Based on newly discovered documentation, the study traces the world and commercial activity of Jewish booksellers who operated in several Eastern European cities. These booksellers saw themselves as the disciples and apostles of the *Haskala* in Eastern Europe. They offered their clients a rich variety of Hebrew books of popular science, Judaic studies, as well as books representing the latest innovations in Modern Hebrew literature. At the end of the 19th century these bookshops changed their character. Against their will, contrary to their world view and only because of the public demand, they began to sell Yiddish-language books and religious literature. Step by step, the establishment of mass reading culture amongst Eastern European Jews and the widening of the Jewish reading public is revealed.

The constructed Jew. A pragmatic approach for defining a collective Central European image of Jews

Eszter B. Gantner, Mátyás Kovács

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the socialist regimes one can witness noticeable phenomena in Central and Eastern Europe in the forms of Jewish festivals, programs, restaurants or sightseeing. This flourishing and the emerging of the so-called Jewish space has impressed many researchers since the 1980s. After shortly interpreting their theses and giving a brief introduction to the history, theory and daily life of Central European Jewish spaces, we introduce our idea of a collective Central European image of Jews, the constructed Jew, which we consider as a pragmatic approach, as it is based on the examples of the largest Central European Jewish festivals. In the second part we analyse Budapest, which is home to the region's largest historically continuous community, as a possible counter-image to the tendencies that are to be observed within the frames of the constructed Jew.

Jewish heritage production and historical Jewish spaces: a case study of Cracow and Berlin

Magdalena Waligórska

The text deals with the relation between historical Jewish spaces and the development of the *klezmer* revival in Cracow and Berlin. It addresses the question of the representation of Jewish heritage in the post-Shoah Europe, where the authentic Jewish spaces provide legitimisation to the revival staged by mostly non-Jewish actors. The text briefly examines the nature of Jewish historical spaces in Cracow and Berlin and the ways, in which the *klezmer* revivalists have used them for heritage production. Apart from the dominating representation of the Jewish space as a reinvented *shtetl*, the author also presents its rival representations, which emerge as counter-reactions to the pervasive imagery of the revival. Furthermore, the text provides an overview of *klezmer* venues in the cultural, educational, and commercial context, concentrating also on the overlap between Holocaust commemoration and the *klezmer* revival. Finally, the author discusses the *klezmer* revival space as the Jewish Space (in the sense of Diana Pinto).

The space of the Jewish town in Zalman Shneur's poem *Vilna*

Valentina Brio

The poem was written by Zalman Shneur (1887–1959) in Berlin after World War I, in 1917, and is partly based on the recollections of the author himself, who lived and worked in the city in 1904–06.

The poem is based on constant transitions and contrasts: the poetic mood of the past versus its tragic essence, tradition versus new trends, elevated spiritual interests versus everyday concerns, grandeur versus poverty, and finally, the alien versus the own. The contrasts are taken to an intersecting space, whose parts are opposite to each other and even transformed (for example, a hot and sunny country, the native soil and a swamp, dusk, dullness of an alien country, the *galut*). The main compositional-stylistic principle is that of the collision of the non-Jewish and the Judaic. Shneur juxtaposes two Sanctities: one as an object of worship (the Catholic church), and the other as an object of constant lifetime creativity (typography, i.e. the book). The image of the rhythm of the working typography as the rhythm of the heart of a Jewish city has become the conceptual centre of the poem.

The motive of a resuscitating statue (Moses) emerges from the theatricality of the city space, from the architectural and sculptural intensity of the predominantly baroque city. Topographically situated like an amphitheatre around the "stage", the city presents itself as a spectator of the "spectacle" that looks dramatic to the author. Here emerges the theme of "stolen property", which is characteristic of other works by Snheur as well.

Shneur's poem reflects the peculiar nature of the poetics of Vilna: the presence of various topographic schemes in the relationship between the primary and secondary elements of the city space, which is stipulated by the presence of various cultural languages.

Despite all projections to the archetype of the city (Jerusalem), it is Vilna, and not the city in general, that Shneur captured at a certain historical moment and simultaneously in all historical time. This complicated and controversial space contributes to the unity of the poetic image of this world, while artistic conventionality serves to recreate the Jewish soul of the city.

Jewish sights: exoticization of places and objects as a way of presenting local "Jewish antiquity" by the inhabitants of little towns

Alla Sokolova

The article provides an analysis of interviews and aims to investigate how the dwellers of a number of settlements of Vinnitsa region, Ukraine, use the existing and lost elements of architectural and natural landscape for the mental reconstruction of "the genuine Jewish townships", and how the shtetl is transformed from an imaginary antique Jewish space into "the visible landscape of one's memory". The article explores the manner, in which local dwellers present "ordinary" constructions as "unique" monuments of "Jewish antiquity".

The tavern as a place of communication in Hungarian Jewish literature

Rita Horváth

The tavern and the Jewish tavern-keeper play a prominent role in Eastern European Jewish literature of the 19th century and in 20th century family novels depicting the previous century. In Hungarian Jewish literature, the Jewish tavern-keeper also appears quite frequently. His portrayal, however, is highly stereotyped. In Illés Kaczér's historical and family novel sequence, a tetralogy entitled *Zsidó Legenda* [*Jewish Legend*], which was written just before, during and after the Holocaust, Kaczér subverts the Eastern European literary stereotype of the Jewish tavern-keeper. In doing so, Kaczér aims at demonstrating that Hungarian Jewish literature is an integral part of Eastern European literature. He also provides an opportunity for highly assimilated Hungarian Jews to feel a sense of community with their own past and with other, more traditional Jewish communities. These are critical steps toward constructing a new and viable Jewish identity in the place of the one that had been lost in the Holocaust.

Jews – subjects of the "Minkovtsy State"
(on the history of Jewish book printing in Ukraine)

Benyamin Lukin

In a relatively brief period from the late 18th century to the early 19th century, a number of Jewish "free" printing houses were established in succession in several private towns of Podolia (until 1793 – a remote province of the Kingdom of Poland, and afterwards, as a result of its second partition – of the Russian empire). The purpose of the article is to bring to light the specific common and local historical conditions that were favorable to the process of the development of Jewish typographical business in Podolia in this period. For the reconstruction of the local historical context I have chosen as a model the small town of Minkovtsy, where the Jewish publishing enterprise turned out to be the largest in the region both in terms of the scope of book publishing, as well as the longevity of its functioning. The article focuses on the analysis of the socio-cultural image of the Minkovtsy Jewish community and those historical circumstances that contributed to its transformation into one of the centers of Jewish book printing. As the article shows, among the important local conditions one could enumerate a relatively high level of the living standards of the Jewish community, its advantageous position with regard to settlers of other confessions, intensive economic development of the town, and the support for Jewish book publishing by the owner of the town.

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