PaRDeS
Journal of the Association for Jewish Studies in Germany

Intersections between Jewish Studies and Habsburg Studies

(2023) №. 29
Universitätsverlag Potsdam

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For the Association for Jewish Studies in Germany (VJS)
in association with the Institute for the History of the German Jews (IGDJ)

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ISSN (print) 1614-6492
ISSN (online) 1862-7684
ISBN 978-3-86956-574-3

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek:
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available at http://dnb.dnb.de.

This production of this issue of the journal was generously financed by the Association for Jewish Studies in Germany, the Institute for the History of the German Jews (Hamburg), the Institute for Jewish History in Austria (INJOEST, St. Pölten) and the WAG – Wissenschaftliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft des Leo Baeck Instituts in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland.

| Institut für jüdische
Geschichte Österreichs |

WAG Wissenschaftliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft
des Leo Baeck Instituts in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland

Universitätsverlag Potsdam 2024
Am Neuen Palais 10, 14469 Potsdam | http://verlag.ub.uni-potsdam.de/
phone.: +49 (0)331 977 2533 | fax: -2292 | verlag@uni-potsdam.de

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Editorial deadlines: July 29, 2022 (Proposal); August 31, 2022 (Notification); February 15, 2023 (Manuscript)
The articles published in PaRDeS go through a peer review process. The editors reserve the right to reject contributions, split up, or cut manuscripts after consultation with the authors. The published texts reflect the opinions and knowledge of the authors and do not reflect the opinion of the editors. All articles published in PaRDeS are indexed in “Rambi. Index of Articles on Jewish Studies.”
Cover illustration: Design – Kristin Schettler (Universitätsverlag Potsdam), based on a map of Central Europe © photorebelle – stock.adobe.com

Print: docupoint GmbH Magdeburg
Typesetting: text plus form, Dresden

ISSN (print) 1614-6492
ISSN (online) 1862-7684
ISBN 978-3-86956-574-3

Simultaneously published online on the publication server of the University of Potsdam:
https://doi.org/10.25932/publishup-62207
https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:kobv:517-opus4-622072

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Editor’s Preface

How can we study Jewish history and culture, religion and language(s) in a region that connects many European countries and was united for centuries by an imperial family, the Habsburg dynasty? What resources, skills, historiographical and methodological tools are needed to decipher such a complex region? How do we analyze and evaluate the political, social, cultural, religious, and linguistic characteristics of the region, what is specifically Jewish about it, and how important is the influence and legacy of the Habsburg dynasty in Central Europe to the present day?

The answers to these questions are not straightforward, and bring to the fore numerous challenges that researchers must overcome in order to gain new insights into the region and its history. Not surprisingly, such questions challenge different national narratives, question the role of political, social, and cultural entanglements and conflicts, and test the realization or imagination of regional and pluricultural identities. It demands interdisciplinary cooperation and transnational perspectives, and thus, this volume of PaRDeS, the journal of the Association for Jewish Studies in Germany, seeks to explore intersections between Habsburg and Jewish studies. By linking spatial and thematic approaches, this issue not only aims to offer a new understanding of a region, its cultures and histories, but also brings together two different and often separated research fields and communities. Such an academic conversation hopefully enables fruitful exchanges on research approaches, methodical tools, archival resources, and language skills as well as it starts a discussion on categories and terms, spaces, and periodizations.

The process of decoding “Habsburg Central Europe” and of studying its Jewish dimensions is therefore quite a complex endeavor. Nevertheless, Mirjam Thulin and Tim Corbett initiated the idea of taking a fresh look at the region, its Jewish histories, its cultural and religious entanglements, but also its imaginations and conflicting narratives. Mirjam Thulin, an expert on Jewish intellectual and religious networks and movements in the Habsburg Empire and beyond, and Tim Corbett, an award-winning specialist on Jewish history and memory culture in the Austrian context (empire and republic), are therefore perfect guest editors for this issue of PaRDeS. Combined with my

own interest in the evolution of Jewish transnational aid and humanitarianism as well as the Viennese-Jewish cultural and religious imperial agenda, all three of us added important perspectives and research questions to the issue. We discussed new approaches to Jewish history and culture in the region and struggled with many of the above-mentioned questions. We were struck by the many entanglements and connections between Habsburg and Jewish studies, which led to the decision to bring both academic fields together in order to initiate new and hopefully fruitful discourses between both research communities.

The articles in this issue present the research of colleagues all of whom are connected to the study of Habsburg Central Europe in one way or another and who illustrate a broad variety of approaches, methods, and topics. The issue does neither claim to cover all political, cultural, linguistic, or religious aspects of the region nor to offer a complete set of research tools to uncover all its Jewish dimensions. Also, it does not offer a full representation of research traditions or national academic structures from across the region. Some topics, regions, and national narratives admittedly remain underrepresented in this issue, for example Hungarian and Romanian perspectives. However, the issue does hope to visualize blind spots in different historiographical narratives and detect cultural and lingual barriers which often divide academia and hinder fruitful discussion, especially in Central Europe, while also stimulating exchange and interaction between the different research communities and nationally structured academic systems. The general idea of the issue is to offer short and compact articles which function as gateways to broader discourses, existing scholarship, academic traditions, as well as blind spots in historiography. The collected contributions relate to theoretical approaches, new sources and fields of inquiry, regional spaces of encounter, transimperial histories, and contemporary perspectives. Consequently, the articles invite us to rethink, revisit, and reevaluate Jewish history within Habsburg Central Europe without restrictions, limitations, or borders, as the cover images of this issue visually illustrates.

Such an endeavor was only possible due to the broad support and profound knowledge of the two guest editors, Mirjam Thulin and Tim Corbett. Their enthusiasm was substantial in the creation of this issue. Moreover, I would like to thank the authors and reviewers who invested time and energy and embarked on a process in which important suggestions and critiques were made

that improved the texts and the overall issue. Specifically, the review process showed how challenging it was to integrate two different research communities and research fields as well as different national academic traditions. While the general idea of the issue was to collect short and concise articles, the discussions initated in the review process led to the expansion of several contributions in response to some of the critiques and thus to contributions of varying lengths. Nevertheless, not all of the comments and critiques could be answered or solved, yet the overall idea of initiating conversations continued to be an important and guiding principle of this issue, even though some disagreements may have remained.

I would also like to thank the book reviewers and Oskar Czendze, who organized the book review section of this volume and, in so doing, made an invaluable contribution to this issue. The time which Oskar Czendze took to organize the review section and that the reviewers invested in assessing recent publications in Jewish studies and Habsburg studies, as well as other research fields, has to be seen as a great and valuable service to the scholarly community. Their commitment to this kind of service, which is becoming more and more unusual in academia, is impressive and I thank them all.

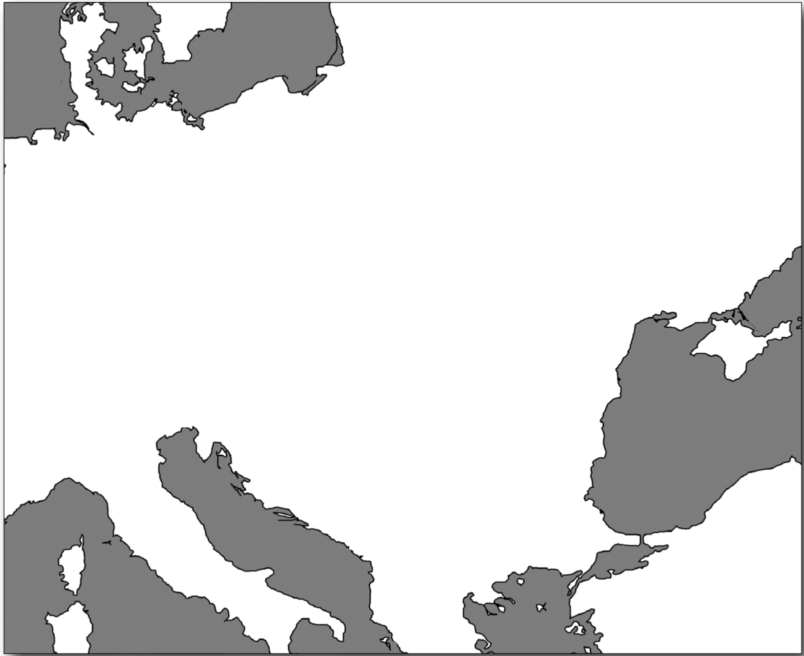
As has become clear, many people made the production of this issue possible. The copy editors, typesetter, and proofreaders, as well as our colleagues at Universitätsverlag Potsdam [Potsdam University Press] were also crucial for the realization of the product. The support and assistance of Andreas Kennecke, Marco Winkler, Felix Will, and Kristin Schettler, who designed the cover of this issue, was impressive, and we thank them. We also thank Gunther Gebhard working at text plus form – Korrektur | Lektorat | Satz (Dresden) for guiding us smoothly through the typetting process.

Last but not least, we would like to thank the Association for Jewish Studies in Germany (VJS) and its board for their openness and support as well as for entrusting the editors with publishing this specific issue of PaRDeS. In addition, we thank the **Association for Jewish Studies in Germany**, but also the **Institute for the History of the German Jews (IGDJ, Hamburg)**, the **Institute for Jewish History in Austria (INJOEST, St. Pölten),** and the **WAG – Wissenschaftliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft des Leo Baeck Instituts in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland** for financially supporting the production of this issue.

The idea of exploring intersections between two different research communities and of linking two often separated research fields in order to offer new insights into a region and its Jewish histories, cultures, traditions, and languages was challenging, but also inspiring. It brought us into conversation with many different colleagues and opened up new discussions and debates on research questions, methods, and sources, but also on perspectives and interests. This issue of PaRDeS is the product of these conversations and discussions and symbolizes a vivid academic community, of which the Association for Jewish Studies in Germany (VJS) is an integral part.

Björn Siegel

Introduction



A map of Central Europe. Source: Tim Corbett.

Towards Pluricultural and Connected Histories: Intersections between Jewish and Habsburg Studies

by Tim Corbett, Björn Siegel and Mirjam Thulin

1 Cartographic Fictions

The interconnected regions of Central Europe, East-Central Europe, and the Balkans were home to a long succession of polities, dynasties, and empires through the course of the last millennium, with borders, rulers, populations, and even names subject to constant change. For example, the name "Austria" has held multiple meanings over the past centuries: In the late Middle Ages, it referred to a pair of small duchies along the Danube (Austria Above and Below the Enns); then, for a brief period in modernity (1806–1867), it denoted one of the world's most powerful empires, before meaning (unofficially at least) the Cisleithanian half of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy until 1918. Today, however, "Austria" applies solely to the diminutive Austrian Republic.[1]

The Austrian example is characteristic of the region as a whole: Contrary to present-day nationalist claims, the sprawling lands of Habsburg Central Europe[2] were characterized prior to the 20th century more by change and

[1] We have endeavored in this volume to be consistent in our use of terminology while at the same time avoiding anachronisms. For example, we differentiate between the Habsburg Monarchy as a loose dynastic construct in the period before 1806 and the consolidated Habsburg Empire that existed between 1806 and 1918, officially divided into Austrian (Cisleithanian) and Hungarian (Transleithanian) halves from 1867.

[2] The concept of "Central Europe" itself has a long pedigree, see the seminal essay by Milan Kundera, "The Tragedy of Central Europe," translated by Edmund White, *New York Review of Books* 31:7 (1984), 33–38. We use the term "Habsburg Central Europe" here to refer to all the lands once connected to the dynasty and/or empire and, following Moritz Csáky, as a "space that is not easily delineable in geographic or historical terms, but rather a relational space that is constantly being discursively renegotiated." Moritz Csáky, *Das Gedächtnis Zentraleuropas: Kulturelle und literarische Projektionen auf eine Region* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2019), 9. All translations in this text, unless otherwise stated, are our own.

heterogeneity than continuity or homogeneity, a fact that renders any attempts to cartographically depict the region in an objective or inclusive form difficult, if not impossible.[3]

The cover of this volume is therefore illustrated with a blank map of the region, through which we wish to draw attention to the manifest geopolitical, demographic, cultural, and dynastic complexity that reigned here over the centuries. The blank canvas allows for the projection of all manner of signs and meanings: names, landscapes, and population centers; topographical features, roads, and railways; and, of course, borders, and boundaries. Yet, the blank canvas also calls to mind absence: the absence of ruined empires, like those of the Habsburg and Ottoman dynasties; of vanished regions, like Bukovina and the Banat; and of course the absence of entire demographics erased in a century of ethnic conflict and genocide, like the German-speaking communities expelled from across the region after 1945, but especially the Jewish and Romani communities extinguished during the Holocaust.

To this day, historiographic works on the former Habsburg Empire and its successor states are nevertheless commonly illustrated with colorful maps claiming to represent the region's "ethnolinguistic" and/or "national" makeup before 1918. The definitions and distinctions in this context usually remain vague. However, these maps are based on a fiction, as the historian Pieter Judson demonstrated in his magnum opus *The Habsburg Empire:* the fiction that the present-day "nations" of Central Europe constitute "transhistorical" (that is, primordial) "ethnic groups" and that nationalism is sui generis antithetical to dynastic imperialism.[4] According to this view, established in the earliest historiographies in the field, the empire, as a dynastic construct, represented an anachronism in the modern world of nation-states, surviving only as a "prison of nations," the demise of which was therefore attributable to the empire's very diversity and the volatility this ostensibly entailed.[5]

3 See generally Herbert Karner and Martina Stercken, eds., *Habsburg kartieren: Schriftbildliche Entwürfe von Herrschaft im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2024, forthcoming).

4 Pieter Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016), 9.

5 See paradigmatically Oscar Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (originally published 1929, this edition University of Chicago: 1961); Robert Kann, *The Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848–1918* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), and Robert Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire 1526–1918* (Berke-

The cartographic representations of the former empire's "ethnonational" makeup, which continue to have a powerful and enduring impact into the present day, were in fact created from the outset by small elites of ethnonationalists with the explicit aim of justifying geopolitical demands.[6] And, as Judson further demonstrated, the rampant nationalism that came to characterize the region in the years preceding World War I – and still profoundly shaping the region today – not only thrived under but was integrally conditioned by imperial structures, thus demonstrating the intertwined history of "nations" and "empires." The December Constitution of 1867, for example, which granted emancipation to the "peoples" of the Austrian half of the newly established Dual Monarchy, contributed to the cultural, political, and crucially also legal formation of the very concept of "peoples" and "nations." Not only constitutional reforms, but the reification of "ethnic" diversity in the Habsburg Empire (for example in the renowned *Kronprinzenwerk* published between 1886 and 1902) engendered and even stimulated the very primordialist thinking that ultimately paved the way – specifically in the aftermath of empire – for exclusionary politics of ethnicization and, ultimately, a long succession of wars, population transfers, and even genocide.[7]

2 Habsburg Legends and Jewish "Nostalgia"

The history of the Habsburg Empire – including the debates on nationalism and imperialism as well as the question of what ultimately caused the empire's collapse – has been subject to a major historiographical revision in recent years. As the historians Peter Berger and Günter Bischof recently summarized: "the legend of a historically inevitable decline of Austria-Hungary was nothing but that: a legend."[8] Pointing to the century of peace and

ley: University of California Press, 1974). Incidentally, both of these authors were political émigrés of Jewish background.

6 See Larry Wolff, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining of Eastern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020).

7 Judson, *The Habsburg Empire,* 328, 381. See also Gerald Stourzh, "Ethnic Attribution in Late Imperial Austria: Good Intentions, Evil Consequences," in *The Habsburg Legacy: National Identity in Historical Perspective,* eds. Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), 67–83.

8 Peter Berger and Günter Bischof, "*Nicht lebensfähig*? Austria's Economic Viability after the Two World Wars," in *Myths in Austrian History: Construction and Deconstruction,* eds. Günther Bischof, Marc Landry and Christian Karner (Contemporary Austrian Studies Vol. 29, New Orleans: UNO Press, 2020), 195.

progressive emancipation that characterized the Habsburg Empire between the Napoleonic Wars and the Balkan Wars, the authors explicitly condoned the view put forward in Stefan Zweig's famous and posthumously published autobiography *The World of Yesterday* (1942 in German/1943 in English), in which Zweig argued that the Habsburg Empire had acted as "a guarantor of stability in Central and Eastern Europe" and was thus not inevitably determined to fail.[9]

For the longest time, Zweig's autobiography was not only understood as a literary engagement with the former Habsburg Empire, but also heralded (and dismissed) as the quintessential expression of "Jewish nostalgia" for a past that never existed.[10] However, the historian Steven Beller pointed out that the attribution of "nostalgia" to the reflections of (often Jewish) contemporaries should rather be seen as admiration for a unique "Central European Jewish tradition" which shaped Viennese and Habsburg society despite the complex and sometimes contradictory social, political and cultural circumstances of the time, and as a coping mechanism in the face of its destruction.[11] In this lived experience, the Habsburg Empire was neither ultimately doomed, nor an easy and conflict-free region, but a space of political (nationalizing and ethnicizing) conflict, cultural interaction, fruitful cooperation, and intellectual engagement all at the same time. Far from universally heralding its demise, in the final years of its existence, many observers were calling for, if not predicting, the transformation of the Habsburg Empire into a truly federal superstructure, a model for a future "United States of Europe."[12] The parallels between the diverse and fragmented society of the empire of yesteryear and the European Union today are self-evident, which may explain the enduring interest in Habsburg history. As the essayist Karl-Markus Gauß recently remarked, the Habsburg Empire acted explicitly as a guardian of diversity in the

9 Berger and Bischof, "*Nicht lebensfähig?*," 195.

10 Stefan Zweig, The World of Yesterday (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964).

11 Steven Beller, "The World of Yesterday Revisited: Nostalgia, Memory, and the Jews of Fin-de-siècle Vienna," *Jewish Social Studies* 2:2 (Winter 1996): 37–53, here 51.

12 This was a policy envisioned not least of all by the ill-fated heir presumptive, Franz Ferdinand, see Corinna Peniston-Bird, *The Debate on Austrian National Identity in the First Republic (1918–1938)* (PhD Thesis, University of St. Andrews, 1997), 201; and Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy,* 123–124.

face of homogenizing nationalism, safeguarding "the survival especially of the small and smallest peoples [...] amidst larger, mightier nations."[13]

And yet, as the Habsburg scholar Tara Zahra explored, most historiographies of the region continue to be written along nationalizing lines, insisting that the kind of ethnonational or linguistic pluralism as represented in the Habsburg Empire necessarily leads to "bloodshed" and that "[o]nly the homogenous nation-state, in this view, could guarantee lasting democracy, peace, and prosperity."[14] Concurring with Judson that the unique cultural makeup and dynastic superstructure of the Habsburg Empire did not suppress, but much rather engendered ethnonationalist movements, Zahra pointed to the crucial problem of sources, which she identified as one of the major reasons for historiographical mischaracterizations of the Habsburg legacy: when examining cultural diversity and coexistence in this region, historiography still relies primarily on hegemonic source materials that not only promoted, but even constructed and imposed artificial notions of "difference." What these sources do not depict is diversity in all its iterations, from multilingualism to multiculturalism to sheer indifference.[15] As the contemporary Bohemian ethnographer Karl von Czörnig (1804–1889) remarked: "every crownland in the empire was in fact linguistically and culturally heterogeneous" and therefore "no single language group could make an authentic or exclusive claim to any crownland."[16]

3 Pluricultural Habsburg Central Europe

Drawing especially on postcolonial theory, the field of Habsburg studies has for some time already been reevaluating diversity and pluralism in the Habsburg context along with the associated "national" master narratives.[17]

13 Karl-Markus Gauß, *Die unaufhörliche Wanderung* (Vienna: Zsolnay, 2020), 108, 113.

14 Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands 1900–1948* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), x.

15 Tara Zahra, "Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis," *Slavic Review* 69:1 (Spring 2010), 93–119, here 106, 101–102. See also Katherine Arens, "Building the Habsburg Subject: Scholarly Historical Fictions," *Journal of Austrian Studies* 54:4 (Winter 2021), 37–71.

16 Cited in: Judson, *The Habsburg Empire,* 243–244. On Judson's concurrence with Zahra's above-cited findings, see also 269, 272–273, 294, 311–312.

17 See for example the open-access article repository "Kakanien Revisited," run by the University of Vienna since 2001, especially the section "Theorie," https://www.kakanien-revisited.at/ (last

As the recently deceased literary scholar Anil Bhatti, among others, explored, postcolonial theory allows for a shift in perspective away from what Pieter Judson termed the "pathologizing" understanding of cultures as inherently homogenous and adversarial and towards a "pluricultural" paradigm in which diversity, heterogeneity, and intercultural exchange are posited as the normative framework of everyday lived experience in multicultural regions such as existed in the Habsburg Empire.[18]

Of course, the one paradigm does not preclude the other, the key point being rather that both approaches to diversity – inclusive and exclusive – exist in all complex societies and are promoted by different actors in different contexts and to different ends. Indeed, many antithetical drives existed simultaneously in Habsburg society, always in an uneasy equilibrium.[19] One of the most disastrous developments in modern European history was consequently the decision in the aftermath of World War I to privilege the "segregationist aspirations" of a loud minority of ethnonationalists, as explored in a recent volume on the Habsburg legacy of the region, which necessarily led to disintegration on multiple scales – imperial, regional, and communal – and finally culminated in ethnic conflict, war, and genocide.[20] This process can still be observed in parts of East-Central and Southeastern Europe today, especially in the Balkans and Ukraine.

The fraught contradiction between everyday heterogeneity and aspired homogeneity has been demonstrated in manifold new studies in recent years, for example with regard to thoroughly diverse former Habsburg crownlands like Galicia and Bukovina, as the contributions of Alicja Maślak-Maciejewska, Ilya Berkovich, and Johannes Czakai in this issue also show. The inhabitants

accessed 7 August 2023); or more recently Tim Corbett, ed., "Empire and (Post-)Colonialism in Austrian Studies," *Journal of Austrian Studies* 56:2 (Summer 2023).

18 See Anil Bhatti, "Heterogeneities and Homogeneities: On Similarities and Differences," in *Understanding Multiculturalism: The Habsburg Central European Experience,* eds. Johannes Feichtinger and Gary Cohen (New York: Berghahn, 2014); Anil Bhatti, "Plurikulturalität," in *Habsburg Neu Denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa – 30 Kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte,* eds. Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016), 171–180.

19 See generally Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl (eds.), *Habsburg Neu Denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa – 30 Kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016).

20 Sieglinde Klettenhammer and Kurt Scharr, "Editorial," in *Was heißt Österreich? Überlegungen zum Feld der Austrian Studies im 21. Jahrhundert,* eds. Sieglinde Klettenhammer and Kurt Scharr (Klagenfurt: Wieser, 2021), esp. 17, 20.

of these regions served explicitly in the writings of some contemporaries (many of them Jewish, like Karl Emil Franzos, 1848–1904, and Josef Drach, 1883–1941?) as models for an idealized "*homo europaeus,*" the embodiment of European heterogeneity. At the same time, these regions and their inhabitants (Jewish and non-Jewish) served for the projection of all manner of racializing (and thus racist) discourses of "Europeanness" and "Orientalness," of professed hegemony and projected alterity, as also explored by Omar T. Nasr and Tim Corbett in this volume.[21]

Czernowitz/Cernăuți/Chernovtsy/Chernivtsi/Czerniowce, the capital of the former crownland of Bukovina, has achieved some notoriety of late as a paragon of lived diversity before the violent homogenization of the region beginning in World War I. Yet, the former Bukovinian capital was far from unique: all the major urban centers of the empire were thoroughly mixed in terms of language, religion, and "nationality" by the early twentieth century.[22] As a case in point, the city of Vienna (which is often construed in historiography as "German," but has in fact been a multicultural crossroads of peoples, however defined, from across Europe for centuries[23]) was not only home to the third-largest Jewish community in Europe around 1900 after Warsaw and Budapest, but also constituted the single largest Czech population center in the world and had a considerable Sephardic population, as Lida-Maria Dodou and Martin Stechauner demonstrate in this issue.

The most profound finding of the vast body of literature briefly touched upon above – which is explored in more detail in the theoretical articles by Moritz Csáky and Klaus Hödl in this volume – is that binary narratives of majorities/minorities, like Jewish/non-Jewish, autochthonous/foreign, and so forth, do not do justice to the everyday realities of life in Habsburg Central Europe before the forced and at times genocidal attempts to homogenize the newly established nation-states in the course of two world wars. While there were certainly hegemonic forces at work in the empire – the Habsburg

21 It seems no coincidence that the Bukovinian-born Josef Drach, who as late as 1920 still prophesized the emergence of a "United States of Europe" with Vienna as its capital, would ultimately be murdered in the Holocaust, see Amy-Diana Colin, "Czernowitz/Cernăuți/Chernovtsy/Chernivtsi/Czerniowce: A Testing Ground for Peaceful Coexistence in a Plural Society", *Journal of Austrian Studies* 53:3 (Fall 2020): 17–44, here 33–34.

22 See Csáky, *Das Gedächtnis Zentraleuropas,* 69–73.

23 See Tim Corbett, "Introduction: Interdisciplinarity and Diversity in Austrian Studies," *Journal of Austrian Studies* 56:4 (Winter 2023), forthcoming.

dynasty, the supranational aristocracy, the German- and Hungarian-language bureaucracy, or the Catholic Church, for example – it makes little sense to speak of "majorities" and "minorities" in this context, in which no single language, religion, culture, "people," or "nation" was numerically predominant. This makes the study of Jewish history in this region fascinating, not least because Jews have experienced issues such as migration, alterity, discrimination, toleration, integration, and interaction in unique and profound ways. Crucially, however, these issues are not specifically "Jewish," with Jews rather having shared their experience with other inhabitants of Central Europe in manifold different contexts.

4 From Different Angles: Jewish Studies on the Habsburg Context

Not least of all with regard to pluriculturalism, academic engagements in Jewish studies with the Habsburg context often lack theoretical reflection and due deference to the bigger picture. The historian Michael L. Miller noted that, except for two attempts in the 1980s,[24] scholarship on Jews in the Habsburg Empire "has been written largely within national paradigms," focusing on individual regions or territories, especially Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, and Galicia, subsuming the local Jewish populations into larger, nationalized Jewries like Polish Jewry, Romanian Jewry, Italian Jewry, Yugoslav Jewry, and so forth.[25] Aside from the widespread neglect of transregional dimensions and peculiarities, there is also a marked tendency in research to focus on Jews in larger cities, such as Vienna, Budapest, Prague or Trieste.

The challenge of writing Jewish histories in the Habsburg context therefore results not only in the perpetuation of otherwise largely revised hegemonic (usually nationalized) narratives. The adoption of such hegemonic narratives in combination with a focus on smaller geographical or political

[24] Wolfdieter Bihl, "Die Juden" in *Die Völker des Reiches,* Vol. 3:2 of *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918,* eds. Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980), 880–948; William O McCagg, *A History of Habsburg Jews, 1670–1918* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).

[25] Michael L. Miller, *Austro-Hungarian Empire, 1867–1918* (Oxford Bibliographies, last edited July 28, 2015 and last reviewed August 21, 2021, open access at: https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780199840731/obo-9780199840731-0109.xml?rskey=AtHyOg&result=19&q=habsburg#firstMatch (last accessed October 6, 2023).

areas and the consequent obfuscation of the bigger picture thereby impedes the reception of Jewish studies research within Habsburg studies. Clearly, it is a great challenge to research a demographic as diverse and fragmented as the Jewish populations of the Habsburg Empire and its successor states and regions. Yet, within the context of Habsburg Central Europe, the Jewish case was by no means unique, thinking for example about Romani history, which remains crassly underresearched and underrepresented in public and academic discourse to date.

There is no doubt that contemporary Jewish studies are following current trends in historical and cultural studies, which open up new perspectives on this complex pluricultural region and employ an interesting methodological toolkit to initiate new research in the field.[26] Yet, profound reflections on and explicit engagement with innovative historiographical concepts and ideas, such as postcolonialism, transnationalism, and transatlanticism are still underrepresented.[27] The different contexts of the various institutions pursuing Jewish studies in Israel, the USA, and Europe make the situation even more complex. Although they are all concerned with the same thematic field, their different scholarly traditions hinder broader academic conversations and limit researchers in their engagements with norms and narratives. Consequently, there are rich specialized publications in each individual scholarly and linguistic field of Jewish studies, yet their mutual reception is often limited and has only increased in recent decades through conferences and collaborative projects, usually with English as the scholarly lingua franca.

Therefore, the writing of Jewish Habsburg history from different angles has become quite common. For example, there was and is a flourishing

26 For a recent summary, see Tim Corbett, Klaus Hödl, Caroline Kita, Susanne Korbel, and Dirk Rupnow, "Migration, Integration, and Assimilation: Reassessing Key Concepts in (Jewish) Austrian History," *Journal of Austrian Studies* 54:1 (Spring 2021), 1–28.

27 Some more conceptual considerations on cultural history and transfer have been provided by: David Biale, *Cultures of the Jews: A New History* (New York: Schocken, 2002); Klaus Hödl, *Jüdische Studien: Reflexionen zu Theorie und Praxis eines wissenschaftlichen Feldes* (Graz: Studienverlag, 2003); Wolfgang Schmale and Martina Steer, eds., *Kulturtransfer in der jüdischen Geschichte* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus 2006); Joachim Schlör, *Das Ich der Stadt: Debatten über Judentum und Urbanität, 1822–1938* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2005); Julia Brauch, Anna Lipphardt and Alexandra Nocke, eds., *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008). Surprisingly, such missing reflections and links are even true for transnational European and American Jewish topics, see Markus Krah, "Clinging to Borders and Boundaries? The (Sorry) State of Transnational American Jewish Studies," *American Jewish History* 101 (2017): 519–533.

historical (pre-Shoah) and contemporary (postwar) German-language Jewish historiography emerging in situ in Austria, characterized to this day by its strong focus on Vienna.[28] English-language Austrian Jewish historiography is also thriving in the United Kingdom and the USA, likewise focusing on Vienna.[29] This English-language branch developed historically in the aftermath of the Shoah as a result of the persecution and emigration of scholars from formerly Habsburg Central Europe.[30] Moreover, a Jewish historiography has developed in various successor states and regions in different languages of Central Europe, offering various historical as well as sociopolitical narratives. For example, in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, regional Jewish history is often conducted at local Jewish museums and Jewish/Judaic studies institutes, and is made public in their own, often vernacular series of books and journals, such as "Judaica Bohemiae" in the Czech Republic.

[28] Eminent pre-Shoah German-language Austrian Jewish historians included Max Grunwald, Israel Taglicht, Bernhard Wachstein and Albert Francis Pribram. Today, research on Jewish topics in Austrian and Habsburg studies is connected primarily with the Institute for Jewish History in Austria (Institut für jüdische Geschichte Österreichs, INJOEST) in St. Pölten, the Jewish Museum Vienna, and the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Graz. One of the key works of post-Shoah German-language scholarship in the field is Eveline Brugger, Martha Keil, Albert Lichtblau, Christoph Lind, and Barbara Staudinger, eds., *Geschichte der Juden in Österreich* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 2006). On Jewish history in Vienna, see the detailed new work in German by Tim Corbett, *Die Grabstätten meiner Väter: Die jüdischen Friedhöfe in Wien* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2021).

[29] The major works in English-language Jewish studies historiography include Marsha L. Rozenblit, *The Jews of Vienna, 1867–1914: Assimilation and Identity* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1984), and *Reconstructing a National Identity: The Jews of Habsburg. Austria during World War I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), as well as Lisa Silverman, *Becoming Austrians: Jews and Culture between the World Wars* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 2012), and Deborah Holmes and Lisa Silverman, eds., "Jews, Jewish Difference *and* Austrian Culture: Literary and historical Perspectives," *Austrian Studies* 24 (2016).

[30] See Joshua Parker and Ralph Poole, eds., *Austria and America: Cross-Cultural Encounters 1865–1933* (Berlin: Lit, 2014); Jessie Labov, *Transatlantic Central Europe: Contesting Geography and Redefining Culture beyond the Nation* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2019); and Dagmar Lorenz, "Austrian Studies als ein Modell kosmopolitischer Vernetzung: Beobachtungen zur Entwicklung der Forschung zur österreichischen Kultur in den Vereinigten Staaten", in *Was heißt Österreich? Überlegungen zum Feld der Austrian Studies im 21. Jahrhundert,* eds. Sieglinde Klettenhammer and Kurt Scharr (Klagenfurt: Wieser, 2021), 63–79.

5 On the Present Volume: Intersections between Jewish Studies and Habsburg Studies

In the aftermath of the Shoah and the ostensible triumph of nationalism, it became common in historiography to relegate Jews to the position of the "eternal other" in a series of binaries: Christian/Jewish, Gentile/Jewish, European/Jewish, non-Jewish/Jewish, and so forth.[31] Notably, the ossification of rigid, homogenous identity categories often occurred ex post facto, and far from home, so particularly as a result of the mass migration of Jews amongst many other Central and Eastern Europeans to the USA in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as discussed above. For the longest time, these binaries remained "characteristic of Jewish historiography in general," as Klaus Hödl remarked, who shares his most recent thoughts in this volume.[32]

Assuming instead, as the more recent approaches in Habsburg studies do, that pluriculturalism was the basis of common experience in Habsburg Central Europe and accepting that not one fundamental "majority culture" existed, but rather imposed hegemonies in certain contexts, then the often used binaries are misleading and conceal the complex and sometimes even paradoxical conditions that shaped Jewish life in the region before the Shoah. The historian Maria Cieśla, for example, pointed out that even where Jewish coexistence with "Christians" is acknowledged, the binary conception Jewish/Christian tends to ignore the polysemy of the phenomenon "Christian," which included Catholics alongside various denominations of Protestants and Orthodox, especially in Galicia, not to mention Muslim population groups across the empire; the latter is the subject of the contribution by Omar T. Nasr and Tim Corbett in this issue.[33] As the historian David Biale already remarked decades ago: "Too many histories of the Jews unconsciously fall back on the theology of Jewish uniqueness and assume that the Jewish tradition evolves

31 Till van Rahden, *Vielheit: Jüdische Geschichte und die Ambivalenz des Universalismus* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2022); Till van Rahden, "Minority/Majority," in *Geschichtstheorie am Werk,* 13/06/2023, https://gtw.hypotheses.org/15181 (last accessed October 16, 2023).

32 Klaus Hödl, "Jewish Studies without the 'Other'," in *The Future of the German-Jewish Past: Memory and the Question of Antisemitism,* eds. Gideon Reuveni and Diana Franklin (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2021), 121–134, here 121.

33 Maria Cieśla, "Jewish Shtetl or Christian Town? The Jews in Small Towns in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th and 18th Centuries," in *Jewish and Non-Jewish Spaces in the Urban Context,* eds. Alina Gromova, Felix Heinert and Sebastian Voigt (Berlin: Neofelis, 2015), 63–82, here 65.

in some splendid isolation from the rest of the world, only pausing to fend off alien influences."[34]

The importance of the Habsburg Empire to Jewish history is self-evident, as the empire in its final years was home to a good fifth of the world's Jewish population.[35] Yet, the Jews of Habsburg Central Europe were far from homogenous, with the Habsburg Empire having been home not only to diverse Jewish population groups in terms of language, culture, and religious practice, but also a space in which Jewish movements as divergent as Chassidism and Zionism evolved while at the same time Jews were also seminal in the emergence of broader ideas such as socialism, cosmopolitanism and, indeed, various iterations of nationalism.

The very complexity of Habsburg Central Europe both in synchronic and diachronic perspective precludes any singular historical narrative of "Habsburg Jewry," and it is not the intention of this volume to offer an overview of "Habsburg Jewish history." The selected articles in this volume illustrate instead how important it is to reevaluate categories, deconstruct historical narratives, and reconceptualize implemented approaches in specific geographic, temporal, and cultural contexts in order to gain a better understanding of the complex and pluricultural history of Habsburg Central Europe as a whole.

The current issue of PaRDeS attempts to tackle this challenging and complex field by offering a fresh perspective on Habsburg Central Europe, detecting entanglements and fusions without denying exclusionary and antagonistic tendencies in the region. The articles collected in this issue demonstrate that the history of Habsburg Central Europe and its Jewries has to be decentralized. Although this volume does not cover every region and time period in formerly Habsburg Central Europe, the individual contributions show, for example, that the history of the Bohemian lands is strongly entangled with the history of the Holy Roman Empire; Galicia is tied up with Poland, Ukraine, and Russia; while the Balkans are highly influenced by the history and culture of the former Ottoman Empire. By taking the complex lingual and ethno-political, but also legal and pluricultural settings of the

34 David Biale, "Confessions of an Historian of Jewish Culture," *Jewish Social Studies* 1:1 (Autumn 1994), 44–45.

35 See Albert Lichtblau (ed.), *Als hätten wir dazugehört: Österreichisch-jüdische Lebensgeschichten aus der Habsburgermonarchie* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1999), 43.

former Habsburg Empire into account, this issue of PaRDeS aims to open up new perspectives on the different Jewries of the region, their self-understandings, and their entangled histories. This exploration of intersections between Habsburg and Jewish studies intends to bring both academic fields into conversation with each other and to provoke a discussion on categories, historical narratives, and assumed binaries as well as on the significance and meaning of manifold Jewish experiences for the history of formerly Habsburg Central Europe. Thus, this issue of PaRDeS should be understood as a starting point for further discussions on new topics and historical narratives, methodologies and approaches to Jewish history, culture and religion in Habsburg Central Europe.

Articles

Habsburg Central Europe: Culturally Heterogeneous and Polysemous Region

by Moritz Csáky

Abstract

Central Europe is characterized by linguistic and cultural density as well as by endogenous and exogenous cultural influences. These constellations were especially visible in the former Habsburg Empire, where they influenced the formation of individual and collective identities. This led not only to continual crises and conflicts, but also to an equally enormous creative potential as became apparent in the culture of the fin-de-siècle.

Central Europe must be understood as a relational space, constantly being redefined in new and variable ways. And yet, considering that every historical space is mutable and subject to processual change, it is thoroughly permissible from a *historical* perspective to refer to the conglomerate of lands that once made up the historical Habsburg Empire as a political manifestation of Central Europe – as a Habsburg Central Europe.[1] In contrast to a physical space, Habsburg Central Europe represents a historical and political manifestation in which numerous territories, peoples, cultures, languages, religions, and social groups existed in various entanglements with and alongside one another. It is precisely the awareness of this heterogeneous diversity that both enables and necessitates us to also keep an eye on the Central European space existing beyond the empire, in which the same elements can be found that characterized the empire. A necessary first step thus consists of identifying

1 Cf. Pieter M. Judson, "The Study of the Nineteenth Century in Habsburg Central Europe," *Central European History* 51:4 (2018): 629–634.

those typical criteria that can be shown to have been characteristic of the Habsburg Central European Empire.

An important finding of recent comparative research on historical empires such as the Romanov, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires is the fact that these were all characterized by ethnic, national, cultural, and linguistic pluralism and/or heterogeneity. Thus, they by no means corresponded to "modern," essentialist understandings of the homogeneous nation state, which is also why they were challenged by the representatives of this latter concept. Indeed, the region is characterized by both endogenous pluralism, which has demonstrably existed for centuries, and exogenous pluralism, meaning additional and manifold extra-regional, pan-European, and/or global influences constantly entering from without. For example, as early as the 17th century, long before Béla Bartók discovered the plurality of heterogeneous musical elements in the region, the Silesian composer Daniel Speer had recorded the region's typical musical elements in his *Musicalisch-Türckischer Eulen-Spiegel,* which included Turkish, Polish, Hungarian, Muscovite, Wallachian, Greek, and Cossack folk songs and dances.[2] One might well ask whether even the Viennese modernism of the fin-de-siècle could not also be productively viewed from such a perspective, namely from the other side, from an outsider's perspective, taking into account the entanglement of numerous cultural elements of pan-European, French, Italian, Spanish, British, Scandinavian, Russian, and Jewish provenance, but especially also extra-European, Indian, or Japanese elements – whether this modernism could not be viewed as a bundle of predominantly exogenous cultural influences that combined with endogenous influences to create a new, transnational symbiosis.

Pluralism and difference are by no means independent, closed systems. Pluralism much rather implies continuous mobility, migration, and interaction and thus serves as the foundation for interconnections, as researched by theorists of *connected history* or *entangled history,* sometimes also in the context of research on empires.[3] Pluralism also implies creative potential,

2 Zoltán Falvy, "Speer – Musicalisch-Türckischer Eulen-Spiegel," *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 12 (1970): 131–151.

3 Serge Gruzinski, *La Pensée métisse* (Paris: Fayard, 1999); Margit Pernau, *Transnationale Geschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 37–42 (connected history) and 56–66 (entangled history).

insofar as a hybrid "Third Space"[4] – a space that is continuously determined by heterogeneity – enables unexpected encounters between heterogeneous cultural elements that may consequently blend together into something new. The sociologist Robert Ezra Park pointed to this potential with specific regard to the migrant, who represents a "marginal man," a "cultural hybrid, a man living and sharing intimately in the cultural life and traditions of two distinct peoples": This boundary-transgressing individual possesses a special creative potential as he is "a man on the margin of two cultures and two societies, which never completely interpenetrated and fused."[5] Park later observed in an autobiographical sketch that he only arrived at this insight on the basis of his own experience traveling through the former Habsburg Empire, during which he was able to witness and study pluriculturalism and multilingualism as the most characteristic phenomena of this region.

A "marginal man" who finds himself in a multilingual border region is of course also constantly confronted with conflicts and crises insofar as he has to choose between various identities. He may try to escape this situation by choosing a particular identity in order to achieve stability, yet thereby he abruptly finds himself in an in-between space in which the various possibilities of identification blend together into something inspirational, creative, and new. Franz Kafka metaphorically associated this problem later identified by Park with a hopeless mimicry practiced by some Jews: "Most young Jews who began to write German wanted to leave Jewishness behind them, and their fathers approved of this [...]. But with their posterior legs they were still glued to their father's Jewishness and with their waving anterior legs they found no new ground. The ensuing despair became their inspiration. [...] They existed among three impossibilities, which I just happen to call linguistic impossibilities. It is simplest to call them that. But they might also be called something entirely different. These are: The impossibility of not writing, the impossibility of writing German, the impossibility of writing differently. One might also add a fourth impossibility, the impossibility of writing [...]."[6]

4 Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

5 Robert E. Park, "Human Migration and the Marginal Man (1928)," in *Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader,* ed. Werner Sollors (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 165.

6 Franz Kafka, "To Max Brod [Matliary, June 1921]," in *Franz Kafka: Letters to Friends, Family, and Editors,* transl. by Richard Winston and Clara Winston (London: John Calder, 1978), 289.

The very presence of so many different peoples who called the Habsburg Empire their home led to this polity being perceived as a state of diversity and heterogeneity, as a "Europe in miniature," as expressed in an entry to the famous *Staats-Lexikon* by Carl von Rotteck and Carl Welcker in the mid-nineteenth century. According to them, the empire exhibited the most "conspicuous paradoxes of national spirit and national character": "The position and scope of the many principal nations of the empire leads to the conclusion that this should be regarded as a Europe in miniature, predicated not just on a European, but on a special Austrian equilibrium."[7] Hugo von Hofmannsthal would later, probably unknowingly, pick up this comparison between Austria and Europe, describing Austria as being "after all itself a Europe in miniature."[8]

The Viennese geographer Friedrich Umlauft already described the Habsburg Empire as a "state of contrasts" in 1876 due to its outspoken diversity, its "glaring paradoxes," including geographical, national, linguistic, cultural, and religious differences. Umlauft's treatise can be viewed as a key text with regard to the region's heterogeneity insofar as it by no means entails a euphemistic description of the multicultural empire, but rather addresses precisely those complex social and cultural processes that have become so topical and theoretically sophisticated in cultural studies discourses in recent decades. This includes the application of a hermeneutic that remains constantly aware of cultural differences and complexities: "Just as our fatherland constitutes a transitional zone between the structured and mountainous west of the European continent and its unstructured and level east, so its considerable longitudinal and latitudinal expanse incorporates the *most glaring paradoxes* with regard to physical circumstances, demographics, and spiritual culture. Hence, the empire can justifiably also be called a *state of contrasts.* [...] From an ethnographic perspective, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is home to all of Europe's principal peoples, and that to a considerable extent: Germanic peoples in the west, Romanic peoples in the south, Slavic peoples in the north and south, followed by the totality of Magyars in between all the principal peoples. Thus, *Austria's history* coalesces from the histories of Germany,

7 "Oestreich," in *Staats-Lexikon oder Encyklopädie der Staatswissenschaften,* ed. Carl von Rotteck and Carl Welcker, vol. 12 (Altona: J. E. Hammerich, 1841), 143.

8 Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "Krieg und Kultur [1915]," in *Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Gesammelte Werke in zehn Bänden. Reden und Aufsätze,* ed. Bernd Schoeller and Rudolf Hirsch, vol. 2: 1914–1924 (Frankfurt a. Main: Fischer, 1979), 417.

Hungary, and Poland, comparable to the way various tributaries will sooner or later coalesce into one great stream in which the absorbed masses of water flow communally onward. Since, however, the above-cited peoples do not all live in clearly delineated, discrete territories, these *border regions* often evince *idiosyncratically mixed populations.* Indeed, nowhere else in Europe can the admixture of the most various nationalities be observed in such a conspicuous manner as in our fatherland."[9]

Umlauft's observation that the empire consisted of "contrasts" can also be found in other contemporary works like the so-called "*Kronprinzenwerk,*" *Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild* (The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Word and Picture). As Crown Prince Rudolf emphasized in his 1885 introduction: "Where else can a state be found that – through such a wealth of paradoxes as regards its soil structure, which through its natural history, landscape, and climate has succeeded in uniting within its borders such magnificent diversity, and its ethnographic composition of various peoples – could offer comparably interesting pictures in such a grand opus?"[10] Decades later, the Viennese cosmopolitan Stefan Zweig would also emphasize these paradoxes and contrasts in the retrospective on the empire offered in his autobiography *The World of Yesterday* (1942), which were visible not least of all in the metropolitan center, Vienna: "At court, among the nobility, and among the people, the German was related in blood to the Slavic, the Hungarian, the Spanish, the Italian, the French, the Flemish; and its was the particular genius of this city of music that dissolved all the contrasts harmoniously into a new and unique thing, the Austrian, the Viennese." Vienna was thus a microcosm of the macrocosm of the region and of Europe itself, which "dissolved all the contrasts harmoniously."[11] Hofmannsthal had made a similar argument twenty years before Zweig, highlighting the heterogeneous character of the army of the Austrian "universal monarchy," which was "in its composition as colorful and supranational as ancient Rome." The army, according to Hofmannsthal, was representative of the "supranational" atmosphere of Vienna and the

9 Friedrich Umlauft, *Die Oesterreichisch-Ungarische Monarchie: Geographisch-statistisches Handbuch mit besonderer Rücksicht auf politische und Cultur-Geschichte für Leser aller Stände* (Vienna/Pest: Hartleben, 1876), 1–2.

10 Brigitte Hamann, ed., *Kronprinz Rudolf, "Majestät, ich warne Sie …": Geheime und private Schriften* (Munich/Zurich: Piper, 1987), 328–329.

11 Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (London: Cassell and Company, 1947^{4}), 28.

empire as a whole: "Right into the World War, the military structure evinced an officer corps that was shot through with the descendants of Frenchmen, Walloons, Irishmen, Swiss, Italians, Spaniards, Poles, and Croats, the descendants of men whose ancestors had in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made their homes, so to speak, within this army."[12]

Umlauft's early, above-cited thoughts really did already incorporate all the key aspects that need to be taken into account in any cultural studies analysis of sociocultural phenomena: Aside from an emphasis on differences, on "contrasts," which can neither be harmoniously euphemized nor eliminated, but must necessarily remain as "the most glaring paradoxes," one of his most pertinent observations relates to the relevance of borders as cultural threshold zones, as "border regions" characterized both by processes of segregation and by cultural symbioses, where "idiosyncratically mixed populations" may be found. Umlauft here seemed to preempt a key finding both of cultural semiotics and of postcolonial theory. This finding also correlates with the history of such peoples and societies who find themselves in such contradictory, heterogeneous situations. Thus, Umlauft did not follow the homogeneous nationalist conception of history that already dominated in his time, which treated the empire's individual nationalities in isolation and in competition with one another. His was rather a conception of a thoroughly complex "shared history" that drew on "various tributaries," in this case meaning various traditions, coalescing into one "great stream" that would in turn determine the historical memory of the inhabitants of the entire region. This is, metaphorically speaking, a "text" that can constantly demand to be read and interpreted anew. This view of a concrete, complex, and heterogeneous past corresponds exactly to Michael Werner's notion of an "histoire croisée," demonstrating the aporia of homogeneous, nationalist conceptions of history and allowing instead for various, equally valid possibilities of interpreting the past.[13] This view of an "histoire croisée" also corresponds to the practical experiences recorded by Edward Said with regard to the entangled, polysemous

[12] Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "Bemerkungen [1921]," in *Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Gesammelte Werke in zehn Bänden. Reden und Aufsätze,* ed. Bernd Schoeller and Rudolf Hirsch, vol. 2: 1914–1924 (Frankfurt a. Main: Fischer, 1979), 474.

[13] Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Penser l'histoire croisée: entre empirie et réflexivité," in *De la comparaison à l'histoire croisée,* eds. Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann (Paris: Seuil, 2004), 15–49.

histories of Palestine. Such a multipolar, polysemous experience is also etched into Jewish consciousness, as Franz Kafka tried to elucidate with regard to the Yiddish "jargon": "It consists solely of foreign words. But these words are not firmly rooted in it, they retain the speed and liveliness with which they were adopted. Great migrations move through Yiddish, from one end to the other. All this German, Hebrew, French, English, Slavonic, Dutch, Rumanian, and even Latin, is seized with curiosity and frivolity once it is contained within Yiddish, and it takes a good deal of strength to hold all these languages together in this state."[14]

However, according to Kafka it is precisely this fragmentation that cultivated "self-confidence" as a typical characteristic of the self-consciousness of Jews, who, as Hannah Arendt also remarked, for centuries constituted not only an integral, but also a determining component, a constitutive factor, of this region – of Habsburg Central Europe. With regard to their complex historical existence, Jews are also a reflection, a microcosm, of precisely that pluralistic, complex, multilingual polysemy that was and is characteristic not only of Habsburg Central Europe, but of the entire Central European region and moreover of the entire globalized world into the present day.

This essay has been translated from German into English by Tim Corbett.

14 Franz Kafka, "An Introductory Talk on the Yiddish Language," in *Reading Kafka: Prague, Politics, and the Fin de Siècle,* ed. Mark Anderson (New York: Schocken, 1989), 264.

Blurring the Boundaries of Jewishness: Exploring Jewish-non-Jewish Neighborliness and Similarity

by Klaus Hödl

Abstract

In this essay I argue that while research in Jewish studies over the last several decades has done much to erode the historical narrative of Jewish/non-Jewish separation and detachment, it has also raised various questions pertaining to the outcome of Jewish/non-Jewish interactions and coexistence as well as the contours of Jewish difference. I contend that employing the concepts of conviviality, ethnic/religious/national indifference, and similarity will greatly facilitate answering these questions.

1 Current State of Jewish Historiography

Until well into the late 20th century, and with few exceptions, historians of Jewish history maintained the view that over long stretches of the past, the greater part of Ashkenazic Jews in Europe had been largely isolated, both culturally and socially, from the non-Jewish environments in which they lived. Contacts between Jews and non-Jews, according to this line of thinking, were restricted primarily to professional activities.[1] It was only in the late 1970s that a new generation of Jewish studies scholars began to question the historiographical narrative that insisted on Jewish-non-Jewish separation.[2] Since

[1] Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis: Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 22.

[2] See Jacob Goldberg, "Poles and Jews in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Rejection and Acceptance," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 22 (1974): 248–282, here 259; Ivan G. Marcus, *Piety and Society: The Jewish Pietists of Medieval Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 1981); Kenneth Stow, *Alienated Minority: The Jews of Medieval Latin Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Francesca Bregoli, "Introduction. Connecting Histories: Jews and Their Others in Early Modern Europe," in *Connecting Histories. Jews and Their Others in Early Modern Europe,* eds. Francesca Bregoli and David B. Ruderman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), 1–19, here 10. Scholarly focus on Jewish and non-Jewish connectedness derived from

the development of this competing narrative, a consensus has emerged among scholars that relationships between Jews and non-Jews were shaped by frequent, sometimes close, contacts over long phases of their history.[3] These scholars thus largely contend that research on Jews should also include their interdependencies with non-Jews.[4]

The work of numerous scholars in Jewish studies focusing their attention on interactions between Jews and non-Jews has not only qualified, but also in many cases corrected the narrative that portrayed Jews and non-Jews as living culturally and socially separated from one another.[5] In the course of their work, researchers have faced various questions. Two sets of questions appear to be of particular relevance:

(1) How did contacts between Jews and non-Jews influence their mutual relations? Did these contacts contribute to revising prejudices that non-Jews held against Jews (or vice versa)? Or did the proximity between the two accelerate the rise of antisemitic stereotypes?

(2) How can we circumscribe (non-religious) Jewishness in the face of manifold Jewish-non-Jewish similarities? What is distinct about Jewishness? What actually separates Jewishness from non-Jewishness?

I contend that these questions have not yet been satisfactorily answered, thereby reducing the innovative strength of the new historiographical focus

historiography's – and, with some delay, Jewish studies' – turn to everyday history and microhistory. See Andrew I. Port, "History from Below, the History of Everyday Life, and Microhistory," *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences,* ed. James D. Wright, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: Elsevier Science, 2015), 108–13, here 111. Francesca Trivellato, "Microhistoria/Microhistoire/Microhistory," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 33:1 (2015): 122–134, here 123.

3 See Jonathan Elukin, *Living Together, Living Apart: Rethinking Jewish-Christian Relations in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

4 See Elisheva Carlebach, *Palaces of Time: Jewish Calendar and Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).

5 See Maria Cieśla, "Jewish Shtetl or Christian Town? The Jews in Small Towns in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th and 18th Centuries," in *Jewish and Non-Jewish Spaces in the Urban Context,* eds. Alina Gromova, Felix Heinert, and Sebastian Voigt (Berlin: Neofelis Verlag, 2015), 63–81; Magda Teter, *Jews and Heretics in Catholic Poland: A Beleaguered Church in Post-Reformation Era* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 66–67; Daniel J. Schroeter, "The Changing Landscape in Muslim-Jewish Relations in the Modern Middle East and North Africa," in *Modernity, Minority, and the Public Sphere: Jews and Christians in the Middle East,* eds. S. R. Goldstein-Sabbah and H. L. Murre-van den Berg (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 39–67.

outlined above. I see the reason for this lacuna as lying primarily in historians' emphasis on Jewish-non-Jewish differences instead of commonalities, and consequently their categorization of Jews and non-Jews as two distinct social/cultural/religious entities. Rectifying this shortcoming necessitates the employment of methodological approaches that shift scholars' perspective from Jewish-non-Jewish distinctness to their interrelatedness.

In the following pages, I elaborate on a few approaches. Instead of providing answers to the questions discussed above, I expand on methodological tools, the use of which I consider eminently promising for adequately addressing the questions. Some of the approaches are also indicative of the fruitful rapport between Jewish studies and Habsburg studies. Others, such as the concept of *conviviality,* allow not only for an analysis of Jewish and non-Jewish neighborliness, but also demonstrate how we can productively investigate the coexistence of various ethnic/cultural group, as it was the case in the Habsburg monarchy.

2 What Fosters Jewish and Non-Jewish Neighborliness?

Historians have dealt with the first set of questions, concerning contacts between Jews and non-Jews, from different angles.[6] One of the central endeavors of their work has been to explain why non-Jews who had good neighborly relationships with Jews sometimes committed acts of violence against their neighbors at certain historical moments, robbing and sometimes even murdering them.[7] Pertinent research has without doubt raised our awareness of the dynamics and intricacies of Jewish/non-Jewish closeness, but it has, on the other hand, scarcely augmented our understanding of the preconditions of this proximity. I contend, however, that a more convincing analysis of research findings, resulting in a more thorough comprehension of practices facilitating Jewish/non-Jewish neighborliness, is key to answering this first set of questions.

6 See Eugene M. Avrutin, "Jewish Neighbourly Relations and Imperial Russian Legal Culture," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 9:1 (2010): 1–16; Glenn Dynner, *Yankel's Tavern Jews, Liquor, and Life in the Kingdom of Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

7 See Jeffrey S. Kopstein and Jason Wittenberg, *Intimate Violence: Anti-Jewish Pogroms on the Eve of the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018); Jan T. Gross, *Neighbours: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland, 1941* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

I propose a two-step approach to this issue. In the first step, researchers would be called upon to theorize and provide reasons for the absence of anti-Jewish aggression and violence in a given locale, with the objective of ascertaining whether this absence was due to agreeable, maybe even cordial relations between Jews and non-Jews, or to a particular political regime that kept anti-Jewish tensions and enmity at bay. The analytical instrument to be used for such an investigation has to a large extent been developed and validated by scholars in Habsburg studies, who have worked on interethnic relations in multiethnic East-Central Europe in the late 19th century, which is often framed as a period of acute nationalism. By investigating everyday experiences of its ethnically diverse population, these scholars have determined that ordinary people hardly paid attention to their neighbors', co-workers', or acquaintances' national identification. Whereas nationalistic discourses strongly influenced contemporary politics and scholarly research, they had only little impact on the mindset of common people. There seemed to be a sharp divide between the culture of the written word, i.e., organized political campaigns and academic debates, and the logic of day-to-day life.[8]

Due to these intriguing findings, *indifference,* be it national, religious, cultural, or other, quickly became an important analytical tool for research on intercultural encounters in humanities and social sciences. Jewish studies scholars, however, have been hesitant to employ it in their work. A major

8 Pieter M. Judson, "Inventing Germans: Class, Nationality and Colonial Fantasy at the Margins of the Habsburg Monarchy," *Social Analysis* 33 (1993): 47–67, here 53; Pieter M. Judson and Tara Zahra, "Introduction," *Austrian History Yearbook* 43 (2012): 21–27; Tara Zahra, "Imagined Non-Communities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis," *Slavic Review* 69:1 (2020): 93–119; Lucean N. Leustean, "Eastern Orthodoxy and National Indifference in Habsburg Bukovina, 1774–1873," *Nations and Nationalism* 24:4 (2018): 1117–1141; James E. Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole: Catholicism and National Indifference in a Central European Borderland* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008). The use of national indifference, both as an analytical instrument and descriptive category, has not been limited to historical studies pertaining to the Habsburg monarchy, but has been applied to historical research on other parts of Europe and beyond as well. See for example Maarten van Ginderachter and Jon Fox, eds., *National Indifference and the History of Nationalism in Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2019); Catherine Gibson and Irina Paert, "Apostacy in the Baltic Provinces: Religious and National Indifference in Imperial Russia," *Past & Present* 255:1 (2022): 233–278; Karsten Brüggemann and Katja Wezel, "Nationally Indifferent or Ardent Nationalists? On the Options for Being German in Russia's Baltic Provinces, 1905–17," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* XX:1 (2019): 39–62; Leone Musgrave, "Mountain Alternatives in Eurasia's Age of Revolution: North Caucasia's 'National Indifference', Anticolonial Islam, and 'Greater War', 1917–18," *Revolutionary Russia* 32:1 (2019): 59–85.

reason for their tentativeness may lie in *indifference's* oblivion of "othering". The use of *indifference* in exploring Jewish history and culture by default disvalues the notion of Jewish particularity, which has been an idea central to the field of Jewish studies.

While the deployment of the category of *indifference* enables scholars to determine people's disregard of their fellow citizens' sense of belonging, it does not allow them to assess the practices that brought about such casualness and, consequently, Jewish/non-Jewish neighborliness. For this purpose, researchers must, in the second step, draw upon another methodological concept. The concept that I consider important in this context and wish to introduce in this essay is *conviviality,* which is usually attributed to Paul Gilroy's 2004 *After Empire.*[9] In the years that followed its publication, the concept has been employed and further developed by sociologists, anthropologists, and geographers. As is the case with *indifference, conviviality* – as a theoretical concept – has not yet gained purchase in Jewish studies.

In general, the term conviviality refers to the largely peaceful coexistence of people. As a theoretical concept, which has central relevance for this essay, *conviviality* is useful for examining how different cultural groups shape their cooperation with one another.[10] Scholars using this concept are careful not to ignore resulting tensions or even confrontations that sometimes arise because of intercultural/-ethnic contact. They see these tensions, however, as secondary to the activities that create a feeling of connection among people. Nor does *conviviality* refer to processes of social integration, which usually implies a tendency to efface cultural differences, or to the maintenance of a multiculturalism whose starting point is the borders – and thus differences – between cultural groups. *Conviviality* makes possible an innovative perspective on intercultural relationships, while also providing information on how a community can emerge from an ethnically heterogeneous environment.[11] *Conviviality* is not about dealing with cultural differences, but rather about analyzing a largely conflict-free interethnic coexistence, in this case

9 Paul Gilroy, *After Empire. Melancholia or Convivial Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004).

10 Amanda Wise and Greg Noble, "Convivialities: A Comparison," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 37:5 (2016): 423–431, here 423.

11 Amanda Wise and Selvaraj Velayutham, "Conviviality in everyday multiculturalism: Some brief comparisons between Singapore and Sydney," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 17:4 (2014): 406–430, here 407.

regarding practices facilitating Jewish/non-Jewish neighborliness. Although there is consensus among researchers that these practices do not stem from planned and organized efforts to avoid conflict, it is not yet entirely clear what other activities are also possibly at work.[12] Inferring from their significance to people's everyday life and their feeling of inter-cultural connectedness, I argue that these practices primarily have to do with daily habits and related activities.[13]

Evidence of such habits as well as attitudes of (religious/ethnic) indifference and Jewish/non-Jewish conviviality can be found in criminal records. Interrogation protocols, for example, often abound with references to inter-ethnic interactions. Other sources to be reviewed in this context are ego documents, such as diaries, memoirs, letters, and similar notes. They usually contain manifold indications and descriptions of Jewish/non-Jewish everyday encounters.

3 How Are We to Define Jewishness?

As mentioned, recent historical analyses of contacts between Jews and non-Jews revised the view of a largely closed Jewish world. These studies also revealed extensive cultural commonalities between Jews and non-Jews. These commonalities tend to render indeterminate the contours of Jewish difference (beyond the realm of religion) and raise the question: how are we to define and describe Jewishness, despite the numerous Jewish/non-Jewish cultural overlaps and interdependencies?

In recent years, numerous historians have addressed this issue from a variety of perspectives and have arrived at different conclusions. These conclusions range from Debra Kaplan's thesis that, despite innumerable interactions between Jews and non-Jews, boundaries between them (and thus a Jewish distinctness) continued to exist,[14] to the concept of Jewish connectedness, which is currently receiving increased scholarly attention in Jewish

12 On this aspect see Eric Laurier, Angus Whyte, and Kathy Buckner, "Neighbouring as an Occasioned Activity," *Space & Culture* 5:4 (2002): 346–367.

13 Sivamohan Valluvan, "Conviviality and Multiculture: A Post-integration Sociology of Multi-ethnic Interaction," *Young* 24:3 (2016): 204–221, here 207. In this context, individual, albeit communally experienced, events do not play a role.

14 Debra Kaplan, "Jews in Early Modern Europe: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries;" *History Compass* 10:2 (2012): 191–206, here 196.

studies.[15] As diverse as these various approaches are, almost all of them have one thing in common: they assume a binary between Jewish and non-Jewish. Only a handful of scholars has questioned this dichotomous perspective, and even fewer have theorized the reason for its prevalence. One of them, the historian Helmut Walser Smith, has given a plausible explanation: In a 1999 study on the relationships between Jewish cattle traders and non-Jewish farmers, Smith points to a lack of theoretical approaches that allow us to recognize both Jewish/non-Jewish similarities *and* distinctness.[16]

Since the publication of Smith's article, almost a quarter-century has passed and various attempts to dissipate the tension between Jewish/non-Jewish commonalities and the notion of Jewish distinctness or particularity have been made. But, as far as I am aware, only one analytical approach has proven successful in bypassing dichotomous categorizations of Jewish and non-Jewish, and thereby reconciling Jewish difference with Jewish/non-Jewish similarities. Elisheva Baumgarten has promoted this approach. She achieves this step by conceiving of Jewish/non-Jewish not as strict opposites, but as "two continuums."[17] This is to say that Jewish/non-Jewish differences must not be considered dichotomous, but rather they bear a relation to each other.[18] As a result of her pioneering work, we are no longer in a position in which we must contend with the question of how to preserve Jewish particularity in the face of multiple similarities.

I consider Baumgarten's approach seminal and groundbreaking, but I also think that slight modifications of her theory would prove fruitful. While Baumgarten, as her use of the term "minority" seems to suggest, employs Jewish/non-Jewish distinctions as a point of departure in her analysis,[19] I would focus first and foremost on historical evidence of common ground between Jews and non-Jews and outline Jewish distinctiveness only within the context

15 Francesca Bregoli and David Ruderman, eds, *Connecting Histories. Jews and Their Others in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

16 Helmut Walter Smith, "The Discourse of Usury: Relations between Christians and Jews in the German Countryside, 1880–1914," *Central European History* 32:3 (1999): 255–276, here 270.

17 Elisheva Baumgarten, "'A separate people'? Some directions for comparative research on medieval women," *Journal of Medieval History* 34:2 (2008): 212–228, here 214.

18 In clarifying her argument, Baumgarten alludes to medieval Jewish-Christian polemics which, despite their mutual denigration and emphasis on the respective other's contrariness, frequently unfolded on the basis of shared ideas and concepts.

19 On the problematic nature of the term minority, see Gershon Hundert, "An Advantage to Peculiarity? The Case of the Polish Commonwealth," *AJS Review* 6 (1981): 21–38.

of mutual Jewish and non-Jewish commonalities.[20] I contend that in this way it is possible to show both Jewish difference as well as Jewish/non-Jewish connections more comprehensively and more clearly. For this purpose, I draw upon *similarity,*[21] a model that has gained prominence lately as the result of interdisciplinary research.

Although researchers in Jewish studies, admittedly with few exceptions,[22] have so far ignored it, similarity is anything but a new concept. Scholars, particularly in the fields of philosophy and literary studies, have employed it to great success since the 1990s. The potential of similarity as a pivotal analytical instrument for investigating Jewish/non-Jewish relations as they occurred in the past, I argue, lies in its replacement of the dichotomy of identity and difference with the category of "both-and-one." Similarity thus provides an eminent framework for exploring and identifying experiences of connection between different people or groups without neglecting differences.[23] These differences, however, are gradual rather than fundamental, i.e., they do not constitute a binary.[24] Thinking in terms of similarity then entails a new ap-

[20] The recollections of Anna Robert, who was born in Vienna on July 31, 1909, exemplify what I mean by outlining Jewish distinctiveness within the context of feelings of mutual Jewish and non-Jewish similarities. Anna Robert recounts that when she was a child, her parents, although Jewish, always celebrated Christmas. They even made great effort to obtain a Christmas tree during the deprivation-stricken years of World War I, when such a luxury was very rare in Vienna. As Anna Robert writes in her memoirs, the major reason for their efforts was Mizzi, the non-Jewish maid, who was treated as if she were Anna's sibling. (Anna Robert, In: LBI (Memoirs), ME 899.) In this case, Jewish/non-Jewish (religious) differences were emphasized in a performative way. Yet, they did not prevail over people's sense of connectedness. The differences played out only within the framework of felt togetherness.

[21] Anil Bhatti, "Language, Heterogeneities, Homogeneities and Similarity: Some Reflections," in *Impure Languages, Linguistic and Literary Hybridity in Contemporary Cultures,* eds. Rama Kant Agnihotri, Claudia Benthien, and Tatiana Oranskaia (New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2015), 3–28.

[22] See Susanne Korbel, "Spaces of Gendered Jewish and Non-Jewish Encounters: Bed Lodgers, Domestic Workers, and Sex Workers in Vienna, 1900–1930," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 65 (2020): 88–104; Tim Corbett, Caroline Kita, Susanne Korbel, Klaus Hödl, and Dirk Rupnow, "Migration, Integration, and Assimilation: Reassessing Key Concepts in (Jewish) Austrian History," *Journal of Austrian Studies* 54:1 (2021): 1–28; Klaus Hödl, "Defying The Binary: Relationships Between Jews And Non-Jews," *Journal of Jewish Identities* 13:1 (2020): 107–124.

[23] Anil Bhatti, "Plurikulturalität," in *Habsburg neu denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa. 30 kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte,* eds. Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2016), 171–80.

[24] Albrecht Koschorke, "Similarity: Valences of a post-colonial concept," in *Similarity: A Paradigm for Culture Theory,* eds. Anil Bhatti and Dorothee Kimmich (New Delhi: Tulika Book, 2018), 25–34, here 26.

proach to and a new understanding of interethnic interactions, as it orients us toward intercultural togetherness rather than borders and demarcations. Similarity is not prescribed, but is rather constituted in the process of manifold encounters and contacts.[25]

Despite similarity's excellent applicability for highlighting perceptions of togetherness between Jews and non-Jews while at the same time determining Jewish distinction, historians working with the concept will likely encounter some difficulties. The first of these difficulties is related to the property of people's feelings of intercultural/-ethnic connectivity. According to theoreticians of the similarity model, they represent situational experiences, i.e., they are "contingent, ephemeral, unpredictable, [...]."[26] Their transitory nature implies, however, that feelings of connectedness vary depending on a particular situation and in principle can also shift from one moment to the next. This understanding of the concept assumes that people possess an extraordinary capacity for change and adaptation. This assumption then contradicts a large number of studies that argue that people achieve through socialization a more or less stable sense of self that is not in constant flux.[27]

A second problem that arises when employing the concept of similarity has to do with the fact that although the model describes experiences of connectedness between one person and other people or groups, it does not currently

25 I argue that an awareness of common bond, that in certain situations eclipses religious/ethnic boundaries, can be found throughout history. See for example Victoria Hoyle, "The Bonds that Bind: Moneylending between Anglo-Jewish and Christian Women in the Plea Rolls of the Exchequer of the Jews, 1218–1280," *Journal of Medieval History* 34 (2008): 119–29; Monica H. Green, "Conversing with the Minority: Relations among Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Women in the High Middle Ages," *Journal of Medieval History* 34 (2008): 105–18; Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, "The Marketplace in Balta: Aspects of Economic and Cultural Life," *East European Jewish Affairs* 37 (2007): 277–298, here 292; Glenn Dynner, "Legal Fictions: The Survival of Rural Jewish Tavernkeeping in the Kingdom of Poland," *Jewish Social Studies* 16:2 (2010): 28–66, here 52. Thomas Cohen, "The Death of Abramo of Montecosaro," *Jewish History* 19:3/4 (2005): 278–279; Ariel Toaff, *Love, Work, and Death: Jewish Life in Medieval Umbria* (London, 1996); Ulrich Baumann, "'Gell, Raphael, wir gehen heim, mir wo'n heim': Heimaten, Heimat, Idylle, Gewalt: Ein Rückblick auf die Beziehungen von Christen und Juden in Südbadischen Landgemeinden," *Allmende* 17:54/55 (1997): 203–227, here 208.

26 Aleida Assmann, "Ähnlichkeit als Performanz: Ein neuer Zugang zu Identitätskonstruktionen und Empathie-Regimen," in *Similarity: A Paradigm for Culture Theory,* eds. Anil Bhatti and Dorothee Kimmich (New Delhi: Tulika Book, 2018), 159–177, here 168.

27 Gill Valentine and Joanna Sadgrove, "Biographical Narratives of Encounter: The Significance of Mobility and Emplacement in Shaping Attitudes Towards Difference," *Urban Studies* 51:9 (2014): 249–263, here 259.

account for the reasons why these experiences took place, nor does it examine any possible effects on the relationships of these people. As a result, similarity represents a largely descriptive category that is not useful in elevating the analysis of relationships between Jews and non-Jews from the level of pure description to the level of explanation.

A final shortcoming of the similarity model relates to the question of how we are to ascertain perceptions of similarity. If people do not explicitly articulate their experience of commonality with one or more other people, an outside observer can scarcely access this experience. Historians can usually only garner access to such an experience if it is recorded in ego documents, such as diaries, memoirs, and similar sources. However, the availability of these documents is very limited, and they disclose next to nothing about individuals who find it too difficult to articulate themselves in writing.

To make similarity more accessible, I suggest stripping it of its ephemeral and strictly subjective character and instead making it legible in observable processes. By this, I mean practices such as exercising solidarity,[28] cultivating friendship,[29] or articulating trust between Jews and non-Jews.[30] In order to

[28] Let us consider as a concrete example a skiing holiday that Anna Robert (see footnote 21) participated in. She was a member of a private sports club to which both Jews and non-Jews belonged. At one point, this club organized an excursion to Salzburg to take skiing lessons. Because of the antisemitic atmosphere that prevailed at the resort, the group ended their vacation earlier than planned. The non-Jewish participants thus expressed their solidarity with their Jewish friends and traveled with them back to Vienna. See Anna Robert. In: LBI (Memoirs), ME 899.

[29] The historian Daniel Jütte describes a remarkable example of Jewish/non-Jewish friendship, in which both parties put feelings of togetherness with members of one's own ethnic or religious group aside in favor of crossing such ostensible boundaries. See Daniel Jütte, "Interfaith Encounters between Jews and Christians in the Early Modern Period and Beyond: Toward a Framework," *American Historical Society* 118:2 (2013): 378–400.

[30] In a study on Jewish peddlers in the U.S., Hasia R. Diner draws attention to how their encounters with non-Jewish clients "erased linguistic, national, and religious differences as barriers to human interaction. Over time, the peddlers ceased to be alien, as customers noticed what they and the peddlers had in common." The peddlers befriended their non-Jewish customers, spent their nights in the houses of their clients, and they finally developed mutual trust and intimacy. See Hasia R. Diner, *Roads Taken: The Great Jewish Migrations to the New World and the Peddlers Who Forged the Way* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 86. An example of Jewish/non-Jewish similarity set in an everyday situation within a community has been described by Alice Gruenwald, a Viennese-born Jewish woman. In her memoirs, she remembers her grandparents in Mistelbach, a small town of 6,000 inhabitants in Lower Austria. It was home to forty Jewish families who, according to Alice Gruenwald, lived in good relations with their non-Jewish neighbors. When her grandparents celebrated their 50th wed-

serve as evidence of similarity, however, these practices must, when carried out, express a greater connection between people of different ethnic backgrounds, in the particular case between Jews and non-Jews, than between members of the same ethnic group. I wish to illustrate my proposition by referring to the memoirs of the Viennese-born Jewish woman Helen Blank, who survived the Shoah by emigrating to the U.S. shortly before the beginning of World War II. She started her escape at the Viennese railway station where Jewish as well as non-Jewish friends bid her farewell. The latter thus publicly displayed affective ties to Helen at a time when doing so was utmost inopportune, probably even perilous. Personal interethnic bonds thus prevailed over the fear of potential sanctions.[31]

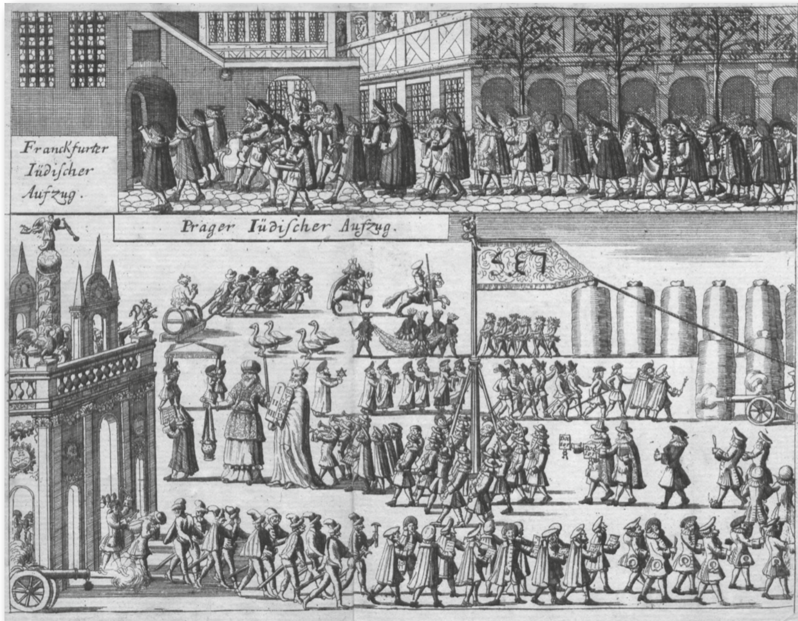
4 Summary

In the last third of the 20th century, a growing number of scholars in Jewish studies turned to micro-historical approaches in their research on Jewish life in the past. Their methodological orientation to everyday life not only revised notions of Jews' societal isolation and separation from non-Jews, but also raised various questions which, as I understand them, have not yet been sufficiently answered. I consider two of these questions, namely: 1) whether and to what extent encounters between Jews and non-Jews promoted a sense of interconnectedness and 2) what constitutes a non-religious Jewish self-understanding in terms of their cultural overlaps, particularly relevant for the field of Jewish studies. I strongly contend that answering these two questions can be greatly facilitated by applying the concepts of *conviviality* and *similarity.* Whereas *conviviality* primarily explores practices that deemphasize fixed categories of belonging and thus allow for an intercultural coexistence, in this case of Jews and non-Jews, *similarity* helps us ascertain experiences of connectedness between them.

ding anniversary, a large part of the non-Jewish population participated in the festivities, lined the way to and crowded the synagogue as well as her grandparents' house. In such moments, the awareness of Jewish and non-Jewish distinctiveness was clearly secondary to a shared sense of community and togetherness. (Alice Gruenwald. In: LBI (Memoirs), ME 897).

31 See Helen Blank, Growing up in Vienna. In: LBI (Memoirs), ME 1299. I wish to emphasize at this point that citing Helen Blank's experiences solely serves to illustrate Jewish and non-Jewish similarity under dire conditions. They are exceptional rather than representative of Jewish/non-Jewish relations during the reign of National Socialism in Austria.

Using *conviviality* and *similarity* for analyzing Jewish and non-Jewish ties deconstructs preconceived ideas of Jewishness and questions presumed boundaries between the two groups. Such work is of utmost pertinence to the field of Habsburg studies in that it paradigmatically demonstrates how relations between cultural groups can be investigated without drawing upon contested, maybe even questionable, analytical notions, such as minority/majority, integration, acculturation, ethnic belonging, and others.



Processions of Prague and Frankfurt Jewish communities in spring of 1716 celebrating the birth of Habsburg heir Prince Leopold Johann of Austria. Both communities employed similar performative practices to show their belonging to their respective urban community and the empire. Aside from using shared imperial symbols they imitated noble clothing styles to emphasize the status of their Jewish leadership, evoking similarity and closeness to nobility as author Johann Jacob Schudt mockingly noted. Source: Johann Jacob Schudt, *Jüdisches Franckfurter und Prager Freuden-Fest: Wegen der höchst-glücklichen Geburth Des Durchläuchtigsten Käyserlichen Erb-Prinzens, Vorstellend Mit was Solennitäten die Franckfurter Juden selbiges celebrirt, auch ein besonders Lied, mit Sinn-bilder und Devisen, darauff verfertigt; So dann Den Curieusen kostbahren, doch recht possirlichen Auffzug, so die Prager Juden gehalten […]*, Frankfurt am Main: Andreä, 1716, p. 4.

Imperial Transition and Early Modern Jewish Continuities: The Case of Bohemian Jewry

by Verena Kasper-Marienberg

Abstract

This article brings two seemingly disconnected historiographic models of periodization into conversation: Habsburg studies and Habsburg Jewish studies. It argues for an expansion of the temporal frameworks of both fields to highlight historical continuities connecting the Holy Roman and Habsburg Empire at least from a structural perspective. These historical continuums are a useful analytical lens when applied to marginalized groups, like early modern Jews, in tandem with a central group of contemporary powerholders, such as the Habsburg nobility. Using Bohemia as a case study, this essay juxtaposes questions of transregional transfer of cultural, economic, and social capital with the challenges of Jewish marginalization and discrimination to highlight the changing yet interconnected imperial landscapes.

1 Periodization Models in Early Modern Habsburg and Jewish Studies

The 18th century has become the primary area of research for early modern Habsburg Jewish historiography. Its narratives tend to highlight the *Haskalah* (Jewish Enlightenment), rabbinic schisms between different religious movements such as Sabbateanism, Frankism, and Hasidism, and enlightened toleration policies from Joseph II to Napoleon.[1] These studies emphasize the

[1] Since the list of important works would be too long, see as an exemplary selection Shmuel Feiner, *The Origins of Jewish Secularization in Eighteenth-Century Europe,* trans. Chaya Naor (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Paweł Maciejko, *The Mixed Multitude: Jacob Frank and the Frankist Movement, 1755–1816* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Louise Hecht, *Ein jüdischer Aufklärer in Böhmen: Der Pädagoge und Reformer Peter Beer (1758–1838)* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2008). Joshua Teplitsky, *Prince of the Press: How One Collector Built History's Most Enduring and Remarkable Jewish Library* (New Haven: Yale Uni-

continuities of Jewish life in Central Europe between the 18th and 19th centuries with a periodization model based on intellectual history. They describe the Jews' path to modernity as beginning with religious pluralism and culminating in the participation of Jews in the European Enlightenment and civic projects.[2] In European Jewish historiography, this intellectual success story has been termed the "long 18th century" by Michael K. Silber and other scholars, which reached its apex with Jewish emancipation in the mid- to late-19th century when national revolutions accelerated full citizenship for Jews in the German and Habsburg lands.[3] It echoes the concept of a "saddle period" (Sattelzeit) as discussed in the broader realms of intellectual history since the 1960s, mainly by Reinhart Koselleck and Michel Foucault.

However, most Habsburg Jewish studies scholars have not taken notice of a dramatic political change that occurred during this period and its effect or lack thereof on Jewish daily life: the transition of Central European empires between 1804 and 1806.[4] In 1804, Francis II/I (1768–1835), the last emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (r. 1790–1806), proclaimed a new Austrian hereditary empire encompassing all Habsburg hereditary and crown lands. Two years later, under pressure from Napoleon, he disbanded the Holy Roman Empire, the largest and longest-standing Central European political association, after

versity Press, 2019); Sharon Flatto, *The Kabbalistic Culture of Eighteenth-Century Prague: Ezekiel Landau (the 'Noda Biyehudah') and His Contemporaries* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010).

2 The chronological chapter division in survey works is a good indicator for this common periodization. See, for example, Christoph Lind, "Juden in den habsburgischen Ländern 1670–1848," in *Geschichte der Juden in Österreich,* eds. Eveline Brugger, Martha Keil, Albert Lichtblau, Christoph Lind, and Barbara Staudinger (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 2006), 339–446. Similarly, Louise Hecht, "Österreich, Böhmen und Mähren 1648–1918," in *Handbuch Zur Geschichte Der Juden in Europa,* eds. Julius Schöps and Elke-Vera Kotowski, vol. 1 (Darmstadt: WBG, 2001), 101–34; Dan Diner, "Between Empire and Nation State: Outline for a European Contemporary History of the Jews, 1750–1950," in *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands,* eds. Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 61–80.

3 Michael K. Silber, "The Making of Habsburg Jewry in the Long Eighteenth Century," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism,* eds. Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe, 1st ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 763–797, here 763.

4 The Holy Roman Empire has not been sufficiently discussed in broader empire studies. While this article cannot examine this in more detail, it is noticeable that it is often subsumed under the Habsburg Empire, with a trajectory running from the Spanish-Habsburg to the Austrian Empire of the 19th and 20th centuries. For a discussion of the possible reasons, see Peter H. Wilson, *Heart of Europe: A History of the Holy Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2020), 3–6.

almost 400 years of Habsburg leadership. For two years in between, Francis II/I held the power of both empires in a most intimate union: his legal persona. Continuities and fundamental disruptions went hand in hand during this transition period of intense warfare in Central Europe. When Francis ultimately abdicated on August 6, 1806, the Holy Roman Empire and its imperial institutions were dissolved. The imperial diet in Regensburg, the two supreme courts in Vienna and Wetzlar, the empire's executive imperial circles and, most importantly, the sophisticated political structure of its imperial estates across Central Europe all ceased to exist.[5] The resulting power vacuum was filled by European rulers who replaced imperial hierarchies and institutions. For Jews who had lived within the borders of the Holy Roman Empire, the legal basis of their claim to residency as *cives romani* had fundamentally rested on imperial law and it would now be entirely replaced by territorial and state law.[6]

Readers of Habsburg Jewish history appear to have taken little notice of the transition of Central European empires, which is essentially absent in the scholarly literature, particularly in English. This gap is of note because the imperial shift is constitutive for the field of Habsburg studies, with Habsburg imperial historiography commonly beginning with 1804. A brief example serves as illustration: over the last fifty years, Habsburg studies published in the leading American scholarly journals of the field have focused almost exclusively on the history of the Austrian Empire, founded in 1804, the Austro-Hungarian Empire since 1867, and its successor states. Even though every new editorial board of *Central European History* and *Austrian History Yearbook* reaffirmed the goal of including premodern Habsburg history, recent analyses of these journals have shown early modern histories of the Habsburg lands

5 On the long underrated reaction to the end of the Holy Roman Empire due to Prussian and Austrian-focused historiographies, see Wolfgang Burgdorf, *Ein Weltbild verliert seine Welt: Der Untergang des Alten Reiches und die Generation 1806,* 2nd ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2009).

6 In most parts of the Holy Roman Empire, like in Bohemia, territorial laws for Jews had already de facto replaced or outmaneuvered imperial law mostly because of a lack of imperial executive power and special legal privileges granted by emperors to territorial princes. In theory, however, and in special cases, like denied justice, Jews from across the empire could still appeal for protection to imperial institutions qua imperial law until 1806. On the development of imperial legislation regarding Jews in the Holy Roman Empire, see Friedrich Battenberg, "Rechtliche Rahmenbedingungen jüdischer Existenz in der Frühneuzeit zwischen Reich und Territorium," in *Judengemeinden in Schwaben im Kontext des Alten Reiches,* ed. Rolf Kießling (Berlin: Akademie, 1995), 53–79, here 60–61.

and the Holy Roman Empire to be marginal, at best.[7] Habsburg Jewish history is well represented from the 19th century onward; early modern Habsburg history, and Habsburg Jewish history in particular, are not. This suggests a lack of conversation between the intersecting fields of early modern Jewish and Habsburg Studies.

What might be gained if we created an interface between early modern Jewish and Habsburg studies and connected these two different periodization models? Instead of reading models of Jewish modernity backwards into the 18th century, what would following the path of early modern Jewish history forward into the 19th century tell us about the imperial shift?[8] If we look back before the 18th century and consider the cultural history of European Jewry in combination with political, social, and economic patterns that were constituted during and in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War, would this alter our understanding of European Jewish history?

2 Bohemia's Position within the Holy Roman Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy

The Habsburg lands followed very different paths and paces in their integration into the Habsburg administration and later Austrian Empire. Bohemia formed part of the Holy Roman Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy from 1526[9] and had a continuous Jewish presence since at least the High Middle Ages.[10] Geographically and politically, the Kingdom of Bohemia had

7 Andrew I. Port, "Central European History since 1989: Historiographical Trends and Post-Wende 'Turns,'" *Central European History* 48, no. 2 (2015): 241–43; Stephan Sander-Faes, "Habsburg Studies under Siege: Notes on Recent Early Modern Scholarship," *The Seventeenth Century* 37, no. 1 (2022): 169–75. For a slightly more positive resume, see Joachim Whaley, "Central European History and the Holy Roman Empire," *Central European History* 51, no. 1 (2018): 40–45; and the contributions of John Deak and Chad Bryant in the same volume.

8 Robert Evans poignantly emphasizes the continuities between the Holy Roman and Habsburg empires in the framework of empire studies: Robert Evans, "Communicating Empire: The Habsburgs and Their Critics, 1700–1919," *Royal Historical Society (London, England): Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 19 (2009): 117–38.

9 "Bohemia" is here used interchangeably with "Bohemian lands," which included Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Lusatia under the Wenzel crown. For more detail, see Verena Kasper-Marienberg and Joshua Teplitsky, "Between Distinction and Integration: The Jews of the Bohemian Crown Lands until 1726," in *Prague and Beyond: Jews in the Bohemian Land,* eds. Kateřina Čapková and Hillel J. Kieval (Philadelphia: Penn University Press, 2021), 22–60.

10 For a detailed discussion of the status and importance of Bohemia within the Holy Roman Empire, see Jaroslav Pánek, "Der böhmische Staat und das Reich in der Frühen Neuzeit," in

a particular proximity to the Holy Roman Empire, nominally belonging to the Holy Roman Empire as an electorate principality. As the primary estate among the secular electorate curia (*weltliche Kurfürstenkurie*), it enjoyed renewed engagement in imperial affairs from 1708 and participated in a leadership role in the Imperial deputation of 1803. This important political position as well as the composition of its high nobility, several of whom held property in both Bohemia and the Holy Roman Empire, explains its central role among the Habsburg lands until the end of the Holy Roman Empire.[11] While Bohemia may be somewhat exceptional, it offers possibilities for historical insights from both sides of the imperial divide.

At first glance, Francis II/I's creation of the Austrian Empire in 1804 and his dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 might not have made much of a difference in Jewish daily life in the Bohemian lands. The Habsburg administration had already territorialized Jewish politics, rechanneling their legal recourse and financial revenue from the institutions of the Holy Roman Empire to local and regional Habsburg institutions. Jews lived mostly under the auspices of Habsburg noble landowners or royal/imperial cities and seemed removed from the political realities of the Holy Roman Empire. However, what has yet to be explored is whether the transition of empires might have set Jews living in the German lands and those in the Habsburg lands on divergent paths. For centuries, Jews in both regions had shared an imperial political and legal framework, even if governed by different regional and local authorities.[12] In the early 19th century, this fundamentally changed.

Studies of the Bohemian nobility have emphasized the importance of Habsburg legislation during the Thirty Years' War – namely the Revised Land Ordinance of 1627 – for it transformed the composition of Bohemian nobility and integrated them more fully into the Habsburg administration.[13] The

Alternativen zur Reichsverfassung in der Frühen Neuzeit?, eds. Volker Press and Dieter Stievermann (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1995), 169–78.

11 On the complex and changing position of Bohemia in the context of the Holy Roman Empire, Alexander Begert, *Böhmen, die böhmische Kur und das Reich vom Hochmittelalter bis zum Ende des Alten Reiches: Studien zur Kurwürde und zur staatsrechlichen Stellung Böhmens* (Oldenburg: De Gruyter, 2003).

12 On imperial framing as a constitutive element of European Jewish history and culture, see Malachi Haim Hacohen, *Jacob & Esau: Jewish European History between Nation and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 10–12, 28–35, 187–235, 290–92.

13 See Václav Bůžek and Petr Maťa, "Wandlungen des Adels in Böhmen und Mähren im Zeitalter des 'Absolutismus' (1620–1740)," in *Der europäische Adel im Ancien Régime: Von der Krise der*

dispossession of those Bohemian nobles who identified mainly as Protestants and the reallocation of their lands to Catholic nobles who were loyal to the Habsburgs brought significant changes in Bohemia's noble economies. It has been estimated that more than half of the noble property in the Bohemian lands changed hands. Nobility from all over Europe gained the Bohemian *Inkolát,* the right to purchase and bequeath land in Bohemia and hold a seat in its noble political fora. Recent studies highlight post-1648 Bohemian nobility's increasingly transregional profile, which was geared towards political status both in the Holy Roman Empire and at the Habsburg court in Vienna.[14] As Petr Mat'a shows, the new aristocratic Bohemian elite after the 1620s was granted princely titles through both the imperial and Bohemian chanceries, simultaneously creating, whether intended or not, a higher integration of the Bohemian nobility into the Holy Roman Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy.[15] Thomas Winkelbauer interprets this strategy as a long-term effort towards state building that made the imperial court "the centre of political power and the most important site of the communication, interaction, and integration of the political elites of the Habsburg territories as well as the Holy Roman Empire."[16] Yet, we know rather little about how the loss of their imperial noble status in 1806 affected their self-positioning in the noble landscapes of Central Europe.

3 Economic Developments: The Schwarzenberg/Kader Case

The consolidation of larger noble estates since the 1620s created more differentiated manorial economic systems that – most likely not coincidentally – increasingly opened up to Jewish merchants who functioned as intermediaries between local populations and manorial courts and as access points to Jewish

ständischen Monarchien bis zur Revolution (ca. 1600–1789), ed. Ronald G. Asch (Vienna: Böhlau, 2001), 287–321; James Van Horn Melton, "The Nobility in the Bohemian and Austrian Lands, 1620–1780," in *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Northern, Central and Eastern Europe,* ed. Hamish M. Scott, vol. 2 (London/New York: Longman, 1995), 110–43.

14 Bůžek and Maťa, "Der europäische Adel," 195

15 Petr Maťa, "Bohemia, Silesia, and the Empire: Negotiating Princely Dignity on the Eastern Periphery," in *The Holy Roman Empire, 1495–1806: A European Perspective,* eds. Robert Evans and Peter H. Wilson (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2012), 143–165, here 156.

16 Thomas Winkelbauer, "Separation and Symbiosis: The Habsburg Monarchy and the Empire," in *The Holy Roman Empire, 1495–1806: A European Perspective,* eds. Peter H. Wilson and Robert Evans (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2012), 167–183, here 176.

credit networks in Prague and Vienna.[17] Noble families like the Franconian Schwarzenbergs, who gained the Bohemian *Inkolát* during the reallocation of noble property in 1654, actively promoted Jewish settlement in their Bohemian estates. In six of their 24 Bohemian dominions, Jewish settlements emerged during the second half of the 17th century, followed by another nine during the 18th century. At the same time, the family rose within one generation to the highest ranks of nobility within the imperial court system, gaining a princely ennoblement in 1670 and a leadership position on the Imperial Aulic Council in 1674.[18] Similarly, some of their Jewish subjects transitioned from the lower ranks of rural retailers to wealthy court merchants. Adam Kauder for example, competed unsuccessfully with other local Jews over years for permission to settle on the Schwarzenberg estate at Frauenberg (Hluboká nad Vltavou) in southern Bohemia in the 1670s. Finally, in 1683, he was allowed to settle with his family for an annual fee of 50 Gulden as a so-called *Schutzjude* (protected Jew). Synchronously with the rising career of his employer Prince Johann Adolph von Schwarzenberg (1615–1683) in the imperial court system, Kauder's economic activities expanded to Vienna as well. In 1697, his settlement fee had risen to 250 Gulden, only to be doubled again in 1706. He sponsored around 50 people from his extended family and employees in his household and eventually financed and organized army supplies together with the influential Viennese court merchants Samson Wertheimer and Samuel Oppenheimer. On at least one occasion, Wertheimer came to visit Kauder in Frauenberg and used his connection with both Kauder and Schwarzenberg to find a temporary shelter for Hungarian Jewish refugees in Frauenberg in 1703.[19] Earlier studies about close credit relations between rural Bohemian

17 See Aleš Valenta, "Jüdische Kredite des böhmischen Adels im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert," *Judaica Bohemiae* 44 (2009): 61–95; Ruth Kestenberg-Gladstein, *Neuere Geschichte der Juden in den böhmischen Ländern. Erster Teil: Das Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1969).

18 On the families' continuous success throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, see Dana Štefanová, "Gutsherren und wirtschaftliche Aktivitäten: Eine Fallstudie zur 'Schwarzenbergischen Bank,'" in *Adel und Wirtschaft: Lebensunterhalt der Adeligen in der Moderne,* eds. Ivo Cerman and Luboš Velek (Munich: Meidenbauer, 2009), 63–83; Raimund Paleczek, "Die Modernisierung des Großgrundbesitzes des Fürsten Johann Adolf zu Schwarzenberg in Südböhmen während des Neoabsolutismus (1848/49–1860)," in *Adel und Wirtschaft: Lebensunterhalt der Adeligen in der Moderne,* eds. Ivo Cerman and Luboš Velek (Munich: Meidenbauer, 2009), 135–84;

19 SOA Třeboň, Česky Krumlov, Frauenberg, file no. A5AJ1a, doc. 36, no folio, October 20, 1697; doc. 42, no folio, August 16, 1702; doc. 44, no folio, December 16, 1703. Kestenberg-Gladstein, *Neuere Geschichte,* 6. This case study is part of my current research project about the relation-

Jews and noble lords suggest that Kauder was not an exception.[20] Further studies will have to investigate if there are other similar professional biographies of Jews connected to the development of Bohemian noble manorial economies and how they carried on beyond the turn of the century.

Beyond individual case studies, the assumption of new opportunities in the noble estates in the Bohemian countryside is echoed more broadly in the demographic shifts within Bohemian Jewish internal migration. While Prague was home to most Jews in the Bohemian lands until the late 16th century, this changed dramatically in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War. By the early 18th century, only one quarter of Bohemia's Jews (around 10,000 people) lived in Prague, while the majority (around 30,000) lived in the countryside, primarily in noble towns and villages.[21] Future studies will have to ascertain whether the phenomena of changes in noble economies and Jewish rural migration were indeed interconnected, but so far, the numerical data suggests that they were. If so, we will have to ask more systemically how the political, economic, and cultural integration of Bohemian nobility into the Habsburg elite was supported, facilitated, and mirrored by their Jewish subjects.

4 Court Jews and Noble Jews

Did the phenomenon of Jews in courtly services end in the Habsburg lands in 1806? There is little evidence to support this assumption. The historiography of Jews in courtly services (*Hoffaktoren*) has traditionally focused on the Holy Roman Empire and most studies have therefore cited 1806 as the presumed end date of the "court Jew phenomenon." Focusing on the Holy Roman Empire, Rotraud Ries states: "functionally, court Jews were a solid part of the absolutist premodern system. Not only because of this, they stopped

ship of rural Jewries and Habsburg nobility in the Bohemian lands after 1648 and will be expanded upon in future publications.

20 Petr Kopička and Hana Legnerová, "Jews, Burghers and Lords: Social and Economic Relations in the Town of Roudnice Nad Labem (Raudnitz), 1592–1619," *Judaica Bohemiae* 41 (2005): 5–43; Jan Podlešák, *Naše dny se naplnily: z historie Židů v jižních Čechách* (České Budějovice: Klub přátel Izraele, 2002). On credit relations between Prague Jews and Bohemian nobles, see Marie Buňatová, "Die wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen Prager Juden zum Adel in den böhmischen Ländern an der Wende vom 16. zum 17. Jahrhundert," in *Juden und ländliche Gesellschaft in Europa zwischen Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit (15.–17. Jahrhundert): Kontinuität und Krise, Inklusion und Exklusion in einer Zeit des Übergangs*, ed. Sigrid Hirbodian and Torben Stretz (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2016), 33–50.

21 Kestenberg-Gladstein, *Neuere Geschichte*, 1–3.

functioning in this capacity with the end of the old empire."[22] In the Habsburg lands, however, the framework of the "old empire" did not necessarily cease to exist, it had transformed into something else. Despite the lure of urbanization and greater social mobility in the growing metropolitan areas of the empire, the majority of Bohemian Jews in the mid-19th century continued to live mainly in rural areas. Still predominantly under noble rule, they dwelt in almost 2,000 localities of which only around 200 were communities composed of more than ten families and a formal synagogue.[23]

The continuity of Bohemian and Austrian noble property structures in the imperial framework along with continuously increasing Jewish populations in their estates indicates that there might be another story to tell for the Habsburg lands. As many Habsburg, and in particular Bohemian, nobles developed from primarily landowners to agents of economic change through agricultural reform, banking, and early entrepreneurship at the end of the 18th century, so did Habsburg Jewish elites change alongside them to become bankers, monopoly leaseholders, and manufacturers.[24] Both social groups seem to have been innovators towards economic modernity while maintaining occupational patterns of premodern agricultural societies, with distinct techniques of elite cohesiveness (*Elitenbildung*) and adaptiveness (*Elitenwandel*) that derived from early modern models of success.[25] For Bohemia at the turn

22 Rotraud Ries, "Hofjuden – Funktionsträger des absolutistischen Territorialstaates und Teil der jüdischen Gesellschaft," in *Hofjuden – Ökonomie und Interkulturalität: Die jüdische Wirtschaftselite im 18. Jahrhundert,* ed. Rotraud Ries and Friedrich Battenberg (Hamburg: Christians, 2002), 11–39, here 27. See also Friedrich Battenberg, "Die jüdische Wirtschaftselite der Hoffaktoren und Residenten im Zeitalter des Merkantilismus," *Aschkenas* 9, no. 1 (1999): 31–66, here 65.

23 Hillel J Kieval, "Bohemia and Moravia," in *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe,* 2010, https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Bohemia_and_Moravia. Last accessed October 13, 2023.

24 On the engagement of Bohemian nobles in early Habsburg industrialization, see particularly the case studies in part I and II of Ivo Cerman and Luboš Velek, eds., *Adel und Wirtschaft: Lebensunterhalt der Adeligen in der Moderne* (Munich: Meidenbauer, 2009). On the contribution of Jewish elites to early Bohemian industrialization, see Martina Niedhammer, *Nur eine "Geld-Emancipation"? Loyalitäten und Lebenswelten des Prager jüdischen Großbürgertums 1800–1867* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018); Jiří Kudela, "Prager jüdische Eliten von 1780 bis in die 1. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts," *Judaica Bohemiae* 28 (1992): 22–34.

25 See Karsten Holste, Dietlind Hüchtker, and Michael G. Müller, eds., *Aufsteigen und Obenbleiben in europäischen Gesellschaften des 19. Jahrhunderts: Akteure, Arenen, Aushandlungsprozesse* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2009). For a different path in comparison to the Habsburg lands in Poland, Prussia, and the Netherlands, see Cornelia Aust, *The Jewish Economic Elite: Making Modern Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018).

of the 19th century, Ruth Kestenberg-Gladstein poignantly observed that "the (Jewish) elite in the era of the Toleration Edicts stepped into the footprints of the court Jews and fulfilled their function."[26] As we ascribe a larger role to nobility in the slow process of modernization, we might consider reevaluating and expanding what it meant to be a court Jew or a Jew in courtly service as well. Rotraud Ries's intergenerational model of "court Jews" suggests that the functions ascribed to Jews in courtly societies were highly adaptable to the changing needs of the court whether it was for purposes of status representation, army supply, credit financing, or luxury commerce. "Court Jews" like other Jewish merchants worked and invested in multiple businesses in and out of courts simultaneously to reduce their financial risk. The support of the small rural nobility as well as high status aristocracy brought Jewish merchants into contact with a broad range of noble courts which in return created a diverse social spectrum of "court Jews." Some worked on behalf of several nobles out of economic hubs like Prague, Vienna, and Frankfurt, but most others lived within or close to local court societies. Not a cohesive group by any means, their common denominator was economic dealings with Central European noble courts safeguarded by individual business contracts; a social practice that likely did not end in 1804 or 1806.[27]

Most notably, we can see an overlap in trajectory between Habsburg Jews and Habsburg nobles in the urge for ennoblement among the rising Habsburg Jewish merchant elite. As Rudolf Kučera has pointed out, the Habsburg court administration enabled Jewish individuals and families to rise to the rank of nobility already in the late 18th century, while Prussia distinctly chose not to, even though its Jewish population had a similar social and economic profile.[28] The first two ennobled Habsburg Jewish families were notably from Bohemia: tobacco merchant Israel Hönig in 1789 and the Popper family in 1790, followed by another 26 Jewish families during the first half of the 19th century.

26 Kestenberg-Gladstein, *Neuere Geschichte,* 104.

27 On the overlap and approximation of noble and Jewish elite communication circles and value systems, see Rotraud Ries, "Hofjuden als Vorreiter? Bedingungen und Kommunikationen, Gewinn und Verlust auf dem Weg in die Moderne," in *Judentum und Aufklärung: Jüdisches Selbstverständnig in der bürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit,* ed. Arno Herzig, Hans Otto Horch, and Robert Jütte (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 30–65; Kestenberg-Gladstein, *Neuere Geschichte,* 104.

28 Rudolf Kučera, *Staat, Adel und Elitenwandel: Die Adelsverleihungen in Schlesien und Böhmen 1806–1871 im Vergleich* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 100–104.

Of those 26 families, almost half came from the Bohemian lands, three from Vienna, three from Hungary, eight from the German lands, and four from western Sephardic communities.[29] William McCagg counted a total of 443 Habsburg families of Jewish heritage and/or Jewish identity that were ennobled between 1701 and 1918. This might tell us a story not only of Jewish social mobility aspirations but of close relations that developed between noble and Jewish elites to the imperial state, which derived from shared paths, networks, and economic interdependencies since the 1620s. Given the lack of structural changes in the interconnected living conditions of Bohemian nobles and Jewish Bohemians until the mid-19th century, it seems sensible to rethink the entangled histories of both social groups in a longer perspective beyond the imperial shift.

5 Interconnected Spaces

The restrictive grip of the Habsburg administration on Bohemia after the Thirty Years' War had mediating effects on its Jewish inhabitants as well. Due to being perceived as Habsburg loyalists during the war, Bohemian and Moravian Jews received confirmation by Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II of their privileges of settlement and commerce in 1623. However, starting in the 1650s, a series of state commissions started to restrict Jewish life both in terms of space (segregated living areas and restrictions on Jewish settlement in certain places in 1618 and 1659) and demographics.[30] Bohemian nobles, the Bohemian Chamber, and Jewish communities were able to mitigate the new restrictions for several decades until the *Familiant Laws* issued in 1726/1727 effectively capped Jewish settlement rights until 1848. With a limit of 8,541 Jewish families in Bohemia, it allowed for only one son of any Jewish household to marry and establish his own household in the Bohemian lands. For Moravia, Michael L. Miller has rightly pointed out that Jewish demographic growth until the 1840s suggests that the legal restrictions might not have been consistently applied and noble territories and clandestine marriage systems

29 William McCagg, "Austria's Jewish Nobles, 1740–1918," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 34 (1989): 163–183, here 170. See also Kai Drewes, *Jüdischer Adel: Nobilitierungen von Juden im Europa des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2013), 378.

30 Jaroslav Prokeš, "Der Antisemitismus der Behörden und das Prager Ghetto in nachweißenbergischer Zeit," *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für Geschichte der Juden in der Čechoslovakischen Republik* 1 (1929): 41–262.

offered loopholes to circumvent the forced migration of young adults.[31] Yet, for young Bohemian Jewish adults these laws must have been a constant obstacle and determining parameter if they planned their life paths in the Bohemian lands or elsewhere in the Austrian Empire. The shift of empires did not change this circumstance. Instead, we can assume that Jewish families continued to develop multiple migration scenarios and economic opportunity patterns for their children, using both transregional familial and communal networks. Scholars have pointed to common early modern Jewish migration patterns, in the case of the Bohemian lands particularly from Moravia to Hungary and from Bohemia to Austria and the Holy Roman Empire.[32] This suggests that from a Jewish perspective, we can conceive of Central Europe and its empires as interconnected spaces in which legal differences and economic opportunities of early modern origin were major long-term factors in steering migration. Retrospectively creating regionally exclusive narratives of German, Austrian, Czech, and Hungarian Jews based on modern ideas of national borders does not necessarily match the realities of Habsburg Jewries, who had to navigate and circumvent Habsburg imperial and regional administrative restrictions in ever new and creative ways in terms of mobility and migration. Utilitarian legislation under Maria Theresa and Joseph II opened new possibilities of doing so, namely entrepreneurial opportunities, military service, and access to public primary and secondary education.[33] Yet, the legal restrictions on Jewish settlement that required transregional mobility in the first place remained in place for Bohemian Jews until the mid-19th century. Only in 1848/49 did Austrian imperial legislation break this barrier. That Bohemian Jewish mobility and migration patterns after the imperial shift of 1804/06 mostly pertained to the same imperial regions of Central Europe speaks to a continuous early modern spatial understanding and sphere of activity of Habsburg Jewish life paths.

31 Miller, *Rabbis and Revolution,* 33–40.

32 Silber, "The Making of Habsburg Jewry in the Long Eighteenth Century," 768, 769, 775. Věra Leininger, *Auszug aus dem Ghetto: Rechtsstellung und Emanzipationsbemühungen der Juden in Prag in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Singapore: Kuda Api Press, 2006), 57–68.

33 Michael Silber, "From Tolerated Aliens to Citizen-Soldiers: Jewish Military Service in the Era of Joseph II," in *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe,* eds. Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit (New York: Berghahn, 2005), 19–36.

6 Conclusion

Early modern Jewish history studies complement and enhance many of the core topics that traditional Habsburg studies discuss as key terms for the Austrian Empire: internal migration; inconsistent but intentional policies towards (religious) minorities; imperial institution-building; noble power accumulation; legal pluralism; and transnational economic networks, to name but a few. These phenomena, which – depending on one's interpretation – either led to the eventual downfall of the Austrian Empire or its long-term stability beforehand, have a long "prehistory" in early modern Europe that deserves greater attention. It is likely that Habsburg Jewries, alongside Habsburg nobles, navigated the structural remnants of the Holy Roman Empire in the emerging Austrian Empire particularly well due to their long-standing familiarity with the legal structures of imperial institutions as well as the socioeconomic practices within courtly societies.

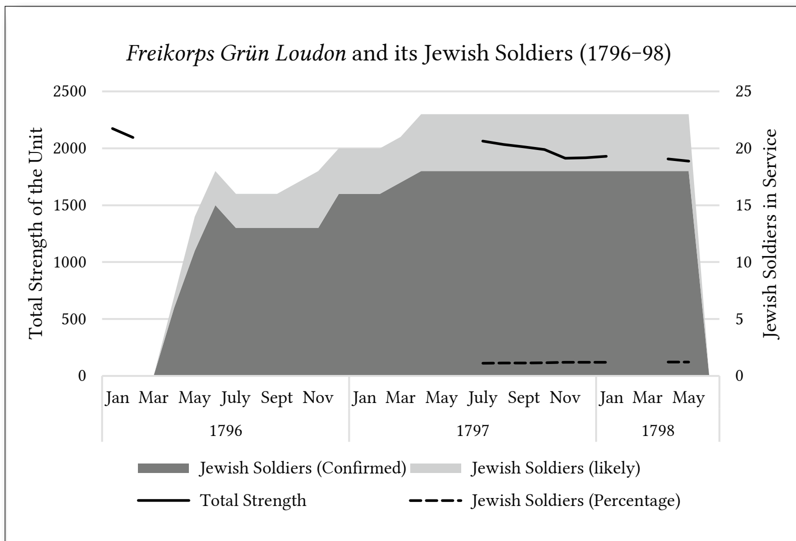
More in-depth research on the continuities of legal traditions, like the transformation of the legal status of Jews from subjects under imperial law to those under territorial and state law, as well as the role of Jews within developing noble economies from the 17th to the 19th centuries could alter our understanding of European Jewish history more broadly. The current narrative of a Jewish path towards modernity predominantly centers on the Haskalah and Joseph II's toleration legislation in the Habsburg lands that was echoed in other parts of Europe. The focus on Jewish entrepreneurship in urban and semi-urban protoindustrial environments has prioritized the dominant perspective of a radical transformation of Jewish economic profiles at the turn of the 19th century. A reconsideration of Jewish men and women who were not in the immediate orbit of the emerging Jewish middle class, but who remained under noble protection and in the service of noble court societies and their economic structures beyond 1804/06 might uncover a simultaneous but different economic continuity. This may diversify and enrich our understanding of Jewish history. The conditions manifested in the Habsburg lands might also have parallels in other European societies where the Jews' route to citizenship was substantially delayed and noble power holders continued to determine the conditions of Jewish life.

To disregard the historic continuum of those Habsburg Jewish men and women who previously lived in the Holy Roman Empire in the narrative of

Austrian imperial history turns a blind eye towards their deeply entrenched experiences and expectations. These frames of reference informed their sense of civic allegiance and political alliances long before 1804/06. It can moreover be assumed that these continuities were not limited to the Jewish subjects of the two empires, but mirrored the life experiences and perceptions of other social groups in courtly circles and other marginalized societies as well.[34]

A reconsideration of the imperial political periodization of 1804 in favor of an interdisciplinary engagement with early modern social and minority studies would enhance our understanding of premodern continuities and the legacies that carried over into the Austrian Empire. Abandoning either-or binaries and seeking out imperial practices and frameworks that overlapped between the Holy Roman Empire and the consolidating Habsburg Monarchy that was to become the Austrian Empire could highlight the liminal spaces that Central Europeans navigated so comfortably for over a century. By the same token, scholars of Jewish history could revisit their current periodization focusing on the Enlightenment and emancipation and move on to explore how early modern imperial framework and the transition of empires might have impacted and informed the self-perception of the diverse Jewish societies in the Habsburg lands.

34 See by comparison Andreas Helmedach, "Bevölkerungspolitik im Zeichen der Aufklärung: Zwangsumsiedlung und Zwangsassimilierung im Habsburgerreich des 18. Jahrhunderts – eine noch ungelöste Forschungsaufgabe," *Comparativ* 6, no. 1 (1996): 41–62; Ulrich Niggemann, "Migration in der Frühen Neuzeit: Ein Literaturbericht," *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 43, no. 2 (2016): 293–321.



Within a year of the outset of Jewish recruiting into the *Freikorps,* Jews comprised more than one per cent of the unit's strength. Source: Ilya Berkovich.

Jewish Mercenaries in Habsburg Service: Soldiers of the *Freikorps Grün Loudon* (1796–98)

*by Ilya Berkovich**

Abstract

This article aims to demonstrate the exceptional potential of Habsburg military records for the study of Jewish history during Europe's Age of Revolution. We begin with the random discovery of six Jewish veterans of *Freikorps Grün Loudon* – a unit of mercenary freebooters – which fought for the Habsburgs during the first war against the French Republic (1792–97). A careful re-reading of the available archival evidence reveals that these men were the survivors of a much larger group numbering at least two dozen Jewish soldiers. While Jewish conscripts had been drafted into the Habsburg army since 1788, the fact that Jews could also serve – even volunteer – as professional soldiers in that period is completely new to us. When considered together, the personal circumstances and service experiences of the Jewish soldiers of *Freikorps Grün Loudon* enable us to make several observations about their motivation as well as their position vis-à-vis their non-Jewish comrades.

1 Introduction

In 1788, the Habsburg Monarchy became the first state in modern history to draft Jews into military service. Jewish soldiers continued to serve in the Habsburg army until the final collapse of Austro-Hungary at the end of the First World War. Thus, Habsburg history and Jewish military history was intertwined for exactly 130 years. The current article deals with the early part of that period, in the immediate aftermath of Joseph II's conscription edict. The parity established by the Habsburg Emperor between his Jewish and Christian subjects – at least as far as compulsory military service was concerned – was soon to produce another novelty: the long-established ban on voluntary

* I am grateful to the editors of this volume and to Debbie Bryce for their help with this article.

enlistment of Jews into the army was lifted. Closely following the footsteps of the first Jewish conscripts in the last Habsburg-Ottoman War (1788–91), the Jewish professional soldier was to re-appear on history's stage.[1]

In the autumn of 1802, the 13th Line Infantry Regiment *Reisky* had a total of 76 Jewish soldiers. Unlike almost every other Habsburg regular infantry formation under the Upper and Inner Austrian Military Command, the 13th Regiment did have a small Jewish population living directly within its primary conscription district in Friuli. Although the local Jewish community of Gorizia (Görz) was formally allocated a quota of three conscripts per year,[2] none of the Jewish soldiers of the 13th Regiment came from there. Instead, 70 of these men were conscripts raised through the Regiment's auxiliary recruitment district in Galicia, as well as transferees from other line infantry regiments.[3] The remaining six soldiers – Mayer Fuchskehl, Mayer Geldmann, Wolf Kritz, Isack Lanzek, and Berko Reiner as well as the convert Franz Eisen (formerly Israel Eusen) – were veterans of a German mercenary unit called *Freikorps Grün Loudon* (hereafter *FKGL*).

2 Contextualizing the Discovery

Not to be confused with the 20th century paramilitary formations which bore the same name, the original *Freikorps* were light infantry units specializing in irregular warfare. In the 18th century, when the bulk of the infantry focused on large battlefield maneuvers in tight formations, operations behind enemy lines were assigned to a special type of troops. As implied by their name, the *Freikorps* did not form part of the standing army but were raised *ad hoc* for the duration of a particular war. Operating on the fringes of the main field army, the *Freikorps* engaged in what contemporaries called *petite-guerre,* involving outpost duty, raids, reconnaissance, and skirmishing in woods and broken terrain. Service in the *Freikorps* could be more exciting but it was also more dangerous. While the main army would usually engage in several

1 For an earlier instance of this phenomenon, see: Bezalel Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).

2 Erwin A. Schmidl, *Habsburgs jüdische Soldaten, 1788–1918* (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 2014), 53.

3 Austrian State Archives [hereafter ÖStA], Military Archive [hereafter KA], *Musterlisten* [hereafter ML] 10.045/6. On the Galician auxiliary recruitment districts, see Alfons von Wrede, *Geschichte der k. und k. Wehrmacht,* 5 Vols. (Vienna: Seidel, 1898–1905), Vol. 1, 103.

pitched battles each year, the *Freikorps* were to fight continuously. Furthermore, small raiding parties could not encumber themselves with prisoners. Hence, the stated ethos of the *Freikorps* troops was that quarter was neither sought nor given.

But with higher risk came a reward. The *Freikorps* were a surviving vestige of an earlier time when soldiers felt entitled to supplement their meagre pay by unleashing the tax of violence on the civilian population. Regular infantrymen were glad to plunder, but because they fought in close formation under direct officer supervision, opportunities for booty were largely limited. Free-roaming *Freikorps* soldiers did not have such constraints and could rape and pillage with impunity.[4] To reinforce their appeal further, *Freikorps* were issued with extravagant uniforms. Although not belonging to either elite branch, *Freikorps* troops sported bearskin caps, braided dolmans, fur-trimmed pelisses, or other elements of grenadier or hussar dress. Unlike the collective precision and obedience of the line infantry, service in the *Freikorps* required savviness and initiative. Therefore, these units adopted a daredevil attitude and offered recourse for adventurers, renegades, smugglers, poachers and deserters.[5] All in all the self-fashioning of these early modern military formations bears distinct similarities to that of modern commandos and private military contractors. While the presence of Jewish soldiers among regular Habsburg troops during the initial phase of the French Wars is known, even if little studied, the fact that Jews served – let alone volunteered – in such a unit as the *FKGL* is new to scholarship.

Composed primarily of Prussian renegades and impressed prisoners of war, the original *Grenadier Batallione Grün Loudon* gained notoriety during the Seven Years War (1756–63) for its aggressive fighting spirit and high desertion rates. More than a generation later, in early 1790, several *Freikorps*

4 For the tax of violence more generally, and on soldiers who augmented their pay with rape in particular, see John A. Lynn, *Giant of the Grand Siècle: The French Army, 1610–1715* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 184–196.

5 For the best available introduction on 18th century *Freikorps,* their tactical deployment, their collective military ethos, and the treatment their men inflicted on civilians, see Sandrine Picaud-Monnerat, *La petite guerre au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Economica, 2010). Also valuable is Martin Rink, "Die noch ungezähmte Bellona: Der kleine Krieg und die Landbevölkerung in der frühen Neuzeit," in *Militär und ländliche Gesellschaft in der frühen Neuzeit,* Herrschaft und soziale Systeme in der frühen Neuzeit 1, eds. Stefan Kroll and Kersten Krüger (Hamburg: LIT, 2000), 165–189.

were raised to provide a light infantry force for the Habsburg army sent to quell the uprising in the Austrian Netherlands. One of these formations was to enlist foreign volunteers in the Holy Roman Empire. To boost its image and recruitment prospects, its officers were allowed to draw on the memory of the first Green Loudon *Freikorps* by taking its name and green uniforms.[6] This second *FKGL* continued to serve in the First Coalition War against Revolutionary France (1792–97). As the conflict dragged on, the Rhineland, which served as its primary recruitment area, first became a war zone and then was lost to the enemy. As a result, the *FKGL* shifted its main recruitment efforts to Galicia where the bulk of the monarchy's Jewish population lived. This is where the six veterans named above were originally enlisted into the Habsburg army.

Their service records indicate that all six men were native-born Habsburg subjects. Eusen, Fuchskehl, Kritz and Lanzeck were enlisted in their late teens; Geldmann was in his mid-twenties, while Reiner was 35 years old when he originally took the bounty. Reiner was not only the eldest of the group but also the only one who was married. He also had two children: a daughter, Ades (b. 1788), and a son, Moyses (b. 1790). Three of the Jewish veterans had a civilian profession: furrier, barber and comb-maker. The height of all six men is recorded in Theresian feet. At metric equivalents, Geldmann was the tallest at 168.52 cm, while Reiner at 158 cm was the shortest. Their enlistment dates indicate that five of the six soldiers took service within weeks of each other in spring 1796. After the *FKGL* was disbanded in summer 1798, the men were transferred into the 4th Light Battalion in whose ranks they fought in the Italian theatre during the Second Coalition War (1799–1801). When the Habsburg army was subsequently downscaled, these six veterans were transferred again, this time into the regular infantry.

6 For the service records of both units, see Wrede, *Geschichte,* Vol. 2, 431, 445–446.

3 The Archival Sources

The service itineraries of these six Jewish soldiers demonstrate the detailed and varied data available in the records of the Military Archive (*Kriegsarchiv*) in Vienna. Despite its reputation as militarily backward, the Habsburg army was a frontrunner in assembling and collating the personal data of its officers and men. In peacetime, annual musters were held in which detailed tables describing entire military units were compiled. Name, birthplace, age, marital status, profession, children (with names and ages) and a summary of individual service was meticulously recorded for each man. The latter included the enlistment date and category (providing a crucial breakdown between conscripts and volunteers), promotions, desertions, periods as prisoner of war, and transfers between different units. Religion was also noted. Jews were recorded as *Jüdisch, Hebräer* or *Israelit.* Thus, whether one pursues historical or genealogical research, Jewish soldiers are easily identifiable. About half of the peacetime musters of 1802 to 1804 for the entire Habsburg army survive. For 1811 and 1817, there are no gaps in the records. The total number of Jewish soldiers from the period of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars is estimated at 35,000 men at least.[7] This means that the musters alone preserve the data of tens of thousands of Jewish soldiers. Apart from a few unit musters,[8] this material has not been used until now.

However, the data collected by the Habsburg army does not stop here. Musters were held only in peacetime years. In wartime, a simplified procedure took place known as *Revision.* Nominal lists of all men within a unit were prepared but without their personal data. Changes in manpower were recorded similarly to the muster, allowing us to trace the fates of individual soldiers year on year. Furthermore, when a soldier was originally taken into service an enlistment certificate (*Assent-Liste*) was prepared noting the data which would then be entered into the regimental personnel inventory (*Grundbuch*). Transfer between units was noted in a *Transferierungs-Liste* – drafted according to the same tabular principle, listing all the personal data of the

7 Michael K. Silber, “The Making of Habsburg Jewry in the Long-Eighteenth Century,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism,* eds. William D. Davies and Louis Finkelstein, 8 Vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984–2021), Vol. 7, 763–97 here 792.

8 Max Grünwald, *Österreichs Juden in den Befreiungskriegen* (Leipzig: M. W. Kaufmann, 1908), 21–25. This information is repeated in: Schmidl, *Habsburgs jüdische Soldaten,* 55.

men concerned. Unlike the revisions and musters, the survival of enlistment and transfer certificates is variable. However, when these are consulted additional Jewish soldiers can be identified whose religion would otherwise not be known.

Another important group of Habsburg military records are the monthly manpower reports known as *Standes-Tabellen.* These include nominal lists of soldiers joining or leaving the unit, as well as hospitalizations, arrests and detached service. Once we identify individual Jewish soldiers through the combination of musters, enlistment certificates and transfer papers, we can reconstruct their service from their units' monthly reports. Finally, even when no religious affiliation is stated, Jewish soldiers can be inferred by their names. Name alone cannot confirm religion, but when cross-referenced with the origin, enlistment dates, and personal circumstances of confirmed Jewish personnel within the same unit, a reasonable identification may be reached. Using these methods and consulting all surviving papers of the *FKGL,* it is possible to determine that the six veterans who served in 1802 with the 13th Regiment were but a small part of a larger cohort. The total number of Jews who served in the *FKGL* between 1796 and 1798 numbered at least two dozen. Their complete service records are collated into the accompanying dataset available on the open repository Zenodo.[9] A summary of their service itineraries appears in Table 1.

4 Motivations and Experiences

When these records are considered together, several observations can be made. Although the *FKGL* was recruiting continuously up to its disbandment, 19 out of its 27 Jewish soldiers were enlisted in spring 1796. In fact, seven of them appeared on the same *Assent-Liste* issued in Brody on April 7, 1796. Such concentration cannot be explained by statistical distribution suggesting another reason. In the autumn of 1796, the relaxation of conscription obligations introduced in 1790 under Emperor Leopold II (1747–1792) was revoked. The Jewish communities were then no longer able to buy out their quota of conscripts. Men were required either to report for service or raise a substitute:

9 Ilya Berkovich, 'Jewish Soldiers of the Green Loudon Freikorps (1796–1798)' [Data set]. Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8341908, accessed on October 3, 2023.

money payments into the local *Kriegskassa* would no longer do.[10] From that moment on, Jews who wanted to serve voluntarily in the army had far better financial prospects. They could either come forward on behalf of their community or offer themselves as substitutes for a wealthy draftee. Both options entailed a substantial supplement above the enlistment bounty. To put this into perspective, the army paid three Gulden to a conscript, ten to a native volunteer, and up to 41 to a foreigner. In the latter two scenarios, up to two thirds of the sum was deducted for equipment and travel expenses.[11] By comparison, payments to substitutes could easily come to 30 or 40 Gulden in cash. Hence, from that moment on enlistment into the regular army offered better financial prospects. Those who choose to enlist in a *Freikorps* after that date must have had other motives. Some are alluded to above.

From the Jewish soldiers of the *FKGL* whose birthplaces are known, native Habsburg subjects outnumber foreign Jews more than two to one. This is in line with what is known about other mercenary formations from the early modern period.[12] Their birthplaces reveal a further fact. The Jewish soldiers of the *FKGL* came predominantly from the eastern part of Galicia, from both sides of the Russian border. When one looks at known places of enlistment, the proportion of recruits from that region is even higher. Ten were enlisted in Brody and another nine in Tarnopil (Tarnopol). This could be due to the initiative of the local recruiting detachments. Furthermore, *Freikorps* were happy to recruit smugglers, who were common among the Jewish communities in that region.[13] Lastly, one may compare the experience of Jewish soldiers with their non-Jewish comrades. As already noted, *Freikorps* troops had higher turnover rates than the regular infantry. Desertion was the highest single loss factor. Between February 18, 1796 and March 7, 1798, the *FKGL* recorded a total of 946 desertion cases. In comparison, within that timeframe 1,218 recruits were enlisted into the unit, while the overall strength of the

10 Michael Hochedlinger, *Thron & Gewehr: das Problem der Heeresergänzung und die "Militarisierung" der Habsburgermonarchie im Zeitalter des Aufgeklärten Absolutismus (1740–1790)* (Graz: Steiermärkisches Landesarchiv, 2021), 675–676.

11 Ilya Berkovich, "The Unlikely Case of the Jewish Mercenary Nathan Leibowitz (1777–1810)," *Mars & Clio* (January 2023), 19–24, here 19–20.

12 Peter H. Wilson, *Iron and Blood: A Military History of the German-speaking Peoples since 1500* (London: Penguin, 2022), 335.

13 Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, *The Golden Age Shtetl: A New History of Jewish Life in East Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 74–94.

Freikorps rarely rose above 2,000 men (Graph 1).[14] Of our 27 Jewish soldiers, 11 deserted either during their time with the *FKGL* or from the units to which they were subsequently transferred. Conscripts were kept in service at least in part by the knowledge that their families could be punished if they deserted. *Freikorps* volunteers had no such qualms. Besides, service as light infantry offered more opportunities to abscond. The same goes for three of the four Jewish soldiers who eventually converted to Catholicism. As stated above, *Freikorps* soldiers tended to be free spirits and not the most stable types.[15] Last but not least, as shown by the case of Samuel Prager who rose to become a *Feldwebel* – the most senior non-commissioned officer in a company of 100 to 200 soldiers – being a Jew was not an impediment to promotion. In fact, it is hard to find another activity in which Jews could attain such authority over non-Jews until general emancipation in the latter half of the 19th century.

5 Conclusion

After an initial period of bewilderment, Jewish communal leadership came to accept conscription as yet another unfortunate obligation under the principle of obeying the law of the land (*Dina d'malkhuta dina*).[16] Our focused case study of the *FKGL* reveals that individual Jews could view military service as a new opportunity to be embraced proactively. Conclusive evidence concerning their motives must await the re-discovery of first-hand accounts.[17] Until then, some indications are provided by the experience of their non-Jewish contemporaries who chose to enlist voluntarily. Army service gave an outlet for ambitions that young men could not easily pursue within their home communities, be it a craving for adventure, a desire for money, or – perhaps the

14 Figures calculated from ÖSTA KA ML 10.763, 10.771, 10.772 and 10.773.

15 For more on the links between conversion, desertion and abandonment, see Ilya Berkovich, "Nachweis von Konfession und Religion in habsburgischen Militärmatriken," *Die Habsburgermonarchie* (January 10, 2020) https://habsmon.hypotheses.org/473 (accessed April 14, 2023).

16 Michael Brenner, "Von Untertanen zum Bürger," in *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit: Band II, Emanzipation und Akkulturation,* ed. Michael A. Mayer (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1996), 260–284, here 266–268.

17 For a contemporary ego-document of a Jewish soldier who fought on the side of the French revolutionaries, see the letter of Getschel (i.e. Gabriel) Bloch, in Étienne Bloch, *Marc Bloch, 1886–1944: Une biographie impossible* (Limoges: Culture & Patrimoine en Limousin, 1997), 32–33.

most prominent motive – to dramatically change one's circumstances.[18] It should be noted that the material presented here is but the tip of the iceberg. The *ML* series of the Austrian State Archives holds more than 12,000 cartons. These cover the personal data of hundreds of thousands of soldiers, as well as wives and children. About half of the material covers the period when Jews were already active in the Habsburg army, representing unprecedented potential for Jewish history. Jewish and Habsburg studies specialists who would like to engage with this rich military resource will be amply rewarded.

[18] Ilya Berkovich, *Motivation in War: The Experience of Common Soldiers in Old-Regime Europe* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 144–164.

Table 1 Jewish Soldiers of *Freikorps Grün Loudon* (1796–1798)

Name	Biodata		Born in		Marital Status	Civilian Profession
	From	To	Place	Land		
Beermann, Salomon [?]		d. 1800				
Faletnicker, Salomon	1777	fl. 1796	Brody	East Galicia [N]	Single	None
Forgel, Simko	1772/6	fl. 1802	Brody	East Galicia [N]	Single	None
Isakowitz, Rachmiul	1780	fl. 1799	Brody	East Galicia [N]	Single	None
Kritz, Wolf/Wolfgang	1768/76	fl. 1805	Brody	East Galicia [N]	Single	None
Herz, Markus	1780	fl. 1796	Tulchyn	New Russia [F]	Single	None
Lanzeck, Isack	1781	fl. 1805	Brody	East Galicia [N]	Single	None
Geldmann, Mayer	1772	fl. 1805	*Szaslau*	Galicia [N]	Single	None
Baisichowitz, Löwel	1763	fl. 1796	Lutsk	New Russia [F]	Single	None
Dagenstreich, Markus	1776	d. 1800	Skalat	East Galicia [N]	Single	None
Rosenstein, Abraham [?]		fl. 1799				
Schwarz, Itzig/ [†] Ternawsky, Sebastian		d. 1799				
Deres, Jüdel	1776	fl. 1802	Ternopil	East Galicia [N]	Single	Combmaker
Liebe, Michael [?]		fl. 1799				
Fuchskehl, Mayer	1777	fl. 1803	Ternopil	East Galicia [N]	Single	Barber
Abrahamovitz, Mayer/ [†] Pituminsky, Franz Carl		fl. 1801				
Speiser, Jacob		fl. 1802	Ternopil	East Galicia [N]	Married	Bathhouse attendant
Tiller, Abraham	1766	d. 1798	*Neustad*	Pruss. Poland [F]	Married	None
Eusen, Israel/ [†] Franz Eisen	1781	fl. 1809	Brody	East Galicia [N]	Single	Tailor
Blum, Jonas/Thomas [?]		fl. 1796				
Pfeiffer, David [?]		fl. 1799				
Benjaminowitz, Nachmann/ [†] Rosansky, Lorenz	1775	fl. 1806	Hrodna	Russian Poland [F]	Single	None
Lewyck, Moises	1777	d. 1800	Zavallya	New Russia [F]	Single	Tailor
Prager, Samuel	1776	fl. 1802	Lviv	East Galicia [N]	Single	None
Reiner Berko/Peter	1761	d. 1802	Ulanów	East Galicia [N]	Married	Furrier
Hotkes, Hersz [?]		fl. 1799				
Mendel Berl	1775	d. 1800	*Jerroflotz*	South Prussia [F]	Single	Distiller

Symbols and Abbreviations

[?] – No documentary record for religion survives
[†] – Baptized as

d. – died
fl – alive

[N] – Native Habsburg subject
[F] – Foreigner

Enlistment Date	Service Record Summary
21/03/1796	▸ LB 4. Detached duty guarding military cattle. Died in hospital in Este in August 1800.
21/03/1796	Deserted in July 1796 on the march from Galicia to Germany.
26/03/1796	▸ GR 2 due to deteriorating health in 1797. Deserted from Tartakiv in December 1802.
26/03/1796	Deserted from Treviso; returned himself. ▸ LB 4. MIA near Genoa in December 1799.
26/03/1796	▸ LB 4 then IR 13. Furloughed to Galicia in late 1802. Discharged in July 1805.
28/03/1796	Deserted in July 1796 on the march from Galicia to Germany.
28/03/1796	▸ LB 4 then IR 13. Serves as ArtAux in 1800. Furloughed in 1802. Discharged in 1805.
02/04/1796	▸ LB 4 then IR 13, Furloughed in late 1802 to Galicia. Discharged in July 1805.
09/04/1796	Deserted in July 1796 on the march from Galicia to Germany.
11/04/1796	▸ LB 3. Deserted in 1799 but returned himself. Died in hospital in Montagnana in 1800.
11/04/1796	▸ LB 3. POW in April 1799 three days after the Battle of Magnano.
11/04/1796	Baptised in Rovigo together with soldiers Abrahamowitz and Benjamowitz just before the *FKGL* was disbanded ▸ LB 3. Died in hospital in Vicenza in October 1799.
12/04/1796	▸ LB 3 then IR 44. Discharged in July 1802 after raising a substitute at his own expense.
12/04/1796	▸ LB 4. POW on 15th December 1799 during operations in the Ligurian Riviera.
13/04/1796	▸ LB 4 then IR 13. POW at Dego. Exchanged in 1801. Deserted from furlough in 1803.
01/05/1796	▸ LB 3. MIA in November 1799. In July 1800 re-appeared in Kitzingen, Germany as a returning deserter. Sent back to his unit in Italy but never arrived. Struck off in April 1801.
02/05/1796	▸ LB 3 then IR 44. In February 1802 furloughed to Galicia. Discharged in July that year by order of the Regional Command in Padua after raising a substitute.
06/05/1796	Shortly after his transfer to LB 3, drowned in a water channel near Rovigo.
28/05/1796	▸ LB 4. Converted in Rovigo in January 1799. POW in August 1799, but was exchanged one week later. Unsuccessful desertion attempt in November 1799. POW again at the Battle of Montebello. ▸ in 1808 to the Carinthian-Carniolan Border Cordon. MIA during the retreat from Italy as member of the 9th Sanitary Company in May 1809.
16/10/1796	Deserted in December 1796 on the march from Galicia.
09/11/1796	▸ LB 4 while still on the march from Galicia. Never arrived in Italy. Struck off in 1799.
04/12/1796	▸ LB 3 then IR 44. Deserted in April 1801 but returned voluntarily to Legnano. In November that year renewed his service contract for another six years. Promoted to NCO during the war of 1805. In 1806, put on detached service on board the Austrian navy. Deserted in December that year from a *Cannoier Schalupe* (either gunboat or a sloop-of-war).
13/12/1796	▸ LB 3. POW on 8th May 1799 near Stradella. Exchanged two days later at Casa Laschi. Died in hospital in Padua in April 1800.
24/12/1796	▸ LB 4. In December 1798 first promotion to NCO, initially as Vice Corporal. Full Corporal from April 1799 and 2nd *Feldwebel* from October that year. In Winter 1800–1, hospitalised in Montegnano. After return to active service, promoted to 1st *Feldwebel.* After LB 4 was disbanded, allocated to IR 29 in Bohemia. Discharged from the army in February 1802.
12/02/1797	▸ LB 4 then IR 44. In early 1799, spent time as a cook. Subsequently served 10 months as ArtAux. Died in Vienna while on march back home to Galicia.
22/04/1797	▸ LB 3 while still on the march from Galicia. Never arrived and struck off in April 1799.
25/05/1797	▸ LB 3. Died in Florence in February 1800.

N.B. All transfers to LB 3 and LB 4 took place in July 1798. All transfers to IR 13 took place in September 1801 and to IR 44 in November 1801.
ArtAux – Artillery Auxiliary; IR – Line Infantry Regiment; LB – Light Battalion; MIA – Missing in Action; NCO – Non-Commissioned Officer; POW – Prisoner of War
▸ Transferred to

Statt jeder besonderen Anzeige.

Gramgebeugt geben wir hiemit Nachricht von dem Ableben unseres innigstgeliebten unvergesslichen Gatten, resp. Bruders, Vaters, Schwiegervaters und Grossvaters, des Herrn

David Herzl

Zahnarztes, gew. Armenrates des I. Bezirkes

welches im 84. Lebensjahre nach einem langen wirkungsreichen Leben Mittwoch früh den 8. Mai 1918 erfolgte.

Das Leichenbegängnis fand am 10. d. M. in aller Stille auf dem Zentralfriedhofe (israel. Abteilung) statt.

Karoline Herzl geb. **Luk**, als Gattin.
Fritz Werner, Gustav Werner, als Söhne.
Adele Fuchs, Frieda Frieser, Rosa Kleinberger, Helene Lichtblau, Paula Hauser, Olga Fischer, als Töchter.
Salomon Herzl, als Bruder.
Architekt **Leopold Fuchs, Dr. J. W. Frieser, Sigmund Kleinberger, Isidor Lichtblau,** Leutnant **Richard Hauser,** dzt. im Felde, **Hugo Fischer,** als Schwiegersöhne.
Sämtliche Enkel.

Statt jeder besonderen Anzeige.

Vom tiefsten Schmerze gebeugt, geben wir allen Bekannten und Freunden die Nachricht von dem Ableben unseres teuren, unvergesslichen Vaters, resp. Schwiegervaters und Grossvaters, des Herrn

Nathan Goldenberg

Grossgrundbesitzers und Kultuspräsidenten aus Strzyloze, Galizien

welcher am 10. Mai 1918 im 71. Lebensjahre sanft entschlummert ist.

Die Beerdigung findet Sonntag den 12. d. M. um 11 Uhr 15 Minuten vormittags auf dem Zentralfriedhofe (israel. Abteilung, 1. Tor) statt.

Adolf Goldenberg, Isidor Goldenberg, Eva Baran geb. **Goldenberg, Charlotte Margulies** geb. **Goldenberg, Frida Rosenbaum** geb. **Goldenberg,** als Kinder.
Sämtliche Schwiegertöchter, Schwiegersöhne, Enkel und Enkelinnen.

Mit gebrochenem Herzen geben die Unterzeichneten Nachricht von dem Ableben ihrer innigstgeliebten, unvergesslichen Gattin, respective Mutter, Tochter, Schwiegertochter, Schwester und Schwägerin, der Frau

Gisela Löwy geb. Pfeifer,

welche Donnerstag den 4. Juni 1903 in der Blüthe ihrer Lebenszeit nach 19jähriger überaus glücklicher Ehe im 36. Lebensjahre selig und sanft entschlummert ist.

Das Leichenbegängniss findet Freitag den 5. d. M., Nachmittags 3 Uhr, vom Trauerhause: IX., Berggasse 11 aus, statt.

Jacques Löwy jun., als Gatte.
Richard Löwy, Fritz Löwy, Paul Löwy, als Kinder.
10752 **Franz Pfeifer, Elisabeth Pfeifer,** als Eltern.
Ilona Gyömröi, Miksa Pfeifer, Izsó Pfeifer, Jozsef Petény, als Geschwister.
Moriz Löwy, als Schwiegervater.
Wilhelm Löwy, M. Manó Gyömröi, Josef Stauber, Carl Stein, als Schwäger.
Helene Löwy, Kathi Stauber, Fany Stein, als Schwägerinnen.

Statt jeder besonderen Anzeige.

In tiefster Erschütterung geben wir Nachricht vom Ableben unserer innigstgeliebten Gattin, resp. Mutter, Grossmutter und Schwiegermutter, der Frau

TONI REICH

welche Samstag den 11. Mai 1918, 4 Uhr früh, nach langem, schwerem Leiden im 58. Lebensjahre sanft verschieden ist.

Die Bestattung der teuren Verblichenen findet Dienstag den 14. d. M., 11 Uhr vormittags, auf dem Zentralfriedhofe (israel. Abteil.), I. Tor, statt.

Moriz Hermann Reich, als Gatte.
Anna Herzog, Rosa Löwenherz, Saba Löwy, Bronka Jakobius, Lola Reich, als Kinder.
Landesrat Dozent **Dr. Dawid Herzog, Dr. Heinrich Löwenherz, Johann Löwy, Dr. Ludwig Jakobius,** als Schwiegersöhne.
Heinrich und **Leon Weinberger,** als Brüder.
Anna Reich, als Schwiegermutter.
Robert und **Fritz Herzog, Richard Löwenherz, Lilly, Irene Jakobius,** als Enkelkinder.
Und sämtliche Schwäger und Schwägerinnen

Man bittet, von Kranzspenden und Kondolenzbesuchen abzusehen.

1) Obituary of David Herzl, Neue Freie Presse, Vienna, 12. 5. 1918, p. 20, Source: ANNO/Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.
2) Obituary of Nathan Goldenberg, Neue Freie Presse, Vienna, 12. 5. 1918, p. 20, Source: ANNO/Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.
3) Obituary of Gisela Löwy, née Pfeifer, Neue Freie Presse, Vienna, 5. 6. 1903, p. 18, Source: ANNO/Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Members of the family have mostly modern German and Hungarian first names. One brother changed his German family name Pfeifer to the Hungarian Petény.
4) Obituary of Toni Reich, née Weinberger, Neue Freie Presse, Vienna, 12. 5. 1918, p. 20, Source: ANNO/Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Her Yiddish name was Toybe. The family members have mostly German family names and modern German first names.

Between Legibility, Emancipation, and Markers of “Otherness”: The Habsburg Empire and the Names of Jews

by Johannes Czakai[1]

Abstract

The article analyzes the interdependences between the history of the Habsburg Empire and the names of its Jewish inhabitants. Until today, these names tell stories about this close relationship and they are an everlasting symbol of this era. By focusing on names, this paper shows how state policies towards Jews shifted over time, and how the perspective on names and name regulations can be a tool to connect and investigate both Habsburg and Jewish studies.

1 Introduction

Between 1785 and 1805 several laws and edicts ordered the Jews in the various provinces of the Habsburg Empire to adopt hereditary family names: 1785 in Galicia, 1786 in Bukovina, 1787 in almost the entire empire, and 1805 in newly annexed Western Galicia.[2] This Habsburg endeavor, which targeted only Jews, predated similar laws for Jews in other countries by almost two decades. In contrast to the naming laws in the German lands, which were predominantly influenced by the emancipation discourse of Napoleonic France, the Habsburg naming policy is often seen in a more unfavorable light. These regulations are repeatedly portrayed as emperor Joseph II’s desire to “assimilate” Jews into the naming system of a Christian majority culture, to turn them into agents of

1 I would like to thank the Martin Buber Society of Fellows at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for the valuable support that contributed significantly to the completion of this article.

2 For a comprehensive list, see Johannes Czakai, *Nochems neue Namen. Die Juden Galiziens und der Bukowina und die Einführung deutscher Vor- und Familiennamen 1772–1820* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021), 80–81.

"Germanization", or even to brutally eradicate Jewish identity and tradition.[3] However, a more thorough analysis of these names and their history challenges these old narratives. It enables us to give a more nuanced insight into a modernizing empire, its contradictory policies, and its diverse inhabitants.

2 Fluid Names

The very existence of the name regulations seems to prove that Jews and non-Jews lived in completely different cultural spheres, in which all Christians had a first and a family name, while Jews did not. However, in the early modern period, the supposed dividing border between Jewish and non-Jewish naming systems was less distinct than is often portrayed – although there were differences. In general, the naming culture of Central and Eastern European Jews was fluid. Next to the secular name, Jewish men had a religious name, while hereditary family names were not yet common.[4] Instead, Jews were often known under changing nicknames referring to their fathers, religious functions, occupations, or places of origin. Some of these names turned into hereditary (proto-)family names, especially among rabbinical and elite families (like Horowitz, Margulies, and Wertheimer) or in populous communities like Prague and Vienna. Still, nicknames as well as first names changed with situations, sources, and languages – and a person could be known under several names, like the Viennese "me'ir ben rav meshulam segal", "Mayr Jud," or "der alte Mayr."[5]

However, a similar – but not identical – fluidity can be found among non-Jews. Although in theory the system of a fixed first and a hereditary family name was common among Christians, its actual use diverged in the multicultural empire and depended on factors like class and linguistic background. Especially peasants in rural areas did not use or sometimes even know their

[3] For example, Stanisław Grodziski, "The Jewish Question in Galicia: The Reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, 1772–1790," in *Focusing on Galicia: Jews, Poles, and Ukrainians, 1772–1918* (Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry 12), eds. Israel Bartal, and Antony Polonsky (London/Portland, OR: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1999), 61–72, here 71.

[4] Alexander Beider, "Names and Naming," in *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe,* ed. Gershon David Hundert (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2008), 1248–1251.

[5] Bernhard Wachstein, *Die Inschriften des alten Judenfriedhofes in Wien: 1. Teil 1540(?)–1670* (Vienna/Leipzig: Braumüller, 1912), 54, 447; Alexander Beider, *Jewish Surnames from Prague (15th–18th Centuries)* (Teaneck, NJ: Avotaynu, 1994), 2–5

existing hereditary family, instead using only first names or nicknames in everyday life.[6]

Accordingly, on the eve of the naming regulations, the naming systems of the inhabitants of the Habsburg Empire were in general diverse. An analysis of these naming cultures helps to scrutinize the perceived dichotomy of Jewish and non-Jewish spheres, without denying that actual differences existed. They help us to ask *where* exactly these differences mattered and *who* perceived them.

3 The Name Regulations of the 1780s

The introduction of name regulations exclusively for Jews was closely connected to the emergence of the Habsburg Empire. During the reign of Maria Theresa (1717–1780, reigned since 1740) and her co-regent and heir, Joseph II (1741–1790, reigned since 1765/1780), the Habsburg Empire evolved from an amalgamation of dispersed territories to a centralized state.[7] Over the course of its expansion and modernization, hitherto local knowledge had to be turned into information that could be directly accessed by the state. In other words, the central bureaucracy had to convert space, nature, and humans into "legible" data.[8] Accordingly, the implementation of the censuses 1770–72 in the empire and 1776 in Galicia was accompanied by instructions towards the general population not to change their names.[9]

However, the first name legislation exclusively for Jews – the regulations demanding that Jewish inhabitants of Galicia (1785) and Bukovina (1786) adopt hereditary family names – went further. Both crownlands had only recently been annexed from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1772) and Moldova (1775). In order to incorporate these formerly foreign territories into the empire, the Habsburg administration built new bureaucracies and introduced numerous new laws, especially for Jews, who had a different legal status than

6 Anton Tantner, *Ordnung der Häuser, Beschreibung der Seelen: Hausnummerierung und Seelenkonskription in der Habsburgermonarchie* (Innsbruck/Vienna/Bozen: Studien-Verlag, 2007), 95–100; Ágoston Berecz, *Empty Signs, Historical Imaginaries: The Entangled Nationalization of Names and Naming in a Late Habsburg Borderland* (New York, NY: Berghahn, 2020), 260–263.

7 Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA/London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016), 16–50.

8 James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1998).

9 Tantner, *Ordnung der Häuser,* 113; see also Czakai, *Nochems neue Namen,* 170–173.

non-Jews. Regarding the significant local Jewish populations, the Habsburg administration had two main objectives: first, to prevent an increase of Jews in the provinces by restricting marriages or deporting poor families, and second, to deprive Jewish self-autonomous bodies of their political and financial powers – especially their ability to collectively raise taxes. The written registration of every individual and the accompanying introduction of fixed family names made the hitherto anonymous masses "legible" and turned them into governable and taxable individuals. In this light, the new names were an administrative attempt to undermine Jewish autonomous communal structures and subject them to state authority, while simultaneously gaining direct state access to the Jewish population of the provinces to control their taxes, their legal status, and their demographic growth.[10]

Furthermore, the name regulations highlight certain aspects of the reforms of Joseph II and his desire to transform Jews into "useful" subjects. This is apparent in the name edict of 1787, which was aimed at almost the entire empire. The 1787 edict demanded that the Jewish population in the hereditary lands as well as in Hungary and Transylvania adopt a "German" first name and a "permanent" family name.[11] The use of German had several goals: the language was gaining increasing importance as the unifying language of higher administration in the empire, as a language of education, as well as a carrier of a "civilizing mission" towards the eastern provinces, which were perceived to be backward.[12] At the same time, German was a means to combat Yiddish (and Judeo-German). Being the vernacular of the vast majority of Central and East-Central European Jews, Yiddish was perceived as an obstacle towards modern education and enlightened thinking, while its Hebrew letters posed difficulties for the German-speaking administration. In order to suppress Yiddish first names, the *Hofkanzlei* (Court Chancellery) published a list of 120 male and 40 female first names in standardized German spelling (like Gabriel and

10 Czakai, *Nochems neue Namen*, 116–185. After the annexation of "Western Galicia" in 1795, a similar name regulation for Jews was implemented in 1805.

11 The edict is printed in: Alfred F. Přibram, ed., *Urkunden und Akten zur Geschichte der Juden in Wien: Erste Abteilung, Allg. Teil, 1526–1847 (1849)* (Vienna/Leipzig: Braumüller, 1918), 582–584.

12 Larry Wolff, *The Idea of Galicia: History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2010), 13–62; Dirk Sadowski, *Haskala und Lebenswelt: Herz Homberg und die jüdischen deutschen Schulen in Galizien 1782–1806* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010).

Rosalia) that Jews were allowed to use.[13] On the other hand, the edict did not impose German family names. Apart from the prohibition to further use or adopt common Yiddish nicknames or place names, the linguistic source of the new family names was not restricted.

The regulations show that the state authorities did not intend to forcefully "Germanize" the Jewish population in an anachronistic pre-national sense. German names were predominantly an administrative necessity. Paradoxically, despite the problems these German names later caused in non-German nationalistic contexts (which I will discuss in more detail below), they were originally an expression of the demand to reduce dividing boundaries and align Jews to some extent with the non-Jewish population, no matter of which religious, cultural, or linguistic background.[14]

4 Between Constraint and Agency

The name regulations and their implementations are not only a source for the cultural history of Habsburg bureaucracy, but also a source to investigate the possibilities of Jewish agency. In the early modern period, Jews were aware of their scopes of actions and fought against discriminatory restrictions. Also, in 1787 Jewish dignitaries in Bohemia protested against several aspects of the early drafts of the 1787 edict and had the chance to slightly influence the legislature. Their concern was primarily the restriction of first names, as will be shown below, while the implementation of family names was less disputed.[15]

Except for Galicia and Bukovina, almost no comprehensive research has been conducted on the actual registration process in the provinces. However, the archival absence of protest notes as well as the scattered research literature suggests that the means was not met with much or even any resistance.[16] In fact, many family names that were registered in 1787 had been used by Jews before (like Kohn, Fränkel, Liberles, Polak, Bloch, Schlesinger), or were German adaptations (Levi turned into Löwy, Löwenstein, Löwenherz and

13 Printed in: Přibram, *Urkunden und Akten, I,* 584–585.

14 Czakai, *Nochems neue Namen,* 186–222.

15 Wenzel Žáček, "Eine Studie zur Entwicklung der jüdischen Personennamen in neuerer Zeit," *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für Geschichte der Juden in der Čechoslovakischen Republik 8* (1936): 309–97, here 321–322.

16 Lenka Matušiková, "Namensänderungen in jüdischen Familien im Jahre 1787 am Beispiel der jüdischen Gemeinde Kanitz (Dolní Kounice)," *Judaica Bohemiae 34* (1998): 107–25.

others). Although the majority of the newly registered family names in the empire was linguistically German (among the most common family names in Hungary were Schwarz, Weiß, Klein, Groß, and Deutsch), Jews had – at least in theory – the possibility to adopt names of any linguistic origin, resulting for example in the retention of Czech names like Jelinek and Kafka, which had already been used by Bohemian Jews before 1787.

In Galicia, most of the new names were not chosen by their Yiddish-speaking bearers but appointed by Austrian officials. They invented thousands of names, mostly using German nouns (like Baum, Feder, and Winter) or creating compound names (like Goldenberg, Wolkenfeld, or Lichtmann). Despite this imbalance of power, there are also scattered traces of Jewish agency, which highlight that the process was more diverse than previously known. Some Jewish dignitaries, like Dov Ber Birkenthal (1723–1805) or R. Zwi Hirsch Rosanes (d. 1804), deliberately chose family names that they used both in the inner-Jewish and in the non-Jewish sphere. Some got the help of Austrian authorities in order to register their desired name or to prevent rivals from getting theirs. There were successful as well as rejected attempts to register Yiddish or place names that the 1787 edict prohibited, while poor widows or servants often did not adopt a family name at all. Although probably most Galician Jews were indifferent towards the means, their newly registered names turned out to be a valuable instrument in dealing with Habsburg state authorities. They could be used to prove legal statuses in documents, while fake names helped their bearers to hide their identities.[17]

5 Aftermath and Later Name Changes

Joseph II's reform policy granted Habsburg Jewries certain rights, but still no full emancipation. In the first decades of the 19th century, Jews in Bohemia recognized that the ongoing restriction of their first names embodied that inequality. In 1828, they began a longstanding legal fight against the discriminatory limitation of first names and for their right to bear names, which the authorities inconsistently perceived as "Christian," like Ludwig and Emilie. Although in 1836 the *Hofkanzlei* in Vienna finally acquiesced to their demand, it took until the December Constitution of 1867, which granted equal rights to

[17] Czakai, *Nochems neue Namen,* 273–369. For an onomastic analysis of the names, see Alexander Beider, *A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from Galicia* (Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu, 2004).

all male citizens of the Austrian half of the empire, for Bohemian Jews to be free to choose the first names of their children.[18]

While first names could be changed in every generation, the predominantly German family names remained. As the historian Ruth Kestenberg-Gladstein (1910–2002) stated: "The Jews thus entered the age of nationality struggles afflicted with German names."[19] Due to the emergence of national ideologies often (but not exclusively) based on linguistic origins, names became ethnically charged symbols. Thus, their linguistic "otherness" could become an obstacle to Jewish participation in newly emerging national spheres. For example, in Hungary a nationalizing state elite sought to reshape names of places and people in order to turn them into elements of Magyarization. This Hungarian cultural nationalism exerted a strong pull on the non-Magyar middle bourgeoisie.[20] Jews, especially the Hungarian-speaking middle class in the cities, were by far the biggest group among the non-Magyars that changed their family names into Hungarian ones. In this process, for instance, Löwy became Lukács, Pfeifer became Petény, and Weinberger became Szöllősi.[21]

While name changes in Hungary were publicly promoted and even facilitated, other national movements were less inviting. The Polish national movement, for example, was more antisemitic. Accordingly, petitions by Jews to change their family names into Polish ones were much scarcer. Instead, name change petitions by Jews in Lwów/Lemberg aimed mostly at their first names. The main objective was to remove Yiddish names and adopt names that were common both in German and in Polish.[22] In Vienna, the motivation for name change petitions was either baptism, a ridiculous meaning of a family name, or that names could be perceived as too "Jewish." By being turned into less "visible" names – like Leibisch Mendel Schnupftaback changing his name to

18 Žáček, "Jüdische Personennamen," here 334–397. For a similar analysis of Prussia, see Dietz Bering, *Der Name als Stigma: Antisemitismus im deutschen Alltag 1812–1933* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1987), 63–105.

19 Ruth Kestenberg-Gladstein, *Neuere Geschichte der Juden in den böhmischen Ländern, Erster Teil, Das Zeitalter der Aufklärung 1780–1830* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1969), 69.

20 Berecz, *Empty Signs,* 6.

21 Tamás Farkas, "Jewish Name Magyarization in Hungary," *AHEA: E-Journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association* 5 (2012): 216–32.

22 Maria Vovchko, "'This Name Befits Better for Presentation of my Person': Change of Names and Surnames by the Jews of Galicia in the Late 19th – Early 20th century," in *Drohobych Regional Studies,* 17–18 (Drohobych: Kolo, 2014), 217–34 (Ukrainian).

become a Schmidt – they enabled their bearers to evade the growing antisemitism of the *fin-de-siècle.*[23]

At the same time, legends and fictitious historical narratives emerged about the creation of Jewish family names, which were based on a new perspective: the originally administrative and civilizing means was now interpreted as an act of brutal oppression and eradication of cultural identity.[24] This narrative arose from and nurtured national sentiments in the provinces – German family names in predominantly non-German environments were now perceived as a "foreign, Germanic marker"[25] and contributed to the perception of a forced cultural Germanization of the Habsburg East. Simultaneously, family names of Jews – real and invented – became a target for antisemitic jokes, while alleged names from the East were used as codes for a perceived Jewish infiltration.[26]

6 Conclusion

The names of the Jews in the Habsburg Empire are as diverse as their origins. The findings from Galicia indicate how fruitful it is to study the actual implementation of the naming regulations and Jewish reactions elsewhere. So far, we still lack comprehensive research and too little is known to draw a complete picture of the name adoption process throughout the empire. Much more research is necessary to understand the different processes between Vienna and Trieste, in rural Hungary and Silesia, among elites and peddlers. But it is clear that the study of Jewish reactions, of similarities as well as clear differences in the choice of names, offers insight into Jewish agency and self-positioning. It can widen our understanding of the different Habsburg Jewries and their interaction with the state. Furthermore, it enables us to compare

23 Anna Lea Staudacher, "'… bittet um die Bewilligung zur Änderung seines Zunamens': Der Namenswechsel von ausgrenzenden Namen der Häme und des Spottes bei Juden und Nichtuden in Wien zum Fin-de-siècle," *Österreichische Namensforschung* 34, no. 1–3 (2006): 159–82, here 172.

24 Johannes Czakai, "Of Bug Crushers and Barbaric Clerks: The Fabricated History of Jewish Family Names in Karl Emil Franzos' 'Namensstudien' (1880)," in *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book 67*, no. 1 (2022): 39–54.

25 The Polish original reads "piętno obce, germańskie," see Majer Bałaban, *Dzieje żydów w Galicyi i w Rzeczypospolitej Krakowskiej 1772–1868* (Lwów: Połoniecki, 1914), 44.

26 See also Bering, *Der Name als Stigma.*

their choices and circumstances with the name adoption process that began in German lands only twenty years later.

During the 19th century, both the Jewish and the non-Jewish public began to have an idea of what a "Jewish" name looked like. Due to the absence of other visible markers of difference, Christian anti-Judaism, national movements, and modern antisemitic agitation sought to turn the names of Jews into markers of "otherness" – alleged onomastic borders that could not always be logically or consistently maintained. Accordingly, the further research of these attempts as well as the handling of Habsburg Jewries with their inherited names offers new perspectives on the diverse society and national movements of the late Habsburg Empire.

The focus on the name – a supposed commonplace shared by all humans, ranging between basic necessity and powerful symbol of belonging or distinction – allows us to challenge established narratives and question alleged boundaries and antagonisms. Names enable us to see the diversity of Jewries and the various relationships between Jews and the state, Jews and non-Jews, and Jews amongst each other, as well as the importance of languages and cultural affiliations. Many of the family names that were created in the 1780s exist until today and still shape the way we remember the Habsburg Empire. They are footprints – remnants of the complexity of a multilingual empire.

School certificate of a Jewish student, Naftali Engelhardt, who frequented sixth grade of male public school in Gorlice. Visible signature of his teacher of religion A. Lecker. Source: National Archive in Przemyśl, collection: Akta szkół – zbiór szczątków zespołów, no 395, sign. 44, p. 73.

Shared Spaces: Jews in Public Schools in Galicia

by Alicja Maślak-Maciejewska

Abstract

Galicia was home to the largest Jewish population of the Cisleithanian part of the Habsburg Empire. After the Josephinian "German-Jewish schools" had closed already in 1806, educational patterns differed from those in Moravia and Bohemia, where Jewish children received a secular education in a more consistent "Jewish" space. In Galicia in the constitutional era (post-1867), however, with mandatory education enforced, public schools became a shared space in which Jews and (Catholic) Christians functioned together. In Galicia, most Jewish children received public education but usually constituted a religious minority in the student body. The article analyzes how the school space, calendar, and routines were adjusted to accommodate the multi-religious character of the student body.

1 Introduction

Throughout the 19th century, attending school became a common experience shared by children of different religions and cultures inhabiting the Habsburg Empire.[1] The school system initiated by reforms during the 1770s and supported by a developed administrative apparatus was a result of the empire's demand for education, and served as a powerful political tool. As recent research brilliantly shows, it was in fact a "last-gasp offspring of serfdom."[2] The constitutional era (1867–1918) brought a liberal school reform in 1869 with which a new chapter in the history of schooling began. The reforms divided school from church and modernized the former. In the case of some crownlands such as Galicia the liberal school reform instigated a slow

1 This research was funded by the National Science Centre of Poland, Warsaw (2018/31/D/HS3/03604).

2 Tomáš Cvrček, *Schooling under Control: The Origins of Public Education in Imperial Austria* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 280.

development of mass education, as only then tools for enforcing compulsory schooling were implemented.

Galicia, formerly part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, was incorporated into the Habsburg Monarchy in 1772. From the imperial perspective, this was a rural, poor, and economically underdeveloped territory situated on the borderland. From the perspective of Jewish history, however, Galicia was a center of major importance. It was home to the largest Jewish population in the Cisleithanian (Austrian) half of the later Habsburg Empire. Galician Jews were customarily perceived as bound to tradition and less modernized than their Moravian or Bohemian counterparts in western Cisleithania. This picture also influenced the perception of Jewish education. The scholarly literature often mentions the Jewish avoidance of mandatory schooling due to their attachment to the cheder (Jewish elementary school). However, it rarely mentions the fact that at the end of the 19th century most Jewish children received a secular elementary education. In 1900, approximately 69.5 percent of Jewish children of school age completed mandatory schooling, this percentage being close to the general average for Galician society.[3] More than 80 percent of Jewish schoolchildren went to non-denominational public schools along with students of other religions and backgrounds.[4] Therefore, these schools constituted a shared space where children of different religions met. Because of the universality of mandatory schooling, Galician schools, like Habsburg schools in general, constituted a space where similarity and difference, community and alterity come to the fore.[5] The question about the interplay between these categories seems crucial from both a Habsburg studies and Jewish studies perspective.

3 My calculations are based on census and school data and refer to the reports of the Galician school council among others published annually in Polish as *Sprawozdanie Rady Szkolnej Krajowej o stanie wychowania publicznego* and in German as *Statistik der Allgemeinen Volksschulen und Bürgerschulen* for the years between 1890 and 1900 published in the "Oesterreichische Statistik." There are no exact figures about Jewish children recorded in 1900; I therefore calculated this figure based on the general average in Galicia (13.9 percent).

4 According to the data from 1900 (the latest record), Jews were present in 2,807 out of 4,225 primary schools operating in Galicia at that time. Only in 65 of those schools the majority of students was Jewish, and only 18.94 percent of all Jewish schoolchildren in Galicia attended these Jewish-majority schools. See K.K. Statistischen Central-Commission, ed., *Schematismus der Allgemeinen Volksschulen und Bürgerschulen in den im Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreichen und Ländern auf Grund der statistischen Aufnahme vom 15. Mai 1900* (Vienna: Alfred Hölder, 1902). I am grateful to T. Cvrček for providing me with a copy of this source.

5 See the introduction to this volume of PaRDeS.

While the multicultural character of Galician schools is usually noted by historians, at least in passing, previous studies have rarely reached deeper to the level of relations in schools or analyzed schools as a contact zone in which cultural transfers occurred.[6] A particular lacuna concerns research questions posed within the history of everyday life (*Alltagsgeschichte*) and to an extent inspired by the spatial turn in the humanities. These pertain to the functioning of various religious groups in a physical school space and analysis of the day-to-day school reality.

This article employs such a perspective, analyzing how the school space was adjusted to the multireligious character of the student body. Was school a common space, symbolically owned by all the students, or were Christian students privileged? I will answer these questions by analyzing the situation in Galicia, the crownland with the largest Jewish population in Cisleithania. Jews also constituted the largest religious minority in Galicia. Therefore, their experiences might have been characteristic of other religious minorities living under Habsburg rule. The article focuses on the period of the post-liberal school reforms that were implemented in Galicia between 1869 and 1873, and created a new school reality.[7]

2 Education of Jews in the Habsburg Empire

The educational patterns among Jews differed between the Habsburg crownlands. In some lands, the educational situation in the constitutional era (1867–1918) was conditioned by the former success or lack thereof of Josephinian German-Jewish schools, which were opened at the end of the 18th century. In Galicia, however, these schools were already closed in 1806.[8] In Moravia and Bohemia, by contrast, they flourished throughout the 19th century, providing local Jewish children with a secular elementary education in a "Jewish

6 Two exceptions are Eugenia Prokop-Janiec, *Pogranicze polsko-żydowskie: Topografie i teksty* (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2013), 47–76; Rachel Manekin, *The Rebellion of the Daughters: Jewish Women Runaways in Habsburg Galicia* (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2020).

7 The remarks presented below summarize readings of multiple sources: the limited word count of this article does not allow for lengthy footnotes, therefore only examples are given. The reader will find further detail in my forthcoming book, which will be published in 2024.

8 Dirk Sadowski, *Haskala und Lebenswelt: Herz Homberg und die jüdischen deutschen Schulen in Galizien 1782–1806* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010).

space."[9] In Bohemia, German-Jewish schools only started to close in the last decades of the 19th century due to migration and the rising "Czech-Jewish" movement, which led to a growing presence of Jewish children in public schools. In turn, Moravian German-Jewish schools continued to operate and play an important role until the collapse of the Habsburg Empire.

Before the constitutional era, the majority of Jewish children did not receive a secular education on the primary level in Galicia. Those who did, acquired it in secular (non-cheder) Jewish schools. However, there were only few such institutions, for example six in 1865 with altogether 2,651 students.[10] Some Jewish children frequented Christian denominational elementary schools, but exact figures are unknown. Significant growth in school attendance occurred only from the last quarter of the 19th century onwards. In 1900, 78,466 Jewish children received mandatory elementary education.[11] Jewish girls were sent to school more often than boys. In the years from 1871 to 1900, they constituted between 58.5 and 65.9 percent of Jewish schoolchildren in public schools.[12]

In the constitutional era, the obligation of mandatory schooling could be fulfilled either in public or in private elementary schools. Jews used this possibility to establish their own schools, for example those founded by the Baron Hirsch Foundation. However, most Jewish children were sent to public non-Jewish schools. Many of these children, especially boys, simultaneously attended cheders.[13] Some Jewish children were sent exclusively to cheders and therefore did not fulfill the school obligation. It must be stressed, however, that the avoidance of compulsory education occurred among various social groups and was not typical of Jews.[14] The reasons for this avoidance varied, including poverty, child labor, and ideological opposition to school.

[9] Marsha L. Rozenblit, "Creating Jewish Space: German-Jewish Schools in Moravia," *Austrian History Yearbook* 44 (2013): 108–147, here 109–112; Hillel J. Kieval, *The Making of Czech Jewry: National Conflict and Jewish Society in Bohemia, 1870–1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 54–55.

[10] *Detail-Conscription der Volksschulen in den im Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreichen und Ländern nach dem Stande vom Ende des Schuljahres 1865* (Vienna: M. Salzer, 1870), 934.

[11] Jacob Thon, *Die Juden in Österreich* (Berlin/Halensee: Louis Lamm, 1908), 88.

[12] These calculations are based on school statistics, see footnote 3.

[13] This is attested in many memoirs, for example, Leopold Infeld, *Szkice z przeszłości. Wspomnienia* (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1961), 9.

[14] See for example: *Sprawozdanie c.k. Rady szkolnej krajowej o stanie wychowania publicznego w roku szkolnym 1877/78* (Lviv: Drukarnia Narodowa, 1879), 32–33.

Since the mid-19th century also the number of Jews frequenting secondary schools, i.e. Gymnasia and *Realschulen,* grew in Galicia as well as in other crownlands.[15] Typically, the percentage of Jews among the student body was higher than their percentage in general society: for example in 1900, Jews constituted more than 11 percent of Galician society and around 20 percent of secondary school students. One must remember, however, that in absolute numbers the secondary school students did not constitute a large group. For instance, in 1900/01, 13,351 Jews in total frequented secondary schools throughout the whole Habsburg Empire.[16]

3 Public Schools as a Shared Space

Galician schools, both primary and secondary, became an arena of contact between Jewish and non-Jewish students. They constituted a shared space in which children of different faiths met regularly. This facilitated interactions that, due to their recurrent character, shaped the daily lives of the schoolchildren.

After the liberal school reforms, Galician schools were made institutionally independent from the church, yet they retained a Christian character until the collapse of the empire and thereafter. While according to the letter of the law children of different denominations could have frequented public schools on equal terms, the schools were in practice ruled by the religious majority and adjusted to its needs. There were two main denominations in Galicia: Roman Catholics (mainly Poles, 46.49 percent of the Galician population in 1910) and Greek Catholics (mainly Ruthenians/Ukrainians, 42.13 percent of the population in 1910). Roman Catholics dominated in Western Galicia while Greek Catholics were the majority in Eastern Galicia. Jews constituted the third major religious group at 10.86 percent of the Galician population in 1910.[17]

The school space was permeated with Christian symbols like crosses and pictures of saints hanging on the walls. Christian motifs were also featured in

15 Gary B. Cohen, *Education and Middle-Class Society in Imperial Austria 1848–1918* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press), 145.

16 Thon, *Die Juden in Österreich,* 97.

17 Krzysztof Zamorski, *Informator statystyczny do dziejów społeczno-gospodarczych Galicji* (Krakow/Warsaw: Polskie Towarzystwo Statystyczne 1989), 71.

the textbooks used by all children.[18] In many cases, clergy played an important role at the schools. They worked as catechists, but their opinions mattered in other issues as well. Jews rarely worked as teachers of secular subjects, although, according to the law, they could have studied in teachers' seminaries and worked in this profession. Yet, antisemitic grassroots actions of local school authorities and seminary boards made this career path unfeasible. The criticism of the idea of Jews teaching Christian children came mainly from Roman Catholic religious circles, which were influential in Galicia. As a result, the number of Jews in the teaching profession was significantly lower than their percentage among students in primary schools. Jewish teachers in public schools constituted only 0.74 percent in 1890 and 1.42 percent in 1900.[19] This disproportion was a thorny issue for Jews, who especially criticized situations in which a school employed only Christians, although Jews constituted the majority of the student body.[20]

The basic school curriculum followed in daily instruction, as well as extracurricular activities such as study trips, were open to all students regardless of religion. The curriculum shaped common experience, although Christians surely felt more at home with the program. Sources rarely recount certain adjustments made for the Jewish students, such as dividing the group in two during an excursion and allowing Jews to visit synagogues instead of churches.[21] The experience of the children is moreover not translatable into quantitative categories, because daily practices and customs varied between schools. For instance, the seating of students, which might have had either a dividing or a unifying effect, was not regulated by law, but left to the teachers. Some chose to seat the students alphabetically,[22] others according to height,[23]

[18] This was typical of all primers, which were widely used (having multiple editions) in Galicia, for example: *Elementarz dla szkół ludowych* (ten editions, the first published in 1878). The presence of Christian symbols in the school space is attested in multiple memoirs as well as lists of furniture preserved in the school archives.

[19] Thon, *Die Juden in Österreich,* 89.

[20] See for example: "Dola nauczycieli żydowskich," *Wschód,* 5–39 (1904): 4; "Stosunki w szkolnictwie ludowym we Lwowie," *Jedność* 1 (1911): 6.

[21] "Chrzanów," *Tygodnik Chrzanowski,* 3–27 (1909): 5.

[22] Bolesław Drobner, *Bezustanna walka: Wspomnienia 1883–1918* (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1962), vol. 1, 69.

[23] Stanisław Giza, *Na ekranie życia: wspomnienia z lat 1908–1939* (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1973), 76.

and then again others according to religion.[24] The latter method inevitably fortified divisions and, in some cases, contributed to the maltreatment of Jewish students by their peers.[25]

Another area of division was the language of instruction. Both Polish and Ukrainian were used in Galician schools, depending on the majority denomination among the students. However, Polish and Ukrainian were usually foreign languages for many Jewish children whose mother tongue was Yiddish. In practice, this meant that they could not participate fully in the lessons, at least initially. Such experiences simultaneously had an immense linguistically acculturating effect, contributing to the growing fluency of Galician Jewry in the Polish language.[26] Naturally, the situation was different in secondary schools, where students always had a previous command of the language of instruction. Still, the mistakes they made such as incorrect pronunciation or minor syntax and vocabulary lapses, although these presumably did not hinder the students' ability to understand the lessons, led to mockery.[27]

Religious calendars also differed and the school year in Galician schools was attuned to the calendar of either the Greek or Roman Catholic majority of the student body. Their festivals were days off at school. In those public schools in which Jews dominated, both Jewish and Christian holidays were rest days. In most public schools and in all secondary schools, classes generally continued to be held during Jewish holidays. Moreover, Saturdays were regular school days. Customarily, Jews did not frequent schools on their holidays. In order to facilitate this, headmasters received lists of such festivals.[28] On Shabbat, Jewish students were mostly exempted from writing. In some secondary schools, however, receiving such an exemption was not customary and required effort and civil courage.[29] It also happened that teachers treated

24 See for example: "W tutejszej szkole żeńskiej," *Postęp,* 1–10 (1895): 7.

25 Jechiel, "Nowy Sącz," *Moriah,* (no issue number) (1909): 268.

26 Most Jews, who were predominantly from urban areas, went to school where the language of instruction was Polish. Ukrainian-language schools operated mainly in villages.

27 See for example: Wawrzyniec Dayczak, "Gimnazjum w Brodach na przełomie XIX i XX wieku we wspomnieniach byłego ucznia," ed. Maria Dayczak-Domanasiewicz, *Krakowskie Pismo Kresowe* 4 (2012): 29.

28 See for example: National Archive in Przemyśl, The Elementary School in Krosno, 56/274/0/1/2, 83.

29 See for example: Soma Morgenstern, *In einer anderen Zeit: Jugendjahre in Ostgalizien* (Lüneburg: Klampen Verlag, 1995), 210, 216.

Jewish students unfavorably, questioning them about the given material the next day after holidays.[30] This was interpreted by Jews as a manifestation of antisemitism.

4 Religion and Religious Instruction at Galician Schools

What divided students most, however, was the sphere of religious life, which at that time was closely intertwined with school life. All-important school events such as the beginning and end of the school year had a religious setting, and students were obliged to participate in religious practices such as confession and holy mass. Usually, a local Christian church and school closely collaborated in organizing these events. In some cases, Jews participated in these activities despite their thoroughly Christian character. As a schoolboy, Soma Morgenstern (1890–1976), a later writer and journalist, even sang for a bishop during his visit at school, his Jewishness not being an obstacle.[31]

The religious divisions in daily school life were most pronounced during weekly religion classes. Religion was an important school subject in Galician schools, listed first in school transcripts. Children of all denominations were supposed to receive such lessons either held exclusively for them or jointly for students of several classes and schools, depending on their numbers. The responsibility for supervising and organizing such lessons rested with the churches and religious institutions.[32] For Jewish communities, this was a new and not an easy task. As a result, the chronology of introducing the so-called "Mosaic religion" to Galician schools was complex. In some schools, these lessons were instituted already in the mid-1870s, in others much later. In general, lessons on this subject were present until World War One in most schools with a significant number of Jewish students. A few hundred Jewish religion teachers worked in Galicia, in many cases being the only Jewish teachers in a given school.[33]

The organization of religion lessons reveals deep inequalities. In many cases, lessons for Christian and Jewish students were not organized simultaneously.

30 "Brzeżany," *Moriah* [9] (1906): 325.

31 Morgenstern, *In einer anderen Zeit,* 83–84.

32 This partially changed in 1889, when a new law pertaining to religion teachers was issued. Since then, the responsibility was shared with the school authorities.

33 As evidenced by lists of school staff included in Galician lists of officials (schematisms). A biographical dictionary of all Jewish religion teachers is currently being prepared.

For example, Christian catechesis was held during regular school hours, but lessons in Judaism in the afternoon, which required coming to school twice. Moreover, this caused gaps in the daily schedule, during which students needed to find a place to stay. Not every school allowed students to stay in the building, even in winter. Cases when desperate Jewish parents asked priests to allow their children to attend catechesis only to avoid the winter cold were frequent enough to draw the attention of the Jewish press.[34] Moreover, lessons for Jews were sometimes organized in spaces not suited for this purpose, such as a corridor. At the end of the 19th century, however, there were also schools that had a separate classroom dedicated to religious instruction for children of different faiths.

Receiving instruction in their own religion symbolically confirmed the students' legitimate position in the school. Such lessons consequently contributed to making Jews feel at home in Galician schools. Other practices that similarly contributed to a sense of Jewish belonging included the festive beginning of a school year in a synagogue or regular weekly sermons, similar to the ones organized for Christians[35]. Moreover, the very presence of a Jewish religion teacher at school was important: The teacher offered Jewish students support and cared for their religious needs.

5 Conclusion

This subject shows the benefits of employing both Jewish and Habsburg studies perspectives. The former allows for a deeper understanding of the complexity, including the religious dimension, of school life (and how this was experienced by Jews), while the latter allows this to be placed within a broader context and thus discerns between universal and particular experiences. The Habsburg Empire had a multicultural and multireligious character. The school space shows what this meant in daily life.

As I have shown in this article, public schools in Galicia constituted a shared space where children of different religions learned together. Therefore, school was an arena where differences were performed and where various

[34] Józef Sarmacki, "W sprawie nauczycieli i nauki religii mojżeszowej," *Przyszłość* 4–11/12 (1896): 87.

[35] Such sermons were called "exhortations." See: Alicja Maślak-Maciejewska, ed., *Kazania dla młodzieży żydowskiej w Galicji* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2021).

and sometimes opposing social powers intersected. The question about what school should be, including how open it should be to various religions, was a political one. The crownlands differed greatly in how Jews received their primary secular education; more similarities existed on the secondary level.

Yet, many of the problems described in this article for the province of Galicia were universal. The same questions might be applied not only to Jews from other crownlands, but also to other religious or "national" minorities in the Habsburg Empire. Future comparative studies would probably be able to answer questions about how schools dealt with multireligious and multicultural student bodies and whether the situation of various minorities, however defined, differed.

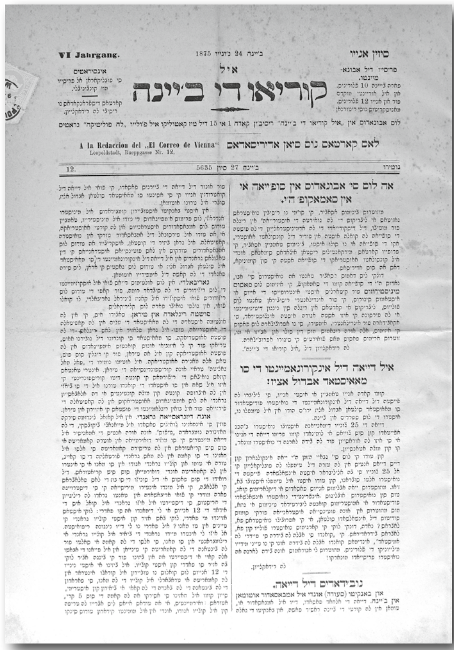
איל נאסיונאל.

אפארים קאדה מיירקולים.

A la Redaccion del „Nasional" Viena, Hoher Markt, 11.

Nr. 33. — ביינה, מיירקולים 31 די ייוליו די 1867

איל סילטאן אין ביינה.



VI Jahrgang.

1875 ביינה 24 ינואר

איל

קוריאו די ביינה

A la Redaccion del „El Correo de Vienna" Leopoldstadt, Rueppgasse Nr. 12.

12. — 5635

איל דויאה דיל אינקורונאמיינטו די סו מאאיסטאד אבדול אציז:

נובידאדיס דיל דויאה.

1. Journal “El Nasional”, first page, no. 33 (1867). Source: Yad Ben Zvi Library & Archive.
2. Journal “El Correo de Vienna”, first page, no. 12 (1875). Source: Yad Ben Zvi Library & Archive.

“Domestic Foreigners”: The Trans-Imperial Loyalties of Sephardic Jews in Vienna

by Martin Stechauner

Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between the Sephardic Jewish community of Vienna and the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires in the latter half of the 19th century. The community’s legal status was transformed following the emancipation of Austrian Jews, but very few first-hand accounts of these changes exist today. The primary sources analyzed in this paper are Judezmo-language newspapers published in Vienna at that time. The paper emphasizes the historical and political contexts surrounding these sources, particularly the community’s close ties to the Ottoman and Habsburg regimes.

1 Introduction

This paper explores the complex relations between the Sephardic Jewish community of Vienna and the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires during the second half of the 19th century. As a result of the emancipation of Austrian Jews, the community’s legal status underwent significant changes during that time. Unfortunately, only few testimonies informing us about these changes and stemming from the community itself have survived until the present day. The primary sources presented here include Judezmo-language newspapers,[1] such as *El Nasional* (1866–1967) and *El Koreo de Viena* (1869–1883). *El Nasional* was owned and edited by Yosef Yaakov Kalvo (or Josef Jakob Kalwo in German,

[1] Judezmo, the traditional vernacular of Eastern Sephardic Jews, including the ones in Vienna, is a Jewish language based on medieval Castilian Spanish, with some Hebrew and Turkish, later also French, Italian, and South Slavic loanwords. It was traditionally written with modified Hebrew characters, the so-called Rashi script. The language is nowadays also known as Judeo-Spanish and Ladino.

ca. 1800–1875). *El Koreo de Viena* was owned by his close friend Shem Tov Semo (or Alexander Semo in German, 1810 or 1827–1881) and edited by Kalvo. After Kalvo's death, it was edited by Semo's son-in-law Adolf von Zemlinszky (1845–1900). Although these newspapers were run as private enterprises, they were often considered the official mouthpiece of the Viennese Sephardic community. While analyzing these sources, it is important to consider the historical and political contexts, especially the community's close relations to Ottoman and Habsburg Empires.

2 The Historical Beginnings of the Community

Since the late Middle Ages, the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires had been rivals, fighting for supremacy in Southeastern Europe. The Treaty of Karlowitz (1699) initiated political and economic reconciliation between the two empires.[2] It was further refined in the Treaty of Passarowitz (1718), which allowed Ottoman subjects – in most Habsburg sources generally referred to as "Turks," also serving as a synonym for Ottoman Muslims[3] – to trade almost freely within the Habsburg domains and vice versa. However, it was primarily Ottoman Greeks, Armenians, and Jews – the latter usually referred to in Habsburg sources as "Turkish Jews" – establishing trading posts in Vienna. As some of these traders decided to stay in Vienna permanently, this led to the foundation of the first Greek Orthodox, Armenian, and Ottoman Jewish congregations in the Habsburg capital.[4] The latter was officially referred to as the "Turkish-Israelite Community of Vienna" (*Türkisch-israeltische Gemeinde zu Wien*).[5] A few historical sources also use the term "Spanish" or "Spanish-Israelite" Community of Vienna,[6] while designating its members as "*sefardim*"[7] (Sephardic Jews) or "*espanyoles*" (Spaniards),[8] in reference to the

2 Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 64–66.

3 "Türken (Begriff)," Wien Geschichte Wiki, accessed March 3, 2023, https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/Türken_(Begriff)

4 Anna Ransmayr, *Untertanen des Sultans oder des Kaisers: Struktur und Organisationsformen der beiden Wiener griechischen Gemeinden von den Anfängen im 18. Jahrhundert bis 1918* (Göttingen: V&R unipress/Vienna University Press, 2018), 38.

5 Adolf von Zemlinszky, *Geschichte der türkisch-israelitischen Gemeinde zu Wien von ihrer Gründung bis heute: nach historischen Daten,* ed. Michael Papo (Vienna: Michael Papo, 1888).

6 Zemlinszky, *Geschichte der türkisch-israelitischen Gemeinde.*

7 "Avizos tokantes a la nasyón israelita," *El Koreo de Viena* 1, no. 1, December 19, 1869: 6.

8 "Sovre el modo de predikar en Turkía," *El Nasional* 1, no. 45, October 23, 1867: 363.

Spanish origin of its members.[9] For this reason, the congregation has also become known as the Sephardic community of Vienna,[10] although this expression was never officially used by the Viennese Sephardim themselves.[11]

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, more Ottoman Jews arrived in Vienna, making up 12.5 percent of the city's Jewish population in 1818.[12] They maintained their Ottoman citizenship to retain their legal status in Vienna, where Habsburg Jews were only "tolerated." This meant that the latter were not allowed to move freely and settle down in Vienna or Lower Austria, unless they were able to pay a prescribed toleration tax.[13] The only Jews able to meet these strict requirements were so-called "Court Jews," wealthy Jewish individuals, specialized in rendering their financial and diplomatic services to Christian monarchs.[14] The Ottoman Jews in Vienna, predominantly merchants, were generally exempted from that tax. As subjects of another state, their legal status was stipulated by the bilateral treaties mentioned above.

3 The Formation of a Trans-Imperial Expat Community

Whenever they had to deal with the Habsburg authorities, the Ottoman Jews simply sought help from the local Ottoman embassy, for example, when establishing a new house of worship in the 1840s.[15] The authorities eventually

9 The ancestors of most Ottoman Jews were refugees from Spain and Portugal who arrived in the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century. Since the Middle Ages, the Iberian Peninsula has become known as *Sefarad.* Georg Bossong, *Die Sepharden: Geschichte und Kultur der spanischen Juden* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2008), 13.

10 E.g. see Nathan M. Gelber, "The Sephardic Community in Vienna," *Jewish Social Studies* 10:4 (1948): 359–396; Manfred Papo, "The Sephardi Community of Vienna," in *The Jews of Austria: Essays on their Life, History and Destruction,* ed. Josef Fraenkel (London: Vallentine-Mitchell, 1967), 327–346; Michael Studemund-Halévy, Christian Liebl, and Ivana Vučina, eds., *Sefarad an der Donau: Lengua y literature de los sefardíes en tierras de los Habsburgo* (Barcelona: Tirocinio, 2013).

11 In the Viennese Judezmo press the community is sometimes referred to as "*komuné sefardit de Viena*" ("Sephardic community of Vienna"), e.g. see "La komuné sefardit de Viena i 'El Koreo de Viena'," *El Koreo de Viena* 2, no. 19, October 13, 1871: 1.

12 In total, 45 Turkish Jewish families or 214 individuals. Nathan M. Gelber, "The Sephardic Community," 367.

13 Michael K. Silber, "Josephinian Reforms," in *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe,* Volume 1, ed. Gershon David Hundert (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 831–834, here 832.

14 Kurt Schubert, *Die Geschichte des österreichischen Judentums* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2008), 49–55.

15 Gelber, "The Sephardic Community," 373; Kaul, "Die spanischen Juden," 150–151.

approved the Viennese Sephardim's request, however, not without letting the Ottoman emissary know that in return for this favor the Habsburg government hoped that the Habsburg merchants in the Ottoman Empire would be treated in a similar way.[16]

The diplomatic and commercial dimension of their legal status certainly shaped their identity as a collective group. To be sure, they were not simply economic migrants, as this term is today often associated with refugees and asylum seekers. In a historical perspective, this term has also been used to describe the situation of so-called *Ostjuden,* poor and disadvantaged Ashkenazi immigrants from Eastern Europe, settling down in Western European metropoles, including Vienna.[17] In contrast to these, the Viennese Sephardim should be viewed as a mobile expat community who, in reference to Alexandra Peat, practiced a voluntary "in-betweenness," distinguished by a flexibility of movement between different states and identities.[18] They were a privileged but confidently separated community of foreigners who managed to live under the protection of two multicultural empires. For this reason, we can also describe them as "trans-imperial subjects," which E. Natalie Rothman characterizes as "self-proclaimed foreigner[s]," who nevertheless felt part of the "local metropolitan elite."[19]

Despite their privileged expat status as domestic foreigners, the legal situation of Viennese Sephardim was further complicated by the emancipation of Habsburg Jews beginning in the mid-19th century. Following the revolutionary years of 1848/49, the Habsburg Jews gradually gained the right of free exercise of religion and free movement. Also, the toleration system was finally abolished. As a result, more Ashkenazi Jews moved to the city, many of them poor, from the northern and eastern parts of the empire – principally

16 Kaul, "Die spanischen Juden," 151.

17 Klaus Weber, "Zwischen Religion und Ökonomie: Sepharden und Hugenotten in Hamburg, 1580–1800," in *Religion und Mobilität: Zum Verhältnis von raumbezogener Mobilität und religiöser Identitätsbildung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa,* eds. Henning P. Jürgens and Thomas Weller (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 137–168, here 137–138. For more information on the reality and the myths surrounding the "*Ostjuden*" in the late Habsburg Empire, see Philipp Mettauer and Barbara Staudinger, eds., *"Ostjuden" – Geschichte und Mythos* (Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2015).

18 Alexandra Peat, *Travel and Modernist Literature: Sacred and Ethical Journeys* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 102.

19 E. Natalie Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects Between Venice and Istanbul* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 1.

Bohemia/Moravia, then Hungary, and finally Galicia/Bukovina[20] – causing the Viennese Sephardim to become a small minority.[21] This was also the time when the Viennese Ashkenazim were able to establish a proper community of their own, the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde* (IKG).[22] When the IKG tried to incorporate the Sephardic community in its own administrative body – following the "Inter-confessional Law" (1868)[23] and the "Israelite Religious Law" (1890)[24] – the Sephardic community's leadership vehemently protested. Despite or rather because of being quite a wealthy community, its members did not want to pay any dues to their Ashkenazi brethren. As usual, the Sephardic community leaders simply turned to the local Ottoman embassy to avert this fusion.[25]

The embassy supported the Viennese Sephardim's appeal by writing petitions to the Habsburg authorities. Yet, despite these efforts, the Sephardic community was eventually incorporated as a *Verband* (association) into the *IKG* in 1906. When the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy collapsed in 1918, the Sephardic association withdrew its membership from the *IKG* and the Ottoman embassy formally recognized the reestablishment of an independent community. Finally, in 1922, the Sephardic community was once again incorporated into the *IKG*. However, this time, the *IKG* reassured its Sephardic members that their inner autonomy and privileges would remain unaffected in the future.[26]

[20] Robert S. Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 62.

[21] Kaul, "Die spanischen Juden," 187–188.

[22] Tim Corbett, "The Israelitische Kultusgemeinde in Vienna: The Transformative Continuity of Jewish Collective Representation in Austria from Early Modernity to the Present," *Dubnow Institute Yearbook* 21 [forthcoming].

[23] Anonymous, "Gesetz vom 25. Mai 1868, wodurch die interconfessionellen Verhältnisse der Staatsbürger in den darin angegebenen Beziehungen geregelt werden," in *Reichs-Gesetzblatt für das Kaiserthum Österreich* (*RGBl*), no. 49/1868, 99–102.

[24] Anonymous, "Gesetz vom 21. März 1890, betreffend die Regelung der äußeren Rechtsverhältnisse der israelitischen Religionsgesellschaft," in *RGBl.* no. 57/1890, 109–113.

[25] For more information on these interventions, see Mordche Schlome Schleicher, "Geschichte der spaniolischen Juden (Sephardim) in Wien" (PhD Thesis, Universität Wien, 1932), 172–186; Christina Kaul, "Die Rechtsstellung der türkischen Juden in Wien: auf Grund der österreichisch-türkischen Staatsverträge" (MA Thesis, Salzburg University, 1990), 40–63.

[26] Schleicher, "Geschichte der spaniolischen Juden," 194; Manfred Papo, "The Sephardi Community of Vienna," in *The Jews of Austria: Essays on their Life, History and Destruction,* ed. Josef Fraenkel (London: Vallentine-Mitchell, 1967), 327–346, here 344; Kaul "Die Rechtsstellung," 64–66.

4 Proclamations of Loyalty Towards the Habsburg and Ottoman Regimes

Despite their strong ties to the Ottoman Empire, many Sephardic Jews in Vienna had developed great affections for their actual country of residence. Nathan M. Gelber (1891–1966), an Austro-Israeli historian and a self-proclaimed Zionist, pointed to the fact that "a majority of the Turkish Jews had been born and raised in Vienna and looked upon Austria as their second fatherland."[27]

This sentiment was also echoed in the Viennese Judezmo press, which is full of examples demonstrating loyalty to both political entities. For example, when the Austro-Hungarian Empire was established in 1867, the editor of *El Nasional* explicitly referred to the Dual Monarchy as "our country."[28] Moreover, Emperor Franz Joseph I (r. 1849–1916) was often described as a strong and respectful father figure, for example, in expressions such as "our high-born Emperor, who is working hard to fulfill the wish of his peoples."[29] The Viennese Judezmo press also covered the royal family extensively, as did both the Jewish and non-Jewish Austrian press.[30] Austrian newspapers generally wrote very favorably of the monarch, certainly out of fear of strict censorship of the press.[31] Likewise, the Jewish and non-Jewish press published in the late Ottoman Empire was replete with articles about the Sultan, usually drawing a very favorable image of his reign,[32] which in many cases can be assessed as a form of self-imposed censorship.

The Judezmo press of Vienna was no exception to this common, yet purposeful practice. One example of this was the welcoming of Ottoman Sultan Abdülaziz I (r. 1861–1876) by the Sephardic and Greek Orthodox communities of Vienna in 1867. The Sultan had been invited to the International Exposition

27 Gelber, "The Sephardic Community," 372.

28 "Revista de la semana," *El Nasional* 1, no. 26, June 12, 1867, 203.

29 Untitled (editorial note), *El Nasional* 1, no. 43, October 8, 1867, 343.

30 Jacob Toury, *Die jüdische Presse im österreichischen Kaiserreich: Ein Beitrag zur Problematik der Akkulturation 1802–1918* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, Paul Siebeck, 1983), 19, 36.

31 Philip Czech, *Der Kaiser ist ein Lump und Spitzbube: Majestätsbeleidigung unter Kaiser Franz Joseph* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2010), 297–344.

32 Palmira Brummett, *Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908–1911* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 1–9; Julia Phillips Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans: Sephardi Jews and Imperial Citizenship in the Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 122–131.

in Paris and used the opportunity to tour other European capital cities, including Vienna, where he had been invited by the Habsburg Emperor. The Ottoman Jews and Greeks in Vienna formed delegations to greet their ruler and reaffirm their ties to the Ottoman regime.[33] This display of loyalty was financially beneficial, as the Sultan left a donation of 1000 florins for the poor and needy of each community.[34] It also strategically reaffirmed their expat status towards the Viennese public and Habsburg authorities, while demonstrating the Sultan's authority towards his hosts.

As committed expats, the Sephardic Jews of Vienna closely followed the politics in the Ottoman Empire, as well as its official protocols. To express their loyalty on a public stage, the community celebrated the anniversary of the Ottoman Sultan's coronation every year. Yet, while this ceremony was frequently attended by Ottoman officials from the local embassy, the editor of *El Koreo de Viena* – annoyed and embarrassed – pointed to the fact that many fellow community members abstained from attending these celebrations. In fact, he wrote, the "temple remained largely empty" on that day.[35] As usual, only the most elderly and poorest community members showed up. Although the editor did not go into further detail about the reasons behind this certainly quite awkward situation, we can assume that this might have been a passive form of protest. In fact, Abdülaziz did not enjoy an upright and unstained reputation among all Ottoman Jews, especially those living in the Ottoman Empire. Orthodox Jewish traditionalists often felt ashamed and restricted by the Sultan's reformist government.[36]

In addition, in the case of the generally quite liberal-minded Viennese Sephardim, the reason behind this scandal was a much simpler and trivial one. As one article in *El Koreo de Viena* reveals, many Viennese Sephardim, especially the younger ones, already born and raised in Vienna, simply found such official ceremonies – especially in the form of a traditional religious service – utterly boring and outdated.[37] Consequently, in 1880, the community

33 "El Sultán en Viena," *El Nasional* 1, no. 33, July 31, 1867: 260.
34 "El Sultán en Buda-Peshta," *El Nasional* 1, no. 34, August 7, 1867: 272.
35 "El día del enkoronamiento de su maestad Abdul Atsiz," *El Koreo de Viena* 6, no. 12, June 24, 1875, 47.
36 Phillips Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans,* 21.
37 "La komuné sefardit de Viena i 'El Koreo de Viena'," *El Koreo de Viena* 2, no. 19, October 13, 1871, 1.

employed an Ashkenazic cantor by the name of Jacob Bauer (1852–1926) and a professional choir, and the celebrations, as well as the religious service in general, took on a new reformist character.[38]

Considering this generational and cultural gap, we could assume that the younger members of the community, might have held stronger feelings for the country's dynasty in which they were living. Indeed, *El Koreo de Viena* informs us that the Viennese Sephardim also took part in the annual birthday festivities for the Austrian Emperor, as did most Habsburg Jews.[39] However, once again, the editor of *El Koreo* critically pointed out that although the synagogue was again beautifully decorated, it was nevertheless "empty of people."[40] Only the less affluent members of the community had followed the call, while the young and wealthy had decided to abstain from the event. Maybe they did so out of personal interest, in order not to be obligated to give charity to the poor at the end of the ceremony, as used to be the custom on such occasions.[41]

Yet, this scene might also point to another dimension of Jewish loyalty and patriotism, especially in Austria. Most Austrian Jews had a greater inclination towards legalistic than dynastic patriotism, meaning that they generally felt more loyal "to a constitutional monarchy" and "not to a dynasty" as such.[42] The same can be said about Ottoman Jews, including the ones living in Vienna, who had definitely adopted many ceremonial manifestations of modern Ottomanism such as the public celebration of the Sultan's coronation day.[43] However, we may assume that the Sephardic Jews in Vienna, like their co-religionists elsewhere, did so with a purposeful rationale in mind – the veneration of the ruler was merely a pragmatic necessity in exchange

38 Martin Stechauner, "Vienna: A Cultural Contact Zone between Sephardim and Ashkenazim," in *Sephardim and Ashkenazim: Jewish-Jewish Encounters in History and Literature,* ed. Sina Rauschenbach (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 183–208. See also Edwin Seroussi, "Sephardic Fin des Siècles: The Liturgical Music of Vienna's Türkisch-lsraelitische Community on the Threshold of Modernity," in *Jewish Musical Modernism, Old and New,* ed. Philip V. Bohlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008, 55–79.

39 Daniel L. Unowsky, *The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848–1916* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2005), 138–144.

40 "El día del enkoronamiento de su maestad Abdul Atsiz," *El Koreo de Viena* 6, no. 12, June 24, 1875: 47.

41 Unowsky, *The Pomp and Politics,* 141.

42 Steven Beller, *Vienna and the Jews, 1867–1938: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 181.

43 For other examples, see Phillips Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans,* 45–73, 104–131.

for protection and legal rights. As has been mentioned before, ever since the establishment of the *IKG,* the Viennese Sephardim tried hard to keep their autonomous status. This might explain why the editor of *El Koreo de Viena,* in solidarity with the congregation's leadership, was quite embarrassed by the fact that so many community members had abstained from the celebrations honoring the Sultan and the Emperor.

Yet, to make these intertwined dependencies even more obvious, there were also occasions when the Ottoman Sultan and the Austrian Emperor were simultaneously honored during the same ceremonial act. Such was the case when the New Turkish Temple was inaugurated in 1887. As an article of the *Österreichisch-ungarische Cantoren-Zeitung* (edited by the Viennese Sephardim's new Ashkenazi cantor Jacob Bauer) reveals, both monarchs and their households were honored with the so-called *Kaisergebet* (imperial prayer), as well as the performance of the Austrian and the Turkish anthems.[44]

As pointed out by Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Katznelson, Jewish loyalties in the 19th century – like those of other groups in the Habsburg Empire – did not necessarily have to be unilateral or one-dimensional but "of course, [could] be directed to more than one target."[45] As the simultaneous veneration of the Austrian Emperor and the Ottoman Sultan reveals, multiple loyalties could easily be expressed concurrently, at the same place, and within the same ceremonial framework. The simultaneous patriotic declarations towards the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires during the inauguration ceremony of the new Sephardic synagogue can definitely be viewed as a purposeful act of a Jewish community which, given its expat status, relied on the protection and beneficence of two states at once. Another visual token of the Viennese Sephardim's purposeful and simultaneous loyalty to the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires, both embodied by their rulers, were two life-size portraits of Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909) and Emperor Franz Joseph, which were placed in the reception hall of the newly inaugurated synagogue. These paintings remained there until the end of World War I – then being replaced by large mirrors – as both empires were eventually dissolved and turned into republican states.[46]

44 *Österreichisch-ungarische Cantoren-Zeitung* 7, no. 31, September 22, 1887: 5.

45 Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Katznelson, "Emancipation and the Liberal Offer," in *Paths of Emancipation: Jews, States, and Citizenship,* eds. Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Katznelson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 3–36, here 34.

46 Papo, "The Sephardi Community," 335.

5 Conclusion

As we have seen, the Sephardic Jews in Vienna had a strong attachment to both the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires, while calling the latter their actual home. While they expressed loyalty and affection towards the rulers of both political entities, their patriotism was more legalistic in nature, rather than dynastic. The absence of younger community members in such celebrations points to the fact that these demonstrations of loyalty fulfilled a rather pragmatic purpose, reaffirming their expat status towards the Viennese public, as well as Habsburg and Ottoman authorities. As has been discussed, this status and its legal implications depended heavily on the benevolence of both states.

The Viennese Judezmo press sheds light on the complex and nuanced nature of this purposeful trans-imperial patriotism. Although being private entrepreneurs, the editors of *El Nasional* and *El Koreo de Viena* felt a great responsibility in representing their community in a certain light, especially at times when their community's autonomous legal status was at stake. Of course, we must keep in mind that institutions such as community boards and newspapers, do not necessarily represent an entire religious group as a whole[47] – again, this is alluded to in the behavior of certain community members, which was openly criticized in the Viennese Judezmo press. Yet, as long as we read carefully between the lines, both *El Nasional* and *El Koreo de Viena* provide important insights for the valuation of public demonstrations of loyalty towards the late Ottoman and Habsburg Empires. Apart from having quite practical effects, these twofold loyalties helped the Viennese Sephardim to manage their shared and yet hybrid status of being trans-imperial expats.

[47] Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," *Archives européennes de sociologie* 42:2 (2002): 163–189, here 171–173.

Synagogue Zirkusgasse, the so-called “Türkischer Tempel” in Vienna’s District Leopoldstadt, designed by Hugo von Wiedenfeld (1852–1925). This synagogue for Vienna’s Sephardic community was consecrated in 1887, and destroyed during Kristallnacht. It was also home to Salonica Jews who lived in Vienna. Undated photograph; photographer/artist unknown. Source: LBI F 3226 Synagogue Zirkusgasse in Vienna, Leo Baeck Institute New York, F 3226.

“Austrian,” “Jewish,” “Salonican”: The Multiple Aspects of Belonging of Salonican Jews in the Fin-de-Siècle Habsburg Empire

by Lida-Maria Dodou

Abstract

Even though Salonican Jews are not typically associated with the Habsburg Empire, some of them, nonetheless, lived there. This paper aims to examine the formation of these Salonican Jews’ (self-)identification by studying their social interactions with the local Viennese population such as the Viennese Sephardi or the Greek-Orthodox communities. The change of the milieu within which they found themselves subsequently impacted their self-perception. Thus, the issue of the surrounding environment and their relations with other groups became central to their self-understanding, as will be demonstrated. By examining different aspects, like migration patterns, financial decisions and family ties, one can understand how their intersection influenced Salonica Jews’ self-identification, which, at the same time, shaped and was shaped by the surrounding milieu. Within this framework, these people perceived themselves and were perceived as Salonican, Sephardi, Jewish, and as subjects of the Emperor.

1 Introduction

On September 24, 1897, the Judeo-Spanish newspaper of Salonica “La Epoka” published an article from its correspondent in Vienna, which described how well-received the newspaper was by the “Salonikiotes de Vyena” (“Salonican [Jews] of Vienna”).[1] Although not an official community of their own, it appears that the Salonican Sephardi Jews were quite numerous in fin-de-siècle Vienna. The reason for this was mostly the commercial links they entertained with enterprises located in the Austrian half of the Habsburg Empire. In fact,

[1] *La Epoka,* September 24, 1897, 3.

this period was the period of the greatest financial and political influence of the Habsburg Empire in Salonica and its surrounding region, and a part of Salonica's Jewish elite was instrumental in the consolidation of this influence.[2] A few Salonican Jews also had political links with the Habsburg Empire, since many of them had acquired the Austrian protection (within the framework of the Capitulations) and/or citizenship, sometimes even before 1867.[3]

The presence of Sephardi Jews in the Habsburg lands is a field of Jewish studies that has experienced a revival in the last decade. Works like that of Martin Stechauner offer an insight into the (self-)perception of Sephardi Jews in the Habsburg lands.[4] Others, like Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek's work, bring to light the material aspect of Sephardi life while considering regional differences that existed.[5] However, a study about Jews from Salonica in the Habsburg Empire – and particularly in Vienna – remains a desideratum. This becomes more evident if one considers the significance Salonica had for Sephardi Jewry, as indicated by designations such as "Mother of Israel."[6] The Ashkenazi and Romaniote Jews that inhabited Salonica had adapted to the Sephardi majority, as indicated, for example, by the use of the Judeo-Spanish language, while the overall Jewish population of Salonica constituted the city's majority until the 1920s.[7]

2 Kostis Moskof, *Thessaloniki, Breakthrough of the Compradorial City* [Greek] (Athens: Stochastis, 1978), 79–93.

3 Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, GKA Konsulatsarchiv Saloniki 138, Matrikel 1833, where there are Jews registered as "untertanen de iure"; the issue of the legal differentiation between the protégés and the citizens of a European state in the Ottoman Empire is the subject of an extensive bibliography. For some introductory comments, see Pablo Martin Asuero, *El consulado de Espana en Estanbul y la proteccion de los Sefardies entre 1804 y 1903* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2011), 14.

4 Martin Stechauner, *The Sephardic Jews of Vienna: A Jewish Minority Crossing Borders* (Vienna: Unpublished dissertation, 2019).

5 Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek (ed.), *Die Türken in Wien: Geschichte einer jüdischen Gemeinde* [Jüdisches Museum Wien, May 12–October 31, 2010] (Vienna: Jüdisches Museum Wien, 2010).

6 For a discussion about the origins and conceptualization of the phrase, see Devin E. Naar, "Fashioning the 'Mother of Israel': The Ottoman Jewish Historical Narrative and the Image of Jewish Salonica," *Jewish History* 28:3 (2014): 354–357.

7 Devin E. Naar, "Sephardim since Birth: Reconfiguring Jewish Identity in America," in *Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews in America: The Jewish Role in American Life,* ed. Saba Soomekh (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2015), 75–104, here 97. Naar offers an indicative example of Ashkenazi adaptation to the broader Sephardi milieu in Salonica through the case of Saadi Halevi, the editor of La Epoka (see fn. 1).

This essay aims to examine the relations between Salonican Jews and other groups in Vienna, and how their interaction in both the Habsburg lands and Salonica shaped their sense of belonging and their self-perception. Salonican Jews in the Habsburg Empire will here be examined as a community, not on a formal level, but rather as a group that shared multiple cultural affinities, linked to the experience of living across different borders.[8] This experience turned them into mediators between the different milieux within which they found themselves, thus blurring the boundaries between these worlds.[9] This experience across milieux led, as will be demonstrated, to the concretion of their self-identification as "Salonicans," "Sephardim," "Jews," and "subjects of the Emperor." By interacting with different groups and individuals, they shaped their self-understanding, transforming their identification in relation to their experience(s) and how they were perceived by others.[10] In other words, their origin from Salonica, the fact that they were merchants, their immigration (whether temporary or permanent) to the Habsburg lands, and their acquisition of Austrian citizenship/protection (at least for some of them) all shaped their self-understanding, which would have been different had any of these elements not been a factor.

2 Salonican Jews in the Habsburg Empire

While Sephardi Jews in the Habsburg Empire were present already since the early 18th century, the presence of Salonican Jews dates to approximately one century later. This presence is documented by the passport indices of the Habsburg consulate in Salonica. According to these, a number of Jews in Salonica who had originally come from the Italian dominions of the Habsburg Empire were regularly issued passports to travel to the Habsburg lands. The persons in question had maintained business relations with fellow Jews in Italian cities such as Trieste, participating in broader Jewish maritime

8 Vaso Seirinidou, *Greeks in Vienna (18th–mid-19th Century)* [Greek] (Athens: Herodotus, 2011), 27.

9 Olga Katsiardi-Hering, "Christian and Jewish Ottoman Subjects: Family, Inheritance and Commercial Networks between East and West (17th–18th C.)," in *The Economic Role of the Family in the European Economy from the 13th to the 18th Centuries,* ed. S. Cavaciocchi (Florence: Florence University Press, 2008), 412–434, here 414.

10 Basil Gounaris, "Introductory Comments," in *Identities in Macedonia* [Greek], eds. Basil Gounaris, Iakovos Michailidis, and Giorgos Angelopoulos (Athens: Papazisi Editions, 1997), 11–25, here 19.

networks.[11] However, they saw the opportunity which was provided by the increasing trade between the Habsburg mainland and the region of Macedonia and expanded their businesses beyond the well-established networks in the port cities of the Mediterranean, thus creating the first Jewish Salonican enclave in Vienna.

The presence of fellow Sephardim in Vienna, many of whom were members of the same extended families as those in Salonica, proved valuable for the eventual consolidation of businesses in Vienna and the decision of settlement taken by Salonican Jews. Joint partnerships were sometimes formed, particularly in the field of the so-called "colonial products" or "Turkish products," but most importantly, information on where to settle or whom to trust for financial transactions was shared, thus minimizing the risks for the newcomers. For example, when Elie Asseo settled in Vienna in 1903, he opened his business close to the *Westbahnhof* train station, but soon transferred it to the city center, at *Postgasse 11,* where one could find other Sephardi businesses in very close proximity.[12] Moreover, it appears that the transfer of leases took place within the same circles. That is how in 1891 the firm "Calderon Josef und Soehne" (owned by the Sephardi Calderon family) was registered at *Untere Donaustrasse* 27,[13] while in 1908 Calderon's firm had moved and the firm of the Salonican Jew N. Nehama was registered at this address.[14]

Even though many of the Salonican Jews who found themselves in the Habsburg Empire participated in the same social circles as the Viennese Sephardim, they notably did not participate in the official institution of the Viennese Sephardi community (*türkisch-israelitische Gemeinde*) – a fact that contrasts strikingly with their active participation in the Salonican Jewish community. Additionally, when in the last quarter of the 19th century the Sephardi community of Vienna attempted to maintain its independence from

11 Mark Levene, "Port Jewry of Salonika: Between Neo-colonialism and Nation-state," in *Port Jews: Jewish Communities in Cosmopolitan Maritime Trading Centres, 1550–1950,* ed. David Cesarani (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 125–154, here 130.

12 Adolph Lehmann, *Adolph Lehmann's allgemeiner Wohnungs-Anzeiger: nebst Handels- u. Gewerbe-Adressbuch für d. k.k. Reichshaupt- u. Residenzstadt Wien u. Umgebung* (Vienna: Österreichische Anzeigen-Gesellschaft, 1908), 23.

13 Adolph Lehmann, *Adolph Lehmann's allgemeiner Wohnungs-Anzeiger: nebst Handels- u. Gewerbe-Adressbuch für d. k.k. Reichshaupt- u. Residenzstadt Wien u. Umgebung* (Vienna: Österreichische Anzeigen-Gesellschaft, 1891), 610.

14 Lehmann, *Wohnungs-Anzeiger* 1908, 383.

the *Isreaelitische Kultusgemeinde,* the official Jewish community organization, which predominantly consisted of Ashkenazi Jews, the Salonican Jews in Vienna did not participate in their struggle, not even through public advocacy. We can, therefore, deduce that they did not associate with the official Jewish institutions, or even the discussions conducted within their framework, with their sense of belonging in a Sephardi milieu.

Salonican Jews also had interactions with Ashkenazi Jews, albeit more limited. These mostly entailed sharing information regarding business prospects in regions of the Habsburg Empire where there was no consolidated Sephardi presence, like Moravia.[15] It appears, moreover, that the local committee of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* (AIU) in Prague was regularly informed about the situation in the broader region of Macedonia. The activities of the AIU in Macedonia often appeared in the organization's bulletins, providing information to all its members across its network. Yet, in the case of Prague, one can find in the local committee's archives a draft letter written by Rabbi Armand Kaminka (1866–1950) on the reverse side of a telegram that was originally sent from Serres (the part where the recipient's name was written is torn and missing).[16] Thus, we can deduce that either direct communication between Serres and Prague was established or some Salonican Jew, to whom the telegram was originally addressed, had visited Rabbi Kaminka – either way, this is an indication of links between Salonican Sephardi Jews and Ashkenazi Jews in the Habsburg lands.[17]

Furthermore, there were even cases of intermarriage. The most well-known example concerned the marriage of Robert Allatini, a banker and member of one of the most renowned families of Salonica, with Bronia Rappaport,

[15] Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, GKA Konsulatsarchiv Saloniki 454, letters of firms from various places, like Prague, but also smaller ones, like Reichenberg/Liberec, asking for information about Jewish Salonican firms.

[16] Serres is a town close to Salonica. The city and its Jewish community were in decline in the second half of the 19th century. However, by the end of that century it regained some of its importance thanks to, among other things, the settlement of Jews from Salonica, who sought to take advantage of the financial opportunities offered by the production of export goods and the eventual creation of a railway line that passed by the city. Vasilis Ritzaleos, "Jewish Neighborhoods in Serres from Tanzimat until the Financial Crisis of the Interwar, 1839–1929," in *Proceedings of the International Conference on the Town of Serres and its Periphery from the Ottoman Conquest to Contemporary Times* (Serres: Municipality of Serres, 2013), 379–400, here 383–384.

[17] Alliance Israélite Universelle, Petits Pays, Tchécoslovaquie B, 1.4.

daughter of Arnold Rappaport, director of the *Länderbank* and a prominent member of Galician and later Viennese Jewry.[18] It is worth noting that the marriage did not take place at the Sephardi synagogue, a fact which attests to the previous conclusion about the Salonican Jews' disassociation from the institutionalized framework of Sephardi social life, as well as the minimal importance (if any) that the issue of denominational differences held for them – at least for those about whom we have data.

Salonican Jews in Vienna were also in contact with another part of the Viennese population: the Greek-Orthodox community. The great majority of Salonican businesses were located in the "Greek quarter" in Vienna's first district, often side-by-side or even in the same building as those of Greek-Orthodox merchants.[19] There are moreover records of the two groups visiting the same recreational locations outside Vienna, like Bad Ischl, particularly in the summer, a fact that not only verifies their links with one another but also indicates the adoption of the same standards and behaviors as the locals and their belonging to the Viennese upper class.[20]

Another element that demonstrates their contacts with the Greek-speaking population in Vienna is the very name they used for themselves when addressing the audience of the most popular Judeo-Spanish newspaper in Salonica, in the example given at the beginning. The term used, that is "Salonikiotes," is a version of the Ladino word for a person originating from Salonica which contains a Greek suffix and therefore differs from the word "Selaniklis" which was otherwise typically used.[21] The choice demonstrates a linguistic influence from the Greek language, which in turn demonstrates frequent social interaction.[22] Moreover, this evinces their strong identification with their

18 *Die Neuzeit,* December 7, 1888: 4.

19 Anna Ransmayr, *Untertanen des Sultans oder des Kaisers: Struktur und Organisationsformen der beiden Wiener griechischen Gemeinden von den Anfängen im 18. Jahrhundert bis 1918* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2018), 63.

20 *Ischler Cur-Liste,* July 24, 1895: 2.

21 Even today, after more than a century of being part of the Greek state, the term used to describe a person originating from Salonica is influenced by the French, and not the Greek language. I would like to thank Jacky Benmayor for bringing this to my attention.

22 On the choice of the word influenced by the Greek language, instead of the more standardized version influenced by the Turkish, see also Naar, "Sephardim since Birth", where the author examines issues of identification of Sephardi migrants from the Ottoman Empire in the United States.

place of origin – a trait that is also to be found among other Salonican Jews who migrated elsewhere.[23]

3 Austrian Jews in Salonica

The fact that some of the Salonican Jews under examination had Austrian protection or citizenship, as mentioned in the introduction, affected not only their relations with the local authorities when they were in Salonica, but also how they were perceived by their fellow citizens. They were characterized "membres de la colonie austro-hongrois de notre ville"[24] by the *Journal de Salonique,* the most widespread Jewish local newspaper (in French). They displayed their allegiance to the Habsburg Empire in various ways such as providing funds for the Austro-Hungarian army.[25] Their association with Austria-Hungary became more evident after the First Balkan War (1912), when prominent members of the Jewish community of Salonica proposed the internationalization of the city, instead of its annexation by any of the belligerent states, a plan which served the Habsburg Empire's interests as well. As noted in the Habsburg consul's reports, the existence of Salonican Jews in the Habsburg lands facilitated the positive disposition of Salonica's Jewry towards the plan and, consequently, towards the increased influence of the Habsburg Empire in the region.[26] Many of those who held Austrian citizenship continued to declare publicly their allegiance to the Habsburg Empire,

[23] Edgar Morin's description of his father's emigration to France is indicative of the strong regional identification which Salonican Jews had. Morin mentions that, upon his arrival in France in the early 20th century, his father was asked by the border authorities about his nationality, and he responded "Salonican." See Morin Edgar, Christine Garabedian, and Colette Piault, "Vidal and his people," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies,* 4:2 (1994): 330–343, here 332. The strong identification of Jews of Salonican origin in Vienna with their city persisted until many decades later. In 1938, Rachel Levy still answered "Salonica" when she was asked about her citizenship. Archive of the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde* (on loan at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute), Auswanderungsfragenboegen – A/W 2589,83 (Nr.32801-33200)/33160/Levy Rachel.

[24] *Journal de Salonique,* July 21, 1902: 1. The Jews in Salonica were to a large extent French-speaking, much like the Jews of other Ottoman cities, due to the influence of the educational programs of the AIU. On the impact of the AIU and its education of Jews in the Ottoman Empire, see Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey 1860–1925* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990).

[25] *Wiener Zeitung,* June 17, 1864, 1.

[26] Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Politisches Archiv XII, 404, Report of the Habsburg consul in Salonica to the minister of Foreign Affairs, April 8, 1913.

even at a time when Salonica had become the center of the Entente forces operating at the Macedonian front. This led some of them to eventually be apprehended by the Entente forces and deported from Salonica (their place of birth) since they had become enemy aliens.[27]

4 Concluding Remarks

Following Matthias Lehmann's observation on the concept of diaspora, which should be understood "as something that happens rather than something that is,"[28] this article demonstrates that even in cases of settlements such as the one described here, identifications are formed according to what happens – in other words, according to the people's experiences, individually and collectively. Thus, the sense of belonging of Salonican Jews in Vienna was concretized by their experiences relating to their affinities with fellow Salonicans, fellow Sephardi, fellow Jews, and fellow Austrian citizens. Each aspect contributed separately and all together as a sum of experiences to the formation and diversification of the persons' self-perception and was related to aspects like information distribution, social circles, and financial relations. The intersection and transformation of these persons' sense of belonging is not separate from their migration experience and constitute a common thread that connects migrational phenomena across time and space.[29] Similarly, their class affected the construction of their self-identification and informed their practices when in contact with other groups, since "the migrant is created according to his social class."[30]

The surrounding milieu thus affected the prevalence of each aspect of their identification. Acting as brokers between many groups and environments, the Salonican Jews in Vienna nonetheless embodied the real and imagined space where different identifications intersected and (in)formed their social

[27] Archives du *Ministère des Affaires étrangères,* AMAE/604PO/B/56, Letter from the Salonica directorate of the Lighthouses Company to the consul of France in Salonica, January 11, 1916; E.l.i.a. (Greek Literary and Historical Archive), Anastasiadou/656/1, Liste de sujets autrichiens résidant à Salonique. September 19, 1916.

[28] Matthias B. Lehmann, "Rethinking Sephardi Identity: Jews and Other Jews in Ottoman Palestine," *Jewish Social Studies* 15:1 (2008): 81–109, here 83.

[29] Dirk Hoerder, Andrew Gordon, Alexander Keyssar, and Daniel James, *Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millennium* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 15, 17.

[30] Nancy Green, "La migration des élites. Nouveau concept, anciennes pratiques?," *Les Cahiers du Centre de Recherches Historiques* 42 (2008), 107–116, here 113.

surroundings.[31] At the same time, their ability to maneuver between various distinct aspects affected them not only on a social but on a material level as well.[32] This was what at the end allowed them to remain "Salonikiotes de Vyena" and at the same time "membres de la colonie austro-hongrois de notre ville."[33]

31 Simone Lässig and Miriam Rürup, "Introduction: What Made a Space 'Jewish'? Reconsidering a Category of Modern German History," in *Space and Spatiality in Modern German-Jewish History,* eds. Simone Lässig and Miriam Rürup (New York/Oxford: Berghahn 2017), 1–20, here 5.

32 This, of course, was not a unique trait of Salonican Jews. As Constanze Kolbe demonstrates, a similar case can be found with the Jews of Corfu, who were active in the citrus trade. They, too, "forged cross-ethnic and cross-religious networks between Jews, Orthodox Christians, Muslims, and Catholics but also between Jewish Sephardim and Ashkenazim from different empires and nation-states". However, as the author states, "Corfu [was placed] on a very different trajectory than Salonica." The establishment of connections between Salonican Jews and the Habsburg mainland and their migration is a case in point: Constanze Kolbe, *Crossing Regions, Nations, Empires: The Jews of Corfu and the Making of a Jewish Adriatic, 1850–1914* (unpublished dissertation, Indiana University, 2017), 2,5, 116–119.

33 See fn. 1 and fn. 24.

“*Die Gute Stube*”: Fotodokumentation. Source: Archiv des Jüdischen Museum Wien, Sign. 001028-001.

What was “Jewish” about the Old Jewish Museum of Vienna?

by Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek

Abstract

The Jewish museums established in the fin-de-siècle Habsburg Empire postulated the unity of “the Jewish people,” with custodians constructing an “us” (Jews) in distinction to the “other” (non-Jews). In the difference-oriented frenzy of the time, Jewish identity was predominantly presented as Central European, enlightened, not overly religious, and middle-class. Then, when the Viennese Jewish Museum opened its doors in 1895, the painters Isidor Kaufmann and David Kohn created an installation called “*Die Gute Stube*” (The Parlor). This exhibit housed books, furniture, as well as decorative and ritual objects of the kind that were thought to be found in typical Eastern European Jewish households. However, as this article argues, this attempted visualization of the essence of Judaism and the range of Jewish life worlds promoted a paradigmatic stereotype with which Jewish museums would have to struggle for decades to come.

1 Introduction

About a generation before its collapse, three Jewish museums had been established in the Habsburg Empire: first in Vienna in 1895,[1] then in Prague in 1906,[2] and, finally, in Budapest in 1909.[3] As little as they may have been

[1] Bernhard Purin, *Beschlagnahmt: Die Sammlung des Wiener Jüdischen Museums nach 1938* (Vienna: Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Wien, 1995); Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek and Wiebke Krohn, *The First Jewish Museum, Vienna 1895–1938* (Vienna: Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Wien, 2005).

[2] David Altschuler and Vivian B. Mann, eds., *The Precious Legacy: Judaic Treasures from the Czechoslovak State Collections* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983); MagdaVezelská, “Jewish Museums in the Former Czechoslovakia,” in *Neglected Witnesses: The Fate of Jewish Ceremonial Objects During the Second World War and After,* eds. Julie-Marthe Cohen and Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek (Crickadarn: Institute of Art and Law, 2011), 103–128.

[3] Ilona Benoschofsky, “Die Geschichte des Museums,” in *Das Jüdische Museum in Budapest,* eds., Ilona Benoschofsky and Alexander Scheiber (Wiesbaden: Fourier Verlag, 1989); Zsuzsan-

present in the consciousness of non-Jewish milieus, they too were clearly an expression of that European current that would ultimately lead to the dissolution of the monarchy: nationalism. The constructed unity of a given "people," which increasingly separated the "self" from the "other," did not only have real political implications: Cultural mechanisms were thereby set in motion that helped solidify these boundaries and cultural institutions were created that raised these distinctions to a program.

In its very origins, the museum institution generally was a servile instrument of "higher" interests of whatever kind. If European bourgeois Jewry chose to make itself a museum object around 1900, this was especially in Central Europe, not only out of "a sense of responsibility for the image of the Jewish past and implicitly the Jewish present."[4] This also has to be seen in the context of national independence movements and cultural identity/self-consciousness discourses. In the difference-oriented frenzy in which the many peoples of the multicultural state wanted to be accepted as independent entities, the naming of one's own identity became a vital argument for recognition, up to and including statehood. This designation was (and is) based on a real or fictitious common ancestry as well as on a real or fictitious common culture.

In this multicultural constellation, the designation of a collective Jewish identity could appear quite up-to-date and self-evident, if it was at the same time articulated as multinational, or later Austro-, Hungarian-, Czech- or otherwise hyphenated Jewish. The problem was how to elucidate Jewish identity both for the internal community and to the outside world, or in other words: to make explicit what Jewish identity meant. In what structures other than academic discourses and theoretical vocabulary could appropriate representations of identity be found? And what was this collective Jewish identity to begin with?

na Toronyi, "The Fate of Judaica in Hungary During the Nazi and Soviet Occupations," in *Neglected Witnesses: The Fate of Jewish Ceremonial Objects During the Second World War and After,* ed. Julie-Marthe Cohen and Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek (Crickadarn: Institute of Art and Law 2011), 285–306.

4 Richard I. Cohen, *Jewish Icons: Art and Society in Modern Europe* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1998), 199.

2 Musealizing Jewish Identity

The answer to the latter question was highly complex after the Enlightenment. In both the general European and specific Jewish Enlightenments, the dissolution of the formerly perceived unity between religion and "nationhood" demanded and prompted new, non-religiously motivated strategies for dealing with the Jewish self during the 19th century. On the intellectual level, the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* emerged, transferring traditional Jewish scholarship into – increasingly differentiated – academic fields of research. On the more popular level, beyond scholarly collections of Hebraica, "Jewish" collections were assembled: conglomerates of ritual objects alongside folkloristic and artistic objects that stemmed from, or were connected with, Jewish life contexts.[5]

At the turn of the 20th century, the transferal of such new and specific collections into a medium of their own made sense, the emergence of which matched the self-assertive efforts of the various communities – the Jewish museums. These museums were based on already existing associations: in Vienna on the Society for the Collection and Preservation of Artistic and Historical Monuments of Judaism (*Gesellschaft für Sammlung und Konservierung von Kunst- und historischen Denkmälern des Judentums*),[6] in Prague on the Association for the Establishment and Maintenance of a Jewish Museum,[7] and in Budapest on the Hungarian Israelite Literary Association. In general, their members were individuals interested in the history and culture of their respective upscale Jewish society.[8] Their advocacy was also fueled by the incredibly active scene of the Society for Jewish Folklore (*Gesellschaft für jüdische Volkskunde*), which was founded in Hamburg in 1896 by Rabbi Max Grunwald (1871–1953), who would later serve as a full-time rabbi in Vienna.[9]

5 Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek and Daniela Schmid, "Von der Judaica-Sammlung zum j/Jüdischen Museum," in *"Ausgestopfte Juden?" Geschichte, Gegenwart und Zukunft Jüdischer Museen,* ed. Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek and Hannes Sulzenbacher (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2022), 36–60.

6 Purin, *Beschlagnahmt,* 7.

7 Magda Veselská, *Defying the Beast: The Jewish Musuem in Prague 1906–1940* (Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2006).

8 Andrew Handler, "The Seminary and the Israelite Hungarian Literary Society (IMIT)," in *The Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest 1877–1977: A Centennial Volume,* ed. Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger (New York: Sepher-Hermon Press, 1986), 113–122.

9 Christoph Daxelmüller, "Hundert Jahre jüdische Volkskunde: Dr. Max (Me'ir) Grunwald und die 'Gesellschaft für jüdische Volkskunde'," *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 9 (1999), no. 1: 133–144.

The custodians employed at the Jewish museums not only had the task of guarding the art and cultural assets deposited and exhibited there, but also of ensuring their correct interpretation. This was no different in other museums, whether ethnographic, regional, or municipal (to the extent that they existed at this time). As instruments of representation, the custodians of the Jewish museums knew approximately, if only vaguely, what they wanted to represent, namely themselves in their own perception: as a Central European, enlightened, not too religious, middle-class, and homogeneous Jewry. The museums meanwhile presented themselves as modern (and they were indeed modern), knowledge-based, and as research and educational institutions. They wanted to simultaneously capture, portray, and shape Jewish history and culture, to present the success story of Jewish integration, and at the same time to demonstrate an "us" (Jews) in distinction to the "other" (i.e. non-Jews). As with the encyclopedias of their time, they were not only products of scholarship, research, and knowledge; they were also manifestations of progress, self-assurance, and self-empowerment.

For many, the Jewish museums were not only modern but even revolutionary, a minority claiming the right to its own history and historical representation. They thus differed markedly from the Ethnological Museum (*Volkskundemuseum*) in Vienna, where a folklorist and an ethnologist sought to stereotype the many peoples of the empire through a serial collection of more or less specific utensils and costumes. By contrast, the Jewish museums were sites of visualized narratives, of the manifestation of one's own group, its cultural, political, and social expression, in short: of its representation.

3 Visualizing Jewish Identity

But how was Jewish identity to be captured? And which identity? And how could and should this be exhibited? For example by trying to explain oneself, so to speak, through a serial accumulation of specific objects? In a sense, this was the case. On the one hand, regional history was exhibited from the perspective of Jewish experience, but on the other, as in ethnographic museums, objects were exhibited that were considered by the museum operators to be representative, i.e. typical of the Jewish collective, or better of an imagined Jewish collective.

Beyond this very genteel and rather tame self-presentation, however, Vienna explored the power of object-based communication in quite a revolutionary

way. In 1899, the painters Isidor Kaufmann (1853–1921) and David Kohn (1861–1922) created a three-dimensional installation for the museum called the "*Gute Stube*" (Parlor), which was filled with objects identifiable as "Jewish."[10] One may imagine its creation as a result of both ethnographic field research and artistic creativity. In the process, the notion of a "typically Jewish" home was nourished by Kaufmann's travels through Jewish habitats in Galicia, Hungary, and Poland. After all, the museum also had a collection focus on the culture and history of Eastern European Jewry, given that a large proportion of Vienna's Jewish families had roots precisely in Eastern Europe. Thus a "*Führer durch das Jüdische Museum*" (Guide through the Jewish Museum) published in 1906 already listed Russian, Polish, and Hungarian materials.[11] The collections of objects of Eastern European origin grew considerably in the following decades. From the perspective of an urban Central European community, the structures and values of small-town or even rural Eastern Jewish life seemed much more genuine and authentic than their own.

Even if Kaufmann himself laid no claim to the authenticity of the interior design of this room as specifically Jewish, the result of this method, which can be called rather projective, was received with enthusiasm in Vienna. The traveling physician and anthropologist Samuel A. Weissenberg (1867–1928) mused: "But the room where a 'Jewish heart' can really rest and find pleasure is the 'Gute Stube' built by Isidor Kaufmann." Indeed, Weissenberg got quite carried away with the dreamy fantasy:

> "One is overcome by a wistful feeling about the beautiful, good, old times that shall never again return; one feels transported to one's childhood years and one involuntarily looks around, searching for one's grandparents, in order to wish them 'a good Shabbos'."[12]

[10] For background and classification, see Bernhard Purin, "Isidor Kaufmanns kleine Welt: Die 'Gute Stube' im Wiener Jüdischen Museum," in *Rabbiner-Bocher-Talmudschüler: Bilder des Wiener Malers Isidor Kaufmann 1853–1921,* ed. G. Tobias Natter (Vienna: Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Wien, 1995), 128–145. See also Leon Kolb, "The Vienna Jewish Museum," in *The Jews of Austria: Essays on their Life, History and Destruction,* ed. Josef Fraenkel, 2nd ed. (London: Vallentine, Mitchell & Co. Ltd, 1967), 147–160, here 148.

[11] Gesellschaft für Sammlung und Conservirung von Kunst- und historischen Denkmälern des Judenthums, ed., *Führer durch das Jüdische Museum* (Vienna: Jüdisches Museum Wien, 1906), nos. 272–282 and 476–481; see also nos. 220–221 and no. 96.

[12] For this and the previous quote, see Samuel Weissenberg, "Jüdische Museen und Jüdisches in Museen," *Mitteilungen zur jüdischen Volkskunde* 10 (1907) no. 23, 77–88, here 87. Weissen-

This sentimentalization of the Jewish ghetto existence also corresponded to Kaufmann's romantic visual transcription of Jewish shtetl life in his artworks.[13]

It is difficult to judge whether or to what extent the idea of depicting this nostalgic habitat was influenced by exhibitions of folkish living rooms, for example at the Bavarian State Exhibition in Nuremberg.[14] Both Kaufmann and Kohn may have been too young to have been influenced by the self- and other-staging with which the 1873 World's Fair in Vienna had flaunted itself. But later and elsewhere in the Habsburg Empire, there were other such recreations of life and living spaces, for example the "Exhibition Village with Wallachian Settlement" in Prague in 1895 or the "Skansen" at the Hungarian Millennium Exhibition in 1896, which consisted of 24 farmhouses, a Transylvanian church, and a "Gypsy Tent Camp."[15] These inspired not only ideas of the "other" (i.e. non-Jews) but also possible modes of (self-)depiction.

4 The Spatial Arrangement in the Jewish Museum Vienna

In the above-mentioned guide through the Jewish Museum from 1906, the authors had to limit themselves to 400 objects out of a total of 3,000. The objects were listed by room and accompanied by an overview of the physical possibilities offered at the museum in this early stage. The guide opened with "I. Anteroom," with objects unrelated to one another in content. It is no longer clear today why, for example, a Torah curtain from the Jewish community of Hohenems was shown here next to the "*Fauteuil des Predigers Dr. Adolf Jellinek s.A.*" (armchair of the preacher Dr. Adolf Jellinek of blessed memory) and why, next to this, tombstones discovered during construction work around Vienna were exhibited together with "tombstones from Southern Arabia," all of them "gifts of Hofrat Doktor D[avid] H[einrich] Müller, Member

berg became famous with the study: *Die Südrussischen Juden: Eine Anthropometrische Studie mit Berücksichtigung der Allgemeinen Entwicklungsgesetze* (Braunschweig: Vieweg und Sohn, 1895).

13 See in particular the chapter "Nostalgia and 'The Return to the Ghetto'," in Cohen, *Jewish Icons,* especially 171–175.

14 Purin, "Isidor Kaufmanns kleine Welt," 140.

15 Timea Galambos, *Magyarisches Millenium 1896: Glanz- und Schattenseiten der ungarischen Tausendjahrfeier* (published Master's thesis, Vienna University, May 2008), available online at: https://fedora.phaidra.univie.ac.at/fedora/get/o:35047/bdef:Content/get (April 27, 2023), 64.

of the Board of Trustees, Vienna" (1846–1912).[16] In "II. Main Room," there were graphics of biblical scenes, paintings, portrait medals, and memorabilia of famous, mostly Viennese personalities, next to various Judaica objects. "Room III" again offered biblical subjects mainly in the form of copperplate engravings, some ceremonial objects, historical Austriaca, but also two peculiarities, namely watercolor copies that the Viennese synagogue architect Max Fleischer (1841–1905) had made of the illustrations of the famous Haggadah of Sarajevo[17] and the painting "Morning Prayer" by the Viennese Hagenbund member Lazar Krestin (1868–1938).[18] "Room IV" showed, in addition to many mainly Austrian Jewish celebrities, Jewish folkloristic objects from the collection of the above mentioned Samuel Weissenberg, and depictions by Bernhard Picart (1673–1733) of Jewish rituals and customs.[19] These served the museum (and not only the one in Vienna) to illustrate Judaism as a religion beyond any historical experience, beyond different traditions, and beyond time and space – as a static religion. A "Cabinet" finally showcased a few more items that did not remotely form a coherent group. Even after the museum moved to new premises in 1913, there was surprise expressed that it "gave the impression of a painter's studio or antique store rather than a scholarly collection."[20] Particularly harsh criticism of the lack of focus in the presentation and of the cult of personalities practiced through countless memorabilia came from the founder of the Berlin Art Archive Karl Schwarz (1885–1962), a contributor to the renowned journal *Ost und West* and later director of the Jewish Museum of Berlin, who vehemently demanded quality over quantity.[21]

16 Müller was one of the leaders of the South Arabian expedition of the Imperial Academy of Sciences in Vienna in 1898. His research results aroused broad linguistic, cultural-historical, and ethnological interest.

17 This Sephardic Haggadah was among the first objects of academic research in Hebrew illuminated manuscrips and was edited and published as: David Heinrich Müller and Julius von Schlosser, *Die Haggadah von Sarajevo: Eine spanisch-jüdische Bilderhandschrift des Mittlelalters, Textband von Dav[id] Heinr[ich] Müller u[nd] Julius v[on] Schlosser, Nebst e[inem] Anh[ang] von David Kaufmann* (Vienna: Alfred Hölder, 1898).

18 Georg Herlitz and Bruno Kirschner, eds., Jüdisches Lexikon, III (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1929), 891; see also: Richard I. Cohen and Mirjam Rajmer, *Samuel Hirszenberg 1865–1908: A Polish Artist in Turmoil* (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2022), 289–290.

19 *Gottesdienstliche Ceremonien oder Andachts-Uebungen und Religions-Pflichten der Juden, Türcken ec.: In V Ausgaben abgetheilt, welche alle Völcker, die sich durch die Beschneidung unterscheiden, begreiffen. Mit Kupferstichen nach Bernhard Picart* (Zurich: David Herrliberger, 1746).

20 Anonymus (presumably Max Grunwald), "Jüdisches Museumswesen", *Archiv für Jüdische Familienforschung, Kunstgeschichte und Museumswesen,* 4, 5 und 6 (1913): 30.

21 Anonymus (presumably Max Grunwald), *Jüdisches Museumswesen,* 30–31.

5 The Image of the *“Gute Stube”* (Parlor)

The last room listed in the 1906 guide is “The Parlor.” The description of this room was cursory: “Interior, built and furnished by Isidor Kaufmann, member of the Curatorium. The furnishings and fittings contained therein mostly date from the 18th century.” This misjudgment of the period of origin reflects the state of knowledge of the curators. Just as the showrooms were unorganized and unstructured in terms of content, so the “*Gute Stube*” seems to have been furnished at random, rather as a stage than an exhibition room.

Looking at the photos of the “*Gute Stube*” today, one is involuntarily reminded of Kaufmann’s early genre paintings. Just as he had often organized these as stage spaces,[22] so in the Jewish Museum he organized a space as a theater on which (a) Judaism was staged.

The items that Isidor Kaufmann had collected for the purposes of illustration and reproduction were books, furniture large and small, everyday decorative objects, and ritual objects of the kind that were in the metropolis thought to be the norm in Eastern European Jewish households. Concrete provenances were not recorded, which means that acquisition contexts, occasions, and criteria cannot be traced. Almost certainly, the parlor was simply furnished as the curators saw fit. It is true that some Judaica objects were scattered around the room, such as “1 iron Torah box with the date 5584 […], 1 pewter seder bowl […], 1 brass bessamim box […], 1 parchment scroll (Megillah Esther), 1 tallit […].”[23] However, there were also tables, chairs, a chest of drawers, and bookcases in front of a so-called “doorway with stairs.”

The contexts of the exhibited objects are not immediately clear. Why the “1 Hanukkah lamp” hung next to “2 wall arms in the shape of a deer” is somewhat puzzling, whereas “5 candlesticks” as well as “5 different pictures” can probably be interpreted as what they were named in the inventory: “Kommodenaufputz” (essentially window dressing). The table and chairs were probably meant to emphasize the familial nature of Jewish life.

22 G. Tobias Natter, “‘Geschreibsel und Zuckerwasser?’ Verklärung und Standpunkte bei Isidor Kaufmann,” in *Rabbiner-Bocher-Talmudschüler: Bilder des Wiener Malers Isidor Kaufmann 1853–1921,* ed. G. Tobias Natter (Vienna: Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Wien, 1995), 12–41, 18.

23 On the furnishing, see Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek, “Aus der Schabbatstube,” in *Rabbiner-Bocher-Talmudschüler: Bilder des Wiener Malers Isidor Kaufmann 1853–1921,* ed. G. Tobias Natter (Vienna: Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Wien, 1995), 146–163.

All in all, the composition of the objects, the authenticity of which cannot today be verified, suggests that the furnishers were never concerned with depicting a reality. Otherwise, what were the "3 women's headdresses," models visualizing traditional female Jewish headdresses, doing next to the Torah cabinet, and what were two amulets "for a woman in childbed and a newborn child" doing up there? Was the oil-based "Portrait of a Rabbi" a characteristic wall decoration in Jewish homes? What was the inner connection between "1 tobacco pouch" and a "synagogue prayer bench" (and whoever defined it as such)?[24] Museum curator Maurice Bronner (1890–1971) claimed the parlor to be "an 18th-century Jewish house as can actually still be found today in Galicia and southern Russia."[25] How this student of French literature should have known such houses remains unclear, even if he had lived with his grandparents in Bielce (modern-day Moldavia) for a while as a child.[26]

Finally, the ceiling of the room was also especially designed. Wooden beams were fitted into the "good room" or "Shabbat room," as the "Parlor" was also called. Hebrew inscriptions were carved into these beams from the Shabbat tradition, beginning with: "So the Israelites shall keep the Shabbat" (Ex. 31:16) and "When the Shabbat comes, rest comes" (from the Shabbat prayers). A "Jewish ceiling" thus completed a "Jewish room," enclosing the room, giving a frame to its disjointed individual parts, defining it with its disparate "filler materials" and giving it its lasting name.

6 Conclusion

Looking at the featured "*Gute Stube*" (The Parlor) in particular, the question arises to what extent the presented material artifacts portrayed such a thing as a "genuine" Judaism or rather created such a thing in the first place. In the search for visualization methods for what the Hungarians, the Czechs, the Ruthenians, and all the many peoples of the empire put forward for their (aspired) independence, the Jewish Museum in Vienna created a backdrop

24 For this and the previous quotes, see Heimann-Jelinek, "Aus der Schabbatstube," 146–163.

25 Christa Prokisch, "Chronologie einer Ansammlung: Jüdische Museen in Wien 1893–1996," in *Papier ist doch weiss? Eine Spurensuche im Archiv des Jüdischen Museums Wien,* ed. Werner Hanak (Vienna: Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Wien, 1998), 14–25, here 16.

26 Felix Bronner, *As I Remember my Father's Life,* off-print, digitized by the Center for Jewish History in New York and avaiable online at: https://digipres.cjh.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=FL8885863 (April 27, 2023).

as an ostensibly "authentic representation"[27] of a "genuine" Jewry: modest, simple, Eastern European, family-oriented, supra-temporal and trans-spatial, untouched by secularization and industrialization, by nationalization and internationalization, by class struggle and feminism, by poverty, and girl trafficking. The image of the Jewish "*Gute Stube*" went around the European world both physically and as a photograph and postcard.[28] The distribution was comparable to, and possibly an imitation of, the cycle of "*Bilder aus dem altjüdischen Familienleben*" (Pictures from Old Jewish Family Life) by Moritz Daniel Oppenheim (1800–1882), who worked in Frankfurt am Main. From 1866 onwards, his cycle was sold all over the world both as a portfolio work and in individual sheets and also formed part of the collection of the old Jewish Museum in Vienna.[29] Isidor Kaufmann's parlor was – willfully or not – misunderstood as reality.

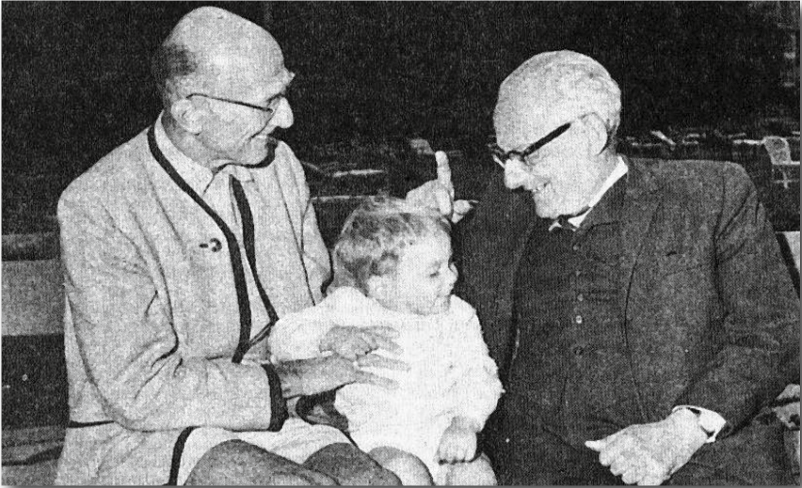
The identity-assuring search for a Jewish self resulted in the artistic reproduction of an idea, becoming an artificial decal that was supposed to visualize the Jews of the Habsburg Empire in their cultural independence and uniqueness. Ultimately, it was the original failure to visualize the essence of Judaism and the range of Jewish life worlds that promoted the auxiliary of a stereotype from which the Jewish museums could later only slowly liberate themselves. In their desire to become seen as an entity in its own right amid this seething and sinking multicultural empire, the museum protagonists ended up finding only inadequate means to visually explain "the Jewish."[30]

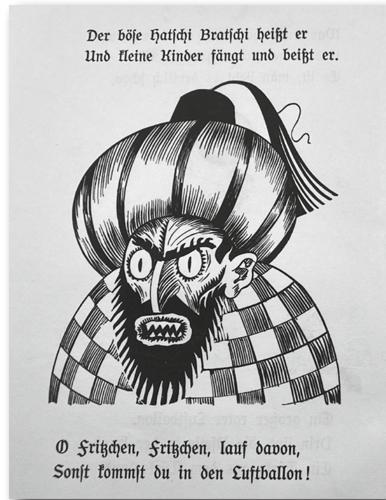
27 Leon Kolb, "The Vienna Jewish Museum," in *The Jews of Austria: Essays on their Life, History and Destruction,* ed. Josef Fraenkel, 2nd ed. (London: Vallentine, Mitchell & Co. Ltd, 1967), 147–160, here 148.

28 Purin, "Isidor Kaufmanns kleine Welt," 138–139.

29 Anonymous, *The Jewish Year, Illustrated by Pictures of Old-Time Jewish Family Life: Customs and Observances: From the Paintings by Professor Moritz Oppenheim, with Explanatory Text by Louis Edward Levy* (Philadelphia: The Levytype Company, 1895); Norman L. Kleeblatt, *The Paintings of Moritz Oppenheim: Jewish Life in 19th-Century Germany,* Exhibition Catalogue (New York: The Jewish Museum, 1981); Erik Riedl, "Moritz Daniel Oppenheim: Ein jüdischer Maler der Emanzipationszeit," in *Napoleon und die Romantik: Impulse und Wirkungen,* ed. Magistrat der Brüder-Grimm-Stadt Hanau, Fachbereich Kultur, Stadtidentität & Internationale Beziehungen/Städtische Museen Hanau (Marburg: Historische Kommission für Hessen, 2016), 83–99, especially 83, 94–95.

30 In this context, see the interesting installation on the "*Gute Stube*" by the Israeli artist Maya Zack, commissioned by the present-day Jewish Museum of the City of Vienna in 2013. Zack dehistoricized the ensemble by transferring its history and fate after 1938 into an up-to-date 3D artwork. The question of what exactly had been Jewish about "The Parlor" was not addressed here.





Above: Omar Rolf von Ehrenfels and Max Brod with Ehrenfels's son Mou'min in Tarasp (Switzerland), 1963. Cited in Umar R. von Ehrenfels, "Vier Erinnerungen an Max Brod," Die Tat 34, no. 45 (Feb. 22, 1969): 29. Source: E-Newspaper Archives.
Below: Franz Karl Ginzkey, Hatschi-Bratschis Luftballon: Eine Dichtung für Kinder von Franz Karl Ginzkey. Mit vielen Bildern von Ernst Dombrowski (Salzburg: Anton Pustet, 1933). Inside cover and p. 8 (depicting Hatschi Bratschi). Source: Austrian National Library.

Diversifying Modern Austrian History: Exploring Parallels and Intersections between Jewish and Muslim Histories in Austria

by Omar T. Nasr and Tim Corbett

Abstract

Jews and Muslims have lived in the territory of modern-day Austria for centuries untold, yet often continue to be construed as the essential "other." This essay explores a selection of sometimes divergent, sometimes convergent historical experiences amongst these two broad population groups, focusing specifically on demographic diversity, community-building, discrimination and persecution, and the post-war situation. The ultimate aim is to illuminate paradigmatically through the Austrian case study the complex multicultural mosaic of historical Central Europe, the understanding of which, so our contention, sheds a critical light on the often divisive present-day debates concerning immigration and diversity in Austria and Central Europe more broadly. It furthermore opens up a hitherto understudied field of historical research, namely the entangled history of Jews and Muslims in modern Europe.

1 Introduction

Among the many myths on which a sense of Austrian "nationhood" was belatedly established in the years following Nazi rule, one of the most tenacious was the notion that Austria is – and always has been – essentially white, Catholic, and German.[1] In reality, throughout the millennium that "Austria" has existed as a political construct, the lands included under this name (we are here concerned primarily with the territory of the present-day republic)

[1] In lieu of in-depth citations on these broad issues, please refer generally to the series "Contemporary Austrian Studies," accessed February 15, 2023, https://www.uibk.ac.at/iup/verlagsverzeichnis/contemporary-austrian-studies.html. The statistics on contemporary demographics cited in this essay are drawn from "Statistik Austria," accessed February 15, 2023, https://www.statistik.at/.

have been shaped by a great diversity of peoples, languages, cultures, and religions and marked by constant migration flows that persist into the present day. Jews constituted probably the most visible and certainly one of the most beleaguered groups construed as a "minority" in pre-Holocaust Austrian history. Yet, this position has in contemporary Austrian society to a large degree shifted onto the country's large and substantially post-migrant Muslim population.[2]

This essay is dedicated to highlighting the diversity of Austrian society past and present by exploring some of the parallels and intersections between Jewish and Muslim histories in the territory of modern Austria. To this end, it explores a selection of sometimes divergent, sometimes convergent historical experiences amongst these two broad population groups, focusing especially on the following topoi: demographic diversity, community-building, discrimination and persecution, and the post-war situation. The ultimate aim is to illuminate paradigmatically the complex multicultural mosaic of historical Central Europe, the understanding of which, so our contention, sheds a critical light on the often divisive present-day debates concerning immigration and diversity in Austria and Central Europe more broadly.

2 Demographic Diversity

Both in the past and present, Jews and Muslims, as indeed Austrians generally, have been conceived in varying terms, with no clear definition applying to all the members of each given group nor clearly delineating the one group from the other. Islam and Judaism are usually regarded first and foremost as religions, but like Christianity, neither follows a monolithic dogma, thus, throughout its history, Austria has been home to many different Jews and Judaisms (Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Chassidic, Bucharan, Reform, and so on) and different Muslims and iterations of Islam (mainly Sunni and Shi'i and multiple subgroups of each). At the same time, the followers of both these denominations in Austria have often been perceived and/or viewed themselves additionally or alternatively in "national" or "ethnic" terms and are thus crucially often

[2] The term "post-migration" refers not just to the migration experience of first-generation migrants themselves, but also the interactive, transformative relationship that arises as a result between the migrant communities (and their descendants) and their new home countries, see Erol Yildiz and Marc Hill, eds. *Nach der Migration: Postmigrantische Perspektiven jenseits der Parallelgesellschaft* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2015).

perceived as "non-native" peoples, in explicit contrast to white, Christian (whether Catholic or Protestant), German-speaking Austrians.

To be sure, the various Jewish and Muslim population groups that have inhabited Austria throughout history often had a (post)migration background. Yet, Jews have inhabited the region since the Roman era, while Muslim populations in the region date as far back as the ninth century, and not just since the immigration of "guest workers" after World War Two, as is popularly assumed.[3] The presence of both Jews and Muslims, therefore, significantly predates not only the modern "nations" in the region, but even the nebulous "Ostarrichi document" of 996, on the basis of which a new Austrian "national" identity was invented after 1945. Demographically and culturally, both population groups have thus formed a constitutive part of Austrian history for centuries. Nevertheless, the myth of a solely Christian or – increasingly after the Holocaust – an extended "Judeo-Christian" culture in Central Europe remains unfortunately widespread, as reflected in contemporary Austrian political discourse, particularly amongst the right wing.

An immediate contrast between the Jewish and Muslim populations in the territory of modern Austria can be found in their relative size and proportion, which stand in inverse relation to one another in the past and the present: The Habsburg Empire in its final decades was home to several million Jews, who made up about a fifth of the world Jewish population in 1900, with Vienna constituting one of the world's greatest Jewish metropolises before the Holocaust. Conversely, the Muslim population in the present-day territory of Austria, while negligible before the twentieth century, has grown steadily since the 1970s, reaching approximately 745,000 individuals in 2021, about 8.3 percent of the total population. Meanwhile, the post-Holocaust Jewish population of Austria has never exceeded about 0.1 percent of the population.

Another contrast can be found in the historical places of origin of Jews and Muslims, respectively: In the early modern and modern periods, Jews primarily migrated to Austria from the lands of the Holy Roman Empire, Hungary, and Poland, while before the mid-twentieth century, especially following the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718, Muslims mainly migrated to Austria from

[3] Smail Balić, "Zur Geschichte der Muslime in Österreich I: Lebensräume und Konfliktfelder," in *Islam zwischen Selbstbild und Klischee: Eine Religion im österreichischen Schulbuch,* ed. Susanne Heine, Kölner Veröffentlichungen Zur Religionsgeschichte, vol. 26 (Cologne: Böhlau, 1995), 23–35.

the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire, with an increasing number coming from Egypt.[4] The Muslim population of the Habsburg Empire finally rose to over half a million following the occupation of Bosnia and Hercegovina in 1878.

This gradual growth in the size and significance of Muslims in Habsburg Austria found a Jewish parallel, however, in Sephardi migration to present-day Austria, particularly Vienna, in the modern period. The Sephardi migrants constituted a distinct "community" with a distinct religious, cultural, and linguistic makeup, moreover sharing many cultural and economic ties to the Muslim-majority communities of the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires from which they hailed. Finally, while Ashkenazi Jews were legally and socially ostracized before the granting of general emancipation in Austria with the December Constitution of 1867, the Sephardim generally enjoyed greater social privileges alongside an elevated economic status on account of their Ottoman citizenship.

3 Community-Building

The concept of "community," while ubiquitous today in academic, political, and popular discourse, often remains poorly defined. In the Austrian political context, the definition of a "religious community" ("*Religionsgesellschaft*") is a distinctly legal matter: Unlike in other countries, certainly in the English-speaking world, religious communities in Austria are constituted as legally recognized public-law bodies acting essentially as intermediaries between the state and their members. The process by which religious denominations become chartered has since 1874 been regulated by the "*Anerkennungsgesetz*" (Recognition Law). The constitution of each recognized community is subsequently regulated with a specific law, in this context specifically the "*Israelitengesetz*" (Israelite Law) recognizing a "Jewish community" and the "*Islamgesetz*" (Islam Law) recognizing a "Muslim community" since 1890 and 1912, respectively.[5]

[4] Marcel Chahrour, "The 'Mecca of Medicine.' Students from the Arab world at the Medical Faculty of the University of Vienna 1848–1960," in *Strukturen und Netzwerke: Medizin und Wissenschaft in Wien 1848–1955,* eds. Daniela Angetter, Birgit Nemec, Herbert Posch, Christiane Druml, and Paul Weindling (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2018), 487–509.

[5] The respective laws can be found under the Austrian government's register of laws: "Rechtsinformationssystem des Bundes," accessed February 15, 2023, https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/.

Naturally, such official definitions do not necessarily or accurately reflect the self-identification of "communities" in reality, though they are constitutive of homogenous community concepts in the popular imagination. While hundreds of centralized Jewish representative bodies – so-called *Israelitische Kultusgemeinden* – were established across Habsburg Austria from the 1890s onwards, in which the vast majority of self-identifying Jews were members, an *Islamische Kultusgemeinde* was not officially founded until 1979. This, however, should not lead to the fallacy that the Islamic religious community ("*Religionsgesellschaft*") as a whole was only founded in 1979, as it was already officially recognized in 1912.[6] To be sure, Muslims had already settled in Austria before 1979, formed cultural and religious associations, and thus self-identified as an Austrian Muslim community many decades prior to 1979.[7]

Consequently, by the interwar period, when a vibrant Jewish culture was flourishing in Austria, a small yet energetic Muslim community had also emerged, like the Jewish population predominantly located in Vienna but also in university cities like Graz and Innsbruck. Muslims in interwar Vienna formed various intellectual, political, and religious organizations and endeavored to partake in Viennese cultural life. Despite its ultimate failure due to the rise of Nazism and the outbreak of World War Two, a mosque construction project in Vienna serves as an emblematic reminder of the determination to make Vienna a spiritual abode for the interwar Muslim community.[8]

6 Rijad Dautović, "40 Jahre seit der Wiederherstellung der IRG-Wien: Warum die Islamische Religionsgemeinde Wien nicht erst 1979 gegründet wurde," in *Die Islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich, 1909–1979–2019: Beiträge zu einem neuen Blick auf ihre Geschichte und Entwicklung*, ed. Farid Hafez and Rijad Dautović (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2019), 99–124.

7 Rijad Dautović, "Islamitisch akademischer Verein 'Zvijezda': Über den 1904 gegründeten ersten muslimischen Verein in Österreich," *Wiener Geschichtsblätter* 74, no. 4 (2019): 397–406; Marcel Chahrour, "Politics in Exile – Egyptian Political Opposition in Austria 1880–1945: The Ägyptische Nationalpartei and the Islamische Kulturbund and Its Activities in Austria in the Interwar-Period," in *Egypt and Austria IV: Crossroads,* eds. Johanna Holaubek, Hana Navrátilová, and Wolf B. Oerter (Prague: Set Out, 2008), 247–261.

8 Omar Nasr, "The 'Islamischer Kulturbund' in Vienna and Its Role in Organising the Muslim Community in Interwar Austria" (Master's thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2021).

4 Discrimination and Persecution

As abstractions, Jews and Muslims present twin pillars of exclusion in the construction of a "white" and "Christian" identity regime in modern Austria, as elsewhere in Europe. As Farid Hafez has explored, Jews and Muslims were both imagined as "inherently opposed to European values," albeit by the nineteenth century the "Jewish Oriental" was imagined to be the "enemy within" (as were Protestants at crucial moments like the Counterreformation), while the "Muslim Oriental" was "located outside of the borders of Europe."[9]

This finding is borne out by the long history of violent exclusion and persecution suffered by Jews within Austria since the Middle Ages, while by the fifteenth century, the principal external menace had been identified as the Ottoman Empire. Following the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 and the Ottoman military advances in Southeastern Europe resulting in two sieges of Vienna in 1529 and 1683, the "Turks" were firmly imprinted in the collective consciousness of the Catholic Habsburg lands as the preeminent external threat. In parallel to the "Jews" within, the "Turks" were of unequivocal importance in demarcating the "other" without, both abstractions ("Jews" and "Turks") serving over the centuries – albeit in constantly mutating forms – to conversely define the Catholic, German-speaking "we" in Austria.[10]

Indeed, the term "Turks" was at various stages of Austrian history applied to various groups hailing from the Ottoman Empire, not just Muslims, but also Greeks, Armenians, and notably Sephardic Jews.[11] Similarly, the abstracted "*Türkengefahr*" (Turkish danger), as a cultural trope, has historically been applied to perceived enemies within (Habsburg) Austria as disparate as (Jewish) democrats during the 1848 revolutions, (Jewish) liberal politicians in the 1880s, and (Jewish) socialists under the "Austrofascist" regime in the 1930s.[12]

9 Farid Hafez, "From 'Jewification' to 'Islamization': Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in Austrian Politics Then and Now," *ReOrient* 4, no. 2 (2019): 199–202.

10 Simon Hadler, "Europe's Other? The Turks and Shifting Borders of Memory," *European Review of History/Revue Européenne d'histoire* 24, no. 4 (2017): 507–526.

11 Franz Fillafer, "Österreichislam," in *Habsburg Neu Denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa – 30 Kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte,* ed. Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016), 163–170, here 165.

12 Simon Hadler, "Feindschaften," in *Habsburg Neu Denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa – 30 Kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte,* eds. Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016), 59–65, here 63–64.

The intertwining of anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim ideologies in modern Austrian culture is succinctly demonstrated in the 1933 edition of Franz Karl Ginzkey's (1871–1963) children's book *Hatschi Bratschis Luftballon,* a story originally published in 1904 about an evil "Turk" called Hatschi Bratschi who kidnaps Christian children from Central Europe. The 1933 edition included new illustrations by Ernst Dombrowski (1896–1985) that incorporated explicitly antisemitic motifs, blending them with barbaric stereotypes of the "Oriental Muslim." Notably, both Ginzkey and Dombrowski were Austrian members of the Nazi Party. *Hatschi Bratschis Luftballon* continues to be sold today, the most recent edition having been published in 2011, though it has come under increasing criticism in recent years for its racist stereotyping.

Austria's large and influential Jewish population of the interwar period was almost entirely decimated in the Holocaust, being either driven into exile or murdered. The fate of Austria's Muslim population under Nazi rule was more checkered. Muslim civilians in Austria during this period were organized in a few associations, the most important being the *Islamische Gemeinde zu Wien* (Islamic Community in Vienna), which was only able to operate under the strict control of the Nazis.[13] While some members supported the regime – mainly for political reasons such as anti-colonial and anti-Soviet aspirations – others helped save Jews by granting them membership in the association, thus passing them off as Muslims.[14]

Meanwhile, anti-Nazi Muslims in Austria were forced to flee, such as Baron Omar Rolf von Ehrenfels (1901–1980), a Christian convert to Islam, who was the inaugural president of the "*Islamischer Kulturbund Wien*", the main Muslim association of interwar Austria, and from 1933 onward an outspoken activist and voice against rising antisemitism and Nazism. On the eve of the *Anschluß* in 1938, Ehrenfels was holding a lecture in Prague, where he had been in close friendship with Max Brod, a renowned Jewish intellectual and editor

13 Rijad Dautović, "40 Jahre seit der Wiederherstellung der IRG-Wien: Warum die Islamische Religionsgemeinde Wien nicht erst 1979 gegründet wurde," in *Die Islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich, 1909–1979–2019: Beiträge zu einem neuen Blick auf ihre Geschichte und Entwicklung,* eds. Farid Hafez and Rijad Dautović (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2019), 99–124.

14 Rijad Dautović, "'Islamische Gemeinde zu Wien' (1942–1945): Zwischen Kollaboration und Judenrettung," presentation at the annual conference of the Austrian Studies Association, New Orleans, 2022.

of the anti-Nazi liberal democratic newspaper, the *Prager Tagblatt,* for which Ehrenfels also wrote regularly. Following the *Anschluß,* Max Brod received information that his Muslim friend was wanted by the Nazis as his name was on one of their notorious blacklists. Ehrenfels was alerted by his Jewish friend, Brod, who despite being in danger himself assisted Ehrenfels in his successful escape to India. Shortly after that, Brod had to escape as well. They were only to meet again about three decades later.[15]

There were also examples of entanglements between Jewish and Muslim fates during the Holocaust in Austria. For example, Leopold Weiss alias Muhammad Asad (1900–1992), a celebrated convert from Judaism to Islam who resided in India, endeavored to rescue his Jewish family from Austria. Yet, his attempt to procure a visa to India was rejected by the British colonial administration due to Asad's involvement in Muslim anti-colonial circles in India. His family was subsequently murdered in a concentration camp.[16] Finally, Muslim soldiers, like Jewish soldiers, participated greatly in the Allied war efforts, for example in the Red Army's conquest of Vienna in April 1945, and Muslim POWs can be found in the records of concentration camps on Austrian territory.[17]

5 The Postwar Situation

The Jewish population that reestablished itself in the Second Austrian Republic after 1945 consisted once again to a great degree of migrants, this time mainly DPs, refugees, and immigrants from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The latter group, today organized as the *Verein Bucharischer Juden Österreichs* (Association of Bukharan Jews in Austria) and constituting about a third of the Jewish community membership, not only originally hailed from Muslim-majority countries, but also spoke regional languages like Farsi and practiced a form of Judaism that emerged in interaction with local variants of Islam,

15 U. R. von Ehrenfels to Roy C. Bates, Box 2, Professional Correspondence Series, Folder 26, Roy C. Bates (Kurt Bauchwitz) Papers, German and Jewish Intellectual Emigre Collection, M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York.

16 Margit Franz, *Gateway India: Deutschsprachiges Exil in Indien zwischen britischer Kolonialherrschaft, Maharadschas und Gandhi* (Graz: Clio, 2015).

17 Jeff Eden, *God Save the USSR: Soviet Muslims and the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 112–117.

thus presenting deep cultural intersections with some (post-)migrant portions of Austria's Muslim population today.[18]

Like surviving Jews, the Muslim populations of Central and Eastern Europe were scattered across DP camps after the war, including in Austria. Many decided to stay in Austria and to (re-)establish Muslim communal life, especially in Salzburg and Carinthia, but also in Vienna.[19] The Muslim population of Austria then grew substantially following the labor migration treaties with Turkey and Yugoslavia in 1962 and 1964. Muslims from other countries also migrated to Austria in search of educational and career opportunities, with many deciding to stay and make Austria their new home. Presently, Austria is home to a large – and growing – Muslim population, most of whom are already second, third, fourth, and occasionally fifth-generation. Today making up 8.3 percent of the total population, Muslims have thus become conspicuously visible in contemporary Austrian society.

Jews also remain conspicuously visible in public consciousness today, despite their minimal numbers following the Holocaust, partly as an abstraction, but also due to the disproportionate cultural attention paid to Jewish history as a result of the Holocaust. Since the 1970s, however, political and social discourse in Austria has increasingly shifted away from Jews and towards the topic of "Islam," particularly amongst the right wing. While antisemitism has by no means ceased to exist, Muslims today undoubtedly constitute the primary target for the construction of "otherness" in Austrian politics. Indeed, the boom in interest in Jewish history and culture in Austria in recent years, which has been attributed at least in part to the general shame predominating today about the Holocaust as Austria's "original sin,"[20] has most recently also led to a problematic tendency to instrumentalize the Holocaust to justify exclusionary anti-refugee, anti-immigrant, and anti-

18 Ariane Sadjed, "(Re-)Covering a Mutual Language: Persianate Muslims and Jews in Austria," *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion* 24 (2024), Special Issue: Change and Its Discontents: Religious Organizations and Religious Life in Central and Eastern Europe, eds. Olga Breskaya and Siniša Zrinščak (forthcoming).

19 Rijad Dautovi, 'Eine Islamische Gemeinde im Kärnten der Nachkriegszeit?' (manuscript under review).

20 Jérôme Segal and Ian Mansfield, "Contention and Discontent Surrounding Religion in Noughties' [sic] Austria," *Austrian Studies* 19 (2011): 52–67, here 65.

Muslim politics, as though antisemitism were an issue "imported" into Austria by Muslims.[21]

While anti-Jewish sentiments amongst Austria's Muslim population do exist, often relating to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, this tendency to shift the blame for antisemitism onto the Muslim population and thus to sow discord between two often marginalized groups in Austrian society is worrying indeed – especially considering that neo-Nazi violence has been no less an issue in Austria in recent decades.[22] In recent times, there have moreover been concerted efforts by Austrian Muslim organizations to address and counter antisemitism within Muslim communities. Unfortunately, comparable endeavors to combat Islamophobia in Austria to date remain relatively limited.[23]

6 Conclusion

This brief essay has highlighted numerous points of convergence and divergence in the Jewish and Muslim histories of Austria over the past centuries. For all the differences in geographic and temporal patterns of migration, Jews and Muslims in Austria evidently share the common experience both of looking back on a long history in this country and at the same time of being consistently construed as the quintessential "other." While Austria's Jewish history, from the cultural heyday of the fin-de-siècle to the annihilation of the Holocaust, has been thoroughly explored in historiography, the historic Muslim populations of the country, their entanglements in Austrian culture and society, and their experiences of war and persecution, evidently remain a research desideratum, as does the entanglement of Jewish and Muslim histories in modern Austria and Europe.

The kind of comparative approach to Austrian history we have briefly highlighted here invites a deeper engagement with the cultural complexity of the region in the past and present, beyond the Manichean discourses of "majority/minority" or "autochthonous/foreign" that continue to dominate

[21] Dirk Rupnow, "Austria's Year of Memory and Commemoration 2018: A Review," *Contemporary Austrian Studies* 28 (2019): 222–236.

[22] Evelyn Adunka, *Die vierte Gemeinde: Die Wiener Juden in der Zeit von 1945 bis heute* (Vienna: Philo, 2000), 452–459.

[23] Muslimische Jugend Österreich, ed., *MuslimInnen gegen Antisemitismus: Gedenken, Begegnen, Bewegen* (Vienna: Al Hamra, 2019).

today.[24] For all the differences – and occasional antagonisms – between Jewish and Muslim histories in Austria, the commonalities invite reflection upon and solidarity with other smaller population groups construed as religious, ethnic, or social "others" in the past and present. Finally, the complexity of these entangled histories serves as a stark reminder not to allow one group's tragic history to be used as justification for another group's stigmatization.

24 Ruth Wodak, *The Politics of Fear: What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean* (London: Sage, 2015).

| Institut für jüdische Geschichte Österreichs |

Neuerscheinungen

Regesten zur Geschichte der Juden in Österreich

Band 5: 1405–1418
Eveline Brugger, Birgit Wiedl. Hrsg. vom Institut für jüdische Geschichte Österreichs. Studienverlag, Innsbruck – Wien 2022

In Österreich ist reichhaltiges urkundliches Quellenmaterial zur mittelalterlichen Geschichte der Juden überliefert; dazu kommen zeitgenössische historiographische, literarische und theologische Texte. Diese Quellen geben Aufschluss über die wirtschaftliche, rechtliche und persönliche Situation der jüdischen Bevölkerung sowie deren Interaktion mit der christlichen Umwelt. Daher wurde am Institut für jüdische Geschichte Österreichs (St. Pölten) eine Publikationsreihe in Angriff genommen, die dieses Material erstmals gesammelt in Regestenform zugänglich macht.

Jüdische Geschichte ist uns anvertraut

Festschrift für Martha Keil
Hrsg. von Sabine Hödl, Studienverlag – Innsbruck – Wien 2023, 328 Seiten, € 49,90, ISBN 978-3-7065-6332-1

Der „rote Faden“ dieses Buches ist die jüdische Geschichte, denn: „Mir ist es wichtig, begreifbar zu machen, dass die jüdische Geschichte ein integraler Bestandteil der Geschichte ist“, wie Martha Keil in einem Interview festhielt. Die Beiträge zeigen in ihrer Vielfältigkeit, dass jüdische Geschichte kein Sonderforschungsfach ist, sondern immer im Zusammenhang mit den allgemeinen historischen Entwicklungen zu sehen und zu interpretieren ist.

http://www.injoest.ac.at/de

Book Reviews

coordinated by Oskar Czendze

Kateřina Čapková/Hillel J. Kieval (eds.), Prague and Beyond. Jews in the Bohemian Lands (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press 2021), 384 pp., $79.95.

Basierend auf den Forschungsprojekten eines internationalen Autor:innenteams zeichnet der Band „Prague and Beyond" in sieben, chronologisch angelegten Kapiteln und zahlreichen Abbildungen die Geschichte der Jüdinnen und Juden in den böhmischen Ländern von der Frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart auf. Mit „Böhmischen Ländern" sind hier die historischen Gebiete der böhmischen Krone gemeint (Böhmen, Mähren und Österreichisch-Schlesien), die bis 1918 Bestandteil der Habsburger Monarchie waren und seit 1993 das Staatsgebiet der Tschechischen Republik bilden. Neben der englischen Originalfassung sind Ausgaben in deutscher, tschechischer und hebräischer Übersetzung erschienen.

Die Hauptthese des Buches ist die Entwicklung einer eigenständigen regionalen Identifikation der böhmischen, mährischen und schlesischen Jüdinnen und Juden, die sich – trotz großer innerer Heterogenität, die wiederum mit divergierenden jüdischen Erfahrungen verbunden war – weder Aschkenas (die deutschen Länder) noch Polin (Polen und Litauen) zugehörig sah. Diese im Buch überzeugend belegte Besonderheit der Region veranlasste den Historiker Hillel J. Kieval von den „Ländern dazwischen" (*lands between,* S. 58) zu sprechen. Ein methodisches Anliegen ist es, diese Geschichte nicht aus der staatlichen Verwaltungsperspektive (mit all ihren machtbasierten Vorurteilen), sondern aus jüdischer Sicht zu verfassen, und hierfür vor allem jüdische Zeugnisse und Ego-Dokumente zu verwenden.

Ausgehend vom Bericht des jüdischen Reisenden Abraham Levie untersuchen Verena Kasper-Marienberg und Joshua Teplitsky im ersten Hauptkapitel die Kultur und Geschichte von Jüdinnen und Juden in der Frühen Neuzeit. Sie reißen dabei Themen an wie die Unterschiede in den Ansiedlungsmustern zwischen Jüdinnen und Juden in Böhmen und Mähren, die auch in den folgenden Kapiteln relevant bleiben und das Spezifische jüdischer Existenz in den böhmischen Ländern aufzeigen.

Während die böhmischen Jüdinnen und Juden, aus den meisten Königstädten im 16. Jahrhundert vertrieben, bis ins 19. Jahrhundert vorwiegend in Dörfern lebten, konnten sich Jüdinnen und Juden in Mähren ebenso in Städten mittlerer Größe ansiedeln. Auch wenn Prag Sitz des Oberrabbinats und

das Zentrum religiös-kultureller Aktivitäten war, soll mit diesem Buch die sonst so häufige Pragzentrierung überwunden werden. Dies geschieht sehr anschaulich in der Schilderung ganz praktischer Probleme religiösen Lebens, die sich einfach ergaben, wenn beispielsweise nur wenige Juden an einem Ort lebten und kein Minjan zustande kam.

Im zweiten Kapitel analysiert Michael Miller die für Jüdinnen und Juden sehr restriktiven Entwicklungen in der Zeit des habsburgischen Absolutismus im 18. Jahrhundert. Mit Maßnahmen wie der Einführung der „Familiantengesetze" 1726/1727 versuchte der Staat zusehends Kontrolle über ein bislang weitgehend autonomes jüdisches Leben im Bereich der Kultur und Religion zu erlangen. Im dritten Kapitel beschreibt Kieval die Entwicklungen seit 1790. Die gesellschaftliche Emanzipation der Jüdinnen und Juden, einhergehend mit Urbanisierung und Verbürgerlichung, vollzog sich nicht friktionsfrei und war voller Widersprüche und Widerstände. Kieval stellt dabei heraus, wie die jüdische Bevölkerung gerade Bildungseinrichtungen ambivalent wahrnahm, als Orte der Hoffnung auf Inklusion, aber auch der Ausgrenzung und Ablehnung.

Das vierte (1861–1917) und fünfte Kapitel (1917–1938) sind vom jeweils gleichen Autor:innentrio verfasst. Michal Frankl, Martina Niedhammer und Ines Koeltzsch zeigen differenziert, wie sich Jüdinnen und Juden in den böhmischen Ländern – im öffentlichen Raum sehr sichtbar – immer mehr säkularisierten, während die Kenntnis und Praxis jüdischer Traditionen im Privaten stetig abnahmen. Zeitgleich sah sich die jüdische Gemeinschaft mit einer weiteren Bewegung konfrontiert. Jüdinnen und Juden gerieten unter die Räder des anschwellenden Nationalitätenkonflikts zwischen tschechischen und deutschen Akteur:innen, wurden teilweise umworben, aber auch der Kollaboration mit der jeweils gegnerischen Seite bezichtigt und immer wieder gedrängt, sich zu positionieren. 1897 führten antideutsche Demonstranten Angriffe auf jüdische Einrichtungen aus, die sie als „deutsch" wahrnahmen. Als Juden 1914 den Kriegsbeginn befürworteten (und zahlreich für das Habsburgerreich an die Front zogen), wurde dies von nationaltschechischer Seite als „Provokation" gewertet.

Selbst in der Ersten Tschechoslowakischen Republik kam es zu antijüdischen Ausschreitungen. Auch wenn viele Jüdinnen und Juden noch heute die Zwischenkriegszeit als eine der glücklichsten Zeiten böhmischer und mährischer Geschichte verstehen, was sich in der nahezu hagiographischen Verehrung des ersten Staatsoberhauptes Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk zeigt, warnen

die Autor:innen des Buches vor der Verklärung dieser Epoche als „Goldenes Zeitalter". Allerdings muss man erwähnen, dass Jüdinnen und Juden nun als Staatsbürger:innen gleichgestellt waren und sogar im Zensus ihre jüdische Nationalität deklarieren konnten. Diese komplexe Gemengelage beschreiben die Autor:innen für die Zwischenkriegsperiode folgendermaßen:

> „Though nation-building offered Jews many opportunities for participation, the borders of belonging were permanently redrawn, and the position of Jews remained fragile. Despite the high level of tolerance and integration, the relative stability and peace fostered illusions and ignorance of the subtle tendencies to disintegration, which were also part of democratic Czechoslovakia." (S. 195)

Mit dem Münchner Abkommen änderten sich dann auch die Rahmenbedingungen radikal. Offen antisemitische Haltungen und Handlungen wurden salonfähig und so schildert die Schriftstellerin Ilse Weber ihre Enttäuschung darüber, dass ihre nicht-jüdischen Nachbar:innen in Mährisch-Ostrau zunehmend den Kontakt mieden.

Im darauffolgenden Kapitel zum Holocaust beschreibt Benjamin Frommer detailliert den Ausschluss böhmischer und mährischer Jüdinnen und Juden aus dem gesellschaftlichen Leben und die Bedeutung eines immer kleiner werdenden Lebensradius. Die Verfolgung stellte viele vor die harte Entscheidung der Emigration. Der Großteil der im „Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren" verbliebenen Jüdinnen und Juden wurde nach Theresienstadt und von dort aus in die Vernichtungslager deportiert. Der Autor hebt hervor, dass die böhmischen und mährischen Jüdinnen und Juden auch in Theresienstadt unter sich blieben und in dieser extremen Situation eine eigenständige Gemeinschaft mit starkem innerem Zusammenhalt bildeten. Doch zu Kriegsende hatte nur eine kleine Anzahl überlebt. Von den 68.000 Deportierten kehrten nur 3.371 heim.

Auf völlig neuen Quellenrecherchen und Interviews beruht Kateřina Čapkovás abschließendes Kapitel. In der Nachkriegszeit entstand durch den Zuzug von Jüdinnen und Juden aus Polen, der Karpato-Ukraine, Rumänien und anderen Ländern neues jüdisches Leben, vor allem in den Grenzgebieten, eher religiös-orthodox und ohne direkte Verbindung zur Vorkriegsgemeinde.

Mit den antisemitischen Schauprozessen der frühen 1950er Jahre und der Hinrichtung des jüdischen Generalsekretärs der Kommunistischen Partei, Rudolf Slánský verschärfte sich die Lage der jüdischen Bevölkerung bedrohlich. Paradoxerweise begann aber in dieser Zeit das jüdische Gemeindeleben

aufzublühen. In den 1960er-Jahren folgte zwar eine Phase der politischen Liberalisierung, doch nach dem Ende des Prager Frühlings 1968 verließen viele Jüdinnen und Juden das Land, die Verbliebenen zogen sich aber nicht unbedingt zurück. Für die 1970er Jahre kann Kateřina Čapková einen bedeutsamen Anteil von jüdischen Unterzeichnern der Charta 77, der Petition der gleichnamigen antikommunistischen Bürgerrechtsbewegung, nachweisen. Mit dem Ende des Kommunismus 1989 reaktivierten jüdische Gemeinden ihre Schulen und kulturellen Einrichtungen. Heute zählt die Gemeinde in Tschechien nur etwa 3.000 Mitglieder, allerdings identifizieren sich schätzungsweise bis zu 20.000 Menschen mit dem Judentum. Einen demographischen Abriss zu ausgewählten Gemeinden in den böhmischen Ländern präsentieren Helena Klímová und Lenka Matušíková in einem Ergänzungskapitel.

Wünschenswert wäre in der Einleitung eine eingehendere Diskussion der verwendeten Quellen bzw. Archive und die damit verbundenen eventuellen Limitierungen gewesen. Überblicksdarstellungen sind eine Herausforderung, schon deshalb, weil immer jemand die Absenz irgendeines Aspekts beklagen wird. So fehlt beispielsweise im vorliegenden Band ein genauerer Blick auf die sozioökonomische Diversität der untersuchten Gruppe. Diese kleinen Einwände tun der Größe dieses Werkes indes keinen Abbruch. Insgesamt bietet der Sammelband einen hervorragenden Einblick in die vielfältige, aber auch sehr spezifische Welt der Jüdinnen und Juden in den böhmischen Ländern. Die Präferenz für die (inner-)jüdische Perspektive, eine breite thematische Herangehensweise bei gleichzeitiger konziser und gut lesbarer Darstellung machen diese Schrift zu einem Standardwerk.

Monika Halbinger, Munich/Vienna

Jason Sion Mokhtarian, Medicine in the Talmud: Natural and Supernatural Therapies between Magic and Science (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2022), 260 pp., $95.

"Talmudic medicine" had been recurringly addressed since the mid-eighteenth century. But only in the last three decades – most prolifically by Mark Geller and more recently Lennart Lehmhaus – scholars left the dominant Eurocentric view behind. Jason S. Mokhtarian is an expert in the Near East, its history, languages, and culture. His skillset promises that *Medicine in the Talmud* will depart from Hellenizing and other Western imaginaries to indulge readers

with the medical landscapes of the Persian-Sasanian Empire (224–651 CE) that informed the edition and compilation of the Babylonian Talmud (the *Bavli*).

Before Mokhtarian materialises this agenda in the last chapter by comparing the Akkadian and Mandaic texts with the medical contents of the Babylonian Talmud, he deconstructs in four chapters the ways in which Talmudic medicine used to be read. Chapter 1 surveys the relevant materials (mostly bGittin 68b–70b, bAvodahZarah 27a–29a, bShabbat 108b–111b). It lists over two dozen afflictions mentioned in the Talmud. The author seeks to establish that some medical content represents a mature medical genre (a recipe mostly), an already crystalised form of recording medical knowledge. In Chapter 2, Mokhtarian raises the question of whether such materials constitute a valid source for the study of the history of medicine. He enters the discussion on science and magic and whether medicine is any or both. Chapter 3 compares the medical concerns of earlier Jewish text (the Bible most prominently) with those in the Babylonian Talmud. Mokhtarian bolsters his earlier claim from the first chapter that the *Bavli* does not address bodily afflictions fleetingly. It includes distinct and standard medical genres. Chapter 4 then looks closely at the recorded remedies to emphasize their empirical nature. Recipes, mostly capturing a set of activities and ingredients applied as an answer to an affliction, were not only recorded as a form of archive-making; they were also applied and tested as an empirical form of knowledge. In the final chapter, Mokhtarian then maps the cultural context that surrounded the recorded remedies to highlight the domestication of remedies and recipes. He juxtaposes Akkadian and Mandaic texts to the broadly termed Greek tradition of Syriac (and Middle Persian, New Persian and Arabic) texts that is represented in the *Bavli* in limited amounts. Texts are studied along with magic bowls, and briefly, "strangers" offering esoteric remedies and Jewish women enter the picture. Ultimately, the "rabbinization" of medical content stands at the core of Mokhtarian's hypothesis that rabbis aimed to "maintain control over an essential aspect of everyday life" (p. 117) by introducing and adapting medical knowledge into the Talmud.

The book fleshes out topics familiar to historians of medicine, among others, the plurality of premodern healing practices and practitioners, women and medicine, magical and scientific thinking. Nevertheless, it never fully tells (or shows) us how exactly the different elements of the societal medical matrix reconfigure and produce a medical culture of the Talmud. Mokhtarian

connects his research with the history of medicine through Gianna Pomata's concept of "epistemic genre" – that is, "texts that develop in tandem with scientific practices" (p. 8) or, more plainly, writing driven by social practice. Surprisingly, the author does not use Pomata's quintessential study on recipes that would conceptually improve Chapter 4 in particular.[1] In the end, the social dimension remains underexplored. For a general reader, it is difficult to understand whether this absence is a result of missing evidence or a methodological oversight. It nevertheless undermines any argument about rabbis and their use of medical knowledge to control anyone. Such a composite argument would require the reader to understand how rabbis mobilized medical knowledge and turned it into legal (halakhic) knowledge that was applied (to individuals and collectives). Addressing social practices and institutions that "in tandem" co-exist with genres is unavoidable.

In addition, one may ask whether the "control" hypothesis is the only potential contribution of the recent history of medicine to Talmudic studies and ancient Jewish history. In contemporary Jewish studies, the act of writing medicine is often reduced to an act of power, and the authors of such texts to a group holding ultimate power over the body. The multicultural, multiscriptual, multilingual, oral, and decentralized societies of late antiquity seem, by design, resistant to any such Foucauldian interpretations. *Medicine in the Talmud* is invested in the history of the "genre of healing therapies" (p. 113). But before the author moves to texts, he should tell readers how much writing was needed and practiced in connection to healing. Did texts bear power over the body? The body's fragility and our desire to survive and thrive generate medicine. Our bodily state necessitates health-related interventions, not their written record. The history of medicine and the body gives us tools to consider the unwritten and embodied. It thus provides an opportunity to acknowledge the various unscripted and tacit ways in which practices governing bodily conduct produce knowledge, allowing historians to avoid totalizing and positivistic interpretations that stem from plain textual comparisons.

Despite these gaps, the book is a stimulating read. It illustrates the intellectual work scholars must invest to reconceptualize medicine in Jewish history.

1 See Gianna Pomata, "The Recipe and the Case: Epistemic Genres and the Dynamics of Cognitive Practices," in *Wissenschaftsgeschichte und Geschichte des Wissens im Dialog/Connecting Science and Knowledge,* ed. Kaspar von Greyerz, Silvia Flubacher, and Philipp Senn (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), pp. 131–154.

In an essayistic manner, Mokhtarian asks questions that problematize the ways in which medicine and its Jewish practitioners were portrayed between the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth century: Should Talmudic medicine be considered science or magic? Were the remedies described by rabbis efficient? Can doctors of medicine produce histories of medicine? Were rabbis medical experts or consumers of expert medical knowledge? The fact that these questions are still raised attests to the power of the "civilisation" – making myth that turned scientific practitioners into progressive forces changing history. It still echoes among some Jewish and other minority MDs and even the *hitechistim* of Tel Aviv. Students who had no opportunity to study the history of science, medicine, and technology may approach the Talmud with similar preconceptions of medicine and science. It is, however, my good academic duty to ask whether such framing of *Medicine of the Talmud* perpetuates the old debates rather than paves the way for new ones.

Magdaléna Jánošíková, Jerusalem, Israel

Anke Geißler-Grünberg, Jüdischer Friedhof Potsdam: Dokumentation – Geschichte – Erinnerungsort (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2022). Teil 1: Geschichte, Gestaltung, Ort der Erinnerung, 289 S. + 1 eingelegter Plan, 69,90 €. Teil 2: Dokumentation der Grabsteine und Grabanlagen, 780 S., 148 €.

Publikationen zu jüdischen Friedhöfen in Deutschland gibt es viele – vor allem seit dem 50. Jahrestag der Pogromnacht. Die mehr als 2000 jüdischen Friedhöfe in Deutschland standen hierbei oft im Fokus als die oftmals einzigen authentischen Orte, die noch an die ausgelöschten jüdischen Gemeinden und deren Mitglieder erinnern. In diesem Zusammenhang entstanden auch die ersten mehr oder weniger detaillierten Dokumentationen jüdischer Friedhöfe, die oft von Lokalhistorikern als kleine Schriften und später von Denkmalpflege- oder anderen Forschungseinrichtungen als umfangreiche Überblickswerke veröffentlicht wurden. Das jetzt im Harrassowitz Verlag in der Reihe „Jüdische Kultur. Studien zur Geistesgeschichte, Religion und Literatur" erschienene Werk zum jüdischen Friedhof Potsdam setzt sich in bemerkenswerter Weise von diesen früheren Publikationen ab. In langjähriger Arbeit hat Anke Geißler-Grünberg akribisch unterschiedlichste Aspekte des 1743 angelegten Begräbnisortes herausgearbeitet und damit seine Entstehungs- und

Nutzungsgeschichte, aber auch die Geschichte seiner Vernachlässigung und seine neue Funktion als Gedächtnisort untersucht.

Der erste Band (Teil 1) beschreibt zunächst die Ausgangslage und stellt frühere Dokumentationen und den Forschungsstand zum Friedhof sowie die Quellenbasis vor. Aufgrund der großen Bedeutung der jüdischen Gemeinde und des jüdischen Friedhofs in einer wichtigen Residenzstadt (der Bau von Schloss Sanssouci wurde nur zwei Jahre nach Gründung des Friedhofs begonnen) ist die Quellen- und Forschungslage sehr gut. Die Autorin kann daher ausführlich die Entwicklung des Friedhofs, den Bestattungskult und seine besonderen Herausforderungen in Potsdam sowie das Ringen der Gemeinde mit den lokalen Behörden um diverse Fragen, wie z. B. dem Bau der Trauerhalle oder die geplanten Erweiterungen, darstellen. Dies tut die Autorin gut verständlich und nachvollziehbar und belegt ihre Angaben mit zahlreichen Quellenangaben. Es wird deutlich, wie sehr der Friedhof sowohl ein Spiegel des sich wandelnden Selbstverständnisses der Gemeinde als auch ein Ort der Auseinandersetzungen mit der Mehrheitsgesellschaft war.

Besonders erfreulich ist, dass dem in vergleichbaren Publikationen oft vernachlässigte Zeitraum zwischen 1933 und 1945 sowie der Nachkriegszeit viel Raum eingeräumt werden – dies macht etwa die Hälfte der Untersuchung aus.

In der Sektion wird deutlich, dass für beinahe alle jüdischen Friedhöfe Schändungen während der NS-Zeit – abgesehen vielleicht von jenen der Pogromnacht – kaum dokumentiert sind, so auch in Potsdam. Besser nachvollziehbar ist hingegen das Ringen um Schließung, Enteignung sowie Verkauf des Friedhofs an die Stadt Potsdam, der nach zähen Verhandlungen erst im Mai 1944 erfolgte. Die Bürokratie, die die Vorschriften zur Wahrung einer 30-jährigen Totenruhe umsetzte, machte eventuellen Hoffnungen auf eine Umnutzung des Geländes und die damit verbundene (weitere) Zerstörung glücklicherweise zunichte und rettete den jüdischen Friedhof in Potsdam. Die Rückerstattung des jüdischen Friedhofs wie auch von Immobilien und Grundstücken an den Landesverband der jüdischen Gemeinden in der DDR erfolgte erst 1949. Dass Geißler-Grünberg hier nicht nur die Rückerstattungsgeschichte des Potsdamer, sondern auch anderer Friedhöfe im Land Brandenburg untersucht, ist vor dem Hintergrund der bislang wenig aufbereiteten Geschichte dieser Zeit sehr hilfreich.

Im folgenden Kapitel mit dem Titel „Das Verhältnis zum jüdischen Erbe“ untersucht die Autorin dann die „neue“ Bedeutung des Friedhofes als Ort des

Gedenkens zur Zeit der DDR und analysiert den Umgang mit neu aufkommenden antisemitischen Angriffen, die nicht als solche thematisiert werden durften. In diesem Zusammenhang wird auch die Haltung der Denkmalpflege in der DDR behandelt, die der Anlage durchaus „hohe Wertschätzung“ entgegenbrachte, aber sachlichen Zwängen unterworfen blieb.

Das Kapitel IV („Entwicklung der jüdischen Sepulkralkultur in Potsdam“) untersucht und visualisiert im Anschluss die Entwicklung des Friedhofs (die Belegungen, das Gesteinsmaterial, die Grabmalformen mit separaten Untersuchungen zu den oberen Abschlüssen sowie der Symbolik, Sprache der Inschriften und der Bepflanzung). Besser eingefügt hätte sich diese ausgesprochen interessante Untersuchung eher am Anfang des Bandes oder am Ende, an dieser Stelle unterbricht sie – vielleicht bewusst – den Fluss der Darstellung der Bedeutung und Geschichte der Nachkriegszeit. Anschließend knüpft Kapitel V („Gedächtnisort jüdischer Friedhof Potsdam“) mit der Entwicklung ab 1989 und dem Zuzug von Jüdinnen und Juden aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion an die vorherige Untersuchung an. Hier hätte ein direkter Übergang dem Leser ein kleines Fragezeichen im Kopf erspart, denn tatsächlich ist auch der dann folgende Abschnitt zur jüngeren Geschichte als Gedenkort sehr spannend, in dem die Autorin die verschiedenen Vermittlungsformate von Führungen bis Sommercamps betrachtet und kritisch untersucht. Vielleicht hätte man sich den Abschnitt zu den Hintergründen der 1999 erfolgten Eingliederung des Friedhofs in das UNESCO-Welterbe noch ein wenig ausführlicher gewünscht.

Beeindruckend ist der umfangreiche, zweite Band, der eine Dokumentation aller 532 historischen Grabsteine und Gedenkanlagen des Friedhofs enthält. Er beinhaltet auch die Ergebnisse der 1992 durch Martina Strehlen durchgeführten, aber nie veröffentlichten Dokumentation von 154 Grabsteinen. Die darin nicht enthaltenen 378 Grabmale hat die Autorin ergänzt, so dass erstmals eine vollständige Darstellung vorliegt. Zudem wurden von ihr Begräbnislisten ausgewertet, so dass selbst jene Bestattungen aufgeführt werden, für die kein Stein erhalten oder dieser vielleicht im Boden versunken ist. Mit dieser in ihrer Tiefe und Sorgfalt sehr beeindruckenden Dokumentation ist ein wichtiger Grundstein für weiterführende Projekte aber auch für genealogische Forschungen gelegt. Besonders positiv anzumerken ist, dass die Autorin die Grabstellen unter vielerlei Blickwinkeln erfasst und nicht – wie bei vielen ähnlichen Publikationen – nur die Inschriften wiedergibt. Neben einer

Dokumentation und Übersetzung der Inschriften finden sich Informationen zur Größe und Gestaltung der Grabsteine, zur Art und Herkunft der Steine und zu Beschädigungen aus früheren Schändungen. Bei größeren Grabstellen geben Fotografien sowohl einen Eindruck der Gesamtanlage als auch der Inschriftentafeln wieder. Die Angaben werden mit zum Teil sehr ausführlichen biographischen Hinweisen zu den Verstorbenen und ihrem Umfeld ergänzt.

Das Orts- und Namensverzeichnis im zweiten Band, mit dessen Hilfe die Leser:innen Personen schnell auffinden und interessante Verknüpfungen entdecken können, ist wichtig. Der Doppelband ist damit nicht nur Wissenschaftler:innen zu empfehlen, sondern auch allen Interessierten an der jüdischen Geschichte und Gemeinschaft Potsdams. Die Bände können separat erworben und auch gelesen werden. Einzig und allein der hohe Preis, der den Kauf zu einer wahren Anschaffung macht, ist kritisch anzumerken – enttäuscht wird der Käufer dennoch nicht!

Katrin Keßler, Braunschweig

Andrei S. Markovits, Der Pass ist mein Zuhause. Aufgefangen in Wurzellosigkeit (Berlin: Neofelis Verlag, 2022), 326 pp., 18 €.

First published in English in 2021, Markovits clearly wrote his memoir with a North American audience in mind. There is much to learn about the history of academia in North America, especially at Columbia and Harvard University, as well as American rock music. There are also passages on the Federal Republic that seek to explain developments to readers unfamiliar with West German history. Even so, *Der Pass ist mein Zuhause* should appeal to a German-speaking audience too. The author's biography is a fascinating tale of Jewish migration in the second half of the twentieth century. It recounts the travails of a Jewish Hungarian-speaking boy from Romania who attended one of Vienna's best high schools and ended up teaching at one of the most prestigious universities in the world. It also tells the story of a transatlantic academic who has successfully managed to straddle different disciplines, from the sociology of sports to the politics of the West German union movement. Since the volume is about "rootlessness," I will focus on aspects of the autobiography that touch on this topic particularly.

Born in 1948, the cosmopolitan Markovits grew up in a multicultural setting at a time when anti-cosmopolitanism spread throughout communist

Eastern Europe. He spent the first nine years of his life in Timisoara, half of whose inhabitants spoke Romanian while the other half conversed in either Hungarian or German. This setting was in many ways anathema to socialists, for whom any form of particularism threatened the prospect of a classless society. Yet, the regimes of Eastern Europe, following in the footsteps of Stalin's "socialism in one country," found "Jewish cosmopolitanism" even more problematic at a time when the East-West divide gave rise to widespread paranoid anxiety. The most prominent Romanian victim of this kind of antisemitism was Ana Paucker, a diehard Stalinist who became the first female foreign minister anywhere in the world.

After his mother's death, Markovits moved to Vienna, where he attended the *Theresianum.* As a (self-proclaimed) "rootless Jew," he never felt at home in any particular place, but Vienna seemed to present problems of its own: "Ich würde eher sagen," he writes, "dass ich aus der Hölle komme, als dass ich diese schrecklich schöne Stadt als mein Zuhause bezeichnen würde" (p. 40). For a brief moment, in September 1958, Markovits hoped to escape from the Austrian capital soon after his arrival, but his father's need to make a decent living (and pay for Andrei's schooling) cut short what proved to be an interlude on American soil. He returned to Vienna to finish his secondary education, but visited New York annually, staying with his uncle every summer. Once he passed his *Abitur* exams, Markovits moved to the United States. There he studied political science at Columbia, researched at Harvard, and taught at Wesleyan, Boston University, UC Santa Cruz, and, finally, Ann Arbor.

Throughout this book readers will sense a tension between Markovits's many accolades (indeed, he is keen to mention these repeatedly, for example, on pp. 102, 200, 228, 244, 245, 248) and the perception of himself as an outsider. He notes that he always remained at the margins – be it personally or institutionally – but recounts how people helped him feel comfortable, even at ease, in all sorts of situations. Indeed, some of the most intriguing passages in *Der Pass ist mein Zuhause* relate to the good will exercised by those around him, despite the difficult or challenging circumstances. He loved to play with the Soviet officer who lived in the family's apartment in the early 1950s. *Frau Kohler,* the family's landlady in Vienna, organized a Bar Mitzvah party his father could not afford, although she may have espoused National Socialist ideals in the past. The director at his *Gymnasium* promised to protect him against antisemitism at a time when such sensitivity hardly existed in Austria.

Famous scholars at Harvard, often Jewish immigrants from Europe, received the young research fellow with open arms at the Center for European Studies.

There are other tensions we can discern. On the one hand, Markovits insists that his parents never said anything negative about the Germans (p. 59), despite the fact that 28 of his relatives had been murdered in Auschwitz and elsewhere. His mother's bourgeois background was such that German music and literature belonged to a cultural repertoire that could not be relinquished. The young Andrei therefore received German language lessons from a woman with Nazi sympathies. Hitler, the author concludes, “hatte in der Familie Markovits gegen Beethoven keine Chance” (p. 51). On the face of it, then, the transgenerational transmission of trauma, often invoked in the literature, did not affect Markovits and his friends in postwar Timisoara. They had their bicycles and parks, and they were “relativ sorglos und glücklich, weitgehend behütet vom Schmerz unserer Eltern, den der Holocaust verursacht hatte” (p. 67).

On the other hand, the feelings of resentment toward Germany remain an underlying theme and came to the fore at unexpected moments. When West Germany played against Hungary in the 1954 World Cup final in Bern, Andrei noticed, possibly for the first time, how much his father hated Germany. In fact, this hatred extended to Austria at sporting events. Markovits junior describes how Markovits senior had trouble holding back his joy when the Soviets, otherwise held in much contempt by the family, scored a goal against Austria in Vienna's Prater stadium in the early 1960s. Although the author does not say so, it seems that the anger vis-à-vis Germany/Austria could not be fully articulated for some time thanks to the bourgeois norm of emotional control, the role of German culture in the family, and the dependence on Austrian goodwill. Resentment, typifying the comprise between anger and restraint, did not disappear, however. Later, as an established scholar in the United States, Markovits could speak his mind, which he does effortlessly in his memoir: its final chapter, after all, is entitled “Germany. Bewunderung für die Bundesrepublik, Unbehagen mit Deutschland.”

Feelings of unease are also at the center of what he calls “the thing,” “dieses giftige, schwammige, aber deutlich wahrnehmbare Amalgam aus Antisemitismus, Israelhass, Antiamerikanismus, deutschem Nationalismus, Nazismus und antiwestlichem Ressentiment” (p. 288). Markovits complains that the existence of this noxious concoction, always a possibility in right-wing circles,

now exists among the Left as well. It is for this reason that he decided to abandon the subject of German studies for sports and dogs, subject areas he can research "ohne Schmerz, Enttäuschung und Groll" (p. 308). It is a decision this reader can sympathize with.

Anthony D. Kauders, Keele, UK

Agnieszka Wierzcholska, Nur Erinnerungen und Steine sind geblieben. Leben und Sterben einer polnisch-jüdischen Stadt: Tarnów 1918–1945 (Paderborn: Brill-Schöningh Verlag, 2022), 665 pp., $101.

Agnieszka Wierzcholska's six-hundred-page monograph on the Polish city of Tarnów entitled *Nur Erinnerungen und Steine sind geblieben* is the newest addition to the quickly growing body of integrated Holocaust historiography.[1] Tracing the everchanging spaces of interaction between Jews and non-Jews from the onset of the interwar period until the aftermath of the Second World War, Wierzcholska establishes continuity throughout a narrative of violent ruptures. Focusing on a medium-sized city – the population of Tarnów in 1936 was approximately 53,000 with 52 percent Jews and 47 percent Poles – rather than a village or a metropolis, she uncovers the ways in which "small people" responded to shifts in societal norms set by the ruling authority and thus provides a welcomed contribution to our understanding of the on-the-ground dynamics of mass murder.

Following a background chapter on the Austro-Hungarian past of Tarnów, Wierzcholska divides her study into two distinct parts. In the first section, she proceeds thematically, discussing two case studies of spaces of interaction between Jews and non-Jews throughout the interwar period, namely the municipal council and elementary school education. The second part focuses on the Shoah and its aftermath. Here, the author proceeds chronologically to explain the increasingly radical nature of the Nazi policies in the occupied town.

The first case study of Tarnów's municipal council demonstrates that Jews were an integral part of the interwar political landscape. In this original part

1 See for example Omer Bartov, *Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town called Buczacz* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018) and Samuel D. Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History. Rediscovering a Hidden Archive from the Warsaw Ghetto* (New York: Vintage, 2009).

of her book, Wierzcholska shows that local politicians came directly from their highly multiethnic electorate and thus were interested in the general functioning of the town. Indeed, she notes how rarely Jewish interests were distinctly discussed. Fault lines emerged along political, rather than ethnic lines. On the few occasions where problems between Jews and non-Jews emerged, general interest in "interethnic compromise" typically resulted in a quick resolution (p. 100). Visualizing the process of the state's curbing of municipal autonomy and the transformation of the state's conception from a civic into an ethno-nationalist one, Wierzcholska successfully embeds her local story into the overall national context of the Second Polish Republic after 1918. This allows her to explain the sudden politization of ethnicity during a local political fight when "discrimination against Jews was politically desired and the antisemitic discourse was approved at the highest level" (p. 171).

The second case study concerns the elementary education system in which 80 percent of all Jewish children in interwar Poland shared a classroom with their non-Jewish co-patriots. Examining two schools in Tarnów's working-class neighborhood Grabówka, Wierzcholska uncovers vastly different interethnic attitudes. Whereas in the Czacki-School Jews were singled out as troublemakers, in the Staszic-School their non-Jewish teachers saw them as part of the community in need of institutional aid. Still, in both schools early-interwar-era "civic education increasingly merged with the ethno-national principle of 'being Polish'" (p. 260). Just as in the case of the city council, the change in the position of the highest authority enabled the proliferation of antisemitism not only on the national, regional, and municipal level, but reached down to the classrooms, fostering new norms that changed everyday life of Tarnów's residents. By dedicating almost half of the book to the pre-war era, Wierzcholska masterfully illustrates the viability of multiethnic society of the Second Polish Republic.

The growing radicalization of societal norms set by a central authority also provides the explanatory framework in the second part of Wierzcholska's book. Utilizing the concept of "occupied society" (*Besatzungsgesellschaft*) she places her emphasis on the "changing social dynamics within the local population [and] on the diverse, sometimes contradictory roles that an individual could take on during the period of occupation" (p. 271). She divides this part of her narrative into three subparts: the Shoah, the role of non-Jews during Nazi occupation, and the post-war era.

Wierzcholska first examines the early years of the German occupation characterized by the "simultaneity of proximity and distance among the local population" (p. 235). Tarnów's residents continued to live side by side while inhabiting vastly different positions within the racialized social hierarchy of the Nazi authorities. This period ends with the onset of Operation Reinhard in June 1942. Large-scale deportations to Bełżec and mass-murder of Jews on Tarnów's streets marked the start of genocide in this medium-sized town. Wierzcholska vividly describes the various urban sites where Nazi perpetrators – sometimes with the active help of local non-Jews – killed 40 percent of the town's entire Jewish population. The following chapter turns to the newly established Tarnów ghetto that existed from mid-1942 to September 2, 1943. Placing her emphasis on spaces of interaction once more, Wierzcholska examines not only the particularity of Jewish life in the Tarnów ghetto – frequently interrupted by deportations and consequent spatial shrinking – but also the conspicuous absence of Jews on the "Aryan side" and the theft of Jewish property by the Nazi perpetrators and local non-Jews alike. Engagingly probing the various ways in which Jews continued to interact with their non-Jewish neighbors – be it through barter with food at the ghetto fence, or in forced labor at workshops and factories – Wierzcholska argues that Jews were active actors who looked for ways to survive despite the limited range of action. Indeed, she shows that successful survival often hinged on contacts that Jews actively made with non-Jews during the Holocaust, rather than previous friends and acquaintances.

Wierzcholska dedicates three chapters to the role of the surrounding society during the Shoah. She joins other scholars in rejecting the category of a "bystander".[2] As she argues, the "passivity among the non-Jewish population was unthinkable given the proximity of violence" (p. 558). Non-Jewish Poles were not merely the audience of a staged performance. They were actors, standing on the stage alongside both Nazi perpetrators and their Jewish victims. Therefore, even a non-action must be considered an active choice. Wierzcholska does not undermine the fact that non-Jewish Poles were also

[2] Frank Bajohr and Andrea Löw, "Beyond the 'Bystander': Social Processes and Social Dynamics in European Societies as Context for the Holocaust," in *The Holocaust and European Societies Social Processes and Social Dynamics,* ed. by Frank Bajohr and Andrea Löw (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 3–14.

victims of Nazi terror. Throughout the study, she repeatedly draws attention to killings, deportations, forced labor and the limited frame of action open to them. Similarly, she makes clear that it was the Nazi occupiers – not the surrounding society – that set the norms in which everyone had to operate. Nevertheless, the racial hierarchy caused that non-Jewish Poles stood above the Jews and could easily benefit from their demise. Periodically reminding the reader of the radicalizing visions of ethnic nationhood in the late interwar period, Wierzcholska postulates that the exclusion of Jews from the Polish nation during the late Second Republic eased the non-Jewish population into the radical Nazi framework.

Examining the topic of active cooperation with the Nazi regime, Wierzcholska unlike previous scholarship places her emphasis on the *Baudienst* – an under-researched construction workforce created by the Nazi authorities in the General Government. Featuring young, able-bodied non-Jewish Poles, the main purpose of the *Baudienst* was to aid with the construction of infrastructure. Yet, the organization also took part in the Holocaust by digging up mass graves, transporting Jews to the killing sites and searching for escapees. Here, Wierzcholska flashes out the frame of action of these men who were either drafted or enlisted voluntarily – be it to escape the deportation to the Third Reich or to reap the workforce's benefits such as food, cigarettes, or the opportunity to subsequently pursue vocational education. No matter the circumstances, she underscores that desertion from the *Baudienst* could be punished by death. Moving onto non-Jews who aided Jews, Wierzcholska offers a similarly nuanced view. Showing that the reasons impelling non-Jews to aid their co-patriots ranged from self-enrichment to sexual desire to altruism, she emphasizes the processual nature of the decision. Based on the swiftly radicalizing environment, these decision-making processes had to be reevaluated practically on daily basis. Furthermore, she notes that similarly to Jews outside of the ghetto, non-Jewish helpers feared the denouncement of their non-Jewish neighbors who saw aiding Jews as a transgression of societal norms. While these norms were set by the Nazi authorities, the occupied society had internalized them.

According to Wierzcholska, it is this internalization of skewed norms as well as the intensity and intimacy of violence that at least partially explains the antisemitism of the immediate post-Second World War period. While Tarnów did not witness a pogrom-like violence such as Kraków or Kielce,

she demonstrates through chilling anecdotes "how threatening the situation was for Jewish men and women everywhere [...]" (p. 591). Mapping the waves of emigration in response to antisemitism, she shows that by 1957 Jewish Tarnów had been reduced to only memories and stones.

Agnieszka Wierzcholska has written a well-researched and engaging monograph. The periodization and focus on the adoption of changing societal norms allows us to better understand the proliferation of violence within society. Although it does not necessarily offer a new perspective on how the Shoah unfolded and how ordinary people responded to mass killing, the study of a medium-sized town nonetheless provides an important glimpse into the political and social reality in which a vast majority of interwar period urbanites acted. The book will no doubt become an important reference book for all scholars focusing on interethnic relations in Eastern Europe throughout the first half of the 20th century.

Zora Piskačová, Chapel Hill, USA

Renata Segre, Preludio al Ghetto di Venezia: Gli ebrei sotto i dogi (1250–1516) (= Studi di storia, 15). (Venezia: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 2021). 618 S., 40 €.

Während die Umstände der Einrichtung eines abgesonderten Wohnbezirks für Juden in Venedig im Jahr 1516 spätestens seit dem 500. Jahrestag und den damit verbundenen Publikationen und Ausstellungen recht gut ausgeleuchtet sind, ist die mittelalterliche und spätmittelalterliche Geschichte der Juden in Venedig bisher nur sporadisch ans Licht gebracht worden. Dieser Vorgeschichte des Ghettos, so könnte man den Buchtitel „Preludio al Ghetto" am besten ins Deutsche übersetzen, geht Renata Segre in ihrer umfangreichen Studie nach. Die Autorin erforscht seit Jahrzehnten die Geschichte der italienischen Juden, insbesondere im Piemont, der Lombardei und Venetien.

Basierend auf Archivstudien sowohl in Venedig als auch in Dutzenden der ehemals unter venezianischer Herrschaft stehenden Städten und Gebieten trägt Segre beeindruckend viel Material zusammen, das die Anwesenheit von Jüdinnen und Juden im Nordosten Italiens spätestens seit der Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts gut dokumentiert. Die Dokumente (die teils vollständig, teils in Auszügen in der Originalsprache in den Fußnoten abgedruckt sind) handeln, um es vorweg zu sagen, vor allem von Geldgeschäften, an denen

jüdische Personen (*zudei* oder *(h)ebrei*) beteiligt waren, und geben vergleichsweise wenig Auskunft über deren Privat- oder Gemeindeleben. Zu den Vorzügen von Segres Studie gehört aber, dass die Bankgeschäfte, Finanztransaktionen und fiskalische Aspekte in nachvollziehbarer Weise erklärt und verlebendigt werden. Über einen langen Zeitraum spielten Geldverleiher oder Pfandleiher die wichtigste Rolle in der Gemeinde, seltener aber auch Ärzte, wie z. B. einem gewissen *[M]aestro Elia medico,* der im Jahr 1276 die Erlaubnis erhielt, in Venedig zu praktizieren (vgl. auch die Studien Cecchetti 1883, 1886, Shatzmiller 1994, 2001 sowie Segre 2008, 2010).

Ein auffälliger Befund in Segres Studie ist, dass unter den ersten erwähnten Juden viele aschkenasischer Herkunft waren. Während einige generisch als „Deutsche" (*Leone di Bonaventura d'Alemania, Josef di Mercadante teotonico*) oder wie ein gewisser *Baruch ben Eliezer Axelrod* als *Ashkenazi* bezeichnet wurden, gibt bei anderen der Zusatz von Toponymen genauere Auskunft über ihren geographischen Ursprung, etwa bei *Salomone da Rothenburg, Salomone da Forchheim* oder *Jacob di Salomone da Ingolstadt* u. a. In anderen Fällen, z. B. wenn nur der Vorname (beispielsweise *Abramo* oder *Moise*) genannt wird, fällt es dagegen schwer, die Personen überhaupt zu identifizieren und auseinanderzuhalten. Gravierend kommen variierende Schreibweisen der Namen hinzu oder gar *Alias*-Namen wie im Falle von *Frizele di Lazzaro* alias *Grassone/Cressone* alias *Yekutiel Katz* alias *Grassone di Lazzaro.* Daher ist es lobend hervorzuheben, dass die Autorin die Verwandtschaftsverhältnisse – so gut wie möglich – zu klären versucht und ein äußerst nützliches Namens- und Ortsverzeichnis („Indice analitico", S. 587–617) erstellt hat. Auch wenn die Quellen überwiegend von Einzelpersonen handeln, konnte die Autorin in manchen Fällen, die Familienbande auch über größere geographische Entfernung hinweg rekonstruieren und/oder über mehrere Generationen verfolgen. Bedauerlich ist, dass in den Quellen Frauen nur selten erwähnt werden.

Bereits in der Vergangenheit haben Historikerinnen und Historiker immer wieder auf die Bedeutung von Mestre, der kleinen Stadt auf dem Festland gegenüber von Venedig, für das jüdische Leben hingewiesen. Dank der unterschiedlichen Archivbestände (in erster Linie des *Archivio antico della Scuola dei Battuti*) gelingt es Segre nun nicht nur die jüdische Präsenz an diesem besonderen Ort gut zu dokumentieren, sondern auch eine topographische Annäherung an das jüdische Leben entlang der „Calle de Mezzo" (S. 82–89) vorzunehmen; von einer Synagoge, einem Gasthof, einem jüdischen Friedhof

und mehreren von Juden bewohnten Häusern ist da die Rede, wobei Segre betont, dass es nur punktuell verlässliche Auskunft gibt.

Der Untertitel von Segres Buch („Die Juden unter der Dogenherrschaft von 1250 bis 1516") klingt zwar schlicht, umfasst jedoch immerhin einen Zeitraum von beinahe dreihundert Jahren und ein geographisches Gebiet, das weit über die Lagunenstadt hinausgeht: auf dem Festland umspannte dies die sogenannten *Domini di Terraferma* (z. B. Padua, Treviso, Udine oder auch die apulischen Städte, z. B. Monopoli, Trani und Otranto) und in Übersee (dem *Stato da mar*) verschiedene Städte an der dalmatischen Küste und auf dem Peloponnes sowie die Inseln Korfu, Kreta und Zypern – um nur einige zu nennen. Zur besseren Orientierung wären hier übrigens Landkarten sehr nützlich gewesen.

In den weiteren Ausführungen geht Segre auf die sich verändernden Herrschaftsverhältnisse wie auch die Situationen der ansässigen Juden ein.

Grundlegend verschieden war der juristische Status der dauerhaft in den *Giudecche,* den jüdischen Quartieren, auf Korfu oder Kreta lebenden Jüdinnen und Juden (S. 127 f.), von dem derjenigen in Venedig selbst, die sich nur mit Sondergenehmigungen *ad personam* und nur zeitlich befristet dort aufhalten durften. Zur uneinheitlichen rechtlichen Lage kam, dass die Einstellungen der Entscheidungsträger in Bezug auf die Duldung der Juden im Laufe der Zeit schwankten und die venezianischen Behörden untereinander um ihre Kompetenzen und Zuständigkeiten stritten – was sogar zu sich widersprechenden Verordnungen führte. Auf mühsam abgerungene Zugeständnisse und Erleichterungen für die Jüdinnen und Juden folgten brüsk und unangekündigt drastische Geldforderungen unter Androhung der totalen Ausweisung.

In diesen von Segre nachgezeichneten Vorgängen spiegeln sich deutlich das Fehlen einer einheitlichen Politik und die Bandbreite der unterschiedlichen Handlungsspielräume wider. Zudem zeigen Segres Ausführungen auf, dass keine Ideologie oder Denkart die absolute Oberhand gewinnen konnte – jedenfalls nie für lange Zeit. Einzig der althergebrachte Vorsatz, Juden in Venedig nicht zu dulden („*Antiqui nostri numquam eos voluerunt videre in Venetiis*"), bildet einen roten Faden. Von den Gegnern der Juden trotz der allgemein bekannten Angewiesenheit des Staates auf die Steuern, Sonderzahlungen und Kredite der Juden immer wieder gezielt in Erinnerung gerufen, als handele es sich um eine Staatsdoktrin, stellte dieser Vorsatz für deren Fürsprecher und „Realpolitiker", etwa Kardinal Bessarione (1464), ein schwer zu überwindendes Hindernis dar, das nur temporäre Aufenthalte und Ausnahmen

zuließ. Dass ausgerechnet mit der Einrichtung des Ghettos dann eine prosperierende Phase der christlich-jüdischen Beziehungen im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert beginnen sollte, klingt wie eine Ironie der Geschichte.

Segres Buch führt die Leserinnen und Leser souverän von Ort zu Ort und von Jahrzehnt zu Jahrzehnt und vergisst dabei niemals, auch die größeren nationalen und internationalen Spannungen und Konflikte mit einzubeziehen (wie z.B. die wechselnden Allianzen und Konkurrenzen in den angrenzenden Gebieten sowie auf der gesamten Apenninenhalbinsel, das angespannte Verhältnis zur Kurie in Rom, die Bedrohung Venedigs durch die Expansion des Osmanischen Reiches und die sich durch die transatlantischen Handelswege verschiebenden Machtverhältnisse beim Orienthandel), deren Opfer bzw. Akteurin die Serenissima war.

Neben den staatlichen Akteuren rückt Segre noch eine andere Instanz in den Vordergrund: Franziskaner- und Dominikanerorden hetzten in ihren Predigten, insbesondere während der Fastenzeit, immer offener gegen die „Feinde Christi“ und wiegelten die Volksmasse auf. Auch den Anklagen wegen sogenannten „Hostienfrevels“ und Ritualmordes (in Trient und Portobuffolè) räumt Segre den nötigen Raum ein. Die Ordensbrüder gefährdeten damit zwar – sehr zum Missfallen der Obrigkeit – die öffentliche Ruhe, zugleich aber teilte ein Großteil der Machthabenden diese Ressentiments, nicht zuletzt, weil man hoffte, sich auf die ein oder andere Weise der Schulden bei jüdischen Geldleihern zu entledigen. Dass aus diesen komplexen Verflechtungen unheilvolle Spannungen entstehen mussten, ist leicht nachzuvollziehen.

In frischem Ton und spannungsreich erzählt Renata Segre diese wechselvolle (Vor-)Geschichte in ihrem faktenreichen und dabei stets gut leserlichen *opus magnum.* Mit ihrer Forschung, bei der sie sich nur auf wenige, Teilaspekte behandelnde Einzelstudien stützen konnte, schließt sie auf imponierende Weise eine lange Zeit klaffende Forschungslücke. Man behauptet nicht zu viel, wenn man das Buch jetzt schon als Standardwerk bezeichnet.

Rafael D. Arnold, Rostock

Hanna Kozińska-Witt, Politycy czy klakierzy? Żydzi w krakowskiej radzie miejskiej w XIX wieku [Politicians or Claqueurs? Jews in the Cracow City Council in the 19th Century]. Studia nad Cywilizacją Żydowską w Polsce 3 (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2019), 248 pp., 46.20 zł.

Marek Tuszewicki, A Frog Under the Tongue. Jewish Folk Medicine in Eastern Europe (London: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2021), 360 pp., £39.60.

As a significant part of Habsburg Jewry, Galician Jews deserve no less attention than those in more prominent regions and cities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, such as the capital of Vienna. Two recent publications by Polish historians affiliated with the Institute of Jewish Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow contribute to this field of research. In addition, Hanna Kozińska-Witt was associated with various German institutions such as the Dubnow Institute in Leipzig and the Alexander Brückner Center for Polish Studies in Halle.

As the titles already suggest, the authors approach Galician Jewry from two different angles based on their respective fields of expertise. Interested in the socio-political development of Polish Jewry in the modern era, Hanna Kozińska-Witt, on the one side, examines intersections between the local Jewish community and the city council in Cracow. Consequently, she uses archival files from the Cracow kehillah and municipality, the press, as well as reports and documents concerning local political affairs. Marek Tuszewicki, on the other side, uses a cultural and anthropological lens to examine Jewish folk medicine in Congress Poland and Galicia from the late 19th century until the First World War. He employs two sets of sources in a variety of languages to illuminate the practices, mythical character, and magical elements of folk medicine; firstly, handbooks and pamphlets with therapeutic advises, recipes, magical incantations, and charms, and secondly, ethnographic records from the late 19th century until the 1930s.

Both books follow a thematic structure, even though chronology unsurprisingly plays an important role in Kozińska-Witt's narrative of political developments. She divides her study into four chapters that deal with (1) the regulation of the legal situation of Jews in Cracow, (2) Jewish involvement in the city council, (3) charitable activities of Jews in and outside of the local

self-government, and (4) the modernization of the Jewish quarter Kazimierz and its integration into the Christian-dominated center of the city. The book unfortunately lacks a summary that makes her findings less accessible to the reader. Instead, it concludes with an account on the trials of Mojżesz and Gitla Ritter who were accused of ritual murder between 1882 and 1885. Marek Tuszewicki's monograph consists of 14 chapters. Divided into four parts, it first sketches the conceptions of health and sickness in (Jewish) folk culture as opposed to the sciences. The second and third part examine folk medicine's understanding of the human body as a reflection of the world incorporating both visible and invisible elements. The fourth part focuses on notions of demons and their assumed impact on health, as exemplified in the popular idea of the evil eye (*ayin-hore*).

In her study, Hanna Kozińska-Witt points out to several interesting instances where the municipality's influence on local Jewish affairs in Cracow and the participation of local Jews in them resulted in a re-organization of Jewish community life along the principles of Enlightenment ("modernization"). Because of its competences, the composition of the city council was especially significant to local Jews. All important decisions of the Jewish community in Cracow had to be accepted by a special section of the municipality which controlled finances, taxation, education, and charities of the kehillah. Usually, Jewish councilors were members of this section, so it was in the kehillah's interest to influence that body. Some proposals even suggested to move all the competencies of the kehillah to the city council, which would practically result in the dissolution of the Jewish community as a traditional autonomous body (p. 60). In general, the overlapping authority in areas of policymaking and communal activity made the city council not less important than the kehillah in regard to internal Jewish affairs. Concerning the narrative of the study, Kozińska-Witt aims at presenting the politics of both Orthodox and Reform Jews, she is, however, clearly influenced by the latter. For instance, the question of organizing the Jewish community is mainly presented from the liberal point of view (pp. 23 ff.) and communities without reform statutes are labeled as "disordered," (p. 17) as if no *takanot* of any kind ever existed.

In contrast to Kozińska-Witt's political protagonists in an urban, reform environment, Marek Tuszewicki focuses on the part of East European Jewish society "which remained faithful to its traditional Ashkenazi Jewishness

(*yidishkayt*) and retained its attachment to aspects of that tradition," (p. 5) living mostly in rural areas and small towns. However, the author makes clear throughout his book that many of the folk notions and medical practices circulated among dwellers in the larger cities and emigrants from that part of Europe as well. This persistence of traditional and folk notions ("superstition") in medical practices is the driving force of this study. For the majority of East European Jews around 1900, for example, a typical approach to a sick person would initially include home remedies, often associated with the *yiddishe mame* ("Jewish mother"), and if those did not work, the neighbors followed, among them preferably a midwife, a *shohet,* or a *mohel,* the local *hevrah kadisha* or other brotherhoods specialized in *bikur holim.* Depending on the locality, a sick person could furthermore look for the assistance of *ba'alei shem,* non-Jewish healers known as *tatars* or *shepherds,* and finally, trained physicians. Various factors influenced the decision-process of whom to approach, among them finances and logistics but also fundamental issues such as the importance of traditional beliefs versus biomedicine. Secularly educated physicians encountered great distrust but at the same time, all strata of Jewish society accepted some elements of biomedicine in one way or another.

Tuszewicki's impressive range of sources illustrates the importance of the concept of a bond between the body and the world in Jewish folklore medicine. Being healthy was not merely a lack of illness, and at the same time, illness was more than its physical byproduct. Religious, astrological, even demonological knowledge and practices were necessary to reach an equilibrium between the microcosm (the body) and the macrocosm (the world). Tuszewicki concludes that around 1900 Jewish folk medicine

> "was still firmly embedded in the tradition of early medicine, mixed with an attachment to a premodern mindset that sought supernatural explanations for the origins of disease and other afflictions. [...] It perpetuated a model of the treatment process in which the patient's own opinion played a central role, both with regard to the nature of the illness and in terms of the choice of remedy" (p. 294).

Even though Jewish folklore medicine of Eastern Europe shared some notions and practices with Slavic communities in the region, it differed greatly due to the role Judaism played as a specific reference point both in its halachic and haggadic nature.

In the end, Kozińska-Witt's and Tuszewicki's studies offer a great amount of detail on the Jewries of Galicia and Eastern Europe at large. As such, they will be important references in future research projects. Nevertheless, both authors neither summarize their findings in an accessible way, nor do they contextualize them in a broader historical context. For this reason, it seems that both studies invested an immense workload that still has to bear fruits. Specifically, Tuszewicki's monograph is predestined to become a valuable handbook of Jewish folklore in Eastern Europe, partially thanks to its detailed and 14 pages long index. Thanks to books like these, research on Galician Jewry evolves, and further insightful studies will hopefully follow.

Michael K. Schulz, Potsdam

Charles Dellheim, Belonging and Betrayal: How Jews Made the Art World Modern (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2021), 674 pp., 24 col./96 mono illus., $35.

Charles Dellheim's book *Belonging and Betrayal* invites us to reflect about the seminal role of Jews in shaping modernist visual culture. As historian of European culture and skilled storyteller, Dellheim offers a fascinating portrait of Jewish art dealers in Paris and Berlin, their business and artistic networks in Vienna, London and New York, and their search for belonging between the 1880s and 1940s. By analyzing the formation of modern Jewish identities and the public reception of Old Masters as well as modern artists in Europe, he pays special attention to the role of the art trade in helping to shape a canon of modern art. Despite Nazi persecution and betrayal by their non-Jewish "fellow citizens," these art dealers have had a decisive influence on our understanding of modern art to this day.

Dellheim carefully details the processes in which Jews asserted their integration into European society, demonstrating their belonging to their (native or adopted) homelands. Two central themes appear in this narrative: the formation of a grand tradition of Jewish art gallerists in the western world, and the persecution of Jews and theft of their art collections. Starting with American Jewish Lieutenant James Rorimer and his encounter with the extent of stolen art, the prologue invites the reader to reflect on the Jewish perspective of topics such as national recognition and loyalty, and the successful and failed search for historical justice after the Holocaust.

The results of Dellheim's enormous research are presented in four parts, each divided into five chapters. The first part considers the initial interest of the gallerists in (European) Old Masters. As these promised higher cultural recognition, leading gallerists shifted their focus away from the trade and production of European arts and crafts. Tracing the origins of dealing with Italian Renaissance artists to the eighteenth century in which art was transferred from "fallen Italian aristocrats to their ascendant English counterparts," (p. 50) Dellheim offers an explanation to the availability of the Old Masters' works in the late nineteenth century. These trails are interesting, yet at times distract the reader's attention from Dellheim's captivating examination of the challenges that Jewish gallerists experienced in establishing their businesses as "newcomers" in the field. Dutch art dealers Joel and Henry Duveen, for example, engaged the Jewish scholar Bernard Berenson to support their trade with Italian Renaissance. New York's art scene was uniquely shaped by shared economic interests and corporate support. Dellheim describes Henry Duveen's fruitful reciprocal relations with non-Jewish architect Stanford White, patron Collis P. Huntington, as well as Benjamin Altmann, Jewish entrepreneur and owner of a large department store. Professionals of different backgrounds collaborated with a common interest in the production of high culture in New York, a city that became the center of western culture in the early 1940s.

The second part entitled "Was Modernism Jewish?" looks at how gallery owners realized their ambition to shape a modern art movement instead of solely pursuing prestige through trade. Contemporary art emerged simultaneously to the development of French and German national identities. In this context, Dellheim emphasizes collaboration between historical "outcasts": Jewish traders, new migrants, and mostly non-Jewish artists. As he argues, "both craved professional success and social acceptance to one extent or another. They were outsiders who were determined to become insiders. […] The need to circumvent entrenched authority provided common ground for avant-garde artists and their Jewish champions" (p. 159). Dellheim recounts the first visit of young German-Jewish émigré art dealer Henry Kahnweiler to Pablo Picasso's studio in Paris in 1907. Kahnweiler expressed his excitement and desire to purchase Picasso's revolutionary painting "*Les Demoiselles d'Avignon,*" which challenged traditional notions of nudity and which Kahnweiler later identified as "the first upsurge of Cubism" (p. 237). Less than a simple story of belonging to a majority society, this encounter shows Kahnweiler's

shared interest with Picasso in making history "on their own terms, rather than by capitulating to traditional ways or majority opinion" (p. 159).

Dellheim's depiction of Kahnweiler's business partner Alfred Flechtheim encourages one to reflect further on why Jews made the art world modern. Flechtheim was not only a charismatic art dealer but also a sports fan. As honorary president of the Maccabee Clubs he participated "in the movement to turn the puny bodies of ghetto dwellers into 'muscular Jews,' ready to fight off antisemites" (p. 257). Since Jewish art dealers were constantly confronted with antisemitic attacks against their "Otherness" and especially their so-called "Jewish looks" as in Otto Dix's portrait "The Art Dealer Alfred Flechtheim" (1926), their advocacy of modernism can be seen as a creative counterattack. Through their visionary patronage, Flechtheim and other Jewish gallerists fought against the established provincial and repressive criteria that defined "belonging," "beauty," and "cultural prestige." Despite Nazi persecution and the Holocaust, the history of art written today proves that their attempts were indeed successful.

The third part, "In the Middle," discusses the impact of the First World War on the revival of trade networks in what could be called the "Jewish Renaissance" of the interwar period. As Dellheim argues, many gallerists felt the need to prove their patriotism by investing in art in their home countries. By opening in Paris in 1918 the *Galerie de l'Effort Moderne,* dedicated to Cubist artists, Léonce Rosenberg responded openly to public criticism of this art movement. In Berlin, Jewish gallery owners and artists worked in interconnected networks to promote modern art as a revolutionary force in German cultural production. Initiated by journals such as *Kunst und Künstler* (1902–1933) by art dealer Bruno Cassirer or *Der Sturm* (1910–1932) by writer and gallerist Herwarth Walden, German Jews like Flechtheim joined and published their own avantgarde papers.

"To Have And Have Not", the fourth part of the book, examines how on the one side, Jewish gallerists developed new approaches to market their artworks as part of the discourse around "modernism." In the Berlin art scene, Flechtheim, as Dellheim points out, "preferred to go over the top, and keep going, by going in for outrageous outfits guaranteed to amuse and attract his guests" (p. 438). On the other side, Dellheim examines in detail what happened to the gallerists, their collections, and prominent clients during Nazism, the annexation of Austria and later invasion of France. Museums and galleries were made

"securely *judenrein,* 'cleansed' of Jews" (p. 427) parallel to the confiscation of "degenerate" modern art in Germany. "For all the Nazi revulsion against the Jewish body," as Dellheim emphasizes, "Germans evidently had no scruples" stealing luxury goods that had previously belonged to Jews (p. 457). The book ends by reflecting on the historical lessons from the Jewish art dealers' crucial role in shaping the European and American art worlds, as well as the deferred justice and unresolved cases that are in courts today around the world.

The role of Jewish women in helping to shape the modern art scene is not adequately addressed. Dellheim briefly portraits the Viennese gallerist Lea Bondy-Jaray in a positive light and praises the French gallerist Berthe Weill. However, Weill, it seems, serves merely to advance the story about the important role of Jewish male dealers in the European and American art scenes. In a patriarchal world of horse, grain, and textile traders who made it as successful art dealers, Weill's career stands out. She did not enjoy the privilege of inheriting a business, being supported by wealthy family members, or having a transnational network of family businesses. Nevertheless, she successfully used her dowry to purchase art and establish her gallery, B. Weill. Displaying Belgian symbolist painter Henry de Groux's "Zola Faces the Mob"/"Zola Insulted" (1898), she provoked the flaneurs and artists passing by.[1] In addition, Weill demonstrated her revolutionary view of contemporary art by encouraging modernists to present, collaborate and network at her gallery. Many famous French artists like Jean Metzinger exhibited at the B. Weill gallery.[2]

Nonetheless, *Belonging and Betrayal* offers an immensely important and careful reconstruction of the complicated relationships between successive generations of art dealers, among others, the Wildenstein, Gimpel, Rosenberg, Duveen, Bernheim, Kahnweiler, and Flechtheim. Dellheim's recovery of these narratives is a critical contribution to the discourse on European modernism, and to a series of books dedicated to the Jewish involvement in shaping modern art and architecture in the early twentieth century.

Elana Shapira, Vienna

1 Berthe Weill, PAN DANS L'ŒIL ! … ou trente ans dans les coulisses de la peinture contemporaine 1900–1930 (1933) bibliothèque numérique romande ebooks-bnr.com, p. 25.

2 Others include Raoul Dufy in 1903, Achille-Émile-Othon Friesz in 1905, Marie Laurencin, André Derain in 1908, and Dutch-French Kees van Dongen in 1910. See Galerie Berthe Weill | Past and Future Exhibitions | on artist-info.

Heike Bauer, Andrea Greenbaum, Sarah Lightman, eds., Jewish Women in Comics: Bodies and Borders (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2023), 296 pp., $39.95.

Jewish Women in Comics: Bodies and Borders sits at the crossroads of several inextricable histories: women's and feminist comics, graphic memoir, and comics in general. The collection aims to examine, through the intertwining of image and word distinctive to comics, "how Jewish women's lives are constituted by, and move across, bodies, borders, and boundaries, including those demarcated by gender, sexuality, religion, history, and culture" (p. 1). The book works to highlight the "significant contributions of Jewish women to comics" and challenge "a form and field that have long been dominated by (white) men" (p. 9).

The tripartite structure of *Jewish Women in Comics* achieves a careful balance between introductions to new works, the voices of artists, and critical analyses. Interestingly, this structural model is taken from co-editor Sarah Lightman's book *Graphic Details* (2014). There seems to have been an intentional effort made to complement the previous collection in terms of featured artists, to continue the shared goal of bringing these artists to new audiences – the two share only four names (Lightman included) in the first two sections.

The introduction focuses on the embodied experience of women that comics are uniquely situated to highlight. Editors Bauer, Greenbaum, and Lightman offer a detailed but concise introduction to the feminist comics and Jewish cultural histories that inform the book. These works illuminate the complex physical, religious, cultural, historical, and memorial demands to which these writers respond. I am left, though, by the end of the first section, with one lingering question why transgender Jewish women are absent in this study? Though it may be that there are yet to be any published or accessible comics by trans Jewish women, it is an important community within Judaism, and the single, offhand gesture towards the existence of gender identities beyond binary ones ("… even as definitions of 'woman' continue to change and evolve," p. 3) is uncomfortably dismissive.

The comics included are almost all confessional narratives, reflective of a broad focus within Jewish women's comics, and an ongoing result of the male-centric industry. There is an implicit argument made through both *Jewish Women in Comics* and Lightman's earlier collection that women's confessional

comics, in particular in the work of pre-war German-Jewish artist Charlotte Salomon, laid the groundwork for the modern genre of graphic memoir. Sophie Hardach's description of Salomon's work as "filtered through memory, trauma, and physical distance but also firmly anchored in a historical and familial context," is an apt characterization of the works in *Jewish Women in Comics* altogether (p. 232). Taken with its predecessor, the volume marks the emergence of a new model for the study of Jewish literatures: critical analysis as a collaborative process between artists and scholars.

Section One introduces the works of several Jewish women artists. Each introduction approaches their subject through a distinct thematic or conceptual lens, but all highlight the artist's unique approach to visually depicting the human body. This shared focus is not announced, but reads as intentional, given that these works are all deeply embedded in the personal or familial history of their artists. Section Two comprises interviews with artists themselves. While all the interviews offer a fascinating insight into the artistic processes behind the works, two stood out: first, Sandra Chiritescu's interview with Amy Kurzweil, in particular because of Chiritescu's insistence on situating Kurzweil's *The Flying Couch* in all its relevant contexts (familial, geographical, political, educational, etc.), as well as within the complex literary and political landscape of the second- and third-generation Holocaust literatures. Second, Miriam Libicki's interview with Rutu Modan which in large part itself adopts a graphic form. This chapter blends photographs, sketches, and comic images seamlessly to create a multilayered presentation of a single conversation, reflecting the complexities of style and content in both Modan's and Libicki's works simultaneously, marking it as unique among these interviews.

Section Three turns to familiar analytic territory, which allows the collection to attend (1) to names more recognizable to broader audiences, such as in Jenny Caplan's examination of Miriam Katin, Leela Corman, and Liana Finck, (2) to mainstream fantastical comics in Megan Fowler's chapter on DC's Batwoman and Harley Quinn, and (3) to the understudied world of Orthodox women's comics as examined by Noa Lea Cohn. Memory, family, and community are the dominant themes throughout five of the six essays. Consequently, it is here that Jewish identity becomes the central site for discussion.

I want to highlight two chapters from this section, which apply as much to the whole collection as to the specific comics in question. As Efraim Sicher

observes in his essay on Sarah Lightman and Corinne Pearlman, despite how revealing confessional literature seems, and how intimate a connection readers feel, these works are anything but unmediated access to the authors (p. 184). This does not mean we should read with suspicion; rather, we should attend to the constructed nature of the graphic memoir and the intentionality behind each pairing of image and word not only to tell a particular story but to tell it in a highly specific way that forecloses as many interpretive possibilities as it opens.

Second is Sophie Hardach's emphasis on the centrality of family to traditional conceptions of Jewish life and to the burden placed on women, especially as mothers, to be responsible for, to safeguard, and to maintain that tradition (p. 239). At the same time, as Hardach notes, there has been a perpetual fear within the Jewish community for the last two centuries that industry, education, assimilation, or immigration would erode the borders of this domestic ideal (p. 239). The collection's introduction does an excellent job of reminding us of how women's bodies are instrumentalized by Jewish law, tradition, and culture. Yet, this dialectic of nostalgic ideal and its perpetual erosion pushes us to recall the entanglement of internal and external pressures and influences that manifest in often confusing ways in our embodied lives, part of the deep complexities explored and illuminated by the artists and scholars alike in this collection.

The final essay, a collaboration between Mira Sucharov and Rebecca Katz, is challenging both because the editors themselves did not know how to categorize it (p. 14) and also because it represents what we might view as a project that failed to come to fruition. Yet, even in the excerpts we are given here, this collaborative work offers an incisive critique of the intersections of politics, history, education, and the embodied, sometimes overwhelming, experience of Jewish socialization. In this way, it is representative of *Jewish Women in Comics* as a whole: an ongoing collaborative process, which has the potential to offer us new, simultaneously critical and creative ways of representing and engaging with the complexities of Jewish women's lives, art, and scholarship. The book is an insightful, energizing, and compelling addition to the study of comics in general, and to the enormous range of possibilities for future stories, studies, and collaborations.

Sean Sidky, Bloomington, IN, USA

Kathryn Hellerstein and Song Lihong (eds.), China and Ashkenazic Jewry: Transnational Encounters (Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2022), 359 pp., $89.99.

In recent years, the field of Jewish Studies has increasingly pivoted toward global history and engaged with scholars across the world. Kathryn Hellerstein and Song Lihong's co-edited volume is the product of such a collaboration. With nineteen contributions from a range of disciplines and scholars based in the United States, Israel, and China, this ambitious book explores the transcultural interactions between Ashkenazi Jews and China. It aims, in Hellerstein's words, "to shift the emphasis from 'Jews *in* China' to 'Jews *and* China'" (p. 1) in the field. In addition, this book introduces readers to a rich array of current research in Chinese Jewish Studies. By doing so, Hellerstein and Song showcase potential new trajectories in the burgeoning field of Jewish Studies in/on China.

This book is divided into three sections. The first one contains five essays on the translation and interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in China. The first and last ones focus each on the Jewish Christian convert Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky (1831–1906). Irene Eber uses the story of Joseph to discuss Schereschewsky's translation of the Old Testament arguing that his Jewish background and sensitivity "between faithful versus literal translation" (p. 31) ensures that original meanings could be properly transmitted into vernacular Chinese. The following three essays put the Hebrew Bible in dialogue with Chinese literary culture. Fu Xiaowei and Wang Yi explore the representation of filial piety through a comparison between Chinese philosopher Mencius and the story of Judah and Tamar in Genesis 38. They trace how producing male offspring was a shared concern and one that was crucial in maintaining the family lineage, even at the risk of committing incest. Cao Jian's essay brings the reader to the 1910s, examining how the Old Testament prophets informed the Chinese intellectuals' concept of the "Chinese nation." These thinkers read Amos and Jeremiah not as religious figures, but as patriots and "spokesmen for their people" (p. 56), through which a narrative of national suffering and redemption could be adopted. Zhong Zhiqing explores the contrasting reception of Song of Songs as both a theological allegory according to Judeo-Christian tradition and "a wondrous collection of love lyrics" (p. 63) in the Chinese interpretation. Liu Yan concludes with a fascinating

investigation of two versions of Schereschewsky's Chinese translations of the Song of Songs, written in 1875 and 1902. Liu's comparison confirms Eber's argument that Schereschewsky adapts his translations to his intended audience: colloquial expressions in vernacular Mandarin for ordinary people, and a mix of classical and vernacular Chinese for the educated class.

In the second and largest section entitled "Jews in Modern China" eight essays cover the activities of individual Jews or Jewish communities in China, four of them on Shanghai Jewish refugees. Xu Xin opens with a historical overview of Jewish communities in China. He defines interactions between Chinese and Jews in two categories: Chinese interest in Jewish culture as a source of knowledge and Jewish cultural/scientific contributions to China. Ai Rengui's chapter explores how physical activities became a vehicle for Jewish diasporic nationalism. The physically fit Jewish (male) body redefined the meanings of "Jewishness," offering a pathway to challenge antisemitic stereotypes while embodying the Zionist ideal of the Jewish nation. Looking at the popular Jewish newspaper *Israel's Messenger,* Wang Jian's essay concludes that at least 25,000 Jewish refugees found shelter in Shanghai between 1938 and 1941. While Maisie Meyer focuses on four notable members of the Baghdadi Jewish community which helped Shanghai and Ashkenazim refugees, Nancy Berliner explores the works of three Jewish refugee artists. As she points out, their visual records "not only reflect their own lives and struggles, but also depict the Shanghai neighborhoods that they observed around them" (p. 165). Berliner's excellent essay shows how each artist's position informed their representation of Shanghai and the Chinese people, and the varying degrees in which they themselves were influenced by Chinese artistic culture. Yang Meng's chapter shifts to theatre, focusing on the only two published Jewish refugee dramas performed in Shanghai: "*Die Masken fallen*" [The masks fall] and "*Fremde Erde*" [Foreign land]. Both plays were influenced by Austrian German and Viennese theatre tradition, lacked Jewish religious imagery, and touched taboo topics (mixed marriage and sex work). Yang argues that these plays' importance lay in their realistic depiction of Jewish refugees' experiences in Shanghai. Marc B. Shapiro provides a detailed discussion on Mir Yeshiva's escape to Shanghai. In contrast to other authors in this volume, Shapiro notes "how *little* connection there was with Chinese society" (p. 213) and only minimal contact to the local Jewish community. Samuel Heilman concludes the section with an analysis of the Lubavitcher Hasidim Chabad's

outreach activities for Jewish expatriates living and working in the People's Republic of China.

The third section shifts the conversation towards the different forms of communication that brought Chinese and Jews together – within and outside of China. Katheryn Hellerstein offers a fascinating discussion of the 1925 Yiddish play "*Der krayd tsirkl*" [The chalk-circle]. But lacking an extant manuscript, Hellerstein draws from other Yiddish poets' translations and a few surviving ephemera to explore the challenges that these Jewish immigrants faced in making their work accessible to a Yiddish audience. Zhang Ping looks at two more theater plays: the Chinese "Peking Man" and the Chinese-translated Israeli play, "Suitcase Packers". Zhang highlights the themes of tradition, modernization, and escape, and their different receptions by a contemporary Chinese audience. Returning to the United States, Bao Anruo examines Yiddish newspapers for their representations of China during the Russo-Japanese War. Bao differentiates between war reports which show China as a battlefield with an untrustworthy population and government, and informative articles which presented "the similarities (real or imagined)" (p. 266) between Chinese and Jewish people. While Li Dong's chapter shows the challenges of teaching American Jewish literature to Chinese university students, Rebecca Kobrin's exceptional essay explores the fight against Chinese exclusion. Looking at American Jewish immigration lawyer Max J. Kohler and his unsuccessful but strong belief that "open immigration, if handled properly, could be an instrument of US power" (p. 298). Kobrin argues that he remains a significant authority in immigration jurisprudence and important figure in the Jewish-Chinese history of the United States. The career and personal life of late Sinologist Irene Eber concludes this book. Examining her memoir, Song Lihong finds in Eber's decision to disobey her father and leave the family the reason she found refuge in the study of Chinese culture and history.

Hellerstein and Song have co-edited a remarkable collection showcasing the breadth and complexities of Sino-Jewish transnational and transcultural interactions along the overarching themes of religious studies, history, and literature. "The Bible in China" is perhaps the most cohesive section in the book. The essays are individually compelling and together serve as points of conversation between the five chapters. "Jews in Modern China" as a whole leaves the reader unsatisfied. Some articles (Ai, Wang, Shapiro, and Heilman) reinforce the image of isolation and limited interactions between Jewish and

Chinese communities, while others (Xu, Berliner, and Yang) highlight areas where Jews contributed to China's modernization or were themselves informed by its tradition. This tension weakens the proclaimed goal of moving towards "Jews *and* China," and suggests that more work is needed to tease out the specifics of this reconsideration. "Jews and Chinese" is consistent in emphasizing intercultural communication, revealing the transnational linkages outside the nation-state framework. Yet, there remains an awkward gap: except for Song's chapter, three essays are on early-20th century United States and two on contemporary China. Moreover, the language and description are occasionally problematic. Xu calls Hong Kong and Shanghai "Chinese treaty cities" (p. 100) when in fact only the latter was a treaty port.[3] Meyer incorrectly conflates the unconditional surrender of all German troops in April 1945 as also "concluding the Pacific war" (p. 158). Japan did not surrender until August 1945. In addition, a few structural decisions are puzzling. It may have helped to reduce the size of "Jews in Modern China" by creating a separate "Shanghai Jewish refugees" section, while Song's essay could have been made into a standalone epilogue – since this book is dedicated to Irene Eber.

Nonetheless, Hellerstein and Song's co-edited volume demonstrates the growing potential of Sino-Jewish scholarship and international scholarly cooperation. Not only does it reveal the current priorities in the study of the Jewish diaspora in China, but also offers a roadmap for future research. Were there meaningful differences in the activities of Ashkenazim and Sephardim in China? What role do overseas Chinese, such as those in the *Nanyang*, play in Sino-Jewish interactions? Could a microhistorical lens (like Berliner or Kobrin's essays) uncover cross-cultural interactions from Jews who stayed in China after the PRC's establishment or reveal lesser-known connections between Israel and China? Although women were mentioned in a few essays, it was not a focus. Does the absence of women as historical subjects, or gender as a category of analysis open potential areas for further exploration? Overall, the essays in this co-edited collection are indisputably a valuable resource for

[3] Xu does expand on the historical contexts in footnote 4 but does not make the distinction clear. Hong Kong was ceded in perpetuity to the British in 1841 and was later established as a Crown Colony in 1842. It was only after the acquisition of the New Territories in 1898 on a 99-years lease that Hong Kong's colonial status became ambigieous.

graduate students and scholars interested in Chinese Jewish Studies and Sino-Jewish interactions.

Cheuk Him Ryan Sun, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Andrea Dara Cooper, Gendering Modern Jewish Thought (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2021), 270 pp., $34 (paperback).

The scope of the book is much narrower than the title promises. Focusing on Franz Rosenzweig (d. 1929) and Emmanuel Levinas (d. 1993), with some discussion of Jacques Derrida and Hannah Arendt, Cooper argues that modern Jewish philosophers can be properly understood only if we attend to the "organizing metaphors of kinship: erotic love, marriage, brotherhood, paternity, and maternity" (p. 7). Kinship language, however, is neither innocent nor neutral, but one that is based on exclusion and that brings about further exclusion and marginalization. This is most evident in the case of "brotherhood," a trope that functioned as a "regulative theological and philosophical ideal for modern Jewish thought" (p. 8). "Brotherhood" is problematic because it can efface gender, support patriarchy, prioritize procreation, privilege fraternal relations, endorse "troubling gender dynamics," (p. 10) or take embodiment to be "merely a metaphor" (p. 11). Reading for gender, as Susan Shapiro named the practice, Cooper analyzes how gendered metaphors frame the philosophy of these two influential thinkers. She argues that only if we undertake this interpretative labor, can we "see how they [i.e., Jewish philosophers] provide valuable models for intersubjective ethics, reciprocity, embodiment, and positionality" (p. 11). The mission of the book is thus twofold: to expose the limitations of Jewish philosophy from a feminist perspective and to make (problematic) Jewish philosophy usable for Jewish feminists. Reading philosophical text through the lens of feminist theory, Cooper highlights the "positionality" of Rosenzweig and Levinas as Jewish males who did not transcend the social and cultural conventions of the Jewish tradition. The purpose of the analysis is to "reveal and disrupt relations of power in these texts," but without "reproducing the exclusionary logic within foundational works that make uncritical use of gendered terms" (p. 12). This is not a particularly novel strategy, but it is skillfully executed.

The book consists of five chapters and an epilogue: Chapter 1 and 4 focus on Rosenzweig; chapters 2 and 5 focus on Levinas, and Chapter 3 brings

Rosenzweig and Levinas in conversation with Derrida and Arendt. In the epilogue Cooper discusses her own positionality and how she got interested in Jewish philosophy, even though her initial training was in literature. Throughout the study, Cooper analyzes Jewish philosophers in conversation with Western philosophers, especially Plato and Hegel, and she is primarily concerned about reading Jewish texts from the perspective of feminist scholarship. Written as a discourse analysis, the novelty of the book lies in the intersection of feminist and gender studies, religious studies, Jewish studies, biblical studies, philosophy, and literature. Cooper's literary approach makes Jewish philosophy a distinctly humanistic discipline.

Chapter 1 focuses on "Rosenzweig's antiquated gender constructions" and their "harmful application" (p. 104), exposing Rosenzweig's "essentialist" position. Echoing Elliot Wolfson, her doctoral advisor, Cooper claims that according to Rosenzweig, "while a woman can *act* as lover, she can become active only if she is gendered masculine. If she is to remain feminine, she will inescapably be drawn back by her sexuality to her natural position as the passive beloved" (p. 104). Focusing on Levinas, Chapter 2 shows that his gendered analysis of the ethical is "theoretically flexible," yet based on "practically rigid gender roles" because "the feminine allows the masculine subject's access to the ethical, without participating in this relation as the subject reaches toward the future in fecundity" (p. 104). In the case of both philosophers, "the feminine is subordinated to the masculine, the female beloved to the male lover, the mother to the father, and the daughter to the son" (p. 104).

In Chapter 3, Cooper engages Rosenzweig and Levinas in conversation with Derrida and Arendt's reflections on friendship and concludes that "Rosenzweig and Levinas's thought is explicitly marked as male and Jewish, forcing the reader to confront the usually invisible assumption underlying Western thought that attempt to implicitly shore up a masculine and Christian norm" (p. 119). In Chapter 4, Cooper returns to the filial model and examines "scandalous relations," namely brother-sister relations and the love affair between Rosenzweig and Margarit (Gritly), the wife of his best friend, Eugen Rosenstock-Hussey. The chapter uncovers "the struggle between erotic love and family obligation" and shows how "this tension informs Rosenzweig's philosophical/biographical regulation of kinship and bloodlines" (p. 153). Chapter 5 returns to Levinas' gender economy where Cooper finds a path toward a viable future for Jewish philosophy. She contends that "a gendered reading

of modern Jewish philosophers can expose their limitations in a way that simultaneously makes their approaches available as we seek a way forward" (p. 169.). Not surprisingly, Cooper concludes that "modern Jewish thought [...] has been a largely masculine discursive space, and [...] foundational texts that rely on fratriarchal logic are always built on androcentric frameworks" (p. 217). While the trope of brotherhood "*appears* universal," (p. 217) its power is based on the exclusivity of family and the peculiar dynamics within family members (i.e. parents, siblings, and lovers). Cooper's critical "intervention" is to expose the exclusionary logic of seemingly inclusive language.

In the 1970s, Jewish women took active part in the women's movement giving rise to Jewish feminism that has changed Jewish communal life and transformed the practices of Jewish studies. Cooper is not concerned about these social, political, and cultural struggles because she was born after these fights were already won. She also greatly benefits from the successful inclusion of Jewish studies into the Western academy after centuries of exclusion. Writing exclusively for other academics, Jewish and non-Jewish, Cooper's project has a programmatic message, even though it is not stated as such. To her (mostly male) cohorts in Jewish philosophy Cooper shows that feminist scholarship is indispensable to the interpretation of Jewish philosophical texts, and, to feminist (mostly non-Jewish female) cohorts Cooper shows that Continental philosophy cannot be fully understood without the analysis of Jewish philosophy. Will Cooper's feminist critique of Rosenzweig and Levinas make their philosophy relevant to feminists and gender theorists? Will (male) Jewish philosophers become interested in feminist philosophy? Only time will tell, but Cooper at least paves the way for this future development.

Hava Tirosh-Samuelson, Tempe, AZ, USA

Jaclyn Granick, International Jewish Humanitarianism in the Age of the Great War (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 418 pp., $39.99.

World War I was central to the development of modern humanitarianism. The unprecedented devastation and destruction of civilian life required a new kind of response that was filled by private and government-run organizations, many of which still remain in existence today. Jaclyn Granick has written an important institutional history focused on the little-studied role of

Jewish-centered philanthropy in the making of the humanitarian movement in the period surrounding the Great War. Based in the Jewish diaspora of the United States, Jewish humanitarian activism developed an international character as a result of the great need among Jewish communities in the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Russia in this period.

Granick's comprehensive account of the philanthropic networks created by activists is a welcome addition to the growing literature on humanitarian institutions that arose in this period in the United States, including the American Red Cross (ARC), Near East Relief (NER), American Relief Administration (ARA) and the Friends (American Quakers). The book's focus lies on the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and its growth from a local to regional to international force in providing aid to needy Jewish communities affected by the war. The JDC led the way for Jewish-centered humanitarian relief, distributing today's equivalent of a billion dollars in aid between 1914 and 1931 (p. 289).

The shifting subjects of Jewish aid networks serve as an organizing theme of the book. Each chapter title indicates Granick's focus on a different suffering group of people whose plight comes to the attention of the JDC in particular historical moments. The book progresses chronologically to deal first with "War Sufferers" in Chapter 1 and then moves on to consider "The Hungry" of the post-armistice moment in Chapter 2. The "Refugee" is the subject of Chapter 3 and "The Sick" in Chapter 4. The final two chapters deal with the delivery of aid in the period of post-war reconstruction. Welfare for survivors of the war targeted the "Child," the subject of Chapter 5, and finally, "The Impoverished" in Chapter 6. This focus on the aid's recipient makes sense in the context of the wide geographic distribution of Jews in need across Europe and the Middle East. Rather than focusing on a region, Granick shows how the subject of deserving aid changes as conditions on the ground deteriorated in the period surrounding the war.

International Jewish Humanitarianism in the Age of the Great War importantly shows the close connections between private philanthropy and the US government. Foreign policy priorities and economic concerns inevitably shaped the scope of particular humanitarian campaigns as well as the ways in which aid was delivered. This happened in the case of all major internationally focused aid programs based in the US. NER and ARA had US Congressional approval. The ARC functioned as a quasi-governmental organization.

The JDC, while not officially sanctioned by the US government, necessarily relied on diplomatic networks to facilitate the distribution of aid, and closely followed the dictates of American foreign policy concerns. The wartime emergency made this relationship a necessity and often influenced how humanitarianism operated, as historians of wartime humanitarian institutions have shown. For the JDC, antisemitism and the reliance on American Jewish support made this relationship with the state particularly complicated when it came to issues like US immigration restrictions imposed during this period and a finite, largely Jewish-American donor base. The JDC still saw itself as a "war organization" in 1923 when it shifted its focus to development work (p. 287). Granick argues that this was a strategy that sought to strengthen connections between Jewish diasporic communities while allowing the JDC to eventually decrease its humanitarian commitments abroad in the face of shifting political currents in the US and donor fatigue.

While the archives mined by Granick reveal the transactional nature of how humanitarianism organizations relied on the US government to deliver aid, the ideological motivations of making humanitarianism part of the war machine are less clear. The idea that aid work is part of US foreign policy dates to this moment. This relationship is worth unpacking further. National priorities and wartime expediency made it difficult for humanitarianism to separate itself from war aims. At the same time, by making aid work part of the war effort – an American "strategic" and "ideological" project in the mind of President Wilson (p. 61) – the US government necessarily absorbed and reflected humanitarian priorities. Understanding how this worked in practice can help further nuance the institutionalization of humanitarianism as a relationship between public and private aid agencies in this moment. Humanitarian organizations like NER, ARA, ARC and the Friends influenced this turn during the Great War. So, too, did the JDC. Granick characterizes the JDC as a "transnational welfare state" (p. 200) whose evolving mission during the war was made possible by its relationship to the government and international entities as well as the donors who allowed the mission to evolve and grow.

Granick tells the history of the JDC and Jewish international humanitarianism as an evolutionary story of American Jewish involvement in philanthropy that drew on Progressive-era values. The motivations, internal conflicts of different organizations and connections between public and private philanthropy on behalf of the Jewish diaspora find thorough and thoughtful expression

in this account. So, too, does the uniqueness of this brand of humanitarian engagement that distinguished itself from other parallel organizations working on behalf of non-Jewish victims of wartime violence. It will be up to future historians to situate Granick's story of international Jewish humanitarianism in the larger story of aid work in this period. It is worth placing the work of organizations like JDC alongside Near East Relief, the American Red Cross and religiously oriented philanthropy that served communities in the United States. Viewing these organizations in a single frame will help reveal a broader and more complete picture of how humanitarianism operated as both an institution and ideology during the period of the Great War.

Michelle Tusan, Las Vegas, NV, USA

Elisheva Baumgarten, Biblical Women and Jewish Daily Life in the Middle Ages (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022), 288 pp., $50.

The aspects of entanglements between Jews and Christians in Ashkenaz, the realities of daily life in the Middle Ages, and the variety of medieval interpretations of the (Hebrew) Bible have all been long discussed among prominent scholars such as Lucia Raspe, Robert Chazan, Avraham Grossman, and Alfred Haverkamp. In her latest book "Biblical Women and Jewish Daily Life in the Middle Ages", Elisheva Baumgarten combines these research topics to discover more about the daily realities of women beyond the elite, which she defines as medieval women who had left no written record themselves. Based on the idea that the influence of both the Bible and female biblical heroes on society and cultural mentalities have also shaped daily practices of medieval customs and traditions, Baumgarten uses the latter as indicators of what the lives of these women that are intangible in other sources might have looked like.

Throughout her book, Baumgarten uses a variety of sources such as literature, art, exegesis, legal directives, tombstones, and others that taken together as case studies provide access to the daily life of Ashkenazi Jews living among a Christian majority. Each example occupies its own chapter organized by the biblical heroine that the source relates to, namely Eve, the matriarchs (Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah), Deborah and Yael, Abigail, and Jephthah's Daughter. Through a wide selection of narratives and their varied tellings and

re-tellings, Baumgarten makes a compelling case on how the medieval interpretation of original biblical stories and characters has shaped ritual practices. Where applicable, the book compares the treatment of female biblical heroes to their male counterparts and also shows commonalities and differences between Jewish and Christian customs.

The first chapter deals with common activities and rituals that are thematically related to Adam and Eve as biblical figures and as interpreted in rabbinic literature. These topics range from the rituals surrounding Niddah, the ways in which Eve was used as a defense of women's rights, and Adam and Eve as inspiration for medieval wedding rituals. Throughout the chapter, it becomes evident how, even though Jews and Christians shared neighborhoods and ideas in medieval Ashkenaz, each group had adapted these common themes into their religious culture in separate ways.

The second chapter not only discusses narratives surrounding the matriarchs, but it also serves as a case study of gendered ritual praxis. Looking at the evolution of the *mi sheberakh* prayer, which overtime shifted from an individual blessing for men and women to a benediction for the male head of a household, Baumgarten skillfully demonstrates a general, slow marginalization of women during the High Middle Ages, with the 13th century as turning point. The tradition of the *mi sheberakh* prayer is also an indicator that this shift occurred much slower than rabbinic leaders might have hoped – a story that is also evident in other sources where women continued to participate in rituals now exclusive to men up until the early 15th century.

In the third chapter, the sources about Deborah and Jael show that the reality of daily life in the Middle Ages might differ from the ideal pictured by the rabbinic elite. In medieval texts in general, Deborah is referenced implicitly rather than explicitly. The chapter describes how the perception of Deborah, and by lesser extent Jael, has switched from her being a judge to being an educator. Most rabbinic sources that explicitly discuss women as educators do so negatively. The *sefer hassidim,* for example, gives strict guidelines forbidding women from receiving an education. In contrast, sources from daily life tell us indirectly about the education of women, such as 13th century tax-lists that name women as educators. In early modern sources, Deborah is pictured as rich, well-educated, and as a strong warrior. Baumgarten argues that we should see these early modern exemplars as a direct evolution of medieval interpretations of Deborah and Jael and "how these biblical personae continued

to serve as models for women who were religious models and leaders despite the efforts to 'tame' them" (p. 123).

The fourth and fifth chapter discuss Abigail and Jephthah's Daughter respectively. Both chapters start with the biblical story where both women are depicted in somewhat effusive terms. Baumgarten then continues to show the evolution of the characters and stories in medieval and early modern times. Over the course of time, both biblical women are elevated to provide leadership for medieval women. But whereas Baumgarten uses Abigail as a prism through which we can understand the economic activity as well as the framework of women's economic roles and varying degrees of autonomous behavior, the chapter on Jephthah's daughter helps us understand how biblical interpretations can change the significance of an already common practice. In both chapters, Baumgarten draws parallels to but also shows the clashing with Christian interpretations on these customs that are based on shared oral and textual traditions.

Over the course of the book, Baumgarten not only provides an impressive number of sources on how narratives surrounding biblical women shaped the daily life and routines of medieval women but also manages to show the reader how the meaning of concepts is closely interwoven with the cultural context. The wide range of diverse sources from inscriptions to personal writings and illuminations also means that Baumgarten's interpretation and analysis can only scratch the surface of this material. The structure that consists of a quick sequence of narratives and customs relating to one biblical character almost make her monograph look like a textbook. However, it is exactly this impressive number of different sources that make her argument so compelling. By including such a high number of sources, Baumgarten skillfully demonstrates that narratives, actions, and mentalities can indeed be classified as rituals and customs, and we must therefore assume that most medieval Jews have partaken in, or at least known about them, giving modern researchers a new method to shed light into the daily life of people beyond the elite.

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Photo Credits

A map of Central Europe. Source: Tim Corbett [page 14]

Processions of Prague and Frankfurt Jewish communities in spring of 1716 celebrating the birth of Habsburg heir Prince Leopold Johann of Austria. Both communities employed similar performative practices to show their belonging to their respective urban community and the empire. Aside from using shared imperial symbols they imitated noble clothing styles to emphasize the status of their Jewish leadership, evoking similarity and closeness to nobility as author Johann Jacob Schudt mockingly noted. Source: Johann Jacob Schudt, Jüdisches Franckfurter und Prager Freuden-Fest: Wegen der höchst-glücklichen Geburth Des Durchläuchtigsten Käyserlichen Erb-Prinzens, Vorstellend Mit was Solennitäten die Franckfurter Juden selbiges celebrirt, auch ein besonders Lied, mit Sinnbilder und Devisen, darauff verfertigt; So dann Den Curieusen kostbahren, doch recht possirlichen Auffzug, so die Prager Juden gehalten […], Frankfurt am Main: Andreä, 1716, p. 4. [page 52]

Freikorps Grün Loudon and its Jewish Soldiers (1796–98): Within a year of the outset of Jewish recruiting into the Freikorps, Jews comprised more than one per cent of the unit's strength. Source: Ilya Berkovich. [page 68]

Obituary of David Herzl, Neue Freie Presse, Vienna, 12. 5. 1918, p. 20, Source: ANNO/Österreichische Nationalbibliothek; Obituary of Toni Reich, née Weinberger, Neue Freie Presse, Vienna, 12. 5. 1918, p. 20, Source: ANNO/Österreichische Nationalbibliothek; Obituary of Gisela Löwy, née Pfeifer, Neue Freie Presse, Vienna, 5. 6. 1903, p. 18, Source: ANNO/Österreichische Nationalbibliothek; Obituary of Nathan Goldenberg, Neue Freie Presse, Vienna, 12. 5. 1918, p. 20, Source: ANNO/Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. [page 80]

School certificate of a Jewish student, Naftali Engelhardt, who frequented sixth grade of male public school in Gorlice. Source: National Archive in Przemyśl, collection: Akta szkół – zbiór szczątków zespołów, no 395, sign. 44, p. 73. [page 90]

Journal “El Correo de Vienna”, first page, no. 12 (1875). Source: Yad Ben Zvi Library & Archive; Journal “El Nasional”, first page, no. 33 (1867). Source: Yad Ben Zvi Library & Archive [page 102]

Synagogue Zirkusgasse the so-called “Türkischer Tempel” in Vienna’s District Leopoldstadt, designed by Hugo von Wiedenfeld (1852–1925). This synagogue for Vienna’s Sephardic community was consecrated in 1887, and destroyed during Kristallnacht. It was also home to Salonica Jews who lived in Vienna. Undated photograph; photographer/artist unknown. Source: LBI F 3226 Synagogue Zirkusgasse in Vienna, Leo Baeck Institute New York, F 3226. [page 114]

“Die Gute Stube”: Fotodokumentation. Source: Archiv des Jüdischen Museums Wien, Sign. 001028-001 [page 124]

Omar Rolf von Ehrenfels and Max Brod with Ehrenfels’s son Mou’min in Tarasp (Switzerland), 1963. Cited in Umar R. von Ehrenfels, “Vier Erinnerungen an Max Brod,” *Die Tat* 34, no. 45 (Feb. 22, 1969): 29. Source: E-Newspaper Archives. Franz Karl Ginzkey, Hatschi-Bratschis Luftballon: Eine Dichtung für Kinder von Franz Karl Ginzkey. Mit vielen Bildern von Ernst Dombrowski (Salzburg: Anton Pustet, 1933). Inside cover and p. 8 (depicting Hatschi Bratschi). Source: Austrian National Library. [page 136]

In the aftermath of the Shoah and the ostensible triumph of nationalism, it became common in historiography to relegate Jews to the position of the "eternal other" in a series of binaries: Christian/Jewish, Gentile/Jewish, European/Jewish, non-Jewish/Jewish, and so forth. For the longest time, these binaries remained characteristic of Jewish historiography, including in the Central European context. Assuming instead, as the more recent approaches in Habsburg studies do, that pluriculturalism was the basis of common experience in formerly Habsburg Central Europe, and accepting that no single "majority culture" existed, but rather hegemonies were imposed in certain contexts, then the often used binaries are misleading and conceal the complex and sometimes even paradoxical conditions that shaped Jewish life in the region before the Shoah.

The very complexity of Habsburg Central Europe both in synchronic and diachronic perspective precludes any singular historical narrative of "Habsburg Jewry," and it is not the intention of this volume to offer an overview of "Habsburg Jewish history." The selected articles in this volume illustrate instead how important it is to reevaluate categories, deconstruct historical narratives, and reconceptualize implemented approaches in specific geographic, temporal, and cultural contexts in order to gain a better understanding of the complex and pluricultural history of the Habsburg Empire and the region as a whole.

ISSN 1614-6492
ISBN 978-3-86956-574-3