UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

School of Humanities

Jews in the Metropolis

Urban Jewish Cultures in London, Berlin, and Paris, c1880-1940

by

Tobias Metzler

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Quamquam id quidem, infinitum est in hac urbe;
quacumque enim ingredimur, in aliqua historia vestigium ponimus.

Cicero, De finibus bonorum et malorum V:5

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ABSTRACT

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The modern Jew had become indeed a *homo urbanus* declared Karl Kautsky in 1914. Taking this remark as a point of departure, this thesis raises the question how Jews in different urban setting throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century responded to the challenges of the modern urban environment and what cultural practices they developed and employed in coming to terms with it.

Bringing together so far disparate and detached aspects of Jewish historiography, this study unfolds three case studies to explore the formation and functionality of urban Jewish cultures and cultural practices employed by urban Jews in late nineteenth century London, interwar Berlin and 1930s Paris. Reconstructing and analysing paradigmatic components of Jewish urbanity this thesis investigates the urban encounters between native Jewish community and East European Jewish immigrants, attempts to constitute Jewish community and a suitable urban Jewish identity in the modern metropolis and the trajectories of Jewish refugees for whom the city became both refuge and exile.

Giving space and its production a greater prominence in the context of Jewish history this thesis emphasises that cities are more than mere framework for the analysis of historical development but that they shape it sustainably.

Hence, the experiences of urban Jews are integral and integrated in the general urban trajectories, allowing a specific insight into the modern condition and its discontents.

Investigating manifold aspects of urbanity for the modern Jewish experience, this thesis thus offers new readings of Jewish cultural history and allows new insights into the diversity, complexity and ambivalence of modernity.

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[1] Theodor Herzl, *Altneuand: Roman* (Leipzig: Hermann Seemann Nachfolger, 1902), 343.

Abbreviations

ACIP	Archives du Association Consistoire Israélite de Paris
AIU	Alliance Israélite Universelle, Paris
AI	Archives Israélites
AZJ	Allgemeine Zeitung des Judent[h]ums
BA	Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde
CAHJP	Central Archive of the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem
CDJC	Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine
CJB	Centrum Judaicum Berlin
CV	Centralverein
CZA	Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem
DNB	Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, Frankfurt am Main
GStA	Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Berlin-Dahlem
JC	Jewish Chronicle
JLZ	Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung
JML	Jewish Museum London
JR	Jüdische Rundschau
JW	Jewish World
LArchB	Landesarchiv Berlin
LBIJM	Leo Baeck Institute Archive, Jewish Museum Berlin
LBIYB	Year Book of the Leo Baeck Institute
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
PTB	Pariser Tageblatt
PTZ	Pariser Tageszeitung
UI	Univers Israélite

Introduction

> "No Eastern Jew goes to Berlin voluntarily. Who in all the world goes to Berlin voluntarily? Berlin is a point of transit, where, given compelling reasons, one may end up staying longer. Berlin has no ghetto. It has a Jewish district. This is where emigrants come ... where they often get stuck. ... It is possible for a [Jewish] hawker to make a career in Berlin. He will assimilate faster there than his equivalent would in Vienna. Berlin levels out differences and kills off particularities. [...]
>
> Eastern Jews live almost as well in Paris as God in France. No one prevents them from having their own businesses, and there are even whole ghettoes here. ... Their vivacity does not attract notice. ... Paris is a real metropolis. Vienna used to be one. Berlin will one day become one.... Paris is where the Eastern Jew begins to become a Western European. He becomes French. He may even come to be a French patriot."[1]

With these contrasting passages, Joseph Roth in 1927 described the experience of Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe coming to Berlin and Paris. Pointing to the different challenges the German and the French capital city meant to the newcomers, Roth illustrates the ways in which they took up these challenges and tried to find their ways within the new urban environment. The city in its particularity, with its characteristics, Roth argues, shapes the Jews.

How would Roth have described the British capital—the city that became the destination for many Jewish migrants? He might have strolled around the East End. We will never know. Roth never came to England. His engagement with cities highlights the centrality the urban gained for modern Jews.

It was Warsaw and New York that provided the stage for much of Isaac B. Singer's work, it was the environment of Odessa, the stays in Berlin and the experience of urban exile in London that influenced the thinking of Asher Ginsburg alias Ahad Ha'am, it was the dream-worlds of the nineteenth century French capital as well as the childhood memories of its German counterpart that fascinated Walter Benjamin, it was this fascination for both Paris and Berlin Benjamin shared with other flâneurs and thinkers such as Siegfried Kracauer or Franz Hessel, while London and Berlin were the scenery Julius Rosenberg tried to capture in his travel writings decades earlier. It was Berlin too that provided the backgrounds for Georg Simmel's investigations into the effect of city life on human mentality. Many names could be added to this list, but it was not merely Jewish intellectuals and *hommes de lettres* to whom the urban space obtained a formative element in their thoughts and writings.

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[1] Joseph Roth, *Juden auf Wanderschaft* (Berlin: Die Schmiede, 1927). Here quoted according to the English translation Joseph Roth, *The Wandering Jews [1927]: With a Comment by Elie Wiesel*, trans. Michael Hofmann (New York: Norton, 2001), 68-71 and 81.

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, the relationship between city and Jews has been described—both by Jewish and non-Jewish observers—as an exceptional, a special or even a unique one. Such views can be found along the entire political spectrum, reaching from the extreme right to the left.

In numerous anti-Semitic writings, the Jews were accused of being the major source of the degenerative influence of the urban environment, for it were they, the ultimate city people, who were benefiting from the rise of urban capitalism while themselves being immune to the city's negative influences.[2] Furthermore, as Shulamit Volkov has shown, stereotypes against urban Jews were part of an anti-Semitic nexus juxtaposing anti-urban and anti-modern patterns.[3] The article "Großstadt" (big city) from the notorious anti-Semitic lexicon *Sigilla Veri* or *Semi-Kürschner*[4] summarises and illustrates the pre-existing combination of anti-urbanism and anti-Semitism most clearly:

> "The Jews flourish and thrive in the big cities, while the Aryans that are lured to go there are extinguished in huge numbers. The internally rotten and contaminated cities are extended Ghettos, places that are naturally not detrimental for the Jews' health;—all Jews are somehow brother murders for one might say that Cain is the father of the big city, since it was he who according to the first book of Moses went away from the lord and founded a city."[5]

However, it was not merely anti-Semites who accentuated the exceptional position of Jews within the urban environment. For the socialist Karl Kautsky, exploring the "Mental Qualities of the Jewish Race" in 1914, the "Jew ha[d] become the city dweller *par excellence*", indeed a *homo urbanus*.[6]

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[2] Throughout the last years scholars have started to investigate the relationship between Antisemitism and the urban context more closely. Some examples for this are Joachim Schlör, "»Der Urbantyp«," in *Antisemitismus: Vorurteile und Mythen*, ed. Hans Joachim Schoeps and Joachim Schlör (München: Piper, 1995), Hillel J. Kieval, "Antisemitism and the City: A Beginner's Guide," in *People of the City: Jews and the Urban Challenge*, ed. Ezra Mendelsohn (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), Hillel J. Kieval, "Neighbors, Strangers, Readers: The Village and the City in Jewish-Gentile Conflict at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (2005). For an older approach cf. Arnold Rose, "Anti-Semitism's Root in City-Hatred: A Clue to the Jew's Position as Scapegoat," *Commentary* 6 (1948).

[3] Shulamit Volkov, "Anti-Semitism as a Cultural Code: Reflections on the History and Historiography of Anti-Semitism in Imperial Germany," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 23 (1978), Shulamit Volkov, "Readjusting Cultural Codes: Reflections on Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism," *Journal of Israeli History* 25, no. 1 (2006).

[4] The name refers to Kürschners Gelehrtenkalender a periodically published encyclopaedia of scholars and academics in Germany.

[5] Erich Ekkehard and Philipp Stauff, eds., *Sigilla Veri: (Ph. Stauff's Semi-Kürschner) Lexikon der Juden, -Genossen und -Gegner aller Zeiten und Zonen, insbesondere Deutschlands, der Lehren, Gebräuche, Kunstgriffe und Statistiken der Juden sowie ihrer Gaunersprache, Trugnamen, Geheimbünde, usw.*, 2 ed., 4 vols. ([Erfurt]: U. Bodung, 1929-1931), Vol. 2 (1929), 826. Unless indicated otherwise, all translations are my own.

[6] Karl Kautsky, *Rasse und Judentum* (Berlin: Wurm, 1914), 56. The availabe English Translation of Kautsk's texts follows the second extended German edition from 1921. Karl Kautsky, *Are the Jews a Race?* (New York: International publ., 1926).

The alleged exceptional Jewish degree of urbanisation has remained a central point in Jewish historiography ever since. In 2004, the Hungarian historian Viktor Karády argued that the general European trend to urbanisation "has been one of the paradigmatic features of Jewish social history since the late Middle Ages" and that this Jewish movement towards the cities can be seen as "'overurbanization'." "[I]t goes without saying," Karády continues uninhibitedly, "that the trend to 'overurbanization'," can be seen "as a distinct Jewish behavioral paradigm."[7] It is at least dubious if not dubitable to deduce a "Jewish behavioral paradigm" from statistical figures of Jewish city dwellers. Leaving this aside, such explanations point to the lasting legacy of the image of the Jew as urbanite. This narrative forms a central backdrop against which this research project is set up.

"It was in the city that Jews first faced the challenge of modern life: how to balance their religious and ethnic loyalties with their commitment to the larger society", David Weinberg argued, and "[i]t was also in urban society that nineteenth- and twentieth-century Jews made their livelihood, established modern communal and religious institutions, and created distinctively new cultural forms."[8]

This project explores some of these "new cultural forms" urban Jews created. It investigates paradigmatic elements in the formation of urban Jewish cultures in the three European capital cities London, Berlin, and Paris during a period reaching from the final decades of the nineteenth up until the mid-twentieth century.

In doing so, it employs a broad notion of cultures, incorporating both traditional concepts of culture, depicting the city as the place of a distinct cultural infrastructure, institutions and 'monuments' as well as elements of culture as patterns of action, emphasising the diversity of Jewish attempts to take up the challenge of the urban environment and creating Jewish spaces and places in its midst.

Instead of following approaches emphasising the dichotomy between high and popular culture this project suggests that they are equally elements of the formation of Jewish urban cultures and thus have to be studied together.[9] As Marshall Berman

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[7] Viktor Karády, *The Jews of Europe in the Modern Era: A Socio-Historical Outline* (Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, 2004), 15.

[8] David Weinberg, "Jews and the Urban Experience: Introduction," *Judaism* 49, no. 3 (2000): 278.

[9] Instead of focusing on culture as system, culture is understood here as a set of practices, as a sphere of practical activity. Thus, rather than adopting a model of culture as a system of symbols and meanings, or reducing it to exclusive textuality, culture is understood here as characterised by encounter and clashes of different subject positions within the framework of power relations, and thus as an object to negotiation, change and transformation. While earlier anthropological writings including those by Clifford Geertz or French structuralism emphasised the notion of culture as a system of symbols and meanings and in following Saussure emphasised the textuality of culture (Geertz's

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emphasises, such a "broad and open way" to understand culture "enables us to see all sorts of artistic, intellectual, religious and political activities as part of one dialectical process, and to develop creative interplay among them" creating "conditions for dialogue among the past, the present and the future" as well as cutting "across physical and social space".[10] In the context at issue, the broad cultural concept thus allows juxtaposing both representations of urban and urban Jewish culture as well as different urban practices and social activities such as philanthropy or intra-communal politics.

In order to approach these various cultural and urban patterns, the project draws from a broad variety of archival and printed sources. Besides communal records,[11] Jewish newspapers of various political and religious outlooks form an important set of sources.[12] These texts allow delineating different Jewish perspectives towards the city as well as the reconstruction of conflicts within the Jewish communities. Moreover, Jewish periodicals such as yearbooks, guidebooks—often containing maps showing the Jewish infrastructure in an urban setting—are of particular importance for they both represented the variety of Jewish life in an urban setting and

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concept of Culture as a set of texts, or Derrida's dictum that nothing can be extra-textual), I rather follow conceptions such Pierre Bourdieu's *Outline of a Theory of Practice* and the works of James Clifford (especially *Writing Culture*, ed. together with George E. Marcusto) to develop a conception of urban Jewish cultures.

Furthermore recent year saw a growing adaptation of cultural studies by scholars in various fields of Jewish studies. Among the major contribution in the emerging field of Jewish cultural studies on which this project can build on are e.g. Jonathan Boyarin and Daniel Boyarin, eds., *Jews and Other Differences: The New Jewish Cultural Studies* (Minniapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), Bryan Cheyette and Laura Marcus, eds., *Modernity, Culture, and 'the Jew'* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998), David Biale, ed., *Cultures of the Jews: A New History* (New York: Schocken Books, 2002).

[10] Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air: the experience of modernity* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1988), 5-6.

[11] In the case of London major archives of central Anglo-Jewish institutions, such as the Office of the Chief Rabbi, the Jewish Board of Guardians, the United Synagogue and the Federation of Synagoges are available. Most of them are deposited in the London Metropolitan Archives and in the Anglo-Jewish Archives held at Archives and Special Collection in the Hartley Library, University of Southampton. The situation in respect to Berlin is quite different. Most records of the Gemeindearchiv got lost during World War II. The surviving material is scattered around several countries. While the Special Archive in London and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw hold mainly pre-twentieth century records, parts of the archive survived in the Central Archive of the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem, the Centrum Judaicum in Berlin and the Leo Baeck Institute New York. As for Paris, major collections are available around different French archives.

[12] On different aspect of the Anglo-Jewish press cf. David Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1994), John Gross, "The "Jewish Chronicle" & Others," *Commentary* 36, no. 5 (1963), Jacob Hodess, "Tsu der geshikhte fun der english-yidisher prese [On the History of the English-Jewish Press]," *YIVO Bleter* 43 (1966). Michael Brenner gives a brief overview over Berlin-Jewish periodicals in Weimar Berlin. Michael Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1996), 54 ff.

played themselves a central role in creation of the urban Jewish community.[13] In a similar way, literary depictions and autobiographical accounts manifest various aspects of urban Jewish cultures. In face of the vast number of accounts on Jewish life and other sources concerning Jewish presence in London, Berlin or Paris this work necessarily has to be selective.

By utilising a concept of cultural plurality, this project counters a narrative that has long dominated the perspective on Jewish urbanity, emphasising the antagonistic relationship between Jews and city and thereby portraying the urban context predominantly as a major source of Jewish self-destructiveness.

The turn of the century was a time of growing interest in urban matters.[14] In the wake of the fin-de-siècle atmosphere, the city was placed at the centre of discussions of modern societies. It was the city that represented the "dusk of nations, in which all suns and all stars are gradually waning, and mankind with all its institutions and creations is persisting in the midst of a dying world" as Max Nordau phrased it in his influential book *Entartung* (Degeneration) that appeared in two volumes in 1892 and 1893 respectively.[15] Hence, the city became the expression of a degenerating society, a site of the decomposition of traditional patterns and at the same time the synonym of modernity as well as its decline. The fin-de-siècle was an epoch of endings and beginnings, a period of the collision between the old and the new, and thus a volatile and transitional period[16] and all of these ambivalences, conflicting views, and conceptualisations found expression in the discussions around the city.

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[13] Examples are the *Jewish Year Book* founded by Joseph Jacobs in London in 1897, the *Jüdisches Jahrbuch für Groß-Berlin* that was published throughout the late 1920s or the *Jüdisches Adressbuch für Gross-Berlin* (1929-1931).
Examples of guidebooks are the booklet with information concerning various Jewish institutions in London, published in Yiddish for the East European immigrants [the exact title of the guidebook could not be reconstructed for the only available copy in the Jewish Museum London, lacks the title page] or [Heinz Friedländer], *Jüdischer Führer durch Berlin* ([Berlin-]Charlottenburg: Verlag Erich Veis, [1933]). Cf. also David Gilbert, "London in all its Glory - or how to enjoy London: guidebook representations of Imperial London," *Journal of Historical Geography* 25, no. 3 (1999).
[14] Klaus Bergmann has pointed to the predecessors of these urban debates, tracing them, in the case of Pfeil, back as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Klaus Bergmann, *Agrarromantik und Großstadtfeindschaft* (Meisenheim am Glan: A. Hain, 1970). For an exellent tour d'horizon through the history of ideas concerning the city since the enlightenment cf. Carl E. Schorske, "The Idea of the City in European Thought: Voltaire to Spengler," in *The Historian and the City*, ed. Oscar Handlin and John E. Burchard (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press and Harvard University Press, 1963).
[15] Max Nordau, *Degeneration* (London: W. Heinemann, 1895), 5-7. On Nordau's work cf. by George L. Mosse's introduction to Max Nordau, *Degeneration: Translated from the Second Edition of the German Work; Introduction by George L. Mosse* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993). For the original German edition cf. Nordau, Max Simon. *Entartung*. 2 vols. Berlin: C. Duncker, 1892/1893.
[16] Cf. Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst, "Introduction: Reading the 'Fin de Siècle'," in *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History, c.1880-1900*, ed. Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Following these general lines of argument, Jewish commentators too began to engage questions of urbanisation and urbanity. Like their non-Jewish contemporaries, they saw the city in a contrasting way either as a modern space offering new opportunities or more often as the stage of decline and degeneration. Despite these commonalities, Jewish commentators took a particular "Jewish attitude" towards urban question, raising questions about the effect of urbanity on the Jews in particular. In seeking answers, many thinkers inscribed the dichotomy that characterised the modern urban discourse. Steven Loewenstein has coined the catchy slogan "Was Urbanization Harmful to Jewish Tradition?"[17] Jewish tradition did not stay at the centre of turn of the century Jewish debates on the city as a closer look at these debates reveals. The commentators were rather raising a more general and open question: were urbanisation and urban existence harmful or beneficial for the Jews?

The year 1911 saw the publication of two books dealing in one way or the other with the question of Jews and the city; one was Arthur Ruppin's revised edition of his *Die Juden der Gegenwart* (*The Jews of Today*), the other Felix Theilhaber's *Der Untergang der deutschen Juden* (*The Decline and Fall of German Jewry*). Both Ruppin and Theilhaber represent a strain of Zionist thinkers embracing the nexus of modernity and degeneration with the modern city at its centre.[18] According to Theilhaber, mixed marriage as an element in the self-destruction of German Jewry was a metropolitan product.[19] The same applies to Jewish conversion, "for the provincial milieu did not provide ground for baptism, while the urban circumstances promoted Assimilation."[20] Ruppin and Theilhaber's interpretations coincide at this point. As the former wrote in *The Jews of To-Day*:

> "Large towns are one of the great factors of assimilation—veritable hot-beds of the process, which goes on more actively and rapidly there than in other parts of the country[...]In a small town the Jewish convert to Christianity must be prepared to create something of a scandal, and probably to be cut by the majority of those with

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[17] Steven M. Lowenstein, "Was Urbanization Harmful to Jewish Tradition and Identity in Germany?," in *People of the City: Jews and the Urban Challenge*, ed. Ezra Mendelsohn (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[18] In their descriptions both Ruppin and Theilhaber were influenced by *völkisch* ideas and appropriated the language of *völkisch* romanticism. On these influences cf. Lowenstein, "Was Urbanization Harmful to Jewish Tradition and Identity in Germany?"

[19] Felix A. Theilhaber, *Der Untergang der deutschen Juden: eine volkswirtschaftliche Studie* (München: Ernst Reinhardt, 1911), 112.

[20] „Absichtlich haben wir die Provinz Posen und Hessen herausgegriffen, wo die Taufe so gut wie unbekannt ist, weil das ländliche Milieu der Taufe keinen Boden abgibt, während die städtischen Verhältnisse die Assimilation fordern." Theilhaber, *Der Untergang der deutschen Juden* (1911)Ibid., 97.

whom he has hitherto associated; whereas, in a large town, where people meet more easily, he can make new social connections without much difficulty [...]."[21]

To Ruppin, the large towns were "the homes of irreligion, or at least of religious indifference." He admits that cities with "their public schools, universities, and similar institutions, offer exceptional opportunities for acquiring higher education and culture, which [...] render the Jew especially receptive to assimilative influence and apt to renounce his Judaism."[22] Despite this concession, his perception of the city remained without exception a negative one.

Throughout the following decades both Theilhaber and Ruppin continued to engage in the exploration of the "Jewish tendency" to settle in an urban environment and the effect this environment has on the Jews as a community. In the second extended edition of his book—following a number of publications that depicted Berlin as the model for the destructive forces of the city, endangering Jewish survival[23]— Theilhaber stressed the urban component in the alleged decline and fall of German Jewry even further.

Contrasting the "simplicity," "naturalness," and "health" of the world of village Jewry in which the Jews lived according to nature and had not been "refined by any kind of 'overcultivation'" to the dark sides (Schattenseiten) of the big cities with their excitements to which the Jew "with his nervous character seeks out."[24]

Different from Theilhaber's picture of an inevitable decline of German Jewry, Ruppin stressed the possibility of a solution to the problem of the urban Jews through the Zionist project. He shared this assumption with a number of Zionist thinkers. What "the Jews need, for their physical regeneration", the Viennese physician and Zionist

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[21] Arthur Ruppin, *Die Juden der Gegenwart: Eine sozialwissenschaftliche Studie* (Köln; Leipzig: Jüdischer Verlag, 1911), 97. The English translations is taken from Arthur Ruppin, *The Jews of to-day: Translated from the German by Norman Bentwich. With an Introduction by Joseph Jacobs, Litt.D.* (London: G. Bell and sons, 1913), 99. While quoting the German edition, page numbers from the English translation will be given in [ ].

[22] Ruppin, *Die Juden der Gegenwart: Eine sozialwissenschaftliche Studie*, 97 [98-99].

[23] Felix A. Theilhaber, *Das Sterile Berlin; eine volkswirtschaftliche Studie* (Berlin: E. Marquardt, 1913), Felix A. Theilhaber, "Zum Preisausschreiben: "Bringt das materielle und soziale Aufsteigen den Familien Gefahren in rassenhygienischer Beziehung?": Dargelegt an der Entwicklung der Judenheit von Berlin. Von Dr. Felix A. Theilhaber in Berlin," *Sonderabdruck aus Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschafts-Biologie*, no. 1/2 (1913).

[24] In the German original the passages reads as follows: „Der Jude des platten Landes war ein Muster an Einfachheit. Sein Leben war ein natürliches, von keinerlei ‚Ueberkultur' beleckt. [...] Der einfache, religiöse, mäßige Jude stellt ein Kapitel ‚Volksgesundheit' dar."
„Im jüdischen Volkscharakter liegt das Streben nach Geselligkeit. Wie ein Schmetterling, der um das Licht herumflattert, so sucht der Jude mit seinem sensitiven nervösen Charakter die Reize der Großstadt. Ihn locken die Stätten der materiellen und geistigen Genüsse. Der geistige und ökonomische Aufstieg der ersten Emigranten wirkt anreizend auf die zurückbleibenden." Felix A. Theilhaber, *Der Untergang der deutschen Juden: Eine Volkswirtschaftliche Studie* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1921), 69.

Martin Engländer argued in 1902, are "land, light and air". In order to counter the "oppressive poverty, filth and misery" of the Eastern ghetto, and the "nerve-shattering competitive struggle for material and intellectual existence" in the Western metropolis, resulting in "exhausted nerves" of the Jewish city dweller, he continued, "nerve-strengthening agriculture and farming" and "the education of an indigenous and strong *Landvolk* (rural country people)" were needed regenerators.[25]

While Ruppin outlines the Zionist solution to the Diaspora and urban problems of the Jews in his *The Jews of Today,* he elaborates on this in a series of lectures delivered at the Hebrew University after his emigration to Palestine. In these lectures as in others of his later works, Ruppin remains convinced that the city undermined Jewish communal control, accentuating that the city gave rise to "rationalism" that easily gave way to hedonism and even apostasy. Thus, cultural effervescence and biological infertility characterised the modern city and contributed, Ruppin argues, to both the growth of anti-Semitism, due to the Jewish prominence in urban intellectual and economic life, as well as to precipitous demographic decline among Jews.[26]

It is not alone in the realm of scientific or pseudo-scientific investigations that Jews tried to analyse the alleged special relationship between their people and the urban sphere. Writers too dedicated themselves to exploring the *Großstadtjuden* (metropolitan Jews). In Adolf Dessauer's novel, the urban Jewish struggle between the upholding of tradition and religion and the assimilation and secularisation stands at the centre.[27] Among later literary representations of the Jewish urban experience are such famous works as Bettauer's *Stadt ohne Juden* (*City without Jews*) or Arthur Landsberger's less elaborate adaptation of the novel for the Berlin context.[28] Bettauer's work gained further attention through its cinematographic adaptation in 1924 under the directorship of H. K. Breslauer.

It would be wrong to conclude that the urban experience of Jews was exclusively seen as one marked by expulsion from the city as in Bettauer's and Landsberger's accounts or as a site of decline and decay of traditional Judaism and Jewish

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[25] Martin Engländer, *Die auffallend häufigen Krankheitserscheinungen der jüdischen Rasse* (Wien: J. L. Pollack, 1902), 45-46. Cf. also John M. Efron, "The "Kaftanjude" and the "Kaffeehausjude": Two Models of Jewish Insanity - A Discussion of Causes and Cures among German-Jewish Psychiatrists," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 37 (1992).

[26] Arthur Ruppin, *Soziologie der Juden*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1930-1931). For an English translation see Arthur Ruppin, *The Jews in the Modern World: With an Introduction by L. B. Namier* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1934).

[27] Adolf Dessauer, *Großstadtjuden: Roman* (Wien; Leipzig: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1910).

[28] Hugo Bettauer, *Die Stadt ohne Juden: Ein Roman von Übermorgen* (Wien; Leipzig: R. Löwit Verlag, 1923), Artur Landsberger, *Berlin ohne Juden: Roman* (Wien; Leipzig: R. Löwit Verlag, 1925).

existence as portrayed by Ruppin, Theilhaber and others. There were other voices. Among them was Ludwig Feuchtwanger who as late as June 1933 declared the *Metropolis a Jewish Destiny* being both Jewry's "fate and deliverance".[29] While stressing the urban dangers for Jews and Judaism Feuchtwanger emphasised that it was the big cities, unlike "province and village," that offered opportunities to Jews to unfold themselves.[30]

Even Theilhaber, despite his continuing anti-urban sentiment, admits the role of the city as Jewish refuge in a surprising passage of the 1921 edition of his book. He argues—contradicting the point he made some pages before about the subversive power of the city on Jewish life—that it was in the big city that the Jew was secure from the anti-Semitic sentiments of the small town.[31]

Some historians have tried to stress the importance to come to a differentiating image of the city's impact on Jews trying to overcome the black and white picture Theilhaber, Ruppin and others.

In 1938, the eminent Jewish historian, Salo Wittmayer Baron, declared that the Jews "were especially fortunate in having been prepared, through many centuries of peculiar historical evolution, for urban life with all its biological dangers" and that their "perennial legal and extralegal exclusion from agriculture and many crafts and, hence, their partly enforced and partly voluntary concentration upon urban [...] had prepared the ground from which sprang some of the most effective entrepreneurs of the new period."[32] It was through "their overwhelming urbanization and their predominantly middle-class status", Baron went on that Jews were provided with new opportunities, namely that to enter the domains of science, literature and art "in a degree far surpassing their proportion of the population."[33]

Here anti-Semitic stereotypes depicting the Jews as a people predestined for modern urban capitalism—voiced most clearly in Werner Sombart's 1911 book *Die Juden*

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[29] "[Die] Großstadt ist dem europäischen Judentum zum Schicksal geworden, zum Verhängnis und zur Rettung zugleich", Ludwig Feuchtwanger, "Die Großstadt als jüdisches Schicksal," *Bayerische Israelitische Gemeindezeitung* IX, no. 12 (1933): 178.

[30] Ibid.: 180.

[31] Theilhaber, *Der Untergang der deutschen Juden*, 71. Indeed, the development of Jewish neo-Orthodoxy in nineteenth century Germany both showed that an often made distinction between traditional religious provincial Judaism and the subversion of Judaism in the city can not be maintained, for it were cities like Frankfurt upon Main or Berlin that became the hotspots of a revival of orthodoxy. Robert Liberles, *Religious Conflict in Social Context: The Resurgence of Orthodox Judaism in Frankfurt am Main, 1838-1877* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985).

[32] Cf. Salo Wittmayer Baron, "The Jewish Question in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Modern History* 10, no. 1 (1938): 52, 54.

[33] Ibid.: 55.

und das Wirtschaftsleben (*The Jews and Modern Capitalism*)—are reinterpreted and portrayed as leading to a Jewish urban success-story.

Decades after Baron, Shmuel Ettinger recapitulates the duality characterising the early twentieth century debates around Jews and city. In his assessment of the city's impact on the Jews, Ettinger draws an ambivalent picture, suggesting that the concentration of Jews in large cities influenced Jewish life in "two directions". On the one hand, it weakened constraints; on the other, it reinforced "the Jewish sense of solidarity and [...] common destiny."[34]

The examples of Baron and Ettinger point to a continuous scholarly involvement in the study of aspects of Jewish urbanity. There has been a long tradition of Jewish community histories, often somewhat stylised sketches celebrating the achievements of a congregation. Among the noteworthy exceptions are studies such as Ludwig Geiger's *Geschichte der Juden in Berlin*, published 1871.[35]

Steven J. Zipperstein has argued that the professionalisation of Jewish urban studies began in the 1970s.[36] Scholars who started to engage questions of Jews and cities though had predecessors. Among the earlier writings, Jacob Shatzky's multivolume *History of the Jews in Warsaw* published shortly after the Second World War is still one of the best and most detailed accounts of a Jewish city-history.[37] Moses Rischin's 1962 study on New York Jews at the beginning of the twentieth century too remains one of the key books on its subject.[38] Another example of the early engagement into urban matters by historians of Jewish history—in content more relevant for the issue at stake—was David H. Weinberg's study on Paris Jewry in the 1930's that appeared in 1977.[39]

The 1970s and 80s saw a number of new publications in the field of urban Jewish studies. Besides Bill Williams' excellent book on Manchester Jewry, published in 1976, Masha Rozenblit's social historical study *The Jews of Vienna*, published in 1983, and Nancy L. Green's work on the Parisian Jews during the Belle Époque, are

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[34] Samuel Ettinger, "A Modern Period," in *A History of the Jewish People*, ed. H. H. Ben-Sasson (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1976), 864-65.

[35] Ludwig Geiger, *Geschichte der Juden in Berlin*, 2 vols. (Berlin: J. Guttentag, 1871).

[36] Steven J. Zipperstein, "Jewish Historiography and the Modern City: Recent Writing on European Jewry," *Jewish History* 2, no. 1 (1987).

[37] Jacob Shatzky, *Geshikhte fun Yidn in Varshe* [History of the Jews in Warsaw], 3 vols. (New York: Yiddish Scientific Institute - YIVO, 1947-1953).

[38] Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews, 1870-1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).

[39] David H. Weinberg, *A Community on Trial: The Jews of Paris in the 1930's* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977).

two of the most innovative and remarkable examples in the field.[40] Both basing their investigation heavily on urban Jewish demographic developments, pay much attention to "ordinary Jews", investigating the difficult intra-communal relation between Jewish immigrant newcomers and established communities, as well as between different sections within the community, within the urban environment, thus providing new insight into the set-up of Jewish urban communities and elements of daily life within the city. Furthermore, many of these early studies concentrate on questions of assimilation and acculturation in an urban milieu.[41] Apart from monographs, workshops and special journal issues on the topic of Jews and city indicate the growing interest in Jewish urban matters beyond the realm of Jewish studies.[42]

The following decade saw a growing numbers of monographs on aspects of Jewish life in different cities. Among them were Shulamit S. Magnus' study on Jewish emancipation in nineteenth century Cologne, Seven M. Lowenstein's *Berlin Jewish Community*, Stefanie Schüler-Springorum's study on the Jewish minority in Königsberg (Kaliningrad), and Till van Rahden's investigations into how Jews and Catholics in Breslau (Wrocław) faced the urban challenge.[43] Most of these studies take a social historical approach to explore elements of Jewish communities. Often the urban context serves rather as an analytical framework than as an integral category of studying patterns of Jewish urban identity. Outside of the European context, the urban development in Palestine has received a growing scholarly

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[40] Bill Williams, *The Making of Manchester Jewry, 1740-1875* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press; Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1976), Marsha L. Rozenblit, *The Jews of Vienna, 1867-1914: Assimilation and Identity* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1983), Nancy L. Green, *The Pletzl of Paris: Jewish Immigrant Workers in the Belle Epoque* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1986).

[41] For another example see Deborah Dash Moore, *At Home in America: Second Generation New York Jews* (New York Columbia University Press, 1981).

[42] In 1987 one of the leading German journals of urban history *Informationen zur modernen Stadtgeschichte* issued a special issue on Jews and City. Among the contributions of this volume is Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, "Juden als Stadtbewohner," *Informationen zur modernen Stadtgeschichte* 1 (Themenschwerpunkt: Juden und Stadt) (1987).

[43] Shulamit S. Magnus, *Jewish Emancipation in a German City: Cologne, 1798-1871* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997), Steven M. Lowenstein, *The Berlin Jewish Community: Enlightenment, Family, and Crisis, 1770-1830* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, *Die jüdische Minderheit in Königsberg/Preussen, 1871-1945* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), Till van Rahden, *Juden und andere Breslauer: Die Beziehungen zwischen Juden, Protestanten und Katholiken in einer deutschen Grossstadt von 1860 bis 1925* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000).

attention. Michael Berkowitz and others have explored questions of Jewish urbanity and urbanisation in the Yeshuv.[44]

Recent years have seen a growing number of studies engaging cultural aspects of Jewish city life as well as works addressing the question of Jewish urbanity on a broader level, in both theoretical and trans-urban perspective. Several collections of essays compiled during the 1990s marked the beginning of these new reflections of the *People of the City*.[45] In 2000 the Journal *Judaism* devoted an issue to questions of the urban experience of Jews[46] and two years later an international conference on the "City in Jewish History," being held at Princeton University, again offered a forum for the continuing discussion of the "urban diaspora" across Europe from the Middle Ages up into the twentieth century.[47] Furthermore, the team of organisers as well as a number of papers show that the examination of the relationship between Jews and city is one that takes place in different academic contexts. The collection *Berlin Metropolis*, published in conjunction with an exhibition at the Jewish Museum, New York in 1999/2000 provides an insight in different aspects of Jewish culture of turn of the century Berlin.[48]

One of the most remarkable studies recently published is Scott Spector's work on Fin-de-siècle Prague.[49] Focusing on a group of young German-speaking Jewish intellectuals and writers such as Franz Kafka and Max Brod, Spector argues that their

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[44] Michael Berkowitz, "Zion's cities: Projections of urbanism and German self-consciousness, 1909-1933," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* (1997). For a very early discussion on Zionist perspectives on urbanisation in Palestine cf. Erik Cohen, "The City in Zionist Ideology," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* 4 (1977). Especially the development of Tel Aviv as a Jewish city has been studies by different scholars. Two mention just two major contributions: Joachim Schlör, *Tel Aviv, vom Traum zur Stadt : Reise durch Kultur und Geschichte* (Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1996), Barbara E. Mann, *A Place in History : modernism, Tel Aviv, and the creation of Jewish urban space* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006). In this context, Sonder's detailed study on garden cities in Erez Israel needs to be mentioned too. Ines Sonder, *Gartenstädte für Erez Israel: Zionistische Stadtplanungsvisionen von Theodor Herzl bis Richard Kauffmann* (Hildesheim; Zürich; New York: Georg Olms, 2005).
[45] Willi Jasper and Julius H. Schoeps, eds., *Deutsch-jüdische Passagen: Europäische Stadtlandschaften von Berlin bis Prag* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1996), Fritz Mayrhofer and Ferdinand Opll, eds., *Juden in der Stadt* (Linz: Österreichischer Arbeitskreis für Stadtgeschichtsforschung, 1999), Ezra Mendelsohn, ed., *People of the City: Jews and the Urban Challenge* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Besides collections of essays the anthology edited by Schlör is another example of the growing interest in the matter. Joachim Schlör, ed., *Wenn ich dein vergesse, Jerusalem: Bilder jüdischen Stadtlebens* (Leipzig: Reclam-Verlag Leipzig, 1995).
[46] The papers published *Judaism* 49, no. 3 (2000) were outcomes of a two-day international conference on "Jews and the Urban Experience" that took place at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, in March 1999.
[47] Some of the contributions to the conference have been published in volume 12, No. 1 of the *Jewish Studies Quarterly* (2005).
[48] Emily D. Bilski, ed., *Berlin Metropolis: Jews and the new culture 1890-1918* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1999).
[49] Scott Spector, *Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka's Fin de Siècle* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2000).

struggle for identity took place against the background of different urban territories, defined through geographical as well as ideological, linguistic and cultural components. Through this complexity of territories Spector shows that different urban aspects were formative to its Jewish inhabitants.

More recently, Joachim Schlör has emphasised the need for an interdisciplinary approach to Jewish urbanity. He not only shows that the debates about Jews as urbanites since the nineteenth century took place across many academic disciplines such as geography, anthropology, demography etc. but that a combination of methodologies and approaches from these different fields is needed to study Jewish urbanity in its full range.[50]

These attempts to apply elements of cultural studies to questions of Jewish urbanity form an important background for this project. Looking at paradigmatic elements of Jewish urban culture in London, Berlin and Paris this project incorporates theoretical conceptualisations to the historical context of three European capital cities and their Jewish community and contributes to a better understanding of the complexities of Jewish urbanity and urban cultures in general.

Under the overall question of the formation of modern urban Jewish cultures, the project unfolds three case studies, each focusing on aspects of the process of cultural formation in a particular urban setting. The time frame for these investigations reaching form the 1880s up to 1940, too, is subdivided into three segments each of which forms the temporal framework for the investigation of one of the three cities. This chronological arrangement is not meant as a teleological sequence but is rather based on the assumption that particular elements of the formation of urban Jewish cultures can be studied best in a particular urban setting in a specific period.

The three case studies are interlocked in content, chronology and methodology. The different parts overlap chronologically and are linked by cross-city examples. Methodologically all three parts, despite addressing different aspects of modern Jewish urbanity, share a common methodological approach that can be termed Jewish cultural topographies. The assumption that urban cultures and cultural practices are inseparable from urban spaces and places within a city underpins the entire thesis. It is argued that cultural activities are both an offspring of topographies and shape urban space.

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[50] Joachim Schlör, *Das Ich der Stadt: Debatten über Judentum und Urbanität 1822-1938* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005).

All three key aspects, that of the encounter between East and West, the coming to terms with the challenges of urban modernity, and the city as refuge and exile, were played out within the landscape of the city. Furthermore, it is through the creation of spaces that Jews attempted to find their place within the city. In employing space as a central aspect this study follows the broad notion of the term as outlined by Henri Lefebvre in his 1974 book *La production de l'espace* (*The Production of Space*).[51] Barbara Mann, who in her study on Tel Aviv also employs a Lefebvreian concept of space, has recently argued, "[w]hat Michel Foucault did for knowledge, Lefebvre has done for space"; stressing that space in his view is neither given nor transcendent but "produced".[52] This theoretical achievements of Lefebvre's work, has influenced a number of more recent interpretations of spatial practices by scholars such as Michel de Certeau or James Clifford, who juxtaposes it with the anthropological term of "field".[53]

Lefebvre divides space further into three modes: spatial practices, representation of space, and spaces of representation.[54] According to Lefebvre, spatial practices are the projection "of all aspects, elements and moments of social practice."[55] For the questions at issue here, this notion shall be remodelled towards an interpretation of spatial cultural practices, suggesting that (urban) spaces are both the basis for cultural production as well as objects of cultural activities, using and shaping it. Throughout the following chapters, the aspect of social and cultural patterns of action taking off from space will be investigated more closely. The remaining two modes of space Lefebvre maps out are also relevant for the context. Lefebvre distinguishes between the "representations of space", which he views as the space conceptualised and envisioned by urbanists and planners and *representational spaces,* which are "directly *lived* through", i.e. which become subject to "imagination" seeking to change and appropriate them.[56]

Differentiating the field of spatial production, these modes of space serves as starting points for the investigation of Jewish urban spatial strategies, ranging from visions of

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[51] Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace* (Paris: Anthropos, 1974).

[52] Mann, *A Place in History : modernism, Tel Aviv, and the creation of Jewish urban space*, 1.

[53] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), especially Part III: Spatial Practices, James Clifford, *Routes : travel and translation in the late twentieth century* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1997), especially Chapter 3 with the same title.

[54] The translations follows in large part Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1991), 38.

[55] Ibid., 8.

[56] Ibid., 38-39.

Jewish urban spaces to the active shaping of Jewish places and sites within the urban setting. These activities are fuelled by what Scott Spector has termed "territorial ideology" –a conceptual system of looking at one's place in the world.[57] Another reason for topographical approach is the aim to write an integrated Jewish history, i.e. to study Jewish history as embedded part of general (e.g. urban) history. Although placed in specific spatial and temporal settings, the cultural formations processes in question are generalisable insofar as they play out in other urban contexts too.

The case of London in the period between the 1880s and the eve of World War I forms the first part of the project and illustrates this juxtaposition of specific and paradigmatic aspects of Jewish urbanity.

Entitled "Unity and Diversity" this part focuses on the formation of urban Jewish cultures through encounters between established "Western" Jewish community and "Eastern" immigrants in London. Encounters of this kind were not unique to the British capital. Similar examples can be found in the struggle of coming together between "Uptown" and "Downtown Jews" in New York City during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century,[58] the relationship between the established Berlin Jewish community living in the Western parts of the city and immigrants residing in the Scheunenviertel[59], in turn of the century Vienna,[60] or in Paris during the *Belle Époque*.[61]

Despite numerous similarities, there are notable differences in the ways urban Jewish communities took up the challenge of diversification through immigration. What makes London a particularly interesting place to study these encounters is that it was here—more than in the other mentioned cities—that the encounter between East and West played out simultaneously on local, national and international levels.

Looking at attempts by the Anglo-Jewish establishment to anglicise the newcomers in different ways and the responses of the London immigrant community to these attempts, this chapter argues that a shift in mutual perception of both groups took place during the period between the start of the East European Jewish mass migration and 1914.

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[57] Spector, *Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka's Fin de Siècle*, ix-x.
[58] Cf. for example Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews, 1870-1914*.
[59] Cf. Jack Wertheimer, *Unwelcome Strangers: East European Jews in imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).
[60] Rozenblit, *The Jews of Vienna, 1867-1914: Assimilation and Identity*.
[61] Green, *The Pletzl of Paris: Jewish Immigrant Workers in the Belle Epoque*.

Initial attempts by the London's "native" Jewish community to ground their identity within the context of the Empire, fostering an ideology of homogeneity to counter the emerging subculture of "alien Jews" in the eastern boroughs of the metropolis gradually gave way to a more open perspective towards these new cultural and communal forms, levelling the path for a coming together of both groups. In opposition to the long predominating view, this chapter argues that both sides were contributing elements to the formation of a new urban Jewish identity that resulted from the encounter.[62]

Cities have long been perceived as spaces and places of modernity.[63] In his classical essay on urban modernity—*The Metropolis and Mental Life*—Georg Simmel argues that the complexity and rapidity of urban life (namely in Berlin) resulted in indifference and a blasé attitude by city dwellers in order to cope with their environment.[64] Looking at the Jewish community one might argue contrary to this account that it was within the modern city—more than anywhere else—that (Jewish) urbanites were forced to position themselves to decide in what way they wanted to face their new "urban visibility" as Richard I. Cohen calls it. The new freedom the post-emancipation city offered to the Jews, Cohen argues, "required the Jews to make decisions of wide cultural and social implications concerning where they would reside, with whom and how they would create their public and private spaces and systems of value."[65] The second part of this project examines Jewish responses to the modern urban environment. Berlin of the so-called Golden Twenties has become the epitome of the modern city, a place "where all Jewish fantasies and imagination were concentrated".[66] Thus, Berlin trajectory in becoming a modern capital city and a capital of modernity, starting at the turn of the century and continuing through the

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[62] This development has been theoretically discussed within postcolonial studies. Namely Homi Bhaba's concept of hybridity, rooted in the assumption that in fact the colonized always brings something of his own to the encounter with the colonizers and that both are transformed by this encounter seems particularly applicable to the case of London. Homi K. Bhabha *The Location of Culture* (London; New York: Routledge, 1994).

[63] According to Heidemarie Uhl the city it the point of intersection between cultural chnage and social modernisation („Schnittstelle zwischen kulturellem Wandel und gesellschaftlicher Modernisierung") Heidemarie Uhl, "Vorwort," in *Kultur – Urbanität – Moderne: Differenzierungen der Moderne in Zentraleuropa um 1900*, ed. Heidemarie Uhl (Wien: 1999), 12. See also the excellent introduction in Miles Ogborn, *Spaces of modernity : London's geographies, 1680-1780* (New York: Guilford Press, 1998).

[64] Georg Simmel, "Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben," in *Die Großstadt: Vorträge und Aufsätze zur Städteausstellung*, ed. Th. Petermann (Dresden: Zahn & Jaensch, 1903).

[65] Richard I. Cohen, "Urban Visibility and Biblical Visions: Jewish Culture in Western and Central Europe in the Modern Age," in *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, ed. David Biale (New York: Schocken Books, 2002), 735-36; here: 25.

[66] Schlör, *Das Ich der Stadt*, 117.

inter-war years, provides the setting for raising questions of Jewish community within the modern urban setting.

In his study of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Berlin Jewish community, Steven Lowenstein argues that it was here, in Berlin, that Jews embraced the opportunities of Enlightenment and became "pioneers of modernity".[67] Did their fellow-Jews a century later play a similar role in embracing mid-twentieth century modernism and modernity? How did Jews face the challenge of the modern Berlin? How did they come to terms with it, as individuals and more importantly as community?

In order to find answers to these questions this part will look at different strategies by Berlin Jews to come to terms with their modern city especially in a time of crisis. Weimar Berlin saw unprecedented debates on the form and function of the Jewish *Gemeinde* (community) among urban Jews an institution that increasingly became subject to a number of external as well as internal crises. Hyperinflation and economic crisis seemed to put the very existence of *Gemeinde* at stake while deepening inner-Jewish political divisions paralysed it.

Already prior to the Weimar years Berlin Jewry had attempted to find means to make up for the alleged lack of history and tradition[68] and to locate Jewish Berlin within the vast urban landscape of the German capital. These cultural practices of creating and mapping Jewish spaces intended to form a stable ground for Jewish urban existence amidst the fragmentation and fluctuation of the modern city stand at the centre of this chapter.

Peter Fritzsche argues that a city not only can be read through its media, e.g. its newspapers, but that these publications in part constructed the urban.[69] Twentieth century Berlin-Jewry was keen to allow urban Jews to read through their city and thereby counterbalance the forces of urban alienation by establishing a sense of rootedness within Jewish Berlin. It was through publications such as the *Gemeindeblatt* (community's newspaper), or through *Jewish Year and Address-Books for Berlin*, that a sense of urban community was constructed and that the Jewish community was located within the city.

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[67] Lowenstein, *The Berlin Jewish Community: Enlightenment, Family, and Crisis, 1770-1830.*
[68] The application of the terms Geschichts- und Traditionslosigkeit to Berlin can be found throughout numerous accounts of the Prussian and later German capital city.
[69] Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996).

The last part of this thesis overlapping chronologically with the previous one will deal with Paris. In the decades prior to the outbreak of World War II, the French capital became one of the "city of refuge" and subsequently "a capital of refugees", a place onto which many refugees projected their imaginations and hopes. Perceiving Paris as *the* city where the liberalising and emancipatory promises of the French Revolution of 1789 were manifest thousands of Jews from around Europe, came to the alleged city of lights in the hope to find a refuge from persecution. Thus, Paris became a unique place where utopian urban images are interlocked, contrasted and contested by actual Jewish spaces.

By bringing together so far separately studied groups of Jewish refugees, i.e. Eastern European Jews settling in Paris throughout the inter-war years and German Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany in the 1930s, this part engages two major aspects. On the one hand, it investigates the obstacles refugees' faced upon arriving in the alleged city of light and the ways in which they tried to place themselves in the new urban environment. On the other hand, the dialectic of home and exile in special reference to Paris will be analysed.

Upon arriving in the French capital city, many refugees remained in a state of transition. The experience and subsequent strategies of finding one's place within the city are linked to transitory urban (s)paces. It was places such as hotels, the Jewish night asylum or inner-city refugee camps that became reality for many new arrivals. Coming to Paris these newcomers moreover faced a manifold Jewish communal structure, composed of "native" French Jews, and migrants from Eastern Europe and North Africa, to whom Paris had become home in previous decades.[70]

The quest for finding their place within this communal setting Jewish refugees put in place what Michel Foucault has called heterotopia. According to the French theorist, heterotopia is the result of putting in place "counter-sites" in which existing social and spatial arrangements are "represented, contested and inverted".[71] Unlike Utopia that is a "site with no real place", the figure of the heterotopia refers to real spaces, places of difference or "other places". By setting up their own networks of a refugee Jewish newspapers and libraries, by forming circles to discuss urban Jewish aspects, or by turning urban spaces such as cafes into refugee meeting-places both Eastern

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[70] Didier Epelbaum, *Les enfants de Papier: les juifs de Pologne immigrés en France jusqu'en 1940: l'accueil, l'intégration, les combats* (Paris: Grasset, 2002), Annie Benveniste, *Le Bosphore à la Roquette: la communauté Judéo-espagnole à Paris (1914 - 1940)* (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 1989).
[71] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1986): 24.

European and German Jewish refugees created such counter-sites or rather in-between-spaces.

In a period of intensifying atrocities against fellow Jews beyond the Rhine, Paris became a place where various Jewish groups discussed the possibilities of Jewish urban existence and future. Some saw themselves thrown into a new ghetto while others remained faithful to the fulfilment ideals of 1789 or embraced the new political movement of the Popular Front.

1930s Paris was also a city of international exhibitions and congresses. Coinciding with the 1937 World Exhibition, Paris hosted an international conference on Jewish culture. The 1937 conference underlined the importance of the French capital city as a place to map out the future trajectory of Jews.

On an individual level however, coming to Paris for many refugees meant a challenge of coming to terms with the loss of their former home and the experiences of exile. Walter Benjamin's reflections on urban questions while in exile in Paris, juxtaposing his *Berlin Childhood* memories with the investigation of the dream-world of the nineteenth century, Parisian Arcades, point to the aspect of nostalgia and is just one prominent example of this struggle.

The German occupation of the French capital in the summer of 1940 not only meant the end of emerging Jewish cultural patterns but also underlined the transitory nature of the Paris Jewish experience in the 1930s. Soon after arriving in Paris, many Jewish refugees who had hoped to find a refuge in the French capital city were forced to continue their flight. Nonetheless, the idea(l) of Paris as a city of liberation and emancipation travelled with these refugees.

Unity and Diversity

> "London is the greatest city in the world and above all the capital city of the largest empire on earth. Together with her colonies, England takes up almost a fifth of the globe; and the inhabitants of this kingdom form almost a sixth of the world's population! ... At its Eastern End lies the part of London, which is called East-End ... In this part of the city lies Whitechapel where the Jewish immigrants constitute a majority ... In the West-End ... matters are reversed for its population is constituted almost exclusively from the higher classes of London."[72]

With these words, Jacob Lestschinsky, the Jewish statistician and social scientists, set the scene for his investigation of the *Jewish Worker in London* in 1907. In describing the vastness of the British capital, the capital of the world's largest Empire he stresses the simultaneity of imperial, national and local pattern playing out in the London landscape. These multiple layers characterising the metropolis that formed the backdrop against which Londoners in general and London Jewry in particular throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century attempted to find their place within the city and develop their urban identity. This chapter takes the interplay between imperial, national and local aspects as a point of departure in answering the question how the Jewish community/ies of London found their place within it.

Furthermore, Lestschinsky's opening remarks point to an aspect that has dominated not only the historiography of London Jewry but of Anglo-Jewry in general ever since.[73] What he describes as the social difference between two urban neighbourhoods – the East and the West end – provided contemporaries as well as historians with a means to describe the relationship between both groups in antagonistic terms, as clearly distinct from each other. According to these views, it were not just differences between social classes, between Eastern European and anglicises "native" Jews, not only the divisions between the slums of East London and the glamour of the western boroughs of the metropolis but rather, to use Benjamin Disraeli's famous phrase in a somewhat modified form, "two [Jewish] nations" that were living in London.

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[72] Jacob Lestschinsky, *Der yidisher arbayter: in London* (Vilna: Tsukunft, 1907).

[73] For overviews and critical discussions of the developments of Anglo-Jewish historiography – much of it dealing with London – see Lloyd P. Gartner, "A Quarter Century of Anglo-Jewish Historiography," *Jewish Social Studies* 48, no. 2 (1986), David Cesarani, "Introduction," in *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry*, ed. David Cesarani (Oxford; Cambridge, MA: B. Blackwell, 1990), Todd M. Endelman, "English Jewish History," *Modern Judaism* 11, no. 1 (1991), Lloyd P. Gartner, "A Recent Look at Anglo-Jewish History: A Review Essay," *American Jewish History* 80, no. 4 (1991), David Cesarani, "Dual Heritage or Duel of Heritages?: Englishness and Jewishness in the Heritage Industry," in *The Jewish Heritage in British History. Englishness & Jewishness*, ed. Tony Kushner (London; Portland, OR: F. Cass, 1992).

Charles Russell's description of the alleged unbridgeable differences between both camps of London Jewry illustrates this view exemplary. "There appears to be almost a stronger line of severance between the English and foreign Jew than between the English Jew and Gentile," Russell argues, both in "habits, ideas and religion they are fundamentally distinct." Russell emphasises not only this distinctness but indeed the "mutual hostility and contempt," when both groups come into contact, leading to the point that in Whitechapel "the bitterest enemies of the foreign immigrant" are the English Jews. Russell did not try to hide his sympathy for the English Jews he "found to be surprisingly popular," unlike the traditionalist, religiously dogmatic foreign Jews.[74] Russell was one of many voices of the time depicting Jews in London in such a way.

The second half of the study *The Jew in London*, written by Harry Samuel Lewis, himself Jewish, too, highlights the differences between East and West End Jews, but in quite a different way from that of Russell. By stressing that "the English and foreign Jew feel themselves more in sympathy with each other than with the outside world," despite the separateness of the latter, developed through the experience of persecution over generations in the old country, Lewis emphasises the intra-communal Jewish solidarity, thus giving a more balanced account of the relationship between both groups. Hence, Lewis described the many links between both groups. For Lewis Judaism held on London Jews "as a racial bond". Furthermore, East and West End Jews shared the common "Jewish characteristics" of intellectualism, and they were linked through the praiseworthy endeavour of Anglo-Jewish philanthropic activities. All this indicates possibilities to overcome differences and of coming together between East and West, between native and foreign Jews of developing a communal sense beyond the divide.

This chapter argues that London provided a special stage for the commingling of diversity and differences. The framework of the capital city of both Britain and the Empire shaped the encounter of different Jewish groups and thus cultural patterns coming together here in a particular multilayered way. Hence, London's urban environment rather than serving merely as background for the formation of different,

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[74] Charles Russell and Harry Samuel Lewis, *The Jew in London: A study of racial character and present-day conditions Being two essays prepared for the Toynbee trustees by C. Russell, ... and H.S. Lewis, ... With an introduction by Canon Barnett and a preface by the Right Hon. James Bryce, ... With a new map specially made for this volume by Geo E. Arkell* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1900), 24.

sometimes conflicting sets of urban Jewish identities played an active role in these processes.

Continental immigrants brought new cultural patterns to London. Transplanted into this new environment these patterns underwent transformations. While being transformed by the new city environment these people and patterns shaped the existing metropolitan cultures in London. However, the influx of thousands of East and Central European immigrants was not the only means by which London Jewish identity was shaped and challenged. In their search for identity, community and their place in society, post-emancipation London-Jewry turned to different elements rooted in the landscape of London. Namely, London's position as capital of the Empire became a formative element in the identity of the nineteenth-century London Jewish establishment. The multifaceted character of modern London gave a special dynamic to the encounter between Western and Eastern Jews that took place elsewhere in Europe and North America.

It happened that an important change in the perception of cities in Britain taking place towards the end of the nineteenth century coincided with the beginning of Jewish mass migration. Subsequently the debates concerning the city and immigrants became interlocked. While commentators in the first half of the nineteenth century were often emphatic about cities the 1880s saw a considerable change in perception.[75] Now the prevailing image of the city was a negative one in which it was perceived as a complex of problems, such as mass poverty, with its components of unemployment, physical degeneracy, overcrowding, inadequate housing and economic exploitation, and with concomitants like immorality, vice, crime, irreligion and political disaffection. Many contemporaries held immigration and immigrants responsible for these developments and the Victorian middle-classes felt increasing threatened by "Outcast London".[76]

"A mighty mass of brick, and smoke" – London, the capital of the nineteenth century

"In forming our idea of the great capital of the British Empire and of the nineteenth century," an article in the Journal *Temple Bar* in 1862 argues, "we naturally look for

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[75] Cf. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Hogarth, 1985), especially Chapter 19 'Cities of Darkness and of Light'. Bruce Ivor Coleman, ed., *The idea of the city in ineteenth-century Britain* (London; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973).
[76] Gareth Stedman Jones, *Outcast London : a study in the relationship between classes in Victorian society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

models in the great cities of the past, and the centres of other empires." Comparing London – that "mighty mass of brick, and smoke" as Lord Byram called it – with Imperial Rome we "call her 'the Modern Babylon'" when we would "express in one word the idea of her greatness."[77]

By comparing London with the great imperial cities of antiquity, the anonymous author unintentionally pointed to the Janus-face of the Victorian capital for both Rome and Babylon were paradoxical images. To nineteenth century commentators the British capital represented both a fascinosum and a threat. The city both thrilled and horrified the spectator. Besides her vastness, London's unprecedented and rapid growth most struck contemporaries. The population of the area that later became the responsibility of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and then the London County Council (LCC), rose from just under the one million mark in 1801, passing it ten years later, to reach 2,263,000 in 1851, more than doubling in size; it doubled again over the next half-century to 4,536,000 in 1901.[78] At a meeting of the Statistical Society in 1885, it was proudly announced that London was by far the largest city in the world: its population was larger than that of Paris, and three times that of New York or Berlin.[79] Throughout this period the population boom of London was a result not only of the extension of the city limits but also especially due to migration to the city either from rural areas of the British Isles or from across their shores.

London achieved an economic status unparalleled by any other urban centre over the course of the nineteenth century. Perhaps forty per cent of all capital outflows from Europe at the turn of the century were British in origin.[80] At the heart of this development stood the City with its banking houses and especially the London Stock Exchange.[81] Within the urban fabric of London, the City continued to occupy a special position. The City defended its privilege of self-government and withstood absorption by the Board of Works or the LCC.[82]

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[77] "London, as it strikes a stranger," *Temple Bar* 5 (1862): 381.
[78] P. J. Waller, *Town, city, and nation: England, 1850-1914* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 25.
[79] Cf. Peter Hall, *Cities in Civilization: Culture, Innovation, and Urban Order* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998), 657. For a contemporary estimation of London's population growth cf. George Laurence Gomme, *London in the reign of Victoria (1837-1897)* (London: Blackie & Son, 1898).
[80] Jay M. Winter and Jean-Louis Robert, *Capital Cities at war: Paris, London, Berlin, 1914-1919* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 33. See also Roderick Floud and Deirdre N. McCloskey, eds., *The Economic history of Britain since 1700: Volume 2. 1860-1939*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[81] Cf. P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British imperialism : innovation and expansion, 1688-1914* (London; New York: Longman, 1993), esp. Chapter 2 & 4.
[82] P. J. Waller, *Town, city, and nation: England, 1850-1914* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 53 f.

Taken together, nineteenth century London became a metropolis *par excellence* "maybe the only city on earth, the only one in world history, who really deserved the name 'world-city' in the fullest sense of the word," as the Swedish sociologist Gustaf Fredrik Steffen remarked in 1895.[83] Looking at the massive increase of population, her sheer size and economic as well as fiscal power, London can be called not just one but *the* capital of the nineteenth century—though not necessarily in a Benjaminian sense.[84]

Steffen continued, "it is not an empty phrase, but a fact, that all nationalities and all social classes of the world are numerously represented in the capital of the British colonial power. What is significant in this remark is that Steffen links the exceptional position of London not primarily with political or economic power but with the diversity within the city. He continues by comparing the British capital with Paris. While in the latter one meets "representatives of the higher social classes from all parts of Europe and America" it is in London that "each European, American, Asian and African nation is represented in the entire social scale: Indian Rajahs and Indian Pariahs, African kings and freed Negro-Slaves, Chinese mandarins and Chinese sailors, Russian Boyars and haggling Russian Jews ..."[85]

Louis Wirth placed the elements of size and diversity at the centre of his classical Essay 'Urbanism as a Way of Life' that appeared in July 1938 in the *American Journal of Sociology*. After an in-depth analysis of different aspects of urbanism from a multi-disciplinary perspective, Wirth comes up with a working definition of a city: "For sociological purposes a city may be defined as a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals."[86]

Wirth presents his readers with a remarkably positive conception of urbanity. He remarks that that the city has "been the melting-pot of races, people, and cultures, and a most favourable breeding-ground of new biological and cultural hybrids" and

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[83] Gustaf Fredrik Steffen, *In der Fünfmillionen-Stadt : Kulturbilder aus dem heutigen England : Verkürzte Textausgabe des illustrierten Werkes "Aus dem modernen England" 1895. Aus dem Schwedischen übersetzt von Dr. Osker Reyher* (Leipzig: Peter Hobbing, 1895), 2.
[84] Among the numerous books investigating London's trajectory in becoming a world city only a few should be named here. Roy Porter, *London, a social history* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), Tristram Hunt, *Building Jerusalem: The Rise and Fall of the Victorian City* (London: Phoenix, 2005), Stephen Inwood, *City of cities : the birth of modern London* (London: Macmillan, 2005), Jerry White, *London in the twentieth century: a city and its people* (London: Viking, 2001), Jerry White, *London in the nineteenth century: 'a human awful wonder of God'* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2007).
[85] Gustaf Fredrik Steffen, *In der Fünfmillionen-Stadt* (Leipzig: Peter Hobbing, 1895), 2.
[86] Wirth, Louis. "Urbanism as a Way of Life." *American Journal of Sociology* XLIV: 1 (July, 1938): 1-24; here: 8.

continues that it "not only tolerated but rewarded individual differences". Wirth adds that the city "has brought together people from the ends of the earth *because* they are different and thus useful to one another, rather than because they are homogenous and like-minded."[87] According to Wirth, stressing the importance of urban migration, there are two central aspects of urbanity. First, the idea that within the city space, a new urban type or rather types of people, Wirth's biological and cultural hybrids—a terminology that is not unproblematic—would develop. Wirth's writing on Jewish immigrants gains a new dynamic in conjunction with this prediction, for as Michael Berkowitz has pointed out, Wirth's attitude towards the persistence of patters if ghetto life among Jewish immigrants was a negative one. He believed that especially Jews needed to "radically transform themselves" in order to fully integrate themselves into the new society.[88] This call for transformation can be interpreted as a necessary precondition for Jewish immigrants to join the development of the new metropolitan type.

Although Wirth's blueprint is early twentieth century Chicago and notions such as the melting pot are deeply rooted in the "American ideology", this conception is applicable to late nineteenth century London too, as another section of Hueffer's *Soul of London* shows:

> "Immense without being impressive, tolerant without any permanent preferences, attracting unceasingly specimens of the best of all earthly things without being susceptible of any perceptible improvements, London, perhaps, because of its utter lack of unity, of plan, of the art of feeling, is the final expression of the Present Stage. It owes its being to no one race, to no two, to no three. It is, as it were, the meeting place of all Occidentals and of such of the Easterns as can come [...] into touch with the Western spirit."[89]

Offering an image of London similar to that of Wirth's urban melting pot the modernist author Ford Madox Hueffer too reflected the diverse population as a central feature of urbanity. Hueffer however, goes even beyond Wirth's interpretation that urban space creates new "cultural hybrids". For Hueffer, the diversity of its inhabitants transforms the city.

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[87] Ibid., 10

[88] Michael Berkowitz, "Viewing the Jewish masses: easing (?) and interpreting entry, to the New World," *Zutot* 1 (2001): 152.

[89] Hueffer, *The Soul of London: A Survey of a Modern City*, 13.

Between Shtetl and Empire – London Jewry's quest for identity

One source of the diversity of modern London was her position as capital of the empire as a "contact zone" of people and cultures from around the globe.[90] Largely London indeed owed its exceptionally powerful position to its position as "Heart of the Empire".[91] From London the Empire was administrated, ruled, and shaped. This empire in turn shaped the capital, the empire, as Roy Porter put it, is the "key to the capital".[92]

In recent years, scholars have taken a growing interest in studying the impact of imperial culture in shaping London and its urban landscape.[93] The impact of the Empire on London Jewry however, has only partially been studied to date.[94] This is even more surprising, since the position of London as the capital of the Empire had a powerful impact on her Jews. The imperial narratives and rhetoric deeply shaped fin-de-siècle urban debates. Hence, imperial terminology was employed in describing the conditions of the East End as well as its inhabitants, especially those "oriental aliens", i.e. the Eastern European Jews. Even the Anglo-Jewish establishment at times employed a colonialist rhetoric towards the "uncivilised" newcomers. Additionally, the imperial landscape of London shaped the strategies of Jews to find their places and a common ground in the British metropolis. Especially for the "native" parts of the community, the Empire moreover served as major source of identification and as a means to create a modern metropolitan Jewish identity. The creation and development of various institutions founded by the London-Jewish establishment over the course of the nineteenth century illustrates the interconnectedness of city, country, and empire.

The institution of the London Chief Rabbi was of central importance in this context. Aubrey Newman echoing Cecil Roth has called the Office of the Chief Rabbi "a very

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[90] Cf. for instance the case studies on Indians in Victorian Britain examined in Cf. for instance the case studies on Indians in Victorian Britain examined in Antoinette M. Burton, *At the heart of the Empire: Indians and the colonial encounter in late-Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 1.

[91] At the turn of the century, the trope "Heart of the Empire" became more widely used. Cf. H. O. Arnold-Forster, *Our Great City: or, London the Heart of the Empire* (London; Paris; New York; Melbourne: Cassell and Company, 1900).

[92] Roy Porter, *London, a social history* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 2.

[93] Felix Driver and David Gilbert, "Heart of empire?: Landscape, space and performance in imperial London," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 16 (1998), Felix Driver and David Gilbert, "Imperial cities: overlapping territories, intertwinded histories," in *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*, ed. Felix Driver and David Gilbert (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1999), Felix Driver and David Gilbert, "Capital and Empire: Geographies of Imperial London," *GeoJournal* 51, no. 1-2 (2000), Jonathan Schneer, *London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2001).

[94] David Feldman, "Jews and the British Empire c.1900," *History Workshop Journal*, no. 63 (2007).

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English Institution" arguing that it gradually developed throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century in response as by adapting to changes in English society as a whole.[95] Indeed, one could call it a very imperial institution. References to the London Chief Rabbi as "Chief Priest of all Jews within London, the Provinces and the Dependencies" can be traced back into the early decades of the nineteenth century.[96] Not until the appointment of Nathan Adler to the post in 1844 did the imperial claim of the London Chief Rabbi's really gain momentum. For the first time the claim to imperial leadership was made manifest in 1847 when Adler issued a booklet containing regulations for the arrangement of services for all the Synagogues in the British Empire. According to these *Laws and Regulations,* the London Chief Rabbi claimed the duty of superintending all Synagogues around the Empire, as far as religious observance was concerned. Moreover, the erection of any new Synagogue in any part of the Empire required the London Chief Rabbi's sanction, as did the formation of any new Congregation.[97] The claim Nathan M. Adler put forward in this circular was a cornerstone of the perpetual claims of hegemony over provincial and colonial congregations by the London Jewish establishment throughout the following decades. The second half of the nineteenth century saw the establishment of a network of institutions including the Office of the Chief Rabbi by London's Jewish elite. This network now only served a centralising purpose of the local metropolitan community but emphasising the claim of the urban leadership over provincial and colonial congregations.[98]

The first of these institutions was the Board of Deputies of British Jews, which evolved gradually out of a local eighteenth-century institution, and by the late Victorian period became recognised as the unofficial representative of British Jewry

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[95] Aubrey N. Newman, "The Office of Chief Rabbi: A Very English Institution," in *Religious Change in Europe, 1650-1914: Essays for John McManners,* ed. Nigel Aston (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997). Roth had called it "a typically English institution". Cecil Roth, "The Chief Rabbinate of England," in *Essays in Honour of the Very Rev. Dr. J. H. Hertz Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Empire: On the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday, September 25, 1942 (5703),* ed. I. Epstein, E. Levine, and Cecil Roth (London: Edward Goldston, 1942), 384.

[96] Hyman A. Simons, *Forty Years a Chief Rabbi: The Life and Times of Solomon Hirschell* (London: Robson Books, 1980), 110. Cecil Roth, "The Chief Rabbinate of England," in *Essays In honour of the Very Rev. Dr. J. H. Hertz,* ed. I. Epstein, E. Levine, and Cecil Roth (London: Edward Goldston, 1942), 381.

[97] Nathan Marcus Adler, *Laws and Regulations for all the Synagogues* ק"ק אשכנזים in the British *Empire* (London: 1847).

[98] The Chief Rabbi was one of the driving forces behind this. When Nathan Marcus Adler arrived in Britain, British Jewry was prospering economically but simultaneously facing serious internal divisions and tension. Disunity seemed a real threat, as the Reform secession of 1840 under Hirschell as Chief Rabbi had proven this. Cf. Eugene C. Black, "The Anglicization of Orthodoxy: the Adlers, Father and Son," in *From East and West: Jews in a Changing Europe, 1750-1870,* ed. Frances Malino and David Sorkin (Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 298.

by successive governments. The London based Board, very much like the Chief Rabbi claimed to speak for the Jews of the metropolis as well as for those of the entire Empire. I was not until the presidency of Moses Montefiore that the Board indeed achieved recognition by overseas Jewish communities.[99] The Board's position was closely linked to that of the Chief Rabbinate, becoming the lay counterpart to the Chief Rabbi's spiritual leadership.[100] The simultaneity of overseas, national and local activities by the Board of Deputies is symptomatic. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the Board was active in the struggle for political emancipation, the protection of persecuted Jewish communities overseas and after 1881 in the Eastern European Jewish immigrants' relief work in London.[101]

Yet another Anglo-Jewish institution had made the philanthropic quest its central concern. In 1859, the Jewish Board of Guardians was added to the list of Ashkenazic Anglo-Jewish institution. Established to replace the haphazard alms-giving of London synagogues and charities with systematised philanthropy it was to play an important role in the challenges Anglo-Jewry faced with the mass migration of co-religionist beginning in the 1880s.[102]

Two additional London based institutions were founded in rapid succession. First the United Synagogue that came into existence in 1870, incorporating the three traditional Ashkenazic synagogues in the City—the Great, Hambro and New—and the Bayswater and Central Synagogue which were located further west in London. The creation of the United Synagogue was largely the result of financial and administrative considerations. Already by 1860, a westward flow of London's Jewish population away from the traditional Jewish area of settlement east of the City had started. Thus, many of the members of the three City Synagogues, clustered together in Duke's Place, Fenchurch Street and Great St. Helen's, no longer lived within walking distance of their place of worship.[103]

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[99] Aubrey N. Newman, *The Board of Deputies of British Jews, 1760-1985: A Brief Survey* (London; Totowa, NJ: Vallentine Mitchell, 1987).

[100] Newman, "The Office of Chief Rabbi: A Very English Institution," 303.

[101] Charles Herbert Lewis Emanuel, ed., *A Century and a Half of Jewish History: Extracted from the Minute Book of the London Committee of Deputies of the British Jews. By Charles H. L. Emanuel, M.A. Solicitor and Secretary of the London Committee of Deputies if the British Jews* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1910), 114 ff.

[102] Cf. Vivian D. Lipman, *A Century of Social Service, 1859-1959: The Jewish Board of Guardians* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954), Laurie Magnus, *The Jewish Board of Guardians and the Men who Made it, 1859-1909: An Illustrated Record* (London: The Jewish Board of Guardians, 1909).

[103] Vivian D. Lipman, *Social history of the Jews in England 1850-1950* (London: Watts & Co., 1954), 58.

The youngest of the institutions was founded a year after the establishment of the United Synagogue. At a public meeting held in London on 2 July 1871 the Anglo-Jewish Association was formally constituted. The new institution was modelled according to the Alliance Israelite Universelle. Similar to other metropolitan Anglo-Jewish institutions the Anglo-Jewish Association too saw the entire Empire as realm of its activities. By 1900, the Association not only had 21 branches in the United Kingdom but also 14 across the colonies and one in India. In an article on the Association for the *Jewish Encyclopedia,* its secretary M. Duparc declared that it "forms a powerful link between the Jews in all parts of the British dominions, for there is no other Jewish body in the United Kingdom with such extensive ramifications."[104] While the Board of Guardians and the United Synagogue were predominantly metropolitan institutions the Anglo-Jewish Association, the Chief Rabbinate, and the Board of Deputies claimed to speak and act for Jews around Britain and throughout the Empire.[105]

For Todd Endelman, these communal institutions "determined the tenor and the agenda of the public side of Jewish life in London" and it can be added that they shaped the internal structure of London Jewry as well as that of Jewish congregations from Sydney to Cape Town.[106] Moreover, the creation of these institutions highlights the centrality of the empire in the London Jewish identity. The London Jewish establishment saw itself as the natural leader of the Empire's Jewries. One might argue that the creation of this unique institutional network was only made possible by particular setting of London, with its intersecting elements of the local, the national, and the imperial. London's position as heart of Empire thus found its reflection in the claims of the capital's Jewish leadership to represent and act on behalf of all Jewish communities across the Empire. While London Jewry was eager to shape Jewish communal organisation and performance the Empire deeply shaped London Jewry in various ways.

However, in the wake of Eastern European Jewish mass migration towards the west this strain of imperial Jewish identity was soon challenged. Yet it was in the context of the growing diversification of Anglo-Jewry in general and London Jewry in particular caused by the newcomers from Eastern Europe that the Empire rhetorically

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[104] *Jewish Encyclopedia,* vol. 1: 601.
[105] On the importance of the imperial context for Anglo-Jewish institutions cf. David Feldman, "Jews and the British Empire c.1900," *History Workshop Journal,* no. 63 (2007).
[106] Todd M. Endelman, "Communal Solidarity among the Jewish Elite of Victorian London," *Victorian Studies* 28, no. 3 (1985): 495.

gained new prominence. Rather than embracing the unfolding diversification of London Jewry, the Eastern European brethren were rather regarded colonial subjects in need of civilisation.

Around the turn of the century, imperial elements increasingly came to dominate the urban debates in Britain. For social imperialists such as the founder of the Salvation Army William Booth, the city was a problem and the empire was part of the solution. In his view, the 'way out' of moral and social decay in the metropolis lay ultimately in colonial emigration. To others, however, the empire—or at least imperialism as a popular sentiment—was actually part of the problem. Schneer, analysing the so-called Khaki elections of 1901 in the midst of the Boer War, has shown to what extent these sentiments manifested themselves in London politics. This was the context for Charles Masterman and some of his friends from Cambridge to publish *The Heart of Empire* in 1901.[107] For them London's status as imperial city was rather a cause for concern than a potential solution to the looming crisis. Masterman, writing about the London slums, for instance, presents the growth *of* popular imperialism as demoralising force, appealing to the most "primitive" instincts of the urban masses. In the following year, Masterman anonymously published another collection of essays on the bleak conditions he had investigated in the slums of southeast London.[108]

The City with its worldwide pre-eminence as the greatest commercial and financial centre not only was a hub of imperial economy shaping markets and industries around the globe, but it also "defined the imperial metropolis".[110] Thus, Schneer continues, "City views of empire and the empire's impact upon City views were intertwined."[111] Furthermore, the "imperial theme" was also pervasive in London's popular entertainments, her theatres, music halls, museums, exhibitions or zoos. The interconnectedness of metropolis and colony result in the creation of what Edward Said has called "overlapping territories" and "intertwined histories"[112] adding

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[107] C. F. G. Masterman, ed., *The Heart of the Empire: Discussions of Problem of Modern City Life in England.* Edited with an introduction by Bentley B. Gilbert ed. (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1973).
[108] Charles F. G. Masterman, *From the abyss, of its inhabitants; by one of them* (London: Dent, 1902). For biographical details on Masterman cf. Eric Hopkins, *Charles Masterman (1873-1927), politician and journalist : the splendid failure* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999).
[109] Jonathan Schneer, *London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2001), 12-13.
[110] Schneer, *London 1900*, 70.
[111] Ibid., 82.
[112] Edward W. Said, *Culture and imperialism* (New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House, 1993), 19. Cf. also the Introduction in Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1997).

a special dynamic to the diversification of modern London. The Empire hence broke down spatial categories, brought detached places into contact, shaping both imperial and metropolitan terrains alike. If the empire shaped the city, it also shaped her inhabitants. Londoners around 1900 were subjected "to a continual barrage of patriotic and imperialistic propaganda."[113] This ubiquity of the Empire in the capital city so often embraced by London Jewish leaders at times took chauvinistic and anti-Semitic paths. This development became particularly apparent in the context of the second Boer War (1899–1902).[114] Clair Hirshfield goes as far as to claim that the "intrusion of a Jewish question in British public life" was one of the "domestic by-products" of the war.[115] A striking example for such a standpoint is the writings of the economist John Atkinson Hobson. In 1899, he went to the Cape as war correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*. His coverage of the Second Boer War contained a number of open anti-Semitic attacks. In his book *The War in South Africa* Hobson not only warned of the growing Jewish influence in South Africa but blamed "a small group of international financiers, chiefly German in origin and Jewish in race " of having evoked the war.[116] Hobson was among several writers revitalising the stereotype of the Jews profiteering from imperialism. Another even more bluntly example of intertwining the Empire and anti-Semitic stereotypes is Arnold White's *Efficiency and Empire* that appeared in the following year.[117] Among his numerous anti-Semitic attacks in the book, White proclaimed that the "influence of bad foreign Jews" was a "real danger to the Empire"[118] These few examples indicate yet another aspect of the interconnectedness between London Jewry and the Empire—the anti-Jewish instrumentalisation of the pro- as well as anti-imperial arguments. The Empire thus shaped London and its Jewish community in numerous ways. Jews became both subjects and active participants in the imperial urban narrative of Victorian and

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[113] Ibid., 106.

[114] Cf. Susanne Terwey, *Moderner Antisemitismus in Großbritannien, 1899 - 1919 : über die Funktion von Vorurteilen sowie Einwanderung und nationale Identität* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), especially chapter 1.

[115] Claire Hirshfield, "The Anglo-Boer War and the Issue of Jewish Culpability," *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, no. 4 (1980): 619.

[116] J. A. Hobson, *The war in South Africa : its causes and effects* (London: J. Nisbet, 1900), 189. Even in his *magum opus* published two year later Hobson continued to express his anti-Jewish sentiments when he asks if anyone could "seriously suppose that a great war could be undertaken by any European state [...] if the House of Rothschild and its connections set their face against it?" John A. Hobson, *Imperialism: a study* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1902), 64. On Hobson and his writings cf. P. J. Cain, *Hobson and imperialism : radicalism, new liberalism, and finance 1887-1938* (Oxford: Oxford Uuniversity Press, 2002). Unfortunately, Cain's account falls short when it comes to an indepth analysis of Hobson's anti-Semitic tendencies.

[117] Arnold White, *Efficiency and Empire* (London: Methuen & co., 1901).

[118] Ibid., 80.

Edwardian London. Most importantly maybe, the Empire came to become a major source of identification for and an element of the local identity of parts of London's Jewry.

A London-Jewish Jubilee Project

An event dating from 1887 highlights this juxtaposition and fusion of imperial, national and local aspects as part of an attempt to develop an identity framework suitable for modern Jews in London. When the year 1887 and with it the fiftieth anniversary of the ascension of Queen Victoria to the throne drew nearer, numerous festivities were planned to celebrate this event—at London and around the globe.

Anglo-Jewry did not want to stay aside and aimed for taking part in these celebrations. In 1886, numerous editorials, articles, and letters to the Editor appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle*.[119] Many of them were calling for a special Anglo-Jewish contribution as part of the Golden Jubilee festivities. As the occasion drew nearer a particular project was favoured more and more to serve as Anglo-Jewry's considerable contribution to the celebration of Queen Victoria's Jubilee: an exhibition. Isidore Spielman came up with the idea to organise such an exhibition in London. After he had convinced the young journalist Lucien Wolf and the Sephardic Jew Alvarez Newman that such a plan would lead the way to realise their idea of forming an Anglo-Jewish historical society to support the study of "British-Jewish history" and the group was joint by the young Cambridge graduate Joseph Jacobs, Spielman presented his idea to a broader Anglo-Jewish public. In an open letter that appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* on 23 April 1886 he outlined his idea to gather not only "records of Jewish history" in England but also "objects employed in Synagogue service and in religious ceremonies, as well as antiquities and other curiosities" and put them on display in London.[120]

The idea of this Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition or "Anglo-Jewish Archæological Exhibition" as Spielman originally termed it, did not originate in the discussion around the jubilee but rather in context of attempts to preserve Anglo-Jewish heritage. Most importantly it was the fight for the preservation of the Bevis Marks Synagogue—both Wolf and Alvarez had played a central role in the Anti-Demolition League that had been formed earlier in 1886 to counter the decision by the Yehidim of the Spanish

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[119] The introduction of the subsection "Foreign and Colonial News" by the *Jewish Chronicle* towards the end of 1886 can also be interpreted as response to a broadening imperial perspective.
[120] *JC*, 23 April 1886.

and Portuguese Congregation to tear down the Synagogue and build a bigger building elsewhere.

The plan for an exhibition envisioned and outlined by this group of young Jewish intellectuals was soon supported by a number of representatives from the leading metropolitan Jewish families. Especially the Delegated Chief Rabbi Herman Adler took a vivid interest in the preparation of the exhibition and it was in his office where much of the correspondence concerning offered exhibits converged.[121]

Yet it was not merely the support of the leading families of London Jewry as well as communal representatives such as the Chief Rabbi or Philip Ornstein, who was elected secretary of the United Synagogue that same year, that led to the term "'coronation' of the 'Cousinhood'" for the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition appear quite appropriate.[122] One of the most visible examples for the attempt to display the success story of Anglo-Jewry was a gallery of "portraits of communal celebrities."[123] On the whole, as has been argued repeatedly, the exhibition was an attempt to display Anglo-Jewish history as an integral part of English history by pointing to the contributions Jews had made to British society and portraying them as loyal and patriotic citizens. Thereby if attempted to embed Jewishness into the discourse, or, to borrow an expression from David Cesarani, the taxonomy of Englishness.[124] The London exhibition fostered this "construction of an Anglo-Jewish heritage" in numerous ways. Promoting the idea that having achieved political emancipation the *Jews in England* ought to continue aiming for becoming *Jewish Englishmen* was central to the master narrative put forward by the exhibition.[125]

Nevertheless, to draw the conclusion that the entire exhibition focused around the attempt of integrating Jewishness into Englishness would be misleading. Rather than following a single concise political agenda or strategy, displaying just one particular historical narrative the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition as a whole appeared very

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[121] Cf. correspondence between organisers of the exhibition and Hermann Adler, LMA: ACC/2805/02/01/098-099.

[122] Peter Stansky, "Anglo-Jew or English/ British?: Some Dilemmas of Anglo-Jewish History," *Jewish Social Studies* 2 (1995): 162.

[123] [Joseph Jacobs and Lucien Wolf], *Catalogue of Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition, 1887. Royal Albert Hall. And of Supplementary Exhibitions Held at the Public Record Office, British Museum, South Kensington Museum.* (London: Printed by William Clowes and Sons, 1887), 7.

[124] David Cesarani, "Dual Heritage or Duel of Heritages?: Englishness and Jewishness in the Heritage Industry," in *The Jewish Heritage in British History. Englishness & Jewishness*, ed. Tony Kushner (London; Portland, OR: F. Cass, 1992), 30.

[125] This materialisation of an "Anglo-Jewish progress show" can be seen as one of the long-lasting effects of the exhibition cf. Stansky, "Anglo-Jew or English/ British?: Some Dilemmas of Anglo-Jewish History."

heterogeneous. By the time of the opening of the exhibition, almost 3,000 objects were assembled under the dome of the Albert Hall.[126] Although the majority of the objects came from British collections donations were brought to London from such different places as Canada, India, Breslau or Vienna.[127] This heterogeneity of objects highlights conflicting constructions of Jewish identity.

The sections "Antiquities" and "Coins and Medals" were formed of different exhibits from the ancient Near East, showing a model of the temple of King Solomon, archaeological relics from excavations in Palestine, ancient Jewish coins, as well as curiosities such as a stone alleged to be from the Tower of Babel.[128] These collections, together with a number of works by medieval Jewish philosophers and religious manuscripts and prints, indicate that despite the attempts to nationalise Jewish history the organisers were well aware of a distinct Jewish context. Thus, the attempt of placing Jewishness within the discourse of Englishness was somehow dismantled and replaced by another set of identity forming elements. In another part of the exhibition highlighted the centrality of the British Empire for Anglo-Jewry and revealed once more the claim of a leading status of London Jewry within the imperial context. In addition to objects send to London by various Indian Jewish communities, other exhibits paid tribute to Jewish history across the British Empire and the former North American colonies. A map showing past and present congregations of the British Empire from the collection of Joseph Jacobs were displayed as well as documents relating to the history of the Jews in the Caribbean Islands. These exhibits however did not form a cohered subsection on colonial Jewish history— objects related to Australian-Jewish history one might have expected since with Joseph Jacobs one of the main organisers had come to England from Sydney – were not represented. Overall, the organisers of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition did not succeed and probably did not even intend to provide a concise concept of exhibiting Jewish history or Jewish histories around the British Empire. Despite this absence, the mentioned artefacts and subsections indicate that the British Empire

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[126] In total there were 2626 (excluding objects shown in three supplementary exhibitions at the Public Record Office, the British Museum and the South Kensington Museum), cf. [Joseph Jacobs and Lucien Wolf], *Catalogue of Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition, 1887. Royal Albert Hall. And of Supplementary Exhibitions held at The Public Record Office, British Museum, South Kensington Museum* (London: Printed by William Clowes and Sons, 1887).

[127] Joseph Jacobs and Lucien Wolf, eds., *Edition de luxe. Catalogue of the Anglo-Jewish historical exhibition, Royal Albert Hall, London 1887. Compiled by Joseph Jacobs and Lucien Wolf. Illustrations by Frank Haes* (London: F. Haes, 1888), xiii-xxi (List of Exhibitors).

[128] The incorporation of the section "Antiquities" was the result of the co-operation between the organisers and the Palestine Excavation Fund.

constituted an inbuilt aspect to the self-understanding of the group of London Jews organising and realising the exhibition at Kensington.

The Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition was a London exhibition in many respects. Not only the fact that it was on display in the British capital, choosing a side that underlined the Jewish commitment to Britain and its royal family, or that large parts of the show dealt with London Jewish history and the majority of objects were assembled from London collections bear witness to this. Looking at this exhibition we are presented with a metropolitan Jewish community—the group of organisers and supporters of the exhibition saw themselves as representatives of what they considered London Jewry if not even Anglo-Jewry as a whole—in search of an identity as English Jews, Jewish Englishmen and Londoners. In this attempt, they derived identity-forming elements form a number of different sometimes conflicting contexts, namely Anglo-Jewish history, Judaism and the history of the Jewish people and the Empire.

To what extent the latter had become a central element in the identity-formation of English Jews can be illustrated once again through another article from the *Jewish Chronicle* that appeared shortly before the official celebrations of the Jubilee. Although the frame of reference of this article was the jubilee in general, the example of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition fits into the given picture. The author argues that the jubilee project became a work of "Imperial importance" and that therefore England's Jews were to take their "rightful share in the great work, which is now being done to bind the whole Empire into a closer and firmer unity". This in itself is not surprising. Yet the text continues to argue that the Jubilee also provides an opportunity "to achieve communion between the Jews of Great Britain and those of Greater Britain", emphasising "that no degree of spatial separation can weaken the link that binds Jew and Jew" and that "a fitting mode of connection all Her Majesty's Jewish subjects with a real bond of union seems a not inappropriate Jubilee Memorial."[129]

In Search of Communal Unity

As the example of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition shows, late nineteenth century London Jews were eager to overcome internal divisions—such as the slit between Ashkenazim and Sephardim—and create a homogeneous community. The

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[129] *JC*, 18 March 1887.

trans-denominational cooperation had already played an important part in events leading to the 1887 show at the Albert Hall. The year 1886 saw the appearance of a cross-denominational grass-root movement. After decades of financial crisis the ruling body of the Sephardic Bevis Marks Synagogue, the Mahamad, decided to demolish the synagogue building and sell the property in order to erect a new building elsewhere, closer to its members.[130]

It was a group young Anglo-Jewish men, both of Ashkenazic origin, such as Leopold J. Greenberg and Lucien Wolf and of Sephardic descent, such as Haim Guedalla, Abraham Anidjar Romain and Alfred Alvarez Newman, who organised protest against the scheme by forming the Bevis Marks Anti-Demolition League. Through the work of the league, the question of the future of Bevis Marks gained widespread attention. After the *Jewish Chronicle* had published the accounts of the Synagogue and the details of the scheme for its demolition the editor received numerous letters.[131] Moreover, the Anti-Demolition League issued leaflets calling for support[132] and in February 1886 it petitioned the Mahamad to reconsider the demolition of the building "forming as it does the monument of Anglo-Judaic liberation, associated as it is so intimately with the return of Jews to this happy land, where from the day that your renowned ancestor." "[T]he demolition of such a building," the petition went on, "would be an irreparable loss to the Jewish Community at large."[133]

Throughout March and April 1886, supporters and opponents discussed the scheme in the meetings of the Yehidim, the subscribed synagogue members. Numerous resolutions—some more in favour others against the realisation of the scheme—were passed without reaching a consensus in the matter.[134] Time subsequently played for the anti-demolitionists. It was the joint efforts of Ashkenazim and Sephardim to protest and lobby against the scheme that led to its postponement and subsequent surrender.[135]

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[130] The proposed sale of the synagogue dates back to 1883 when the ruling body of the congregation presented a scheme to the Elder of the Congregation who remitted it to a committee for further discussion. *JC*, 3 February 1883. On 2 March 1883, the Jewish Chronicle published the balance sheet of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Synagogues together with the scheme of the Mahamad. On the financial crisis of the community cf. Hyamson, *The Sephardim of England*.

[131] *JC*, 5 February 1886; 12 February 1886; 19 February 1866.

[132] Lucien Wolf, "Origin of the Jewish Historical Society of England: (Presidential Address, delivered before the Society on January 15, 1912)," *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* VII (1915): 212.

[133] Quoted after Hyamson, *The Sephardim of England*, 374.

[134] *JC*, 2 and 9 March 1886.

[135] 1891 saw a new attempt to revive the scheme for demolition but like the previous one it was soon to be abandoned. *JC*, 6 March, 1891.

While the London Jewish establishment was preoccupied with establishing further bonds between the two major denominations, Anglo-Jewry was to face an even greater challenge to the sense of community. The 1880s saw an unprecedented wave of Jewish immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe towards "the West". London became one of the prime destinations of these immigrants.[136] Coming to the new country the mass migration from the Pale of Settlement became an urban phenomenon. Like earlier waves of Jewish immigrants, the newcomers settled almost exclusively in urban centres. Besides Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Glasgow or Leeds, it was London and primarily in its East End that the Jewish immigrants settled. About 60 to 70 percept of all Jewish immigrants coming to Britain settled in the Eastern boroughs of the metropolis.[137]

Considering these attempts forming a ground for a unified London Jewish community it comes as a surprise that "native" London Jews initially showed little attempts to incorporate these East European newcomers into their quest.

It has been argued that the arrival of tens of thousands of Jewish immigrants from continental Europe led to the formation of two antagonistic camps within Anglo- and in particular London Jewry: the native community, ruled by a few "cousinhood" families and the traditionalist, orthodox immigrants.[138]

Some scholars have argued that English Jews feared that the "outside world is not capable of making minute discrimination between Jew and Jew", as the *Jewish Chronicle* put, and that the image of the foreign un-acculturated Eastern European Jews would become the image of Anglo-Jewry as a whole.[139] Indeed, initial responses to mass immigration by the Anglo-Jewish establishment were overwhelmingly reticent, to say the least.

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[136] London became a prime destination of transmigrants on their way to America due to the fact that ship fares via Britain were much cheaper than direct passages. A large number of these trans-migrants, however, stayed in Britain. Cf. Lloyd P. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1960).

[137] Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2002), 129.

[138] For a contextualisation of the term "cousinhood" cf. Chaim Bermant, *The Cousinhood : the Anglo-Jewish gentry* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1971). Others have stressed the division within the Anglo-Jewish cousinhood. Cf. Daniel Gutwein, *The Divided Elite: Economics, Politics, and Anglo-Jewry, 1882-1917* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1992). Fishman and others have shown that the image of the Eastern European Jewish immigrants as an overwhelmingly religiously observant group is oversimplifying. For many Jewish newcomers class consciousness war far more important than religious affiliation. William J. Fishman, *East End Jewish radicals, 1875-1914* (London: Duckworth, in association with the Acton Society Trust, 1975).

[139] The quote is taken from *JC*, 13 March 1896. The fear of rising Anti-Semitism through Jewish immigration as been pointed out inter alia by Todd M. Endelman, "Native Jews and Foreign Jews in London, 1870-1914," in *The Legacy of Jewish Migration: 1881 and Its Impact*, ed. David Berger (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1983).

Throughout the early years of Jewish mass immigration to Britain, two major strains of response by the Anglo-Jewish establishment towards immigration can be identified, countering immigration and attempting to dissolve the sources of migration. Communal leader were eager to regulate the flow of foreign Jews, either by discouraging it in the first place, by repatriating those who became a financial burden, or by promoting transmigration to countries better suited in their view to receive immigrants, like the United States, Canada, South Africa, and Argentina.[140] Towards the end of 1888, Chief Rabbi Nathan Adler issued a circular letter to his East European colleagues urging, "kindly to preach in the synagogue and house of study, to publicize the evil, which is befalling our brethren who have come here, and to warn them not to come to the land of Britain for such ascent is a descent."

In drastic images, Adler portrayed what the "unfortunates who have come here to seek rest, "had to face upon there arrival in London: poverty, overwork, irreligion, and the snares of missionaries." "It is impossible," Alder continued, "for one city cannot support all the refugees of other countries, besides the poor who already reside in it. There are many who believe that all the cobblestones of London are precious stones, and that it is the place of gold. Woe and alas, it is not so."[141]

Adler's attempts to discourage immigration were no isolated case. Two years previous, the Jewish Board of Guardians had sent out warnings to the major Hebrew newspapers in the Russian empire, warning Jews not to come to England.[142]

Prior to these deliberate attempts to discourage immigrants to come to Britain, the London Jewish establishment engaged into protests against Russian atrocities, believing that immigration would decline if the Russian authorities ceased to persecute Jews and to that end publicised and protested conditions there, urging British officials to pressure the tsarist government.[143]

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[140] The policy of emigration gained large coverage in the Anglo-Jewish press. Intense debates on Emigration as a means to counter Jewish pauperisation predated the period of mass migration (cf. e.g. *Jewish Record*, January-March 1870).

[141] Quoted after Lloyd P. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1960), 24.

[142] A number of these warnings can be found in various numbers of *HaMeliz* and *HaMagid* throughout the 1880s. Gartner gives extensive references to many of them. Ibid., 25.

[143] The launch of a press campaign in 1882 to call attention to the situation of Jews in Russia is one example for this. Especially the series of articles entitled "The Persecution of the Jews in Russia", written by Joseph Jacobs are to be mentioned here (*The Times*, 9, 11 and 13 January 1882). In the wake of events, the Russo-Jewish committee was formed and a supplement to the *Jewish Chronicle* "In Darkest Russia", compiled by this committee, was published regularly. Furthermore, Anglo-Jewish notables such as the eminent Moses Montefiore engaged in diplomatic mission on behalf of the persecuted Russian brethren.

Early in 1882, in the heart of the City of London, at the Lord Mayor's residence in Mansion House, a great public meeting—supported by, among others, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Manning, Charles Darwin, Matthew Arnold, Lord Tennyson and Lord Shaftsbury—was held to protest against anti-Jewish atrocities in Russia. The Mansion House Relief Fund established as a result of the meeting raised more than £100,000 to assist Jewish refugees.[144] Furthermore, a new European network of Jewish agencies trying to handle migration and to process the immigrants, including the Alliance Israélite Universelle, Paris, the Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden, Berlin, the Hebrew Emigration Aid Society, New York, the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien and the London based Anglo-Jewish Association came into being. In December 1890 a second meeting similar to the previous one at Mansion House, was held at London Guildhall.[145] Another outcome of these meetings was the foundation of the Mansion House Committee that was reorganised and renamed in 1891 as the Russo-Jewish Committee.

In the wake of the broad support for the persecuted Russian Jews, the Board of Guardians even suspended its six months' residence rule that was intended to discourage immigration, as a charitable gesture of strictly limited duration in 1882.[146] Despite such gestures of sympathy for the fate of East European Jews, the initial response to immigration by the native Jewish establishment remained one of distance and indifference.[147]

It soon became apparent that despite all attempts to minimise the influx of immigrants to Britain, the native community had to face its challenge at home, especially in London. Throughout the following decades, major shifts in the attitudes towards the new part of the Anglo-Jewish community took place, a community that in the wake of mass immigration underwent both demographically and culturally

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[144] *JC,* 3 Febuary, 1882, supplement; 27 October. Council of Anglo-Jewish Association, *Outrages upon the Jews in Russia : report of the public meeting at the Mansion House, on Wednesday, February 1st, 1882 : with an appendix, containing lists of towns where similar meetings were held, together with a letter addressed to the Chief Rabbi, by the graduates of Oxford University* (London: Council of the Anglo-Jewish Association, 1882).

[145] Russo-Jewish Committee, *The persecution of the Jews in Russia : with appendix containing a summary of special and restrictive laws, also a map of Russia, showing the Pale of Jewish Settlement, a letter reprinted from "The Times" of 5th November, 1890, a report of the Guildhall Meeting held on 10th December, 1890, and the text of the Memorial to the Czar, with its accompanying letter from the Lord Mayor* (London: Wertheimer, 1891).

[146] *JC,* 17 February 1882, 14

[147] The continuous repatriation policy of the Jewish Board of Guardians is an indicator for this. Cf. Vivian D. Lipman, *A Century of Social Service, 1859-1959: The Jewish Board of Guardians* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954), 94, Eugene C. Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880-1920* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 93, Endelman, *The Jews of Britain,* 172.

dramatic changes. East European Migration made Anglo-Jewry an even more urbanised community leading to new forms of Jewish urban visibility and an expanding of Jewish cultures in London.

Walks in a foreign country – the exploration and creation of the Jewish East End

From the beginning of the 1880s well until the first decades of the new century, intense debates around urban questions set off in Britain. Throughout these debates, also question concerning Jewish city life in general and London Jewish life in particular were taken into consideration. Andrew Lees has rightly observed that throughout this period the "optimism about the ability of urbanites to surmount their various problems had been in the ascendant" giving way to "a reawakening of concern over the condition of the urban lower classes" and the articulation of a "heightened awareness of poverty in the midst of plenty" by contemporaries.[148] As for Britain, this shift in perception took place during the 1880s and 90s. For most observers, among them many outside commentators[149], London became the symbol of urban decline. The debate surrounding urban problems such as pauperism, overcrowding and housing-shortage, immorality, or crime were not entirely new but had been treated repeatedly throughout the earlier decades of the nineteenth century.[150] Authors like Charles Dickens depicted poverty in their literary works. On the political level, too the early nineteenth century had seen major debates around poverty leading subsequently to the passing of the Poor Law.[151] Also in the field of

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[148] Andrew Lees, *Cities Perceived: Urban Society in European and American Thought, 1820-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 106.

[149] Several German authors payed attention to the developments of the London East End. Some of them even came to London to explore the conditions in the East End themselves. Among these foreign explorers trying to examine the capitalist influences on society in London representatives of the political left are especially prominent. Cf. Paul Fischer, *Das Ostende von London: Ein soziales Nachtbild*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Verlag der Expedition des "Vorwärts" Berliner Volksblatt/ Verlag der "Berliner Arbeiter-Bibliothek", 1893/ 1895). Eduard Bernstein, "Einige Bemerkungen über die Jüdische Einwanderung in England," in *Jüdische Statistik*, ed. Verein für Jüdische Statistik and Alfred Nossig (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1903).

[150] The works of Henry Mayhew or the visual depictions of destitution in London slums by Gustave Doré are examples for this. Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor; a Cyclopædia of the Condition and Earnings of those That Will Work, Those That Cannot Work, and Those That will not Work*, vol. 4 (London: Griffin, Bohn, and Company, 1861-62), Blanchard Jerrold and Gustave Doré, *London: a pilgrimage* (London: Harper and Brothers, 1890 [1872]).

[151] On these early debates around poverty cf. *Poverty in the Victorian age; debates on the issue from 19th century critical journals*, 4 vols. (Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers, 1973), especially vol. 1: English poor laws, 1807-33 and vol. 2: English poor laws, 34-70, David Englander, *Poverty and Poor Law Reform in Britain: From Chadwick to Booth, 1834-1914* (London ; New York: Addison

social investigation, contemporaries in the late nineteenth century could already look back onto a long tradition.[152] Despite these earlier developments, the debates of the 1880s and 90s were new in many respects. The latter were different both in intensity and their widespread mediation and thus in their influence on late Victorian society.[153]

More importantly, it was the centrality of the urban in general and London in particular that distinguished these debates from previous ones. Moreover, the question of urban social divides seemed to have gained urgency. A series of riots sparked fears of social unrest.[154]

Several months after the journalist George R. Sims had published a series of disturbing articles on 'How the Poor Live' in June of 1883[155], a short pamphlet bearing the title *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* marked the real opening of the new phase of public interest in urban poverty. Written by Andrew Mearns, it gained huge publicity through the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* W. T. Stead who published a number of editorials, referring to the *Bitter Cry*. For several years thereafter, a flood of pamphlets and articles on the London poor inundated the reading public.[156]

The new debate surrounding urban problems was not limited to the arena of journalist. Soon notable politicians such as Lord Salisbury or Chamberlain contributed their views on problems such as the housing crisis and outlined their opinion on how they should be solved; the latter in the *Fortnightly Review* the earlier in articles for the *National Review*. Furthermore, the late 1880s saw a number of

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Wesley Longman, 1998), Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Idea of Poverty: England in the Early Industrial Age* (New York: Knopf, 1984).

[152] One of the earliest examples of social investigation is arguably Defoe's *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* that was published between 1724 and 1727. Especially since the mid-nineteenth century a growing number of investigations into social aspects were conducted, such as Frederick Engel's *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (written in1845) or Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* (4 vols. 1861-2).

[153] On the differences between earlier and late nineteenth century urban debates in Britain see Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Hogarth, 1985), 221 ff.

[154] On the fear of middle-class Victorian Londoner's see the excellent study by Judith Walkowitz. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*. Besides its achievement of revealing the highly gendered nature of these urban fears, Walkowitz extends Louis Chevalier's concept of the dangerous classes onto London. Cf. Louis Chevalier, *Classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses à Paris pendant la première moitié du XIXe siècle* ([Paris]: Plon, 1958).

[155] The articles appeared throughout June 1883 in the *Pictorial World* and were published as a collection shortly thereafter. George Robert Sims, *How the Poor Live: With Sixty Illustrations by Frederick Barnard* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1883). On Sims see Keith Wilson, "Surveying Victorian and Edwardian Londoners: George R. Sims' Living London " in *A mighty mass of brick and smoke : Victorian and Edwardian representations of London*, ed. Lawrence Phillips (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007).

[156] Some of the central texts of this early debate have been compiled in Anthony Stephen Wohl, ed., *Andrew Mearns: The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* (Leicester; London; New York: Leicester University Press, 1970).

official investigations into the matter. Not only did the Board of Trade under the Board's Labour Correspondent John Burnett submit its report "on the Sweating System at the East End of London" to Parliament,[157] but both Houses of Parliament set up special committees to assemble evidence about the conditions of the poor, especially among the immigrant population and the effect of immigration on these conditions respectively.[158] Moreover, working-class life in London provided the basic subject matter for literary engagements by such different figures such as Walter Besant[159], Israel Zangwill[160] and Arthur Morrison[161].

In December 1883, the *Illustrated London News*, summed up the debate that evolved some months earlier by commenting that "recent revelations as to the misery of the abject poor have profoundly touched the heart of the nation [...] probably there never was a time when the desire to alleviate their wretchedness was so widespread".[162] Already in its early stages, the new debates reverberated also within the Jewish community. Hermann Adler, then Delegate Chief Rabbi, gave Mearns's pamphlet prominence in a sermon he preached at the Bayswater Synagogue on 17 November 1883. Addressing the "sickening immorality in which masses of the London poor were doomed to live" Adler too simulated Mearns's sensational language in his sermon. He referred to the houses of the poor in East London as their "graves and tombs." For Adler there was not only a bitter cry of London but also one of Jewish Londoners. Rather than merely describing the bleak and wretched situation of the Jewish poor, Adler tried to suggest ways and means to counter the situation. In particular, he mentioned the existing "system of home visitation which was being organised by warm-hearted lady members of the community." More though had to be done and the scope of aid for the foreign brethren should not be limited to institutions providing spiritual support for the Jewish pauper. Thus, Adler calls his audience to seize the opportunity of the centenary of Sir Moses Montefiore to set up a fund

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[157] *Report of the Board of Trade, on the Sweating System at the East End of London by the Labour Correspondent of the Board [John Burnett]*, Parliamentary Papers, 1887, LXXXIX.

[158] While the House of Commons set up a Selected Committee on Emigration and Immigration (First Report, 27 July 1888, Parliamentary Papers 1888, XI followed by a second report a year later, Parliamentary Papers 1889, X) and House of Lords set up Selected Committee on the Sweating System that worked between 1888 and 1890 (Parliamentary Papers, 1888, XX and XXI; 1889, XIII and XV and 1890, XVII).

[159] Walter Besant, *All Sorts and Conditions of Men: An Impossible Story* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1884 [1882]).

[160] Israel Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto: Being a Picture of a Peculiar People*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1892).

[161] Arthur Morrison, *A Child of the Jago* (London: Methuen, 1896), Arthur Morrison, *Tales of Mean Streets* (London: Methuen & co., 1894).

[162] *Illustrated London News*, 22 December, 1883, 602 see also *The Lancet*, 29 December 1883, 1143.

honouring his philanthropic activities by providing improved living conditions in the Jewish East End. This fund then should be used to set up "A Free Public Library in the East of London [that] would be an immense boon, shedding sweetness and light upon the lives of the poor toilers," and to provide further "medical charities" for them.[163]

Despite attempts to comprehend the social situation in parts of the capital city in order to develop appropriate ways of improving it, there were more radical voices to be heard. One of these voices was that of journalist Arnold White who in the following years became the most outspoken and ardent activists for a restriction of "alien immigration".

Although the question of Jewish immigrants was not as prominent in *Problem of a Great City* when compared to his later writings, White, like many of his contemporaries, linked the urban with the Jewish question.[164] Furthermore, he clearly puts forward anti-Semitic sentiments, when suggesting, not without sympathy, that *some of the London working class might take violent action against the "alien" Jews* who push out English workers from their dwellings in the East End. "So bitterly is the justice of these charges felt by those suffering from the immigration," White states, "it would not be surprising to witness a *judenhetze* in the heart of London. Temperate is his habits, and with a low standard of comfort, the poor foreigner evades all taxation in England, while he presses heavily on the poorer English in the struggle for existence."[165] Overall, *Problems of a Great City* revealed a social Darwinian analysis of racial degeneration within the urban setting that is taken to a sinister and unedifying solution, that of the "sterilisation of the urban unfit."[166]

Other authors were convinced that the removal of urban pauperism could only be achieved by transcending the problem to the outside of the urban realm. In 1890, General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, influenced by the earlier

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[163] "Dr. Hermann Adler on the Bitter Cry of Outcast London," *Jewish Chronicle*, 23 November 1883.
[164] Among his later works were Arnold Henry White, *The Modern Jew* (London: William Heinemann, 1899).
[165] Arnold White, *The Problems of a Great City* (London: Remington & Co., 1887 [1886]), 143 f.
[166] White, *The Problems of a Great City*, Chapter III. For White the West End was not much better: "The species is being propagated and continued increasingly, though not of course exclusively, from the idle, unthrifty, undersized, and unfit. As luxury and success corrupt the West End, the East is corrupted by want and failure. As in the West there are those who, born to wealth, revelling in wealth, are destitute of the qualities by which wealth is won, or its possession made a blessing to the community: so in the East, those born to poverty, wallowing in misery, are, many of them, devoid of the qualities by which life is sustained in dignity, if not in comfort, and perpetuated by means of a healthy and capable progeny." (p. 29)

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debates and supported by his friend W. T. Stead[167], published his influential pamphlet *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, in which he outlined his proposals for eliminating poverty by means of work colonies in the city, on farms, and overseas. The influence of imperialist ideas however went further than plans for shipping poverty abroad. For Booth, the urban slums in England were an "urban jungle."[168] In an often-quoted passage in the first part of the book, Booth delineated the resemblance between "darkest England" and "darkest Africa" most explicitly:

> "... while brooding over the awful presentation of life as it exists in the vast African forest, it seemed to me only too vivid a picture of many part of our own land. As there is a darkest Africa is there not also a darkest England? Civilisation, which can breed its own barbarians, does it not also breed its own pygmies? May we not find a parallel at our own doors, and discover within a stone's throw of our cathedrals and palaces similar horrors to those [...] in the great Equatorial forest?"

According to Booth, the English slums resembled the African jungle in "its monotonous darkness, its malaria and its gloom, its dwarfish de-humanized inhabitants, the slavery to which they are subjected, their privations and their misery"—they were indeed a dark, foreign country.[169]

This adhering of urban and colonial spaces in Booth's narratives was not exceptional, but as Asa Briggs has shown a common characteristic of late nineteenth century urban writing.[170] Through the urban debates of the 1880s and 1890s, the influence of the Empire on the metropolis and its inhabitants and the entanglement between imperial and urban space gained new momentum. While the Empire was a point of reference and a frame of claims of communal and political influence of London's Jewish elites; the Empire now came home. Not only were London's slums compared with "darkest Africa" as in William Booth's text, the Jewish immigrant and his non-Jewish fellow poor now became objects of the imperial discourse, were regarded to be on one level with colonised people. Throughout the following years—coinciding with growing "anti-alien" sentiments—it was the East End Jews more than any other urban minority that was perceived as foreign element within the metropolis becoming the 'urban Other' par excellence. Thus, urban slum areas were seen as territories that had to be colonised. This intermingling of urban and colonial aspects highlights the ambivalence with which the Anglo-Jewish establishment responded to the Jewish

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[167] Lees, *Cities Perceived: Urban Society in European and American Thought, 1820-1940*, 110.
[168] For a detailed analysis of Booth's text cf. Joseph McLaughlin, *Writing the urban jungle : reading empire in London from Doyle to Eliot* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 79-103.
[169] William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (London: International Headquarters of the Salvation Army, 1890), 11-12.
[170] Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (London; New York: Penguin, 1990), 313-14.

poor. On the one hand, it found praising words for the immigrant's deep attachment to Judaism, on the other it eyed it with suspicion and identifying their "crude and uncivilized religious ideas," their meaningless prayer and their "ceremonial drill" as expressions of low state of culture and civilisation that had to be countered by "anglicisation."[171]

In following Walter Benjamin's observation on the usage of archaic images as a central feature of nineteenth century industrial capitalism, Anne McClintock has developed the concept of "anachronistic space". Through the invention of anachronistic space that reached full authority in the late Victorian era, she argues, the agency of women, the colonised and the industrial working class—and it needs to be added the foreign Jews—were "disavowed and projected onto anachronistic space." Furthermore, the evocation of anachronistic space within the urban realm became central to urban surveillance of the social groups dwelling in these spaces.[172] In part, it was this invention of anachronistic space that was directed to the East End and to its inhabitants, namely its "alien elements".

For most fin-de-siècle commentators on urban decline the East End was at the centre of concern. This focus around the neighbourhoods east of the Tower often went hand in hand with conjunctions of East and West End. The latter described as space of splendours, luxury and decadence the previous as a hotbed of vices, destitution and social horrors. According to Asa Briggs, this opposition between East and West End became *the* "great contrast" of the period.[173] As a result, the East End became as potent a symbol of urban poverty as Manchester had been of industrial conditions at the beginning of the century.

The actor Jacob Adler, who arrived in London with his Yiddish theatre company in the year the *Bitter Cry of Outcast London* appeared, described the differences between East and West End of London as following:

> "You must know that in London there is a West End and an East End. The West End is for those happy mortals sent into the world with a kiss. The East End is for the others. Here live the poor, the small, the shamed, those whom fate, seeing how bent and shrunken they are as they creep through the gates of life, spat in their face for good measure."[174]

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[171] *JC*, 2 January 1885.

[172] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York; London: Routledge, 1995), 40 ff.

[173] Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, 314.

[174] Jacob P. Adler, *A Life on the Stage: A Memoir* (New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1999), 232.

Throughout the concluding decades of the nineteenth century, the perception of the eastern boroughs of the metropolis underwent significant changes. Still in 1875, Harry Jones described the East End as a sober and hard-working provincial town, where no "touching of hats", little drunkenness and less mendicancy than in the fashionable quarters of the West End were to be found.[175] Furthermore, he described the East Enders as "civil" but not "pompous" people. Only some years after Jones, in 1882, Walter Besant gave an entirely different picture of East London. In his novel *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, he portrays it as one huge cultureless void, when stating that "[n]obody goes east, no one wants to see the place; no one is curious about the way of life in the east." For Besant this part of the city had "little or no history," in its churchyards no "great men" are buried and above all, it is crowded by obscure citizens.[176]

Furthermore, the East End increasingly was associated predominantly with the area of settlement of Eastern European Jewish immigrants.[177] Numerous descriptions of the time depicted the "Jewish colony" in East London as a foreign country, as *terra incognita*, and its inhabitants as foreign, mysterious and exotic. In an article that appeared in *The Sunday Magazine* in 1892, a Mrs Brewer stressed "we know very little about the colony" of the Jews in the East End that are "perfect strangers" since "it is a well-known characteristic of theirs that they do no willingly mingle with other people." Exploring the "Jewish colony" of East London, Brewer felt like being "in some far-off country whose people and language" she did not know "the names over the shops were foreign," she reported, "the wares were advertised in an unknown tongue of which I did not even know the letters, the people in the streets were not of our type."[178] The *Jewish Chronicle* editorialised on 22 January 1886 that it "needs but a casual visit to one of the many Jewish quarters at the East End to make it clear that a little Russia has sprung up of late in the very heart of England" and that "the chief sufferer from th[is] fact must be the Anglo-Jewish community." For the author the

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[175] Harry Jones, *East and West London* (London: Smith, Elder, 1875), 106.

[176] Walter Besant, *All Sorts and Conditions of Men: An Impossible Story*, 3 vols. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1882), vol. 1, 48.

[177] This and the sharp contrast between East and West End emphasised by numerous contemporaries led to neglect of the fact that the parts of London's West End too were a major base for new arrivals. As for Soho the Jewish migration also began in the 1880s and accelerated in the 1890s. And as in parts of the East End a Yiddish milieu also developed in areas of in Soho and Fitzrovia. Cf. Gerry Black, *Living up West: Jewish Life in London's West End* (London: London Museum of Jewish Life, 1994), 13 and 43.

[178] Mrs Brewer, "The Jewish Colony in London," *The Sunday Magazine* XXI (1892). The article has been reprinted in David Englander, ed., *A Documentary History of Jewish immigrants in Britain, 1840-1920* (Leicester; London; New York: Leicester University Press, 1994), 69 f.

foreignness of the Russian Jews, their ideas and habits, represented a "serious element of weakness, if not of positive danger, for the community" as a whole.[179] Even a decade later, the foreignness of the immigrants was still highlighted. In 1895, a short note in the *Jewish Chronicle* read "[n]othing gives the casual observer so many a notion of an 'Alien Invasion' as to hear so many speaking a foreign language."[180] In some of his later writings the journalist George Sims, although with sympathy, described the walks through the Jewish East End as a trip "In Alien-Land" and like others, he too described the Jewish immigrants, namely Jewish women as exotic.[181] Here "in the heart of the old Ghetto" gazing at the crowd, "the Oriental type predominates" everywhere, Sims wrote.[182]

Such descriptions were part of the continuous creation of Jewish East End as an anachronistic space, highlighting the ambivalence of colonial and urban discourse. Besides the Orientalisiation and Africanisation of the East End Jews and representations depicting them as foreign and exotic, the anachronistic space of the East End became associated with yet another aspect.[183] Especially in the wake of the Whitechapel murders throughout the late 1880s, the East End was depicted as the urban hotbed of crime, threatening the urban order. Although some contemporaries emphasised that, the level of serious crimes was fare smaller among the Jews than among the general population[184] it was conjectured by some that Jack the Ripper was indeed an East End Jew.[185] Mixed with anti-alien and anti-Semitic sentiments East End Jews as a group were now regarded as a major threat to their fellow Londoners. Some even denounced the Jews to be ritual murders. The anti-

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[179] *JC*, 22 January 1886.

[180] *JC*, 6 December 1895.

[181] "Imagine a good-looking Jewess, plump and smiling, with dark glossy hair, a man's cap on her head, a big kiss curl on her forehead, her arms bare to the elbows..." George Robert Sims, *Off the Track in London* (London: Jarrold & Sons, [1911]), 138

[182] George Robert Sims, *Off the Track in London* (London: Jarrold & Sons, [1911]).13

[183] On the Africanization of the East End by means of jungle tropes and references to "darkest Africa" cf. Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British literature and imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988), esp. 2-45, 173-97, and 255-74, Joseph McLaughlin, *Writing the urban jungle : reading empire in London from Doyle to Eliot* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York; London: Routledge, 1995), 118 ff.

[184] Harry Samuel Lewis was but one voice stressing this point. Cf. Russell and Lewis, *The Jew in London*, 175 ff.

[185] Cf. Martin L. Friedland, *The Trials of Israel Lipski: A True Story of a Victorian Murder in the East End of London* (London: Macmillan, 1984), Robert F. Haggard, "Jack the Ripper as the Threat of Outcast London," *Essays in History* 35 (1993), Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*, Women in Culture and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

Jewish agitation intensified up to a degree that the hundreds of Police were drafted into the East End to forestall a possible pogrom.[186]

Throughout the concluding decades of the nineteenth century, another term became customary and was used extensively to describe the settlement of the East End Jews, that of the "Ghetto". This term not only emphasised their foreignness, their alleged backwardness but also carried the notion of the seclusion of the newcomers, their unwillingness to integrate into English society, matching Louis Wirth's conception of the Ghetto as "physical symbol for that sort of moral isolation which the 'assimilationists,' […] are seeking to break down."[187] As a spatial category, the term ghetto moreover indicates the centrality of the urban context in respect of Jewish immigration. It thus emphasises the borderlines between integrated Anglo-Jewry living around London and the seclusion of the Jewish settlement, the difficulties to approach this part of Jewish London as well as its foreignness. "If poor Jews will persist in appropriating to themselves whole streets, in the same districts," the *Jewish Chronicle* states in September 1888, "if they will conscientiously persevere in the seemingly harmless practice of congregating in a body at prominent points in a great public thoroughfare like the Whitechapel or Commercial Road, drawing to their peculiarities of dress, of language and of manner, the attention which they might otherwise escape, can there be any wonder that the vulgar prejudices of which they are the objects should be kept alive and strengthened?"[188] For the *Chronicle* as for many within the Anglo-Jewish establishment it was this "separatism" the new arrivals brought with them from "Poland to England and retain it while they stay here" forming a "community within the community" detached not only in residential patterns but in cultural attitude, such as "their peculiarities of dress, of language and of manner" as well as in religious practice, that was not only undesirable but a "calamity", threatening the status of Anglo-Jewry as a whole.[189] "Native" Jews claimed for themselves that they had "fortunately risen above both the separatism and its consequences" of separatism "which has done so much in the past to embitter the relations of Jews and their neighbours." It was "the recent accessions" to the ranks of

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[186] Cf. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*, 203-04.
[187] Louis Wirth, *The Ghetto: Illustrations from Woodcuts by Todros Geller* (Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press, 1928), ix.
[188] *JC*, 28 September 1888.
[189] *JC*, 12 August 1881.

Anglo-Jewry threatening these achievements by creating "a little Poland in the East End of London."[190]

In the introduction to *Children of the Ghetto* Israel Zangwill countered these romanticising and orientalising representation, describing the London Ghetto as an "Eternal City" with "an inner world of dreams, fantastic and poetic as the mirage of the Orient where they were woven."[191] Descriptions of the East End as "foreign country" and life in the "self chosen ghetto" continued throughout the following decades. Major Gordon, one of the most outspoken representatives of a pro-immigration-restriction policy picked up the image of the foreign country "East of Aldgate" in his book *The Alien Immigrant*, published after a tour through the "resorts of the mass migration" in Central and Eastern Europe. "Many English people living" in the East End, Gordon claimed, "summed up the situation to me in a phrase: 'We are living in a foreign country.'"[192] For him East London was rather a part of the Jewish Pale of Settlement, where Gordon found himself "in the familiar surrounding of the East End." Driven by their "Ghetto habits" and living conditions, Gordon continues, "[t]he Hebrew colony, then, unlike any other alien colony in the land, forms a solid and permanently distinct block—a race apart."[193]

One year before Gordon's account was published, the American writer, Jack London, arrived in the British capital, determined to go to the East End to "see things" and "to life there" himself. In *People of the Abyss* in which he presented his experiences among the destitute East Enders only occasionally referred to the Jewish population of the area.[194]

Jack London's investigation represents a new strain of social investigation following a shift away from earlier sensational writings on East London towards first hand accounts of the "real East End". A number of contemporaries performed similar undercover social investigations around London. Charles Masterman, for instance,

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[190] *JC,* 15 May 1885.

[191] Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto: Being a Picture of a Peculiar People, vol. 1,* 5.

[192] On the sentiments of non-Jewish East Enders towards the newcomer cf. Joseph John Bennett, "East End Newspaper Opinion and Jewish Immigration, 1885-1905" (M.Phil., University of Sheffield, 1979).

[193] Evans-Gordon, W., *The Alien Immigrant: by Major W. Evans-Gordon, M.P. (Lately a member of the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration). With Map and Numerous Illustrations from Author's Photographs* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1903), 6 ff.

[194] Jack London, *The People of the Abyss* (London: Macmillan, 1903). Even in the chapter entitled "Ghetto" London focused on the industrial poor, arguing – quite crudely – that they were forced to live in ghettos just like the Jews used to in the Middle Ages. On Jack London's representation of the East End see Lawrence Phillips, "Jack London and the East End: Socialism, Imperialism and the Bourgeois Ethnographer," in *A mighty mass of brick and smoke : Victorian and Edwardian representations of London,* ed. Lawrence Phillips (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007).

lived for several months in a southeast London slum to explore the conditions of the poor.[195]

One of the earliest attempts to overcome sensational and often ideological approaches towards urban questions and replace them with socio-graphic analysis was made by a team of investigators in the mid-1880s. The investigations Charles Booth and his colleagues conducted over the following years grew into the monumental 17-volume work on *Life and Labour of the People of London*. It is not surprising that the initial focus Booth, Llewellyn, Schloss, Potter and others engaged was East London.

In the concluding remarks of the first volume of the survey, Booth points to some of the difficulties in approaching and investigating the eastern boroughs of the metropolis. He wrote:

> "East London lay hidden from view behind a curtain on which were painted terrible pictures: Starving children, suffering women, overworked men; horrors of drunkenness and vice; monsters and daemons of inhumanity; giants of disease and despair. Did these pictures truly represent what lay behind, or did they bear to the facts a relation similar to that which the pictures outside a booth at some country fair bear to the performance or show within? This curtain we have tried to lift."[196]

The continuous interest in the Jewish section of London's eastern boroughs left its mark on a number of contributions to the published volumes of Booth's survey. A glance at the survey notebooks that Booth kept during his investigations reveal that he and his team collected a great deal of information concerning different aspects of Jewish life in London. The team gathered a lot of information by interviewing representatives of the Anglo-Jewish community, such as the Hermann Adler or Samuel Montagu. Apart from these extensive interviews they also contain material and entries—press cuttings, pamphlets of Jewish institutions such as the Federation of Synagogues, information about the self-organisation of East End Jews or statistical material drawn from police of School Board investigations—dealing with a wide range of aspects of Jewish life.[197]

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[195] The outcome of these investigations was the anonymous publication of *From the abyss, of its inhabitants; by one of them* (London: Dent, 1902). For biographical details on Masterman cf. Eric Hopkins, *Charles Masterman (1873-1927), politician and journalist : the splendid failure* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999).

[196] Charles Booth, *Life and Labour: Volume I: East London* (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1889), 591-92.

[197] Cf. notebooks relating to the Jewish community in the Charles Booth collection, LSE, Booth/B/197: Jes, 1897. Besides interviews with the Chief Rabbi and Christian clergymen serving in East End parishes the notebooks contain numerous interviews with presidents and/ or secretaries of East End synagogues. Jews also play a central role in a number of other notebooks compiled by the Booth team. LSE, Booth/A19, B108 and B109; Booth/A/19: Tailors, bootmakers and hatters, 1884-1888.

While a lot of the vast material concerning the Jewish community assembled by Booth and his team did not find its way into the published volumes the subject remained prominent. The centrality of the Jewish East End in Booth's survey is remarkable taking into account that the major aim of the survey was to measure the "actual" range of poverty.[198] A glance at the table of contents of the first volume of *Life and Labour* gives a hint to this centrality. Divided into three major parts—"The Classes", "The Trades" and "Special Subject"—the "Jewish Community" was one of three special subjects; the other two being "Sweating" and "Influx of Population."

A year before the publication of the first volume of *Life and Labour*, Potter gained attention for yet another investigation dealing with the social conditions of East End tailoresses.[199] In "Pages from a Work-Girl's Diary", that appeared in September 1888 in *The Nineteenth Century*, Potter described her experiences working undercover in an East End Jewish sweatshop. It was this insight view into the "evil of sweated labour" that led to the furore of "Pages from a Work-Girl's Diary." More concerned with the conditions under which the sweaters had to work, Jewish aspects were not central to Potter's account. Within the Sweatshop System, Jews, Potter pointed out, were engaged both as exploiters, such as the Jewess running the sweatshop Potter worked in for some days, and exploited. Despite some negative depictions of the Jewish capitalist, the *Jewish Chronicle* praised Potter's article as an "anxious, unselfish and untiring efforts to lay bare the evils of the [sweating] system", expressing the hope that the investigation leads to a "distinct gain in the public conscience" that may lead to its solution.[200]

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[198] What makes the central position given to Jewish aspects in *Live and Labour* even more striking is the fact, that David Frederick Schloss was the only Jew on Booth's team. His contributions however, did only partically touch on Jewish issues. In later years Schloss himself turned his attention to investigations into the economic conditions of the East End Jews. David F. Schloss, "The Jew as a Workman," *Nineteenth Century* XXIX (1891). It fell exclusively to Beatrice Potter to compile the investigation on the Jewish community for *Life and Labour*. On the cooperation of Beatrice Potter and Charles Booth cf. T. S. Simey and M. B. Simey, *Charles Booth: Social Scientist* (Oxford; New York; [et al.]: Oxford University Press, 1960), Belinda Norman-Butler, *Victorian aspirations: the life and labour of Charles and Mary Booth* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972).

[199] Details on Potter's methods, how she came to join etc. cf. Rosemary O'Day, "Before the Webbs: Beatrice Potter's Early Investigations for Charles Booth's Inquiry," *History* 78, no. 253 (1993), Rosemary O'Day and David Englander, *Mr Charles Booth's Inquiry : Life and Labour of the People in London Reconsidered* (London; Rio Grande, Ohio: Hambledon Press, 1993), 59 ff. On contemporary writings of the conditions of East End tailoresses, cf. Clementia Black, "London's Tailoresses," *Economic Journal* 14, no. 56 (1904). For an earlier account placing the question of the tailoring industry in East London at midst of the discussion of continuous industrialisation and mechanisation of the trade, see J. George Eccarius, *Der Kampf des Großen und des Kleinen Kapitals oder: Die Schneiderei in London* (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag der Genossenschafts-Buchdruckerei, 1876).

[200] *JC*, 7 September 1888. Also other contribution by Potter investigation such as here article "East London Labour" that appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* were followed up by the *Jewish Chronicle* (3 August 1888). The debate around the Sweating System had a great impact on the Anglo-Jewish

While Jewish matters were a sideline in Potter's "Pages from a Work-Girl's Diary", she made it the central concern in an essay she contributed to the first volumes of *Life and Labour of the People in London* that appeared in 1889. This text attempted to examine London Jewry in general but its main focus remained Jewish East End. With "Pages from a Work-Girl's Diary" Potter had experimented with the method of gathering information about the "un-known world" of East London life through direct encounter. Although Potter continued to explore the East End, trying to gather first hand information her investigations into Jewish matters in London drew heavily from other sources of information too.[201] Apart from personal investigations and insights of informants, Potter's description of the immigrant quarter was greatly influenced by the Anglo-Jewish establishment. Many stereotypical images of the immigrant Jews utilised by Potter mirrored prejudices of West End Jewish notables. Especially the Delegate Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler was one of Potter's central sources to gather information about internal Jewish matters. Right at the beginning of "The Jewish Community" Potter thanked him "for information concerning the religion and charitable organization of the East End Jewish Settlement".[202] After being invited for dinner with the Adlers, Potter noted in her diary, "The Jews have opened their arms to the dark-eyed Christian who is studying their East End life." She felt being "a wonderment in their well-regulated social life, a strange thing curious to behold and pleasant to look upon".[203] Adler assisted her on various occasions throughout her inquiries: he arranged introductions to various religious, educational, and philanthropic authorities and agencies. Potter in turn kept Adler informed about her progress and results of her investigations on the Jews in East London.[204]

Besides the exchange with representatives of the Anglo-Jewish establishment, the *Jewish Chronicle* with its particular image of the "pauper immigrant" became an indispensable source for Potter, deeply shaping her perception of the Jewish East End.[205]

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press. Throughout 1888 the *Jewish Chronicle* published Articles or Letters to the Editor dealing with different aspects of the System. Especially the investigations of the House of Lords Select Committee on the Sweating System that was set up in this very year were covered extensively.

[201] David Englander, "Booth's Jews: The Presentation of Jews and Judaism in Life and Labour of the People in London," *Victorian Studies* (1989).

[202] Beatrice Potter, "The Jewish Community," in *Life and Labour of the People in London. 1st series: Povery, vol. I: East London*, ed. Charles Booth (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1889), 564.

[203] Beatrice Webb, *The diary of Beatrice Webb: Volume 1: "Glitter around and darkness within," 1873-1892* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982), 250.

[204] Cf. "Letter by Beatrice Potter to Hermann Adler, April 1888," LMA: ACC/2805/2/1/125

[205] Webb, *The diary of Beatrice Webb: Volume 1*, 266.

The central concern of her essay on "The Jewish Community" was to evaluate the Jewish immigrants' potential for upward mobility and to identify the sources for their economic success, unparalleled by other immigrant groups it also attempts to draw a picture of the Anglo-Jewish community at large.[206] The essay opens with a brief historical account on the development of Anglo-Jewish patterns of residence in London.

> "With the slow decay of the unwritten, law of social prejudice, whereby the children of Israel had been confined to one district of the metropolis, the aristocratic and cultured Sephardic Jews—direct descendants of the financiers, merchant princes, and learned doctors of Spain and Portugal—moved westward, and were replaced in their old homes by a multitude of down-trodden, poor, and bigoted brethren of the Ashkenazite, or German, branch of the Hebrew race. Thus towards the middle of last century the East End settlement ceased to be the nucleus of a small and select congregation of the chosen people, and became a reservoir for the incoming stream of poverty-stricken foreigners."[207]

As in the context of settling and leaving the East End, Potter concentrates not exclusively on the East European Jewish immigrants but also on the London Jewish establishment and on London Jewry at large. [208]

The essay on "Influx of Population", following Potter's account on the Jewish community also echoed her view:

> "The movement of the Jewish immigrants when once absorbed into London is, [...] a movement upwards from below. This is in sharp distinction to the movement of the influx from the country. [...] Jewish London is kept down by the foreign element, with the standard of living and cleanliness of Warsaw drifting in from below, afterwards to be transformed into industrious citizens. English London is kept up in bone and sinew and energy by the country element pouring in from above, afterwards to be transformed into waste."[209]

On the image of the Eastern Jew in the *Jewish Chronicle* see Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991*, Gross, "The "Jewish Chronicle" & Others."

[206] Scholars have shown that Jewish immigrants were by far not as exceptional as Potter claims. Especially the Irish were economically more successful than often represented. Cf. Donald H. Akenson, *The Irish diaspora : a primer* (Toronto; Belfast: P.D. Meany Co.; Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University of Belfast, 1993). For a critical appreciation of Potters findings see Rosemary O'Day, "Before the Webbs: Beatrice Potter's early investigations for Charles Booth's inquiry," *History* 78, no. 253 (1993): esp. 242.

[207] Potter, "The Jewish Community," 564.

Gerry Black and others have pointed out that the distribution of London Jewry from early nineteenth century was in the throes of change, due to not only East European Jewish mass migration but to a steam of migration to the more desirable, newly build areas of residence outside the City. Wealthier members of the Jewish community in following the pattern of their non-Jewish contemporaries were moving to the fashionable new thoroughfares in Westminster and Hyde Park. During the second quarter of the nineteenth century wealthier Sephardim had began moving to Bloomsbury and Myfair, and the names of the famous families of 'the Cousinhood' became increasingly familiar in the West End. In 1852, Moses Montefiore moved from the City to Green Street than to 99 Park Lane while Nathan Mayer Rothschild and Edward Goldsmid moved to Piccadilly, Isaac Lyon Goldshmid went to Regent's Park. Cf. Black, *Living up West: Jewish Life in London's West End*, 15.

[208] Ibid., 571.

[209] Potter, "The Jewish Community," 553.

As elsewhere in *Life and Labour of the People in London* this remark reveals the questionable view of Jews as fitter for the urban struggle.

In Potter's account, the process of Jewish acculturation was rapid. The "greenest" of the immigrants eked out a bare existence either from the charity of co-religionists or by working day and night for a small contractor in return for a place to sleep and a loaf of bread. After having learned a trade, the worker found a job where he received some pittance of pay. Within a year he joined a Chevrah, and if he managed to resist the "Jewish passion for gambling," he was on his way to becoming a petty trader or a "tiny capitalist—a maker of profit as well as an earner of wage." [210] In the following section, Potter describes the alleged rapid upwards social mobility of the East End Jew in a questionable manner.

> "He [the Jewish immigrant] has moved out of the back court in which his fellow-countrymen are herded together like animals, and is comfortably installed in a model dwelling; the walls of his parlour are decked with prints of Hebrew worthies; or with portraits of, prize-fighters and race-horses; his wife wears jewellery and furs on the Sabbath; for their Sunday dinner they eat poultry. [...] In short, he has become a law-abiding and self-respecting citizen of our great metropolis, and feels himself the equal of a Montefiore or a Rothschild." [211]

Potter's view especially when compared to the repeatedly articulated reproaches towards East End Jews being unwilling to anglicise and thus integrate themselves into British society is striking. Yet despite philo-Semitic elements, Potter's text too reveals an ambivalent picture of the Jews. [212]

"What are the reasons of the Jews' success?" and "Why is that success resented by that part of the Christian community with whom the Jew comes in daily contact?" These two questions stand at the centre of Potter's essay. Parts of the answer to them, she believed, lay in the "intellectual superiority" of the immigrants. "[W]e must realize," she wrote, "that the poorest Jew has inherited through the medium of his religion a trained intellect." [213] Through the traditional *Cheder* education in Eastern

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[210] Ibid., 583.

[211] Ibid., 583-84. On Jewish boxers in Britain, see the catalogue published in conjunction with an exhibition held at the Jewish Museum in London in 2007. Michael Berkowitz and Ruti Ungar, eds., *Fighting back?: Jewish and black boxers in Britain* (London: University College London, Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 2007).

[212] Earlier scholarship, taking her anti-capitalist ideology as a point of departure, has claimed that Potter was driven by Anti-Semitism. Gertrude Himmelfarb was among the first to counter this view and point to philo-Semitic elements as well as to the ambivalence of Potter's engagement with the Jewish question. cf. Nord, Deborah Epstein. *The Apprenticeship of Beatrice Webb*. Amherst, 1985, 173-76, 276 n. 53, Yosef Gorni, "Beatrice Webb's Views of Judaism and Zionism," *Jewish Social Studies* 40, no. 2 (1978), Gertrude Himmelfarb, "Victorian Values/ Jewish Values," *Commentary* (1989).

[213] Potter, "The Jewish Community," 685.

Europe—now transplanted into the East End—the immigrants achieved "mechanical faculties of the intellect—memory, the power of sustained reasoning, and the capacity for elaborate calculation" Potter argued.[214]

According to her interpretation, the centrality given to religious learning was rooted in the persecution and oppression experienced in Eastern Europe. For Potter Judaism was the base for Jewish survival and the economic rise out of this miserable situation[215]

The idyllic picture Potter drew of the success of East End Jews contradicted her own account on the hardship and bad conditions of sweatshop conditions as well as the image of the East End as a notorious slum. Nonetheless, reviewers of the first volume of Life and Labour hailed her contribution in particular.[216]

It is arguable if Booth shared Potter's view of the Jewish community. In a paper read before the Royal Statistical Society on 17 May 1887 in which Booth gave a detailed account on the first year's work on the survey, he also drew the attention to the "Special Subjects" such as the Jewish settlement and immigration "which claim special treatment in connection with this district [Tower Hamlets]." His picture of the Jewish East Enders differed significantly from Potter's. For Booth, "the 'Russian Poles' [i.e. East European Jews]" arrived in London "destitute, often without the knowledge of any trade, and for a long time they know no language but their own; they naturally resort to the quarters already occupied by those speaking the same language, and perhaps hailing from the same districts abroad. [...] Their compatriots are hardly better off [...]. The result is an aggravation of evil [...]." Booth concluded, "Miserably destitute themselves, they also increase the destitution of their own people, and of our own people."[217]

Besides Potter's essay, the Jewish dwellers of London's East End were also the object of investigation of other parts of Life and Labour of the People in London. Despite its empirical claims, Booth' enquiry was not limited to a quantitative social analysis but went beyond the measurement of poverty and social inequality. As was

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[214] Ibid., 686. Even critical observers such as Charles Russell followed Potter in her praise for the traditional Jewish educational system. Cf. Russell and Lewis, The Jew in London.
[215] Ibid., 566.
[216] JC, 19 April 1889, Newcastle Daily Chronicle, 17 April 1889 and Charity Organisation Review, 1889, 327, quoted after Gertrude Himmelfarb, Poverty and Compassion: The Moral Imagination of the Late Victorians (New York: Vintage, 1991), 143, and F. C. Huntington, "East London," Quarterly Review of Economics 4 (1889).
[217] Charles Booth, "The Inhabitants of Tower Hamlets (School Board Division), Their Condition and Occupation," Journal of the Royal Statistical Society 50, no. 2 (1887): 367. As a note following the table of contents of the first volume of Life and Labour indicates, it was this article that formed an important part of the first part entitled "The Classes" of the volume.

the case in Potter's contributions Booth, found it both necessary and desirable to make use of individual facts to which no quantitative value could be assigned. Thus, classification and enumeration were brought together with non-quantifiable social influences "which form a part of the very structure of life" and without which it was not possible "to complete the picture of things as they are".[218] The interplay of these two elements influenced large parts of Booth's survey. Especially the final seven volumes, forming the third series of Life and Labour, entitled "Religious Influences" embody Booth's "attempt to probe the spiritual and moral health of the people."[219] Booth's perception of the foreign Jews was by no means free of stereotypes. As in other contemporary writings, parts of Life and Labour presented the Jewish East Enders as an exotic and mysterious people: women having "olive complexions" and "dark-bearded men in Russian-Polish dress" to evoke a sense of extravagance and mystery.[220]

Another passage portrays the Jewish immigrant as being especially well-equipped for his new urban environment and that he was inevitably the victor when thrown into competition with the London-born, who "is met a vanquished by the Jews fresh from Poland or Russia, accustomed to a lower standard of life, and above all of food, than would be possible for the native of these Islands; less skilled and perhaps less strong, but in his way more fit, pliant, adaptable, adroit ..."[221]

The alleged Jewish skills to come to terms with the urban environment however were seen by others as a thoroughly negative aspect of the immigrant stratum.

During the last decades of the nineteenth century Britain saw an intensifying debate blending racial aspects with questions of crime that lead to the reproach of 'Jewish criminality'.[222] Especially in connection with prostitution and white slavery, this

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[218] Charles Booth, Life and labour of the people in London [3rd Series: Religious Influences], vol. 7 (London: Macmillan, 1902), Vol. I, 4.
[219] Englander, "Booth's Jews: The Presentation of Jews and Judaism in Life and Labour of the People in London," 553. On the compilation of the Religious Influence Series cf. Rosemary O'Day, "Interviews and Investigations: Charles Booth and the Making of the Religious Influences survey," in Retrieved Riches: Social Investigation in Britain, 1840-1914, ed. David Englander and Rosemary O'Day (Aldershot; Brookfield; Vt.: Scolar Press; Ashgate Pub. Co, 1995).
[220] Booth, Life and labour of the people in London [3rd Series: Religious Influences], Vol. II, 104.
[221] Charles Booth, ed., Life and Labour of the People in London [1st Series: Poverty], vol. 4 (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1889-1891), Vol. IV, 340. See too E. Clerke, 'The Dock Labourers' Strike', Dublin Review, October 1889, pp. 390-1. David Feldman, Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 272.
[222] For a recent investigation into this matter in a British context cf. Paul Knepper, "British Jews and the Racialisation of Crime in the Age of Empire " British Journal of Criminology, no. 47 (2007), Paul Knepper, ""Jewish Trafficking" and London Jews in the age of Migration," Journal of Modern Jewish Studies 6, no. 3 (2007). On the perpetuation and radicalisation of the sterotype of Jewish criminality cf.

racialisation of crime was most virulent.[223] The creation of the London-based Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women (JAPGW) emphasises that the Anglo-Jewish establishment took the agitation against 'Jewish criminality' very serious. It was by coincidence that the creation of the Association coincided with the sensational coverage of prostitution as an expression of urban vices of modern London in the *Pall Mall Gazette* by W. T. Stead. However, the coinciding of Stead's "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" in which he gave the bourgeois readership first-hand accounts of the trading of underaged girls for brothels of the metropolis and the foundation of the new association points to an important aspect. Stead linked the trafficking in girls to the larger concern of urban problems at the times. The creation of the JAPGW was part of a Jewish response to these very problems. Besides fighting white slavery and anti-Semitic stereotypes, it also turned into an attempt to assert paternalistic leadership over the Jewish immigrants.

Booth's eight-tier system classification of poverty from "the lowest class of occasional labourers, loafers and semi-criminals" (A.) to the "Upper middle class" (H.), published as a central result in the first volume of 1889, was far from being merely scientific. The classification rather bears elements of social Darwinism and resembled ideas of the "elimination of the "residuum" of barely human pauper as developed in the eugenics conceptions of Pearson and Galton, when Booth remarked "[t]hey [the lowest class (A.)] render no useful service, they create no wealth; more often they destroy it [...] degrade whatever they touch" and thus "[i]t is much to be desired and hoped that this class may become less hereditary in its character."[224]

Apart from such ideological implications, the idea of "The Eight Classes" is of interest in another way. The attempt to classify poverty and the entire urban population respectively shows one of the main concerns of Booth's survey: to make the urban comprehensible and manageable.[225] Others employed similar classification

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Michael Berkowitz, *The crime of my very existence : Nazism and the myth of Jewish criminality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

[223] For a general account cf. Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice : The Jewish fight against white slavery ; 1870 - 1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

[224] Booth, *Life and Labour: Volume I: East London*, 33-62. On the conception of the residuum cf. José Harris, "Between civic virtue and Social Darwinism: the concept of the residuum," in *Retrieved Riches: Social Investigation in Britain, 1840-1914*, ed. David Englander and Rosemary O'Day (Aldershot; Brookfield, Vt.: Scolar Press; Ashgate Pub. Co, 1995). Gertrude Himmelfarb has argued that the usage of vocabulary such as "barbarians," "savages," etc. for Booth as for many of his contemporaries were "necessary and appropriate—not for purposes of judgment [...] but for objective analysis." Himmelfarb, *Poverty and Compassion: The Moral Imagination of the Late Victorians*, 116 f.

[225] It has been argued that in his mapping Booth "was equivalent to a colonial power, with a panoptic vision of the city as a whole." Richard Dennis, "Modern London," in *The Cambridge urban history of Britain, Vol. III: 1840-1950*, ed. Martin Daunton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 108.

strategies. In a series of articles that appeared between May and July in the *Jewish Chronicle*, Joseph Jacobs presented the results of his research in the field of Jewish statistics, of which most dealt with London Jewry. Jacobs distributed London Jewry in 1882, whose number he estimated to 46,000, into eleven "Classes".[226] The table Jacobs provides are showing a clear East West divide.[228]

Jacobs continued his investigations on East and West End in a series of statistical surveys. Inspired by his former "Cambridge mentor" Francis Galton[229], Jacob had conducted research "On the Racial Characteristics of Modern Jews" followed by a study "On the Comparative Anthropometry of English Jews." In a paper given at the Anthropological Institute in 1886, Jacobs combined both trails, statistics and anthropometry. A year earlier, he had published together with Galton "composite portraits" of schoolboys taken at the Jews' Free School in Bell Lane in London's East End. The choice of doing the inquiry here was underpinned by a presumption of "Jewish authenticity" of the East End Jewish. As Galton remarked it was here that the "typical" "cold, scanning gaze" of the Jews could be found.[230]

Starting his inquiries in East London Jacobs extended the scope. Assisted by Isidore Spielman, body measurements were undertaken first at the Jewish Working Men's Club, Great Alie Street before the "Anthropometric Laboratory was moved to the West End. The "persons tested", Jacobs and Spielman remarked, "were themselves average samples of the two chief classes into which English Jews may be considered and divided. They may be described as 'West End Jews,' [...] and 'East End Jews,' the less fortunately situated Jewish dwellers at the East End [...]."[231] It

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[226] *JC,* 2 and 23 February 1883. These article and others were reproduced in the collection of essays Joseph Jacobs, *Studies in Jewish Statistics, Social, Vital, and Anthropometric* (London: D. Nutt, 1891), 10-12.

[227] Jacobs lists the following synagogues: Central, Berkely Street, Bayswater, West End, St. John's Wood, Werstern, Maiden Lane and some 200 Yehidim of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue that live west of Temple Bar.

[228] *JC*, 23 February 1883.

[229] Galton had started his work on facial features or as he called it "composite portraits" in the late 1870s and continued them until the early twentieth century. Among his articles were 'Composite portraits made by combining those of many different persons into a single figure.' Nature 18 (1878): 97-100, "Composite Portraits" Journal of the Anthropological Institute 8 (1879): 132-144, 'Les images generiques' *La Revue Scientifique* 17 (1879): 221-5, 'Generic images.' *Nineteenth Century* 6 (July, 1879): 157-69, Composite portraiture.' *Photographic News* 25 (1881): 316-7, 332-3, and 'Photographic composites.' *Photographic News* 29 (1885): 234-45, this article was published together with a contribution by Jacobs in the same issue of the Photographic News. On the cooperation of Galton and Jacobs cf. Daniel Novak, "A Model Jew "Literary Photographs" and the Jewish Body in *Daniel Deronda*," *Representations* 85 (2004).

[230] Joseph Jacobs, "On the Racial Characteristics of Modern Jews," *Journal of the Anthropological Insitute of Great Britain and Ireland* 15 (1886): Notes by Mr. F. Galton, 62.

[231] Joseph Jacobs and Isidore Spielman, "On the Comparative Anthropometry of English Jews," *Journal of the Anthropological Insitute of Great Britain and Ireland* 19 (1890): 77. For discussion on the

was important for Jacobs to emphasise the "unity of race" between groups, what he wanted to estimate was the influence of the prevailing environment each group was living on its physical features. Thus, despite the differences in height, nutrition, shape of nose between East and West End Jews, Jacobs claimed to have found during his investigations, he repeatedly stressed that these differences were results of the milieu in which Jews lived but that they did not contradict the unity among Jews.[232] The partly pseudo-scientific investigations Jacobs conducted seem strange to the modern observer. However, they reveal to what extent Jewish investigators such as Jacobs took the urban environment for a central element in the formation of different types of urban people. Furthermore, read in the context of London, Jacobs' intention to prove the existence of Jewish "racial" unity was but one attempt to bridge the continuously inscribed differences between East and West.

More obviously connected with the urban space is the practice of mapping.[233] Booth inquiry set new standards in this field. His survey not only brought together empirical data, social classification and investigation into industrial conditions but also rooted them in a spatial context. While this spatiality becomes evident by the outline of the first volumes of *Life and Labour of the People in London* along special urban areas, it was brought to a synthesis in mapping it.

The first volume of *Life and Labour* appeared in 1889 and included a single-sheet map, based on the data compiled and analysed by Booth and his team. This first map covered the East End.[234] Its streets were coloured according to Booth's eight-fold classification system.

During the continuation of the work on the London survey, Booth and his team updated this early "poverty map" by systematically revisiting every street in London.

Jewish body Sander L. Gilman, *The Jew's body* (New York: Routledge, 1991), Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "The Corporeal Turn" *Jewish Quarterly Review* 95, no. 3 (2005).

[232] On Jacob's contribution to Racial Science and his conception of a distinct Jewish race cf. John M. Efron, *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-siècle Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), chapter 4.

[233] On mapping of nineteenth century London cf. Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets, and Images in Nineteenth-century London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), Part I: Mapping and Movement, Felix Driver, *Geography militant : cultures of exploration and empire* (Oxford ; Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 180 ff, Richard Dennis, *Cities in Modernity : representations and productions of metropolitan space, 1840 - 1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Chapter 'Surveying the city'.

[234] The map extends from the Regents Canal in the north to the Thames in the south (the map just includes the southern boundary of the Tower), and from Shepherdess Walk in the west to Bow in the east. (This is roughly the area described in Booth's two papers on the 'condition and occupation' of the inhabitants of the East End which were published in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* in 1887 and 1888.) The map combining census data with interviews and extensive notes gathered by the London School Board, whose attendance officers visited all school age children.

Accompanying by the police on their beats the investigators attempted to gain first-hand assessments of dwellings and the social status of their inhabitants.[235] As a result, an extended map covering an area from Kensington Gardens in the west to Poplar in the east and from Kentish Town in the north to Stockwell in the south was published in 1891.
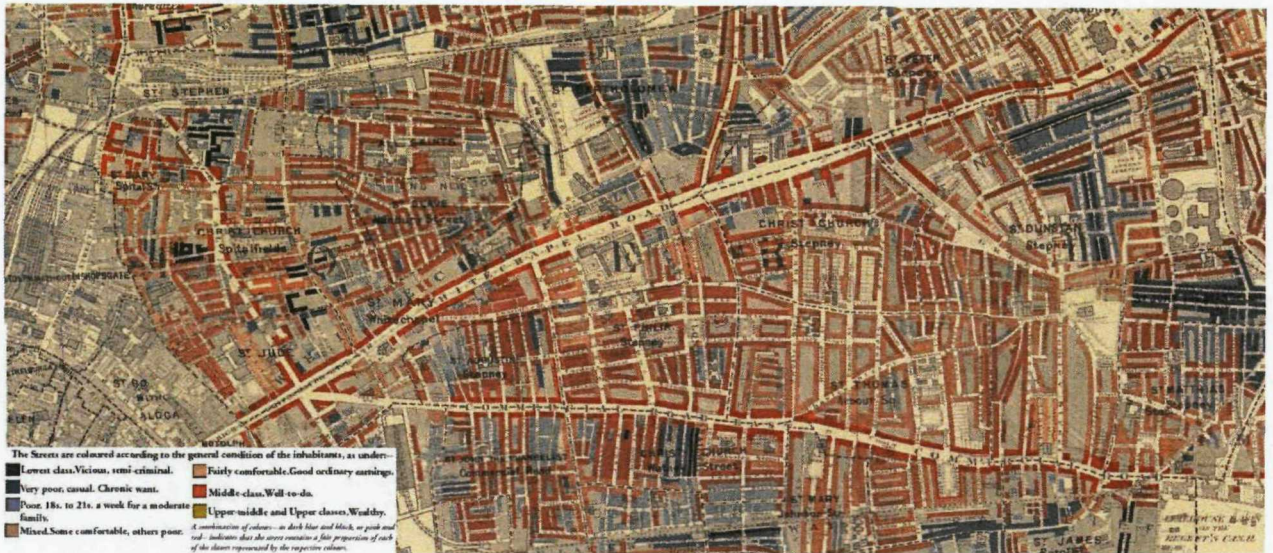
Fig. 1: Detail of Booth poverty map, showing the East End.

On the first glance the map seems to support the idea of East-West-divide, with large areas coloured in yellow to indicate "upper-middle and upper classes" dwelling here while on the other end towards East London black and dark blue—the earlier for Lowest classes, the latter for very poor—seem to dominate. Looking at the details it is striking that a distinction between rich West and poor East End is oversimplifying matters. Areas labelled as "poor" or even "very poor" are located across London; the same applies to the "well off" districts.[236]

In 1900 another map also showing a large section of East London appeared. Compiled by Geo E. Arkell it was published as an appendix to the book *The Jew in London* in which Charles Russell and Henry S. Lewis presented their views on the

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[235] In addition to the colour coded poverty map, Booth compiled maps and data of religious institutions and their charity efforts by interviewing some 1800 church leaders. He found that such charity work was insufficient to meet the need, and that religion was most active in the upper middle class. Booth also mapped all bars, restaurants and stores that sold liquor to assess the spatial distribution of drinking and poverty rates.

[236] Cf. Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900* (London; New York: Verso, 1999). For further assessments of Booth mapping work cf. Martin Bulmer, Kevin Bales, and Kathryn Kish Sklar, eds., *The Social survey in historical perspective, 1880-1940* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), Bruce Ivor Coleman, ed., *The idea of the city in ineteenth-century Britain* (London; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), Richard Dennis, "Modern London," in *The Cambridge urban history of Britain, Vol. III: 1840-1950*, ed. Martin Daunton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), Simon Joyce, *Capital offenses : geographies of class and crime in Victorian London* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003).

THE EAST END OF LONDON c. 1900, SHOWING JEWISH RESIDENTS IN PROPORTION TO THE TOTAL POPULATION
(Adapted from Russell Lewis, *The Jew in London*).
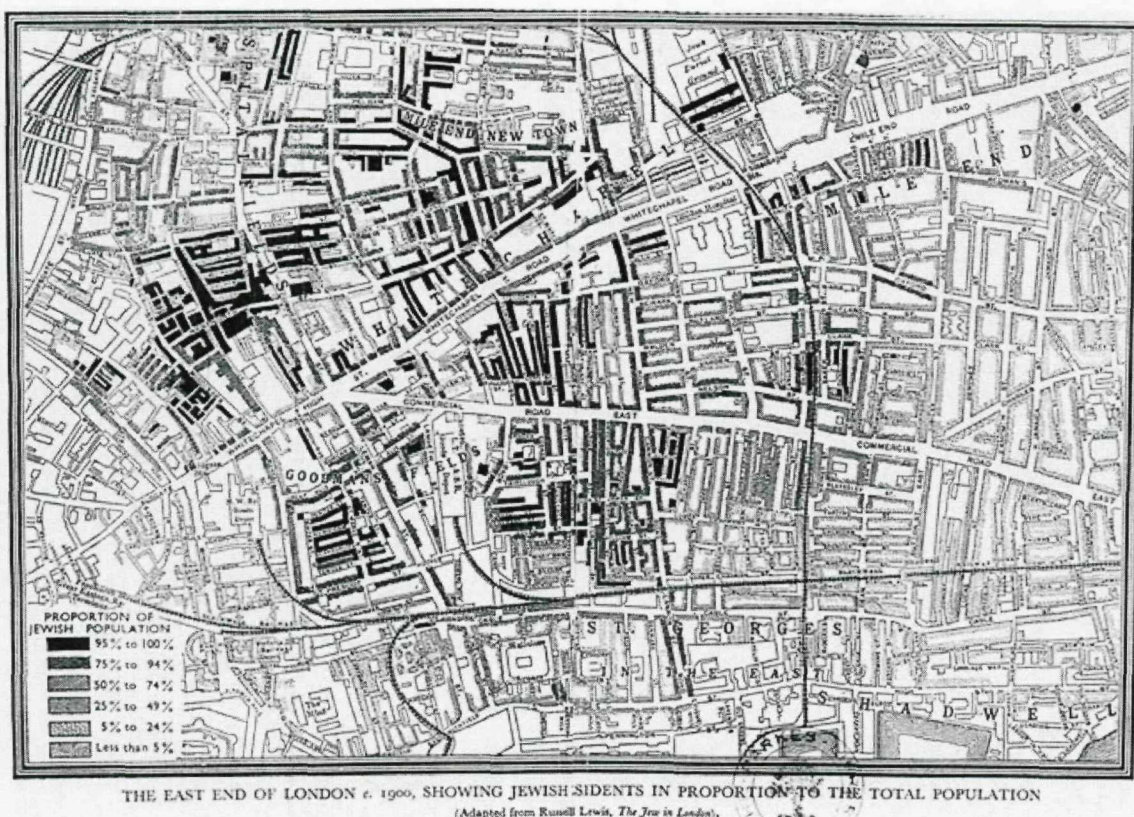
Fig. 2 : Reproduction of the East End map by Geo E. Arkell in *The Jew in London*.

Jewish settlement of East London. Although Ankell explicitly orientated his mapping work at that of Booth, his map did not depict the stratification of Tower Hamlets but was prepared "to show the extent of the Jewish settlement" indicated through a scheme of colours ranging from bright red (less than 5 per cent of Jews) to dark blue (95 to 100 per cent Jews).[237]

As with the poverty map Ankell's work was more than an attempt to represent the state of affairs but to provide a basis for interpretation. Thus the "Judaisation of East London" or the assumption that "[o]f the future of these districts there is little doubt but that they must soon become entirely Jewish" were deduced.[238]

Despite attempts to evaluate the situation of East London and its Jewish settlement, the turn of the century saw another development. If the 1880s were marked by spectacular and heated debates of urban vices that continued well until the eve of World War I, the years around the turn-of-century saw different means of encountering the urban 'Other'. London bourgeois men and women, driven by their fascination of the unknown world of the urban poor, began to stroll through the East

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[237] Russell and Lewis, *The Jew in London*, xxxiii. It is striking to compare both maps with each other. Although some years apart it can clearly be deduced from such a comparison that the areas with a majority of Jewish inhabitants are not the ones Booth identified as the most destitute or very poor.
[238] Ibid., xlii-xliv.

End. The social practice of "Slumming", Seth Koven argues, involved "some sort of 'descent', across urban spatial and class, gender and sexual boundaries" and the poor become "objects of elite spectatorship."[239] Slumming revealed urban power relations and it was part of the creation of the "urban other" through urban encounter. Not only did middle and upper middle class Londoners start exploring the unknown areas of their city, the East End also became a destination of urban Jewish tourism. While the Fourth Zionist Congress was held in the British capital in 1900[240] the Viennese Zionist newspaper *Die Welt* seized the opportunity to suggest its readers (among them also delegates of the congress) a tour through London beyond "Baedekers 'Sehenswürdigkeiten'" ("Baedekers 'sights'").[241] Under the title "What we shall see in London", Leo Rafaels called the delegates of the Zionist Congress not to let an opportunity of seeing "Jewish curiosities of London" slip by, and called them to go and explore the Jewish settlement in Whitechapel too.[242] Rafaels animated his reads in particular to study non-Jewish philanthropic institutions such as the Toynbee Hall or the Salvation Army and their praiseworthy activities. The work of these institutions could be of use to the Zionist movement Rafaels was convinced.[243] Urban tourism and bourgeois slumming were late developments in a process, starting roughly in the 1880s, that brought about major changes in urban perceptions and new forms of urban exploration.

In its preliminary stages, the late Victorian debates on the city were not focused around Jewish aspects of urban poverty. Throughout the following years though a growing interest in Jewish matters, especially the influence of the influx of foreign Jews from Eastern and Central Europe and their crowding together in urban slums such as London's East End gained more and more attention by contemporary observers and analysts. Questions concerning the "alien Jews" now were placed at

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[239] Seth Koven, *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 9, 283. Unfortunately, Koven ignores the role of Jews as part of this social practice entirely.

[240] Michael Berkowitz has investigated the impact the Congress had on Zionism in England and even on non-Zionist London/Anglo-Jewry. Michael Berkowitz, "Introduction: 1900 to 2000 and beyond: Taking nationalism for granted?," in *Nationalism, Zionism and Ethnic Mobilization of the Jews in 1900 and Beyond*, ed. Michael Berkowitz (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2004).

[241] The German term Sehenswürdigkeiten literally means „what is worth been seen". It is this connotation on which Rafaels develops his claim that there are many places worth been explored beyond the general tourist streams. Despite Rafaels claim it were guidebook publishers such as Baedeker that had started to direct visitors into notorious slum districts such as Whitechapel and Shoreditch by mapping excursions to philanthropic institutions such as the Toynbee Hall—also mentioned by Rafaels—located in these districts. Cf. Karl Baedeker, *London and Its Environs* (Leipzig: Karl Baedeker, 1887).

[242] *Die Welt*, 27.07.1900.

[243] *Die Welt*, 27.07. and 10.08.1900.

the heart of discussing urban problems. Throughout these debates, a mixture of social and moral aspects was brought together. The sensationalism of the early contributions to these debates resulted not only in a public awareness of urban problems but also levelled the path for closer investigations into the state of affairs, the extent of the problems and serious discussion about its possible solution. Following the early contributions of 1883, a change in Victorian's perception of the urban took place as Beatrice Potter described in her autobiographical account *My Apprenticeship*:

> "A new consciousness of sin among men of intellect and men of property; a consciousness at first philanthropic and practical [...] then literary and artistic [...] and finally analytical, historical and explanatory."[244]

Although social investigators, namely Charles Booth and his team, were driven by the idea of replacing sensational depictions of urban poverty, often based on second hand information, with scientifically gathered facts and empirical data, they too contributed to the creation of an image of the urban poor and their urban spaces. Attempts such as slumming and exploration can be seen as attempts by the Victorian bourgeoisie to regain control over the foreign territory a stone's throw away from their doorsteps. Attempts to gain mastery over the "foreign" urban territory were manifested in the usage of imperial and colonial rhetoric in describing the London slums as well as by emphasising the need of moral uplifting of the poor, bringing them values and culture to make them into useful parts of society. [245]

Late Victorian London saw a deepening territorialisation of the urban landscape. Through the debates surrounding urban poverty since the early 1880s, the divide between East and West End was deepened. It was this creation of images of East London out of a mixture of facts and fictions that formed an important backdrop on which the relation between East and West London Jews developed throughout this period.

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[244] Beatrice Webb, *My Apprenticeship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press in co-operation with The London School of Economics and Political Science, 1979 [1926]), 154.

[245] While official approaches to the problem of urban poverty had traditionally placed great faith in the practical work and doctrinal announcements of the housing reformer Octavia Hill, along with the generally uncharitable Charity Organisation Society, asserting that the difficulties facing the casual poor were generally self-made and boiled down to questions of character and moral fibre and that thus the challenge was to counter the process of 'demoralization' by training the poor in habits of punctuality, thrift and respectability, the late nineteenth century debates saw a partial shift in perception. Although moralising attitudes towards the poor continued to be of influence it the discussion and investigation of urban poverty lead to the realisation that social problems had to be countered also in other ways. Hunt, *Building Jerusalem: The Rise and Fall of the Victorian City*, 402.

Despite all their stylistic and methodological difference, most of contributions to the late Victorian debates around urban problems underlined distinctness, inscribed the demarcation line between East and West, rich and poor within the metropolis. Yet, all these different insights into urban matters did more than merely inscribe distinctions, differences, dichotomies and antagonism. Be it the compilation of Booth's poverty map, the varieties of personal investigations into the East End by people such as George Sims, Beatrice Potter or Jack London, Joseph Jacobs measurements, or Victorian middle-class men and women that went slumming, all of these examples are also about encountering the unknown urban space and its people and thus crossing the lines drawn between them. Neither did visiting the London slum or Ghetto mean to give of one's social standpoint or one's norms nor did it lead to perceiving East and West as equal. However, this juxtaposition indicated the possibilities of not only overcoming the demarcation lines between East and West but it also allowed to get a more accurate and multidimensional picture of the "urban Other".

Although Jews were not numerous among the social investigators, they participated in the explorations into the world of urban poverty. As the example of Booth and Potter's inquiry clearly shows it were the Anglo-Jewish "West End" elites that provided a lot of information about the Jewish East End. In turn, the Anglo-Jewish establishment was not left uninfluenced by the reports of the conditions of their co-religionists living east of the Tower. A growing number of West End Jews started to follow the track of fellow explorers and went to see the world of East End Jewry themselves, as numerous contributions of first hand accounts of such visits to the established Jewish press show.[246]

As was the case with Victorian society, the Jewish establishment became aware that the conditions of their brethren in the Eastern boroughs of the metropolis could not be left unchecked, that it was not enough to content themselves with trying to send the foreign Jews off to America. Thus social investigation was partly responsible for a rise in Victorian and Anglo-Jewish philanthropic activity throughout the concluding decades of the nineteenth century; activities that were based on the distinction of East and West but also activities that inhered elements of encounter, crossing lines and renegotiating one's place within an urban setting.

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[246] Cf. for just one such example *JC*, 23 August 1895.

Fender and Flower-pots/ Control and Encounters: Trajectories of Anglo-Jewish Philanthropy

Pauperism and the alleged persistent foreignness of the Jewish immigrants coming to Britain's shores and their massing in London's East End were calling for a response by the 'native' Jewish community. Driven by the anxiety that the rush of alien Jews would threaten to swamp and transform the high English character of the community, the Anglo-Jewish establishment was eager to come up with means to anglicise the newcomers and thus make them less visible. Philanthropy became one of the central instruments in this context.

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Anglo-Jewry remodelled existing communal institutions namely the Jewish Board of Guardians attempting to face the new challenges of mass migration.[247] Numerous new philanthropic and charitable institutions were created often overlapping in their direction of aid.

Most of these institutions improved living standards of the Jewish poor—often in a paternalistic manner—and aimed for the anglicisation of the foreigners living in their midst, making them to become "good Englishmen/ women."[248]

Several scholars have argued that one of the central features of Anglo-Jewish philanthropy was to gain social control—and it has to be added, also cultural control—over the immigrants.[249] Anglo-Jewish philanthropy highlights the ambivalence characterising the intra-communal relationship between "native" and immigrant community. It was driven by conflicting motives of "humanitarianism and self-interest".[250] Philanthropic activity undoubtably became an instrument of domination and destruction of Yiddish subculture and a means by which the establishment hoped to regain control over the territory of the Jewish East End.

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[247] Despite many weaknesses, Vivian Lipman's study *A Century of Social Service* on the history of the Jewish Board of Guardians remains one of the best on its subject. More recently, Mordechai Rozin has given a different interpretation on the early history of the Board. Mordechai Rozin, *The Rich and the Poor: Jewish Philanthropy and Social Control in Nineteenth-Century London* (Brighton; Portland, Ore.: Sussex Academic Press, 1999).

[248] Susan L. Tananbaum, "Generations of Change: The Anglicization of Russian-Jewish Immigrant Women in London, 1880-1939" (PhD, Brandeis University, 1991), Stephen Sharot, "Native Jewry and the Religious Anglicization of Immigrants in London, 1870-1905," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 16, no. 1 (1974), Suzanna Kirsch Greenberg, "Compromise and Conflict: The Education of Jewish Immigrant Children in London in the Aftermath of Emancipation, 1881-1905" (PhD, Stanford University, 1985), Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880-1920*.

[249] Cf. especially Chapter 3 in Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880-1920*. Rozin too emphasises the importance of social control, cf. Rozin, *The Rich and the Poor: Jewish Philanthropy and Social Control in Nineteenth-Century London*.

[250] Derek J. Penslar, *Shylock's children : economics and Jewish identity in modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 182.

However, reducing Anglo-Jewish philanthropy to this aspect and seeing it exclusively as the product of class antagonism[251]—which indeed formed an important background for a number of philanthropic endeavours—is ignoring another central element of the philanthropic endeavour: that of encounter. Mere encounters between donor and recipient, between West and East End, rich and poor did not *per se* reconcile existing differences. Philanthropy rather provided a stage for these differences and different conceptions of urban Jewish culture to compete with each other.[252] Thus, studying Jewish philanthropy allows an insight into conflicting ways of finding a way of managing the challenges of the urban environment. Moreover, philanthropy was not exclusively directed towards people. As the United Synagogue's East End Scheme shows, it also aimed for the transformation of entire parts of the city through "improving" their Jewish infrastructure. Consequently, philanthropic activity was driven by an ideology that aimed for the destruction of an emerging Yiddish urban milieu and to replace with homogenous anglicised urban culture. In response, immigrants developed their own networks of self-help and intra-communal charity as well as communal organisation, challenging the elites' attempts to gain social, cultural and territorial control over London's Jewish East End.

The importance of acculturationist philanthropy and the ideology of anglicisation through philanthropy and the often irreconcilable conflicts between West End Jewish institutions and East End networks of self-help seem to contradict the importance of encounter through philanthropy overshadowing it with elements of control and domination. There are indicators for a shift in turn of the century Anglo-Jewish philanthropy, away from a predominantly negative perception of the Jewish immigrants towards attempts of negotiating different social and cultural interests within London Jewry.

Furthermore, Anglo-Jewish philanthropy was not a one-dimensional activity from donors to recipient but rather one that shaped the identity of both groups. As Susan L. Tanenbaum has shown, it was not merely the anglicisation of the foreign Jewish immigrants but also the attempt by the Jewish establishment to ensure its social

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[251] Rozin's interpretation, following Marxist analysis, (over-)emphasises the importance of class antagonism in the Board's work. Ibid.

[252] Several scholars of modern Jewish Philanthropy have pointed to the importance of philanthropy in the transformation of Jewish identities, arguing modern form of Jewish philanthropy in turn were shaped through new patterns of Jewish identity. Cf. Rainer Liedtke, *Jewish Welfare in Hamburg and Manchester, c. 1850-1914* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1998), Derek J. Penslar, *Shylock's children : economics and Jewish identity in modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

status and acceptance within and by the non-Jewish society, e.g. through the adaptation of Victorian elements of charitable activity, that were driving forces behind the philanthropic endeavours of Anglo-Jewry, making it a formative element in the renegotiation of West as well as East End Jewish identities.[253]

One of the central adaptations from Victorian philanthropy by Anglo-Jewry was that of moralising the poor, of teaching those values and a proper way of life in order to allow them integration into the broader society. These attempts found expression in different aspects of Anglo-Jewish philanthropy. Education for the immigrant children in Anglo-Jewish institutions such as the Jews' Free School or the Stepney Jewish school and the fight against "backwardness" of *cheder* instruction, were but one means of moralising the immigrants[254]—another the creation of the Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade.[255] Besides these institutional attempts, it was the social practice of visitation through which Anglo-Jewish philanthropist attempted to bring values to their alien co-religionists.

Already prior to the period of mass immigration visitation had become a central element of Anglo-Jewish philanthropic activity.[256] The first Committee the newly founded Board of Guardians formed two years after its own establishment was the Visiting Committee with none other than Frederick D. Mocatta as its first chairman.[257] The Board of Guardians was not the only institution to give centrality to visitation work. Shortly after its establishment in 1871, the United Synagogue set up a Visitation Committee.[258]

Early in 1884, as part of lecture series on propose and method of charitable relief Hermann Adler gave his views on the question of visiting as part of Anglo-Jewry's philanthropic activities. Right from the beginning of his talk, he stressed the

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[253] Susan L. Tananbaum, "Philanthropy and Identity: Gender and Ethnicity in London," *Journal of Social History* 30 (1997).

[254] Cf. Gerry Black, *JFS : the history of the Jews' Free School, London since 1732* (London: Tymsder Publishing, 1998). For an estimation and critical review of the cheder system cf. Russell and Lewis, *The Jew in London*, 28 ff.

[255] Sharman Kadish, *'A good Jew and a good Englishman': The Jewish Lads' & Girls' Brigade, 1895-1995* (London ; Portland, Or: Vallentine Mitchell, 1995).

[256] Eugene Black has called it "Anglo-Jewry's key" to philanthropy. Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880-1920*, 76.

[257] *JC*, 20.03.1896. Eugene Black argues that the experimenting of Samuel Montagu and the Rev. A. A. Green with visiting on a private basis played a major role in the formation of the Board's visiting committee. Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880-1920*, 90.

[258] United Synagogue, Visitation Committee, Minutes, 1871-1914, LMA: ACC/2805/
Laura V. Marks' estimation of the average number of visits to Jewish inmates in various Poor Law Institutions made by the Visitation committee between 1873 and 1912 give an idea of the extent of its work. Lara V. Marks, *Model mothers: Jewish Mothers and Maternity Provision in East London, 1870-1939* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1994), 191-92, Table 5.1.

importance of encountering through visitation. "[O]ur philanthropy must not be confined to the dispensing of relief on the part of official almoners," Adler said, but "[t]he rich [...] and the poor must meet together face to face."

Stressing the importance of visiting the poor, Adler engaged practical matters of the visitation work, condemning "red-tape rules of officialism" in this important quest. In order to illustrate how visiting work should not be performed Adler mentioned the anecdote of a visitor going to a poor woman's cottage, not knowing what to do, "the occupant of the cottage instructed her as to her duties. 'First you read a psalm, then you ask me whether my place is tidy, then you give me a shilling, and go.'" What was rather needed, Adler argued is "practical counsel and direct aid to enable them to gain a decent living." Similar to the ideology of the Jewish Board of Guardians Adler called for loans rather than alms to be given to the poor. Further visitations should ensure the appropriate use of such loans and supervise the poor further. In continuing to give further "practical advices" for the visitors, Adler remarked:

> "You must teach the poor you visit some few indispensable lessons of hygiene. [...] you should give the poor, not tracts, but a fender and a proper fireguard to prevent the sad accidents of children falling into the fire [...]. Give them a few pictures for their bare walls, a few flower-pots for their window-sills."[259]

These lines now seem laughable but fender, pictures, and flower-pots highlight the ideological core of Anglo-Jewish philanthropic activities and its ambivalence for it was visitation that took Anglo-Jewry into the homes of their poor and formed a realm for encounter between East and West, rich and poor but at the same time it also was a mechanism of social and cultural control by the one over the other group. Once in the homes of their poor, Board visitors attempted to determine how family life should be organised.[260] The main object of Anglo-Jewish philanthropy, Hannah Hyam, one of the leading female philanthropists of Anglo-Jewry, argued in a speech delivered at the Conference of Jewish Women in 1902, is "the moral and material advancement of the destitute, the strengthening of character, the encouragement of effort, so as to lead to independence and self-help", visitation being a central feature in the attempt to achieve this.[261]

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[259] *JC*, 25 January 1884.

[260] On the centrality of the home as sphere philanthropic activity was directed to and especially on women as target group thereof cf. The contributions by Tananbaum, "Generations of Change: The Anglicization of Russian-Jewish Immigrant Women in London, 1880-1939", Tananbaum, "Philanthropy and Identity: Gender and Ethnicity in London."

[261] *JC*, 16 May 1902. On the Conference of Jewish Women see also Rickie Burman, "Middle-Class Anglo-Jewish Lady Philanthropists and Eastern European Jewish Women: the first national conference of Jewish women, 1902," in *Women, Migration and Empire*, ed. Joan Grant (Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham, 1996).

Already prior to the 1902 conference, Jewish women had played an important role in philanthropic activities, both as agents and targets of anglicisation through charity.[262] It was Anglo-Jewish ladies that engaged in particular in visitation work. Convinced that "ladies will, probably, prove more efficient in this respect than men", the Jewish Board of Guardians had formed a Ladies Visiting Sub-Committee in 1879.[263] Three years later, emphasising the importance of female visitation, the Board created a Ladies Conjoint Visiting to coordinate its work with that of the Ladies Visiting Committee of the United Synagogue. Gender issues were not the only ones revealing the ambivalences of Anglo-Jewish philanthropy. The practice of visiting too showed the ambivalent if not paradoxical juxtaposition of social control and attempts to bring the applicants for relief "under Anglo-Jewish scrutiny and 'discipline'"[264] as well as direct encounter, thus establishing reciprocity between east and west. Visiting as a central element of Anglo-Jewish philanthropy hence brought "native" and newly arrived London Jews in contact with each other and provided a ground to develop mutual understanding. However, class bonds often prevailed over gender solidarity.

A "House of Thousand Destinies" – The Jews' Temporary Shelter

The foundational history of the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter—Stefan Zweig called it emphatically the "House of Thousand Destinies"[265]—is both one of competing conceptions of philanthropy within nineteenth-century London-Jewry and one of the subsequently successful negotiations between them.

Eugene C. Black has rightly pointed out that "East End Jewry was no passive community".[266] Philanthropy was not limited to the establishment's institutions such as the Jewish Board of Guardians but the immigrants themselves attempted to take up matters of charity and mutual support. Such attempt partly grew out of the necessity of initial aid for the newcomers upon their arrival in London, since the

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[262] Susannah Taylor, "The Role of Jewish Women in National, Jewish Philanthropic Organisations in Britain from c. 1880 to 1945" (PhD, University of Southampton, 1996), Marks, *Model mothers: Jewish Mothers and Maternity Provision in East London, 1870-1939*. On women's role in anglicising immigrant women cf. Tananbaum, "Generations of Change: The Anglicization of Russian-Jewish Immigrant Women in London, 1880-1939", Tananbaum, "Philanthropy and Identity: Gender and Ethnicity in London." For general introduction to female involvement in late Victorian philanthropy (with little references to Jewish women) cf. F. K. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1980), F. K. Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse: Philanthropy in Modern Britain* (London; Boston: Faber, 1988).

[263] *JC*, 28 March 1879.

[264] Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880-1920*, 78-79.

[265] Stefan Zweig, *House of a thousand destinies* ([London]: Typ. Shenval Press, 1937).

[266] Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880-1920*, 194.

Jewish Board of Guardians followed a policy that denied any charitable support to individuals until they had lived in Britain for a period of at least six month.

Against this background, Simon Cohen who had arrived in England in 1870 as an immigrant from Poland "allowed an unoccupied portion of his premise in Church Lane, Whitechapel, to be as a Refuge, which gradually absorbed within its precincts a considerable proportion of the homeless foreign Jews."[267]

The development of this temporary shelter reveals both the self-initiative of the Jewish immigrants in matters of philanthropy as well as the struggle with philanthropic institutions of the native Jews that regarded it as a challenge to their position. Notwithstanding the struggle between both groups, the example of the shelter also illustrates the possibility to overcome differences between newcomers and natives and to reach cooperation in matters of urban Jewish philanthropy. Cohen had set up this improvised shelter in 1879 without bothering to ask the permission of Anglo-Jewish institutions such as the Board of Guardians.[268]

In the wake of debates concerning the unsanitary conditions of many dwelling in London's East End[269], the Jewish establishment became aware of the existence of the shelter on Church Lane. In April 1885, Frederick D. Mocatta and Lionel L. Alexander paid a surprise visit to the premise on behalf of the Jewish Board of Guardians. In their subsequent report given to Board, they pointed to the desolate sanitary conditions of the place. Moreover, they expressed their concern that "such a harbour of refuge must tend to invite helpless foreigners to this country, and therefore was not a desirable institution to exist".[270]

Consequently, the Board thereupon was working successfully towards the closure of the refuge. These high-handed decisions led to protests in the East End. Presided by Hermann Landau a meeting was called "with the object of eliciting public opinion as to the desirability of the continued existence of the Home [i.e. Shelter] in Church Lane" at the Jewish Working Men's Club in Great Alien Street. Both Mocatta and

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[267] Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter, *Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter: First Annual Report, 1885-6 (5646-7)* (London: Jews' Temporary Shelter, 1886), 6.

[268] Little is known about the early history of the shelter. The Anglo-Jewish press did not pay any attention to the improvised refuge until much later.

[269] Lancet "Report of the Lancet Special Sanitary Commission on the Polish Colony of Jew Tailors," *Lancet* 123, no. 3166 (1884). The Report was reprinted and intensely discussed in the *Jewish Chronicle* (9 May 1884 and the following weeks). See also C. L. Barker, "Jewish Migration to South Africa and the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter, London, 1880-1914" (M.Phil., University of Leicester, 1998).

[270] Jewish Board of Guardians, Minute Book, 13 April 1885, University of Southampton, Hartley Library, Special Collections, MS 173/1/1/1.

Alexander were present to defend the Board's decision. The audience "consisted largely of Polish" Jews, among them the founder of the refuge Simon Cohen. The situation was tense and on several points during the meeting, it was feared that it would end up in "a serious riot". Although Mocatta tried to calm down the situation he remained uncompromising as to the closure of the refuge, pointing out that premise in its present condition was "in short, a scandal". Once again, he emphasised that the closure was not merely the result of the unsanitary conditions but to its attracting further immigrants.

"I do not wish to see the dock-gates of England closed to the foreign poor," Mocatta stated, "but we must at the same time remember not only the poor unfortunate people who come here with only their clothes, and without the knowledge of the English language; we must think of the many who are here, and who, after trying many years, are just paying their way." Having said this, he concludes that "if we bring these people here with false hopes and they fall into the hands of the missionaries, it is more our fault than theirs."[271] According to the *Jewish Chronicle* the meeting ended in chaotic scenes and the heated atmosphere unloaded itself in collisions between "some English Jewish lads and some of the Polish Jews" that "it was found necessary to call in the assistance of the police to disperse the crowd."[272] Already prior to Mocatta's visit West End observers had gone to see the refuge at 19 Church Lane themselves. A letter to the *Jewish Chronicle* in March 1885 gave a quite different impression of the shelter. Although the author, writing under the name "O. J. S.", too mentioned "its abject misery" that "is worse than any workhouse" he came to a different conclusion than Mocatta. Suggesting that a "'responsible committee'" should be formed or at least "a few gentlemen" should "supply a few cheap mattresses for the older men to lie upon at night, and some blankets or rugs" he hoped to improve the condition of the shelter and for the refuge-seekers. Quite different from the view of the Board this account furthermore stressed the fact that the Shelter prevented many Jewish newcomers from going to the nearby Christian Mission houses in the same street.[273] Initially representatives of the London cousinhood ignored such calls. It was rather members of the *nouveaux riches* that became engaged in finding a permanent solution to the shelter question. Hermann Landau, himself a Polish born immigrant who upon his coming to England had

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[271] *JC*, 1 May 1885. For another report on this meeting cf. *Die Tsukunft*, I, 41 (May 1, 1885).
[272] *JC*, 1 May 1885.
[273] *JC*, 27 March 1885.

become a successful stockbroker had long engaged himself in finding "some suitable premise as a shelter."[274] Assisted by Samuel Montagu, the brothers Ellis and Henry Franklin, and others Landau organised several meeting to discuss his plan.[275] As a result of the quarrel around the closure of Simon Cohen's improvised shelter, and following heated debates between Landau and representatives of the Board of Guardians, it was decided to entrust the further evaluation of the question concerning a shelter and developing a scheme for it in which the Board might cooperate, to a conjoint committee consisting of representatives of the Board and Landau.

Lionel L. Cohen, President of the Board of Guardians was appointed chairman of the committee that after a number of meetings came up with a scheme. According to this, the Shelter should abandon the idea of "distributing relief in money or in any form, except that of meals on the premises", as well as "opening any workshop for the purpose of giving actual employment." New arrivals were to be admissible into the Shelter for a maximum period of two weeks with out being allowed to re-enter thereafter, and in case an inmate did not succeed in finding employment over this period, the Shelter should refer him to the Board for repatriation.[276] This compromise was presented to the Board of Guardians on October 5, 1885, but although Lionel L. Cohen recommended its acceptance, it was rejected by ten to four votes.[277]

Despite the Board's rejection, Landau did not end his quest of establishing a more appropriate Temporary Shelter for Jewish immigrants. Furthermore, he continued to hope for a future involvement of the Board of Guardians in the establishment and upkeep of this shelter. In a letter to the *Jewish Chronicle,* he pointed out that "[r]egarding the action of the Board of Guardians, I have only to say that events will prove the wisdom of the minority in desiring that this Shelter should work in harmony with, and under the guidance of, the Board."[278]

As in many other cases the Anglo-Jewish press, above all the *Jewish Chronicle,* provided a forum for different groups within London's Jewish community to promote their views. Thus, it became a major space of the commingling of different urban Jewish perspectives. The following week Landau and his supporters called in a

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[274] Mundy, "Memoirs," Chapter 2.
[275] Mundy gives a list of people who attended either all or some of these meetings.
[276] Mundy, "Memoirs," Chapter 3.
[277] Jewish Board of Guardians, Minute Book, 8 October 1885, University of Southampton, Hartley Library, Special Collections, MS 173/1/1/1.
[278] *JC*, 16 October 1885.

public meeting to formally establish the "Poor Jews' (Temporary) Shelter".[279] Besides electing a provisional general Committee for the institution the meeting passed a resolution in form of a letter to the Board of Guardians. This letter, undersigned on behalf of the Provisional Committee, by Hermann Landau, stated that the establishment of the Shelter was "secured by the widespread sympathy with which it has been greeted by the community, and especially that portion of it that resides in the East End of London". Having pointed to the support for their quest by the local Jewish population of the East End the letter picked up this issue again by pointing to the praiseworthy attempts of the "comparatively poor Jewish inhabitants of the East End of London" to assistance the poor immigrants as good as they could. The committee members emphasised their own immigrant background and thus claimed to have "a better acquaintance with the feelings and motives of their countrymen" from Eastern Europe. The letter closed with the assurance towards the Board that "under any circumstances you may be assured that with or without direct cooperation on your part we are determined that none but the most cordial relations shall subsist between your body and our own, both being inspired with the same spirit of true Jewish charity."[280]

What is most striking about these last lines is the emphasis of the fraternal bands with the East End Jews and the alleged sharing of their experience by the organisers of the Shelter, portraying themselves as immigrants. Despite the questionable shared experience with the new arrivals at the London Docks, the emphasis on one's own "immigrant heritage" was not limited to the supporters of the Shelter, most of them had achieved a high social standing and subsequently dwelt in the Western parts of the metropolis.[281] During the meeting at the Jewish Working Men's Club Frederick D. Mocatta too, stressed the point when he told the crowd: "In speaking about the Jews I dislike to use the world 'foreigner.' Although by accident I happen to belong to one of the oldest English families, my ancestors were foreign, and so were the ancestors of all English Jews."[282]

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[279] So fare the history of the new Shelter has been examined predominantly within the framework of migration-studies, especially in connection with the cooperation of shipping companies and the shelter and the work of the institution on helping Jewish immigrants to travel on towards South Africa. Cf. Barker, "Jewish Migration to South Africa and the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter, London, 1880-1914", Aubrey Newman, "The Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter: An Episode in Migration Studies," *Jewish Historical Studies* 40 (2005). See also the online "Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter Database" (URL: http://chrysalis.its.uct.ac.za/shelter/shelter.htm; 22/06/2006).
[280] *JC*, 23 October 1885.
[281] Hermann Landau for example resided in 11 Leinster Square in Bayswater.
[282] *JC*, 1 May 1885.

One might argue that this is nothing but mere rhetoric but such statements point to a coming together of East and West for a common cause of rich and poor.

Some weeks later, in jet another letter to the *Jewish Chronicle* the president of the newly established Shelter, Ellis A. Franklin together with the Vice-President and Treasurer—Hermann Landau and Samuel Montagu—stressed their connection with the East End and calling for financial support to the new institution for "[w]ith the exception of a little sympathy and countenance from the West" the expenses of the Shelter were "carried on by the poor East End Jews themselves, who contribute their pennies a week."[283]

Such an appeal was not to be the last one. Throughout its existence, the Shelter remained dependent on donations, especially in times of new major waves such as that of Roumanian Jews in 1900 or that following the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904. Among others it were the Rothschilds "who immediately issued appeals for funds, heading the list themselves with munificent donation".[284] Despite financial difficulties, the new Shelter opened its doors at 12 Great Garden Street in November 1885 providing just ten beds. This premise too soon was found overcrowded and quite inadequate for the purposes of the Shelter. Thus, the Shelter's Executive Committee commissioned a sub-committee with finding an appropriated building.[285] The formal opening of the Shelter in Leman Street was honoured by the presence of the Chief Rabbi.[286] Soon after its opening, the new institution was enthusiastically appraised as a success.[287]

While the new shelter succeeded in providing a more sanitary and equipped accommodation for destitute immigrants than the previous on Church Lane the organisers of the Shelter still saw themselves confronted with the reproach that their institution attracted even more Eastern European Jews to migrate to England. Called in front of parliamentary committees investigating the situation of London's East End

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[283] *JC*, 13 November 1885.

[284] Other institutions, such as the Russo-Jewish Committee or the Jewish Colonization Association were among the institutional donators. Abraham Mundy, "Some Reminiscences of the Shelter's Activities for the Last Quarter of a Century [typoscript - not paginated], [1922]" in JML: 1983.346.1, Chapter 5.

[285] Mundy, "Some Reminiscences" in JML: 1983.346.1, Chapter 5 and 6.

[286] Ibid., Chapter 7. Cf. also *JC*, 16 April 1886. Both's reports are almost identical.

[287] The visitors' book of the shelter, kept from mid-May 1886 onwards indicates this clearly. Londoners, both from the direct neighbourhoods of the East End and from the Western districts visited the Shelter. Moreover, numerous international visitors from continental Europe, and from as far away as Melbourne or the United States came to examine the work of the Shelter. "Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter, Visitor Book, 1886," LMA: LMA/4184/2/4/1.

as witnesses in 1888 and in 1903, representatives of the Shelter were confronted repeatedly with questions concerning the shelter attracting further immigration.

In his statement to the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration in 1903, Herman Landau outlined the principles according to which the Shelter operated, stressing that its primary task was to provide "temporary refuge and protection for those immigrants who were proceeding to America, Africa, and other countries" and that "The relief given by the shelter, is essentially only temporary, and cannot by any stretch of the imagination be termed an attraction to the immigrants."[288]

Lloyd P. Gartner has pointed out that the Shelter and the Jewish Board of Guardians originally "embodied opposing outlooks on immigration policy." Over time, both sides though realised the necessity of a *de facto* cooperation.[289] One can add that it was not merely the different outlooks on immigration policy but on how to welcome and integrate the immigrants in London that divides both institutions.

Furthermore and more importantly, the example of the Shelter illustrates the interrelation between native and immigrant Jewish community in London.

By the time of Landau's statement, the Shelter had become an established institution that had been passed through by tens of thousands of immigrants.[290] Furthermore, the work of the shelter had proven that a joint effort of local East End self-help with the backing of respective members of the West End community had lead to a success.

The shelter had become both a symbol for the dividing forces within Anglo-Jewish philanthropy as well as for the potentials of negotiating different views and subsequently, even if it took a long time, to establish a common ground for communal action.

The East End Strikes Back

Not always were compromises achievable as easily as in the case of the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter. Throughout the decades around the turn of the century, London Jewry witnessed the clash of different views and concepts. This was especially the

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[288] Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, *Minutes of Evidence*, vol. II, Parliamentary Papers 1903 IX, qq. 16271 and 16280. Back in 1888 Landau had given a similar statement to the House of Commons Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration, *[First] Report ..., July 27*, Parliamentary Papers 1888, XI (London: 1888), qq. 2157 ff.

[289] Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914*, 54.

[290] Landau spoke of about 14,000 to 15,000 individuals that had passed through the Shelter between 1896 and 1903. Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, *Minutes of Evidence*, vol. II, Parliamentary Papers 1903 IX, q. 16278

case in the quest to improve the living conditions of the Jewish poor. Although some of these clashes escalated and ended in open violence, the following examples highlight that London Jews tried hard to find ways to negotiate and to find a common ground on which differences could be resolve.

Ezra Mendelssohn has shown that cities of the Russian Empire provided the context in which Jews developed new forms of political form of articulation and agitation.[291] Immigrants brought these new patterns of action, such as strikes, to the urban centres of the Jewish labour movement in the West.[292] In London, these new political form became important instruments for East End Jews make themselves heart. Following the successful Match-Girls' Strike in 1888, the year 1889 saw growing industrial action in which East End Jews played an active role. Thousands of tailors followed the call for a general strike by a meeting of Jewish tailors on 26 August 1889.[293] These protests by the Jewish working class were in part a fight against the employers demanding better working condition. Yet they carry also elements of protest against the way the Anglo-Jewish establishment dealt with the situation of the destitute Jewish working classes and the unemployed.

While Anglo-Jewish notables initially viewed these developments as threat of their position, fearing in particular the growing influence of radical ideas such as socialist or anarchist within the Jewish immigrant milieu, a partial shift in perception took place throughout the final decade of the nineteenth and the first of the twentieth century.

By mid-September 1889, when the conflict between the growing number of tailors on strike and the masters' association had broken down Anglo-Jewish notables realised the necessity to intervene. Both Lord Rothschild and Samuel Montagu, independently and competitively, offered themselves as mediators.

Despite his involvement on behalf of the Jewish strikers, Montagu did not conceal his concerns about the growing influence of trade unionism and socialism in particular during the Jewish Tailors' strike. In a letter dated 6 November 1889, he wrote:

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[291] Ezra Mendelsohn, *Class Struggle in the Pale; the formative years of the Jewish workers' movement in Tsarist Russia* (Cambridge: University Press, 1970).

[292] For a rough overview of the developments of the Jewish labour movement in three western European cities cf. Karin Hofmeester, *Jewish workers and the labour movement : a comparative study of Amsterdam, London and Paris (1870-1914)* (Aldershot, Hants, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004). For a number of exemplary sources cf. Nancy L. Green, ed., *Jewish Workers in the Modern Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[293] David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 216. For a detailed analysis of the Jewish Tailors' Strike cf. Anne J. Kershen, *Uniting the Tailors: Trade Unionism Among the Tailoring Workers of London and Leeds, 1870-1939* (Ilford, Essex; Portland, Or.: F. Cass, 1995).

"My experience gained during the recent strike convinces me that the influence of a few Atheists over the Jewish working class can no longer be ignored. I therefore appeal with confidence to the Federation of Synagogues, comprising so large a number of observant Jews, to take the lead in combating these most serious evils."

To Montagu a "gentleman well acquainted with Jüdisch Deutsch [Yiddish] and able to lecture in English, as a Magid or Minister, (not Dayan)" to visiting the "Jews in East London, advising them in case of need and generally promoting the objects of the Federation" and preach in Federation synagogues on Sabbaths and holidays—a post he was willing to raise the salary for—seemed to be an appropriate means of counteracting these undesirable influences.[294] The *Jewish Standard* praised Montagu's offer effusively in an article entitled notably "In the East—Light" and expressed the hope that soon too "a Jewish Toynbee Hall of lay workers" may be established. The article concluded: "Mr. Montagu's action may sow the seed that shall ripen into a well-directed movement for Anglicising without de-Judaising our foreign brethren in the East End."[295]

The attempts by members of the Anglo-Jewish notability to get involved in negotiating conflicting positions concerning the working conditions of the Jewish labour class were more than the result of the mere threat of growing influence of socialism upon this class. They were also the outcome of failed attempts to negotiate conflicting political standpoints and of taking class differences serious, ones that had manifested months earlier. It was through these struggles that the Anglo-Jewish elites realised the need of a stronger trans-Jewish solidarity beyond class boundaries.

After the hard winter of 1888/89, matters had worsened among the Jewish poor. Different from the strikes that took place in the fall of 1889 the early months of the year saw clashes between Jewish rich and poor of quite a different nature.

Upon the decision to continue the series of Sabbath Addresses to Jewish Working Men and Women organised by the United Synagogue the Delegate Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler "received an intimation from a well-known Jewish socialist that it was intended to hold a synagogue "parade" of the unemployed and sweater's victims." Adler vehemently rejected this by stating "that any parade would not receive his sanction, and that the Synagogue could not be made the scene of a demonstration, but that it was open to all worshippers rich and poor." Despite this rejection, the

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[294] "Federation of Synagogues, Minuets," LMA: ACC/2893/001. The text of the letter was reprinted in *JC*, 15 November 1889.
[295] *Jewish Standard*, 22 November 1889.

Yiddish anarchist organ *Der Arbayter Fraynd* informed its readers of Adler's intention to preach the next sermon in the series of Sabbath Addresses. During this sermon, Adler openly attacked the socialists warning his audience to be aware of "such friends, for sooner or later they would lead them to difficulties from which it would be almost impossible to extricate themselves."[296] If socialist activists were looking for another excuse to depict Adler as the bourgeois representative of West End class interests that ignored the needs of the destitute Jewish East End working class his sermon provided them with one. Some weeks later on 15 March the *Arbayter Fraynd* took action and called on all workers to participate in "a synagogue parade", a procession that would mobilise the following Sabbath at Berner Street—where the International Workers Educational Club, simply known as the Berner's Street Club . had been established in 1884—to march from there to the Great Synagogue.

What followed this appeal on the morning of 16 March was described by the *Jewish Chronicle* as an event "quite unparalleled in the history of the Jews in London".[297] According to the *Chronicle*, in an attempt to underplay the situation, around 300-400 people had assembled around noon at the Socialist club to march on to Duke Street, while the *Arbayter Fraynd* was speaking of some 3,000 participants.[298]

Under the title "A Hebrew Hubbub in Whitechapel" the *East London Advertiser* described the crowd gathered in Berner Street under a "black and white banner, bearing the words 'Jewish Unemployed and Sweaters' Victims'" as "Ill-clad, dirty, unwashed, haggard and ragged, they looked in the bright sunlight, a picture of abject misery."[299] Arriving at the synagogue the leaders of the unemployed discovered the delegate Chief Rabbi was not in attendance. But that "a certain Meisels" as the *Arbayter Fraynd* put it was to give the sermon. "What can a ritual bath-house beggar tell us about the labour question?" the article went on, denigrating Meisels.[300]

Only through the presence a strong force of fifty policemen[301], "the loyal dogs of our bloodsuckers, the keepers of 'order,'" the crowd of Jewish protestors was prevented from entering the Synagogue and "protect the sacred residence of the almighty god" as the *Arbayter Fraynd* mockingly called it.

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[296] *JC*, 22 February 1889.
[297] *JC*, 23 March 1889.
[298] *JC*, *East London Advertiser*, and *Arbayter Fraynd*, 23 March 1889.
[299] *East London Advertiser*, 23 March 1889, quoted after William J. Fishman, *East End Jewish radicals, 1875-1914* (London: Duckworth, in association with the Acton Society Trust, 1975).
[300] *Der Arbayter Fraynd*, 23 March 1889, quoted after Nancy L. Green, ed., *Jewish Workers in the Modern Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 136 ff..
[301] *The Times*, 18 March 1889.

When the demand by the crowd that Adler should deliver a sermon on the subject of sweated labour was not met by the Synagogue's officials the crown decided to move accompanied by the sound of the Marseillaise to the "Mile End Waste" to hold a meeting there.[302] During this meeting, a resolution was passed condemning "Dr. Adler for refusing to comply with the courteous request of the Committee of the Jewish unemployed to preach".[303] The night following on this protest meeting saw open street violence and riots between the police and Jewish working class activists leading to the devastation of the Berner Street Working Men's Club and numerous injured.[304]

The episode of the Synagogue Parade revealed the conflicting views on how to deal with the urban challenge of poverty, unemployment and sweated labour. An article in the *Jewish Chronicle* published in the aftermath of the Synagogue Parade pointed to the link between philanthropy and the events in front of the Great Synagogue in Aldgate. "We can well understand how powerless they [the] socialists must feel in the face of the tangible evidence of West End sympathy with East End suffering," the article stated, drawing a sharp line between "Berner Street gentry" and "the honest and industrious working folk". The article clearly exposed the ideological standpoint of the Anglo-Jewish philanthropic agencies such as the Board of Guardians, i.e. the conviction that what was needed to counter the problem of the sweating system was not radical agitation but enabling the poor to help themselves through teaching them "morel aspects" as well as strengthening their "notions of worship and education" for "it must be satisfied above all out of regard for the welfare of the poor, whom we are enjoined to succour and to bless by the two-fold dictates of a common religion and a common humanity."[305] These suggestions clearly demonstrate the lack of practical support for the poor Jewish immigrants by Anglo-Jewish notability and its incapability to respond to the needs of the Jewish toilers and unemployed.

Furthermore, the struggle in the spring of 1889 was also one over space. The Berner Street Club as well as the Great Synagogue became landmarks for competing models of Jewish community within London's East End. Throughout the following decades, East End Synagogues repeatedly became the site of clashes between

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[302] *Der Arbayter Fraynd*, 23 March 1889, quoted after Green, ed., *Jewish Workers in the Modern Diaspora*.
[303] *The Times*, 18 March 1889
[304] In the aftermath of these events mutual accusations concerning who was to blame for the outbreak of violence were made. *East London Advertiser*, 23 March 1889, Freedom, March 1889 cf. Fishman, *East End Jewish radicals, 1875-1914*.
[305] *JC*, 22 March 1889.

different sections of the Jewish community. The early twentieth century saw repeated clashes between worshippers and anarchist activists breaking out on Yom Kippur in front of the Princelet Synagogue in Whitechapel during which the police were called for to part the rioters.[306]

Following the Synagogue Parade of 1889, the question of the Jewish Unemployed remained virulent. In 1894 the embodiment of established Anglo-Jewish philanthropy, the Jewish Board of Guardians itself became the target of protests by unemployed East End Jews. [307] Not unlike five years earlier, the Great Synagogue became once again the site of manifest protest, when 300 people after attending the *Erev Shabbat* service on 26 January, refused to leave the building seeking charitable support.[308] When the synagogue warden ask them to leave, telling them that they had to call in at the Jewish Board of Guardians for assistance the following Monday. The *Jewish World* described the scenes that followed:

> "A Voice: But that will not find me a lodging for to-night. I have walked the streets for three nights. Another Voice: My wife and family are starving. Mr. Rosenfeld: I cannot discuss matters here. After some persuasion, a number of the men were prevailed on to leave the building but about 200 still refused to stir, and commenced a violent discussion. Meanwhile a body of constables had closed round the malcontents, and [...] an order was given to clear the building [...]. No resistance worth mentioning was offered, and no arrests took place. Outside the crowd was kept on the move, and prevented from assembling in the vicinity of the synagogue."[309]

Prior to the events at the Great Synagogue placards in Yiddish had appeared around East London calling for a demonstration at the office of the Jewish Board of Guardians at Devonshire Square in Whitechapel. The text of the placards read as following:

> "What can the Jewish Board of Guardians do for the Jewish poor people? To hear a right answer to the question, all Jewish unemployed are invited to come Friday, 19th January, [...] to the office of the Board [...] where the Committee will explain what they can do that our wives and children should not hunger. Brothers! Come thither all to show the Committee our poverty to prove to them how we die of hunger, how we

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[306] Cf. *JC, Jewish World,* 23 September 1904, and *Der Arbayter Fraynd,* September 16, 1904. On Jewish anarchists in the East End cf. William J. Fishman, "Jewish immigrant anarchists in East London, 1875-1914 and Rudolf Rocker," in *Crucible of socialism,* ed. Louis Patsouras (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1987). For a recent account see also Paul Knepper, "The other invisible hand: Jews and anarchists in London before the First World War " *Jewish History* 22, no. 3 (2008).

[307] Nancy Green suggested a link between both protests. Green (ed.), *Jewish Workers in the Modern Diaspora,* 30.

[308] According to the Jewish Chronicle the protesters in the Great Synagogue in Duke Street had followed a "'manifesto ... calling on the unemployed Jews in the East End to take possession of the synagogue". [emphasis T.M.] *JC,* 2 February 1894.

[309] *Jewish World,* 2 February 1894.

are torn in tatters, naked and barefoot. Let us ask our rights. We want no charity, but work [...]. Let Dr. Adler with the Jewish community, see what they can do for us."[310]

Different from his position some years earlier Adler—asked by the Secretary of the Board of Guardians—offered to negotiate with the committee of the unemployed and meet with their representatives on Thursday, 18 January. During this meeting, Adler expressed his concerns that "the proposed 'demonstration' might lead to dangerous consequences, which would react disastrously on the unemployed" and in turn, the spokesmen of the unemployed assured him to "use all their efforts to prevent the 'demonstration' at the offices of the Board of Guardians from taking place" that following day.[311] Adler's success in forcing concessions out of the delegates though proved only temporary. Instead of marching towards Devonshire Square on 19 January, the demonstration took place a week later. Officials at the Board's office denied the crowd access to the building but offered to meet with representatives. The delegates of the unemployed, among them a number of Jewish trade union leaders, submitted the demands of the demonstrators to representatives of the Board of Guardians. Among others the demonstrators demanded that the Jewish Board of Guardians should immediately "relieve those cases of the Jewish Unemployed which are now in distress", to "supply work in lieu of charity" to call together a conference to discuss actions against Jewish unemployment and exploitation in the workplace, to appeal to Jewish members of Parliament on behalf of the unemployed as well as for representation of the Committee of the Unemployed on the Investigating Officer of the Board.[312]

Hermann Adler remained involved in the quest of settling matters. Following the demonstration in Whitechapel, he devoted his Sabbath sermon the following day at the New West End Synagogue to the question of the distress in London and the question of Jewish unemployment.[313] Besides strengthening existing means of communal philanthropy as well as calling for the introduction of the decisions by the Mansion House Committee, Adler suggested the "establishment of an Institution akin to Toynbee Hall, where the indwellers of the East and West would meet together, and where our working classes would be taught correctly conceptions about the relations of Labour and Capital of employers and toilers."[314]

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[310] *JC*, 19 January 1894.

[311] *JC*, 19 January 1894.

[312] For the full text of the resolution cf. *JC*, 26 January and *Jewish World*, 2 February 1894.

[313] *Jewish World* and *JC*, 2 February 1894.

[314] *JC*, 2 February 1894.

Although repeating the paternalistic attitude towards the Jewish poor by the Jewish elites, Adler's statement also showed a change in perspective into the matters of dealing with social divides when he emphasised that the coming together of East and West End was the key to the solution of the problem.

Besides the Chief Rabbi, the Jewish Board of Guardians too showed a more open attitude towards the demands of the Jewish unemployed. On Monday 29 January, following the hand over of the protesters' petition, the Board called a special meeting to discuss the matter. During the meeting, most speakers agreed that the Board's activity should remain limited to relief work and not get itself mixed up in disputes between employers and employed. Sympathy with the unemployed was expressed but the resolution in response to the petition that was subsequently passed by thirteen against nine votes met Stuart M. Samuels' request to deal with the complaints of the unemployed in a statesmanlike manner, i.e. rejecting them politely and diplomatically.[315] Hence, it came not as a surprise that meeting of the Jewish unemployed "regret[ed] the unsatisfactory reply of the Jewish Board of Guardians" and reserved for itself further action.[316]

Despite these attempts to meet the needs of the East End poor in a more open way, potential for conflict remained. Protests such as the one in front of the office of the Jewish Board of Guardians were no isolate events. Repeatedly the office provided the scene for similar, often less well organised, and sometimes violent, protestations. In 1906, for instance a group of young Russian Jewish immigrant men, frustrated by the alleged lack of support the institution had offered them, caused violent disturbance at the Board's office.

The *Jewish Chronicle* captured the drastic scene and described how the situation seethed—starting from throwing inkstands at Board clerks, overthrowing and smashing furniture and resulting in threatening the porter of the Board with a knife, so that that the police had to be called in to arrest the troublemakers.[317] In its coverage of the event, the *Chronicle* emphasised the kindness the Board showed to applicants and attempted to portray the four Russians as notorious troublemakers that had planned a "concerted and pre-arranged attack". Calling for "sympathies with the officers of the Jewish Board of Guardians" the paper nevertheless admitted that the incident was not an isolated case but that the "Board has occasionally to deal with an

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[315] *JC*, 2 February 1894.
[316] *JC*, 2 February 1894.
[317] *JC*, 16 February 1906.

unruly or obstreperous client," expressing the concern "that a somewhat truculent spirit is to be met with at times among certain section of the newly arrived in the East End", that compromises both the "claims and the chances of the deserving poor" as the image of the entire community.[318]

Between Schism and Integration – The Federation of Synagogue

Violence and protest were not the only ways in which East End Jews reacted to the establishment's rejection and indifference towards their needs and despair. East End Jews started taking matters of intra-communal support into their own hands. The example of the foundation of the temporary shelter illustrates this. While the shelter was a single institution with a rather clearly defined purpose, East End Jews established a wide network of self-organised mutual support throughout the decades bracketing the turn of the century. *Chevrot* and friendly societies stood at the centre of this network.[319] These *chevrot* were often affiliated with minor Synagogue congregations around the East End. Other friendly societies developed out of self-organised congregations.[320]

When the first edition of the *Jewish Year Book* was published in 1896, it listed only a small number of such friendly societies as part of a long "Alphabetical List of Metropolitan Charities", although there were several others in existence.[321] The 1900 edition of the *Year Book* in contrast reflected the enormous boom of the friendly societies, listing no fewer than 98 societies of various types[322] and by the following year there were no less than 176 such societies in London alone, with over 26,000 members (mostly male) on their books.[323]

Being mainly a creation of East European Jewish immigrants it comes not as a surprise that many of the societies were formed as *landsmanschaften*, uniting immigrants coming from the same places in the old world.[324] The same can be said

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[318] *JC*, 16 February 1906.
[319] Chevrot and friendly societies sometimes overlapping but not always equal.
[320] On early examples of chevrot going back into the late eighteenth century cf. Raymond Kalman, "The Jewish Friendly Societies of London, 1793-1993," *Jewish Historical Studies* 33 (1992-1994). Cf. also Geoffrey Alderman, *Modern British Jewry* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1992), 180.
[321] Joseph Jacobs, ed., *The Jewish Year Book: An Annual Record of Matters Jewish: 5658. 27th September, 1897-16th September, 1898.* (London: Greenberg & Co., 1897), 49-53..
[322] Isidore Harris, ed., *The Jewish Year Book: An Annual Record of Matters Jewish: 5662. (14th September, 1901-1st October, 1902)* (London: Greenberg & Co., 1901), 116-26.
[323] Alderman, *Modern British Jewry*, 180.
[324] The names of some friendly societies as given in the *Jewish Year Book* for the year 5663 indicate the *landmanshaft* character of them. Among others, the *Year Book* lists a Random Society, the

about a number of chevrot that were founded by members from the same places in the old country, forming a minyan after arriving in London and meeting in improvised prayer-rooms. Thus these associations transplanted elements of East European communal orientation to London, forming, what Stephen Sharot has called "cultural nuclei for the preservation of the 'Old World' culture, and social centres, integrating the immigrants in familiar groups of regional origin and social background."[325] Although numerous not all chevrot and friendly societies reflected the origin of their members. One of the main purpose of chevrot and immigrant societies was to support the members in there struggle to find their place in the new country, through the provision of sickness, invalidity and death benefits. They also played a key role in the allocation of social honour and maintenance of personal identity within the immigrant community.

Gartner has pointed out that while Gentile observers like Beatrice Potter could look upon the *chevrot*—she used the term chevra both to describe a small congregation as well as prayer rooms in the East End[326]—with sympathy and romanticism as an exotic oriental import, to the native Jewish community the chevra meant a problem for it was foreign to the ecclesiastical system of the community.[327]

The growing influence of the *chevrot*—not necessarily friendly societies—in London's East End was eyed by native Jews with concern. Fearing that this way of communal organisation would stop the immigrants integrating into British society, calls for the suppression of the *chevrot* were made publicly. The *Jewish Chronicle* went so far as to state that it was "because Jews have lived within themselves in other countries on the 'Hebra' principle that they have made the existence of Jews in those countries intolerable" and that "the sooner the Hebra movement is crushed out of existence the sooner we will remove from our midst the only draw-back to the advancement of Jews in this country."[328] The *landsmanshaft*-character of many *chevrot* too, came under harsh criticism. The *Jewish Chronicle* editorialised that the *chevrot* or minor congregations intensified and encouraged "un-English habits and thoughts" of the immigrants for within these bodies, "Pole meets Pole and becomes more Polish than

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Brethren of Biale, those of Bresk, of Courland, and of Vilna, a Hebrew Austrian, a Kutner Hebrew, a Lublin Hebrew, a Ozorkow, Plotzker Divisional and United Brethren of Turik Benefit Society. Desmond Harding, ed., *The Jewish Year Book: An Annual Record of Matters Jewish: 5663. (2nd October, 1902-21st September, 1903)* (London: Greenberg & Co., 1902), 116-26.

[325] Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914.*
[326] Potter, "The Jewish Community."
[327] Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914,* 197-200.
[328] *JC,* 5 December 1884.

ever."[329] Repeatedly the *Chronicle* pointed to these and other "evils which result from the system of which the Chevra and the Cheder are the concrete embodiments." The central accusation against the chevrot was that they kept the immigrants in isolation, fostering backwardness to the extent that "a large proportion of the poor are morally as far removed from the sway of the Synagogue as though they lived in the wilds of Africa."[330]

Despite these depictions of the "savage" system of East End Jewish communal organisation and mutual social support, some members of the West End community were willing to paint a more balance image of the *chevrot*, trying to understand their internal mechanisms and the attraction they presented to many immigrants.

> "I often think that if visitors among the Jewish poor were to relate the experience they come across in the course of their philanthropic labours they might furnish now and again some interesting reading to the outside public who have a very vague idea of how our foreign poor live, move and have their being."[331]

With these lines, "A Visitor Among the Poor" commenced his report on a visit to "A Humble Chevra Room" published in the *Jewish Chronicle* in August 1895.

The article is interesting in two respects. First, it allows an insight into the working practice of Board visitations and second it describes the encounter between two worlds that of the West End visitor and the visited East Enders.

On his way to see a "woman who was lying ill at a certain house in Hanbury Street whose occupants are not unknown to the Jewish Board of Guardians" our visitor comes to a room being used both as flat and as meeting and praying place of a local East End *chevra*. This account offers a unique insight into the structures and settings of *chevrot*. It also pointed to the gap between West End synagogal services and the religious gathering of the Jewish poor. The report, truly surprised by the scene, went on:

> "But what will they say when I tell them that behind her [the ill women's] bed was a fairly large Aron Hakadesh [...] and [...] a Reader's Desk? Such, however, is the fact. The room was not only a kitchen and a bedroom, it was also a shul or rather a chevra."

Why should "a dozen or so of poor foreigners have clubbed together" in such a place to form a minyan, subscribing twopence a week to the occupier of the house, instead of choosing in one of the many *chevrot* in the immediate neighbourhood. Putting this question to one of the worshippers, the visitor got the answer that even the

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[329] *JC*, 16 February 1883.

[330] *JC*, 2 January 1885. See also the previous article in the Series "Judaism at the East End" that appeared in the *JC*, 19 December 1884.

[331] *JC*, 23 August 1895

subscription for the nearby Princelet Street Shul was beyond the financial limits of people coming together in this back-room and the reason for them to form a chevra.[332]

This benevolent account and the attempt to get a better understanding of the internal mechanism and functions of the chevrot by West End visitors is a rare example. Throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century, the establishment of East End chevrot was meet with hostility by the native Jewish elites. Repeatedly the transplantation of the "foreign" system of communal organisation was seen as a major source of obstructing the immigrants' advances on the way towards anglicisation. "It is because Jews have lived within themselves in other countries on the 'Hebra' principle," the Jewish Chronicle told its readers in 1884, "that they have made the existence of Jews in those countries intolerable." Thus the article stated, "the sooner the Hebra movement is crushed out of existence the sooner we will remove from our midst the only draw-back to the advancement of Jews in this country."[333] Such calls for the elimination of the chevrot were more than mere rhetoric. One of the central aims of the United Synagogue's East End Scheme was their abolition "to save them from the degeneration which inevitably results from an attempt to transplant ghetto life into a free country."[334] According to the standpoint of the Anglo-Jewish elites, it was the chevrot, linked to institutions such as the cheder that were to blame for the persistent foreignness of the newcomers and thus a threat for the entire community.

For New York Daniel Soyer has shown that *landsmanshaften* rather than hindering Jewish immigrants' integration into the new country indeed served as bridge-builders between old and new home. Landsmanshaften served the Americanisation of immigrants by negotiating an identity appropriate to their new situation and reconciling elements of the old and the new home by bringing them together in the structures and activities of their associations.[335] Contrary to the Anglo-Jewish establishment's rejection and prejudices, a similar claim may be made for London too. By helping the newcomers in finding their place in the British metropolis, by

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[332] JC, 23 August 1895

[333] JC, 5 December 1884.

[334] JC, 24 January 1896. Cf. Stanley Kaplan, "The Anglicization of the East European Jewish Immigrant as seen by the London Jewish Chronicle, 1870-1897," YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science X (1955).

[335] Daniel Soyer, Jewish immigrant associations and American identity in New York, 1880-1939 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

providing a social and cultural network *chevrot* and friendly societies in London too paved the way to integration of their members.

It was not until the early years of the twentieth century that established Anglo-Jewry revised its view towards the Friendly Societies of the immigrants. A report forwarded to the United Synagogue by its Committee of Workers Among the Jewish Poor recommended in 1902 that the visiting ministers in the East End "shall not only endeavour to correct existing evils, but shall make use of and encourage the many existing agencies for the benefit of the poor and the working classes." "Chief among these", the report went on, "are the numerous Friendly Societies" and the United Synagogue ought to support them and continue its efforts "to secure for these societies suitable meeting places at moderate rentals."[336] The shift in attitude towards the friendly societies is striking. Some decades previous, the United Synagogue had called for the destruction of the *chevrot* system viewing it as an obstacle to immigrants' anglicisation, now in 1902 these societies themselves were seen as useful vehicles of infiltrating the East End with West End ideas.

Back in the 1880s, nobody would have suggested, "supporting" the chevrot, granting them representation within Anglo-Jewry's institutions, and they probably would not have changed their attitude had it not been for that members of these minor congregations took matters in their own hands. On Sunday, 16 October 1887, members of minor synagogues and *chevrot* throughout the East End came together at the Spital Square Synagogue. The meeting, at which Samuel Montagu presided, passed the following resolutions:

> "[1] That it is desirable for the Chevras to become Federated for certain clearly defined objects. [2] That a representative of every Chevra or Minor Synagogue in East London be invited to attend a preliminary meeting to be held at the Spital Square Synagogue on Sunday, November 6th, at 3 o'clock, to discuss plans for a Federation of Chevras."[337]

On the duly appointed afternoon representatives of eighteen of these minor congregations came together, again under the chairmanship of Montagu, and formally constituted the "Federation of Minor Synagogues". [338]

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[336] Committee of Workers Among the Jewish Poor, "Report of Sub-Committee. [Adopted by the General Committee, 31 December 1902]," LMA: ACC/2712/15/1371.

[337] Joseph E. Blank, *The Minutes of the Federation of Synagogues: A Twenty-Five Years' Review* (London: E. W. Rabbinowicz, 1912), 13.

[338] The largest of the founding institutions of the Federation the Sandys Row Synagogue boasted some 400 members, while the smallest congregations such as that on Carter Street and Mansell Streed had barely four dozen members. The total membership of the founding congregation did not exceed 1,300 people. Geoffrey Alderman, *The Federation of Synagogues, 1887-1987* ([London]: Federation of Synagogues, 1987), 1.

Different reasons leading to the formation of the Federation of Synagogues have been given. For Aubrey Newman the row between Montagu and his cousin Lord Rothschild over the financial reorganisation of the United Synagogue in 1886 triggered the decision by the former to create the new body.[339] An anonymous undated manuscript in the archives of the Federation of Synagogues offers a quite different explication linking it directly to the failure of West End paternalistic philanthropy.

> "The English Jews would help their poor brethren in the form of alms, but completely failed to grasp, that those poor, persecuted Jews, fleeing from hell, expected practical sympathy and were fated one day to revive and strengthen the religious self-consciousness of anaemic Anglo-Jewry and thus more than repay the small financial assistance received."

Besides this, "the lack of earnest co-operation between the English Jews and those 'contemptible foreign Jews' formed an important background for the developments in the fall of 1887.[340]

Years later in front of the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration in 1903 questions by Lord Rothschild, Montague gave the following explanation for the foundation of the Federation:

> "In 1888 [it should be 1887] I found there were different isolated minor synagogues in the East End of London which were disposed rather to quarrel among themselves, and I formed the idea of amalgamating them together—quite a voluntary association—for their general benefit. The chief object was to get rid of the unsanitary places of worship, and to amalgamate two or three small ones together, and have a suitable building. We have succeeded very well in that respect. At the present time we have 39 synagogues in the Federation and the number of male seat holders is 4,391, representing as you say about 24,000."[341]

There were further reasons behind Montagu's engagement in founding the Federation. For him the new body was for one a means of promoting orthodoxy but also as a way of forestalling a breakaway of observant East End Jews, many of whom showed great deal of dissatisfaction with the autocratic position of the Chief Rabbi and with the relaxed quality of the Judaism he promoted from the Anglo-

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[339] Aubrey Newman, *The United Synagogue, 1870-1970* (London; Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1976), 68.

[340] "Federation of Synagogues: its origins and history," LMA: ACC/2893/275.

[341] Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, *Minutes of Evidence Taken before the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration*, vol. II, Parliamentary Papers 1903 lx [Cd. 1742] (1903), q. 16772. The number of synagogues and seat-holders of the Federation continued to grow throughout the following years. So that, by the time of Montagu's death, in 1911, the Federation embraced 51 London congregations, representing over 6,000 male members. Cf. Blank, *The Minutes of the Federation of Synagogues: A Twenty-Five Years' Review*, 26. As the United Synagogue then had about 5,200 male seat-holders in membership, the Federation could justly claim to be the largest synagogal body in the United Kingdom.

Jewish community.[342] It was this combination of the local aspect of forming a stronger organisational structure of East End Jews "for their general benefit" and the intention to incorporate this new structure within Anglo-Jewry as a whole to "prevent communal disunion".

Hermann Landau pointed to these two elements when he was describing the foundation of Federation in a letter to the *Jewish Chronicle* in May 1889, stating, "in the latter part of 1887 great dissatisfaction was expressed in the East End with existing ecclesiastical arrangements and meetings were actually held to organise a new Shechita Board, &c. The Federation was called into existence to prevent any development of this movement, and has, therefore, been the means of preventing communal disunion."[343]

The Federation thus was an attempt to bring a number of *chevrot* together in an institutional framework in order to provide services a single *chevra* was not able to provide. Above all, the formation of the Federation can be interpreted as an attempt to gain representation of a large number of East End Jews within the established institutions of Anglo-Jewry thus allowing them to address the needs of the East End Jews. Thus, the Federation was an attempt of bringing together different concepts of urban communal organisation into mutual contact. The Federation's role as mediator between East and West End was not without ambivalences. On the one hand, it aimed for recognition of organisational structures of parts of London's Jewish community modelled upon East European examples as equal to that of the established Anglo-Jewish community. On the other hand, the Federation too fostered anglicisation of the Jewish immigrants, though in quite different ways from other Anglo-Jewish institutions. Examples for this were that although Yiddish was the first language of the majority of Federation members, board meetings were held in English or that the Federation supported and promoted the knowledge of English by allowing the Russo-Jewish Committee to hold English classes at Federation synagogues.[344] Furthermore, the Federation persuaded the ultra-orthodox Machzike Ha'dath to abandon teaching exclusively in Yiddish in its Talmud Torah but to provide half of the teaching in English.[345]

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[342] Lily H. Montagu, *Samuel Montagu, 1st Baron Swaythling, born December 21st, 1832, died January 12, 1911: a character sketch* (London: Truslove & Hanson, 1912), chapters 3 and 4.
[343] *JC*, 24 May 1889.
[344] Blank, *The Minutes of the Federation of Synagogues: A Twenty-Five Years' Review*, 38-39.
[345] *JC*, 16 March 1906.

No other than Samuel Montagu, the central figure of the Federation represented the difficulties of being socially anglicised while remaining religiously orthodox.[346] Being involved in both East and the West End matters, Montagu was well aware of the importance of integrating the Federation within the established London Jewish organisational structure. Into the bargain, Montagu spoke Yiddish, which made him the perfect spokesmen of the immigrants.[347] He realised that especially in the eyes of the United Synagogue the formation of the Federation was seen as a provocation and as an open threat to its position. Thus, he was eager to prove that the new Federation was interested in cooperation with established Anglo-Jewry. One way of showing the new institution's loyalty was to accept the authority of the Chief Rabbi. By funding the Federation, Montagu ensured that orthodox opposition would be consolidated in the East End but he also ensured that it would remain within the existing communal structure. When the Federation appointed a minister Montagu made it a condition of his employment that he should be acceptable to the established ecclesiastical authorities. In practice, any synagogue, which did not accept the authority of the Chief Rabbi, was thus not able to join the Federation.[348] In order to bring both the Federation and the United Synagogue together Montagu proposed at the first meeting of the Board of the Federation on Sunday, December 4, 1887, that not he, but Lord Rothschild who "took a deep and abiding interest in the welfare of the East End Jews" and who had connection to the United Synagogue as well as the Jews' Free School, should be elected the president of the Federation.[349] The announcement of this proposal had been hailed by the *Jewish Chronicle* already prior to the meeting, expressing "cordial sympathy" with the new movement for the union of the *chevrot*. The reporter of the *Chronicle* went on to pointing to the importance of this proposal, stating that a "word of congratulation should be given to Mr. Montagu for his statesmanlike action in pioneering the movement and for the unselfishness he has shown in desiring the presidentship of the new organisation to be given to Lord Rothschild." "Much of the good", the report continued, "which we

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[346] Despite his involvement in East End Jewish affairs and becoming a spokesman of their interest, already prior to him being elected Liberal MP for Whitechapel in 1885 Montagu remained deeply involved in the affairs of West End London Jews two. He not only helped to found the New West End Synagogue and acted of as warden of that Synagogue for many years, but also held positions in various institutions of established Anglo-Jewry; he was member of the council of the United Synagogue, a prominent member of the Board of Deputies of British Jews as well as a member on the Board of Guardians and the Religious Education Board.
[347] Alderman, *Modern British Jewry*, 38-39.
[348] Federation of Synagogues, Minute Book, 4 December 1887, 12 November 1889.
[349] *JC*, 9 December 1887.

anticipate from the movement would be frustrated if we permit any rivalry to exist between the United Synagogue of the West and the East of London."[350]

Although Lord Rothschild was "unanimously and enthusiastically elected President",[351] it soon became evident that the gap between east and west was not as easy to bridge. At the second meeting of the Federation's Board at which Herman Alder was also present, delivering a sermon in which he stressed that the "aim and object of the intended Federation" was to be union, Lord Rothschild gave an opening address. "You have recognised the feeling that all classes of the community are united in a desire to improve their co-religionists, to work together and not to allow any differences to separate them," Rothschild began his speech to carry on in a paternalistic and condescending manner by pointing out:

> ". . . in coming to England, unacquainted as you are with its laws, some of you may at first be led astray by the desire to keep up strictly the customs, I will not say the religious practices, of distant countries which might clash with the laws of the land. [. . .] If you elect a *Dayan* (rather than a minister), who may be a foreigner, he might at some time or other be engaged in a contest with the civil authorities . . . I warn you of this danger."[352]

Some months later Rothschild, describing the Federation meeting at the United Synagogue Council, openly expressed his antipathy towards the new institution, pointing out that he "found a large number of gentlemen who had no idea what they had assembled for, or what purpose the Federation was intended to serve." Although he had told them "in order to calm them [. . .] that the United Synagogue did not in any way desire or intend to impose its authority on them [. . .] [h]e would always strenuously oppose the appointment of a *Dayan,* who according to the views of their foreign brethren was a judge, competent to grant divorces" and thus challenge the authority of the Chief Rabbinate.[353]

Throughout 1888, the Federation and the United Synagogue negotiated the representation of the former to the Board of Shechita as well as a reduction of funeral cost for the Federation on the United Synagogues burial grounds. In a letter to the Federation's Board meeting on 21 February 1888 that he did not attend, Rothschild wrote that "It was understood and I undertook on the part of the United Synagogue, that that body with in no way seek to interfere with the Federation except to advice it in such matters as affect Jews generally, and which may be to the advantage and

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[350] *JC*, 11 November 1887.
[351] *JC*, 9 December 1887.
[352] *JC*, 20 January 1888.
[353] *JC*, 6 July 1888.

credit of the whole community. I have now to inform you that the Executive of the United Synagogue, before whom the matter has come, is most favourably disposed towards the Federation with regard to the Board of Shechita."[354]

As to the "friendly disposition" on the Shechita Board question Joseph E. Blank pointed out that it "was well dissembled, for there is no doubt that the United Synagogue obstructed the Federation from representation at, and a share in the profits of, the Shechita Board as long as it could."[355] The question of representation on the Board of Shechita became the first trails of strength between both bodies— many more followed throughout the years thereafter. In January 1886, shortly after Samuel Montagu had been elected President of the Board of Shechita after the resignation of Henry Solomon, the Federation formally applied for representation on the Board. The Committee the application had been referred to recommended that it should be granted but during a special meeting of the Board of Shechita the representatives of the United Synagogue objected to the recommendation, considering a modification in the composition of the Board without the sanction of the governing bodies of the Spanish and Portuguese and the United Synagogue "wholly illegal".[356]

Surprisingly opinion as expressed in the *Jewish Chronicle*—at least temporarily— turned towards the Federation. Stating, "a very large proportion of the surplus revenue accruing to the Shechita Board must be due to the purchases of the men who attend these Chevras," the *Chronicle* stated in March 1888, "it seems only fair that a portion of these profits should revert to them." In an astonishingly critical analysis, the article went on:

> "And all for what? It would seem to maintain the dignity of the United Synagogue. In fact there is more than dignity at stake, the actual possession of power might be infringed by the precedent. The delegates are, it will be said, exceeding their mandate. That is an intelligible reason, and if the true one, it was a sad mistake to lay so much stress on mere dignity. Of course, if power really resides with the United Synagogue, and not with the Shechita Board, it is the United Synagogue which should make, and have the credit to making, the concession tot the Chevras which all desire to carry into effect."[357]

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[354] Blank, *The Minutes of the Federation of Synagogues: A Twenty-Five Years' Review*, 17. The text of the letter was also published in *JC*, 24 February 1888.

[355] Ibid., 18.

[356] Albert Montefiore Hyamson, *The London Board for Shechita, 1804-1854* (London: London Board for Shechita, 1954), 42. Cf. also Geoffrey Alderman, "Power, Authority and Status in British Jewry: The Chief Rabbinate and Shechita," in *Outsiders & Outcasts: Essays in Honour of William J. Fishman*, ed. Geoffrey Alderman and Colin Holmes (London: Duckworth, 1993).

[357] *JC*, 2 March 1888.

Late during the year 1888, after a number of meetings both of the Board of Shechita and the United Synagogue, it seemed as if the Federation had reached recognition. The recommendation of an especially formed sub-committee of the Board of Shechita to grant the Federation three representatives was accepted as well as the fiercely contested recommendation that one fifth of the Board's surplus revenue should be allocated to the new institution. The United Synagogue continued to oppose these decisions and thus during the following year, when the decisions came up for confirmation, they were again rejected by fourteen votes to three.[358]

As in the Shechita Board[359] question, so did the United Synagogue reject the Federation's request for a reduction in funeral charges. Although the United Synagogue was prepared to reduce the fees for adults, it refused to do the same with fees for the burial of children.[360]

Despite this setback in negotiations with the United Synagogue, the Federation successfully gained access to other Anglo-Jewish bodies. In March 1888, the Federation was invited to elect a representative to sit on the Jewish Board of Guardians, and through the representation of Spital Square Synagogue, the Federation also had a de facto representation on the Board of Deputies since 1889.

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[358] Hyamson, *The London Board for Shechita, 1804-1854*, 43. It was not until January 1899 that the United Synagogue relented, and that the Federation's representatives were finally and permanently admitted to the Board of Shechita the following year, and not until another two years had passed that the Federation received its first remittance from the Board, a cheque for £76.

[359] The Shechita Question remained a stone of contestation for London Jewry throughout the following years. Between 1891 and 1905 a conflict smouldered between representatives of the Anglo-Jewish establishment on the one side and the ultra-orthodox independent congregation of the Machzika ha-dath which refused to accept the authority of the Board of Shechita, being doubtful whether the standard of Kashruth observed under the auspices of the Board was sufficient to meet their requirements. The row over the Machzika ha-dath setting up its own institution to control ritual slathering lead to fierce arguments and mutual accusations that were not limited to Anglo-Jewry but called upon Rabbinic authorities in Eastern Europe (cf. e.g. Spekter, Izkhak Alkhanan. מכתב מהרב הגאון ר יצחק אלחנן נ"י אב"ד דק"ק קאוונע [Letter Form the the Rav Gaon, Rabbi Izkhak Alkhanan .... Head of the Bet Din ... Kovno], LMA: ACC-2712-GTS-366.) It was not until 1905 that both sides agreed on terms of settlement (*JC*, 24 February 1905). For more detailed accounts on this Shechita question cf. Bernard Homa, *A Fortress in Anglo-Jewry: The Story of the Machzike Hadath* (London: Shapiro, 1953), Hyamson, *The London Board for Shechita, 1804-1854*.

[360] Federation of Synagogues, Minute Book, 18 November 1888, LMA: ACC/2893/001; Jewish World, 20 February 1891, p. 7; The intransigence of the United Synagogue was, due to the high percentage of children comprising the immigrant community, felt with particular force. Cf. S. Rosenbaum, "A Contribution to the Study of the Vital and Other Statistics of the Jews in the United Kingdom," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* (1905), 534.

The early minutes of the Federation reflect the anguish of the chevrot memberships at this distressing state of affairs. In July 1888 the United Synagogue agreed to reduce the charge for a 'second class' funeral to £3, but declined to alter the charge it made for children's funerals.[Federation of Synagogues, Minute Book No. 1, 18 July 1888.] The impact of this decision can only be assessed in the light of the high rate of infant mortality then prevalent. The records of the Federation's own Burial Society, established on 15 April 1890, show that during the first two years and eight months of its existence it carried out 199 interments, of which no less than 117 (including 43 stillbirths) were of children under 1 year old. Cf. Alderman, *The Federation of Synagogues, 1887-1987*, 13.

The Federation was eager to prove that it was interested in a continuous cooperation with the established Anglo-Jewish institutions and that it made its contributions to them, e.g. in the form of annual collections for the Jewish Board of Guardians. The gathering and contribution of funds towards the Board were, as David Feldman has pointed out "declarations that the Federation was to be treated on an equal basis, because it, and by extension the East End, were donors as well as recipients of charity."[361]

Despite these successes in obtaining representation within established Anglo-Jewish institutions or maybe due to these successes matters between the United and the Federation of Synagogues soon were to become worse and "by 1889 there was open war between the two organisations."[362] Repeatedly the Federation was blamed for creating disunity within Anglo-Jewry and to cause a schism or split in the community as a whole. When the Federation started to affiliate synagogues outside the East End, the United Synagogue regarded this as "very hostile" to its interests[363], especially since Montagu, upon the New Dalston Synagogue's joining the Federation had stated that its example should be followed by all other "isolated minor synagogues in the community".[364]

A new row between united and federated synagogues evolved over the Federation's response to the continuous denial of reducing burial fees further on the United Synagogue side. In the summer of 1889, the Federation, with money provided by Samuel Montagu, purchased two acres of land at the cost of £1,000 to set up its own burial ground.[365] Montagu also subsidised the burial society, which the Federation established, until it became self-supporting in 1893.[366] Achieving herewith further independence from the United Synagogue the Federation faced massive accusations of acting against communal unity and of promoting further schism within the Anglo-Jewish community.

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[361] Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914*, 325.
[362] Aubrey N. Newman, "The United Synagogue - Growth and Change," in *A Century of Anglo-Jewish Life, 1870-1970*, ed. Salmond S. Levin (London: United Synagogue, 1970), 68.
[363] Quoted after Aubrey N. Newman, "The United Synagogue - Growth and Change," in *A Century of Anglo-Jewish Life, 1870-1970*, ed. Salmond S. Levin (London: United Synagogue, 1970): 47.
[364] *JC*, 14 June 1889.
[365] The need of access to affordable burial facilities is reflected in the records of the Federation's own Burial Society, established on April 15, 1890. They show that during the first two years and eight months of its existence it carried out 199 interments, of which no less than 117 (including 43 stillbirths) were of children under 1 year old. Alderman, *The Federation of Synagogues, 1887-1987*, 13.
[366] Federation of Synagogues, Minute Book, 18 June 1889; Blank, *The Minutes of the Federation of Synagogues: A Twenty-Five Years' Review*, 30-32.

In a letter to the editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, a certain "Unionist" accused the Federation of being bent on creating a distinct section of foreign Jews and thus inscribing the communal divides further. Moreover, the letter went on, the Federation was responsible for "fanning the flames of discontent, by manufacturing grievances, and by dinning into the ears of the poor the unfounded statement that till the formation of the Federation they were neglected and ignored." In contrast to this the author of the letter pointed to the great achievement of West End Jewish involvement in improving the conditions of the foreign poor and of integrating them into Anglo-Jewry stating that it was not the Federation that "found the great Jews' Free School, the Jews' Infant School, the Stepney Jewish Schools, the Religious Classes throughout the metropolis, the Jewish Board of Guardians, the Soup Kitchen, the Rothschild Dwellings, and the hundred and one benevolent and scholastic Jewish institutions which honeycomb the East End of London," but that all these achievement were made possible through support "by West End Jews", who long before the Federation was dreamt "had interested themselves in the welfare of the poor." The Federation in turn had not followed these affords to "bind together in one common link of mutual esteem and friendship the poor and the rich Jew, to instil into the minds of the poor the lesson of self-dependence," to make them feel and appreciate "that no food is so bitter as the bread of dependence, and no ascent more painful than the staircase of a patron." The accusation against the Federation culminated in the statement that "if the *particular* interest of the United Synagogue is injured, the *general* interest of the community at large must suffer."[367]

Despite these heated arguments both sides repeatedly made efforts to calm matters down. Montagu for instance hoped that the presence of Lord Rothschild at the consecration of a Federation synagogue in the East End in 1892 was the beginning of cooperation between the two organisations.[368] Once again, the truce between both institutions proved frail. In 1900, Rothschild refused to open a Federation synagogue in Notting Hill, because the United Synagogue believed the Federation was trespassing in the West End as Montagu conjectured.[369]

The Federation was eyed with suspicion by the West End Jewish establishment and regarded as an institution representing backward attitudes to Judaism. On the occasion of a conference called together to discuss questions concerning the role of

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[367] *JC*, June 28, 1889.

[368] *JC*, May 27, 1892

[369] *JC*, November 18, 1892

the Chief Rabbinate and the Beth Din in 1890 the *Jewish Chronicle* remarked that most of the Federation's delegates were "champions of ultra-orthodoxy" and consequently "are likely but scantily to regard, even if they could understand, or appreciate, the spiritual needs of the modern English Jew."[370] In December 1911 intending to improve the relationship between both Synagogal bodies, the Council of the United Synagogue offered the Federation to accept Avigdor Chaikin as a full Dayan on the Beth Din. Yet, this did not prevent new conflicts over the election of a new Chief Rabbi after the year of interregnum following the death of Herman Adler. Already in 1890 when Adler was formally elected successor of his father Nathan Adler, Lord Rothschild had invited the Federation to send eight delegates to the election conference a number that was later reduced to two[371], leading to anger by members of the Federation.

When Joseph Herman Hertz was elected Chief Rabbi of the British Empire the Federation of Synagogues had not taken part in his election and declared, shortly afterwards, that it would refuse any longer to contribute to the Chief Rabbi's Fund.[372]

Jewish Neighbourhood Improvement on West End Terms – The East End Scheme

The most obvious urban component of Anglo-Jewish philanthropy and the attempt to anglicise the Jewish poor of the metropolis was the so-called East End Scheme.[373] One can rather speak of a number of East End Schemes since over a period of thirteen years the plans were postponed, reintroduced, modified, temporarily abandoned, negotiated and finally widely dropped. Thus, the discussions around the East End Scheme offer an insight into the inner-communal stratification of Anglo-Jewry during the concluding decades of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, they also point to the gaps between "West End" top-down projects and "East End" needs and the problems to reach congruence between both.

Moreover, the East End Scheme shows a slow shift away from high-handed planned anglicisation to negotiation with those the scheme targeted.

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[370] *JC*, 4 July 1890, 4.

[371] The principle of representation was calculated on the basis of the amount contributed to the Chief Rabbi's Fund.[Federation of Synagogues, minute book, 29 April 1890, 7 April 1891.]

[372] Alderman, *The Federation of Synagogues, 1887-1987*, 45.

[373] Among the literature on the East End Scheme Stehen Sharot's article, published in 1974, remains on of the best overviews. Aubrey N. Newman, "The United Synagogue - Growth and Change," in *A Century of Anglo-Jewish Life, 1870-1970*, ed. Salmond S. Levin (London: United Synagogue, 1970), 118.

The Scheme originated in a Proposal by Lord Nathan Mayer Rothschild, the president of the United Synagogue in 1885. He suggested that a committee be appointed to inquire into the East End, arguing, "unless the powerful leverage of the Council of the United Synagogue can be brought to bear, it is to be feared that the immigrants will remain 'foreigners' in our midst. Our desire should be to find out a mode of civilizing them."[374] The report of the subsequently formed committee confirmed that by point out that also there was "spiritual destitution" in the East End there was a social ghetto "within which [... the immigrant] has but little opportunity to shake off the habits which have accompanied him from his home." Thus the committee recommended, "steps must be taken to cause the foreign poor [. . .] to imbibe notions proper to civilized life in this country."[375]

This *mission civilisatrice* remained a principal and a driving force throughout the different stages of the scheme in years to come. Civilising and anglicising the "savage" East End Jews also meant an attempt to gain control over them and their institutional structure be it the network of *chevrot* in general or the Federation of "Minor" Synagogues in particular aiming to bring it under the "under the umbrella of the United Synagogue"[376].

A number of years passed by until the United Synagogue engaged itself in "considering the most effective means for promoting the social, intellectual, moral and spiritual welfare of our industrious classes" as a detailed draft by the Committee of Ministers and Others Visiting the Jewish Poor outline of the Scheme dating from 1889 stated.[377] According to this draft "the provision in various localities of suitable clubs or Reading Rooms, not necessarily of large and spacious dimensions" were identified as the "most urgent need at present". This assumption stressed the centrality to anglicise the immigrant Jews through establishing controlled cultural spaces in the East End, such as clubs and a library, "where the working classes after the hours of labour would be enabled to spend their Sabbaths and other periods of leisure in comfort" and would thus "be kept away from the temptations of gambling houses, from resorting to anarchist and anti-religious clubs, and from attending Mission Halls."[378]

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[374] *JC*, January 9, 1885.
[375] Minute Book of the United Synagogue, March 3, 1885, LMA: ACC/2712/01.
[376] Newman, "The United Synagogue - Growth and Change," 117.
[377] "Scheme to Provide for the Spiritual, Intellectual and Social Wants of the Jewish Poor; Submitted by the Committee of Ministers and Others Visiting the Jewish Poor [1889]," LMA: ACC/2712/GTS/366.
[378] Ibid.

Following this early draft, the Unite Synagogue Executive Committee presented its own report on 7 January 1890, which the Council of the United Synagogue discussed a month later.[379] The Report called "For the provision of further Synagogue accommodation in the East of London[.] For the enactment of such alterations in the present conditions of membership of the United Synagogue as may be best adapted to the circumstances of the majority of the Jewish resident population [and] For the establishment of such Benefit and Provident Societies in connection with such place or places of worship as will be likely to conduce to the communal and social welfare of the Jewish population in the East of London".[380] Most of the report was little more than a description of the state of affairs, praising the successes of West End initiated projects to improve the condition of the East End Jews, especially those projects that were in some way or other related to the work or personal of the United Synagogue, be it the foundation of a synagogue at Stepney Green, the reduction of the marriage fee and cost of funerals or the operations of the Four Per Cent Industrial Dwellings Company "of which the President of the United Synagogue is the Chairman, and which arose out of the Committee appointed by the Council in 1885 to consider the circumstances affecting the social conditions of the poorer classes of Jews in East London." Besides the "Council for the spiritual welfare of the Jewish poor" and the provision of religious services both in the East and West Central districts of London funded by the United Synagogue were mentioned.[381] For Aubrey Newman it was a "spirit of superiority" that was displayed here.[382]

The report though did not restrict itself to such self-adulation. The 1890-report too stressed the primacy of moralising and civilising the Jewish poor through providing a United Synagogue modelled communal infrastructure over material charity giving. Besides the establishment of suitable organisations for the Jewish East End, it envisaged a new type of minister to become civilising agents. Such a mister according to the report ought to be "a gentleman [with] intimate knowledge of the habits and customs of Polish and other foreign Jews [...] and whose character will, it is hoped, secure for him the esteem and respect of those to whose requirements he ministers" and enabling him "while studying the necessities of the poor, [to ...] elevate their social condition by inculcating lessons of morality, health, and

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[379] United Synagogue, Minute Book, 18 Feb. 1890, LMA: ACC/2712/01.
[380] Quoted after Newman, "The United Synagogue - Growth and Change," 118.
[381] Ibid.
[382] Ibid., 118.

cleanliness, and will, at the same time, minister to their spiritual wants in times of distress and affliction".[383] An editorial on the East End Scheme, published some years later in the *Jewish Chronicle*, stressed the moralising, civilising and above all anglicising role of the type of new minister the United Synagogue was aiming for to "labour among the poor". "He will", the *Chronicle* stated, "correct all that is unwholesome in the Chebra system; for he will constitute religion a civilizing and moral force, instead of a power that makes for ignorance and superstition, and that numbs the moral sense. He will teach his flock that to patter strings of prayer without thought, and to go through a sort of ceremonial drill is not the true duty of man; and by such doctrine he will pull down the Cheder, not at once, but slowly, brick by brick."[384]

A central sphere of activity for these new East End ministers besides his active work around the East End the United Signage's Council envisaged a major new of a synagogue to take the place of "the many unsuitable and unsanitary places where they [the East End Jews] now resort for Divine Worship."

It was this new Synagogue, a feature that despite fundamental changes of the scheme during the following years remained one of its central elements, pointing to the implantation of West End Jewish decorum and communal control into the East End.

The plan for further provision of "Synagogue accommodation for the industrial classes" did not originate in the report of 1890 but was presented already in the earlier draft. Unlike the later version, this earlier draft stressed the importance of the establishment of Jewish cubs and reading rooms around different districts of the East London Jewish settlement, pointing out that it would "not be expedient to construct Synagogues of too large dimensions, in as much as they would tend to check the distribution of the labouring classes over a wider area, and would not be in accord with their views and wishes."[385] The United Synagogue's council widely ignored these warning and took an entirely different view on the matter.

The synagogue outlined by the report of the United Synagogue's council was intended to give an unmistakable architectonic statement of the United Synagogue's power and thus of West End supremacy over the "humble chevra room" of the

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[383] Ibid., 119.
[384] *JC*, 25 January 1895.
[385] "Scheme to Provide for the Spiritual, Intellectual and Social Wants of the Jewish Poor; Submitted by the Committee of Ministers and Others Visiting the Jewish Poor," 4-5.

immigrants. The large synagogue building outlined in the report was to contain over 1,000 seats. Of these, 100—at a rental of five guineas a year—were to be taken by "gentlemen who were in sympathy with the idea of the synagogue", but the report added—"it is likely that these seats will rarely be occupied by their owners, most of who will probably reside at a distance." Many of the others would be 'Free', while the rest would be subject to a nominal charge. Although the report stresses the importance of coming together in common prayer of those who could afford the seat-rental of five guineas *per annum* and those have-nots, praying in there own small *chevrot* for they could not afford even the lowest fees, it doubts its realisation. Nevertheless, it tried to hold up the illusion of the scheme being one incorporating the entire community, and treating the interests of West and East equally.

The estimated costs of the project were enormous. According to calculations, the cost for a large synagogue building for East London alone amounted some £20,000. The United Synagogue was unable to raise this sum out of its own budget. Therefore, it called for the support of the entire community.

In its concluding remarks the report relativised the outlined scheme stating that it was just the beginning of countering the 'East End problem' by pointing out that "[i]t is not pretended that the labours of a minister, however zealous and respected, nor that the erection of a Synagogue, even of the capacity of the one proposed, will supply all that is required." Nevertheless the report went on "if the Community will rally to the support of the Council, and if, as is earnestly to be hoped, the new place of worship is appreciated and frequented by the Jews in the East End, at least an important beginning will have been made in grappling with one of the most pressing questions of the day, in so far as it affects all classes of the Anglo-Jewish Community." This emphasis on the importance of the Scheme to the entirety of Anglo-Jewry not merely to the East End Jews culminated in the final statements "that 'ALL JEWS ARE BRETHREN'."[386] Despite these affirmations, the discussions around the East End Scheme following the report showed little brotherly elements.

At first, it appeared as if the Scheme would turn out to be merely a paper tiger. The implementation of the scheme was postponed and it was not until 8 May 1891 that the United Synagogues invited "gentlemen being themselves, or representing institutions outside the United Synagogue, willing to co-operate" to develop the

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[386] Quoted after Newman, "The United Synagogue - Growth and Change," 120. The emphasis is that of the original.

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Scheme further.[387] Among the "gentlemen" who assembled under the chairmanship of Lord Rothschild in the Central Synagogue Chambers, were the MPs Julian Goldsmid and Samuel Montagu, the latter representing the Federation of Synagogues, Ellis A. Frankin, Benjamin L. Cohen the President of the Board of Guardians and others.

In his opening remarks, Lord Rothschild once again pointed to the necessity of the support of the entire community to realise the scheme. Quite realistically, he estimated that "there is little or no enthusiasm for the present scheme; and if I want proof I have it in this empty room and in the few who have come here." "If the scheme had met with enthusiasm," Rothschild carried on, "if the large mass of Jews in the metropolis had thought the present moment suitable for carrying it out, they would have sent their representatives here to pick holes in the scheme."

Sir Julian Goldsmid, taking the word after the opening remarks added much to the pessimistic view on the realisation of the scheme and doubting the effect of some of its parts. As to the erection of a large synagogue he remarked, that it "would be difficult to attract them [the East End Jews] away from their Synagogues" in this way. In his opinion, it was not the right moment to discuss the implementation of the scheme any further but to delay the question for another year.

Both Rothschild's and Goldsmid's remarks pointed to the essential weakness of the Scheme; that it had been outlined without incorporating the East End Jews themselves and thus not being able to meet their real needs.

Over the course of the meeting, it became evident that the lines of disagreement were not merely along the East-West divide but that they ran through both camps. During the meeting Benjamin L. Cohen attacked the *chevrot* and the Federation and thus his brother-in-law, Samuel Montagu, for deterring anglicisation of the East End Jews by pointing out "that the multitude of minor synagogues, and many do not deserve the name of synagogue at all, do attract people to one locality, and so far from the Federation having conferred a boon, it has been a cause of the most cruel mischiefs inflicted on the best and truest interests of our community."[388]

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[387] *JC*, 8 May 1891.
[388] *JC*, 8 May 1891. It has been repeatedly pointed out that the East End Scheme in many of its part itself was directed against Chevrot and Federation. Cf. Stanley Kaplan, "The Anglicization of the East European Jewish Immigrant as seen by the London *Jewish Chronicle*, 1870-1897," *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science* X (1955): 326-27, Stephen Sharot, "Native Jewry and the Religious Anglicization of Immigrants in London, 1870-1905," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 16, no. 1 (1974): 268.

Although more diplomatic in tone, Lord Rothschild had put forward similar accusations against the minor synagogues and *chevrot* pointing out that "there live in close approximation to each other a large number of co-religionists, with what are called minor Synagogues—some of them are good synagogues—of their own, who, through the migration of Jews to other parts of the metropolis, are not now so much in touch with the whole congregation as they were years ago." Therefore, "it is our duty to improve their position in every way" he went on. 'Improving' meant, following the United Synagogue's Scheme, replacing them with a large central East End synagogue.[389]

Several months prior to the meeting, Montagu declared in a letter to the United Synagogue that no further synagogue accommodation was required in the East End for there were vacant seats in the Federation synagogues, and the United Synagogue's services at the Jews' Free School attracted only about a hundred worshippers on ordinary Sabbaths[390], protested the accusations against the Federation.

The meeting ended without results and in discord. After being temporarily abandoned, the scheme was reintroduced in a modified form in 1893. A central modification of this new proposal was that instead of building a new large East End Synagogue the existing Hambro Synagogue situated near a number of Federation synagogues in Spitalfields should be enlarged. Inevitable Montague protested against the plan on behalf of the Federation and resulting in the abandonment of the scheme.[391] The following year another Scheme was presented that resembled the original one. A United Synagogue committee reported that the aim was to avoid a split between the "two communities", and it recommended that a large synagogue be built in Commercial Road. A minority report was submitted by Samuel Montagu who pointed out that immigrants had established *chevrot* near the New West End and Central synagogues, and if the United Synagogue had not attracted the immigrants who had moved to the West End, it was unlikely to attract those in the East End. The majority report was adopted by the Council.[392] During the summer of 1894,

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[389] The conflict between the United Synagogue and the Federation revealed conflicting views on how to organise and anglicise the East End Jews as well as different intestinal interests. Noah Davis quite honestly admitted during the meeting "[o]ur [the United Synaogue's] motives are not wholly philanthropic; our own personal interests are involved, for we will have to take care of ourselves in looking after them [foreign Jews]." *JC*, 8 May 1891.

[390] *JC*, 17 January 1890.

[391] *JC*, 9 June 1893.

[392] United Synagogue, Minute Book, April-May 1894, LMA: ACC/2712/01.

opposition against the report arose from different directions. The Hambro, New, North London, and New West End synagogues – all members of the United Synagogue – sent letters opposing the scheme.[393] Meetings were held in the East End, one supporting and the other opposing the scheme.[394] Despite these protests a special meeting of the United Synagogue seatholders that was attended by 540 people, also adopted the report.[395] Throughout the following years, Samuel Montagu continued effectively to oppose the scheme.[396]

After the United Synagogue had purchased a site in East London on which it was proposed to erect a Beth Din, a Beth Hamidrash, a Communal Hall, and a Synagogue with a thousand seats for men and four hundred seats for women another East End scheme was submitted by the Honorary Officers to the Council of the United Synagogue in January 1896, pointing out that "in the last few years the Jewish question in East London has become more and more acute." Thus, the Executive Committee emphasising that "within the pale of the social Ghetto there is no anglicising influence operating to reclaim him [the immigrant ...]" and that "it is the object of the East End scheme to supply this influence"[397] tried to speed matters up. However, protests on behalf of the Federation led to further modifications and after negotiated with Samuel Montagu. Finally, the plan to erect a large East End Synagogue—much to the regret of Lord Rothschild[398]—was dropped from the scheme ant it was agreed to erect a smaller synagogue. In return, Montagu guaranteed that the opposition to the scheme would cease.[399]

Two years later in 1898, the final version of the East End scheme was presented. The plan for a large synagogue had been abandoned. The new scheme instead proposed to erect a large building to "be placed at the disposal of the United Synagogue for public worship on High Festivals" and made available for the rest of

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Letters were received from the Hambro, New, North London, and New West End synagogues opposing the scheme. Two meetings were held in the East End, one supporting and the other opposing the scheme. Montagu chaired the opposition meeting: JC, 29 June and 6 July 1894.

[393] United Synagogue, Minute Book, May 1894, LMA: ACC/2712/01.

[394] JC, 29 June and 6 July 1894.

[395] JC, 6 and 13 July 1894.

[396] In a letter to the United Synagogue, Montagu charged that the procedure at the members' meeting was unfair and had been calculated to achieve a positive vote. Cf. United Synagogue, Minute Book, 4 December 1894, quoted after United Synagogue, "East End Scheme: Report of the Special Committee - Marked A.; Report of the Sub-Committee on the East End Scheme - Marked B.; Report of the Sub-Committee on Beth Din and Beth Hamedrash - Marked C.: June, 5658-1898," LMA: ACC-2712-15-1371, 50.

[397] United Synagogue, Minute Book, 22 January 1896, LMA: ACC/2712/01.

[398] JC, 15 May 1896.

[399] United Synagogue, Minute Book, 12 May 1896, LMA: ACC/2712/01.

the year for non-religious activities. The building would accommodate judicial boards of arbitration, a provident society, a thrift society, a central visiting committee, mothers' meetings, classes and lectures in English and technical subjects, and clubs for adults and children.[400]

The Council of the United Synagogue adopted the scheme[401] and appointed a Special Committee to consider steps to give effect to the Scheme and implement its provisions. When the Special committee meet in April 1899, it became obvious that there was not much interest in the scheme, even by the members of the committee—out of the fifty six only six members were present at the meeting. The meeting was confronted by several letters by members resigning their membership—such as Samuel Montagu, Lionel Alexander and Lawrence Isaac—and statements of harsh criticism of the remainders of the scheme, describing it as "a collection of pious platitudes, combined with an attempt to either rob existing institutions of the credit to which they are entitled or impair their efficiency."

In facing all these reservations, the present committee members decided that it was "inadvisable to proceed further with the consideration of the recommendations remitted by the Council of the United Synagogue" and thus finally decided to abandon the East End Scheme.[402]

The reasons for the failure of "this grandiose scheme", as Aubrey Newman called it, were manifold. For one the failure resulted out of the half-heartedness of leading members of the United Synagogue in implement the scheme and the lack of negotiating conflicting interests within their institution and outside of it. For another, protests especially from the Federation of Synagogues *in personam* Samuel Montagu delayed the scheme and subsequently led to its surrender.

The jargon becomes the Jewish *lingua franca*, or Yiddish and its discontents

The early years of the twentieth century, especially following the passing of the Aliens Act by Parliament in 1905, saw a dramatic shift in the relationship between "native" Anglo-Jewry and Jewish immigrants. Not unlike the development within German-Jewry following the World War I, established Anglo-Jewry became

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[400] United Synagogue, East End Scheme: Report of the Special Committee, June, 5658-1898, LMA: ACC-2712-15-1371. See also United Synagogue, Minute Book, 10 November 1898, LMA: ACC/2893/001.
[401] JC, 10 February 1899.
[402] JC, 21 April 1899.

fascinated in elements of Yiddish (sub-)culture as it had developed in the East End.[403] The formally disparaged "Jargon" Yiddish became a symbol of Jewish authenticity. Performances of Yiddish theatre companies attracted a West End audience and representatives of the Anglo-Jewish establishment welcomed literary figures from Eastern Europe, visiting London. The perception of the East End as notorious slum area began to give way to different images of the Jewish settlement. Despite changing attitudes towards Yiddish language and culture, they remained prime battleground for competing concepts of London Jewish identity. "Native" London Jewry fought the spreading of "the jargon" contentiously and with acrimony aiming for nothing less than the destruction of Yiddish culture in the British metropolis. As in the case of Anglo-Jewish philanthropy, the struggle over Yiddish in London is characterised by shifting ambivalence rather than firm antagonism. An encounter, taking place towards the end of 1883 in London is most telling in this context.

Upon his arrival from Odessa, Jacob P. Adler and his fellow Yiddish actors took lodging in Whitechapel and were looking for support to start Yiddish theatre performances in the British capital. As a distant relative of the British chief Rabbi Nathan Adler, Jacob P. Adler was hoping to find in him a benevolent advocate. Armed with a Hebrew letter of recommendation by his father, Jacob Adler thus made his way to meet his influential family member confident to receive support. In his autobiography, the actor recalls the encounter that followed. Arriving at the Chief Rabbi's residence, both Nathan and his son Herman Adler welcomed him. The conversation took place in German. At first the actors hopes seemed to be well grounded for "when he [the Chief Rabbi] heard I was of his family, and had brought a letter from my father in Hebrew, he became truly warm [... and the] more he read, the more relaxed he became." The situation however changed dramatically when the old Chief Rabbi reached the end of the letter:

> "[T]he smile on the rabbi's lips disappeared. [...] An actor who played in the "jargon"? *In Yiddish*? [...] every line and wrinkle of the eighty-year-old face told me I had lost him. [...] The very way he had pronounced the word *Yiddish* – with such a twist of the mouth – told me our beloved language held no honored place in his heart. And I had come to spread this "jargon" further? To popularize it? Worse, to do so in public where, God forbid, strangers might come to jeer and make a mockery of our people? In the eyes of both rabbis I saw anxiety and fear." [404]

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[403] Cf. Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: the east European Jew in German and German Jewish consciousness, 1800-1923* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), esp. Chapter 7. Strange Encounter: Germany, World War I, and the Ostjuden.
[404] Adler, *A Life on the Stage: A Memoir*, 234.

With politeness, the petitioner was shown the door, assured he would be welcome if he should call again. The scene highlights the role of Yiddish in inscribing otherness towards Jewish immigrants by the native Anglo-Jewish community throughout the late nineteenth century.

As we have seen earlier in the descriptions of the East End as a foreign country there is a spatial component to language, i.e. Yiddish was one of the central features to emphasise the foreignness and otherness of the immigrant quarters. Thus, language played an important role in the territorialisation of London Jewry.[405] For the decades following, the first major waves of Eastern European Jewish immigration to Britain established Anglo-Jewry tried to fight the spread of the "jargon" in various ways or, as the case of the *Jewish Chronicle* shows, steadfastly ignore the fact that Yiddish culture had taken root in the East End.[406] Other segments of established London-Jewry tried to challenge the persistence of Yiddish among the immigrant population actively. In 1901, the Russo-Jewish Committee published a bilingual textbook for evening classes to promote English among the newcomers. More than mere teaching material the textbook also carried the ideology of anglicisation in its content – e.g. sample phrases stressing English working ethos such as "A workmen can easily gain bread" or "I sleep only five hours a day, as a general rule, for I got late to bed and rise early".[407]

Despite the lack of support, Adler and his fellow actors managed to set up their Yiddish theatre in the heart of London's East End. The Hebrew Dramatic Club founded in March 1886 on Princes Street, off Brick Lane as the first purpose built Yiddish theatre in London became the regular stage for Adler and his Odessa company. As in the case of the temporary shelter, the Hebrew Dramatic Club owed his founding to an Eastern European immigrant who had established himself in the East End, the kosher butcher David Smith who had come to London from Poland in the 1860s. Young people flocked to the Yiddish theatre with as much devotion as

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[405] Scott Spector has coined the useful expression of "territory of language" to investigate how language influences spatial practices. Cf. Spector, *Prague Territories: National Conflict and Cultural Innovation in Franz Kafka's Fin de Siècle*, Chapter 3.

[406] Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991*, 78.

[407] Joseph Jacobs and Hermann Landau, eds., *Yidish-englishes lehrbukh: zusammengestellt fir di englishe abend klassen kommitee in farbindung mit di russò dzhuish kommittee [Yiddish-English Manual: compiled for the English Evening Classes Committee in connection with the Russo-Jewish Committee]* (London: E. W. Rabbinowicz, 1901), 10, 15.

others attended synagogue and the Princes Street Club thus became one of the leading venues of Yiddish theatre in Western Europe.[408]

Nina Warnke, investigating the history of Yiddish theatres and music halls in early twentieth century America, comes to the conclusion that the these institutions "reflected the changing mores of a new generation of working-class immigrants" and that the "popularity of these institutions both highlighted and contributed to the estrangement of a younger generation from their elders" as they embraced new urban culture.[409] Similar developments were at issue in turn of the century London. While young men and women in the East End vied for places in the chorus, the success of the Yiddish theatre provoked harsh opposition from religious orthodoxy – within the native and the immigrant community alike – regarding the Yiddish theatre as a "hotbed of heresy and godlessness".[410]

Throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century, the perception of Yiddish by the native community shifted from distant curiosity to open hostility. As early as 1880, the *Jewish Chronicle* published an article entitled "The drama in Judish-Deutsch" that declared:

> "The plays performed were in the *Jüdisch-Deutsch* dialect, a language which we should be the last to encourage any efforts to preserve; but as it is still a spoken tongue, the opportunity of studying it is not uninteresting."[411]

The careful interest in Yiddish voiced here was exceptional in the pages of the leading newspaper of Anglo-Jewry. Overall, however, the establishment remained hostile towards the Yiddish theatre. Another exceptional case involved the Chief Rabbi. Despite the initial harsh rejection of the jargon, Hermann Adler, the incarnation of anglicisation and Anglicanisation, came to understand that ignoring and condemning it would not serve the need of London's Jewish community as a whole. Jacob P. Adler described this change of mind of his reverend relative in his memoirs:

> "It is a story still told by London actors, that the revered Rabbi Adler not only took an interest in my production of Uriel Acosta, but even gave it his personal assistance! With his own venerable rabbinical hand, the chief rabbi gave me a paper ram's horn to be blown in the synagogue scene. The God-fearing rabbi would not allow a real ram's horn – one that had actually grown on the head of a ram – to be played in a mere theatrical spectacle, a thing performed for money on a stage. In its place he

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[408] David Mazower, *Yiddish theatre in London* (London: Museum of the Jewish East End, 1987), 15.
[409] Nina Warnke, "Immigrant Popular Culture as Contested Sphere: Yiddish Music Halls, the Yiddish Press, and the Processes of Americanization, 1900-1910," *Theatre Journal* 48, no. 3 (1996).
[410] S. J. Harendorf, "Yidish teater in england [The Yiddish Theatre in England]," in *Yidn in England : shtudyes un materyaln, 1880-1940 - Jews in England: Studies and Materials, 1880-1940*, ed. YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 1966), 232-33.
[411] *JC*, 26.03.1880.

gave me a replica made of cardboard. The cardboard ram's horn looked remarkably like the real thing, but it had one defect – it could not be blown."[412]

Moreover, Rothschild accompanied Adler on his visit to the Yiddish play.[413]

It was a tragic accident during a performance at the Hebrew Dramatic Club that for some time caught the interest of the West and East End Jews alike. The catastrophe even received international coverage. The *New York Times* published the dry fact of the event on 18 January 1887.

> "London.—A frightful accident happened here this evening. The Hebrew Dramatic Club gave an entertainment at a theatre in Prince's-street, Spitalfields, which was attended by about 500 persons, mostly Jews. Some one in the gallery, doubtless for a joke, shouted 'Fire.' The gas was immediately turned off [...] and a terrible panic ensued. The people rushed in a solid mass for the doors [...]. When the panic had subsided it was found that 12 women and five youths had been trampled to death in the rush to escape, and many others injured."[414]

Facing this tragic event, the Anglo-Jewish establishment's prejudices against their foreign co-religionists was confined and at least temporarily gave way to a new sense of intra-communal solidarity. Receiving numerous letters offering condolence with the bereaved and expressing sympathy with the East End brethren, the *Jewish Chronicle* set up a subscription list for donations towards the families of the deceased.[415] Moreover, it emphasised that the disaster "illustrates in a most striking manner the responsibility of all London Jews for one another," stating that "whether English or foreign, the Jews are a collective whole" and "whatever befalls one section is held to apply to the whole community." In a remarkable passage of the note went on:

> "We scarcely need this reminder of our common interest with all London Jews, wherever they reside, or wherever their original home. If there is any tendency to repudiate this solidarity among us, this shocking disaster would be sure to show the impossibility of so doing. The reputation of the London Jews is bound up inexorably with that of the Russian Jews of the East End.[416]

The tragic event at the Hebrew Dramatic Club thus highlights the sense of community among the different sections of London Jewry. At the same time the aftermath of the event also highlights the continuing obstacles in consolidating this sense of a London community instead of communities existing side by side in the capital city, for the initial solidarity was soon followed by disenchantment. Already a month after the accident, the London Jewish establishment foremost its august organ the *Jewish Chronicle* returned to a pejorative and at times adverse attitude towards

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[412] Adler, *A Life on the Stage: A Memoir*, 257.
[413] Ibid., 301.
[414] NYT, 19.01.1887. For a personal account cf. Adler, *A Life on the Stage: A Memoir*, 295 ff.
[415] JC, 21.01.1887.
[416] JC, 28.01.1887.

Yiddish culture in the East End. The *Chronicle* called "the persistent isolation" of the East End Jews "one of the most direct causes of the recent disaster" and blamed the foreign Jews for exploiting Anglo-Jewry's hospitality:

> "When they [the foreign Jews] want aid in sickness or distress they are willing to claim their privileges as Jews living in England, but in all their social relations they keep themselves aloof from us [...]. The recent event ought to be a lesson to avoid such performances of strolling minstrels acting in the jargon, and helping to keep up the alienation of the foreign contingent. In making these remarks, we are urged by a consideration of the best interest of these brethren of ours, whose chance of livelihood is largely diminished by their not helping to hasten the process of "Anglicising." We have felt at liberty to give this piece of advice, as we have fortunately been the means of alleviating much of the distress which has been caused by the accident that gave rise to our remarks."[417]

Although the paper started to carry reports on the Yiddish theatre, including interviews with celebrities from the British and American stage as early as 1898 the antipathy to 'the jargon' and the support for anglicisation and anglicising institutions remained the central attitude.[418]

The events at Princes Street meant a serious setback to London Yiddish theatre in other ways too. The audience stayed away from other theatres and Jacob Adler and his company decided to leave England and to continue their work in America.[419] Only slowly did the East End theatre culture recover from the event. Throughout the 1890s, London saw new productions, mainly staged by travelling Jewish companies.[420] It took until the early years of the twentieth century until the London Yiddish theatre was consolidated. In 1906, following a very successful season of Yiddish performances, the Pavilion Theatre became the new main base for of the Yiddish theatre in the capital city. The establishment of the Pavilion Theatre marked the beginning of a new renaissance of Yiddish productions across the East End.[421] Yet another remarkable development coincided with the re-establishment of a London Yiddish theatre landscape. By 1906, the perception of the Yiddish theatre by West End Jews was on its way to change. The *Jewish Chronicle* sent correspondents to the East End for first hand accounts from the Yiddish stage. Despite stressing the persistent otherness of the theatrical performances, many were

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[417] *JC*, 18.02.1887.

[418] Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991*, 78.

[419] Not only did London loos one of his key Yiddish actors of the time but also a Yiddish drama school Adler had operated until his departure at 9 Raven Row, off Sidney Street in the East End. Leonard Prager, *Yiddish Culture in Britain: a guide* (Frankfurt am Main; New York: P. Lang, 1990), 51.

[420] J. Platt, "Yiddish," *Notes and Queries* 8-XI, no. 286 (1897).

[421] Mazower, *Yiddish theatre in London*, 18 ff. The development of the Yiddish theatre was, however, accompanied by setbacks. In 1908, for instance, the New York Time reported that the Yiddish Pavilion Theatre was on the brink of closure. "Failure seems to attend every effort to found a Yiddish theatre in London", the report read. NYT, 8 March 1908.

startled by the enthusiasm of the audience and the unexpected qualities of Yiddish productions. Reporting from his visit "At the Yiddish Play" a *Jewish Chronicle* reporter remarked in 1906 that a "Yiddish audience is an interesting one, and a good-tempered one" where all ages are represented from infants to their grandfathers and where "an atmosphere of anticipated enjoyment" can be found. The report concluded with a remarkable statement:

> "The acting [...] is good, and was evidently appreciated by the audience [...].The Yiddish plays, of which happily there are many in the repertoire superior to the one here described, are distinctly worth a visit."[422]

Six year later in reporting about a Yiddish Rigoletto production the *Jewish Chronicle* and even the non-Jewish press declares:

> "Nowhere, except in the grand opera at Covent Garden, could one hear, in England, a company of such brilliant talent as in this Yiddish Theatre, in the very heart of the East End [...] The performance of 'Rigoletto' in Yiddish stands by itself as one of the most notable operatic triumphs in this country."[423]

The changing attitude towards the Yiddish stage was part of a broader development within London Jewry during the first years of the new century.

The first decades of the twentieth century once again show that the contested Yiddish topographies of London were in part the result of intersecting local, national and imperial aspects within the British capital. While the Yiddish theatre and press represent the local level of Jewish London the example of the 1901 census shows how national politics shaped the local debates surrounding the "jargon". David Cesarani has argued that it was through the census of 1901 that Yiddish was given official recognition compelling the *Jewish Chronicle* to accept the language of the immigrants as a factor that could not longer be ignored.[424] Other Anglo-Jewish institutions followed the example. The Jewish Board of Guardians, for instance, distributed leaflets with guidance on how to complete the English census forms. Besides instructions, the leaflets contained sample of the census forms in German and Yiddish.[425] Moreover, the Chief Rabbi called for volunteers able to serve as English-Yiddish interpreters to support London Jewry's task of gathering the needed census information among all sections of the community.[426] The influence of imperial components came into play in 1906 when the *Jewish Chronicle* declared:

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[422] *JC*, 04.05.1906.

[423] *JC*, 19.04.1912.

[424] Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991*, 78.

[425] "Jewish Board of Guardians, 1901 Census instruction leaflet," LMA: ACC/2712/GTS/366. See also the extensive article and Facsimile of the Yiddish explanations of Schedule in *JC*, 15 March 1904, 11.

[426] *JC*, 18 and 22 February 1901.

"We notice, with great pleasure, that the Government of Cape Colony has resolved formally and by its legislation to recognise Yiddish as a European language."[427] Four years earlier, the Cape Colony had passed legislation forbidding any immigrant to land who was unable to "write out and sign in the characters of any European language." This initial exclusion of Yiddish had already been criticised harshly by the Jewish establishment.[428] The subsequent lobbying for legislation changes – although in part the result of Anglo-Jewish establishment's agenda to minimise the influx of newcomers by diverting them towards British colonies – was an indication of a changing attitude towards the "jargon".

Another decision from Westminster resulted in a long lasting change in attitude on the part of established Anglo-Jewry towards Jewish immigrants as well as their Yiddish subculture in London. The Aliens Act passed by Parliament in 1905 marks a watershed in the intra-communal relations of London Jewry.

Following the implementation of the new immigration restrictions, the established Anglo-Jewish press published numerous sympathetic accounts covering the fate of East European Jewish immigrants examined and often turned back in the ports of arrival such as Grimsby. In November 1906, the *Jewish Chronicle* went so far as to openly lobbying against the Act by sending its own correspondent to deliver a file of material to the Home Office exposing the abuses in the application of the new legislation.[429]

What is even more remarkable is a change in attitude towards the Jewish East End and all things Yiddish following the Aliens Act. The columns of the *Jewish Chronicle* serve again as a very good example of this shift. Starting in the summer of 1906 the paper witnessed a major overhaul through the addition of broader provincial coverage as well as the introduction of new regular columns devoted to the activities of friendly societies – of which most were rooted in the immigrant community – trade unions and a section entitled "East End Notes".

It has been argued that the attempts to attract new groups of readers and thus boost the paper's sales were the moving force behind this overhaul.[430] Looking at some of

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A decade later, in 1911 the practice was extended and continued when 2,000 copies of the "Yiddish and German Census were distributed by the Federation [of Synagogues]" with Federation officials giving "assistance in the correct completion of papers which wer unfamiliar to many of their recipients", "Federation of Synagogues, Report, (Part) 1911, 1912, 1913," LMA: ACC/2805/03/02/024

[427] *JC*, 27 July 1906, 8.

[428] *JC*, 17 April 1904, 17.

[429] Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991*, 100.

[430] Ibid., 101.

the new contributions to the paper, especially articles dealing with Yiddish culture, however, it becomes apparent that it was more than just a change in form but also in content. An editorial article from 17 August 1906 described the language the paper had so fiercely fought for years in the following way:

> "Yiddish is an instinct with an enormous vitality, and with a consequent faculty of evolution, to impugn or to impair which would be almost to question the essential characteristic of our race [...] a Jewish Esperanto, a *lingua franca* ...."[431]

The metamorphosis from "alien jargon" to "Jewish lingua franca" could not have been greater. Although the *Chronicle* stressed the need of foster English among the immigrants, it was far form condemning the use of Yiddish. One should not wholly discourage the use of Yiddish among the children, the argument continued, for "to know Yiddish also renders them bi-lingual and facilitates the acquisition of pure German." It also allows "domestic intimacy and sweet homeliness between them and their linguistically less accomplished elders."[432]

Another striking example for the changing perception of the East End and its Jews in post-Aliens-Act London is the exhibition of *Jewish Art and Antiquities*. Originally planned to go on display in 1905 at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in the heart of the East End, the exhibition had to be postponed by one year. The organisers of the exhibition named the unavailability of the gallery space in autumn of 1905 as the reason fort the delay.[433] Others have argues that the delay might have been due to recent political events, for it resulted in significant change of the ideological aims connected to the show. Opening the exhibition in the final months of 1906 meant that it became seen as a response to recent political events, a direct answer to the legislation of the Aliens Act passed in the previous year.[434]

There is now evidence however, that such the makers of the exhibition followed a political agenda of this kind in their endeavour, for the intentions behind the show were very different ones. One of the central figures in the outline and realisation of the exhibition was a non-Jew. Canon Barnett who had served as a vicar in an East London Parish and became active in philanthropic projects for many years was the first to come up with an idea for a Jewish exhibition in Whitechapel with the aim to

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[431] *JC*, 17.08.1906.

[432] *JC*, 17.08.1906.

[433] Whitechapel Art Gallery, ed., *Exibition of Jewish Art and Antiquities: Catalogue: 7 November-16 December 1906* ([London]: 1906), Preface.

[434] Steyn argues that the proximity of the exhibition to political processes and legislation "cannot be mere coincidence and must be seen as part of the sub-text of the show". Juliet Steyn, "The complexities of assimilation in the 1906 Whitechapel Art Gallery exhibition 'Jewish Art and Antiquities'," *Oxford Art Journal* XIII, no. 2 (1990): 45.

educate its inhabitants and making them aware of artistic values.[435] It was this idea "to uplift its [the East End's] inhabitants with ideas as different as can be from the sordid surroundings of their daily occupations [...] to diffuse 'light and sweetness' among a population that have few opportunities of cultivating the refinements of life"[436] that became the driving force behind the efforts of the organisers – numerous Anglo-Jewish notables among them. For many, the exhibition was as tool of social engineering, a means to foster Anglicising of the Jewish immigrants dwelling in the eastern boroughs of the metropolis.

Another argument for the unconscious politicisation of the plan is the attempt to place the 1906 show in the tradition of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition of 1887. The preface of the catalogue states:

> "The scheme [of the Whitechapel Art gallery exhibition] as originally shadowed out was to hold a cosmopolitan and representative Show on much the same lines as the memorable Anglo-Jewish Exhibition held at the Albert Hall in 1887; save that it was proposed to widen the basis by including a Collection of Works by Jewish Artists, English and Foreign, and to invite the offer of exhibits from all countries."[437]

Indeed almost half of the gallery space was devoted to Jewish antiquities following the model of the 1887 exhibition. It were however the examples of contemporary Jewish art on display on the upper gallery that caused furore and attracted masses of visitors. During the six weeks it was held, over 150,000 people visited the exhibition.[438]

The exhibition received attention beyond London. A young art student from Berlin, Karl Schwarz, who came to the British capital in 1905, wrote an enthusiastic report of the Whitechapel exhibition for the central German-Jewish newspaper *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*.[439] The exhibition offering overview of the development of art among the Jews, he declared, deserves attention in all circles and all countries.[440] The significance of the exhibition of 1906 however is not limited to the fact it being one of the first exhibit ever to put contemporary Jewish art on public display. What is

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[435] Cf. Henrietta Barnett, *Canon Barnett: His Life and Work, and friends: By his wife*, 2 vols. (London: John Murraz, 1918), vol. 1, 219-20. On Barnetts work in the East End cf. also Canon Barnett, "Twenty-five Years of East London," *Contemporary Review* 74 (1898).

[436] *JC*, Supplement, 09.11.1906

[437] Whitechapel Art Gallery, ed., *Exibition of Jewish Art and Antiquities: Catalogue: 7 November-16 December 1906*, Preface.

[438] Juliet Steyn, *The Jew: assumptions of identity* (London; New York: Cassell, 1999), 80.

[439] In his autobiography, Schwarz recalls meetings with Zangwill and his numerous visits in the art cathedrals of London but does not mention his visit to the East End exhibition. Karl Schwarz, Chana C. Schütz, and Hermann Simon, *Jüdische Kunst, Jüdische Künstler : Erinnerungen des ersten Direktors des Berliner Jüdischen Museums* (Teetz: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2001).

[440] Karl Schwarz, "Die jüdische Ausstellung in der Whitechapel Art Gallery zu London," *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, 07.12. 1906.

even more important for the context at issue, are the exhibition's political implications for London Jewry.

It has been argued that the exhibition unfolded a concept of Jewishness for the recent arrivals that "urged them to assimilate" to "purged of its own languages, its Yiddish cultures" and embrace a "version of Jewishness which would be compatible with Englishness."[441] Looking at the success of the exhibition and parts of its contents more closely however, puts such an interpretation at question. For despite of the fact that it was the culture of Western European Jews which was celebrated – most of the objects on loan came from the established Anglo-Jewish community and mirrored their ideological standpoint and aesthetic believes – the exhibition turned into a celebration of Eastern European Jewish culture and art.[442]

Although the *Jewish Chronicle* celebrated the works of artists such Joseph Israels, Solomon J. Solomon or Joseph Oppenheimer as the finest examples of Jewish art most visitors – probably Jewish East Enders to a large extent – found links to their own cultural background in different works on display at the Whitechapel Art Gallery. Leopold Pilichowski was but one among the contemporary artists exhibiting in London in 1906 who was of Eastern European origin himself. Born in Łódź, Pilichowski had studied at Warsaw and Munich before he had settled in Paris. On several occasions, Pilichowski travelled back to his native Poland seeking inspiration for his paintings in the realist style, depicting the harsh living conditions of his fellow Polish Jews. His striking canvas "On the Way of the Exile" was but one starling example for a number of paintings around the exhibition depicting fleeing Eastern European Jewry.[443]

These pictures represented a world thousands of East End visitors had left in hope of a better future in the West. At the same time, a world they had brought with them on their journey and in part re-established in their new environment. Seeing these pictures at an exhibition organised by the London-Jewish establishment could be seen as recognition or even an appreciation of the immigrants' subculture.

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[441] Steyn, "The complexities of assimilation in the 1906 Whitechapel Art Gallery exhibition 'Jewish Art and Antiquities'," 49-50.

[442] As can be see from th catalogue that lists the lenders of all objects. Whitechapel Art Gallery, ed., *Exibition of Jewish Art and Antiquities: Catalogue: 7 November-16 December 1906.* Cf. also Steyn, "The complexities of assimilation in the 1906 Whitechapel Art Gallery exhibition 'Jewish Art and Antiquities'," 47.

[443] The exhibition supplement published by the Jewish Chronicle rubricated these painting under the heading "Judenschmerz", *JC*, 9 November 1906, Supplement, iv.

In sum, the 1906 Exhibition Jewish Art and Antiquities highlighted an ongoing shift within London Jewry it became – to borrow the phrase of the late Peter Gross – "an Anglo-Jewish U-turn".[444]

Conclusion

The decades around the turn of the century saw major transformations of Anglo-Jewry in general and London Jewry in particular. The British capital city not only became a true "capital of the nineteenth century" it also became a major capital of the age of migration. Early attempts to establish a common ground beyond the denominational divide in the metropolis were challenged by the influx of thousands of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. Fear that the presence of these "alien brethren" and their foreign customs and habits would jeopardise the position achieved by those already dwelling in the metropolis – a group only impartially described by the term "native community" – long dominated the intra-communal affaires. The case of London is paradigmatic for the encounter between Jews from East and West—a key aspect of the modern urban Jewish experience across Western Europe and North America. Within London, the attempts of anglicising the newcomers turned into a struggle over urban territory. The East End became seen as a world apart. London's position as capital of the Empire added a specific dynamic and dimension to the urban Jewish trajectory. At the heart of the empire lay a territory that needed to be anglicised and colonised. Hence, London provided both the scene for acrimonious attempts to destroy the flowering Yiddish subculture in the eastern boroughs of the metropolis and the subsequent "revolt of colonized" against hegemonising attempts.[445]

Overall this chapter argues that the British capital city had a profound impact on the transformation London's Jewish community underwent during the late Victorian and early Edwardian years. The competing concepts of Jewish urbanity were inscribed into the urban territory of London, as the example of East End and West End indicates. Turning away from the dominating (narrative of) antagonism of East and West End this chapter stresses that the big city provided a field where differences not

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[444] Peter Gross, "Representations of Jews and Jewishness in English painting, 1887-1914." PhD thesis, Leeds, 2004, 216.
[445] I borrow the term "revolt of colonized" from Susannah Heschel who has brilliantly applied post-colonial methodology to the study of nineteenth century *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Cf. Susannah Heschel, "Revolt of the Colonized: Abraham Geiger's Wissenschaft des Judentums as a Challenge to Christian Hegemony in the Academy," *New German Critique* 77 (1999).

only could compete but coexist and at times even be synthesised and resolved. The city both mitigated and mediated the clashes of different urban Jewish cultures. Consequently, the diverse and multifaceted metropolis fostered the evolution of new urban Jewish cultural pattern and the coexistence of differences.

Community and Modernity

Modern Jewish art for a modern metropolis

Inspired by the success of the Exhibition of Jewish Arts and Antiquities at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London's East End in 1906 a group of Berlin Jews aimed for a similar display in the German capital city.[446] In the following year, the *Association for the promotion of Jewish Art* (Verein zur Förderung jüdischer Kunst) founded for this purpose managed to bring a number of exhibits previously on display in London to Berlin. On 17 November 1907, the *Exhibition of Jewish Artists* opened in the *Gallery for Old and New Art* in the Berlin Wilhelmstrasse.[447]

While on display in London, the exhibition aimed to contribute to the anglicisation and enculturation of the Eastern European Jewish masses. Already the choice of location for the Berlin exhibition indicates that here Jewish art was to serve quite a different agenda. In an ambience far detached from a direct Jewish context and in close proximity to the political centre of the government edifices on Wilhelmstrasse in the centre of the Berlin, the *Exhibition of Jewish Artists* aimed to present the vitality of modern Jewish art production and its important contribution to modernism across national boundaries.[448]

Coming to the German capital city the exhibition came to an emerging centre of modernism. Against the odds of the Wilheminian agenda advocating a nationalistic conservative cultural taste, turn of the century Berlin saw the emergence of "alternative" artistic subculture where modernism was embraced. The exhibition of 1907 was part of this development and an example for Jewish engagement in it.[449] Since the last decades of the nineteenth century, Berlin had developed not only into a centre of a vital modernist subculture but also embarked on a breath-taking trajectory towards becoming a modern metropolis joining London and Paris. Around the turn of the century, Berlin had become a big city – "a world city (perhaps?)" as Wilhelm II wrote in 1896.[450] Population explosion and expansion of the city space were just the obvious signs of this development.

The 1907 exhibition emphasised that Jews were actively participating in the creation of modern artistic expression and it was a statement that Berlin Jews saw

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[446] *AZJ*, 07.12.1906 and 29.11.1907.
[447] Alfred Nossig, "Ausstellung jüdischer Künstler," *Ost und West* 7 (1907).
[448] *AZJ*, 07.12.1907.
[449] On the role of Jews in Berlin modernism cf. Bilski, ed., *Berlin Metropolis*.
[450] Gerhard Masur, *Imperial Berlin* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), 125-26.

themselves as an advocate of modernism amidst a modern city, a city of exceptional importance for German Jewry overall.[451]

According to the census that was compiled three years after the exhibition in Wilhelmstrasse Berlin was home to 144,000 Jews[452] by 1925 – mainly due to mass migration from the territories lost as a result of World War I – almost a fourth of all Jews in Germany lived in the capital city.

Development of Jews in Berlin

Especially since the second half of the nineteenth century, Berlin had witnessed the establishment of a wide range of urban Jewish infrastructure of which the New Synagogue on Oranienburger Strasse, completed in 1866, added a visible landmark emphasising Jewish presence in the city. Besides sublime architectural structures Berlin became a centre of Jewish learning with the foundation of the liberal *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* in 1872 and Hildesheimer's Rabbinical Seminary for Orthodox Judaism opening its doors adjacent to the *Hochschule* a year later. Besides these institutions - known vernacular as the "light [liberal Hochschule] and the heavy [orthodox Seminary] artillery" due to the positions of their edifices along the Artilleriestrasse in the centre of Berlin[453] – a number of German-Jewish organisations had their headquarters in the capital city. The *Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund* (union of German Jewish communities) originally founded as the first all-German Jewish association in Leipzig in 1869 moved its headquarters from Saxony to Berlin in 1882. Other Jewish institutions setting up in Berlin were the German section of the lodge B'nai B'rith (founded in 1883), the *Central-Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens* (Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith; often referred to with the abbreviation CV) founded here in 1893, the *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden*

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[451] Vera Grodzinski argues in here thesis that German Jewish art collectors and patrons before World War I diverged in their taste and collecting activity from mainstream German society. They hoped to promote modernist art and culture even against the odds of Wilhelmine taste. Grodzinski goes as far as to argue that the support for French modernist art among by this group of collectors and patrons was the result of a particular "German Jewish 'sub-culture'". Grodzinski, Veronika. "French impressionism and German Jewish patronage: the reception of modernism in Imperial Germany, 1896-1914." PhD thesis, University College London, 2005.

[452] Figure according to the account by Walter Breslauer, "Die jüdische Gemeinde Berlin," in *Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Rabbiner Dr. Leo Baeck am 23. Mai 1953*, ed. Council of Jews from Germany (London: Council of Jews from Germany, 1953), 43.

[453] Monika Richarz, "Jüdisches Berlin und seine Vernichtung," in *Die Metropole: Industriekultur in Berlin Im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Jochen Boberg, Tilman Fichter, and Eckhart Gillen (München: C.H. Beck, 1986), 217.

(founded 1901) or the *Verband der deutschen Juden* (Alliance of German Jews) founded three years later. In 1911, the centre of the Zionist Federation was transferred to Berlin.[454] Moreover, Berlin became of *the* European centre of Hebrew Culture in the early years of the twentieth century.[455] Especially during the Weimar years, the German capital furthermore developed into a hub of Yiddish culture.[456] Paradoxically the high inflation in Germany during in the early twentieth made Berlin an attractive and profitable place for publishers, which enjoyed outside financial resources. As a result, numerous Yiddish papers where published in Berlin for re-export to Eastern Europe.[457] Scholars like Dubnow who in 1921 noted, "Berlin is the only point in the universe where I might conclude my literary work" came to live in the German capital city[458] as did writers like Hayyim Nahman Bialik. These developments added new Jewish sites to Berlin's Jewish landscape, such as the Hebrew-speaking corner in Café Monopol – a meeting-point for intellectuals and writers.[459] In 1925, a group of émigré scholars from Eastern Europe founded the Yiddish Scientific Institute, YIVO in Berlin.[460]

Consequently, Berlin had become indeed "the place where all strains of the cultural life of German Jews converged," as Eugen Wolbe stated in 1937.[461] However, Berlin was more than the nexus of German-Jewish religious and political institutions it was a place where "all 'Jewish fantasies' as well as the inner contradistinctions of German

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[454] As a result of World War I it was moved to London some years later.

[455] On Hebrew Culture in Berlin cf. Brenner, *Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany, 1996*, 185 ff, Zohar Shavit, "On the Hebrew Cultural Center in Berlin in the Twenties : Hebrew Culture in Europe - the last attempt," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 68 (1993).

[456] Gennady Estraikh, "Vilna on the Spree: Yiddish in Weimar Berlin," *Aschkenas* 16, no. 1 (2006), Delphine Bechtel, *La renaissance culturelle juive en Europe centrale et orientale, 1897-1930 : langue, littérature et construction nationale* (Paris: Belin, 2002), especially chaptre IV, Delphine Bechtel, "Cultural transfers between "Ostjuden" and "Westjuden": German-Jewish intellectuals and Yiddish culture 1897-1930," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 42 (1997). On Berlin Yiddish modernism and avant-garde cf. Arthur Tilo Alt, "The Berlin Milgroym Group and Modernism in Yiddish," *Yiddish* VII, no. 1 (1987), Arthur Tilo Alt, "Yiddish Literature and the Modern Metropolis: Images of Whitechapel, Scheunenviertel, and the Lower East Side," *Yiddish* 10, no. 2/3 (1996).

[457] Cf. Marion Neiss, *Presse im Transit: jiddische Zeitungen und Zeitschriften in Berlin von 1919 bis 1925* (Berlin: Metropol, 2002). For a comparative perspective cf. Susanne Marten-Finnis and Heather Valencia, *Sprachinseln: jiddische Publizistik in London, Wilna und Berlin 1880-1930* (Köln: Böhlau, 1999).

[458] Quoted after Zohar Shavit, "On the Hebrew Cultural Center in Berlin in the Twenties : Hebrew Culture in Europe - the last attempt," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 68 (1993): 375. For a brief but no less inspiring account of Dubnow's time in Berlin cf. Karl Schlögel, *Berlin Ostbahnhof Europas: Russen und Deutsche in ihrem Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Siedler, 1998), 220 ff.

[459] Gershom Scholem, *From Berlin to Jerusalem : memories of my youth* (New York: Schocken Books, 1980), 85-87.

[460] David E. Fishman, *The Rise of Modern Yiddish Culture* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 126 ff.

[461] Eugen Wolbe, *Geschichte der Juden in Berlin und in der Mark Brandenburg* (Berlin: Kedem, 1937), 305.

Jewry concentrated".[462] Berlin became an icon of Jewish urbanity both in the sense of Jewish urban ways of life as well as in their shaping of the urban environment. It was this latter aspect that gave rise to the idea of a particular "Berlin Jewish spirit", described and critically analysed by Peter Gay.[463] When Theodor Fontane coined the term in 1889 he referred to a particular aspect of the metropolitan spirit that was about to detach Berlin from its surrounding provinces. For Fontane it was a Berlin Jewish spirit represented by Lessing's Nathan and Rahel Levin's Salon that shaped Berlin Enlightenment and the city's middle classes.[464] Extending Fontane's term into the time of the Weimar Republic Gay argues that the Berlin-Jewish spirit emerged as a "distinct political and intellectual force" showing that the "Jews' prominence in Berlin" continued to play an important role in the shaping of the character of the city and its people.[465] Despite his scepticism concerning the existence or persistence of the alleged Berlin Jewish spirit and its violation by notorious anti-Semites, Gay does not succeed in entirely deconstructing the concept.

Despite the necessary scepticism towards an alleged Berlin-Jewish spirit the concept can serve as a point of departure to investigate the role Jews played in Berlin during the first half of the twentieth century, helping to analyse ways in which they shaped the face of the city while and in turn were shaped by the city. This chapter puts these two aspects at the centre by looking in particular at multilayered Jewish urban space in Berlin. Jewish Berlin was more than its synagogues and architectural sites – it was more than the "real" network of Jewish community and voluntary institutions.

Janus face of urban modernity

> « Berlin est une grande ville, dont les rues sont très-larges, parfaitement bien alignées, les maisons belles, et l'ensemble régulier [...] on n'y voit rien qui retrace les temps antérieurs. [...] Berlin, cette ville toute moderne .... »
>
> Anne Louise Germaine de Staël-Holstein[466]

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[462] Schlör, *Das Ich der Stadt*, 117.

[463] Peter Gay, *The Berlin-Jewish Spirit: A Dogma in Search of Some Doubts* (New York: Leo Baeck Institute, 1972). In the following quoted after: Peter Gay, "The Berlin-Jewish Spirit: A Dogma in Search of Some Doubts," in *Freud, Jews, and other Germans: master and victims in modernist culture*, ed. Peter Gay (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

[464] Theodor Fontane, "Die Märker und die Berliner und wie sich das Berlinertum entwickelt [1889]," in *Theodor Fontane: Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Charlotte Jolles, vol. XIX (München: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1969), 750-51.

[465] Gay, "The Berlin-Jewish Spirit: A Dogma in Search of Some Doubts," 178 and 73.

[466] Anne Louise Germaine de Staël-Holstein, *De l'Allemagne* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1845), 81.

Around the turn of the century, cities became perceived as *the* space of what Baudelaire in a programmatic essay in 1863 called "modernité". In his reflections on the "Painter of modern life," Baudelaire established a connection between urban space and modern experience. The painter, Baudelaire argued, is a wanderer in the great city, this "landscape of stone, caressed by the mist or buffeted by the sun. As flâneur his wandering aims for something general, he is "looking for something what we can call modernity (la modernité)." It is in the urban space that the painter aiming to capture "the attitude and the gesture of human beings" can find and depict modernity defined as "the transitory, the fleeing, the fortuitous, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable."[467]

Twentieth century Berlin shows that cities, and not only in terms of aesthetic representation had become laboratories of modernity in a double sense. Due to the ubiquity of modernity in metropolises, cities became prime places for writers attempting to encapsulate the essence of increasing fluidity and ambivalence of the human condition. More and more social theorists engaged questions of modern urbanity. Contrary to Baudelaire's enthusiastic embracing of modern city life, most these accounts reflected a fare more ambivalent view of urban modernity.

In 1899, an article by Walter Rathenau entitled "The Most Beautiful City in the World" appeared anonymously in Maximilian Harden's journal *Die Zukunft*. Rathenau declared that Berlin was the "parvenu among the big cities and the big city of parvenus" in other words the "self made man" (English in the original) of cities. Despite lacking features of other metropolises, such as London, Paris or New York, without historic buildings older than some decades, Berlin claimed to be one among them, the author continued, a claim resting upon the "factory city that no one knows in the West and which is perhaps the greatest in the world." Ironically, the article quotes the song lines that "Berlin will some day indeed become the most beautiful city in the world" while Paris and London will be depopulated and impoverished "for the millions of the world will pour into Berlin."[468]

Rathenau's essay represents one strain of Berlin descriptions, describing the city as a would-be metropolis, one that despite its enormous growth remained inferior the 'real' metropolises, namely Paris and London. It was in Berlin that the Janus face of

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[467] Charles Baudelaire, "Le peintre de la vie moderne [1863]," in *Œuvres complètes de Charles Baudelaire*, ed. Jacques Crépet, vol. 2: Quelques-uns de mes contemporains; curiosités esthétiques (Paris: L. Conard, 1925).

[468] Walter Rathenau, "Die schönste Stadt der Welt," *Die Zukunft* 7, no. 15 (1899).

modernity exposed itself most visibly. Rathenau's ambiguous statement of "the most beautiful city of the world" was just one out of many attempts to capture the ambivalence of urban modernity Berlin became to represent over the following decades.[469] Many commentators embarked on the quest to investigate, analyse and understand Berlin as a city that was "damned to perpetual becoming and never to being" as Karl Scheffler concluded in his 1910 book *Berlin, fate of a city*.[470]

During a conference organised by the Gehe Foundation in the run-up to the German Urban Exhibition of 1903 in Dresden, Georg Simmel delivered his famous lecture *Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben* (The Metropolis and Mental Life)[471], the "most important single article on the city from a sociological standpoint" as Louis Wirth called it later.[472]

Aiming for the comprehension of modernity Simmel analysed the particular "mode of lived experience within modern society" in general, most visibly, and strongly within the big cities.[473] Simmel's argument that the urban dweller exposed to the numerous "rapidly shifting stimulations of the nerves" of modern city life develops a "blasé attitude" in order to cope with them stands at the centre of his essay.[474]

With his 1903 remarks, pointing to a central aspect of modernising urban life that was to become more and more virulent, Simmel paved the path for many future commentators. Over the following decades, a growing number of commentators associated the German capital city with modernity in its varied forms and expressions. Retrospectively Helmuth Plessner argued in 1962, that the trajectory of imperial Berlin towards modernity and modernism laid the fundaments for the image

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[469] On ambivalence as a central feature of modernity cf. Zygmunt Bauman, "Allosemitism: Premodern, Modern, Postmodern," in *Modernity, Culture, and 'the Jew'*, ed. Bryan Cheyette and Laura Marcus (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998), especially pp. 148 ff, Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Oxford: Polity, 1991).

[470] Scheffler, *Berlin, ein Stadtschicksal*, 267.

[471] Simmel, "Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben, Dresden, 1903."

[472] Louis Wirth, "A bibliography of the urban community," in *The City*, ed. Robert Ezra Park, Ernest Watson Burgess, and Roderick Duncan McKenzie (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1925), 219.

[473] David Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity: theories of modernity in the work of Simmel, Kracauer, and Benjamin* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985). There is an immense literature on Simmel and numerous contributions engaging his 1903 essay. To give just some examples: David Frisby, *Cityscapes of Modernity: critical explorations* (Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity Press in association with Blackwell, 2001), Chapter 3: The City Interpreted, Lothar Müller, "Die Großstadt als Ort der Moderne: Über Georg Simmel," in *Die Unwirklichkeit der Städte: Großstadtdarstellungen zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne*, ed. Klaus R. Scherpe (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988), Dietmar Jazbinsek, "The Metropolis and the Mental Life of Georg Simmel: on the history of an antipathy," *Journal of Urban History* 30, no. 1 (2003), Iain Borden, "Space Beyond: spatiality and the city in the writings of Georg Simmel," *The Journal of Architecture* 2, no. 4 (1997).

[474] Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life [1903]," in *The Blackwell City Reader*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 14.

of inter-war Berlin as *the* modern city. In his attempt to deconstruct the *Legend of the Twenties* – which he himself became part of – Plessner carried this argument to the point that there was indeed nothing authentically new about Weimar Culture but that it was merely the delayed result of avant-gardist movement of the turn of the century.[475] While this argument seems extreme it challenges an equally inadequate interpretation of Weimar Berlin and Weimar-Jewish culture describing it as something new and unprecedented while ignoring its roots in the year prior to the Great War. Both views, one seeing the creation of the Weimar Republic as a zero hour for cultural development and another regarding Weimar culture merely as an interrupted continuation of pre World War I development, are inadequate to capture the complex and contradictory nature of (Jewish) Weimar culture.

Despite important strains of continuation World War I signified a rupture to the German Jewry and Berlin Jewish life worlds in particular marking the disappearance of what Stefan Zweig called "The world of yesterday", a pre-war "golden age of security".[476] On a local level too, changes became visible. Not only revolution, civil war and the subsequent, in part violent implementation of the republican system seemed to turn the German capital city upside down, sweeping away "the old an the rotten" that had collapsed.[477]

Paradoxically post-war Berlin witnessed some kind of consolidation compared to the exorbitant urbanisation of previous decades. Population explosion and rapid extension of the urban scope of the city slowed down. The 1920 Greater-Berlin act, unifying inner city Berlin with 93 surrounding communities that had in part grown into cities themselves over the passed decades, gave the urban landscape of the German capital a common administrative framework. Taken together Berlin became a big city with defined limits and a centralised political structure. These consolidations in turn did not bring the disappearance of urban challenges and problems. On the contrary, fragmentation, lack of cohesion in cultural and social terms as well as social

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[475] Helmuth Plessner, "Die Legende von den zwanziger Jahren [1962]," in *Die Verspätete Nation*, ed. Helmuth Plessner (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1982).

[476] Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern: Erinnerungen eines Europäers* (Stockholm: Bermann-Fischer, 1942). Here quoted after the English edition Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday: an autobiography* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), especially Chapter I. "The World of Security", pp. 1-27.

[477] The expression "old and the rotten" is taken from the speech of Philipp Scheidemann on 9 November 1918 calling out the Republic and declaring the collapse of the imperial system. The speech was reconstructed in 1924.

divides prevailed putting the myth of the so-called Golden Twenties very much at question.[478]

It is this myth of the Golden Twenties that overshadows a number of accounts on Jewish life in inter-war Berlin. Thus, it does not come as a surprise that earlier scholarly accounts on Jews in the Weimar Republic focused on Jewish intellectuals and representatives of Weimar (high) Culture.[479]

Weimar high culture itself became in part a synonym of Jewish and particularly Berlin-Jewish culture. Thus, Walter Laqueur claims "[w]ithout the Jews there would have been no 'Weimar culture'". He describes Jews as the "forefront of every new, daring, revolutionary movement" and stressing their prominent position "among Expressionist poets, among the novelists of the 1920s, among the theatrical producers and, for a while, among the leading figures in the cinema" as well as in the realm of journalism, theatre and criticism.[480] More than twenty years earlier, Gottfried Benn had made a similar statement when he argued that the "overflowing richness of artistic, scholarly and economic improvisations that had placed Berlin next to Paris" during the inter war years was to a great extent the result of the presence of the Jewish section of Berlin's population "with its international networks, sensible unrest and instinct for quality."[481]

Against such an approach, this chapter argues that Berlin in the 1920s and 1930s was a place where Jews experience what Detlev Peukert termed the "crisis of classical Modernity."[482] Social, political or economic turmoil during these decades meant a particular challenge to Berlin Jews. These decades of crisis forced the question of how to live as Jews and especially as a Jewish community within the big city upon urban Jewry. It was in 1920s Berlin more then elsewhere and with

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[478] Recent years have seen a renaissance of this myth. Especially in Berlin attempts to place places and institutions in the tradition of the Weimar years are apparent. Cf. Michael Bienert and Elke Linda Buchholz, *Die Zwanziger Jahre in Berlin: ein Wegweiser durch die Stadt* (Berlin: Berlin-Story-Verl., 2005). For the revival of "[Weimar] Jewish Culture" in post-1989 Berlin cf. Joachim Schlör, "Jüdisches (in) Berlin," in *Berlin : Kultur und Metropole in den zwanziger und seit den neunziger Jahren*, ed. Godela Weiss-Sussex and Ulrike Zitzlsperger (München: Iudicium, 2007). The rootes of this myth though are older as an article by Adorno dating from 1962 indicated. Cf. Theodor W. Adorno, "Jene zwanziger Jahre," *Merkur* 16, no. 1. Halbjahr (1962).

[479] Cf. Walter Grab and Julius H. Schoeps, eds., *Juden in der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Burg Verlag, 1986).

[480] Walter Laqueur, *Weimar, a Cultural History, 1918-1933* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974), 73.

[481] Gottfried Benn, "Doppelleben [1950]," in *Gottfried Benn Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 5 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1986), 85 f.

[482] Detlev Peukert, *Die Weimarer Republik: Krisenjahre der klassischen Moderne* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987). Cf. also David F. Crew, "The Pathologies of Modernity: Detlev Peukert on Germany's Twentieth Century," *Social History* 17 (1992).

unprecedented intensity that the debates around city and Jews and especially the equation of Jews with modernity were carried out.[483]

Different from Simmel's argument concerning individual urban experience this chapter then argues that Berlin Jews as a community quite actively engaged the challenge the urban environment meant for them by employing various strategies to come to terms with the metropolis and its life. Hence, the chapter explores various patterns of Jewish responses to the challenges of the modern urban environment of Berlin, such as the creation of Jewish spaces in the city and the search of place for the Jewish community in the big city. The central question of this chapter thus is how did Berlin Jews establish community in its different configurations within the modern metropolis? What obstacles did they face in this quest and what means did they employ to come to terms with the shifting landscapes of modern Berlin where all that is solid seemed to melt into thin air – to borrow Marshall Berman's catchy description of modernity?[484]

Like in the previous chapter, the focus will be laid on the interaction between Jews and the city, showing how the quest for community and the concept of *Gemeinde* and *Gemeinschaft* were shaped by the urban environment and the demands of modernity of the German capital city. The chapter argues that the concept of community served as a central means for Berlin Jews to overcome the crisis of modernity.

Juxtaposing aspects of city representation with a new interpretation of economic and political aspects of Berlin Jewish history, this chapter proposes that during Berlin throughout the first decades of the twentieth century was a place where Jews envisioned, created, and defended different concepts of Jewish urbanity projecting them onto the city and onto various spaces therein. In this attempt, the chapter can build on a growing research of Berlin Jewry.[485] Until the 1990s, Donald Niewyk's study on *Jews in Weimar Germany* remained one of the few studies devoted to the subject.[486] The following decades though witnessed a growing scholarly interest in Weimar Jewish History.

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[483] Joachim Schlör, "Bilder Berlins als "Jüdische Stadt": Ein Beitrag zur Wahrnehmungsgeschichte der deutschen Metropole," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 37 (1997): 208.

[484] Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air.*

[485] Among scholarship of importance to the issues at question that deals with Berlin Jews at the beginning of the twentieth century are Bilski, ed., *Berlin Metropolis.*

[486] Donald L. Niewyk, *The Jews in Weimar Germany* (Baton Rouge; London: Louisiana State University Press, 1980). A noteworthy exception are several volumes published by the Leo Baeck Institute earlier: Werner E. Mosse and Arnold Paucker, eds., *Juden im Wilhelminischen Deutschland 1890 - 1914 : ein Sammelband* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1976), Werner E. Mosse and Arnold Paucker, eds., *Deutsches Judentum in Krieg und Revolution : 1916 - 1923 ; ein Sammelband* (Tübingen: Mohr,

Especially Michael Brenner's encyclopedic study on the *Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany* allows new insights in the varied field of Jewish cultural activity in inter-war Germany focusing in particular on inner-Jewish developments.[487] Different from Brenner's attempt, the volume *Jewish Life in the Weimar Republic* published in the Leo Baeck institute series in 1998 focuses rather on political and intellectual activities of Weimar Jewry placing them in the context of the broader German society of the time.[488]

Both volumes were preceded by a collection of essays edited by Oded Heilbronner bringing together a number of Israeli historians in the attempt to map out various aspects of German Jewish attitudes towards Weimar Modernity.[489] Although Berlin plays a considerable role in these publications, it is often not the main focus.

"It really is astonishing," Ernst G. Lowenthal remarked in 1978, "that Berlin [...] is still not represented appropriately in the post-war literature on Jewish communal history."[490] In fact, publications by the Berlin Jewish community and works accompanying exhibitions for a considerable time remained the only works devoted to the subject.[491] Still in 1984, Lowenthal regretfully remarked that the situation of a "puzzling inadequacy" in the scholarship of Berlin Jewish history had remained.[492] The growing number of anthologies—reprinting the same "prominent" texts—adds little to a better understanding of Jewish Berlin.[493] A similar assessment can be made concerning most local studies. There are monographs on Jews in almost every Berlin district. These publications, partly the outcome of local initiatives and the history

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1971), Werner E. Mosse and Arnold Paucker, eds., *Entscheidungsjahr 1932: zur Judenfrage in der Endphase der Weimarer Republik ; ein Sammelband* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1965).

[487] Brenner, *Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany, 1996.*

[488] Wolfgang Benz, Arnold Paucker, and Peter G. J. Pulzer, eds., *Jüdisches Leben in der Weimarer Republik = Jews in the Weimar Republic* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998).

[489] Oded Heilbronner, ed., *Yehude Vaimar: hevrah be-mashber ha-moderniyut, 1918-1933 - Weimar Jewry and the Crisis of Modernization, 1918-1933* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, The Hebrew University Jerusalem, 1994).

[490] Ernst G. Lowenthal, "In the Shadow of Doom — Post-War Publications on Jewish Communal History in Germany (III)," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* XXIII (1978): 300.

[491] H. G. Sellenthin, *Geschichte der Juden in Berlin und des Gebäudes Fasanenstrasse 79/80* ([Berlin]: Vorstand der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin, 1959), Herbert Arthur Strauss and Kurt R. Grossmann, eds., *Gegenwart im Rückblick: Festgabe für die Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin 25 Jahre nach dem Neubeginn* (Heidelberg: Stiehm, 1970), Berlin Museum, *Leistung und Schicksal: 300 Jahre jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin* (Berlin: Berlin-Museum, 1971).

[492] Ernst G. Lowenthal, "In the Shadow of Doom — Post-War Publications on Jewish Communal History in Germany (IV)," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* XXIX (1984).

[493] Andreas Nachama, Julius H. Schoeps, and Hermann Simon, eds., *Juden in Berlin* (Berlin: Henschel, 2001), Gert Mattenklott, ed., *Jüdisches Städtebild Berlin* (Frankfurt am Main: Jüdischer Verlag, 1997).

workshop movement since the 1980s partly official publications by local authorities range widely in quality.[494]

On an exhibition in the New Synagogue in Berlin, two volumes edited by Reinhard Rürup were published presenting Berlin Jewish history from the readmission of the Jews in 1671 until the re-establishing of the community in post-war Berlin.[495] Still in 2000, Rürup lamented considerable gaps in the study of modern Jewish existence in Berlin that up to now have "been merely described rather than systematically investigated."[496] Considering a number of recent doctoral theses in the field make Rürup's assumption appears a bit too harsh.[497]

Jewish urban degeneration

It was in cities that indications for the prospective decline and fall of the Jews were detectable Felix Theilhaber had argued in 1911 and again with greater emphasis a decade later in the second edition of his widely circulating book.[498] In other less sensational publications, Theilhaber occupies himself with what he regards as

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[494] Horst Helas, *Juden in Berlin-Mitte : Biografien - Orte - Begegnungen* (Berlin: Trafo, 2000), Carola Jüllig and Berliner Geschichtswerkstatt., eds., *Juden in Kreuzberg : Fundstücke, Fragmente, Erinnerungen* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1991), Udo Christoffel, ed., *Berlin Wilmersdorf: die Juden : Leben und Leiden* (Berlin: Kunstamt Wilmersdorf, 1987), Kulturamt Weißensee and Stadtgeschichtliches Museum <Berlin>, eds., *Juden in Weißensee : "ich hatte einst ein schönes Vaterland"* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1994), Inge Lammel and Bund der Antifaschisten, eds., *Jüdisches Leben in Pankow : eine zeitgeschichtliche Dokumentation* (Berlin: Ed. Hentrich, 1993), Inge Lammel and Bund der Antifaschisten Berlin-Pankow e.V., eds., *Jüdische Lebensbilder aus Pankow : Familiengeschichten, Lebensläufe, Kurzporträts* (Berlin: Ed. Hentrich, 1996), Friedrich W. Hossbach and Initiative Haus Wolfenstein., *Von Juden in Steglitz: Beiträge zur Ortsgeschichte* (Berlin: Initiative Haus Wolfenstein, 1987), Annegret Bühler and Berliner Geschichtswerkstatt, *Am Wedding haben sie gelebt: Lebenswege jüdischer Bürgerinnen und Bürger* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Kulturbund e.V. and Thea Koberstein, *Juden in Lichtenberg: mit den früheren Ortsteilen in Friedrichshain, Hellersdorf und Marzahn* (Berlin: Ed. Hentrich, 1995), Kulturring in Berlin, *Die Friedrichshainer Opfer des Holocaust: ein Gedenkbuch* (Berlin: Kulturring in Berlin, 1998), Regina Girod et al., *Nachbarn Juden in Friedrichshain* (Berlin: Mondial Verlag, 2000), Avigdor Ben-Trojan, *Jüdische Spurensuche in Reinickendorf* (Berlin; [et al.]: Boesche, 2003), Förderverein des Heimatmuseums Tiergarten and Kurt Schilde, *Versteckt in Tiergarten : auf der Flucht vor den Nachbarn ; Gedenkbuch für die im Bezirk in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus Untergetauchten* (Berlin: Weidler, 1995).

[495] Reinhard Rürup, ed., *Jüdische Geschichte in Berlin*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1995).

[496] Reinhard Rürup, "Jewish History in Berlin - Berlin in Jewish History," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* XLV (2000): 44. It is therefore surprising that Moshe Zimmermann quite contrary to these remarks regrets the "over-emphasis" of the "hydrocephalus Berlin" in the study of modern German-Jewry that prevented research on the rich variety of Jewish life in nineteenth and twentieth century Germany. Mosche Zimmermann, *Die deutschen Juden, 1914-1945* (München: Oldenbourg, 1997), especially chapter 9 "'Wasserkopf' Berlin'.

[497] Garbriel Alexander, "Yehude Berlin u-kehilatam be-yameha shel republikat Vaimar (1919-1933) [Berlin Jewry and their community during the Weimar Republic (1919-1933)]" (PhD, Hebrew University Jerusalem, 1995), Dorothea Bohnekamp, "Une expérience dialectique de la République? : Intégration politique et identités juives dans l'entre-deux-guerres. Paris et Berlin, 1918-1933" (Thèse de doctorat, Institut d'études politiques (Paris); Universität Potsdam, 2005), Sharon Ilise Gillerman, "Between public and private : family, community and Jewish identity in Weimar Berlin" (PhD, University of California, Los Angeles, 1996).

[498] Theilhaber, *Der Untergang der deutschen Juden.*

degeneration of urban Jews in general and Berlin Jews in particular. In 1913, a paper by Theilhaber on "racial deterioration as a result of the social and economic advancement proven by the example of Berlin Jews" won the award of the Society for Racial Hygiene.[499] Some month later Theilhaber published a book entitled *The Sterile Berlin.*[500] In both publications, Theilhaber engaged the degenerative and destructive effects of urban existence. Supported by demographical and statistical data Theilhaber tried to show that the urban environment lead to a decline of birth rates in Berlin in general and among Berlin Jews in particular. Especially Zionists followed Theilhaber's agenda condemning the "curse of urban existence" on Berlin Jews.[501]

Throughout the following decades, Berlin remained an object for various scenarios of the decline and fall of the urban population and especially urban Jews. These contributions engaging declining birth rates, rising figures of mixed marriages, inexorable assimilation of urban Jews or fantasies of the annihilation of Berlin Jewry by Artur Landsberger portrait Berlin as a place that would soon become "A city without Jews".[502]

Besides visions of degeneration and decline, another strain of Jewish urban scepticism can be identified – one concerned with questions of urban spirituality and religiosity. Once again, it was foremost Berlin that was seen as a place of accelerated secularisation, a notion that echoed in the use of the term *berlintshik* [Berliner] among orthodox circles of Eastern Europe to describe those who had given up tradition.[503]

Views of the danger of the big city for religion were not limited to Jewish observers. Already prior to World War I, the Protestant theologian Ludwig Heitmann, who had carried out pastoral duties in a Hamburg working-class neighbourhood where he experienced the social problems of the modern city, published a series of books entitled *Metropolis and Religion* in which he not only described the decreasing influence of religion in the urban setting but also outlined what he saw as a re-spiritualisation of the city. It was not until the Weimar period when the publication

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[499] Theilhaber, "Zum Preisausschreiben: "Bringt das materielle und soziale Aufsteigen den Familien Gefahren in rassenhygienischer Beziehung?": Dargelegt an der Entwicklung der Judenheit von Berlin. Von Dr. Felix A. Theilhaber in Berlin."
[500] Theilhaber, *Das Sterile Berlin; eine volkswirtschaftliche Studie.*
[501] Hans Goslar, "Jüdische Not in Berlin," *Berliner Jüdische Zeitung*, 01.12. 1929.
[502] Landsberger, *Berlin ohne Juden: Roman.*
[503] Delphine Bechtel, "Babylon or Jerusalem : Berlin as center of Jewish modernism in the 1920s," in *Insiders and Outsiders : Jewish and Gentile Culture in Germany and Austria*, ed. Dagmar C. G. Lorenz and Gabriele Weinberger (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 116.

went through numerous extended new editions that Heitmann's work caused furore.[504] He became a "pioneering interpreter of the Protestant Gospel in the modern metropolis" as the *laudatio* of Gießen University that awarded Heitman an honorary doctorate in 1929, stated.[505] In the same year, he published an article on the "Crisis of Religion in the metropolis" in the Jewish monthly *Der Morgen* in which he emphasised the potential to re-establish a new religion in the city despite the current spiritual crisis.[506] Heitmann's article – in which he did not touch on any Jewish matters – can be seen as a prelude to Leo Baeck's famous article on "Community in the Metropolis" that appeared in the following number of the same journal. Baeck's analysis too starts off with a sceptical estimation of the future for Jewish existence in the big city and he too speaks of signs of religious disintegration in the city contrasting them with an idealised view of village and small-town Jews that remained loyal to religious traditions. While small-town Jews, Baeck argued, were integrated into a Jewish community, metropolitan Jews embraced individualism and thus unavoidably drifted away into the anonymous mass. Despite the negative observations Baeck – and this makes the text so valuable – did not come to a decline and fall conclusion but rather interpreted the metropolis as a challenge that Jews need to face. The central task for Judaism is, Baeck went on, was to aim for a "new religiosity in the big city." Baeck concludes his remarks with great optimism. He believed that "a revolution of the youth" was already springing up from the "potentials of the big city" that aimed for the replacement of the negative urban aspects by positive ones. When the Jew becomes connected to the "alleyways and their world, with the big city and its world" a "meaningful new spirituality rooted in the ancient Jewish faith" would be the result, Baeck concluded.[507]

Among the few examples of Jewish commentators defending Jewish urbanity against the odds of an overwhelmingly negative perception, is another remarkable text published three years before Baeck's famous metropolis essay. In 1927, the *CV-Zeitung* published an article entitled "Big city or small city?" The author of this article was the celebrated German-Jewish novelist, Georg Hermann, who had created one

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[504] Ludwig Heitmann, *Großstadt und Religion*, vol. 3 in 2 (Hamburg: C. Boysen, 1920-1925).

[505] Quoted after Rainer Hering, "Säkularisierung, Entkirchlichung, Dechristianisierung und Formen der Rechristianisierung bzw. Resakralisierung in Deutschland," in *Völkische Religion und Krisen der Moderne : Entwürfe "arteigener" Glaubenssysteme seit der Jahrhundertwende*, ed. Stefanie v Schnurbein and Justus H. Ulbricht (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001).

[506] Ludwig Heitmann, "Die Krisis der Religion in der Großstadt," *Der Morgen* 5, no. 6 (1929).

[507] Leo Baeck, "Gemeinde in Der Großstadt," *Der Morgen* 6 (1930).

of the best depictions of late nineteenth century upper-middle class Berlin Jewry in his works Jettchen Gebert and *Henriette Jacoby*.[508]

The article opens with the following remarkable statement:

> "I do not intend to speak for or against the metropolitan Jew (Großstadtjuden) here. I see his advantages as well as his deficiency. I know his capability that gives a lot of creating strength to the big cities – especially to Berlin. I also see the rhythm of his existence as something new and strong, and I sense his clairaudience towards future becoming. [...] I love and admire this type of rootless, intellectual metropolitan Jews."[509]

Although Hermann in later parts of the article also strikes a warning note when he calls his fellow Jews to be aware of the potential dangers of overwhelming Jewish urbanisation these lines are clearly remarkable in the context of modern Jewish urban writings. Few have expressed their sympathy with the urban and with urban Jews more articulate than Herman did. The dominance of anti-urban sentiments in the German-Jewish urban discourse during the decades bracketing the turn of the centuries makes the texts even more noteworthy.

Out of the city! ... Towards the soil?

In face of the harsh perceptions of the destructive influences of the big city for Jewish life, various Jewish circles did not see any Jewish future within it but propagated to leave the urban environment.

In January 1918 while the Berlin population suffered from supply bottleneck a number of pamphlets and press announcements appeared in the capital calling for the creation of a Jewish garden city on the outskirts of Berlin.[510]

The appeal was signed by a group of communal activists a number of them with affinity to Zionism. Among them the co-founder of the *Chevra Kadisha* of Berlin who had glorified small town Jewish life in a number of his literary works[511], the conservative member of the community assembly and representative of the Berlin

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[508] Georg Hermann, *Jettchen Geberts Geschichte; Roman* (Berlin: E. Fleischel, 1907), Georg Hermann, *Henriette Jacoby : Roman* (Berlin: Egon Fleischel & Co., 1908). On Georg Hermann's urban writings cf. Godela Weiss-Sussex, *Metropolitan chronicles: Georg Hermann's Berlin novels, 1897-1912* (Stuttgart: Verlag Hans-Dieter Heinz, Akademischer Verlag, 2001), Godela Weiss-Sussex, ed., *Georg Hermann: deutsch-jüdischer Schriftsteller und Journalist, 1871-1943* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 2004).

[509] Georg Hermann, "Großstadt oder Kleinstadt?," *C.V.-Zeitung* VI, no. 22 (1927).

[510] Copies of the appeal to create a Jewish garden-city outside of Berlin can be found in the CAHJP, D/Be4/508 and the CZA, A 104/67 in Jerusalem.

[511] Cf. Arthur Kahn, *Entschwindende Gestalten : Erzählungen aus dem rheinischen Gemeinde- und Familienleben* (Frankfurt am Main: I. Kauffmann, 1904), Arthur Kahn, *Jüdische Dorfgeschichten* (Berlin: M. Poppelauer, 1910).

Agudath Israel Moritz A. Loeb, the Zionist activists Heinrich Loewe and Davis Trietsch, and Clara Boschwitz.

Anti-urban sentiments reverberate in the appeal, especially in the section listing reasons for the creation of a Jewish garden city. "While the country-communities are deserted the Jewish community in the big cities, especially in Berlin, are growing immensely" thus leading to increasing fragmentation among German Jews the authors argues. Moreover, the authors depict the big city as destroyer of traditions, where the "sacredness of Jewish holidays drowns in the urban hustle and bustle". where distance obstructs the exchange between Jewish families thus leading to the growing-up of a "new generation knowing the religious and ethical norms of Judaism only from hearsay."[512] Among the reasons given for the creation of a Jewish garden city, the authors moreover described the miserable and degenerative living conditions in the big city. Urbanites not only were crammed in tiny flats but even the houses "in which Jewish life pulsates lack the supporting echo of community" from the outside.

In contrast to doomed city life the authors envisioned "a youth surrounded by light and air, in their own homes and within a Jewish environment" to grow up in the prospective Jewish garden city with synagogue school, spacious sport grounds and Jewish assembly hall at its centre.[513]

Following their initial appeal, the group intensified their propaganda work for a Jewish garden city throughout the following month. On 17 February 1918, they held a lecture evening in a central Berlin location that some 500 people attended. Adolf Otto the general secretary of the German garden city Association delivered the keynote address on the historical development of the garden city movement. Following this general introduction, Heinrich Loewe, librarian, folklorist and active member of the Berlin section of the Zionist Peoples Party,[514] outlined why a Jewish garden city was

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[512] "Zum Projekt einer jüdischen Gartenstadt bei Berlin," *Jüdische Presse* 49, no. 4 (1918). This appeal published in the *Jüdische Presse* is identical with the archival record CAHJP, D/Be4/508.

[513] "Idee der Gründung einer jüdischen Gartenstadt bei Berlin und Gründung einer Genossenschaft zu diesem Zweck," [1918], CAHJP, D/Be4/508

[514] On Loewe's various activities cf. Dov Schidorsky, "Libraries in Late Ottoman Palestine between the Orient and the Occident," *Libraries & Culture* 33, no. 3 (1998), Erik Petry, "Zwischen nationalem Bekenntnis und Pragmatismus: Zum Verhältnis zwischen Heinrich Loewe und Willy Bambus bis zu ihrer Palästinareise 1895," in *Janusfiguren: „Jüdische Heimstätte", Exil und Nation im deutschen Zionismus*, ed. Christian Wiese and Andrea Schatz (Berlin: Metropol, 2006), Todd Presner, "Muscle Jews and Airplanes: Modernist Mythologies, the Great War, and the Politics of Regeneration." *MODERNISM / modernity* 13, no. 4 (2006).

needed and Zionists as well as Orthodox and Liberal Jews had to have a lively interest in its creation.[515]

Although the majority of the initiators were affiliated with Zionism, they repeatedly emphasised that their project was one for all Jews indiscriminately regardless of their religious or political standpoint.[516] Following the lectures and subsequent discussions around 60 people attending the meeting signed up for membership in the prospective garden city cooperative, among them a number of representatives signing for their associations such as the Jewish gymnastics club Bar Kochba, the Rowing club Ivria or the Jewish Women's association for gymnastics and sport. Furthermore, the "Jewish Garden City Berlin" was registered as a cooperation Ltd. on 25 March 1918. The cooperation had 65 initial members and its program stated the aim to found a Jewish "weekend colony" following the English model, to establish Jewish cultural and welfare institutions as well as sport facilities at the prospectus garden city on the outskirts of Berlin.[517]

Following this first larger gathering the organisers continues their efforts by planning a series of follow-up evening lecture given by various experts on topics related with the garden city project.[518] For mid May 1918 Paul Schirrmeister was invited to speak about land speculation and land reform.[519] As a result of this second lecture evening, members of the Berlin B'nai-Brith-Lodge articulated their intention to support the idea.[520]

Davis Trietsch – whom Ines Sonder calls the *spiritus rector* of the project – propagated the idea of a Jewish Garden city in an article for the *Jüdische Monatshefte für Turnen und Sport* in which he put the idea into the context of Jewish colonization efforts around the world.[521] Furthermore, he responded to Zionist criticism that the creation of such a garden city in the diaspora would distract activists from the task of working for the development of Palestine by stating that "a Jewish garden city can never be a substitution for people that feel passionate about

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[515] Joseph Loewy, "Jüdische Gartenstadt bei Berlin," *Jüdische Presse* 49, no. 9 (1918).

[516] "Zum Projekt einer jüdischen Gartenstadt bei Berlin," *Jüdische Presse* 49, no. 4 (1918).

[517] Joseph Loewy, "Jüdische Gartenstadt bei Berlin," *Jüdische Presse* 49, no. 9 (1918).

[518] Sonder, *Gartenstädte für Erez Israel: Zionistische Stadtplanungsvisionen von Theodor Herzl bis Richard Kauffmann*, 102, foodnote 42.

[519] "Zum Projekt einer jüdischen Gartenstadt bei Berlin," *Jüdische Presse* 49, no. 4 (1918).

[520] "Berlin," *Jüdische Rundschau*, no. 21 (1918).

[521] Davis Trietsch, "Jüdische Gartenstadtbestrebungen," *Jüdische Monatshefte für Turnen und Sport* 3 (1918).

Palestine but the creation of a Jewish cultural centre [in Palestine] will benefit from every intensification of Jewish life in the Diaspora."[522]

Despite the support from various groups, the project never left the realm of planning. After the May lecture evening no further reports on events organised by the garden city cooperation appear in the Jewish press. The reasons for the dropping of the plan to establish a Jewish garden city near Berlin are unclear.

A number of the initiators of the Berlin garden city project subsequently emigrated to Palestine where they participated in the setting up of cooperative settlements.[523] Almost a decade after the failed Berlin garden city project the Jewish Veteran Association, *Reichsbund Jüdischer Frontsoldaten* opted for a major settlement project in 1927.

In a highly emotional article Rudolf S. Mosse, nephew of the Berlin publisher Mosse, praised the new attempt for a Jewish settlement in the countryside as a major step towards the regeneration of German Jewry. The price Jews had to pay for "assembly new strength" Mosse wrote, was to relinquish "the passion for the delights the city can offer even those high standard spiritual delights." The Jewish return to agriculture though will bring manifold substitutions be it in form of "the great love for air, light, soil as well as the pride to create" or in a positive influence on "religious emotions", Mosse concluded.[524]

While the new attempt to create a Jewish collective settlement away form the big cities found its supporters other commentators attacked the plan harshly.[525] Following Mosse's article the *CV-Zeitung* published two responses representing the pro and contra argument to the settlement plans.[526] In his contribution, Ernst Goldschmidt warned of linking the question of settlements, being a matter relevant to the development of the German economy as a whole, with Jewish questions, thus emphasising Jewish otherness. To him the calls for the return to the land were

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[522] Ibid.: 12.

[523] Joseph Loewy, one of the executive directors of the Berlin cooperation became a founding member of garden settlement Naharia north of Akko in 1935. Davis Trietsch who had called for the creation of garden cities in Palestine already prior to World War I (Davis Trietsch, "Die Gartenstadt," *Altneuland* 2, no. 11 (1905).) remained an important voice in the Zionist garden city movement. He too immigrated age 62 in 1932 to Palestine and helped establishing the settlement Ramoth Hashavim. Cf. Sonder, *Gartenstädte für Erez Israel: Zionistische Stadtplanungsvisionen von Theodor Herzl bis Richard Kauffmann*, 51 and 294 f. for a list of Trietsch publications on garden city issues

[524] Rudolf S. Mosse, "Aufs Land!," *C.V.-Zeitung* VI, no. 7 (1927).

[525] For an ambivalent response to the project cf. Paul Rieger, "Zurück zur Scholle," *Gemeinde-Zeitung für die israelitischen Gemeinden Württembergs*, no. 23 (1927). Although Rieger harshly criticized the reasons given for the project as well as several aspects of its setting up he nonetheless stressed the necessity of the settlement movement.

[526] "Aufs Land?," *C.V.-Zeitung*, no. 13 (1927).

nothing other than anachronistic. Moreover, he countered Mosse's glorification of agricultural existence by reversing it, stating that "the longing for the arable land" was not stronger among urban Jews compared to their fellow non-Jews. "Even without arable land," Goldschmidt continued, "we are having the feeling of being at home (Heimat) of having a fatherland." Moving away from the city, he warned, would mean descending into a "spiritual ghetto". Thus, the "industrious Jewish 'Intellectual' and the spiritually brisk Jewish middle class would be replaced by the cultural desert of peasanty."[527] Taken together, Goldschmidt argues for nothing less than that the city is the place where Jews can best develop their talents where they – provided they comply with the "ideals and commandments of Jewish Ethics" – can live both as good Jews and as good Germans, where they find their home.

During the later years of the Weimar Republic, the Berlin Jewish Community directly supported a new attempt to create Jewish settlement outside of the city. In 1932, the board of the community donated 125,000 Marks for the development of the Jewish settlement in Groß-Gaglow south of Cottbus around 125 kilometres southeast of Berlin.[528] Preceding this decision, the Berlin community newspaper published a number of articles supporting the settlement movement. The September issue of *Gemeindeblatt* responded with a front-page editorial with the characterising title "Jewish settlement in Germany: a way out of the crisis" outlining the initial successes in Groß-Gaglow.[529] During a debate in the community assembly following the decision of the board to support the project, various representatives declared their support for the project, emphasising that such Jewish settlements could offer unemployed Jews new livelihood.[530]

This link between the Jewish garden city movement and questions of Jewish occupational reorientation that became a central issue in Jewish community across Germany, and especially within the big cities during the second half of the 1920s and early 1930s, indicated a major shift in the development of the inner-German Jewish settlement movement. Being an attempt to counter the dangers of city life upon Jews the idea of Jewish garden cities became increasingly demoted to a means of

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[527] Ernst Goldschmidt, "Aufs Land?," 165.

[528] "Aus Der Repräsentantenversammlung Vom 10. November 1932," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 22, no. 12 (1932).

[529] E. Jungermann, "Jüdische Siedlung in Deutschland: Ein Weg aus der Krise," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 22, no. 9 (1932).

[530] "Aus der Repräsentantenversammlung vom 10. November 1932," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 22, no. 12 (1932).

countering the economic crisis thus returning Jewish attempts dating back to the nineteenth century to propagate artisan professions among Jews.[531]

During the same year, the Central Association for Jewish Immigrant and Travellers Welfare (Hauptstelle für jüdische Wanderfürsorge) founded a working colony on the outskirts of Berlin on the estate Neuendorf stressing its importance to employ a "greater number of Jewish unemployed in agricultural, gardening, and craft jobs" especially in the current difficult situation.[532]

Although Zionist were the most outspoken supporters of the Jewish garden city movement the idea found support also in other segments of the German-Jewish elite. One example for this is an article by Leo Baeck that appeared in the Journal of the Jewish veteran association *Der Schild* in 1931. Not unlike the first half of his essay on Community in the Metropolis that had appeared in the previous year, Baeck portrayed a negative image of urbanisation and the city. The juxtaposition of "Man and soil" and "thoughts on a sociology of the metropolitan Jews" in the title of the essay points already to the ambivalence between the ideal of Jewish return to the soil and the attempt to find a way within the urban context despite of this ideal Baeck was concerned with.

Describing German Jewry as an exceptionally urbanised group, Baeck warned strongly that this moving to the city caused a dangerous distance from nature "the most original and immediate of all existence (Ursprünglichstes und Unmittelbarstes alles Daseins)." In a very similar line to Simmel's account on the psychological influence of city life, Baeck continues his argument, stating that this lack of the contact with nature affects the urbanites feelings and senses, transforming them into mere rationalist and intellectualists loosing the feeling for their roots and the original in life. Applying to all urbanites these developments affected the Jews in particular, Baeck argued, since Religion as a force to counter these developments was diminishing within the city.

Despite the predominant anti-urban tone and the glorification of the soil, Baeck qualified his point towards the end of his essay. In a paradoxical twist, Baeck argued that remaining in the urban context could still be "the way out of the big city". The necessary precondition for this was that those remaining in the city had to regain the connection with the original forces of nature. One way of doing this was to oriented

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[531] Cf. Ernst G. Lowenthal, "The Ahlem Experiment," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* XIV (1969).
[532] "Errichtung Der Ersten Jüdischen Arbeiterkolonie: Produktive Arbeitslosenhilfe — Landwerk Neuendorf," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 22, no. 9 (1932).

one's own thoughts and feelings towards the soil and support others in their return thereto.

To realise the danger of urbanisation and urban life has to be the first step towards a solution, he believed, and Baeck advocated a solution that could only be the "way back to the soil and thus to its ancient and original qualities (Urtümlichen und Ursprünglichen)."[533]

Baeck's call for the return to the soil reveals the ambivalence many urban Jews felt. His call can be seen as an attempt to find a middle ground between exaggerated enthusiasm for Jewish settlement and the reality in that most urban Jews were unwilling to leave the city. Despite seeing the dangers urban existence meant to the Jewish community, Baeck too was among those believing in the sustainability of Jewish *Gemeinde* within the urban framework. Thus, his advocating a return to the countryside and the glorification of small-town Jewish community life was rather a result of urban nostalgia than a call for action, a view he shared with the majority of his fellow urban brethren.

Other commentators like Eugen Wolbe did not hide their scepticism amid the enthusiasm for training Jews to be small independent farmers, pointing to the great problems urbanised Jews would encounter in adjusting to rural life. In 1927, he harshly criticised the absence of an emotional drive to become farmers among most bourgeois Jews, a drive similar to the one impelling young Zionists to prepare for Palestine.[534]

Such scepticism proved well founded for despite the various attempts to create Jewish settlements outside of the big cities they did fail in having a significant impact on the majority of urban Jews. The failure of the Berlin garden city project moreover suggests that attempts to settle urban Jews outside of the big city did not succeed in becoming a broadly accepted strategy or model to challenge the alleged negative impact of urban life on Jews. It was within the city that Jews attempted to find their

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[533] Leo Baeck, "Mensch Und Boden: Gedanken Und Soziologie Der Großstadtjuden," *Der Schild* 10, no. 9 (1931).

[534] Eugen Wolbe, "Die Schwierigkeiten der jüdischen Siedlungsbewegung," *Israelitisches Familienblatt*, 27.10. 1927. A decade later in face of Nazi Germany Wolbe came to fare more positive assessment when he stated that especially the Jewish youth movement had brought urban Jews into a beneficial contact with nature and thus giving rise to a generation that was free of urban arrogance and hunger for appreciation. Cf. Wolbe, *Geschichte Der Juden in Berlin Und in Der Mark Brandenburg*, 307.

spaces and places for an urban existence. To explore the strategies they envisioned and employed is the task of this chapter.

Gemeinde within or versus *Gemeinschaft*?

> "The Ghetto-person was characterised by a strong experience and consciousness of community (Gemeinschaft). Everybody was fatefully bond to everybody else and the collective mutual responsibility superseded personal consciousness and individual experience. The individual was absorbed by the community. [...] All political, spiritual and emotional accomplishments were accomplishments of the community. [...] Only the affiliation with the community gave the individual dignity, reputation and importance, allowed practising a profession, the fulfilment of religious duties and the maintenance of existence. [...] Leaving the community meant leaving Judaism and thus loosing one's direction in life as well as the basis for being and existence."[535]

Stern's statement, written in 1925 is more than a mere description of the eighteenth century Jewish "Ghetto-type". It also can be seen as a nostalgic look to the past from a present where community seemed to have lost its binding force, matching Noah Isenberg observation that for many intellectuals of the 1920s *Gemeinschaft* symbolised what was absent from modern *Gesellschaft* and that the search for community was a search for lost tradition and belonging.[536]

It was Tönnies path-breaking study of the relationship between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* that stood at the beginning of an intensifying debate about both terms. Although first published in 1887 it was not until the second extended edition of 1912 making "its fortune in the Weimar Republic, with its invidious contrast between the authentic, organic harmony of community and the materialistic fragmentation of business society" as Peter Gay puts it.[537]

Gay's observation moreover touches the heart of Tönnies' work in which community and society were analysed as sharply distinguishing concepts. Exploring their polarity Ferdinand Tönnies developed a complex theory of modernity.

Right at the beginning of his investigation, Tönnies sums up the dichotomy of both concepts:

> "All kinds of social co-existence that are familiar, comfortable and exclusive are to be understood as belonging to *Gemeinschaft*. *Gesellschaft* means life in the public sphere, in the outside world. In *Gemeinschaft* we are united from the moment of our

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[535] Selma Stern, *Der preussische Staat und die Juden*, Zweiter Teil: Die Zeit Friedrich Wilhelms I., Erste Abteilung: Darstellung (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1962), 171-72.
[536] Noah William Isenberg, *Between Redemption and Doom : the strains of German-Jewish modernism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 2.
[537] Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: the outsider as insider* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 80.

birth with our own folk for better or for worse. We go out into *Gesellschaft* as if into a foreign land."[538]

While community is seen by Tönnies as a social form of pre-modern societies that allowed the establishment of interpersonal ties of a more "organic" and binding nature his depiction of the "foreign land" society is linked to the realm of modernisation, rationalisation and subsequently urbanisation. Modernity thus is seen as a force destroying community.

What makes Tönnies observations particularly intriguing for the context at issue is the spatial dimension he applies to this alleged destruction, the space being far and foremost the "sterile, narrow, and empty" Großstadt (big city), "reduced to being a mere lodging-house [...] for those travelling through the world" where the organic world of community is destroyed.[539] The big city indeed is the "the archetype of pure *Gesellschaft*" and thus the counter-image or community according to Tönnies.[540] When Simmel states at the beginning of his essay on *The Metropolis and Mental Life* that "[t]he deepest problems of modern life flow from the attempt of the individual[ism] to maintain the independence and individuality of his existence against the sovereign power of society (die Übermächte der Gesellschaft)," it is Tönnies concept of Gesellschaft that clearly echoes here.[541]

Considering these overwhelming powers of modern society, its fragmentations and ambivalences, felt most strongly in the urban context, it comes not as a surprise that "Gemeinschaft became the idol of the times" as Helmuth Plessner declared in 1924.[542] Like Tönnies, Plessner saw *Gemeinschaft* as a counter-concept to "big city, reign of the machine and rootlessness (Großstadt, Maschinentum und Entwurzlung)", adding a political dimension to it by declaring it the ideology of the weak.[543]

The quest for the re-establishing of community became a central notion of social discourse in the Weimar years. While for many it was part of the search for a new identity in a new society the quest for *Gemeinschaft* gained a special dynamic within the Jewish context.

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[538] Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Civil Society* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 18.

[539] Ibid., 165-66.

[540] Ibid., 171.

[541] Simmel, "Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben, Dresden, 1903," 187.

[542] Helmuth Plessner, *Grenzen der Gemeinschaft : eine Kritik des sozialen Radikalismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002), 28.

[543] Ibid. On the affinity of Plessners concept of Gemeinschaft and that of Tönnies cf. Cornelius Bickel, "Ferdinand Tönnies und Helmuth Plessner," in *Plessners "Grenzen der Gemeinschaft" : eine Debatte*, ed. Wolfgang Eßbach, Joachim Fischer, and Helmut Lethen (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002).

Among the first Jewish authors taking an interest in Tönnies' analysis was Martin Buber. In a small booklet published in 1919 Buber presented what he saw as a possibility to prevent the seemingly unavoidable decline and fall of community in modern times taking Tönnies' argument of a historical development from pre-modern organic community to modern mechanic society as a point of departure.[544] Contrary to Tönnies though, Buber did not see the danger for community and its loss in the expansion of a society but rather through state power. His text can be read as a direct reaction to the political turmoil in post World War I Germany. It is the perspective of the creation of a socialist state that Buber feared and that would destroy the last niches for a re-establishment of community.

Buber was among those intensely debating the importance of Gemeinschaft for the Jewish context.[545] In the editorial introduction to the first issue of his new journal Der Jude, Buber proclaimed in 1916 that the "most essential weakness" of the western Jew was not that he was "'assimilated'" but that he was "atomized", "uprooted", lacking integration into "holy people's community (Volksgemeinde)".[546] In Buber's statements stereotypical images of the modern, especially the urbanised Jews reverberated and his suggested solution of a return to Judaism following "the deep community of the blood" reminds strongly of völkisch terminology.[547]

Almost a decade later and from a very different ideological standpoint Leo Baeck sensed a similar danger when he argued that Jewish emancipation levelling the path from the ghetto into dominant civilisation had brought about a profound crisis in Jewish life, creating "the Jewish individualist without culture" (der kulturlose jüdische Individualist).[548] Having moved into civilisation the modern Jew had lost his cultural identity and thus the restoration of culture was the precondition for the revitalisation of Gemeinschaft. Jews, Baeck argued optimistically, posed all three dimensions essential for the re-establishment of culture (Kultur) – history, community and orientation towards (a messianic) future.[549] Thus, as in other writings Baeck rejected

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[544] Martin Buber, Gemeinschaft (München; Wien; Zürich: Dreiländerverlag, 1919).
[545] Ibid, Paul R. Flohr and Bernard Susser, ""Alte und neue Gemeinschaft": An Unpublished Buber Manuscript," AJS Review 1 (1976), Michael A. Meyer, "Gemeinschaft within Gemeinde: Religious Ferment in Weimar Liberal Judaism," in In Search of Jewish Community, ed. Michael Brenner and Derek Jonathan Penslar (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).
[546] Cf. Martin Buber, "Die Losung," Der Jude 1, no. 1 (1916).
[547] Bernard Susser, "Ideological Multivalence: Martin Buber and the German Volkish Tradition," Political Theory 5, no. 1 (1977). On the concept of Volk in Jewish nationalism cf. George L. Mosse, Confronting the Nation: Jewish and Western nationalism (Hanover: Published [for] Brandeis University Press by University Press of New England, 1993).
[548] Leo Baeck, "Kulturzusammenhänge," Der Morgen 1, no. 1 (1925): 81.
[549] Ibid.: especially 79.

the view of Jewish decline in modern society and advocated that Jewish *Gemeinschaft* could be preserved amidst the pressures of civilisation and mass society. The Weimar year not only saw Gemeinschaft becoming an "idol of the age" but a growing debate among Jews on shape, structure, propose and tasks of the Jewish *Gemeinde*.

In another essay that appeared in the following year, Baeck used the argument of *Gemeinschaft* as preservation against the pressures of civilisation in the context of *Gemeinde*. Arguing, "the Jewish individual and community (Gemeinde) are inseparable" and "working as individual for the community is working for one's own spiritual advancement" Baeck claimed that it was the *Gemeinde* "that served as counterbalance to all materialism" providing Jews with a direction. Thus, Baeck concluded, "Its actual life Judaism [and Jews] comes through the *Gemeinde*."[550] Different from the rather abstract concept of *Gemeinschaft*, *Gemeinde* for many German Jews was a quite clearly defined institution. Concerning their organisational structure Jewish communities in Prussia as in most parts of Germany were structured very different from Anglo-American congregation, a voluntary union fulfilling mainly religious purposes. Unlike in England or America the German-Jewish *Gemeinden* were constituted as public corporations (Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts) by state laws.[551] The "Law on the circumstances of the Jews in the Prussian state from 23 July 1847" defined the principle of compulsory membership, embracing all Jewish males dwelling in the limits of a synagogue community defined by the state officials thus creating an unity congregation (*Einheitsgemeinde*)[552] or as some called it a "forced community" ("Zwangsgemeinde").[553]

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[550] Leo Baeck, "Unsere Gemeinde," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 12 (1926).

[551] On the differences between the Anglo-American and the Prussian/ German model of community organization cf. Walter Breslauer, "Vergleichende Bemerkungen zur Gestaltung des jüdischen Organisationslebens in Deutschland und in England," in *In zwei Welten: Siegfried Moses zum fünfundsiebzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. Hans Tramer (Tel-Aviv: Verlag Bitaon, 1962).

[552] Extracts from the Prussian Law of 1847 (Gesetz über die Verhältnisse der Juden im Preussischen Staate vom 27. Juli 1847) as well as the law of 1876 (Gesetz vom 28. Juli 1876, betreffend den Austritt aus den jüdischen Synagogen-Gemeinden) can be found in C. Zander, ed., *Handbuch sämmtlicher Bestimmungen über die Verhältnisse der Juden im Preussischen Staate* (Leipzig: Scholtze, 1881), 31 ff and 59 ff.

[553] N. M. Gelber, "Gemeinde," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Jakob Klatzkin and Ismar Elbogen, vol. 7 (Berlin: Eschkol, 1931), Werner Rosenstock, "Erinnerungen an das Hansaviertel," in *Gegenwart im Rückblick*, ed. Herbert Arthur Strauss and Kurt R. Grossmann (Heidelberg: Stiehm, 1970), 310.

The *Gemeinde* was empowered by the state to levy taxes on its members and to govern itself through elected bodies.[554] Thus, the law defined that anybody intending to leave the *Gemeinde* could do so only by declaration of leaving Judaism too. Although this was slightly changed by the Prussian law concerning the breakaway from the Synagogue community of 1876, legalising the foundation of the independent Orthodox Berlin Jewish communities Adass Jisroel founded in 1869[555], and the introduction of the new constitution for Prussia in November 1920, the concept of *Einheitsgemeinde* remained in place.[556] The *Gemeinde* was thus a body also quite autonomous in its internal decision-making that was in many respects linked to the state officials be it in administrative conduct such as the monitoring of election results and the change of its statutes by the local Chief of Police. At the same time, it was as a corporate association entitled to public financial support that in times of economic crisis, however, was difficult to gain.

Despite continuity in its legal setting, the Weimar years saw an unprecedented debate concerning the structure, role and future of *Gemeinde*. The origins of these debates that at times lead to bitter disputes were manifold. They were in part fuelled by the dramatic political changes in post war Germany resulting in growing demands to follow general political developments and democratise the structure of *Gemeinde*. While community officials rallied for modernisation of the legal framework for the Jewish *Gemeinde* from the state officials, they themselves had to face a growing pressure of new forces within the Jewish community calling for internal modernisation.[557] It took long-lasting negotiation between the community and

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[554] § 35 of the law of 1847 defined the principle of compulsory *Gemeinde*-membership and § 37 the fiscal sovereignty of the *Gemeinde*.

[555] Thus, Berlin had two Jewish communities the majority *Gemeinde* and the much smaller orthodox *Austrittsgemeinde*. The following investigation will however focus exclusively on the majority community. For historiographical works on the Berlin Adass Jisroel cf. Max Sinasohn, *Adass Jisroel, Berlin: Entstehung, Entfaltung, Entwurzelung, 1869-1939; eine Gemeinschaftsarbeit* (Jerusalem: [M. Sinasohn], 1966), Mario Offenberg, ed., *Adass Jisroel: Die jüdische Gemeinde in Berlin, 1869-1942: Vernichtet und vergessen [anläßlich der gleichnamigen Ausstellung, veranstaltet gemeinsam vom Berlin Museum, Landesarchiv Berlin und dem Museumspädagogischen Dienst Berlin im Landesarchib Berlin 29.6.-23.9.1986]* (Berlin: Museumpädagogischer Dienst Berlin, 1986).

[556] Art. 76 of Section IX. of the Prussian constitution of 30 November 1920 granted the right the breakaway from any religious congregation by declaration in front of a court, cf. *Preußische Gesetzessammlung*, 1920. cf. Also preußische Gesetz betreffend den Austritt aus den Religionsgemeinschaften des öffentlichen Rechts vom 30. November 1920 (GS 1921 S. 119). Cf. Also overview on legal developments concerning the Jews in Prussia between 1869 and 1918 by Claus Förster, "Die Stellung der jüdischen Gemeinden nach preußischem Recht zwischen 1869 und 1918, sowie das preußische Gesetz zum Austritt aus einer Gemeinde: Seminararbeit im rechtshistorischen Seminar „Zur Geschichte der rechtlichen Stellung der Juden" bei Prof. Dr. Hans-Peter Benöhr und Stephan M. Eibich" (Seminararbeit, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, 2000).

[557] Ismar Freund, *Die Rechtstellung der Synagogengemeinden in Preußen und die Reichsverfassung : ein Beitrag zur Revision der bisherigen Gesetzgebung* (Berlin: Philo-Verl., 1926). The hearings on a

Prussian state officials until finally a revised statute for the community was finally approved in 1930.[558]

Furthermore, the debates concerning Gemeinde were the result of growing inner tensions and fragmentations of Berlin Jewry. During the period in question, the rise of political Zionism as part of Gemeinde politics led to a striking change in the political powerbalance of the community took place. The rapidly changing inner composition of the community through the influx of large numbers of so-called Ostjuden (Eastern European Jews) had a profound impact on this development.[559] A further factor was the continuous periods of social and economic crisis during the 1920s and 30s that had major affects on the community from the outside in form of rising anti-Semitic sentiments as well as from the inside where the community had to try to tackle the problems of Jewish unemployment and related issues.

In face of these and other challenges, the very institution Gemeinde increasingly became a subject to debate. Yet Gemeinde was seen as more as a mere institution providing services and administrating Jewish matters in Berlin. Especially in times of crisis, it also became an ideal, incarnating the potential to overcome the crisis as community rather than as individuals. In this sense, Gemeinde became both a synonym as well as an alternative concept to Gemeinschaft.

Despite the reluctance of the establishment of the Zionist Federation for Germany towards participation in "diaspora" community politics German Zionists especially in the big cities felt the need to get involved in local Jewish politics. Calls for a participation "in the lively spiritual fight of conflicting principles with idealistic competitiveness for the best of Judaism and the gain of power" in the Jewish communal offices had been raced already prior to World War I.[560] It was, however, not until the founding of the Zionist Jüdische Volkspartei (Jewish People's Party) in

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modification of the legal status of the Jews in the two chambers of the Prussian Parliament (Preußischer Landtag und Preußischer Staatsrat) in 1922 were drooped without leading to a revisions, cf. Preußischer Staatsrat, "[Verhandlungen über den Entwurf eines Gesetzes zur Änderung des Gesetzes über die Verhältnisse der Juden vom 23. Juli 1847]," in GStA, HA 1 Rep 169 D II CF 4 I (1922).

[558] Ismar Freund, "Das neue Statut der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin," Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin 20, no. 2 (1930).

[559] Although the number of Ostjuden in Berlin was small in comparison to cities like London or New York they made up for some 20 per cent of Berlin Jewry by 1910. Moreover, they congregated in the Scheunenviertel making it – as Steven Aschheim has pointed out – a visible Jewish area close to the center of town. Steven E. Aschheim, Brothers and Strangers: the east European Jew in German and German Jewish consciousness, 1800-1923 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 44.

[560] Max Kollenscher, "Vorwort," Jüdisches Gemeinde-Jahrbuch 1913/14 (1913): 3. Cf. also Kollenscher's other pre-war writings on Gemeindepolitik: Max Kollenscher, Aufgaben jüdischer Gemeindepolitik (Posen: Philipp'sche Buchhandlung, 1905), Max Kollenscher, Jüdische Gemeindepolitik (Berlin-Charlottenburg: Verl. Zionist. Zentralbureau: 1909).

1919 that Zionist *Gemeindepolitik* found an organisational structure that was about to shake community politics in many German cities and above all in Berlin during the coming decades.[561] For many Zionist activists work in the realm of *Gemeinde* meant work towards the creation of Jewish *Gemeinschaft*. In the wake of the collapse of the old political system in Germany, some Zionist commentators like Emil Simonsohn saw the opportunity for a radical reorientation of the position of the Jewish communities in the prospective state. His 1919 call for the establishment of a Jewish People's Community (Volksgemeinde)[562] a year later the board of the Berlin Section of the Jewish People's Party discussed the matter stressing the need to inform the Jewish (i.e. Zionist) public better about the enormous work Zionist representatives were doing within the existing *Gemeinde*.[563]

In March 1921, Rabbi Malwin Warschauer, an avowed Zionist, wrote to Albert Einstein encouraging him to join the Jewish community actively. In this letter Warschauer outlined the importance of Zionist work within the existing *Gemeinde* in order to transform it into a real "People's community".

> "In order to survive, we Jews are in need of all-embracing as well as small communities (Gemeinschaften). Today, the latter are only achievable within the existing community (Gemeinde). We Zionist aim for the transformation of this religious community into a national, so-called People's communities (Volksgemeinden). We can only achieve our aim if we are participating in the communities and gain influence on their structure and conduct."

Einstein's reply to this letter a week later was reserved. "The community (Gemeinde) is an organization", Einstein wrote back, "for the purpose of ritual practice something distant to my senses." Wittily Einstein concluded his response by stating:

> "I have to take the community as what it is today and not as what it might be as a result of future transformation. If I go downtown I am not lying down in bed hoping that it will develop wheels and become an automobile."[564]

The exchange of letters between the rabbi and the physicist sums up some of the central aspects and tensions of *Gemeinde* and *Gemeinschaft*. While both Warschauer and Einstein were committed Zionists, their views on community work differed greatly. Moreover, the correspondence reveals the ambivalence between actual existing and envisioned future community structure.

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[561] On the development of the Jewish People's party cf. Michael Brenner, "The Jüdische Volkspartei - National-Jewish Communal Politics in Weimar Germany," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* XXXV (1990).

[562] Emil Simonsohn, *Die jüdische Volksgemeinde* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1919).

[563] Protokoll einer Sitzung des Vorstandes der Berliner Jüdischen Volkspartei zur zionistischen Gemeindearbeit [1920], CAHJP, D/Be4/83.

[564] Malwin Warschauer, *Im jüdischen Leben: Erinnerungen des Berliner Rabbiners Malwin Warschauer* (Berlin: Transit, 1995), 141 f.

Furthermore, the intense debates concerning Gemeinde in Zionist circles hint to the ongoing process of politicisation of the institution during the first half of the twentieth century. Debates concerning the future of Gemeinde were not limited to Zionist circles and the process of politicisation engaged the community at large.

In a city of almost four million inhabitants, with its members scattered across large sections of its space, the Gemeinde administration was eager to ensure the cohesion of the urban Jewish community under the umbrella of the Gemeinde. Throughout the time in question, the community employed various means to improve the exchange between the Gemeinde and its members animating the latter to more active participation and support.

"The Community and You!"

> "Today we want to resume previous community evenings that have brought us together. They served the purpose that the community administration and the community members do not remain strangers to one another. To understand each other better and to come into personal contact with one another was the aim as well as to allow everybody who feels at home within the community to find a centre within it, a centre he can turn to. We all should turn to the community especially for contemplation after the haste, hustle and bustle of the day. By coming together like a circle of friends we show what duties the Jewish community has to fulfil and by what means it can achieve them. In doing so we enable our friends - the members of the community - to judge for themselves in what circumstances to consult the community and in what matters to seek council from it. We tried to awake the optimism that everybody can count on the support and council of the community. Thus, everyone can feel that he or she is not alone."[565]

With these words the deputy chairman of the Berlin Jewish Community and president of the Prussian association of Jewish congregations, Leo Wolff, outlined the purpose of the community evenings to the audience gathered in the nave of the Synagogue in Rykestrasse. Ignoring the date one could take these remarks as one of many attempts by Berlin Jewish community officials to establish closer bonds between the administration and the community members. Wolff delivered his speech in a very unsettling time for Berlin Jewry, on 24 May 1933.

Already two days earlier a similar gathering had taken place in the western districts of Berlin in the Fasanenstrasse Synagoge. Like Wolff, the orators at this gathering too stressed the importance of strengthening the community spirit among Berlin Jew. As

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[565] Leo Wolff, "[Speech delivered at the community evening at the Synagogue Rykestrasse in April 1933]," in Leo Wolff Collection 1912-1938 (LBIJMB MF 112, 1933).

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Moritz Rosenthal argued in his keynote address, "the highest aim in the work of the community (Gemeinde) is the preservation of Jewish community (Gemeinschaft)".[566] The community evenings had been established through a decision of community board of the community three years earlier following the model of similar events that had been organised in various parts of Berlin by local Jewish associations previously.[567]

On 14 February, the first community evening was held in a rented banquet hall off Greifswalder Strasse in the East of Berlin. The opening address by the deputy chairman of the community Max Kollenscher engaging topics such as the extension of the Jewish school system, welfare activities, the importance of the community newspaper and cultural matters was followed by a presentation with slides delivered by the head of the community art collection, Karl Schwarz.[568] This latter presentation on "the cultural development of the Jews in various countries form antiquity to the present" proved very popular and was repeatedly part of the following community evenings. Members of the community assembly argued that by juxtaposing reports of community officials with presentations of a rather unpolitical character the evening events could attract even those community members who were not directly interested in community politics.[569] Indeed the events attracted a growing audience and according to the Zionist spokesman Alfred Klee had proven a great success after the first months.[570]

As with so many other matters, the community evenings became a subject of dispute between the main fractions with in the community assembly. Liberal representatives accused the Zionist dominated board of instrumentalising the new event for party political propaganda restraining liberal representatives to speak on these occasions.[571]

The initial success of the community evening led to a growing number of them in the following years all around Berlin with an audience of up to 1200 people. Besides various speakers, the cantors of the community contributed musical performances.

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[566] "Was tut die Gemeinde? Zwei Gemeindeabende der Jüdischen Gemeinde," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 23, no. 6 (1933).
[567] An example are the community evenings organised by the *Synagogue-Association Weißensee*. Cf. "Gottesdienst in den Vereins-Synagogen," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 19, no. 4 (1929): 189.
[568] "Chronik des jüdischen Lebens: Februar 1930," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 20, no. 3 (1930).
[569] "Aus der Repräsentantenversammlung: Sitzung vom 1. Mai 1930," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 20, no. 6 (1930): 294.
[570] Ibid., 295.
[571] Ibid.

Rather than reports of community administration, the events were transformed more and more into cultural events for the community members – free of charge.[572]

The motto of the community evening held on 9 January 1933 is a clear indication that the events were both a particular urban means to create a sense of community as well as a forum to address the particular needs of an urban Jewish community. The evening of Monday, 9 January saw some 6,000 people gathering in the major hall of the Berlin Zoo to listen to speakers engaging the topic "Judaism in the metropolis". "The aim of the evening", the *Israelitisches Familienblatt* commentated on the event, "was to assess the situation of Judaism and the Jewish people in the big city and to bring the spirit of Judaism to the masses, especially those sections that have stood alienated away from the community (Gemeinde)."[573]

The program of addresses delivered over the course of the evening ranged from general discourses on "community and environment", "the way to community" to questions of community youth work and welfare.[574]

The community evenings were but a late addition to a number of attempts by the community administration to improve the exchange with the mass of community members.

Prior to World War I, the Zionist initiators of the New Jewish Community Association (*Neuer jüdischer Gemeindeverein*) had lamented the indifference of many Berlin Jews in matters of the community, calling all community members to participate in a discussion concerning the tasks and duties of the community administration and role of the community as a whole.[575]

Community officials soon tried to counter the alleged apathy and indifference of community members themselves. The foundation of the monthly community newspaper, the *Gemeindeblatt*, for instance, was animated by the idea to strengthen the spirit of community among Berlin Jews. "The Gemeindeblatt wants to create an administrative link between the community (Gemeinde) and its members," the cover story of its first issue that appeared on 13 January 1911 announced. The article went on that the new periodical was aiming "to enable the community members to form a stronger bond to the community." Due to the rapid growth of the congregation and

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[572] "Chronik des Gemeindelebens: Gemeindeabende," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 23, no. 1 (1933).

[573] "Judentum in der Großstadt," *Israelitisches Familienblatt: Ausgabe für Groß-Berlin*, 19.01. 1933.

[574] "Chronik des Gemeindelebens: Gemeindeabende," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 23, no. 1 (1933). Here the full program of the event was published.

[575] "Mitglieder der Jüdischen Gemeinde! [Circular to the members of the Jewish Community Berlin issued by the Neuer jüdischer Gemeindeverein]," in *Jerusalem, CAHJP, D/Be4/37* ([19XX]).

the distribution of community members over the space of the entire city, new means were needed to counter the "loss of clarity for the individual" Berlin Jew and his dwindling knowledge about the community events that resulted from growth and fragmentation. "In this respect," the article continues, "the Gemeindeblatt wants to create a change by publicising the duties and services of the community widely."[576] This statement clearly reveals that the establishment of a regular issued community newspaper was in part a response to the challenge of the metropolitan environment to the Jewish community and its individual members. The vastness of a city such as turn of the century Berlin obstructed the direct exchange between urban Jews dwelling around the various quarters of the city detaching them from the community. Although the paper was distributed freely to every household registered in the Jewish community increasing its circulation to more than fifty thousand by the late 1920s[577] the high hopes pinned to the potential of the community newspaper were disappointed.

In December 1926 a special issue of the community paper, entitled "The community – and you!" was published. In its opening remarks, the community board self-critically stated that the hope for the Gemeindeblatt to act as a link between administration and members had not been fulfilled entirely. "Therefore", the text continued, "this special issue had been published to present the institutions of the community who's services are of particular interest to the members."[578]

Besides statistical material on the spending of the community taxes, the issue contained articles on the philanthropic and welfare activities of the community, e.g. Jewish nurseries, schools, the Jewish old people's home, hospital and orphanage, as well as on the treasures of the community's art collection.

In sum, the issue presented the community as an institution providing a network for all areas of life for its urban members. Moreover this special issue foreshadowed attempts to professionalise the publication and to make it into "a publicity tool of the first rank, in order to promote the Jewish interests of the members of the Jewish community," as the former editor of Ost und West, Leo Winz, hired as general editor by the community two years later, argued.[579] Winz successfully transformed the

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[576] "Das Gemeindeblatt," Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin: Amtliches Organ des Gemeindevorstandes 1, no. 1 (1911).

[577] Brenner, Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany, 1996, 55-56.

[578] Vorstand der Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin, "Die Gemeinde - - und Du?," Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin: Amtliches Organ des Gemeindevorstandes 16, no. 12 (1926).

[579] Quoted after Brenner, The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany, 55.

Gemeindeblatt. Visible indications of this transformation was the replacement of the Gothic script by a modernist roman type, the re-designing of the title page, making it into an aesthetically refined frontispiece and the incorporation of numerous illustrations, reproductions of art-works or sheet music. Under the new management, the circulation of the *Gemeindeblatt* rose from some fifty-eight thousand copies in 1928 to seventy-seven thousand in 1931, with individual issues reaching eighty-seven thousand.[580]

Like many other aspects of Berlin Jewish communal life, the *Gemeindeblatt* to was drawn into the struggle between Liberals and Zionist during the late 1920s. The publication of an issue dedicated in major parts to Palestine in February 1929 caused a heated debate in the community assembly.[581] The Liberals accused their Zionist opponents of hijacking the periodical for Jewish nationalist propaganda and thus driving the community away from its essential "German orientation". They stressed, "the *Gemeindeblatt* was created to establish a link between the community and its members, to inform them about the community's institutions," and to present them with articles "of interest to all community members". Representatives of the Jewish Peoples Party in turn argued that the work for Palestine was one of these questions of interest to all Jews and that the Germanness of Berlin Jews did not need any special emphasis.[582] As in many other cases this debate in the community assembly too soon shifted away from the actual question towards mutual accusation by Liberals and Zionist of party propaganda.

The integration of suburban Berlin Jews meant a special challenge to the community. Scattered across large areas reaching from Spandau in the North West to Köpenick in at the southeastern tip of Greater-Berlin a couple hundred Jews – a tiny number when compared to the city districts[583] – were eager to establish links to the community.[584] A number of local associations approached the community

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[580] Brenner, *Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany, 1996*, 55-56.
[581] Three major articles dealing with Palestine were published in the second number of the *Gemeindeblatt* in 1929: Ismar Elbogen, "Palästina: Reiseeindrücke," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 19, no. 2 (1929), Arthur Ruppin, "Die jüdische landwirtschaftliche Kolonisation in Palästina," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 19, no. 2 (1929), J. Lurië, "Das hebräische Schulwesen in Palästina," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 19, no. 2 (1929).
[582] "Aus der Repräsentantenversammlung: Sitzung vom 14. März 1929," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 19, no. 5 (1929).
[583] Julius Rothholz, "Die Zunahme der jüdischen Einwohner in den Vorortgemeinden Groß-Berlins," *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 1 (1929).
[584] In 1925, some 491 Jews lived in Spandau and around 200 in Reinickendorf. Throughout the other northern suburbs the figures scarcely exceeded hundred: Hermsdorf (115), Heiligensee (16), Wittenau (53), Frohnau (40), Buch (134). As for Köpenick some 224 Jews were listed by Ibid. The statistician

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administration asking for the extension of communal infrastructure in the suburban and eastern parts of the city.[585] In December 1928, the *Jewish Religious Association for the Northern Suburbs* urged the library commission on establishing a branch of the community library in the area. Despite the local efforts made by various associations to improve the "education of young Jews in the northern suburbs" the letter reads they are insufficient in effectively "conveying Jewish consciousness, the knowledge of Jews and Judaism and thus strengthening and deepening the affiliation with the Jewish community."[586] An earlier proposal by the *Synagogue Association "East"* for the establishment of a library branch on Petersburgerstrasse in Friedrichshain was accepted by both the board and the assembly of the community.[587]

In a meeting of the community assembly in November 1928 the issue of improving the Jewish infrastructure in the eastern areas of the city were raised. Stressing the fact that no community institutions were located east of the Kaiserstrasse the Zionist representative Alfred Klee suggested the establishment of a Jewish community centre there to support the devotional work of the Synagogue associations in the area. Besides the creation of an assembly hall for up to 1200 people Klee suggested the establishment of a library branch, a youth meeting centre and an office serving as nexus with the central community administration.

Although favourable in his response, Georg Kareski speaking on behalf of the community board declared that the current financial situation of the community did not allow realising such an ambitious project yet. Yet he declared that he was hoping that by 1930 the first concrete steps might be possible.[588]

Heinrich Silbergleit estimated the figures slightly higher: Reinickendorf (554), Spandau (514) and Köpenick (494). Cf. Heinrich Silbergleit, "Die Entwicklung der Juden Berlins," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 18, no. 9 (1928).

[585] David Heimann, "Um die Eingemeindung der nördlichen Vororte," *Israelitisches Familienblatt: Ausgabe für Groß-Berlin*, 23.05. 1929.

[586] Letter by the Jewish religious association of the northern suburbs to the library commission of the Berlin Jewish Community, 28.12.1928, LBIJMB MF 472, Reel 2.

[587] Letter by the Synagogen-Verein "Osten" e.V. to Dr. Stern at the library of the Berlin Jewish Community, 12.11.1928, Board of the Berlin Jewish Community to the Community Assembly, 12.02.1929, and Notes on decisions by the Community Assembly, 18.02.1929, all in LBIJMB MF 472, Reel 2.

[588] "Repräsentantenversammlung: Sitzung vom 8. November 1928," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 19, no. 1 (1929).

De-bourgeoisement among Berlin Jews

"The situation for large parts of the Berlin Jewish population has become precarious during the past weeks. Numerous families experience bitter hardships. They are lacking nutrition, cloth, heating and lighting. Furthermore, considering the bleak winter conditions, one has to fear the worst for a number of institutions and families."[589]

"Humans are falling victim to this 'economic crisis' ... ring the tocsins! Raise the alarm in the streets! Human life is in danger!"[590]

"Every Friday evening the rabbis of the Berlin synagogues are preaching against Jewish suicides. – Every Friday evening, towards the end of the week hundreds and thousands of Jewish employees are sacked. Here lie the roots of evil."[591]

These examples put the view of Weimar Berlin as a golden age of Jewish culture into question. The majority of ordinary Jewish Berliners experienced the "Golden Twenties" as a period of crisis.

Fiscal turmoil and economic crisis hit Jews all over Germany. However, the situation once again differed in the case of Berlin. In previous decades, the German capital city had become the place where the making of the German-Jewish middle class was most dynamic. Fontane's Berlin-Jewish spirit is one of the earliest descriptions of the exceptionally successful adaptation of *Bürgerlichkeit* by the Berlin Jewish bourgeoisie.

Therefore, it is not surprising, that a dominant strain of German-Jewish historiography focuses on the embourgeoisement of German Jews following their political emancipation, resulting in what George Mosse called a "perfect" creation of a Jewish bourgeoisie through *Bildung*.[592] Numerous historians followed Mosse in exploring the emergence of consolidation of a broad German-Jewish middle class during the nineteenth century.[593]

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[589] "Winternot!," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 13, no. 11-12 (1923).

[590] Eugen Caspary, "Notgemeinschaft," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 2 (1926).

[591] Heinz Levy, "Von der Lage der Erwerbslosen," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 6, no. 13 (1926).

[592] George L. Mosse, *German Jews beyond Judaism* (Bloomington, Indiana; Cincinnati, Ohio: Indiana University Press ; Hebrew Union College Press, 1985), 72. For a critical appreciation of Mosse's concept of German-Jewish Bildung see also Shulamit Volkov, "The Ambivalence of Bildung: Jews and Other Germans," in *The German-Jewish Dialogue Reconsidered : a symposium in honor of George L. Mosse*, ed. Klaus L. Berghahn (New York: Peter Lang, 1996).

[593] Jacob Toury's collection of sources on early Embourgeoisement was one of the first major contributions to what was to become one of the most dominating strain of modern German-Jewish historiography; Jacob Toury, *Der Eintritt der Juden ins deutsche Bürgertum; eine Dokumentation* (Tel Aviv: Diaspora Research Institute [Tel Aviv University], 1972). Since the early 1990s, an number of major contributions have been made to the field: Marion A. Kaplan, *The making of the Jewish middle class : women, family, andidentity in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991),

While the decades preceding World War I saw the making of the Jewish middle class, the interwar years were marked by a deep crisis of the group that dominated German Jewry.

This crisis was not exclusively one of economic decline caused by inflation and socio-economic instability during the Weimar years but one – as Jacob Lestschinsky argues in his controversial book *The Economic Fate of German Jewry* – that threatened the Jewish middle classes in both material and psychological respects, thus leading to a deep crisis of German Jewry on the whole.[594] Indeed, the Weimar years saw the counter-development to the previous process of embourgeoisement among urban German Jews. For some contemporaries the decay of the urban Jewish middles classes was an indication for its decline leaving little hope for a recovery. Although such conclusions might have been made over-hastily one could argue that the Weimar Germany and Berlin in particular witnessed Jewish de-bourgeoisement.

As was Jewish embourgeoisement so was de-bourgeoisement a predominantly urban process. It was in cities that German Jews of the nineteenth century first gained civic rights and became part of bourgeois society where they entered in large numbers the so-called free professions and it was in the cities that the same urban Jewish middle classes were hit most badly by the economic turmoil of inflation and economic crisis.[595] For Zionist commentators the "curse of urban existence with its sociological, biological, moral and spiritual dangers" and the related trend towards assimilation and decadence among Berlin Jews were to blame for this crisis.[596]

Shulamit Volkov, "The 'Verbürgerlichung' of the Jews as a Paradigm," in *The Bourgeois Society in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Jürgen Kocka and Allan Mitchell (Oxford; Provindence: Berg, 1993), Andreas Gotzmann, Rainer Liedtke, and Till van Rahden, eds., *Juden, Bürger, Deutsche : zur Geschichte von Vielfalt und Differenz 1800-1933* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), Simone Lässig, *Jüdische Wege ins Bürgertum : kulturelles Kapital und sozialer Aufstieg im 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004). More recently, historians have pointed to the limites of some of the scholarship. For example, the failed integration of Jewish embourgeoisement into the broader context of non-Jewish society, cf. Oded Heilbronner, "Das (bürgerliche) deutsche Judentum im Spiegel der deutschen Fachwissenschaft : ein Forschungsbereich zwischen In- und Exklusion," *Historische Zeitschrift* 278, no. 1 (2004). .
[594] Jacob Lestschinsky, *Das wirtschaftliche Schicksal des deutschen Judentums : Aufstieg, Wandlung, Krise, Ausblick* (Berlin: Energiadruck, 1932).
[595] Gerald D. Feldman has shown that the economic crisis and especially hyperinflaction hit the entire German Mittelstand particularly hard. Many were forced to sell personal valuables and household possessions in order to meet day-to-day living costs. In Berlin, self-help sales buereaus were established for this purpose. Especially for small rentiers and pensioners as well as those living on social securtiy the hyperinflaction of 1922 was desasterous both economically and emotianlly. Cf. Gerald D. Feldman, *The Great Disorder: politics, economics, and society in the German inflation, 1914-1924* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), especially Chapter 12 "The Year of Dr. Marbuse: The Hyperinflation and German Society in 1922.
[596] Goslar, "Jüdische Not in Berlin."

Berlin, more than other German cities, became the place where both embourgeoisement and de-bourgeoisement of German Jews were most visible. In 1925, Kurt Zielenziger described the intensity with which the economic crisis hit and subsequently Berlin Jewry laconically.

> "Once the Kurfürstendamm was the symbol for Jewish prosperity and entrepreneurship. Nowadays the Alexanderplatz has become the emblem of the economic decline of Jewish Germans."[597]

Picking up on an argument that the Jewish middle classes were effected by the economic crisis to a higher extant than their Christian counterpart, Zielenziger takes his readers on a tour from the pompous edifices along the boulevard in the West of Berlin to the narrow alleyways with its grey tenement blocks around the Alexanderplatz in the East. "Here we meet the Jewish proletariat that reminds us that there is a Jewish working class not only in Poland and Russia but also in Germany", Zielenziger continued his account, "a proletariat that in face of the decline of the German Jewish middle classes is growing!"[598]

Zielenziger's article anticipates major debates in coming years sparked off by the publication of Kurt Zielenziger's work *Jews in the German economy*, Alfred Marcus' study *The Economic Crisis of German Jewry* in 1931 and Jacob Leschinsky's book *The Economic Fate of German Jewry* in the following year.[599] Already prior to the major intellectual debate of the early 1930s sparked off by these publications,[600] the effects of economic crisis on German Jewry in general and Berlin Jewry in particular became a source of growing anxiety among many Berlin Jews. The repeated

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[597] Kurt Zielenziger, "Kurfürstendamm und Alexanderplatz," *C.V.-Zeitung* IV, no. 48 (1925).

[598] Ibid. For his earlier article on the decline of the German Jewish middle class cf. Kurt Zielenziger, "Der Untergang des jüdischen Mittelstandes," *C.V.-Zeitung* IV, no. 46 (1925).

[599] Kurt Zielenziger, *Juden in der deutschen Wirtschaft* (Berlin: Welt-Verlag, 1930), Alfred Marcus, *Die wirtschaftliche Krise des deutschen Juden : eine soziologische Untersuchung* (Berlin: G. Stilke, 1931), Lestschinsky, *Das wirtschaftliche Schicksal des deutschen Judentums : Aufstieg, Wandlung, Krise, Ausblick*. Birnbaum argues that Marcus' study in particular had a great impact on Jewish political representatives and that it levelled the way to the decision of the *Preußischer Landesverband* to establish a Jewish economical institute. Max P. Birnbaum, *Staat und Synagoge, 1918-1938 : eine Geschichte des Preussischen Landesverbandes Jüdischer Gemeinden (1918-1938)* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1981), 203.

[600] In addition to the books by Zielenziger, Marcus and Leschinsky the journals *Jüdische Arbeits- und Wanderfürsorge* and *Jüdische Wohlfahrtspflege und Sozialpolitik* served as stage for intense debates concerning Jewish proletarization, organisation of welfare in response to the economic crisis etc. To mention but some of the central contributions to these journals: S. Adler-Rudel, "Voraussetzungen und Notwendigkeiten einer jüdischen Arbeiterkolonie [Vortrag gehalten auf der Mitgliederversammlung der Hauptstelle für jüdische Wanderfürsorge am 8. Mai 1927 in Berlin]," *Jüdische Arbeits- und Wanderfürsorge* 1, no. 1-2 (1927), I. Koralnik, "Proletarisierung als Heilmittel?," *Jüdische Wohlfahrtspflege und Sozialpolitik* 3, no. 2/3 (1932), Alfred Marcus, "Proletarisierung als Heilmittel?: Schlußwort einer Diskussion," *Jüdische Wohlfahrtspflege und Sozialpolitik* 3, no. 2/3 (1932), Felix A. Theilhaber, "Zum Bevölkerungsproblem der Berliner Juden," *Jüdische Wohlfahrtspflege und Sozialpolitik, Neue Folge* 2, no. 10/11 (1931).

references to growing numbers of Jewish suicides resulting from the economic decline are just one indicator for this.[601]

Other observers followed the example set by Zielenziger and investigated the impact of the crisis on Berlin Jewry topographically. One of the most striking examples of this territorialisation is a reportage that appeared in the *CV-Zeitung* in 1931 "Criss-cross through working Jewish Berlin".[602] The unnamed author takes its readers on a tour through Berlin, visiting factory buildings of the northeast, Jewish shops along arterial roads in the eastern districts, clothes stores in the city centre near the Hausvogteiplatz, the cafes of the western centre of the city as well as Jewish pharmacies and surgeries in the bourgeois south of Berlin. Thus, the reportage provides a social as well as geographical map of Jewish Berlin, locating Jewish Berlin beyond its bipolar hubs in the Western and Eastern city centre – around the Kurfürstendamm and the Oranienburger Strasse.

On his travel through working Jewish Berlin, the reporter inquires into the effects the economic crisis has on the different social strata of Jewish Berlin – from a Jewish industrialist, to factory workers, shopkeepers, department store sales assistants, agents, lawyers, physicians and pharmacists. The results of his inquiry range from desperation to careful optimism. Repeatedly the article highlights the fear of growing anti-Semitism as a major factor adding to the aggravation of Jewish existence caused by the economic situation.[603]

Indeed, the economic crisis resulted in new waves of anti-Semitism with anti-Jewish sentiments and the image of Jews as benefactors or causers of the crisis circulating widely in German popular culture. A striking example for this widespread anti-Jewish sentiments in the German public sphere is a caricature appearing in 1923 at the high point of hyperinflation in the satirical magazine *Simplicissimus* entitled "The flood (Die Sintflut)", depicting a stereotypical Jewish figure sitting safely on a secure boulder

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[601] Max Sichel, "Der Selbstmord bei den Juden - einst und jetzt," *Zeitschrift für Demographie und Statistik der Juden. Neue Folge* 1, no. 5/6 (1924), "Jüdische Selbstmorde," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 6, no. 7 (1926), Franz Goldmann and George Wolff, *Tod und Todesursachen unter den Berliner Juden* (Berlin-Charlottenburg: Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland, Abteilung: Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle, 1937). The opening scenes of the film *Kuhle Wampe* (1931) – based on a screenplay by Bertolt Brecht and Ernst Ottwald – indicates that suicide caused by economic decline was a trope among non-Jewish Berliners of the time as well. Towards the beginning of the film the only son of the family standing at the centre of the film, unable to find employment commits suicide. Cf. the decision by the censorship to ban the film, Filmprüfstelle Berlin, "Zur Verhandlung über den Bildstreifen ,Kuhle Wampe oder Wem gehört die Welt'", B.31425 (21.04.1932), URL: http://www.deutsches-filminstitut.de/zengut/1509ur.pdf [accessed 12/2007]
[602] "Quer durch das arbeitende jüdische Berlin (Eine Reportage)," *C.V.-Zeitung* X, no. 33 (1931).
[603] Ibid.

amidst the sea of worthless inflation money swallowing human bodies.[604] The figure of the "Dr Mabuse the Gamble" in Fritz Lang's film presents another example of anti-Semitism in Weimar popular culture, blaming the Jews as profiteers of the economic crisis.[605] These examples highlight how widespread anti-Jewish sentiments were at the beginning of the allegedly so golden Twenties. Towards the end of 1923, these sentiments culminated in open violence against Jews in Berlin leading to an attack upon one of the most visible Jewish spaces of the city, the so-called *Scheunenviertel*.[606]

The "Ghetto" of Berlin and the defence of Jewish urban space

Similar to observation of the London East End in previous decades many early twentieth century commentators referred to the quarter north of the Alexanderplatz, the so-called *Scheunenviertel* (barns quarter) centring around the Grenadier-, Dragoner- and Hirtenstrasse as a world of its own. Others referred to it as "Jewish Switzerland"[607] or dubbed it "the ghetto of Berlin".[608]

Such references – employed in particular by assimilated middle class Jews from the Western Quarters of the city – were often ideologically underpinned.[609] Berlin did not

[604] "The Flood," Simplicissimus, 28:20 (13.08.1923), 255

[605] Bernd Widdig, *Culture and inflation in Weimar Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

[606] On the historical origins of the term Scheunenviertel cf. Elke Keller, "Vom Scheunenfeld zum Scheunenviertel," in *Das Scheunenviertel : Spuren eines verlorenen Berlins*, ed. Thomas Raschke and Verein Stiftung Scheunenviertel (Berlin: Haude & Spener, 1994).

[607] Klara Eschelbacher, "Die Wohnungsfrage," *Neue jüdische Monatshefte*, no. 11 (1920): 255. Garbriel E. Alexander, "Die jüdische Bevölkerung Berlins in den ersten Jahrzehnten des 20. Jahrhunderts : Demographische und wirtschaftliche Entwicklung," in *Jüdische Geschichte in Berlin : Essays und Studien*, ed. Reinhard Rürup (Berlin: Hentrich, 1995), 121.

[608] "Im Ghetto von Berlin [Aus: "Deutsche Zeitung"]," *Jüdische Rundschau*, no. 9 (1907), Maximilian Rapsilber, "Das Ghetto von Berlin," *Der Roland von Berlin* 7, no. 45 (1909).

[609] After 1989, the Scheunenviertel became a synonym of "revival" of Berlin Jewish culture that, according to Marline Otte reflects "a decidedly selective public memory." The focus on the Scheunenviertel as "predominate site for a postwar engagement with Jewish history and culture in Berlin" for her is "a choice that also favors a popular historical narrative in which Jews are almost exclusively perceived as strangers." Marline Otte, *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 4. For critique of this development cf. Joachim Schlör, "Klischeebilder aus dem Scheunenviertel," *Berliner Lesezeichen*, no. 10 (1995), André Meier, "Franz Biberkopf trinkt anderswo: Schmähschrift gegen den Mythos Scheunenviertel," in *Die Spandauer Vorstadt: Utopien und Realitäten zwischen Scheunenviertel und Friedrichstrasse*, ed. Gesellschaft Hackesche Höfe e.V. (Berlin: Argon, 1995). Part of a larger formation of "virtual Jewish culture" in post-communist Eastern and Central Europe. Cf. Ruth Ellen Gruber, *Virtually Jewish: reinventing Jewish culture in Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), Joachim Schlör, "From remnants to realities: is there something beyond a "Jewish Disneyland" in Eastern Europe?," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 2, no. 2 (2003).

have a ghetto in the sense of a confined area of Jewish residence in early modern or modern times.[610]

Referring to the *Scheunenviertel* as ghetto is hence problematic, as Klara Eschelbacher, a Jewish student from the southwestern region of Baden, who received her doctorate at the Berlin University in 1920 for a thesis on the Jewish immigrant population of Berlin, has shown.[611] In an article for the *Neue Jüdische Monatshefte*, published in March 1920, Eschelbacher raises the question of an Eastern European Jewish Ghetto in Berlin. Although her article commences with the statement that "wherever Eastern European Jewish immigrants settles, a ghetto – the closest territorial context – is created in one form or another" and that Berlin has its "typical ghetto" in the *Hirtenviertel* (shepherds quarter) the former *Scheunenviertel*, the article rather deconstructs the existence of a Berlin Jewish ghetto than trying to prove its existence. The Berlin Jewish ghetto, Eschelbacher argues is limited to a single street – the Grenadierstrasse – whose inhabitants are almost all *Ostjuden*. Although Eastern European Jewish subculture is visible in the surrounding streets too, the area differs significantly from modern Jewish ghettos such as London East End or the New York East side.

In comparison to London or New York City, where almost the entirety of East European immigrants settles in one district Berlin appears very different. Here the majority of Ostjuden live scattered around the centre, the North and the East of the city to its "most distant periphery", with a "preference for certain districts" that does not however result in a "concentration within a clearly limited territory", Eschelbacher argues. Furthermore, "the Ostjude immigrating to Berlin settled not exclusively in the streets of the ghetto" like his London or New York brethren "but even in areas where scarcely any other Jews life." As a result, Eschelbacher concludes, the "actual ghetto" in Berlin remains quite unchanged by the influx of new Eastern European Jewish immigrants.[612]

Ghetto or not, the district east of the Alexanderplatz, despite the turn of the century demolition of the actual *Scheunenviertel* around the Bülowplatz by the city in which

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[610] The early centre of Jewish residence in Berlin was located south of the Alexanderplatz. Until the mid-nineteenth century one could still find the "Judenhof" on Berlin city maps and until today a street in proximity to the Berlin town-hall is called "Jüdengasse". For the history of early modern Berlin Jewish settlements cf. Lowenstein, *The Berlin Jewish Community: Enlightenment, Family, and Crisis, 1770-1830*, Geiger, *Geschichte der Juden in Berlin*.

[611] Klara Eschelbacher, "Die ostjüdische Einwanderungsbevölkerung der Stadt Berlin: Inaugural-Dissertation Zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde. Genehmigt von der Philosophischen Fakultät der Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin" (Diss., Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin, 1920).

[612] Eschelbacher, "Die Wohnungsfrage."

ramshackle buildings were torn down to make way for new structures including the imposing building of the *Volksbühne* (People's Theatre)[613] remained the urban area of Berlin where East European Jewish life was most visible. In the Grenadierstrasse, as Eschelbacher admits, is the place where "Eastern European life can be felt most intensely and is most visible" even to the sporadic visitor. Numerous writers and literati explored the Scheunenviertel at the beginning of the century.

In 1910, Adolf Grabowsky described his impressions of the quarter as follows:

> "One walks along the boulevard Unter den Linden and passed by the royal palace. Suddenly the dazzling lights of the Friedrichstadt and Western luxury disappear and one enters a broad and silent avenue ... on which one gets deeper and deeper into the East of the world. The eternal East with his great plains ... These figures! Is that Berlin?"[614]

Years later, Joseph Roth's description of the area carried a similar ambivalence providing an answer to Grabowsky's questions.

The destitute urban slum of the Scheunenviertel, Joseph Roth argued, was very much a product of Berlin although it appeared to be detached from the rest of the city. His description of the quarter in *The Wandering Jews*, published in 1927, reads:

> "There is rubbish in the hallways. Including rubbish that has been collected, bought. Rubbish as an object of trade. Old newspapers. Torn stockings. Soles of shoes. Shoestrings. Apron strings. Hirtenstraße is boringly suburban. ... It has a few empty display windows. Jewish baked goods, poppy-seed bagels, rolls, black bread lie in the windows. ...

Moreover, Roth describes the visibility of traditional Jewish life in the district. Mentioning its numerous Talmud schools and synagogues, the Hebrew letters that seem alien on the walls or the Jews with prayer shawls under their arms, Roth stresses that the Jews of Scheunenviertel give a particular appearance to the neighbourhood, one that resembled Jewish life in Eastern Europe rather than that of a modern metropolis. "Berlin shares a border with Galicia" as Walter Mehring has pointedly remarked.[615] It is this otherness, the native Galician Roth, argues that the Jewish inhabitants try and subsequently fail to overcome.

> "Attempts to turn this boring Berlin street, kept as clean as circumstances permit, into a ghetto are always gaining strength. Always, Berlin is stronger. The inhabitants are

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[613] Alfred Döblin, "Östlich um den Alexanderplatz [1923]," in *Die Zeitlupe*, ed. Walter Muschg (Olten; Freiburg i.B.: Walter Verlag, 1962).

[614] Adolf Grabowsky, "Ghettowanderung," *Die Schaubühne* VI, no. 4 (1910). Such views challenge Wertheimer's assertion that the quater prior to World War I "even remotely resembled a "ghetto". Wertheimer, *Unwelcome Strangers*, 80.

[615] Mehring's *Kaufmann von Berlin* was published in 1929. The text can be found in the Walter Mehring, *Die höllische Komödie : Drei Dramen* (Düsseldorf: claassen Verlag, 1979), 135-272.

fighting a futile fight. They want to spread their influence a bit? Berlin pushes them together.[616]

Joseph Roth was but one among a number of Weimar authors fascinated by the Scheunenviertel.[617] The protagonist of Alfred Döblin's metropolitan novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz* Franz Bieberkopf is drawn into the neighbourhood shortly after his release form prison. The play writer Walter Mehring moved for two month to the Grenadierstrasse to reproduce faithfully the types of the Eastern Jew upon which he modelled the figure Simon Chaim Kaftan the protagonist in his controversial play *Der Kaufmann von Berlin* (The Merchant of Berlin).[618]

Non-Jewish observers contributed to the image of the Scheunenviertel too.

In 1929 the *Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung* published a article on the quarter accompanied by numerous photos showing the life of the Lumpenproletariat, the desolate housing situation, the black marked and most presently an orthodox Jews described as a "typical figure" of the area. The text of the article reads very much like Joseph Roth's description but in its conclusion, both texts differ. While Roth emphasises the potential of the 1929 article proclaimed: "The Scheunenviertel is dying." In its backwardness, the area did not life up to the demands of the modern city, to traffic or appropriate housing. The result is a renewed attempt of slum clearing that leaves no space for the indigenous inhabitants who are forced out to look for a new "'home' ('Heimat') in other deprived areas of the capital city."[619]

Despite the repeated reference to the otherness of the area east of the Alexanderplatz its detachment from the rest of city the Scheunenviertel was "isolated island", no city within the city but a "integral part of the urban" a starting point for "ways out into Berlin" as Joachim Schlör has argued recently.[620] Rather than a confined ghetto, the district around the Grenadierstrasse was an in-between-space

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[616] Roth, *Juden auf Wanderschaft*. Here quoted after the English translation in Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg, eds., *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

[617] Among the numerous literary representations of Eastern European Jewish life in the "Scheunenviertel" are Sammy Gronemann, *Tohuwabohu : Roman* (Leipzig: Reclam, 2001 [1920]), Adolf Sommerfeld, *Das Ghetto von Berlin: aus dem Scheunenviertel ; Kriminalroman* (Berlin-Lichterfelde-Süd: Continent Ed., 1932), Martin Beradt, *Beide Seiten einer Strasse: Roman aus dem Scheuenviertel* (Berlin: Mackensen, 1993). Cf. also the autobiographical recollections of the quarter in Mischket Liebermann, *Aus dem Ghetto in die Welt: Autobiographie* (Berlin (Ost): Verlag der Nation, 1977).

[618] Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: the east European Jew in German and German Jewish consciousness, 1800-1923* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 241.

[619] "Im Berliner Scheunen-Viertel," *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung*, no. 23 (1929).

[620] Schlör, *Das Ich der Stadt*, 112.

where two faces of the same city – that of the rapidly modernising hectic metropolis and that of the urban slum - came into close proximity.

Peter Jelavich emphasises the ambivalence underpinning this commingling of different urban aspects at the Alexanderplatz, a place that represented the modernity of Berlin on the one hand and signified poorer sectors of the populations on the other.

"If both aspects of the square implied instability," Jelavich argues, "it was because they were related: the processes of modernization brought with them massive social and economic change, which offered employment to some but made others job redundant."[621]

What the Alexanderplatz was for Berlin, the Oranienburger Strasse was for its Jewish community. Here, in close proximity to the alleged Eastern European Jewish ghetto was one of the community's central hubs. During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, a web of Jewish institutions was woven in the area around the New Synagogue branching out into the area of the Scheunenviertel.[622]

The memoirs of Max Fürst who upon his arrival from Königsberg (today Kaliningrad) in 1927 until 1935 settled in the quarter underline to what extent the area was interconnected with the surrounding parts of the city. Fürst defines the area very broadly incorporating neighbouring segments of the city that lay outside of the actual Jewish quarter. "I loved this area, the centre of the old Berlin," the centre of the Jewish quarter, the large department stores on the nearby Alexanderplatz, the Bülowplatz with the headquarters of the Communist Party, the Cinema Babylon and the many cafes, Fürst passionately declared. [623] His description underlines the inclusiveness of the Jewish quarter in the urban composition of Berlin.

It is not to deny that the Scheunenviertel was an urban terrain causing disputes within the Berlin Jewish community. For many assimilated Jews in the Western

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[621] Peter Jelavich, *Berlin Alexanderplatz: radio, film, and the death of Weimar culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 7.

[622] For an overview of the various institutions in the area cf. Maren Krüger, "Das Leben im Umfeld der Neuen Synagoge : jüdische Einrichtungen 1826-1943: Einführung," in *"Tuet auf die Pforten" : die Neue Synagoge 1866 - 1995*, ed. Hermann Simon and Stiftung Neue Synagoge Berlin - Centrum Iudaicum (Berlin: Stiftung Neue Synagoge Berlin - Centrum Judaicum, 1995). See especially the map on page 166 f.

[623] Max Fürst, *Talisman Scheherezade : die schwierigen zwanziger Jahre* (München; Wien: Hanser, 1976), 15.

Ostjuden district in the east remained foreign, an antagonistic urban terrain and thus a source of concerns.[624]

Despite this however, the Scheunenviertel also became a space of encounter, a place where different segments of the Jewish community, where modernity and tradition came into close proximity, collided and intermingled rather than a detached space or a place of exclusion. A striking example for this is the *Jüdisches Volksheim* (Jewish People's home) founded right at the heart of the Scheunenviertel on 22 Dragonerstrasse in 1916. The fact that Eschelbacher describes the activities of the *Volksheim* as part of here discussion of *chevrot, landsmanshaften*, and other aid societies organised of the Ostjuden in the Scheunenviertel hints to this importance. Moreover, she emphasises that the institution - although not founded by *Ostjuden* – became one of their central meetingplaces.[625]

The moving force behind the *Volksheim* was Siegfried Lehmann a medical student in Berlin and follower of Buber's Jewish Renaissance movement.[626] The first progress report of the project published towards the end of 1916 outlined its aims. It states that the home "following the concept of the settlement system provides general social and medical support and intends to join together the East European Jewish children and youths living in the area of the home in communities (Gemeinschaften), giving them suitable guidance and thus gaining cultural influence on this new generation."[627]

The *Volksheim* differed very much from previously discussed institutions in London aiming for the anglicisation of Eastern European immigrant children in that it, as Steven Aschheim has argued, "proposed nothing less than mutual East-West Jewish transformations" and thus part of a "passionate search for renewed East-West Jewish community".[628] Michael Brenner, however, states that the "main educational goal was to create a sense of Gemeinschaft among the East European Jewish youth"

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[624] See for instance the coverage of the 1926 community assembly election results in the liberal press further down in this chapter.

[625] Klara Eschelbacher, "Die ostjüdische Einwanderungsbevölkerung der Stadt Berlin," *Zeitschrift für Demographie und Statistik der Juden* 17, no. 1 (1923): 18.

[626] Coninciding with the opending of the Volksheim Lehmann (under the pseudonym Salomon Lehnert) was able to publish a programmatic article entitled "Jüdische Volksarbeit" in Buber's journal *Der Jude*. On the development of the Lehmann's idea and the model of the English settlement movement cf. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: the east European Jew in German and German Jewish consciousness, 1800-1923*, 194 ff.

[627] *Das Jüdische Volksheim Berlin*, 1st Report, May/December 1916, here quoted after Dieter Oelschlägel, "Das jüdische Volksheim in Berlin 1916 bis 1926," *Rundbriefe des Verbandes für Sozial-Kulturelle Arbeit* 30. Jg., no. Heft 1 (1994): 48.

[628] Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: the east European Jew in German and German Jewish consciousness, 1800-1923*, 195. Barbara Schäfer has re-emphasised this view. Barbara Schäfer, "Das Jüdische Volksheim," *Kalonymos: Beiträge zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte aus dem Salomon Ludwig Steinheim-Institut* 6, no. 3 (2003).

adding however that the educators in the *Volksheim*, mostly young German Zionist, sought among the youth of the Scheunenviertel what they could not find in themselves: Jewish authenticity.[629]

The views of contemporaries differed too. Franz Kafka celebrated the *Volksheim* enthusiastically in a letter to his fiancée, stressing the caution of the social workers in bringing Western education to *Scheunenviertel* children without forcing them to adapt a way of life of "Berlinian Western Jews of our time".[630] The young Gershom Scholem harshly criticised the "aesthetic ecstasy" of the place that for him lacked any spiritual qualities rooted in Hebraism.[631]

The attempts of creating a common ground for the encounter of Eastern and Western Jews in the Scheunenviertel to integrate the "Berlin Ghetto" into "Jewish Berlin" were challenged brutally some years later.

"A pogrom against Jewry as a whole": the Scheunenviertel-Riots 1923

In November 1923 in the heyday of economic crisis, the Scheunenviertel became the scene of the most violent anti-Semitic street riots the Weimar Republic had thus far seen. Various scholars have analysed what became known as Scheunenviertel Riots from different perspectives. Either focusing on the role of the Eastern Jews, the response of the Press or placing them in the context of anti-Jewish violence during the Weimar years these accounts predominantly fall short concerning the importance of urban space in the context of the 1923 riots.[632]

Similar outbreaks of street riots directed against Jews in other German cities preceded the events in the capital city.[633] The Berlin Jewish community regarded these developments with anxiety. During a session of the community assembly, the

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[629] Brenner, *Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany, 1996*, 187.

[630] Franz Kafka to Felice Bauer, Summer 1916, here quoted after: Eike Geisel, *Im Scheunenviertel : Bilder, Texte und Dokumente* (Berlin: Severin und Siedler, 1981), 48.

[631] Gershom Scholem, *Von Berlin nach Jerusalem: Jugenderinnerungen; Erweiterte Fassung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), 84 f.

[632] One of the most intriguing studies of the events is David Clay Large, ""Out with the Ostjuden": The Scheunenviertel Riots in Berlin, November 1923," in *Exclusionary Violence: Antisemitic Riots in Modern German History*, ed. Christhard Hoffmann, Werner Bergmann, and Helmut Walser Smith (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002). Large also gives an overview on previous scholarship on page 124. Other studies include a short section in Trude Maurer, *Ostjuden in Deutschland, 1918-1933* (Hamburg: H. Christians Verlag, 1986), 329 ff. on the riots. Dirk Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität und Gewalt: Judenfeindschaft in der Weimarer Republik* (Bonn: Dietz, 1999), 151 ff.

[633] "Antisemitische Exzesse in Deutschland," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXVIII, no. 95 (1923). For an extensive list of cities see Ulrich Dunker, *Der Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten 1919-1938 : Geschichte eines jüdischen Abwehrvereins* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1977), 50.

Jewish People's party introduced a motion for a resolution by the Berlin community –
being not only the largest in Germany but also the chairing body of the Prussian
Assembly of Jewish communities – to condemn events that took place in the Silesian
city of Beuthen on 5 October 1923.[634] None of the representatives however thought
such incidence "previously experienced only in Darkest Russia" possible in the
capital city.[635]

The events that occurred at the heart of the Eastern Jewish quarter in Berlin a month
later however outshone the violent outbreaks in Silesia.

Alfred Döblin recalled the events of 5 November 1923:

> "At noon I was in the Alexanderplatz [...]. All was quite peaceful. As in every great
> city, in Berlin everything is localized, and events in one quarter may not have much
> impact elsewhere. But when I ventured into the [Scheunenviertel] that night, I
> encountered sights that seemed weird even to a Berliner. [... The] chief refuge of
> Berlin's Ostjuden, were sealed off by the police; [...] there were smashed windows
> and wrecked shops. [...] Among the Jews there was great anxiety about what might
> happen next; many contemplated another exile. What transpired in the
> Scheunenviertel was in some ways reminiscent of old Russia ..."[636]

The scene described by Döblin were preceded by scene outside an employment
office in the nearby Alexanderstraße where during the morning hours of 5 November
a crowd of unemployed learned that they would receive no relief money that day. A
rumour, stirred up by right-wing agitators, spread that Jews from the Scheunenviertel
had bought up all the relief money in order to loan it at exorbitant rates later on.
Within less than an hour of the announcement thousands of unemployed workers set
off for the Scheunenviertel and began to loot shops up and down Grenadierstraße,
Münzstraße, and Dragonerstraße and to attack people on the street they took for
Jews.

Throughout the following hours, the police acted only half-heartedly to protect the
Jewish residence against the mob. The police did not intervene decisively until the
night hours, closing off the entire area and finally expelling the rioters by pushing
them to the north. An internal police report following the riots offers an explanation for
the police's hesitation. The report, blaming the violent outbreaks on Jewish

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[634] "Aus der Repräsentantenversammlung: Sitzung vom 28. Oktober," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 13, no. 11-12 (1923). For the text of the passed resolution cf. "Die Exzesse in Beuthen: Protest der Berliner Jüdischen Gemeinde," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXVIII, no. 94 (1923).
[635] "Das Pogrom in Beuthen: Spezialbericht der "Jüdischen Rundschau"," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXVIII., no. 88 (1923).
[636] Alfred Döblin, *Ein Kerl muß eine Meinung haben: Berichte und Kritiken 1921 - 1924* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1981). The English translation is taken from Large, ""Out with the Ostjuden": The Scheunenviertel Riots in Berlin, November 1923," 123.

provocation, clearly reveals that parts of the police forces involved in the operation shared many Anti-Semitic stereotypes of the mob[637]:

> "Finally it needs to be said that the behaviour of the *Ostjuden* of the Grenadierstrasse and Dragnonerstrasse are responsible to have caused the looting on 5 November. Already several days before the event *Ostjuden* had a go at some of the unemployed in order to take their benefits that were paid out in inflation resistant currency in exchange for usual currency. The same happened on 5 November. When parts of the crowd realised what was happening they caught the Jewish extortioner relieved him of the money and beat him up. This was the inducement for the crowd to turn against the *Ostjuden* whom they believed stored away foreign currency. Following these events the Jews fled to their flats. [...] When police forces arrived and they felt more secure these Jews started to show themselves behind their windows, thumbed their noses and poked their tongues out at the rioters ... "[638]

From contemporary sources, it rather appears as if the violent outbreak on 5 November 1923 was the result of an aggravating economic situation hitting the urban unemployed in particular. At the end of October riots involving unemployed had already broken out in the Wedding a northern working-class district of Berlin. The beginning of November saw an exorbitant rise in bread prices.[639] On the day of the initial attacks on the Scheunenviertel, the price of a loaf of bread was officially pegged at 140 billion marks.[640]

The correspondent of the London *Jewish Chronicle* described the following "pogrom", with "bands of hooligans raided every large shop in the Grenadierstrasse" and the invading crowds "shouting 'Death to the Jews'." Jews that had sought refuge in their

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[637] Anti-Semitic sentiments were widespread within several echelons of the Berlin Police Force throughout the Weimar period – especially among Schutzpolizisten. Paradoxically however, it was also the Berlin Police force that for many years served as a major guarantor of the Republican system within the capital defending it against radical attempts from both the right and the left. The case of Bernhard Weiss who was appointed Deputy Police President of Berlin in 1927 highlights this ambivalence within the Berlin police forces. Together with Albert Grzesinski Weiss became a central pro-Republican figure within the police apparatus. Tracking down the murders of Walther Rathenaus was credited to Weiss. As a Jew Weiss not only became the target of regular Nazi defamations. In the lower ranks of the Berlin police, too crude and often anti-Semitic jokes at Weiss' expense were widespread. In Joseph Goebbles who reviled the Deputy Police President as "Isidore", Weiss found his major opponent. Cf. Hsi-Huey Liang, "The Berlin Police and the Weimar Republic The Berlin Police and the Weimar Republic," *Journal of Contemporary History* 4, no. 4, The Great Depression (1969): 169, James F. Richardson, "Berlin Police in the Weimar Republic: A Comparison with Police Forces in Cities of the United States," *Journal of Contemporary History* 7, no. 1/2 (1972), Dietz Bering, *Kampf um Namen : Bernhard Weiß gegen Joseph Goebbels* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1991), Michael Berkowitz, *The crime of my very existence : Nazism and the myth of Jewish criminality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 21.
[638] "Internal Police Report concerning the riots in the Grenadierstrasse and neighbouring areas on 5 November 1923," LArchB: A Rep. 358-01 Mf Nr. B 388-389. The Association of German-National Jews was the only Jewish group following a similar line of argument by blaming the Ostjuden to have caused the trouble. Cf. the journal of the association *Der Nationaldeutsche Jude* for October, November and December 1923, I-5.
[639] Dunker, *Der Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten 1919-1938 : Geschichte eines jüdischen Abwehrvereins*, 50-51.
[640] Large, ""Out with the Ostjuden": The Scheunenviertel Riots in Berlin, November 1923," 128. See the following pages for a more detailed analysis of the origins of the riots.

private houses were dragged out by the mob and attacked by the rioters "with the upmost fury" endeavouring "literally to tear them to pieces."

The London reporter described the brutalities against the Jews most drastically:

> "Attacks were made on every Jew who could be seen in the streets, and every shop bearing a Jewish name was robbed. [...] The mob, numbering over 10,000, after practically wrecking the Jewish quarter, attacked the Cloth Exchange and also the Stock Exchange, where cries of 'Kill the Jewish speculators!' were raised. [...] In the evening the rioters, whose numbers had now increased to 30,000 [...] again attacked the Jews. Many were stripped naked in the streets and beaten senseless."[641]

The result of the rioting and plundering were over thousand looted shops, one fatality and at least 129 persons injured.

What startled the London reporter was the fact that the police forces arriving in large numbers following the initial rioting in the Grenadierstrasse "did nothing to prevent the looting, which they watched with laughing approval" and that finally they "were obliged to arrest the Jews in order to protect them from their attackers."[642]

Not only does this statement underline that parts of the Berlin police force shared anti-Jewish sentiments but without going into any further details, these lines also hint to a central chain of events essential to the context at issue.

While the police had not arrived members of the *Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten* (Jewish Veteran Association) assembled at the Jewish community centre on the nearby Rosenstrasse. Cadres of members, some of which were armed with pistols and rubber truncheons were formed and began patrolling the area, guarding synagogues and defending local Jews against the looters.[643] On Bülowplatz, the Reichsbund cadres clashed with a group of some hundred rioters. In this situation, the veterans seek support from a passing by police patrol that refuses and leaves the area.[644] In the following melee, a shot rang out fatally wounding a rioter.[645] It was not until then that the police started to intervene not arresting the rioters but about two hundred Jews, several members of the *Reichsbund* arming them, supposedly to

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[641] "A Pogrom in Berlin: Attack by 30,000 Riotors," *Jewish Chronicle*, 09.11. 1923.

[642] Ibid.

[643] Dunker, *Der Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten 1919-1938 : Geschichte eines jüdischen Abwehrvereins*, 53.

[644] "Der Bund jüdischer Frontsoldaten vor Gericht," *Jüdische Rundschau*, no. 40 (1924).

[645] The Reichsbund member Goldlust was later charged with firing the shot. Later investigations revealed however that the fatal shot was fired out of a window to scare the rioters away. Cf. "Generalstaatsanwaltschaft bei dem Landgericht Berlin, Verfahren gegen Domei und andere Polizeibeamte, die bei antisemitischen Ausschreitungen im Scheunenviertel am 5. Nov. 1923 eine herbeieilende Schutztruppe des "Reichsbundes jüdischer Frontsoldaten" inhaftieren und unter Misshandlungen und Beschimpfungen zur Alexanderkaserne bringen," LArchB: A Rep. 358-01 Mf Nr. B 388-389 and "Polizeiinspection Alexander, Questioning of various members of the crowd, 26 January 1924," LAchB: B Rep. 58, 2743.

"protect" them from the mob. The arrested Jews were transported in lorries to the police barracks in the Alexanderplatz. Already on the lorries, police officers maltreated them. The maltreatment continued at the police barracks where the Jews taken into custody were made to stand for hours with their hands over their heads and beaten up by the police.[646]

Despite the police sealing off the Scheunenviertel in the evening and driving out the rioters, the next day once again saw large crowds assembling in the area hoping for further looting. The quarter appeared like a ghost town. The inhabitants stayed in their houses. A massive intervention of the police forces on Tuesday, 6 November prevented further violent outbreaks in the Jewish quarter.[647]

Roughly the area of the *Scheunenviertel*

Synagogue and community administration on Oranienburger Strasse

Bülowplatz where Reichsbund and rioters clashed

Unemployment office in the Alexanderstraße (starting point of riots)

Police barracks

Jewish community centre where the Reichsbund assembled

Police headquarters

Berlin stock exchange
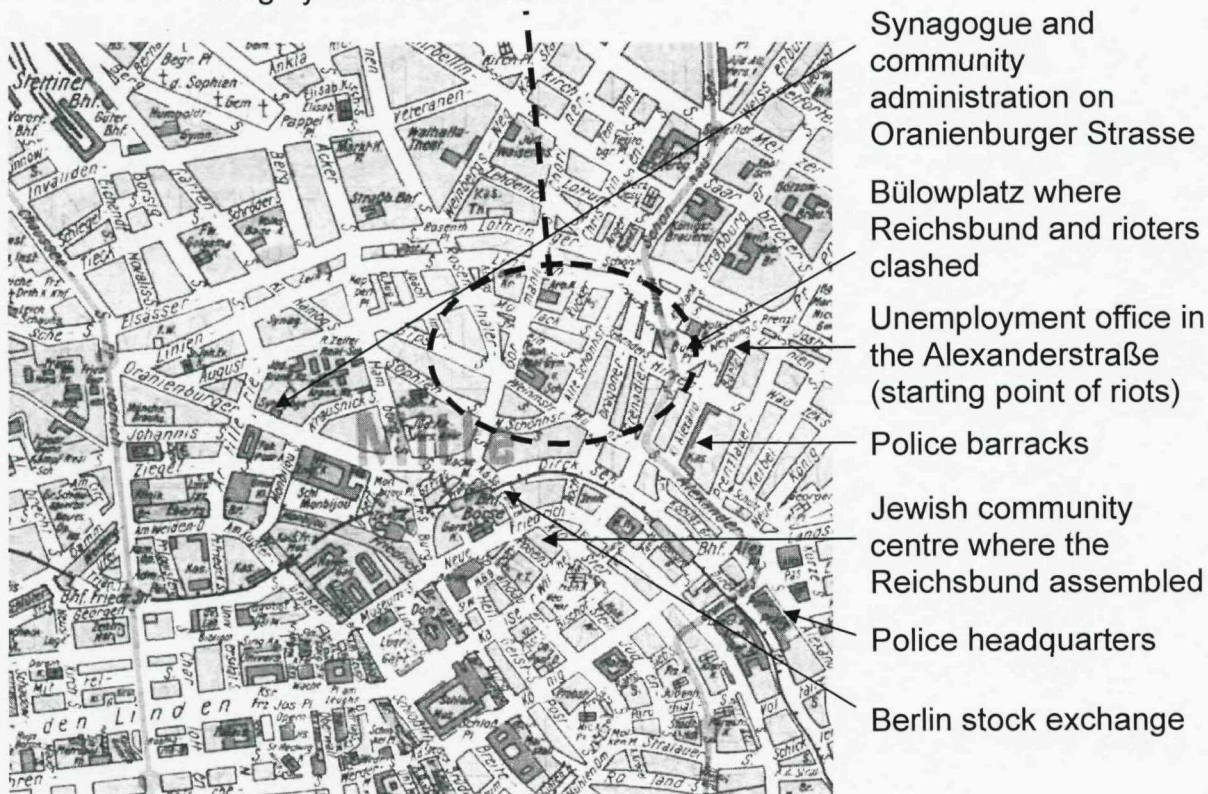
Fig. 3: Topographies of the Scheunenviertel-Riots in November 1923

The significance of the events of November 1923 is manifold. Being in part the result of the ongoing socio-economic crisis of the young Weimar Republic they manifested that Jews were not only suffering from the precarious situation like their fellow

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[646] The Reichsbund later brought criminal charges against three police officers that later received fines and prison sentenced respectively and had to leave the police force for misbehaviour while on duty. "Landgericht Berlin, Verdict 18 and 20 June 1925," LArchB: B Rep. 58, 2743. See also "Schupo und RjF," *Der Schild* 4, no. 13 (1925).
[647] "Die judenfeindlichen Ausschreitungen in Berlin," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXVIII, no. 96 (1923).

citizens but that the crisis lead to a growing anti-Jewish sentiment in parts of German society. It would be wrong however to reduce the pogrom merely to the level of an extended food-riots and it is equally inadequate, as David Clay Large rightly argues, to see them as "a full-scale dress rehearsal" for the events fifteen years later that saw synagogues and other Jewish buildings across Germany set on fire and looted respectively.[648] Nonetheless, German Jewry saw them as a wake-up call to fight growing Anti-Semitism.[649] In this context, contemporary Jewish analysts discussed the events in the *Scheunenviertel* in one breath with the failed Nazi coup in Munich on 9 November 1923.[650]

It was however not merely the calls for a joint fight against Anti-Semitism that resulted from the Berlin events but a reassessment of the relationship between Eastern and Western Jews living in Germany, namely in Berlin. The intervention of the *Reichsbund* is hence highly significant. Being a highly patriotic organisation of German Jews its members "stood on their dignity as Jews and came to the physical aid of their imperiled Eastern brethren, for whom they felt responsible despite obvious cultural differences."[651] The statement made by Dr. Hugo Bernhardt – the leader of the *Reichsbund* activities on 5 November 1923 – in the court-case against members of the Veteran Association for illegal possession of weapons underlines this sense of Jewish solidarity. He declared, "I had the impression, that we were facing an organised pogrom that was directed against Jewry as a whole."[652]

Although interpreting the impact of the event very differently, German Zionists agree with the view that the pogrom in the Jewish quarter had not been directed merely against its inhabitants. Under the headline "German Jewry's hour of fate", the chief Zionist organ *Jüdische Rundschau* stressed that the events had not been only an "Ostjudenpogrom" but indeed a "Judenpogrom".[653]

The impact of the events on the Berlin Jewish community and the strong local component of the riots have so far been widely overlooked. "As in every great city, in Berlin everything is localized," Döblin stated in his recollections of the events on 5 November 1923. The *Scheunenviertel* stood for a special urban locality. Without

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[648] Large, ""Out with the Ostjuden": The Scheunenviertel Riots in Berlin, November 1923," 140.
[649] "Dunkle Tage: Schwere Ausschreitungen in Berlin und im Reich," *C.V.-Zeitung*, no. 45 (1923).
[650] "Berlin - München," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 3, no. 29 (1923).
[651] Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: the east European Jew in German and German Jewish consciousness, 1800-1923*, 243.
[652] "Die November-Pogrome vor Gericht," *Der Schild* 3, no. 7 (1924). Berhardt's view was subsequently adapted by the public prosecutor in the case who called for discharging the Veterans for they had acted in self-defence of their community.
[653] "Die Schicksalstunde des deutschen Judentums," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXVIII, no. 96 (1923).

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clear limits, it represented a highly symbolic locality in the composition of Jewish Berlin, defined by its Eastern European Jewish population rather than urban landmarks.

The visible Jewish presence made it the prime target of the rioters to whom the area of the Grenadierstrasse was *the* Jewish space of Berlin.

One of the most remarkable results of the pogrom was that the "invasion" of a Jewish urban space long ignored and perceived as a world-apart, a detached foreign Jewish world by the established Berlin Jewry, led to a incorporation of the Scheunenviertel into the broader topography of Jewish Berlin. The *Reichsbund* and other West Jewish organisation[654] saw their intervention as part of the defence of Berlin Jewish urban space *per se*. Thus, the crisis that underpinned the Berlin riots in 1923 resulted in a reassessment of urban Jewish identity in the German capital city. The crisis and especially the new wave of anti-Semitism it fuelled could only be challenged together for they threatened Jewish Berlin as a whole.

Less than a decade later, the validity of such assessments was brutally proven. Jews leaving the Fasanenstrassen Synagogue in the western part of Berlin after the evening service on 12 September 1931, the first day of Rosh Hashanah, were attacked by roving Nazi bands. Once again, the police forces acted slowly resembling the scenes north of the Alexanderplatz in 1923 and allowing the attacks to spread over to the near by Kurfürstendamm, where the SA troops continued to attack Jews or those they thought Jewish, wrecking a coffee house frequented by Jews.[655] Over the course of less than a decade, the two main hubs of Jewish Berlin identified by Zielenziger in 1925 the Kurfürstendamm, symbol of success story of the Berlin Jewish middle classes and its decline and the area north of Alexanderplatz home to the Eastern European urban Jewish proletariat were threatened.[656]

The Crisis of Community

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[654] Following the pogrom the Centralverein indirectly claimed that it had supported the action of the Reichsbund in the Scheunenviertel. "Dunkle Tage: Schwere Ausschreitungen in Berlin und im Reich." Dunker moreover shows that the Reichbund already prior to the Scheunenviertel riots had embarked into a growing "Abwehrarbeit". Dunker, *Der Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten 1919-1938 : Geschichte eines jüdischen Abwehrvereins*, 53 f.

[655] "Auschreitungen am Kurfürstendamm," *C.V.-Zeitung* X, no. 38 (1931), W. G., "Sühne für die Kurfürstendammunruhen," *C.V.-Zeitung* X, no. 39 (1931). Cf. also Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität und Gewalt: Judenfeindschaft in der Weimarer Republik*, 211 ff. and Donald L. Niewyk, "The Jews in Weimar Germany: The Impact of Anti-Semitism on Universities, Political Parties and Government Services," in *Hostages of modernization*, ed. Herbert Arthur Strauss, vol. 1 (Berlin ; New York: W. de Gruyter, 1993), 224.

[656] Zielenziger, "Kurfürstendamm und Alexanderplatz."

The *Scheunenviertel* pogrom was a wake-up call for the Berlin Jewish community and an indication that the current socio-economic crisis was not a problem of Jewish individuals but of the community as a whole.

By 1923, it became evident that indeed the community itself had become subject to the crisis and suffered especially severely from it.

Alexander Szanto describes the difficult situation in his memoir:

> "My first contacts with the Berlin Jewish community stem from 1923, the year of the great inflation. The grave crisis that at that time engulfed Germany was, of course, a turbulent time for the German Jews as well. If previously the Jewish community had to tend solely to religious, charitable, and cultural tasks, now economic and sociopolitical problems entered increasingly into its sphere of work. The executive body of the community had its hands full doing justice to the growing demands that were made on it, and the assembly of representatives, a community parliament, chosen by free election, had to hold many more meetings than earlier to manage the work load. Not only did the number of meetings increase, but their agendas also became more extensive and significant."[657]

Szanto's remarks highlight the omnipresence the crisis gained in the realm of community affairs. Yet an article that appeared in the *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* in 1926 added a more sinister view stating that "the global economic crisis menaces the Jewish community" and that the future of Jewish communities in Germany was therefore in danger. The crisis, the article continued, in particular affected Berlin Jews employed predominantly in the commercial sector and thus "it is a great sin of omission that the Berlin Jewish community continues to discuss the distress of the Jewish unemployed without providing sufficient means to counter the situation." Admitting that the economic crisis had also led to a loss in community taxes, the article continue to list the community's failures in providing an adequate welfare system for Berlin Jews. Moreover the article identified another danger springing up from the current crisis, that of a radicalisation of the unemployed, warning that the "mood of the unemployed was on edge," that they had started forming associations and organised a demonstration in front of the Jewish welfare office on Rosenstrasse.[658] Not being the first of its kind, this article shows the complexity of the problem faced by the Berlin Jewish communities since the 1920s.

Two major strains can be identified. On the one hand, the community was confronted with a growing number of members in need of benefits and economic support. On the

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[657] Alexander Szanto, "Im Dienste der Gemeinde 1923-1939," in *LBIJMB, MM 76* ([1968]). The English translation is taken from Alexander Szanto, "[In the Service of the Community. Manuscript, dated Manchester, 1968]," in *Jewish life in Germany: memoirs from three centuries*, ed. Monika Richarz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 342-43.
[658] Berthold Weiß, "Die jüdische Not: Die Krisis der jüdischen Gemeinschaft," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 6, no. 6 (1926).

other hand, the financial turbulence of Weimar economy culminating in hyperinflation in the final months of 1923 that saw the value of the Mark falling to one trillion for one Dollar hit the financial basis of the community especially hard. While prior to the collapse the community administration already struggled to collect taxes that were sustainable against instant loss in value[659] the fiscal crash meant that for years to come the community had lost some of its central sources of income from endowments and capital invested.[660] The financial means of the community were further aggravated by a loss of community taxes due to the growing number of members not able to pay.[661]

The following example shows that these financial difficulties had an instantaneous effect on the community infrastructure affecting community members directly. In face of exploding energy costs, for instance, the community assembly in 1923 considered such drastic measures as to close a number of synagogues around the city during the winter months in order to reduce costs asking members either to use smaller rooms or to move to other synagogues. As with so many other issues, this debate was overshadowed by mutual jealousy of the various religious and political fractions. An orthodox representative, for instance, blamed the Liberals to use the crisis to close "organ-free" synagogues.[662]

Soon however it became apparent that the effects of economic crisis were more severe than the temporary closure of synagogues over the winter months and in 1926, the community establishment was reminded of this most vocally.

Manifestation of Jewish unemployed

When the assembly gathered on the evening of 17 February 1926 to discuss matters of Jewish schools in Berlin an unprecedented number of people – most of them Jewish unemployed – gathered on the audience tribune of the meeting hall. The assembly proceedings started with the usual formalities and soon the representatives started to debate the question of Jewish schooling in Berlin extensively.

Over the course of this debate, the situation on the tribune became more and more agitated leading to open expressions of protest with shouts of "we are hungry", "we

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[659] "Aus der Repräsentantenversammlung: Sitzung vom 21. Oktober 1923," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 13, no. 11-12 (1923).

[660] Benas Levy, "Einst und jetzt - Die Finanzverhältnisse unserer Gemeinde 1914-1926," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 12 (1926).

[661] Georg Kareski, "Steuerbedarf und Geldbedarf," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 10 (1926).

[662] "Aus der Repräsentantenversammlung: Sitzung vom 28. Oktober," 70.

have no shelter" becoming louder and louder. Subsequently the protests of the audience threw the assembly meeting into turmoil leading to an interruption in the procedures.[663]

During this interruption, several representatives went to the tribune to negotiate with the unemployed. Already prior to the assembly meeting spokesmen of the unemployed had outlined their demands to a number of community representative.[664] Besides financial support, the unemployed demanded legal assistance and efforts of professional reorientation from the community. After the chairman of the assembly – the Zionist representative Klee – had assured the protesters that the community would "consider" their demands the situation was calmed down and the meeting resumed.[665] Spokespersons of all parties then declared that the community had to make more efforts towards the alleviation of the situation of the unemployed. During the following debate – which was interrupted repeatedly by interjections from the tribune – the setting up of free soup kitchens and shelters was identified as main priorities.[666]

The demonstration of the unemployed was a new form of inner communal protest, calling for change in community politics. Not only did the "Jewish public took a more lively part in the internal Jewish quarrels than before", as Alexander Szanto recalled in his memoirs, but sections of this public actively challenged the representative structure of community policy, a structure they regarded as detached from the actual needs of the community members.[667]

An incident that occurred some days after the turbulent assembly meeting showed how the virulence of Jewish unemployment in Berlin highlighting the gap between community members and officials. During a meeting organised by the liberal association in the eastern part of the city representatives of the unemployed again attacked the lack of support by the community. When calls for a extended discussion of the matter by members of the audience was denied by the chairman of the meeting calling such demands "Eastern Jewish manners" the gathering attended by

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[663] "Erwerbslosendemonstration in der Berliner Repräsentantenversammlung," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 6, no. 8 (1926).
[664] "Aus der Repräsentanten Versammlung: Sitzung vom 17. Februar 1926," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 4 (1926).
[665] H. Grünberg, "Schuldebatte in der Berliner Gemeinde: Aus der Repräsentanten-Versammlung vom 17. Februar 1926," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXXI, no. 15 (1926).
[666] "Aus der Repräsentanten Versammlung: Sitzung vom 17. Februar 1926."
[667] Szanto, "[In the Service of the Community. Manuscript, dated Manchester, 1968]."

a large number of *Ostjuden* got out of control and the police had to be called in to close it.[668]

The demonstration of the unemployed and the clash during the meeting in East Berlin indicated once again that the community was drawn deeper into the crisis effecting Jewish and non-Jewish Berliners. Moreover, the events made it evident that the community could no longer distance itself from the crisis but needed to act for the crisis not only put community members in despair but also threatened to jeopardise the very concept of *Gemeinde*. Thus, the crisis called for "a renewal of Jewish communal life," as Brenner and Penslar argue.[669]

The nineteen twenties mark a watershed in both Berlin Jewish community politics and self-understanding.

On the one hand, the question of Jewish welfare became a central issue in discussions on the future of Jewish community. An article by the chairman of the community's welfare office Eugen Caspary written for the *Gemeindeblatt* as early as 1923 shows this shift clearly. Under the title "Notgemeinschaft" ("Relief Community"), Caspary described the devastating effects of the current economic crisis for both the Jewish community and Berlin Jews. Stressing the enormous efforts his office made he harshly criticised that many members were relying too much on the community without realising their own responsibility in supporting it to enable confrères in need. Calling on those with work to donate more money for the welfare efforts of the community he declared that what was needed was a voluntary willingness to sacrifice and inner-Jewish solidarity in times of crisis. If this could be achieved, he went on, a real *Notgemeinschaft* would come into existence.

> "We do not need to 'found' a relief community; the community (Gemeinschaft) is our community (Gemeinde) it is Berlin Jewry. That this community develops into a true relief community of Jewish people is not a matter of propaganda, a program or an organisation it is merely a matter of good will."[670]

Caspary called for a new communal sense among urban Jews. Only through the establishment of responsibility of the individual for the community and solidarity between its various section, his argument ran, could the community overcome the crisis.

One the other hand, the changes in the face of crisis did not remain on the level of appeals or lip service. Throughout the nineteen twenties and thirties, the community's

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[668] "Eine aufgelöste Versammlung," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXXI, no. 15 (1926).
[669] Michael Brenner and Derek Jonathan Penslar, eds., *In Search of Jewish Community : Jewish identities in Germany and Austria, 1918-1933* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), xi.
[670] Caspary, "Notgemeinschaft."

welfare apparatus in Berlin was extended massively. This extension was the most visible response towards the ongoing crisis, a response that meant both a change to the community structure and subsequently to the Jewish topography of Berlin. Already prior to the protest of 1926, the assembly had discussed matters of relief efforts, such as the extension spaces as refuge for homeless Jews[671] and decided to devote almost 33 % of the annual community budget to welfare activities.[672] However, the changes went beyond a mere increase of funds into the welfare activities of the community. Throughout the following decade the community welfare system witnessed an unprecedented professionalisation and modernising replacing the old charitable work for the poor (Armenfürsorge) with a modern institutionalised welfare system (Wohlfahrtspflege).[673] Under the leadership of Eugen Caspary, the community's welfare apparatus was not only extended but underwent also a radical reorganisation. Detached bodies were joined together and previously privately organised charity was incorporated into the central welfare administration.[674]

In reorganising its local administration, the Berlin Jewish community furthermore set the trend for the remodelling of Jewish welfare beyond the capital city. Thus, 1925 saw the restructuring of the Central Association for Jewish Immigrant and Travellers Welfare (Hauptstelle für jüdische Wanderfürsorge). The journal *Jüdische Arbeits- und Wanderfürsorge* founded two year later became a professional journal for Jewish social workers and community officials across Germany. Another attempt to tackle the economic difficulties trans-locally was the active involvement of the Prussian Association of Jewish communities in matters of Jewish welfare.[675] By the following

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[671] "Aus der Repräsentantenversammlung: Sitzung vom 14. Januar 1926, abends 6 Uhr," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 2 (1926).

[672] ***, "Wollen und Wirken," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 12 (1926): 250, 52 ff.

[673] M. K., "Eugen Caspary in seinem Wirken," *Jüdische Wohlfahrtspflege und Sozialpolitik, Neue Folge* 2, no. 3-4 (1931). The process of professionalisation dates back to the late nineteenth century. In 1897 the Federation for Jewish Welfare Work was founded in Berlin and in 1917 the new national body of the Central Welfare Office of German Jewry (Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der deutschen Juden) came into existence. Steven M. Lowenstein, "The Community," in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, ed. Michael A. Meyer, vol. 4: Integration in Dispute (New York: Columbia University, 1998), 134.

[674] Fritz Lamm and S. Adler-Rudel, "Fünf Jahre Wohlfahrts- und Jugendfürsorgeamt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin," *Jüdische Wohlfahrtspflege und Sozialpolitik, Neue Folge* 2, no. 3-4 (1931).

[675] Leo Baeck, "Die Jüdischen Gemeinden," in *Zehn Jahre Deutsche Geschichte, 1918-1928*, ed. Hermann Müller and Gustav Stresemann (Berlin: O. Stollberg, 1928), 442 ff, Birnbaum, *Staat und Synagoge, 1918-1938 : eine Geschichte des Preussischen Landesverbandes Jüdischer Gemeinden (1918-1938)*, Aaron Sandler, "The Struggle for Unification," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, no. II (1957). Between 1929 and 1931 the *Landesverband* supported the *jüdische Wanderfürsorge* with large funds. Birnbaum, *Staat und Synagoge, 1918-1938 : eine Geschichte des Preussischen Landesverbandes Jüdischer Gemeinden (1918-1938)*, 192.

decade, German-Jewry and most prominently the Berlin community had established an enormous network of different welfare institutions.[676]

As to Berlin, the extension of community welfare services resulted in the creation of a new social infrastructure across Berlin, a visible statement that the community despite the difficult circumstances remained present within the city and accessible for its members.[677]

Community elections

1926 was to become a decisive year for Jewish communal politics in Berlin, indeed for the development of the Berlin Jewish community as a whole. On Sunday, 16 May, some 123.000 members were called to the polling stations to decide the composition of the new *Repräsentantenversammlung* (Community Assembly) that was to decide the community's political agenda for the following years.[678]

> "Then we drove to the Synagogue in Lindenstraße to vote in the Jewish elections (strangely councillor Goslar who stands for the Zionists in the elections called me yesterday to ask the *Berliner Tageblatt* not to report on the elections since there was already too much turmoil). Then off to the lodge where the *Relief Organization of German Jews* (Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden) was celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary."[679]

With these dry words the special editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt* one of Berlin's leading dailies, Ernst Feder, noted the events of the day that was to mark the beginning of major changes within the Jewish community in his diary. Hans Goslar's hopes were soon jeopardised. What followed soon developed into a major political crisis of Berlin-Jewish communal politics.

The assembly elections of 1926 differed from previous ones in several respects. The most important change was that women were given full active a passive suffrage for the first time in the community's history. Furthermore, the elections were to be conducted in a more professional way following the model of general political elections. Thus, ballot papers were no longer distributed by the various parties but

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[676] "Führer durch die jüdische Gemeindeverwaltung und Wohlfahrtspflege in Deutschland," (Berlin-Charlottenburg: 1932).

[677] See for instance the maps discussed in a later part of this chapter.

[678] The number of persons entitled to vote are based on the figures published in "Die Repräsentanten-Wahlen," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 6 (1926): 125-26.

[679] Ernst Feder, *Heute sprach ich mit ...: Tagebücher eines Berliner Publizisten 1926-1932* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1971), 57.

replaced by a standard one given out to the polling stations by the community board.[680]

Additionally, they manifested a fundamental change in political agitation and means of propaganda. Jacob Borut shows the increasing influence of mass politics in the realm of Jewish communal politics since the late nineteenth century. He explains these changes with a combination of external factors such as the changes in communal election laws under the young republic and internal factors such as the increase of the Jewish population of East European descent in post-war Germany. Far and foremost Borut argues it was the Zionists' growing activism in communal matters, which forced other political groups to stand up to the new forms of electoral campaigns.[681]

While the first elections after the war six years earlier were rather by-elections, the entire assembly was to be newly elected in 1926.

The question of female suffrage had been pending for some years. Following the end of the war and the revolutionary uprisings in 1918, the newly declared republic had given women the right to vote for the first time in German history, a right they were able to perform for the first time in the elections to the new national assembly in December 1918. Inspired by these political developments the Berlin section of the Jewish Women's Association (Jüdischer Frauenbund) organised a meeting in March 1919 to discuss the role of women in the administration of the Jewish community. Besides female activists, a number of male community officials and renowned Jewish figures attended the meeting. As representative of the community its legal advisor explained that the reason for not granting female suffrage despite the community board's intention lay in the fact that the by-laws of the community were still bound to the Prussian law concerning the Jews dating from 1847 giving the right to vote only to male community members. Considering the positions articulated by other male representatives during the meeting it is arguable that this was the real reason for the slow implementation of general suffrage and it can be doubted that community officials took the matter particularly serious. Even a liberal like Leo Baeck speaking of the "special task of women to reintroduce a new and at the same time ancient

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[680] The board of the community announced these changes in the pre-election number of the *Gemeindeblatt* Vorstand der Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin, "Die Wahlen zur Repräsentanten-Versammlung," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 5 (1926). A picture of the newly introduced ballot papers was published in the same issue of the *Gemeindeblatt*.
[681] Jacob Borut, "Das ungewöhnliche Bild jüdischer Wahlversammlungen: Zum Stilwandel innerjüdischer Wahlkämpfe in der Weimarer Republik," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 37 (1997).

spiritual culture to Judaism" saw women's role fare and foremost as family members. Judaism is a "family community" (Familiengemeinde) he argued. Rather than giving them more power within the community the community ought to be restructured, divided into sub-communities to emphasise the role of the family.

It was Ismar Elbogen who articulated an even more conservative standpoint by blaming "the Jewish women and mothers of today" for the "decline and fall of Judaism" for unlike their predecessor they fail to fulfil their duty as "guardians of religion."[682]

In contrast to this reserved attitude towards female suffrage the leader of the Zionists in the community assembly, the lawyer Alfred Klee declared that different from the other political parties the Zionist unreservedly supported women in their demand for the right of vote.[683] Klee's statement ignores though that the championship of women's rights among Zionist too was not undisputed.[684] Female suffrage alone though, Klee continued, would not be sufficient since such a right would be worthless without the abolition of the voting system based on the payment of communal taxes.[685]

Half a year after this meeting the Zionists finally succeeded in their quest for the abolition of the tax based voting system within the Jewish communities around Prussia. In October 1919, the Prussian Minister of the Interior issued a decree that extended the number of male community members entitled to vote. Not only did the decree remove the precondition of paying community taxes in order to take part in the community elections but it also revised the previous legal standpoint that demanded a three-year stay within the community prior to enfranchisement. The Zionist press celebrated this decreed as the achievement of the "universal suffrage" – ignoring the continuing exclusion of women – in all Jewish communities across Prussia.[686]

Until the communal elections of the following year, further changes were made to the electoral system, abandoning the old party list system favouring the liberals by a

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[682] Marion Kaplan has shown that middle-class German Jewish women indeed served as guardians of religion. Marion Kaplan has Marion A. Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class: women, family, and identity in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).
[683] The Jewish Peoples Party included their call for female suffrage in their 1920 manifesto. Programm der "Jüdischen Volkspartei" [Juni 1920], CZA, A 142/53/2, reprinted in Jehuda Reinharz, ed., *Dokumente zur Geschichte des deutschen Zionismus 1882-1933* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1981), 276-77.
[684] Niewyk, *The Jews in Weimar Germany*, 149.
[685] "Die Frau in der Gemeindeveraltung," *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* 83, no. 10/11 (1919).
[686] "Ein Erlaß des preußischen Ministers des Innern über das Wahlrecht in den jüdischen Gemeinden," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXIV, no. 73 (1919).

system of proportional representation.[687] These changes of electoral legislation led to the enfranchisement of some 24,000 additional voters[688], thus almost doubling the number of eligible voters in the 1920 elections to 40,000.[689] the figure for 1926 was more than three times as high[690] and still not all female voters were able to register due to the inaccuracy of local registry records.[691]

On the whole, Jewish community politics had undergone striking changes on other levels too during the first years of the Weimar Republic, changes that can be labelled as modernisation and professionalisation. The reasons for these changes are manifold. For one, the new democratic political system forced Jewish politics to adjust. Female suffrage and the introduction of standard polls are just two indicators of this. For another, there were internal factors that made changes in the way the community was administrated inevitable. The growing responsibilities of the community's administration such as welfare in the post war years and especially in the years of hyperinflation called for a professional organisational structure rather than notabilities' politics that had characterised communal affairs prior to World War I. Yet another factor for the changes was the rise of the Zionists as political factor in communal affairs.

While the antagonism between Liberals on the one hand and Conservatives and Orthodoxy on the other had characterized the pre-war community the emergence of Zionism as political factor in communal affairs had far greater effect in the arena of community politics. Already prior to war and revolution the foundation of the *New Jewish Community Association* (Neuer jüdischer Gemeindeverein) initiated by the Zionist activist Alfred Klee caused a political clash with the *Association for liberal Judaism* (Vereinigung für das liberale Judentum) founded shortly before.[692] However, it was not until the founding of the Jewish People's Party in 1919 that German Zionism began to challenge the political establishment of Jewish communities across Germany and in Berlin in particular.

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[687] Jehuda Reinharz, ed., *Dokumente zur Geschichte des deutschen Zionismus 1882-1933* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1981), 278, foodnote 1.

[688] "Das Ergebnis der Repräsentantenwahlen," *Der Israelit* 61, no. 25 (1920).

[689] "Das Ergebnis der Repräsentantenwahlen," *Der Israelit* 61, no. 25 (1920).

[690] "Die Repräsentanten-Wahlen," 125-26.

[691] "Statistisches zum Berliner Wahlergebnis," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 6, no. 22 (1926).

[692] For a circular to the members of the Jewish community Berlin asking for support of the new Jewish community association as well as its program cf. Jerusalem, CAHJP, D/Be4/37 and D/Be4/377 for an example of the association's activities.

Already in the 1920, Berlin community elections in which the new party took part for the first time it managed to gain four out of twelve mandates.[693] Back then, the Liberals had managed to secure their majority only at the price of a compromise with conservative and orthodox groups. Among the reasons for the decision of such groups ranging from the Liberal Association, to the ultra-orthodox Associations for the preservation of traditional Judaism (Verein zur Erhaltung des überlieferten Judentums) to merge their election lists despite a number of conflicting views on communal matters was to counter the rise of the electoral camp gathered under the auspice of the Jewish peoples party that includes inter alias the Misrachi and other East European Jewish groups. Moreover, orthodoxy and conservatives hoped to overcome liberal dominance themselves and to realize some of their main political goals in areas such as ritual and schooling questions.[694] It became apparent the nature of political agitation too had changed dramatically. Both sides now regarded the election campaign as a political struggle between two ideological blocks – the liberal-conservative versus the Zionist one – and the tone between the adversaries became rougher.[695]

Initially the Zionist Association for Germany had showed little interest in Zionist involvement in community politics and had eyed attempts of Zionist activists to get involved in the "Diasporic" activity of local community politics with suspicion.[696] By the mid-1920s – following initial successes of the People's party in community elections and a growing support for the aim of creating a "Jewish People's community" ("Jüdische Volksgemeinschaft") already within the Diaspora[697] – however this ideological line became increasingly subject to calls for revision. In face of the growing successes of the Jewish People's Party in local community elections and their growing autonomy of political activities from the central Zionist bodies the Prussian Board of the Zionist Association aimed to regain influence upon the party's activities prior to the community elections of 1926. On 3 May 1926, less than two

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[693] "Die Woche," *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* 84, no. 26 (1920).

[694] "Der Wahlkampf zur Repräsentanten-Versammlung," *Der Israelit* 61, no. 23 (1920).

[695] The deal between these groups was denounced by representatives of the Eastern European Jews and the Zionist as horse trade and a betrayal of orthodox ideals. "Der Kuhhandel," *Jüdische Presse: Centralorgan des Misrachi* 51, no. 23 (1920), "Moritz A. Loeb über sein Wahlbündnis mit den Liberalen," *Jüdische Presse: Centralorgan des Misrachi* 51, no. 25 (1920), "Der Wahlkampf zur Repräsentanten-Versammlung."

[696] Hagit Lavsky, *Before Catastrophe : the distinctive path of German Zionism* (Detroit; Jerusalem: Wayne State University Press; Magnes Press Leo Baeck Institute, 1996), 43 ff.

[697] For a contextualization of Jewish People's Party's activities and their political program cf. Michael Brenner, "The Jüdische Volkspartei - National-Jewish Communal Politics in Weimar Germany," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* XXXV (1990).

weeks prior to the Berlin community elections, the Board issued guidelines for the conduct of Zionist groups in community and regional elections. Not only did the board claim the responsibility to ascertain the consistency of Zionist community policy and to ensure its accordance with the program of the Zionist Association but it also demanded control of local election preparation by local Jewish People's Party section monitoring their list of candidates and possible collaboration with non-Zionist groups. According to the guidelines, the board had a right to veto the conduct of the local party.[698] This attempt by the Zionist nomenklatura to regain control over an increasingly autonomously acting Jewish People's Party clearly indicates the growing strength of the party within the Zionist movement, fuelling fears that it could undermine the "Work for Palestine" ("Palästinaarbeit") in favour of local German-Zionist politics.

Although the Zionist representatives in the community assembly had to be content to act as opposition, they did not lack confidence to achieve their aims of breaking the "hegemony of the Liberals" in the next elections scheduled for 1926.[699]

By that time, things had changed. The collaboration between Liberals and Conservatives, characterised by bitter disputes especially over questions of ritual, had broken apart.

Despite this, the Liberals seemed not worried about the upcoming elections. On the eve of the elections, the Liberals weekly newspaper stated that the election Sunday would bring yet another electoral victory for the party that had dominated Berlin Jewish communal politics and policy for the preceding decades. "Berlin Jews in their majority" wished the continuation of the liberal policy for their community the front-page article of the *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* announced.[700] Therefor, the paper mocked the idea of a Zionist victory in the upcoming elections as merely hypothetical.[701]

In face of this confidence, the results of the assembly elections came as a shock to the Liberals. Although they remained the largest party, the ten assembly seats won in the election meant that they now were short of two mandates of the overall majority.

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[698] "Richtlinien für die Führung der Gemeinde-Wahlen: beschlossen auf der Sitzung des Landesvorstandes am 3.5.1926," in *Jerusalem, CAHJP, D/Be4/482* (1926).

[699] "Wahlen in Berlin: 16 Mai: Brecht die Herrschaft der "Liberalen"!," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXXI, no. 37 (1926).

[700] "Auf zur Wahl! Für Liste 2!: In letzer Stunde," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 6, no. 20 (1926).

[701] The front-page article was accompanied by a graphic in form of a ballot paper for the elections.

Their former collaborate the Conservatives, represented mainly the Orthodox Jews had to face even heavier losses. They only managed to secure a single seat in the new assembly. The Religious Centre Party, emphasising the purely confessional character of the community managed to secure two seats while both the Association of employers of the Jewish community (Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Arbeitnehmer der Jüdischen Gemeinde) and the Poale Zion did not win any seats. The latter however managed to secure one deputy representative.[702]

Berlin Jewish territories

The significance of the election of 1926 for analysis of the trajectories of the Berlin Jewish community is twofold. On one level, the elections represent a watershed of Berlin Jewish communal politics in marking the end of the politics of notabilities (Honoratiorenpolitik) dominated by the Liberals originating in the late nineteenth century. Hereupon they also signify an important step in the implementation of democratisation of Jewish communal affairs. Simultaneously, though, the elections stood at the beginning of political antagonism that was to overshadow the following decades paralysing Jewish community politics well into the 1930s. On yet another level, they allow an insight into the fragmented nature of Berlin Jewry and its topographical and social segregation.

A look at the distribution of almost 100 polling stations set up for the community elections in administrative buildings of the community, Jewish schools, shops, restaurants, hotels and private flats around Berlin reveals the residential patterns of Berlin Jewry.

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[702] "Die Repräsentanten-Wahlen."
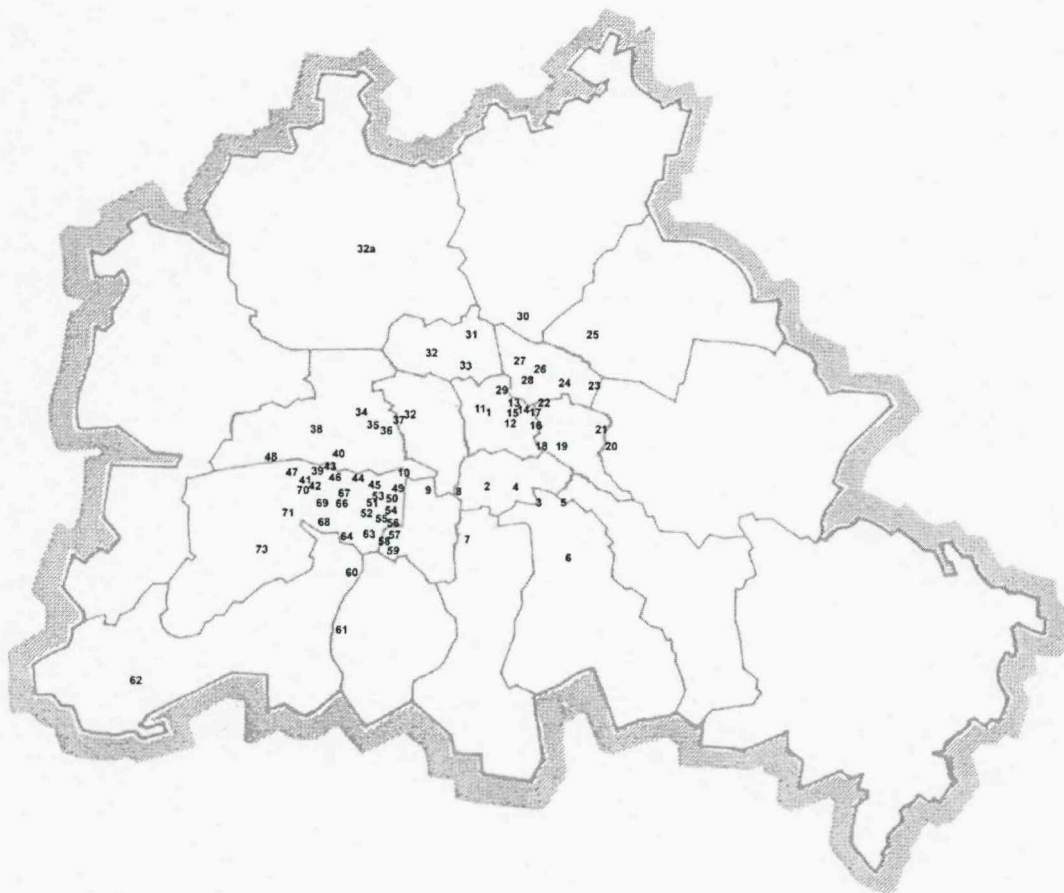
Fig. 4: Map of polling stations in the 1926 Jewish community elections based on the list published in May issue of the *Gemeindeblatt* 1926.

Besides the often emphasized east-west-division, the location of the polling stations reveals the main areas of Jewish settlement in Berlin. Broadly two major centres can be identified, one in the eastern sections of the old city centre where around 30 per cent of Berlin Jews lived and especially the western districts of Charlottenburg, Wilmersdorf, Schöneberg and Tiergarten, with particular concentration around the Bayerischer Platz in Schöneberg and the Hansa-Viertel at the northern edge of Tiergarten and in northern Wilmersdorf – where almost half of Berlin's Jewish population lived. These latter districts were often vernacularly called "Berlin W[est]" a term derived from the postal district code that became to signify more than just a geographical entity but a synonym for the upper middle class districts of the city and thus, as Friedrich Leyden put it in 1933 "inseparable with the neighbourhoods in which a high percentage of Jews live".[703]

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[703] Friedrich Leyden, *Gross-Berlin: Geographie der Weltstadt* (Breslau: F. Hirt, 1933), 103. He also gives an overview over the various disticts the term „Berlin W" was used for at various times. Esra

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It was this concentration of Berlin Jews in the prosperous western districts of the city that are interpreted as a reflection of the process of Berlin Jewish embourgeoisement.[704] The 1926 elections however show that the traditional Jewish quarters in the old centre most Berlin Jews had left around the turn of the century as they advanced socially, had become home to a growing number of Jewish immigrants form the East following World War I. The Weimar years witnessed a countermovement to the Jewish depopulation of the centre through a large influx of Eastern Jews creating the above mentioned east-west-division adding bipolarity to Berlin Jewry that was not merely based on residential patterns but also in terms of social status and geographical origin.[705] In his memoirs, Sammy Groneman provides a vivid description of the overlapping topographical aspects of Berlin Jews.

> Between the proletarian East of Berlin (Berlin O) and the aristocratic West (Berlin W) lies the Bellevue quarter (Berlin NW, in the Jewish vernacular called 'Nebbich-West').[706] Berlin O was the district of the Eastern Jews, who surprisingly inhabited streets that all had military names: Artilleriestraße (artillery street), Grenadierstraße (grenadier street), Dragonerstraße (dragoon street); while the western quarters of Charlottenburg, Wilmersdorf and especially the noble quarter of the Grunewald were home of the Jews that had made it. In Berlin the terms Eastern and Western Jews were rather temporal than geographical terms. It was very common that Jews that had recently immigrated from the East first settled in the above mentioned quarter. After a time, when they achieved prosperity, they started settling in the Bellevue quarter – home of the middle classes. While climbing up the social ladder further they moved to Charlottenburg and became Western Jews that often contemptuously looked down on the immigrated elements in the eastern quarters of the city"[707]

Bennathan uses the number of domestic servants in these neighbourhoods as an indicator for the elevated social position of the majority of dwellers. Cf. Esra Bennathan, "Die demographische und wirtschaftliche Struktur der Juden," in *Entscheidungsjahr 1932 : zur Judenfrage in der Endphase der Weimarer Republik,* ed. Werner Eugen-Emil Mosse and Arnold Paucker (Tübingen: Mohr, 1965), 91.

[704] Rürup, "Jewish History in Berlin - Berlin in Jewish History," 41.

[705] Alexander, "Die jüdische Bevölkerung Berlins in den ersten Jahrzehnten des 20. Jahrhunderts : Demographische und wirtschaftliche Entwicklung."

[706] Former postal districts: O stands for Osten (East), W for West and NW for Northwest. David Brenner has investigated the sterotype of the parvenu *Tiergartenjude* as a representative type of Berlin W. David Brenner, "Out of the Ghetto and into the Tiergarten: Redefining the Jewish Parvenu and His Origins in *Ost und West,*" *The German Quarterly* 66, no. 2, German-Jewish-Austrian Aspects (1993).

[707] Samuel Gronemann, *Erinnerungen; aus dem Nachlass herausgegeben von Joachim Schlör* (Berlin: Philo, 2002), 256. For a more recent topographical approach to Jewish social mobility in Berlin cf. Tobias Brinkmann, "Topographien der Migration - Jüdische Durchwanderung in Berlin nach 1918," in *Synchrone Welten : Zeitenräume jüdischer Geschichte,* ed. Dan Diner (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005).

Berlin Jewish Residential Patterns
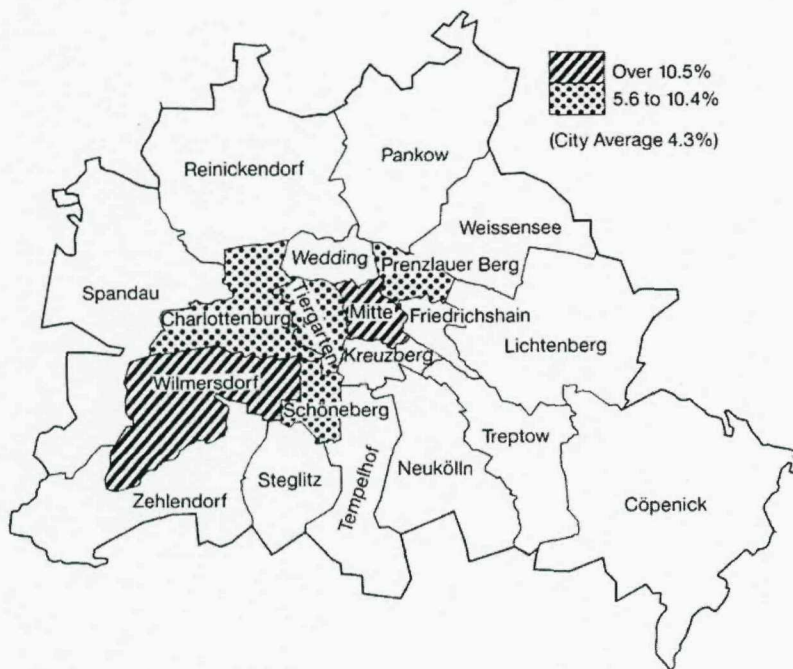
Fig. 5: Residential pattern of Berlin-Jewry according to the 1925 census.

Contemporaries recognised the impact of the east west divide on communal affairs. In the aftermath of the elections of 1926 commentators paid attention to the fact that the results in various parts of the city showed the different composition of the local Jewish population.

Most notably an article in the liberal press on 28 May 1926 emphasised the correlation between residential patterns of Berlin Jews and the election results.[708] It was in areas where the majority of the Ostjuden lived that the Jewish Peoples Party gained most of its votes.

The increase in votes for the Zionist Jewish Peoples Party in areas with a high percentage of Jews of East European origin is not surprising. Prior to the assembly elections at the end of April 1926 the Peoples Party had successfully negotiated with representatives of the Eastern European Jews leading to the withdrawal of the latter's own electoral list and a subsequent addition of two of their representatives on promising positions on the list of candidates of the Jewish Peoples Party.[709] Already

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[708] "Statistisches zum Berliner Wahlergebnis."

[709] Cf. Appendix to a decree issued by the Berlin Chief of Police with reference to the objections against the elections to the assembly of the Jewish Community in Berlin, dated 13 September 1926, GStA, I. HA Rep. 77 Minsterium des Innern, Tit. 416.

back in 1920 the success of the Zionists in the community elections was made possible by a strong support of the *Ostjuden*.[710]
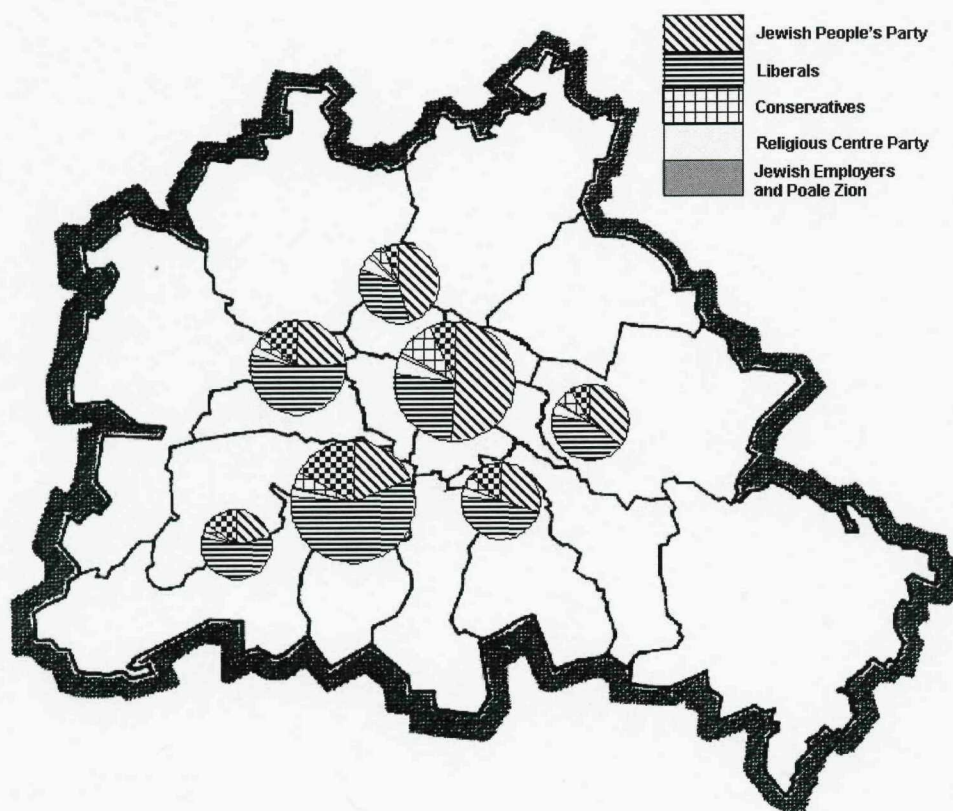
Fig. 6: Results of the 1926 community elections.

It was this cooperation between Zionists and *Ostjuden* that became a central issue in the liberal press following the electoral defeat. Repeatedly, commentators expressed the opinion that the voters of the "actual Ghetto districts" ("eigentlichen Ghettobezirke") had decided the elections for the Zionist.[711] In its first issue after the election the *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* described it as an "outrageous and disgraceful case" that not the "bearers of German-Jewish culture" but "an ignorant element foreign to the local conditions", i.e. the *Ostjuden*, decided the composition of the community assembly that now represented a "distorted picture of Berlin Jewry."[712] These comments indicate a change in the attitude towards *Ostjuden* by the middle-class sections German-Jewish community of Berlin. Moreover statements like that of

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[710] The orthodox press claimed that one third of the votes for the Zionists had come from Ostjuden. "Das Ergebnis der Repräsentantenwahlen."
[711] "Statistisches zum Berliner Wahlergebnis."
[712] H. S., "Nach den Berliner Wahlen," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 6, no. 21 (1926).

the "ignorant element" calls images of the Eastern European Jew as the embodiment of an authentic, primal Jewishness, long disappeared in Western Europe, as it was promoted by followers of the Jewish renaissance following World War I, into question.[713] Were these depictions the outcome of a changing attitude towards urban *Ostjuden*, were they just the product of political rhetoric, or do they show the continuation of stereotypes of native Berlin Jews against their foreign brethrens? Once the initial shock of losing the majority in the community elections wore off, the Liberals claimed that polling irregularities had invalidated the election. Not prepared to go into opposition the Liberals formally protested against the legitimacy of the elections to the *Berliner Polizeipräsident* (Berlin Chief of Police) who in accordance with the Prussian law concerning the Jewish Community of 1847 had to legitimize the election results formally.

The long list of complaints submitted listed irregularities ranged from ill-equipped polling stations in a flat, distribution of pre-filled ballot papers to unregistered voters – especially *Ostjuden*. The Jewish People's Party was accused of having disregarded the statutory period by withdrawing their original list of proposed candidates and replacing it with a modified one.[714] The following legal conflict paralysed communal affairs in Berlin for more than a year.[715] Besides the exchange of legal expertise and mutual accusations of electoral fraud towards the state officials,[716] the month long conflict was characterized by attempts not to relinquish control of community organs by the liberals and to gain that very control by Zionists and conservatives. Alexander Szanto recalled the aftermath of the elections in his memoirs:

> "[T]he Zionists and the different conservative groups joined forces immediately to form a united front, and they used their majority of one voice achieved in this manner

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[713] For the ambivalent attitude of Ostjuden by their western brethren cf. Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and strangers: the east European Jew in German and German Jewish consciousness, 1800-1923* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), Paul R. Mendes-Flohr, ""Fin de Sièle Orientalism, the Ostjuden and the Aesthetics of Jewish Self-Affirmation."" in *Ostjuden in central and western Europe*, ed. Jonathan Frankel (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1984). Cf. Also Noah Isenberg's introduction to Arnold Zweig and Hermann Struck, *The face of East European Jewry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

[714] Polizeipräsident von Berlin, "Einsprüche gegen die Wahl zur Repräsentanten-Versammlung der Jüdischen Gemeinde in Berlin," in *Berlin, GStA, I. HA Rep. 77 Minsterium des Innern, Tit. 416* (1926).

[715] Moritz A. Loeb, "[letter to the Berlin Chief of Berlin asking for final decision concerning 1926 community assembly elections, 01.07.1927]," in *Berlin, GStA I. HA Rep. 77 Minsterium des Innern, Tit. 416* (1927). In which Loeb warned that the lack of a fully functioning community administration was already doing great damage to the community.

[716] The matter soon involved various bodies of the Prussian administrative after the Chief of Police had asked the Prussian Cultural Secretary (Kultusminister) for administrative assistance who in turn consulted the Prussian Minister of the Interior concerning the subject matter "[Letter by Justizrat Sonnenfeld to the Prussian minister of the interior, 21 October 1926] ", in *Berlin, GStA, I. HA Rep. 77 Minsterium des Innern, Tit. 416* (1926).

to establish their own regime. Numerous new appointments to leading positions in the community administration were undertaken ...”[717]

Despite the pending investigations into the legitimacy of the elections, the non-Liberal representatives in the community assembly indeed tried to get matters in their hands as soon as possible. In July 1926, a meeting of the community assembly was called at very short notice making it impossible for a number of representatives to attend. Protest by non-Zionist representatives concerning the agenda of the meeting were ignored leading them leaving the meeting under protest. With only twelve remaining representatives, the assembly then passed a declaration concerning the protests against the election results downplaying their impact and arguing that a repeating of the elections would not find the approval of the majority of the community members.[718]

It took the state officials until February of the following year to issue a preliminary report concerning the legitimacy of the elections. The report of the Chief of the Berlin Police found that a number of "considerable irregularities" had indeed occurred emphasising that the elections did not "meet the dignity of a public cooperation". However, the report did not suggest a repeat election but advised the community to "ensure greater accuracy in the preparation and conduct of future elections".[719] According to the Liberals, this statement was hinting at the upcoming decision of the officials to call for a repeat election. Considering the enormous cost and efforts such a decision would mean, they generously offered a compromise to the other parties in an open letter published in the Liberal weekly that read:

> "The liberal party which always put the welfare of the community before party interests can no longer accept the current circumstances that hinder the community from fulfilling its religious duties. In order to resolve this problem and in the interest of pacification of our Jewish life the Liberals are willing to make a sacrifice."[720]

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[717] Szanto, "Im Dienste der Gemeinde 1923-1939." The English translation is taken from Szanto, "[In the Service of the Community. Manuscript, dated Manchester, 1968]," 342-43.

[718] "Sitzung vom 15. Juni 1926," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 16, no. 8 (1926). The declaration was forwarded to the Prussian minister of the interior in order to counter the liberal protest against the elections. Cf. Moritz A. Loeb, "[Schreiben des Vorsitzenden der Repräsentanten-Versammlung Moritz A. Loeb vom 15. Juli 1926 an das Preussische Ministerium des Innern mit angefügter Resolution der Repräsentatenversammlung betreffend die Unregelmäßigkeiten bei der Wahl]," in *Berlin, GStA, I. HA Rep. 77, Tit. 416, Nr. 55BA3, Beiakte III* (1926).

[719] Preußisches Ministerium des Innern, "[Abschrift eines Schreibens des Ministerium des Innern and den Berliner Polizeipräsidenten betreffend den Bericht vom 13. September 1926 über die Wahl der Repräsentantenversammlung der Jüdischen Gemeinde in Berlin, 6. Januar 1927]," in *Berlin, GStA I. HA Rep. 77 Minsterium des Innern, Tit. 416* (1927). Parts of the report were reprinted in the Jewish press. "Die Berliner Wahlverstöße: die Anweisung des Polizeipräsidenten an den Gemeindevorstand," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 7, no. 6 (1927).

[720] "Die Berliner Wahlverstöße: Der Weg zur Verständigung," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 7, no. 6 (1927).

In return for a liberal majority on the executive board of the community and an earlier re-election of the community assembly in 1929[721], the proposal further read, the Liberals would accept the suspect result of the 1926 elections.[722] The Zionists immediately turned down the Liberal proposal.[723] It took another four months until the Chief of the Berlin Police finally rejected the protests against the legitimacy of the elections allowing the community to return to business as usual.[724] While the dispute over the election result was thus resolved, the internal power struggle continued. Despite attempts to come to terms with the new hung situation of the assembly the following years were characterised by repeated clashes between Liberals and Zionists and mutual polemics in the Jewish press.[725]

Other contemporary saw the political conflict of Zionists and Liberals rather as fruitful as destructive for the Berlin Jewish community. In his memoirs, Szanto stated that the quarrel between Zionists and Liberals following the 1926 elections not only "led to an intensification of the debates in the assembly" making them much more exciting but also to the Jewish public taking "a more lively part in the internal Jewish quarrels than before" with the Jewish press sending their reporters to the meetings of the assembly (which previously had been the case only sporadically) "giving community politics more detailed accounts in their columns."[726]

Following this observation, the alleged crisis of the community caused by the deepening antagonism between the political camps resulted in a revitalization of Jewish Berlin.

Where is the Jewish Berlin? – Urban Jewish spatial strategies

Berlin as a city spreading over an enormous terrain, characterised by fragmentation and multiple centres posed a particular challenge of location. How should one find Jewish Berlin in the vast metropolis many contemporaries queried?

In his book *Reading Berlin 1900,* Peter Fritzsche investigates the concept of "word city". According to Fritzsche, who uses daily newspapers published and read in Berlin

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[721] To coincide with the re-election of the Prussian assembly of Jewish communities in which the liberals had gained the overall majority in 1925 outnumbering their Zionist adversaries by far.

[722] "Die Berliner Wahlverstöße: Der Weg zur Verständigung."

[723] "Das Schicksal der Wahlproteste," *Jüdische Rundschau* XXXII, no. 13 (1927).

[724] Polizeipräsident von Berlin, "[Bericht and den Minister des Innern vom 15. Juli 1927]," in *Berlin, GStA I. HA Rep. 77 Minsterium des Innern, Tit. 416* (1927).

[725] Cf. For example Heinz Levy, "Streiflichter zur Berliner Repräsentanten-Versammlung," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 9, no. 8 (1929).

[726] Szanto, "Im Dienste der Gemeinde 1923-1939." The English translation is taken from Szanto, "[In the Service of the Community. Manuscript, dated Manchester, 1968]," 342-43.

during the years bracketing the turn of the century as his central sources, argues, "the city as place and the city as text defined each other in mutually constitutive ways." Going even a step further he argues that the activities of "reading and writing [...] in turn, constructed a second-hand metropolis which gave a narrative to the concrete one."[727] Debates on the legibility of urban spaces have long dominated parts influenced scholarship in various disciplines and given rise to the concept of the city as text or as discourse.[728] Berlin Jews employed city texts as a means to structure the urban environment, to provide guidance through the increasingly enigmatic asphalt jungle and to map the scattered Jewish infrastructure in various part of the German capital city.

The year 1926 saw the appearance of a new Berlin Jewish publication. Until 1932, the *Jüdisches Jahrbuch für Groß-Berlin* (*Jewish Yearbook for Greater Berlin*) assembled and published a cross-section of Jewish life in Berlin, providing its readers with articles on Berlin Jewish history, statistics, communal organisation, reports from different associations and clubs as well as portraits of Jewish celebrities, review of the year's events, and classified directories.

In the introduction to the first volume of the *Yearbook* Eugen Caspary, head of the welfare commission of the Jewish community and director of the Central Welfare Bureau for German Jews, remarked that Berlin was "a city without centre and character, without a face and clarity." As a city that was home to a quarter of a million Jews it struck Caspary, that one was unable to identify any part of the city as its Jewish centre. Asking "But, where is the Jewish Berlin?"

The question was rather rhetorical for Caspary was convinced that the Jewish Berlin already existed despite its alleged invisibility. According to him, it was to be found in the numerous Berlin-Jewish associations, clubs, and institutions that promoted "cultural and social tasks of the day in a specific Jewish way that is suitable for Berlin".

On behalf of the editors of the *Yearbook* Caspary formulated the aim of the new publication as to "bring together in literary form the spatially scattered Jewish life in

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[727] Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900*, 1.
[728] Cf. Manfred Smuda, ed., *Die Großstadt als "Text"* (München: Fink, 1992), David M. Henkin, *City reading : written words and public spaces in antebellum New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

the metropolis Berlin in all its diversity unifying it in a common context". Moreover, he called the readers to contribute to this enormous task.[729]

Caspary's remarks are the most outspoken indication that Jewish circular publications were aiming for overcoming the obstacles modern city life in Berlin meant for its Jewish dwellers by bringing them together as readers and potential contributors to these publications. Thereby, Caspary and his co-editors were optimistic that a common urban Jewish identity could be formed and Jewish spaces within the metropolis could be identified and made visible.

The attempt of the yearbook editors to assemble the Jewish Berlin between two book covers reverberated in a number of publications that appeared in the German capital throughout the following decade. In one way or another, all these publications can be seen as endeavours to locate, map, assemble and visualise Jewish Berlin in its fragmentation and diversity. Different from similar spatial practices such as the Booth survey in late nineteenth century London these publications were compiled by Jews with the intention to serve an urban Jewish readership.

The attempt was not exclusive to Berlin Jewish publications. In 1928, the Central Welfare Bureau for German Jews published a *Guide through the Jewish communal administration and welfare organisation in Germany*. "This book guides through the Jewish welfare system in Germany," wrote Leo Baeck in his preface, "which for many is still an unknown country and an undiscovered land."[730]

Baeck's spatial terminology is striking stressing the intention that the long and, as he himself admitted, apparently boring list of institutions, was to be more than a directory but a real guide giving directions to Jews in need.

Even more pronounced were the similarities with Caspary's project in a publication that left the press in the following year. In 1929, the first *Jewish Directory for Greater Berlin* (Jüdisches Adressbuch für Groß-Berlin) was issued. The introduction to the directory reads very similar to Caspary's remarks, stating that despite the fact that Berlin had become a centre of German Jewry, both in figures and in "spiritual potential" (geistige Potenz), the metropolitan Jews were lacking unity. The Directory, the editors continued, was intended to create "a spiritual centre" from which such unity could be achieved. "Scattered in the ocean of the world city almost a third of

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[729] Eugen Caspary, "Zum Geleit," in *Jüdisches Jahrbuch für Groß-Berlin auf das Jahr 1926*, ed. Jacob Jacobson, Jacob Segall, and Eugen Caspary (Berlin-Grunewald: Scherbel & Co. Verlag, 1926).
[730] Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der Deutschen Juden, ed., *Führer durch die jüdische Wohlfahrtspflege in Deutschland* ([Berlin-]Charlottenburg: Verlag Dr. Fritz Scherbel, 1928).

German Jewry dwells." Due to enormous migration from the former eastern provinces after the war, "Berlin became the centre of German Jewry."

> "More than in their number the importance of Berlin Jewry lies in its spiritual power. However, Berlin Jewry lacks a unifying force. Its various sections are only loosely related. What is deficient is a centre that can serve as orientation for the different parts of the community."[731]

Besides entries of Jewish families and individuals living in Berlin, the Directory contained a long section dealing with different Jewish institutions in the German capital, accompanied by general information concerning their activities.

Thus, similar to the *Jewish Yearbook for Greater Berlin*, the directory sought to bring together Jewish Berlin between two book covers, providing Jewish Berliners with a practical tool to enable them to interact with each other.

The early 1930s saw the appearance of further publications in the format of city-guidebooks or directories.[732]

As late as January 1937, the Berliner Section of the Central Union of German Citizens of Jewish faith (Centralverein) issued a *Guide through Berlin* (Wegweiser durch Berlin) in the form of a city map. The Guide was distributed freely to all members of the Central Union in Berlin.

Different from the previous mentioned examples the *Central Union's Guide through Berlin* was not aiming for the creation of Jewish spaces in Berlin but rather a statement that despite the precarious political situation, Jewish life in the German capital continued. I would argue, while the publication of the pre- and inter-war years I referred to were in part attempts to unveil or even construct twentieth century Jewish Berlin, the latter example is one of defending Jewish urban territories.

One indication for this is that, besides the icon-like illustrations of various Jewish edifices in Berlin—from the cemetery at Weißensee in the North East to the sport ground of the Jewish community in Grunewald—the map was accompanied with a chronology of the history of the Jews in Berlin. Such a chronology did not have any practical significance for the usage of the map but was rather a statement that Jews had lived in Berlin since medieval times and that they contributed to the city's development by creating a manifold Jewish network visible within the urban landscape. It is this diversity and visibility the map represents. This stress of historical

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[731] *Jüdisches Adressbuch für Gross-Berlin: Ausgabe 1929/30*, (Berlin: Goedega Verlags-Gesellschaft, 1929).
[732] [Heinz Friedländer], *Jüdischer Führer durch Berlin*.

urban presence and Jewish contributions to the city's development can be seen as a claim by Jewish Berliners of having become an integral community of urban society. The second textual item on the map reveals how problematic upholding claim of Jewish integration within Berlin's history and landscape had become by 1937.

The keys to the map listing central Jewish institutions located in Berlin such as the Jüdische Kulturbund (Jewish Cultural Association), or the Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland (Reich Association of the Jews in Germany), reveals the ambivalence between staying and leaving in the city. It is striking that among the six listed institutions there are two that are associated with Emigration – the Relief Organization of German Jews and the Palestine Office.

Reading the review of the map by Heinz Berggrün that appeared in the newspaper of the Centralverein (Central Union) the CV-Zeitung on 28 January 1937, one is tempted to regard this ambivalence as a mere coincident. Although Berggrün indicates the increasing need for inner Jewish support the enthusiasm with which he describes the map brushes aside the fact that Berlin Jews had lived under the Nazi's regime for almost five years, becoming more and more subject to discrimination. Stressing the practical purposes of the map, Berggrün emphasised, that in a time when Jews had to seek more support from different administrative sections of the community than before, a guide was needed to assist them in finding their way around the different offices. "Surely it won't take long," Berggrün concluded, "until the C.-V. Guide through Berlin will be hang up in all Jewish public building, and become an indispensable auxiliary tool to all those, who try to find their way through Jewish Berlin. In addition, everybody will agree, that the C.-V. Guide 'guided them the right way.'" These concluding remarks are ambiguous indicating that in such difficult times, guidance both on a practical level, i.e. through the landscape of the city, and on a spiritual one are needed.

Half a year after the publication of the Central Union's Guide, the Board of the Jewish community issued yet another Guide through the Jewish community of Berlin. Both publications show numerous commonalities.[733] Besides itemizing Jewish institutions such as the library in the Oranienburger Strasse, Mikvot, or the theatre of the Cultural Association of German Jews (Kulturbund), this guide came with numerous

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[733] [Aufbringungswerk der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin], Wegweiser durch die Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin: mit vielen Abbildungen und einem farbigen Plan ([Berlin]: [Vorstand der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin], 1937).

illustrations and was accompanied by yet another coloured map listing synagogues, administrative offices, welfare and educational Berlin-Jewish institutions.

These publications served a dual purpose: to locate Jewish Berlin in its various incarnations and thereby create a sense of community or to provide a virtual basis upon which a common Berlin-Jewish culture of community could be established. In their quest for community, they superseded the narrow notion of *Gemeinde* as religious community in more or less direct ways. Some of these publications such as the Jewish Directory can even be interpreted as a response to the perceived failure of the *Gemeinde* to create the necessary "spiritual centre". Among the editors of the Jewish urban aid books were, however, many active members of the Gemeinde. None the less, most of the earlier publications were compiled outside the official community framework and it took quite a while until the *Gemeinde* realized the need for such publications by Berlin Jews. By the time the first community guide through Berlin appeared, the circumstances for the "Jewish Berlin" Caspary was searching for had changed dramatically.

Conclusion

The process of urbanisation and modernisation Berlin underwent during the nineteenth century created a vibrant, fluctuating environment for the re-conceptualisation of Jewish urban cultures. The rapidity of this process resulted in the city becoming a prism for the ambivalence of modernity a place where the promises and the threats of urbanity left more visible traces than anywhere else. It is therefore not surprising that Berlin became one of the foremost targets of antagonistic perceptions of the modern city and its effects on Jews and Judaism clashed.

On a practical level, the city placed growing challenges to the Jewish community. These challenges of creating and sustaining a communal structure suitable for the modern metropolis were further complicated by the socio-political turmoil of the post-war years on the one hand, and the growing internal fragmentation within the Berlin Jewish *Gemeinde* on the other. To meet these challenges Berlin Jews employed various means to come to terms with modern city. Besides the extension of the Jewish community network throughout the city new forms such as mapping and the publication of Jewish city texts were employed.

In summary, the Berlin Jewish experience stands paradigmatic for a central aspect of modern Jewish urbanity. The development of Jewish Berlin during the first half of the twentieth century represents the paradoxical simultaneity of an increasingly diversifying and fragmenting community and the common quest to create, to sustain and to defend Jewish spaces and places amidst the modern metropolis.

Exile and Refuge

City of Light and City of Refuge

> "And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying: 'Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: When ye pass over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge [עָרִים, עָרֵי מִקְלָט] ....

(Numbers 35: 9-11)

The idea of the city of refuge taken from the Hebrew Bible and extensively discussed by the Talmudic authorities provides the background for the concept of the city as refuge and subsequently the city of refugees that are at the heart of the following chapter. It can be even argued that it was the ideas of the city as refuge for the cities of refugees gained particular momentum during the twentieth century that became the century of refugees. The Franco-Jewish philosopher Emanuel Lévinas was among those who reflect on the adaptability of the biblical idea of the city of refuge and the modern experience in a series of Talmudic lectures.[734] He argues, "all our liberal cities are organized as cities of refuge." Furthermore, he introduces the dialectic of refuge and exile to the context of cities. This simultaneity of refuge and exile, of protection and punishment is also found in the modern world where cities provide sanctuary from radical violence while at the same time they perpetuate unwitting oppression – economic, social, and political.[735]

Despite such a political and actual approach to the notion of city of refuge Lévinas moves away from the actual place of refuge by linking the cites of refuge to the heavenly Jerusalem, thus transcending them into a messianic era and thereby de-territorialises them. It was Jacques Derrida who criticised this "fetishizing of the holy city" and the Zionist underpinning of Lévinas' lecture in an attempt to re-actualise the concept of the city of refuge.[736]

What makes Lévinas' reflections of the city of refuge important for the context at issue is that he underscores the complex and ambiguous status of refugees and the cities of refuge as both hospitable and inhospitable, as a place reminding the refugees that they are in exile. "A city of refuge is a place of forgiveness and of punishment at the same time," as Mireille Rosello argues in his interpretation of

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[734] Emmanuel Lévinas, *L'au-delà du verset : lectures et discours talmudiques* (Paris: Editions du Minuit, 1982).

[735] Cf. the in-depth discussion in Oona Eisenstadt, "The Problem of the Promise: Derrida on Levinas on the Cities of Refuge," *Cross Currents* 52, no. 4 (2003): 476.

[736] Jacques Derrida, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999), 77, 117.

Lévinas' text.[737] Lévinas' and Derrida's reflections on the city of refuge are but one very particular example of the reverberations of the idea of *ir miklat* in the modern Jewish experience.

Despite vocal urbanophobia of some Jewish commentators, cities were repeatedly referred to as places offering security from anti-Semitism, with its strongholds on the flat land.[738] In 1928, the *CV-Zeitung*, for instance, announced that *völkisch* ideology, highly successful in rural areas, would not be able to gain ground in the cities especially the big cities.[739]

A text published by a Jewish exile from Berlin in 1938 emphasises the endurance of such views. In his text, entitled *Die Sache der Juden* (The Jewish Cause) Goldstein – conscious of the threat faced by European Jews - expounds an unusual project. Arguing that a country for Jewish refugees cannot be made instantaneously but has to grow he comes up with an unusual suggestion.

> "A city, on the other hand, can be made ... Since it takes too long to settle Jews, hundreds of thousands, indeed millions of Jews, on to land, build them a city instead; let them build a city for the time being, as a temporary solution. There is no room anywhere in the world for a large-scale settlement of Jews on the soil. ... But even if there is no room for a land of the Jews, there may be room for a city of the Jews. Even for a great, cosmopolitan, gigantic city, a city of millions."[740]

Goldstein's envisioned city for the millions of fleeing European Jews is a reverberation of the ancient idea of the city as refuge.

Preceding Goldstein's dream of a major city of refuge a number of actual cities served as refuge for Jews fleeing persecution and destitution. During the interwar years and even more in the first half of the 1930s, Paris achieved a special position as a capital of refugees. The experience of urban refugees is one of fragmentation, detachment and transition. The new urban environment is the place where the loss of one's home and the subsequent uprootness, and lack of social networks come to the fore and are realised. For the refugees the new city appears as a conglomerate of fragments, a mixture of unfamiliar places, a space where they do not yet belong and where they are challenged to find their place. It is through distinct places, the train station as point of arrival, the hotel-room as first accommodation that the refugee

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[737] Mireille Rosello, *Postcolonial hospitality : the immigrant as guest* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001), 155.
[738] Rudolf S. Mosse, "Aufs Land!," *C.V.-Zeitung* VI, no. 7 (1927).
[739] "Völkische Propaganda auf dem Lande," *C.V.-Zeitung* VII, no. 14 (1928).
[740] Joachim Schlör has rediscovered and analysed Goldstein's manuscript. Schlör, *Das Ich der Stadt.* The English translation follows Joachim Schlör, "How urban culture was saved in the Levant," in *Century city : art and culture in the modern metropolis*, ed. Iwona Blazwick (London: Tate Publishing, 2001), 254.

initially experiences the new urban environment. The attempt to come to terms with the conditions of exile play out in particular urban spaces. Cafés became places where they attempted to resume previous contacts or networks, where they sought to find help and advice from fellow refugees in finding their way through the urban jungle. Setting up libraries with books of one's own language is an attempt to create in-between spaces referring back to the old home while creating a familiar space in the new urban environment.

Different from interpretations describing the Jewish refugees' experience as "placeless topographies"[741] this chapter claims that their experience is grounded in the urban space, arguing that the experience of urban exile is deeply shaped by a set of fragmented and fluctuation places. Thus, continuing the cultural-topographical approach employed above, this chapter investigates the urban experience of Jewish refugees in a spatial perspective. By bringing together the experience of two different groups of Jewish refugees coming to Paris throughout the decades prior to the outbreak of World War II and the German occupation of the French capital in 1940, this chapter investigates different aspects of what can be called topographies of exile. Despite significant structural differences Eastern European Jews, immigrants during the interwar years and German Refugees fleeing Nazi Germany after 1933 faced similar obstacles upon arriving in Paris and employed similar means to counter them. Hence, they both were confronted with the question of how to find their place within the new urban environment and how to cope with the loss of *Heimat*.[742]

Among the cities of refuge, Paris with its duality as a mythological place and an actual urban centre occupies a special position. Taking the mythification of Paris as a city of liberation and refuge as a point of departure this following chapter follows the immigrants and refugees on their path through the French capital, from their arrival in the city of light, their settling in, to their forced escape in face of the German occupation. Following this trajectory the chapter engages their attempts of finding their places in the city of refuge, their activities to make it a new home and their considerations concerning the future as individuals and as Jews in the city.

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[741] Bernhard Greiner, ed., *Placeless topographies : Jewish perspectives on the literature of exile* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 2003).
[742] For some exelent scholarship on the notion of Heimat and strategies to cope with its "loss" cf. Krista O'Donnell, Nancy Ruth Reagin, and Renate Bridenthal, eds., *The Heimat abroad : the boundaries of Germanness* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).

Setting the scene

While the period at issue saw a number of major contribution to the history of French Jewry in general and the Paris community in particular[743] the decades following World War II witnessed a marginalisation of French Jewish historiography.[744] It was not until the 1970s, after decades of being widely ignored and treated as if it were "unworthy of serious investigation", that French Jewish history attracted a growing scholarly interest – especially by North-American historians.[745] In recent years, French Jewish history has established itself as a vibrant academic field within the French university system.[746]

Rather like in the case of Germany, the history of French Jewry is characterised by its multiple centres among which Paris is but one. Especially the histories of the Sephardic population of Bordeaux and the Ashkenazic communities of Alsace and Lorraine have been studied extensively.[747] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jews at the French periphery greatly outnumbered the Paris community.

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[743] Especially the two-volume edition edited and published by the YIVO shortly after its re-establishment in New York is still a valuable source of information of French and Paris Jewish history E. Tcherikover, ed., *Yidn in Frankraikh: shtudyes un materialn - The Jews in France: Studies and Materials*, 2 vols. (New York: Yisisher Visnshaftlekher Institut - YIVO, 1942). Of equal importance are the works by Szajkowski, Zosa (born as Szajko or Yehoshua Frydman in Poland in 1911 and lived and work in Paris between 1927 and 1941 before emigrating to the US). Among his earliest works on French Jewish history is Zosa Szajkowski, *Etjudn tzu der gesichte fun aingewandertn jidisn jisew in Frankraich* (Paris: Imp. S.N.I.E., [1936]).

[744] Among the few works of this period are Charlotte Roland, *Du ghetto à l'Occident: deux générations yiddiches en France* ([Paris]: Éditions de Minuit, 1962). Ida Benguigui, "L'Immigration juive à Paris entre les deux guerres (1918-1939)" (thesis for Diplome d'études supérieurs, Paris, Sorbonne, 1965). The latter was indeed a pioneering work in that it predestined future studies of Jewish migration to France. Unfortunately the thesis was never published.

[745] David Weinberg, "French Jewish History," *Modern Judaism* 10, no. 3 (1990): 381. Among the pioneering studies of modern French Jewish history are Michael Robert Marrus, *The politics of assimilation: a study of the French Jewish community at the time of the Dreyfus Affair* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), Phyllis Cohen Albert, *The Modernization of French Jewry: Consistory and Community in the Nineteenth Century* ([Waltham, Mass.]; Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press ; distributed by University Press of New England, 1977), Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, Paula Hyman, *From Dreyfus to Vichy: the remaking of French Jewry, 1906-1939* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), Simon Schwarzfuchs, *Du juif à l'israélite : histoire d'une mutation ; (1770 - 1870)* ([Paris]: Fayard, 1989), Michael Graetz, *The Jews in nineteenth-century France: from the French Revolution to the Alliance Israélite Universelle* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996). Michael Graetz' study was first published in Hebrew in 1982.

[746] Didier Epelbaum, *Les enfants de papier: les juifs de Pologne immigrés en France jusqu'en 1940: l'accueil, l'intégration, les combats* (Paris: Grasset, 2002), François Lustman, *De l'émancipation à l'antisémitisme : histoire de la communauté juive de Paris 1789-1880* (Paris: Champion, 2006).

[747] On the Jewish history in Alsace and Lorraine cf. Paula Hyman, *The emancipation of the Jews of Alsace : acculturation and tradition in the nineteenth century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), Vicki Caron, *Between France and Germany : the Jews of Alsace-Lorraine, 1871-1918* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988). cf. On Jews in Bordeaux cf. Frances Malino, *The Sephardic Jews of Bordeaux : assimilation and emancipation in Revolutionary and Napoleonic France* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1978), Théophile Malvezin, *Histoire des Juifs à Bordeaux* (Bordeaux: Charles Lefebvre, 1875), Gérard Nahon, *Juifs et judaisme à Bordeaux* ([Bordeaux]: Mollat, 2003), Gérard Nahon, *Métropoles et périphéries sefarades d'occident : Kairouan, Amsterdam, Bayonne, Bordeaux, Jérusalem* (Paris: Cerf, 1993).

Therefore, the rapid growth of the capital's Jewish community in the following decades making it the uncontested centre of French Jewry by the end of century is even more remarkable. By the 1930s Paris' Jewish population represented the vast majority of French Jews it also boasted the third largest in the world, behind New York and Warsaw.[748] In the following year, the Paris community made up for some sixty-seven per cent of all Jews in France.[749]

Jewish migration from Eastern and Central Europe fostering the exponential growth of the French Jewish community was a quite late phenomenon when compared to Britain or the United States. Moreover, it took place on a lower scale than in the Anglo-Saxon world. Compared to more than one million of Jewish immigrants arriving in the United States and some 120,000 in Great Britain between 1881 and the eve of the Great War, France only attracted some 30,000 in the same period.[750] One of the reasons for the late advent of Jewish immigration to France might have been the increasing restrictions immigrants were facing in Great Britain following the passing of the Aliens Act of 1905 making the country less attractive as a transit place on the journey to America. The fact that at the same time immigrant figures to the British Isles plunged, France witnessed an increasing influx of immigrants seems to support such an interpretation. Another reason for the growing number of Jews coming to France was the changing perception of the country and its capital among Eastern European Jews. At the beginning of the twentieth century, France gradually became a "golden land" for Jewish immigrants almost equalling the status of the *goldeneh medina* America had occupied in the previous century. Between 1906 and 1939, some 175,000 to 200,000 Eastern European Jews arrived and settled in France, especially in her capital.[751] In the wake of this development, the Paris community experienced a rapid growth. By the mid 1930s, Eastern European Jews in Paris numbered 90,000 of the 150,000 Parisian Jews.[752]

Due to immigration, Franco-Jewry witnessed a major transformation during the twentieth century reaching its peak in the interwar years. Summing up the situation

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[748] Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, viii.

[749] Nancy L. Green, "Jewish Migration to France in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: community or communities?," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 23 (1989): 135.

[750] Hyman, *From Dreyfus to Vichy*, 64.

[751] Ibid., 68.

[752] Nancy L. Green, "Les juifs d'Europe orientale et centrale," in *Toute la France : histoire de l'immigration en France au xxe siècle*, ed. Laurent Gervereau, Pierre Milza, and Emile Témime (Paris: Somogy, 1998), 59. Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, 4. According to Michel Roblin some 80,000 "Juifs d'Europe slave" lived in Paris by 1939. Michel Roblin, *Les Juifs de Paris; démographie, économie, culture* (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1952), 89.

for Eastern European Jewish immigrants in France on the eve of World War I, David Weinberg remarks that it seems "like a moment frozen in time – an age of innocence and hopefulness where, for all its frustration and travails, it was still possible to dream of becoming "happy as God in France."[753] This pre-war "golden age of symbiosis"[754] however rapidly gave way to a "time of uncertainties".[755] Partly the result of the exponential growth of the French Jewish community through the influx from Eastern Europe this transformation was also fostered by general political developments such as the official separation of State and Church in France in 1905. The *union sacrée* announced during the war years cover the growing fragmentation of Franco-Jewry only temporarily.[756] Hence, the political trajectory of post-war France shook the confidence of Franco-Jewry to its core, leaving large parts of the community in a stage of growing uncertainties and the felt need to manifest its allegiance and loyalty to the French nation aggressively.

The central feature of causing this upheaval was the renewed rise of French anti-Semitism during the 1930s.[757] In part, the global economic crisis following the Black Friday in 1929 reached France in 1931 can be held responsible for this phenomenon.[758] More prominent in the popular imagination than the deteriorating socio-economic situation spectacular affaires fuelled anti-Semitic sentiments in parts of the French society. The assassination of the Ukrainian leader Symon Petlura in 1926 by the Bessarabian-born Jewish anarchist Sholom Schwartzbard, who held Petlura responsible for a pogrom in 1919 in which he had lost his family and in particular the following sensational murder trial, was one of these events.[759] More far-reaching than the Schwartzbard trial was the Stavisky Affair. Coinciding with the

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[753] David Weinberg, "'Heureux comme Dieu en France': East European Jewish Immigrants in Paris 1881-1914," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 1 (1984): 48.

[754] Hyman, *From Dreyfus to Vichy*, Chapter 2.

[755] In his first novel with the same title Arnold Mandel, who was born in Strasbourg in 1913 into an Eastern European Jewish family and who came to Paris after attending the Rabbinical seminary in Frankfurt, describes the difficult situation of Jewish refugees coming to France in the 1930s. Arnold Mandel, *Les Temps incertains : roman* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1950).

[756] Diane Afoumado, "Les relations entre "Israélites français" et Juifs immigrés durant les années trente," *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah, Paris, N.S.* 166 (1999): 123.

[757] Paul J. Kingston, *Anti-Semitism in France during the 1930s : organisations, personalities, and propaganda* (Hull, England: University Of Hull Press, 1983).

[758] Gordon Wright, *France in modern times : from the Enlightenment to the present* (New York: Norton, 1981), Chapter 30: Depression Politics, 1931-36.

[759] Saul S. Friedman, *Pogromchik: the assassination of Simon Petlura* (New York: Hart Pub. Co., 1976), Boris Czerny, "Paroles et silences: L'affaire Schwartzbard et la presse juive parisienne (1926-1927)," *Archives Juives* 34, no. 2 (2002), Mariusz Wołos, "Proces Samuela Schwartzbarda w październiku 1927 r. (w świetle prasy francuskiej) [The trial of Samuel Schwarzbard in October 1927 (in the light of the French press)]," *Dzieje Najnowsze* 4 (2006). For biographical information of Schwartzbard cf. "[Biographies] Salomon Schwartzbard, anarchiste," *Archives Juives* 33, no. 2 (2000).

attempted fascist coup d'état on 6 February 1934 it grew into a major political scandal that lead to the successive resignation of the governments under Camille Chautemps's and Édouard Daladier levelling the path for the establishment of the ultra-conservative government under Gaston Doumergue.[760] Stavisky, a naturalised Ukrainian Jew, had established a network of illegal financial transaction involving a number of the French political class, he was put on trial for fraud in 1933. The scandal came to light in December 1933 when Stavisky's fraudulent municipal bonds proved worthless. Fearing the exposure in the financial scandal, he fled. The police found him deadly wounded by a gunshot. The official version stated suicide. Besides fuelling anti-Semitic agitation, these scandals destroyed the sentiment of security of many Jews in France.

Despite these developments myth of France as liberal country of asylum that welcomes foreigners remained vivid throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. Nowhere else did this myth pay out as strongly as in reference to Paris.

Paris capital of foreigners, or, city of refuge revisited

"Paris is the home (Heimat) of the stranger" where "the pedestrian acquires a small citizenship" and where "the street is a living room" Franz Hessel, the Berlin flâneur declared in the 1930s.[761]

Already prior to World War I, Paris became the European capital of foreigners. In 1911, foreigners made up 6.8 per cent of the population of Paris, compared to 3 per cent in London, and 2.6 in Berlin. Following World War I with its heavy death toll leaving France in need for labour to boast the countries economy and to rebuild the vast areas the war had left devastated the French government actively recruited workers from abroad.[762] Moreover, the increasingly immigration distractions in the United States made many Polish Jews who might have otherwise crossed the Atlantic come to Paris.[763] Until the mid-1920s, the Paris immigrant community almost

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[760] Paul Jankowski, *Stavisky : a confidence man in the republic of virtue* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), Alfred Détrez, *L'affaire Stavisky : Dossier d'histoire* (Paris: Paillard, 1935).

[761] Franz Hessel, "Paris [1930?]," in *Franz Hessel Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Hartmut Vollmer and Bernd Witte, vol. 3: Städte und Porträts (Oldenburg: Igel, 1999), 306.

[762] On post WWI labour migration cf. Eugen Weber, *The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1995), 11 ff.

[763] Nancy L. Green, ed., *Jewish Workers in the Modern Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), Introduction, 7.

doubled in numbers.[764] By 1925, more than 10 per cent of Paris's four million inhabitants were foreign born. In the following year, immigration reached its peak. There were now three times as many foreigners within the octroi boundaries of Paris as there were in all of Germany.[765] While immigration from Italy and other neighbouring countries lowered, Paris remained a centre of attraction for immigrants, especially for Jewish refugees from Central Europe.[766] Following the Nazis rise to power in neighbouring Germany, France faced new waves of refugees. Throughout the first months of 1933 alone, some 25,000 to 30,000 refugees from Germany had already come to France. This was almost half of the total number of refugees leaving Germany.[767] Until 1938, France remained the prime destination for German refugees.[768] The majority, about nine-tenth, of these new refugees were Jewish – many of them forced into Jewishness by the Nazi legislation and persecution. While many German-Jewish refugees had initially settled in the French province, they increasingly turned to the capital city.[769] The fact that some eighty per cent of the Jewish refugees from Germany settling in Paris came from big cities in Germany – almost half had lived in Berlin – may provide a partial explanation for the preference of Paris.[770] In influx of German and especially German-Jewish refugees in the 1930s stood at the end of decades of massive immigration to France. Moreover, the tens of thousands fleeing over the Rhine manifested the persistence of France's tradition as traditional country of asylum and of Paris a one of the cities for refugees.

An article published in 1939 underlined this tradition by providing an overview of early twentieth century migration to France, calling it "the only large immigration country in Europe." As an explanation of the fact that France took more refugees than any other European country the article stated:

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[764] Philip E. Ogden, "International migration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries," in *Migrants in modern France : population mobility in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries*, ed. Philip E. Ogden and Paul White (London; Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 43.
[765] Clifford D. Rosenberg, *Policing Paris: the origins of modern immigration control between the wars* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006), 29-31.
[766] For a contemporary analysis cf. Georges Mauco, *Les étrangers en France : leur rôle dans l'activité économique* (Paris: Colin, 1932), Georges Mauco, "Le problème des étrangers en France," *Revue de Paris* 42, no. 18 (1935).
[767] Anne Saint Sauveur-Henn, "Paris in den dreißiger Jahren: Mittelpunkt des europäischen Exils?," in *Fluchtziel Paris*, ed. Anne Saint Sauveur-Henn (Berlin: Metropol, 2002), 23.
[768] Rita R. Thalmann, "Die Flüchtlinge des Dritten Reiches: ein Sonderfall der Immigration im Frankreich der dreißiger Jahre," *Babylon* 5 (1989): 30.
[769] Cf. Ralph Schor, *Histoire de l'immigration en France de la fin du XIXe siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1996), 134, Julia Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?: Jüdische Emigration aus Deutschland 1933-1939* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2000), 97.
[770] Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?* , 51.

"Partly because of its political tradition and partly because of its need for population [...] France has not only granted asylum willingly, but has on several occasions deliberately encouraged the admission of refugees."[771]

Here some of the central elements important to this chapter are enumerated. The political freedom of France made it a particularly attractive sanctuary for the intellectuals among the refugees. Especially in Paris, they were "able to continue their cultural and political activities." As a result, the city "has become the centre of the cultural and propaganda activities of the German refugees."[772]

This successive influx of immigrants led to a growing fragmentation if not disintegration of Parisian Jewry in the interwar years. As a result, the composition of the French Jewish community witnessed a remarkable turnover.[773] Native "israélites français" made up for less than a third of the total Jewish population while the other two thirds were foreign born or recently naturalised "juifs". Over the period of two decades, the communal structure of Franco-Jewry had changed fundamentally.[774] Few contemporaries shared Avram Menes' enthusiasm embracing this diversity when he declared in 1937, "No country in Europe has such a diverse Jewish population [...] like France."[775]

The revival of the nineteenth century terminology of israélites and juifs, coined by Bernard Lazare gained new momentum in the interwar years.[776] More importantly it the two terms saw a major modification. Increasingly they were used to describe a harsh contrast between the unacculturated immigrant ghetto *Juif* with the socially integrated French *Israélite*. This development, especially the pejorative use of the term *juifs*, at the beginning of the twentieth century and especially during the interwar years highlights the growing internal tensions within the Jewish community in Paris.[777] The re-employment of the Juifs/ Israélite had various roots. On the one

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[771] Walter Adams, "Refugees in Europe " *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 203 (1939): 41.

[772] Ibid.: 41-42.

[773] Renée Poznanski, *Jews in France during World War II* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England for Brandeis University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2001), 1-18.

[774] Benguigui, "L'Immigration juive à Paris entre les deux guerres (1918-1939)", 24-25. Considering these figures, arguments, put forward for instance by Michel Roblin, that Jewish immigration to France were but a side effect of that exodus to America appear questionable. Roblin, *Les Juifs de Paris; démographie, économie, culture*, 65.

[775] A. Menes, "Yidn in Frankraykh," *YIVO Bleter*, no. 1-3 (1937): 33.

[776] Bernard Lazare, "Juifs et Israélites," *Entretiens Politiques & Littéraires* 1ère année, no. No 6 (1890).

[777] Phyllis Cohen Albert, "Israelite and Jew: how did nineteenth-century French Jews understand assimilation?," in *Assimilation and Community : the Jews in nineteenth-century Europe*, ed. Jonathan Frankel and Steven J. Zipperstein (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 92. On

hand, it highlighted the competing concepts of Jewish life and faith within modern French and especially Parisian society and the difficulty of integration of the newcomers. On the other hand, it indicates the growing anxiety of the native French community and inability to cope with the phenomenon of mass immigration and related questions such as ghettoisation. Edmond Cahen's literary adaptation of the matter in his 1930 novel *Juif, non! ... Israélite* is a contemporary example to analyse the difficult relationship between native and immigrant community placing it at the centre of the question of French Jewish identity formation in the early twentieth century.[778]

Furthermore, the terminology of juifs and israélites was deeply interconnected with the development of Paris and thereby received a topographical dimension. In her investigation of competing concepts of community, the American born anthropologist Dominique Schnapper locates the dichotomy of the bourgeois *Israélites* in the western districts of the capital and the working class *juifs* in the eastern districts respectively and concludes that there were indeed "two separated communities" in Paris, separated by both ideology and geography.[779] The divide within the Paris Jewish community was however not limited to the difficult relationship between Eastern European *juifs* and native *israélites*.

With the arrival of growing numbers of refugees coming to France from Germany and Nazi occupied Europe matters were further complicated. Although initially welcomed with great sympathy the growing number of refugees was soon considered a burden by the Parisian Jewish establishment.[780] Despite the foundation of numerous refugee aid societies, the attitude of the native French Jewish community remained

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the origin of the term cf. also K. H. Adler, *Jews and gender in liberation France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 13 ff.

[778] Edmond Cahen, *Juif, non! ... Israélite: Roman* (Paris: Librairie de France, 1930). For a discussion of Cahen's work in the context of early twentieth century Jewish French literature cf. Nadia Donna Malinovich, "Le Reveil D'Israel: Jewish Identity and Culture in France 1900-1932" (PhD, University of Michigan, 2000), Nadia Malinovich, "Littérature populaire et romans juifs dans la France des années 1920," *Archives Juives* 39, no. 1 (2006).

[779] Dominique Schnapper, *Juifs et israélites* ([Paris]: Gallimard, 1980). Here quoted after Évelyne Cohen, *Paris dans l'imaginaire national de l'entre-deux-guerres* (Paris: Publ. de la Sorbonne, 1999), 103.

[780] Vicki Caron has analysed this shifting perception in details challenging earlier views put forward for instance by Simon Epstein. Vicki Caron, "Prelude to Vichy: France and the Jewish refugees in the era of appeasement," *Journal of Contemporary History* 20, no. 1 (1985), Vicki Caron, *Uneasy Asylum: France and the Jewish refugee crisis, 1933-42* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), Simon Epstein, "Les institutions israélites françaises de 1929 à 1939: Solidarité juive et lutte contre l'antisémitisme" (Thèse doctorate, Université Paris I - Panthéon-Sorbonne, 1990). An article by Julia Franke offers an excellent summary and discussion of the literature concerning this question. Julia Franke, "»De véritables >boches<«: Französische und emigrierte deutsche Juden im Paris der dreißiger Jahre," in *Jüdische Emigration zwischen Assimilation und Verfolgung, Akkulturation und jüdischer Identität*, ed. Claus-Dieter Kron (München: edition+kritik, 2001).

ambiguous towards the "German" refugees. [781] At times, this ambiguity even gave way to open hostility as an article appearing in 1936 in the Zionist journal *La Terre Retrouvée* reveals. The author under the pseudonym "Martin" declared that "French Jewry regrets that the newly arrivals bring with them particular German errors: they are too loud and believe too much in the German superiority. In short: they are real 'Boches'."[782]

Despite the ambivalence of the native community in receiving the newcomers, the attraction of the destination Paris for immigrants and refugees remained unbowed. Rather than the Parisian realities, an idealised image of the capital on the Seine served as major pull for Jews and non-Jews fostering their decision to come here.

Paris an exceptional city

> "Oh, one needed to know Berlin first in order to love Paris properly [...] Oh, how easily, how well, one lived in Paris, particularly if one was young! Merely walking about was a pleasure and a lesson at the same time, for everything was within reach. [...] The only difficult thing was to stay home or to go home, especially when it was spring ..."[783]

Thus, wrote Stefan Zweig in his autobiography. Different from Berlin, he experienced Paris as a liberating place. Berlin by contrast lacked the "lush beauty of Vienna", and thus Berlin, "with its strong brine" only increased Zweig's "thirst" but could not satisfy it.[784] For him the occupation of Paris by German troops during the summer of 1940 stood symbolically for the loss of the *World of Yesterday*. His praise for the capital city on the Seine is part of an inestimable number of accounts celebrating Paris.

All major cities have images or rather clichés attached to them. While nineteenth century London was the incarnation of the modern Babylon, a metropolitan abyss swallowing the deprived urban masses, the prevailing image of Berlin during the nineteen twentieth was that of a roaring modern city.

The previous chapters have shown that these urban images and imaginations are in part reflections of city life stressing certain aspects of the urban composition while hiding or covering up others. Moreover, these images have an impact on the city and its people – influencing the cultural and political agendas within them or as means of identification and distancing respectively.

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[781] Afoumado, "Les relations entre "Israélites français" et Juifs immigrés durant les années trente."
[782] *La Terre Retrouvée*, 25.03.1936
[783] Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday: an autobiography* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 129.
[784] Ibid., 112-13, 19.

As in the case of London and Berlin, Paris – maybe even more than the other two – is an object of these urban imaginations, a place where the city reality stands on an equal level with the city as dreamworld. More than other cities, Paris is characterised by the duality of the material and the immaterial city.[785] For many it was both an actual urban place and an icon, a mythological world. Most prominently did Surrealists engage these two sides of the city in their attempt to uncover the true essence of modernity. Louis Aragon's *Le paysan de Paris* published in 1926 became somewhat of a compendium of Surrealist urban experience, depicting the city as a space of mythologies and dreams.[786] Walter Benjamin followed the surrealist agenda a decade later in his attempt to examine the prehistory of modernity in the "capital of the nineteenth century"—a term originally coined by another prominent Jewish immigrant, Ludwig Börne.[787] Yet another contemporary of Benjamin, Franz Hessel, who like him had to flee Berlin to come to Paris, remarked pointedly:

> "Paris is the city where nothing ends, where the past constantly coexists with the present. Paris is simultaneously present and memory."[788]

The topographical and the imaginary Paris were more intertwined than in any other city and it was the latter that attracted thousands to come to the French capital city. Paris was not merely the capital city of France, Heine remarked, but the "capital of the entire civilised world."[789] A century later, Ernst Robert Curtius called the city in a very similar vein "a spritual *caput orbis*".[790]

It is striking that it was "foreigners", emigrants, exiles and refugees coming to Paris that were largely responsible for the continuous recreation the myth of the *ville lumière*; a myth that for many had been constitutive in their decision to leave home and go to Paris.

[785] Jean-Pierre A. Bernard, *Les deux Paris : les représentations de Paris dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2001), 12. On the myth of Paris see the extensive study by Karlheinz Stierle. Karlheinz Stierle, *Der Mythos von Paris: Zeichen und Bewusstsein der Stadt* (München: C. Hanser, 1993).

[786] Louis Aragon, *Le paysan de Paris* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1926). Cf. Ian Walker, *City Gorged with Dreams: surrealism and documentary photography in interwar Paris* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), Verena Simon, *Paris - das Mysterium der Surrealisten: die Modellierung der Stadt Paris in ausgewählten Erzähltexten französischer Surrealisten* (Duisburg: WiKu, 2006), Andrew Hussey, *Paris : the secret history* (London: Viking, 2006), 333. Prior to the surrealists Baudelaire was among the key figures "inventing" the myth of Paris.

[787] Patrice L. R. Higonnet, *Paris: capital of the world* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2002), 2.

[788] Hessel, "Paris [1930?]," 306.

[789] Heinrich Heine, "Essays II: Über Frankreich: Französische Zustände: Artikel III [1832]," in *Heinrich Heine: Werke und Briefe*, ed. Hans Kaufmann, vol. 4 (Berlin; Weimar: Aufbau, 1972), 413.

[790] Ernst Robert Curtius and Arnold Bergsträsser, *Frankreich* (Stuttgart; Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1930), 151.

Reasons to come to Paris

The French scholar Gilbert Badia suggests a list of reasons for emigrants to choose to come to Paris. [791] A central motive was networks such as relatives or acquaintance living in Paris or the affiliation with a religious group and thus the perspective of receiving material support through the local congregation. Badia traces a similar motive in the context of artists and intellectuals. Various German writers had close contact to their French counter-parts prior to 1933. At the "décades" – repeated meetings of intellectuals and artists in the Abbey Pontigny in North-West France – people like André Gide, Heinrich Mann, Ernst Robert Curtius, and others gathered. Others like Kurt Tucholsky had settled in France already during the 1920s.

In addition, the image of France as the country of Revolution and the Paris Commune respectively – the latter aspect was especially important on the political left – and as the country of Heinrich Heine were additional motives. Moreover, Badia argues that publications on France circulating in interwar Germany deeply shaped the perception of the neighbouring country as one where one could live well.[792] Some of these motives were of greater importance for one group of emigrants than for others. Among the main motives of European Jewish immigrants in coming to France were the country's revolutionary heritage and the perception of it as hospitable and welcoming country. It has been argued that the motives of German-Jewish intellectuals were rather different. For many among them the image of Paris as centre of art and culture fostered their decision to come here.[793] A letter by Hermann Kesten written to his friend Ernst Toller shortly after arriving in Paris supports this view. With enthusiasm, Kersen writes that he had moved into the same hotel as his fellow author Joseph Roth. Moreover, the hotel was situated on the same street where André Gide lived and only "five minutes from the Bon Marché, Zola's department store". For Kersten who had worked with many other authors in Berlin during the 1920s that like him had to leave Germany, Paris was a city with a distinct literary topography as the reference to the setting of Zola's novel *Au Bonheur des Dames* (1883) reveals. Moreover, Paris became the place where circles of German speaking authors having to flee Germany and later Austria and Czechoslovakia could

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[791] Gilbert Badia, "Deutsche und österreichische Emigranten in Frankreich 1933-1942," in *Zweimal verjagt: die deutschsprachige Emigration und der Fluchtweg Frankreich-Lateinamerika 1933-1945*, ed. Anne Saint Saveur-Henn (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), 16.

[792] Monique Köpke supports this point in her autobiography, speaking of "seductive books" creating an image of France for German readers as a place where one can live well. Monique Köpke, *Nachtzug nach Paris: ein jüdisches Mädchen überlebt Hitlers Frankreich* (Erkelenz: Altius-Verl., 2000), 33.

[793] Gilbert Badia, "La France Decouverte par les émigres," *Revue d'Allemagne* XVIII (1986): 171.

gather again. The capital on the Seine allowed – for a time – to re-establish former intellectual network. "I'm enchanted by the city of Paris," Kersten continued, leading him to the remarkable statement "What a dream exile is" for as soon as "you cross the border" "the terror becomes 'foreign'" and "you begin to doubt the reality of the horror in Germany."[794] Kersten's statement highlights the liberating power of Paris, similar to the one described by Zweig.

However, only for a relatively small group of German emigrant intellectuals did the perception of Paris as a cultural and literary capital serve as the main factor to emigrate there. For the majority of refugees from Nazi Germany, the decision to go to Paris was based on practical considerations.

Another rather practical reason needs to be added. "We went to France (preferably to Paris) like together others," Köpke recalls, "because the entry was easy".[795] France with its liberal immigration policy was indeed one of the few countries they could go without lengthy preparations, such as visa application procedures. The proximity of the country to Germany and the fact that one could reach it by land avoiding expensive and lengthy sea passage contributed to this context.

Networks of relatives or acquaintance living in Paris already are yet another complex in which both groups differed from each other. While many Eastern European Jews were drawn to Paris by the existence of these networks of previous immigrants and relatives,[796] the majority of German-Jewish refugees of the 1930 were much less prepared and thus – as will discussed later – much more dependent on the support of refugee organisations. Nancy L. Green stresses the decisive importance of the image of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity for the decision to this "classical country of asylum in Europe".[797]

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[794] Hermann Kesten, "Letter to Ernst Toller [Paris, Le Bon Hotel, 24, rue Vaneau, 23 March 1933]," in *Hitler's Exiles: personal stories of the flight from Nazi Germany to America*, ed. Mark M. Anderson (New York: New Press, 1998), 135-36.

[795] Köpke, *Nachtzug nach Paris*, 33.

[796] Jean Amoretti, "Les Juif immigrés dans le 4e Arrondissement," *Univers israélite* 86e année, no. 4 (1930).

[797] Green, ed., *Jewish Workers in the Modern Diaspora*, 7, Ruth Fabian and Corinna Coulmas, *Die deutsche Emigration in Frankreich nach 1933* (München; New York: K. G. Saur, 1978), 25. For detailed accounts on the history of French immigration policy, see the world by Ralph Schor. In particular Schor, *Histoire de l'immigration en France de la fin du XIXe siècle à nos jours*, Ralph Schor, *Français et immigrés en temps de crise (1930-1980)* (Paris: Harmattan, 2004). For a specific and very detailed analysis of the legal framework faced by German and Austrian Jewish refugees in the 1930s cf. Caron, *Uneasy Asylum*.

For many Jews France became a *terre promise* (a promised land) and Paris a *ville d'espoire* (city of hopes), the Jerusalem on the Seine, a place where all hopes to escape persecution and poverty were directed to.[798]

These images of Paris even circulated among Jews in Eastern and Central Europe as Pierre Pachet's account of his father's generation indicates:

> "The scientific and cultural prestige of France ... was enormous, the liberalism of its customs and its hospitality towards foreigners were celebrated among us. I speak not of her pornographic and dubious reputations ... which is universally connected with Paris because I am certain that this reputation did not reach the yeshiva."[799]

The Jewish cap maker Yankel Mykhanowitzki in Roger Ikor's novel describes the imaginative power of the French capital for Eastern European Jews similarly:

> "When the word [France] was pronounced in Rakwomir, faces lit up. Victor Hugo, Voltaire, the Rights of Man, the Revolution, the barricades, liberty-equality-fraternity. [...] Even their national hymn was that noble "Marseillaise" that democrats, nihilists, socialists and revolutionaries sing, in defiance of autocracy, under the whip of the Cossacks."[800]

Even the continuous attempts by established Franco-Jewish institutions such as the Alliance Israélite Universelle throughout the nineteenth century to discourage immigration of Eastern European Jews to France failed to destroy the myth of the city of light and its attraction for Jews in tsarist Russia.[801] Rather did the knowledge of Paris based Jewish institutions like the Alliance, the Consistoire and its welfare office circulating in Eastern Europe act "as an implicit 'pull'" for potential migrants allowing them to image a "safety net into which to fall if the reality of migration did not live up to the myth."[802]

An example of the effusive celebration of Paris by Eastern European Immigrants in the French Capital can be found in the bilingual French-Yiddish *Almanach Juif* published in 1931 by the *Colonie Scolaire*. The Almanac contains the following poem by Théodore Valensi in which he depicts Paris as the "lightning star on the clear

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[798] André Kaspi, "Les juifs et la vie politique," *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, no. 19, Numero special: Religion et politique aux états-unis (1988): 67, Jacques Burstein-Finer, *Paris, terre d'espoir* (Beaumarchais: Le Sycomore, 1979).

[799] Pierre Pachet, *Autobiographie de mon père* ([Paris]: Belin, 1987), 17. Here quoted after Cohen, *Paris dans l'imaginaire national de l'entre-deux-guerres*, 103.

[800] Roger Ikor, *Les fils d'Avrom, roman*, 2 vols. (Paris: A. Michel, 1955), vol. 2: Les eaux mêlées, 92-94. Here quoted after Nancy L. Green, "The Modern Jewish Diaspora : East European Jews in New York, London, and Paris," in *Comparing Jewish Societies*, ed. Todd M. Endelman (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 118.

[801] On these attempts cf. Weinberg, "'Heureux comme Dieu en France': East European Jewish Immigrants in Paris 1881-1914."

[802] Nancy L. Green, Laura Levine Frader, and Pierre Milza, "Paris: City of Light and Shadow," in *Distant magnets: expectations and realities in the immigrant experience, 1840-1930*, ed. Dirk Hoerder and Horst Rössler (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1993), 45.

firmament," the "earthly garden Eden," the "pounding heart of the world," and finally as "brain of humanity".

> « Paris, étoile qui rutile au firmament serein et inonde de ses rayons l'Univers ébloui ; Paris, nom qui résonne, mélodieux et troublant, jusqu'au fond des plus humbles bourgades, jusqu'au sein du désert;
> Paris, pays d'espérance et de rêve, si séduisant, si attirant qu'il n'est pas un être humain, noir, jaune ou blanc, qu'il n'appelle mystérieusement ;
> Paris, Eden terrestre, le jour, avec ses monuments majestueux, ses avenues somptueuses et ses ponts harmonieux sur le fleuve cristallin,
> tache flamboyante, la nuit, avec ses boulevards féeriques, ses enseignes phosphorescentes et ses coulées de brillants
> Paris, cité prestigieuse et unique des plaisirs et des joie roues Huas aussi loyer merveilleux et ardent de la pensée;
> Paris, coeur palpitant du monde, étendant indompté sur la terre et sur l'onde, Paris cerveau de l'Humanité ! » [803]

For many Eastern European Jewish activists of the political left, France with its revolutionary past furthermore represented an alternative to Poland, shaken by economic crisis and the war with the Soviet Union in 1920. The hopes for an improvement, many Polish Jews had had upon the coming to power the authoritarian regime of General Pilsudski were soon disappointed by a growing anti-Semitism.[804] In his attempt to reconstruct his father's motives for leaving Poland and settling in Paris in the 1920s, Maurice Rajsfus recalls the following story: while working as teacher in Warsaw his father Nahoum went to a public library to consult Jean Jaurès' *Socialist History of the French Revolution*. The warning of a local librarian not to ask for *that* book rather increased Nahoum's curiosity.[805] This anecdote highlights the imaginary power the revolutionary tradition of France had upon political active Jews in inter-war Poland.

A short pamphlet published in London in 1934 highlights how durable the idea of France as the Promised Land was. In his reflections on the German refugees that had fled to France Lowell Joseph Ragatz stated that "Gallic state, where the doctrine of equal opportunity for all, irrespective of creed, color or status, is still a living reality," has become the "Promised Land" for the "Jews fleeing before the savage pronouncements and legal discriminations of Swastika rule."[806]

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[803] Colonie scolaire (Paris), ed., *Almanach Juif - Yidisher Almanakh* (Paris: "La Nouvelle génération", 1931), 32.
[804] Isaac Bashevis Singer, *Love and Exile: The Early Years - A Memoire* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1984), 48, Jonathan Boyarin, *Polish Jews in Paris: The Ethnography of Memory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 34, Ezra Mendelsohn, *Zionism in Poland : the formative years, 1915-1926* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).
[805] Maurice Rajsfus, *Mon père l'étranger: un immigré juif polonais à Paris dans les années 1920* (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 1989), 29.
[806] Lowell Joseph Ragatz, *The German Refugees in France* (London: Arthur Thomas, 1934), 1.

Ragatz's statement hints at the perpetuity of the myth of France as a refuge for victim of persecution. Repeatedly, this mythification played an important role in process of identity formation of the Parisian Jewish community in a period that was marked by successive crisis. Both in countering current crisis and in the internal negotiations of an urban Jewish identity the myth of Paris gained a central role. The collective imagination of Paris conveyed an abundance of themes with which Jews on all sides could identify thus bridging the growing centrifugal forces within Jewish Paris.

Where is Jewish Paris?

As we have seen, Paris Jewry witnessed an enormous diversification throughout the first half of the twentieth century. This process fuelled by the various waves of Jewish immigration to the French capital found an expression in the residential distribution of Jews in the urban landscape of Paris.

Compared to London where successive waves of Jewish immigration were foremost directed towards one area of the city, the situation in Paris was different. With each new wave, Jewish immigrants began to settle in different parts of the French capital. This fragmentation reflected a strong isolationism of the various immigrant groups. The native community was uninterested and unable to counter the separation of the various Jewish groups.

One reason for this lay in the administrative structure of French and Parisian Jewry. With the separation of church and state in 1905, the state imposed consistorial system lost its legal position and formally its monopoly upon Jewish religious associations. As Paula Hyman has shown, the oligarchic nature of the consistorial and its ideology of eradicating eastern European Jewish immigrants' culture by assimilating them to the French Jewish model however persisted even after 1905.[807] Hence, the consistorial system proved inflexible and unable to adjust to an ever growing and diversifying community. The result were a "long-lasting paternalistic approach" by the leadership of French Jewry – as Hyman calls it – and a growing tendency of separatism among the newcomers.

As late as 1936, an article in the Berliner *Gemeindeblatt* on the elections to the Paris consistorial stated "Only by looking at Jewish life in Paris one realises how unified the Berlin Jewish community is." The article warned that the divide between the small group of the French Jewish establishment and the immigrant element representing

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[807] Paula Hyman, "From Parternalism to Cooptation: The French Jewish Consistory and the Immigrants, 1906-1939," *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science* XVII (1978).

by far the majority of French Jewry was deepening. In face of this development, the author expressed his bewilderment that only a single list was standing in the consistorial elections that "take place unnoticed by the majority of Parisian Jews."[808] The residential distribution of Jews in Paris both mirror and explain the fragmentation of the Jewish community in the French capital during the first decades of the twentieth century.

Julia Franke's observation in reference to German-Jewish emigrants of the 1930s is true for the residential patterns of Jewish immigration to Paris throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century. Already densely populated and due to the fragmentation of the newcomers set up in various parts of the city. There was not *one* quarter in which they settled and lived in Paris and it can be added that probably there never was.[809] Even the nineteenth century Jewish settlement in the third and fourth arrondissement was never the only Jewish space of Paris.
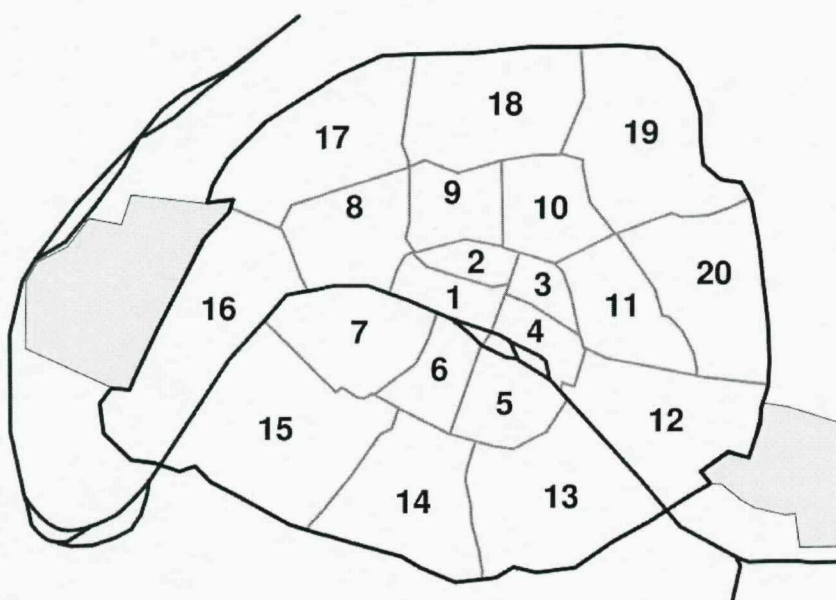
Fig. 7: Map showing the twenty arrondissement of Paris

Besides the westward movement of the Alsatian Jews that had settled in large numbers in the Marais district, especially following the loss of France's most eastern provinces to the new German nation state in 1871, soon left for the more bourgeoise western districts of Paris. During the first decades of the Third Republic the eighth, ninth and the sixteenth and seventeenth arrondissements became the preferred

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[808] Martin Glass, "Jüdisches Gemeindeleben in Paris," *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 26, no. 18 (1936).
[809] Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?* , 86-87.

residential areas of the Parisian Jewish bourgeoisie.[810] The void they left in the third and fourth arrondissements was soon filled with newly arrived Eastern European Jewish immigrants.

Following this development, the Pletzl area that had been home to almost half of all Parisian Jews in 1872 took on an increasingly Eastern European air. By 1907, only one third of all Parisian Jew lived here of which more than sixty per cent were immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe.[811] One reason for the decrease in significance of the Pletzl was that the area soon was too small to accommodate the rising number of newcomers. Another reason was the different social structure of these newcomers, most of them being left-wing Eastern European Jewish workers with little or none religious attachment.

While the Marais became the home for rather traditional Jewish immigrants, the majority of Eastern European Jewish migrants coming to Paris during the first decades of the twentieth century did not settle there. Belleville, a traditional working class district east of the place de la République in the eleventh and twentieth arrondissement became the prime target. One of the reasons for the growing attraction of Belleville was the improved connection of the district by the Métro. More important for settling in Belleville however were the economic infrastructure of the area and the development of a Jewish working class infrastructure.

For those settling in Belleville, the traditionalist Pletzl stood for religious traditionalism that many of them regarded as reactionary. Arnold Mandel has captured this perception in drastic terms:

> "The ghetto does not exist any longer it has been replaced by the working-class neighbourhood where the proletarian Jews settle. The ghetto used to be god's acre, holy ground, free of turpitude, amidst the Christian Gomorrah. But God has retired and Jewry was forced into the area of the outcasts."[812]

During the inter-war years, Belleville developed into a major centre of immigrants of which the Jews were only one group.[813] In the context of Paris Jewry, the area

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[810] Cyril Grange has reconstructed this development on the basis of marriage certificates for the period from 1875 till 1940. Cyril Grange, "La bourgeoisie juive à Paris sous la Troisième République: localisation et mobilité," *Cahiers d'histoire* 44, no. 4 (1999).

[811] Cf. Doris Bensimon, *Socio-démographie des juifs de France et d'Algérie : 1867-1907* ([Paris: Publications orientalistes de France], 1976), 94 ff.

[812] Mandel, *Les Temps incertains : roman* Here quoted after Béatrice Philippe, *Être juif dans la société française, du Moyen-Âge à nos jours* ([Paris]: Éditions Montalba, 1979), 267.

[813] Cf. Gérard Jacquemet, *Belleville au XIXe siècle : du faubourg à la ville* (Paris: École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1984).

developed into the second centre of Yiddish speaking Eastern European life in Paris besides the Marais.[814]

Considering this growing importance of Belleville, it is surprising that few contemporaries engaged the Jewish life in the district in their works. A number of short stories published in *Naïe Presse* during the 1930s by Binyomin Shlevin are one of the few exceptions. It was not until the post-war years however, that Shlevin published his novel *Di yidn fun Belvil* (The Jews of Bellville).[815] It is paradigmatic that an East European Jewish author in Warsaw published the only contemporary literary depiction of Jewish life in Belleville in form of a novel. Shortly after its publication in 1935, Shlomo Kornblum's *Ri-de-belvil* (Rue de Belleville) it met harshly criticism by Paris Jewish intellectuals. In their view, Kornblum was unfamiliar with Paris and its Jews and his account thus inaccurate.[816] Four years after the publication of Kornblum's novel Yosl Cukier devoted several sections of his book *A fremd lebn* (A foreign life) to his own experiences as immigrant in Belleville.[817] Following the footsteps of his older brother, Cukier had emigrated to Paris dreaming of becoming a painter. Arriving there, he was however forced to earn a living as lamp manufacturer. The so-called Roquette district in the eleventh arrondissement stretching from the place Voltaire between Rue Sedaine and Rue de la Roquette was the destination of Sephardic Jewish immigrants from the Ottoman Empire and especially its successor states on the Balkan. The vernacular soon called this group of immigrants "Juifs du onzième" (The Jews of the eleventh [arronissement]) emphasising the bond between certain groups of immigrants and particular areas of Paris.[818]

As in the case of Eastern European Jewish immigrants, the Judeo-Spanish community of la Roquette however was only one strata of Paris' Sephardic population that was scattered around the city with principal settlements in le Sentier, the Faubourg-Montmarte and the suburbs.[819]

Despite the geographical overlapping of areas inhabited by Eastern European and Sephardic Jews there seem to have been almost now exchange between both

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[814] Green, "Jewish Migration to France in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: community or communities?," 146. On the demographic development of the Jewish settlement in Belleville cf. Roland, *Du ghetto à l'Occident: deux générations yiddiches en France*, 33 ff.

[815] Binyomin Shlevin, *Di yidn fun Belvil: roman* (Paris: Ofsnaï, 1948).

[816] Shlomo Kornblum, *Ri-de-belvil [Rue de Belleville]* (Warshe: Yidishe universal-bibliotek, 1935).

[817] Yosl Cukier, *A fremd lebn : dertseylungen fun Yidishn lebn in Pariz* (Warshe: Aroysgegebn mit der mithilf fun Yid. P.E.N.-klub, 1939).

[818] Annie Benveniste, *Le Bosphore à la Roquette: la communauté judéo-espagnole à Paris (1914 - 1940)* (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 1989), 63.

[819] Ibid., 16.

immigrant groups.[820] This phenomenon of encapsulation and separation of the various Jewish groups was typical though for early twentieth century Paris.

The constitution of what Nancy Green calls "micro-quartiers" started already around World War I.[821] Russian-Jewish artists, intellectuals and revolutionaries set up on the rive gauche (the left bank). On the Montmartre a small but very self-confident Jewish settlement, predominantly of Roumanian Jews, was formed. For some immigrants settling there the Montmartre was "the new Jerusalem" as opposed to the "old" one in the Marais.[822] For many Jewish immigrants settling around the Montmartre, the world of the Pletzl was not part of their urban experience in Paris and indeed a world apart. The example of Ménaché Foïgel – an immigrant from Eastern Europe himself – only heart of the existence of the old Jewish quarter of Paris after having lived in the Montmartre district for quite some time underlines this. Rather by coincidence, Foïgel was invited by a fellow Jew to visit the Jewish settlement around Saint-Paul and instantaneously struck by the foreign, "oriental" character of the neighbourhood asking himself if it is acceptable that Jews "in the streets of the city of light are still walking around in kaftans"?[823]

More and more Jews, also a significant number of recently immigrated Eastern European Jews, moved away from the inner city areas towards the new Parisian suburbs.[824]

The arrival of tens of thousands of German-Jewish refugees after 1933 meant a further residential diversification of Jewish Paris. Most of them settled in the rather poorer neighbourhoods in the eleventh, nineteenth and twentieth arrondissement. However, a surprisingly high number of German-Jewish emigrants settled in the bourgeois sixteenth arrondissement and the western suburb Neuilly-sur-Seine. Hélène Roussel and Lutz Winckler attribute this phenomenon to the fact that some emigrants managed to rescue parts of their capital upon leaving Germany and the

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[820] A relatively high number of Polish Jews lived in the Roquette district. See the table of residential figures in André Kaspi, "L'antisémitisme dans la France de l'entre-deux-guerres," in *Vivre et survivre dans le Marais*, ed. Jean-Pierre Azéma (Paris: Editions Le Manuscrit, 2005), 289.

[821] Nancy L. Green, "Les juifs étrangers à Paris," in *Le Paris des étrangers*, ed. André Kaspi and Antoine Marès (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1989), 111.

[822] André Billy and Moïse Twersky, *L'Épopée de Ménaché Foïgel*, 3 vols. (Paris: Plon, 1927), 2:89.

[823] Ibid., 2:97.

[824] Jean Laloum, *Les juifs dans la banlieue parisienne des années 20 aux années 50 : Montreuil, Bagnolet et Vincennes à l'heure de la solution finale* (Paris: CNRS, 1998).

successful professional integration of parts of the immigrant community in Paris respectively. [825]

It is noteworthy that the residential areas of the German exiles of the 1930s had almost no overlapping with the traditional Jewish centres in the Marais or the ninth arrondissement around Rue Richer. Julia Franke attributes this phenomenon to the overcrowding of the districts and to the different social structure of the newly arrivals from Germany. [826] However, a number of refugees from Germany found a new home in Belleville where they rather lived apart from Jews who had arrived there in previous decades. This separation is not surprisingly considering the different background of Belleville Jews. While the majority of Eastern European Jews in this quarter came from a working class background, many German-Jewish immigrants were forced to seek refuge in cheap hotels or flats out of economic necessity resulting from them fleeing Germany. Many of those settling down in Belleville had had a modest middle-class existence in Germany. Robbed of most of their capital by the so-called *Reichsfluchtsteuer* (Reich flight tax) – a forced charge introduced on the property of all those "fleeing" Germany[827] – and often without employment, many middle-class German-Jewish families were forced to find their place here.[828]

A number of German emigrants – among them Lisa Fittko's parents and later herself and her husband – moved to the southern suburb Chatenay-Malabry, 45 minutes away from the city centre by bus. The rents in the suburbs were not only lower than in central Paris but the properties were recently built modern apartment blocks. The fact that a local socialist government that showed sympathy for the difficult economic situation of the emigrants ran the Butte Rouge council housing estate was another advantage of the suburb.[829] The same can be said about other southern banlieues such as Vanves or Malakoff.

Already around the turn of the century the Montparnasse area on the *rive gauche* with its numerous cafés and brasseries had attracted artists and intellectuals. Among

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[825] Hélène Roussel and Lutz Winckler, "Zur Topographie des literarischen und publizistischen Exils in Paris," *Exilforschung*, no. 20: Metropolen des Exils (2002): 134.

[826] Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?*, 91 ff.

[827] The origin of this "tax" goes back into the final years of the Weimar Republic. For a short overview cf. Dorothee Mußgnug, *Die Reichsfluchtsteuer : 1931-1953* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1993).

[828] The story of Monique Köpke is examplary in this context. She also recalls that she only had contact to fellow German emigrant children not to locals in Belleville. Cf. Köpke, *Nachtzug nach Paris*, 111 ff.

[829] Lisa Fittko, *Solidarität unerwünscht : meine Flucht durch Europa : Erinnerungen 1933-1940* (München: Hanser, 1992), 169.

them were many Jews such as Marc Chagall and other painters of the Paris School who arrived in the capital on the Seine at the beginning of the twentieth century.[830] Many among the refugees from Germany were attracted by Montparnasse. Arthur Koestler and Lisa Fittko found a new home here, as did Walter Benjamin. Despite the long distance to his daily workplace at the Bibliothèque National in Rue de Richelieu a look at Benjamin's hotel addresses, reveal that they were located exclusively around Montparnasse, as did the flat in Rue Dombasle he moved to in the second half of the 1930s.[831]

A further attraction of the *rive gauche* districts included the Sorbonne and the offices of the major French publishing houses and their bookshops, providing an essential infrastructure for refugee intellectuals.[832]

While the traditional centres of Jewish settlements in Paris were located on the rive gauche the arrival of refugees from Germany fostered the developing of Jewish networks on the *rive gauche* that had started already in previous decades.

Eight Métro stations away from the Champs d'Elysée – the Pletzl of Paris

Despite this fragmented residential patters there were however areas that more than others stood for Jewish Paris. Although other areas of the city also developed into major Jewish centres, the Marais remained a highly symbolic place, an area that was regarded by many as *the* Jewish space of Paris.[833] One reason for this exceptional position might have been that here – more than elsewhere – the duality of dream world and actual space characteristic of Paris as a whole was immanent in the world of the Jewish Marais too.

At the beginning of the twentieth century it became apparent that the traditional Jewish quarter in the Marais was about to lose its dominating position for Parisian

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[830] Kenneth E. Silver and Romy Golan, eds., *The Circle of Montparnasse : Jewish artists in Paris, 1905-1945* (New York: Universe Books, 1985), Romy Golan, *Modernity and nostalgia : art and politics in France between the wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

[831] Catherine Stodolsky, "Ein Pariser Alltag im 15. Arrondissement: Walter Benjamin, Arthur Koestler, Lisa Fittko," in *Fluchtziel Paris: die deutschsprachige Emigration 1933-1940*, ed. Anne Saint Sauveur-Henn (Berlin: Metropol, 2002). Recently Benjamin's private Paris addressbook has been edited by Christine Fischer-Defoy. This document allows more detailed insights into the residential patterns of German emigrants in Paris. Christine Fischer-Defoy, ed., *Walter Benjamin - das Adressbuch des Exils : 1933 - 1940 ; ["... wie überall hin die Leute verstreut sind ..."]* (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 2006).I thank Joachim Schlör for making me aware of these documents.

[832] Roussel and Winckler, "Zur Topographie des literarischen und publizistischen Exils in Paris."

[833] For a contemporary investigation of the notion of Jewish symbolic place in Paris cf. Jonathan Boyarin, *Polish Jews in Paris: The Ethnography of Memory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).

Jewry. While 46 per cent of Parisian Jews had lived here in 1872 only 26 per cent did so in 1905.[834] A passage from Speiser's *almanac* published in 1910 indicates the continuing importance of the area for newcomers. The guidebook designed for Jewish immigrants suggested them upon their arrival "to turn immediately towards Rue des Rosiers." In the centre of the Jewish quarter the almanac stressed, help was in reach.[835] Indeed, as the example Hersh Mendel's arrival in Paris in the 1920s shows, even non-religious eastern European Jews continued to turn towards the Pletzl as it was called. Mendel's recollections also highlight this symbolic importance of the area. After the first night in the foreign city Mendel and his companion, reflect on where they should turn next. They neither speak nor understand a word of French nor do they know anybody. "The young man accompanying me only knew the name of one street: Rue des Rosiers," Mendel recalls. Each time the two newcomers met somebody "who looked Jewish" to them they tried to find out where this Rue des Rosiers was located. Although they did not understand the answers in French given to them, they evidently managed to reach their destination. "For the last time we inquired somebody led us right to the street." Mendel's first impression of the area was that it appeared "indeed a bit more like home."[836] Still in 1933, Pierre Paraf remarked that "without doubt most Jews after descending from the train do not turn towards the quartier Saint Paul" but go to Belleville close to the Place de la République "symbolising a point of rest for the Wandering Jew." Nonetheless, Paraf concludes, "the traditional geometric place" of Jewish immigration "remains Rue des Rosiers."[837]

The Yiddish vernacular referred to this traditional Jewish centre of Paris as *Pletzl*. The Yiddish term literally means small square or place an expression maybe originating in a reference to the large Place des Vosges towards the East.[838] While it originally referred to the Place des Hospitalières-Saint-Gervais – nowadays the entrance to the Métro-station Saint-Paul – it became used to refer to the intersection of Rue des Rosiers and Rue des Ecouffes further to the north – the

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[834] Marie-Claude Blanc-Chaléard, "L'habitat immigré à Paris aux XIXe et XXe siècles: mondes à part?," *Le Mouvement social*, no. 182, L'habitat du Peuple de Paris (1998): 33.

[835] Wolf Speiser, ed., *Yidish-frantzoyzisher "Kalendar" - Calendrier-annuaire israélite pour l'année 5671* (Paris: [Librairie W. Speiser], 1910), 26-27.

[836] Hersh Mendel, *Memoirs of a Jewish revolutionary* (London: Pluto Press, 1989), 128.

[837] Pierre Paraf, "Le Ghetto de Paris," *L'Illustration*, 08.04. 1933.

[838] On the origin of the term Pletzl cf. Yehezkel Kornhendler, *Yidn in Pariz: materialn far yidisher geshikhte [Jews in Paris: materials for Jewish history]* (Paris: Publié avec l'aide de la Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture et de la Commission du Livre, 1970), 186-203.

centre of the Jewish settlement in the Marais. Soon, the term Pletzl superseded the level of actual location and was employed to refer to the "Jewish quarter" as such.[839] Aline Benain goes as far as to claim that a "largely mythological construction of a 'Jewish quarter'" is at play in terms of the Pletzl. According to her interpretation, the Pletzl has no "real existence" as actual space but is characterised by "fluidity" and "dynamic" what makes it unattainable or even unlocatable.[840]

Throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, the Jewish areas of the Marais district remained an alien element in the Parisian topography for French Jews and non-Jews alike. As in London or Paris, the perceptions of the "Ghetto of Paris" reached from open hostility to curiosity in this foreign territory. According to Charles Fegdal, for instance the ghetto Jews – "these Jewish Tamudists and Polacks" – were so "different from the civilised French Jews [israélite]."[841] References to the Pletzl as "a foreign city" where you realise that you "are not in Paris any more" were widespread.[842] Others captured the exotic "oriental" appearance of the area.[843] An account of the area, although written several decades later, contains the central elements that perpetuate in numerous descriptions of the Jewish Marais.
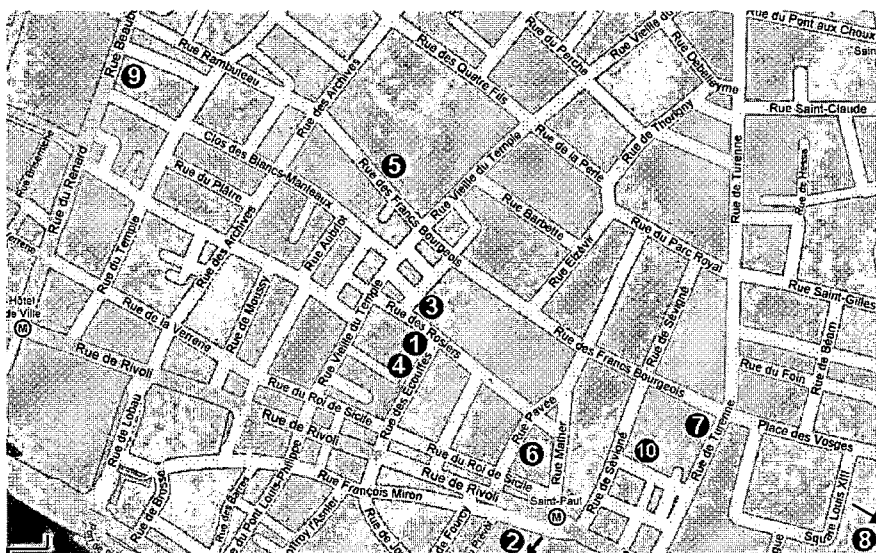
1 Pletzl at the intersection of Rue des Rosiers and Rue des Écouffles

2 Original location of the Asile de Jour (15, Rue du Figuier)

3 Librairie Wolf Speiser

4 Parizer yidisher arbeter-bildungs-fareyn (27, rue des Écouffes)

5 Nomberg Library (50, Rue des Francs-Bourgeois)

6 Synagogue (Rue de Pavée)

7 Synagogue (Rue de Turenne)

8 Headquarter of the *Fédération des societé juives* near the Place de la Bastille

9 Yiddish Theatre (Rue Beaubourg)

10 Université juive populaire (Rue de Jarente)

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Fig. 8 : Jewish cultural topographies in the Marais

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[839] Colette Bismuth-Jarrassé and Dominique Jarassé, "Fragments d'un quartier juifs," in *Le Marais, mythe et réalité*, ed. Jean Pierre Babelon and Claude Malecot (Paris: Caisse nationale des monuments historiques et des sites Picard, 1987), 221.

[840] Aline Benain, "Le Pletzl: tentative de définition," in *Vivre et survivre dans le Marais*, ed. Jean-Pierre Azéma (Paris: Editions Le Manuscrit, 2005), 313.

[841] Charles Fegdal, "Le ghetto parisien," *La Cité: Bulletin Trimestriel de la Société Historique et Archéologique du IVe arrondissement de Paris* 14e année, no. 55 (1915): 235.

[842] UI, 10.10.1930.

[843] Paraf, "Le Ghetto de Paris."

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In *Du rébecca rue des Rosiers* the French crime novelist Léo Malet sends his protagonist Nestor Burma into the 1950s Marais. Descending into Rue des Rosiers Burma describes his impressions as following:

> "I left the sidewalk in order not to disturb the whispering conversations of two old Jews with round caps [...]. I may imagine it but the dominating atmosphere, despite the cheerful noise of the children and the very ordinary types shouting from one sidewalk to another in a foreign language, is that of an ancestral malediction. There is without doubt what is called, inaccurately according to my opinion, the ghetto. The word evokes sinister images. The Ghetto! A very liberal ghetto and a good point of departure for advancement. From the Métro Saint-Paul, next door, its just eight stops to the Champs-Elysées. Many Jews have made this voyage and one rarely sees them again here."[844]

For representatives of the Jewish establishment regarded the Eastern European Jewish subculture in the heart of Paris as a threat to their own position. A statement made by Jules Mayer, a prominent figure of the Parisian community, in 1925 is symptomatic. "The walls of Paris must no longer be covered with Hebrew characters," he declared and emphasised his viewpoint by openly attacking Eastern European cultural expressions: "Paris must cease being flooded with Yiddish newspapers, books, films, and plays."[845] A similar example is the harsh criticism of persistence of the "language of the ghetto" the "jargon" among the Jewish immigrants Hippolyte Prague, the chief editor of *Archives Israélites*.[846] The attack of the Yiddish speaking, anachronistic area of the city and its inhabitants provoked a number of responses idealising the Pletzl.

In a remarkable book, Raymond Hesse captures the Eastern European Jewish experience from the old home in Russia to Paris. The title of the book that appeared in 1928 is already illuminating – "Voyage from *rue des Écouffes to rue des Rosiers*". Despite the small space the two short crossroads in the centre of the Jewish Marais occupy geographically, they represent a space of memories, dreams, images and impressions that is spacious enough for a voyage. Indeed both Hesse's account and the accompanying woodcuts by Gabriel Belot engage Jewish life in general and in Paris in particular in a highly diverse manner. The introductory passage to the text explicitly dealing with the Jewish quarter of Paris puts forward a highly ambivalent

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[844] Léo Malet, *Du rébecca rue des Rosiers: les nouveaux mystères de Paris (IVᵉ arrondissement)* (Paris: Union générale d'Éditions, 1987), 139. The novel was first published in 1958.
[845] UI, 03.07.1925 quoted after Hyman, "From Parternalism to Cooptation: The French Jewish Consistory and the Immigrants, 1906-1939," 219.
[846] AI, 05.05.1932.

image of its area and its residence, portraying it as a place where reality and nostalgia interplay.

> "Here we can see them all, the fat and the skinny Jews, the Jewish dreamer and the Jewish jester. Here we see them all with our prejudices, our pride and our disgust. And we will make an excursion to rue des Rosiers and into Rue des Écouffes for it is there that our brethren present themselves to us and because it is here that we will find vanishing memories to our home village."

Hesse elaborates on this ambivalence by contrasting foreignness and intimacy of the Pletzl dwellers. Further down we read:

> "Here the shop signs speak a foreign language and the people here wear fur hats and clothes that are too wide ... They are friendly in their misery, knowing that it is written in the book of Job that the glam of wisdom shines brighter than that of pearls. And they would be tempted to tell the passers-by starring at them 'Stand out of my sunlight' if only the sun would shine in Rue des Rosiers and in Rue des Écouffes."[847]

Hesse, himself native French, juxtaposed the ambivalence of the foreignness of the area and its inhabitants with a nostalgic idealisation of Eastern European Jews as the bearers of authenticity. Moreover, as a later section of his *Voyage* shows, he is convinced that Paris is a city with a particularly strong integrating power and that hence foreign elements are to be welcomed. Emphasising his point, Hesse employs a strong, rather odd example. As the obelisk on Place de la Concorde - deported from Egypt "incorporated into our soil" becoming "one of our integral monuments and conserving its language and its myth at the same time" – Paris will take in the foreignness of the immigrants.[848]

Similarly, the Pletzl served even integrated Jewish immigrants as a link between their new home Paris and their life in the old country. Thus, Yehouda or Jacques – as he called himself later - Tchernoff born in Nizhny Novgorod who had come to France at the beginning of the century where he became a successful lawyer, was drawn by "irresistible nostalgia" to visit the Jewish Marais time and again for it was by wandering around this area that he "regained old memories". The typology of his co-religionists evoked in him memories of both his religious upbringing and the world of Russian Jewish life and of pogroms and persecution, he had experienced.[849]

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[847] Raymond Gaston Hesse and Gabriel Belot, *Voyage de la rue des Écouffes à la rue des Rosiers: Vingt bois originaux du peintre graveur Gabriel Belot - Vingt croquis littéraires de Raymond Hesse: accompagnés de lettres ornées en couleur de d'ornements typographiques dessinés et gravés par l'illustrateur* (Paris: H. Blanchetière, 1928), n.p. - Section "Rue des Rosiers".
[848] Ibid., Le Sphinx.
[849] J[acques] Tchernoff, *De l'affaire Dreyfus au dimanche rouge à Saint-Pétersbourg* (Paris: Éditions Rieder, 1937), 15-16.

Transitory spaces and the experience of urban exile

> "We decided that I ought to leave town [Warsaw] as soon as possible.
> I have to admit that going to Paris was a highly alluring prospect. I once read in Maxim Gorky that every revolutionary must travel to Paris and visit the Bastille, and at that time, I had made a resolution to go there someday. Now, however, I regretted leaving, for I did not want to separate from my parents, from the movement and most of all from my comrades. [...] The only person who came with me to the station was my father. He bought me a ticket to Bendin, and from there I had to cross the border on the sly."[850]

> "The last days in Berlin during the fall of 1933 were characterised by fear and horror. We phoned numerous acquaintances and friends. We hoped to hear good news [...]. We grabbed all the money we still had. [...] Catholic friends accompanied us to the train station taking a great personal risk for it was illegal to see Jewish friends off. [Our little daughter] Ursula received gifts and did not realise that we were fleeing but rather looked forward to travelling to Paris."[851]

The accounts of Hersh Mendel and Gertrud Isolani stand for experiences of thousands of Jews forced to leave Tsarist Russia and Nazi Germany respectively during the first half of the twentieth century, turning towards Paris with the hope to find a refuge there or even a new home.

Train station, these modern cathedrals, places of farewell and welcome, of departure and arrival are among the foremost urban places representing the immigrants and refugees' trajectory. As the above quoted passages show, the train station is the place where leaving the former home becomes manifest and it is the train station again where the first encounter with the new world takes place.

In the introductory poem "Zone", to his 1913 collection *Alcools* Guillaume Apollinaire captures the scene of immigrants arriving at a Paris train station as well as their hopes and dreams at this urban point of departure.

> "You look into the plain tear-filled eyes of these poor emigrants|
> They believe in God [...]||
> They fill the hall of the [... train] station with their odour| [...]
> They hope to make money in Argentina|
> And to return to their country of origin after having made a fortune|
> One family carries around a red duvet like you carry your heart|
> This duvet and our dreams are unreal too|
> Some of these emigrants stay here and lodge|
> in Rue des Rosiers or rue des Écouffes in the dive|
> I have seen them often in the evenings when they try to get fresh air in the street|
> and they rarely move like the chess pieces|
> Most of them are Jews [...]."[852]

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[850] Mendel, *Memoirs of a Jewish revolutionary*, 126-28.

[851] Gertrud Isolani, *Kein Blatt vor dem Mund : Briefe, Gespräche, Begegnungen* (Basel: Basileia-Verl., 1985), 145.

[852] « Tu regardes les yeux plains de larmes ces pauvres émigrants | Ils croient en Dieu [...] | Ils emplissent de leur odeur le hall de la gare [...] | Ils espèrent gagner de l'argent dans l'Argentine | Et

Train stations are among the first urban space where their dreams, hopes and often with an idealised vision of the new city clashed with the urban reality.

Arriving in a foreign city, immigrants, refugees or exiles face the challenge of finding a place to stay.

For many – especially those having no acquaintances or friends hosting them upon their arrival – hotels became the first destination. Like the train station, the hotel thus served as a point of arrival in the city, a space where the initial contact with the new urban environment took place and a place, which served as point of departure for reconnoitring the city and its potentials to make it a new home.

For most Jewish immigrants and refugees Gare du Nord and Gare de l'Est respectively became the modern gates through which they entered Paris. Many of the newly arrivals found their first accommodation on one of the many cheap hotels close to these two stations.[853]

The hotel is among the foremost urban structures. It allows investigating diverse urban practices and becomes itself a "spatial paradigm of metropolitan modernity".[854] As transitory and transitional spaces, hotels represent both the fluidity of the modern city and more importantly the obliteration of home and the loss of stability and grounding. What Hersh Mendel recalls in his autobiography can be taken as a common experience of newcomers arriving in the city.

> "Late that night we arrived in Paris. The streets were empty. I had half a franc left from the trip and my traveling companion another half a franc. We decided to use our remaining cash to put ourselves up in a hotel room for the night. After a long search we found a hotel. Did I sleep that night? I can't remember, but I definitely spent the night with a heavy heart. What would I do the next day?"[855]

Mendel continues his narrative with an account of the agony to establish himself in Paris and his subsequent failure. Although he manages to receive funds by an aid association to stay for some more weeks in another hotel he does not succeed in finding work and thus ends up among the Parisian clochards. In his desperation Mendel attempts to get to London where his brother lives but is turned back by British

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revenir dans leur pays après avoir fait fortune | Une famille transporte un édredon rouge comme vous transportez votre cœur | Cet édredon et nos rêves sont aussi irréels | Quelques-uns de ces émigrants restent ici et se logent | Rue des Rosiers ou rue des Écouffes dans des bouges | Je les ai vus souvent le soir ils prennent l'air dans la rue | Et se déplacent rarement comme les pièces aux échecs | Il y a surtout des Juifs ... » Guillaume Apollinaire, *Alcools, poèmes 1898-1913* (Paris: Éditions de La Nouvelle revue française, 1920), 13-14.

[853] Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?* , 90.

[854] Siegfried Kracauer is a key theorist in this context. In numerous essays, he explored urban life through the lens of hotels. For a discussion of Kracauer's hotel-writings cf. Marc Katz, "The Hotel Kracauer," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 11, no. 2 (1999): quote from p. 136.

[855] Mendel, *Memoirs of a Jewish revolutionary*, 128.

border. Back on the Continent, entirely broke, he decides to walk back to the capital city that once was such appealing to him. Most Jewish refugees coming to the French capital during the following decades started their life in one of the Parisian hotels too.[856]

Especially the thousands of German Jews leaving Germany after the Nazis came to power set up in cheap Parisian hotels hoping to be able start a new life in the French capital. Most of them stayed in one of the many cheap hotels upon arriving in Paris. In these hotels – having almost no resemblance with the Grand hotels described by Kracauer – one could rend a room for a week for as little as 30 to 35 Francs.[857] Consequently these hotels lacked any luxury and comfort, where the room with kitchenette, its yellowish wallpaper and the worn out chairs exuded sadness and where the fuse tripped upon trying to exchange the 15 Watt light bulb at the bedside table for a stronger one."[858]

The emigrant poet Walter Mehring has captured the depressing atmosphere of these "little hotels," these tiny spaces of refuge:

> "Washed up from the station in the stream of the masses | Fever caused by the dwindling of your last money | You are driven through narrowing alleyways | That make a turn towards the dosshouses, | To the small hotels."[859]

Mehring continues his lyrical portrait of the small hotels by stating that once signed in "you are sentenced to livelong | Stay in the small hotels", sentenced to tiny rooms, with plaster tickling down the walls onto the bed, "soaked with the cold sweet of foreign dreams rising from the rubbish of the small Hotels".[860]

Mehring's lyrical description culminates in the lines:

> "If you attempt to flee from this labyrinth of passageways | the bell shrills instantaneously with rage | the closet will catch you with their fangs | and gradually it will shrink entirely to become a coffin | the small hotels, | the small hotels, | the small hotels."[861]

Other emigrants too describe the nightmarish aspects of the hotel-existence aggravated by the material misery many of them had to live.

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[856] Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?* , 87.

[857] Comité d'assistance aux réfugiés (CAR), *Rapport de l'exercice 1939* (Paris 1939), 12.

[858] Henry Jacoby, *Davongekommen: 10 Jahre Exil 1936 - 1946; Prag, Paris, Montauban, New York, Washington ; Erlebnisse und Begegnungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Sendler, 1982), 57.

[859] Walter Mehring, "Die kleinen Hotels," in *Lyrik des Exils*, ed. Wolfgang Emmerich (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1985), 156-57.

[860] „Dort fällst Du mit der Tür in sieche Räume, | zu Häupten droht im Sturz der Mauerfels. | Pitschnaß das Bett vom Angstschweiß fremder Träume, | die aufquellen | aus den Abfällen der kleinen Hotels."

[861] „Versuch zu fliehen aus dem Wust von Gängen, | schon schrillt die Glocke wütenden Gebells. | Tapetenranken fangen Dich in ihren Fängen | bis sich allmählich ganz zum Sarg verengen | die kleinen Hotels, | die kleinen Hotels, | die kleinen Hotels."

"Our hotel entered my dreams for a long time," recalls Monique Köpke. "It was a dark hotel," she continues her account, "and the memories of the life in this hotel open pandora's box. So many sad scenes come out of it and follow me ever since. One image follows another. The lack of money was our daily leitmotif. I recall evenings when my Mum had not a single centime left for dinner."[862]

On his strolls around the Parisian hotels, Siegfried Kracauer experienced hotels in a very different way from the grand hotels he had visited while still in Berlin. In contrast to the magnificent city within the city, the cheap hotels of Paris appeared to Kracauer as spaces characterised by nightmares that resemble tombs.[863]

Despite the desolate conditions, the hotel held other uncertainties to the emigrants such as the constant concern of raising the money for the rent. The Concierge became a figure represented the precariousness of the hotel existence. They were the one to beg for deferment of paying rent.[864] They posed a daily obstacle for those illegally sharing rooms in order to save money.[865] Moreover, many concierges had a reputation of being anti-Semitic and anti-German and frequently reporting illegal emigrants to the police.[866] Despite these negative depictions, hotels for many became the first refuge amidst the unknown, the uncertainties of exile where new networks were formed helping to find one's way in the new urban environment.

In her 1929 novel *People in the Hotel*, Vicky Baum describes a group of very different people, strangers to each other, who pass coincidentally through a Berlin Grand Hotel on the same weekend. In her narrative the hotel hence becomes a place where the unrelated lives of a fading prima ballerina, shady nobleman and others are entangles, a place where anonymity and encounter intersect.[867] Made into an Oscar winning film some years later Baum's novel highlights the paradox of detachment, anonymity and encounters many refugees experienced settling into their cheap rooms in Parisian pensions or hotels too.

Two years prior to Baum's novel, Joseph Kessel born into a family of Russian-Jewish immigrants in Argentina who had come to study in Paris, published his novel "Nuits de Princes". La Pension Mesureux providing the scene for the first half of the novel

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[862] Köpke, *Nachtzug nach Paris*, 111.
[863] Siegfried Kracauer, "Pariser Hotel [1936]," in *Siegfried Kracauer: Schriften. 5.3. Aufsätze 1932-1965*, ed. Inka Mülder-Bach (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990).
[864] Köpke, *Nachtzug nach Paris*, 112.
[865] Fittko, *Solidarität unerwünscht : meine Flucht durch Europa : Erinnerungen 1933-1940*.
[866] Ernst Heidelberger, "Une vie en tranches," in *Exilés en France*, ed. Gilbert Badia (Paris: F. Maspero, 1982), 200.
[867] Vicki Baum, *Menschen im Hotel; ein Kolportageroman mit Hintergründen* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1931). An English translation followed in the same year under the title *Grand Hotel*.

becomes the place where various types of Russian refugees come together, slowly developing contacts to each other, intermingle, developing a refugee hotel community.[868] There are indications that similar communities of solidarity or those sharing the experience of exile in Paris developed among German-Jewish refugees in Parisian hotels in the 1930s too.[869] Moreover, numerous refugees sought to move into the same hotel hoping for a network of support in the unknown city. Emigrants exchanged their hotel addresses they wished to live close to one another.[870] Thus, as Julia Franke shows, larger groups of emigrants frequented certain hotels making them over time into "islands where people established close links to each other."[871] For others the hotel however was nothing more than a stopgap solution on the way to find a more stable place in Paris. Gertrud Isolani's account is typical of many German Jews arriving in Paris after 1933. She describes that she, her husband and their little daughter stayed together in a tiny Paris hotel room with no other furniture than a small rickety table and without a bathroom, having to share one bed for the first months upon their arrival in France.

Moreover, she recalled, how difficult it was for her, having come from Berlin, where the family had lived in a spacious flat with bathroom, to come to terms with the Parisian conditions. While for Hersh Mendel the stay in the hotel means a certain comfort many refugees in the thirties tried to exchange the hotel existence for an own – however modest – flat.

The first hotel room Isolanti and her family stayed was followed by a small flat near the Seine. Attempting to regain at least a bit of the Berlin comfort the Isolantis soon decided to move to the Parisian suburbs to find a place to stay and one that offered the "luxury" of her own bathroom.[872] Allowing themselves such a luxury was only made possible by the fact that both Gertrud Isolanti and her husband were able to earn money soon after arriving in Pairs – she as secretary at the foremost émigré newspaper the *Pariser Tageblatt* and her husband as self-made *parfumeur*, creating his products in the bathtub at home.[873]

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[868] Joseph Kessel, *Nuits de princes* (Paris: Les Editions de France, 1927).

[869] Köpke, *Nachtzug nach Paris*.

[870] Fittko, *Solidarität unerwünscht : meine Flucht durch Europa : Erinnerungen 1933-1940*, 167 f.

[871] Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?* , 87.

[872] Isolani, *Kein Blatt vor dem Mund : Briefe, Gespräche, Begegnungen*, 146.

[873] It points to the centrality of Paris as a centre of German refugees that the Pariser Tageblatt – later following a major scandal involving its editor renamed Pariser Tageszeitung – was the only German speaking daily newspaper published by emigrants fleeing Nazi Germany. One of the central issues on the agenda of the Tageblatt was to provide the emigrant community with both helpful information on how to set up in Paris. Georg Bernhard pointed to another central concern of the paper when he

This development was typical for the majority of German refugees. The longer they stayed in Paris, along with occupational integration, they exchanged the hotel room for a permanent flat.[874]

Nonetheless, a number of German-Jewish refugees were not as fortunate and circumstances forced them to remain in transitory accommodation. In face of the exodus from Germany towards Paris, French-Jewish aid societies were eager to provide the newcomers with basic housing support upon their arrival.

Just a month after its foundation in April 1933 the Comité d'Aide et d'Accueil aux Victimes de l'Antisémitisme en Allemagne started to accommodate newly arrived Jews in various Parisian hotels on a grand scale.

In its first proceedings, the general secretary of the Comité d'Aide et d'Accueil declared, "the accommodation service continues to function at the greatest satisfaction of all." The report outlined the continuing search for further hotels. To be suitable for the work of the Comité these hotels should be located ideally in close proximity to restaurants in order to minimise cost, i.e. to avoid the extra cost of transportation towards the refugees by providing them with shelter and food in the same paces. Despite the general satisfaction, the first report also emphasised that the Comité in face of the growing number of refugees was considering cheaper solutions than that of accommodating refugees in hotels.[875]

During the last ten days of May 1933 alone, 259 hotel rooms were allocated to German Jewish refugees. An additional 620 accommodation vouchers were given

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stated in its first issue that the Tageblatt was committed to the "unshakeable democratic principles of France" grateful to French hospitality. As a "Parisian Newspaper", Bernhard continued, the Tageblatt covered both French and German news in an attempt to provide the German emigrants with a true picture of the development on the other side of the Rhine as well as news in German from there country of refuge and its capital. It is noteworthy that Bernhard's editorial appeared in both French and German on the front page of the first issue, while the other articles were published almost exclusively in German. PTB, 12.12.1933. There are several studies on the newspaper. Cf. Walter Frederick Peterson, "The German left-liberal Press in exile: George Bernhard and the circle of emigre journalists around the "Pariser Tageblatt" - "Pariser Tageszeitung" 1933-1940" (PHD, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1982), Walter F. Peterson, The Berlin Liberal Press in Exile: A History of the Pariser Tageblatt--Pariser Tageszeitung, 1933-1940 (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1987), Gerda Raßler, Pariser Tageblatt, Pariser Tageszeitung, 1933-1940 : eine Auswahlbibliographie (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1989), Hélène Roussel and Lutz Winckler, eds., Deutsche Exilpresse und Frankreich 1933-1940 (Bern; Berlin; Frankfurt a.M.; New York; Paris; Wien: Lang, 1992), Michaela Enderle-Ristori, Markt und intellektuelles Kräftefeld: Literaturkritik im Feuilleton von "Pariser Tageblatt" und "Pariser Tageszeitung" (1933-1940) (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1997), Hélène Roussel and Lutz Winckler, Rechts und links der Seine : Pariser Tageblatt und Pariser Tageszeitung 1933-1940 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2002).

[874] Roussel and Winckler, "Zur Topographie des literarischen und publizistischen Exils in Paris," 134.
[875] Compte-Rendu N° 1: Activité du Secrétariat Général du 10 au 20 Mai 1933, ACIP, Serie A, C.P. 1 Réfugiès Allemands, boîte 1, dossier 1.c

out and another 193 rooms in the *Palais du Peuple*[876] were made available as temporary accommodation.[877] Besides the Comité *d'Aide et d'Accueil* other refugee aid societies participated in the provision of food and lodging. The *Comité pour la Défense des Juifs persécutés en Allemagne*, for instance, gave out 2,500 hotel vouchers during the first ten months of 1933.[878]

The following months saw an extensive remodelling of the refugee aid in France. In part due to governmental pressure, various refugee organisations formed a new umbrella organisation in June 1933 aiming for a better coordination of the different aid societies' work. The *Comité national de secours aux réfugiés allemands victimes de l'antisémitisme*, as the official title of the new organisation reads, was meant as an explicitly a-political institution. It is noteworthy that not a single representative of the German refugees participated in the work of the *Comité National* presided over by the former prime minister Paul Painlevé and Robert de Rothschild and funded by a number of international organisations such as the Alliance Israélite Universelle, the American Joint Distribution Committee and the Central British Fund for German Jewry.[879] Despite this international support, the Comité's work was guided by the "superior interest of France" as the member of the executive committee Jacques Helbronner declared.[880] The success of the centralisation of the aid work was only partial and did not last long. After operating for a bit more than a year, the French government decided to close the central office of the Comité in August 1934 – apparently out of financial reasons.[881]

Despite efforts to coordinate the refugee aid, it soon became apparent that the provision of hotel rooms could not be sustained. Over the term of a couple weeks in the summer of 1933, the figures of vouchers allowing the recipients to stay in a hotel for one week handed out rose from some 200 by the end of July to more than 900 in

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[876] Located in the in the 13th arrondissement the Palais du Peuple was and still is run by the Salvation Army. It is noteworthy that Le Corbusier was commissioned with extending the complex in the mid-1920s as part of his major building project of the *Cité de Refuge*. Cf. Brian Brace Taylor, *Le Corbusier, the City of Refuge, Paris 1929-33* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

[877] Paris, AIU, France X D 56, *Comité d'Aide et d'Accueil aux Victimes de l'Antisémitisme en Allemagne*: Compte – Rendu N° 2, Activité du Secrétariat Général du 20 au 30 Mai 1933.

[878] Afoumado, "Les relations entre "Israélites français" et Juifs immigrés durant les années trente."

[879] Ursula Langkau-Alex, *Deutsche Volksfront 1932-1939 : zwischen Berlin, Paris, Prag und Moskau*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004-2005), 1:42.

[880] Quoted after Anne Grynberg, "L'accueil des réfugiés d'Europe centrale en France (1933-1939)," *Les cahiers de la Shoah*, no. 1 (1994).

[881] On the Comité National cf. PTB, 30.07.1934 and 11.08.1934 as well as Jean-Baptiste Joly, "L'Aide aux émigrés juifs: Le Comité national de secours," in *Les Bannis de Hitler*, ed. Gilbert Badia (Paris; Vincennes: Etudes et documentation internationales; Presses universitaires de Vincennes, 1984), especially Chapitre III, Epstein, "Les institutions israélites françaises de 1929 à 1939: Solidarité juive et lutte contre l'antisémitisme".

the second week of August.[882] The costs for hotel accommodation between 12 July and 30 September 1933 alone totalled 22,668 francs.[883]

Thus, by September the Comité d'Aide et d'Accueil shifted the focus of its activities towards the provision of food.[884] Furthermore, the newly formed Comité National entered into negotiations with the ministry of war and the prefect of the Seine concerning the use of army sites for the accommodation of Jewish refugees.[885] The rededication of unused barracks for the accommodation of refugees meant a deterioration of the living conditions as W. Strauß calling them "Parisian concentration camps" described drastically in his accounts send back to Berlin in 1933:

> "In the barracks at the Port d'Italie a palliasse on the bare floor serves as bed. In the Saint Maur barracks, 36 people sleep in on shack: military principles prevail, latrines replace toilets, and the food is times and again made from meat that is off. The answer to these conditions – hunger-strike!
> The first inmates are already moving on ... first into hospitals ... and, one speaks already about de-barracking! Those, who have received support by the Committee for some time and have to leave the barracks face a dreadful prospect. At first, they will sleep under the bridges over the Seine. And in Winter ...? Deathly twitches ..."[886]

The conditions in the refugee barracks were widely discussed. In his novel Exil, Leon Feuchtwanger's protagonist Oskar Tschernning experiences the draconic treatments at the Saint Maur barracks.[887]

Despite these conditions, the emigrant press expressed concerns when the plan to close the barracks was made public. On 16 January 1934, the Tageblatt titled "Dissolution of the barracks at last? What will happen to the destitute residents?" The report stated that the Comité National supervising the accommodation of the refugees had promised to find a different solution to the problem. For instance, the Comité intended to shift a larger number of emigrants to the province to employ them in the agricultural sector and to enable their departure to Palestine respectively. Returning to its previous policy the Comité intended to accommodate the remaining immigrants in hotels again. Thus U-turn in was justified with a remarkable argument:

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[882] Comité d'Aide et d'Accueil, Rapports, 21.07. -03.08.1933, AIU, AIU, France X D 56.
[883] Comité d'Aide et d'Accueil, Rapports, 01.08. 1933, AIU, France X D 56.
[884] Ibid.
[885] Comité National, Rapports, Compte – rendu jusqu'au 16 Octobre 1933, AIU, France X D 56.[886] W. Strauß, "Erlebnisse eines jüdischen Emigranten: Wo ist die größte Not? 1. Fortsetzung," Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung 13, no. 23 (1933).
[887] Lion Feuchtwanger, Exil : Roman (Amsterdam: Querido Verlag, 1940), 69 ff.

> "It is hoped that by returning to the original form of care the emigrants will find their way into French life and thought quicker. That they will learn the foreign language and find opportunities to get employed through the constant encounter with the French environment."[888]

In other words, the hotel now became seen as integrated part of Parisian life, especially suited to foster the integration of the refugees into French society. The *Tageblatt*, however, remained sceptical emphasising that the question at issue was not only one of the emigrants' willingness to integrate into French society but one of legal and administrative modifications making it easier to get a work permit. The decision to give up the barrack experiment was however not exclusively the result of a change in policy but rooted in incidents that had occurred in the previous summer. Considering the conditions for those living in the decommissioned barracks, it is not surprising that riot erupted. The first food riots occurred at the Saint Maur camp in August 1933. The fall saw a full-fledged riot at the Andral Hospital. Representatives of the native community reacted bewildered to these protests. The president of the Comité Nationale Robert de Rothschild even demanded that the police expel the ringleaders who had not "the least recognition for the hospitality offered by our country."[889] Rothschild's attempt to uphold the myth of French hospitality offered to refugees became increasingly difficult in the wake of deteriorating political situation in the second half of the 1930s. As so often, foreigners became a major target of political propaganda depicting them as scapegoats for the situation. People previously welcomed as enemies of the Nazi regime where no labelled as unwanted aliens. The barracking of refugees foreshadowed the drastic deterioration of the refugees' situation some years later. On 2 May 1938, the conservative government succeeded in passing a law intending the expulsion or police surveillance of illegal immigrants. Some months later, the first detention camps were established that in accordance with the decreed of 12 November 1938 ought to "secure the expulsion of the unwelcome."[890] These events were just the foreplay the encounter with the devil in France – an expression coined by Lion Feuchtwanger.[891]

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[888] PTB, 16.01.1934.

[889] Caron, *Uneasy Asylum*, 100.

[890] Cf. Barbara Vormeier, "Législation répressive et émigration (1939-1939)," in *Les barbelés de l'exil*, ed. Gilbert Badia (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1979), Barbara Vormeier, "Les internés allemands et autrichiens en 1939-1940," in *Les barbelés de l'exil*, ed. Gilbert Badia (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1979).

[891] Lion Feuchtwanger, *The devil in France : my encounter with him in the summer of 1940* (New York: Viking Press, 1941).

"I do not belong in a flat ... only the hotel has liberated me"

Compared to the desolate condition of the refugee barracks the limited space of even a tiny room in one of the cheapest Parisian hotel must have appeared luxurious.

Not all Parisian hotels where refugees lived resembled nightmarish tombs and not all refugees saw the hotel, despite the relatively high costs, as a temporary condition. Indeed, staying in the hotel could for some was a conscious decision. Many refugees coming to Paris were convinced that their stay in Paris would be a short one and that the political situation in Germany would soon change, allowing them to return. In this context looking for a more permanent lodging in a rented flat would probably have meant too much of a commitment or was simply regarded as unnecessary. In turn, the decision to move into a flat was besides financial considerations an expression of the intention to stay in Paris and to make it a new home.[892] In a poem written in exile in Danmark, Bertold Brecht has captured this ambivalence between staying on and hoping to return soon. As a setting for his "Thoughts on the Duration of Exile," exploring the ambivalence many emigrants encountered Brecht uses unsurprisingly the hotel.

> "Don't knock any nails in the wall | Just throw your coat on the chair. | Why plan for four days? | Tomorrow you'll go back home", reads the first verse of his poem. From the hotel room the poems moves to the courtyard of the edifice where a little tree stands. "Leave the little tree without water. | Why plant a tree now? | You'll pack your bags and be away."

The second half of the poem then contrasts these high hopes of a quick return with the following lines:

> "Look at the nail you knocked into the wall: | When do you think you will go back? | [...] Look at the little chestnut tree in the corner of the yard – | You carried a full can of water to it."[893]

Others deliberately chose to stay in hotels. On 15 February 1935, Joseph Roth wrote to Stefan Zweig, "You were absolutely right; I do not belong in a flat. It was the last time that I undertook such a foolish experiment", and he continues, "Only the hotel has liberated me a bit." The liberation Roth refers to was foremost the overcoming of a writer's block. "With 10 francs a day, without interruptions of my controlling fiends

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[892] Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?* , 88.
[893] Bertolt Brecht, "Gedanken über die Dauer des Exils," in *Bertolt Brecht: Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Suhrkamp Verlag and Elisabeth Hauptmann, vol. 9: Gedichte 2 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1967). The English translation is taken from Bertolt Brecht, *Poems* (London: Methuen, 1976).

and a bottle of Marc it's cheaper. Tonight I will start a new with the second part of [my novel],"[894] Roth declares to his fellow emigrant and friend Zweig.

Even for people like Roth the hotel existence was difficult to afford. The various hotel letterheads Roth wrote on and the repeated reference to his desperate financial situation indicate this.[895] Rudolf S. Joseph, a successful Berlin actor describes a similar situation that forced him to exchange the room at the Astoria for a less expensive and luxurious hotel. "Soon, by different experiences," Joseph notes in his memories, "I became aware of my new situation as an 'exile.'"[896]

A Jewish refuge on Montmartre

Hotels were not the only transitory urban spaces providing an initial refuge for newly arrivals in Paris. A particular Jewish space of this type was the *Asile Israélite de Nuit et de Jour* (Jewish night and day Asylum). The Asile – similar to the Jews' Temporary Shelter in London – was the result of Eastern European Jewish self-aid.[897] Jewish immigrants from Russia and Romania founded it in 1900.[898] As in the case of the London shelter, the Asile was the brainchild of a Jewish immigrant who had come to Paris in previous years. Moïse Fleischer who had found work in the hosiery and cotton print business was the "soul" of the Asile and its first president until his death in 1905.[899]

The early development of the Asile reflects the trajectories of the Parisian Jewish community at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Although the Asile faced similar accusations to those directed against the London Shelter, e.g. of unhygienic conditions or that the very knowledge of its existence enticed refugees to come to Paris; it did not face a hostile community establishment. Although the relationship with institutions such as the Alliance was not entirely free of conflicts in the initial years the Asile soon one the community's moral and financial

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[894] Letter by Joseph Roth to Stefan Zweig, 15.02.1935 in: Joseph Roth, *Briefe 1911-1939: Herausgegeben und eingeleitet von Hermann Kesten* (Köln; Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1970), 402-04.

[895] Cf. various papers by Joseph Roth in the archival collection of the *Das Neue Tagebuch*, BA, R 8046 /4

[896] Rudolph S. Joseph, "Paris under different Aspects 1926-1977," Exilarchiv DNB, EB 96/111: 42.

[897] UI, 15.01.1915. Paula Hyman, *The Jews of modern France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 129.

[898] "Asile de jour israélite, Rapports des exercices (1905-20)," AIU, France IH1 and the dossier "Associations cultuelles" in ACIP, B78, cf. also Speiser, ed., *Yidish-frantzoyzisher "Kalendar" - Calendrier-annuaire israélite pour l'année 5671*, 61 f.

[899] Nancy L. Green, "To Give and to Receive: Philanthropy and Collective Responsibility Among Jews in Paris, 1880-1914," in *The Uses of Charity*, ed. Peter Mandler (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 212.

backing.[900] The newspapers of the native community *L'Univers Israelite* and *Archives Israelites* admired the "discreet and quiet work" of the new institution, complimented its efforts as doing honour to the Parisian Jewish community. Moreover, representatives of the establishment openly supported the Asile. The grand rabbis gave the Asile their spiritual patronage and financial support soon came from the Alliance Israélite Universelle, the Merzbach family and the Rothschilds.[901]

Set up initially in 15, Rue du Figuier in the centre of the traditional centre of Jewish immigrants in the Marais the Asile was move to 12, rue des Saules at the food of the Montmartre in 1910 and a year later to an even larger edifice more suitable for its purposes in 16, Rue Lamarck also at the Montmartre.[902] The dislocation of the Asile reflected the transformation of the Parisian Jewish immigrant community around the turn of the century as well as the changing character of the institution itself. While the Marais, with the streets around Rue des Rosiers remained the point of arrival of many Jewish newcomers many of those who had arrived in previous decades, having climbed up the social ladder, followed the movement towards the western arrondissement. The Montmartre district in the eighteenth arrondissement became a centre of Roumanian and Russian Jews, most of them artisans and intellectuals.

After its dislocation to Montmartre in 1911, the Asile that initially provided food and temporary lodging to new immigrants also established a nursery for preschool children of working mothers.[903] The *Asile de jour* was added to the initial night asylum on 16, Rue des Cloÿs (Montmartre) in 1914 where it existed until combined with the *Asile de nuit* in the building on Rue de Lamarck in 1923.[904]

By the late 1930s, the asylum ranked was the second largest Jewish welfare institution in Paris after the *Comité de Bienfaisance* with an annual budget of 800.000 francs.[905]

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[900] Ibid., 213.
[901] Ibid.
[902] Green, *The Pletzl of Paris: Jewish Immigrant Workers in the Belle Epoque*, 93.
[903] Hyman, *From Dreyfus to Vichy*, 75. Cf. also Dossier de demande en reconnaissance d'autorité publique de la Société Philanthropique de l'Asile de Nuit et de la Crèche Israélites, CD*JC*, Cote : LXVI-1(19-31)
[904] Ensemble de documents concernant l'Association Philanthropique de l'Asile de Nuit, Asile de Jour et de la Crèche Israélites de Paris, de 1914 à 1939, CDJC, Cote: LXVI-1. Cf. also Green, *The Pletzl of Paris: Jewish Immigrant Workers in the Belle Epoque*, 93. The institution still exists today.
[905] A. A., "Yidishe gezelshaftn un institutsies in pariz in 1939," in *Yidn in Frankraikh: shtudyes un materialn,* ed. Elihu Tcherikover, vol. II (New York: Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut - YIVO, 1942), 253.

The Asile was one of the rare spaces in the Jewish topography of Paris were native community, Eastern European Jewish immigrants and German-Jewish refugees came together and into contact with one another.

It played a significant role in the effort of Parisian Jewry to accommodate the Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany and later from Austria.

A short article in the *Pariser Tageblatt* reveals the enormous support of the Asile for the German Refugees. In 1933, alone the institution provided almost 200,000 meals and provided more than 50,000 overnight stays and almost the same number during the first eight months of 1934.[906] Facing this enormous demand, the *Association Philantropique de l'asile de nuit, de l'asile de jour et de la Creche Israelites* took out appeals for support in the Franco-Jewish and German Exile press. Hence, the above-mentioned article of the *Pariser Tageblatt* called upon those emigrants that had settled in Paris already earning a living to show gratitude for the given aide and to support the *Asile* in Rue de Lamarck.

However, there were others among the German refugees that regarded the Asile far less favourably. In an article on the situation of the emigrants in France Robert Breuer painted a rather sinister picture of the institution. Among the roughly 3000 poor emigrants in Paris, hardly managing to survive were "those two hundred poor" finding refuge at the Jewish asylum in Rue Lamarck. "The atmosphere is dreadful, nerve-racking, and kills all energy," Breuer proclaimed. However, "many are forced to life there, grateful to get shelter and food for free until fate – mostly after a long waiting time – brings about the departure to another country that promises rescue."[907]

Cafés as homestead

Coffee house were another transitory spaces of urban refugees. Different from the hotel the cafés represent a form of "privileged conviviality" a luxury even those frequenting it often could not afford.[908] Some observers go as far as to claim that Paris became the social centre of the world because its "supreme merit is that it is the city of conversation and cafés."[909] While such a claim seems a bit exaggerated, it

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[906] PTB, 30.03.1935.
[907] PTB, 26.03.1935.
[908] Rita R. Thalmann, "Topographie de l'émigration du IIIe Reich à Paris," in *Le Paris des étrangers: depuis un siècle*, ed. André Kaspi and Antoine Marès (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1989), 95.
[909] Ralph Waldo Emerson quoted after W. Scott Haine, *The World of the Paris Café: sociability among the French working class, 1789-1914* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 1. Cf. also the longue durée study by Rebbeca L. Spang on Parisian gastronomic culture. Rebecca L.

is true that turn of the century Paris had the highest number of such establishments compared to other metropolises such as London or New York.[910] Serving various functions Parisian cafés, bistros and brasseries became essential spaces for artists, intellectuals and bohemians but it was for emigrants and refugees that the café gained a part vital importance. Hans Sahl underlines this central function of the cafés for the emigrants when he declares, "for us they were a kind of national homestead [Heimstätte] [...] one lived in the café, one slept in the café, one wrote farewell letters in the café."[911]

The threefold function of shelter, incubator, and stage ascribes to the Belle Epoque café is adaptable for the present context.[912]

On an individual level, the Parisian cafés enabled many German and German-Jewish refugees to re-establish of a sense of being at home. The café, as Sahl states, really became a substitute for the lost home, offering a point of reference in the metropolis. This point is further emphasised by a seemingly paradoxical fact. Merging the spatial instability of exile with the seemingly stability of the known, the continuation of old habits. In this sense, cafés were not only transitory but also transplanted urban spaces. Many of those gathering in the cafés on the rive gauche in 1930s Paris used to come together in the Romanische Café in Berlin some years prior to their flight from Germany.[913]

The Montparnasse district – located at the intersection of the sixth, fourteenth and fifteenth arrondissement, centred on the intersection of Boulevard de Montparnasse and Rue de Rennes – became *the* area where artists, intellectuals congregated. Already prior to World War I, Montparnasse became the new centre of the Parisian avant-garde. Artists such as Marc Chagall or Pablo Picasso constituted the so-called *School of Paris* here.[914]

One of the reasons for the attraction of the area was that in cafés such as *Le Dôme*, *La Closerie des Lilas*, *La Rotonde* or *La Coupole* one could occupy a table all evening for a few *centimes*. The function of the cafés as meeting places, where one

Spang, *The invention of the restaurant : Paris and modern gastronomic culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000).
[910] Ibid., 4.
[911] Hans Sahl, *Die Wenigen und die Vielen : Roman einer Zeit* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1959), 256.
[912] Haine, *The World of the Paris Café: sociability among the French working class, 1789-1914*, 234.
[913] On the Berlin café culture in the 1920s cf. Jürgen Schebera, *Damals im Romanischen Café ... : Künstler und ihre Lokale im Berlin der zwanziger Jahre* (Braunschweig: Westermann, 1988), Georg Zivier, *Das Romanische Café. Erscheinungen und Randerscheinungen rund um die Gedächtniskirche* (Berlin: Haude u. Spener, 1965).
[914] Cf. Silver and Golan, eds., *The Circle of Montparnasse : Jewish artists in Paris, 1905-1945*, Golan, *Modernity and nostalgia : art and politics in France between the wars*.

met acquaintances and friends was even more important. Zinaïda Schakovskoy a young Russian poet who had come to Paris in 1925 recalled, "Whenever I came to Paris, I was sure to find somebody either at the Dôme, at La Coupole, or at the Select." She describes the spontaneous making up of discussion circles the sharing of the "slim finances" and the evolving discussions ranging from Proust to St. Augustine from cheapest possibilities for publishing a book of poetry or the arrangement of a public lecture or a benefit ball. The public space café for many of these artists became an *intérieur* where "romances started and broke up, literary and personal feuds flared and waned; but the prevailing ingredients of all these evenings were gloom and desperation."[915]

The Café du Dôme at the intersection of Boulevard du Montparnasse and Rue Delambre became one of these artistic meeting points in Paris. Already at the turn of the century, members of the Parisian German colony frequented it.[916] Among the "Dômiers" as they were soon called, was a surprisingly large number of Jews – although by far no majority. Although they never constituted an exclusive group, Kenneth E. Silver suggests that they have stuck together a good deal. Besides numerous artists of Jewish descent, other Jews such as the Galician-born dealer and critic Adolphe Basler or the dealer Paul Cassirer congregated at the Dôme.[917]

The Dôme became one of *the* exiles spots in Paris. For Arthur Koestler it was the "centre of his universe."[918] The novel written by Anna Gmeyner after she had moved from Paris to London in 1935 is just another remarkable example for how formative especially this café in Montparnasse was for many emigrants.[919]

A 1933 police report provides a snapshot of the emigrant café scene in Paris.

> "The café 'Le Dôme', Boulevard du Montparnasse, deserves special mentioning in this context. An important part of its clients is at present refugee Jews, among them many writers and journalist, communists, socialists, liberals, pacifists etc. mainly enemies of the Hitler dictatorship. According to their convictions they assemble in groups of 5 to 20 people. Their discussions take place in German and reach an elevated diapason that attracts the attention of the French customers leading to the intervention of the restaurant

[915] Zinaïda Schakovskoy, "Russian Montparnasse," *Russian Review* 31, no. 4 (1972): 362.

[916] Annette Gautherie-Kampka, *Les Allemands du Dôme : la colonie allemande de Montparnasse dans les années 1903-1914* (Bern ; New York: P. Lang, 1995).

[917] Kenneth E. Silver, "The Circle of Montparnasse : Jewish artists in Paris, 1905-1945," in *The Circle of Montparnasse : Jewish artists in Paris, 1905-1945*, ed. Kenneth E. Silver and Romy Golan (New York: Universe Books, 1985).

[918] Kati Marton, *The great escape : nine Jews who fled Hitler and changed the world* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 95.

[919] Anna Gmeyner, *Café du Dome* (London: H. Hamilton, 1941). The original German Manuskrip of *Café du Dome* was probably sent to the Querido publishing house but the German occupation of Amsterdam prevented its publication.

proprietor who is eager to prevent the recent events at the café to repeat themselves."[920]

It is not entirely clear what these "recent events" were. It is most likely however that they refer to one of the frequent arguments, some fuelled by intellect, others by alcohol that sometimes lead to open fights.

For those among the refugees, who had known the Montparnasse prior to their forced return to Paris, Montparnasse was not the same any more. Max Hochdorf's article in the *Pariser Tageblatt* in 1934 was full of nostalgic reminiscences to the spirit of the "old" Dôme back in 1905 that had been a "Bohemian place" not existing any more.[921]

Other contemporaries not only witnessed the end of the pre-war Parisian coffeehouse culture but also foresaw the end of this culture as such. Titling "'Café Royal': New Yorks only outlook towards Europe" an anonymous article in the *Pariser Tageszeitung* described the Dôme among iconic coffee houses across the old continent: the Romanische Café in Berlin, the Herrenhof in Vienna and the Café Conti in Prague. What is striking is that the article refers to these "holy coffee houses in Europe" in the past tense, indicating that are but great names reflecting a grand tradition that is no longer. The remnant of this tradition is to be found across the Atlantic hidden in heart of Manhattan, where the Café Royal allows an "outlook" and a look back to Europe and its bohemian tradition that no longer is possible.[922]

Besides the Dôme, artists and intellectuals from all over the world frequented numerous other cafés and bars in the Montparnasse district.[923] For many refugees these cafés provided a possibility to maintain contacts with fellow emigrants a space to exchange ideas and a network vital for their literary work. Visits in the café thus were a way to escape the isolation of exile.[924]

Paradoxically though this function of the café as meeting place also lead to a self-imposed ghettoisation. Some cafés became real "emigrant ghettos" as Klaus Mann remarked in reference to La Lunte.[925] Ernst Feder, former political editor of the

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[920] APP, dossier BA 1814, Note d'ensemble objective sur les réfugiés allemands, 24 octobre 1933. Here quoted after Anne-Marie Corbin, "Die Bedeutung der Pariser Cafés für die geflohenen deutschsprachigen Literaten," in *Fluchtziel Paris: die deutschsprachige Emigration 1933-1940*, ed. Anne Saint Sauveur-Henn (Berlin: Metropol, 2002).

[921] PTB, 29.04.1934.

[922] PTZ, 12.09.1938.

[923] For a detailed list and description of these cafés cf. Billy Klüver and Julie Martin, "Carrefour Vavin," in *The Circle of Montparnasse : Jewish artists in Paris, 1905-1945*, ed. Kenneth E. Silver and Romy Golan (New York: Universe Books, 1985).

[924] Corbin, "Die Bedeutung der Pariser Cafés für die geflohenen deutschsprachigen Literaten," 88.

[925] Ibid., 91.

Berliner Tageblatt, made similar observations. On 10 October 1933, he noted in his diary that a type of German Jewish ghetto had developed especially around particular cafés existed in Paris.[926]

Most German refugees remained among fellow German-speakers. Several owners even banned German from their cafés hanging up sings "ici on parle français" (French is spoken here).[927] In response, other restaurants and cafés advertised in the German exile press with a German-speaking environment or that many German speakers gathered in them.

Fig. 9: Advertisement of Parisian cafés welcoming German speakers in *Pariser Tageblatt* 16.01.1934

From Heine to Wassermann, or, libraries as in-between urban spaces

Cafés were not the only transitory transplanted Jewish urban spaces in Paris. Both Eastern European immigrants and German-Jewish refugees began to establish libraries. Even more than cafés these libraries served as places of conviviality. They were places that allowed the coming together of fellow compatriots. Moreover, they served as point of orientation within the urban landscape and as familiar spaces where one could flee the alienation of the foreign city by returning to one's home through reading newspapers and books in a familiar language. At the beginning of the century, another institution in Paris served a very similar purpose. The *librairie* of Wolf Speiser in Rue des Rosiers became an urban landmark in the Jewish

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[926] Peterson, *The Berlin Liberal Press in Exile: A History of the Pariser Tageblatt--Pariser Tageszeitung, 1933-1940*, 56.

[927] Ernst Feder noted this in his diary entry quoted above. A photography of such sings is on display in the exhibition "Heimat und Exil" compiled by the Jewish Museum Berlin and the Haus der Geschichte Bonn, on display in varies German cities since 2007. Cf. also Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?* , 185.

topography of Paris.[928] The bookshop with its varied stocks of Yiddish books, sheet music and records at the heart of the traditional Jewish quarter of Paris in the Marais as well as the Jewish guidebook Speiser edited served as points of orientation for Parisian Jews, both those settled there for some time already and especially for newly arrivals. According to Léon-Paul Fargue, Speiser's *librairie* was not an exclusively Eastern European Yiddish speaking Jewish meeting-place but also one for visitors coming to Paris from around the world. Stefan Zweig payed his visits to the bookshop in Rue des Rosiers whenever being in Paris. Another frequent visitor was Leo Trotsky.[929]

Like Speiser's bookshop, libraries became urban spaces bridging the old and the new home of many immigrants. In 1904, the Bundist *Parizer yidisher arbeter-bildungs-fareyn* (Parisian Jewish Workers' Union for Education) set up a small library along with a small stage for Yiddish performances and later also a soup-kitchen in the building 27, rue des Écouffes around the corner of Speiser's bookshop. It was not until 1922 however with the foundation of the *Kultur-Liga* – a joint project of leftist immigrant groups including the Bundists and the Po'alei Zion – that the idea of a Yiddish library in Paris gained momentum. When the communists took over the *Kultur-Liga* three years later, a group of young Bundist decided to create their own new library as a cultural centre. In 1928, the Nomberg Library of the Medem-Union opened at 50, Rue des Francs-Bourgeois, located also in the Marais – significantly on the first floor above a café.[930]

The Nomberg library did not remain the only such institution. In 1939, Paris had eight Yiddish libraries. The *Fédération des societé juives* oversaw the Pernikov Library containing more than 6,000 Yiddish and Hebrew books. The library of the *Kultur-Liga* had grown to almost 4,000 volumes at this time.

Moreover, these libraries were places of intellectual gatherings and cultural events, hence fostering the ties between Jewish immigrants in Paris. The Nomberg Library, for instance, organised a number of soirée and readings of Yiddish poets to raise funds for the acquisition of new books. The function as place of Jewish conviviality is

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[928] On Speiser's bookshop cf. Aline Benain, "Le Guide des égarés de Wolf Speiser," *Archives Juives: Revue d'histoire des Juifs de France* 30, no. 1: Dossier: Le Yiddishland en France depuis 1880 (1997): 9-10.
[929] Léon-Paul Fargue, *Le piéton de Paris : suivi de D'après Paris* ([Paris]: Gallimard, 1982), 95.
[930] Gilles Rozier, "The Medem-Bibliotek: The Yiddish library of Paris," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 14, no. 3 (1996): 139.

underlined further by numerous other activities of the library such as the organisation of youth camps or the establishment of a soup kitchen.[931]

Immigrant libraries and bookshops created spaces where immigrants could experience familiarity, reading books and newspapers in their mother tongue and meet fellow Yiddish speakers. At the same time, these libraries offered windows into the Parisian world. Speiser's almanac is just one obvious example for this. Hence, the institution of the immigrant library bridged the former and the new home of many immigrant Jews in Paris.

In the case of the German emigrants the libraries as bridge-builder between the country of origin and the new home was paradoxically even more visible. On 16 January 1934, the *Pariser Tageblatt* reported on a reception at the "International anti-fascist Archive" in Paris and on the intention to open a "great library" in Paris "that collects those burned, prohibited and censored works" the Nazis had publicly burned in Germany on 10 May 1933.[932] In December 1933, the communist "World committee for the victims of Fascism" had decided to found the archive whose first director became Bruno von Salomon followed by Alfred Kantorowicz. The aim of the archive that became the forerunner of the library was to monitor the political situation back in Germany by collecting first-hand information and original material such as Nazi propaganda and newspaper reports as well as anti-fascist publications.[933] The idea to establish a "library of burned books" or "German freedom library" as it was soon to be called won the support of many leading exile emigrants such as Lion Feuchtwanger, Heinrich Mann, Joseph Roth, Ernst Toller, Georg Bernhard or Anna Seghers.[934] Moreover, the project soon became prominent international support. Especially a number of French *hommes des lettres* among them the publisher Gaston Gallimard, André Gide, Romain Rolland, Edmond Fleg and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl supported the idea to collect books "from Heine to Wassermann" as the *Tageblatt* called it.[935]

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[931] Bernard Vaisbrot, *Historique de la bibliothèque Medem : Carrefour des littératures européennes* ([Paris]: [unpublished typoscript], [n.d.]), 6.
[932] ""Tag des verbrannten deutschen Buches": Pariser Empfang des Internalionalen Archivs," *Pariser Tageblatt*, 16.01. 1934.
[933] For a brief overview of the development of the archive and the foundation of the German freedom library in Paris cf. Dieter Schiller, *Der Tag des verbrannten Buches und die Deutsche Freiheitsbibliothek in Paris : zum 70. Gründungstag der Deutschen Freiheitsbibliothek im Mai 1934* (Berlin: Helle Panke, 2004).
[934] Alfred Kantorowicz, *Politik und Literatur im Exil : deutschsprachige Schriftsteller im Kampf gegen den Nationalsozialismus* (Hamburg: Christians, 1978), 272.
[935] PTB, 24.02.1934.

When the library opened on 10 May 1934 the edifice on Boulevard Arago (Montparnasse) turned out far too small to accommodate the large audience – among them most German emigrant authors and again a number of French intellectuals.[936] First president of the Library was Heinrich Mann. In his opening keynote address, Egon Erwin Kisch emphasised the political function of the new library in the fight against fascism.[937] The library aimed to fulfil this political agenda through the publication of anti-Nazi books that were partly smuggled into Germany.[938]

One volume among the publications of the Freedom library deserves special mentioning. At the end of 1935, the library published the collection "The yellow spot" reporting on the anti-Jewish repressions and persecutions in Germany.[939] Based on original material the book was written with "admirable objectivity" as Ernst Toller stated in his review. For Toller it was a book "one cannot read without one's breath being taken away."[940] The publication of "The yellow spot" underlines the mediating function of the freedom library.

The Ghetto revisited or do the Jews have a future

The late 1930s saw the emergence of intensifying debates in different Jewish circles in Paris dealing with the ghetto or rather the perspectives of a "return to the ghetto". These debates resulted from the perceived deepening political crisis during the final year of peace. The supporters of a return to the ghetto called on Paris Jews to face the hopelessness of their situation stressing that the only way out of this situation was through a Jewish renewal based upon Jewish tradition and culture.

To supporters and opponents alike the question of a "return of to the Ghetto", i.e. the rejection of any perspective of further assimilation and a turn towards Jewish

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[936] PTB, 11.05.1934.

[937] *Gegen-Angriff*, 20.05.1934.

[938] Schiller, *Der Tag des verbrannten Buches und die Deutsche Freiheitsbibliothek in Paris : zum 70. Gründungstag der Deutschen Freiheitsbibliothek im Mai 1934*, 35 f.

[939] Lilly Becher, ed., *Der gelbe Fleck: die Ausrottung von 500 000 deutschen Juden* (Paris: Ed. du Carrefour, 1936). An English translation was published the same year. *The Yellow spot : the outlawing of half a million human beings ; a collection of facts and documents relating to three years' persecution of german jews, derved chiefly from national socialist sources very carcfully assembled by a group of investigators*, (London: Gollancz, 1936).

[940] PTB, 09.12.1935.

[941] Richard I. Cohen, "Nostalgia and 'Return to the Ghetto': a cultural phenomenon in Western and Central Europe," in *Assimilation and Community : the Jews in nineteenth-century Europe*, ed. Jonathan Frankel and Steven J. Zipperstein (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

isolationism, was part of the larger issue of a Jewish future in general and one in the urban context of Paris in particular. Moreover, the debate reveals the tapestry of Eastern European Jewish circles in Paris.

The debate was as David Weinberg has shown not only an attempt to respond to the intensifying crisis both in Germany and in France but also a "component of the re-evaluation of the 'Jewish question' in the waning months of peace".[942] In this context, the call for "a return to the ghetto" was seen by some as an alternative, an answer for Jewish diaspora existence as a whole. Weinberg argues that these debates involving sections of both the immigrant and the native community allow a "fascinating insight into the mood of Paris Jewry" in the wake of the Munich treaty."[943] An article that appeared in the *Parizer Haynt* on 29 March 1937 can be seen as the initial spark of the debate. Stressing that a "return to the ghetto" was no option, the anonymous author of the article emphasised that that Jewish immigrants especially in Paris had to recognise and appreciate that they had left Eastern Europe forever.[944] The appearance of this article suggests that the idea of a return to the ghetto was discussed within Jewish immigrant circles in late 1930s Paris. It took however another year until this discussion gained momentum in the Parisian Yiddish press. In mid-1938 the *Haynt* published a series of articles engaging the question of the return to the ghetto in one way or another.[945]

Moshe Fuchs, a New York journalist who had come to Paris, was among the most outspoken warning of the "fatal mistake" of Jewish assimilation, stressing that very success of Jewish assimilants brought about their own downfall.[946] The article by A. Kremer that appeared the following week, went even a step further by openly calling for "turning away from evil, wickedness, the lust for material goods and a return to humanity, justice, and a sane environment where not only Jews but all men who cannot exist in this world will find a home." Kremer was well aware that the re-establishment of an actual ghetto allowing Jews to retreat into self-imposed isolation was not solution. While emancipation had failed, Kremer argued, the only way to solve the contradictory existence of Diaspora Judaism was auto-emancipation and

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[942] Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, 188.
[943] Ibid.
[944] Parizer Haynt, 29.03.1937.
[945] Parizer Haynt, 03.07., 12.07. and 27.07.1938.
[946] Parizer Haynt, 03.07.1938.

the creation of a Jewish state.[947] During the following months, the question "Tsurik in geto?" gained further momentum.[948]

In December the Jewish scholar Elihu Tcherikover, who had come to Paris via Berlin together with other leading figures of the Vilna Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut (YIVO) contributed a long article to the *Parizer Haynt*. In his contribution he promoted his own concept of return to the ghetto not as isolation from the world but, rather, as "a feeling of coming to ourselves, to strengthening the national discipline."[949] His YIVO colleague Yisroel Efroykin went even further in supporting Jewish isolationism by proclaiming that Jews would no longer send emissaries to the non-Jewish world despite the benefits from European civilisation.[950] In the same issue of the *Haynt* the Bundist Abraham Menes expressed a very similar ambivalent sentiment when he argued that Jews ought to focus on their own distinctive culture but could not stand separate themselves from others in finding a solution to the "Jewish question."[951] The Jewish Left regarded the calls for Jewish isolationism with scepticism and responded sharply to reproaches that it had "one foot in the ghetto and will not, or cannot, free themselves from its heritage" thus remaining rooted in the "culture of the ghetto."[952]

In a contribution for the communist *Naïe Presse* in November 1938 Joseph Opatashu warned against the return of the ghetto ideology arguing that the Jews even amidst the "dark forces" ought not to forget progressive developments such as the French and Russian Revolutions. In an amazing attempt to bridge the divide between bourgeoise representatives and communists Opatashu stated, that as long as there were the "Thomas Manns" – those defending the traditions of democracy – Jews had nothing to fear. In direct response to the calls for a return to the ghetto, he proclaimed, that if Jews wanted to go back to their roots they should rather turn towards the "socialism" of the prophets than to deny themselves liberation by returning to the ghetto.[953] The following months saw open and at times harsh attacks against the return to the ghetto ideology by communist representative, labelling it as objectively reactionary, as a tool of the clerics and bourgeois philanthropists to mask

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[947] Parizer Haynt, 12.07.1938.
[948] A series of articles that appeared in the Parizer Haynt on 21./22.12.1938 had Tsurik in gheto (back to the ghetto) as headline. This fact points to the prominence the debate had gained by the end of 1938.
[949] Parizer Haynt, 21./22.12.1938.
[950] Parizer Haynt, 21./22.12.1938.
[951] Parizer Haynt, 21./22.12.1938.
[952] E. Tcherikover, "Di Tragedie fun a shvakhn dor," *Oyfn Shaydveg* 1, no. 1 (1939): 23.
[953] Naïe Presse, 16.11.1938.

the true nature of the Jewish plight.[954] Other representatives of the left however took a more conciliatory approach. The secretary of the Jewish Communist cultural federation Haim Sloves for instance, spoke of the need to "reawaken the spiritual energy of our people," in a contribution to the jubilee issue of *Naïe Presse*.[955]

The return to the ghetto debate gained new momentum during the first months of 1939. Remarkably, the impetus this time came from a group of native Parisian Jews around the newly founded militant Zionist journal *Affirmation*. In a number of articles published in the first numbers of the new journal, the illusion of Franco-Jewish assimilation was harshly criticised.[956] In an article published towards the end of February the criticism of the shibboleth of native French Jews and their illusion of security culminated in Jacques Calmy's call for a return to the essence of Judaism. The essential vice of Jewish existence in the Diaspora was the continual dependence upon the goodwill of others, Calmy argued, forcing Jews inevitably to compromise themselves. Moreover, the dependence upon others held a great danger for the Jews. Even "among the French, this best most human and gentile people on earth," Calmy proclaimed, Jews could not live securely any more. Anti-Semitic violence spread even amidst the French warning that today's leaders standing up for humanity and justice could be overthrown quickly by the masses. Therefore, Clamy concluded, "We cannot count on anybody but ourselves." Thus, "only a Jewish synthesis embracing all aspects and spaces of our live, putting together all Jewish values" Calmy declared, "could re-establish a healthy existence" for the Jews.[957]

In February, the author and literary critic Arnold Mandel joint the debate. Growing up in a traditional Jewish family of Galician descent in Strasbourg Mandel came to Paris in the 1920s.After brief flirtations with anarchism, communism, native Jewish identity, and Zionist revisionism Mandel arrived at a rather militant Jewish stand in 1939 as his contribution to *Affirmation* on 3 February shows.

Mandel condemned the "assimilist illusions" that democracies such as France and England would protect Jews against the persecution permanently. According to Mandel however, "the ideologies and political systems are ephemeral." Thus, anticipating Calmy's central argument, Mandel emphasised that "we can not count on anybody but ourselves" and that "the emancipation of the Jews (the true one) has to

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[954] Cf. the article by A. Galitzine in Naïe Presse, 07.05.1939.
[955] Naïe Presse, 12.02.1939.
[956] cf. e.g. Suzanne Bloch-Roukhomovsky, "Nous, Juifs français," *Affirmation* 1, no. 1 (1939).
[957] Jacques Calmy, "Ne comptons que sur nous-mêmes," *Affirmation* 1, no. 7 (1939).

be the work of the Jews themselves". The text continued in the grim mood of resignation. According to Mandel democracy were too weak to survive the onslaught of dictatorship. Counter to political mythology of French Jewry he proclaimed:

"Will Judaism consent to die along with it [democracy]? No! We must prepare for the most severe test. One day we may find ourselves under the domination of a nearly universal network of dictatorial systems and of a universal anti-Semitism. And, in the meantime, we must continue to survive.
The Jewish future is not only determined by the degree of tolerance of the people among which the Jews live but overall by their proper radiation and their strength. The solution of the Jewish problem [...] lies in becoming self-conscious, in the firm and coherent will of the Jewish people to reach the status of a strong united national entity: a force."[958]

For Mandel, Jewish identity, as Weinberg argues, set the individual apart from society, indeed from history itself. The duty of Jews was to maintain their identity in the face of all political, social, or economic challenges.[959]

The contributors of *Affirmation* – most of them Zionist militants – were rather an exception among native French Jews. However, they were not the only ones participating in one way or another in the debate. Although, as Weinberg argues, the establishment of native community did not directly participate directly in the "return to the ghetto" debate, the idea of Jewish isolationism and return to Jewish spirituality as a means to counter the experience of crisis respectively was very much at issue among consistorial leaders too.[960] The editor of *L'Univers israélite* Raoul Raymond Lamber voiced this attitude dramatically in summer of 1939. "Neither meetings nor spectacular demonstrations will ever replace religious practice," he declared. "The Shema [Israel]," in turn, "recited by a martyr about to die has been more effective in our history than changes in human nature or legal action which comes too late."[961] This example show that the question of returning to the ghetto or sticking with the ideology of integration and assimilation so prominent among the French-Jewish leadership since the nineteenth century was indeed one that was very much at issue across the different sections of Parisian Jews. None the less, attempts to find an answer to these questions remained detached and few attempts were made to bring the different groups and their position into a direct exchange.

In 1939, two of the leading Eastern European Jewish émigrés intellectuals who had been among the first calling for a return to the ghetto revived the debate once again. Together Elias Tcherikover and Yisroel Efroykin edited a new journal in Yiddish,

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[958] Arnold Mandel, "Prendre conscience," *Affirmation* 1, no. 4 (1939).
[959] Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, 192.
[960] Ibid., 195 ff.
[961] UI, 28.07.1939. English translation taken from Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, 196.

which they named appropriately *Oyfn Shaydveg* (at the crossroads). The first issue of the new journal was published in Paris in April 1939. Despite a varied group of contributors from different countries, a similar attitude towards the current crises was characteristic to *Oyfn Shaydveg*. A deep disappointment of the democratic system and subsequently a call for the retreat from politics in response were central features of the new journal, as was a "search for an organic Jewish life that they believed had existed in the medieval ghetto."[962] Considering that the editors had previously committed themselves to activist politics their calls for a return to the ghetto shows their deep disillusionment.

Hence, the editors' preface to the first number of *Oyfn Shaydveg* reflected this pessimistic analysis of the situation. According to their interpretation the current period saw the "impending liquidation of the era of emancipation with its humanitarian and democratic principles." As a result Jews had become "a nation of refugees facing closed doors" and "without the prospect of finding a new home."[963]

The introductory essay by Tcherikover that followed the preface highlighted the political position of the new journal further. Shocked by the "capitulation" of the Western democracies in form of the Munich treaty and their failure at the refugee conference of Evian, Tcherikover declared, "a new basis for Jewish existence in a world where democratic principles are losing their hegemony" was needed. Rejecting religious belief as fundament for such a new basis Tcherikover called for a return to the values of eastern European Jewish life with the ghetto at the core of Jewish existence. The ghetto, Tcherikover was convinced, was the place where the indestructible "Jewish soul" was born and had developed.[964]

The fact that Tcherikover was not the only contributor who explicitly called for a return to the ghetto shows the importance the debate still played in Eastern European Jewish émigrés circles in Paris at the time.[965]

When the second issue of *Oyfn Shaydveg* appeared in August 1939 the theme of return to the ghetto once reverberated in a number of contributions. While Menes called for a re-embracing of traditional Judaism by synthesising religious socialism and Yiddishism believing that, the internal Jewish crisis was solvable through a bond between religion and humanity Golomb favoured the return to a secularised Jewish

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[962] Joshua Karlip, "At the Crossroads Between War and Genocide: A Reassessment of Jewish Ideology in 1940," *Jewish Social Studies, New Series* 11, no. 2 (2005): 171.
[963] I. Efroykin and E. Tcherikover, "Wort tsu di leyener," *Oyfn Shaydveg* 1, no. 1 (1939): 4.
[964] Tcherikover, "Di Tragedie fun a shvakhn dor."
[965] Ibid, Avram Golomb, "Di ufgaben fun yidishn gedank," *Oyfn Shaydveg* 1, no. 1 (1939).

tradition. One way to achieve this aim was a turn towards an authentic Yiddish literary creation based on internal refinement of Jewish folk traditions.[966]

The publication of *Oyfn Shaydveg* – both the two published volumes as well as the planned third one that remained in manuscript form – highlights the growing sense of crisis Paris Jewish intellectuals felt in the second half of the 1930s as well as the desperate attempt to outline a suitable response.[967] In terms of Paris, the return of the ghetto debate highlights both the centrality of the city as a hub of Jewish attempts to formulate visions for the future of the Jews as well as the rising uncertainty and doubts concerning the durability of the Parisian refuge.

The debate initiated by calls for the return to the ghetto during the late 1930s has been interpreted in different ways. Weinberg regards them as an expression of the growing anxiety among Parisian Jews as an expression of helplessness in the face of the "victories of the dark forces in the world" as the Opatashu called it in 1938.[968] While Weinberg stresses the impact of the immediate Paris environment for the course of the debate Karlip has argued recently that it was rather part of larger ideological crisis of Diaspora nationalists and Yiddishists.[969]

Yet another reading, treating these different interpretations not as oppositions but rather as two intertwined aspects, is possible. The "return to the ghetto" debate was indeed part of a larger debate concerning the future of the Jews. While it addressed the question of Jewish fate, destiny and future on a general level, the debate also emphasised that for many on a more concrete sense the city did no longer represent a reliable refuge from anti-Semitism and the growing threat of fascism. For those calling for a return to the ghetto even Paris, the city of light and liberty had lost its gleam and did not stand up to its promises any more.

German Jews in the Ghetto

The debates about the return to the ghetto were parts of a broadening discussion of the future of European Jewry in face of a growing thread in Nazi Germany and beyond. Hence, although German-Jewish exiles did not participate directly in this debate the issue of the ghetto representing the increasingly pressing question of a

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[966] Avram Menes, "Der zinen fun undzer tsayt," *Oyfn Shaydveg* 1, no. 2 (1939).

[967] Karlip discovered the manuscript of the third volume in the papers of Tcherikover deposited in the YIVO Archive in New York. For a detailed analysis of this unpublished volume cf. Karlip, "At the Crossroads Between War and Genocide: A Reassessment of Jewish Ideology in 1940."

[968] Naïe Presse, 16.11.1938.

[969] Karlip, "At the Crossroads Between War and Genocide: A Reassessment of Jewish Ideology in 1940."

Jewish future in general and within the Parisian framework in particular was virulent among them as well.

In 1934, the Amsterdam based exile-publishing house Querido released a collection of essays entitled *Stories from seven Ghettos* written by the journalist Egon Erwin Kisch. Born in Prague Kisch came to Berlin in 1921 where he become a leading journalist. After their accession to power, the Nazis imprisoned him and subsequently expelled him from Germany. Kisch's 1934 collection, written shortly after his arrival in Paris, contains besides an autobiographical text dedicated to his impressions, impressions of Jews in Baghdad also a text on Jews in Paris. What is remarkable about these "Notes from the Parisian Ghetto" is the mocking tone with which Kisch describes aspects of daily life in the Jewish Marais. Already the introductory passage of the short text is full of ridicule. Kisch remarks that "a true civil war concerning the 'kosher' is fought on shop signs in the quarter of Saint-Paul" with each shop claiming to follow stricter dietary laws than the neighbouring ones.[970] Overall, the text is characterised by a sense of detachment and distance. From the perspective of the German-Jewish reporter, the Ghetto Jews are the Other.

Kisch's text reveals the ambivalence of German Jews towards their East European brethren and highlights a sense of superiority towards the *Ostjuden* many German emigrants in Paris had brought with them from Germany. The Jewish dwellers of the Pletzl are exotic at best. The description of backwardness and a dislike for the "ultra conservative spirit of the place" however dominates the text.[971] Hence, the contemporary ghetto is portrayed as the counter-image to the relics of the aristocratic *glory* of the *ancien régime* Marais: where Queen Bianca once resided dwells now David Chmoulkowicz, responsible for circumcisions in the neighbourhood while Jacques Axelchevaisse sells intensities in the hose once occupied by the great poet Rabelais.[972]

Other German-Jewish authors contributed similar depictions of the Jewish Marais. Already in 1930, Franz Hessel had written a text simply entitled "Ghetto" describing the foreignness of the "alleyways behind the hôtel de ville where the usual Parisian street scenes are suddenly interrupted," where Hebrew characters advertise theatre

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[970] Egon Erwin Kisch, "Geschichten aus sieben Ghettos: Notizen aus dem Pariser Ghetto [1934]," in *Egon Erwin Kisch: Gesammelte Werke in Einzelausgaben; Band VI*, ed. Bode Uhse and Gisela Kisch (Berlin (Ost); Weimar: Aufbau, 1985), 115.

[971] Ibid., 119.

[972] Kisch's reference to the probably fictional character of Jacques Axelchevaisse underlines his pejorative account of the Pletzl Jews for the last name literally means armpit sweat. Ibid.

performances or gatherings.[973] Very much along the same lines, Hessel describes the sense of decay in the neighbourhood. Less pejorative than Kisch's account Hessel stresses rather the foreignness of the Eastern European subculture in the Marais.

Authors like Kisch and Hessel shared a sense of distance from the East European Jewish neighbourhood and its anachronistic appearance with many, predominantly middle-class, and assimilated or even secularised German-Jewish refugees in Paris. For them the Paris Ghetto represented the backwardness of Eastern European Jewish shtetl existence transplanted into the heart of the West European urban context. Hence, for the majority of German-Jewish refugees in France coming to Paris the ghetto was a phenomenon not directly shaping their life. They were rather convinced that they had escaped escalating tendencies forced them out of German public sphere into a new ghetto. Therefore, the intensifying debates on ghettoisation taking place in the exile press, especially the *Pariser Tageszeitung* focused on Germany and on the Nazi regime's successive attempts to forced Jews into a daily life ghetto.[974] Most refugees were hence unwilling or unable to realise the dangers of yet another form of ghettoisation in exile for despite their distance, the ghetto was soon to become a reality for many of them too as a text from 1933 reveals. Writing a series of reports for *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung in Berlin* concerning the despair of German Jewish Refugees in Paris based on his own experiences, W. Strauß declared in 1933 "Well, we do not receive meal vouchers any more. Until now, we ate most of the time in the Jewish quarter of Paris, in the Ghetto (Germany's Jews in the Ghetto!). Now we have to help ourselves."[975]

In Strauß's account, the ambivalence of the term ghetto comes to the fore. While referring to a concrete topographical entity – the Jewish Marais with its infrastructure of soup kitchens and other institutions of mutual aid supporting not only the Eastern European inhabitants of the neighbourhood but also those destitute German refugees unable to find work and make a living in Paris – it also carries a typological nation of the ghetto. In this latter sense, reflecting the above-mentioned pejorative depictions, the ghetto is not seen as a space of authentic Judaism, a refuge from

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[973] Franz Hessel, "Aus alten Pariser Gassen: Ghetto [1930?]," in *Franz Hessel Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Hartmut Vollmer and Bernd Witte, vol. 3: Städte und Porträts (Oldenburg: Igel, 1999), 312.

[974] "Das neue Ghetto: Gespraeche im Dritten Reich," *Pariser Tageblatt* 3, no. 553 (1935), Karl Loewy, "Judenstaat oder Ghetto," *Pariser Tageszeitung* 2, no. 529 (1937).

[975] W. Strauß, "Erlebnisse eines jüdischen Emigranten: Wo ist die größte Not? 2. Fortsetzung," *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 13, no. 25 (1933).

social and political crisis with the potential of providing the opportunity for a Jewish future as the advocates of a return to the ghetto portrayed it. Rather Strauß describes the ghetto as the last stage of the social and economic decline of German Jewish refugees, who had been lawyers, bank clerks, mechanics and teachers before coming to Paris. Forced into a ghetto existence was however just one aspect of isolationism among German-Jewish refugees.

Recently Julia Franke has argued that many German Jewish refugees in Paris formed a "Ghetto-community". Their "ghetto-existence", Franke argues, resulted from their (partly self-imposed) exclusion from their French environment. Rather than mingling the preferred to stay within a merely German refugee context: read German exile publications, meet in German speaking clubs and associations.[976]

This "ghetto-existence" resulted from the experience of urban exile. As described earlier the coming and sticking together was a mechanism to cope with the alienation of exile, the loss of the former home. Despite sporadic contacts with fellow writers and intellectuals, many German Jewish refugees described their isolation in Paris.[977] For many among them German remained the only language they were able to write. Excluded from the German literary scene they were forced to publish their works among themselves in exile-publishing houses, emigrant journals and newspapers.

The "self-ghettoisation" among German-Jewish refugees was however not limited to the group of intellectuals. Especially for illegal refugees and those with little money the network of fellow German refugees was of vital importance as Erich Maria Remarque describes in his novel *Arc de Triomphe*.[978] Not having enough money to pay for medical treatment German doctors not allowed to follow their profession in France were for many refugees the only hope.

However, the ghettoisation was not merely the result of socio-economic necessities. Many religious oriented refugees, gathered among themselves rather then joining local French synagogues. Each Friday evening a "service for Jewish emigrants" with German sermon was held at different locations in the central and western districts of Paris. Among these locations was Rue Sainte-Anne in the first arrondissement and

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[976] Franke, *Paris - eine neue Heimat?* , 181-200.
[977] Repeatedly Walter Benjamin wrote in letters to friends and collegues about the felt isolation in Paris. Joseph Roth accounted similar experiences. His alcoholism that lead to his early death was probably a result of this. Cf. Soma Morgenstern, *Joseph Roths Flucht und Ende : Erinnerungen* (Lüneburg: zu Klampen, 1994).
[978] Erich Maria Remarque, *Arc de Triomphe: Roman* (Zürich: Micha, 1946).

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Avenue Hoche and Avenue Wagram respectively close to the Etoile.[979] Especially on high Jewish holidays, special religious services according to the "German ritual with organ, choir and German sermon" were organised.[980] These services were very popular. More then 1000 people attended, for instance, the German Succoth service in 1934.[981] It is difficult to determine if this popularity was due to the familiar German environment or due to the relatively low cost for synagogal seats during the services between 10 and 50 francs in some instances even free. Probably both factors played an important role.

For the *Association des Emigrés Israélites d'Allemagne en France* the growing number of German-Jewish worshippers clearly indicated that "a strong bond between the Jews of Germany existed" even in Paris. In order to keep this sentiment of belonging alive beyond the holiday services the Association propagated the creation of a separate German-Jewish congregation in Paris.[982] Despite the initial enthusiasm of representatives of the Association, the plan remained in a planning stage and no actual steps were made to the creation of independent Jewish *Gemeinde* in Paris. Similar developments can be traced in the context of the Eastern European Jewish community of Paris where a Yiddish subculture evolved. Repeatedly conflicts arose between immigrant religious association setting up their own congregations ignoring the monopoly of the Consistoire or establishing their own network of mutual aid.[983] Calls for a return to the ghetto or the self-imposed ghettoisation represent only one strain within the context of debates about and attempts to respond to the experience of crisis. Besides the pessimistic perspective brought forward by the supporters of a return to the ghetto there are indications that other circles, analysing the social and political situation of the Jews in the mid and late 1930s very similar, sketched the future much more positively.

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[979] "Gottesdienst fuer juedische Emigranten," *Pariser Tageblatt* 2, no. 136 (1934); "Juedischer Gottesdienst," *Pariser Tageblatt* 2, no. 318 (1934), *"Gottesdienst an den hohen juedischen Feiertagen,"* *Pariser Tageblatt* 2, no. 243 (1934).

[980] "Gottesdienst an den hohen jüdischen Feiertagen," *Pariser Tageblatt* 3, no. 321 (1935).

[981] "Gottesdienst am Laubhuettenfest," *Pariser Tageblatt* 2, no. 284 (1934).

[982] "Association des Emigrés Israélites d'Allemagne en France: Zur Frage der Gruendung einer juedischen Gemeinde," *Pariser Tageblatt* 3, no. 677 (1935).

[983] Hyman, "From Parternalism to Cooptation: The French Jewish Consistory and the Immigrants, 1906-1939.", Nancy L. Green, "Philanthropy and Intracommunal Solidarity: Native and Immigrant Jews in Paris, 1880-1914," *Research in Social Policy* 1 (1987).

The Writing on the Wall – Paris as capital of the defence of Jewish culture

The May elections of 1936 saw a landslide victory of the political left in France. While the native community responded to the accession of the Popular Front government under Léon Blum in 1936 to power with mixed reactions many Jewish refugees in France welcomed the formation of the new cabinet.[984] Blum manifested the synthesis of Frenchness and Jewishness and openly stood by his dual identity. In 1924, Blum had declared, "I consider myself entirely French and at the same time I'm a Jew. I never realised, that an opposition or contradiction exists between these two parts of my consciousness."[985]

For the political right Blum's coming to office was an excuse for renewed brash anti-Semitic propaganda.[986]

However, for the majority of Jewish refugees in Paris it was less the fact that a Jew was head of government but rather that this government was setting out a new policy agenda. Especially the tens of thousands of refugees from Nazi-Germany were hoping for an improvement of their position and legal status a hope that seemed not unfounded. Indeed the new government soon after taking office brought a number of legislative projects aiming for an improvement of the refugees' status on its way, making it easier for them to receive work and residential permits.[987]

Soon however these initial hopes were challenged. France was shook by a wave of successive strikes demanding the fulfilment of Popular Front promises prior to the elections.

In such a tense situation, the fact that Paris was hosting the 1937 World Exhibition offered a unique opportunity to manifest the political change in France. The initial plan to open the exhibition on 1 May 1937 was but one indication of the symbolic

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[984] On the native community's reaction to the Popular Front cf. Ariel Danan, "Les Français israélites et l'accession au pouvoir de Léon Blum, à travers L'Univers israélite," *Archives Juives* 37, no. 1 (2004).

[985] Léon Blum, "Jude und Franzose [Rede auf einem Bankett zu Ehren Prof. Weizmanns am 16. Dezember 1924 in Paris]," *Der Jude*, no. Sonderheft: Antisemitismus und jüdisches Volkstum (1925). On Blum

[986] Laurent Viguier, *Les Juifs à travers Léon Blum : leur incapacité historique de diriger un État; la marque juive dans le christianisme* (Paris: Baudinière, 1938).

[987] Cf. Marcel Livian, *Le Parti socialiste et l'immigration: le gouvernement Léon Blum, la main-d'oeuvre immigrée et les réfugiés politiques (1920-1940) : russes, géorgiens, arméniens, italiens, espagnols, allemands, sarrois, autrichiens, allemands des Sudètes* (Paris: Anthropos, 1982), Schor, *Français et immigrés en temps de crise (1930-1980)*.

instrumentalisation of exhibition making it a manifestation of the new political agenda in France.[988]

Rather than becoming an arena to promote the Popular Front, the pavilions of the World Exhibition erected on the Champs de Mars rather became visible manifestations of the growing tensions across Europe. The pavilions of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany facing each other at the beginning of the avenue of nations in the shadow of the Eifel Tower on the left bank of the Seine symbolically foreshadowed the has been called the "age of Extremes" as did a painting brought to the show with some delay to become the centrepiece of the Spanish Pavilion: Picasso's Guernica.

Among the numerous events, taking place in Paris in connection with the World Exhibition the so-called *Ershter Alveltlekher Yidisher Kultur-Kongres* (First International Congress of Jewish Culture). The origins of this extra-ordinary congress can be traced back to early twentieth century central Europe.

> "Why do we cry that we do not possess sufficient strength in the world? Do we endeavour to tap new wellsprings of strength and power? Have we not heard of what a language can do for a people? That it shelters and screens its culture and enables a people to unlock the door of ethnonational equality? [...]
> Today, Jews from different lands have come together to proudly reacquaint themselves with our language and to discuss what can be done for our beloved Yiddish."[989]

With these words, Nathan Birnbaum opened the so-called Czernowitz Conference on 30 August 1908. Although formulated decades before the Paris congress these lines highlight the central concerns of the concerns of the gathering in the French capital in 1937 – to discuss ways of defending Jewish culture, giving it strength to withstand the odds of the political pressure on Jews around Europe. Almost three decades after the gathering in the capital of the Bukovina, the congress in Paris was opened attempting to continue the legacy of Nathan Birnbaum as well as to expand it.[990]

In 1936, the New York based communist "Jewish Bureau" had already organised an "International Conference Against Anti-Semitism and Racial Hatred." Convening in Paris in September 1936 under the auspices of French communists the conference

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[988] PTZ, 21.12.1936, 3 and PTZ, 03.04.1937, 1. With a delay of several weeks the World Exhibition was finally opened on 24 May 1937, PTZ, 25.05.1937, 1.
[989] The speech was reprinted in: Nathan Birnbaum, "Fayerlekhe efenungs-rede [Opening Address at the Conference for the Yiddish Language, Czernowitz, 30 August 1908]," *Aln shvel*, no. 185 (1968): 3.
[990] The organisers placed the 1937 congress into the direct tradition of the Czernowitz-Conference of 1908. Cf. *Ershter Alveltlekher Yidisher Kultur-Kongres, Pariz 17-21 sept. 1937 : Stenografisher barikht [First Congress for Jewish Culture, Paris 17-21 September 1937: minutes]* (Paris; New York: Tsentral-Farvaltung fun Alveltlekhn Yidishn Kultur-Farband (Ikuf), [1937]), 11.

' delegates agreed to organise a follow-up conference that would be truly "an all-Jewish world congress" to be held in Paris in 1937.

Bat-Ami Zucker argues that the idea of a World Jewish Cultural Congress needs to be placed in the context of heated debates concerning Jewish culture in Jewish communist circles of the 1930s. He shows that one of the central preconditions of the idea of the congress was a shift within the communist movement in 1935 calling for the cooperation with all left and "progressive" elements in a "popular front".[991] This development led to a new positive attitude toward Jewish culture among Jewish communist and a new Jewish self-confidence, as the repeated use of the term "Jewish people" applying a positive connotation shows.[992] In the invitation-letters send out to Jewish organisations around the world, the organisers gave an explanation why they were intending to hold the congress in Paris.

> "The Jewish cultural-front in France takes the initiative to call together a world-congress for the defence of modern Jewish culture to Paris. The congress shall be held during the summer months of 1937 (while the world exhibition is held in Paris)."[993]

Hence, the organisers place their project in the contact of the popular front movement, emphasising the necessity of unity beyond political divides in order to tackle the desolate situation of the Jews especially in Europe. The reference to the World Exhibition – read in connection to the destitute picture the introduction of the congress minutes paint of the current situation – underlines the claim of the congress to be a truly global Jewish endeavour and that the simultaneity of congress and exhibition allows to manifest to the world gathering in the French capital that Jews were fighting for their culture.

To discuss "effective methods of defending 'worldly, secular Jewish culture'" was named as the central concern of the congress. Was part of this overall aim the congress "open to delegates from all countries where Jews live" and bringing together "intellectuals regardless of their ideological background" was to "discuss the fundamental problems of the Jewish book, press, school, theatre, art and scholarship."[994]

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[991] It is noteworthy that the rhetoric of the 1937 congress resembles the one of the 7th communist congress. Repeatedly references to "progressive forces" or the idea of a unified popular/ cultural front can be found in the congress minutes.

[992] Bat-Ami Zucker, "American Jewish Communists and Jewish Culture in the 1930s," *Modern Judaism* 14, no. 2 (1994): 180.

[993] *Ershter Alveltlekher Yidisher Kultur-Kongres*, 5.

[994] Ibid., 6-7.

The attempt of the Communist organisers to bring about unity across the political spectrum however failed. Despite a renewed invitation to organisations that had previously not responded, many important associations such as the Jewish Writers' Union, Yiddish Scientific Institute - YIVO, the Jewish Workmen's Circle and the Jewish National Labour Alliance stuck to their refusal.[995] Moreover, non-communist Jewish circles especially in America – among them the Jewish socialists and unions – responded to the idea of an all-Jewish world congress for the defence of Jewish culture with bitter criticism and resentment. The New York mouthpiece of the Jewish socialists *Forwards* even organised a campaign against participating in what it called "the Communist manoeuvre to take over Jewish souls."[996]

Other groups adopted a different attitude towards the project despite their reservations about the political agenda of the communist organisers. These groups, as the Warsaw *Haynt* reported maintained that the Congress in Paris ought to be supported regardless of who convened it, for only a large number of non-communist delegates would be in a position to prevent Communist propaganda at the Congress. More importantly, they argued that the congress indeed put important issues of Jewish culture on agenda that were actual problems requiring immediate attention.[997] The native Franco-Jewish community participated neither in the congress nor in the heated debates concerning its political agenda. A short notice appearing in *Univers Israélite* reported unemotionally and in an objective tone of the opening of the congress.[998]

With some delay, the congress was opened on 17 September 1937.[999] Attended by some 3,000 delegates from 23 countries the congress was opened by Haim Sloves, the secretary of the Jewish Communist cultural federation in Paris. "In a tragic moment of world history" and "one of the saddest epochs for the Jewish people" Sloves reminded his audience "culture is one of the strongest bonds for a people" without it neither the people (folk) nor humanity can exist.[1000] Therefore, the congress had to fulfil an essential objective that of defending the Jewish people and its culture

[995] Ibid., 8. Cf. also *JC*, 01.10.1937.
[996] *Forwarts*, 13.08.1937. Other journals joint the campaign. Cf. Zucker, "American Jewish Communists and Jewish Culture in the 1930s," 184.
[997] Here following the report in "Examiner", "World Congress for Jewish Culture," *Jewish Chronicle*, 01.10. 1937.
[998] UI, 24.09.1937
[999] Initially the opening was planned for the opening had been planned for 18 August. *Ershter Alveltlekher Yidisher Kultur-Kongres*, 9.
[1000] Ibid., 14.

and as M. Olgin added in his keynote address, to promote Jewish culture and to spread it among the Jewish people.[1001]

After intense debates on various aspects of cultural production and education, the congress concluded on 21 September 1937 with the passing of a congress manifesto. In the "current tragic moment in the life of Jewish people" in a time when the "crusade of reaction and fascism" aims "to exterminate Jewish culture", we are "animated by the will to survive by the dream of a free world of social justice."[1002] Only international cooperation can bring about an answer to the present crisis the manifest stated. Moreover it emphasised that that "Jewish people and culture are indivisible (the stronger the link between people and culture the stronger the resistance against annihilation)."[1003]

In addition to these declarations, the congress adopted several resolutions. Especially small communities ought to be supported in their struggle, a coordination of Jewish cultural activities between all counties was seen as a necessity as was the creation of Jewish cultural infrastructure on a national level. In order to achieve these aims the congress decided to establish a set of new institutions.

Most importantly, the delegates' decisions to establish a "World Alliance of Jewish Culture - IKUF" with local branches operating under an international committee formed out of eighty-five representatives from all countries where Yiddish is spoken, and the founding of a special periodical simply titled *Yiddishe Kultur*.[1004] Together with finance promised by American Jewish communists the organisational structure and its mouthpiece should become central instruments "to uphold Jewish culture among the widest classes of the Jewish population," and to establish a centre to promote the development of Jewish dramatic art, Jewish schools and Jewish literature."[1005] As the minutes of the congress state, the gathering in Paris in 1937 created a "spirit of optimism, enthusiasm and activism" and was seen as "only the beginning of historical act."[1006] While being fully aware of the worsening of the Jewish position in the current political crisis this statement most clearly underlines the international congress's attempts to come up with optimistic agenda for a Jewish future against all odds.

[1001] Ibid., 30-32.
[1002] Ibid., 325.
[1003] Ibid., 326.
[1004] Ibid., 327.
[1005] *JC*, 01.10.1937
[1006] *Ershter Alveltlekher Yidisher Kultur-Kongres*, 329.

Paris the city of the Revolution

References to and idealisation of the French Revolution of 1789 became one of the strongest facets of the image of Paris during the nineteenth and twentieth century. Especially in the imagination of many Eastern Europe Jews 1789 occupied a special position. The ideals of liberty, freedom and emancipation associated with the Revolution for many developed into a central reason in their decision to leave Russia and turn towards France.[1007]

For the native Jewish community too the revolutionary tradition was a central aspect of their identity as Israélites français as recollections of the writer and philosopher Julien Benda show. "I was raised in the spirit of the Republic. Democratic principles were ingrained in my bones," Benda describes the centrality of 1789 across the generations of native French Jews and he continues his account by stating:

> "The attachment of my father to the Revolution was due in part to the gratitude he felt because it had emancipated his race given civil and political liberties to the Jews. I often heard him say that it was scandalous that a Jew should oppose it, for without it he would still be in the ghetto."[1008]

These lines show that the tradition of 1789 not only served as a magnet for Jewish refugees from abroad but that they formed a central feature in the identity of native French Jews as well. Benda thus is surprised that the non-Jewish French bourgeoisie far less appreciated these "revolutionary" concepts he regarded as deeply French.

Yet another aspect Benda's account reveals is the sense of gratitude towards the nation that emancipated and liberated the Jews. This sense of gratitude and the felt obligation to repay la patrie for this gift reverberates throughout modern French Jewish history. A passage in the story of immigrant Ménaché Foïgel who upon his arrival in Paris succeeds in becoming a true Frenchmen sums up the entanglement of France's revolutionary past and Jewish identity:

> "If you exclaim 'Vive la Republique!' or 'Vivent les droits de l'homme!' its exactly like exclaiming 'Vivent les juifs!'."[1009]

In the wake of a menacing war, the year 1939 saw the celebrations of the hundred fiftieth anniversary of the French revolution. These celebrations highlight the

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[1007] Nancy L. Green, "La révolution dans l'imaginaire des immigrants juifs," in *Histoire politique des Juifs de France: entre universalisme et particularisme*, ed. Pierre Birnbaum (Paris: Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1990).
[1008] Julien Benda, *La Jeunesse d'un clerc* (Paris: Gallimard, 1936), 36-37, 42. Quoted after Susan Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 8.
[1009] Billy and Twersky, *L'Épopée de Ménaché Foïgel*, 1:246.

continuous optimism of many Jews in France that the ideals connected to the French revolution would live through and help to overcome the crisis.

Less unreservedly optimistic in the analysis of the Jewish position than the delegates at the International Congress for Jewish culture in 1937 many of the contributions to the anniversary celebrations too indicated that the majority of Jewish in France stand by the conviction of a Jewish future in the Diaspora.

Paradoxically the celebrations moreover reveal the unifying and fragmenting power of the myth of 1789 for the Jews in France. While the promoters of a "return to the ghetto" favoured isolationism the majority of Jews stood by the ideal of universalism represented by the French Revolution. An article published in the Paris paper of the Bundists *Unzer Stime* stressed the central importance of the French Revolution in overcoming the past when Jews were "ghettoised" and "tyrannised by despotic rulers" and allowing Jewish culture to be integrated into a nation state.[1010] A return to the ghetto would have meant betraying the great achievements of 1789. Hence, the celebrations in 1939 were in part expression of an alternative response to the crisis and to the suggested Jewish isolationism. Stressing the integration of the Jews in France, their gratitude towards the country that initiated Jewish emancipation the celebrations were also an expression of Jewish confidence rooted in the myth of Paris as a city not only of liberty and equality but as a bulwark against the frightening political developments in Germany and elsewhere.

Different from such an interpretation, Weinberg argues that at a time of a national *crise de conscience* the celebrations provided yet another opportunity to the native Jewish community to display their loyalty to the nation. The motivating factor behind the Paris Jewish community's eager participation in the celebrations, Weinberg's argument continues, was fear. This fear was twofold, on the one hand, it was a fear of war and on the other, and maybe more significantly a fear that France could give up the ideals of liberty and emancipation it incorporated since 1789 levelling the path for a new Jewish question. The recruitment of non-Jewish speakers was but one aspect of the "de-emphasis upon the 'Jewish question'"—as David Weinberg calls it—by Jewish organisers of the celebrations.[1011]

In the preface to the special issue of *L'Univers Israélite* dedicated to the anniversary the Grand-Rabbin of France Isaïe Schwarz summed up the ambivalent atmosphere. "It is our duty as French Jews (Israélites de France)" he proclaimed to participate in

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[1010] Unzer Stime, 30.06.1939, quoted after Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, 200.
[1011] Ibid.

the official commemorations "with a particular fervour" and he continues, "the Revolution liberated our fathers, gave them back their human dignity and made them free citizens and equal persons. We will never forget this." Re-emphasising the centrality of the Revolution for the self-conception and identity of native French Jews Schwarz stressed that the ideals of 1789 continued to be vital for Jews outside of France in this time of crisis:

> "The same elan lifts them in these hours of heavy menaces. The same spirit of sacrifice animates those of our co-religionists that flee the barbarian countries finding a land of hospitality here with us."[1012]

In June 1939, Grand Rabbin Maurice Liber spoke at a meeting of the French Jewish Youth movement. In his address, he too proclaimed the mythology of the French Revolution. Very much along the same lines with Schwarz's expression of Jewish gratitude to 'la grande nation', Liber used his statement to underline loyalty and patriotism of French Jews. While his considerations of Jewish spirituality were directed to his audience statements such as the one that Jews could henceforth play an important role in helping to realise the ideals of the Revolution were rather directed to the non-Jewish French public.[1013]

The program of the meeting reveals this double aim of internal and external assurance of Franco-Jewish integration in the French society even more clearly. The singing of La Marseillaise was followed by speeches on the "Liberating Work of the Revolution", "Revolution and Judaism" along side with readings of historical documents dealing with the question of Jewish emancipation. Besides Abbé Gregoire's "Motion in Favour of the Jews," speeches by Berr Isaac Berr and the Jews of Paris to the National Assembly in 1789 and correspondence in Hebrew announcing the convening of the Estates General and the taking of the Bastille were read out.[1014]

On 12 June 1939, in the Salle Adyar off the Boulevard Rapp in the shadow of the Eiffel tower, the German Emigrant Society Deusches Kulturkartell organised its celebration of the Revolution. The similarity with the program of the Franco-Jewish celebration is striking.[1015] Concerning German refugees in Paris, Albrecht Betz remarks that the chronological coincidence of the hundred fiftieth anniversary of the

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[1012] UI, 25.08.-01.09.1939.
[1013] UI, 30.06.1939
[1014] For the full program, cf. Weinberg, A Community on Trial, 198 fn 82.
[1015] Deutsches Kulturkartell Paris, Programm der 150 Jahr-Feier der Französischen Revolution, BArch, N2020, NL Georg Bernhard

French Revolution provided them with an opportunity of self-reflection.[1016] More than for other groups of refugees the collapse of the Popular Font in June 1937 and the subsequent fragmentation of the movement for a German popular front had left a political void.[1017]

The similarities between both meetings are striking, as is the fact that both groups celebrated independently from each other. That native French Jews and German-Jewish Refugees organised their own festivities of the anniversary indicates already that the different section of the Parisian community keep to themselves in celebrating. This tendency comes to the fore even stronger in the context of the participation of the Eastern European Jewish contributions to the commemorations where it reached the level of competition.

Independent from each other the two main umbrella organisations of the Jewish *landsmanshaften* in Paris, the *Union des sociétés juives de France* (Union of Jewish societies of France) and *Fédération des sociétés juives de France* (Federation of Jewish societies of France) organised major rallies on 14 and 15 June 1939 respectively.[1018]

The Union held a festive banquet attended by more than 300 people on 14 June 1939. It is noteworthy that the list of public speakers at the meeting includes various non-Jewish French personalities such as Romain Rolland, the archbishop of Paris and even the Minister of Education but it also reached its climax again in the intonation of *La Marseillaise*, this time sung in Yiddish.[1019] Similar to the native community, the Union attempted to underline its patriotism and the integration of its members in the French society.

A central theme throughout the event was once again the solidarity with the persecuted brethren abroad and those who had found refuge in France. Hence, Alexandre Zévaès, who chaired the banquet, associated the memories of the Dreyfus Affaire to the "present situation of Judaism persecuted by the pan Germanic racism" in his keynote address. Julien Racamond, speaking in the name of the trade union CGT (Confédération générale du travail) expressed the sympathies of the French

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[1016] Albrecht Betz, *Exil und Engagement : deutsche Schriftsteller im Frankreich der dreissiger Jahre* (München: Edition Text + Kritik, 1986), 160.
[1017] For a detailed analysis of the development of the German Popular Front Movement in Exile and an edition of central sources cf. Langkau-Alex, *Deutsche Volksfront 1932-1939 : zwischen Berlin, Paris, Prag und Moskau.*
[1018] UI, 23.06.1939
[1019] *Naïe Presse,* May 23, 1939. Quoted after Weinberg, *A Community on Trial,* 200.

working class for the persecuted Jews and D. Tcharny stressed the efforts of the Union in favour of the refugees and the victims of racism.[1020]

This contribution to the celebrations most clearly highlights the problem of double allegiance parts of the immigrant Jewish community in Paris were facing. Regarding themselves as integrated in the French society many of them still remembered being refugees coming to Paris themselves feeling thus a particular solidarity with the newly arrived refugees.

The following day the Fédération de Sociétés Juives de France organised its ceremonial manifestation. Chaired by Victor Basch, president of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen a number of militants assembled at the Fédération's headquarters on Avenue de la République. Among the speakers were the authors André Spire, Mr. Grunnebaum-Balin, Member of the Conseil d'Etat

As on the previous day, a number of non-Jewish speakers had been invited.

More outspoken than in other celebrations connections between the fight against the "pest of Hitlerism" and the historical significance of the revolution were drawn. Jean Locquin, for instance, reminded the audience that the Constitution of 1793 granted great favours to political refugees calling for a continuation of this political agenda in the present crisis. Another orator stressed the "eternal gratitude of Judaism for France."[1021]

According to Weinberg, the Fédération demonstration could well have been mistaken for a consistorial affair for immigrant leaders who delivered speeches talked mainly of the indebtedness that eastern European Jews owed to France avoiding critique of the recently passed anti-immigration legislation by the right-wing governments that succeeded the Popular Front.[1022]

Besides manifestations organised by Jewish organisations and *landsmanschaftn*, Jews participated in the official commemorations. These participations took place especially on a local level. Thus, the Fédération called upon Parisian Jews to attend the official ceremony at the *mairie* of the eleventh arrondissement.[1023]

[1020] "Le 150ᵉ anniversaire de la Révolution française," *Affirmation* 1, no. 23 (1939).
[1021] Ibid.
[1022] Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, 199.
[1023] Samedi, 01.07.1939. Cf. also Philippe Boukara, "Commémorations juives de la révolution française: Le cas du cent cinquantenaire (1939) vu par les juifs de Paris - immigrés en particulier," in *Les juifs et la révolution française: histoire et mentalités*, ed. Mireille Hadas-Lebel and Evelyne Oliel-Grausz (Louvain; Paris: Peeters, 1992).

The most impressive celebrations in the Paris community however were those sponsored by Jewish Communists. They had made the anniversary the centre of their activities as early as April 1939.

A brochure in French published by a Communist group in Spring 1939 detailed what the Revolution meant to Jews. One purpose of the publication was to remind some Frenchmen, "admittedly a small number," a writer in *Naïe Presse* noted, of the high principles that their ancestors had fought for. Moreover, they established a stipend for a Jewish student to write a thesis on "The Jews and the French Revolution".[1024] Yet another project of the Jewish Left celebrating the anniversary and expressing gratitude for the achievements the French Revolutions were the foundation of a new Masonic lodge named Loge Abbé Grégoire.[1025]

The Jewish contributions to the celebrations of the anniversary of the French Revolution in 1939 show a central paradox of the Parisian Jewish community in the interwar years. While they highlight the integrating power of the ideals of 1789, they also reveal the persistent fragmentation. The different groups organised their celebrations independently and in doing so, they were keen not to be outdone by another group in its public display of loyalty to France and its liberating ideals. Despite competition and fragmentation, the event also served as an opportunity to reflect on the position of the Jews in Paris in face of a growing crisis.

Paradoxically the fragmented contributions to the anniversary celebrations hence served an important unifying purpose for Parisian Jews. Reducing the Jewish participation to fear and external pressure to prove patriotic allegiance is hence inaccurate. Despite the separation, the celebrations of the hundred fiftieth anniversary of the French Revolution shared the aims by the various segments to revitalise one of the central myths of Paris. They reveal a common effort of self-reassurance by native, immigrant, and refugee Parisian Jews to (re-)establish a counter-myth to the growing anxieties caused by external and internal threats. They were a means of reassurance that Paris had the potential to withstand the writing on the wall. Especially for the newly arrivals, both Eastern European and German Jews, the celebrations provided a possibility of grounding. For those who had come to Paris driven by the myth of the Revolution and its promises of liberation the anniversary provided an opportunity of self-re-assurance that these ideals were still vivid.

[1024] *Naïe Presse*, 30.04.1939. Cf. also Ibid., 337.
[1025] Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwall, *The Abbé Grégoire and the French Revolution: the making of modern universalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 223.

Moreover, they allowed the sense of belonging in the sense that they shared their appreciation for the achievements of the Revolution with their fellow Jews and fellow Frenchmen alike allowing them to feel more at home in the revolutionary capital Paris against all odds of exile and persecution they escaped from.

"… it seems to me as if God left the earth" – The death Paris or the second flight

"Paris – a new home?" entitles Julia Franke her book on Jewish emigrants from Germany coming to Paris between 1933 and 1939 that has been quoted repeatedly throughout this chapter. Franke answers the question she raises with her title only partially and possibly the period most German-Jewish emigrants stayed in Paris was far too short to make it truly a new home.

Rather than asking about Paris as a new home for the emigrants, this final section draws attention to the significance of both the real and the imaginary Paris in the moment when Paris is threatened by the German invasion and subsequent occupation and on their flight for the French capital – a flight that was for many Jews the second one in a relatively short period of time. How did the perception of the once glooming city of light change in the weeks and months prior and after the German occupation and what images and memories of Paris did those leaving the capital city take with them on their into their second exile?[1027]

Stefan Zweig had left Paris already in 1936 to move to London. In December 1940, Zweig left Europe for New York. In New Haven, Connecticut, where he stayed for some time before continuing his way to Brasil, he completes his autobiography *The World of Yesterday*. Working on the manuscript in the Library of Yale University Zweig writes:

> "I know that this […] Paris of my youth is no more [… and] will never be restored since the hardest hand on earth pressed the branding iron down upon it. […] it has happened: the swastika waves from the Eiffel Tower, the black storm troops parade provokingly through Napoleon's Champs Elysées. From afar I sympathize […] with the humiliated gaze of the once good-natured citizens when the conqueror's boots stamp through their beloved bistros and cafés. Hardly any other misfortune has touched, shaken, and grieved me so much as the degradation of this city which possessed a special grace to give happiness to everyone who approached it. Will it

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[1026] Poznanski, *Jews in France during World War II*, 18.

[1027] Köpke goes as far as to claim that fleeing France and leaving Europe was the starting point of the "actual emigration" form any exiles. Wulf Köpke, "Die Flucht durch Frankreich: Die zweite Erfahrung der Heimatlosigkeit in Berichten der Emigranten aus dem Jahre 1940," *Exilforschung* 4 (1986): 241.

> again be able to give to future generations what it gave to us [...], the most wonderful example of how to be free [...]."[1028]

Zweig's tribute to Paris is one of the most remarkable examples for the perpetuation of Paris despite war and occupation, or rather for the perpetuation of the myth of Paris. Zweig's lamentations read like a resigned response to the famous line of a chanson sang by Maurice Chevalier in 1939, "Paris sera toujours Paris" (Paris will always be Paris), "despite the distant rumbling of the guns" as the last verse proclaims. By the time, the rumbling could be heart in Paris the city had changed dramatically.

Already during the last months before the outbreak of war were marked by growing anxieties among the Jews in Paris. The multiplying reports of the deteriorating condition of Jews in Eastern and Central Europe resulted in an extreme despair among Eastern European immigrants.[1029] Among the German-Jewish immigrants, a sense of fear and frustration was spreading too. Quoting from a letter written by her sister Eve, written at the hight of the crisis, Monique Köpke recalls that "every evening when I sad down to follow the news on the radio it made me so nervous, making it impossible for me to concentrated." Despite the nerve-racking, she and her husband were eager to hear all news bulletins they had access too, in German, English Spanish, Russian, French and Hebrew.[1030]

For others the developments in neighbouring Spain where the fascists under Franco seemed to prevail added to the sense of being trapped growing doubts as to France remaining a save haven for refugees. The fatalism expressed by large parts of the native French Jewish establishment at the same time stood in crass opposition to the growing anxieties of Jewish immigrants and emigrants in Paris.[1031]

"Where to emigrate to?" read the front-page headline of the *Pariser Tageszeitung* on 26 February 1939. The following announcement by the editors declared:

> "Hundreds of thousands have to face the question of fate: Where to emigrate to? It is extremely difficult to give a satisfying answer. The world is vast but it is tiny for refugees facing locked doors in many countries. [...] Everybody seeking a new existence a new home faces a labyrinth of bylaws and paragraphs."[1032]

According to the editors of the *Tageszeitung* enough theoretical articles, grand settlement projects and scholarly analysis concerning emigration had been published. What was lacking and urgently needed is "practical information on

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[1028] Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, 126.
[1029] Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, 202.
[1030] Köpke, *Nachtzug nach Paris*, 106.
[1031] For details on the native establishment's fatalism cf. Weinberg, *A Community on Trial*, 202 f.
[1032] PTZ, 27.02.1939.

emigration possibilities." In a series of article published between 28 February and 25 July 1939 the paper engaged various practical questions concerning the emigration of German refugees from France. The articles provided useful information ranging from obtaining a visa, climatical conditions, to employment possibilities in countries such as Australia, Bolivia, Columbia, Uruguay, China, Canada or British Guyana. The publication of the article series manifests the growing uncertainties among German emigrants in Paris and that many of them were considering to leave France rather sooner than later. Coinciding with the turning to the ideals of 1789 in the celebrations of the hundred fiftieth anniversary of the French Revolution and the re-assurance that France would remain a country of refuge withstanding the current crisis, the article series highlights the ambivalence of the emigrant's situation during the final month of peace.

A letter written by Leon Askenasy to Erwin Piscator around the same time captures the mood of many emigrants. "... how long will it take until Hitler demands the extradition of the emigrants from France [...] – France won't start a war over this question – she can't fight a war and people start talking openly, sarcastically and bitterly about a possible occupation of Paris." In addressing Piscator who had left France already to go to America Askenasy wrote: "Be happy that you are out of here, out of Europe and that you NEVER, NEVER have to come back here; you would not recognise Paris any more ...."[1033]

A month later Piscator received a letter from Hans Sahl who also was still in Paris. As in Askenasy's letter, the question of a nearing war occupied a prominent position in the letter. "Three months passed and probably another three will pass," Sahl wrote "until war will break and until France will expel all emigrants forcing them to emigrate into the ocean." Furthermore, Sahl described his growing sense of frustration and loss of optimism. Unsuccessfully, the young author had tried to get his latest manuscript published. As Askenasy, Sahl described the growing decay of the spirit of Paris.

> "When you were here, there was still movement, projects, hopes. Now Paris is a cemetery. The repeated question 'what do you think, will war break out?' starts annoying me. People speak of nothing else. How shall one sit done and write poetry or have ideas ..."[1034]

[1033] Leon Askenasy to Erwin Piscator, 18.03.1939, quoted after Hermann Haarmann, ed., *Abschied und Willkommen : Briefe aus dem Exil 1933 - 1945* (Berlin: Bostelmann und Siebenhaar, 2000), 186-89.

[1034] Hans Sahl to Erwin Piscator, 07.04.1939, quoted after Haarmann, ed., *Abschied und Willkommen*, 189-90.

In face of growing uncertainties situation the journalist Erich Kaiser who had come to Paris from Berlin in 1933 advised his sister Ilse to leave Paris and go to London. In a letter to her, written shortly after her departure, Kaiser wrote, "I believe I was right in pleading you to leave [Paris]. In the meantime, world history has continued without anybody knowing into which direction it is moving."[1035] Three days later, he added that apart from personal financial problems, "it is remarkably calm here, although things are changing."[1036]

Like many of his fellow emigrants, Erich Kaiser somehow sensed but did not believe sincerity of the current danger. A year later, he committed suicide in a French internment camp is Southern France.

Similarly, Walter Benjamin remained very reluctant to leave the city as he explained in a letter to Max Horkheimer in December 1939.

> "My Paris friends are unanimously of the opinion that I should leave. But you know that I am not a friend of overhasty decisions. ... Nonetheless, I usually follow the council of my experienced friends (and I have not forgotten that I never would have had the wisdom to leave Germany already in March 1933 had not Mrs. Adorno insisted upon it). I don't have to tell you how attached to France I feel, not so much in terms of personal relations but in terms of my works. Nothing on earth can replace the Bibliothèque Nationale for me."[1037]

More than half a year was to pass until Benjamin finally decided to follow his friends' advice and leave Paris.

The French declaration of war on 3 September 1939 meant a further deterioration of the emigrant's situation. Two days before the French government had issued a decree declaring all Germans staying in France to "sujets ennemis" (enemy subjects) and called upon all men of German descent between age 17 and 65 to gather in certain location. From these places, they were then taken to internment camps.[1038] Throughout the following months of *drôle de guerre* the fear of the internee's families left behind in Paris were torn between concern for their husbands and sons and the fear of the German bombardments of Paris.[1039]

Already prior to what Marc Bloch called the *étrange défaite* (strange defeat) – the military surrender of the French armies – began "l'Exodus". Thousands of people –

[1035] Erich Kaiser to his sister Ilse, 27.08.1939, Wiener Library, 1061/1.
[1036] Erich Kaiser to his sister Ilse, 30.08.1939, Wiener Library, 1061/1.
[1037] Walter Benjamin to Max Horkheimer, 15.12.1939 in: Gershom Scholem and Theodor W. Adorno, eds., *Walter Benjamin: Briefe*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1966), 2:838-39.
[1038] Marion Neumann, "Frankreich: Ersehnte Zuflucht - enttäuscht Hoffnungen; France: longed - for refuge - dashed hopes," in *Ohne zu zögern : Varian Fry : Berlin - Marseille - New York*, ed. Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand in Berlin (Berlin: Aktives Museum, 2007), 109.
[1039] Fittko, *Solidarität unerwünscht : meine Flucht durch Europa : Erinnerungen 1933-1940*, 187 ff.

according to some estimates close to two million Parisians – fled southwards out of the capital and away from the fighting in June 1940.[1040]

As early as 11 June 1940, the Consistoire Central decided that the grand rabbin Isaie Schwartz ought to leave Paris "in order to stay in contact with the communities of the country".[1041] Other Parisian rabbis followed him leaving the Paris community without their spiritual leaders.

Among those fleeing Paris, was the writer Walter Mehring. On 13 June 1940, while German troops approached the capital city, he left Paris on foot. His Odyssey through France via Orleans, Bayonne and Toulouse lasted for six and a half weeks until they reached his destination: Marseille. In *Briefe aus der Mitternacht* (Letters from Midnight), Mehring has captured the experiences in a French internment camp, his return to Paris, and his flight to Marseille drastically.[1042] For many fellow refugees the city on the Mediterranean coast became the "last shelter in the old world".[1043] Meanwhile German troops "parade provokingly through Napoleon's Champs Elysées" as Stefan Zweig wrote. For those refugees still in Paris the situation became desperate.

Paragraph 19 of the Armistice Agreement between France and Germany signed in the Forest of Compiègne on 22 June 1940 determined that the "French Government is obliged to surrender upon demand all Germans named by the German Government in France as well as in French possessions, colonies, protectorate territories, and mandates."[1044] For many emigrants there was no doubt that an extradition to the Germans would equal a death sentence. Those how had not left the capital city where in sincere danger. Paris had ceased to be a city of refuge as had the traditional *terre d'asile* France.

[1040] Hanna Diamond, *Fleeing Hitler: France 1940* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[1041] Report by the Grand Rabbin Isaïr Schwartz on his activities since June 1944, AIU, CC, boîte 4, here quoted after Jacques Biélinky, *Journal, 1940-1942 : un journaliste juif à Paris sous l'Occupation* (Paris: Cerf, 1992), 38.
[1042] Cf. Walter Mehring, *Staatenlos im Nirgendwo : die Gedichte, Lieder und Chansons 1933 - 1974* (Düsseldorf: Claassen, 1981), 233-36 (Afterword by Christoph Buchwald). The English translation of Mehring's collection of poems, illustrated by his fellow exile George Grosz, bore the illuminating title *No Road Back*. Walter Mehring, *No Road Back: Poems* (New York: Samuel Curl, 1944).
[1043] Anna Seghers, *Transit: Roman* (Berlin (Ost): Aufbau-Verlag, 1982). On Marseille as a centre of refugees in early 1940s cf. Angelika Meyer, Marion Neumann, and Aktives Museum Faschismus und Widerstand in Berlin, eds., *Ohne zu zögern : Varian Fry : Berlin - Marseille - New York* (Berlin: Aktives Museum, 2007).
[1044] "Armistice Agreement between the German High Command of the Armed Forces and French Plenipotentiaries, Compiègne, June 22, 1940," in *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, ed. United States Department of State, vol. Series D, IX (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1956). The text of the armistice is also available at the Avalon Project at Yale Law School website, URL: http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/wwii/frgearm.htm#art19

While German emigrants had left Paris and were massing in the South of France hoping to get a visa to leave the country and the continent, many native French and Eastern European Jews remained in Paris.[1045] Among those who stayed in Paris was the French-Jewish journalist Jacques Biélinky. He noted down his impressions collected on his walks through the occupied city in a diary. This exceptional document, rediscovered in the YIVO archives by Renée Poznanski, allows an insight into the world of Paris Jewry during the German occupation. The first entry of the diary reads:

> "19 July [1940]. [...] Montparnasse is deserted. At the Dôme one reads a note in German 'Interdiction of entry for German civilians and military personal". La Coupole was entirely empty. Many ateliers are abandoned.
>
> 20 July. Synagogue Rue de la Victoire. The service commences at the small oratorio but is moved to the great hall. Many people. Two cousins argue in Yiddish, agreeing that soon all of Europe will be inhabitable for the Jews. [...] The rabbis are absent."[1046]

Already these few lines are illuminating the drastic changes in Paris following the occupation as well as the desperate attempt to uphold normality. Holding the usual synagogue service however was more then just normality. The large number of people gathering at Rue de la Victoire was a clear indication. Those staying in the occupied city longed for mutual support and solidarity and by gathering at the synagogue, they assured themselves that Jewish Paris despite all turmoil was still intact.

On the evening of 21 November 1940, a couple accompanied by a group of friends to a Paris train station. At the entrance of the station, the couple, Elisabeth and her husband Julius Bab, said farewell to their companions and made their way on to the platform to await the train that would take them out of Paris.

Years later, Elisabeth Bab recalled this scene their departure from Paris, followed the many other German-Jewish emigrants that had left Paris in the previous months. "The Paris we left," Elisabeth Bab wrote affectionately in her memories, "was only a shadow of our beloved city, but it was still our Paris."

Not less affectionately Julius Bab wrote about leaving the French capital in a poem written upon their arrival in New York City:

> "Everything, humans ever excogitated, felt, believed and achieved,
> everything they still aim for today, what they are worth
> all that is in the mirror of your eyes.
> [...]

[1045] Cf. the statistical documents on Jews in Paris compiled after the occupation in Fonds Le Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives (CGQJ), CDJC, CCCLXIX-3, 4 and 5.
[1046] Biélinky, *Journal*, 1940-1942, 37.

> Your delicate beauty faded away
> In these horrific days
> And it seems to me as if God left the earth
> When you died, beloved city Paris."[1047]

The Paris of the refugees had died but it was the image of Paris that Bab and numerous other emigrants took with them to their next destinations. The myth of the city of light, the city of refuge thus survived across the Atlantic and elsewhere.

Conclusion

Like London and Berlin, Paris provided a unique stage for the evolution and transformation of urban Jewish cultures. More than other cities, the French capital became *the* symbol of urban potential and promises. The myths of Paris—the capital of revolution, of lights, or liberation—add a particular dynamic to the Parisian Jewish experience. Different from London or Berlin, where the negative effects of the city on the Jewish community often dominated debates and perception, Paris stands for the embracing of the promises and potentials urbanity offers. However, the high hopes of many twentieth century Jewish immigrants and refugees coming to Paris remained unfulfilled. In fact, Paris rather posed enormous challenges on the newcomers to find their place within the fragmented, fluctuating and alienating environment of the city. These newcomers—conceptualised in Simmel's foreigner or Park's marginal man—represent an essential urban type. In its transitory position, they represent the multidimensional character of the modern city, created out of "foreignness" and difference forged together within the urban landscape. The experience of migrants and refugees thus allows a unique insight into hidden aspects of urbanity, invisible borders and hidden spaces in the city. Hence, the investigation into the mid-twentieth century Parisian Jewish experience is one into the perpetuating theme of exile and homecoming so central to modern Jewish history. What makes the case of Paris unique is the persistence of the dream-image of the city among refugees despite the urban reality and the destruction of Paris as a city of refuge.

[1047] Alles, was die Menschen je erdachten,| Was sie fuehlten, glaubten und vollbrachten, | Was sie heut' noch wollen, was sie taugen –| Alles war im Spiegel Deiner Augen. [...]
Deine freie Schoenheit ist verblichen| In den Tagen, in den fuerchterlichen –| Und mir scheint, dass Gott die Welt verliess,| Als Du starbst, geliebte Stadt, Paris. Elisabeth Bab, Aus Zwei Jahrhunderten [1960], Exilarchiv DNB, EB 90/37, 214. Also in LBIJMB, MM 3.

Conclusion

Cities occupy an exceptional place in the modern Jewish experience. This thesis has traced key elements of this modern (urban) Jewish experience in the contexts of London, Berlin and Paris in the nineteenth and twentieth century. It has been stressed that Jewish and urban aspects are more closely interconnected than previously acknowledged. Consequently, this thesis has shows how profoundly cities influenced the Jewish trajectory amidst them and how Jews in turn helped shaping the urban landscape in response to the city's challenges.

While each of the three capital cities had a unique impact in its Jewish community, they provided the stage for paradigmatic elements of modern Jewish urbanity. The encounter between East and West in the wake of the Jewish mass migration from Eastern Europe became a central concern for Jewish communities across the West. The case of London illustrates that the urban context had a profound impact on the manifestation, mediation and transformation of the different cultural and social models of East and West. London's multidimensional topography—geographical, imperial—adds new dynamics and perspectives to these encounters.

The question of coming to terms between Eastern and Western Jews within the city is part of the larger question of how to develop a modern Jewish identity suitable for the modern metropolis. It is this question that lies at the heart of the second chapter. Berlin has proven to be particularly suitable to investigate the challenges urban modernity posed to the Jewish community and the way in which this community responded to them. The creation and mapping of Jewish urban spaces are a striking example how Berlin Jews attempted to come to terms with the fluctuating, fragmenting, and shifting landscape of the city. The element of transition leads to the final chapter dealing with Paris. Among other cities, the twentieth century French capital gained the status of a capital of refugees. Following Jewish immigrants and refugees on their way through Paris attempting to find their place within the city, this final chapter highlights yet another central aspect of the modern Jewish experience, that of exile. Paris serves as a prism to trace the experience of exile and the hopes of having found refuge among Jews.

The reverberations of the three central themes of this thesis—the city as place of encounters between different Jewish groups, the complex relationship between Jewish community and modern metropolis, and the issue of the city as refuge—can still be felt at present.

After years of intense arguments and legal proceedings, Orthodox Jews in the borough of Barnet in north London were permitted to create an eruv, a religious boundary allowing observant Jews to carry items outside of their homes that would otherwise be forbidden during Sabbath. In February 2003, Britain's first eruv was put in place, in 2006 a second eruv followed in Edgware. The dispute over what critics see as an isolationist orthodox project point to the ambivalence of urban modernity in general and modern Jewish experience in particular. The example of the London Eruv thus points to a central concern underpinning the entire thesis: the constant ambivalence between Jewish particularism and integration characterising the trajectory of post-emancipation European Jewry. The eruv is the creation of a Jewish space stressing Jewish particularism but it is a space within a modern city thus also a means of coming to terms with the modern environment.

The fact that the Hebrew term Eruv literally means 'mixing', hints at the multiple functions of Jewish urban spaces this thesis addresses. Jewish spaces, actual and virtual once serve both internal and external. The production of Jewish urban spaces is an important means in the formation of (comm)unity. The creation of Jewish spaces within a non-Jewish environment is furthermore a practice through which Jewish elements and urban elements come into contact and are mixed.

However, the creation of Jewish spaces can also create boundaries. The "domestication of the neighborhood" through the establishment of the eruv, for instance, establishes a border towards the outside world creating a refuge for Jewish practice within the city.[1048] The example of the eruv also highlights the third major aspect of this thesis, that of cities and urban spaces as refuge.

Immigrants and refugees add their spaces, distinct cultural practices, and patterns to the existing urban Jewish topographies. Besides spatial aspects, the arrival of immigrants and refugees in the city adds a temporal dimension to the Jewish urban experience. Driven away from the old home towards a new future in the foreign city the foreigner's arrival poses the question of the future of the Jews.

The majority of fin-de-siècle commentators of Jewish urbanity were pessimistic about the future of urban Jewry, seeing the city rather as destructive force. Despite these developments, the predicted decline and fall of urban Jewry proclaimed by

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[1048] Jennifer Cousineau, "Rabbinic Urbanism in London: Rituals and the Material Culture of the Sabbath," *Jewish Social Studies* 11, no. 3 (2005): 53-54 and 43. Cf. also Peter Vincent and Barney Warf, "Eruvim: Talmudic places in a postmodern world," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series* 27, no. 1 (2002).

Theilhaber, Ruppin and others proved false. A century later, more than half of world Jewry lived in only five metropolitan areas—Tel Aviv, New York, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and Haifa. Including other cities such as Philadelphia, Paris, London or Be'er Sheva this figure rises to almost eighty per cent.[1049]

The overarching interconnected elements of space, culture(s), and modernity permeate through the three case studies binding them together. The central questions of this thesis - how did Jews cope with the challenges of the urban environment, what practices and means did they employ and how did the urban environment shape these attempts – are a synthesis of these three elements. Under this central question, *Jews in the Metropolis* makes multifold contributions. Bringing together so far detached histories, it suggests new readings of both modern Jewish and urban history. The dialectic relationship between cities shaping Jewish cultures, calling for new patterns of action and Jews in turn transforming the city through the creating of urban Jewish spaces and other manifestations of Jewish culture highlights this interconnectedness of urban and Jewish aspects.

Rather than "Judaising" Jewish history, this thesis approaches the historical experiences of Jews in cities as integral and integrated in the urban trajectories. Besides revealing specific Jewish elements, all three case studies are embedded in the context of general (urban) history.

Giving space and its production a great prominence in the context of Jewish history this thesis emphasises that cities are more than mere framework for the analysis of historical development but that they shape it profoundly.

Cities are laboratories and prisms of modernity. It is in cities that modernity reveals its ambivalence and variety. As this thesis shows, cities occupy a central place in the modern Jewish experience. Investigating Jewish urbanity is thus a way to investigate the question of Jewish modernity and its discontents. The case of Jews in the city is particularly interesting for another reason. Through the ubiquity of urban Jews, their experience gains exemplary quality for the study of modernity. Developments in 1880s London, 1920s Berlin, or 1930s Paris are therefore both specific and paradigmatic examples of Jewish urbanity. The various cultural practices and strategies – employed by urban Jews to bridge divides, develop new form of commonality and community, and to find their (s)places in the urban environment – as described in this thesis suggest a new element of Jewish cultural history. Culture

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[1049] Sergio della Pergola "World Jewish Population, 2006," *American Jewish Year Book* 106 (2006): 598.

in this thesis is – following Marshall Berman and others – conceptualised in an open and expansive way that allows bringing together very different forms of human activity, hence allowing perceiving all sorts of artistic, intellectual, religious, political and spatial activities as interconnected and interactive. The adaptation of this broad notion of culture for the concrete context of (Jewish) London, Berlin, and Paris is yet another contribution.

Despite these contributions, this thesis clearly has its limitations. Considering the diversity of urban Jewish communities and the cities at issue, a thesis investigating the relationship between Jews and cities will necessarily remain fragmented.

A vast topic such as Jews in the metropolis offers various points of departure for further research. The role of the city in the context of Jews and empire, the analysis of Jewish philanthropy as an urban practice, the role of cities in the context of Jewish memory, or the interaction between Jews and other urban minority groups in the production of space are only some examples for possible further investigation in the field of Jewish urban history.

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