Everyday Zionism in East-Central Europe, 1914–1920: Nation-Building in War and Revolution

Jan Rybak

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

Florence, 05 July 2019

European University Institute
Department of History and Civilization

Everyday Zionism in East-Central Europe, 1914–1920: Nation-Building in War and Revolution

Jan Rybak

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

Examining Board

Prof. Pieter M. Judson (EUI) - supervisor
Prof. Lucy Riall (EUI)
Prof. Marsha L. Rozenblit (University of Maryland)
Prof. David Engel (New York University)

© Jan Rybak, 2019

No part of this thesis may be copied, reproduced or transmitted without prior permission of the author

Researcher declaration to accompany the submission of written work
Department of History and Civilization - Doctoral Programme

I <Jan Rybak> certify that I am the author of the work <Everyday Zionism in East-Central Europe, 1914–1920: Nation-Building in War and Revolution> I have presented for examination for the Ph.D. at the European University Institute. I also certify that this is solely my own original work, other than where I have clearly indicated, in this declaration and in the thesis, that it is the work of others.

I warrant that I have obtained all the permissions required for using any material from other copyrighted publications.

I certify that this work complies with the Code of Ethics in Academic Research issued by the European University Institute (IUE 332/2/10 (CA 297).

The copyright of this work rests with its author. Quotation from it is permitted, provided that full acknowledgement is made. This work may not be reproduced without my prior written consent. This authorisation does not, to the best of my knowledge, infringe the rights of any third party.

I declare that this work consists of <170,271> words.

Statement of inclusion of previous work:

I confirm that chapter <6> draws upon earlier articles I published
"Sozialistischer Zionismus in der europäischen Revolution 1917–1920: Widersprüche emanzipatorischer Identitäten." Arbeit – Bewegung – Geschichte. Zeitschrift für Historische Studien, Vol. 16, No. 2 (2017): 31–48.
"'Universal Freedom' and the Balfour Declaration: Watershed Moments for Radical Jewish Politics." European Review of History: Revuee européenne d'histoire. (forthcoming in fall 2019)

Statement of language correction:
This thesis has been corrected for linguistic and stylistic errors. I certify that I have checked and approved all language corrections, and that these have not affected the content of this work.

Signature and date:

20 June 2019

Thesis Abstract

The thesis analyzes Zionism as a nation building project in East-Central Europe during the years of war, revolution, the collapse of Empires and the creation of nation states, 1914 to ca. 1920. It focuses on the day-to-day forms of activism in the Habsburg Empire and the regions of Russia occupied by the German army during the First World War. Zionist activists found themselves in a situation where they both had to respond to hitherto unknown pressures and where they could seize opportunities to engage with the masses of East-Central European Jewry and win them to the national project. The thesis argues that it was the everyday encounters between Zionist activists and Jewish communities that allowed the movement to establish itself as an important force in Jewish social and political life. These included the building of a social and educational infrastructure, the provision of relief and aid as well as attempts to provide security and representation during a period that was characterized by impoverishment and anti-Jewish violence. Local conditions and the relations between activists and the authorities determined whether such efforts were successful and whether Zionists could convince larger segments of the population and acquire meaningful positions within Jewish society. The Zionist activists' struggle to gain agency for the Jewish nation in a radically changing environment is at the core of the thesis. The major narratives of the period, namely those of collapse of empires, the rise of nationalism, and the simultaneous promises made by the Balfour Declaration and the Russian Revolution could have different impacts and meanings on a local level and for individual activists. Whereas many of these developments forced people to rethink their ideological preconceptions as well as their place in society, I argue that Zionists' on-the-ground activism shaped the way people responded to these major events.

Contents

List of Illustrations *page* iv
Acknowledgments v

INTRODUCTION 1
Everyday Activism 3
Time, Region, and the Jews of East-Central Europe 8
On Zionism 21
Organization and Structure of the Thesis 31
1 THE NATIONAL MISSION 37
Conquer the World 38
A Walk on Eggs 46
Liberation? 50
The Aim of a 'Publicly and Legally Assured' Position of Influence 56
"Completely alien": Zionists Encounter their Nation 66
A Civilizing Mission 72
Conclusion 76
2 POLITICAL POWER 79
Effects of the War I: The Habsburg Empire 80
Effects of the War II: The Generalgouvernement and Ober Ost 82
Relief in Austria: "What kind of work you do is not the decisive question" 85
Raising Funds 88
Galicia and her Refugees 97
Relief Work under German Rule: Ober Ost and the Generalgouvernement 110
"Under the Slave Whip" 115
Consequences of Relief Work 123
3 THE MOST VALUABLE NATIONAL FUND: CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION 133
To Impress One's Hallmark 134
Self-Sacrifice 138
Saving the Children 142
Muscular Young Men, Straight-up Girls 147
The Students of Rabbi Akiva 152
A Space for the Youth 163
Care for the Victims of the Pogroms 167
Conclusion 171
4 SECURITY AND AGENCY 173
Glory through Arms 175
National Antisemitism? 185
Liberation or the Decline of the Imperial Option? 193
Fighters for Human Rights and National Freedom 201
The National and the Local 210
"Dreadful Events have taken place in our town" 217
Protest and Autonomy 227
Conclusion 233
5 REPRESENTING THE NATION 235
Uniting the People 237
Nation and Community: Prague and Vienna 245
East Galicia: Survival as a Nation 260
Other Paths to National Representation 273

Representing the Will of the Jewish Nation to the World 279
Conclusion: Two Contradictory Tasks 289
6 THE ANCIENT IDEAL AND THE NEW WORLD 293
New Mass Politics following the February Revolution 294
History's Categorical Imperative 302
The Russian Way 312
"Der proleytariat hot dos vort!" 318
Ready for Departure 325
Conflicting Alternatives? 335
CONCLUSION 339

Bibliography 347

List of Illustrations

Map 1: East-Central Europe under occupation in 1917 *page* vii

Figure 1: A training farm near Wilno, ca. 1918 151
Figure 2: Classroom of a Mizrahi-run school in Wilno, ca. 1917 160
Figure 3: Jews in Dąbrowica demonstrate to welcome the Russian Revolution in 1917 295
Figure 4: 'Pioneers' in Grodno before their departure to Palestine, early 1920 328
Figure 5: Orphans on their way to Palestine in Trieste; ca. 1920 334

Acknowledgments

Writing this dissertation was a long and challenging endeavor and there were many people along the way without whose support this would have never happened. I am immensely grateful to my supervisor, Pieter Judson, for challenging my preconceived ideas, for pushing me to rethink my concepts and to approach old problems from new perspectives; for his critique, his patience, and his exemplary supervision. I want to thank Lucy Riall for her challenging questions and comments, Helga Embacher for her unwavering support and encouragement, and Laurence Cole without whom I would have never come to Florence. I am incredibly grateful to David Engel and Marsha Rozenblit who, as members of the Examining Board, took the time to read the thesis and gave excellent and encouraging reviews, corrections, and comments.

I had the great privilege to get critique, comments, and encouragement on my work by scholars whom I immensely admire and without whose help this dissertation would not be what it is today (only in regard to the good parts; of course, I am responsible for all mistakes and shortcomings). I want to thank especially Chaim Gans, Marion Kaplan, Laura Lee Downs, Michael Miller, James Renton, Marcos Silber, Larry Wolff, and Konrad Zieliński. I consider myself very lucky to have benefitted from their feedback, inspiration, and support. In many conversations in New York, Tel Aviv, Warsaw, Prague, Vienna, Graz, Florence, and Jerusalem, I had a chance to learn from numerous highly distinguished scholars whose invaluable questions and comments pushed me to rethink my topic, and to refine my arguments. I want to express my sincerest gratitude especially to Israel Bartal, Katerina Čapkova, Jonathan Dekel-Chen, Gennady Estraikh, Semion Goldin, Harriet Murav, Gerald Lamprecht, Riki Ofir, Antony Polonsky, Simon Rabinovitch, Anita Shapira, Nick Underwood, and Jolanta Żyndul,

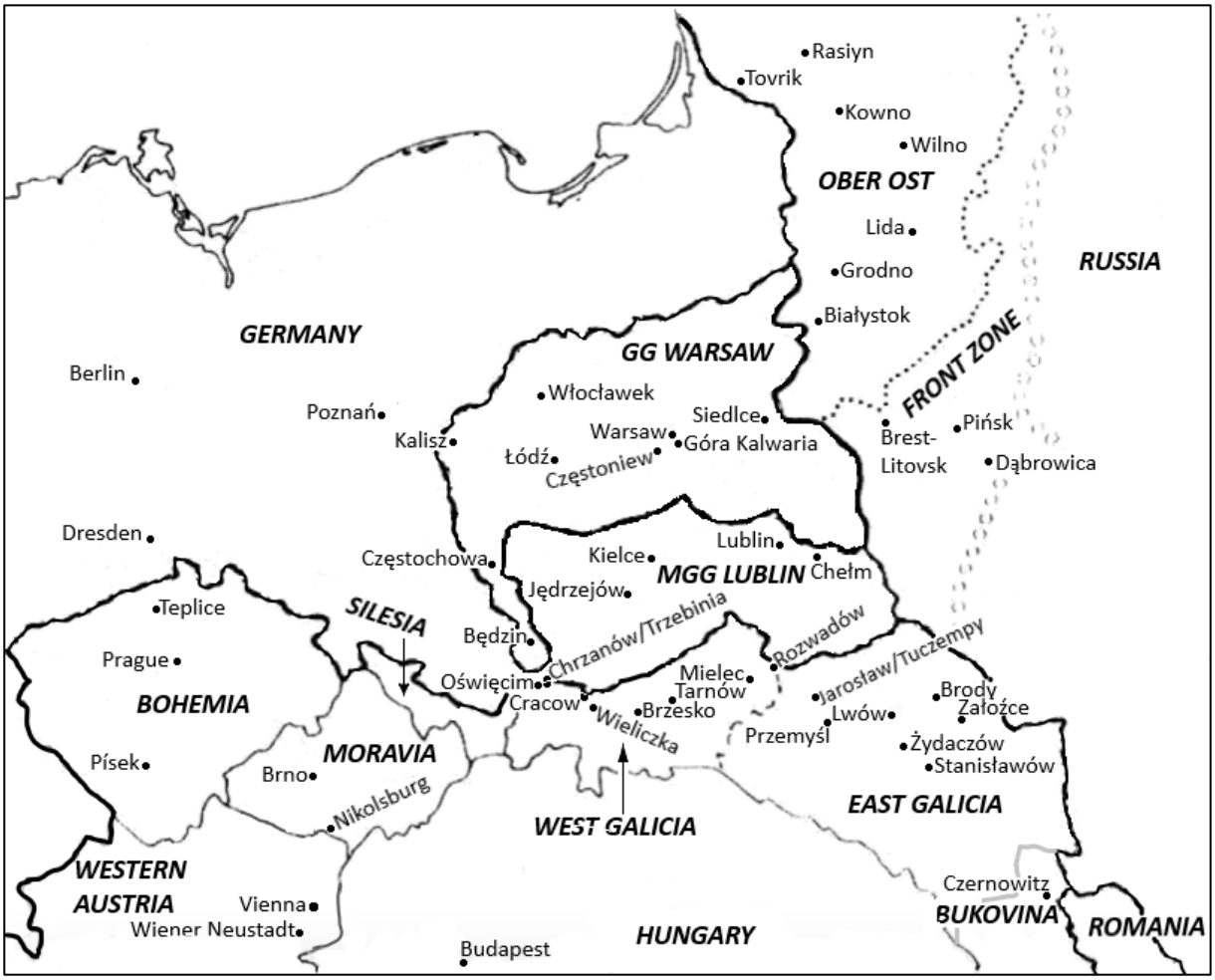
I was honored to spend three months as a GEOP Doctoral Research Fellow at POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews and the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw; two of the most important institutions that research, contribute to, and defend the history and heritage of East-Central European Jewry as no other in Europe. This is more important today than it has been for a long time. I am very grateful to the William K. Bowes Jr. Foundation, the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture, and the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute for making this visit possible, and to Joanna Andrysiak, Artur Markowski, and Joanna Wójcicka-Warda for their amazing work and support during my time in Warsaw.

In the past years, I had a chance to visit many archives and libraries on three different continents. Numerous archivists and librarians went out of their way to help with my research and I want to thank especially Rochelle Rubinstein and Amiel Shefer, alongside their wonderful

colleagues at the Central Zionist Archives; Denise Rein, Beatrice Kremer and everyone else at the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People; Stefan Litt at the National Library of Israel, Annat Barel at the Israel Labor Party Archive; Yishai Ben-Arieh at the Pinhas Lavon Institute; Ilya Slavutskyi and his amazing colleagues at YIVO; Alicja Kościan at the Jewish Historical Institute; and Manfred Mugrauer at the KPÖ-ZPA. Unfortunately, I failed to note the names of many of the wonderful, dedicated, and supportive archivists and librarians who helped me so much. But special thanks go to the incredibly generous and helpful lady at the RGVA in Moscow, the great staff at the German Military Archive in Freiburg, the amazingly helpful and friendly archivists at the Archiwum Państwowe in Warsaw, Łódź, Cracow, and Przemyśl, at the Bundesarchiv and the Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts in Berlin, as well as the unnamed hero who came up with the genius idea of digitalizing and centralizing the catalogues of the Polish state archives.

Many friends and colleagues supported me tremendously during these years with their advice and practical help, in working together on projects, and by connecting me to people. I am grateful for many wonderful and exciting conversations, for their intellectual input, their moral support, their friendship, and the beautiful time I could spend with them. I want to thank especially Nadav and Shay Aharoni, Nof and Yossi Azran, Jan Burek, Suheir Daksa, Lisa Sophie Gebhard, Feike Fliervoet, Fuchsy and Philomena, Alina Kugler, Daniel Marwecki, Neta Most and Eyal Atsey Pri, Ari Neuhauser, Arturo Zoffmann-Rodríguez, Dave in Moscow, Paul, Kalina and Bartek in Warsaw. I want to thank Moritz Erkl, Michael Gehmacher, Sonja Grusch, and Sebastian Kugler, who are incredible friends, intellectual and political inspirations. I could not have written this dissertation without the many people here in Florence who gave me strength and stability, kept me (somewhat) sane, supported me when I needed support, were just there when I needed someone to be there, and helped me in so many big and small ways. They are too many to name them all, but I want to thank especially Maryna Batsman, Ula Furgał, Diana Galos, Kirsten Kamphuis, Galyna Kostiukevych, Elżbieta Kwiecińska, Margherita Melillo, Irene Otero Fernández, Christy Petit, Ion Pagoaga Ibiricu, Maria Patrin, Heloisa Rojas Gomez, Mikko Toivanen, Saša Vejzagić, and Mikaella Yiatrou.

Finally, I want to thank my family for their continuous love and support, and for the sacrifices they made, allowing me to follow this academic path and finish the Ph.D. And a kiss to Sophie who, since May Day 2018, made this world so much more beautiful.



Map 1

East-Central Europe under German and Austrian occupation as of December 1917. Places mentioned in the thesis feature on the map.[1]

[1] Map based on: Antony Polonsky, "The German Occupation of Poland during the First and Second World War," in *Armies of Occupation*, ed. Roy A. Prete, A. Hamish Ion (Waterloo: Wilfried Laurier University Press, 1984), 106.

Introduction

"Saturday, May 8, 1915. […] Shaye comes over with Podolsky's cousin Khayim who is an ardent Zionist, a very temperamental and sickly man. Once he is convinced of an idea, you cannot change his mind. If you tell him something he does not agree with, he gets so excited trying to show you how wrong you are, that you're just afraid to start up with him. 'He won't live long,' Podolsky says after his cousin's departure. 'He takes things too much to heart. He became so overwrought reading about the Jews who are being driven out of their homes, that his parents had to put him to bed.'"[1]

Khayim was the first Zionist who fourteen-year-old Anne Kahan from Siedlce (Shedlits) mentioned in her diary.[2] He was a dedicated, enthusiastic, self-educated, self-sacrificing activist, an ideologue who gave passionate speeches about Zionist theory, the Jewish nation and its future home in Eretz Israel.[3] He might very well have been typical of many Zionist activists in much of East-Central Europe in those days. The war, "that colossal madhouse, which spread over half the globe and wherein a thousand million frantic people rioted in a variety of frantic postures",[4] as Avigdor Hameiri (Emil Feuerstein) put it in 1929, would change not only the face of the continent, but also the fate of European Jewry and the very character of the Zionist movement in much of the region. By the end of the war, not only would there be a declaration of support for a Jewish national homeland in Palestine by the great powers, but the movement itself would have gained significant following and a central position in Jewish society in East-Central Europe. This thesis will show how this came to be.

I began this research project somewhat naively, motivated in part by a sense of irritation that certain numerical data did not match my preconceived understanding of what Zionism was. Between 1904 and 1923, that is, in the years commonly associated with the Second and Third Aliyah, an estimated 72,000 Jews moved to Ottoman and Mandate Palestine.[5] Not all of them

[1] Anne Kahan, "The Diary of Anne Kahan: Siedlce, Poland, 1914–1916," *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Studies*, No. 18 (1983): 181.
[2] A note on place names: Unless there is a common English version of a place's name (e.g. Cracow, Prague, Warsaw), I give several versions of the place's name at the first time it is mentioned, using the relevant local languages. In order to make the text more readable I subsequently only use one version of the name, either orientating myself on the official name attributed to the place after the war or the most common version used in the documents. Where I translate direct quotes, I use only the version of the place's name in the original. In direct quotes, I will also use the spelling of individuals' names as they appear in the cited source.
[3] Kahan, "Diary," 181; 216–7; 335; 345.
[4] Avigdor Hameiri, *The Great Madness* (Haifa: Or-Ron Publishing House, 1984), 1.
[5] According to Walter Laqueur, up until 1914, between 35,000 and 40,000 Zionist immigrants had come to Palestine. The Third Aliyah (1919–1923) brought another estimated 37,000 new immigrants. Walter Laqueur, *The History of Zionism*, 3rd ed. (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 213; 294.

did so for Zionist reasons.[6] At about the same time, between the years 1907 and 1923, membership of the various Zionist Organizations around the globe rose from 166,333 to 584,765.[7] The latter numbers primarily reflect the sale of the Shekel. The Shekel was the "declaration of commitment to the Zionist Organization,"[8] to be collected "from those Jews who recognize both the publicly and legally assured homeland and its establishment in Palestine as the core of the program,"[9] in order "to provide for the Jewish people funds for acquiring land."[10] With the Zionist movement proclaiming the necessity of the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine and that all Jews should eventually move there, I wondered what those 512,765 men and women who joined the movement, but apparently showed little interest in relocating to the Middle East, were thinking. Why would they join a party whose program seemed to revolve around one specific issue and then draw no consequences for themselves in respect of this one precise issue? What did they do before – or instead of – going up to the Land of Israel? In short: what did Zionism mean for them, why did they join this movement, and how did they make sense of it and its program in their own lives and in their own environments?

I argue here that the key for understanding this ostensible contradiction can be found in the form Zionism assumed, both as a political movement and as an idea, in Europe, particularly in the decisive years of the First World War and its aftermath that are at the center of this thesis. The movement and its idea gained, and in some cases failed to gain, meaning, credibility, and support because of its members and activists who gave it meaning and made it credible on a day-to-day basis and who, through their deeds, communicated it to the Jewish population of East-Central Europe.

This thesis explores this dynamic in the time and region that is crucial for the development of the Zionist movement. The region is East-Central Europe, ranging from Vienna

---

[6] Based on Gur Alroey and Baruch Ben-Avram, Boaz Neumann argues that in the Second Aliyah, only 4.5 percent of immigrants were 'pioneers' (i.e. developing the land in the Zionist sense), while 16 percent of those who embarked at the port of Odessa, one of the main ports of Jewish emigration, were old orthodox Jews who followed the tradition to come to die in Jerusalem. Similar doubts about the *olim*'s ideological commitments were raised in regard to the Third Aliyah. Boaz Neumann, *Land and Desire in Early Zionism* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2011), 7. Donna Robinson-Divine produced a fascinating study on the experiences and often disillusionment of new immigrants in Mandate Palestine that also challenges the idea of purely nationally motivated, pioneering immigration: Donna Robinson Divine, *Exiled in the Homeland: Zionism and the Return to Mandate Palestine* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009). Furthermore, it was not really clear where Palestine/Eretz Israel actually ought to be and the question of territory and identity was (and remains) heavily debated in Zionist ranks. See: Nadav G. Shelef, *Evolving Nationalism: Homeland, Identity, and Religion in Israel, 1925–2005* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2010).

[7] "Shekel," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 2nd ed., Vol. 18 (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 439–40.

[8] Verband der Judenstaatszionisten Österreichs, *Leaflet: "Instruktionen für den Schekelverkauf"*, undated (ca. 1920), Russian Military State Archive-Special Archive (RGVA-OA), 727k o1 d5.

[9] *Die Welt*, 03.06.1904.

[10] *Die Welt*, 11.07.1902.

to Wilno (Vilne/Vilnius/Wilna/Vilna), and from Prague to Pińsk (Pinsk). I concentrate on the Habsburg Empire and those regions of the Russian Empire that were conquered by German and Austro-Hungarian forces during the First World War. This vast territory, in which a great part of European Jewry lived, went through radical changes during the war and its aftermath. In the years between 1914 and 1919/20, the chronological framework of the thesis, European Jewry and European Zionists experienced fundamental transitions that profoundly affected almost all aspects of life, not only due to the horrors of war and devastation itself. The institutions of the Jewish community were challenged, and the relationship between the Jews and the non-Jewish society and state were reformulated. Not least, promises for a new Jewish homeland in Palestine were made, while at the same time a revolution in the East promised to overturn the entire old order. Zionists in East-Central Europe were a vital part of this transition. They responded to changing circumstances and took up the new opportunities that came with it. The thesis analyses their efforts and their activities on the ground and how activists like Khayim and many others worked to build a strong Jewish-national movement.

Everyday Activism

What made the Zionist movement a key factor in Jewish social and political life? For years and decades, activists and ideologues made their case in countless books and newspapers that the Jews were a nation (and not merely a religious, ethnic, or linguistic group), and spoke of why this nation had a special relation to a land they called Palestine or Eretz Israel, and the reasons for which it should establish a national home there. True, there were some who were convinced by arguments that corresponded to their experiences, whereas others were drawn to the Zionist movement for its often-rebellious approach towards the old community elites, for its response to antisemitism, or its rejection of assimilation. However, a key aspect, which is at the center of this thesis is that a decision to side with the Zionist movement in one form or another depended on whether this movement and its activists made an impact in people's lives, rather than as part of an intellectual evolution at the end of which would be the 'awakening' of a hitherto nationally indifferent person.

Particularly in the period described in this study, years that were characterized by war and devastation, hunger and violence, people's everyday problems and material interests in the here and now were absolutely dominant. Zionist activists, as everyone else for that matter, had to respond to these urgent needs. However, they did not – they could not – respond by merely making promises of a bright future in a far-away land, but only by addressing these daily needs

effectively and by connecting them to their programmatic principles. In this sense, Zionism came into people's lives not in the form of an idea or a proclamation but in the form of its activists who tried to make a difference to them. People were drawn to the movement because activists proved that they were honestly concerned with their problems, because they could actually improve their living conditions and formulate a credible perspective for their future.[11] In her 1954 autobiography, then 89-year-old Puah Rakovsky, a Zionist and feminist from Poland and a pioneer of Hebrew education, especially for girls, summed up the importance of this everyday social work as she reflected on the Zionist movement before the First World War:

> "Jewish women's associations also ran children's homes, ran vocational courses, took care of children and orphans, engaged in social work, supported mothers and children, offered legal aid to deserted women, and established serious and honest cooperatives that were better administered by women than by men. In no case could these important works be dismissed as 'just philanthropy,' even by the purely Zionist women's associations. We never forgot that the so-called Galus [Exile] is the reservoir of human material for the land of Israel […] Along with everything else, this work was an important means for keeping in close contact with the various classes of women. Because the masses, especially the female masses, are drawn not only by scientific ideas that move only a few; the masses are moved by concrete, realistic acts derived from ideological struggles that improve the harsh conditions of their lives."[12]

During the time in question, Jews in East-Central Europe encountered Zionists as teachers, kindergarteners, caregivers in summer camps and hospitals, and as volunteers in soup kitchens. They sometimes met them as agents of an occupation regime or as revolutionary agitators in factories. They were armed defenders of the community on the barricades and representatives of the community, negotiating with powerful forces. They sometimes took to the streets to protest against the *ancien régime* of the Kahal, and sometimes appeared as partners or even leaders of the Kahal. In short, Zionist activists tried to be at the center of Jewish society, responding to the needs of the people, as they interpreted them.

Seen in isolation, there would often be little particularly 'Zionist' about these efforts, a point that was at times also raised by a number of Zionist activists. However, all these efforts were framed in a distinctly Zionist context. Childcare was understood as a way to protect and

[11] This kind of claim has been generally accepted for other political movements. No serious historian would argue, for example, that the over one million members the German Social Democratic Party before the outbreak of the First World War had all joined for purely ideological reasons. They were drawn to the movement because its members and leaders played a role in the betterment of conditions for working people here and now. The hundreds of thousands of members came to socialism through these day-to-day efforts, through social and economic organizations, and so on, and eventually connected these practical efforts with the wider programmatic ideas of overcoming capitalism and how a socialist society could look like.

[12] Puah Rakovsky, *My Life as a Radical Jewish Woman: Memoirs of a Zionist Feminist in Poland* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), 84–5. I am very grateful to Marion Kaplan for pointing out this wonderful autobiography to me.

raise the nation's future, self-defense units not only responded to immediate threats but also defended national honor, and a rebellion against the old Kahal was both a protest against its alleged failures and shortcomings and a call to organize Jewry on national grounds. All these efforts served to put Zionist activists at the center of society and to transform them from nationalist intellectuals into leaders of the people. Institutions, such as soup kitchens and youth centers allowed people to join for material, social, and various other reasons, and then connected them to Zionist ideas in the process. The analysis of these efforts and their effects is at the center of this thesis. In short, the study asks what Zionism means and how it worked on a day-to-day basis.

The Zionist organizations, clubs, and associations that were active in the region during this period were highly diverse and often did not follow any clear centralized strategy. At the center of the study are the many activists who were engaged in, or connected to, these groups and ideas in one way or another. Amongst them were long-standing leaders in the center in Berlin, politically active high school students in Prague and Vienna, nationalist rabbis in Lodz (Łódź), teachers in Wilno, working class organizers in Warsaw, isolated activists in Lwów (Lemberg, L'viv), and many more. Rather than concentrating on 'big' politics, party congresses, elections, negotiations with other political forces, and organizational developments, the thesis focuses on their day-to-day activism, the way they encountered the situation around them and how they tried to make a difference in people's lives.[13] Of course, elections, organizational developments, and so on were at times of great importance for the activists and where relevant I will elaborate on them. However, I approach these questions in relation to what they meant for activists on the ground, and this was often very different to what they appeared to mean in theory and in the higher echelons of the movement. I approach the question of ideology in a similar way.[14] The key question for me is how ideology translated into practical

[13] A number of studies have excellently analyzed these organizational and major political questions in this period. For example: On (what became) Poland: Joseph Marcus, *Social and Political History of the Jews in Poland, 1919–1939* (Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton Publishers, 1983), 261–410; Ezra Mendelsohn, *Zionism in Poland: The Formative Years, 1915–1926* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1981), 37–185; Marcos Silber, *Le'umiuyt Shonah Ezrahut Shavah: HaMa'amets LeHasagat Otonomyah LiYehudeh Polin BeMilhemet Ha'olam HaRishonah* (Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center at Tel Aviv University, 2014). On the Habsburg Empire and its successor states: Harriet Pass Freidenreich, *Jewish Politics in Vienna, 1918–1938* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991); 48–83; Adolf Gaisbauer, *Davidstern und Doppeladler: Zionismus und jüdischer Nationalismus in Österreich, 1882–1918* (Vienna, Cologne, Graz: 1988). On Poale Zion (especially the World Union): Zvia Balshan, *Ihud Mefulag: Habrit ha'olamit shel miflegot po'ale-tsyon, 1907–1920* (Beer Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, 2004), 131–323. For a concise overview of Jewish living conditions and politics in East-Central Europe in the interwar period, see: Ezra Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe between the World Wars* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983).

[14] For a concise overview of the various trends of Zionist ideology and their evolution, see: Gideon Shimoni, *The Zionist Ideology* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1995). Walter Laqueur gave an excellent account on Zionist ideological and organizational history until 1948: Laqueur, *History of Zionism*. David Vital's three-part

deeds, how it helped activists to navigate through the – often confusing – situations they found themselves in, and how these situations often forced them not only to adapt their strategies, but also to rethink aspects of their ideology. This is an activists' history, centered around how Zionists interpreted events around them, how they adapted to them, and what people did to gain influence, spread their ideas, and win support.

Many studies of East-Central European Jewry during the First World War and its aftermath have concentrated on questions of loyalty, patriotism, and relations between the Jews and the respective old and new states.[15] In her magisterial study on Jews in Habsburg Austria, most notably the Cisleithanian half of the monarchy, Marsha Rozenblit noted that "[w]hen the Habsburg Monarchy disintegrated in October-November 1918 and new nation-states emerged, Jews not only mourned the old Austria but also faced a grave crisis of identity."[16] This question of identity and belonging remains central to many studies about East-Central European Jewish society during the war and its immediate aftermath. At the same time, and not in contradiction to this, great attention has been devoted to the suffering of Jewish civilians in the war zone.[17] One difficulty that arises from these approaches lies in a certain danger that the view of Jews' agency in this period may be obfuscated and an image of disunity and failure created.[18] This is

history of the Zionist movement until 1919 is probably the best and most in-depth overview of the movement's history and ideology: David Vital, *The Origins of Zionism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975); David Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982); David Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987). Shlomo Avineri provides a collection of several key Zionist figures' biographies and ideologies: Shlomo Avineri, *Profile des Zionismus: Die geistigen Ursprünge des Staates Israel. 17 Portraits* (Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser/Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1998).

[15] This is especially notable for the German case: Peter C. Appelbaum, *Loyal Sons: Jews in the German Army in the Great War* (Edgeware: Valentine Mitchell, 2015); Tim Grady, *The German-Jewish Soldiers of the First World War in History and Memory* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012); Tim Grady, *A Deadly Legacy: German Jews and the Great War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017); Tracey Harris Norrell, *For the Honor of the Fatherland: German Jews on the Eastern Front during the Great War* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017); Ulrich Sieg, *Jüdische Intellektuelle im Ersten Weltkrieg: Kriegserfahrungen, weltanschauliche Debatten und kulturelle Neuwürfe* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2014).

[16] Marsha Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity: The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 163. Mainly focused on the question of identity and belonging, see also: Sarah Panter, *Jüdische Erfahrungen und Loyalitätskonflikte im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014).

[17] Amongst others: Giuseppe Motta, *The Great War against Eastern European Jewry, 1914–1920* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017); Frank M. Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten: Osteuropäische Juden während des Ersten Weltkriegs (1914–1919)* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2004); Frank M. Schuster "Between all Fronts: The Impact of World War I on Eastern-European Jewry," *Medaon: Magazin für jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung*, Vol. 10, No. 18 (2016), 1–12.

[18] This is particularly the case in studies that take a very large geographical and political frame for their analysis. Local studies and those focusing on particular political movements tend to put strong emphasis on Jews' agency. Christoph Mick, *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914–1941: Violence and Ethnicity in a Contested City* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016), 17–193; Alexander Victor Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland: War, Ethnicity, and Anti-Jewish Violence in East Galicia, 1914–1920* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005); David Rechter, *The Jews of Vienna and the First World War* (Oxford, Portland: the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2008); Silber, *Le'umiuyt Shonah*.

most evident in certain assessments of anti-Jewish violence in the region towards the end of the war and in its immediate aftermath. To a large extent Jews feature primarily as victims, and hardly ever as actors in their own right.[19] This is in notable contrast to works on earlier cases of anti-Jewish violence, especially the pogroms in the Russian Empire, which often strongly emphasize Jewish agency and (armed) resistance.[20] In this thesis I show how Jewish activists exercised agency and how they did manage to change the world around them, even in small ways. Of interest in this study is primarily the process of engagement with events or circumstances rather than the outcome of these activities. The thesis is underpinned by the belief that by concentrating on one very specific group of people, and on one particular political movement – Zionism – it is possible to rethink the above-mentioned picture of disunity and structural weakness more in terms of individual and group agency, not least because a political movement functions according to a different logic.

During the period in question Jews in East-Central Europe, as in many other regions, were confronted with a notable rise in antisemitism and anti-Jewish violence. The thesis analyzes these events from the perspective of the activists. This means that rather than focusing on the dynamics of discrimination, antisemitism, anti-Jewish violence, and pogroms, it analyzes how Zionists interpreted these developments and how they responded to them. The thesis therefore refrains from engaging in a debate over how to define antisemitism and pogroms and how specific cases should be conceptualized and categorized.[21] If the activists at the center of this

[19] Amongst others: William W. Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland, 1914–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Motta, *Great War*, 177–201; Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten*, 420–53. This is also true for the 'larger' histories of 'post-war' violence in the region, in which Jews primarily feature as victims of violence and not as actors. For example: Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, ed., *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[20] For example: Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Nathan M. Meir, and Israel Bartal, ed., *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011); John D. Klier and Shlomo Lambroza, ed., *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Inna Shtakser, *The Making of Jewish Revolutionaries in the Pale of Settlement: Community and Identity during the Russian Revolution and its Immediate Aftermath, 1905–07* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014).

[21] On the question of interpretation and conceptualization of antisemitism (I will use the term without the much-discussed hyphen) in historical research, see: David Engel, "Away from a Definition of Antisemitism. An Essay in the Semantics of Historical Description," in *Rethinking European Jewish History*, ed. Jeremy Cohen and Moshe Rosman (Oxford, Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2009), 30–53. Recent contributions to a special issue of the American Historical Review sum-up and comment on the debate and the various approaches in a concise way: David Feldman, "Towards a History of the Term 'Anti-Semitism'," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 123, No. 4 (2018), 1139–50; Jonathan Judaken, "Introduction," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 123, No. 4 (2018), 1122–38; Scott Ury, "Strange Bedfellows? Anti-Semitism, Zionism, and the Fate of 'the Jews'," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 123, No. 4 (2018), 1151–71. On the question of pogroms and how they can or should be approached and understood: David Engel, "What's in a Pogrom? European Jews in the Age of Violence," in *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European Jewish History*, ed. Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan M. Meir, and Israel Bartal (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011), 19–37. Specifically on the Russian context: John D. Klier,

thesis interpret something as antisemitic or as a pogrom, I accept this, not least because I do not believe that it would add much analytical value to refute their interpretation some one hundred years later. But most importantly because the activists themselves formulated their responses according to their interpretation of what was happening in a situation. When they interpreted something as antisemitic, they reacted to it as such and when they interpreted a case of violence as a pogrom, they responded to a pogrom.

Time, Region, and the Jews of East-Central Europe

Historians choose time periods and geographical boundaries for their work because they want to examine questions that they believe can be best shown in the framework they choose. There is no inherently 'correct' or 'incorrect' frame to choose. I decided on a transnational perspective, in which people feature who in 1914 lived in three different Empires and who by 1919 would find themselves in ten or so different new states, some of which were rather short-lived. With the focus on the activists it did not seem logical to analyze them in a framework – such as that of a state established in late 1918 – and to project boundaries backwards in history. Furthermore, the Zionist movement was by its very definition a transnational movement that not only encompassed members all over the world, but decidedly proclaimed that they were all one and that what they had in common was more important than the specific conditions in the various states that separated them. The thesis aims to connect the transitional perspective with local experiences. This means looking at how 'big' developments played out on a local level and how local events and conditions influenced the wider, transnational strategies and efforts of the Zionist movement.

The main geographical focus of the thesis are parts of the Russian Empire that were conquered by the Central Powers during the war. They became the Generalgouvernement Warschau (Government-General Warsaw) and the regions under the Oberbefehlshaber der Gesamten Deutschen Streitkräfte im Osten (Supreme Commander of All German Armed Forces in the East; Ober Ost) and then largely the Second Polish Republic and Lithuania. The thesis also concentrates on Galicia, Vienna, and Prague. However, I chose the regional framework not to reconstruct 'what happened there' but rather as reference points with differing legal, economic, and social conditions, as well as different pre-war traditions and impacts of the war.

Russians, Jews, and the Pogroms of 1881–1882 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 58–88. On the Polish context: Artur Markowski, "Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Kingdom of Poland," *POLIN*, Vol. 27 (2015): 219–55.

Much of the activism occurred on a local level, and consequently most cases are analyzed in the framework of a specific city or town.

There are some regions that would fall into the very broad category of East-Central Europe but that do not feature prominently in the thesis, although where relevant they are also discussed. These are namely the Bukovina, Hungary, and the formerly Russian-controlled parts of Poland that came to be ruled by the Habsburgs as the Militär-General-Gouvernement Lublin/ Generalne Gubernatorstwo Lubelskie (Military Government-General; MGG Lublin). This is to a large extent due to the lack of Zionist activism in these regions during the war or a lack of sources, which was often due to broken lines of communication in the period in question. Due to the war and Russian occupation, Zionist work in Bukovina had completely ceased, as a report from Czernowitz noted in July 1918.[22] The Zionist movement in Hungary, which had traditionally been very small,[23] completely disintegrated at the outbreak of the war as the majority of activists were drafted to the army,[24] and according to a letter of October 1915, only apathy remained.[25] With some notable local exceptions, especially with regard to activists of Poale Zion towards the end of the war,[26] there were very few Zionist activities in MGG Lublin. Although there were a few initiatives by individualized local activists,[27] a factfinding mission from Warsaw concluded that "in the Austrian [occupation] zone hardly any traces of Zionist

[22] Bukowinaer Zionistisches Landeskomitee in Czernowitz, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 19.07.1918, Central Zionist Archives (CZA), Z3/788. Arthur Hantke (?), *Letter to Schmaria Levin*, 29.10.1914, CZA, Z3/395. There were some attempts to restart Zionist work there on a very low level in 1915 but they eventually failed. See: Theodor Weisselberger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 27.10.1915, CZA, Z3/788.

[23] Mendelsohn, *Jews of East Central Europe*, 91; 107–8; Raphael Patay, *The Jews of Hungary: History, Culture, Psychology* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996), 442–57. See also the essay "Why Zionism did show so few successes in Hungary" which was sent to by a local activist to the center in Berlin in 1917: Unknown Author, *Warum in Ungarn der Zionismus so wenig Erfolg zeitigte*, 12.03.1917, CZA, Z3/921.

[24] Magyarországi Cionista Szervezet Budapest, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 24.08.1914, CZA, Z3/920; Magyarországi Cionista Szervezet Budapest, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 10.09.1914, CZA, Z3/920; Magyarországi Cionista Szervezet Budapest, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 25.11.1914, CZA, Z3/920; M. Bisseliches, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin; Report on Activities in Hungary since the outbreak of the war*, 05.11.1916, CZA, Z3/921.

[25] Magyarországi Cionista Szervezet Budapest, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 29.10.1915, CZA, Z3/921.

[26] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, 05.03.1918, CZA, Z3/1169; K. u. k. Militärgeneralgouvernement in Polen, *Report "Verlauf der Feier des 1. Mai"*, 02.05.1918, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (AGAD), 312/463; K. u. k. Militärgeneralgouvernement in Polen, *File "Behandlung von Mitgliedern geheimer und illegaler Vereine"*, 29.08.1918, AGAD, 312/464.

[27] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Moses Bergmann*, 04.04.1916, CZA, Z3/141; Zionist Bureau Vienna, *Letter to Moses Bergmann*, 09.04.1916, CZA, Z3/845; Unknown Author, *Report on a meeting in Kielce*, December 1916, CZA, Z3/143. It was only in January 1918 that a 'pre-conference' of Zionists in the MGG Lublin was held in Radom (Rodem) with the purpose of reorganizing the work there. The report indicates that local forces were very weak. P. Fogelmann, *Letter to Zionist Central Committee Berlin*, 31.01.1918, CZA, Z3/147.

activity can be found."[28] For these reasons, I decided to leave these regions out of the analysis and only reference them where they are relevant for the wider argument.

The regions at the center of the thesis were home to an estimated 6.238 million Jews, fifty-nine percent of the World's Jewish population, before the outbreak of the First World War.[29] For reasons of space, I will relate certain basic limited background information about these regions and briefly address certain key issues that will be of relevance in the thesis, where they are taken up again in more detail.[30]

The vast majority of the Jewish population at the center of this study (4.94 million) lived under the rule of the Russian Czar: in the Kingdom of Poland (also named Congress-Poland; 1.35 million), and in the northwestern and southwestern krai (together 3.59 million), roughly making up today's Lithuania, Belarus, Moldova, Eastern Latvia, most of Ukraine, and some parts of Western Russia, known as the Pale of Settlement, the regions where Jews could live.[31]

---

[28] Organizacja Syjonistyczna w Królestwie Polskim, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 27.06.1918, CZA, L6/108. On the Jewish experience under Austrian occupation, see: Konrad Zieliński, "Żydzi pod okupacją austro-węgierską w wyborach do samorządu miejskiego 1916 roku," *Kwartalnik Historyczny: Organ Towarzystwa Historycznego*, No. 1 (2002): 61–78.

[29] Mark Kupovetsky, "Population and Migration: Population and Migration before World War I," *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Population_and_Migration/Population_and_Migration_before_World_War_I (accessed 05.03.2019). The numbers are for 1900 and do not include Hungary and the Western regions of the Habsburg Empire.

[30] I want to briefly refer to some of the key overview literature on pre-First World War East-Central European Jewry: Israel Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772–1881* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Jonathan Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics: Socialism, Nationalism, and the Russian Jews, 1862–1917* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); François Guesnet, *Polnische Juden im 19. Jahrhundert: Lebensbedingungen, Rechtsnormen und Organisation im Wandel* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1998); Heiko Haumann, *Geschichte der Ostjuden*, 6th ed. (Munich: Deutscher Tachenbuch Verlag, 2008); Hillel J. Kieval, *The Making of Czech Jewry: National Conflict and Jewish Society in Bohemia, 1870–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Hillel J. Kieval, *Languages of Community: The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Dov Levin, *The Litvaks: A short History of the Jews in Lithuania* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001); Albert Lichtblau, "Integration, Vernichtungsversuch und Neubeginn – Österreichisch-jüdische Geschichte 1848 bis zur Gegenwart," in *Geschichte der Juden in Österreich*, ed. Eveline Brugger et al. (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 2013), 447–565; Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, *The Golden Age Shtetl: A New History of Jewish Life in East Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Antony Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia: Volume I: 1350 to 1881* (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010); Antony Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia: Volume II: 1881 to 1914* (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010); David Rechter, *Becoming Habsburg: The Jews of Bukovina, 1774–1918* (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2013); Marsha Rozenblit, *The Jews of Vienna, 1867–1914: Assimilation and Identity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983); Robert Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph* (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1989); Rudolf M. Wlaschek, *Juden in Böhmen: Beiträge zur Geschichte des europäischen Judentums im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, 2nd ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997).

[31] Numbers from: Mark Kupovetsky, "Population and Migration: Population and Migration before World War I." See also: Robert E. Mitchell, *Human Geographies Within the Pale of Settlement: Order and Disorder during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); John D. Klier, "Pale of Settlement," in *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Pale_of_Settlement (accessed 05.03.2019); Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. I*, 335–6. There were exceptions with the Jews of the Caucasus and Siberia residing outside the Pale, having a different legal status. See: Vladimir N. Shudairov, Ekaterina S. Norkina, "Law,

Aside from a small group of people that gained permission to live outside this region,[32] the vast majority of the Czar's Jewish subjects lived in the Pale under a series of special laws and discriminatory practices, including a ban on purchasing land and quotas for admission to universities inside and outside the Pale.[33] While the vast majority of the non-Jewish population lived in rural areas and worked in agriculture, eighty-one percent of Jews in the Western region of the Pale, and 61.5 percent in the East lived in urban spaces.[34] These numbers reflect the gradual decline of the Shtetl, the small rural Jewish town, as part of a general process of urbanization in the region, although the rate of urbanization amongst Jews was significantly greater than that of society at large. Significant proportions of the urban population were Jewish, with Warsaw (38.1 percent in 1914), Łódź (32 percent in 1897), and Wilno (41.3 percent in 1897), being the largest Jewish centers in the region.[35] The modernizing process in the regional economy entailed a severe crisis for the Jewish population. Dominated by small merchants and artisans, Jewish economy experienced a decline as it could not compete with modern industry and its high demand for capital investment, and much of the Jewish working population was relegated to a marginalized position in labor-intensive small-scale production (mainly of consumer goods), and trade.[36] Additionally, some Jews played an important role in the free professions, as journalists, lawyers, doctors, and so on. They did not represent a significant share of the Jewish population but their social capital made them immensely important as leaders of the community and of political parties.[37] Under the pressures of anti-Jewish legislation, impoverishment, and the lack of social mobility, but also with the

Imperial Bureaucracy and Russian Jews outside the Pale of Settlement in 19 – Beginning of 20th Centuries," *Bylye Gody*, Vol 37, No. 3 (2015): 623–32.

[32] Antony Polonsky, "The New Jewish Politics and Its Discontents," in *The Emergence of Modern Jewish Politics: Bundism and Zionism in Eastern Europe*, ed. Zvi Gitelman (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 39.

[33] Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 50; Shtakser, *Making of Jewish Revolutionaries*, 23.

[34] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 6.

[35] Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 162–73; 179–81. The last census was in 1897. For further towns, see: Ibid., 170–85.

[36] Ben Halpern and Jehuda Reinharz, "Nationalism and Jewish Socialism: The Early Years," *Modern Judaism* Vol. 8, No. 3 (1988): 220; Abraham Léon, *Die jüdische Frage: Eine marxistische Darstellung* (Essen: Arbeiterpresse Verlag, 1995), 138–40; Ezra Mendelsohn, *Class Struggle in the Pale: The Formative Years of the Jewish Workers' Movement in Tsarist Russia* (London, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 4–7; 28–9; Jerry Z. Muller, *Capitalism and the Jews* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 203–5; Yoav Peled, *Class and Ethnicity in the Pale: The Political Economy of Jewish Workers' Nationalism in Late Imperial Russia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 5–30; Polonsky, "The New Jewish Politics and Its Discontents," 39; Shtakser, *Making of Jewish Revolutionaries*, 33–47; Scott Ury, "The Generation of 1905 and the Politics of Despair: Alienation, Friendship, Community," in *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia's Jews*, ed. Stefani Hoffman and Ezra Mendelsohn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 104–5.

[37] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 8. On Jewish economic stratification, see: Piotr Wróbel, "Jewish Warsaw before the First World War," in *The Jews in Warsaw: A History*, ed. Władysław T. Bartoszewski and Antony Polonsky (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 257–262.

establishment of reliable and more affordable shipping lines, 1.6 million Jews migrated from the Russian Empire to the United States in the years 1881 to 1914 alone.[38]

Aside from a small economic and cultural elite in urban centers, the vast majority of the Jews in the Kingdom of Poland, as well as in the Pale in general spoke Yiddish and in many respects lived much of their daily lives separate from non-Jewish Christian society, although there was, of course, regular, day-to-day contact.[39] The 'assimilationists', as Zionists and, indeed, many others, would call them,[40] dominated much of Jewish public life, including many Kahals (in cooperation with the Orthodox) in most cities and towns, which around the turn of the century had expanded their activities dramatically, especially in the sphere of welfare and social services.[41] During the nineteenth century, Hasidism spread from Ukraine throughout East-Central Europe.[42] The success of the disciples of the Ba'al Shem Tov was due to the "attractiveness of the message contained in the movement and its success in establishing the tsaddik as a charismatic leader capable of acting as the intermediary between the followers and the Divine"[43] as well as their success in taking over important positions in the various Jewish community structures. The movement was particularly successful in the Kingdom of Poland

[38] Eli Lederhendler, "America," in *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/America#id0emeag (accessed 05.03.2019). See also: Gur Alroey, "Bureaucrats, Agents, and Swindlers: The Hardships of Jewish Emigration from the Pale of Settlement in the Early 20th Century," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 19 (2003): 214–31; Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 135–7; Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 19–21; Bernard Weinryb, "East European Immigration to the United States," *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (1955): 497–528.

[39] Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 162–82.

[40] This is indeed a rather charged (and polemical) term. In fact, the idea that 'assimilationists' gave up their Jewish identity is far from reflecting their self-perception and political activism. On the debate and conceptualization of the term, see: Alina Cała, *Asymilacja Żydów w Królestwie Polskim 1864–1897: Postawy, Konflikty, Stereotypy* (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1989); Jonathan Frankel, "Assimilation and the Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Towards a New Historiography?" in, *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Jonathan Frankel and Steven Zipperstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 22; Maud Mandel, "Assimilation and Cultural Exchange in Modern Jewish History," in *Rethinking European Jewish History*, ed. Jeremy Cohen and Moshe Rosman (Oxford, Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2009), 72–92.

[41] Samuel Kassow, "Community and Identity in the Interwar *Shtetl*," in *The Jews of Poland between the two World Wars*, ed. Yisrael Gutman, Ezra Mendelsohn, Jehuda Reinharz, and Chone Shmeruk (Hanover, London: Brandeis University Press, 1989), 198–220; Stefan Kieniewicz, "Assimilated Jews in Nineteenth-Century Warsaw," in *The Jews in Warsaw: A History*, ed. Władysław T. Bartoszewski and Antony Polonsky (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 171–80; Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 189–92. Progressive Judaism generally remained a marginal phenomenon. See: Stephen D. Corrsin, "Progressive Judaism in Poland: Dilemmas of Modernity and Identity," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 22 (1998): 89–99.

[42] Elior Rachel, *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism* (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2006); Marcin Wodziński, Hasidism and Politics in the Kingdom of Poland, 1815–1864 (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2016); Marcin Wodziński, *Hasidism: Key Questions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018). On the geography of Hasidism: Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 276–98; Marcin Wodziński, *Historical Atlas of Hasidism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 33–139.

[43] Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 281.

and parts of Galicia, but largely failed to take hold in the rest of the Habsburg Empire, as well as in Lithuania.[44]

The late 1850s and early 1860s had seen an improvement in Polish-Jewish relations, especially in the face of the common Russian enemy, which included the expansion of Jewish rights in the Kingdom of Poland and culminated in the failed anti-Russian uprising of 1863.[45] Subsequent expectations that Jews would fully become 'Poles', an idea that in fact entailed many different concepts and understandings of terms, gradually vanished towards the end of the nineteenth century, dramatically marked by the pogroms of 1881.[46] Relations continued to deteriorate and from at least the turn of the century were increasingly marked by the rise of antisemitic nationalism, most notably in the form of the Narodowa Demokracja (National Democracy; Endeks) who "blamed the Jews […] for creating the present 'unhealthy' state of the Polish nation".[47] In these new mass politics of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jews became 'the other' and mobilization against them, notably in the form of boycotts to 'protect' the 'Polish economy', became an instrument to produce national, catholic, and cross-class unity.[48] This was notably different from the situation in Lithuania, where there was indeed antisemitism, but significantly less developed than in neighboring regions and it was not a constitutive factor of nationalist ideology, allowing for more cooperation on social and political levels.[49]

---

[44] Ibid., 281–306; Glenn Dynner, *Men of Silk: The Hasidic Conquest of Polish Jewish Society* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Rachel Manekin, "Hasidism and the Habsburg Empire, 1788–1867," *Jewish History* Vol. 27, No. 2-4 (2013): 271–97; Wodziński, *Hasidism: Key Question*, 165–98.

[45] Theodore R. Weeks, *From Assimilation to Antisemitism: The "Jewish Question" in Poland, 1850–1914* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006), 33–50.

[46] Theodore R. Weeks, "Assimilation, Nationalism, Modernization, Antisemitism: Notes on Polish-Jewish Relations, 1855–1905," in *Antisemitism and Its Opponents in Modern Poland*, ed. Robert Blobaum (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 20–38; Theodore R. Weeks, "Jews in the Kingdom of Poland, 1861–1914," *POLIN*, Vol. 27 (2015): 311–3.

[47] Weeks, "Jews in the Kingdom of Poland," 314. On the rise of antisemitism in the Polish lands: Robert Blobaum, "Criminalizing the 'Other': Crime, Ethnicity, and Antisemitism in Early Twentieth-Century Poland," in *Antisemitism and its Opponents in Modern Poland*, ed. Robert Blobaum (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2005), 81–102; Brian Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in 19th Century Poland* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Roman Wapiński, "The Endecja and the Jewish Question," *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999), 271–83.

[48] Keely Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848–1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 133–41; Brian Porter, "Antisemitism and the Search for a Catholic Identity," in A*ntisemitism and its Opponents in Modern Poland*, ed. Robert Blobaum (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2005), 103–23; Weeks, *From Assimilation to Antisemitism*, 165–9.

[49] Darius Staliūnas attributes this to the slow pace of social and economic modernization in the region. Darius Staliūnas, "Lithuanian Antisemitism in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *POLIN*, Vol. 25 (2013): 135–49. See also: Darius Staliūnas, *Enemies for a Day: Antisemitism and Anti-Jewish Violence in Lithuania under the Tsars* (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2015). On Jewish-Lithuanian relations, see: Vladimir Levin, "Lithuanians in Jewish Politics of the Late Imperial Period," in *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*, ed. Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2012), 77–118; Darius Staliūnas, "Collaboration of Lithuanians and Jews during the Elections to the First and Second Dumas," in *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*, ed.

The revolution of 1905 challenged both right-wing nationalism and czarist autocracy. At the initial stage of the uprising, Jewish and non-Jewish workers and revolutionaries often found themselves together on the barricades, albeit without necessarily having a common understanding of what exactly it was that they wanted to achieve and what a post-revolutionary society should look like.[50] When the revolution was defeated and Jews were faced with a wave of pogroms, the ideal of revolutionary emancipation, alongside the universalist ideals of the left in general, were dealt a disastrous blow.[51] Jewish activists who had not only fought for their own emancipation as Jews but that of society at large often found themselves in a position of weakness and abandonment, left to defend their communities themselves without much support from their non-Jewish comrades.[52]

Whereas the decades before the outbreak of the First World War saw deteriorating Jewish-Gentile relations and the rise of antisemitism in the context of economic modernization, mass politics, and nationalism, they were also marked by a dynamic development of Jewish culture, press, and politics. Urban centers like Wilno and Warsaw, in particular, but also many other places saw a dramatic expansion of the (often nationally-oriented) Yiddish press, the publication of Hebrew-language journals, the establishment of modern Jewish educational institutions, cultural centers, theatres, and so on.[53] Industrial cities like Łódź or Białystok

---

Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2012), 45–75; Mordechai Zalkin, "Lithuanian Jewry and the Lithuanian National Movement," in *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*, ed. Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2012), 21–44.

[50] Genrikh Agranovskii, "Jewish Socialist Parties during the 1905 Russian Revolution," *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (2012): 69–78; Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905, Vol. 1: Russia in Disarray* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905, Vol. 2: Authority Restored* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992); John Bunzl, *Klassenkampf in der Diaspora: Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Arbeiterbewegung* (Vienna: Europaverlag, 1975), 95–9; Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 134–69; Jonathan Frankel, *Crisis, Revolution and the Russian Jews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 57–71; Henry J. Tobias, *The Jewish Bund in Russia: From Its Origins to 1905* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), 295–332; Simon Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights, National Rites: Nationalism and Autonomy in Late Imperial Russia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 85–7; Scott Ury, *Barricades and Banners: The Revolution of 1905 and the Transformation of Warsaw Jewry* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2012).

[51] Robert Weinberg, "Workers, Pogroms, and the 1905 Revolution in Odessa," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (1987): 53–75; Richard Wortman, "Nicholas II and the Revolution," in *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia's Jews*, ed. Stefani Hoffman and Ezra Mendelsohn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 41. On the impact of the defeat and the pogroms on the labor movement: Vladimir Levin, "The Jewish Socialist Parties in Russia in the Period of Reaction," in *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia's Jews*, ed. Stefani Hoffman and Ezra Mendelsohn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 112–7; Wiktor Marzec, "Under one common Banner: Antisemitism and Socialist Strategy during the 1905–07 Revolution in the Kingdom of Poland," *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. 51, No. 3/4 (2017): 269–91.

[52] Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 329–30; Inna Shtakser, "Self-Defence as an Emotional Experience: The Anti-Jewish Pogroms of 1905-07 and Working-Class Jewish Militants," *Revolutionary Russia*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2009): 153–79; Shtakser, *Making of Jewish Revolutionaries*, 131–46.

[53] David E. Fishman, "The Bund and Modern Yiddish Culture," in *The Emergence of Modern Jewish Politics: Bundism and Zionism in Eastern Europe*, ed. Zvi Gitelman (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 107–19; Zvi Gitelman, "A Century of Jewish Politics in Eastern Europe: The Legacy of the Bund and the Zionist Movement," in *The Emergence of Modern Jewish Politics: Bundism and Zionism in Eastern Europe*, ed. Zvi

(Byalistok), and countless others saw a rise in the militancy of Jewish workers, leading to the foundation of unions and cooperatives, the entry of workers into the general Social Democratic Parties or the Algemeyner Yidisher Arbeter Bund (General Jewish Labor Bund; hereinafter Bund), which had been founded in Wilno in 1897.[54]

One of the new forms of Jewish political activism was Zionism.[55] Whereas the movement developed rather quickly in the Pale, it had already started to take a different path in the Kingdom of Poland from the 1880s. There, it was to a significant extent made up of recent immigrants from the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Litvaks) and remained a rather small and isolated force, although it started to represent a challenge to the traditional hegemons in the communities of Warsaw and Łódź.[56] In Lithuania, where Hasidism had failed to play a dominant role and where important sectors of the Jewish population were both influenced by modern ideas of enlightenment and simultaneously maintained strong communal bonds,[57] Zionism did manage to establish itself as a relatively important force, despite state repression and strong competition from the socialist Bund.[58] Reliable numbers are hard to find, but sources suggest that at the outbreak of the First World War, around 12,000 members were organized in the Zionist organization in the Kingdom of Poland, whereas the socialist-Zionist Poale Zion (see below) was said to have no more than 500 active members.[59]

Gitelman (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 3–19; Joanna Nalewajko-Kulikov, "'Who Has Not Wanted To Be an Editor?' The Yiddish Press in the Kingdom of Poland, 1905–1914," *POLIN*, Vol. 27 (2015): 273–304; Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 212–74; 348–53; Chone Shemurek, "Aspects of the History of Warsaw as a Yiddish Literary Center," *Studies from POLIN: From Shtetl to Socialism*, ed. Antony Polonsky (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1993), 120–33; Michael C. Steinlauf, "Jewish Theatre in Poland," *POLIN*, Vol. 16 (2003): 72–83.

[54] Bunzl, *Klassenkampf in der Diaspora*, 53–103; Alina Cała, "Jewish Socialists in the Kingdom of Poland," *POLIN*, Vol. 9 (2008): 3–13; François Guesnet, "*Khevres* and *Akhdes*: the Change in Jewish Self-organization in the Kingdom of Poland before 1900 and the Bund," in J*ewish Politics in Eastern Europe: The Bund at 100*, ed. Jack Jacobs (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 3–12; Mario Keßler, *Zionismus und internationale Arbeiterbewegung 1897 bis 1933* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994), 50–3; Mendelsohn, *Class Struggle in the Pale*; Tobias, *Jewish Bund*, 22–104; Shtakser, *Making of Jewish Revolutionaries*, 21–75; Janusz Sujecki, "The Relation of the Polish Socialist Party: Proletariat to the Bund and the Jewish Question, 1900–1906," *POLIN*, Vol. 9 (2008): 32–44; Joshua D. Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews, and the Politics of Nationality: The Bund and the Polish Socialist Party in Late Tsarist Russia, 1892–1914* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004).

[55] On Zionist ideologies and practices, see below.

[56] Joseph Goldstein, "The Zionist Movement in Congress Poland: The Victory of the *Hasidim* over the Zionists?," *POLIN*, Vol. 5 (1990): 114–30; Laqueur, *Histoy of Zionism*, 75–83; Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 98–9.

[57] Ezra Mendelsohn, *On Modern Jewish Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 41–4.

[58] Eglė Bendikaitė, "'Hier und jetzt': über Bedingungen und Wirkungsspielräume der zionistischen Bewegung in Litauen 1906–1940," *Forschungen zur Baltischen Geschichte*, Vol. 5 (2010): 144–9; Henri Minczeles, *Vilna, Wilno, Vilnius: Le Jérusalem de Lithuanie* (Paris: Éditions la Découverte, 2000), 84–104.

[59] For membership figures, see: *Warschauer Mitteilungen: Berichte aus dem Königreich Polen*, 05.06.1918; *Haynt*, 24.10.1917. I could not find reliable numbers for Lithuania.

Of the 1.314 million Jews living in the Cisleithanian half of the Habsburg Empire (4.6 percent of the total population) in the years before the outbreak of the war, the vast majority lived in Galicia.[60] In Galicia, the Jewish economy, urbanization trends, social stratification, and religious developments all showed many common tendencies with those in the Kingdom of Poland. Of the slightly less than 900,000 Jews (by religious definition) living in the region in 1910, about two thirds of them lived in East Galicia.[61] Jews were a major sector of the urban populations in Cracow and Lwów (over 25 percent) and in the East made up almost half of city and town residents, constituting a majority in a number of towns. The majority of Jews not only distinguished themselves by religion and language from much of wider society but also by their economic role. Significantly greater numbers worked in commerce, transport, and industry (mainly foodstuff and textile), while the vast majority of non-Jews worked in agriculture.[62]

The most significant difference to the Kingdom of Poland and the Pale (for our purposes) was that the 1867 constitution had granted the Jews full emancipation, allowing them to settle where they wanted, work in all professions, and enjoy political freedoms similar to their non-Jewish neighbors. Post-1867 Galicia was politically dominated by the Polish landowning nobility, alongside urban bourgeois and the clergy, who asserted their influence both against the perceived danger of Germanization and against Ukrainian ambitions in the East of the crownland.[63] "Before 1867, many Austrian bureaucrats there, their backgrounds as diverse as possible, were European almost by design, but after 1867, the vast majority of

[60] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 15.
[61] Mick, *Lemberg*, 5.
[62] Joshua Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism and Jewish Identity in Habsburg Galicia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 17–20; Daniel Unowsky, *The Plunder: The 1898 anti-Jewish Violence in Habsburg Galicia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 12–19. On Jewish economy and society in Habsburg Galicia, see: Tomasz Gąsowski, "Jewish Communities in Autonomous Galicia: Their Size and Distribution," in *The Jews in Poland*, Vol. 1, ed. Andrzej K. Paluch (Cracow: Jagellonian University, 1992), 205–2; Tomasz Gąsowski, "From *Austeria* to the Manor: Jewish Landowners in Autonomous Galicia," *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 120–36; Nathan Michael Gelber, *Toldot ha-tenu'ah ha-tsiyonit be-Galitsyah, 1875–1918* (Jerusalem, Ruben Mass, 1958); Rafał Mahler, *The Economic Background of Jewish Emigration from Galicia to the United States* (New York: YIVO Yiddish Scientific Institute, 1952); Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 113–46; Sławomir Tokarski, *Ethnic Conflict and Economic Development: Jews in Galician Agriculture 1868–1914* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Trio, 2003); Piotr Wróbel, "The Jews of Galicia under Austrian-Polish Rule, 1869–1918," *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 25 (1994): 97–138. On ethnic relations in Galicia: Jerzy Motylewicz, "Ethnic Commuities in the Towns of the Polish-Ukrainian Borderland in the Sixteenth, Sevententh, and Eigteenth Centurie," in *Galicia: A Multicultured Land*, ed. Chris Hann and Paul Robert Magosci (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 36–51. On Galician Economy: Klemens Kaps, *Ungleiche Entwicklung in Zentraleuropa. Galizien zwischen überregionaler Verflechtung und imperialer Politik (1772–1914)* (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 2015).
[63] Józef Buszko, "The Consequences of Galician Autonomy after 1867," *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 86–99; Claudia Kraft, "Das galizische Bürgertum in der autonomen Ära (1866–1914): Ein Literaturüberblick," in *Polen und die böhmischen Länder im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Peter Heumos (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997), 82–110; Philip Pajakowski, "Dynamics of Galician Polish Conservativism in the late Nineteenth Century," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (1995): 19–33; Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 3–4.

Galician officials were Polish. Nationalism became integral to imperial administration."[64] The dual role of the Polish elites, to enforce and represent Habsburg rule, while at the same time asserting Polonization and their own political and economic dominance, represented a challenge to Galicia's Jewry. Parts of the urban Jewish elite, especially in Cracow and Lwów, gradually abandoned their former German cultural orientation and adopted Polish language and culture, and often political orientation.[65] Alongside the Orthodox, these integrationist cultural and economic elites dominated most of the religious Jewish communal institutions.[66]

Galicia witnessed a significant emigration of Jews, not only to the United States, but, most importantly in the context of this thesis, to the Western centers of the Empire, especially the imperial capital.[67] In Vienna, Galician Jews, alongside other recent arrivals from Moravia, Hungary, Bukovina, and so on soon made up a significant proportion of the Jewish population.[68] With 175,000 Jewish residents in 1910, Vienna was, just after Warsaw, the second largest Jewish center in Europe, with a prospering upper class of great cultural and social significance.[69] The lands of the Bohemian Crown at the same time saw a significant influx of Jews from small towns and the countryside to urban centers, most notably to Prague, in the

---

[64] Iryna Vushko, *The Politics of Cultural Retreat: Imperial Bureaucracy in Austrian Galicia, 1772–1867* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2015), 232.

[65] Jerzy Holzer, "Zur Frage der Akkulturation der Juden in Galizien im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (1989): 217–27; Katarzyna Kopff-Muszyńska, "'Ob Deutsch oder Polnisch' przyczynek do badań nad asymilacja Żydów we Lwowie w latach 1840–1892," in *Jews in Poland*, Vol. 1, ed. Andrzej K. Paluch (Cracow: Jagellonian University, 1992), 187–203; Albert Lichtblau, Michael John, "Jewries in Galicia and Bukovina, in Lemberg and Czernowitz: Two Divergent Examples of Jewish Communities in the Far East of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy," in *Jews at the Frontier: Accommodation, Identity, Conflict*, ed. Sander L. Gilman and Milton Shain (Urbana: University of Illinois Press), 29–66; Rachel Manekin, "Politics, Religion, and National Identity: The Galician Jewish Vote in the 1873 Parliamentary Elections," *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 100–19; Ezra Mendelsohn, "From Assimilation to Zionism in Lvov: The Case of Alfred Nossig," *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 49, No. 117 (1971): 521–34; Wacław Wierzbieniec, "The Process of Jewish Emancipation and Assimilation in the Multiethnic City of Lviv during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," In *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture,* ed. John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 223–50.

[66] Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 187–8.

[67] Klaus Hödl, *Als Bettler in der Leopoldstadt: Galizische Juden auf dem Weg nach Wien* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1994); Klaus Hödl, "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 147–63; Anson G. Rabinbach , "The Migration of Galician Jews to Vienna, 1857–1880," *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 11 (1975): 43–54; Marsha Rozenblit, "A Note on Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1983): 143–52; Rozenblit, *Jews of Vienna*, 40–5; Marsha Rozenblit, "Jewish Immigrants in Vienna before the First World War," *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (2007): 35–53.

[68] Marsha Rozenblit, "The Jews of Germany and Austria: A Comparative Perspective," in *Austrians and Jews in the Twentieth Century: From Franz Joseph to Waldheim*, ed. Robert Wistrich (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 12–14. In 1910 only about one fifth of the Viennese Jewish population had been born in the city. See: Freidenreich, *Jewish Politics in Vienna*, 5. Particularly on Moravian Jewry, see: Marsha L. Rozenblit, "Jews, German Culture, and the Dilemma of National Identity: The Case of Moravia, 1848–1938," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2013): 77–120.

[69] Amongst many others: Steven Beller, *Vienna and the Jews, 1867–1938: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Albert Lichtblau, "Ambivalent Modernity: The Jewish Population in Vienna," *Quest: Issues in Contemporary Jewish History*, Vol. 2 (2011); Rozenblit, *Jews of Vienna*; Wistrich, *Jews of Vienna*.

latter half of the nineteenth century.[70] While a narrow majority of Jews in Prague named Czech as their first language, most were probably bilingual and especially the upper social strata oriented itself primarily to German language and culture in the city, although a stronger Czech orientation gained traction in some sectors of the Jewish population around the turn of the century.[71] Both in Vienna and in Prague, the Jewish religious community (Israelitische Kultusgemeinde/Židovská náboženská obec), whose board was elected on the basis of communal taxes and thereby disenfranchised the vast majority of Jews, was dominated by the wealthy, liberal upper class.[72]

For the Jewish communities of the Habsburg Empire, there was no *Ostjudenfrage* as was discussed in neighboring Germany.[73] Indeed, acculturated, liberal, upper-class Jews in Vienna or Prague may have looked down on their Eastern brethren and their seemingly strange and backward behavior and customs, and the communities of established and newly arrived Jews largely lived apart from one another. However, many Galitzianer soon integrated and adopted local customs and identities.[74] Nonetheless, Vienna did see the evolution of a distinct Yiddish speaking East-European Jewish community around the turn of the century, that produced a distinct culture of its own, often an expression of national or cultural-Zionist ideas.[75]

There is much that may be said regarding nostalgia for an idealized 'golden age' of a *fin-de-siècle* Habsburg Empire, especially the imperial capital. This trope already emerged in the interwar period in many respects as a response to antisemitism and exile, might tell much

[70] Kieval, *Making of Czech Jewry*, 13–14. In 1910 85,327 Jews lived in the Bohemian Crownland (1.3 percent of the total population), of which 29,107 (33.91 percent) lived in Prague. See: Wlaschek, *Juden in Böhmen*, 24

[71] Gary B. Cohen, "The Jews in German Society: Prague, 1860–1914," *Central European History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1977): 28–54; Gary B. Cohen, "Jews in German Liberal Politics: Prague, 1880–1914," *Jewish History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1986): 55–74; Kieval, *Making of Czech Jewry*, 28–30; Wlaschek, *Juden in Böhmen*, 51–7.

[72] On Vienna: Wistrich, *Jews of Vienna*, 90–7. On Prague: Kieval, *Making of Czech Jewry*, 118–9. This was similar to the situation in Galicia as the Jewish communities operated under the same legal principles. Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, Vol. II*, 187–8.

[73] Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German-Jewish Consciousness, 1800–1923* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982); Jack Wertheimer, *Unwelcome Strangers: East European Jews in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Yfaat Weiss, "'Wir Westjuden haben jüdisches Stammesbewußtsein, die Ostjuden jüdisches Volksbewußtsein': Der deutsch-jüdische Blick auf das polnische Judentum in den beiden ersten Jahrzezhnten des 20. Jahrhunderts," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, Vol. 37 (1997): 157–78.

[74] Rozenblit, *Jews of Germany and Austria*, 12–13; Wistrich, *Jews of Vienna*, 62–86.

[75] Armin Eidherr, "Die jiddische Kultur in Wien der Zwischenkriegszeit und ihre Positionierungen in Bezug auf Akkulturation, Diasporanationalismus und Zionismus," in *Wien und die jüdische Erfahrung, 1900–1938: Akkulturation-Antisemitismus-Zionismus*, ed. Frank Stern and Barbara Eichinger (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 2009), 175–9; Gabriele Kohlbauer-Fritz, "Yiddish as an Expression of Jewish Cultural Identity in Galicia and Vienna," *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 171–6; Gabriele Kohlbauer-Fritz, "Die jiddische Subkultur in Wien und die jüdische Arbeiterbewegung," in *Judentum und Arbeiterbewegung: Das Ringen um Emanzipation in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Markus Börner, Anja Jungfer, and Jakob Stürmann (Munich, Vienna: DeGruyter Oldenbourg, 2018), 51–62; Thomas Soxberger, *Revolution am Donaukanal: Jiddische Kultur und Politik in Wien 1904 bis 1938* (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2013), 18–33. Of great influence for this development in Vienna was Nathan Birnbaum. See: Jess Olson, *Nathan Birnbaum and Jewish Modernity: Architect of Zionism, Yiddishism, and Orthodoxy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

more about the society to which these narratives responded rather than about the imperial society they claim to describe.[76] That being said, the political conditions of the Habsburg Empire allowed for a great degree of emancipation and development that did create an affective relationship to the state and its ruler, not least because the imperial state at times intervened against anti-Jewish violence and outbursts of antisemitism, most notably against the 1898 riots in Galicia.[77] At the same time, the peculiar framework of the imperial state allowed Jews "to be Austrians by political loyalty, Germans (or Czechs or Poles) by culture, and Jews by ethnicity all at the same time."[78]

In the latter decades of the nineteenth century Jews in the Habsburg Empire were increasingly confronted with the new mass politics of nationalism in which conflicting claims over hegemony, and indeed resources, gained traction. The paradigm of nationalism challenged Jewish integrationist strategies as an ever-increasing sector of Polish, Czech, German, and other nationalists adopted an ethno-nationalist model of sovereignty that in many varieties – though not all – excluded Jews from their imagined national collectives. Alongside clerical antisemites, nationalists' fantasies that the emancipation of the Jews and their role in society were responsible for all the ills of the modern era that had befallen the nation served both as an instrument to mobilize support, to explain societal problems, and to define the nation itself.[79]

---

[76] On nostalgia, especially for Vienna, see: Steven Beller, "The World of Yesterday Revisited: Nostalgia, Memory, and the Jews of Fin-de-siècle Vienna," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1996): 37–53; Malachi Haim Hacohen, "Juden und Österreicher in der Ersten Republik," in *...der Rest ist Österreich. Das Werden der Ersten Republik*, ed. Helmut Konrad and Wolfgang Maderthaner (Vienna: Carl Gerold's Sohn, 2008), 281–316; Lisa Silverman*, Becoming Austrians: Jews and Culture between the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 118.

[77] On 1898 in Galicia: Tim Buchen, *Antisemitismus in Galizien: Agitation, Gewalt und Politik gegen Juden in der Habsburgermonarchie um 1900* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2012), 167–237; Frank Golczewski, "Die Westgalizischen Bauernunruhen 1898", in *Polnisch-Jüdische Beziehungen, 1881–1922: Eine Studie zur Geschichte des Antisemitismus*, ed. Frank Golczewski (Wiesbaden: Frank Steiner, 1981), 60–84; Keely Stauter-Halsted, "Jews as Middlemen Minorities in Rural Poland: Understanding the Galician Pogroms of 1898," in *Antisemitism and its Opponents in Modern Poland*, ed. Robert Blobaum (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 39–59; Unowsky, *The Plunder*; Daniel Unowsky, "Peasant Mobilization and the 1898 anti-Jewish Riots in Western Galicia," *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2010): 412–35.

[78] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 24. On the question of a supposed contradiction between national belonging and imperial loyalty, see: Steven Beller, "Patriotism and the National Identity of Habsburg Jewry, 1860–1914," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, Vol. 41 (1996): 215–38.

[79] Amongst Others: Buchen, *Antisemitismus in Galizien*; Michal Frankl, *"Prag ist nunmehr antisemitisch": Tschechischer Antisemitismus am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2011); Albert Lichtblau, "Antisemitismus, 1900–1938: Phasen, Wahrnehmungen und Akkulturationseffekte," in *Wien und die jüdische Erfahrung, 1900–1938: Akkulturation, Antisemitismus, Zionismus*, ed. Frank Stern and Barbara Eichinger (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 2008), 39–58; Bruce Pauley, *Eine Geschichte des österreichischen Antisemitismus: von der Ausgrenzung zur Auslöschung* (Vienna: Kremayr&Scheriau, 1993), 60–90; Peter G. J. Pulzer "Lueger's Heritage: Anti-Semitism in Austrian Party Politics," in *Hostages of Modernization: Studies in Modern Antisemitism 1870–1933/39, Vol. 2: Austria–Hungary–Poland–Russia*, ed. Herbert A. Strauss and Werner Bergmann (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 1993), 700–19; Stauter-Halsted, *Nation in the Village*, 133–41; Herbert A. Strauss, "Austria – Vicissitudes of Anti-Modernism: Origins and Continuities of Populist Antisemitism," in *Hostages of Modernization: Studies in Modern Antisemitism 1870–1933/39, Vol. 2: Austria–Hungary–Poland–Russia*, ed. Herbert A. Strauss and Werner Bergmann (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 1993), 669–74; Andrew G. Whiteside, "Pan-Germanism: Anti-Semitism in Mass-Style Politics," in *Hostages of*

At the same time, nationalists often raised a seemingly integrationist claim, trying to incorporate Jews into their national body, at least for the sake of establishing numerical majorities in regions contested by various nationalist movements, such as East Galicia or the Bohemian lands.[80]

In this atmosphere of nationalist mobilization, many Jews tried to assert and strengthen their bonds with the supranational imperial state, while some turned towards a nationalism of their own.[81] From the 1880s, Jewish nationalists, mainly university students, in Vienna (most of them Galicians), Czernowitz, and Lwów established fraternities, clubs, and associations, often modelled after their non-Jewish nationalist counterparts.[82] The ideas of Theodor Herzl, and probably even more so his personal standing and what he represented, energized and united the various small groups in the Empire.[83] The movement was characterized by a great variety of experiences, the differences of living conditions and traditions between East and West, the urban centers and smaller towns, making Habsburg Zionism something of a miniature image of world Zionism itself, divided into three regional organizations (Galicia, Bukovina, and Western Austria).[84] From small groups of academics and intellectuals holding up a Jewish-national position in the multinational city of Prague, to Galician Zionists involved in mass campaigns in the elections to the Reichsrat (Imperial Parliament), Zionists and Diaspora-nationalists with strong standing in the communities in Bukovina, and groups of predominantly middle-class academics and students in Vienna with greater ambitions for the movement, Zionism in the Habsburg Empire was highly diverse.[85]

Modernization: Studies in Modern Antisemitism 1870–1933/39, Vol. 2: Austria–Hungary–Poland–Russia, ed. Herbert A. Strauss and Werner Bergmann (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 1993), 689–99.

[80] This was especially the case for the struggle over the declaration of language in the census from which nationalists deducted ideas of national belonging. See in the case of Galicia: Max Rosenfeld, *Die Polnische Judenfrage. Problem und Lösung* (Vienna, Berlin, L. Löwit, 1918), 147–8; Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 36–9. On the Bohemian case: Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 31–2.

[81] On the various Jewish responses to antisemitism in the Habsburg Austria, see (amongst others): Tim Buchen, "'Herkules im antisemitischen Augiasstall': Joseph Samuel Bloch und Galizien in der Reaktion auf Antisemitismus in der Habsburgermonarchie," in *Einspruch und Abwehr: Die Reaktionen des europäischen Judentums auf die Entstehung des Antisemitismus (1879–1914)*, ed. Ulrich Wyrwa (Frankfurt, New York: Campus Verlag, 2010), 193–214; Michal Frankl, "Zwischen Staat und Nation: Tschechisch-jüdische Reaktionen auf den Antisemitismus vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg," in *Einspruch und Abwehr: Die Reaktionen des europäischen Judentums auf die Entstehung des Antisemitismus (1879–1914)*, ed. Ulrich Wyrwa (Frankfurt, New York: Campus Verlag, 2010), 180–92; Hillel J. Kieval, "Nationalism and Antisemitism: the Czech-Jewish Response," in *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz (Hanover, London: Brandeis University Press, 1987), 210–33; Gerald Lamprecht, "'Allein der Antisemitismus ist heute nicht mehr bloße Idee…': Strategien gegen den Antisemitismus in Österreich," in *Einspruch und Abwehr: Die Reaktionen des europäischen Judentums auf die Entstehung des Antisemitismus (1879–1914)*, ed. Ulrich Wyrwa (Frankfurt, New York: Campus Verlag, 2010), 153–79.

[82] On early Zionism in the Habsburg Empire, see: Gaisbauer, *Davidstern*, 39–81; Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 46–108; Wistrich, *Jews of Vienna*, 347–80.

[83] Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 150–64.

[84] Gaisbauer, *Davidstern*, 244–368.

[85] On Galicia: Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*. On Prague: Dimitry Shumsky, *Zweisprachigkeit und binationale Idee: Der Prager Zionismus 1900–1930* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 2013); Kieval, *Making of Czech*

The years of the First World War and its aftermath would bring hitherto unknown challenges and new opportunities for the Zionist movement, both in East-Central Europe and worldwide. In some regions, Zionism would emerge as a strong, sometimes even dominant, force in Jewish political life, in other regions, it would almost completely disintegrate. This thesis attempts to show how this came about and how the day-to-day deeds of Zionist activists shaped the movement and Jewish society.

On Zionism

There is no lack of studies on the emergence of Jewish nationalism and Zionism. What most of them agree on is that Zionism, despite incorporating and building on older religious traditions, was a distinctly modern phenomenon, a response to the crisis of traditional communal relations, changed relations between states and their inhabitants, antisemitism, and most notably the rise of nationalism as an increasingly hegemonic ideology and mass politics. "Zionism", as Joshua Shanes notes in regard to Galicia, "was part of the rising nationalist movements in Europe and not simply a reaction to them."[86] David Engel summed up the basic paradigm of Jewish nationalism:

> "[…] growing numbers of Jews suspected that nation-based states would soon become the norm worldwide, perhaps even replacing existing citizen-based states. They figured that in a world of nation-based states, the best way for Jews to maximize their well-being was to claim that they comprised a nation themselves and that therefore they too had an inalienable right to constitute a state that would define serving the collective needs and interests as one of its fundamental purposes."[87]

This was, of course, not self-evident. Just as all other nationalist activists, Zionists spent much of their time and energy trying to explain to the members of their allegedly hitherto dormant nation the need to 'awaken,' to recognize that they were a nation, that this nation had a special connection to a particular piece of land (in this case Palestine or the Land of Israel), that this was the place where a future home should be established, and that other ideologies, such as socialism or liberalism were incapable of satisfactorily addressing the nation's problems. Of

Jewry, 93–123. On Bukovina: David Rechter, "Nationalism at the Edge: The Jüdische Volksrat of Habsburg Bukovina," *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden*, Vol. 18/19 (2008/2009): 59–89. On Vienna: Wistrich, *Jews of Vienna*: 458–93.

[86] Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 1.

[87] David Engel, *Zionism* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2009), 22

course, many Jews reacted with indifference or outrightly rejected this idea.[88] Nonetheless, the movement did win a not insignificant following in the years leading up to the First World War.

Just as other national movements, the Zionist movement included factions, sub-groups, people who combined their national ideologies with other 'isms', as well as often very conflicting ideas of what the best way would be to achieve the common goal, or even what exactly constituted that goal.[89] At times of heightened internal debates, activists sometimes accused their colleagues and comrades of having abandoned the national ideal, succumbed to foreign pressures, or even ceased to be Zionists. Regardless of these internal conflicts and accusations, in this thesis, I follow the basic approach of 'accepting' everyone who declares him- or herself as a Zionist or acts in explicitly Zionist contexts as a Zionist, irrespective of what his or her critics and opponents might have said.

There are three notable variations or types of Zionism that were central in the region and time that this thesis covers, although they were rarely so clearly demarcated from each other: these are General Zionism, the religious Zionists of the Mizrahi, and the socialist-Zionist Poale Zion.[90] General Zionism, Zionism-classic so to speak, was the dominant force within the Zionist movement at the outbreak of the First World War, mainly defined by membership of the Zionist Organization (founded in 1897) and not of any specific faction. General Zionism

---

[88] For various forms of Jewish critiques and rejections of (early) Zionism, see: Albert H. Friedlander, "Gegner Herzls und des politischen Zionismus aus der Reformbewegung," in *100 Jahre Zionismus: Von der Verwirklichung einer Vision*, ed. Ekkehard W. Stegeman (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2000), 119–26; Yosef Gorny, *Converging Alternatives: The Bund and the Labor-Zionist Movement, 1897–1985* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006); Rick Kuhn, "Jewish Anti-Zionism in the Galician Socialist Movement," in *Rebels against Zion: Studies on the Jewish Left Anti-Zionism*, ed. August Grabski (Warsaw: Jewish Historical Institute, 2001), 47–65; Laqueur, *History of Zionism*, 384–437; Ehud Luz, P*arallels Meet: Religion and Nationalism in the Early Zionist Movement, 1882–1904* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1988), 114–6; Michael A. Meyer, "Liberal Judaism and Zionism in Germany," *Zionism and Religion*, ed. Shmuel Almog, Jehuda Reinharz, and Anita Shapira (Hanover, London: University Press of New England, 1998), 93–106; Polonsky, "The New Jewish Politics and its Discontents," 35–53; Jehuda Reinharz, "The Conflict Between Zionism and Traditionalism Before World War I," *Jewish History*, Vol, 7, No. 2 (1993): 59–78; Yosef Salomon, "Zionism and Anti-Zionism in Traditional Judaism in Eastern Europe," in *Zionism and Religion*, ed. Shmuel Almog, Jehuda Reinharz, and Anita Shapira (Hanover, London: University Press of New England, 1998), 25–43; Tobias, *The Jewish Bund*, 248–55; Enzo Traverso, *The Marxists and the Jewish Question: The History of a Debate, 1843–1943* (Amherst: Humanity Books, 1994); Robert Wistrich, "Zionism and its Jewish 'Assimilationist' Critics (1897–1948)," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1988): 59–111; Wistrich, *Jews of Vienna*, 458–93. The concept of 'national indifference' has gained importance in the studies on nationalism in East-Central Europe. See (amongst others): Pieter Judson, "Nationalism and Indifference," in *Habsburg neu denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa. 30 kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte*, ed. Johannes Feichtinger, Heidemarie Uhl (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 2016), 148–55; Tara Zahra, "Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 69, No. 1 (2010): 93–119. It had since been used as a concept to approach various groups and national movements in the region in different time periods but less so in the study of Jewish nationalism and Zionism. A notable exception is: Tatjana Lichtenstein, "Racializing Jewishness: Zionist Responses to National Indifference in Interwar Czechoslovakia," *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 43 (2012): 75–97.

[89] For an excellent overview of the various currents and ideas within the Zionist movement, see: Shimoni, *Zionist Ideology*.

[90] There were a few other groups that occasionally appear in the text. They will be briefly introduced and contextualized where relevant.

understood itself to be non-ideological.[91] Notwithstanding regional differences, the activists who identified themselves as part of this General Zionism tended to be from middle-class, educated backgrounds. They usually adhered to principles of liberalism, secularism, and private property, and they attempted to combine the systematic settlement of Palestine with political-diplomatic activities to obtain international diplomatic support.[92] The highest body of the movement was the biannual World Zionist Congress, for which the purchase of the Shekel guaranteed every man and woman the right to vote. The congress elected the 'Smaller' or 'Inner' Zionist Action Committee, which led the international movement between congresses, while the 'Greater' Action Committee was made up of representatives of the regional parties.[93] Until the outbreak of the war, and arguably throughout the war, the leadership of the movement was based in Berlin. From 1911 to 1920 Arthur Hantke served simultaneously as head of the Inner Action Committee and of the German Zionist Organization, reflecting the great importance of German Zionists within the (World) Zionist Organization.[94]

In 1902 orthodox activists of the Zionist movement constituted themselves as the Mizrahi, the acronym of Merkaz Ruhani (spiritual/religious center), also meaning 'East', referring to the direction of prayer to Jerusalem. Contrary to the dominant orthodox view that the Jews' return to their land could (and must) only come with the messiah, the Mizrahi adhered to the principles of Zionism for the establishment of a national home. At the same time, they rejected the secularism of the dominant liberal intelligentsia of the Zionist movement especially in the field of education and culture, and insisted on the religious character of the national project.[95]

Notwithstanding a number of ideological and organizational precursors, the revolution of 1905 was the crystallizing moment for Poale Zion (Workers of Zion). From the conditions of Jewish workers in the Czarist Empire and their experience during the revolution and attendant wave of anti-Jewish violence, activists derived the need to establish a Jewish national

[91] It was only in 1922 that 'General Zionists' established themselves as a distinct centrist faction within the Zionist movement as a whole.
[92] Much of the literature (quite rightly) discusses Zionism and the activities of the (World) Zionist Organization interchangeably. Specifically on 'General Zionism', see: Shimoni, *Zionist Ideology*, 93–126.
[93] Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years*, 13–14; 16–19; 66–7.
[94] Jehuda Reinharz, "Ideology and Structure in German Zionism, 1882–1933," in *Essential Papers on Zionism*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira (New York, London: New York University Press, 1996), 268–9. The 'Zionist Organization' (HaHistadrut HaTzionit) only changed its name to 'World Zionist Organization' (HaHistadrut HaTzionit Ha'Olamit) in 1960. However, most of the literature on the movement's history before 1960 uses the name with the term 'World' in order to avoid any confusion with the various Zionist Organizations in the respective countries. I will do the same.
[95] Yehuda Eloni, *Zionismus in Deutschland von den Anfängen bis 1914* (Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1987), 380–406; Judah L. Fishman, *The History of the Mizrachi Movement* (New York: The Mizrachi Hatzair of America, 1928); Gaisbauer, *Davidstern*, 414–24; Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 172–8; Shimoni, *Zionist Ideology*, 127–54; Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years*, 220–4.

home and economy in Palestine as a precondition for Jewish workers' effective participation in revolutionary class struggle.[96] During the Second Aliyah, Poale Zionists were a leading force in the pioneering efforts on the ground,[97] while in Europe, activists formed trade unions, and cooperatives, engaged in industrial action, and worked to reconcile their Zionism with the socialist-revolutionary aspects of their program.[98] As socialist Zionists, they faced the dual challenge of rejection by the mainstream labor movement because of their Zionism and an (at least) tense relationship with mainstream Zionists, due to their socialism.[99]

Zionism was a distinctly modern phenomenon that evolved as a response to a number of factors – symptoms of a crisis of modernity – that affected the Jewish population in Europe. In this, the debates between Zionists and other Jewish activists and politicians to a large extent mirrored those in other national groups and the thesis shows that many of the ideas and political practices Zionists adopted could also be found in other contexts.[100] What many of the debates over comparability have in common is a state-centered concept of Zionism that revolves around the understanding of nationalism, as Ernest Gellner put it, as "primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent."[101] Or to put it in the classical

[96] On the earlier history of Poale Zion, see (amongst many others): Bunzl, *Klassenkampf in der Diaspora*, 103–18; 123–5; Keßler, *Zionismus und international Arbeiterbewegung*, 79–100; Balshan, *Ihud Mefulag*, 51–128; Shimoni, *Zionist Ideology*, 166–201; Gorny, *Converging Alternatives*, 49–83; Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 329–63. The key document, outlining the programmatic approach of Poale Zion was Ber Borochov's 'Our Platform', published in 1906. See: Ber Borochov, "Our Platform (1906)," in *Class Struggle and the Jewish Nation: Selected Essays in Marxist Zionism*, ed. Mitchell Cohen (New Brunswick, London: Transaction Books, 1984), 75–103. On Borochov: Matityahu Mintz, "Ber Borokhov," in *Essential Papers on Jews and the Left*, ed. Ezra Mendelsohn (New York, London: New York University Press, 1997), 122–44.

[97] Yosef Gorny, "Changes in the Social and Political Structure of the Second Aliya between 1904 and 1940," in *Essential Papers on Zionism*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz, Anita Shapira (New York, London: New York University Press, 1996), 395–410.

[98] Gaisbauer, *Davidstern*, 368–414; Shabtai Unger, *Po'ale-Tsiyon baKesarut haOstrit, 1904–1914* (Beersheba: Ben Gurion University of the Negev, 2001); Nathan Weinstock, "La formation des organisations ouvrières juives de Galicie (1892–1911)," *Le Mouvement Social*, No. 127 (1984): 29–44; Ya'akov Zerubavel, ed. *Yidisher arbiter pinkes: Tsu der geshikhte fun der Po'alei-Tsiyon Bavegung, Vol. 1* (Warsaw: Nowa Kultura, 1927).

[99] Balshan, *Ihud Mefulag*, 105–28; Mario Keßler, *Antisemitismus, Zionismus und Sozialismus: Arbeiterbewegung und jüdische Frage im 20. Jahrhundert* (Mainz: Decaton Verlag, 1993), 9–39; Keßler, *Zionismus und internationale Arbeiterbewegung*, 85–100; Ezra Mendelsohn, "The Jewish Socialist Movement and the Second International, 1889–1914: The Struggle for Recognition," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (1964): 131–45.

[100] On the debate whether Zionism was a 'unique' national movement or it can be compared to others, see: Eyal Chowers, *The Political Philosophy of Zionism: Trading Jewish Words for a Hebraic Land* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 13–14; Chaim Gans, *A Just Zionism: On the Morality of the Jewish State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 13–16; 37; Ben Halpern and Jehuda Reinharz, *Zionism and the Creation of a New Society* (New York, Oxford: Oxford, University Press, 1998), 8–11; Miroslav Hroch, "Zionismus als eine europäische Nationalbewegung," in *100 Jahre Zionismus: Von der Verwirklichung einer Vision*, ed. Ekkehard W. Stegmann (Stuttgart, Berlin, Cologne: Kohlhammer, 2000), 33–9; Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth, 1983), 192–209; Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (London: Methuen, 1977), 383–415; Zeev Sternhell, *The Founding Myths of Israel: Nationalism, Socialism, and the Making of the Jewish State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 10–11.

[101] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 43.

form of the liberal paradigm formulated by John Stuart Mill that "boundaries of government should coincide in the main with those of nationalities."[102] Many of the more recent studies of nationalist movements, especially in the imperial context of East-Central Europe, reject this state-centered teleological understanding of nationalism and rather focus on the practices of nationalism and the non-state-related demands of nationalist movements, seeing them as not primarily revolving around demands for statehood but around questions of cultural and educational autonomy, participation in the administration, material demands, and so on. These claims were no less political, but their focus and frame were notably different.[103] Though referencing more recent cases, Michael Keating described this as "[n]ation building has taken place as much within the civil society as the state."[104]

What do these debates mean in the context of studying the Zionist movement? As in the scholarly works on any national movement, there are evident tendencies to project the supposed 'results' of a process, that is, the establishment of the state, backwards in history, understanding Zionism in what is called the 'diaspora'[105] as a mere preparatory stage before the creation of the state.[106] Dimitry Shumsky criticized this, stating:

"This teleological perception of political Zionist nationalism is founded upon the tendency to view the annals of the Zionist movement through the retrospective lens of the establishment of the State of Israel, because of which

[102] John Stuart Mill, *Representative Government* (1861) (Kitechener: Batoche Books, 2001), 184. For this understanding of nationalism in general, see also (amongst others): Benedict Anderson, *Die Erfindung der Nation: Zur Karriere eines folgenreichen Konzepts*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt, New York: Campus Verlag, 2005), 17; Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 3rd ed. (London: Hutchinson, 1966), 9; John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982), 3; Eric J. Hobsbawn, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press), 9.

[103] Notably (amongst others): Karen Barkey, Mark von Hagen, ed., *After Empire* (Boulder, CO: Perseus Books, 1997); István Deák, "Comparing Apples and Pears: Centralization, Decentralization, and Ethnic Policy in the Habsburg and Soviet Armies," in *Nationalism and Empire*, ed. Rudolph. L. Rudolph and David F. Good (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 225–42; Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*; Pieter Judson: *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016); Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815–1918* (London, New York: Longman, 1989); Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2008).

[104] Michael Keating, *Nations against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia, and Scotland* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 218.

[105] The use of the term 'diaspora' is somewhat problematic in an analytical context, since it implies the a priori existence of the relation of 'diasporic' people with the supposed 'homeland', wherefore I will refrain from using it as a category of analysis. See, amongst others: Rogers Brubaker, "The 'diapora' diasporas," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2005), 1–19. But since one can argue, that this relationship was the product of political construction (for a large part in the period in question), it entails many normative implications in regard to the identities of the people described. For this debate, see: James Clifford, "Diasporas," *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (1994), 302–38; Pieter Judson, "When Is a Diaspora Not a Diaspora: Rethinking Nation-Centered Narratives about Germans in Habsburg East Central Europe" in *The* Heimat *Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness*, ed. Krista O'Donnell, et.al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 219–47.

[106] See (amongst others): Uri Ram, *Israeli Nationalism: Social conflicts and the politics of knowledge* (Milton Park, New York: Routledge, 2011), 19; Dona Robinson Divine, "Zionism and the Transformation of Jewish Society," *Modern Judaism*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (2000): 260.

the writing of the political history of Zionism has seemingly revolved around a deterministic axis that leads to the establishment of a Jewish nation-state in Palestine."[107]

There is a certain danger in understanding Zionism in East-Central Europe primarily as a preparatory endeavor before the 'real' national project in Palestine, seeing, in the above-quoted words of Puah Rakovsky, the "Galus [as] the reservoir of human material for the land of Israel".[108] This can obfuscate our view on Zionist activists, the way they understood the world around them, the challenges they faced, the alternative strategies they proposed, and the way they engaged Jewish society on a daily basis. However, a great number of works analyze the Zionist movement not from this perspective, but rather by situating it distinctly within Europe, discussing the movement as a response to the specific problems Jews faced there, arguing that its answers were much more diverse than merely agitating for mass-emigration. Instead, those scholars argued, the Zionist movement played an important role on the ground fighting for what it believed were appropriate political and social responses to local conditions – building a social and cultural infrastructure, running in elections, mobilizing for particular political demands, struggling over the Kahal, negotiating over minority-rights or autonomy, and so on.[109]

This "nitty-gritty of nation building, the everyday work that went into creating a nation"[110] as Tatjana Lichtenstein put it, is at the center of this thesis. Lichtenstein's work shows how daily activism in sports organizations, youth movements, for minority rights and national recognition, and in social sciences was part and parcel of the creation of a feeling of communal belonging and national identity.[111] Joshua Shanes has conducted groundbreaking research on the dynamics of Zionist *Gegenwartsarbeit* and mass mobilization and the role Zionists played in formulating Jewish political strategies in late Habsburg Galicia.[112] Simon Rabinovitch has shown how the emergence of Jewish nationalism as an important force in Jewish politics in the Russian Empire developed around the idea of national rights themselves, and activists formulated and struggled over concepts of national autonomy in theory, cultural projects, and

[107] Dimitry Shumsky, "Brith Shalom's uniqueness reconsidered: Hans Kohn and autonomist Zionism," *Jewish History*, No. 25 (2011): 340. In a recent conversation, Jonathan Dekel-Chen summed up this approach excellently as "anachronistic triumphalism".
[108] Rakovsky, *My Life*, 84.
[109] Notably: Michael Berkowitz, *Western Jewry and the Zionist Project, 1914–1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*; Daniel Kupfert Heller, *Jabotinsky's Children: Polish Jews and the Rise of Right-Wing Zionism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); Tatjana Lichtenstein, *Zionists in Interwar Czechoslovakia: Minority Nationalism and the Politics of Belonging* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016); Mendelsohn, *Zionism*; Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*; Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*; Silber, *Le'umiuyt Shonah*.
[110] Lichtenstein, *Zionism*, 2.
[111] Explicitly: ibid., 329–31.
[112] Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*.

political practice.[113] In his magisterial work on Zionism in Poland in the years 1915 to 1925, Ezra Mendelsohn showed how the building of a Zionist infrastructure and social work in a situation when traditional communal institutions failed attracted people to the movement.[114] This especially allowed the youth to find a space in which they could express their new, rebellious identities, as "the joining of a Zionist party or youth movement was closely associated with the search for a 'new home' to replace the old, decaying, and discredited environment".[115] In many respects, this thesis builds on these and other works, trying to understand what the Zionist version of Jewish nationalism meant for people on the ground, how it functioned on a daily basis, and how it functioned in the construction of Zionist-oriented Jewish national belonging.

There was no inherent contradiction between the ideal of establishing a home or a future state in the Middle East and focusing a large part of one's political energies on the immediate situation. On the contrary: after Theodor Herzl had failed to convince the Sultan and the Kaiser to grant him a charter for the establishment of a national home, at the second Zionist Congress in 1898, the movement turned to what activists called the conquest of the communities, to gain the support of the masses of European Jewry.[116] What started with an attempt to 'nationalize' the traditional communal institutions of European Jewry developed into a wider form of national politics in a decidedly diasporic frame. The crisis European Jewry faced in subsequent years "galvanized all currents of the Zionist movement into an awareness of a key practical necessity: the need to play a genuine role in the political struggle being waged by the Jews in the diaspora for their civil and national rights."[117] This strategy was named *Gegenwartsarbeit* (work in/for the present), a term coined in a 1901 article by Martin Buber, who saw the "essence and the soul of the movement in the transformation of national life, in the education of a truly *new* generation, in the development of the Jewish tribe to a strong, unified, independent, healthy and mature community."[118] With this call for a spiritual-national regeneration activists first and

[113] Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*.
[114] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 37–87.
[115] Ibid., 342
[116] On this process, see: Shmuel Almog, *Zionism and History: The Rise of a New Jewish Consciousness* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 188–9; Engel, *Zionism*, 54–5; Laqueur, *History of Zionism*, 108–10. On the Second Zionist Congress, see: Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years*, 63–74. The theme of 'conquest of the communities' played only a marginal role at the Congress itself and is more important in Herzl's diaries at the time. See Herzl's short comments: *Stenographisches Protokoll der Verhandlungen des II. Zionisten-Congresses gehalten zu Basel vom 28. bis 31. August 1898* (Vienna: Verlag des Vereins Erets Israel, 1898), 5–7.
[117] Matityahu Mintz, "Work for the Land of Israel and 'Work in the Present': A Concept of Unity, a Reality of Contradiction," in *Essential Papers on Zionism*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira (New York, London: New York University Press, 1996), 163.
[118] *Die Welt*, 08.02.1901. Emphasis in the original. On Buber's concept of *Gegenwartsarbeit*: Asher D. Biemann, "Aesthetic Education in Martin Buber: Jewish Renaissance and the Artist," in *New Perspectives on Martin*

foremost turned their attention to educational efforts. However, the approach of *Gegenwartsarbeit* subsequently meant addressing the wider needs and political demands of Jews in Europe. It was intended to strengthen the movement's support base in Europe, to broaden the appeal of the national idea, and to prepare Jewry for the creation of a homeland in Palestine, with some also hoping that the stronger the movement was in Europe, the more likely it would be to win the endorsement of a great power.[119]

In the Russian Empire, the Helsingfors (Helsinki) conference of the Zionist movement in 1906 went significantly beyond the call for a cultural renewal. It called for national autonomy, a Jewish national assembly, a democratization of society, and a concrete struggle for these aims within Russia.[120] Similarly, Zionists in the Habsburg Empire in their 1906 conference in Cracow called for the recognition of the Jewish nation, national autonomy, and equal representation in the Reichsrat.[121] For the socialists of Poale Zion, work in the present meant engaging in workers' economic and political struggles in Europe.[122] In this context, *Gegenwartsarbeit* fostered a form of Zionist activism that would concentrate ever more on diaspora-oriented mass-politics.[123]

The struggle for Jewish rights and national autonomy in Europe was seen by activists as "complementary to the struggle for national territorial autonomy in Palestine, another component of national Jewish normalization".[124] However, this strategy soon led to debates with some Zionists fearing that many activists over-prioritized work for the diaspora, while losing sight of the future home in Palestine. There also emerged debates on different political conceptions of the relation between autonomy and sovereignty in the diaspora and Palestine.[125]

Buber, ed. Michael Zank (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 87–95; Pinchas Erich Rosenblueth, *Martin Buber: Sein Denken und Wirken* (Hannover: Sponholtz, 1968), 13–15.

[119] Michael Brenner, *Geschichte des Zionismus*, 3rd ed. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2008), 95; Eloni, *Zionismus in Deutschland*, 460–528; Halpern, Reinharz, "Nationalism and Jewish Socialism," 239; Halpern, Reinharz, *Zionism and the Creation*, 136–7; Laqueur, *History of Zionism*, 137; Arthur Ruppin, "Gegenwartsarbeit," in *Die Stimme der Wahrheit: Jahrbuch für wissenschaftlichen Zionismus*, ed. Lazar Schön (Würzburg: N. Philippi, 1905), 61–6; Shimoni, *Zionist Ideology*, 114–5; 325–6.

[120] Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, 166; Brian Horowitz, *Russian Idea – Jewish Presence: Essays on Russian-Jewish Intellectual Life* (Brighton: Academic Studies Press, 2013), 57–61; Mintz, "Work for the Land," 163–4; Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 104–7; Joseph B. Schechtman, *Rebel and Statesman: The Vladimir Jabotinsky Story: The Early Years* (New York: American Book-Stratford Press, 1956), 112–6; Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years*, 467–78.

[121] Isaiah Friedman, "The Austro-Hungarian Government and Zionism: 1897–1918," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (1965): 151–2; Gaisbauer, *Davidstern*, 126–31.

[122] On Poale Zionist activism before the war, see: Unger, *Po'ale-Tsiyon baKesarut haOstrit*; Weinstock, "La formation des organisations ouvrières juives," 29–44.

[123] Most notably: Gaisbauer, *Davidstern*, 451–523; Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 104–9; Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 194–8; 217–24.

[124] Shumsky, "Brith Shalom's uniqueness," 342

[125] David Engel, "HaMeser HaKaful: HaTsionut haClalit bePolin Lenokhach Medinat Hale'am," *Gal-Ed: On the History & Culture of Polish Jewry*, Vol. 20 (2006): 55–79; Halpern, Reinharz, "Nationalism and Jewish Socialism," 238–46; Ezra Mendelsohn, "Zionist Success and Zionist Failure: The Case of East Central Europe between the Wars," in *Essential Papers on Zionism*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira (New York, London:

The majority of Zionists, however, did not see the two efforts as contradictory. Ber Borochov, the founder and ideological leader of Poale Zion, proclaimed that "we are 100 percent socialist and 100 percent Zionist"[126] and in reality, the very wide concept of 'Zionism', encompassing work for diaspora-related causes, allowed the movement to broaden and allowed many people to find 'their' version of Zionism and practical work in the frame of the movement.[127]

Besides pioneering efforts which were undertaken by only a handful of activists, what role did Palestine, or Eretz Israel, play in this Zionism of the Zionists? In *A Guest for the Night* by S. Y. Agnon, the author's alter ego returns from Palestine to his home town in East Galicia in the 1920s. There, he meets Yeruham a disillusioned former Zionist who laments his disappointments and elaborates on Zionism in his town: "Until you went up to the Land of Israel, there was nothing real about the Land in our town. You know the Zionists, young and old. All the Land of Israel means for them is something to come together about, to hold meetings and sell the shekel that makes you a member of their organization."[128] Palestine, the Land of Israel, was to a large extent an ethos, a guiding idea, but as an actual geographic place, it was only remotely connected to Zionist daily practices. This is also true for one particular form of activism, that Agnon mentioned, and which features repeatedly in this thesis: the sale of the Shekel and the raising of funds for the project in Palestine. These fundraising efforts were central to connecting people to the ethos of Palestine. These efforts, as Michael Berkowitz put it in regard to Western Zionism, "provided a means for Westernised Jews […] to participate in, and feel a full part of, the national movement."[129]

While the funds raised in the West were significant and contributed greatly to the Zionist enterprise in Palestine, the effect possibly had an even greater symbolic value in the impoverished communities of East-Central Europe. Here too, Zionists asked the people to

---

New York University Press, 1996), 175; Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years*, 459–75. On the debate in general, see: Mintz, "Work for the Land," 161–70.

[126] Ber Borochov, "The Socialism of Poale Zion here (1915)," in *Class Struggle and the Jewish Nation: Selected Essays in Marxist Zionism*, ed. Mitchell Cohen (New Brunswick, London: Transaction Books, 1984), 162. In the same text, Borochov criticized those of his comrades who supposedly saw themselves as 85 percent Zionist and 15 percent socialist. Ibid., 158. On the origins of Poale Zion: see above.

[127] Mintz, "Work for the Land," 169–70. Just one example: the XIII Zionist 'Delegiertentag' (Delegates' Conference) of the German Zionist Organization, held in Posen (Poznań) in May 1912, declared that "it is the duty of every Zionist [...] to make his resettlement to Palestine a part of his life's plan." *Jüdische Rundschau*, 14.06.1912. Max Kollenscher, the leader of the local chapter of the Zionist organization, regarded this as irrelevant, since "highly personal matters cannot be resolved by majority decisions at conferences." Max Kollenscher, *Memoirs* 1875–1914 (ca. 1930s), Leo Baeck Institute-Archives (LBI-A), ME 368, 83.

[128] Shmuel Yosef Agnon, *A Guest for the Night* (New Milford, London: Toby Press, 2014), 96.

[129] Michael Berkowitz, "Towards and understanding of fundraising, philanthropy and charity in Western Zionism, 1897–1933," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1996): 253–4.

contribute money to various causes but the amount of money that could be raised there was significantly lower and was often used to cover the running costs of the organization in the country.[130] However, donating to this cause was of great symbolic value. At the beginning of 1918 – I chose a random date – Jews in East-Central Europe could donate for a number of causes related to Eretz Israel: to the Jewish National Fund, three garden-projects, a special fund to purchase land, the Herzl-forest near Jerusalem, a special 'heroes-grove' in that forest, for a girls' farm in Kinnereth, women's institutions and workers' homes in Palestine, Hebrew schools, and to a number of endowments or fundraising campaigns whose direct purpose seems not immediately clear. They could pay to be written in the 'Golden Book of the National Fund' or to support Jewish refugees in Palestine, pay a special self-taxation for party-members, or just give money without a specified cause.[131] Even for the smallest donation, the donor would find his or her name printed in the newspaper proving to everyone that he or she had contributed to the national cause. As the thesis will show, many discussions over practical work, primarily in the earlier phase of the war, revolved around the importance of this traditional Zionist work of selling the Shekel, raising money for Palestine, and holding the Palestinian ethos high.

Another aspect that featured prominently in war-time discussions and that needs to be addressed here briefly is the problem of philanthropy and charity. Agnon beautifully captured the Zionists' attitude towards philanthropy, commenting on the support for East Galician Jewish communities, ravaged by violence and poverty:

> "True, the charity officials gave them money with which to trade, but charitable funds have no strength. They save a poor man from hunger, but they do not put him on his feet. And if they put him on his feet, they bend his back and lower his spirit, and his spirit is never restored. […] If the benefactors of Israel had made the troubles of their brethren their own, the Holy One, blessed be He, would have helped them, and they would not have had to give and give again. But they did not make their brethren's troubles their own; they tried to salve their consciences by mere giving."[132]

The idea that rich Jews would provide funds to ease immediate suffering and maybe help a certain number of Jews to resettle, was seen as an old and dying illusion that would be unable to solve the 'Jewish question'.[133] The Zionist idea was in and by itself a rejection of benevolent

[130] Goldstein, "The Zionist Movement in Congress Poland," 120.
[131] *HaTsefirah*, 03.01.1918; 10.01.1918; 17.01.1918; 24.01.1918; 31.01.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 04.01.1918; 11.01.1918; 18.01.1918; 25.01.1918; *Selbstwehr*, 04.01.1918; 11.01.1918; 18.01.1918; 25.01.1918; *Jüdische Rundschau*, 04.01.1918; 11.01.1918; 18.01.1918; 25.01.1918.
[132] Agnon, *A Guest for the Night*, 233–4.
[133] Matthias B. Lehmann, "'A new book in Jewish affairs begins:' Maurice de Hirsch and the waning power of Jewish philanthropy at the *Fin-de-Siècle*," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (2018): 472–86; Derek J. Penslar, *Shylock's Children: Economics and Jewish Identity in Modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 223–32; Wistrich, *Jews of Vienna*, 62–97.

philanthropy as a response to the plight of East European Jewry, as Zionists emphasized that their cause was one of self-empowerment and self-reliance.[134] Where aid was necessary, Zionists argued, it should be used 'constructively' or 'productively', as a contribution to a long-term process of regeneration and emancipation, both in Palestine and in Europe. This did not mean that they were not happy to receive the support of philanthropists, and they often appealed to them, but at least in a formal sense, their understanding of what purpose funds should be used for differed significantly.[135]

Organization and Structure of the Thesis

This thesis builds on a great variety of sources, including letters, diaries, newspapers, minutes of meetings and conferences, memoirs, leaflets, pamphlets, Yizkor books, reports on activities, petitions, files from the police, army, and civilian administrations, and much more. Many of the relevant sources on East European Jewry were destroyed in the Second World War (and to a much smaller extent in the First World War), others are spread out over many different countries around the world.[136] Aside from the task of gathering the necessary material, the specific conditions under which the documents were produced – the conditions of war and revolutionary crisis – require a very careful assessment of the source material. The necessity of a critical approach towards the source material is obvious with respect to published material,

[134] Berkowitz, "Toward and understanding," 242–3; Daniel Gutwein, *The Divided Elite: Economics, Politics, and Anglo-Jewry, 1882–1917* (Leiden, New York, Cologne: Brill, 1992), 334; Laqueur, *History of Zionism*, 88–92; David Vital, "Nationalism, Political Action, and the Hostile Environment," in *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz (Hanover, London: Brandeis University Press, 1987), 238–43.
[135] Jonathan Dekel-Chen, "Faith Meets Politics and Resources: Reassessing Modern Transnational Jewish Activism," in *Purchasing Power: The Economics of Modern Jewish History*, ed. Rebecca Kobrin and Adam Teller (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 231; Abigail Green, "The 'West' and the Rest: Jewish Philanthropy and Globalization to c. 1880," in *Purchasing Power: The Economics of Modern Jewish History*, ed. Rebecca Kobrin and Adam Teller (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 163. Zionists and philanthropists generally agreed that there was a need to 'reform' East European Jewry and initiate a process of recoalescence, although the form this process should take was debated. Nahum Karlinsky, "Jewish philanthropy and Jewish credit cooperatives in Eastern Europe and Palestine up to 1939: A transnational phenomenon?," *The Journal of Israeli History*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (2008): 157–8
[136] On the destruction of Jewish records and cultural heritage during the Holocaust, see: Jacqueline Borin, "Embers of the Soul: The Destruction of Jewish Books and Archives in Poland during World War II," *Libraries and Culture*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (1993): 445–60; Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, "Roads to Ratibor: Library and Archival Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2005): 407; Anders Rydell, *The Book Thieves: The Nazi Looting of Europe's Libraries and the Race to Return a Literary Inheritance* (New York: Viking, 2015); Marek Sroka, "The Destruction of Jewish Libraries and Archives in Cracow during World War II," *Libraries and Culture*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (2003): 147–65. On the destructions of archives during the First World War, see for example the reports by the Lwów state archivist after the reconquest of the city: K. k. Statthaltereipräsidium Lemberg to k. k. Ministerium des Inneren, *Jahresbericht des Staatsarchivdirektors*, 28.02.1917, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv (ÖStA AVA), Inneres MdI Präsidium A 1295; K. k. Statthalterei Galizien to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report "Archive in Galizien, Sicherung nach der Invasion. Bericht von Dr. Ludwig, Konservator des k. k. Archivrates Lemberg"*, 20.12.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 1295.

such as newspapers, pamphlets, and books. Journalists and authors during much of the period under study and in all countries worked under the careful auspices of the censor. Censorship also posed a problem for everyone who wrote letters.[137] Jews were particularly affected since both the German and the Habsburg authorities banned the use of the Hebrew script in letters.[138] Having insufficient censors capable of reading Yiddish or Hebrew and therefore worried that those languages would be used by spies to transmit information the language was generally viewed as highly suspicious and letters in Hebrew and Yiddish were confiscated.[139] This permanent threat forced people to self-censor their private communications also. This means that many vital topics – as for example the Balfour Declaration – could not be addressed openly, and evidently a considerable amount of particularly sensitive information was delivered in person rather than in writing, and that activists used codes in their writing.[140] This situation did not end with the formal end of the war. The German government, for instance, permitted the use of Hebrew and Yiddish in letters in July 1919, but it continued to subject them to special censorship and control throughout at least 1920.[141] Especially in respect to their work in the Polish Republic, activists of Poale Zion strictly limited their communication through mail,

[137] On censorship during the war: Mark Cornwall, "News, Rumour and the Control of Information in Austria-Hungary, 1914–1918," *History*, Vol. 77, No. 249 (1992): 50–64; Petronilla Ehrenpreis, *Kriegs- und Friedensziele im Diskurs. Regierung und deutschsprachige Öffentlichkeit Österreich-Ungarns des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Innsbruck, Vienna, Bozen: Studienverlag, 2005), 68–106; 191–212; John D. Halliday, "Censorship in Berlin and Vienna during the First World War: A Comparative Approach," *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 83, No. 3 (1988): 612–26; William G. Rosenberg, "Reading Soldiers' Moods: Russian Military Censorship and the Configuration of Feeling in World War I," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 119, No. 3 (2014): 714–40; John T. Smith, "Russian Military Censorship During the First World War," *Revolutionary Russia*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2001): 71–95.

[138] Verwaltungschef bei dem General-Gouvernement Warschau, *2. (4.) Vierteljahresbericht der Zivilverwaltung für Russisch-Polen vom 1.10. bis 31.12.1915*, Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv (BAMA), PH-30-II-10; Verwaltungschef bei dem General-Gouvernement Warschau, *3. (5.) Vierteljahresbericht der Zivilverwaltung für Russisch-Polen vom 1.1. bis 31.3.1916*, BAMA, PH-30-II-11. For Zionist complaints about this practice, see: Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Auswärtiges Amt Berlin*, CZA, Z3/23; Simon Rosenbaum, J. Regensburg, *Letter to Staatssekretär des Auswärtigen Amtes Berlin*, 05.09.1918, CZA, Z3/134; also: CZA, Z3/176. In the Habsburg Empire, the authorities initially also interdicted the use of the Cyrillic alphabet in letters. Cornwall, "News, Rumour," 55.

[139] K. k. Statthalterei in Prag to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Inhibierte Korrespondenzen*, 08./15.05.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2068. Despite extensive archival research I could only find one single case where it seems that someone actually tried to communicate secrets in a letter using Hebrew characters. Militärgericht des k. u. k. Gouvernementsinspizierenden in Lublin, *Letter to k. u. k. Militärstationskommando Lublin*, 09.12.1917, AGAD, 312/365; K. u. k. Militärgeneralgouverneur in Polen, *File "Strafsache Boruch Bank, jüdisch-hebr. Schriften"*, 15.12.1917, AGAD, 312/365. The lack of competent censors sometimes also meant that although permission was given to publish Hebrew (but usually Yiddish) newspapers, they could not be produced because the authorities lacked personnel to control them. For example: K. u. k. Kreiskommando in Zamość, *Letter to k. u. k. Militärgeneralgouvernement Lublin*, 07.08.1916, AGAD, 312/205.

[140] For example: Max Brod, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 18.10.1918, CZA, Z3/783; Max Brod, *Telegram to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.12.1918, CZA, Z3/783.

[141] Reichspostminister, *Letter to Auswärtiges Amt*, 12.04.1920, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (PA-AA), RZ-207-III-2/R-78656.

aware that everything could be read by the state authorities and potentially endanger their comrades.[142]

The extent of censorship during this period often forces the historian to read between the lines. Most importantly, it requires an acknowledgement of the limitations of the available source material and a recognition that the source material, and the archive as its guardian, is a product of a hierarchically organized society, with the archivists' decisions on storage and order reflecting a particular representation of history.[143] Where possible, the thesis tries to respond to this by drawing on multiple documents, from diverse sources and collections to reconstruct specific events. This means, for example, bringing together material produced by Zionist activists that were not meant for the public eye (such as internal letters), with the public representation of events (for example in newspapers), and 'outside' interpretations of events, such as those in files of the police or military authorities. This also means comparing the better known (and usually better-documented) developments with how they played out on a local level, drawing on different sets of sources. This cannot be done for all events and developments, but where this is relevant, the thesis attempts to build the argument on these diverse interpretations and representations from multiple sources.

Given the strategic focus of the thesis on Zionist activists, the thesis is organized around six chapters, each of which focuses on a specific aspect or form of activism very roughly following a chronological line. Some of the chapters have a specific geographic or chronological focus, but they overlap in many cases, since the Zionists themselves did not demarcate clearly between their various forms of activism. This approach undoubtedly has its weaknesses and one could very well make an argument for structuring the thesis chronologically and according to political territory. However, I argue that the focus on specific problems, in some cases with a special geographic focus, allows for a better understanding of the dynamics of Zionist work and developments on the ground.

Chapter 1 sets the scene for the following chapters. It analyzes Zionist reactions to the outbreak of the war and what the war meant for the Zionist movement and organization on the various

[142] Poale Zion Farbands-Biro, *Letter to Preparatory Committee for the World Conference*, 06.07.1920, Israel Labor Party Archive (ILPA), 1-10-1918-102.
[143] Barbara Brookes, James Dunk, "Bureaucracy, archive files, and the making of knowledge," *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (2018): 281–8; Antoinette M. Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home, and History in late Colonial India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Jacques Derrida, *Mal d'archive: une impression freudienne* (Paris: Edition Galilée, 1995); Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Phantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1993).

sides of the trenches. It then follows a number of Zionists who travelled eastwards from Germany and analyzes their ideas for the transformation and nationalization of East European Jewry and society. The chapter shows that what was fundamentally a 'civilizing mission' was largely rejected by local activists, which forced Zionists to adapt their strategy and methods to the situation on the ground.

Chapter 2 analyzes one of the most important aspect of this new adaptive strategy: welfare and relief-work. In the regions affected by the war, relief work not only came to be essential for reducing the suffering of the Jewish population but also became the primary field of political activism, not only for the Zionists, but for all Jewish political movements. The chapter investigates the struggle over relief-funds, the building of welfare-institutions, and their connection with Zionist political ideas throughout the region, focusing on a number of local cases. These efforts played out very differently depending on local political and social circumstances and Zionists therefore acquired very different positions within Jewish society depending on local factors.

Chapter 3 focuses on Zionists' work with children and youth. Since young people were particularly affected by the war and also seen as the future of the nation, the struggle for their wellbeing and education to become upright, nationally conscious Jews (much in the sense of the German term *Erziehung*) was at the center of activists' attention. At the same time, the war opened up new possibilities for young people and particularly for young women to attain hitherto unheard-of possibilities and roles within the Zionist movement.

Chapter 4 has a rather narrow geographical focus on Galicia. In this one specific regional case, the chapter analyzes Zionist security strategies during the war and in its aftermath. Here I show how security strategies shifted over time from an orientation towards the imperial state, to local agreements with nationalist forces on the ground, to self-organized armed self-defense, and to appeals to the new 'national' states. The chapter shows how, in the minds of Zionists, questions of loyalty and security were intimately connected with the struggle to gain agency for the Jewish nation.

Chapter 5 analyzes one of the most important forms of Zionist organization and political practice after the end of the First World War: the Jewish National Councils. Focusing mainly on three cases where those institutions managed to gain significant influence in Jewish society – at least for a certain period – the examples of East Galicia, Vienna, and Prague are at the center of the analysis, while examples from other places also play a role. The chapter examines the day-to-day work of the Jewish National Councils, their political aims, how they corresponded and related to other nationalists, and how they attempted to turn their claim of

representing the Jewish nation into a reality. The chapter then goes on to analyze the role those East-Central European nationalist representatives played in the context of the Paris Peace Negotiations and the struggle for national and minority rights.

Chapter 6 investigates the two simultaneous, but in many respects, contradictory promises of national and social emancipation unleashed in November 1917 by the Bolshevik Revolution and the Balfour Declaration. The chapter analyzes how activists perceived these two events, how they responded to them, and how they drew conclusions from them for their own work. After the end of the war the questions of emigration to Palestine or a revolution in Europe were posed very practically for many activists. The chapter shows how both revolutionary activism and attempts to organize emigration to Palestine worked out on a practical level in local contexts and what these efforts implied for the evolution of both Zionist political practice and ideology.

As all the chapters focus on particular forms of Zionist social and political practices in this period, the thesis shows how activists engaged with the communities, how they interpreted the events around them, and how they formulated their responses and strategies. In all these aspects, Zionists were forced to adapt their understanding of the world, their programs, their traditional methods of political engagement, and the way they communicated their ideas. There was no one Zionist movement, but there were many concepts and practices under a wide umbrella, which activists called Zionism. What they made of this differed dramatically, according to the circumstances. The period at the center of this thesis brought turmoil and radical breaks that represented fundamental challenges but also opportunities for the Zionist movement. The thesis shows what these meant in practice.

Chapter 1: The National Mission

"It was a lovely night, cool and clear. I could smell the freshly cut grass and the scent of the nearby forest. We sat on a bench in front of our bungalow, chatting with neighbors. Then, about 9:30, a man came shouting: 'Mobilization has been declared!' […] We had three reservists in our family: Yosl and Yitshok, my father's brothers, and Yankl, my aunt Rukhtshe's son. I imagined the world coming to an end. What can be done? Where can one escape?

[…]

It was a lovely morning. I gazed at the passing fields and forests and I thought: all this will be devastated. Here comes a cottage with a garden. How much labor went into building this house, planting those flowers, and all at once they might be destroyed!"[144]

"Outside, there is a peaceful, sunny fall, one cannot grasp that somewhere else everything is in flames. Yesterday was the Day of Atonement. One could realize how everything is reinterpreted. Previously, one could only hear of the horrors of war and spoke about the fraternization of all humans. Now, the war brings about the 'great regeneration' and all enemies are villains, liars, the scum of humanity, whereas here, according to Lewin – the nationalist Jew! – lives the nation of power and grace, with a mission, just as the 10 tribes in ancient times, as the chosen people!"[145]

These two diary entries date from the beginning of the war, the first by thirteen-year-old Anne Kahan from Siedlce, 80 kilometers east of Warsaw, the other by 43-year-old Adolf Friedemann, a Zionist activist from Berlin. From the summer of 1914 onwards, the two would find themselves on opposite sides of the trenches, in a brutal war that would change the course of their lives and the face of Europe. Both moved in Zionist circles. Friedemann was a long-standing activist, Kahan would soon join the movement.[146] In their diaries, both would express hope in their countries' armies and fear of the enemy, though, indeed, with differing levels of commitment and identification. What they shared was fear of violence and anxiety over what the war would bring for themselves and the future of Jewry. For both of them, the outbreak of the war represented a turning point in their lives. While Anne Kahan and her family would mainly try to survive, Adolf Friedemann, alongside many of his German Zionist comrades, would go to the East, following the tracks of the German army, in an attempt to change the fate of East European Jewry.

This was the context in which the two 'met', although though they probably never met in person. This chapter analyzes three different aspects: how did Zionists respond to the

[144] Kahan, "Diary," 142–3.
[145] Adolf Friedemann, *Diary*, Entry of 01.10.1914, CZA, A8/10.
[146] Friedemann had been active in the German Zionist movement since the 1890s. See: Eloni, *Zionismus*, 66. Anne Kahan would be drawn closer to Zionism from the summer of 1915 onwards. See: Kahan, "Diary," 211–3.

outbreak of the war and what ramifications did the war have for the movement? How did the Central Powers' conquest of large parts of formerly Russian-ruled East-Central Europe play out? What political system was imposed on Anne Kahan, her neighbors and friends and the millions of Jews in the region? How did Adolf Friedemann and his comrades, who went to the East, view the Jews of the newly-conquered region and how did they think that they could change their fate?

As most of the chapters in the thesis, this adopts a specific focus and perspective. It analyzes a large part of the developments here based on the writings of German Zionists who went eastwards. Throughout the war the relationship between the center of the Zionist movement and what activists there tended to perceive as the periphery constituted a dynamic that decisively shaped the way the Zionist movement developed in East-Central Europe. The different structures and attitudes of the occupation regimes and the relation of Zionists to these regimes constituted the framework that to a large extent determined the different forms activism could take in subsequent years. Another key factor was the view of East European Jewry held by Western (that is, German) Zionists during this period. This is not only interesting in and by itself, as it allows for insight into the mindset of those activists and how they imagined the Jewish nation and its future, but also of great importance for this study since the way Zionist leaders in Berlin saw Jews in the East often directly inspired the demands that they raised and the political strategies they adopted.

Before 'going Eastwards', however, the chapter analyzes the impact of the outbreak of the war on the Zionist movement, both as an international movement and on a local level. The impact of the war, the fact that Zionists found themselves on opposing sides of the trenches, and that a great number of activists were called or volunteered for the front, were essential developments that determined the form Zionist activism took in the years that are at the center of this thesis.

Conquer the World

In the year 5674 (1914), Tisha B'Av, the day of mourning for the destruction of the First and Second Temple, fell on 4 August, the day Germany declared war on Russia. The Berlin-based *Jüdische Rundschau* (Jewish Review), which, after the discontinuation of *Die Welt* (The World), was considered to be the primary publication of the Zionist movement in the regions

controlled by the Central Powers,[147] was convinced that this was a good sign. It called its readers to volunteer for the army. In the spirit of the Maccabees and of Bar Kokhba, German Jews would do their duty to defend Germany and crush the common Muscovite archenemy.[148] Heinrich Loewe wrote the proclamation.

"We fight for the truth, we fight for justice, we fight for the freedom of human culture. As Jews, we have a special bill to settle with the barbarians of the East. For hundreds of years, the blood of the Jews, their martyrs and heroes fume to the heaven from Russian soil. […] When we fight as citizens of our fatherland, the bravery of our ancestors, the fearlessness of the Maccabees, the giant struggle of Bar Kochba, and the heroes' death of hundreds of thousands of our people are shining before us, as glorious examples for all eternity."[149]

This proclamation was mirrored by Zionists in the Habsburg Empire. They, just as other Jewish organizations, aimed to present the Jews as the most loyal subjects of their empire, especially emphasizing the oppression of Jews by the Czar.[150] The Prague-based *Selbstwehr* (Self-Defense) declared the unity of both the fight for the Austrian fatherland and the Jews' war of liberation: "For us, the battle for the fatherland is at the same time a battle for the just cause and also a holy war against the hereditary enemy of the Jews."[151] *HaMitspeh* (The Observatory), the Hebrew-language paper of the religious-Zionist Mizrahi in Cracow equally called for a war of revenge against the Czar, to make him pay for the atrocities he and his henchmen had committed against the Jews in the past.[152] This did not mean that Zionists proclaimed an anti-Slavic war. The *Jüdische Volksstimme* (People's Voice) in Brno (Brünn), for instance, referenced the great Russian writers, who had been imprisoned or exiled by the regime and described how they had cursed the Czar, for he had sinned against the Slavic people, suggesting

[147] *Die Welt* was officially discontinued with the decision of the Inner Zionist Action Committee on 2 August. *Protokoll der 62. Sitzung des E.A.C.*, 02.08.1914, CZA, Z3/357. The Hebrew-language central organ of the World Zionist Organization *HaOlam* (The World) which was published in Odessa also seems to have been discontinued at the outbreak of the war and resumed publication in 1919 (then in London). Getzel Kressel, "Haolam," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 2nd ed., Vol. 8 (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 336.
Although the last regular issue of *Die Welt* appeared after the outbreak of hostilities between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, it did not deal with the issue of the war. *Die Welt*, 31.07.1914. A last special issue of *Die Welt* was published in September to commemorate the recently deceased David Wolffsohn. The issue did not touch on the war. *Die Welt*, 25.09.1914. The Berlin-based *Jüdische Rundschau* was also sent to all subscribers of *Die Welt*. Zionist Central Bureau, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 16.08.1914, CZA, Z3/520. Not everybody seemed to have realized that the paper had been discontinued. As late as May 1915, (former) subscribers wrote to the center, complaining that they had not received *Die Welt* in such a long time. See: Agudath Zionit beSkala, *Letter to Editorial Board of Die Welt*, 09.05.1915, CZA, Z3/940. In its reply, the leadership suggested subscribing to *Jüdische Rundschau* instead. B. (Julius Berger), *Letter to B. Krakowski*, 14.05.1915, CZA, Z3/940.
[148] *Jüdische Rundschau*, 07.08.1914. Why they believed that this date was a good sign remains a mystery to me.
[149] Ibid.
[150] For example: *HaMitspeh*, 31.07.1914.
[151] *Selbstwehr*, 02.09.1914.
[152] *HaMitspeh*, 07.08.1914.

a familiarity in Jewish and Slavic yearning for liberation.[153] This line of argument mirrored that of other actors in the Empire who insisted that this was not a war of Teutonism against Slavdom (*Germanentum gegen Slawentum*) but against the political regime of the Czar,[154] and went hand in hand with the Habsburg state's attempt to curtail nationalist, especially anti-Slavic, sentiments for the sake of the unity of the Empire.[155] For Austrian Zionists, the war was fought both for the sake of Austria and for the Jewish nation.

"It is not only grateful fidelity that binds us to our fatherland but also the expectant conviction that a free development of the Jewish people of the Diaspora will be granted in the monarchy. […] We strongly emphasize towards those Jews who still stand and struggle in alien national camps; while we national Jews have an a priori sympathy for the Poles', Ukrainians', and whatever, nations' ambitions for freedom, it is necessary to primarily fight for the freedom of our own nation."[156]

Most historiography is in agreement that the Jews of the Central Powers enthusiastically welcomed the outbreak of the war, identifying with the war efforts of their respective states.[157] Marsha Rozenblit argued that the attitude of the Habsburg Jews was to see the war as one of liberation of their Eastern brethren.[158] Indeed, Zionists, just like other Jewish movements, repeatedly articulated the idea of a war of revenge or a war of liberation against the Czar.[159] The German-Yiddish War Appeal of the Jewish National Party of Bukovina of August 1914 proclaimed: "Freedom for us and freedom for our Russian brothers who have been yearning for too long in the torture chambers of Czarism. Do not worry; Austria's victorious weapons

---

[153] *Jüdische Volksstimme*, 19.08.1914.
[154] This was especially emphasized by some of the catholic newspapers in the empire. See for instance: *Katholische Kirchenzeitung*, 13.08.1914.
[155] Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Weisung an alle Landeschefs: Hintanhaltung nationaler Hetze*, 23.08.1914, ÖStA, AVA Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2047.
[156] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 18.09.1914.
[157] On the Habsburg Empire: Panter, *Jüdische Erfahrungen*, 53–8; David Rechter, "Die große Katastrophe: die österreichischen Juden und der Krieg," in *Weltuntergang: Jüdisches Leben und Sterben im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Marcus G. Patka (Vienna: Styria Premium, 2014), 18–19; Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 39–58. The historiographic discussions on Germany sometimes show a more nuanced picture and tend to respond more to recent scholarship on the public perceptions of the outbreak of the war. Notably: Sieg, *Jüdische Intellektuelle im Ersten Weltkrieg*, 53–69. Emphasizing more the war-enthusiasm, though in a careful way: Grady, *German-Jewish Soldiers*, 23–9; Panter, *Jüdische Erfahrungen*, 39–53. For further accounts, mainly arguing a rather unanimous support for the war, see: Amos Elon, *The Pity of It All: A History of Jews in Germany* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2002), 297–335; Clemens Picht, "Zwischen Vaterland und Volk: Das deutsche Judentum im Ersten Weltkrieg," in *Der Erste Weltkrieg, Wirkung, Wahrnehmung und Analyse*, ed. Wolfgang Michalka (Munich: Piper, 1994), 736–55; Peter Pulzer, *The Jews and the German State: The Political History of a Minority, 1848–1933* (Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992), 194–8; Peter Pulzer, "The First World War," in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times, Vol. 3: Integration and Dispute, 1871–1918*, ed. Steven M. Lowenstein, Paul Mendes-Flohr, Peter Pulzer, and Monika Richarz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 361–6; Julius H. Schoeps, "Kriegsbegeisterung und Ernüchterung: Über das Selbstverständnis und die Befindlichkeiten deutscher Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg und danach," *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (2014): 76–89.
[158] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 43–54.
[159] For example: *Jüdische Rundschau*, 07.08.1914; 28.08.1914.

shall and will grant you all its [Austria's] joys."[160] The concept of a war of liberation in the East might have been especially pronounced amongst Zionists, and Jewish political actors in general, but was not confined to them. Very similarly, Social Democrats declared that the Russian working class was waiting for its liberation by German and Austrian arms.[161] Whether anyone was really waiting there to be liberated by force seems doubtful.[162] Russian Jewish representatives, including Zionists, declared their commitment to defending their fatherland.[163] Alexander Prusin suggests a picture of Russian Jews in the major cities as being "swept up in enthusiastic frenzy"[164] over the outbreak of the war. Isaac Bashevis Singer described a scene in the streets of Warsaw that could have taken place in any European city at the time:

> "People were in a festive mood as if it were Purim. Women weepingly trailed their husbands, bearded Jews with tiny white pins in their lapels, indicating that they had been called up for military service. Annoyed and amused at once, the men strutted along while children behind them carried sticks on their shoulders and shouted military commands."[165]

Jews generally pledged their loyalty and hoped that doing their patriotic duty would grant them emancipation after victory. At the same time, the atmosphere in rural areas of the Pale of Settlement was dominated by fear of the potential impact of the war.[166]

The Warsaw-based Zionist newspaper *HaTsefirah* (The Dawn) rejected the claim of their Austrian and German comrades that the Central Powers were engaged in a defensive war and instead blamed Germany and Austria-Hungary as the aggressors.[167] The Germans, the paper stated "are guilty of all the horrors, the murders and the rape of this war" and the German Kaiser with his "cold eyes and proud moustache" was "a pious fanatic of the war to conquer

---

[160] Jüdische Nationalpartei der Bukowina/Yudisher Natsionalpartey in Bukovina, *Leaflet: "Jüdische Stammesgenossen!/Ahinu bnei Israel!"*, August 1914, Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP), A-W/357/1. Reprinted in: *Jüdische Zeitung*, 18.09.1914.
[161] For example: *Salzburger Wacht*, 11.08.1914.
[162] The Russian labor movement was split in regard to the war. Whereas Lenin, Trotsky, and others on the Marxist left strictly opposed the war, some leaders of the Menshevik and Anarchist movements supported it. Julius Braunthal, *Geschichte der Internationale*, Vol. 2, 3rd ed. (Berlin, Bonn: J. H. W. Dietz, 1978), 45–7.
[163] David Aberbach, "Zionist Patriotism in Europe, 1897–1942: Ambiguities in Jewish Nationalism," *The International History Review*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (200): 293; Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten*, 116–7.
[164] Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 21. Simon Rabinovitch equally mentions support for the war amongst urban, liberal Jews in Russia. Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 168. See also: David Aberbach, *The European Jews, Patriotism and the Liberal State 1789–1939: A Study of Literature and Social Psychology* (London, New York: Routledge, 2013), 163.
[165] Isaac Bashevis Singer, *In my Father's Court*, 5th ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975), 229.
[166] Zvi Gitelman, *A Century of Ambivalence: The Jews of Russia and the Soviet Union, 1881 to the Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 55–8. For Jewish patriotism and war-enthusiasm in the Russian Empire, see also: American Jewish Committee, *Der Shvartzer Bukh: Di Yudn in di Malhamah-Gegenden fun Mizrah-Eyiropa* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1916), 34–7.
[167] *HaTsefirah*, 30.07.1914.

the world."[168] The paper reported on patriotic mobilizations of Jews in the Kingdom of Poland,[169] and described the terror inflicted by the German army on the civilian population as a catastrophe of almost biblical dimensions.[170] With much similarity to the portrayal of the suffering of the Jews under Czarist rule, *HaTsefirah* painted a picture of the suffering, oppression, and poverty of the Jews in Habsburg Galicia, which now, it claimed, was worsening further due to the war.[171] The major daily Yiddish papers in Warsaw *Haynt* (Today) and *Der Moment* (The Moment) published similar articles,[172] while the rabbinate in Warsaw called on Jews to pray for a Russian victory.[173]

Whether all these published declarations in the various countries can be assessed as genuine expressions of a particular Jewish loyalty to their states or as an extraordinary identification with the war effort seems doubtful. Historians are quick to argue that declarations of loyalty in the Jewish press of the Russian Empire can be explained by the state's censorship and public pressure on the actors, which was undoubtedly an important factor. They tend, however, to approach similar statements in the Austrian and German Jewish press from a less crital perspective, ignoring war-time censorship and public pressure as factors.[174] In the Habsburg Empire, the arguments for war raised in official declarations did not differ significantly from those of other Jewish and non-Jewish organizations.[175] Similarly, the ritual declarations of loyalty in the form of sermons and prayers in synagogues mirrored patriotic rituals in Christian contexts. In late July and early August 1914, practically everybody declared his or her loyalty to Emperor and Empire.

Were there other voices? Max Brod, for instance, recalled in his memoirs that when he saw the Emperor's proclamation "To my peoples!" posted on the walls of Prague, "the significant remains of my Austrian patriotism dwindled."[176] He might have been the exception and if his memories really capture his feelings at the time, he was undoubtedly at odds with the opinion of most of his fellow party members in Prague, who were generally absolutely

[168] *HaTsefirah*, 13.08.1914.
[169] Ibid.
[170] *Hatsefirah*, 16.08.1914. Also: see below.
[171] Ibid.
[172] See: *Haynt*, 02.08.1914; *Der Moment*, 02.08.1914.
[173] *Haynt*, 11.09.1914.
[174] The Jewish press in Russian Poland complained about censorship, but every paper of the belligerent countries was affected by it in some way. See: *Der Moment*, 05.08.1914.
[175] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 39–58; Björn Siegel, *Österreichisches Judentum zwischen Ost und West: Die Israelitische Allianz zu Wien 1897–1938* (Frankfurt am Main, New York: Campus Verlag, 2008), 223–6.
[176] Max Brod, *Streitbares Leben, 1884–1968* (Munich, Berlin, Vienna: F. A. Herbig, 1969), 88.

enthusiastic and in support of the war.[177] No coherent comparative study exists about Jewish reactions to the outbreak of the war. However, a particular strand of recent historiography has concentrated explicitly on popular sentiments during the crucial weeks in summer 1914 in various European regions and challenged the notion of war enthusiasm and the so-called *Augusterlebnis* in general. It has rather emphasized that the patriotic manifestations were not instinctive, 'natural' reactions, but rather forms of staged or learned ways of expression in this particular situation.[178] I believe that although most of the historiography that deals with the problem of Jewish responses to the outbreak of the war commonly reiterates an established narrative, there is little evidence, and ultimately little reason to assume that Jews were exceptionally more or less enthusiastic about the outbreak of the war than any other group in society.

In many respects the public rituals, professions of loyalty and demonstrations of patriotism, especially in a bourgeois urban setting, were very similar throughout Europe, and suggest that very similar dynamics were at play. In some cases, the participation in patriotic events had little to do with their political purpose and more with the event itself. Anne Kahan, wrote in her diary, recalling the visit of the Czar at some point in the fall of 1914:

"When I came to work this morning, I learned that the Czar was stopping in Siedlce on his way to the front. It was announced in all the synagogues that everyone may go to see him today. 'We'll all go,' said Itke, 'an opportunity like this comes only once in a lifetime.' I don't care much for the Czar, still there is some excitement in watching a parade, or seeing the mighty ruler of an empire."[179]

Although Anne went to see the parade, she did not manage to see the Czar. These public events had a dynamic of their own, even in Russian-ruled Poland. It does not seem plausible to derive a generalized argument about sentiments and Jews' alleged particular war enthusiasm from

[177] In those days, *Selbstwehr* strongly emphasized the Jewish nation's loyalty to the Empire and its willingness to go to war. See for instance: *Selbstwehr*, 31.07.1914; 27.08.1914; 20.09.1914. There are no sources that suggest that anti-war sentiments were prevalent amongst Bohemian Zionists.

[178] Steffen Bruendel, "100 Jahre 'Augusterlebnis': Deutungskonstruktionen eines historischen Phänomens," in *Europa 1914: Wege ins Unbekannte*, ed. Nils Löffelbein, Silke Fehlemann, and Christoph Cornelißen (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2016), 193–218; Marcel van der Linden, Gottfried Mergner, "Kriegsbegeisterung und mentale Kriegsvorbereitung," in *Kriegsbegeisterung und mentale Kriegsvorbereitung. Interdisziplinäre Studien*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Gottfried Mergner (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1991), 9–23; Jeffrey Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914: Militarism, Myth, and Mobilisation in Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Benjamin Ziemann, *Front und Heimat: Ländliche Kriegserfahrungen im südlichen Bayern, 1914–1923* (Essen: Klartext, 1997).

[179] Kahan, "Diary," 147. The exact date when this happened is not clear. Anne Kahan started to write her diary on 31 December 1914. On the first pages she recalled the events that happened since July 1914. The visit of the Czar was probably at some point after Simchat Torah, so in late October or in November 1914.

public rituals and statements.[180] The published statements and rituals can, however, be seen as parts of a political strategy in which political claims would be derived from the expression of a particularly strong support for the war effort. There is another important aspect: recent studies of public reactions to the outbreak of the war show very clearly which societal group it was that actually showed enthusiasm: young, middle- and upper-class urban men.[181] This was precisely the core demographic of the Zionist movement.[182]

Besides the aspect of declarations of support for the war, there was a genuine feeling of enthusiasm amongst many Zionists, at least in the lands of the Central Powers. Adolf Stand wrote to his friend Marek Scherlag from Lwów that "Here, there is enthusiasm and optimism amongst all peoples."[183] In Germany, the majority of party activists joined the army, and those members of Zionist university students' organizations that were not drafted, volunteered.[184] Leo Herrmann, originally from Bohemia, but then in Berlin, and Viktor Kubie in Prague exchanged letters in which they both praised the war enthusiasm of Zionist youth and its willingness to self-sacrifice, but also their worries about the impact this would have on the organization's ability to function.[185] However the mood was positive and despite the loss of many activists Kubie was nonetheless "convinced that after the victorious end of the war, it [the organization] will be fantastic and will be able to work successfully."[186] Assessing the prospects for Zionism in the new situation, the leadership in the Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin tied the movement's prospects to the course of the war. "It primarily depends on the progress of the war. Hopefully, German arms will soon have reached the decision in France; [… then] one can use all force against the Russian troops, if a decisive blow has not already been dealt against them before then. These are the two events that will decide everything."[187]

---

[180] It is notable, that those studies who largely base their argument of a particular Jewish support for the war effort usually do not reflect on the existence of a very rigid system of censorship.
[181] Jean-Jacques Becker, *1914: Comment les Francais sont entrés dans la guerre: Contribution à l'étude de l'opinion publique printemps-été 1914* (Paris: Les Presses de Sciences Po, 1977) ; Christian Geinitz, *Kriegsfurcht und Kampfbereitschaft: Das Augusterlebnis in Freiburg. Eine Studie zum Kriegsbeginn 1914* (Essen: Klaretxt, 1998).
[182] On Austria: Gaisbauer, *Davidstern*, 323–6. On Germany: Reinharz, "Ideology and Structure," 119–46. On Galicia: Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 199. On the social composition of nationalist movements in general, see: Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the smaller European Nations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
[183] Adolf Stand, *Letter to Marek Scherlag*, 24.08.1914, CZA, A47/72.
[184] Julius Berger, *Letter to Max Geyer*, 16.08.1914, CZA, Z3/733.
[185] Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Viktor Kubie*, 26.08.1914, CZA, Z3/779; Viktor Kubie, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 01.09.1914, CZA, Z3/799.
[186] Viktor Kubie, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 01.09.1914, CZA, Z3/799.
[187] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Wilhelm Stein*, 26.08.1914, CZA, Z3/840. See also: Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Viktor Kubie*, 26.08.1914, CZA, Z3/779.

The age composition of the Zionist movement, as well as many activists' enthusiasm for the war, had dramatic effects on the organization. Wilhelm Stein reported from Teplice (Teplitz-Schönau) in northern Bohemia that all Zionist work had ceased and the party offices – even the one in Vienna – had to close temporarily since almost all activists had either been drafted or had volunteered. He begged the center for instructions, pleading that even in this situation one could not abandon the organization.

"We cannot foresee the end of the war, wherefore we cannot wait for its end. Our activities will become more difficult and it will take all our energies to keep the anyway weakly organization in Western Austria alive, given the great loss of men and goods. Only this thought kept me from volunteering."[188]

The already small Zionist organization in the Hungarian Kingdom, which had enthusiastically called on its members to do their duty as soldiers for both their country and their nation,[189] ceased its activities entirely, since all the young men who had been involved in Zionist activities were at the front.[190] A member of the central leadership (probably Arthur Hantke) in Berlin wrote to Shmaryahu Levin in New York that "[t]he Galician provincial association currently does not exist at all, neither does that in Bukovina. In the southern Slav lands, which are partially war zones, our work had to cease almost completely, also because our friends are in the army."[191] The author then complained about the inactivity of the parties in Western Austria and the Bohemian lands, but acknowledged that "contrary to all this, the Zionist mood is thoroughly encouraging, and it almost seems like Zionism in Austria will now have better chances of penetrating into wider circles, than in quieter times."[192]

The Zionists of the Central Powers fully endorsed patriotic efforts and saw the Jewish nation as standing alongside the other nations in the war. This was expressed in publications, in the efforts to form Jewish military units and, crucially, in the social practices of Zionist work on the home-front, especially in the form of relief activities, which were presented as part of the larger patriotic effort.[193] This integration into the common war effort also had its impact on how Zionist activists imagined individuals' patriotic and national behavior in daily life. In

[188] Wilhelm Stein, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 10.08.1914, CZA, Z3/840.
[189] *Ungarländische Jüdische Zeitung*, 31.07.1914.
[190] Magyarországi Cionista Szervezet Budapest, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 24.08.1914, CZA, Z3/920. The crisis in Hungary continued. When the organization had somehow rebuilt a core of activists who were younger or older than the military age, by early 1916, the army's need for personnel had grown again and they were drafted as well. Magyarországi Cionista Szervezet Budapest, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau*, 28.05.1916, CZA, Z3/921.
[191] Unknown Author, *Letter to Shmaryahu Levin*, 29.10.1914, CZA, Z3/395.
[192] Ibid.
[193] For the attempts to form a Jewish military unit at the outbreak of the war, see Chapter 4. For the relief activities, see Chapter 2.

September 1914, Robert Stricker, leader of the Zionists in Western Austria and an elected member of the Viennese Jewish Community Board, for instance, suggested that the Kultusgemeinde should instruct all rabbis to tell women not to wear jewelry in public. In such serious, mournful, and patriotic times, Stricker argued, this would make a completely wrong impression.[194] Such calls for modesty and seriousness were indeed very common in the first weeks and months of the war throughout society and expressed various actors' attempts to show their participation in the creation of a common wartime spirit, as under the impact of the war, day-to-day private behavior gained a new public and political dimension that included a renegotiation of the individual's place in society, as well as of gender roles.[195]

A Walk on Eggs

When fears and doubts in regard to the war were raised by the Zionists of the Central Powers– not in the press, but in internal letters – they centered around the war's presumed impact on their own local organizations and explicitly did not touch on the often-supposed dilemma of European Jewry which was fighting on opposing sides.[196] In the first year of the war an estimated half million Jews faced each other on the battlefields of Europe.[197] This number would double in the following years, with three quarters of those one million Jews fighting in the Austro-Hungarian and Russian armies.[198] Zionists fought enthusiastically on opposing sides.[199] Michael Berkowitz has summed up this development. "Along with declaring that there was no contradiction between loyalty to the European nations and to Zionism, they rationalized that their own country's victory would hasten the conversion of the Zionist dream into reality."[200]

---

[194] Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Report on Appeal by Robert Stricker*, 04.09.1914, CAHJP, A-W/357-1.
[195] Laurence Cole, Marlene Horejs, Jan Rybak, *"Das ist Krieg": Reaktionen auf den Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkriegs in Salzburg* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, forthcoming 2020), ch. 5; Christa Hämmerle, *Heimat/Front. Geschlechtergeschichte/n des Ersten Weltkriegs in Österreich-Ungarn* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2014), 9–26; Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1–10.
[196] David Rechter, for example, wrote that "in battle, Jews were in an omnipresent conflict of loyalty." Rechter, "Große Katastrophe," 14. I believe that historiography has hitherto not presented enough convincing evidence that this conflict actually existed amongst broad layers of the Jewish population. Every once in a while, newspaper articles lamented the fact that Jews were killing Jews in this way, but these statements are also very similar to liberal and Christian lamentations about the war, which seemed to have not been in contradiction to the beating of war drums, but rather complementing it.
[197] Berkowitz, *Western Jewry*, 20.
[198] Aberbach, *European Jews*, 161.
[199] Aberbach, "Zionist Patriotism," 278–81.
[200] Berkowitz, *Western Jewry*, 7.

The international structure of the Zionist movement, the World Zionist Organization (WZO), had been largely paralyzed by the outbreak of the war. The decision of the various Zionist parties to support their respective governments in the war was epitomized by that taken in the Inner Action Committee on 2 August to discontinue *Die Welt*, a symbol of the worldwide union of Zionists, and to support the German war effort. Both decisions were part of the same motion.[201]

Whereas the WZO itself was officially neutral, most of its members, including the leadership in Berlin that still regarded itself as the leadership of the world movement, were far from neutral and pitched in on the Central Powers' side.[202] Many of the leaders of the Yishuv in Ottoman Palestine also tended to support the Central Powers.[203] In September 1914, the Inner Action Committee decided to create an office in a neutral country – eventually it was located in Copenhagen – in order to ensure some kind of neutrality for the world movement and to maintain communication between activists from the various countries. Still, the activists in Berlin were convinced that this office would not be able to work very effectively and insisted on the maintenance (and the authority) of the bureau in Berlin.[204] The neutrality, and the creation of a neutral office, which was provisionally led by three men from the Russian Empire, Yehiel Chelnov, Nahum Sokolow, and Leo Motzkin, was confirmed at a meeting of the international leadership in Copenhagen in December 1914.[205] The conference of the Greater Action Committee in Copenhagen in December revealed the difficulties of the new situation, as leaders from various countries accused each other of breaking Zionist discipline, acting against the principle of neutrality, of misusing funds, and so on.[206]

There were sincere disagreements over the practice of 'neutrality'. Max Bodenheimer, a long-standing German Zionist veteran, was convinced that the fate of the Jews was bound to the German war effort and therefore saw the politics of 'neutrality' as a danger to the Jews' cause.[207] The Greater Action Committee officially condemned the unapologetically pro-German position of German Zionists, and especially their participation in the Committee for

---

[201] *Protokoll der 62. Sitzung des E. A. C.*, 02.08.1914, CZA, Z3/357.
[202] Laqueur, *History of Zionism*, 171–4.
[203] The first comments on the war in *HaAhduth* (The Unity), the weekly paper of Poale Zion in Jerusalem tended to portray German military efforts in a more positive light than those of the Entente. *HaAhduth*, 18.08.1914; 20.09.1914. It later emphatically endorsed the German war effort, especially as it was directed against Czarist Russia. *HaAhduth*, 07.12.1914. See also: Anita Shapira, *Ben-Gurion: Father of Modern Israel* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2014), 38–40.
[204] *Protokoll der 84. Sitzung des E. A. C.*, 15.09.1914, CZA, Z3/357.
[205] *Protokoll der Sitzung des Zionistischen Aktionscomités*, 03.–06.12.1914, CZA, Z3/450.
[206] Julius Berger, *Report on the Meeting of the Zionist Action Committee in Copenhagen*, 03.–06.12.1914, CZA, Z3/450.
[207] Max Bodenheimer, *Letter to Otto Warburg*, 28.12.1914, CZA, Z3/204. On Bodenheimer's pro-German stance, see: Jay Ticker, "Max I. Bodenheimer: Advocate of Pro-German Zionism at the Beginning of World War I," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (1981): 11–30.

the East (see below), as this "is likely to endanger the security of Jews in one of the belligerent countries."[208] On a similar note, though on a different front, Vladimir Jabotinsky moved to create a Jewish-national military unit as part of the British army in 1915.[209] As he proposed the establishment of the Jewish Legion in the British army, primarily for the sake of improving the Zionists' chances that a future peace settlement would grant Palestine to them, he was aware that this would mean the end of Zionist 'neutrality'.

"The Zionist Organization would have to be completely deactivated; it would have to disavow the entire thing, I would have to leave the party officially, etc. But in reality, one would have to help one another in all possible ways. […] I do not intend infighting but a peaceful divorce of the tactics of Cavour and Garibaldi."[210]

In this, Jabotinsky juxtaposed what he believed was revolutionary self-emancipation from below (Garibaldi's tactic for Italian unification) and the authoritarian solution from above (Cavour's solution). In his view, this was a question of strategy, the hope of gaining national independence either through self-reliance and self-empowerment or continued attempts to win a concession from the great powers.[211] Besides this fundamental difference of approach, there was the problem of Zionists on all sides supporting their belligerent governments. In his autobiography Chaim Weizmann formulated the internal conflict pithily. "To conduct internal Zionist politics during the First World War was to walk on eggs."[212] The Zionists of the Central Powers, who still regarded themselves to be the leadership of the world movement, protested vehemently against Vladimir Jabotinsky's attempt to form a Jewish Legion, whose boots they saw as recklessly stepping on those very eggs. Jabotinsky's campaign was not dissimilar to the ventures of German Zionists in Poland in 1916 (see below) and the military attempts of Galician Zionists in 1914 (see Chapter 4). As all nations were at war, activists everywhere were convinced that the Jewish nation would indeed have to align itself with one side, but it should do so not in the form of subjugation but self-confidently and with its own forces.[213] Nonetheless,

[208] *Protokoll einer Besprechung (Warburg, Hantke, Jacobson, Sokolow, Bodenheimer, Klee, Motzkin)*, 20.12.1914, CZA, Z3/204.
[209] On Jabotinsky's Jewish Legion: Hillel Halkin, *Jabotinsky: A Life* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2014), 97; 100–13; Schechtman, *Rebel and Statesman*, 201–30.
[210] Vladimir Jabotinsky, *Letter to Victor Jacobson*, 25.05.1915, CZA, Z3/86.
[211] Jabotinsky, of course, saw himself as the Garibaldi in this analogy. On these influences on Jabotinsky's thinking, see: Joseph Heller, "Zeev Jabotinsky and the Revisionist Revolt against Materialism: In Search of a World View," *Jewish History*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (1998): 51–67.
[212] Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1949), 217. In the edition of the memoirs published in New York in the same year, the formulation is "This was the egg dance of internal Zionist politics during the First World War." Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), 170.
[213] Vladimir Jabotinsky, *The Story of the Jewish Legion* (New York: B. Ackermann, 1945), 181–2.

almost everyone in the movement believed that this was hazardous and a danger to the Zionist movement as a whole.[214]

The General Zionists were not the only ones facing massive difficulties with the outbreak of the war. The tension between transnational solidarity and patriotism was also evident in the case of the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien (Israelite Alliance in Vienna) and the French Alliance Israélite Universelle.[215] The World Union of Poale Zion, unlike general Zionists and Social Democrats, clearly rejected the war.[216] In 1915 the Farbands-Biro (Union Office), the leadership of the World Union of Poale Zion, published a short pamphlet in which it declared:

> "The Jewish people in general does not regard any of the fighting people as an enemy that needs to be defeated, it never had in mind to breach any border in order to move them by armed force. It also has no territorial borders that need to be defended. The Jewish people as a community are neither fighting a war of conquest nor of self-defense. Our people's interest never had anything to do with any state's imperialist desires. We are uninvolved in this monstrous struggle amongst the nations."[217]

It also expressed its "great disappointment and dismay that the Socialist International had proven incapable of bringing about an international action of the working class in order to prevent this catastrophe."[218] The primary problems were organizational, with many members being drafted to the army or imprisoned.[219] Party leader Ber Borochov wrote in November 1914

---

[214] Shmuel Katz, *Lone Wolf: A Biography of Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky*, Vol. 1 (New York: Barricade Books, 1996), 174–6.

[215] Armand Kaminka of the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien wrote to Lucien Wolf in London on 24 July, the day after the ultimatum was declared to Serbia, trying to convince him that this would be a just war against "Russian darkness." Armand Kaminka, *Letter to Lucien Wolf*, 24.07.1914, CZA, A147/18. Kaminka asked Wolf to engage in a press-campaign against Russia, especially through promoting the monthly paper *Darkest Russia: A Weekly Record of the Struggle for Freedom* which was published in London and detailed anti-Jewish oppression in the Czarist Empire. However, as a sacrifice to the British-Russian alliance during the war the paper was closed down in August 1914. See: *Darkest Russia: A Weekly Record of the Struggle for Freedom*, August 1914. The Israelitische Allianz zu Wien also tried to convince their French partners, the Alliance Israélite Universelle of the same cause. See: Siegel, *Österreichisches Judentum*, 223–4.

[216] On the World Union of Poale Zion during the war, see Balshan, *Ihud Mefulag*, 131–62.

[217] Allweltlicher Jüdischer Arbeiterverband Poale Zion, *Die Juden im Kriege. Denkschrift des Jüdischen Sozialistischen Arbeiterverbandes Poale-Zion an das Internationale Sozialistische Bureau* (The Hague: Verlag des Jüdischen Sozialistischen Arbeiterverbandes Poale Zion, 1915), 7.

[218] Ibid. 8. The Farbands-Biro nonetheless left a door open to the belligerent socialist parties, stating that "they have taken up the sword honestly convinced that their national independence was at stake and with the sincere will to guarantee the freedom and equality of all peoples." Ibid. 9.

[219] One of the party leaders, Leon Chasanowich, who came from the Russian Empire but had fled to the Habsburg Empire after the failed 1905 revolution was imprisoned at the outbreak of the war and stayed there until he managed to leave the country for the United States. Leon Chasanowich, *Letter to k. k. Lagerkommando in Exztergrom-Talos*, 12.10.1914, CZA, A277/1. In the letter in which he asked the commander of the prison camp to let his wife visit, he described himself as a "Lithuanian subject". It was probably the intervention of the Viennese Kultusgemeinde that got him free, after Viennese Poale Zionists lobbied it to support their comrade. See: Michael Kohn(-Eber), *Letter to Gustav Kohn (Vice-president of Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Vienna)*, undated (1914), CAHJP, A-W/357.1.

that "the Bureau of the World Union of Poale Zion had fallen into four pieces".[220] In 1915 the World Union managed to establish an international center, first in The Hague and later in Stockholm, from where they published a multilingual bulletin, the *Jewish Labor Correspondence*, for the sake of informing Poale Zionist parties and the wider Jewish and socialist public about its activities and political positions.[221]

The traditional strategy of the Zionist movement of lobbying the Great Power governments for guarantees to establish "for the Jewish people a publicly and legally assured home in Palestine", as was stated on every Zionist newspaper's first page, seemed to have become unfeasible – at least in its old form. After all, which power would guarantee such a right? And would such a declaration not inevitably lead to retaliations by the opposing regimes against the Zionist parties and the Jewish nation as a whole? Additionally, the war made it harder to transfer money to Zionist settlements in Palestine and the rapprochement of the Ottoman Empire with the Central Powers endangered Zionists with Russian citizenship there. In Berlin, the seat of the Central Bureau of the WZO, these questions dominated the debates of the leading Inner Action Committee throughout the early months of the war.[222] It was only at the end of October 1914 that Leo Motzkin, a Ukrainian Zionist veteran, stranded in Berlin in summer 1914, suggested using the available funds not for Palestine but rather for national work amongst the Jews of Eastern Europe.[223] At this point, the Zionist activists on the ground were already fully engaged in relief efforts for the Jewish population, especially for refugees.[224]

Liberation?

Expecting a German advance on the Eastern front and the conquest of large parts of the Western regions of the Russian Empire, German Zionists saw the war as a chance to gain access to the masses of East European Jews; but they could only walk this road alongside the German troops.

---

[220] Ber Borochov, *Letter to Zionist Action Committee*, 14.11.1914, CZA, Z3/935.
[221] The first issue of the Jewish Labor Correspondence could not be traced. The second issue was published in early July 1915, see: *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, July 1915, Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut (YIVO), Vilna Collection 000000056. The authorities in the Habsburg Empire were very suspicious of these Jewish-socialist-internationalist activities and at least from 1918 closely investigated them. We therefore have the list of recipients in the Empire to whom the Jewish Labor Correspondence was sent. They include general Zionist institutions, such as the Jewish National Fund as well as a number of local Zionist groups, Social Democratic party centers, Jewish and general newspapers. See: Ministerkomission im k. u. k. Kriegsministerium, *File: "'Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz' Stockholm"*, 09.07.1918, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Kriegsarchiv (ÖStA KA), ZSt KM KÜA 254, File No. 2656.
[222] See: *Minutes of the Inner Action Committee*, CZA, Z3/357, Z3/358.
[223] *Minutes: Zionist Inner Action Committee Meeting*, 24.10.1914, CZA, Z3/358.
[224] See chapters 2 and 3.

As Richard Lichtheim, the WZO's representative in Istanbul, wrote to the center, they saw "a political partnership, of otherwise differing interests"[225] between them and the German government. Not being able or allowed to officially take sides in the war, German Zionists in late August 1914 set up the Komitee zur Befreiung der Russischen Juden (Committee for the Liberation of Russian Jews; later re-named Komitee für den Osten, Committee for the East).[226] The Committee was primarily made up of the old guard of German Zionist leaders but also included several non-Zionists who were recruited to the Committee at first primarily in order to broaden its appeal and to protect German Zionism from the accusation of playing the role of merely a German agency.[227] Despite the claim to be a broad Jewish-national committee, its Zionist character was evident, not only programmatically, but also organizationally; Franz Oppenheimer, one of its leading functionaries, was not even sure whether he was officially employed by the Committee for the East, the Zionist Organization, or the Jewish National Fund.[228] The Committee's primary characteristic was integrating Jewish-national demands for the reorganization of the East within German imperial concepts for the region.[229] It demanded no less than "to split off Russia's Western provinces […] and [to] unite them in a buffer state."[230] In this state, all nations should be organized in a non-territorial way, eventually guaranteeing that "the Germans and the Jews would be an effective counterweight against the predominantly Slavic population."[231]

A key argument of German Zionists was that the Jews who lived under the rule of the Czar were anxiously waiting for their liberation. The narrative of Eastern Jews' happiness over what was supposed to be their 'liberation' by the Germans began with the efforts of German-Jewish political activists in Germany. Historians have largely reiterated this narrative, primarily

---

[225] Richard Lichtheim, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 29.11.1914, CZA, Z3/50.
[226] Komitee zur Befeiung der Russischen Juden, *Minutes of the Meeting*, 21.08.1914, Jüdisches Museum Berlin Archiv (JMB-A), MF13-1.
[227] *Minutes of a joint session of the Inner Action Committee and the Committee for the East*, 02.09.1914, JMB-A, MF13-1.
[228] Franz Oppenheimer, *Letter to Max Bodenheimer*, 30.11.1914, JMB-A, MF13-2.
[229] On the Committee and its programmatic approach, see: Iasiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey and Zionism, 1897–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 230–3; Stephen M. Poppel, *Zionism in Germany, 1897–1933: The Shaping of Jewish Identity* (Philadeplphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976), 79; Silber, *Le'umiuyt Shonah*, 15–42; Zosa Szajkowski, "The Komitee für den Osten and Zionism," *Herzl Year Book*, No. 7 (1971): 199–239; Ticker, "Max I. Bodenheimer," 11–30; Egmont Zechlin, *Die Deutsche Politik und die Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969), 126–38; Konrad Zieliński, "Liberation or Occupation? Jews in the occupied territories of the Kingdom of Poland," *Medaon: Magazin für jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung*, Vol. 10, No. 18 (2016): 3. See also Max Bodenheimer's autobiography and his daughter's biography of him: Henriette Hannah Bodenheimer, *Max Bodenheimer, 1865–1940: Political Genius for Zionism* (Edinburgh, The Pentland Press, 1990), 73–8; Max I. Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel: The Memoirs of M. I. Bodenheimer* (New York, London: Thomas Yoseloff, 1963), 230–78.
[230] Komitee zur Befeiung der Russischen Juden, G*uidelines of the German Committee for the Liberation of the Russian Jews*, 1914, CZA, Z3/206
[231] Komitee zur Befreiung der Russischen Juden, *Memorandum on the Russian Jews*, 1914, CZA, Z3/206.

referencing the anti-Jewish repression and deportations of Jews by Russian troops in the months leading up to the German conquest of the region.[232] While this narrative is reflected in several memoirs, what is probably more important is that it had already been carefully crafted during the war by German Jewish organizations and especially by Zionists, in order to put themselves into a good position vis-à-vis the authorities in the reshaping of the East.[233]

The initial German advance in Russian Poland opened a space in which relations on the ground could be reorganized. Nationalists of all national movements were convinced that they could shape the region in their image, according to their national ambitions and demands. From a Jewish perspective, a key part of this, as Marcos Silber has shown, revolved around the struggle over national rights and autonomy, making the future Poland a state of many nations.[234] For German-Jewish political actors, this meant trying to gain official positions in the occupied territories. In many ways, it could be argued, this was an adaptation of the traditional demand for a 'publicly and legally assured homeland in Palestine' that the Zionists had always asked from the great powers, to the new situation in Eastern Europe. Rather than seeking control over territory, however, here they sought influence, control even, over the Jewish population of the East. The Committee for the East asked the German government to rely on its expertise,

---

[232] Amongst others: Steven E. Aschheim, "Eastern Jews, German Jews, and Germany's Ostpolitik in the First World War," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (1983): 365; Robert Blobaum, "A Warsaw Story: Polish-Jewish Relations during the First World War," in *Warsaw: The Jewish Metropolis: Essays in Honor of the 75th Birthday of Professor Antony Polonsky*, ed. Glenn Dyner and François Guesnet (Boston: Brill, 2015), 279; Elon, *Pity*, 311–2; Tobias Grill, "'Pioneers of Germanness in the East'? Jewish-German, German, and Slavic Perceptions of East European Jewry during the First World War," in *Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe: Shared and Comparative Histories*, ed. Tobias Grill (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2018), 157; Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten*, 52–3; 236–7; Aba Stražas, "Die Tätigkeit des Dezernats für Jüdische Angelegenheiten in der 'Deutschen Militärverwaltung Ober Ost'," in *Die baltischen Provinzen Russlands zwischen den Revolutionen von 1905 und 1917*, ed. Andrievs Ezergailis and Gert von Pistohlkors (Vienna, Cologne: Böhlau, 1982), 316; Zieliński, "Liberation or Occupation", 1–5. On Russian anti-Jewish violence, repression, and deportations, see: Semion Goldin, "Deportation of Jews by the Russian Military command," *Jews in Eastern Europe*, Vol. 1, No. 41, (2002): 70–8; Eric Lohr, "The Russian Army and the Jews: Mass Deportation, Hostages and Violence during World War I," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (2001): 404–19; Eric Lohr, "1915 and the War Pogrom Paradigmin the Russian Empire," in *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History*, ed. Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan M. Meir, and Israel Bartal (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 41–51; Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: The Campaign against Enemy Aliens during World War I* (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 2003), 137–50.

[233] Memoirs particularly emphasize how with the Germans' arrival the terror of the Russian troops ended and Jews who were in hiding could return to their homes; although they sometimes found them destroyed. They usually also stress how short-lived the happiness over liberation was as the German troops plundered everything. See (amongst others): Hirsz Abramovicz, *Profiles of a Lost World: Memoirs of East European Jewish Life Before World War II* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999), 184–5; S. A., *Autobiography* (YIVO Autobiography Competition, 1934), YIVO, RG4 No. 3518; P. Kh., *Autobiography* (YIVO Autobiography Competition, 1934), YIVO, RG4 No. 3523; Z. I., *Autobiography* (YIVO Autobiography Competition, 1934), YIVO, RG4 No. 3701; Adelle Mondry, *Autobiography* (YIVO American Autobiographies 1952), YIVO, RG 102 No. 112. There is also a counter-narrative in autobiographies that stresses especially the flight from the German army and the destructions caused by it. For example: K. J., *Autobiography* (YIVO Autobiography Competition, 1934), YIVO, RG4 No. 3549; David Gorfein, *Autobiography* (YIVO American Autobiographies 1952), YIVO RG 102 No. 3.

[234] Silber, *Le'umiuyt Shonah*.

suggesting that the Committee had connections to Jews in Warsaw, Kowno (Kovne/Kovno/Kaunas), Wilno, and Brest-Litovsk (Brisk/Brześć) who could "guide the army leadership there". They also promised that "hundreds of Jewish millionaires in Warsaw would be honored to host German generals and officers"[235]

Zionists also responded to the desire of the German command to spark insurrections and get practical support in Russian-controlled territory in order to weaken the enemy.[236] Max Bodenheimer had submitted proposals for such a call for liberation and this call was integrated into the final leaflet, calling on the Jews to take revenge for pogroms and mistreatment and to support the German and Austro-Hungarian advance.[237] Bodenheimer's Committee for the East fully endorsed this, but complained that the demands did not go far enough, since they only appealed to Polish Jews, and not to all Jews living under Russian rule.[238] It subsequently published a journal *Kol Mewaser* (The Herald/The Precursor) in Yiddish and Hebrew which was distributed by German troops in some areas. The journal promised the Jews liberation through German arms.[239]

These policies effectively created a split in the Zionist movement. Stefan Vogt's suggestion that German Zionists primarily saw a short-term overlap of common interests between them and the government seems only true for those Zionists, like Arthur Hantke and Julius Berger, who, while maintaining their transnational outlook and the neutrality of the Zionist organization, still closely cooperated with the government.[240] Many more, especially those in the Committee for the East – Bodenheimer, Oppenheimer, Sobernheim, Friedemann and others – tended to identify their Jewish-national interests completely with those of German imperial ambitions.[241] These tactical differences in part crystallized around the publication of *Kol Mewaser*. The Zionist leadership in Berlin had to respond to pressure from activists in other

---

[235] Komitee zur Befreiung der Russischen Juden, *Memorandum to the German Government*, 29.09.1914, Bundesarchiv Berlin (BAB), R1501-119613.
[236] Zechlin, *Deutsche Politik*, 116–8. The archives of the *Auswärtige Amt* (Foreign Office) in Berlin hold numerous communications with people of various national and political movements, especially in the Russian Empire, who promised to bring support for the Germans or even ignite uprisings. The Germans were generally happy to support these efforts, as unrealistic as they might often seem in hindsight.
[237] Zosa Szajkowski, "The German Appeal to the Jews of Poland, August 1914," *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 59, No. 4 (1969): 311–20. See the leaflet's text: Ibid., 317–320. For Bodenheimer's first draft: PA-AA, IA-WK-22-adh2 R20942.
[238] Max Bodenheimer, *Letter to Chef des Stellevertretenden Generalstabs der Armee*, 20.08.1914, PA-AA, IA-WK-22-adh2 R20942.
[239] *Kol Mewaser*, August/September 1914; October 1914.
[240] Stefan Vogt, *Subalterne Positionierungen. Der deutsche Zionismus im Feld des Nationalismus in Deutschland 1890–1933* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2016), 219–20.
[241] On this conflict, or at least ambiguity, see: Zechlin, *Deutsche Politik*, 119–20. The idea of congruent Zionist and German imperial interests was also reflected in debates around colonial politics. See: Kurt Blumenfeld, *Der Zionismus: Eine Frage der Deutschen Orientpolitik* (Berlin: Verlag Georg Stilke, 1915); *Das Größere Deutschland: Wochenschrift für Deutsche Welt- und Kolonialpolitik*, 27.02.1915.

countries, especially in the United States, who were worried that the paper's direct coupling of German and Jewish interests would endanger Jews still living under Russian rule.[242] In fact, this was exactly what happened, although probably not because of the publication of the journal. Russian authorities used the alleged coupling of German and Jewish interests as a pretext for undertaking large-scale violent anti-Jewish measures in the warzone.[243] At the same time, however, Bodenheimer and others insisted on distributing the paper, claiming that where violence and pogroms had been perpetrated by the Russian army, the paper had nothing to do with it.[244] In fact *Kol Mewaser*'s effect on Jewish sentiments towards the invading German forces is to be doubted.[245] Notwithstanding the later deterioration of conditions, already in the very first encounters between the German army and the Polish Jews the horrors of war most likely overshadowed any supposed notion of a 'liberation' with which Germans prided themselves as having brought to the East.

There is indeed evidence that some Jews welcomed the German conquest of the region and were helpful and supportive. This welcome, however, often seems to have been characterized more by relief over the end of fighting. Several contemporary sources seriously challenge the narrative of the alleged enthusiasm of Eastern European Jews for liberation through German arms. For example: In the summer of 1914, an unnamed citizen of the Western Lithuanian town of Tovrik (Tauragė/Tauroggen/Taurogi) started writing a diary for his children, with whom he had lost contact at the beginning of the war.[246] As the town changed hands multiple times the diary betrays no sense of welcoming any of the plundering armies that marched through the town mistreating the population. Instead, it reflects on the daily horrors inflicted by German and Russian soldiers alike. "The Germans were robbing the town of everything. There was no food to be found. Everything was emptied and from all houses, everything was taken away […] All was taken to Prussia."[247] The author described the terror and plunder inflicted by German and Russian soldiers alike.[248] Every time one of the armies would enter the town, the Jews would suffer. The diary painted a picture that suggests that the author did not favor either of the sides but mainly preferred that the town would steadily remain

[242] See for example: Strauss, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 26.12.1914, CZA, Z3/376.
[243] Lohr, "War Pogrom Paradigm,", 41–51; Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 170–80.
[244] Max Bodenheimer, *Letter to Franz Oppenheimer*, 03.06.1915, CZA, A15/658. Bodenheimer asked his colleague to "rub this fact under the noses" of his opponents in the Zionist movement.
[245] Zieliński, "Liberation or Occupation?," 1–13.
[246] Unknown Author, *Tovrik Diary*, YIVO, RG 116 Box 4 Folder 4.5, Introduction.
[247] Ibid., entry of 15. (28.)09.1914.
[248] Mention of Russian atrocities: ibid., entries of 05. (18.)10.1914; 26.10. (08.11.)1914; 30.10. (12.11.)1914; 17. (30.)04.1915. Mention of German atrocities: entries of 13. (26.)09.1914; 03. (16.)02.1915; 30.04. (13.05.).1915; 14. (27.)06.1915.

in either of their hands and not be the object of repeated conquests.[249] The author of the diary eventually fled to Rasiyn (Raseiniai/Rosienie), about 60 kilometers further East. When this place too was conquered by German troops in May 1915, they seem to have held a parade. "But the civilian population was not happy. Because they were suffering from hunger. Whatever there had been, the soldiers had taken. From Russia one could not bring a thing, and the Germans only brought for their soldiers."[250]

In her diary, Anne Kahan from Siedlce noted several times that everyone feared the German army and that they were relieved when they read reports that it had been repelled.[251] There were no political sympathies for any side, only fear of the impact of the fighting. "…war is horrible, turning men into beasts, and the thought of how girls are abused haunts us all."[252] After experiencing the terror of flight, bombing, and hiding, there was relief when the German army finally took the city: "A wild joy overwhelms us: it's over, it's over at last! […] Everything seems to say: no more fear, no more danger, no more death. I feel so light. I could fly."[253] This was not a joy over 'liberation' from Czarist despotism but simply the joy of having survived the fighting.

A decisive event was the German army's destruction of the city of Kalisz (Kalish/Kalisch), which lay just behind the border. In August 1914, an unnamed Jewish businessman from Warsaw, whose relatives had escaped the city, wrote to his brother in New York about the hardships of the first months of the war.

> "Add to all this the horror of the German culture bearers with their 'humane' treatment of Kalish. In the middle ages no foe ever treated peaceful civilians as the Germans did now. They destroyed, burned and stabbed everything and everybody in their way without pity for women and children, and even infants and in a cynical and barbaric way that defies description. […] The beautiful flourishing city of Kalish was laid in ruins, made even with the earth. Well-to-do men were turned into beggars."[254]

In the Jewish quarter alone, 150 houses were destroyed and at least thirty-three Jewish civilians killed.[255] Even the Committee for the East sent a protest note to the German Minister of War,

---

[249] There are even some entries from which it is not clear to discern who was mistreating the Jews. For instance: "The soldiers left […], and others arrived and ordered all Jews to be beaten." Ibid., entry of 17.02. (02.03.)1915. This alone, to me, seems very telling. What mattered for the author was not who beat him (soldiers) but that he was beaten.
[250] Ibid., entry of 12. (25.)05.1915.
[251] Kahan, "Diary," 177; 209; 215; 217; 225.
[252] Ibid., 220.
[253] Ibid., 273.
[254] Unknown Author, *Letter to his brother in New York*, 03.09.1914, National Library of Israel Archives Department (NLI-A), USA V. 703 2 105.1.
[255] Laura Engelstein, "'A Belgium of Our Own': The Sack of Russian Kalisz, August 1914," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (2009): 448.

specifically denouncing the taking of hostages from within the leadership of the Jewish community and the subsequent execution of one of them.[256] In the Zionist press in Poland, the destruction of Kalisz was represented as a barbaric atrocity by the Germans.[257] The Mizrahi paper *HaTsefirah* reported that there and in the surrounding towns "the terrified residents hid in the cellars and stayed there without water […] for three days and three nights, and begged God to save them from the cruel Germans."[258]

This exploration of Jewish responses to the German offensive in the East is necessary to understand the relations, which East-Central European Jewry later had with the occupying powers, as well as with the Zionists that came with them from the West. The scholarly assessment that Jews in East-Central Europe welcomed 'liberation' by Germany 'works' to the extent that the arguments subsequently focus on questions of relative political liberalization and the formal-political, especially party-political developments that followed. I argue in the following chapters, that for the vast majority of Jews in the region this 'liberation' was a secondary concern, since the vast majority of them had to focus on the day-to-day question of survival. In this context, the misery that the German invasion inflicted, in addition to the horrors they suffered under Russian rule, is of profound importance. It was these everyday-questions with which Zionists would be occupied to a large extent during the war.

The Aim of a 'Publicly and Legally Assured' Position of Influence

Eventually, the publication of *Kol Mewaser* was intended less for the local Jewish populations and rather for the Zionists themselves, as they tried to prove to the government that they were reliable partners, prepared to take over positions in the administration of the conquered regions.[259] In this, they were not alone. All Jewish parties hoping to gain influential positions in the new administration promised largely the same to the authorities: that they would influence the Jews of Poland in a pro-German way, act as intermediaries between the authorities and the Jewish population, and mediate between the Jews and the Poles.[260] The Jews, the

[256] Komitee für den Osten, *Letter to the German Minister of War*, 28.09.1914, CZA, A15/682.
[257] *Der Moment*, 13.08.1914; 30.08.1914; *HaTsefirah*, 16.08.1914.
[258] *HaTsefirah*, 13.08.1914. The paper consistently used the term *ashkenazim* rather than *germanim* for Germans.
[259] For example: when the merchant Herman Rosenes from Sosnowiec (Sosnovits/Sosnowitz) wrote to the editors of the paper, asking them to send him issues of *Kol Mewasser* in order to distribute it, he never received a reply and was ridiculed by Bodenheimer and Oppenheimer in their communication. Herman Rosenes, *Letter to the Editor of Kol Mewaser*, 16.05.1915, CZA, A15/658.
[260] For the Committee for the East: Komitee für den Osten, *Letter to Theodor Lewald, Ministerialdirektor im Reichsamt des Inneren*, 03.03.1915, BAB, R-1501-119802; For the German Orthodox, see: Freie Vereinigung für die Interessen des Orthodoxen Judentums E.V., *Letter to the Ministry of Interior*, 23.10.1914, BAB, R-1501-

Committee for the East promised, could become the "bearers of Germanness in Poland"[261] (*Träger des Deutschtums*); after all, their language – Yiddish – was supposedly nothing but merely a German dialect. This trope of German-Jewish national affinity and common destiny, manifested in the language, was continuously repeated until the end of 1916, when the Germans declared an 'independent' Poland and Zionists realized that their attempts had been in vain. The tactic, however, produced remarkable publications, such as the pamphlet "The German-Jewish Language of the Eastern Jews", by Heinrich Loewe, the initiator of the Jewish National Library in Jerusalem, which argued that with the correct policies, the Yiddish language could eventually re-approach its German roots and pave the way for Germanness in the East.[262]

German Zionists developed these concepts for the re-organization of Jewish life and the Jews' place in society for the newly conquered regions in general. They effectively had to deal with two different kinds of occupation regimes, the General Government Warschau and Ober Ost. These two regimes have been studied extensively, so it is only necessary here to mention some of their central features for the purposes of this thesis.[263] The main difference between the two occupation regimes was the extent of military control, of centralization, and the willingness of

---

119613. For the wider concepts of the Committee for the East as directed to Polish political actors, see the files of the Polish Naczelny Komitet Narodowy: Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie (ANK), 530/0/1.1/147.

[261] Franz Oppenheimer (on behalf of the Committee for the East), *Letter to Baron von Bergen (Auswärtiges Amt)*, 25.03.1915, BAB, R-1501-119802. See also: Grill, "Pioneers of Germanness," 125–58.

[262] Heinrich Loewe, *Die jüdischdeutsche Sprache der Ostjuden* (Berlin: Komitee für den Osten, 1915), 16. Herrmann Struck, later to become the head of the department for Jewish affairs in Ober Ost contributed to the brochure. There were a few other publications that raised similar arguments. For example: Hermann L. Strack, *Jüdischdeutsche Texte: Lesebuch zur Einführung in Denken, Leben und Sprache der osteuropäischen Juden* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1917).

[263] Works concerned (mainly) with Ober Ost: Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Klaus Richter, "'Go with the hare's ticket' mobility and territorial policies in Ober Ost (1915–1918)," *First World War Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2015): 151–70; Abba Strazhas, *Deutsche Ostpolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg. Der Fall Ober Ost 1915–1917* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1993); Christian Westerhoff, *Zwangsarbeit im Ersten Weltkrieg. Deutsche Arbeitskräftepolitik im besetzten Polen und Litauen 1914–1918* (Munich, Vienna, Zurich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012); Christian Westerhoff, "'A kind of Siberia': German labour and occupation policies in Poland and Lithuania during the First World War," *First World War Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2013): 51–63. One of the problems with works on Ober Ost is that the great mass of records on the region were held in the Prussian War Archive in Berlin, which was hit by a bomb in 1944. Most of the records burned. The German Military Archive in Freiburg still holds the inventory. BAMA, PH-30-III-11.
Works concerned (mainly) with the Generalgouvernement: Robert Blobaum, *A Minor Apocalypse: Warsaw during the First World War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017); Winson Chu, "A Sonderweg through Eastern Europe? The Varieties of German Rule in Poland during the Two World Wars," *German History*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (2013): 318–44; Jesse Kauffman, *Elusive Alliance: The German Occupation of Poland in World War I* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015); Stephan Lehnstaedt, "Imperiale Polenpolitik in den Weltkriegen: eine vergleichende Studie zu den Mittelmächten und zu NS-Deutschland," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (2012): 409–40; Piotr Mikietynski, *Niemiecka droga ku Mitteleuropie. Polityka II Rzeszy wobec Królestwa Polskiego, 1914–1916* (Cracow: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Historia Iagellonica, 2009); Robert Spät, "Für eine gemeinsame deutsch-polnische Zukunft? Hans Hartwig von Beseler als Generalgouverneur in Polen 1915–1918," *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, No. 58 (2009): 469–500; Arkadiusz Stempin, "Generał-pułkownik Hans Hartwig von Beseler – generalny gubernator warszawski w latach 1915–1918," *Dzieje Najnowsze*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (2011): 21–34.

the Germans to permit the local population to participate in the administration of local affairs. These differences should not distract, however, from what both regimes shared in common. They were decidedly German projects, which had the purpose of serving exclusively German interests. This included the dismantling and evacuation of industrial assets to Germany, the ruthless exploitation of natural resources for the German war industry, the transport of foodstuff to Germany, and large-scale forced labor, which especially affected Jews.[264]

In the Generalgouvernement Warschau, which was established in August 1915, the combined civilian and military administrators aimed at integrating certain sectors of the local population. This allowed for a more liberal political atmosphere and comparatively better relations between the occupiers and the occupied. Zionists from Germany, as other Jewish parties here, tried to gain influence in the form of an officially recognized position. None of them was really successful. After rejecting many of these offers – with his tone reflecting an increasing annoyance – Wolfgang von Kries, the head of the German civil administration in Poland, stated that "I want to emphasize that I cannot endorse the employment of any German [*reichsdeutscher*] Jews […] for the cultivation of the relationship with the Poles in the administrative district."[265] Part of the administration's rationale was just thinly veiled antisemitism by the German side and a response to anti-Jewish sentiments amongst the Polish population. "The employment of Jews in the administration would discredit the administration."[266] as Felix von Merveldt, von Kries' predecessor until November 1914, put it. The crucial factor, however, was the regime's fear that the Zionists, or any other Jewish political group for that matter, would diminish German authority.

"The creation of a Jewish institution mediating between the government and the population, or a part of it, is undesirable, since it would increasingly reduce the direct contact between the population and the administration, and would permanently alienate the population, which would attach trust not to it [the administration; JR] but only to the 'mediators' who would gain credit for every successes."[267]

The promises or concepts of German Zionists, especially the Committee for the East, to incorporate their representatives and support Jewish nationalism in the region, were rejected by the German authorities. Instead, the German administration installed Ludwig Haas, a liberal politician who was not directly aligned with any of the major Jewish political movements as

[264] I discuss some of these policies in respect to Zionists' responses to them below.
[265] Wolfgang von Kries, *Letter to the Staatssekretär des Inneren*, 27.05.1915, BAB, R-1501-119802.
[266] Felix von Merveldt, *Letter to the Ministry of Interior*, 04.11.1914, BAB, R-1501-119613.
[267] Wolfgang von Kries, *Letter to the Staatssekretär des Inneren*, 29.08.1915, BAB, R-1501-119802. The quote also shows that at this point the German leadership was still convinced that it would actually bring improvements to the East and better the situation of the population there.

the head of the Jewish department.[268] Over time, especially with the proclamation of Polish 'independence' in November 1916, the administration in the Generalgouvernement increasingly made political concessions to Polish nationalists. These included a very limited degree of self-government, and notably the refusal to abolish the old Russian anti-Jewish laws.

The situation was markedly different in the region under direct control of Ober Ost, established as a special, military-controlled zone in November 1915. Ober Ost was distinct insofar as there was practically no civilian element in the administration. The "military utopia" Ober Ost, was under strict, brutal, and centralized German military rule, led by Erich Ludendorff, Paul Hindenburg, and Max Hoffmann.[269] The requisition of agricultural products, forced labor, and especially the restrictions on the movement of residents from one administrative district to the next made the regime almost unbearable for the local population. However, the political independence the German rulers in Ober Ost enjoyed, given the overwhelming power of the military there, meant that in some respects, the authorities had more political flexibility than in the Generalgouvernement. This also meant, for example, that the Russian anti-Jewish laws were abolished there.[270] It is of great importance for the role Zionists could play, and for the tactics they could employ, that it was in this very region, where centralized German military power was virtually unchecked, that Zionists did manage to become a part of the administration.

From the very beginning of the war, even before the region was established, the Committee for the East had developed good contacts with the German regime's later leading figures in the East. Max Bodenheimer met the three men who would rule Ober Ost – Ludendorff, Hindenburg, and Hoffmann – in the army's Eastern Headquarters in October 1914. He wrote to his wife about the very warm welcome and the great support he received from them.[271] According to the internal report for the Committee for the East, its representatives participated in an impressive gala dinner at headquarters, where they presented their concepts for the Eastern Jews to the assembled officers, especially focusing on the idea of the anti-Russian position of the Jews and their alleged willingness to ally themselves with the Germans in becoming a bulwark against Polish and Slavic national ambitions. "All these aspects", the

[268] Zechlin, *Deutsche Politik*, 160–1. There were indeed friendly relations with Haas, especially from the side of the Committee for the East, but he was in Poland decidedly as a representative of German, not Jewish interests. Haas repeatedly brought forward propositions by Zionists or the Committee for the East to Governor Hans von Beseler. See: Vorträge beim Herrn General-Gouverneur; 05.01.1916; 1.03.1916; 01.07.1916; 01.11.1916; 16.12.1916; 08.08.1917; 15.12.1917, BAMA, N-30/7

[269] *Liulevicius*, War Land, ch. 2.

[270] For an overview of Ober Ost politics towards the Jews, see: Zechlin, *Deutsche Politik*, 224–37.

[271] Max Bodenheimer, *Letter to Rosa Bodenheimer*, 15.10.1914, CZA, A15/848.

report stated not without pride, "were entirely accepted and endorsed by the Chief of Staff."[272] Bodenheimer wrote about the friendly encounter with the future rulers of the East.

"When he welcomed us, Hindenburg stood at the threshold of the dining hall, which was one step elevated and made his impressive personality seem even larger to us. He kindly welcomed us and asked me what impression Russian Poland had made on me during my journey. I did not conceal that it had made a better impression on me than Galicia, which is terribly neglected. The only thing that is missing here in Russia is the higher German culture, which I hope that the German army will bring to the East. This made the Field Marshall smile approvingly. […] Oppenheimer sat to the left of Hindenburg, then came Ludendorff on whose left side I was placed. To the left of me sat General Hoffmann."[273]

The relations with the army leadership improved in the following year, after the conquest of large parts of East-Central Europe by the German army. Contrary to the wishes of the civilian administration in the Generalgouvernement, Ludendorff was very much in favor of Jewish nationalist political activism in the East and right away allowed the Zionists to collect for the National Fund in this region, enabling this basic form of Zionist political activism.[274] Hindenburg gave a written statement expressing his "benevolent interest in the Committee [for the Liberation of the Russian Jews] and that I am prepared to support its goals."[275] In Ober Ost itself, Zionists found themselves treated favorably, as several of their activists, including Hermann Struck and Sammy Gronemann, obtained positions in the headquarters at Kowno.[276] This was in stark contrast to the treatment of other German-Jewish organizations, such as the liberal Deutsche Vereinigung für die Interessen der Osteuropäischen Juden (German Association for the Interests of the Eastern European Jews) which were explicitly prohibited from engaging in any political work in Ober Ost.[277]

The historical sources suggest two main reasons for the comparatively favorable treatment of the Zionists in Ober Ost: The first is that contrary to the German regime in Poland, which, especially from the end of 1916 and the proclamation of the Kingdom of Poland's 'independence' onwards, was mainly interested in winning over the Christian Polish majority,

[272] Komitee für den Osten, *Report on the meeting with the Chief of Staff*, October 1914, JMB-A, MF13-6.
[273] Max Bodenheimer, *Memoirs/Diary*, CZA, A15/819, 108. The text is a mixture of the original diary and notes that Bodenheimer wrote between the years 1923 to 1925 that were included in the text. This part here seems to have been written later.
[274] Max Bodenheimer, *Letter to Rabbi Arthur Levy in Łódź*, 02.07.1915, JMB-A, MF13-2. This was Ludendorff giving his permission in regard to the areas under his military command.
[275] Paul von Hindenburg, *Statement to Komitee zur Befreiung der Russischen Juden*, Quoted in: Max Bodenheimer, *Memoirs/Diary*, CZA, A15/819, 111.
[276] Sammy Gronemman, *Erinnerungen*, LBI-A, ME-203; Jane Rusel, *Hermann Struck (1876–1944). Das Leben und das graphische Werken eines jüdischen Künstlers* (Frankfurt am Main, et. al: Peter Lang, 1997), 145–9.
[277] Oberbefehlshaber Ost, *Letter to Staatssekretär des Inneren Clemens Delbrück*, 20.11.1915, BAB, R-1501-119802; Clemens Delbrück, *Letter to Deutsche Vereinigung für die Interessen der Osteuropäischen Juden*, 24.12.1915, BAB, R-1501-119802.

the policy of Ober Ost in regard to ethnic groups was, at least initially, one of divide-and-rule.[278] This entailed somewhat strengthening the various national movements and using them against each other. The directives for the administration of Ober Ost explicitly suggested deepening the national divides in the region.[279] In all regards, the Jews would have to be treated as a nation and their national ambitions, just as any other group's national ambitions, should be treated properly, their respective antagonisms should be exploited, and all be kept under tight control for the sake of continuous German rule.[280]

The other aspect was the view of the Eastern Jews, which was largely shared between many of the German officers in Ober Ost and many German Zionists they encountered. In a letter to Ludendorff, of July 1915, Franz Oppenheimer described the Eastern Jews as giving "a not very pleasant picture" and that the pressure of Czarism had led "to a condition of material and spiritual degeneration". They could be elevated from this degeneration, with German support, benevolence, and discipline.[281] This was not merely a statement towards the authorities. The minutes of a leadership meeting of the Committee for the East of March 1915 note:

> "Only under Prussian discipline […] will the Jews be able to develop normally and maybe go through the process that German Jews went through in the past 100 years. In contrast to that, the development in Galicia under Austrian resp. Polish rule did prove that the Jews rarely prospered. The Jews of the East cannot be seen as dilapidated, ragged, as a bunch of crooks. There are great possibilities for the Jews of the East. If we want to develop the capabilities and positive characteristics of the Eastern Jews, we have to strive to get them under Prussian discipline."[282]

This view indeed corresponded with widespread ideas in the higher echelons of the German officer corps in the East. After a journey to Ober Ost on behalf of the Committee for the East in November 1916, Moritz Sobernheim and Adolf Friedemann reported on a conversation they had had with the head of the Political Department Captain Freiherr von Gayl. Von Gayl not only agreed on the necessity of recognizing the Jews as a nation, of making them productive

---

[278] On German politics regarding Polish 'independence', see: Robert Spät*, Die "Polnische Frage" in der öffentlichen Diskussion im Deutschen Reich, 1894–1918* (Marburg: Verlag Herder Institut, 2014), 216–26; 275–92; Zechlin, *Deutsche Politik*, 198–223. On nationalities' politics in Ober Ost, see: Liulevicius, *War Land*, 122.
[279] Oberbefehlshaber Ost, *Weisungen für die Verwaltung des Oberbefehlshabers Ost in dem alten Verwaltungsgebiet*, 28.02.1917, BAMA, N-234-6.
[280] Etappen-Inspektion der 10. Armee, Generalleutnant Franz von Trotta, *Memorandum: Unruhen im Etappengebiet – Behandlung der Einwohner*, 31.08.1917, BAMA, N-234-6; Oberbefehlshaber Ost, *Denkschrift betreffend die nationalen Verhältnisse und die deutsche Politik im Ob. Ost-Gebiet unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der litauischen Frage*, 26.03.1917, BAMA, PH-30-III-2. See also: Zechlin, *Deutsche Politik*, 226–7.
[281] Franz Oppenheimer, *Letter to Erich Ludendorff*, 05.07.1915, JMB-A, MF13-6.
[282] Komitee für den Osten, *Protokoll des Geschäftsführenden Ausschusses*, 23.03.1915, CZA, A15/702.

members of the society (implying that they had not been that before), and of facilitating their emigration to Palestine, but also commented on the Zionists: "He was happy that there were […] Zionists on the Committee, because he held the masculine values of this movement in extraordinarily high esteem, believing that a complete regeneration of Eastern Jewry was only possible in this way."[283] There were apparent sympathies. In his war memoir, published in 1919, Erich Ludendorff praised the strong Jewish national solidarity and cohesion, as he had observed it in Ober Ost, and mentioned not without pride that the first Jewish soup kitchen established in Kowno was named after him.[284]

Being in the good graces of Ober Ost, German Zionists had better chances to obtain positions within the administration and to influence its policy regarding the Jews. In March 1916, the Committee for the East proudly informed its supporters that one of its members, Hermann Struck, had been appointed censor in Ober Ost.[285] The – unfortunately very small – part of Struck's diary that remains suggests that from the very beginning he was more than a censor, more a counsellor to the heads of the Ober Ost administration with regard to the Jewish population of the region.[286] It is most likely that this was the reason why the Department for Jewish Affairs, which was founded in August 1917 as part of the military administration, was headed by Struck.[287] This was a major achievement for the Zionists who believed they could use this newly won position to influence Ober Ost's policy regarding the Jewish population. The administration's very positive attitude towards the Zionists was also reflected in its official paper *Korrespondenz B* (Correspondence B; 'B' standing for *Befehlshaber*, meaning Commander), in which Struck and other authors regularly published articles, portraying Jewish national life in the region.[288]

Immediately after the establishment of the Department, Struck and others lobbied the Ober Ost leadership to fulfil its pledge in practical terms by recognizing the Jews as a nationality

---

[283] Adolf Friedemann, Moritz Sobernheim, *Report on the Journey to Poland and Ober Ost*, *18–28 November 1916*, JMB-A, MF13-1. Von Gayl had no sympathies for the Jews as such and suggested in 1916 that after a future peace treaty with Russia none of the Lithuanian Jews who had fled there should be allowed back. Zechlin, *Deutsche Politik*, 231. This was not untypical. Georg Fritz, a notorious and virulent antisemitic author equally expressed sympathies for Zionism as a nationalist movement; not least because it would get rid of the Jews. Georg Fritz, *Die Ostjudenfrage. Zionismus und Grenzschluß* (Munich: J. F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1915), 35–9

[284] Erich Ludendorff, *Meine Kriegserinnerungen 1914–1918* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1919), 154. It is well-known that Ludendorff later developed ludicrous antisemitic delusions (that were even crazy by the standard of antisemitic worldviews in general), but this was notably a development of later years.

[285] Komitee für den Osten, *Letter to the regional branches of the Committee for the East*, 14.03.1916, JMB-A, MF13-1.

[286] Hermann Struck, *Diary*, Entries of 1 and 15 July 1916, JMB-A, R-2000-291.

[287] *Korrespondenz B*, 15.08.1917; Also: *Befehls- und Verordnungsblatt des Oberbefehlshabers Ost*, No. 114, 31.08.1918, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (BSB), 9710830.

[288] *Korrespondenz B*, 08.11.1916, 13.01.1917, 25.07.1917, 08.08.1917, 05.09.1917, 07.10.1917, 19.11.1917, 07.01.1918, 04.09.1918, 25.09.1918.

and implementing appropriate policies regarding schools, language use, and Jewish national representation in the Lithuanian Taryba/Landesrat (regional council).[289] While the administration opposed handing over the Jewish elementary schools to the Zionists – as had been demanded – it did however pledge to support the establishment of Jewish schools, including Hebrew-language secular schools under its control. It also promised to allow Zionist political activism[290] and to support the foundation of private Zionist-run schools.[291] Freiherr von Gayl, stated that while the administration could not make too many official concessions at that point, Zionists should be assured of its support, given the vocal backing they had received from Ludendorff and others.[292] Besides the recognition of the Jews as a nation and the abolition of Russian antisemitic laws,[293] it was mainly the informal influence Zionists gained in Ober Ost, that determined their work there. In their arguments regarding Ober Ost, the Zionists amalgamated the various aspects of Jewish national identity in the region: "The Jews of Lithuania are a coherent national body, distinct from the rest of the population", the Zionist movement was "the organizational expression of the Jewish people's national will", and the Department for Jewish Affairs, had allegedly gained the full trust and confidence of the Jewish population and was the main instrument of their administration.[294] In this representation, they were one. They felt as a part of the administration, felt the recognition of Zionism by the administration and in many respects behaved like an administration towards the Jewish population there.

The appointment of Struck as the head of the Department for Jewish Affairs had enabled German Zionists to use Ober Ost's structures and authority to a certain extent, not only to influence its policies, but also as leverage over the local communities themselves.[295] The degree to which German Zionists were integrated in the administration was also reflected in their mindset and their concept that any good for the Jews of this region would come about through

---

[289] Ibid.

[290] Shortly after the German conquest of most parts of Estonia, for instance, the Zionist Organization there was legalized after negotiations between the Zionists and the German administrations in Berlin and Ober Ost. See: Arthur Hantke, *Letter to the Estonian Zionist Organization*, 06.06.1918, CZA, Z3/133. This also showed how some Zionists' insistence on the proximity of Yiddish and German were less sincere arguments and the traditional Hebraism was still essential.

[291] Hermann Struck, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 26.12.1917, CZA, Z3/131-2. Struck had taken the above-cited letter by Arthur Hantke and collected statements from the various administrative departments, compiling them in this letter.

[292] Freiherr von Gayl, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 28.12.1917, CZA, Z3/131-2.

[293] Verwaltungschef des Generalgouvernements Warschau, *Letter to the Staatssekretär des Inneren*, 09.04.1918, BAB, R-1501-199804.

[294] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to the Administration of Ober Ost, Department V.*, 26.10.1917, CZA, Z3/131-1.

[295] Komitee für den Osten, *Report on the Situation in Poland and Ober Ost*, 1918, JMB-A, MF13-1. On the Department for Jewish Affairs, see the – in many respects highly problematic – representation of events in: Stražas, "Tätigkeit des Dezernats," 315–29.

the administration and not primarily through local Zionists' grassroots-activism. In early 1917 an internal debate arose over how the terrible material conditions for the Jewish population in Ober Ost should be addressed. Julius Berger had argued that (unfortunately) it was necessary to publicly criticize the miserable conditions on the ground, an approach with which Struck strongly disagreed, since in the Ober Ost administration "the sympathies for Zionism here are at stake!"[296] His orientation was toward the rulers. He summarized his approach, clearly showing that he did not give much agency to the local Jewish population or local activists and argued that only by working with the regime could improvements be reached.

"Allow me to remind you that I expressed to Mr. Berger […] my opinion that it is unacceptable that he criticizes the conditions here. [… Our] politics do not mean to repeatedly point out problems again, on whose solution [people] are working anyway, and that have been made known to satiety, employing the beautiful pathos of the defender of the oppressed, and thereby make ourselves popular amongst the powerless. I think [our] politics should be to use every available possibility in an intelligent, tactical and well-thought through way to step-by-step create a favorable atmosphere for the Jews."[297]

Struck's argument that it would be useless to make the Zionists "popular amongst the powerless" sums up the attitude of German Zionists in the region. They did not believe that change would come from Zionist activism on the ground, but only from above, from an administration of which they were a part.

In the Generalgouvernement, the Zionists' efforts to gain positions of influence from the German administration and strengthen the national movement to a large extent attempted to mirror the relation between the Germans and Polish nationalism. One case for this was the attempt to establish a Jewish military unit, made up of Jews from the Generalgouvernement. It correlated with the official proclamation of the 'independent' Kingdom of Poland by the Central Powers, and therefore with the ill-fated attempt to establish a Polish army under German control.[298] Adolf Friedemann and Moritz Sobernheim of the Committee for the East, who visited the Generalgouvernment less than two weeks after the proclamation of 'independence', reported that in Warsaw they were involved in discussions over the creation of a Jewish Legion, made up of Polish Jews. In negotiations with the authorities, they suggested a formation of 10–15,000 men, commanded by Jewish officers. One of their concerns seemed to have been the formation of the Polish army, and the possibility that a large number of Jews would sign up for

[296] Herrmann Struck, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 15.11.1917, CZA, Z3/131-2.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Kauffman, *Elusive Alliance*, ch. 3.

it. Not only would Jews be treated badly by antisemitic officers in these units, but it was also clear, that national considerations demanded the establishment of an independent Jewish Legion.[299] While it was initially unclear whether such a unit would be a quasi-autonomous part of the Polish or another army, Lazarus Barth in Warsaw insisted that the unit become part of the Ottoman army. This, he argued, was not his own initiative but that of an unnamed "comrade from the province".[300] Polish Jews, he argued, would not be willing to be slaughtered on behalf of the Poles who would not even grant them national autonomy. Barth was aware that the recruitment effort amongst the Polish population went rather miserably and explained this by saying that the Polish leaders did not trust the German promise of 'independence' and thought that by holding the recruitment back, they could gain more concessions from them.[301] The idea that raising troops for the Germans would entitle the respective national movement to concessions, was shared by Barth; for him, and his fellow Zionists, however, any concessions should be in relation to Palestine.[302] In his conversation with Ludwig Haas and other "decisive actors in the administration", he demanded that in return for raising a Jewish Legion for the Ottoman army, the Jews would be granted "the right to free settlement in Palestine and autonomy f.[or] t.[he] Jewish settlements."[303] Initial contacts between the Zionists and the Ottoman authorities suggested a certain openness by the latter. However, they insisted that this would not be connected to Zionist claims for Palestine and that the Jewish units would be part of the general Ottoman army.[304] Eventually the attempt failed; probably since the Ottomans were still suspicious about these kinds of endeavors, but it is more than doubtful that a large recruitment of Jewish soldiers in Poland would have been successful since even recruitment for the Polish army had failed miserably.[305] However, the representation of the Jewish nation as one nation amongst the others that would, just like the Polish nation, do its duty for the common cause was a key element of Zionist strategy throughout and after the war and the interdependence between Polish and Jewish nationalism in this regard was and continued to be of special importance.[306]

---

[299] Adolf Friedemann, Moritz Sobernheim, *Report on the journey to Poland and Ober Ost*, *18–28 November 1916*, JMB-A, MF13-1.
[300] Lazarus Barth, *Letter to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 26.11.1916, CZA, Z3/156.
[301] Ibid.
[302] Adolf Friedemann, Moritz Sobernheim, *Report on the journey to Poland and Ober Ost*, *18–28 November 1916*, JMB-A, MF13-1.
[303] Lazarus Barth, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 26.11.1916, CZA, Z3/156.
[304] Lazarus Barth, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 18.02.1917, CZA, Z3/160.
[305] Jesse Curtis Kauffman, *Sovereignity and the Search for Order in German-occupied Poland, 1915–1918* (Ann Arbor: ProQuest, 2011), 61.
[306] See Chapters 4 and 5.

"Completely alien" Zionists Encounter their Nation

When German Zionists came to the East, they encountered an entirely different world, and saw their nation in a way, which often posed challenges to their self-perception as nationalists. Although there are notably fewer travel accounts of Ober Ost than of the Generalgouvernement, since the region was a lot harder to access, the image of this Eastern Jewry they depict was nonetheless an alien one. Some of the Zionists who came there like Sammy Gronemann, for instance, remembered that "the German Jews […] often expressed the arrogance with which they were used to viewing the Eastern Jews, since they had mainly seen them as beggars/scroungers [*Schnorrer*]."[307] For many reporting from the region, the images were connected with mythical ideas of the East. In part, this correlated with German perceptions and mythologization of the East,[308] and in part this was due to the exceptional role, which especially Lithuanian Jewry and its intellectuals had played over the past century, and how it was perceived by more Western Zionists.[309] In this nevertheless completely alien environment, some of the accounts portray the local Jews in a quasi-orientalist mystical way.[310] For instance, with the idea that 'this people' had produced writers "who capture and represent the longing and feeling of the people, the melancholic moaning for the past and the comforting hope for the national future."[311] The region and its people remained foreign. Alexander Adler, son of the German Zionist activist Joel Adler, who was serving in a cavalry unit in Ober Ost, seemed puzzled when he wrote to his mother that within this alien world of the East, he found two pictures of Theodor Herzl in a flat he and his comrades had just occupied – this did not seem to have a place there.[312]

[307] Sammy Gronemman, *Erinnerungen*, LBI-A, ME-203, 416.
[308] In many respects, this correlated with German (not necessarily Jewish) ideas of the East. See: Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *The German Myth of the East: 1800 to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Liulevicius, *War Land*, 151–72.
[309] This especially refers to the Haskalah (Jewish enlightenment) in Lithuania and the fact that many Zionist leaders, especially in Poland, originally came from Lithuania (the so-called Litvaks). The quasi-orientalist representation of East European Jewry was a major trope during the war that was expressed in numerous publications, reflecting a notable interest in East European Jewish topics. For example: S. J. Agnon, Ahron Eliasberg, ed., *Das Buch von den polnischen Juden* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1916); Hermann Struck, Herbert Eulenberg, *Skizzen aus Litauen, Weissrussland und Kurland* (Berlin: Verlag Georg Stilke, 1916); Joseph Wohlgemuth, *Das Bildungsproblem in der Ostjudenfrage* (Berlin: Verlag des Jeschurun, 1916); Arnold Zweig, Hemann Struck, *Das ostjüdidische Antlitz* (Berlin, Welt-Verlag, 1920). Though published after the end of the war, the last book was already produced earlier.
[310] Liulevicius, *War Land*, 191–2.
[311] Hermann Struck, *Report on the Jews in Ober Ost*, 1916, CZA, A124/127.
[312] Alexander Adler, *Letter to his Mother*, 06.05.1917, CAHJP, P234-48.

The real shock and experience of alienation happened when the travelling nationalists came to the Generalgouvernement and had to engage with their putative nation there. Even though the Committee for the East gained no official positions, the authorities did at least allow it to send a delegation to the newly occupied territories in spring 1915. They did not make it easy and insisted that the delegation would not be allowed to distribute money, could not talk to the press, and that it had to publish a report.[313] Moreover, the authorities ordered its representatives on the ground that the delegation should be tolerated, not actively helped, and closely monitored.[314] The official report on this journey, composed by the delegation's leader Max Bodenheimer detailed the impoverishment of the Jewish masses and accused the Poles and "polonized Jews", who were "not more than 10% of the Jewish population […] in the small towns they are isolated exceptions,"[315] of disadvantaging the (real) Jews in the distribution of aid through the citizens' committees.[316] Similarly, Field Rabbi Arthur Levy, a German Zionist serving in Łódź, reported that except for the three Zionists, none of the Jews on the city council showed any interest in the fate of the Jewish people there.[317] Bodenheimer's report mainly aimed to paint a picture of the Polish Jews as a coherent national organism. In a brief depiction of the historic evolution of Polish Jewry, he aimed to demonstrate how, contrary to the 'assimilated', they had kept their traditions and national, quasi-German language.[318] This group would be the basis for the reshaping of society.

"Only the Jewish masses, holding on to its old traditions, are suitable to become a solid stronghold for the reorganization of the conditions [there]. Even if this segment of the Jewish population is backwards in some respects, its customs and habits are alien, and there is much to be desired in regard to cleanliness and orderliness, it is the very national element on which the German government can rely under all circumstances."[319]

Bodenheimer assured his readers that the so-called 'polonized' Jews, who had not only abandoned their nation, but who used their riches and their predominantly pro-Russian attitudes to dominate its institutions did not represent the Jewish nation in Poland.[320] All in all, those

[313] Wolfgang von Kries, *Letter to Staatssekretär des Inneren*, 27.05.1915, BAB, R-1501-199802.
[314] Wolfgang von Kries, *Letter to Kreischef und Polizeipräsident von Lodz*, 09.05.1915, BAB, R-1501-199802.
[315] Max Bodenheimer, *Bericht über die im Auftrag des "Komitees für den Osten" im Mai–Juni 1915 unternommene Reise nach Russisch-Polen*, CAHJP, M71-1, 11.
[316] Ibid, 3–4.
[317] Arthur Levy, *Letter to the Committee for the East*, 01.08.1915, JMB-A, MF13-2. The German authorities disagreed with this assessment. A lengthy report on the composition and the political/national orientation of the members of the Łódź city council shows that besides the Zionists, a number of so-called 'assimilationist' or 'polonized' Jewish councilors were indeed very much engaged in Jewish social and communal life. See: Unknown Author, *Zusammensetzung des Stadtrates von Lodz*, 20.07.1915, BAB, R-1501-119788.
[318] Max Bodenheimer, *Bericht über die im Auftrag des "Komitees für den Osten" im Mai–Juni 1915 unternommene Reise nach Russisch-Polen*, CAHJP, M71-1, 5–7.
[319] Ibid., 8.
[320] Ibid., 11.

Jews epitomized the idea of a traitor. In contrast to them, the delegation reported, the vast majority of the Jewish population had a national character. Bodenheimer juxtaposed 'national' and assimilationist', including the masses of the traditional, orthodox Jews in the national camp and not attributing to them any form of independent political, cultural, or social will.

"Politically, the Jews of Poland are divided between national Jews and polonized Jews. As those [the 'polonized'; JR] we can count all those who speak the Polish language at home as a language of daily use and who aspire their dissolution into Polishness as a political ideal. National Jews are those who adhere to their fathers' customs, traditions, and religion, and especially their Jewish-German language; furthermore, the enlightened […] well-organized group of Zionists."[321]

The argumentative incorporation of the orthodox Jews, the vast majority of Jews in the Generalgouvernement, into the national camp, thereby inflating its numbers and deriving political claims, of course did not reflect the population's sentiments.[322] The religiously observant, orthodox population was generally referred to or perceived in the same way as the Hassidim. They were perceived, or at least portrayed, as the main body of the Jewish nation. The travelling Zionists saw them as a backward, uncivilized mass, held back by the iron hands of the rabbis.

"The Hassidim represent the mass of the Jewish population in Poland. […] Their leaders – the rabbis – exercise tremendous violence over them, their devotees follow them blindly, and they are literally connected with them in life and in death. […] The masses of the Hassidim are engrossed in deepest ignorance and cultural primitivism [*Unbildung und Unkultur*]. They are systematically held away from any modern education, and even in regard to Jewish and religious knowledge, their educational niveau is tremendously low. Even the leading layers are far away from any modern education, especially some of the rabbis are culturally far off from what would be expected from someone in such a leading position."[323]

The common theme relating to the Orthodox, of their backwardness, passivity and lack of culture, their inability to cope with the modern world, necessarily granted the Zionists the position of advocates for the Jewish cause. Only nationalism could create agency. The implication was clear: the masses of the Jewish population of Poland could not speak for themselves, at least not as long as the power of the assimilationist traitors and the backward rabbis was not broken. This, in fact, built on older discussions. Their supposed cultural

[321] Ibid., 10–11.
[322] For orthodox political activism in this period, see: Tobias Grill, "The Politicisation of traditional Polish Jewry: Orthodox German rabbis and the founding of Agudas Ho-Ortodoksim and Dos yidishe vort in Gouvernement-General Warsaw, 1916-18," *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (2009): 227–47. See also: Goldstein, "Beginnings of the Zionist Movement," 114–30.
[323] Julius Berger, *The Polish Jews in the World War. Internal Report, April 1916*, CZA Z3/166

backwardness almost necessarily subjected them to either primitive religious superstition or alien interests, exerted on them by traitors and agents of a foreign nation (either Russian or Polish). The only ones who could possibly give agency to the Jewish masses and lift them from their miserable situation, were the nationalists, first and foremost the Zionists. Eventually, the prince who would awaken the sleeping nation would have to come from outside. Nothing less than a civilizing mission motivated German Zionists, as well as other German-Jewish parties, as they looked towards the East.[324]

In the eyes of German Zionists travelling to the East in various capacities, the perception of the Polish Jews evoked almost mythical images of a Jewish nation – a dormant one, led by the wrong people but a nation's raw material one could work with:

"For the first time in my life I became aware that a Jewish nation still existed. Here in Lodz I saw Jews in their own traditional dress, with their own language, with their own newspapers but not printed in the language of the country, a Jewish populace clearly distinct from the population at large. I saw Jewish porters, factory workers, bearded Jews in caftan and small-visored cap working in all sorts of trades and professions. Lodz was an important factory city whose major products were textiles for the Russian market. There were a number of well-to-do assimilated Jews, but also prosperous Hassidic Jews. The masses, however, lived in the ghetto in bitter poverty, which the war had aggravated even more."[325]

This experience, as Stephen Poppel put it "seemed to confirm the Zionist vision of the reality of the Jewish people,"[326] but it was nonetheless an ambiguous experience. This perception of Poland's Jews largely determined the approach German Zionists took towards their work in the Generalgouvernement. While their appearance in traditional clothing, speaking their own language, seemed to affirm the Zionist claim of the existence of a Jewish nation, this nation nevertheless presented itself to them in a rather unappealing way, and the masses of the population were commonly described as remaining on "the lowest cultural level."[327] This alleged backwardness of Polish Jewry entailed the idea that they were ignorant and incapable of understanding the complexities of the modern world, wherefore the (German) Zionists had the duty to enlighten and guide them. In a report on a journey to Poland in February 1916,

[324] See for example the document: Julius Berger, *Deutsche Juden und Polnische Juden*, ca. 1916, CZA, Z3/715. An altered version of the text was later published in Martin Buber's journal *Der Jude*, June 1916 and led to quite some discussions (see below)
[325] Walter Wolff, *Memoirs of a German Jew*, LBI-A, ME-957, 23.
[326] Poppel, *Zionism in Germany*, 78.
[327] Max Bodenheimer, *Neue Verwaltungsgesetze in Russisch-Polen*, undated (1916), CZA, A15/710.

Bodenheimer, Friedemann, and Sobernheim explained why for instance Jews in Warsaw did not fully appreciate German occupation.

"Based on our conversations, we gained the impression that the undoubtedly well-meaning measures of the German administration do not everywhere receive the understanding that they deserve. The reason is that the masses of the population, which remains on a relatively low level of culture, at first only realizes the obvious conditions, that the economic conditions have worsened significantly, and that even compared to earlier times, the freedom of movement is restricted. Of course, they blame the authorities because they lack the necessary insight into political and military necessities."[328]

After he returned from this journey, Adolf Friedemann noted in his dairy: "Our administration is actually unpopular everywhere in Poland. This is in part because during the war the economic situation became almost unbearable. But it is also because one does not understand how to talk to people. And talking is so important in all politically underdeveloped countries!"[329] There is a certain contradiction. While privately, Friedemann saw a problem of miscommunication on the German side as well, the official report emphasized the shortcomings on the Jews' part, suggesting not only responsibility, but also whose side the Committee for the East chose to be more suitable for their cause.

In the perception of the Western Zionists, 'culture', often framed as 'civilization', 'modernity', or 'morality' could not exist in the East; definitely not amongst the Eastern Jews, at least not as long as they were still dormant or alienated from their nation. As Max Bodenheimer wrote in a letter to his wife from Łódź:

"Everywhere, one can see the spirit of the German administration. The streets are as clean as they have probably never been before, since they came into existence, a[nd] with the marvelous weather, this makes for a great general picture, so that, if one does not look at the people there, one might believe to be in a city in the Rhineland. Of course, this is only true for the main streets. One can see a lot of wretchedness in the side streets. This misery is observable mainly in the big cities, a[nd] especially in Lodz [this was the only big city in Poland he had visited at that point; JR]. There [one can also observe] the moral degeneration of the population, which is especially bad amongst the Jews. Amongst the majority, there is nothing left of the [former] morality of Jewish family life. Over 50% of the prostitutes here are Jewish a[nd] also the licentiousness of the upscale-bourgeois society is horrific. It is an open secret that the majority of Jewish girls who had h[itherto] received a very good education in Polish schools, are offering themselves in the most obscene ways to German soldiers a[nd] officers."[330]

---

[328] Max Bodenheimer, Adolf Friedemann, Moritz Sobernheim*, Report on the Journey to Warsaw, 14. January until 16 February 1916*, JMB-A, MF13-1.
[329] Adolf Friedemann, *Diary*, Entry of 21.02.1916, CZA, A8/10.
[330] Max Bodenheimer, *Letter to Rosa Bodenheimer*, 17.05.1915, CZA A15/848.

The contrast between the German spirit of order and cleanliness and the filth of the East, as Bodenheimer perceived it, correlated to the idea of who had and who did not have agency in the political sphere and who, in return, represented modernity and all the positive features associated with it. Not only is it remarkable that he ignored the economic plight that forced women into prostitution and saw this as a problem of immorality, but also that he seemed to regard the fact that they had received a foreign, non-national education, as connected to, or even a precondition, for their 'immoral' behavior.[331] Even the German Morality Police (*Sittenpolizei*) in Łódź acknowledged that it was the immense poverty, unemployment, and misery that forced Jewish women into prostitution, rather than supposed moral shortcomings.[332]

The image of the Jewish woman in the East is of special interest here. Sammy Gronemann, stationed in Ober Ost, wrote in his memoirs: "I noted the great number of beautiful women. I believe that nowhere in the world I have seen so much female beauty as in Kowno or Wilna."[333] He wrote about widespread prostitution of Jewish women but described his own encounters as merely romantic flirts.[334] He also mentioned that the "young girls" rejected the Westerners' idea of Jewish women's moral failure. "They especially asked us not to judge by the impression and that, given the many intrusive initiations [*aufdringliche Anreisser*] with their sometimes rather questionable offers, we should not draw conclusions over the moral low point of the Jewish women."[335] The phenomenon of Jewish prostitution in East-Central Europe had been well known and was widely discussed in the years leading up to the war, especially in the context of trafficking of women from East-Central Europe to the West and the Americas.[336] For German Zionists, their encounter with Jewish women in Eastern Europe, especially in the context of prostitution, and the way they interpreted these experiences was part of a quasi-orientalist view of East European Jewry in general. To the extent that they projected their nationalist imagination onto them, so much more insulting it was to their national feelings,

[331] This was typical for the nationalist discourse over prostitution in the region in general. As Keely Stauter-Halsted observed in regard to the Polish context: "The women who lined the streets […] were depicted as distinctly un-Polish […]. Despite bearing all the cultural markings of Polish national membership, their social origins branded them as outside the world of Poland's elite actors." Keely Stauter-Halsted, *The Devil's Chain: Prostitution and Social Control in Partitioned Poland* (Itahaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2015), 338.
[332] Chef der Sittenpolizei Lodz, *Letter to Łódzka Gmina Wyznaniowa Żydowska*, 28.01.1916, Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (APL), 228/0/-/45; Chef der Sittenpolizei Lodz, *Letter to Łódzka Gmina Wyznaniowa Żydowska*, 01.03.1916, APL, 228/0/-/45. The head of the Morality Police noted that 35 percent of the prostitutes were Jewish, which was only slightly more than their numerical share of the population. On the conditions of prostitutions in war-time Poland, see: Stauter-Halsted, *Devil's Chain*, 314–21.
[333] Sammy Gronemman, *Erinnerungen*, LBI-A, ME-203, 273.
[334] Ibid., 273–5.
[335] Ibid. 273.
[336] Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (New York: Schocken Books, 1983); Marion Kaplan, "Prostitution, Morality, Crusaders and Feminism: German-Jewish Feminists and the Campaign against White Slavery," *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 5, No. 6 (1982): 619–27; Statuter-Halsted, *Devil's Chain*, 189–95.

when these images were crushed, especially in what they perceived as the most intimate way. See for example Robert Weltsch's letter to Martin Buber, describing his reaction to seeing Jewish prostitutes and listening to his fellow soldiers making lewd jokes about them. "I probably never felt the humiliation of our people so painfully as then and felt a burning shame and a terrible feeling of powerlessness because I could not protest, and [I felt] an angry revulsion over the daughters of Israel, who relinquish the honor of their royal blood."[337] Weltsch, who was a Zionist activist from Prague and then served at the Eastern Front, attributed "this terrible national tragedy" to both material poverty and moral degeneration, which had existed previously, but the war had made everything worse. He juxtaposed those women's "inner weakness" with a group of girls who consciously refused to become prostitutes but instead kept their bodies and souls clean and pure, learned Hebrew, and held their heads up high. "These girls have understood what nationalism is. Nationalism is not a program of slogans, but a program for life. The will to sanctify life, the will to stand for the recovery and the purity of the community."[338]

In many respects, the German Zionists' view of the Jews in the countries to which they came as part of a conquering army, or at least in its wake, to a large extent mirrored existing views of 'the East' as they prevailed among large segments of German and generally Western society at the time. The representation of failures, shortcomings, and things that were unpleasant as being an essential part of the people's character and culture was a common theme. Even where material conditions were mentioned, they only contributed to the pre-existing moral, cultural, or other misery. The essentialization of Eastern European Jewry in this view was both a confirmation of a nationalist image those Zionists had about the existence of a non-assimilated Jewish nation, and at the same time confirmed hierarchical relations between themselves and the Jews in the conquered regions.

A Civilizing Mission

After having achieved very little with the German authorities in Poland, it was with a lot of frustration that Victor Jacobson, a member of the Zionist Executive, wrote to his friend Jacob Fränkel in Munich in October 1915:

[337] *Der Jude*, November 1916. The article was a letter sent by Weltsch to the journal's editor Martin Buber in May. See: Berkowitz, *Western Jewry*, 14–15.
[338] *Der Jude*, November 1916. Again compare this to Stauter-Halsted's analysis of Polish-nationalists discourse over prostitution: "Indeed, the moral code of Polish values was in many respects measured against the demeanor of public women." Stauter-Halsted, *Devil's Chain*, 338.

"The situation is very complicated and the prospects of achieving anything meaningful […] are very poor. The other Jewish parties have also not achieved anything but rather received refusals. Our situation is significantly better insofar as that our comrades are working in Poland itself – of course in cooperation with us – and have a significantly better standing as a local group than those people who are just coming from Germany to Poland in order to establish their work."[339]

Unfortunately for the Zionists, however, their organization in Poland was actually in a miserable condition at the time. Not only was it small, only published a weekly journal in Hebrew, and had developed few connections with the masses of the population, but most of its leadership had either fled the German advance eastwards or had been deported by the Russian army further inland.[340] When Julius Becker, a German Zionist and editor of the *Jüdische Rundschau*, visited Warsaw in August 1915, he found the organization in a demoralized state. Referring to Warsaw's Zionists in his report to the party center in Berlin, he stated that "those gentlemen are unwilling to take any direct action or do anything related to the organization."[341] In July 1917, Julius Berger, who had spent several months in Warsaw reflected back on the previous years and the development of the organization in Poland.

"One may have differing opinions on whether Zionism in Poland should deal with present-day-work [*Gegenwartsarbeit*]. But there is no doubt that the daily hardships need to be addressed by the Zionists, but besides the Orthodox, no one in Poland has any connection whatsoever with the Jewish masses. The Zionists are a bourgeois [*balbattisch*] and academic circle."[342]

Indeed, the social composition of the Zionist activists, especially the leadership, did not reflect society at large. Of the four leading activists in Białystok, for instance, three held doctorate degrees and one seemed to own a factory.[343] In the Zionist movement in Poland in general, Ezra Mendelsohn has observed that a predominance of middle-class men with a largely secular education, often working as businessmen, doctors, or teachers, was evident. The situation was different in smaller towns, where activists usually came from more humble backgrounds and often had a more traditional education.[344]

[339] Victor Jacobson, *Letter to Jacob Fränkel*, 2.10.1915, BAB, R-1501-119802. The private letter was most likely seized by the post censors and a copy added to the Ministry of Interior's files on the administration of occupied Poland.
[340] E. Straus, *Letter to Leon Reich*, 29.10.1915, BAB, R-1501-119802.
[341] Julius Becker, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 29.08.1915, CZA, Z3/140.
[342] Julius Berger, *Referat vom 2. Juli*, 02.07.1917, CZA, Z3/168.
[343] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 06.02.1918, CZA, Z3/613.
[344] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 60.

German Jewish activists, Zionists and 'assimilationists' alike, explained the alleged lack of initiative and organization with the experience of oppression under Russian rule, which had allegedly made Poland's Jews incapable of voicing their own interests.[345] This trope continued to be a major factor in the way Western activists viewed the Jews of the East, even once Russian rule had long passed. It seemed to be part of a general concept, the lack of initiative, the lack of agency seemed to be part of the Eastern Jews' essential character. From this, Western activists derived their civilizing mission.

Many of the new organizational efforts were in fact undertaken by German Zionists drafted into the army, such as Walter Wolff who was serving in the military administration in Warsaw and recalled the regular meetings of German Zionist officers and soldiers and their close coordination with Warsaw's Zionist groups.[346] But the German Zionists' expectations of what national work should look like differed significantly from those of local activists. What the Zionists in Berlin – who represented no less than the World Organization – initially regarded to be proper Zionist work was rather traditional: the collection of the Shekel and funds to support the project in Palestine. Local organizations repeatedly asked the Central Bureau in Berlin to send them money, relief goods like clothes, and so on, arguing not only that the plight of the Jewish masses in their respective towns made this necessary but also that it would be a great opportunity to make the local Zionist organization popular amongst these masses. While the responses from the Center tended to differ, usually giving more favorable responses to petitions from larger cities, activists such as D. Rzepkowicz from Kalisz were told that all efforts had to be focused on Palestine in order to support the Zionist settlements there.[347]

Reiterating the paternalistic view German Zionists had of their Eastern brethren, Julius Berger, a member of the Inner Zionist Action Committee, reported on his fruitless efforts to re-organize what he regarded as proper Zionist work in Warsaw, which "has not made a particularly pleasant impression on me; what I have seen in regard to the N.[ational] F.[und] collection surpassed everything I have ever seen in regard to disorder and lack of understanding and technical aspects."[348] In his lengthy report on the conditions in Warsaw Berger again bemoaned the organizational miseries of Warsaw's Jews: "the non-organized, the completely disorganized, this curious rejection of anything organizational, which almost seems to be an expression of the peoples' character."[349] In some respects, this – still unacceptable –

[345] Paul Nathan, *Report on the Journey to Poland*, 23.04.1915, BAB, R-1501-119779.
[346] Walter Wolff, *Memoirs of a German Jews*, LBI-A, ME 957, 24–25.
[347] D. Rzepkowicz, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 09.12.1915, CZA, Z3/141. Response: Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to D. Rzepkowicz*, 14.01.1916, CZA, Z3/141.
[348] Julius Berger, *Report on JNF activities in Warsaw*, 16.03.1916, CZA, Z3/141.
[349] Julius Berger, *The Polish Jews in the World War. Internal Report, April 1916*, CZA, Z3/166.

thoughtlessness seemed understandable, given that one "needs to use every minute of the day to get some work and bread."[350] In general, however, this characterization and essentialization of the character of the Eastern Jews in Berger's and other Western Zionists' views is important in understanding their approach to national work in the East. From this view, they derived the legitimacy for their civilizing mission in the East, summed up in a rhetorical question in regard to the Zionist school's modern curriculum. "But maybe, every school that we establish represents a crime against the soul of the Jewish people, maybe Zionism, as expressed in this knowledge [the curriculum; JR] and in the way it is brought to those people, is merely an implementation of Western European things into Asia."[351]

It took Berger some time until he realized that the political demands raised by the Zionists in the East – for nationalized schools, personal-national autonomy, and so on – simply failed to meet the Jewish masses' needs and concerns, leaving the Zionist activists not only socially and culturally but also politically isolated from the vast majority of the population:

"The Jewish masses' misery is completely alien to them [the Zionists; JR]. The Jewish masses who spend their lives in squalor in the basements of Warsaw know nothing of all those things and our Zionists know nothing of the conditions and the opinions of the Jewish masses. To them, they [the masses; JR] are as alien as they are to the Western European who comes there. They also do not want to have anything to do with them and keep away from this great poverty, just as the assimilationists abhor any contact with the Polish Jews."[352]

Berger continued with the problem that the political issues discussed by the Zionists, such as the discussions over national autonomy, were of no interest to the Jewish masses, even if they might objectively be important for them. He suggested instead that Zionism, responding to ancient beliefs, might trigger interests, even if Palestine was far away. The problem was not Zionism in and by itself, according to Berger, but the activists and their estrangement from the masses of the people.

"If we demand from Zionism today that it may deal with the demands of daily life, one needs to take into account that this does not refer to demands from which the popular masses would [actually] benefit. The great mass lives on in such literal ignorance and dullness and has just some ideas in religious and national respects. The word Zion still seems to gain some traction amongst it. […] The term Zionism works [as a political slogan; JR]. What is missing, however, is an inner relationship between the bourgeois circles and the popular masses, what is lacking is a love for the people. None of those boys and girls wanted to go to the quarters of misery and work there. For

[350] Ibid.
[351] Julius Berger, *Referat vom 2. Juli*, 02.07.1917, CZA, Z3/168.
[352] Ibid.

this small work, there was not the slightest understanding or helpfulness. It is of course also not without danger to go there, but this not the main point."[353]

There is little evidence that Polish Zionists openly challenged their German comrades' views, not least since they were dependent on them in many respects. When criticism was raised, it was usually rather tame and tried to avoid offending the Zionist leadership in Berlin too harshly. Responding to a polemic between the Committee for the East and Julius Berger in the German-Jewish press over the correct national politics of the Jews in Poland,[354] *HaTsefirah* responded that "The man who sits in Frankfurt or Berlin, shall not lecture the Zionists in Warsaw whom to elect as their leaders."[355]

Conclusion

When the war broke out, Zionists in all belligerent countries enthusiastically supported it. It was the general atmosphere of war enthusiasm that captured the predominantly young, middle-class, nationalist men, and all believed that supporting their country's cause would improve the chances of accomplishing the Zionist program. In this respect, German Zionists found themselves in an extraordinary position when the German army conquered large parts of the Pale of Settlement and the Kingdom of Poland, granting them access to the masses of Eastern European Jewry. While there were differences in the approach of those German Zionists, they generally mirrored the imperial German concept of bringing civilization and culture to the East. When they encountered the Jews of Poland and Lithuania, they saw the dormant nation they had been writing and talking about for many years and saw it as their responsibility to awaken and enlighten them. This is most notable in the image German Zionists gained (and painted) of East European Jewry, as both the core of the nation, and at the same time the nation's most underdeveloped part. This approach would be decisive in the following years, when it came to actual national work on the ground in the newly conquered regions.

The different occupation regimes, the political practices there, and the standing of the Zionists in them were of great importance for subsequent years. As the following chapter will show, where the German Zionists' top-down paternalistic approach was fully implemented, the

[353] Ibid.
[354] Berger's article: *Der Jude*, June 1916. The Committee for the East's response: *Frankfurter Israelitisches Familienblatt*, 14.07.1916. Berger's counter-response: *Jüdische Rundschau*, 04.08.1916.
[355] *HaTsefirah*, 23.08.1916. The article generally supported the position of Julius Berger against the Committee for the East. The mentioning of both Frankfurt and Berlin, however, clearly indicates that Warsaw Zionists did not want to be patronized be either of them (*Der Jude* and *Jüdische Rundschau* were published in Berlin, whereas the *Frankfurter Israelitsches Familienblatt* was published in Frankfurt am Main).

effects were significantly different compared to those cases, where political and relief work was organized bottom-up by local activists. Where Zionists were part of the administration, notably in Ober Ost, political activism would develop in very different ways than in the Generalgouvernement. Eventually, what seemed to be a great asset in Ober Ost – being part of the administration – would bring about disastrous consequences for the Zionist movement there, as it was associated with a brutal occupation regime. At the same time, the failure of this approach in the Generalgouvernement meant that local Zionist activists were better-equipped at pushing back on their German comrades' dominance over them and shaped activism in very distinct ways according to their local needs and ideas.

Chapter 2: Political Power

"'Getting money means getting political power'. Whoever can open another soup kitchen gets thousands more followers. Whoever can feed and clothe 'his' children in school wins their families as supporters. Welfare activities have become a tool of political power."[356]

It was with a lot of frustration over what seemed to be petty squabbles over resources and finances amongst Warsaw's Jewish political parties that a representative of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) reported on the situation on the ground in 1916. In fact, he captured the political struggles and activities that dominated Jewish political life in large parts of East-Central Europe during the period quite well. The organization of relief for the Jewish population soon became the primary concern of all activists. This chapter analyzes how relief work for the Jewish population in East-Central Europe came to be the primary space of political activism for the Zionist movement and how it was the basis for the development of the organization. This played out very differently in regions with varying social and political traditions and conditions. The chapter shows how local activists adapted to those conditions and how different tactics produced often very different results. Scholars have discussed the 'politics of relief' in the past, showing how it was a key feature in Jewish political activism during the war and how it contributed to politicization and changing relations in the region.[357] Relief work was always political, even if those engaged in it were not aware of this or unwilling to admit it. The war created a situation in which relief became the primary, sometimes the only, form of political activism, both locally and transnationally. To be sure, relief activities were not the only form of activism that Zionists (and other Jewish political actors) employed, or tried to employ, during this period. However, as this form of activism responded to the pressing needs of the population, and because the political conditions of war and occupation often did not allow for anything else, this became the primary form of activism, of struggle amongst various political movements, and the most central aspect that would determine the standing of the political movement in Jewish society.

---

[356] Unknown Author, *Report on a Journey to Warsaw, 25. March to 7 April 1916 to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee*, April 1916, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Archive (JDC), New York AR 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.2.

[357] Jaclyn Granick, "Waging relief: the politics and logistics of American Jewish war relief in Europe and the Near East (1914–1918)," *First World War Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2014): 55–68; Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 39–43; Motta, *Great War*; Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 83–90; Zosa Szajkowski, "Jewish Relief in Eastern Europe, 1914–1917," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, No. 1 (1965): 24–56; Chiara Tessaris, "The war relief work of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in Poland and Lithuania, 1915–18," *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2010): 127–44. See also: Tara Zahra, "'Every nation only cares for its own': Empire, Nation, and Child Welfare in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1918," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 111, No. 5 (2006): 1378–402; Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls*.

Effects of the War I: The Habsburg Empire

When the war broke out and the Russian army unexpectedly advanced into Galicia the Austrian government was completely unprepared for these events and struggled to find appropriate responses. Eventually, a great number of the population either fled westwards or were evacuated/deported by the authorities.[358] Those who stayed behind not only witnessed the destruction of their towns and the collapse of the local economy but also faced a Russian administration that was profoundly anti-Jewish.[359] Hunger was widespread and thousands of children whose parents had been killed, or who had been separated from them during the chaos of the invasion, were left unattended.[360] When the Russian troops retreated from the region in 1915, they deported large segments of the Jewish population living near the front eastward into Russia.[361] The horrors were captured by S. Ansky (Shloyme Zanvl Rappoport), who had followed the Russian army on behalf of Evreiskii Komitet Pomoshchi Zhertvam Voiny (Jewish Committee for the Relief of War Victims; EKOPO).

"The road to Brody was flanked by burned and desolate cottages. In the distance we saw a broad field covered with ruins. Soon the devastated town emerged from the grey mist of an early winter morning. There were blackened chimneys and burned walls as far as we could see, visible beneath a dusting of downy snow. The town looked like the ancient, mossy remnants of Pompeii. I noticed the scorched wall of a synagogue. Above the door, some Hebrew words had survived: How awesome is this place [from Genesis 28:17]."[362]

In his diary, writing on 17 January 1915, he also reflected on the poverty and the discrimination suffered by the Jews in the context of the city's destruction. "But throngs of poor children run you over at every turn. I gave several of them each one coin, was about to give one to another, and suddenly one of the first I'd given to screams at me with horror in his eyes: 'Don't give him anything – he's a Jew!'"[363]

---

[358] Beatrix Hoffmann-Holter, "*Abreisendmachung": Jüdische Kriegsflüchtlinge in Wien, 1914–1923* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1995), 23–30; Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 67–74; Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 66–7.
[359] Peter Holquist, "The Role of Personality in the First (1914–1915) Russian Occupation of Galicia and Bukovina," in *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History*, ed. Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan M. Meir, and Israel Bartal (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 52–73; Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 24–62; Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten*, 169–231.
[360] Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization, *Report on the Situation of the Jews in Occupied Galicia*, 1915, CZA L6/313; American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, *Memorandum zur Hilfsaktion für die Juden Galiziens und der Bukowina*, probably fall 1915, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/6/1/106.
[361] Unknown Author, *Report on the Situation in East Galicia*, 13.08. (31.07.) 1915, YIVO RG 348 Folder 129. See also the collection of Russian military orders for the expulsion of Jews in Galicia in the files of Lucien Wolf: YIVO, RG 348 Folder 58.
[362] S. An-Sky, *The Enemy at His Pleasure: A Journey through the Jewish Pale of Settlement during World War I* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2004), 66.
[363] S. A. An-Sky, *1915 Diary of S. An-sky: A Russian Jewish writer at the Eastern Front*, Translated from the Russian and with an Introduction by Polly Zavadivker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), 50–1.

The Habsburg authorities were completely unprepared to deal with masses of refugees who fled the Russian advance. Erna Segal, originally from Lwów, then living in Vienna, recalled this in her memoirs. "One day, Vienna was caught by a new scare. People were standing in every street, telling each other in an agitated way that the Northern Train Station, where only weeks earlier the troops had been sent off, was crammed with thousands of refugees from Galicia. Nobody knew what to do with those people, the refugees themselves knew it the least."[364] Refugees streamed westwards, mainly to the big cities like Cracow, Prague, Budapest, and Vienna. The overwhelmed authorities were incapable of producing reliable numbers but estimates range between 340,000 and 600,000 refugees from Galicia alone, with more than half of them being Jewish.[365] Whoever could not make it to the big cities was accommodated in hastily constructed refugee camps, which were largely separated according to ethnicity and religion, an aspect that Moravian Zionists applauded as a de facto recognition of the Jewish nation.[366] The conditions in the camps, especially at the beginning, were often appalling for all their inhabitants, regardless of ethnicity and religion.[367] In a letter to the Viennese Jewish Community Board, refugees in the Nikolsburg (Mikulov) camp, for instance, described malnutrition, disease, and overcrowding.[368] The Israelitische Allianz zu Wien, which did most of the relief work in the refugee camps collected many accounts on similarly miserable conditions in camps throughout the monarchy.[369]

Just as all other Jewish organizations, Zionists concentrated their efforts on relief work for the refugees. For them, the westward relocation of large segments of the Eastern Jewish population also meant they relocated their own activism and did 'Galician' Zionist work amongst the refugees. From the fall of 1914 onwards, those local Zionist organizations that had remained somewhat intact and functional concentrated fully on relief work for the refugees.[370]

---

[364] Erna Segal, *Memoirs* (1956), LBI ME-594, 16–17.
[365] Hoffmann-Holter, *Abreisendmachung*, 29–30.
[366] Mährisch-Schlesisches Zionistisches Distriktkomitee, *Circular to all Members*, November 1914, CZA, Z3/828.
[367] Judson, *Habsburg Empire*, 410–5; Walter Mentzel, "Kriegserfahrungen von Flüchtlingen aus dem Nordosten der Monarchie während des Ersten Weltkriegs," in *Jenseits des Schützengrabens. Der Erste Weltkrieg im Osten: Erfahrungen–Wahrnehmungen–Kontext*, ed. Bernhard Bachinger and Wolfram Dornik (Innsbruck, Vienna, Bozen: Studienverlag, 2013), 359–90.
[368] Jüdische Flüchtlinge aus Galizien und der Bukowina in Nikolsburg, *Letter to Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien*, 13.12.1914, CAHJP, A-W/357.1
[369] On Rumburg (Rumburk) and Rumpersdorf (Roprachtice) in Bohemia, see: RGVA-OA, f675k o1 d78. On Königsberg (Kynšperk nad Ohří) in Bohemia, see: RGVA-OA, f675k o1 d19. On Auspitz (Hustopeče) in Moravia, see: RGVA-OA, f675k o1 d79. On Ungarisch-Hradisch (Uherské Hradiště/Magyarhradis) in Moravia, see: RGVA-OA, f675k o1 d77. On Kladen (Kladno) in Bohemia, see: RGVA-OA, f675k o1 d82. On the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien's relief work for refugees, see: Siegel, *Österreichisches Judentum*, 231–7. In regard to the refugee camp in Nikolsburg, see especially the files of Rabbi Moritz Lewin: CAHJP, CS/191.
[370] Mährisch-Schlesisches Zionistisches Distriktkomitee Troppau, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 14.10.1914, CZA, Z3/828; Karl Pollak, *Letter to Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für West-Oesterreich*, 19.08.1914,

While the attempt to re-establish the *Tagblat* (Daily Paper) from Lwów in Vienna[371] eventually failed, the Galician organization's Shekel was sold amongst the refugees, although with little success.[372]

Effects of the War II: The Generalgouvernement and Ober Ost

In German-occupied Poland, the Jews were living "from day to day" as *Haynt*, one of the two leading daily Yiddish papers in Warsaw, declared, from which the writer drew the conclusion that everyone had to help the suffering population. "For Jews in whom there beats a Jewish heart […] there can be only one kind of work today, relief work to aid our tens of thousands of persecuted."[373] The outbreak of the war brought hitherto unseen miseries to the Jews in the region. The German occupation of Poland had led to an almost complete collapse of the local economy. Not only had the German advance broken the connection between the Polish and Russian economies, which had developed in close interdependence in the previous decades, but the German war efforts required the extraction of most of the raw materials which were not replaced with deliveries from Germany, and the dismantling of machines and their transport westwards. Additionally, some German companies, most notably in the textile industry, were eager to destroy their potential Polish competition, especially in Łódź.[374] The Jewish population, traditionally relegated to the lowest strata of the economy and therefore especially vulnerable in times of political and economic upheaval, suffered the most.[375]

In Warsaw, a representative of the Copenhagen-based Jewish Relief Committee reported to the Joint Distribution Committee in New York, on how desperate the conditions of the Jewish masses were.

"What we saw surpassed even our worst apprehensions. In moist, dark, underground dwellings were until [sic!] ten people huddled together. The air there was unbearable. There is a great want of employment in Warsaw and even the middle-class is dependent on charity and not very much better off than the working-class. Fairly well off is only the small number of wealthy people for with money you can almost get anything in Warsaw even live fish

CZA, Z3/840; Zionistisches Distriktkomitee für West-Oesterreich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 10.10.1914, CZA, Z3/840.

[371] Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Robert Weltsch*, 05.10.1915, CZA, A167/12.

[372] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Leon Reich*, 31.12.1914, CZA, Z3/507. For a personal account on the relief work for Galician refugees in Vienna, see: Max Grunwald, *Autobiography (manuscript)*, CAHJP, P97/3.

[373] *Haynt*, 06.09.1915. Quoted in: Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 46. On the impact of the war on the population of Warsaw, see: Blobaum, *Minor Apocalypse*.

[374] Erwin Steinitzer, *Bericht über eine Studienreise im Generalgouvernement Warschau (2. bis 15. Juni 1917)*, BAB, R-1501-114442. Steinitzer, an economist, had been sent by the German Ministry of Interior to investigate the conditions in the Generalgouvernement.

[375] Ibid. On the Jewish place in the economy, see: Peled, *Class Struggle*.

from Denmark. […] Through [sic!] the undernourishment of the great masses various epidemic diseases broke out. It is of course the children who are worst off. For the normal development of their tiny bodies they need a proportionate nourishment and this is the very thing which cannot be procured for the poor population."[376]

Poverty, starvation, and crime that resulted from these conditions, were widespread. A great number of the legal cases brought before the German prosecutor in Warsaw had to do with the theft of foodstuff or forging of ration cards.[377] One of the worst examples for the misery that the war brought could be seen in Łódź. Already in January 1915, Paul Nathan of the German Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden (Aid-association of German Jews) reported on the situation in the city that 340,000 of its 500,000 inhabitants depended on some form of welfare in order to survive. While the unemployed factory workers, at least initially, received some kind of support from their companies, of the 30,000 Jewish textile workers only 5,000 had actually worked in factories, while the rest toiled as 'independents' in their own homes, supplying the big factories. They were the first to lose their jobs and they received no benefits. Widespread malnutrition led to a 50 percent rise in mortality rates, while child mortality doubled compared to the previous years.[378] What made the situation even worse, and what came to be at the center of Zionist attention and efforts, was the alleged discrimination against the Jewish population by the citizens' committees, primarily composed of members of the upper classes, Christian Poles and so-called 'polonized' Jews. Jews – the Zionists were eager to make clear – were discriminated against as a nation, not only by the Poles but also by their treacherous elites who did not speak for their nation but rather chose to side with the Poles against them. This was both the legitimization for organizing welfare work directed to only specific sectors of the society, and a challenge to the community's established leadership.[379] However, the discrimination was only part of the story. The non-sectarian citizens' committee welfare work, for instance, was not only criticized for allegedly disregarding Jewish interests, but 'non-assimilated' Jews were actively discouraged by Zionists from participating in them.[380] A letter from Łódź stated: "The Jewish members of the citizen's committee are too spineless to push through a just treatment of the Jewish population in regard to the distribution of welfare funds, against the Poles."[381] The only solution in the eyes of the Zionists was therefore ending cooperation with the Poles

[376] Alfred Heyman, *Report on the Situation of the Jews in Warsaw and Łódź*, June 1916, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.2. Heyman had been there as part of an official delegation together with two German members of parliament and the Warsaw administration's head of the Department of Jewish Affairs.
[377] See the files of the German state prosecutor in Warsaw: Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie (APW), 642.
[378] Paul Nathan, *Report on the Journey to Poland*, 23.04.1915, BAB, R-1501-119779.
[379] Max Bodenheimer, *Report on the Journey to Poland in May/June 1915*, 1915, BAB, R-1501-119779.
[380] Franz Oppenheimer, *Letter to Max Bodenheimer*, 15.06.1915, CZA, A15/658.
[381] Max Bodenheimer, *Letter to Franz Oppenheimer*, 24.06.1915, CZA, A15/658.

and the 'assimilationists' and organizing welfare exclusively through Jewish institutions.[382] At the same time, the Kahal was completely overwhelmed by the extent of the poverty. Its social funds were exhausted after a few months and it was incapable of financially sustaining its social activities and of conducting the necessary relief work in the city.[383]

As a response to the social crisis, the various political movements began to work in relief and welfare. The first to do so were not the Zionists but the Yiddishist, diaspora-nationalist Yidishe Folkspartey (Jewish People's Party) of Noach Prilutsky. The Folkists, as they were called, fully engaged in relief- and welfare-activities, which earned them great respect and support in large segments of the Jewish population, which led to a sweeping victory in the elections to the Warsaw city council in 1916.[384] They were successful, to a certain extent, because they could convincingly make the point that while they were fighting for the daily needs of Jews here and now, Zionists were only concerned with a distant future in a far-away land.[385] The relationship between the Folkists and the Zionists has been well-researched.[386] It is important here to note that the activities of the Folkists were another important factor, which in the general condition of poverty and starvation forced Zionist activists to engage in relief work. Relief work would be the focus of national work in the regions affected by the war. This was not only a necessity but an opportunity "to rally the entire Jewish people for the relief work, to be at the center of the relief work as a stimulating and indirectly leading organ. The [general] relief work lacks an authoritative body, a role that the Zionist Organization nolens volens will have to fill."[387]

A Zionist activist described the sad conditions in Wilno, stating that of the city's 55,000 Jews, 45,000 were in desperate need of aid just to get their one hundred grams of bread and 110 grams of pearl barley per day.[388] Another unnamed activist (most likely a German Zionist who served there in the army) reported from the city:

---

[382] Ibid.
[383] Łódzka Gmina Starozakonnych, *Sprawozdanie Zarządu Łódzkiej Gminy Starozakonnych za 1916 rok.*, 1917, APL, 166/0/82; Łódzka Gmina Starozakonnych, *Sprawozdanie Zarządu Łódzkiej Gminy Starozakonnych za 1917 rok.*, 1918, APL, 166/0/82; Łódzka Gmina Starozakonnych, *Sprawozdanie za 1918 rok.*, 1919, APL, 166/0/82.
[384] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 50–1.
[385] For example: *Varshaver Tagblat*, 21.01.1917.
[386] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 50–3; Marcos Silber, "The development of a joint political program for the Jews of Poland during World War I – success and failure," *Jewish History*, No. 19 (2005): 211–26; Marcos Silber, *Le'umiuyt Shonah*; Keith Weiser, *Jewish people, Yiddish nation: Noah Prylucki and the Folkists in Poland* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2011).
[387] Unknown Author, *Der Zionismus und die Hilfsarbeit*, November 1917, CZA, Z3/613.
[388] Unknown Author, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin*, 09.07.1917, CZA, Z3/145.

"All foodstuffs are exorbitantly expensive (3–4 times higher than the prices in Warsaw) and bread is only available in limited amounts, for a price which makes it a luxury good, even for the rich. […] If one walks from the busy streets to the silent quarters, one can see on the open street, women and children writhing in hunger-cramps and crying in pain. […] In peace times, an average of 100 people died every month, in January 1917 the chief rabbi received 300 burial announcements."[389]

From Kowno a report described that after the German occupation, "the city looked horrific. A part of the city has suffered from the bombardment, the shops and houses had been plundered and the flats had been occupied by the military."[390] While the region was hit by similar catastrophic effects of the war, which led to the collapse of the economy of other regions under occupation, the Ober Ost policy of restricting movement between the various administrative districts[391] was an additional factor in ruining (Jewish) merchants.[392] Unemployment skyrocketed and a report from Kowno stated that "social life has completely ceased."[393] The army, another unnamed activist reported, had requisitioned most valuable goods and handed out vouchers as 'payment', which were then not accepted in return. Most people had lost their work, and the forced-labor 'wages' could not compensate for any of these circumstances, while prices for foodstuff had risen between 500 and 2000 percent.[394]

Relief in Austria: "What kind of work you do is not the decisive question"

The first attempts to organize welfare in the Habsburg Empire did not necessarily have a particular national content but should be understood in the wider context of the outbreak of the war, the societal pressure that came with it, and the necessity that everyone would prove a contribution to society's collective efforts. The initial aim of the Zionists was to prove that the Jewish nation was just as much part of the war effort as any other nation. The Bohemian District Committee therefore proposed organizing "not a special welfare for the Jews, but general welfare carried out by Jews."[395] At the time, they tried to connect this with their Palestine-related program. Soon after the outbreak of the war, the local groups of the Moravian-Silesian

[389] Unknown Author, *Report on the Situation in Wilno*, 1917, CZA, Z3/145.
[390] Unknown Author, *Report on the economic and cultural situation of the Jews of Kowno before and during the war*, undated, JMB-A, MF13-1.
[391] Liulevicius, *War Land*, 89–91; 102–4.
[392] Unknown Author, *Report on the Situation in Wilno*, ca. 1917, CZA, Z3/169.
[393] Unknown Author, *Report on the situation of the Jews of Kowno before and during the war*, ca. 1917, CZA, A15/710.
[394] Unknown Author, *Report on the Situation in Ober Ost*, ca. 1916, CZA, Z3/131-2.
[395] Zionistisches Distriktbureau für Böhmen in Prag, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 01.09.1914, CZA, Z3/779.

Zionist Organization collected money for the Turkish Red Crescent,[396] despite the Ottoman ambassador in Berlin making clear that they could not expect to derive any political claims from those generous donations.[397]

These efforts, however, were the exception. It soon became clear that it would be necessary to develop an independent relief project. The Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael; JNF) then appealed to its activists to collect money not only for Palestine but also for aiding the victims of war in Europe.[398] This in turn led to a significant increase in donations to the JNF, prompting Arthur Hantke to conclude that people were apparently much more willing to donate for humanitarian than for traditional JNF-causes.[399] The leadership simultaneously insisted on the continuation of traditional Zionist work – especially the sale of the Shekel – which, already in the first months of the war failed rather miserably, mainly due to the lack of activists involved.[400]

After the attempts to organize traditional forms of Zionist work had failed in most places under the conditions of war, activists concentrated on relief efforts for the Jewish population in East-Central Europe. Many did not necessarily want to do this. Zionism, after all, had emerged as a rejection of traditional philanthropy and advocated self-help and nationalism as the solution for Jewish suffering.[401] The decision to focus on relief work was both due to internal and external pressures in this situation when people were confronted with the misery of the refugees. Robert Stricker explained this in a letter to the Central Bureau in Berlin already in September 1914: "Our [relief] activities are due to the urgency that stems from the extreme distress amongst the refugees from Galicia and Bukovina and the necessity to help. We emphasize that it is our organization [that helps] since we have to legitimize our special activities before the public and before Zionist circles."[402]

---

[396] Mährisch-Schlesisches Zionistisches Distriktkomitee Troppau, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.11.1914, CZA, Z3/828. The Zionistische Vereinigung für Deutschland (Zionist Association for Germany) also founded an aid committee for the Turkish Red Crescent, collecting money to buy medical goods for the paramedic units of the Ottoman army. Through this, they hoped to get on good terms with the Ottoman regime and improve the standing of the Jewish community in Palestine. Jüdisches Hilfskomitee "Roter Halbmond" Berlin, *Report: "Die Türkei und die Juden"*, undated (probably 1914), CZA, L6/611.
[397] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Gustav Finzi*, 13.11.1914, CZA, Z3/828.
[398] Sammelstelle für den Jüdischen Nationalfonds in Österreich, *Circular: "An die Nationalfondskommissäre und Vertrauensmänner"*, 20.08.1914, CZA, Z3/840. These activities of the JNF have largely been ignored by the historiography, which focuses almost exclusively on the JNF's activities in regard to Palestine. See for instance: Walter Lehn, *The Jewish National Fund* (London, New York: Kegan Paul International, 1988); Zvi Shilony, *Ideology and Settlement: The Jewish National Fund, 1897–1914* (Jerusalem: Magness Press, 1998).
[399] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Shmaryahu Levin*, 26.11.1914, CZA, Z3/395.
[400] For the organizational crisis of the Zionist Organization in this situation, see Chapter 1.
[401] See the introduction.
[402] Robert Stricker, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 19.09.1914, CZA, Z3/840.

The leadership in Berlin agreed that "in this situation" energies should be focused on the refugees, and "[s]uch an intervention by the Western Austrian Zionist Organization to us not only seems to be important due to humanitarian and party-political reasons, but also for Jewish-national reasons."[403] There is no evidence that any activists rejected the idea of focusing on relief work. To a large extent, they responded to the pressures of the situation – they would have completely isolated themselves if they had not done this work. However, they continued to debate tactical questions, and how far relief work was connected to Zionist political efforts. For Robert Stricker, for instance, the situation not only required relief, but a simultaneous strong focus on traditional party propaganda.[404] For these efforts, especially for the establishment of a daily newspaper, he budgeted 25,000 to 30,000 crowns for the first half year.[405] Given that in the first sixteen months of the war the organization effectively only received donations of 12,850 Crowns for relief purposes, this plan was either a staggering miscalculation or a strong reflection of where Stricker's priorities lay.[406]

In the beginning, many of the leading activists in the center regarded the relief work as necessary, but at the same time not as a form of Zionist activity, rather as a distraction from 'real' Zionist work.[407] In the early months of the war, reports generally portrayed these two forms of activity as in contradiction to one another, often explaining the lack of Zionist work by the fact that all energies were focused on relief work.[408]

The internal debates show an apparent conflict between the central activists in Berlin and Vienna and those in the areas which were most affected by the war. This is illustrated in a debate between the center and the activists in Lwów. After the Austrians retook Galicia, the Central Bureau in Berlin sent a letter to Michael Ringel, the editor of the local Zionist paper *Tagblat*, complaining about the "slackness to do any work due to the war" and insisted on the reorganization of Zionist work in the city, mainly on collecting the Shekel.[409] Given the events in East Galicia, this complaint seems rather uninformed and harsh. Since Ringel had been drafted to the army, Zwi Bickels, his successor as editor, responded.

---

[403] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Zionistisches Zentralbüro für Westösterreich*, 25.09.1914, CZA, Z3/840.
[404] Robert Stricker, *Letter to Inner Zionist Action Committee*, 29.09.1914, CZA, Z3/520.
[405] Robert Stricker, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin (probably addressed to Arthur Hantke)*, 04.10.1914, CZA, Z3/520.
[406] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Alfred Pollak, Attachment: Report on the donations received*, 01.11.1915, CZA, Z3/186.
[407] For example: Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Mährisch-Schlesisches Zionistisches Distriktkomitee*, 19.10.1914, CZA, Z3/828.
[408] For example: Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 10.10.1914, CZA, Z3/840; Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 29.10.1914, CZA, Z3/841.
[409] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Michael Ringel*, 27.09.1915, CZA, Z3/814.

"First, it needs to be stated that due to the circumstances in Galicia, propagating any Zionist activities that have anything to do with collecting money is out of the question. The destitution in East Galicia is such that it is impossible to ask our crds. to do any other work than helping the impoverished Jewish population."[410]

East Galician Zionists had published the call for collecting the Shekel, but there had been absolutely no response and none of the activists who were left in the region was willing to do anything besides relief work.[411] The center eventually had to backtrack and concede that in this situation activists there had no other option than to concentrate on relief work. Instead – and this is the important step – they concluded that through relief work, one could do Zionist work. They replied to Bickels:

"It is absolutely necessary that the organization in Galicia appears in public again. […] What kind of work you do is not the decisive question. Even relief work, if organized correctly, can be Zionist work. It is necessary, however, that our comrades are aware that there is a Zionist Organization in Galicia and that this becomes known to other people in the region as well."[412]

The destitution of the war had left no other choice for the activists than to concentrate everything on relief. Although it took some time, even the center eventually realized that through this activity they could strengthen the movement. Relief work done by Zionists eventually became Zionist work.

Raising Funds

Besides engaged local activists, relief work required one thing above everything else: money, and as the Central European communities ran out of it, also the transnational connections to acquire it. A constant conflict in the nationalist endeavor to provide welfare revolved around the question of who would be entitled to deliver urgently-needed aid to the starving Jewish communities. In particular, the funding bodies in the United States – primarily the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee – that raised the money from a broad spectrum of people, were solicitous to guarantee that the money would be distributed according to needs and not according to party lines, in order to avoid alienating any of the donors and maintain the fragile unity of the aid organizations.[413] The same was true for the second major donor, the

[410] Zwi Bickels, *Letter to Actionskomitee der Zionistischen Organisation Berlin*, 03.11.1915, CZA, Z3/814.
[411] Ibid.
[412] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Zwi Bickels*, 11.11.1915, CZA, Z3/814.
[413] Syjonistyczny Biuro Warszawa, *Letter to the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 17.09.1916, CZA, L6/103. See also: American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, *Minutes of the Meeting*, 25.10.1915, CAHJP, M33-1. For Zionists, the fundraising in the West also had an important political dimension, of course.

Scandinavian Jewish Central Committee (Skandinavisk Jødisk Central-Komite), based in Copenhagen.[414] The German authorities did not allow any funds or goods to go directly to Poland. Everything had to go through Germany, and for this reason, the relief organizations needed partners with suitable transnational networks. The two most important were the German Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden and the Zionist Organization. This structure of funding and delivery sometimes put activists in the unpleasant situation of handing over money or goods to political competitors or at least to the central Jewish Relief Committee in Warsaw, made up by representatives of all parties. However, there was some room for flexibility. Heschel Farbstein, the main Zionist organizer in Warsaw and member of the Central Relief Committee, wrote:

"The funds are sent for universal support, therefore the distribution must have a universal character (at least pro forma). We cannot have any expenditures showing up that could be interpreted as related to the party. […] I have to face enough prejudice and slander already and if we want to gain trust, our reports must appear to be non-partisan. Mr. Pinchas Cohn [a German orthodox rabbi and co-founder of the Agudath Israel in Poland; JR] has just accused us of distributing funds for party interests and I had a heated and very embarrassing conversation with him in the presence of certain gentlemen."[415]

The struggle over the scarce funds was necessary, not only due to the extensive impoverishment of the Jewish population, but also for political reasons, in order to position the small Zionist group at the center of the Jewish communities. The attempts to organize 'classical' Zionist work in German-occupied Poland had failed to get either the local activists to participate or in obtaining much support from the wider Jewish society. However, it was clear that whoever would bring relief goods would earn immense gratitude and respect amongst the population. Whenever another body, be it non-nationalist aid committees, religious groups, or even the authorities themselves, distributed funds or goods, Zionists considered this to be a lost opportunity. Arguing for example that the delivery of badly needed grain to the Jews of Łódź should be conducted by the Zionists, and not the German authorities, Franz Oppenheimer, of the Committee for the East, wrote to his colleague Bodenheimer: "It would be a shame to protract such action, which has the potential of making us extraordinarily popular."[416]

On Relief activities of the JDC, see: Morris Engelman, *Four Years of Relief and War Work by the Jews of America: A Chronological Review, 1914–1918* (New York: Shoen, 1918); The Jewish Welfare Board, *Final Report on War Emergency Activities* (New York: The Jewish Welfare Board, 1920); Motta, *Great War*; Felix M. Warburg, Albert Lucas, *Reports Received by the Joint Distribution Committee of Funds for Jewish War Sufferers* (New York: Clarence S. Nathan, 1916); Tessaris, *War Relief*, 127–44.

[414] Skandinavisk Jødisk Central-Komite*, Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 20.03.1918, CZA, Z3/613.

[415] Heschel Farbstein, *Letter to the Scandinavian Bureau of the Zionist Organization*, 14.11.1917, CZA, Z3/172. From the letter it is unclear who the "certain gentlemen" were.

[416] Franz Oppenheimer, *Letter to Max Bodenheimer*, 28.12.1914, JMB-A, MF13-2.

In Warsaw, one of the first efforts of practical aid that the Zionists undertook, and that put them at the center of critical services, was to establish the 'American Section' for the sake of distributing funds received from the relief organizations in the United States and for re-establishing contact between Polish Jews and their relatives overseas.[417] This entailed translating Yiddish messages into German – since the authorities prohibited the use of Yiddish/Hebrew script in letters[418] – and channeling the letters through the Berlin and Copenhagen offices of the Zionist Organization and the Jewish National Fund to the United States (and to a lesser extent to Russia and Latin America), with the reply messages and remittances being sent to the Zionist party center in Warsaw.[419]

The 'American Section' in Warsaw was in charge of receiving, distributing, and accounting for the funds that came in from the donors in the United States. It was officially part of the Kahal but was headed by Samuel Poznański and Heschel Farbstein of the Zionist Organization.[420] It did not take long until other political movements protested against alleged Zionist misconduct in this organization. The Bund, Yakov Dinesohn, the Orthodox, and the German Hilfsverein all accused the Zionists of using the funds for their own purposes, supporting only their own welfare institutions.[421] Bernhard Kahn, who investigated the situation on behalf of the JDC, noted: "The latent passions found violent expressions as soon as money from America was sent directly to the 'American Section.' From the beginning [it] has been considered a purely 'Zionistic arrangement.' Political passions were immediately raised among other partyists."[422] The 'American Section' mainly supported soup kitchens, and institutions for abandoned or unattended children. Most of them seemed to have been under direct control of the Zionist Organization, such as the orphanage 'Eshel' and the soup kitchens of the 'Ezra'

---

[417] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 46. Mendelsohn stated that the 'American Section' had been established only in 1916. In fact, it was founded earlier and received its first funds from the United States in October 1915. See: Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization, *Report by Dr. Farbstein*, 03.04.1916, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.2.

[418] *Zweiter Vierteljahresbericht der Zivilverwaltung für Russisch-Polen für die Zeit vom 1. Oktober 1915 bis zum 31. Dezember 1915*, BAMA, PH-30-II-10

[419] For the Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael's part in the activities, see CZA, KKL1/496. Some return letters are collected in the files of the Zionist Federation of Poland: CZA, F/33-5. Until the end of 1916 residents of the Generalgouvernement were not allowed to send letters anywhere else but to Germany, Austria-Hungary and some of the territories the two states occupied. The United States were then briefly added to the list, of course only until they entered the war on the side of the Entente. See: *1. Halbjahresbericht des Verwaltungschefs bei dem Generalgouvernement Warschau für die Zeit vom 1. Oktober 1916 bis zum 31. März 1917*, BAMA, PH-30-II-15.

[420] Amerikanische Sektion. Hilfskommission für Kriegsopfer bei dem Vorstande der Jüdischen Gemeinde in Warschau, *Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Amerikanischen Sektion*, 01.01.1916, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.1.

[421] Bernhard Kahn, *Report on a Journey to Warsaw and Lodz*, April 1916, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.2.

[422] Ibid.

society which received more than half of the money allocated for food distribution.[423] The establishment of new soup kitchens in the city was regularly announced in the Zionist newspaper *HaTsefirah*, emphasizing the connection between the Zionists' political activities and the provision of food for the people.[424]

One of the criticisms of the Zionists was that the other institutions, especially the Hilfsverein merely distributed money without much consideration about who would receive it and without a national strategy behind it.[425] This meant that others, "the category of people on whose maintenance the Jewish people has an exceptional national interest, the Hebrew and Yiddish writers and teachers,"[426] who were not amongst the neediest but of national importance, often received nothing.[427] The majority of Zionist activists were themselves rooted in these social layers of intellectuals and the wider middle class and, therefore naturally, relief for them was important.

"The middle class has always been [most] connected with Zionism and it was therefore natural that these people turned to the Z[ionist] O[rganization] with a plea for help. […] Since these were mostly families who before the war had had a respectable position in Jewish society, this aid naturally had to be given discreetly."[428]

The latter sentence here does not make it clear whether the aid had to be given discreetly because the formerly well-off families would feel embarrassed if they received welfare, or because Zionists feared that giving money to persons other than the poorest of the poor would arouse protests. What is clear, however, is that the various political and social movements catered to a certain extent to different social groups in society. This was not only the case for the Zionists, as other groups also to a large extent cared for 'their own'.

This was a struggle amongst the various factions over who would receive money from international donors, to a certain extent to support people that were of particular interest or particularly close to the respective movements. The Bund, the Orthodox, and the Hilfsverein accused the Zionists of only supporting their people and their institutions and neglecting

[423] Amerikanische Sektion. Hilfskommission für Kriegsopfer bei dem Vorstande der Jüdischen Gemeinde in Warschau, *Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Amerikanischen Sektion*, 01.01.1916, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.1. Of the 22,700 Rubles allocated for food distribution, 15,000 went to the 'Ezra' soup kitchens, 4,200 were used to subsidize bread and 500 were used for a students' kitchen; the political context of the two is unclear. Only 3,000 Rubles went to the aid commission of the Warsaw Kahal, which is remarkable, since the 'American Section' was officially an institution of the Kahal.
[424] For example: *HaTsefirah*, 02.02.1916; 25.01.1916; 20.02.1916; 22.02.1916.
[425] Unknown Author (of the Zionist leadership), *Notiz für die Mappe Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden*, probably 1916, CZA, L6/107; Komitee für den Osten, *Mitteilungen über die Geldverteilung*, 12.01.1916, CZA, Z3/204.
[426] Unknown Author, *Note on special relief funds for intellectuals*, 1916, CZA, L6/106.
[427] Ibid.
[428] Zionist Organization Warsaw, *Bericht über die Hilfstätigkeit der Warschauer Zionistischen Organisation für die notleidende jüdische Bevölkerung in Polen*, 1916, CZA, Z3/158.

others.[429] The Hilfsverein tried to remove the Zionists from the aid committees,[430] while Orthodox groups accused the Hilfsverein of discriminating against them.[431] In reaction, Zionists – both in Europe and in the United States – suggested that no further money should go through the Hilfsverein, since its purpose was allegedly to promote 'assimilation' amongst the Jews of Poland, whom it "regarded merely as objects of charity."[432] The Zionists were eventually successful with this strategy.[433] These struggles over funds seemed somewhat abstract to many – as for example the quotation at the beginning of this chapter shows – but it was a crucial matter, especially on a local level.

These efforts were essential for placing the Zionist Organization at the center of the Jewish community. When funds, messages or remittances arrived, even their political opponents had to inform the public about them.[434] What the Zionists initially lacked in roots on the ground, they tried to compensate with their transnational connections, playing a vital role in bringing relief to the Jewish communities from abroad. This enabled them to side-line the established Kahal leadership and political opponents and to gain a central position in the Jewish community.[435] Especially when the United States entered the war in 1917, and the transfer of funds via the center in Berlin became more and more complicated (though not impossible), Heschel Farbstein regularly travelled to Switzerland. There he met with local Zionist groups and his brother David, who was a member of the Cantonal Council (regional parliament) of Zurich and raised money for the Jews of Poland Switzerland.[436] Heschel Farbstein also met with American and Russian relief organizations, returning to Poland with money and relief goods.[437] This in turn placed him and other Zionist activists at the center of attention as those who could still manage to bring aid.[438]

One local episode that illustrates the struggle over relief took place in Łódź in the summer of 1916. When in August the Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin organized the shipment

[429] Bernhard Kahn, *Report on a Journey to Warsaw and Lodz*, April 1916, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.2.
[430] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Martin Rosenblüth*, 25.04.1915, CZA, L6/615; Max Bodenheimer, *Letter to his wife*, 14.02.1915, CZA, A15/848.
[431] Unknown Author, *Letter to Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden*, (forwarded to the JDC on 24.07.1916), JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.2. See also the response Stanisław Natanson, *Letter to Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden*, 22.06.1916, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.2.
[432] E. W. Lewin-Epstein, *Memorandum on Distribution of American Jewish Relief Funds in the Occupied Territories to the Members of the Joint Distribution Committee*, 01.06.1916, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.2.
[433] Oscar Straus, *Message to Franz Oppenheimer*, 28.06.1916, CZA, L6/611.
[434] See for example the orthodox and strictly anti-Zionist *Dos Yidishe Vort*, 20.02.1917.
[435] B. [Julius Berger], *Letter to Heschel Farbstein in Zurich*, 12.07.1917, CZA, Z3/145.
[436] David Farbstein, *Memoirs* [unpublished], CZA, AK82
[437] *Haynt*, 24.07.1917.
[438] *Der Moment*, 24.01.1918.

of 300 boxes of condensed milk to Łódź on behalf of the Scandinavian Aid Committee, the funding body insisted that they had to be delivered directly to the Kahal.[439] Almost immediately news about the delivery spread in the city and numerous social institutions and individuals wrote to the Kahal board asking, often pleading, to receive some of it.[440] Local Zionists were unhappy about the way the delivery was organized. "We are perplexed that you did not send this delivery to us", complained the head of the local Zionist group Gershon Rosenblatt to the Central Bureau, demanding an explanation.[441] The Central Bureau's explanation, that the Scandinavians were not all Zionists and had explicitly ordered them to send the milk to the Kahal,[442] did not satisfy the local activists: "If the Scandinavian Committee has explicitly insisted on giving the milk to the Community Board, it would have been your duty to make sure that this is conveyed by us. As you well know the local heads of the Kahal are not very friendly to Zionism."[443] How far this can be read as a proposal to effectively deceive the Scandinavians is not totally clear, but what is clear, is that the question over who would be in control of the delivery would not only gain popularity and support in the community, but also be able to support its own institutions. The local activists' fears were not without reason. None of the institutions (mainly orphanages, hospitals, and philanthropic associations) that received some of the milk from the Kahal were under their control. The vast majority of the recipients were welfare institutions run by the Kahal or philanthropic organizations. Following the instructions of the Scandinavian Aid Committee, one third of the milk was also sent on to other Kahal boards in nearby towns.[444]

The conflict over the distribution of relief funds and goods went very differently in Ober Ost, where German Zionists were integrated into the administration and could use this position to influence the distribution of money and the organization of welfare. One case for this was Białystok. After they had repeatedly been sidelined when it came to the distribution of relief funds there, even when the money had been brought in through the Zionist network,[445] local activists felt that they needed to take action and used the privileged Zionist position in the Ober

[439] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to the Board of the Jewish Community of Lodz*, 15.08.1916, CZA, Z3/612; Gmina Żydowska w Łodzi, *Letter to Action Committee of the Zionist Organization*, 23.08.1915, APL, 228/0/55.
[440] For a collection of these letters, see: APL, 228/0/55.
[441] Gershon Rosenblatt, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 01.09.1916, CZA, Z3/612.
[442] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to the Zionist Committee in Lodz*, 06.09.1916, CZA, Z3/612.
[443] Komitet Syjonistyczny w Łodzi, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 20.09.1916, CZA, Z3/612.
[444] Łódzka Gmina Starozakonnych, *List of recipients of milk*, August 1916, APL, 228/0/55; Łódzka Gmina Starozakonnych, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 11.09.1916, CZA, Z3/612.
[445] See also: Komitet Syjonistyczny w Białymstoku, *Letter to Arthur Hantke,* January 1918, CZA, Z3/132-1.

Ost administration to do so. They wrote to Hermann Struck, the head of the Ober Ost Jewish Department:

"I asked lieutenant Struck to call the city commander and tell him that the money has to be distributed by the local [Zionist] organization, or at least in cooperation with it. For two reasons: First it is incredibly important for our position in the upcoming elections to the community board that we distribute welfare funds as well and show to the masses that we are engaged in present-day work [*Gegenwartsarbeit*], and [secondly] our Zionist orphanage has significant financial needs."[446]

Struck did just that and since he held a prominent position in the Ober Ost administration, the German city commander agreed to hand future funds only to the Zionists.[447] Despite the immediate complaints of the Kahal,[448] Struck insisted that the funds would only be given to the local organization of his choice. Since the Community Board was heavily anti-Zionist and – Struck claimed – did not have any support amongst the population, he decided to "not recognize them as the real representation."[449] Eventually, the Zionists convinced the Scandinavian Central Aid Committee and explained in a letter to their comrades in Białystok:

"You are absolutely right in your position that any welfare funds coming from Zionists, or those on which we have any influence, should go exclusively through you. This is especially true, since, given the conditions in Bialystok, you are the only institution that is trusted by the Jewish population. We have therefore instructed the Copenhagen Office [of the Zionist Organization] to inform the Scandinavian Central Aid Committee that any future payments should only go directly to you, which guarantees the correct usage."[450]

Zionist relief activities in Ober Ost relied to a large extent on the administration in which they had found their place. From late 1917 onwards, the military authorities reorganized the distribution of welfare, intending to funnel the funds through their own structures; any money raised abroad for the Jews of the occupation zone would be centrally distributed to local welfare committees, made up of representatives of the regime and of the Jewish population. The Department of Jewish Affairs was placed in a central position for this distribution procedure.[451] Due to this, many local welfare institutions, which often had absolutely no nationalist content, now approached the Zionists in general and their functionaries in the administration in

[446] Komitet Syjonistyczny w Białymstoku, *Letter to [Leo?] Herrmann*, 21.01.1918, CZA, Z3/132-1.
[447] Ibid.
[448] Zarząd Gminy Żydowskiej w Białymstoku, *Letter to Zionistische Vereinigung für Deutschland*, 23.01.1918, CZA, Z3/132-1.
[449] Hermann Struck*, Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.02.1918, CZA, Z3/132-1.
[450] D. Z. [unknown], *Letter to Komitet Syjonistyczny w Białymstoku*, 06.02.1918, CZA Z3/132-1.
[451] Oberbefehlshaber Ost, Generalleutnant Graf Waldersee, *Organization of Jewish Welfare Committees*, 23.12.1917, CZA, Z3/139.

particular, asking for aid, basically making them the main point or reference for Jewish communities throughout the region.[452] This already illustrates the perception of the Zionists there, at least in regard to welfare, more as an associate or a part of the administration than as an actor in and by itself. The above-cited case of Białystok was quite exceptional insofar as local Zionists there seem to have been engaged in large-scale quasi-independent welfare work. In most cases the money was distributed to the welfare committees in which Zionists were represented, but whose structures they could not dominate. The activists there were engaged in significantly less independent welfare work than their comrades in the Generalgouvernement.

At their conference in 1918, for example, Lithuanian Zionists in Ober Ost could deal almost exclusively with relatively 'abstract' matters, such as the use of the Hebrew language, a future national-personal autonomy, and discussions about Palestine, rather than day-to-day relief activities. All that talk angered several delegates who demanded practical work, but there was simply little room for that. The local Zionist activists had little space to engage in educational- or relief-work independently on the ground, since those tasks had been largely taken over by the Zionists in the German administration. Their practical Zionism therefore necessarily had to focus on the traditional basics, mainly propaganda work.[453] This strategy turned out to be disastrous in the long run, leading to a severe organization crisis at the end of the war, as will be shown later. Josef Berger, a rather young activist in Lithuania then blamed the crisis on the reliance on the administration and the refusal of bottom-up work. Blaming the Zionist leader Simon Rosenbaum there, he wrote: "His politics were orientated towards the power[ful]; he always tried to make deals with the powerful. He was quite successful in this with the Germans."[454] But now, Berger noted, the entire organization collapsed because it had had the wrong strategy, which he blamed on the "destructive influence of Hermann Struck".[455]

In the Habsburg Empire, the question of funding turned out to be even more complicated. At the beginning, Zionists tried to build an 'American Section' just as in Warsaw; in fact, the Viennese institution preceded the Warsaw Section by several months. On behalf of the Zionist Organization, Johann Kremenezky began organizing the exchange of short messages to the United States and money from American relatives to Austria.[456] The aim of the institution was

[452] See for example the Jewish community's elderly home in Wilno: S. Reihenstein, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, October 1917, CZA, Z3/131-1.
[453] *Minutes of the Conference of the Zionist Organization of Lithuania*, 1918, CZA, L6/114.
[454] Josef Berger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau*, 07.01.1919, CZA, L6/113.
[455] Ibid.
[456] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Johann Kremenezky*, 29.03.1915, CZA, Z3/496; Johann Kremenezky, *Letter to Aktions-Komitee des Zionistischen Zentralbureaus*, 05.04.1915, CZA, Z3/496.

to send remittances from the United States directly to relatives in the Habsburg Empire without any costs for them. Both in the United States and in Austria the point of reference for anyone who wanted to send or receive messages or remittances would be the local Zionist party center. "We believe that we shall eventually receive large sums in this manner. This will have the two-fold advantage of furnishing relief to the suffering in your country and add greatly to the prestige of the Zionist Organization."[457] In the following months and years, Kremenezky received hundreds of messages and remittances which came mostly from the United States, but also from Canada, Argentina, and so on, and were sent through the Zionist offices in New York, Copenhagen, and Berlin directly to him for distribution.[458]

Since the various organizations did not enter a 'new' territory, most international donors relied on traditional aid-networks, which mainly meant that funds were directed to the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien and the various local Community Boards.[459] Zionists participated in the general aid efforts but never managed to take political control over them. As Kremenezky wrote from Vienna: "Our influence and the chances to influence the entire thing in a Zionist way was too small."[460]

Zionists in the Habsburg Empire tried to mobilize supporters in the United States to send money directly to them. Very soon after the outbreak of the war, a Committee of Austro-Hungarian Zionists was formed in New York, which raised money amongst American Jews who had immigrated from the Empire.[461] As a matter of fact, Austro-Hungarian Zionists in the United States raised quite significant sums for their comrades' relief efforts for Galician refugees. Of the 12,850 Crowns the Zionists of the Habsburg Empire managed to raise for their relief efforts up until November 1915, almost 60 percent (7,650 Crowns) came from this one source.[462] But these were still relatively negligible amounts. By comparison, the Viennese Israelitische Kultusgemeinde's 1915 budget alone included 869,666 Crowns in direct subsidies to the social and welfare institutions.[463] Austrian Zionists could in no way compete with this

[457] Provisional Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs New York, *Letter to Johann Kremenezky*, 05.05.1915, CZA, Z3/496.
[458] See: CZA, Z3/496.
[459] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 67–8.
[460] Johann Kremenezky, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 23.10.1914, CZA Z3/496.
[461] Samuel Goldstein (Secretary of the Austro-Hungarian Zionists' Relief Committee New York), *Letter to Otto Warburg*, 22.03.1915, CZA, Z3/520.
[462] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Alfred Pollak, Attachment: Report on the donations received*, 01.11.1915, CZA, Z3/186.
[463] Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, "Budgetbericht pro 1915," in *Minutes of Vorstand der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien*, 13.04.1916, CAHJP, A-W/71.16. The general budget was a lot higher since, for instance, the Red Cross would reimburse the IKG for the treatment of wounded soldiers in the Rothschild hospital in Vienna; the total annual budget of the hospital was 608,100 Crowns. The above-mentioned figures also do not include expenditures for education and religious purposes and other aspects that can be regarded as 'welfare', such as expenditures for the cemetery, which had increased significantly since a growing number of poor people,

and instead tried to work with the official institutions in order to gain money for their own endeavors. The most prominent one was a hospital the Zionists established in Vienna (see below). At times, the hospital received subsidies from the IKG, but these seemed to have been more of a symbolic nature, such as 300 Crowns for the year 1915.[464]

Galicia and her Refugees

As the Russian army advanced in East Galicia and Bukovina in 1914, the leaders of the Jewish communities, as well as the vast majority of Zionist, socialist, and other political movements had fled westwards, leaving the communities without an organized leadership.[465] Of the thirty members of the Community Board of Lwów, for instance, only one remained in the city.[466] The few Zionists who remained in East Galicia – mainly in Lwów – did what they could to organize help for the Jewish population. In one of his first letters after the Russian army had withdrawn from the city in 1915, Max Geyer, the regional party secretary, wrote about his experiences in the city after September 1914.

"The evacuation of the city had been so unexpected that it was not possible for me to travel with my family. I therefore stayed in the Russian city. […] I almost cannot express what I had to experience and suffer through. But I got my satisfaction. We were able – that is me and some other crds. who stayed behind – to develop a fantastic activity for the poor Jewish population as part of the immediately founded Jewish Relief Committee, and to imprint our Zionist hallmark on it. It is generally acknowledged now that with the absence of the Community Board and all other important factors, the Zionists really made miracles happen."[467]

S. Ansky similarly noted that the Kahal-institutions were not functioning. He also noted that of the forty-five soup kitchens in Lwów, only five catered to the Jewish population, which – including refugees from surrounding areas – made up more than a quarter of the city's

especially refugees, could not afford the burial costs anymore, which were then covered by the IKG. See: Bruno Frei, *Jüdisches Elend in Wien: Bilder und Daten* (Vienna, Berlin: R. Löwit Verlag, 1920), 40.

[464] Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, "Plenumssitzung vom 24. März 1915," in *Minutes of Vorstand der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien*, 4.03.1915, CAHJP, A-W/71.15. There were two other payments to the Zionists by the Kultusgemeinde in 1915. In October it gave 500 Crowns for the Robert Stricker's *Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv* (see Chapter 4) and in December 1915, 300 Crowns were allocated without specification for the *Wiener Zionistische Vereinigung*. The minutes show no further payments for Zionist causes until the end of the war. Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, "Plenumssitzung vom 24. Oktober 1915," in *Minutes of Vorstand der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien*, 24.10.1915, CAHJP, A-W/71.16; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, "Plenumssitzung vom 26. Dezember 1915," in *Minutes of Vorstand der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien*, 26.12.1915, CAHJP, A-W/71.16.

[465] Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 44–5.

[466] Unknown Author, *Letters from Galicia to the Conjoint Foreign Committee*, 1915, YIVO, RG 348 Folder 58. When a renewed Russian offensive threatened the city again in 1916 even the last member of the old Community Board fled (see below).

[467] Max Geyer, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 08.07.1915, CZA, Z3/733.

population.[468] The organization of much-needed relief was done by a central relief committee that included the remnants of Jewish political organizations and communal structures and was headed by David Feinberg from a Petrograd-based relief institution.[469] The Zionists to some extent managed to fill this gap and after the region had been retaken, concentrated their efforts and all available resources on welfare work there.[470]

Large segments of the Jewish population, as well as of the Zionist Organization of East Galicia, had already moved westwards. Whatever the military draft had left of the Zionist groups in the Western regions of the Empire focused all its efforts on relief work for refugees. In many respects, this work overwhelmed the activists both in regard to their financial and their organizational capabilities. The two most important cases for refugee relief were Bohemia, especially Prague, and Vienna. Those of the small group of Prague Zionists, who did not have to report for military service, very soon decided that it would need to focus their efforts on relief work.[471] Not dissimilar to the efforts in the Generalgouvernement, Zionists regarded the Kahal's practice in this respect to be misguided and insufficient. However, in contrast to the Generalgouvernement, they had neither the financial nor the personal resources to construct their own relief-systems, and for this reason, they decided to take over responsibility in a wider Jewish communal context. An activist in Prague wrote:

"I believe I can see that this welfare […] is done by the Kultusgemeinden in a miserable way. Now, we could undoubtedly make it better, it would correspond to the spirit of the time, nobody could exclude himself, the [local Zionist] associations would work under a Zionist leadership, even if in this situation, where the local conditions are so important, a more theoretical one, as general Jewish organizations."[472]

As a matter of fact, Bohemian Zionists integrated in the general Jewish relief efforts.[473] The heads of the various Jewish Community Boards and the Zionist associations published joint leaflets asking for donations[474] and representatives of the Kultusgemeinde/Židovská Náboženská Obec published their views in the Prague-based Zionist weekly paper

[468] An-Sky, *Diary*, 71. Although the traditional Kahal no longer existed in the Habsburg lands, Galician Jews, and especially Galician Zionists, generally continued to use the term to describe the Jewish communal organization.
[469] Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 45.
[470] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Max Geyer*, 09.08.1915, CZA, Z3/733.
[471] Zionistisches Distriktkomitee für Böhmen in Prag, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 01.09.1914, CZA, Z3/779.
[472] Ibid.
[473] Zionistisches Distriktbureau für Böhmen in Prag, *Letter to Zionist Action Committee*, 10.09.1915, CZA, Z3/940.
[474] For example in Trutnov (Trautenau): Israeltische Kultusgemeinde Trautenau and Zionistischer Volksverein "Theodor Herzl", *Leaflet*, 1914, CZA Z3/779.

Selbstwehr.[475] Zionist activists, mainly of Poale Zion (where many members originally came from Galicia) and the youth-movement Blau-Weiß (Blue-White) seemed to have organized a large part of the practical relief work, including a welcome-service at the train station, the distribution of food and clothes, help with the search for accommodation, and so on, while the Kultusgemeinde/Židovská Náboženská Obec provided the necessary funds.[476] Despite repeated harsh criticism of the leadership of these official Jewish communal institutions, including the proclamation that it would be best to "organize all refugee relief in Bohemia under the Zionist banner"[477] the activists remained in the joint relief committees together with the representatives of the Kultusgemeinde/Židovská Náboženská Obec and other Jewish organizations.[478] The critique was largely a rhetorical, political claim and not really connected to any change in the practices of relief work.[479] This approach led to internal debates. Some activists, such as Siegmund Kaznelson were frustrated with a situation in which they seemed to do the largest amount of the work, while being unable to fully claim credit for what they had done, arguing that a fully independent Zionist relief effort throughout the entire Empire would have been preferable, since it would have made the Zionists a key factor in Jewish life.

> "The colossal effect such a purely Zionist-led and openly declared campaign would have on the Galician Jews is not even the most important thing. […] But imagine the influence we would have gained amongst Western Austrian Jewry, if we had organized a great, centralized, and broad campaign. Not the Kultusgemeinden but we would have become the representatives of the Jewish people."[480]

At the same time, Kaznelson reported on the contrary position, such as that of Poale Zionist Hersch Nagler who strongly opposed such a Zionist campaign, arguing that all efforts should be focused on immediate relief and "said that he realized that the Zionists actually lack any connection to the people and that we are nothing but a clique of petty partisans [*Klüngel von Vereinsmeierern*] and phrasemongers, for a good part a second-rate Kehilla."[481] This was basically a discussion over the concepts of Zionist work, even relief-work, and general work for the Jewish population, in which the latter position clearly seemed to have been preferred by

[475] *Selbstwehr*, 08.01.1915.
[476] *Selbstwehr*, 30.10.1914; 29.12.1914; Siegmund Kaznelson, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 06.12.1914, CZA, Z3/779; Rudolf [Kohn?], *Letter to Leo [Herrmann?]*, 12.12.1914, CZA, Z3/779. On Jewish refugees in Prague, see: Claire Morelon, "L'arrivée des réfugiés Galicie en Bohême pendant la Première Guerre Mondiale: Rencontre problématiques et limites du patriotism autrichien," *Histoire@Politique*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2016): 5–18.
[477] Zionistisches Distriktkomitee für Böhmen in Prag, *Letter to Zionist Action Committee*, 06.12.1914, CZA, Z3/779.
[478] Ibid.
[479] This was even admitted in a letter on the very same day that the above-cited supposed change of strategy was proclaimed. See: Siegmund Kaznelson, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 06.12.1914, CZA, Z3/779.
[480] Siegmund Kaznelson, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 14.12.1914, CZA, Z3/779.
[481] Ibid.

the activists. A report from the district conference in December 1915 subsequently bemoaned "how sad it is that in this time of war the Zionists have shown only little interest in their responsibilities for the party".[482]

This close cooperation with other Jewish institutions and especially the preoccupation of the activists with relief work that was not explicitly Zionist was seen as a danger by the regional leadership which feared that rank-and-file activists would fully immerse themselves in this kind of work. The leadership had to insist on the resumption of Zionist activism: "Any further standstill of [Zionist] work is not only a danger to everyone's individual Zionism [*für den im Inneren jedes Einzelnen lebenden Zionismus*], but it is even more a danger for the party and for everything we have built so far."[483] It seems that this pressing call for action was widely ignored, however, so the leadership changed its appeal and instead gave advice to its members on how they could combine their relief work with activities for Zionism. In Prague, activists had been very successful in using personal contacts with refugees – presumably in the context of the relief efforts – to invite them to attend lectures and discussions at the party center. The leadership also suggested holding informative sessions at the party centers, where activists could give both practical advice and discuss the pressing questions of Jewish nationalism with the refugees. The leadership advised that all activists should read up and educate themselves about the culture and traditions of Eastern Jewry.[484] A detailed report on activities by the Bohemian District Committee of June 1916 painted a very peculiar picture of the activists in the region. Most of them, the authors reported in a rather sarcastic tone, had only a theoretical relationship to Zionism but this Zionism did not translate into any specific Zionist daily practice in their workplaces, their social environments, on the welfare committee, and so on. The activists identified as Zionists, but this did not have many implications in their daily lives.[485] This not only meant that the majority had stopped paying their membership fees,[486] but also that Zionist work and relief work were – on the surface – completely separated from each other. The minutes of the *Distrikttag*, the regional conference, in January 1917, for instance did not touch on this activity which in fact occupied the majority of the activists' time and energies.[487]

---

[482] Zionistisches Distriktbureau für Böhmen, *Letter to Jüdische Zeitung*, 19.12.1915, CZA, Z4/780. The addressee here is 'Jüdische Zeitung' in Berlin but it was obviously sent to *Jüdische Rundschau*.
[483] Zionistisches Distriktkomitee für Böhmen, *Zirkular an alle Vereine und Vertrauensmänner*, early 1915, CZA, Z3/780. See also: Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Martin Rosenblüth*, 23.04.1915, CZA Z3/842.
[484] Zionistisches Distriktkomitee für Böhmen, *Zirkular an alle Vereine und Vertrauensmänner*, April 1915, CZA, Z3/780.
[485] Zionistischer Distriktverband für Böhmen in Prag, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.06.1916, CZA, Z3/781.
[486] Zionistischer Distriktverband für Böhmen in Prag, *Letter to all Members*, 11.07.1916, CZA, Z3/781.
[487] Zionistischer Distriktverband für Böhmen, *Protokoll des ausserodentlichen Distrikttages*, 28.01.1917, CZA, Z3/781.

This particular kind of work of the Zionist activists, who were strongly integrated in the general Jewish relief efforts and took up responsibilities for the entire community, however, had an effect on the party that had not been anticipated. The activists gained respectability and support from the wider community and became an ever more integrated part of it. In July 1916, Zionists could hold the commemorations of Theodor Herzl in a large number of synagogues.[488] Even more importantly, in the spring of 1915 in Prague when the Zionists established a school for refugee children with Hebrew as the language of instruction, non-Zionists supported this effort as well, with the Kultusgemeinde/Židovská Náboženská Obec providing the facilities and paying for most of the expenses.[489] An initiative like this would have been close to unthinkable in other regions such as the Generalgouvernement. It illustrates the different role Zionists had gained in Bohemia and helps to explain how they could later acquire a position in which they would speak on behalf of the entire Jewish community.

The other major space where Zionists invested their resources in the care of refugees was the imperial capital Vienna where by May 1915, according to some estimates, up to 150,000 Jewish refugees had arrived.[490] With the refugees, the realities of Eastern war arrived in the city. Stefan Zweig had already noted in his diary on 26 September 1914: "Still, nothing certain is known, but in Vienna, the streets, the Cafés, teem with Galician refugees who bring news of terror."[491] Both the authorities and Jewish institutions were completely overwhelmed by the numbers and were incapable of providing sufficient care for the refugees.[492] Robert Stricker, who was not only the head of the Zionists in the city but also a member of the Kultusgemeinde's board, introduced a resolution for the imposition of a special war-time tax on the community in order to raise the necessary funds. The board rejected this proposal.[493] Zionists subsequently built their relief projects claiming that they were the ones who really understood the needs of the Eastern Jewish masses: "The Jewish refugees instinctively realize where they can find fraternal

[488] Zionistischer Distriktverband für Böhmen in Prag, *Circular to all Members*, July 1916, CZA, Z3\/81; *Selbstwehr*, 28.07.1916.
[489] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 71; Fn. 104. See also: Zionistischer Distriktverband für Böhmen in Prag, *Rechenschaftsbericht vom 12. Dezember 1915 bis 30. September 1916*, October 1916, CZA, Z3/781. Zionist groups, especially in Prague also focused a lot of attention on raising funds for the school but the financial basis undoubtedly came from the Kultusgemeinde/Židovská Náboženská Obec. See: Zionistischer Distriktverband für Böhmen in Prag, *Arbeitsbericht des zionistischen Distriktkomitees für Böhmen für die Monate November, Dezember, Jänner und Feber*, 1918, CZA, Z3/783.
[490] Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 74. Hoffmann-Holter stated that the number might have been as high as 200,000, the vast majority of them Jews. Hoffmann-Holter, *Abreisendmachung*, 36–7; Fn. 27. On Zionist relief work for refugees in Vienna, see: Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Das Hilfswerk der Wiener Zionisten für die Kriegsflüchtlinge 1914/1916*, CAHJP, A-W/248.5.
[491] Stefan Zweig, *Tagebücher*, (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1984), 105.
[492] Hoffmann-Holter, *Abreisendmachung*, 41–52; Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 77.
[493] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 09.10.1914.

help where they will receive heart-felt advice and support: With all their great and small sorrows, they turn to us Zionists".[494] The first thing activists did to approach the refugees was to receive them at the train station, give them advice and direct them to places where they could find food and shelter.[495] The train station, which had generally been a space for politics at least since the end of July, was used by the Zionists for political agitation as well. For this very reason, the project did not endure. In November 1914, Rudolf Schwarz-Hiller, the Jewish liberal member of the city council who headed the central agency for refugee relief created by the government, shut down the Zionists' activities at the train station.[496]

Zionists subsequently oriented themselves towards the creation of their own social spaces, the most important of which was a clinic, which was opened in December 1914 and supported by the city administration, the doctors' association, and the Kultusgemeinde.[497] The main funds for the clinic were raised through donations which already by early 1915 made up more than any of the donations coming in for other welfare activities or the Jewish National Fund,[498] and the party also organized concerts and other social events to raise money.[499] The clinic was directed by chief physician (*Primarius*) Ludwig Stricker, the father of Robert Stricker, whereas the doctors and nurses – as far as their identities can be traced – were also for the most part either members of the Zionist organization or their relatives.[500] The clinic's work had real and important impacts for the refugees. The crowded and often unhygienic conditions in which the refugees were forced to live led to a spread of scabies and other diseases. The clinic reported in May 1915 that when it had opened its doors a few months earlier, 80 percent of those coming to its dermatological department had suffered from scabies, a number that could be brought down to just 12 percent within the following 11 months.[501] By November 1915 the clinic had treated 45,000 patients,[502] and by April 1916 this number had increased to 59,373.[503] An activist who visited Vienna in spring 1915 was impressed by the work of the

[494] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 30.10.1914.
[495] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 10.09.1914; 13.11.1914; Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 10.10.1914, CZA, Z3/840.
[496] Hoffmann-Holter, *Abreisendmachung*, 112. On the Zionist protest against this, which remained surprisingly tame, see: *Jüdische Zeitung*, 27.11.1914. On the city of Vienna's war relief activities, see: Gemeinde Wien, ed., *Ein Jahr Kriegsfürsorge der Gemeinde Wien* (Vienna: Verlag des Wiener Magistrates, 1915).
[497] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 11.12.1914; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Protokoll der Plenums-Sitzung*, 24.03.1915, CAHJP, A-W/71.15. The Zionists tended to refrain from mentioning the small amount of support (300 Crowns) they received from the Kultusgemeinde.
[498] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 15.01.1915.
[499] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 19.03.1915; 02.04.1915.
[500] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 12.02.1915.
[501] Karl Pollak, Ludwig Stricker, *III. Tätigkeitsbericht des Armen-Ambulatoriums des Zionistischen Zentral-Komitees für die Flüchtlinge aus Galizien und der Bukowina*, May 1915, CAHJP A-W/357.2b.
[502] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Das Hilfswerk der Wiener Zionisten für die Kriegsflüchtlinge 1914/1916*, CAHJP, A-W/248.5.
[503] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 14.04.1916.

organization, especially the clinic, and how local Zionists gained support due to this work. He wrote that "the refugees fully trust the Zionist Organization."[504]

Much of the relief work for refugees was done by women activists. One important case was the relief effort of Anitta Müller. A Zionist feminist from a well-to do family, she was only 24 years old when the war broke out.[505] She initiated the creation of her own relief project in 1914, establishing numerous welfare- and relief institutions for Jewish refugees in the city.[506] Many of the staff in the soup-kitchens, hospital, kindergarten, maternity-care center, and so on were Zionist women,[507] and there were some overlaps with Siegfried Bernfeld's reformed nationalist educational endeavors.[508] There is no evidence that any of the efforts was coordinated with the Zionist organization in the city during the war. This important connection was made only later, after the war, when Zionists built their credentials by referencing the valuable relief work done by Anitta Müller during the war.[509] She, who had won praise and admiration from all sides due to her work during the war and in its aftermath,[510] was the second-ranked candidate (after Robert Stricker) on the list of the Jewish National Party in the elections for parliament.[511] She was promoted as "the woman whose organizational talents have created a relief project [*Hilfswerk*], to which already today thousands owe their rescue from certain ruin, the woman who enjoys worldwide reputation as an outstanding representative of social welfare."[512]

Another Zionist-run space was a kindergarten, established in the fall of 1914. "Thanks to the proficient kindergartner, who has been educated in Palestine, the little ones are speaking and singing equally well in Yiddish, German, and Hebrew."[513] Founded by Erna Patak and supported by the Zionist Women's Association, the institution remained small, supervising,

---

[504] Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Martin Rosenblüth*, 23.04.1915, CZA Z3/842.
[505] On Müller (later Müller-Cohen), see: Dieter J. Hecht, "'Meine Pflicht zu verstehen und zuerst den Juden zu dienen' Anitta Müller-Cohen (1890–1962)," in *Jüdische Wohlfahrt im Spiegel von Biographien*, ed. Sabine Hering (Frankfurt am Main: Fachhochschulverlag, 2006), 307–19; Dieter J. Hecht, *Zwischen Feminismus und Zionismus: die Biografie einer Wiener Jüdin. Anitta Müller-Cohen (1890–1962)* (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 2008).
[506] Unknown Author, *Ein Jahr Flüchtlingsfürsorge der Frau Anitta Müller*, CAHJP, A-W/2318; Unknown Author, *Zehn Jahre Arbeit des Vereins Soziale Hilfsgemeinschaft Anitta Müller*, 1924, CAHJP, A-W/2317.
[507] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 72–3.
[508] Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 107–8.
[509] On her post-war Zionist activism, see: Hecht, *Feminismus und Zionismus*, 174–220.
[510] This praise came from all sides; just some examples: *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 15.12.1915; *Fremden-Blatt*, 06.02.1916; *Jüdische Korrespondenz*, 19.07.1917; *Neue Freie Presse*, 15.07.1917.
[511] Jüdischnationale Partei, *Leaflet: "Juden und Jüdinnen!"*, fall 1920, CAHJP, AU/121.
[512] Jüdischenationale Partei, *Leaflet: "An die Jüdische Wählerschaft Oesterreichs!"*, fall 1920, CAHJP, AU/121.
[513] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 13.04.1916.

clothing, feeding, and educating eighty children.[514] In their representation of the institution, Zionists emphasized its regenerating, national spirit:

"One must have seen the joy and happiness, shining from the children's eyes, of those poorest of the poor, when a visitor comes and they have the chance to give to him from their rich poverty, and they love to give – the songs in Hebrew, German, and Yiddish resound bright and rhythmical. One listens in amazement to the Jewish fairytales and everywhere, one can see and feel the great and strong intelligence of the Jewish children. […] They are well cared for and fed, happy and healthy and until the furthest future, their stay in Vienna in these dreadful times will be nothing but a series of happy memories."[515]

The emphasis on the children's poverty, connected to a concept of purity, was part of many German-speaking Viennese Zionists' essentialist and idealized views of Eastern Jewry, who were often portrayed as the 'real' and not 'assimilated' Jewish nation. It was imagined that they were connected to their roots, hardened, and proud.[516] The realities were, of course, more complicated, especially in the encounter between the Viennese and Galician Zionists, the majority of whose leaders had migrated to Vienna. The situation of the war created numerous conflicts, often revolving around the clash of personalities.[517] The leadership in Vienna was expanded to include some of the exiled Galician leadership, such as Adolf Stand and Fischel Waschitz.[518] The relationship between the 'old' Viennese Zionists and the newly arrived Galicians was difficult. Some Viennese, such as Karl Pollak, did not want to see an Eastern Jewish majority in the Zionist leadership. Nonetheless he had to accept an equal representation in the newly founded Executive Committee, with four members from each of the Western Austrian and Galician parties and two from Bukovina.[519] Although a number of East European Zionists in the city could be employed by the party and organized work amongst the refugees it seemed to the organization that it generally benefitted very little from their presence, "since

[514] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Das Hilfswerk der Wiener Zionisten für die Kriegsflüchtlinge 1914/1916*, CAHJP, A-W/248.5. In the 1920 elections to parliament, Patak was ranked fifth on the list of the Jewish National Party. See: Jüdischnationale Partei, *Leaflet: "Juden und Jüdinnen!"*, fall 1920, CAHJP, AU/121.
[515] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 26.02.1915.
[516] See for example the representation of his encounters with Eastern Jews by Otto Abeles: *Jüdische Zeitung*, 14.04.1916.
[517] For example: Unknown Author, *Letter to Leon Reich*, 18.10.1915, CZA Z3/507; Adolf Stand, *Letter to Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich*, 11.09.1916, CZA, Z3/519; Arthur Hantke, *Letters to Adolf Stand*, 15.09.1916; 18.09.1916, CZA, Z3/519.
[518] See the minutes of the Central Committee meetings: CZA, Z3/841.
[519] *Protokoll über die oderntliche Sitzung des G. A. des Z. K.*, 04.02.1915, CZA, Z3/841; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 12.02.1915; 19.02.1915.

the Galician comrades are [here] as refugees and there is very little will to do organizational work. It is terribly difficult to demand something like this from them."[520]

Everything was focused on relief work, so there was little to no space for Palestine-related efforts. As early as October 1914, Johann Kremenezky wrote that "the misery of the Jews who had fled here is so big that not enough money can be raised to be used for anything else."[521] The same was true for the Mizrahi in Vienna, who argued that it was impossible to do anything besides work for refugees.[522] Some activists were worried that the focus on relief work meant that core Zionist principles, especially the connection with Palestine would become lost. In an attempt to counter this, the Zionist weekly *Jüdische Zeitung* (Jewish Paper) published significantly more news about events in Palestine than on the local Viennese situation.[523] The paper tried to reconcile the Palestine-related program with Europe-related daily practice, which was not easy. In essence, it argued that the Jews needed to be prepared for Aliyah, and one way to do so was to improve their social and economic living conditions, since the alleged 'degeneration' of Eastern European Jewry would make them unfit for Palestine and "that would mean sending scroungers to Jerusalem."[524]

The more practical Palestine-related effort revolved equally around the refugees. The project was called *Kriegslandspende* (War-land-donation) and started in April 1915 with the goal of raising money to settle Jewish refugees from Galicia in Palestine after the war. The benefit of this approach was clearly that it made it possible for the Zionists to raise money for Palestine in a situation in which most people were primarily concerned with supporting refugees and the general war effort, thereby bridging the divide.[525] The idea of resettling war-torn Eastern European Jewry was not new and not confined to the Zionists. Already in October 1914, suggestions had been made to the Viennese Kultusgemeinde to settle Galician Jewish refugees in – undoubtedly soon-to-be occupied – Serbia.[526] Some discussed resettling Polish Jewry in a German protectorate in Palestine,[527] and Franz Oppenheimer suggested to Ludendorff to move

---

[520] Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Martin Rosenblüth*, 23.04.1915, CZA Z3/842. On the complaint of the 'inactivity' of Galician Zionists in Vienna, see also: W. [probably Warburg], *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 31.12.1914, CZA Z3/520.
[521] Johann Kremenezky, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 23.10.1914, CZA, Z3/496.
[522] Zionistische Foederation "Misrachi" Centralbureau, *Letter to Action Committee of the Zionist Organization*, 20.08.1915, CZA Z3/927.
[523] With the loss of journalists and editors, the quality of *Jüdische Zeitung* generally declined during the war. A large part of the articles was simply reprinted from other Zionist papers, especially the *Jüdische Rundschau* or were brief comments on articles from the wider press. This problem was acknowledged by the responsible activists in Vienna as well. Egon Zweig, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau*, 21.01.1916, CZA, Z3/844.
[524] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 11.08.1916.
[525] Egon Zweig, *Die Kriegslandspende in Oesterreich (internal report)*, 1916, CZA, L6/313.
[526] Felix Pollach, *Letter to Präsidium des Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien*, 08.10.1914, CAHJP, A-W/357.1.
[527] Unknown Author, *Report to Max Bodenheimer*, 26.03.1915, CZA, A15/702.

the Jews of the East from their "material and spiritual dilapidation"[528] to Palestine. Zionists argued that in the case of the Eastern Jewish refugees, the combination of factors that they had lost everything and would starve as soon as the war was over and public assistance would cease, and their longing for their ancient homeland, naturally demanded their resettlement in Palestine.[529] One of the remarkable aspects of the campaign was how it managed to mobilize support from non-Jewish newspapers.[530] This enabled Zionists to reach beyond their usual audience and receive significant amounts of money. The majority of donations were made in memory of fallen Austrian Jewish soldiers. The money went to the Jewish National Fund and was reportedly transferred to support the already existing settlements in Palestine.[531] As the war continued, Palestine-related efforts became ever more complicated, if not impossible and Austrian Zionists could not respond to the center's call for donations as was expected of them. "Do not forget that we have our own, although slightly odd, Palestine-campaign, in form of the 'Kriegslandspende' […] [But] should we now undertake another Palestine-support-campaign, we would risk the danger of a fiasco, which we have to avoid for the sake of the entire party."[532] The focus had again shifted towards work in Eastern Europe, especially as the Russian army retreated.

There is not much evidence that any refugees – except for Zionist activists who had been made refugees – called for such a resettlement. There was also no attempt to really develop a plan, in coordination with the Ottoman rulers or otherwise, to actually settle refugees in Palestine. Even the Jewish National Fund regarded it as impossible to settle larger numbers of war victims there.[533] Besides the raising of money, which was desperately needed in Palestine, the campaign was an attempt to again put the idea of Palestine at center stage and to connect Jews to the ethos of a return to the homeland. This was done in a wider context in which most people were concerned with their own plight and the suffering of the refugees, and, for this reason, the campaign tried to connect these aspects.

---

[528] Franz Oppenheimer, *Letter to Erich Ludendorff*, 06.07.1915, JMB-A, MF13-6.
[529] Unknown Author, *Draft Article for Wiener Morgenzeitung*, 16.04.1915, CZA, Z3/842.
[530] The most active paper in this respect was the liberal Viennese *Neue Freie Presse* (New Free Press), Theodor Herzl's former employer, but other papers promoted the campaign as well or at least reported very favorably. *Neue Freie Presse*, 09.08.1915. (The paper published the call in this issue and subsequently reported regularly on the progress of the campaign). See also: *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 20.08.1915. The *Kriegslandspende* even received support from newspapers in Bohemia: *Pilsener Tagblatt*, 11.12.1915; *Teplitz-Schönauer Zeitung*, 20.11.1915; *Prager Tagblatt*, 27.10.1915.
[531] Egon Zweig, *Die Kriegslandspende in Oesterreich (internal report)*, 1916, CZA, L6/313.
[532] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau*, 03.11.1915, CZA Z3/843.
[533] Gross [?], Shlomo Kaplansky, *Letter to Jewish National Fund Central Office Vienna*, 25.06.1915, CZA, L6/295; also in CZA, Z3/843.

After Galicia and Bukovina had been reconquered by the Central Powers in 1915, Zionists concentrated their efforts on rebuilding their institutions there and on organizing aid for the Jewish population under extremely difficult circumstances.[534] This was an absolute necessity "since the Jewish people in Galicia must have a future."[535] One of the first steps was to establish local committees to assess the damages to Jewish property. These were connected to a central committee, located in the Zionist party center in Vienna. Local Jews whose property had been destroyed or plundered during the Russian invasion came to the office and reported on their losses, hoping that this would prepare the basis for material claims during the rebuilding of the region.[536] At the same time, the center pressured local activists to engage in what it believed to be 'real' Zionist work: distributing party literature, selling the Shekel, and collecting money for the Jewish National Fund.[537] The response from the activists in the region was less than encouraging. The central party organizer in Lwów wrote: "The work in the relief activities is so enormous that it is impossible to deal with any other matter. [People in] Berlin and Vienna have absolutely no idea about how bottomless the destitution in Galicia is."[538]

The renewed Russian advance into Galicia in 1916 again forced many people to flee westwards. This new disaster forced Zionists to intensify their relief efforts. Contrary to the work in the German occupied regions, however, Zionists were at no point able to take control of the distribution of funds. They tried nonetheless to bring in their own supplies, which did not succeed particularly well. An example of one such initiative was the Zionist attempt at organizing shipments of condensed milk with the help of the Center in Berlin from the Scandinavian countries.[539] These efforts encountered severe problems. Not only did the Austrian bureaucracy create obstacles but the overall chaos and communication difficulties between the various activists and offices – in Berlin, Vienna, Lwów, and Copenhagen – made everything worse. In the summer of 1916, two train carriages with condensed milk from Denmark arrived in East Galicia, but since no one there expected their arrival, they were not unloaded, and the Scandinavian aid organization eventually re-directed them to Poland.[540]

---

[534] Robert Stricker, *Letter to Inner Zionist Action Committee*, 08.07.1915, CZA, Z3/520.
[535] Robert Stricker, *Letter to American Jewish Relief Committee for Sufferers of the War*, 20.01.1916, CZA, Z3/520.
[536] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 22.10.1915. On its establishment in Czernowitz: Theodor Weisselberger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 27.10.1915, CZA, Z3/788.
[537] For example: Otto Warburg [?], *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 31.12.1914, CZA, Z3/520; Otto Warburg, *Letter to Michael Ringel*, 27.09.1915, CZA, Z3/814; Otto Warburg, Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Zwi Bickels* (copy), 06./17.03.1916, CZA, Z3/815.
[538] Zwi Bickels, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.03.1916, CZA, Z3/814.
[539] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Prof. Simonsen*, 27.07.1916, CZA, Z3/130.
[540] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Zionistisches Zentralbüro für Westösterreich*, 27.07.1916, CZA, Z3/186; Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 10.08.1916, CZA, Z3/186. It is quite likely that these two carriages of condensed milk were the very same that would arrive in

These organizational problems, that were also due to destroyed communication and transport networks, were a constant feature in a situation where there was no centralized party, but rather local, isolated, individualized activists who did what they could in their personal environments. Local Zionist groups in both East and West Galicia had been depleted by the military draft and by the effects of the Russian invasion. Of the 110 members of the Zionist student organization in Cracow, for instance, eighty-five had been drafted by early 1916.[541] Zwi Bickels reported from Lwów that "[t]he mobilization, which effects ever more […] generations, takes away all of our forces, wherefore we can hardly find anyone in the province to organize Zionist work."[542] A report from Tarnów (Tarne) stated that "[a]lmost all Zionists of our city are serving in the military, many are at the front, a large number of our best activists have fallen on the field of honor, and the other comrades who have not been drafted live outside of Tarnów, since […] they cannot find employment [here]."[543] The few remaining activists in East Galicia were involved and integrated in the general relief efforts, as a letter from Lwów stated:

"There are currently very few crds. in Lemberg since all leading persons are currently in the army or reside outside of Galicia as refugees. The few people that can do work and remained in Lemberg, as anywhere in the Galician cities, are working in the Jewish relief committees, which occupies them fully. It would be impossible for them today to engage in any other work."[544]

This particular situation meant that Zionist activists did relief work that could not be perceived as distinctly Zionist work or efforts. The party published the *Tagblat*, but it appeared irregularly, and the editor reported that comrades in the region were not interested either in writing for the newspaper or in distributing it.[545] Zionists focused their efforts on relief work but they did so primarily as local community-activists and leaders, rather than as representatives of the party who would implement a party strategy. After having stated that there was no possibility for 'real' Zionist work in East Galicia, Zwi Bickels reported on this balancing act.

"And [although] Galicia is currently failing in purely Zionist work, the entire relief effort in Galicia is primarily led by our crds. […] wherefore in this regard, Zionist work has not ceased at all here but had rather gained a new form, since everywhere and always, we underline that every activity is done in a Zionist way and in accordance with general Zionist principles. We also hope that through this current work, although it currently cannot be

Łódź and were described above. The timing would allow for this, although the time-span between the letters is quite short. However, there is no clear evidence for this.

[541] Feldblum, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 01.03.1916, CZA, Z3/814.
[542] Zwi Bickels, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.03.1916, CZA, Z3/814.
[543] Samuel Spann, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.03.1916, CZA, Z3/814.
[544] Zwi Bickels, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.11.1915, CZA, Z3/814.
[545] Zwi Bickels, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.03.1916, CZA, Z3/814.

represented as too Zionist to the outside, we will prepare a solid ground for the later Zionist organization amongst the Jewish population of Galicia."[546]

He did not make clear what relief activities "in accordance with general Zionist principles" meant, except that they were conducted by members of the movement. But Bickels quickly tried to clarify the apparent contradiction between the prominent Zionist role in the relief efforts and the fact that this could not be said openly:

"As you […] probably know, the central relief committee in Lemberg is mainly composed of Zionists. In all official deputations, it is mainly our crds. who appear publicly, but as I said, we currently cannot emphasize this too much, since the entire Galician relief effort is financed by the [Israelitische] Allianz [zu Wien]."[547]

This was not limited to Lwów. Samuel Spann wrote from Tarnów, where local relief work was also bankrolled by the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien,[548] that he cooperated with the few other remaining Jewish organizations in the welfare committee: "All this is not really Zionist work, but is of great importance to the Zionists, since we help poor Jews out of their misery and thereby prove that we also seek to alleviate the suffering of the Jews here in the Golus as well, as far as possible."[549] Spann mentioned that this work also included help for the hassidic Talmud Torah School, something he regarded to be of great local importance, but that contradicted the overall strategy of the Zionist movement in the region when it came to schools.[550]

Regardless of what local activists in Galicia said, the leadership in Berlin insisted on independent Zionist work, believing that only in this way could the organization be rebuilt, and the Zionist idea popularized amongst the masses. Hantke wrote to Michael Ringel.

"We believe that it is the foremost task of our functionaries to first assess who of our comrades are still present [in East Galica]. They must be rallied and reminded of their Zionism and made to actively support the functionaries. Together with those comrades, the functionary then has to do the present work in a way that he primarily shows that the Zionists are the leaders of the Jewish population, that they have the best knowledge of the needs of the Jewish masses everywhere and that they are also the best suited for caring for those needs. […] Only in this way Zionism in Galicia will become a true Jewish popular movement, if the people sees in the Zionists its born leaders and those who are fighting for all its needs."[551]

---

[546] Ibid.
[547] Ibid. On the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien's efforts in this regard, see: Siegel, *Österreichisches Judentum*, 237–46.
[548] Israelitische Allianz zu Wien, *Letter to Jüdisches Zentralhilfskomitee für Westgalizien in Krakau*, 19.12.1915, Żydowski Instytut Historyczny (ŻIH), 108/1.
[549] Samuel Spann, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.03.1916, CZA, Z3/814.
[550] Ibid. On schools and education, see Chapter 3.
[551] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Michael Ringel*, 10.03.1916, CZA, Z3/815.

The leadership had already conceded insofar as it accepted that the collection of the Shekel and for the Jewish National Fund in Galicia were not essential and of "no financial but rather [of] demonstrative character."[552] It nonetheless was convinced that independent work was essential.

"In this time of all-encompassing Jewish misery, we have to prove to the Jewish population of East Galicia that we understand all their wishes and needs. We have to be the organizers of refugee relief. We have to establish and lead the damage-assessment-bureaus, the legal aid bureaus, the hospitals, etc. […] in short, we have to be the leaders and counselors to the people everywhere."[553]

These wishes were unfulfillable, primarily since local Zionists had no relevant funds left and, from their perspective, it would have been unthinkable to abandon the general relief committees that did have money (from the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien). Moreover, their standing in these committees had become particularly strong due to the growing weakness of other political groups and especially the Kahal, and it improved further. When in summer 1916 the Russian army's Brusilov offensive threatened Lwów again, the remaining members of the Community Board fled the city, which, according to Michael Ringel, not only disgraced this traditional leadership, but also enabled the Zionists who remained in the city to take up more prominent positions. Professor Bromberg of the Zionist Organization was subsequently elected head of the Galician Jewish relief committee after his predecessor had fled.[554] This was not due to any concentrated efforts by the Zionist party, but to local circumstances and the activities of individual members, including the respect they gained through it.

Relief Work under German Rule: Ober Ost and the Generalgouvernement

In Ober Ost, by contrast, Zionist relief activities – the small amount that actually took place – remained distinctly Zionist and organized by local parties. The local group in Białystok had recommenced its work in early 1916.[555] Soon, several members criticized the lack of *Gegenwartsarbeit*, especially help for the needy, pressuring the local organization, which already ran a Hebrew library and a Hebrew-language afternoon school, to open an orphanage as well.[556] Later, the library was expanded and a lecture and reading hall for up to 200 people

[552] Otto Warburg, Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Zwi Bickels*, (copy), 06./17.03.1916, CZA, Z3/815.
[553] Ibid.
[554] Michael Ringel, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 07.07.1916, CZA, Z3/815.
[555] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to the Zionist Organization in Białystok: L. Treywisch*, 13.03.1916, CZA, Z3/141.
[556] Roschanski [Secretary of the Białystok Zionist Organization], *Report on the local conference of the Zionist Organization in Białystok on 3rd and 9th September 1917*, 21.09.1917, CZA, Z3/146.

was added to it, in which the organization also held its Hebrew, Yiddish, and German language courses.[557] This was made possible due to the ongoing role the Zionists played in the distribution of international relief funds, as described above. While these efforts seemed not to bring the Zionists many new members, as *Korrespondenz B*, which dedicated a very flattering lead-article to Zionism in Białystok in July 1917, had to admit, it nevertheless made Zionists an important factor in the community, and also brought them into conflict with other institutions, as was described above in regard to the distribution of funds.[558] A large part of the Zionists' work in the city focused on relief and education for children which will be discussed in the next chapter. Although the movement's institutions in the city were run by the Zionists, in practice they did not necessarily have a Zionist-only audience or purpose. A report in May 1916 stated that while the library, the school, and the reading hall, which could also be used for theatre plays, were well frequented by the local population, especially the youth, this youth was still split between followers of various Zionist groups on the one hand, and nationally completely indifferent youngsters on the other.[559]

In October 1917, an unknown activist who had travelled the German occupation zones and reported on the misery of the Jewish population wrote from Warsaw:

"Everywhere in Poland and Lithuania, the Jews are primarily concerned with keeping the children alive. It is the children who are always the first victims in such dire economic conditions. However, feeding the children, except those in the first few years of their lives, is best organized everywhere in the form of school lunches. This explains why everywhere Polish and Lithuanian Jewry urgently calls for the schools to remain intact."[560]

A large part of the relief work conducted by the Zionists logically focused on welfare and education for children, which will be the subject of the following chapter. But besides the schools, kindergartens and orphanages that kept the Jewish children alive, Zionists also put significant resources into the establishment of soup kitchens for the impoverished population at large.[561] This was particularly evident in the first years after the German conquest of the region, when the complete destitution of social and economic life demanded responses and aid. The establishment of schools, kindergartens, and orphanages required considerably more financial and organizational efforts than did soup kitchens. The establishment of soup kitchens

[557] Ephraim Bielogowski, *Postcard to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 05.12.1917, CZA, Z3/147. See also: Komitet Syjonistyczny w Białymstoku, *Letter to unknown addressee*, 23.05.1916, CZA, L6/104.
[558] *Korrespondenz B*, 25.07.1917. This was the official paper of the Ober Ost administration.
[559] Komitet Syjonistyczny w Białymstoku, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 23.05.1916, CZA, Z3/141.
[560] Unknown Author, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 25.10.1917, CZA, Z3/139.
[561] This was not dissimilar to other political movements. See: Blobaum, *Minor Apocalypse*, 116–9.

was also encouraged, if not ignored, by the Germans and initially, the social activists could still operate with money that had been raised by Russian philanthropic organizations.[562] Immediately after social and political life had become possible again in Warsaw, Zionist activists opened soup kitchens, thirteen in total.[563] The institutions were, however, far from sufficient. Max Bodenheimer wrote to his wife in January 1916:

"The day before yesterday, I visited three people's kitchens, each of them feeding 3–4,000 Jewish poor. In total, there are 13 Jewish people's kitchens that serve 23,000 lunches every day. Most pay 6 kopeks for which they receive 1/2 pound of bread and a bowl of warm soup. The rooms are cramped, and hundreds are waiting for hours, crammed together as a chaotic, filthy heap."[564]

The soup kitchens, however, seemed to have been mainly an initial step for Zionist relief work, a response to the most pressing, urgent needs of the population. To a large extent they catered to the refugees in the cities, especially in Warsaw. When a large part of the refugees could return home throughout 1916, welfare for them was reduced and resources shifted to other, more 'productive' forms of relief work like child care and education.[565] Reports on relief work from 1917 onwards hardly ever included references to the former, while the latter became ever more important factors in Zionist activism.[566]

A very particular case in both the Ober Ost and the Generalgouvernement regions is the socialist-Zionist Poale Zion, which had a different approach to soup kitchens, and integrated them into their project of constructing social and political centers for the Jewish working class. In Warsaw and Łódź especially, the party in many respects played an important role in the organization of what it called proletarian relief work. Following the passage of the armies through Poland, local Poale Zion activists in Warsaw and Łódź became involved in the reconstruction of worker institutions, mainly organized along trade lines and explicitly distinct from those trade unions, which were controlled by the Bund. These included textile and food-processing workers, needle-makers, hairdressers and trade clerks. As most of the workers in those fields had lost their jobs, these unions had more the character of self-help associations,

[562] Unknown Author (of the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden), *Report on Relief Efforts in Poland*, 25.10.1915, JMB, MF13-1; Julius Becker, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 29.08.1915, CZA, Z3/140. On the cooperation between Polish-Jewish relief committees and Russian organizations, see: *Der Moment*, 26.04.1915.
[563] Syjonistyczny Biuro Warszawa, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 26.05.1916, CZA, Z3/142.
[564] Max Bodenheimer, *Letter to Rosa Bodenheimer*, 21.01.1916, CZA, A15/848.
[565] Unknown Author, *Bericht über die Hilfstätigkeit der Warschauer Zionistischen Organisation für die notleidende jüdische Bevölkerung in Polen*, undated (probably 1917), CZA, Z3/158.
[566] For example: Syjonistyczny Biuro Warszawa, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 02.04.1917, CZA, Z3/144.

organized by trade than traditional unions.[567] Those 'independent trade unions', as Poale Zion called them, focused most of their efforts on the establishment and maintenance of soup kitchens which were financed in large part by the general relief committees, although Poale Zion claimed that they were consistently discriminated against.[568] The party established social centers, called Arbeyterheym (Workers' home). By the end of 1916, the Arbeyterheym in Warsaw – located in Muranów with an additional branch in the proletarian suburb of Praga, on the East bank of the Vistula – had 1,300 members while unions with a total membership of 4,000 were in association to it. Members not only worked in and had access to the soup kitchens, the tea-room, the library, and the reading room, but were also entitled to attend the educational program of the Arbeyterheym. The most frequented courses taught languages (Polish, Yiddish, and German) but members could also attend courses on Jewish history, political economy, hygiene, literature, and natural sciences.[569] The two Arbeyterheyme in Łódź, which adhered to the same organizational principles, included soup kitchens and tea-rooms, feeding around 1,750 people every day. The educational program was similar. The focus was on languages with Yiddish (450 course participants), Polish (405), and German (384) dominating over Hebrew (110) and other subjects, such as Jewish literary history (63), political economy (102) or anatomy (72).[570] Poale Zion activists in other countries raised money from trade unionists and wider Jewish society in order to support these institutions that were in constant financial crisis.[571] Despite the economic problems and the alleged discrimination against them by bourgeois Zionists as well as the general relief committees, the Arbeyterheym flourished due to the socialist orientation of these organizations.[572] They managed to expand, bringing more and more impoverished Jewish workers into the Arbeyterheym, providing food, a social space, and bringing them closer to Poale Zionist ideas through education, literature and lectures.[573]

Moreover, the Arbeyterheym was a space for political activism. It served as an assembly place for Jewish workers while meetings of trade union and Poale Zionist committees were also

---

[567] On Warsaw: *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, December 1915, ILPA, 1-9-1915-96. On Łódź: *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, October 1915, CZA, A137/24.
[568] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, April 1916, YIVO, Vilna Collection, 000000123. See also: J. Reichman, *Letter to Zionist Office Copenhagen*, 21.03.1917, CZA L6/105.
[569] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, April 1917, YIVO, Vilna Collection, 000000123. On the course program, see also *Der Moment*, 03.06.1917.
[570] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, April 1917, YIVO, Vilna Collection, 000000123. On the kitchens in Łódź, see also: *Der Moment*, 23.04.1918.
[571] Leon Chasanowich and Shlomo Kaplansky, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 17.04.1916, CZA, Z3/142.
[572] There were however unregularly payments for the workers' kitchens that came in via the Zionist office in Warsaw, see for instance: N. Achnitz, Dawid Mejer, *Letter to Zionist Office Warsaw*, 26.05.1916, CZA, Z3/612.
[573] See the report on activities: I. Schulmann, *Letter to Berl Locker*, 10.12.1917, CZA, Z3/147. In July 1917 the soup kitchens had to close temporarily due to the lack of funds. See: Unknow Author (from Warsaw), *Telegram to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 26.07.1917, CZA Z3/158.

held there.[574] What had started as a measure to ease the most severe suffering of the Jewish workers came to be an ever-more political and rebellious space. This did not escape the attention of the authorities who had become increasingly vigilant towards workers' organizations as they watched the revolutionary process unfold in Russia. Whereas the Warsaw city administration had originally subsidized workers' kitchens,[575] in August 1917, the authorities cut their subsidies to the soup kitchens of the Arbeyterheym[576] and then, aware of their subversive potential, put them under direct control of the magistrate.[577]

The same happened to the workers' kitchens in Białystok that had been founded directly after the Russian withdrawal from the city as an immediate response to the famine. Max Pogorelsky, a Poale Zionist activist and co-founder of the institution, remembered:

"Within two months the Germans cleaned Białystok out of all food products and requisitioned all wholesale houses. The period of the 'sack' began – people would go to the rural areas with a sack and buy what food was available – potatoes, carrots, onions, flour, etc. A group of my friends, Zaidl Novinski, B. Gdanski, Herman Frank, […] Jacob Pat, and a number of weaver comrades conceived the plan of a consumer Co-op. The Co-op. was organized in the Weavers Shul in Bulkenshteins Street. We bought some potato acreage. The comrades dug up the potatoes, sold them to the Co-op. members at cost. Then we bought various grains, beets, cabbage, even fresh fish for the Sabbath."[578]

The cooperative kitchen of the Białystok Arbeyterheym served well over a thousand meals a day to the unemployed of the city, originally supported by both the magistrate and the Kahal. In January 1916 it expanded to include a tea-room and a reading-room, where "every evening the working people could satisfy their physical needs with supper for 12 pfg. and their mental needs [for] free."[579] Just as in Warsaw, the institution was an integrated project, containing a kitchen, a social, and a political space. In May 1917, a nursery was added to the same complex. Soon after, both the municipal authorities and the Kahal board withdrew their subsidies, which meant that the kitchens had to reduce the number of meals handed out daily from 1,300 to 200.[580] When the activists protested, both the Kahal leadership and the authorities cracked down on them:

---

[574] See for example the reports on the protest-assemblies against the Kahal: *Der Moment*, 05.06.1917.
[575] *Haynt*, 02.02.1917.
[576] *Lebens-Fragen*, 17.08.1917.
[577] *Der Moment*, 21.08.1917.
[578] Max Pogorelsky, *Autobiography "Why I left the old country and what I achieved in the U.S."*, YIVO, RG 102 No. 194, 12.
[579] Unknown Author, *Report on the Workingmen's Kitchen in Bialystok*, February 1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/131.
[580] Ibid.

"The suffering […] grew so intense, that they decided to appeal to the members of the Jewish Community that the subsidy formerly contributed towards the support of the Kitchen be resumed. The delegation of working people was sent away without any reply to their request. […] three members of the delegation, who had sacrificed their time and energies in [sic!] behalf of the Kitchen and its poor applicants, were deported to German prison camps, because it was alleged that they had taken an important part in the demonstration against the members of the Jewish community."[581]

For the Poale Zionist activists, the relief institutions had always been vital tools for political activism. This was even more evident when it came to the attempt to organize work opportunities for its supporters. What, after all, was a labor movement made up of unemployed? The organization attempted to tap into a realm of social activism that had hitherto been dominated by their Jewish socialist rivals of the Bund. Over the previous decades, the Bund had established the *Birzhas* which were both a social gathering place for Jewish workers and youth, a space of political agitation and education for the Bund, and an institution where Jewish employers could find prospective workers.[582] Complaining that the Bund used those institutions "in the most rigorous way for its own purposes"[583] and used the available money "only for people who join the Bund"[584] Poale Zion feared for the workers' associations under its control, since it could not provide a similar service to them. The members of their trade unions suffered from an unemployment rate of over eighty percent – 2,507 of the 3,096 organized workers in Warsaw were unemployed.[585] From 1916 onwards, Poale Zion worked to establish similar institutions, first in Łódź and later in Warsaw.[586] They seemed to have been modelled after the Bund's *Birzhas* and included workers' kitchens and social centers were a space that facilitated exchanges between workers and potential employers.[587] These were mainly social institutions with great political importance but they could do little to alleviate the problem of mass unemployment.

"Under the Slave Whip"

In the early summer of 1915, in the town of Rasiyn in Lithuania, Meir and his family made a small living by selling cigarettes and other minor goods to the German troops stationed on the outskirts of the town. Although the Russian and German soldiers had both plundered the town

[581] Ibid.
[582] Shtakser, *Making of Jewish Revolutionaries*, 7–8.
[583] Unknown Author (from Warsaw), *Letter to Shlomo Kaplansky*, 17.01.1916, CZA, Z3/935.
[584] Ibid.
[585] Unknown Author, *Statistic on the Professional Associations in Warsaw*, 10.01.1916, CZA, Z3/953.
[586] Unknown Author (from Warsaw), *Letter to Shlomo Kaplansky*, 17.01.1916, CZA, Z3/935.
[587] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, April 1916, YIVO, Vilna Collection, 000000056.

and there was no bread to buy, Meir still went to the camp every morning, trying to sell to the soldiers. Sabbath eve was particularity sad in those days, as there was nothing to put on the table.[588] On 6 June, a Sunday, Meir again took the few goods he had and went to the soldiers to sell to them, so that he might be able to put food on the table. On this day, he did not return. His relative noted in his diary:

"That day Meir was taken to work. He had to work all day without food, and when he got home, all he found was a dry piece of bread, and that was all. That was not all our trouble. Next morning, Meir went with some cigarettes to earn something for breakfast, he did not return. We waited for him until 4 pm. So we went to search for him, and we heard that the Germans had taken him. He had been taken with the 'kolone'"[589]

The German soldiers had snatched him and put him to forced labor. His relatives worried, his mother cried, and when he had not returned after four days, they went looking for him. A few days later they found Meir in what seems to have been an improvised forced labor camp where he had to do hard physical work and "he was scared to escape, as [when] a non-Jew had escaped, he was caught and shot."[590] When he was released weeks later, one could see the traces of mistreatment on him. "Meir came home, his hands sore and swollen, his cheeks sunken in, his swollen nose, his lips split, and long hair with large and small creatures in it. He looked a shocking sight."[591]

From the beginning, the Germans used forced labor like this in the occupied regions. But this initial recruitment was largely spontaneous and chaotic and seemed not to have been part of a wider strategy. This changed with the course of the war as the German arms industry was depleted of manpower and both the military and the economy in Germany and the occupied territories were in dire need of workers. The authorities regarded the hundreds of thousands of Polish Jews, who had lost their work due to the war as a vast resource for their purposes. In 1916, the German Ministry of War commissioned the economist Julius Hirsch to assess the possibilities of using a Polish Jewish labor force for the war effort. In his report, he argued that welfare was expensive and did not benefit the Empire, and that only work would benefit the Jews. They should be recruited to Jewish-only work battalions, employed in primary industries,

[588] Unknown Author, *Tovrik Diary*, YIVO, RG 116, Box 4, Folder 4.5, 46–7.
[589] Ibid., 47.
[590] Ibid., 48.
[591] Ibid. 51–2.

absolutely isolated from the rest of society.[592] In practice, the German authorities employed a brutal system of forced labor throughout both occupation zones, which to a large extent specifically targeted Jews.[593] Ludendorff's decree against 'work avoidance' (*Arbeitsscheue*) of October 1916 coincided with the proclamation of Polish 'independence' under the Central Powers.[594] Local authorities feared that its application to Poles would undermine the supposedly positive pro-German effect of the proclamation. They therefore mainly recruited Jews into the forced labor battalions, starting with a group of around 5,000 unemployed Jewish workers from Łódź.[595] Forced labor was specifically directed against Jews. In a town near Łódź, for instance, the local commander issued an order that everyone who did not own land – which due to the Russian laws only very few Jews did – had to report for the labor battalion.[596] The German police established camps near Warsaw and Łódź, raided the poorest districts of Warsaw and arrested unemployed workers from the lines in front of the soup kitchens to fill them.[597]

The practice was especially brutal in Ober Ost.[598] An unnamed Zionist activist wrote about the forced recruitment of young Jewish women in Pińsk for agricultural work on the eve of Passover, the day on which the Jews' liberation from Egyptian enslavement is celebrated.

"One day, 400 girls received the order to come to the market square at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Just as they were, they went there. Not all of them! Some might have foreseen it: […] I cannot express in words what happened on the market square […] Like a transport of prisoners, they forced the girls into the synagogue on this holy Friday evening and locked them in. […] Meanwhile, the police patrols went on a hunt for the missing girls. Should I describe these scenes to you? No, nobody can demand from me to do that."[599]

Another witness reported on the implementation of forced-labor laws in Wilno. There, anyone who was unemployed and between the ages of eighteen and sixty could be recruited, taken directly from the streets. The workers were mainly used for construction and extraction of raw materials such as lumber, provided neither with the necessary equipment nor with work clothes,

[592] Julius Hirsch, *Wirtschaftliche Verwendung der brachliegenden ostjüdischen Arbeitskräfte*, presented to the Ministry of War on 17.07.1916, BAB, R-1501-119798. In 1917 Rabbi Adolf Jacobus made similar suggestions: Adolf Jacobus, *Bericht*, 26.12.1917, Archiwum Akt Nowych (AAN), 473/0/12
[593] Westerhoff, *Zwangsarbeit*.
[594] *Verordnungsblatt für das Generalgouvernement Warschau/Dziennik Rozporządzen dla Jenerał-Gubernatorstwa Warszawskiego*, 07.10.1916, AGAD, 312/1412.
[595] Verwaltungschef des Generalgouvernement Warschau Wolfgang von Kries, *Letter to Staatssekretär des Inneren*, 13.12.1916, BAB, R-1501-119798.
[596] Komendatura Etapowa Biała, *Ogłoszenie*, 05.05.1917, AGAD, 532/0/109.
[597] Polizei-Präsident von Warschau Ernst Reinhold Gerhard von Glasenapp, *Zur Verfügung vom 3. Oktober 1916 – Nr. IIId.5155.G.*, 19.10.1916, AGAD, 533/0/1.
[598] Zosa Szajkowski, "East European Jewish Workers in Germany during World War I," in *Salo Wittmayer Baron Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Saul Lieberman and Arthur Hyman (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1974), 902–6.
[599] Unknown Author, *Letter from Pińsk*, 14.04.1917, CZA, Z3/131-1. On forced labor in Pińsk, see: Azriel Shohet, *The Jews of Pinsk, 1881 to 1941* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 327–34.

sleeping in the open or in half-ruined barracks, being paid 1.20 Mark per day, from which 0.90 Mark was subtracted for the little amount of sub-standard food they received. Lack of food, violence by the guards, hard physical labor, and the lack of medical care led to the spread of diseases, and eventually spiking death-rates amongst the workers.[600] While the German authorities prided themselves on their alleged humanism and civilizing mission to the East,[601] Zionists knew that this kind of work had just the opposite effect to the 'regeneration', which they traditionally attributed to physical labor. "Those people, most of them would be absolutely willing to work voluntarily, see the forced-labor-system as a form of slavery and desperately resist it. They burn down the barracks, cut the sheets in pieces, and run away very frequently."[602]

For the Zionists, it was clear that this system could not be sustained. The suffering of the Jews was too severe, while at the same time the good that they believed could come from physical labor – both in a practical and an ideological sense – would be lost. They therefore petitioned the German authorities in the Generalgouvernement and Ober Ost, trying to convince them that forced labor was ineffective and that they themselves could offer better alternatives by hiring Jewish workers, both for industries in Germany and there in the region.[603] Their suggestion that they hire Jewish workers was a direct reaction to the experiences of forced labor in the occupied regions. The Zionists would be more effective as labor organizers, as Julius Berger argued in a conversation with Social Democratic members of the German parliament: "In regard to the forceful recruitment of the Jewish masses in Poland for systematic labor, it is necessary to put these efforts under Jewish influence."[604]

In early December 1916, Zionists approached General-Lieutenant Wilhelm Groener, head of the War Department at the Prussian Ministry of War. Describing the Jewish labor force in Poland, and regretting its "bourgeois inclination", Zionists offered to be the organizers of Jewish workers for Germany and for infrastructural works in the Generalgouvernement.[605] Eventually, in early 1917, the government agreed to organize the recruitment of Jewish workers

[600] Unknown Author, *Report on the Situation in Wilno*, 1917, CZA, Z3/131-1.
[601] See for example the report in Ober Ost's official paper *Korrespondenz B*, in which one claimed to respect the religious and national feelings of Jewish slave laborers (i.e. giving them some of the High Holidays off): *Korrespondenz B*, 02.10.1917.
[602] B. [probably Julius Berger], *The Conditions in the Territories of Ober Ost*, 12.07.1917, CZA, Z3/167.
[603] Julius Berger, *Letter to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 22.05.1917, CZA, Z3/167.
[604] Julius Berger, *Report on the meeting regarding the matter of organized recruitment of Jewish workers in Poland*, probably late 1916, CZA, Z3/169.
[605] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Wilhelm Groener*, 01.12.1916, CZA, Z3/167.

directly through the Zionist Organization and the Committee for the East.[606] The official report of the Generalgouvernement noted:

"For the sake of improving the [process of] recruitment of Jewish workers, and, more specifically, to organize their evaluation and classification more effectively, the general secretary of the Zionist Association for Germany [Julius Berger; JR] is employed in the German Employment Office [*Arbeiterzentrale*] in Warsaw. His activities have undoubtedly increased the willingness of Jewish workers to go to Germany for work. In Lodz as well, institutions have been established for organizing the recruitment and evaluation of Jewish workers more effectively.[607]

The massive unemployment was not only a problem in itself, but since it led to the embitterment of Jewish workers, many also joined the Bund or the more radical factions of Polish Social Democracy.[608] The employment of Jewish workers therefore was also treated as a political task and intended to raise national consciousness, in part through the 'productivization' of the Jews, and in part through direct Zionist influence. Amongst essential matters, like keeping the Sabbath and providing kosher food, Zionists suggested the following conditions for Jewish workers: a representative of the Zionist Organization would accompany them to their workplace, they would only be employed in exclusively Jewish labor cohorts, should have Jewish supervisors and guards (if available), and workers should have access to newspapers and a small library, both of which would be provided by the Zionist Organization.[609] The management of the railways, which employed numerous Polish-Jewish workers for construction and maintenance works, agreed to these demands.[610] Using their transnational connections, Zionists appealed to like-minded entrepreneurs in Germany to hire 'their' workers from Poland, appealing to their sense of national duty and hoping that they would provide a decent environment for the workers.[611] Additionally, local branches of the Zionist movement

[606] Kriegsamt beim Preussischen Kriegsministerium, *Erlass N. 10/2/17 A.Z.S.5*, sent with a letter from Julius Berger from Warsaw, 12.05.1917, CZA, Z3/167.
[607] *2. Halbjahresbericht des Verwaltungschefs bei dem Generalgouvernement Warschau für die Zeit vom 1. April 1917 bis zum 30. September 1917*, BAMA, PH-30-II-16. The German authorities also tried to hire workers directly. However, their efforts to recruit non-Jewish Polish workers seemed to have been separate and distinct from the process of hiring Jewish workers. See the files of the German administration in Warsaw: AGAD, 531/025; AGAD, 531/026. On Julius Berger and the recruitment of Polish-Jewish workers, see: Ludger Heid, *Maloche – nicht Mildtätigkeit. Ostjüdische Arbeiter in Deutschland 1914–1923* (Hildesheim, Zurich, New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1996), 85–122.
[608] Julius Berger, *Letter to Max Cohen-Reuß*, 04.12.1916, CZA, Z3/167.
[609] Julius Berger [?], *Letter to [Konrad?] Woelker at the civil administration Warsaw*, 08.06.1917, CZA, Z3/167. The fact that there apparently needed to be (armed) guards to prevent the workers from running away, which somewhat blurs the line between forced and voluntary labor, was not questioned at any point.
[610] Generaldirektion der Eisenbahnen*, Letter to Verwaltungschef beim Kaiserlich-Deutschen General-Gouvernement Warschau regarding the suggestions by Julius Berger*, 19.05.1917, CZA, Z3/167.
[611] See for example the response by the owner of the furniture factory Bonn-Beueler Möbelfabrik G.m.b.H. in Beuel, who described how he cared for the Jewish workers, installed a kosher canteen, etc.: Max Cohberg [?], *Letter to Julius Berger*, 10.04.1917, CZA, Z3/167.

in Germany and other Jewish organizations were supposed do their best to help the Jewish workers who came there from the East.[612]

In Ober Ost the Zionists did not manage to become part of the administration's efforts for labor recruitment. However, Hermann Struck, a member of the Mizrahi movement and the Committee for the East, was given the right to privately organize the recruitment of Jewish workers from the territory.[613] This new task, again, placed the Zionists at the center of the community. They were the ones who could potentially provide employment that might be better than the brutal recruitment for forced labor. While the narrative of Jewish 'productivization' was not central to their daily activities, it was still an essential element of their efforts. Getting Jews to work would not only lift them out of their "material and moral misery" but would also be an investment in the future, for they would be transformed into manual laborers.[614] Ideally, this was accompanied by the establishment of Jewish training workshops, mainly in the textile sector. Simon Rosenbaum, the leader of the Zionist Organization in Wilno, reported that in total, 350 boys and girls were learning a craft there, practical lessons being accompanied by a Hebrew language course.[615]

While the recruitment of Jewish workers opened up new opportunities for the Zionists, it also put them in a very difficult position, given the horrific conditions under which many had to work.[616] The Jewish Youth Organization in Dresden reported on the situation of twenty-five boys, aged fourteen to eighteen, working in a glass factory, who had been sent there by the Employment Office in Warsaw:

> "They carry hot bottles from the furnace to the lehr, and the heat is so great that, although they have some clothes, they are literally bathing in sweat. They work 7 to nine hours [a day]. The canteen truly is a dive. […] The children looked horrific, some having burn wounds on their hands, feet, neck, and on their eyes. They were in a completely neglected condition, without clothes, without underwear, without shoes, […] They cried and complained about the mistreatment they got from overseer Schulz. They told us that they were beaten and kicked to work, although he knew exactly that some of them had injured feet and could not work."[617]

---

[612] *Minutes of the Meeting of the "Preparatory Committee for the Establishment of a Jewish Workers Welfare Office"*, 09.10.1917, CZA, A15/714.
[613] Komitee für den Osten, *Letter to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.10.1917, CZA, Z3/167. The Committee forwarded the decision of the Oberbefehlshaber Ost.
[614] Julius Berger, *Letter to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.06.1917, CZA, Z3/167.
[615] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to unknown addressee (probably in the Zionist Central Bureau)*, 06.05.1917, CZA, Z3/509. This will be discussed further in Chapter 3.
[616] For examples of the realities of labor in Germany, see: Heid, *Maloche*, 463–73
[617] Jüdischer Jugendbund Dresden, *Report on the 25 Jewish boys brought here from the occupied territories*, 28.08.1917, CZA, Z3/167.

Despite the horrors of war-time labor, which were not limited to the Polish-Jewish workers,[618] there was also the apparent danger that Zionists might be held responsible for miserable situations in which they may had sent workers. In a letter to Richard Lichtheim one of those workers reported that he "had been hired in Poland by agents of the German government for work in a munitions factory in Germany," while instead he and his fellow 150 co-workers had been sent to a coal-mine, a type of work, none of them could bear.[619] Indeed, the "agents of the German government" was the Employment Office with the Zionists, and especially Julius Berger at its center. A similar disaster happened with the recruitment of 1,200 workers, mainly form Warsaw, to the three Griesheim-Elektron chemical company plants in Griesheim, Bitterfeld, and Lauta. The workers had been promised good wages, decent living and working conditions, kosher food, and the sanctity of the Sabbath. After complaints reached Julius Berger, he went to the factory to investigate, finding terrible conditions and none of the promises fulfilled. The organization of work was militarized, whereas heavy penalties, substandard and expensive food, and imprisonment in the basement of the factory were common. Workers had no day off, they toiled an average of seventy hours per week, and Jewish workers earned significantly less than non-Jewish workers.[620] Berger wrote in his report:

"I spoke to the workers over lunch in the canteen. They were extremely embittered, bombarded me with accusations against the company and demanded, without exception, only the one thing, to be relieved from this factory. […] They do not have a day off, although this had been promised to them at their recruitment. The factory demands an uninterrupted work for 70 hours each week. […] Every absence from work, every interruption of this uninterruptable service is punished by imprisonment in the basement. The workers lie there for up to 8 days, without an interrogation, often days without food, but they are beaten by the guards."[621]

This needed to end. It was not only terrible for the workers but also for the reputation of Berger and the Employment Office. "I myself," wrote Berger, "had promised the workers one day off every week. The workers regard it as a breach of the agreement that this commitment is not

[618] See (amongst others): Elisabeth Domansky "Militarization and Reproduction in World War I Germany," in *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870–1930,* ed. Geoff Eley (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 427–64; Albrecht Ritschl, "The pity of peace: Germany's economy at war, 1914–1918 and beyond," in *The Economics of World War I*, ed. Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 41–76.
[619] Gustav Krojanker, *Letter to Richard Lichtheim*, 27.11.1917, CZA, Z3/167. Lichtheim passed the letter on to the Zionist Central Bureau.
[620] Julius Berger, *Report on visit to the Griesheim plants*, 06.11.1917, CZA, Z3/169.
[621] Ibid.

honored."[622] News of the terrible working conditions spread quickly throughout the region and the more time passed, the harder it became for the Employment-Office to find workers.[623]

In Ober Ost, the 'voluntary' labor units were often nothing but re-named forced labor battalions, while none of the conditions had changed. In July 1918, Berger visited some of those worksites in the region and reported on the horrific conditions, which incuded malnutrition, brutality of the guards and complete exhaustion of the workers. The conditions had forced hundreds of workers to flee the sites, leading to situations where they were chased by the police and placed in solitary confinement. He strongly recommended stopping the recruitment of people for this kind of work, since "the Employment Office would gain the worst possible reputation amongst the population if it would be associated with this kind of forced labor."[624] Simon Rosenbaum had already heavily criticized the fact that the workers for Ober Ost had been recruited by Hermann Struck, which effectively associated the Zionists with the system.[625] Julius Berger wrote about the impressions he gained in the region and the political effects of forced labor: "The mood amongst the population is terrible, it is like living under a slave whip. […] The entire administrative system of Ober Ost, and especially forced labor, led to the complete erasure of all sympathy for, and to the accumulation of enormous hatred towards, the Germans."[626]

The Zionists' engagement in the field of employment was both a practical and an ideological endeavor. Through the Employment Office and similar structures, Zionist activists came to adopt a central part in many people's lives, providing the chance to obtain a job in a situation of mass unemployment and starvation. At the same time, this could potentially serve the greater idea of 'productivization' of the Eastern Jews. For the German Zionists it constituted a balancing act between their civilizing mission and their condescending essentialization of the character of the Eastern Jews, as Julius Berger, the head of the Employment Office in Warsaw, stated.

"I have studied the views of the Jewish masses quite intensely, and while I have observed that the Jew is a rather bad worker, that he is clumsy, maybe even a bit sloppy, but [I have seen] also that every one of those people, even

[622] Ibid. Berger blamed only the factory managers in Griesheim for the problems. He had had a lengthy conversation with one of the managers who had made all the promises and had trusted him. As a matter of fact, he had come to Griesheim not because of workers' complaints, but because the factory management had written to him that they were unhappy with the Jewish workers who, they claimed, were undisciplined and ran away.
[623] Heid, *Maloche*, 364.
[624] Julius Berger, *Report on an inspection visit to the various workplaces*, 06.07.1918, CZA, Z3/168.
[625] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to unknown addressee (probably the Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin)*, 21.11.1917, CZA, Z3/509.
[626] Julius Berger, *Die Verhältnisse in dem Gebiete Ober-Ost*, 12.03.1917, CZA, Z3/167.

if he stems from the poorest background, has a very special relationship to god and the world. […] His soul has not yet suffered any damage, and maybe it is an injustice of us to acquaint those people with claims as they are known to us and artificially impose them. […] When I am bringing in workers for the military railways, I demand that special accommodation is provided for them, so that they have the ability to prepare themselves for the new, Western European ways, and that they shall not encounter the new conditions totally unprepared."[627]

In practice, although the Employment Office was a direct response to German practices of forced labor, none of those promises could be fulfilled and, in reality, this institution subjugated thousands of Jewish workers to the terror of German war industry and forced labor. Though Zionists only rarely connected their ideology of 'productivization' with their practical attempts to recruit workers publicly, the realities of war-time work placed their ideology and its effects on the living conditions of Eastern Jews into stark contradiction. While the organization gained a high degree of leverage over a significant number of people in the East, there was the danger it would subsequently be held responsible for the practical consequences of its policy of physical labor.

Consequences of Relief Work

Ultimately, the question arises as to how the success or failure of the various Zionist endeavors can be assessed. One possibility would be to examine the formal memberships of Zionist organizations, the payment of the Shekel, and so on.[628] This approach – as any other – has its advantages and problems. For one, as shown above, many people could simply not afford to purchase the Shekel. Those who could, might have done this for various reasons. Take for example the case of a certain Dr. Rachmielowicz from Lithuania, who was described as "an orthodox nationalist Jew. He does pay the Shekel and has a subscription to the Jüdische Rundschau but he says that he is not a Zionist."[629] People's decision to (formally) join an organization, buy the Shekel and subscribe to a particular party newspaper (or not to do any of the above) could have many reasons. The quotation at the beginning of the chapter, as well as political practices, shows how the decision to cooperate and associate with the Zionist movement was often connected to the receipt of welfare and connected to the question of daily needs. In her work on Jewish refugees in Vienna, Beatrix Hoffmann-Holter stated that the various Zionist efforts amongst the Galician and Bukovinian refugees in Vienna did not lead to

[627] Julius Berger, *Referat vom 2. Juli*, 02.07.1917, CZA, Z3/168.
[628] As, for instance, Ezra Mendelsohn had suggested: Ezra Mendelsohn, *Zionism in the Jewish Community of Poland during the Twenties* (Tele Aviv: Tamah, 1982), 17–18.
[629] Klee, *Letter to the Zionist* Centr*al Bureau*, 18.01.1918, CZA, Z3/377.

an increase in Zionist membership figures.[630] This might be true, but it does not change the fact that in many regions, including Vienna, Zionists acquired immensely important positions immediately after the formal end of the war, when completely new political spaces opened up, often radically changing social and political relations and representations of Jewish society. They managed to do so precisely because of their war-time activism, which brought them recognition and support.[631] It might be better to assess 'success' or 'failure' from the perspective of the positions and influence Zionists gained within communities, rather than from formal membership figures or the like. The question is, therefore, how local Zionists later built on the efforts they had invested during the war.

Welfare work was the key to Zionist successes in the Generalgouvernement. Being barred from any official positions of authority and therefore forced to work amongst (and with) the masses of the population gave Zionists the reputation as a reliable force that could deliver on their promises against all odds. This came in stark contrast to the Zionists' complete lack of achievements regarding the legal recognition of the Jews as a nation. They failed in terms of all the possible ways they themselves would often measure their success or failure. The Jewish Community officially remained an exclusively religious institution;[632] state-run minority schools were only created for the German-speaking minority,[633] and authorities were not even willing to revoke the old antisemitic laws of the Russian Empire, even after they had been revoked in Ober Ost and in Russia itself.[634] But there was no doubt that by the time of their third conference, which was held in Warsaw at the end of October 1917, the Zionists had become a major factor in Jewish political life in Poland.[635] At the conference, which had brought together 360 delegates from all over the country, more than ever before, most speakers agreed that it had been their efforts for national relief, their work for the physical and spiritual renewal of the nation, which had gained them this support.[636] In his opening speech Gottlieb, a member of the Central Committee said:

[630] Hoffmann-Holter, *Abreisendmachung*, 117.
[631] See Chapter 5.
[632] *6. (8.) Vierteljahresbericht der Zivilverwaltung für Russisch-Polen für die Zeit von 1. Oktober 1916 bis 31. Dezember 1916*, BAMA, PH-30-II-14.
[633] "Gesetz über Berücksichtigung von Schulbedürfnissen der Minderheiten," in: *Verordnungsblatt für das Generalgouvernement Warschau*, 20.09.1917, BAMA, PH-30-II-74.
[634] Verwaltungschef des Generalgouvernements Warschau, *Letter to Staatssekretär des Inneren*, 09.04.1918, BAB, R-1501-199804.
[635] *Haynt*, 10.11.1917.
[636] *Minutes of the Third Zionist Conference in Poland*, *First Session*, 28.10.1917, CZA, Z3/146.

"The hardships are unbelievable and demand massive relief efforts. The Zionist Organization and its representatives have taken active part in these relief efforts, especially taking care of the distribution, in a way that only an organization with so many branches such [as ours] could do. […] [O]ur comrades were active not only as middlemen. Most of our [local] Zionist associations carry on their backs a whole range of Jewish institutions and we have given special attention to those institutions, which have a productive character, which care not only for the daily needs but rather care for the upbringing and education of the people. […] It is this kind of work, which is an answer to the accusation that our Zionist ideal places us in the far future and distracts us from the daily problems of the present. There is no opinion that could be more wrong than to regard our Zionist work as in contradiction to our work in the Galuth, or the other way around. We see the Zionist ideal as the highest expression of Jewish national will, and the expansion and strengthening of our national life in the various countries is self-evident for us and a condition *sine qua non* of our Zionist program."[637]

The conference was closely monitored by all Jewish newspapers, which, while taking very different positions on Zionism, all fundamentally agreed that Zionists were now a strong, if not even the dominant, force in Jewish political life.[638] Even the orthodox *Dos Yidishe Vort* acknowledged that the Zionist conference was one of the most important events in Jewish political life, as the Zionist movement was the strongest Jewish political party, even though, in the newspaper's view most of its members allegedly had no idea of what Zionism was and had only joined because they wanted to be active "for Jewry".[639] This was quite a telling statement, as the orthodox Jewish publication was admitting that people would join the Zionists and not anyone else in order to be active 'for Jewry'.

While the Zionist movement in the Generalgouvernment had undoubtedly made great progress and gained widespread support, the question of how far Zionist ideology and national self-identifications had taken root amongst the masses was something different. A key point was that the ideology of those newly won activists who had just recently flocked to the ranks of the movement, became a matter of debate. Berger wrote from Warsaw in November 1917, that "although there are many who pay the Shekel in Warsaw, there is not a single decent person."[640] While the old leaders came predominantly from well-educated, well-to-do backgrounds with little connections to the masses of the population,[641] new activists, who often had been attracted to the movement due to its community activism and relief work, tended to come from more

[637] Ibid.
[638] *Der Moment*, 20.11.1917; *Dos Yidishe Folk*, 10.11.1917; *Haynt*, 10.11.1917; *Lebens-Fragen*, 10.11.1917.
[639] *Dos Yidishe Vort*, 25.10.1917.
[640] Julius Berger, *Letter to unknown addressee (probably the Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin)*, 16.11.1917, CZA, L6/107.
[641] Julius Berger, *Referat vom 2. Juli*, 02.07.1917, CZA, Z3/168.

humble backgrounds and often had solid roots in local communities. Their language was Yiddish and they often had little interest in the Hebraist Palestinianism of the old guard.[642]

There had been conflict, especially between Heschel Farbstein, who appears to have been a rather authoritarian personality, and the new young activists in the organization at least from early 1916 onwards.[643] Besides the Yiddishism, many of the young members seemed to have been primarily involved in relief activities and community activism, so that a letter from Warsaw in early 1917, when membership had increased significantly, stated: "The state of Zionist work in Warsaw is terrible, the level of Zionist work is so low […]."[644] Many in the leadership attributed this to the alleged incompetence of the younger members. In response, the one-person leadership of Farbstein was strengthened, eventually sharpening the conflicts even more.[645]

Frustrated with the leadership, some of these new activists organized themselves as an independent faction, which they declared represented the transition of Zionism into a popular mass movement.[646] While insisting on the purity of their Zionist beliefs, they nevertheless demanded that the party concentrate its efforts on the situation "here and now" and claimed to represent "a synthesis between Zionism and Folkism."[647] In early summer 1917, Julius Berger reflected on these new members, and their almost non-Zionist political interests as he saw them:

> "I insisted that we ought to do purely Zionist work. But it was not so easy to implement this [approach]. There was a feeling of weakness amongst Zionism in Poland. It was believed that it was impossible to give Zionism the relevance it deserves, that it is wrong, in this time of present-day-work [*Gegenwartsarbeit*] to raise demands for the future. It was said that it was a crime to ask for the Shekel in a city [Warsaw; JR] where hunger was dictating everything, where people earned nothing more than 50 Kopeks per day. The masses demand bread and social welfare. They want possibilities to earn a living and one cannot ask them to concern themselves with hopes for Palestine; this will not feed them. There was almost a territorialist movement in those circles. The older Zionists were incapable of resisting this current to engage in productive and constructive work themselves."[648]

One key battlefield, which reflected the changes in the movement's composition, was the newspaper. The Warsaw Mizrahi-Zionist's Hebrew-language central organ *HaTsefirah* suffered continuous troubles. From a daily paper with 14,300 subscriptions (many of them

---

[642] On the conflict within the Zionist movement: Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 52–6.
[643] Julius Berger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.02.1916, CZA, L6/102; Unknown Author (from Warsaw), *Letter to Julius Berger*, 1916, CZA, L6/104.
[644] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Lazarus Barth*, 13.02.1917, CZA, L6/106.
[645] Julius Berger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 11.05.1917, CZA, L6/107; Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Heschel Farbstein*, 14.02.1917, CZA, Z3/144.
[646] *Dos Yidishe Folk*, 26.10.1917. Also: *Der Moment*, 17.10.1917.
[647] *Der Moment*, 17.10.1917.
[648] Julius Berger, *Referat vom 2. Juli*, 02.07.1917, CZA, Z3/168.

internationally) before the outbreak of the war, it had declined to an intermittently published weekly journal with 1,500 subscribers in 1917. It could only be kept alive with financial support from the Central Bureau in Berlin.[649] The demand for those subsidies rose continuously, even when the organization grew in numbers and public support.[650] Given the newspaper's continuous crisis, the organization decided in spring 1917 to publish an additional Yiddish-language weekly *Dos Yidishe Folk* (The Jewish People). While the paper's editorial declared that "Our program is Zionism,"[651] soon doubts arose about the allegiences of the editors and writers. The paper was in part a concession to the new layers of activists who very quickly worked to take over control of the organization and increasingly side-lined classical Zionist demands.[652] Being rather successful with this approach, they even suggested expanding the paper into a daily.[653] Showing how big the distance had grown between them and classical Zionists, and to the outrage of the Polish and international leadership, the editors suggested making Lazar Kahan the new editor-in-chief of the paper. Kahan, who had been a writer and editor for several Yiddish nationalist newspapers, was a hardened anti-Zionist. Farbstein complained to the Center in Berlin: "A man who has slandered Zionism with such brutal insults, who spits on the Hebrew language, and who has numerous other flaws, cannot become the propagandist for the Zionists in Poland!"[654]

The party's old guard was frustrated and felt alienated by these new kinds of activists and seems to have subsequently withdrawn from activities to a certain extent. Simon Rosenbaum, passing through Warsaw, reported on the 1918 Shekel collection in the city that the energetic young activists had collected the impressive amount of 3,500 Shekel, but that "this number would have been significantly bigger if we would have had more people collecting, particularly, if the old Zionists would not be that indifferent."[655] As youth seemed to take over, they redefined Zionism into a concept with which the old guard could not identify.

Taking into consideration the heterogeneity of new Zionist activists, other conflicts, surfaced during the conference in 1917. Delegates from smaller towns complained that while they had done hard work for the Zionist cause, the leadership, both in Warsaw and internationally, completely ignored them. Schools in the provinces were rarely supported. Others complained that the movement had an excessively religiously defined interpretation of

[649] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Lazarus Barth*, 01.01.1917, CZA, Z3/170.
[650] Syjonistyczny Stowarzyszenie Polski, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 13.03.1918, CZA, Z3/148.
[651] *Dos Yidishe Folk*, 02.03.1917.
[652] In October 1917 the paper even suggested giving up Hebrew as a national language. *Dos Yidishe Folk*, 20.10.1917.
[653] Syjonistyczny Stowarzyszenie Polski, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 09.05.1918, CZA, Z3/149.
[654] Heschel Farbstein, *Letter to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 20.11.1917, CZA, L6/105.
[655] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 05.04.1918, CZA, L6/108.

what the Jewish people was, while others simply bemoaned the lack of religion.[656] Religious Zionists of the Mizrahi movement, such as Rabbi Slotnik from the small town of Gąbin (Gombin), felt discriminated by the leadership: "We represent about 8,000 Jews, but just as the Warsaw city council does not allow Jews with long clothes into the public park, the Central Committee does not want to have Jews wearing caftans at their conference."[657]

Both conflicts reflect the broadening of the Zionist movement, that it developed from a rather small group of intellectuals into a mass movement. The growth in numbers led to conflict, not least because for the young activists that joined at the time, Zionism often meant something different than for the old guard.

Zionists perceived their political and relief efforts as a precondition to winning over the Jewish nation. This is also the way, in which some of the scholarship has interpreted this development.[658] However, local conditions differed significantly and, for this reason, the impact of these political and relief efforts on the standing of Zionists in society also shows very different results. This is a crucial point, because it allows an understanding of how locals responded to Zionist activism and how the Zionist movement may have been able to translate its activism into political influence. For a large part, this was reflected in the process by which attempts to form National Councils – as Zionist-led, all-encompassing national-representative bodies – either succeeded or failed at the end of the war.[659] Previously, however, several important cases showed tests of Zionist politics on the ground, and through them, one may observe how Zionist politics functioned in the different political frameworks.

Despite their prominent position and the several formal achievements of the Zionists in Ober Ost, the movement there did not develop as anticipated either. While the local Zionists were indeed engaged in political activism, it was precisely this association between the movement and the German occupation that damaged them. Simon Rosenbaum wrote from Wilno:

"It would be illusory to believe that it would be possible to achieve something just resembling Warsaw. The general mood is against it. Here, there is only one wish and one hope: to end the occupation. This wish dominates people's feelings so much that there is no room for anything else."[660]

[656] *Minutes of the Third Zionist Conference in Poland*, *First Session*, 29.10.1917, CZA, Z3/146.
[657] Ibid.
[658] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 46; Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 83–4.
[659] See Chapter 5.
[660] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 09.07.1917, CZA, Z3\145.

It seemed to have been a somewhat absurd situation. Zionists were closely aligned with the authorities, whereas the authorities left hardly any room for independent political or social activism, which in turn led many activists, including the younger members, to focus intensely on 'classical' Palestine-oriented Zionist work. Political rule in Ober Ost did not allow for many activities that focused on the present situation. Hantke wrote to the Ober Ost administration that "The Zionist movement is the organizational expression of the Jewish people's national will. It has always had the best and most zealous supporters amongst Lithuanian Jewry."[661] However, rule in Ober Ost endangered this: "Today it [Zionism] depends on local activism and is extraordinarily hindered in this. After the Ober-Ost administration has repeatedly expressed its consent to the national ambitions of the Jews, I hope it will be possible to give the Zionist movement greater freedom."[662] The administration did not grant any more freedom. Whereas a small number of activists were engaged in social work, especially in regard to education (see Chapter 3), this was only a small minority. In essence, for the majority of the members, Zionism meant mainly an engagement in rather traditional cultural and Palestine-oriented forms of activism.[663] Simon Rosenbaum was aware that this would be a problem, because it did not correspond to local needs. He wrote about party activism:

> "The Zionist idea is gaining strength and is fostered by our youth activists; their energetic, vital, and spiritualized activity, despite some rashness, deserves praise and recognition. Whatever has been done here for our cause is thanks to them or their initiative. Their work revolves mainly around fulfilling societal and cultural tasks, including [doing this] in a Zionist and propagandist way. There was a plan to start a collection for Palestine, but on my advice, we refrained from it. The success would have been way too small, and it would have led to bad blood, that while we are begging for our poor, we would send money from Vilna to [a place] far away."[664]

Rosenbaum argued in a later report – which was brought to the center by the writer Arnold Zweig, also employed in the Ober Ost administration[665] – that the Palestine-oriented activism of the Zionist movement was disadvantageous for the spread of Zionism on the ground. He complained about the party forcing him "to deal with all general Jewish problems of the East in a strictly Zionist way," and concluded: "The Zionists of the East, for whom he [Rosenbaum] can still speak today, are very weak as regards their numbers and their influence; the broad

[661] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Verwaltung Ober Ost Abteilung V.*, 26.10.1917, CZA, Z3/131-1.
[662] Ibid.
[663] For instance: Zionist Committee for South Lithuania, *Letter to Inner Zionist Action Committee*, 02.10.1918, CZA, Z3/134; Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau*, 23.09.1918, CZA, Z3/135.
[664] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 22.03.1916, CZA, Z3/509.
[665] On Arnold Zweig's Zionism, see: John M. Efron, "The Zionist World of Arnold Zweig," in *Nationalism, Zionism, and Ethnic Mobilization in 1900 and Beyond*, ed. Michael Berkowitz (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 191–212.

Jewish masses keep away [from them] due to their Zionist one-sidedness."[666] It was no coincidence that as soon as the German forces left the region, the Zionist organization began to disintegrate.[667]

The situation was very different in the Generalgouvernement. By their self-understanding, a good part of the Zionist relief efforts there was defined in opposition to the traditional community leadership. The Zionists' argument for their independent welfare structures rested precisely on the alleged failure of the so-called 'assimilated' or religious leadership. This made it particularly complicated in places where the Zionists' pressure was so effective that they eventually took over the Kahal. The first time this conflict erupted was in Włocławek, a town with a very active Zionist group, located northwest of Warsaw.[668] The activists had already established a number of social and relief institutions, as well as schools. Based on the popular support that stemmed from those efforts "it was possible to kick out the assimilationists and get through a Zionist majority after a hard struggle during the elections for the Gmina [Jewish Community]. Now the Zionists want to implement their program and they face the most severe resistance, even in Zionist circles."[669] According to a report, the old Kahal budget had been very small and mainly allocated funds for religious purposes. It turned out, however, that the implementation of the Zionists' program for the community, funding relief institutions, orphanages, schools, soup kitchens, and so on required increasing the budget tenfold and therefore raising community taxes.

"In the entire community, a storm of indignation arose. There is also a lot of infuriation in Zionist circles. The objections are manifold: On the one side the imposition of such high taxes damages the Zionist party extraordinarily and we will definitely not be reelected the next time, [all this] in addition to the overall damage [this would do] to Zionism; secondly one would give money to institutions which have hitherto not been organized in a Zionist spirit, without having any insurance that they would change their behavior."[670]

The counter argument was that now the Zionists had gained a responsibility not only for themselves but for the entire Jewish population of the city and if one were to take the Zionist program seriously, there was no reason to refrain from implementing it. The conflict almost

[666] Simon Rosenbaum, *Information on the Situation in Wilno for the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 1918, CZA, Z3/510. These are citations from a summary of the letter; therefore, Rosenbaum is referred to in third person.
[667] Histadruth Tsionut beLite, *Letter to the Inner Action Committee of the Zionist Organization in London*, 1919, CZA Z3/824.
[668] Julius Berger, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 08.07.1918, CZA, Z3/163.
[669] Unknown Author (from Warsaw), *Report on the Situation in Poland*, 1918, CZA, Z3/163.
[670] Ibid.

sundered the local organization.[671] The budget that was submitted for the year 1919 (under the same community leadership) clearly shows how Zionist-oriented institutions received sometimes significantly higher amounts of subsidies from the Kahal than others.[672] This episode shows how Zionist activism filled a very particular spot within Jewish communal life. Although activists claimed to represent the will of the people, it could create severe conflicts when they actually had to do so. This showed how 'the people' and even the Zionists themselves were a lot less homogenous, with much greater internally conflicting interests, than activists commonly claimed.

Relief efforts in East Galicia remained without a central strategy and were dependent on local activists and their efforts within the wider relief structures of the communities. The leadership tried to encourage activists, such as Adolf Stand, who had fled westwards, to return to East Galicia, take over the organization, and rebuild it in a truly Zionist sense.[673] Stand refused, arguing that he could serve the cause anywhere he lived, that all of his property in Lwów had been destroyed, and that he wanted to remain with his family in Vienna.[674] It was only in December 1916 that a first meeting to elect a coordinating committee for the region was held.[675] It had taken a visit by Arthur Hantke himself to bring the local activists to coordinate their efforts in a more coherent way. Hantke's visit seemed to have convinced him that the local activists' approach to relief work made sense in these specific circumstances. His report praised the important role of activists in the relief institutions and their good standing in the community, while it refrained from raising old criticisms.[676] The first regional conference, including delegates from most Zionist groups, was only organized in April 1918.[677] The conference minutes – most interestingly – do not suggest that there was much debate over relief work. Most of the discussion centered around general Zionist politics, especially regarding Palestine, the political future of Galicia, and the Jewish nation's place in it.[678] This strongly suggests that these activities were still local efforts and not connected to a central party strategy, in other

[671] Ibid.
[672] Włocławskiej Gminy Żydowskiej, *Budzet Dochodów i Rozchodów Zarządu Włocławskiej Gminy Żydowskiej na rok 1919*, 18.06.1919, ŻIH, 113/2.
[673] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Adolf Stand*, 07.12.1916, CZA, Z3/519. In this particular case, it was also probably an attempt to remove Stand from Vienna, where his activities for a non-Zionist Jewish paper, the *Neue Jüdische Monatshefte* had caused a serious conflict. See: Adolf Stand, *Letter to Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich*, 11.09.1916, CZA, Z3/519; Arthur Hantke, *Letters to Adolf Stand*, 15.09.1916; 18.09.1916, CZA, Z3/519.
[674] Adolf Stand, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 27.12.1916, CZA, Z3/519.
[675] Michael Ringel, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 14.12.1918, CZA, Z3/815.
[676] Arthur Hantke, *Report on the Journey to the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 04.12.1916, CZA, Z3/377.
[677] See the reports: *Jüdische Rundschau*, 10.05.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 03.05.1918; *Selbstwehr*, 10.05.1918.
[678] Zionist Organization of East Galicia, *Minutes of the Conference*, 17.04.1918, CZA, F3/54.

words, that they were the efforts of local activists in their communities. Based on the experience of the Kahal's failure in the relief efforts during the war, the conference raised the demand of turning the religious community into a people's community.

"Jewish pol.[itical] life has to be completely liberated, especially from the assimilated and semi-assim.[ilated] opportunistic politicians who have corrupted it for 50 years, and who, during the time of war, have especially proven their complete lack of participation and understanding for the suffering of the Jewish people."[679]

This already anticipated the later structures of Jewish National Councils, in which the Zionists raised the claim of speaking on behalf of the entire Jewish community.[680] They would not have been able to attain their later position of influence if the activists had not already worked at the heart of the Jewish communities during the war. Their standing as speakers not for a specific party cause, but for the Jewish people could only be achieved because they had already fulfilled this role during the war, filling the gap that was left by the departure of the traditional leadership of the Kahal.

The different kinds of relief work undertaken during this period not only offer a reflection on different local conditions, but also on the various strategies employed by the Zionist movement as a whole and the local activists in particular. One can distinguish between local self-funded activities in the Generalgouvernement, the integration of Zionists within general Jewish relief activities in most parts of the Habsburg Empire, and those activities that were derived from German Zionists' civilizing mission, as most activities in Ober Ost and the Employment Office. Those three strategies led to very different results. In the Generalgouvernement, the Zionists could establish themselves as a strong Jewish political party that was capable of mobilizing significant numbers of people for their cause. While there were few results in regard to new members in East Galicia, Bohemia, or Vienna, Zionists would often be in a position immediately after the war in which they could take over community representation from the old leadership of the Kahal/Israelitische Kultusgemeinde/Židovská Náboženská Obec, effectively leading the communities at times of transition. At the same time, the top-down approach, both in the case of the Employment Office, and with regard to Zionist party activities in Ober Ost, failed miserably in winning over new layers of the Jewish population for the Zionists' national cause.

[679] Ibid.
[680] See Chapter 5.

Chapter 3: The Most Valuable National Fund: Childcare and Education

"After my husband died of hardship and hunger 1 ½ years ago, I was left completely help- and penniless with five children. With my children I am therefore in an indescribable, extreme plight, under which we suffer almost constantly. I hereby direct my most devoted request to the honorable Jewish Community, to accommodate two of my children in an orphanage so that I can earn something [while] I leave the older children at home alone."[681]

The files of the Łódź Kahal are full of requests like this.[682] Hunger and poverty, the death of parents, either of hunger or disease or as a result of the fighting, forced widows and widowers to give up their children so as to ensure they would not starve to death also. Sometimes, neighbors found orphans sitting beside their parents' dead bodies and pleaded to the Kahal to take care of them since they themselves had nothing to feed them with.[683]

This unprecedented crisis was close to a complete disintegration of Jewish society. As described in the previous chapter, the Kahal in Łódź, as well as in many other places, was incapable of providing the necessary aid to the suffering people. This meant that others needed to step in. It also meant that others could step in. The question of who was in a position to distribute relief goods – as discussed in the previous chapter – was more than a matter of prestige. Whatever organization could appropriate money, food, clothes, and so on would be able to keep its institutions open, run soup kitchens, children's homes, schools, and similar institutions. Much of the struggle amongst the various parties was over who could establish the institutions to provide for, care for, educate, and eventually save the Jewish children, who had been severely affected by the crisis of the war. Whereas most Jewish political and social movements were generally concerned with keeping the youth in the 'Jewish fold',[684] 'saving' in this context had a similar meaning to that ascribed by nationalists of other national movements to their own childcare and educational efforts. It meant bringing the children into the fold of the national movement and educating them to be good members of the nation.[685]

During the war and in its aftermath, Jewish towns and neighborhoods throughout East-Central Europe witnessed a struggle amongst the various Jewish movements over who, in their own way and for their own particular purposes, would be in a position to save the Jewish

I am very grateful to Marion Kaplan and Laura Lee Downs who read an earlier version of this chapter and provided me with invaluable comments and feedback.

[681] Malcha Blatt, *Letter to Łódź Kahal*, 20.08.1916, APL, 228/0/-/24.
[682] See: APL, 228/0/-/35; APL, 228/0/-/38.
[683] For example: Leib Maieronic, *Letter to Łódź Kahal*, 07.02.1916, APL, 228/0/-/38.
[684] See for example the excellent work by Daniella Doron on Jewish children in post-World War Two France: Daniella Doron, *Jewish Youth and Identity in Postwar France: Rebuilding Family and Nation* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2015).
[685] Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls*, 3–5.

children. The situation was not only one of crisis, but also of opportunity. It gave new political movements – including the Zionist movement – the chance of shaping the lives and attitudes of a hitherto unknown number of young people, something that all political movements in one way or another regarded as central to achieving their goals. This chapter analyzes these efforts with regard to a number of selected areas and communities. I concentrate on the practice of day-to-day work for children's relief and education – both aspects being absolutely inseparable from one another in the eyes of the activists – rather than on the 'grand' ideological and theoretical debates over relief and education that had already filled the columns of the Zionist press before the war and continued to do so.[686] This is largely because many of the 'big' ideas were impossible to implement during the period in question. Zionist intellectuals may have written lengthy essays about the shortcomings of traditional education systems and their visions for a future Jewish national school network, but this had little impact on a local level in wartime.[687]

To Impress One's Hallmark

Notwithstanding the already-existing pre-war Jewish welfare institutions in the Kingdom of Poland, in most cases run by the community board or by philanthropic foundations, such as those of the Poznański family, most political parties started their own institutions during the war, mainly focused on children. The question of being able to create a healthy environment and provide proper care for children was essential to an institution's ability to thrive. Zionists worried that if other actors, such as the Poles or, the so-called 'assimilationists', could provide better-quality schools or orphanages for Jewish children, those children would be lost to the nation. During the war, terrible rumors circulated about 'assimilationist' Polish schools. Albert Lucas, who represented the Orthodox Union in the JDC and travelled Europe on behalf of the relief institution in early 1916, reported on what people had told him about those schools.

[686] On Jewish, and particularly Zionist, education in this period, and debates over it: Ido Bassok, *Tehiyat haNe'urim: Mishpahah veHinukh beYahadut Polin ben Milhamot ha'olam* (Jerusalem: The Shalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2015); Mordechai Zalkin, *Modernizing Jewish Education in Nineteenth Century Eastern Europe: The School as the Shrine of Jewish Enlightenment* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016).
[687] For example: An unnamed Galician Zionist wrote extensively on the situation and prospects of a Jewish elementary school system in East Galicia in 1915. This did not change the fact that during the war Zionists did not establish a single new school anywhere in East Galicia. Unknown Author, *Elaborate on the Jewish elementary school system in Galicia*, 1915, CZA, Z3/814.

"The teachers tore down the Mazuzahs [sic!] which the little children had put up, and the children are afraid to go to sleep, and recite Psalms, because they are afraid harm will come to them because the Mazuzahs [sic!] are not in their place. One of the girls, I was told, had run away because they forced her to do work on Sabbath."[688]

This could not be allowed to happen. As the Jewish National Fund, whose principle proclaimed task was to collect money in order to buy and redeem land in Eretz Israel and prepare it for the return of the Jewish people, stated in a document on child-focused relief efforts:

"We have no doubt that you will devote all your attention to this task. The rescue/salvation [*Rettung*] of the Jewish children is a great national mission. The Jewish children are the most valuable national fund our Jewish nation has, and we cannot shy away from any difficulty or obstacle in order to fulfil this holy duty."[689]

Replacing the Land of Israel with the Jewish children of East-Central Europe, regarding them, rather than the land, as the object of salvation and redemption, reflects the shift that Zionism experienced in this period. It is a powerful image that shows the de-centralization of Palestine as the focal point of Jewish national rebirth. In a way, the youth itself became the central focus of Zionism, as activists saw them as the most valuable national fund, they became the promise.

Just as with other national movements, the question of educating the children of the nation was at the center of Zionist activists' attention. Warsaw, as other Polish cities with large Jewish communities, had a great variety of schools catering to Jewish children, mainly distinguished by language use and the content of education. Under Russian rule, state and private schools had only taught in Polish and Russian, while the language in the traditional orthodox chederim and Talmud-Torah schools, which catered to the vast majority of Jewish children, mainly boys, was Yiddish, with biblical Hebrew being taught as part of religious instruction.[690]

The creation of relatively large networks of privately-run Jewish schools originated as a response to the crisis in Jewish society that came with the war. With the outbreak of the war, and the beginning of supply difficulties, Jewish philanthropists and political groups, some of them with varying types of nationalist worldview, established institutions to feed and supervise children, and increasingly started to teach secular subjects in this framework.[691] Once the

[688] Albert Lucas, *Report on a Journey to Europe on behalf of the JDC*, 29.02.1916, NLI-A, USA V. 703 2 105.2.
[689] Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael, *Memorandum on the Jewish Children's Relief in Poland*, probably 1917, CZA, L6/103.
[690] Joseph Marcus, *Social and Political History of the Jews in Poland, 1919–1939* (Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton Publishers, 1983), 9–148; Unknown Author, *Report on the Yiddish schools in Warsaw*, 1918, CZA, A/137-28; Unknown Author, *Bericht über die Warschauer jiddischen Volksschulen*, February 1917, JMB-A, MF13-1.
[691] Unknown Author, *Report on the Yiddish schools in Warsaw*, 1918, CZA, A/137-28.

Germans had taken over, their new authorities ordered that the language of instruction in all public schools for Jewish children would be German.[692] However, they explicitly legalized private schools, allowing the language – with the exception of Russian – to be chosen freely.[693] Despite German Zionists repeatedly stressing the close relationship between German and Yiddish,[694] the movement had little interest in leaving Jewish children to such foreign influences. Zionist activists were especially concerned to protect the youth from Polish influences. Foreign languages – especially Polish – entailed the danger of losing the children to the nation, as Anne Kahan's teacher told her: "Then he criticizes me for reading Polish books. 'If you read Polish for six months,' he says, 'you develop assimilationist tendencies.'"[695] This was not only a question of language, however. "It will be hard for us nationally-minded Jews," wrote S. Halpern from a location in Poland, "to agree to send our children to these kinds of schools where Hebrew and Jewish history are not taught at all, and where they are [taught], it will at best be a few hours of religious classes, which will do more harm than good."[696] There could be only one solution: to build a Zionist school network:

"Is it necessary that I write about how important it is for the Zionist movement to take education in its hands! To all the peoples, educational work is the most noble, and through it, the Zionist movement could impress its hallmark on Jewish life in Poland. An entirely new field of work is opening up for Zionism, not only in the Orient, but also here. The Zionist program encompasses not only the renewal of our Palestinian property, but even more importantly, the renewal of Jewish cultural life."[697]

The Zionists were not alone in their educational efforts. While the Kahal, dominated by the so-called 'assimilationists', supported Jewish schools which had Polish as the language of instruction – and it also supported orthodox Talmud-Torah schools and the chederim – other nationally-minded groups and individuals, including the socialist Bund, the writer and philanthropist Jacov Dinesohn, and the Diaspora-nationalist Yidishe Folkspartey, were also eager to impress their educational hallmarks on Jewish life. Most of those schools had Yiddish as a language of instruction but also taught Polish and Hebrew as second and third languages.

[692] *Schul-Verordnungsblatt für Polen/Gazeta Rozporzadeń Tyczacych sie Szkolnictwa w Polsce*, No. 1, 10.10.1915, BAMA, PH-30-II-77.
[693] Deutsche Zivilverwaltung Warschau, *1. Vierteljahresbericht der Zivilverwaltung für Russisch-Polen für die Zeit vom 5. Januar (dem Tage der Einrichtung der Zivilverwaltung) bis zum 25. April 1915*, BAMA, PH-30-II-6.
[694] See chapter 1.
[695] Kahan, "Diary," 349.
[696] S. Halpern, *Letter to Zionist Action Committee*, 1915, CZA, Z3/140.
[697] Ibid. The quote's first sentence is clearly meant as a question, but still ends with an exclamation mark.

Exceptions were those schools run by the Bund which traditionally held the Hebrew language in disdain.[698]

The creation of a Zionist school network in Warsaw was initiated by Heschel Farbstein, one of the few long-standing Zionist leaders who had remained in the city. Farbstein, a member of the religious Zionist Mizrahi within the broader Zionist movement and "an out-and-out Hebraist, in the Russian Zionist tradition"[699] regarded Hebrew as the only national language of the Jewish people and tried his best to establish it as the only language of instruction in the Zionist-dominated schools.[700] According to the figures given by the local Zionist organization, by mid-1916, between 3,000 and 3,500 children attended these schools, while 12,000 attended the chederim and Talmud-Torah schools.[701] By 1918 the Yiddish schools together had about 1,200 students (Dinesohn: 272, Bund: 173, Folkspartey: 754).[702] The reports by the Warsaw Jewish Community Board offer slightly different numbers. They suggest that the Zionist *Kuratorium* (Education Board) had 2,467 pupils by May 1916. In total, 18,518 Jewish children attended school or other institutions that catered to their wellbeing, including kindergartens, orphanages, and so on. 55 percent of them were male.[703] Until early 1918, these numbers increased only slightly to 21,454, which meant that no more than 26.2 percent of children attended school or similar institutions.[704]

The task of the Zionists' work in regard to education was summed up in an internal bulletin, sent out to the members in May 1917:

"Influencing and educating the Jewish youth is Zionist work in the most direct sense. Education for Jewry, education for Hebraism, education for Palestine, these are the three basic principles on which our cultural work must be built. This work mainly demands from us efforts to gain influence in the education sector. It is the duty of all Zionists in the entire country to take over the national education of the youth, may it be by influencing the curricula of existing schools, may it be by establishing new schools."[705]

[698] Unknown Author, *Report on the Yiddish schools in Warsaw*, 1918, CZA, A137/28.
[699] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 49.
[700] Heschel Farbstein, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 27.04.1916, CZA, Z3/162.
[701] Lazarus Barth, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 18.06.1916, CZA, Z3/160.
[702] Unknown Author, *Report on the Yiddish schools in Warsaw*, 1918, CZA, A137/28. These are the most detailed accounts. In September 1917 the Bund claimed that of the 50,000 Jewish children in Warsaw, 18,000 attended religious schools (chederim or Talmud-Torah), 7,000 went to Polish schools, 2,000 to Hebrew schools, and 1,700 to Yiddish-language secular schools. *Lebens-Fragen*, 14.09.1917.
[703] Unknown Author, *Report of the Section for Children's Relief of the Relief Commission of the Warsaw Jewish Community for the Period January 25–May 1, 1916*, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/3/132.1.
[704] Unknown Author, *Report on the Number of Children Attending School*, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.4.
[705] Central Committee of the Zionist Organization of Poland, *Internal Bulletin*, May 1917, CZA, Z3/145.

The relative success of the Zionist schools, given the initial size of the organization and compared to the endeavor of other political movements, can be partially attributed to the fact that, contrary to most of the schools financed by the Kahal, they also accepted children from refugee families, who had fled to Warsaw during the German offensive but had no official residence in the city. The main reason, however, was that Zionist schools, as most others, mainly focused on providing children with food, clean clothes and a healthy environment and were comparatively successful in doing so.[706] While the language question – re-interpreted as a question of national affiliation and identity – was the demarcation line between the schools, the actual battle was not fought over it, but rather over bread, clothes, and the funds to provide them.[707] In this, the struggle over funds for educational and childcare-matters was not dissimilar to the conflicts over funds for other relief-institutions, as described in the previous chapter.

Zionist schools recruited their pupils mainly from the poorer segments of Jewish society, offering them not only food and care but also a relatively modern, often secular enlightened nationalist education (though usually not without religious components). Little could outrage the Orthodox, self-perceived traditional custodians of Jewish culture and education more than the Zionist modernists and secularists and their efforts amongst Jewish children. The orthodox paper *Dos Yidishe Vort* (The Jewish Word) declared that Zionists wanted to rob Jewish religion, tradition, and culture of its core, and as part of their deviousness, their first target was Jewish children, whom they wanted to control and manipulate through taking over Jewish educational institutions.[708] Furthermore, the orthodox paper denounced the Zionists, arguing that by only distributing international donations to nationalist and Zionist schools, they were willing to let the thousands of boys in Warsaw's chederim starve.[709]

Self-Sacrifice

Although questions of language and educational content constituted the dividing lines between school activists of various persuasions, most efforts actually concentrated on caring for the physical wellbeing of the children. There were no clear boundaries between schools and other

[706] See Lazarus Barth's article on the Jewish schools in Warsaw, which was published in the Berlin-based *Jüdische Rundschau*, 21.07.1916.
[707] On the question of financing the Jewish schools, see for example: Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 18.02.1916, CZA, L6/103. On the question of the allocation of funds to Zionist schools only, see: Leo Motzkin, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 10.04.1916, CZA, Z3/501.
[708] *Dos Yidishe Vort,* 15.06.1917.
[709] *Dos Yidishe Vort*, 10.09.1917.

welfare institutions.[710] A characteristic which was also necessary for the sake of education. The above-cited report on the emergence of the Jewish school system in Warsaw under Russian rule had already stated that during the war, these schools had emerged primarily as care-institutions to feed the children. This had not changed by early 1918, as the report stated:

"Feeding the children is still the precondition today. Generally, three meals are served: in the morning, depending on supplies, tea or coffee with milk and a soup, and in most schools a bit of bread, at lunchtime preferably a thick soup with legumes or potatoes; at 3 o'clock, if feasible, again groats or bread. School attendance depends on the children's health conditions, since illnesses, including typhus are very common. Often, schools have to close for weeks due to the lack of heating materials and food."[711]

In Białystok, the socialist-Zionist Poale Zion and the youth movement Young Judea were the initial driving forces behind education and relief efforts for children. In February 1916, the Young Judeans established a six-grade school,[712] and in summer of that year a nursery and children's kitchen,[713] while Poale Zion opened its I. L. Peretz Nursery and School in early 1916.[714] Since the Jewish population of the city had suffered dramatically under the impact of the war,[715] the first priority for those institutions was the provision of food for the starving children. The Young Judea nursery provided two hot meals a day for seventy children just as Poale Zion provided this for its 180 children. The focus could also be observed financially. There are no final budgets in the reports, but the available documents clearly reflect the local necessities. Young Judea's nursery spent seventeen times more money on heating and food than on books and other educational materials, while its school still had to spend seven times more money on those basic needs than on books.[716] While the German authorities praised the establishment of the schools, initiatives which corresponded with their civilizing mission in the East, and painted rosy pictures of the institutions,[717] the schools were funded largely through

[710] For example: Unknown Author, *Letter to Leo Motzkin*, 11.01.1917, CZA, L6/525. This was the case for all organizations' initiatives in this field. The report by the Kahal's Childrens Section on schools included orphanages and similar institutions as well. See: Unknown Author, *Report of the Section for Children's Relief of the Relief Commission of the Warsaw Jewish Community for the Period January 25–May 1*, 1916, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/3/132.1. A representative of Yakov Dinesohn's schools also described how the schools primarily provided food, shelter, and clothes: S. Natanson, *Letter to James Simon*, 20.01.1916, CZA, L6/525.
[711] Unknown Author, *Report on the Yiddish schools in Warsaw*, 1918, CZA, A137/28.
[712] Unknown Author, *Jewish 6-Grade School in Białystok*, 1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/131.
[713] A. Frankfort, M. Baruchewitsch, *Report on the Children's Kitchen and Nursery of the Young Judea Society in Białystok*, 20.02.1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/131.
[714] Unknown Author, *Report on the Perez Nursery and Public School of the Workingmen's Society Białystok*, 22.02.1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/131.
[715] Rebecca Kobrin, *Jewish Bialystok and Its Diaspora* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 135–6.
[716] A. Frankfort, M. Baruchewitsch, *Report on the Children's Kitchen and Nursery of the Young Judea Society in Białystok*, 20.02.1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/131. Unknown Author, *Jewish 6-Grade School in Białystok*, 1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/131.
[717] *Korrespondenz B*, 18.10.1916; 28.03.1917.

the local structures of the organizations, international donors and the local Community Board.[718] The schools and nurseries had a strong national outlook but were under the control of activists who regarded Yiddish as the national language, as the report on the Young Judea school stated: "In order to impact in [sic] the students something of the National Spirit, the language of instruction is Yiddish."[719] The same was true for the Poale Zion institutions.[720] The local branch of the General Zionists, which had a rather traditional Hebraist orientation, therefore had to intensify its efforts for Hebrew education.[721] By May 1916 the General Zionists opened a modern religious school in Białystok where Hebrew was taught and concentrated many of their other educational efforts on Hebrew-language cultural activities.[722] By September 1917 they had also established a Hebrew-language library, an orphanage, and an afternoon-school.[723] Out of this afternoon-school evolved a new Hebrew-language *Gymnasium* (initially only for boys) that was officially opened in November 1919.[724]

'Eshel', the first children's home established by the Zionists in Warsaw was created in response to the large number of orphaned children who lived on the streets and were completely neglected.[725] Caring for them could entail dangers for the health and safety of the volunteers, as one report stated: "Of those members of the Z[ionist] O[rganization] who volunteered to help, 7 were infected by the children, including the manager of the home and members of the staff."[726]

The volunteers were in most cases women, sometimes relatives of Zionist activists, such as the two daughters of Heschel Farbstein who worked in the schools and children's homes from the beginning.[727] Life for those who worked or volunteered in the schools and orphanages

[718] I. Shmulewitz (ed.), *Der Bialystoker Yisker-Bukh* (New York: Bialystoker Center, 1982), 43.
[719] Unknown Author, *Jewish 6-Grade School in Białystok*, 1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/131.
[720] Unknown Author, *Report on the Perez Nursery and Public School of the Workingmen's Society Białystok*, 22.02.1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/131.
[721] Abraham Shmul Hershberg, *Pinkos Biyalistok*, Vol. 2 (New York: Bialystok Jewish Historical Association, 1949), 216–20.
[722] Histadruth HaTsionim beByalistok*, Letter to unknown recipient (copy)*, 23.05.1916, CZA, Z3/141.
[723] Histadruth HaTsionim beByalistok, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, September 1917, CZA, Z3/146.
[724] Yaacov Samid, *The Immortal Spirit: The Bialystok Hebrew Gymnasium Poland, 1919–1939* (Haifa: Traffic Publications, 1995), 27. There are no accounts of girls in the first years of the Gymnasium; they seemed to have been admitted only in later years.
[725] Unknown Author, *Report on the Zionist Organization's Relief Efforts to the JDC*, February 1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.5. 'Eshel' refers to the tamarisk plant also known as salt cedar. According to Genesis 21:33 Abraham planted a tamarisk in Beer-Sheva after digging a well there.
[726] Unknown Author, *Report of the Zionist Organization in Warsaw on Relief Work for the Suffering Jewish Population of Poland*, probably 1916, CZA, Z3/172.
[727] M. F. Seidemann, *Die Heimatlosen in Warschau. Spezielle Korrespondenz für die New Yorker Tageszeitung Forverts*, 1916/1917, CZA, Z3/127.

was hard. Repeated financial crises meant that teachers and caretakers often could not be paid and literally starved.[728]

Through relief work in general, and especially through the care for children, the Zionist movement, as well as other movements at the time, became more female. This was particularly the case in the Habsburg Empire, where a great number, probably the majority, of the pre-war membership, which had been predominantly male, had been drafted to the army. Party leaders there suggested 'replacing' them with women. Displaying a paternalistic approach, they suggested bringing in women merely as "assistants" (*Hilfskräfte*) to "provisionally maintain the Zionist organization during the war" and maybe open up a new field of potentially important activists for the future.[729] The increased role of women was not a specifically Zionist phenomenon but could be observed in other movements as well.[730]

Although Zionists in the German occupation zones did not have to struggle – as they did in the Habsburg monarchy – with the absence of the majority of male activists, a large part of the relief work, and especially this most important aspect of national relief for children, was conducted by women. Reports on women's efforts tended to frame their work in terms of 'love' and 'care' and derived from the particular role of Zionist women in the national effort, specifically related to bringing up the new generation of the nation's youth.[731] M. F. Seidemann, a reporter for the New York-based *Forverts* (Forward), juxtaposed the 'assimilationists'' schools, which were allegedly well-equipped but very strict and cold, with the nationalist and especially Zionist schools "where you can clearly feel the love and warmth in all respects."[732] The German-language report used the male term for head or director (*Leiter*) for the 'assimilationist' schools and wrote about the national schools' warm atmosphere.

"It could not be any other way since in these schools most of the [female] teachers [*Leherinnen*] and matrons [*Aufseherinnen*] are children of the people and do their work voluntarily and without pay. […] Those girls do their

[728] Julius Berger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 13.11.1917, CZA, L6/107. This was the case for example for the teachers of the Young Judea school in Białystok, who went without pay for several months in 1917. See: Unknown Author, *Jewish 6-Grade School in Białystok*, 1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/131.
[729] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to the Zionist Organization in Austria*, 19.08.1915, CZA, L6/300.
[730] For example, in the Social Democratic and Trade Union movement. See: Rudolf Kučera, *Rationed Life: Science, Everyday Life and Working-Class Politics in the Bohemian Lands, 1914–1918* (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 122. This is also true to a large extent for the approach of the state. See: Maureen Healy, "Becoming Austrian: Women, the State, and Citizenship in World War I," *Central European History*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (2002): 1–35.
[731] See also: Jolanta Mickutė, "Making of the Zionist Woman: Zionist Discourse on the Jewish Woman's Body and Selfhood in Interwar Poland," *East European Politics and Cultures*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2014): 137–62.
[732] M. F. Seidemann, *Die Heimatlosen in Warschau. Spezielle Korrespondenz für die New Yorker Tageszeitung Forverts*, 1916/1917, CZA, Z3/127.

work gratuitously [without pay; JR], they are from wealthy families and sacrifice themselves for the sacred cause. That this kind of work comes with a lot of love is clear."[733]

Saving the Children

In June 1917, Zionists in Warsaw initiated the creation of summer colonies (summer camps) for the children of Zionist schools and orphanages, especially for those who suffered from typhus, tuberculosis, and other illnesses.[734] Women activists did the majority of work in this field. This "precious and pleasant work" (as an activist put it) was organized by the daughters of Heschel Farbstein as well as by Mrs. Gordon and Mrs. Zuckermann.[735] The Warsaw Committee for Jewish Summer Colonies, which was organized as part of the Kahal's relief efforts and included Zionists, was chaired by male representatives of various political parties, while the women of the committee represented either orphanages or were the wives of more prominent activists.[736] This committee received children from numerous institutions and was also financially supported by the Polish authorities.[737] Similar colonies were established in Łódź in 1918, albeit under full control of the Zionists.[738]

In summer 1917, the first children's summer colony was organized outside of Warsaw. According to a report by the local organization, 176 children, boys and girls, mostly between six and fourteen years of age, and suffering from lung diseases, could attend. The language of the camp was intended to be Hebrew and the teachers, who came from Zionist schools in the city, gave lessons in that language, as well as in singing, arithmetic, natural sciences, Polish, and handicrafts.[739] The report, which was probably produced for donors, painted a romantic picture of the environment and the location, which had been made available by the German authorities.[740] It described the necessity for the colonies, since the poverty and destitution in

[733] Ibid.
[734] Summer colonies existed already before the war and were sometimes organized by the same activists. See: Rakovsky, *My Life*, 115.
[735] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Biuro Syjonistyczne Warszawa*, 29.06.1917, CZA, L6/106.
[736] Committee for Jewish Summer Colonies, *Second Report*, 10.07.1918, CZA, Z3/149.
[737] Unknown Author, *Report of the Committee for Summer Colonies*, 01.09.1918, CZA, Z3/173.
[738] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Zionist Committee in Łódź*, 18.10.1918, CZA, Z3/150. As mentioned above, there had been earlier Zionist summer camps in Poland. It is not totally clear whether this specific one built on pre-war traditions or was completely new.
[739] Unknown Author (from Warsaw), *Report on Zionist Children's Relief Work in Poland*, probably September 1917, CZA, L6/108.
[740] The German regime also supported the summer colonies of the Warsaw Jewish Community Board, providing them with accommodation and additional bread rations. See: Zarząd Warszawaskie Gminy Starozakonnych, *Letter to Verwaltungschef beim Generalgouvernement Warschau*, 07.05.1918, BAMA, PH 30-II-29; Verwaltungschef beim Generalgouvernement Warschau, *Letter to Polizeipräsident Warschau*, 31.05.1918, BAMA, PH 30-II-29; Polizeipräsident Warschau, *Letter to Warsaw Jewish Community Board*, 02.07.1917, BAMA, PH 30-II-29.

Warsaw had broken the spirit of many children: "Some children literally went mute, did not play and did not sing anymore but crawled with bent backs like birds with broken wings."[741] They needed to get "out of this terrible ghetto"[742] and into the open, to nature, to regain their physical and spiritual strength. The normal day in the summer camp was described as such:

"At 7 o'clock morning call with trumpets. This is the sign that now, a 'free life in the open' begins. The big boys recite their morning prayers. Some are orphans and have confided to their teacher that they have to say the kaddish at every prayer. […] At eight o'clock there is breakfast: warm milk and dry bread. Then until 10 playing in the open […] From 11 to 1 o'clock: partition in groups and lessons outside. The Froebel-group is a special case. It only engages with nature. All other groups have 28 children who are under the guidance of a teacher who teaches his [sic!] subject. From 1 to 2: lunch. The menu has been set for the entire week in advance. It regularly consists of 2 dishes, usually soup and vegetables and instead of the vegetables sometimes an egg or compote or the like. From 2 to 3 rest outside, only if it rains, in the dormitories. From 3 to 4 playing games. At four an afternoon snack, consisting of sweet tea and bread with honey. From 4.30 to 6.30 a hike: studying nature in the sense of Froebel. At 6.30 the entire house come together on the terrace for dinner: usually dumplings with milk and potatoes. Then, teeth and feet are washed and the latest at 8.30 all those small […] ones are in bed. Naturally, the 'big boys' will have the evening prayer with the Chazzan."[743]

The emphasis on physical and moral renewal of the children – combined with prayer for the boys – was typical for those efforts. A report on the summer colony near Wilno depicted their results: "The children spend the day with entertainment, playing games and walks in the forest. A library is provided for them and the children use it. The atmosphere is cheerful, even on rainy days. They sing and play and write theater plays in which they themselves perform."[744]

In the Habsburg Empire, care of orphans came to the attention of the Zionists only relatively late, which can probably be attributed to the organization's lack of funds. Max Geyer wrote that there was hardly any money to organize even basic party work in East Galicia.[745] However, by early 1917 they began initiatives to create orphanages in the war-torn Eastern regions of the empire. A letter to the Scandinavian aid committee detailed the suffering of the estimated 15,000 Jewish war orphans in Galicia and Bukovina and their continuous "physical and moral

[741] Unknown Author (from Warsaw), *Report on Zionist Children's Relief Work in Poland*, probably September 1917, CZA, L6/108.
[742] Ibid.
[743] Ibid.
[744] Dr. Schobach, B. Epstein, *Report on the Jewish Summer Colonies near Wilno*, 1918, CZA, L6/109. In all this, the youth camps showed great similarities with those of other political movements at other times. See for example: Laura Downes, *Histoire des colonies de vacances*, (Paris: Perrin, 2009).
[745] Max Geyer, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 14.09.1915, CZA, Z3/733.

degeneration."[746] There was an urgent necessity to establish orphanages, since the existing structures of care were far from sufficient. The Zionists offered to create a network of orphanages: "The orphanages will of course fully meet all hygienic and pedagogic standards which are necessary, so the children can become true sons of their people and useful members of human society."[747] It is remarkable that although the orphanages were undoubtedly intended for children of both genders, the focus was on raising 'true sons' of the people, with girls being left out of the nationalist discourse in this respect. Zionists also proposed the establishment of a children's home on the outskirts of Vienna. According to the proposal's author, this was necessary since the Jewish community did not have the necessary infrastructure to care for all orphans and the alternatives were not good. The city's orphanages were in poor condition and Jewish children were confronted with hatred and prejudice:

"The [city's] orphanage is an old monastery, a grey building in which the children live. It is only a transitional institution and therefore not maintained well. The rooms are insufficient and insufficient are the supervisors and caregivers who see it as their task to silence the children by beating and shouting. Here, a particular martyrdom begins for the Jewish child. Nobody will call him by his name, he is only 'the Jew', if this name is mercifully thrown at him and not combined with other insults. And there is no child, however miserable, abandoned, and pitiful he may be, who would not feel superior to the child that he can call 'the Jew'."[748]

The only alternative provided by the city administration was not much better. The city tried to find foster parents for abandoned or orphaned children, but since only few Jewish families would allegedly accept an orphan, they would be left to Christian families. There, children would not only be mistreated or neglected (while the foster parents took the money from the city), but they would also be in danger of being lost to the nation.

"Amongst those people [foster parents; JR], who are at best from the upper layers of the proletariat, there is no tolerance or respect for other races and faiths. [...] In most cases what is supposed to be most valuable to a child is taken from it: its consciousness of belonging to its people is turned into a mockery, a ridicule, a curse."[749]

The fear that if a child were to be raised by members of another nation it would become lost was a common feature amongst Jewish nationalists everywhere.[750] The only option could

[746] Exekutiv-Komitee der Zionisten Österreichs, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 19.03.1917, CZA, Z3/612. The letter was passed on by the Berlin Center to the Scandinavian Aid Committee in Copenhagen.
[747] Ibid.
[748] Unknown Author, *Schaffet Kinderkolonien für Verlassene Jüdische Kinder*, 1917 or 1918, CAHJP, AU/166.
[749] Ibid.
[750] Judson, *Guardians*, 3; Tara Zahra, "Reclaiming Children for the Nation: Germanization, National Ascription, and Democracy in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1945," *Central European History*, No. 37 (2004): 499–540.

therefore be the establishment of Jewish orphanages in the countryside, where both the children's physical and spiritual renewal would be possible.

"Outside of Vienna, a children's colony could be established, in which those who are abandoned, expelled, and tormented could find a bright home. […] They would have their play and work spaces, their teachers and counselors. They would receive the physical and spiritual care and education they need, they would be protected from brutality and ignorance, which has hampered and misdirected their physical and spiritual development. From the poorest and sickest, from the most miserable and most depressed, strong, happy, and proud pillars of our people would be formed."[751]

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Zionists in Prague had set up a school for Jewish refugee children. Max Brod taught in the Prague school for Jewish refugees, run by the Zionist organization, and payed by the Kultusgemeinde/Židovská Náboženská there. In his memoirs he recalled the importance of educational work for the national cause. He debated the extent to which the girls should be taught Jewish religion with his colleague Alfred Engel, who insisted that girls should only be taught the bare minimum about religious rituals, as had been customary in the East.[752] "With all my eloquence I explained to him the dangers of defection in [this] alien, Western environment. Here is not like in the East with its concentrated Jewish communities. 'If your daughters do not know anything about Judaism, what shall keep them from abandoning us?'"[753] Brod wrote a poem about his students, capturing the national mission that guided the educational efforts. Even if one's home were destroyed, with father looking back to Galicia, and mother crying, the spirit of the girls was unbroken, as they looked into the wide world on the map and into a better future.[754]

"School for Galician refugee children: 'The World stands on the breath of schoolchildren' (Talmud): They stream in, they sit here, / On their benches, four by four, / And sway their virtuous cheeks. / You good girls, don't you know, / The raider is breaking into your home! / How will you get home? / The good girls, they do not bother. /

---

[751] Unknown Author, *Schaffet Kinderkolonien für Verlassene Jüdische Kinder*, 1917 or 1918, CAHJP, AU/166.
[752] Brod, *Streitbares Leben*, 230–1.
[753] Ibid., 231. Note the phrasing "in the East with its concerted-living Jewries" ("*wie im Osten mit seinen konzentriert wohnenden Judenschaften*") The author chose not only to use the plural, but also the possessive determiner "its" ("*seinen*"), suggesting the East's possession and control over its Jewries.
[754] The poem was published in *Jüdische Zeitung*, 04.06.1915 and *Selbstwehr*, 04.06.1915 as preprint for the collection of poems "*Das gelobte Land: Ein Buch der Schmerzen und Hoffnungen*" (The Promised Land: A Book of Pains and Hopes). Max Brod, *Das gelobte Land: Ein Buch der Schmerzen und Hoffnungen*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Kurt Wolff, 1917), 19–20. In his memoirs, Brod did not print the second verse of the poem (which I also left out here). He wrote there that the poem was dedicated to the Galician Jewish refugee girls he taught. As a matter of fact, it had been dedicated to his colleague in the school "Prof. A.[lfred] Engel, the ingenious philanthropist and organizer." Brod, *Das gelobte Land*, 20. The motto at the beginning of the poem is a reference to the Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 119b where Reish Lakish stated on behalf of Rabbi Yehuda Nesia in saying "The world only exists because of the breath of schoolchildren." The "breath of schoolchildren" refers to their reciting of the Torah.

[…] / The great map is put up, / the view is steered far away / and colorful images float. / You flower-girls, mother cries / the gentle father curses the enemy / the flower-girls, they listen together. / No, flowers would have already withered / plucked from their roots / You blossom with strength and bright, / While all around the world tears itself apart, / fed by a higher power / you live and prepare yourselves / you brave girls: you are the spirit!"[755]

Childcare and education had become the primary focus of all efforts of national revival, and descriptions of the various projects were all framed in a very similar way. A report on the overall children's relief programs in Poland described the orphanages as "a true blessing and the only salvation for the Jewish people."[756] A report from Pińsk stated: "In the Jewish People's Children's Home there are usually around 100 children. The goal of the children's home is to raise them to be strong, upright, and proud Jews. Therefore, there is an equal focus on good nutrition and correct education."[757] The case was the same in Łódź. Feeding the children's body and spirit was the most honorable task for any Jewish nationalist, as Gershon Rosenblatt wrote: "By ensuring the health of the children, we ensure the health of the nation."[758] As described in chapter one, for many German Zionists, Poland and the Eastern Jews in a way represented the unredeemed nation, a promised land of a different kind, to which they came to fulfil their duty to their nation, to be part of the great national mission. As Eretz Israel was replaced by the neglected children of Jewish neighborhoods in East-Central Europe, German Zionists came, as part of a civilizing mission, to plant Jewish national spirit there. As one volunteer wrote, he wanted to go to work amongst the Jews of Poland because he was of "the conviction that only through the morally and physically healthy generation will come the process of national self-emancipation (especially in the East)" and he believed that he could contribute to this.[759] This process was largely coordinated by the Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin, which, for instance, supported the Zionist *Yavneh*-school for girls in Łódź by sending a young teacher, "a well experienced young lady and a marvelous Zionist."[760] In 1918, a group of young male and female activists from Germany came to Warsaw to build an orphanage. They wrote about their motivations:

"We were not [primarily] concerned with rescuing some of the children here from their misery, and adding to the already existing orphanages one that is led in the national spirit. Our intention and our will were that through our deeds we would win influence over local youth and guide them towards practical national work. […] To us, this

[755] Max Brod, "Schule für Galizische Flüchtlingskinder," in *Das gelobte Land: Ein Buch der Schmerzen und Hoffnungen*, 3rd ed., ed. Max Brod (Leipzig: Kurt Wolff, 1917), 19–20.
[756] Unknown Author, *Report on Jewish Welfare Institutions in Poland*, 16.10.1917, CZA, Z3/172.
[757] Unknown Author, *Report on the Jewish People's Children's Home in Pińsk*, 05.09.1918, CZA, Z3/150.
[758] Gershon Rosenblatt, *Letter to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 30.10.1918, CZA, Z3/150.
[759] Siegfried Lehmann, *Letter to Franz Oppenheimer*, 29.11.1915, CZA, A161/10.
[760] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Dr. Braude*, 15.08.1918, CZA, Z3/150.

seems to be the only way, to win the youth for practical work, the only way: through our own work, our own example."[761]

Re-framing national work in the context of social and relief work, especially focused on the youth, not only helped Zionists to gain support in new layers of the Jewish population, but also connected their national ideas with an issue that was crucial to the community and to individuals. They could counter their opponents' claim that Zionism just concerned a distant future in a far-away land – and could therefore not be taken seriously – by connecting the idea of the nation with the necessities of Jewish daily lives.[762]

Muscular Young Men, Straight-up Girls

Another important aspect of the work of 'regenerating' Jewish youth was sports and gymnastics. As was the case for many other national movements throughout Central and Eastern Europe,[763] Zionist sports and gymnastics associations had often been cornerstones of national work, especially amongst the youth.[764] In late 1915, Zionists in Warsaw founded the sports and gymnastics association Maccabi in order "to achieve the physical regeneration of Jewish youth through exercise and gymnastics."[765] They could not afford their own gym but rented one from another organization and the first head coach was the Christian German Michael Alberskirch who left with the German troops in November 1918. The money was raised directly from the members, whose numbers had risen from ninety (both male and female) at the foundation of the association to 200 by early 1918.[766] The gymnasts occasionally performed in public, at events that were connected with parades and speeches.[767] The self-

[761] Magda Gumbel, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 06.06.1918, CZA, Z3/149.
[762] On this common criticism, see for example: *Varshaver Tagblat*, 21.01.1917; 26.01.1917.
[763] Amongst others: Svenja Goltermann, *Körper der Nation: Habitusformierung und die Politik des Turnens, 1860–1890* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1998); Claire Elaine Nolte, *The Sokol in the Czech Lands to 1914: Training for the Nation* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).
[764] Diethelm Blecking, "Jews and Sports in Poland before the Second World War," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, Vol. 23 (2008): 17–35; Jack Kugelmass, *Jews, Sports, and the Rites of Citizenship* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007); Tatjana Lichtenstein, "'An Athlete Like a Soldier Must not Retreat': Zionists, Sport, and Belonging in Interwar Czechoslovakia," *Shofar: an Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (2015): 1–26; Lichtenstein, *Zionists*, 226–68; Igor Yeykelis, "Odessa Maccabi 1917–1920: The Development of Sport and Physical Culture in Odessa's Jewish Community," *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (1998): 83–101. The vast majority of the literature deals with predominantly male groups.
[765] Weizmann, E. T. Bormann, *Letter to Senior and Bogen in the Hague*, 08.01.1918, CZA, Z3/147; Grażyna Pawlak, Daniel Grinberg, Maciej Sadowski, *Bądź silny i odważny: Żydzi-sport-Warszawa/Be strong and brave: Jews-sport-Warsaw* (Warsaw: Fundacja im. Profesora Mojżesza Schorra, 2013), 20–5.
[766] Ibid.
[767] See for example: *HaTsefirah*, 06.09.1917.

representation of Maccabi emphasized the idea of regeneration of both the male and female youth of the nation.

"One must know the misery in the Jewish district of Warsaw, must have seen the physical and moral squalor with one's own eyes […] to understand the joy of seeing those muscular young men, those straight-up girls, the happy flock of children, who are conscious of their body and happy in life. […] The new, the better future of the Jewish people in Poland rests on their shoulders."[768]

A key factor in this 'regeneration' was to offer a type of 'productive help', which would combine the necessity of caring for physical wellbeing and national education, as well as the concept of educating young Jews in 'productive' professions. The idea of 'productivizing' the allegedly 'unproductive' Jews had been a cornerstone of Zionist ideology from its very beginning.[769] This traditionally referred to men. They were regarded as 'unproductive' and had to be 'regenerated', whereas traditionally women were supposed to be educated to become good mothers of the nation's children.[770] At times, the Zionist idea of 'productivizing' the Jewish man provoked serious conflicts with some of the donors. The rejection of philanthropy was central to Zionist ideology and while they had to admit that handing out food and caring for the most urgent needs was necessary, they insisted that it would be a grave mistake to stop there, since this would not solve any problems. As Austrian Zionists wrote to the American-Jewish Congress in regard to relief work for the Jews in Galicia and Bukovina:

"One aspect must always be central when it comes to the reconstruction of Jewish economic life in the areas affected by the war: not philanthropy but social politics must be decisive, since this is not about individual poor, economically weak persons, but about large groups, many classes, and an entire people."[771]

There were recurring problems, however, with international donors, who collected funds for the urgent needs of the suffering Jewish population and not for a wider socio-political project and who were therefore reluctant to give money for what Zionists called 'productive help'.[772] From the Zionist perspective, however, the crisis brought by the war also entailed huge

[768] Unknown Author, *Copy of a text on the German Administration and the Jewish Gymnastics Movement in Poland*, probably 1917, CZA, Z3/148.
[769] See, amongst others: Eliezer Schweid, "The Rejection of the Diaspora in Zionist Thought: Two Approaches," in *Essential Papers on Zionism*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira (New York, London: New York University Press, 1996), 133–60; Sternhell, *Founding Myths*, 47–73.
[770] Jolanta Mickutė, "Making of the Zionist Woman: Zionist Discourse on the Jewish Woman's Body and Selfhood in Interwar Poland," *East European Politics and Cultures*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2014): 137–62; Alison Rose, *Jewish Women in Fin de Siècle Vienna* (Austin: University of Texas Press), 109–40.
[771] Zentralkomitee der Zionisten Oesterreichs, *Letter to American-Jewish Congress-Committee*, March 1917, CZA, L6/320.
[772] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to the Zionist Office in Warsaw*, 24.01.1918, CZA, L6/105.

opportunities: since the Jewish economy had been shattered, this opened the way for the reorganization of Jewish professional stratification. By giving concrete examples of a reorganization of Jewish economic life, Zionists believed they would initiate a larger process of Jewish 'productivization' in Poland.[773]

In May 1917, for instance, Simon Rosenbaum reported from Wilno that vocational schools not only provided food and taught Hebrew and other subjects but also educated 350 boys and girls for useful professions. He especially emphasized the efforts of training them as electricians and mechanics, two professions that allegedly very few Jews – that is, 'Jewish men' – occupied.[774] The kind of professions that were taught in the Zionist-led vocational schools were gender-segregated: boys learned to work with wood and metal, while girls learned traditional professional skills, such as sewing and dressmaking.[775] In early 1918 Zionists in Warsaw initiated the foundation of a technical school for young men which sought to educate them as locksmiths, electrical engineers, mechanics, and metal workers.[776] According to the school's draft budget, it would provide six-month-long courses in the various fields, giving the boys and young men at least a basic understanding of their trade.[777]

Even more valuable than manual labor in industry or as artisans seemed to be the return to agriculture. Just after he had returned from a journey to occupied Poland, Max Bodenheimer wrote in his diary on 4 March 1916:

"I regard the most important demand for the recovery of the Jewish people as its return to agriculture, to the soil. It would be most beautiful if this would be fully achieved in Palestine, the historic homeland of the Jews. If and where this is not possible, one needs to aim for this goal in other countries. Only the continuous connection to the soil will physically and spiritually regenerate the Jewish people. In a spiritual sense, calm, order, conscientiousness, and morality will be developed and strengthened, physical, steady work with nature, and the obligation to fulfil specific tasks at a specific time, will be of outmost importance. […] The Jewish people will live through a pure, beautiful, spiritually enlightened youth. A rejuvenated, more beautiful, more mature Jewish people will rise from the dead. The secret of life will lift its veil. It eventually does not matter whether these Jews will come together for national, religious, or any other reason. In any case, the effect will be a national one."[778]

[773] Arthur Hantke, *Zum Wideraufbau des jüdischen Wirtschaftsorganismus in Polen*, undated, CZA, F4/3.
[774] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to unknown address (probably to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin)*, 06.05.1917, CZA, Z3/509.
[775] Unknown Author, *Report on the Jewish Relief Efforts in Poland*, 16.10.1917, CZA, Z3/131-1.
[776] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Julius Simon*, 07.01.1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/141.
[777] Unknown Author, *Plan and Preliminary Estimate of Costs for the Jewish Technical School in Warsaw*, March 1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/2/141.
[778] Max Bodenheimer, *Diary*, Entry 04.03.1916, CZA, A15/819.

Besides the nationalist fetish of manly physical labor and the soil, Zionists rationalized their attempts to bring Jews into agriculture by arguing that the war would eventually destroy the small-scale merchant economy and dispense with the Jewish 'middleman', and for this reason it was necessary to find new 'productive' forms of labor. The idea was therefore to train young men for jobs as agricultural laborers, farmers, and young women to become "suitable wives" for those future farmers.[779] While the concept of toiling on the soil of Palestine was not in the foreground during the war, it was nevertheless considered by the activists to be an important argument for transformation towards agricultural labor.[780] The great – unrealized, probably unrealizable – plans for agricultural reorganization were developed in the context of a general sense of reorganizing societal relations and political power in East-Central Europe. While the Zionist plan of eventually settling 20,000 Lithuanian Jews in the countryside, as Hermann Struck attempted to negotiate with the Ober Ost authorities, was far from realistic, Rabbi Arthur Levy – who had helped reorganize the Zionist movement in Łódź and was later transferred to Wilno – set up a training farm close to the city.[781]

[779] Unknown Author, *Suggestions for the Transformation of Polish and Lithuanian Jews into Agriculture*, ca. 1916 or 1917, CZA, Z3/144.
[780] Otto Warburg, *Letter to Julius Berger*, 07.05.1917, CZA, Z3/161.
[781] Komitee für den Osten, *Minutes of the Committee Meeting*, 06.09.1917, JMB-A, MF13-1. See also the statutes of the *Vilna Jewish Society for Agriculture "Adamah"* (Hebr. soil/earth), CZA, Z3/132-2. The official Ober Ost paper *Korrespondenz B* praised those efforts, and the transformation of Jewish townspeople into strong men, toiling the soil: *Korrespondenz B*, 05.09.1917.

Figure 1

A training farm near Wilno under German occupation, ca. 1918.[782]

Both in Ober Ost and in the Generalgouvernement Warschau, Zionists (re-)established training farms, to bring the Jewish youth 'back' to the soil and to agriculture. In their eyes, training was necessary, since Jews (that is, Jewish men) in the region allegedly lacked both the knowledge and the physical capacities for agricultural work. Two farms, both of which were planned for one hundred to 200 people, were established in Częstochowa (Czenstochau), close to the border with Upper Silesia, and in Częstoniew (Czentoniew), south of Warsaw.[783] The project was co-financed by the Zionist Organization in Berlin and received funds from the JDC. For a large part it was intended to provide sympathizers or members of the organization with an agricultural education.[784] In a report on the farm in Częstochowa to the JDC in January 1917, Kurt Nawratzki, one of its organizers, painted a very positive picture of the training farm and the fifteen boys who learned and resided there, most of whom had only joined in the two previous years.[785] According to this report, they learned vegetable, fruit, and flowergardening, received

[782] CZA, PHIS/1455764. [I do not own the rights to this picture.]
[783] Curt Nowaritzki, *The Reopening of the Jewish Training Farms in Czentoniew and* Częstochowa, ca. 1917, CZA, Z3/147. A report to the JDC on the school in Częstochowa the author spelled his name slightly differently (Kurt Nawratski; see below). I am using the name on the original documents.
[784] Curt Nowaritzki, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 22.09.1917, CZA Z3/146. I could not find out whom they purchased the land from.
[785] The school in Częstochowa used to house between 25 and 30 boys before the outbreak of the war. The plan to eventually have 100 to 200 students was very ambitious. In this report, Nowaritzki/Nawratski only suggested

basic instruction on irrigation and lessons on agricultural theory, and also learned languages.[786] There was only one case – that I am aware of – in which the largely unspoken but always clear focus on young men was altered. In early 1918, Nawratzki wrote to the JDC again and proposed the expansion of the farm-school in Częstochowa, to create a special training farm for girls. The initiative seemed to have come from a Mrs. Zuckermann, the headmistress of the Jehudiah girls' school in Warsaw. An affluent Jewish family nearby would offer their estate at no cost for the new training school. Although this drove the costs down considerably, Nawratzki insisted that a large part of the money would have to be raised from the Jewish girls or their families directly, making the project much less accessible for girls from poorer backgrounds.[787] Unfortunately, there are few sources on the subsequent development of the training farm.

The Students of Rabbi Akiva

Whereas women's volunteer labor characterized initial efforts in the field of child-welfare, over time, Zionists realized the necessity of professionalizing childcare and education. The problem was not the lack of personnel or volunteers but of qualified and politically conscious people.[788] What good would a Zionist orphanage or school do if it did not have the right teachers and caretakers? The fact that the Zionists organized and guaranteed the schools' funding was essential in order to control the educational and political content of those institutions. By providing funds, the Zionists could ensure that the schools would remain in their fold.[789] It was complicated to find qualified personnel, who could speak Hebrew, Yiddish, and Polish, demonstrate pedagogical and academic skills, and be true Zionists.[790] Heschel Farbstein angrily complained about those in 'his' school-network who were not Zionist enough and neither taught nor spoke Hebrew.[791] Generally local Zionist Organizations, as for example in Białystok, attempted to respond to the problem by opening courses for the women who already worked in its social and educational institutions, writing to the Center:

---

that it should raise the number of students to pre-war levels. See: Kurt Nawratski, *Report on the School of Horticulture in Częstochowa*, 11.01.1917, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/3/132.2.

[786] Ibid. The language they learned was obviously Hebrew, but this was not mentioned explicitly in the report to the JDC.

[787] Kurt Nawratski, *Establishment of a Horticultural School for Jewish Girls in Poland*, 11.02.1918, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/3/132.2.

[788] This was also true in the case of the Jewish High School in Lublin whose teachers had university degrees but no pedagogical training or deeper knowledge of Hebrew. See: S. Szper, *Letter to Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich*, 12.03.1916, CZA, Z3/142.

[789] Lazarus Barth, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.07.1917, CZA, Z3/160.

[790] Exemplified in the attempts to find a new headmaster for a school in Warsaw in August 1916: Biuro Sionistycne Warszawa, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 25.08.1916, CZA, Z3/142.

[791] Heschel Farbstein, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 27.04.1916, CZA, Z3/142.

"The local committee of the Zionist Organization here intends to open seminar-courses for qualified educators for the Hebrew orphanages and kindergartens. The lack of care and educational personnel for the relevant institutions everywhere in Lithuania is so big that we have to overcome this shortage or else close down our educational work."[792]

Since the Zionist-run education system had expanded so rapidly, there were not enough qualified teachers with the proper political stance who had experience teaching in Hebrew or even running a school. The few, like Puah Rakovsky, a pioneer of Hebrew education in Poland, instantly found a job when she returned to Warsaw.[793] Anne Kahan noted in her diary the worries expressed by her teacher, Mr. Tuchklaper, who was also a Zionist activist in Siedlce: "Tuchklaper regrets the shortage of qualified instructors. A teacher who is fluent in Hebrew, does not necessarily know Hebrew literature. Besides, a good teacher ought to understand the problems of the youth, he ought to live and sympathize with the youngsters. But very few do."[794] His suggestion was though to get the proper education in the evening lectures at the local Zionist club.[795]

From 1918 onwards, Zionists in several areas, initiated efforts to professionalize educational programs in their schools, since they mainly suffered from the lack of Hebrew teachers. In Wilno, they created a teacher-seminar for Lithuania. The lack of good teachers was "the main obstacle for the salvation of more schools."[796] This 'salvation' of course referred to the local Zionists' practice of taking over and 'nationalizing' already existing schools in the region; an urgent task for which the initial teacher-seminary only offered one-year-long courses so that its attendees could get to work as soon as possible. The subjects taught there included (in this order): Hebrew, Hebrew literature, Jewish history, mathematics, natural sciences, geography, German, drawing, singing, sports, handicrafts, and psychology.[797] In Warsaw, where Heschel Farbstein's Mizrahi played a more important role in the Zionist movement, the Jewish elementary teachers' seminary had a significantly stronger religious focus. The concept, which was drafted in spring 1918, clearly showed this in the prospective teachers' daily schedule. Divided into Jewish and general subjects (all taught in Hebrew as far as possible), the Jewish part of the program included both religious topics, such as study of the Torah, Agadah, and Mishnah-Talmud, as well as Jewish history and literature, and 'Palestine studies'.[798] For

[792] Histadrut HaTsionit beBialystok, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, September 1918, CZA, Z3/134.
[793] Rakovsky, *My Life*, 126.
[794] Kahan, "Diary," 348–9.
[795] Ibid. 348.
[796] Ch. Grinberg, *Letter to the City Committee of the Zionist Organization in Wilno*, 02.08.1918, CZA, Z3/134.
[797] Ibid.
[798] Unknown Author, *Seminary for Jewish Elementary School Teachers in the Kingdom of Poland "Tachkemoni"*, 1918, CZA, Z3/149. Note the lack of instructions on the Halakhah (Jewish religious law).

the Zionists, who largely financed the seminary,[799] such a program was also part of the struggle over the essential question: who had interpretative authority over Jewish identity itself? In this struggle for hegemony, Zionists fought against all other factions and political movements, and the children were at the center of this struggle.

The war and its aftermath had a profound effect not only on the organization of Jewish education, but also on the content and the methods of education. Zionists needed to find for themselves what they wanted to teach children and how they wanted to teach them. As mentioned above, reformist pedagogical methods, such as that of Froebel were apparently applied in a number of orphanages and summer camps. One well-documented case for pedagogical innovation at this time is Siegfried Bernfeld's *Arbeitskreis für Jüdische Erziehung* (Working Group for Jewish Education).[800] Bernfeld, who was born in Lwów and joined the Zionist Central Committee for Western Austria at the age of twenty-five in 1917, became an important youth leader in wartime Vienna.[801] His and his colleagues' idea was to develop an Empire-wide Jewish-national pedagogical movement since "in the coming times, every people will care for its own wellbeing", and for this reason an organization "based on our idea of national rebirth" was necessary to protect the children from alien-national influences and "the cheder which harms the child's body and soul".[802] The *Arbeitskreis* had contacts and partners throughout the Empire, which persisted after the war.[803] The pedagogical concept focused on children's self-determination, self-organization, and the connection of formal education with nature and agriculture. From the fall of 1918 onwards, a kindergarten and a pedagogical institution for the training of kindergarteners and Hebrew language teachers were established.[804] Since 1917 pedagogical training courses were already being offered in the capital. These courses are quite well documented. Their content shows a strong focus on Jewish

[799] Komitee für Jüdische Erziehungsarbeit in Litauen und Polen, *Protocol of the First Meeting*, 06.06.1918, CZA, Z3/149. The meeting was held in the Zionist Central Office in Berlin.
[800] On Bernfeld: Daniel Barth, *Kinderheim Baumgarten. Siegfried Bernfelds "Versuch mit neuer Erziehung" aus psychoanalytischer und soziologischer Sicht* (Giessen: Lahn, 2010); Eleonore Lappin, "Pädagoge, Psychoanalytiker, Psychologe und Marxist: Siegfried Bernfeld 1892–1953," *in Jüdische Wohlfahrt im Spiegel von Biographien*, ed. Sabine Hering and Sandra Schönauer (Frankfurt: Fachhochschulverlag, 2007), 84–101.
[801] Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 105-119.
[802] J. Kimmel, *Die Notwendigkeit einer gesamtösterreichischen Organisation zwecks der Fürsorge für die vorschulpflichtige Jugend (Osterreichische Juedische Kindergarten-Aktion)*, 1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 19.
[803] Salomon Stammeier (Nowy Targ), *Letter to Siegfried Bernfeld*, 1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 15; Salomon Stamler (Nowy Targ), *Letter to Siegfried Bernfeld*, 17.06.1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 15; Julie Weiner (Šamac and Vukovar), *Letter to Arbeitskreis für Jüdische Erziehung*, 09.01.1919, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 15; Erwin Kohn (Budějovice), *Letter to Siegfried Bernfeld*, 15.06.1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 15; Siegfried Bernfeld, L*etter to Erwin Kohn (on groups in Plzeň, Karlovy Vary, and Teplice)*, 10.07.1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 15.
[804] Arbeitskreis für Jüdische Erziehung, *Circular No. 1*, June 1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 15; Arbeitskreis für Jüdische Erziehung: Kindergartenkommission, *Minutes of the Meeting of 17 June 1918*, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 19; Anitta Müller, *Letter to Arbeitskreis für Jüdische Erziehung*, 20.11.1917, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 19.

history, culture, literature, and ethics, as well as didactics and pedagogical methods.[805] This "blending of general and Jewish knowledge with pedagogical knowledge and skills"[806] was headed by Bernstein. The majority of the 194 course participants were female (seventy-six percent) and between eighteen and thirty years old, most of them apparently from well-educated bourgeois backgrounds.[807] Two reports survive from teachers who taught these pedagogical courses – one on Hebrew, the other on ancient Jewish history. Both strongly emphasize the aspect of dialogue with the students as opposed to lecturing. Both report on a particularly warm and friendly relationship between teachers and course participants.[808]

A draft concept for a future elementary school shows the pedagogical focus of the approach. Three key elements – the teaching of younger children by their older peers, the breaking of the barrier between formal knowledge and experience with nature and practical (work-)skills, and the connection of these with a nationalist ethos – were the central aspects. A key didactical tool was the pupils' self-awareness, self-teaching, the connection between formal and practical aspects, and that they would learn something not because the teacher told them to, but because of their own internal drive and motivation.[809] One field where this is documented in practice is a report by a teacher who taught Hebrew, probably in early 1919. "Before I approached the children with words that are foreign to them and [feeling that] to repeat them would be uninteresting, I though it appropriate to first speak with them about the concept of language in general and the Hebrew language in particular […]."[810] This was in stark contrast to the traditional way of learning Hebrew, especially in the cheder, which primarily consisted of repetition and rote learning. Such methods were rejected here, and the idea was to gain the interaction of the children:

"Who of you understands Yiddish, who Polish, who Hungarian, who German? So all of you understand German, Polish only two, Yiddish five, Hungarian one. You can see that not all people and not all children speak the same way. Out there, not in Vienna, there are many children who speak completely differently to you and if you come to them and tell them something, they will not understand you. Why is that? The children's response: 'Because they speak a different language.' There are many different languages. Which languages do you know? The children

[805] Jüdisch-Pädagogische Kurse, *Kursplan 1917/18*, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 22.
[806] Ibid.
[807] Jüdisch-Pädagogische Kurse, *Liste der Kursteilnehmer 1917/18*, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 22.
[808] Samuel Krauss, *Letter to Siegfried Bernfeld,* 13.08.1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 2; V. Aptowitzer, *Report on teaching*, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 22.
[809] Siegfried Bernfeld, *Einige Gesichtspunkte für eine zu gründende jüdische Elementarschule*, 1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 86.
[810] Unknown Author, *Meine ersten Hebräisch-Stunden in der jüdischen Volksschule in Wien*, 1918/19, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 86.

begin to name several languages: German, Polish, Hebrew, English as well. Why does one learn a different language? The children's response: 'To understand the children who speak a different language.'"[811]

The implicit question was, of course, who should we want to speak with? Which children should we aim to understand?

"And do you know which language we will learn? The children joyfully: 'Hebrew!' Yes, correct, but why do we learn the Hebrew language and not another one? The children's responses vary. The majority knows it but cannot express it. It only becomes clear that in the land where many Jews live (one shouts out this land is called Palestine) and where we all want to go, [people] speak like this. But if we come there and do not understand Hebrew than we cannot speak with the Jews who live there, can neither say anything nor understand what they want to say. That is why we need to learn the Hebrew language."[812]

During the war, of the much Hebrew school effort were concentrated in Warsaw, while activists in other cities, such as Łódź, also saw the necessity of working for the goal of physical and national wellbeing for Jewish children. Providing them with food, the physical, was the prerequisite for being able to give them a proper Jewish education, the national. The Zionist group in Łódź was quite successful in establishing institutions for Jewish children. All of them "are completely in our hands"[813] as Gershon Rosenblatt, the leading figure of the Zionist movement in the city, proudly reported in 1917. There, they controlled several Jewish schools, such as the Jewish girls' school *Yavneh*, which later merged with a newly founded Hebrew-language high school for boys, whose headmaster wrote: "Our institution had been founded in August 1916 by local Zionists in order to provide Jewish children with a proper secondary education in a Jewish national spirit, in the Hebrew language, with minimal tuition."[814] In a conversation with potential donors, Rabbi Braude of Łódź described the urgent national necessity of this school, since otherwise, the children would have to go to a Polish school, which would be "horrible". "[T]he only way to give the Polish Jews a modern education and enable them to connect with European culture, without shattering their Jewish consciousness and feeling of belonging, is the one we chose in Lodz."[815] However, making Hebrew the main language of instruction turned out to be more difficult than initially assumed:

[811] Ibid.
[812] Ibid.
[813] Gershon Rosenblatt, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 26.05.1917, CZA, L6/105.
[814] I. Gutermann (Headmaster of the "Jawne" School), *Letter to the Zionist Action Committee Berlin*, 14.07.1918, CZA, Z3/149. Note the very German transliteration of the school's name which should rather be Yavneh; יַבְנֶה
[815] Rabbi Braude, *Report on the Jewish schools in Łódź*, June 1918, CZA, Z3/173.

"Teaching the secular subjects like mathematics, [illegible], history, and natural sciences in Hebrew, indeed makes our work a lot more complicated and forces our teachers to selflessly use all their strengths for the sake of expanding our important work, not least since the Hebrew textbooks for general subjects, which already exist in Palestine, cannot be brought here due to transport difficulties, and therefore we have to create the various teaching materials for mathematics, geometry, history, [illegible], for our students ourselves […] during the year."[816]

The school desperately needed funds, since "we decided that we cannot close our gates to the children, who are flocking to us, yearning for Jewish education and Hebrew culture."[817] The staff there did its best to care not only for their national and educational needs, but also for their physical development. The Zionist Organization did its best to support the effort financially.[818] In many regards, however, the success in Łódź remained a local phenomenon. The Zionist leadership in Berlin, which attributed to the school "exceptionally high national importance", bemoaned that its eventual success was not a result of a concerted effort by the Polish Zionist Organization, but rather, as in other places, a product of the passionate activism of local members.[819] In fact, the Zionists managed to collect the significant sums necessary for the translation of schoolbooks into Hebrew from the Jewish community in Łódź itself.[820] The Zionists in the city were generally very successful in building their movement during the war through local work. The Yizkor-Book for Łódź notes:

"The Zionist groups, which were few prior to the First World war, increased considerably. A town committee was established, uniting more than 20 associations and groups. Zionist youth groups were begun, as were sports clubs and educational organizations. There was growing Zionist influence in the Jewish schools and the various institutions, and even some synagogues became in a way Zionist centers. 1917 saw the establishment of the Young Mizrachi Association. […] The Women's Zionist Association, founded in 1916, counted 1500 members two years later, and its energetic activity in the cultural sphere was particularly marked, among other [subject areas], in Hebrew study groups, where there were 150 students in 1918."[821]

The case of Łódź shows very well that Zionists were primarily concerned about what kind of schools would be opened and that they would be in control of them. The city did not lack Jewish

[816] Ibid.
[817] I. Gutermann (Headmaster of the "Jawne" School), *Letter to the Zionist Action Committee Berlin*, 03.10.1918, CZA, Z3/150.
[818] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to the "Jawne" School Administration Łódź*, 1918 (exact date unclear), CZA, Z3/150. This is contract to the Zionists in Warsaw. Farbstein reported that he could not raise any funds for the schools from the local population in Warsaw. See: Nederlandsch Comitévoor de Verdeeling der Gelden van het Amerikaansche Fonds tot Ondersteuning der Joodsche Oorlogsschlachtoffers, *Letter to Joint Distribution Committee of funds for Jewish War Sufferers New York*, 29.12.1917, JDC NY AR, 1914-1918/4/14/1/129.4.
[819] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to I. Gutermann, director of the "Jawne" School in Łódź*, 18.08.1918, CZA, Z3/173.
[820] Arthur Hantke, *Note on the conversation with Rabbi Braude*, 29.05.1918, CZA, Z3/175.
[821] Yad Vashem, ed., *Pinhas Hakehillot Polin*, Vol. 1, Lodz III d. Translation via *JewishGen* [https://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/pinkas_poland/pol1_00001.html#TOC]

schools. There were almost forty Jewish schools in the city already, largely financed by the magistrate and the Kahal and administered by the Jewish School Commission which was part of the general school commission at the magistrate.[822] An (increasing) majority of them had Polish as a language of instruction, not least because the occupier's plan to have German in Jewish schools could not be implemented due to the lack of German-speaking teachers.[823] Rabbi Braude was the head of the examining board of the Kahal that decided on the certification of teachers in Jewish religion and Hebrew language.[824] The question that motivated Zionist school-activists was not whether Jewish schools existed or not, the question was what would be taught in them and who was in control.

The possibilities for establishing schools were different in Ober Ost. Not only had there been a longer tradition of Jewish enlightened education there, especially in Lithuania, but the German administration ordered that schools should be organized, or separated, along linguistic-national lines. Jewish-only elementary schools for all Jewish children with Yiddish as the language of instruction already existed alongside the religious schools with Hebrew.[825] The fact that the administration had accepted the nationalist principle for organizing schools and had already segregated them, created a framework in which the Zionist idea of nationally-defined education could thrive. Additionally, Zionists could use their prominent position in the administration to influence local initiatives that set up new schools. In a letter to a certain George Marx of the Committee for the Reorganization of Jewish Schools in Wilno, which had both orthodox and nationalist leanings, Hermann Struck expressed his intentions in a careful, but unambiguous way: "Despite having an official order to do so, I believe that I should note that in the Cultural Department of Oberbefehlshaber Ost, the attempts to open *Western* education to the Jews of Vilna is seen very favorably."[826] With 'Western', he meant modern and secular, modelled after what he knew from Germany.

---

[822] APL, 221/0/4/2.5. See the minutes of the Jewish School Commission: APL, 221/0/4.5/16295.
[823] Zarząd Gminy Starozakonnych w Łodzi*, Letter to Oberregierungsrat von Oppen Kaiserlich Deutsches Polizei-Präsidium Łódź*, 14.06.1916, APL, 166/0/2/82; Polizei-Präsident Lodz, *Letter to Repräsentanten-Kollegium der jüdischen Gemeinde Łódź*, 23.06.1916, APL, 166/0/2/82; Magistrat Lodz Schuldeputation, *Auszug aus der Sitzung der Schuldeputation vom 11. Februar*, 12.02.1916, APL, 221/0/4.5/16672; Magistrat Lodz Schuldeputation, *Auszug aus der Sitzung der Schuldeputation vom 12. Mai 1916*, 13.05.1916, APL, 221/0/4.5/16672; Magistrat Lodz Schuldeputation, *Auszug aus der Sitzung der Schuldeputation am 11. und 25. Mai 1917*, May 1917, APL, 221/0/4.5/16673.
[824] See for example: *Teacher Diploma of Ryfka Miednicka*, 29.05.1917, APL, 221/0/4.5/16667. Zionists generally played an important role in the Łódź Kahal. See: Gmina Wyznaniowa Żydowska w Łodzi, *Skład delegacji*, 1917, AAN, 2/0/16.1/300
[825] Unknown Author*, Jewish Schools in Ober Ost*, 1916, CZA, A15/711. See also: Andrew M. Koss, "From Theory to Practice: The Fight for Jewish Education in Vilna during the First World War," *POLIN*, Vol. 30 (2018): 195–219.
[826] Hermann Struck, *Letter to George Marx*, 26.02.1918, CZA, Z3/132-1. Emphasis in the original.

To the authorities they argued successfully that well-educated parents, who wanted to have a Hebrew education for their children, could not be forced to send them to one of those filthy, backward chederim.[827] The attempt to bring secular Jewish nationalist culture to the East culminated in the creation of a Hebrew-language school for boys in Wilno. A report detailed:

"There is one Zionist-Hebrew high school in Vilna, which now has four classes and is directed by Dr. Regensburg, a Jew from Courland, who had studied theology and then medicine in Germany, an undoubtedly highly educated man, who feels very nationally, a passionate Hebraist, but also a passionate apostle of enlightenment, who shivers just when he hears the word Talmud."[828]

Obviously, not every Zionist was happy with this secular-nationalist version of Zionism and its schools. Rabbi Yitzhak Rubinstein, a leading member of the Mizrahi movement in Wilno, lamented the fact that these educational attempts not only led to the neglect of religious education for children, especially for girls, in nationalist schools, but it also meant that religious parents would not send their children to the nationalist schools. He therefore suggested a plan of kindergartens, modern co-educational chederim, and a reform of the *melomdim* (male religious teachers) education, "on a religious and nationalist basis."[829] The below picture of one of these modern chederim in Wilno, which was most likely produced for potential donors outside the region, intended to demonstrate not only the open-minded and modern nature of the school (the world map on the wall, the mixing of girls and boys, the teacher in modern dress), but also emphasized the cleanliness and modernity of the classroom itself, which was in stark contrast to the image of the traditional chederim. The picture also shows that there were significantly more boys than girls in the schools.

[827] Oberbefehlshaber Ost, *Circular to all Military Commands*, July 1918, CZA, Z3/175.
[828] B. [Julius Berger?], *Letter to Martin Buber*, 02.05.1918, CZA, Z3/133.
[829] Yitzhak Rubinstein, *The Establishment of Jewish Schools in Vilna*, undated, CZA, L6/106.

Figure 2

Classroom of a modern, co-educated cheder-school, run by the Mizrahi in Wilno (undated, probably around 1917).[830]

Another aspect of Zionist educational policy in Ober Ost was the attempt to take control over schools that had been established by other political movements. The main example was the Jewish boys' high school in Kowno, which was under the dominance of the Orthodox and had been founded in 1915 with the help of donations from the orthodox movement in Germany.[831] The local Zionist organization, which had about 400 Shekel-payers before the war, and had previously played an important role in national-educational efforts, did not seem particularly interested in taking over this school, however.[832] The initiative for doing so rather came from the German Zionists through the administration. Arthur Hantke wrote to Sammy Gronemann, a German Zionist who was stationed in the Ober Ost administration, that he regarded "the nationalization of the schools in Lithuania as being of the utmost importance."[833] There was a clear national reasoning behind the attempt to take over this particular school: "The general

[830] CZA, PHG/1014591. [I do not own the rights to this picture.] Also note that the children seem to come from poor backgrounds, many of those in the first row not wearing shoes.
[831] On the establishment of the school, see: Stefan Schreiner, "'Instrumentalisierte Religion' – Juden in Wilna unter deutscher Besatzung während des Ersten Weltkriegs," *Medaon: Magazin für Jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung*, 10 (2016): 13.
[832] Unknown Author, *Report on the Economic and Cultural Situation of the Jews of Kowno before and during the War*, undated, JMB-A, MF13-1.
[833] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Sammy Gronemann*, 01.05.1918, CZA, Z3/133.

mood in Lithuania is very nationalist and Zionist. […] The creation of an orthodox stronghold, especially a cultural one, would severely disturb [our] great prospects."[834] Through pressure from the administration, the Zionists managed to gradually gain control over the school's curriculum and teaching staff. First by adding nationalist elements, such as nationalizing religious celebrations, increasing the number of (non-religious) Hebrew lessons, and so on, and eventually completely nationalizing it, to the point where the school was declared a Zionist school.[835] In December 1918, when the region was still occupied by German forces, a report by Georg Wollstein, a leading Zionist activist from Russia who had fled to the German occupation zone after the revolution and taught as a part-time teacher at the school, showed this new mood:

"The 14 to 16-year-old boys of the Hebrew high school love me. Marvelous boys, true Zionists, who are longing for Palestine to come to them, who live in an atmosphere of optimism […] The director of the high school is Dr. Carlebach, brother of the infamous Rabbi C., but he himself is a decent guy, who declares himself to be a Zionist and who works hard on the Hebraization and nationalization of the school."[836]

This top-down approach of the German Zionists, confident in their support by the administration completely ignored the interests of local activists, however. Since it was easier to obtain approval for a German-language *Gymnasium* – of course in a Jewish-national spirit – than a Hebrew language one,[837] the organization did just that in the city of Lida (Lyda). The school's structure and curriculum were developed by the local Zionist organization,[838] but it was impossible to find local teachers, who should (according to this concept) be both traditionally religious and Jewish nationalist.[839] Hermann Struck therefore wrote to fellow German Zionists asking them to take the position.[840] This attempt failed.[841] For the Zionists in Wilno, this was an unacceptably authoritarian move by their German comrades. They wrote to the Inner Zionist Action Committee: "The leadership of the Zionist Organization of Vilna decided at its meeting on the 27th of Tammuz [7 July] with a majority of votes to protest against the establishment of the new high school, and to ask the member of the EAC Arthur Hantke, to

[834] B. [Julius Berger?], *Letter to Martin Buber*, 02.05.1918, CZA, Z3/133.
[835] Unknown Author, *Report on the Creation and Development of the Jewish Gymnasium in Kowno*, May 1918, CZA, Z3/132-1. B. [Julius Berger?], *Letter to Martin Buber*, 02.05.1918, CZA, Z3/133.
[836] Georg Wollstein, *Letter to Dr. Löwenstein*, 05.12.1918, CZA, Z3/133. He referred to Emanuel Carlebach (see below).
[837] B. [Julius Berger?], *Letter to Martin Buber*, 02.05.1918, CZA, Z3/133.
[838] A. J. Landa, Alexander Dworetzki, *Postcard to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 09.06.1918, CZA, Z3/133.
[839] Zionist Organization of Lida [probably A. J. Landa], *Postcard to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 23.06.1918, CZA, Z3/133.
[840] Hermann Struck, *Letter to Mr. Steinhardt*, 01.07.1918, CZA, Z3/133.
[841] Other German Zionist activists in the region then tried to get teachers directly form the Ober Ost administration. See: Karl Levy, *Letter to Editorial Board of Jüdische Rundschau*, 03.07.1918, CZA, Z3/133.

withdraw his signature and his support."[842] The signatories were mainly from the strong Hebraist faction of the Wilno Zionist organization, which suggests that their critique mainly centered on the language question, and of course the fact that this had been decided without consulting them. However, the EAC, namely Julius Berger, did not intend to comply with the demands of the local activists: "as an elected member of the Inner Zionist Action Committee, he [Hantke] claims the right to decide such things on his own."[843]

This top-down approach of the Zionists in Ober Ost eventually resulted in the establishment of a number of nationally-oriented schools. However, the mere existence of schools did not necessarily cause the spread of Zionist ideals amongst the population. Parents may have sent their children to these schools, but even the activists were aware that this was not necessarily due to its nationalist outlook but often due to the overall circumstances in the institution. For very similar reasons, R. R., who grew up in a religious-Zionist family in Płock, was sent to a Polish-national school.[844] The nationalizing effect of these school efforts has to be questioned. Additionally, the German Zionists' approach, which disregarded the local activists' interests, political ideas, and the local pressures they faced, did much to alienate them from the organization.

The children in the schools and orphanages of the Generalgouvernment came to be an essential part of Zionist activism. Activists in the center insisted that Zionist work should be presented publicly, for all of Jewish society to see. "The purely national Zionism," insisted Arthur Hantke in a letter to Farbstein, "should be shown more in public in a demonstrative way."[845] One occasion for doing so was Lag BaOmer, a holiday that was an essential part of Zionist cultural activities, commemorating the display of Jewish heroism during the Bar Kokhba uprising. On this day, Zionists mobilized 'their' children. The festivities were prepared well in advance, as the activists of the party center in Warsaw wrote: "On 21 May – Lag b-Omer – our gymnastics association Makkabi […] and all our children and schools plan to organize a joint hike to the outskirts of the city; we plan to organize this day in a dignified and impressive way."[846] *HaTsefirah* reported that after prayer a march of a hundred Maccabees as well as hundreds and hundreds of students in orderly fashion in white and blue attire, paraded through the Jewish streets of Warsaw. To the chants of a choir and led by the city's Zionist Committee they

[842] Histadruth Tsionit beVilna, *Letter to Inner Zionist Action Committee*, July 1918, CZA, Z3/133.
[843] Julius Berger, *Letter to Mr. Salinger*, 07.07.1918, CZA, Z3/133.
[844] R. R., *Autobiography*, YIVO, RG 4 No. 3580.
[845] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Heschel Farbstein*, 14.08.1916, CZA, Z3/142.
[846] Biuro Sionistycne Warszawa, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 10.05.1916, CZA, Z3/142.

marched to the green outskirts of the city.[847] Anne Kahan mentioned the Lag BaOmer celebrations in Siedlce in 1916 in her diary:

"It is a lovely day, warm and bright. Everyone is already in school when Brokhe and I arrive. I am appointed monitor of one group, Itke, of another. Brokhe and I march in the first row. I look back. Oh, how long the line stretches and how beautiful it appears with its blue-white banners and ribbons and the Star of David! Windows open as we pass, people leaning out to look at us. […] As soon as we hit the road we sing the Hatikvah. Now a large circle is formed and Goldfarb makes a short speech in Yiddish, standing in the center of the circle. He speaks about the revolt against the Romans led by Bar Kokhba and supported by Rabbi Akiva and his students. He says that we, too, may consider ourselves students of Rabbi Akiva for we are imbued with the same spirit, the same idea of a free homeland for the Jewish people. The only difference is that we don't wish to take it with the sword, but with the spirit of our belief, with the word, the book. We must therefore be united and achieve the revival of our holy language as the first step toward our goal."[848]

In the following year, Julius Berger witnessed such a march in Warsaw on 10 May 1917 and was amazed about "this greatest spectacle of all my life. 5,000 children marched through the streets, decorated with flowers, cheered by hundreds of thousands of Jews."[849] *Haynt* and *Der Moment* also reported how in the impressive demonstration under the leadership of the Zionists, children of all the Zionist schools and orphanages marched in perfect order singing Jewish-national songs and raising Zionist flags.[850] This was a show of strength and self-consciousness by the Zionists in the city. A report from the local organization stated:

"In the midst of a wave of Polish chauvinism, in the last two years it [the Zionist *kuratorium*] has led the children in the open, with waving banners and to prove to the amazed Jewish population of Warsaw that the power of [national] regeneration is unbreakable. […] Even those who oppose political demonstrations of children have to admit that this goal was more than achieved."[851]

A Space for the Youth

During the war and in its aftermath, Zionist youth activism gained increasing importance, beyond the generalized 'care' for young people (that is, shelter, food, and education). There was an increase in the self-organization of young activists in the ranks of the Zionist movement.

[847] *HaTsefirah*, 21.05.1916.
[848] Kahan, "Diary," 360.
[849] Julius Berger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 11.05.1917, CZA, L6/107. See also Berger's report in *Jüdische Rundschau*, 18.05.1917.
[850] *Haynt*, 11.05.1917; *Der Moment*, 11.05.1917.
[851] Unknown Author (from Warsaw), *Report on Zionist Children's Relief Work in Poland*, undated (probably September 1917), CZA, L6/108.

In many cases, girls and young women became active and played an increasingly important role in the movement. In Vienna, a group of thirty-five girls, aged seventeen to twenty-four, most of them from a bourgeois background came together in the framework of the Zionist Nëure Jehuda association.[852] One reason they met separately from the Zionist organization itself, was that the young women felt intimidated by the older male activists at the meeting and they therefore decided that for their political development it would be better to meet in more informal, separate sessions.[853] The local older male activists, according to a letter by Nëure Jehuda to the center in Berlin, were not really interested in the work of the young women. This was at least in part due to the fact that contrary to the expectation of the Austrian Zionist leadership, they did not confine themselves to welfare activities but in large part seemed to have been engaged in the traditional flagship-activities of Zionism, like collecting the Shekel and money for the Jewish National Fund.[854]

The shift in activism was also felt amongst Zionist youth in Prague. Georg Launher, who was a member of the scout movement Blau-Weiß (Blue-White) noted in his diary in 1916 that as more and more of his pals were drafted to the army, girls gained a more important role. "Arthur [the group's leader; JR] emphasized that now the girls will participate more, which many did not like, since it looks like Everything will be in the hands of the girls […]."[855] For early December, his local branch of Blau-Weiß scheduled a special meeting on "How do we position ourselves towards the girls."[856] The discussion did not draw many participants.[857] He later learned that it could actually be quite nice to spend time with girls, especially when towards the end of the year, the mixed group went on a short trip to Teplice in the northern Bohemian mountains, to enjoy the snow. There, he rode a sledge with Lisa from his group and later walked with her back to the train station.[858]

Despite Georg's initial skepticism, the fact that boys and girls could come together in Zionist spaces was actually of great importance for the movement. This was especially the case in those areas where a traditionally rigid gender-segregation still prevailed. Turning the Zionist center into a social space was especially attractive for young people. Offering them a space to socialize, meet their peers, and come into contact with the Zionist worldview, was an important effort. It was not without pride that Lazarus Barth reported from Warsaw about the newly

[852] Nëure Jehuda, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 24.03.1916, CZA, Z3/941.
[853] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Nëure Jehuda Vienna*, 22.05.1916, CZA, Z3/941.
[854] Nëure Jehuda, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 16.05.1916, CZA, Z3/941.
[855] Georg Launher (?), *Diary*, YIVO, RG 4 No. 3637, Entry of 24.10.1916. The last name on the cover of the diary is not clearly legible.
[856] Ibid., Entry of 06.12.1916.
[857] Ibid., Entry of 13.12.1916.
[858] Ibid., Entries of 25. and 26.12.1916.

opened center in September 1915. It included three rooms, one of which could be used as a theatre for up to 200 people, the others being used for social activities and as classrooms for Hebrew language courses and lectures in Hebrew. Many young people, both male and female, something entirely unthinkable in most traditional Jewish institutions, used these facilities. Among them – a point he particularly emphasized – between 150 and 160 youngsters from orthodox background, "who, as you know, never had any understanding for our ideas."[859] By offering this social space for orthodox youth, Zionists were able to reach a social group that they could hardly ever have reached before.

This was, of course, not taken well by the traditional orthodox leadership that already faced many challenges in this period.[860] "Already now," Julius Berger wrote in a lengthy report, "it [Hassidism] cannot rest assured about its youth any more, and it will not be able to assert itself against the pressure from Western Europe, with its culture, its socialism, and its different material development."[861] This ideological struggle was especially hard-fought in smaller towns, where the hassidic rabbis had significant influence. Nowhere was this more evident than in Góra Kalwaria, near Warsaw, better known under the Jewish name Ger. The great Hassidic Rabbi of Ger, who had allegedly 100,000 followers in the country, had left the town in protest against the Zionists' immodesty. A report stated:

> "The rabbis vehemently disapprove of young guys and young girls meeting, as happens in the teahouses in Warsaw and Lodz or in the library in Gora Kalwarja, which had been founded by the Zionists. Since in the evening young guys and young girls are getting together there to read and listen to lectures, the rabbi of Gora Kalwarja refuses to return to the town unless this sinful abomination does not stop."[862]

This development naturally provoked the wrath of the Rabbi's followers. In practice, this meant for the Zionists, that their organizing attempts in the town were severely hampered if not made impossible: "There is a group of Zionists which had already established a library before the war. The books had been stolen by thieves during the night, and because of [everyone's] fear of the rabbis, they were unable to find a place to rent in the town, neither from the Jewish nor from the Christian citizens."[863]

The struggle with the Orthodox over the youth became fierce. In August 1917, Rabbi Emanuel Carlebach, who had come from Germany and was one of the key leaders of the orthodox movement in Poland, wrote a report to the administration, complaining that Zionist

[859] Lazarus Barth, *Letter to Zionistische Vereinigung für Deutschland*, 25.09.1915, CZA, Z3/141.
[860] Grill, "Politicisation," 227–47.
[861] Julius Berger, *The Polish Jews in the World War. Internal Report, April 1916*, CZA, Z3/166.
[862] Max Bodenheimer, *Memorandum on the Hassidim in Góra Kalwaria*, February 1916, CZA, Z3/711.
[863] Max Bodenheimer, *Report on a Visit to Góra Kalwaria*, 06.02.1916, CZA, A15/711.

youth had stormed a lecture he intended to give to an orthodox youth association in Siedlce. The event, which should have only been attended by orthodox men, was filled with Zionist activists who interrupted by shouting and trampling. "Just as the noise had settled, the same young people, which had assembled a group of young girls in front of the hall shouted: Women, come in! The chairman was incapable of establishing order and suddenly, 30–40 girls stormed in, clapping their hands and shouting Indian war cries."[864] When Carlebach fled the event to the house of the local rabbi, other Zionist youngsters followed him, shouting insults, like 'gipsy, 'Jekke' (German Jew), and 'boiged' (traitor) at him.[865] This attack on a prominent rabbi was both part of the struggle between Orthodoxy and Zionism in Poland, as it was an expression of young people's rebellion against the old authorities.

The fact that Zionists allowed and provided spaces for boys and girls, young men and women, to meet, socialize, and get accustomed to Zionist ideas was of special importance for those who otherwise had few opportunities to meet their peers. One example of this is Marta Müller. She was born in 1903 and grew up in a wealthy, Hassidic family in a small town near Cracow. When she was fourteen years old, her father took her out of school, believing that this was sufficient education for a girl.[866] When in early 1919 a Zionist club set up shop in her town, she heard from her friends how nice it was there. Naturally, she wanted to go, which resulted in a serious conflict with her father. "Often, very often, I asked father to allow me to go to the meetings. Again, and again he did not allow me, he laughed at me until I decided to sneak out in secret, in which I was relatively successful."[867] For Marta this was not primarily an ideological question, although it developed an ideological dimension in the conflict with her father. For her, the meetings of the Zionist club gave her the chance to enjoy a mainly social space. She wrote:

"If father would leave his strange prejudices against Zionism aside and would not see it so critically, he would realize that it would not harm me to attend the meeting. Especially because, what is this association here? It's nothing. There are no lectures, no dues are collected, there are no [official] members, and the entire thing is just for getting together for an hour, to chat and of course to read something Zionist. At least I see it this way. I am mocking those girls who take Zionism seriously. […] How should it help the thousands of Jews who are suffering

[864] Rabbi Carlebach, *Letter to the Kreischef of Siedlce*, 27.08.1917, CAHJP, P83-C-156
[865] Ibid.
[866] Marta Müller, *Diary*, CAHJP, PL/1238.143. 'Marta Müller' is a pseudonym. The names of places in the diary are abbreviated and it would take further research to identify them with certainty. On the diary, see also: Desanka Schwara, *"Ojfn weg schtejt a bojm": Jüdische Kindheit und Jugend in Galizien, Kongreßpolen, Litauen und Rußland 1881–1939* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna: Böhlau, 1999).
[867] Ibid, Entry of 08.02.1919.

and persecuted if some well-groomed, elegant doctor comes to meet a group of 20–30 boys and girls and preaches to them that they have already been dormant too long and that they should break their chains?"[868]

In the long run, Marta did not succeed in joining the club, as her strict parents did not allow it, just as they forbade her to take dancing lessons.[869] This is not to say that the majority of young people who joined Zionist youth clubs or movements did so primarily for social reasons, but the importance of this aspect cannot be underestimated for the development of the Zionist – and wider Jewish – youth movements in the region. Very often these clubs and meeting places were the first of their kind to be established and offered a form of social and political space of encounter that hitherto did not exist. The young peoples' motivations were probably highly diverse. For some, it was ideology, for others the social space; for many, it was probably a combination of the two.

Care for the Victims of the Pogroms

As the war came to an end and full-scale pogroms erupted in East Galicia and beyond, care for the children who had been orphaned by the pogroms came to be an essential new task which built on war time efforts.[870] The orphans of the pogroms had gained great symbolic importance in the wake of the events and the public outcry that followed.[871]

In the fall of 1920 the JDC office for childcare in Warsaw estimated that in former Congress Poland, there were at least 60,000 Jewish orphans and twice the number of Jewish children in urgent need.[872] In August 1920, it estimated 20,000 orphans, who were uncared for in Galicia alone.[873] Still, by June 1921 there were 3,400 orphans in Lwów, 1,400 of whom did not receive any aid due to the lack of funds and infrastructure.[874] Although only a minority of them had been orphaned in the wake of the pogroms, the majority having lost their parents during the war, the representation of relief efforts still focused on the victims of the pogroms. In Lwów, 128 children had been orphaned during the pogrom of November 1918. They had to

[868] Ibid.
[869] Ibid., Entry of 14.05.1919.
[870] On the violence in Galicia, see chapter 4.
[871] See for example: *Selbstwehr*, 29.11.1918; *Nowy Dziennik*, 19.02.1919; 28.11.1918; 12.12.1918; *Chwila*, 12.11.1921; Hilfsausschuß galizischer und bukowinaer Juden für die Pogromopfer in Galizien (Berlin), *Leaflet: "Galizische und bukowinaer Juden!"*, probably 1919, CZA, Z3/184; Leon Chasanowich, *Les Pogromes Anti-Juifs en Pologne et Galicie en novembre et décembre 1918: Faits et documents* (Stockholm: Bokförlaget Judea, 1919). This was also the case for the non-Jewish liberal press that reported on the pogrom. For example: *Neue Freie Presse*, 29.11.1918; 13.12.1918.
[872] JDC Office Warsaw, *Report on Jewish Children in Poland*, fall 1920, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/3/1/88.1.
[873] JDC Office Warsaw, *Report on Jewish Children in Europe*, 04.08.19120, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/3/1/88.1.
[874] Boris D. Bogen, *Letter to the JDC Committee of War Orphans*, 28.06.1921, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/4/34/3/207.

be cared for and the local Jewish women's organization (Koło Kobiet Żydowskie we Lwówie) coordinated closely with the Zionists for the sake of their wellbeing and donated 200,000 Crowns of the total 800,000 they had received from the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien for this purpose.[875] Rabbi Mordechai Ehrenpreis, himself from the city but then living in Scandinavia, collected 150,000 Crowns for the orphanage.[876] The money was passed on by the Zionist-led Jewish National Council in Vienna to its local counterpart, insisting that it would not be used for general relief of the victims of the pogrom but specifically for the establishment of an orphanage.[877] The reasons given were not only that it would be necessary to honor the donors' wishes and that it was easier to raise money for children than for general relief, but also that it was a national necessity to care for the children who had been orphaned by the pogroms.[878]

In October 1920, *Chwila* (Moment), the new Polish-language newspaper of the General Zionists in Lwów, reported on one of the orphanages, a beautiful place with spacious bright rooms, new beds (a gift from the JDC), a playing area, and many other amenities, provided for fifty orphan girls.[879] However, the conditions in most of the orphanages, including those maintained by the Zionists and Poale Zionists were desperate. A report by the JDC detailed the situation:

"All of them [the orphanages; JR] suffer from insufficient funds and most of them find it difficult to provide sufficient food and clothing for their pupils. A scarcity of beds compels the crowding of two, three, even of four children into one narrow iron bed and endangers not merely the health but also the morality of the occupants."[880]

An important role in the care for the Jewish orphans of the pogroms was played by Poale Zion. By late 1919, it maintained five orphanages in East Galicia.[881] While other regional Poale Zion parties in this period focused on revolutionary struggles,[882] the East Galician organization largely rebuilt its structures and activism on the basis of relief work, which included help for

[875] Koło Kobiet Żydowskie we Lwówie, *Letter to the Zionist Executive Committee in Lwów*, 31.06.1919, Central State Historical Archive L'viv (CSHAL), f338 o603.
[876] Mordechai Ehrenpreis, *Letter to the Executive of the Zionist Organization of Galicia*, 23.09.1919, CSHAL, f338 o603.
[877] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Letter to Letter to the Zionist Executive Committee in Lwów (Gershon Zipper)*, 08.08.1919, CSHAL, f338 o603. Interestingly, the Jewish National Council in Vienna only wrote about a donation of 100,000 Crowns from Ehrenpreis.
[878] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich (Robert Stricker), *Letter to Gershon Zipper*, 06.11.1919, CSHAL, f338 o603
[879] *Chwila*, 18.10.1920.
[880] Unknown Author, *Report on Orphan Children in Galicia*, 1920, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/4/19/4/142.4. A similarly disturbing account on the situation in the orphanages (which also included accusations of theft and corruption against unknow individuals) was submitted a year later: A. Shohan, *Report of Trip to Lwow and Rowno (to JDC Warsaw Office)*, 14.08.1921, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/4/19/1/141.2.
[881] Poale Zion Party Secretariat East Galicia, *Letter to the Farbands-Biro of the World Union of Poale Zion in Stockholm*, 23.12.1919, ILPA, 1-1-1919-10.
[882] See chapter 6.

the orphans.[883] As always, one of the main questions was where the money could come from, since it was impossible to raise the necessary funds from the impoverished local population.[884]

A special case were the funds raised by members of the Jewish Legion, which had fought alongside the British Army in the conquest of Palestine during the war.[885] Many of the Legion's soldiers were members of Poale Zion[886] who raised money for the establishment of orphanages for victims of the pogroms in Eastern Europe. In the spirit of the Jewish Legion, the money was originally intended to be used for self-defense measures in East Galicia, but was eventually allocated for funding orphanages for victims of the pogroms.[887] Half of the money was sent to the organization in Warsaw, the other half to Lwów.[888] For Poale Zionists, this was an opportunity to show who really cared for the children, not least since they continuously blamed the official aid committees for being inefficient and unjust.[889] This was also an opportunity to connect their local efforts for the daily needs of the Jewish population with the wider context of Palestine-oriented Zionism. The languages of the orphanages should be Yiddish and Hebrew.[890] Every institution that would receive some of the money would display a plaque, stating that the money had been raised by the Legionaries.[891] Through this, they would bring Palestine and the heroic struggle of the pioneers directly to the orphaned children of East Galicia.

Poale Zionists could not fully rely on the financial support of their comrades abroad, especially in the United States, for the necessary funding, which meant that the local party had to join the general Jewish relief committees and accept money from the JDC.[892] This was not without controversy, both locally and internationally. Activists from Romania criticized the Joint's "condescending philanthropy"[893] and the Viennese comrades outrightly rejected those "bourgeois well-doers" whose handouts were "breeding professional scroungers."[894] The local

[883] Poale Zion Farbands-Biro, *Letter to Poale Zion Party Secretariat in Lwów*, 11.09.1919, ILPA, 1-7-1919-87.
[884] Berl Locker, *Letter to Poale Zion Party Secretariat Lwów*, 12.02.1920, ILPA, 1-7-1919-87.
[885] On the Jewish Legion, see: Michael Keren, Shlomit Keren, *We are Coming Unafraid: The Jewish Legions and the Promised Land in the First World War* (Lanham: Rowan and Littfield, 2010); Martin Watts, *The Jewish Legion and the First World War* (Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).
[886] Itzhak Ben-Zvi, *The Hebrew Battalions: Letters* (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Post Press, 1969), 23–4.
[887] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, November 1919, CZA, Z3/1169.
[888] Shlomo Kaplansky, *Letter to Arbeyterheim Publishing House Warsaw*, 27.04.1920, ILPA, 1-7-1920-85.
[889] For example, the paper of the Lwów local committee of Poale Zion: *Folksblat*, June 1919.
[890] Poale Zion Farbands-Biro, *Letter to Ignacy Schipper*, 09.10.1919, ILPA, 1-1-1919-7.
[891] For Warsaw: Ibid; for Lwów: Poale Zion Farbands-Biro, *Letter to the Central Committee of the Jewish Social Democratic Labor Party (Poale-Zion) in Lwów*, 24.04.1920, ILPA, 1-7-1919-87.
[892] Poale Zion Farbands-Biro, *Letter to Poale Zion Party Secretariat in Lwów*, 21.04.1920, ILPA, 1-7-1919-87.
[893] Organizatia Muncitorilor Socialisti Evrei 'Poale Zion' Bucuresti, *Letter to Farbands-Biro of the World Union of Poale Zion in Berlin*, 28.05.1920, ILPA, 1-10-1917-20.
[894] *Freie Tribüne*, 29.11.1919.

Poale Zion in Lwów nonetheless joined the general relief committee in the city, struggling, just as all the other parties did, to get a bigger share of the scarce funds for their institutions.[895]

The experience of the pogroms was also at the center of Zionist considerations around the reorganization of the Jewish school system in Galicia. *Nowy Dziennik* (New Journal), the Polish-language Zionist newspaper published in Cracow, stated in an article on Jewish education in Lwów under the shadow of the pogrom "Most of the Jewish youth […] declared that they would not come back to Polish schools anymore."[896] The Zionist party there sympathized with that decision and declared its commitment to create a Hebrew-language school system, but it had to admit that neither were the funds available nor was this practical since parents would insist on a Polish-language education for their children "for practical purposes."[897] The Zionist-led Jewish National Council in Lwów eventually controlled a number of high schools in the city, which were seen as the heart of the nationalist endeavor, and campaigned for the state to take them over and finance them as a part of the future nationally-organized, segregated education system.[898] The first school had already been opened in February 1919 with great ceremony.[899] The Zionist organization bought one central building which housed in total two high schools, two elementary schools (all gender-segregated), a vocational school, and a Hebrew teachers' seminary.[900] In a carefully crafted letter to the JDC the school board stated its goals as "giving the Jewish youth the opportunity to […] learn the rich traditions of our language and our glorious history."[901] The pogroms, activists argued, had opened the eyes of even those who had hitherto been ignorant to the vital necessities of Jewish national education:

"Now, one could convince oneself that those schools were a necessity. 1,500 Jewish students sought shelter with us, to live and be educated in the warm atmosphere which is necessary for youth and which we are striving for, to

[895] A. Zucker (JDC Regional Director for East Galicia), *Report*, 12.06.1920, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/4/19/1/141.1.
[896] *Nowy Dziennik*, 16.02.1919.
[897] Ibid. Wacław Wierzbieniec suggests that the majority of Jewish students continued to attend general public educational institutions, at last in the long run. Wierzbieniec, "Process of Jewish Emancipation and Assimilation," 242.
[898] *Chwila*, 01.05.1919. Here again, one can observe the parallels with the traditional practices of nationalist education-efforts during the empire. See: Judson, *Guardians*, 23–5.
[899] *Nowy Dziennik*, 16.02.1919.
[900] Delegation of the Jewish National Council of East Galicia at the Peace Conference in Paris, *Jewish School Matters in East Galicia (Report to the JDC)*, 1919, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/4/19/2/142.3.
[901] Żydowskie Towarzystwo Szkóły Ludowej i Średniej we Lwowie/Agudath Beyth Sefer Amami veBinuni beLwow, *Letter to Joint Distribution committee New York*, 20.02.1921, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/4/19/2/142.3.

be educated by Jewish teachers whose love for their profession and their pupils is imbued by their belief in a higher mission, to bring up those children to become real, true sons of our people."[902]

The school system was at the center of Zionist activities in Lwów but had continuous financial problems. Tuition fees, general donations that came in to the Jewish relief committee in the city, and money from the JDC, financed the schools.[903] Zionists themselves raised money amongst their comrades and sympathizers in the West. The local Zionist organization then gave the money as charity to families in need, who would use it to pay for the school's tuition fees.[904] Bernard Hausner, one of the heads of the schools' *kuratorium*, stated: "If the school-system collapses, this would mean the bankruptcy of the entire national movement in Lemberg. By keeping the school-system alive, we are paving the way for the future Jewish-national state-school[-system] which has to be established for our national minority."[905]

Conclusion

There was no coherent Zionist strategy for childcare and education in the period in question. Despite the significant differences in circumstances in the various regions, this remained the common phenomenon. The schools and orphanages had been founded out of necessity and urgency, and despite all efforts, some elements of the improvised character of the institutions remained. There was not a clear distinction between welfare and education. Both depended on each other: without providing a healthy environment, food, and other material goods, no one would be in a position to provide education for children, parents would not send their children to those schools, and the students would likely not be able to concentrate on their learning. The struggle for the rescue, salvation, and protection of the nation's youngest members was therefore fought over funds and infrastructure. As a matter of fact, education was a form of welfare and welfare was a form of education and these efforts were part of a general trend of an emerging welfare state – built bottom-up – throughout Europe.

There was also no clear dividing line between the various concepts of Jewish education, its content and language, and the various trends within the Zionist movement: there were religious and secular institutions, Yiddish, Hebrew, Polish and German-language schools and

[902] Ibid.
[903] Delegation of the Jewish National Council of East Galicia at the Peace Conference in Paris, *Jewish School Matters in East Galicia (Report to the JDC)*, 1919, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/4/19/2/142.3.
[904] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Letter to the Zionist Executive Committee in Lwów (Gershon Zipper)*, 28.11.1919, CSHAL, f338 o603.
[905] *Minutes for the XIII. Meeting of the Delegation of the Jewish National Council for East Galicia*, 08.05.1919, CZA, F3/55.

kindergartens that existed alongside each other often as part of the same political framework.[906] Joseph Serlin, later the Minister of Health in Israel, recalled that his school in Białystok even changed the language of instruction from Yiddish to Polish one day. As he went on strike to protest against this and was subsequently expelled, he found the Zionists' newly-founded high school: "As I was walking home, I noticed advertisements: 'A Hebrew Gymnasium has been founded. Students are invited to register.' Without asking my father, I went to the 'People's Home' [the Zionist party center; JR] and registered."[907] The bottom line was that Zionists, just as any other movement, tried to bring the children into their fold. This was a precondition not only for bringing them up in a national spirit but was also a central base on which the Zionists built their political movement.

The goal was to raise Jewish children in a national spirit to become a new, independent, nationally-conscious generation of Jews. An unnamed activist wrote that "modern popular education does not only strive for educating the people but for national regeneration."[908] This was part of a general trend in which various political actors throughout Europe and beyond worked to mobilize the youth for the sake of building a new society and a better world. The particular Zionist focus on the spiritual and physical regeneration of the Jewish youth was a central aspect of their understanding of national revival. As the older generation's bodies and spirits had already been broken by the experience of exile – as has been illustrated by many quotes in the first chapter – the unspoiled youth could still be rescued and redeemed to become the core of the rebuilt nation.

While much of the rhetoric of 'regeneration' employed concepts of Jewish masculinity and strength, a large part of the actual work in this field was done by female activists. They were part of a new generation of Zionists, alongside many young people from poor backgrounds, who became active in this period, whose ideas often differed dramatically from those of the old (male) leaders and who would eventually play a role in reshaping Zionism, already during the war, but even more strongly in the subsequent years.

---

[906] It seems that a systematic differentiation of the various types only developed in the 1920s, as described in Miriam Eisenstein, *Jewish Schools in Poland, 1919–1939: Their Philosophy and Development* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1950).
[907] Quoted in: Samid, *The Immortal Spirit*, 29.
[908] Unknown Author (from Warsaw), *Report on Zionist Children's Relief Work in Poland*, probably September 1917, CZA, L6/108.

Chapter 4: Security and Agency

In unprecedented ways the First World War and the subsequent upheavals in East-Central Europe endangered the lives and security of Jews and their communities. In many respects traditional allegiances were shattered and old strategies proved to be futile under the pressure of imperial, nationalist, and revolutionary warfare and violence. For Jewish social and political actors, this crisis forced them to re-think their security strategies, to ask anew how they could assert and defend Jewish safety and ensure their place in society.[909] These were not merely abstract debates about loyalties and grand strategies but, besides the closely connected questions of provisions and relief, arguably the most pressing practical issue for most Jewish communities. This chapter examines the role of Zionists in this defensive process and analyzes the security strategies and their practical efforts to protect the Jewish communities. The chapter concentrates on Galicia, a region where the various efforts and strategies were tested and are relatively well documented in the archives. Generally speaking, several different approaches to the question of security – as adapted by Zionists – can be observed: the appeal to the central authorities (whether imperial or national), appeals on an international level, agreements with influential local actors, and (most importantly for this case) self-organization and self-protection. These four strategies were not mutually exclusive and were often undertaken simultaneously. However, the course of events shows how and under what circumstances Zionist activists shifted their attention from one to another strategy and what this meant for the communities.

For Zionists, at the heart of the security question, as of all the other problems analyzed in the thesis, was a struggle for agency, that is, agency as a nation. Indeed, in their abstract theoretical understanding, Jews would never be safe and would never have agency until they would have established a national home in Palestine.[910] For years, Zionists – at least in their official statements – had vehemently refuted arguments that Jews would ever find stability and

I benefitted greatly from the comments by David Engel on an earlier draft of this chapter, as well as from attending his seminar 'Major Issues in Modern Jewish History: The Search for Physical Security' at New York University in spring 2018. I am very grateful for his support. I also want to express my sincerest gratitude to Michael Miller, Laurence Cole, and Larry Wolff who also took the time to read earlier versions of this chapter and provided me with excellent comments and feedback.

[909] David Engel, "World War I and Its Impact in the Problem of Security in Jewish Society," in *World War I and the Jews: Conflict and Transformation in Europe, the Middle East, and America*, ed. Marsha L. Rozenblit and Jonathan Karp (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017), 17–31.

[910] In *Der Judenstaat*, Herzl argued that by the mere existence of the Jews, antisemitism arose, but it would come to an immediate end, once Jews would move away to build their own state. Theodor Herzl, *Der Judenstaat. Versuch einer modernen Lösung der Judenfrage* (1896) (Zurich: Menasse, 1988), 14; 112. Similarly Ber Borochov, the intellectual father of Poale Zionism, argued that wherever the Jews lived as a minority, they would be oppressed, wherefore the only solution was to go to Palestine. Borochov, "Our Platform," 96–8.

protection by fighting discrimination and antisemitism in Europe. But as I hope will already be clear at this point, actual activities, especially during the period that is the focus of this thesis, had often very little to do with grand theoretical paradigms. The struggle for agency, as related to the security problem here instead revolved around political and actual self-organization, practical self-armament, a reorganization of the Jewish community, and the aim to create a protected, self-controlled national Jewish space in society.

This raises the question of the Jews' supposedly exceptional relationship to the imperial state as their protector, with most of the historiography emphasizing their unconditional loyalty to the Empire.[911] In many respects, this reiterates the idea of the 'royal alliance', a supposed Jewish meta-strategy of forming a hierarchical relationship with the highest available authority, supposedly observable in all of Jewish diasporic history.[912] In imperial Austria, based on experience, Jews, and Jewish political activists, did indeed have ample reason to place their trust in the central state rather than in anyone else. Merely sixteen years before the outbreak of the war, Vienna had intervened rather resolutely to end anti-Jewish riots in Galicia.[913] Moreover, the central state had no specific anti-Jewish laws in place, as was the case in neighboring Russia, and it allowed for significant upward mobility of its Jewish citizens. For Zionists, the appeal to the central authorities was not only a call for protection, justice, and security, but strongly connected to how they envisioned the Jews' very place in imperial society. I would argue that the war changed this. The fact that the Empire failed its Jewish citizens during the war shattered this relationship and with the Empire's increasing disintegration towards the end of the war the question of finding a place for the Jews had to shift towards other actors who might offer more promising options. If historiography's newer

[911] See amongst others: Malachi Hacohen, "Nation and Empire in Modern Jewish European History," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, Vol. No. 1 (2017): 53–65; Hillel J. Kieval, "Imperial Embraces and Ethnic Challenges: The Politics of Jewish Identity in the Bohemian Lands," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (2012): 1–17; David Rechter, "Geography is Destiny," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (2008): 325–37; Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity*; David Sha'ari, "The Jewish Community of Czernowitz under Habsburg and Romanian Rule," *Shevut: Studies in Russian and East European Jewish History and Culture*, Vol. 6, No. 22 (1997): 150–83. William O. McCagg Jr., who focused on the long-term processes of 'modernization' amongst Habsburg Jewry, argues that from many Jewish perspectives the supposed 'break' of 1918 might not have been as severe as often assumed. William O. McCagg Jr, *A History of Habsburg Jews, 1670–1918* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 201–22.

[912] Most prominently: Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New Edition (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1966); Salo Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 3 Volumes, 2nd edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960); Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *The Lisbon Massacre of 1506 and the Royal Image in the "Shebet Yehudah"* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Annual Supplements, 1976). For a critique of this approach (especially of Yerushalmi), see: Lois C. Dubin, "Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, the Royal Alliance, and Jewish Political Theory," *Jewish History*, No. 28 (2014): 51–81.

[913] Buchen, *Antisemitismus in Galizien*, 167–237; Golczewski, "Die Westgalizischen Bauernunruhen," 60–84; Stauter-Halsted, "Jews as Middlemen Minorities," 39–59; Unowsky, "Peasant Mobilization," 412–35; Unowsky, *The Plunder*.

explanations for the disintegration of the Habsburg Empire and its succession by self-proclaimed nation-states are taken seriously, then it is necessary to rethink the claim of a continuous, unbroken Jewish affinity to the Empire. Recent works have stressed how the Empire's failure to provide basic provisions, security, and accountability during the war, were essential factors for its demise. Pieter Judson concluded: "War destroyed the Empire of the Habsburgs over time by eroding any sense of mutual obligation between people and state; popular and dynastic patriotism withered away, calling into question the very raison d'être of empire."[914] It was precisely this development and especially the authorities' failure to protect the Jewish population from the escalating violence directed against them, that forced the Zionist activists at the center of this study to search for alternative strategies.

One of these alternatives was self-organization and self-defense, that is, the attempt to gain agency through arms. This strategy gained great importance especially from 1918 onwards, when Zionist activists often played a key role in organizing armed self-defense groups to protect communities. The concept of agency through arms had both an external and an internal dimension. Externally, it was an attempt to show how Jews, just as anybody else, were part and parcel of society's war efforts, that they did not shy away from sacrificing life and property for the common cause. At the same time, especially in the highly militarized society of the years in question, this spoke to ideas of the Jews' regeneration, was a struggle against the myth of the Jew's (that is, Jewish men's) alleged cowardice and weakness, and expressed fantasies of nationalism and masculinity, both essential concepts of Zionist thought.[915]

Glory through Arms

As all nations went to war, Zionists on both sides of the trenches entertained the idea of building a Jewish army and fighting for a Jewish national cause. This in no way contradicted their loyalty and their trust in their respective states but was an attempt to integrate a particular Jewish military unit into their countries' armies. The best-known example of this attempt to gain armed agency was Vladimir Jabotinsky, who successfully lobbied the British government to establish

[914] Judson, *Habsburg Empire*, 441. See also: Laurence Cole, *Military Culture and Popular Patriotism in Late Imperial Austria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 321–3; John Deak, Jonathan E. Gumz, "How to Break a State: The Habsburg Monarchy's Internal War, 1914–1918," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 122, No. 4 (2017): 1105–36; Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire*.

[915] Arye Naor, "Jabotinsky's New Jew: Concept and Models," *Journal of Israeli History*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2011): 141–59; Ofer Nordheimer Nur, *Eros and Tragedy: Jewish Male Fantasies and the Masculine Revolution of Zionism* (Brighton: Academic Studies Press, 2014), 2–3; Derek J. Penslar, *Jews and the Military. A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 4; Sternhell, *Founding Myths*, 47–50; Moshe Zimmermann, "Muscle Jews and Nervous Jews," in *Emancipation Through Muscles: Jews and Sports in Europe*, ed. Michael Brenner and Gideon Reuveni (Lincoln, London: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 13–26.

a Jewish unit to fight for the 'liberation' of Palestine, to redeem the land using Jewish force, employing images of ancient heroism and masculine values.[916] With very similar arguments (but less success), Zionists in the lands of the Central Powers tried to build Jewish military units. While ideas of establishing a Jewish military unit, paralleling that of the 'independent' Polish Kingdom in 1916/17, did not evolve beyond proclamations and negotiations,[917] Zionists did raise a local Jewish armed unit in Lwów at the outbreak of the war. Both attempts closely corresponded with, and in many respects mirrored, the endeavors of Polish nationalists. Whereas Zionists correctly saw the link between the German proclamation of November 1916 and the formation of a Polish army that was intended to fight on the Central Powers' side,[918] in 1914, they had good reason to observe Piłsudski's military adventures with his militiamen, later to become the Polish Legion, as an effective way of supporting national claims. It seemed clear that if the Zionists wanted to make a credible claim on behalf of the Jewish nation, this nation would need to stand alongside the other nations and contribute its sacrifice for the common cause.

The attempt to show that the Jews were a nation, which just as the other nations, shared in wartime values of masculinity and armed defense, is illustrated by the dramatic appeal published by the Central Committee of Galician Zionists on 12 August 1914 in the Polish-nationalist *Kurjer Lwowski* (Lwów Courier):

"Finally, an opportunity has come for the Jewish people to free their brothers and sisters [who are] under the Czar's whip. […] Finally, the opportunity has come when the Jewish people can show its great sympathy and enthusiasm for the Polish nation. […] With baited breath we look in admiration at the procession of the strong Polish ranks who resume Polish glory through their arms, wishing you happiness and luck in your heroic action."[919]

From the appraisal of Polish glory in arms, the proclamation moved to the role of the Jews in this struggle:

"The opportunity has finally come when the Jewish nation can confront its eternal enemy. […] Jews! In this war, let nobody stay behind. Let anyone who is capable of carrying arms shed his blood in the name of the noble slogans for which our monarch has called his nations to fight. Everyone will march as Maccabaeus and Bar-Kochba

[916] Svetlana Natkovich, "The Rise and Downfall of Cassandra: World War I and Wladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky's Self-Perception," *Medaon: Magazin für jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung*, No. 10 (2016): 1–11.
[917] See Chapter 1.
[918] Kauffman, *Elusive Alliance*, 63–4; 103–4.
[919] *Kurjer Lwowski*, 12.08.1914. See also: Komitet Centralny Sjonistów Galicyjskich, *Do Narodu Żydowskiego*, 11.08.1914, CSHAL, f338 o25 d177.

marched and show that the Jewish nation can be grateful to its friends. Let the rest of society give everything: money, time, health, energy, enthusiasm."[920]

At the outbreak of the war, Adolf Stand, the party leader in Lwów, wrote to his friend Marek Scherlag about "the enthusiasm of all nations"[921] in the city. The local Zionist *Tagblat* called for donations for the Polish Legion.[922] The same idea of commonality between the Polish-national and the Jewish-national struggle, an idea that was repeatedly raised, recalling common Polish-Jewish experiences in revolts against oppression and partition,[923] was expressed in *HaMitspeh*, the Mizrahi's paper in Cracow, declaring "The Jews of Lwów feel the same feeling as the Polish nation."[924] Generally, the so-called 'August-experience' in Galicia was marked by a notable outpouring of support by Jews – or at least by their political organizations and institutions – for both Austrian-imperial and Polish-national aims, which were generally not seen in contradiction to one another.[925]

In this atmosphere, just as the proclamation had announced, Zionists in Lwów attempted to raise a Jewish armed force, which would do its part in the great struggle. The central figure in this episode was Fischel Waschitz, a long-standing Zionist activist and youth leader in East Galicia,[926] who later compiled a report on his efforts.[927] As the above-quoted proclamation already suggests, Zionists saw this effort as equivalent to that of Polish nationalists. Therefore, Waschitz started his report with a brief description of the Polish nationalist youth movement Sokół (Falcon) in Lwów before the war, showing how its attempts to revive Polish youth at that time, in the war, made them the pioneers of the nation, now marching in the ranks of Piłsudski

[920] Ibid.
[921] Adolf Stand, *Letter to Marek Scherlag*, 24.08.1914, CZA, A47/72.
[922] *Tagblat*, 25.08.1914.
[923] See also the appeals of the Kahal in Lwów: *Kuryer Lwowski*, 11.08.1914; 12.08.1914
[924] *HaMitspeh*, 14.08.1914.
[925] Konrad Zieliński, "Jews, Poles, and the Legion," in *Jew, Pole, Legionary 1914–1920*, ed. Artur Tanikowski (Warsaw: Museum for the History of Polish Jews, 2014), 40–1. On Jews in the Polish Legion, see: Marek Gałęzowski, *Na wzór Berka Joselewicza: żołnierze i oficerowie pochodzenia żydowskiego w Legionach Polskich* (Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej-Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2010); Alojzy Zielecki, "Żydzi w polskim ruchu niepodległościowym w Galicji przed pierwszą wojną światową i w czasie jej trwania," in *Żydzi w Małopolsce: studia z dziejów osadnictwa i życia społecznego*, ed. Feliks Kiryk (Przemyśl: Południowo-Wschodni Instytut Naukowy, 1991), 289–96; Konrad Zieliński, *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie na ziemiach Królestwa Polskiego w czasie pierwszej wojny światowej* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2005), 144–5.
[926] Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 235; Fischel Waschitz, *Derekh Hayav shel Tsiyoni Lohem: Kovets Mismakhim Metuch Archivun shel Ephraim Washitz* (Jerusalem: Ahi'asaf, 1947). On the Zionist youth movement in Galicia before the war, see: Angelika Jensen, *Sei stark und mutig! Chasak we'emaz! 40 Jahre jüdische Jugend in Österreich am Beispiel der Bewegung "Haschomer Hazair" 1903 bis 1943* (Vienna: Picus Verlag, 1995), 38–47
[927] Fischel Waschitz, *Juedisches Jungschuetzenkorps in Lemberg, August 1914 (ein Versuch)*, CZA, Z3/814.

and in support of their national cause.[928] In his memoirs, Waschitz also recalled how important the impression of the march of the Polish Legion through the city was for him and his comrades to organize themselves in a similar way.[929]

As head of the Jewish gymnastics organization Dror (Freedom) in Lwów, Waschitz wrote to the Military Command in the city, asking for arms and training for those members who had not yet been recruited to the army: "We regard shooting training as something that would strengthen the defensive capacities of the people and hope that you will consider our request so that we will have the chance to express our sincere feeling for the Empire and the Emperor through our deeds."[930] Although the officers initially refused the offer on practical grounds (due to the lack of available rifles), they commended this positive show of patriotism.[931] The activists did not feel discouraged and continued their efforts. The drafting of a local, well-respected high school teacher, Bernard Hausner, was the occasion for a grand meeting of Jewish high school and university students, organized by Dror, which was also attended by two delegates of the Polish national shooting club. There, a resolution was adopted to form a Jewish Rifle Corps in the city.[932] For Waschitz, this was the occasion to restart his practical efforts in cooperation with the military command. This time, he eventually found support. Hauptmann Rudolf Berger of the Military Command, promised to organize rifles, instructors, and a shooting range for practice.[933] Waschitz then began recruitment efforts. The statistic he provided in the report shows 342 young men who signed up and gives insight into the social and age-composition of the volunteers, which was a rather typical composition for a Jewish nationalist youth organization such as Dror. The majority (145) were high school students, followed by university students (82), the others were predominantly white-collar workers in trade, city clerks, and skilled laborers. Almost eighty percent of the volunteers were twenty-one years or younger.[934] This was of course due to the fact that a large part of the older men had already been drafted to the army or the *Landsturm* (militia) and other local youth, including Jewish scouts, had been

[928] Ibid. On the Polish Legion, see: Stanisław Czerep, *II Brygada Legionów Polskich* (Warsaw: Bellona, 1991); Mieczysław Wrzosek, *Polski czyn zbrojny podczas pierwszej wojny światowej, 1914–1918* (Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1990).
[929] Waschitz, *Derekh Hayav*, 25–6.
[930] Fischel Waschitz, *Letter to K. u. k. Korpskommando Lemberg*, 31.07.1914, CZA, Z3/814.
[931] Peter von Hof[f]mann, *Letter to Jewish Gymanstics Organization "Dror"*, 03.08.1914, CZA, Z3/814.
[932] Fischel Waschitz, *Juedisches Jungschuetzenkorps in Lemberg, August 1914 (ein Versuch)*, CZA, Z3/814. Bernard Hausner was the father of Gideon Hausner, the chief prosecutor in the trial against Adolf Eichmann in 1961.
[933] Rudolf Berger, *Letter to Fischel Waschitz*, 14.08.1914, CZA, Z3/814.
[934] Fischel Waschitz, *Juedisches Jungschuetzenkorps in Lemberg, August 1914 (ein Versuch)*, CZA, Z3/814.

recruited by the army for work at the railway station.[935] In a festive ceremony in the Dror gymnasium 150 rifles were handed over to the proud young men of the new Jewish unit.[936]

Despite the not insignificant number of volunteers, the vast majority of the Jewish population in Lwów, according to local Zionist functionary Henoch Halpern, seemed to have rejected this 'separatism' and instead supported the Polish nationalists' recruitment efforts.[937] The local Jewish Community Board was not willing to support the effort either. While it had donated 50,000 Crowns to the Polish Legion, it refused to donate money for the Jewish rifle corps. This created quite a problem, since uniforms and other basic material needed to be organized.[938] Nonetheless, a Jewish-national army unit seemed to emerge. A few weeks later, *Jüdische Volkszeitung* in Brno reported with considerable pride that the unit's language of command would be Hebrew (although "for practical reasons" it would initially be Polish) and that the uniforms' collars would show blue-white insignia.[939] When the drills began on 24 August, the citizens of Lwów could already hear Russian artillery fire in the distance. On 31 August, in the midst of chaos in the city, and after the Austrian administration had left, forty volunteers came together and took a train to the fortress city of Przemyśl (Pshemishl/Peremyshl). In the end, the Jewish rifle corps disintegrated amidst the chaos of the Austrian retreat in East Galicia.[940] Despite all the enthusiasm, the endeavor eventually failed and was not represented much in the Jewish or any other press until it was taken up again in January 1917 in an article in *Jüdisches Archiv* (Jewish Archive; see below), where it was presented as evidence for the city's Jews' unbreakable loyalty and willingness for self-sacrifice for the imperial cause.[941]

This brief episode shows two notable aspects: first, how Zionist activists considered Polish-national and imperial aims as not being in contradiction to one another, and second, how they positioned their own claims and their own ideas in relation to these aims. In this new war, the activists believed, the Jewish nation would for the first time in its diasporic history fight a war on its own. Although these initial efforts failed, the integration of the Jewish national claim

[935] Nordheimer Nur, *Eros and Tragedy*, 2–3.
[936] Waschitz, *Derekh Hayav*, 26.
[937] Komitee für den Osten, *Minutes of the Conference of 3. September 1914*, JMB-A, MF13-1 A 15 VIII 10.
[938] Fischel Waschitz, *Juedisches Jungschuetzenkorps in Lemberg, August 1914 (ein Versuch)*, CZA, Z3/814. The Kahal in Cracow also substantially supported the Polish Legions even through 1915. See: Naczelnego Komitetu Narodowego, *Letter to Cracow Kahal*, 04.03.1915, ŻIH, 107/613.
[939] *Jüdische Volkszeitung*, 03.09.1914.
[940] Waschitz, *Derekh Hayav*, 27–8; Fischel Waschitz, *Juedisches Jungschuetzenkorps in Lemberg, August 1914 (ein Versuch)*, CZA, Z3/814.Waschitz himself got lost somewhere on the way. See*: Neue Freie Presse*, 17.09.1914. His report indicates that he eventually made it to Cracow where he later showed up again (see below).
[941] *Jüdisches Archiv*, January 1917. There is some evidence the Waschitz later continued to organize military drills for youth activists. Jensen, *Sei stark*, 54–5.

and the aim to substantiate it with armed deeds came to be a central feature of political activism in the years of war.

In these efforts, Zionists were strongly confronted by antisemitic myths of Jewish weakness and cowardice. Repudiating and refuting them was seen by them, as by most other Jews, as a crucial task from the beginning of the war. While censorship (at least during the earlier part of the war) prevented antisemites from spreading too many rumors and allegations, their accusations nevertheless formed a dominant trope at the outbreak of the war in the Habsburg Empire.[942] The *Kriegsüberwachungsamt* (War Surveillance Office; the military secret service) and the Ministry of the Interior received dozens of letters, some anonymous, some not, as well as reports from local authorities from all across the monarchy, accusing Jews of avoiding conscription.[943] These defamations often went hand in hand with the image of transnational Jewish connections and ambiguous loyalties, which allegedly allowed Jews to avoid conscription by using sinister international ties to leave the country for the Netherlands.[944] Obviously, the organizers of this transnational defeatist conspiracy, in the eyes of the military authorities, could be the Zionists.[945] The investigation by the secret police painted a somewhat contradictory picture, portraying Zionists both as rootless wanderers, linking them to the international diamond trade, while at the same time commending the unquestionable patriotism and loyalty of Austrian and German Zionists.[946] However, Zionists decided to react publicly to

---

[942] On press-politics and war censorship, see: Cornwall, "News, Rumour," 50–64; Ehrenpreis, *Kriegs- und Friedensziele*, 68–106; 191–212; Halliday, "Censorship in Berlin and Vienna," 612–26.

[943] K. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Collected File: "Anzeigen gegen die nichteingerückte, enthobene Mannschaften (Juden)"*, 08.11.1914, ÖStA KA, ZSt KÜA Akten 13 Akt Nr. 7726; Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *File: "Juedischer Nationalverein in Oesterreich: Beschwerde über das Vorgehen politischer und Militärbehörden in Galizien", Report by the k. k. Statthaltereirat for Galicia*, 5.11.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2116; Landespräsident in der Bukowina, *Report "Bedrückung der Rumänen in der Bukowina; anonymer Brief"*, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2096. For Galicia, see especially the files of the Cracow chief of police regarding the prosecution of Jews supposedly trying to avoid being drafted to the army by claiming to study to become rabbis: ANK, 247/0/187. This accusation was of course not limited to the Habsburg Empire. Jews in the other belligerent countries were also confronted with very similar accusations, a phenomenon that may require a transnational comparative study in the future. The best-studied case is of course the German *Judenzählung* of 1916. See: Michael Grünwald, "Antisemitismus im Deutschen Heer und Judenzählung," in *Jüdische Soldaten, Jüdischer Widerstand in Deutschland und Frankreich*, ed. Michael Berger and Gideon Römer-Hillebrecht (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012), 129–44; Jacob Rosenthal, *"Die Ehre des jüdischen Soldaten". Die Judenzählung im Ersten Weltkrieg und ihre Folgen* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2007).

[944] K. u. k. Militärkommando Krakau to K. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Report: "Auslandsflucht militärdienstpflichtiger mosaischer Konfession"*, 21.12.1915, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA Akten 99 Akt Nr. 53814.

[945] The fact that Viennese Zionist Jakob Landau had defected to The Hague where he established the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, probably played a certain role in this myth. See: Friedman, "The Austro-Hungarian Government," 153.

[946] K. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *File: "Zionistische Vereine: Entente-freundliche Haltung"*, 19.12.1917, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA Akten 174 Akt Nr. 93637; K. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *File "Zionistische Vereine in Oesterreich; Entente-freundliche Umtriebe*", ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA 148. The suspicion of Zionsts' potential treason (due to their international connections) continued throughout the war and was followed by a

these allegations of treason and cowardice, not only as a means of fending off unjust accusations but also to support their political goals by portraying the Jewish people and themselves as an exceptionally loyal political movement willing to sacrifice for the common cause.

For this purpose in late 1914/early 1915 Robert Stricker, the leading figure of Austria's Zionists initiated the foundation of the *Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv*. In a first letter to potential donors, Stricker and the other editors described the intention of the institution. First, it would fight against antisemitic allegations, and second, by collecting evidence of Jewish heroism and self-sacrifice, it would place the Jewish nation in a better position to make political claims after the war.[947]

"There can be no doubt that the enemies and enviers of Jewry are working tirelessly to collect evidence against us during the war, and that once the war has ended, a hitherto unknown agitation against us will begin. There are enough signs for this, since already now an agitation which appeals to the lowest of instincts has begun against us. We have to face this danger. And we can do it, since during this war we have proven ourselves beyond all expectations. Not only have Jewish soldiers done exceptional deeds on the battlefields, but our uncompromising patriotic fidelity is proven to be a factor of true state-supportive [*staatstragend*] value. But these facts alone are not enough. Too easily will they be forgotten by the peoples and the powerful, especially since our enemies are working to blur them. We have to ascertain them for all eternity. We have to note every detail of all events concerning our conduct during the war and our relation to the state and the state's [relation] to us. In short, if we want to be prepared for our struggle against malevolence and for our rights, we have to create the 'Jewish War Archive'."[948]

Initially, Stricker and his comrades had planned to establish a European Jewish War Archive, "the archive of the Jewish nation"[949], which would document the situation of the Jews in all European countries, especially focusing on Russia.[950] However, this did not seem very

number of investigations, all of which turned out to show no results. K. k. Polizeidirektion in Prag to K. k. Statthaltereipräsidium in Prag, *Report: "Zionistische Vereine in Oesterreich, ententefreundliche Umtriebe"*, 03.09.1917, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA 219. K. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Report: "Zionistische Vereine in Oesterreich; ententefreundliche Umtriebe"*, 23.09.1916, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA 156; K. u k. Ministerium des kaiserl. und königl. Haus und des Äußeren, *Report on Zionists in Copenhagen to K u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt*, 19.10.1916, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA 161; Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *File "Künstler David; Chaim und Mina aus Brzozow; ententefreundliche zionoistische Umtriebe; Spionageverdacht"*, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2064; K. k. Landesgendarmeriekommando Nr. 2, *File "Tauber, Julius und Sali, Spionageverdacht, Wehrpflichtverletzung"*, 02.12.1916, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2065. After the British Balfour-Declaration and the Russian Revolution, the idea of Jews' and particularly Zionists' treason gained increased importance. I will return to this matter in chapter 6.

[947] See also: Eleonore Lappin, "Zwischen den Fronten: Das Wiener Jüdische Archiv. Mitteilungen des Komitees 'Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv', 1915–1918," in *Identität, Nation, Sprache – Jüdische Geschichte und jüdisches Gedächtnis. Der Westen im Osten, der Osten im Westen – Konzepte jüdischer Kultur*, ed. Elenonore Lappin and Michael Nagl (Bremen: Edition Lumiere, 2008), 229–46.

[948] Vorbereitendes Komitee zur Erlangung des Jüdischen Kriegsarchivs, *Letter to potential donors*, early 1915, CZA, L6/295.

[949] Robert Stricker [?], *Letter to Leo Motzkin*, 04.03.1915, CZA, L6/295.

[950] Ibid.

practical. Nathan Gross, a leading German Zionist, remarked that there were indeed many similar publications in England, France, and Russia, documenting Jewish heroism, but he was doubtful whether this would be of any use for the Austrian Zionists' War Archive. Would this not actually raise doubts about Jews' allegiances? Nonetheless, it would be an important propagandistic tool. Therefore, the Zionist leadership in Berlin promised to support the War Archive.[951] It also received financial support – albeit largely symbolic – from the Viennese Kultusgemeinde.[952] The Jewish War Archive gave very clear instructions to its correspondents. It should focus on accounts of Jewish soldiers' heroic deeds on the battlefields and reports about patriotic manifestations and activities by the Jewish population. Every report sent in would require thorough documentation.[953]

The results of those collections were then published in several issues of *Jüdisches Archiv: Mitteilungen des Komitees "Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv"* (Jewish Archive: Information of the Committee "Jewish War Archive") from May 1915 onwards. *Jüdisches Archiv* mainly consisted of reports about Russian cruelty against the Jewish population in Galicia and Bukovina, romantic reports about Jewish soldiers' heroism, kitsch anecdotes about Jews' support for the army and their love for *Kaiser* and *Reich*, appreciative comments by high-ranking officers and officials about Jewish bravery, and lists of Jewish soldiers and officers who had received decorations and honors.[954] Some of the stories connected Austro-patriotic heroism with Jewish national aspirations, such as that of a fallen soldier who after giving everything for Austria, wished that the money he left behind might go to the Jewish National Fund.[955] Generally, the stories did not differ substantially from the reports in other Jewish newspapers, most notably the liberal *Österreichische Wochenschrift* (Austrian Weekly) edited by rabbi and former Reichsrat deputy Joseph Samuel Bloch and the *Jüdisches Kriegsgedenkblatt* (Jewish War Commemoration Paper) edited by Moritz Frühling.[956] Despite the apparent competition with the liberals, there were strong overlaps; Frühling, for instance,

[951] Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 28.03.1915, CZA, Z3/520; Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 05.02.1915, CZA, Z3/154.
[952] In 1915, the War Archive received 500 Crowns, and in 1917 1,000 Crowns. See: Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Instruction for the payment of 500 Crowns to Komitee des Jüdischen Kriegsarchivs (Robert Stricker)*, 27.10.1915, CAHJP, A-W/357 2d; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Plenary decision of 11 March 1917: "Subsidies shall be granted to the following associations"*, 11.03.1917, CAHJP, A-W/71.16.
[953] Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv, *Instruktionen für Korrespondenten*, CZA, Z3/154.
[954] *Jüdisches Archiv*, May 1915,
[955] *Jüdisches Archiv*, January 1916.
[956] On Bloch: Ian Reifowitz, *Imagining an Austrian Nation: Joseph Samuel Bloch and the Search for a Supraethnic Austrian Identity, 1846–1918* (Boulder: East European Monographs/Columbia University Press, 2003).

also published articles in *Jüdisches Archiv* and composed the list of fallen Jewish soldiers for it.[957]

One of the remarkable aspects of this publication and its aim, as described in the lengthy quotation from the letter above, is that in many respects it mirrored the traditional security strategy of groups like the Central-Verein Deutscher Staatsbürger Jüdischen Glaubens (Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith) – that is the refutation and raising arguments against antisemitic accusations – which the Zionists had always decried as futile and assimilationist.[958] This did not escape the attention and criticism of some Zionist activists. Samuel Bettelheim wrote in the Budapest-based *Ungarländische Jüdische Zeitung* (Hungarian Jewish Paper):

"A War Archive was founded by Viennese Zionists. The respective appeal states that it would thereby create a document against antisemitism. It is remarkable that this outdated instrument, out of the arsenal of 'defense-Jewry' [*Abwehr-Judentum*; a pejorative term for the C.V. and the likes; JR] is now even dug up by the Zionists. From the beginning, Zionism has abhorred such means and has in general left the struggle against antisemitism up to assimilation."[959]

The Viennese Zionists defended themselves, reiterating their critique of the *Abwehr-Judentum* and insisted that their struggle against antisemitism was not only strictly subjugated to that for the higher goal, but also qualitatively different to that of the 'assimilationists': "When assimilation defends itself against antisemitism, then every word is a whimpering plea […] The Zionist, however, regards the Jews' right to live as any other people as natural and only keeps the weapon of defense only for when it is necessary to attack our antisemitic attackers."[960]

Did Zionists actually believe that this show of patriotism could convince anybody who might harbor anti-Jewish sentiments? Did they really believe in this supposedly 'outdated instrument' as a tool to refute antisemitism? Contrary to the public proclamations, none of the

[957] *Jüdisches Archiv*, August 1915. The main difference was the two publications' focus, with the *Jüdisches Kriegsgedenkblatt* focusing a lot more on soldiers and officers, while the *Jüdisches Archiv* also included many stories of civilians' experiences.
[958] On the C.V. and his *Abwehr*-strategy, see: Avraham Barkai, "*Wehr dich!" Der Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens (C.V.) 1893–1938* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2002); Arnold Paucker, "The Jewish Defense against Antisemitism in Germany, 1893–1933," in *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz (Hanover, London: Brandeis University Press, 1987) 104–32; Arnold Paucker, "Zur Problematik einer jüdischen Abwehrstrategie in der deutschen Gesellschaft," in *Juden im Wilhelminischen Deutschland. 1890–1914*, 2nd ed., ed. Werner E. Mosse (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 479–548; Ismar Schorsch, *Jewish Reactions to German Anti-Semitism, 1870–1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972). For the Austrian context, see also: Jacob Toury, "Defense Activities of the Österreichisch-Israelitische Union before 1914," in *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz (Hanover, London: Brandeis University Press, 1987), 167–92.
[959] *Ungarländische Jüdische Zeitung*, 24.01.1915.
[960] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 05.02.1915.

internal communication of the activists involved included any mention that the task of this publication was to protect against antisemitic defamations. Leo Herrmann made a brief mention of this, however, in a somewhat different context: "I think the War Archive is absolutely worth supporting, especially because it can serve both national and apologetic purposes. It is my general opinion, that the war gives us many opportunities to cooperate with people who had hitherto been distant from us."[961] This was consistent with the general propagandistic strategies Robert Stricker had suggested for Austrian Zionists during the war: amongst the Jews – as arguably amongst any other group – there was the greatest interest in news and accounts about the war. Zionists would have a great opportunity to engage this public and frame the news from the front and the heroism of the soldiers in a specific Jewish-national sense.[962] Additionally, the response to Bettelheim continued by making an argument that went beyond mere 'defense'.

"The '*Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv*' will teach us about our mistakes as well as about our merits, about our weaknesses as about our strengths. Self-awareness means a lot, means everything, to a people that is preparing itself for the reconstruction of *Altneuland*. The assimilationist is pleased, for instance, to read about the heroic deeds of Jewish soldiers – documented in the *Kriegsarchiv* – under Austria's flags; as patriots, we Zionists as well are delighted by this, but in addition we think for ourselves that our youth would not fight any worse under Jewish flags."[963]

The collection of heroic stories was seen not only as a response to allegations of cowardice, but also as an instrument for renewing the Jews' self-confidence, to give them strength and agency and connect this with the Zionist efforts. This was both central for the Jewish community itself, as well as towards society at large and the Zionists' idea for its reorganization, as Stricker wrote:

"The stance of the Aust[rian] Jews in the war is simply marvelous. That the Jews are unmatched in their reliability, self-sacrifice and fidelity, is recognized in the highest circles, *especially in the military*. The high officers who return from Galicia and report are full of praise. *If the knowledge about this and this atmosphere will be preserved, this must bring great results in the forthcoming political regeneration*."[964]

[961] Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 28.03.1915, CZA, Z3/520.
[962] Robert Stricker, *Letter to EAC*, 29.09.1914, CZA, Z3/520. In this letter Stricker was still talking about the establishment of a new daily paper, which never materialized. However, what is important here is the strategic approach.
[963] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 05.02.1915. '*Altneuland'* ('Old-New-Land') referred to the imagined future Jewish national state in Palestine as envisioned in Theodor Herzl's book of that very name. Theodor Herzl, *Altneuland* (Leipzig: Hermann Seemann Nachfolger, 1902). As a matter of fact, Jews' alleged 'mistakes' and 'weaknesses' (whatever these were supposed to be) were not mentioned in *Jüdisches Archiv*.
[964] Robert Stricker, *Letter to EAC*, 29.09.1914, CZA, Z3/520. Emphasis in the original.

National Antisemitism?

While the *Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv* instructions for correspondents invited people to send in reports about antisemitism as well,[965] they were only published when it came to anti-Jewish acts by the Russian occupying forces.[966] This was partially due to wartime censorship, but also reflected the general approach of the editors, who did what they saw necessary to maintain the civic truce in the homeland.[967] However, the Jewish War Archive did in fact receive a large number of letters and reports from Jews, especially from Galicia, accusing Habsburg military and civil authorities, officers and bureaucrats, of discrimination and hostile acts against Jews. For Stricker and his colleagues, this posed the question of how to deal with the matter. They decided that instead of publishing them and publicly denouncing antisemitism, they would address the government directly. Some of the reports were composed into lengthy petitions and submitted to the authorities. The first petition, submitted in early September 1915 to the Ministry of Interior, detailed the mistreatment of Jews in the newly reconquered areas of East Galicia,[968] while the second was sent a few weeks later to the Ministry of War and lamented anti-Jewish measures and discrimination in the newly conquered regions of formerly Russian Poland.[969] There is no evidence that these petitions led to any change in the behavior of the authorities.[970] The collection of reports about the mistreatment of Jews by Austrian officials did, however, create a certain nervousness amongst civilian and military bureaucrats. In summer 1916, postal censorship confiscated a letter by representatives of the Jewish community of Załoźce (Zaleshitz/Saloschzi) in East Galicia, in which Jewish citizens lamented the brutality and corruption of the Austrian officer who had been put in charge of the town after it had been recaptured from the Russian army. The military authorities regarded this complaint to be

[965] Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv, *Instruktionen für Korrespondenten*, CZA, Z3/154.
[966] There were occasional reports about allegedly rampant antisemitism in France and England as well, but the focus was on the Russian Empire and the conduct of Russian troops.
[967] The introductory article to every issue of *Jüdisches Archiv* always mentioned that it would publish reports who "are concerned with those topics we can address in the frame of the legal regulations for the press [*preßpolizeiliche Bestimmungen*]." E.g. *Jüdisches Archiv*, January 1916.
[968] Jüdischer Nationalverein in Oesterreich, *Petition to the K. k. Ministry of Interior*, 03.09.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2116.
[969] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, Jüdischer Nationalverein in Oesterreich, Zentralkomitee der galizischen Zionisten, Zionistisches Zentralkomitee der Bukowina, Poale Zion, *Petition to k. u. k. Armee-Oberkommando*, 29.03.1915, CZA, F1/5.
[970] In August 1916 the Foreign Ministry addressed the issue briefly towards the military authorities in Lublin. However, both the Ministry and the Militärgeneralgouvernement manly saw the complaints as a nuisance rather than as reflecting a serious problem that needed to be addressed. K. u. k. Militär-General-Gouvernement in Polen, *File: "Mißhandlung der Juden"*, 17.08.1916, AGAD, 312/207. The file includes: Vertreter des K. und k. Ministeriums des Äussern beim K. und k. Mil.-Gen.-Gouvernement für Polen, *Angebliche Mißhandlungen von Israeliten*, 09.08.1916, AGAD, 312/207.

unacceptable.[971] If the *Kriegsarchiv* were to be allowed to further collect these kinds of letters, the responsible officer noted, "honorable officers, who have self-sacrificingly and flawlessly done their duty under the most difficult circumstances, might be dragged into investigations which might […] bring about the result that the accusers demand."[972] Shortly after, the police raided the offices of *Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv* and confiscated no less than 417 letters and reports, mainly from East Galicia and Bukovina, many of them detailing the mistreatment of Jews by Austro-Hungarian authorities.[973] In late 1917, police raided the office again and confiscated newly received letters, which eventually meant the end of *Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv*.[974] Whereas much of the other material of *Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv* is lost,[975] these confiscated letters as well as the petitions are a highly interesting set of sources. It allows for an analysis of how a great number of Jews experienced the war in an Austrian-imperial context, how they themselves addressed it, and, most importantly for our purposes, how this was represented by Zionists to the highest authorities in the land.

In a similar way to how historiography largely nationalizes the demise of the Habsburg monarchy and discusses it as the result of a nationalities' conflict, so too have historians often interpreted antisemitism in the latter stage of the Habsburg Empire in national terms. There is the concept of, for instance, of the "unfair treatment of Jews by Polish officials",[976] and "anti-Semitic agitation by German and Czech nationalists".[977] This interpretation, I would argue, is often based on historic source material that already frames these experiences in national categories. Juxtaposing 'national' antisemitism with the alleged neutrality or even anti-antisemitic position of the Habsburg central state eventually becomes an argument for the empire-nation dichotomy and the concept of a particular Jewish affinity to the Habsburg Empire.[978] The imperial administration of Galicia was undoubtedly 'Polish' and dominated by Polish elites, as was much of the K. u. k. administration in Lublin.[979] However, the 'Polish

[971] K. u. k. 2. Armeekommando, Quartierabteilung to k. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Report: "'Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv': Unzulässige Propaganda"*, 07.08.1916, ÖStA KA, KM KÜA Akten 156, File No. 83871.
[972] Ibid.
[973] Ibid. Unfortunately not all of the letters were preserved.
[974] Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren to Ministerialkommission im k. u. k. Kriegsministerium, *Report: "Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv in Wien: Beschlagnahmte Korrespondenz"*, 12.12.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2074.
[975] The collection at the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People contains only a fraction of the material that must have been collected by *Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv*. See: CAHJP, AU/259.1; AU/259.2; AU/259.3; AU/259.4; AU/259.5.
[976] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 112.
[977] Ibid, 125. For similar approaches, see for example: Holzer, "Frage der Akkulturation," 225–6.
[978] See for example: Hacohen, *Nation and Empire*.
[979] On Galicia: Harald Binder, "'Galizische Autonomie'—ein streitbarer Begriff und seine Karriere," in *Moravské vyrovnání z roku 1905 / Der Mährische Ausgleich von 1905*, ed. Lukáš Fasora, Jiří Hanuš, and Jiří

officials' were often Habsburg state officials and the 'German and Czech nationalists' often held positions in the administration of the various crownlands.[980] This is not to say that antisemitism was not a central element in many nationalist movements, quite the contrary.[981] However, nationalists were also an integral part of the Empire as a result of the nationalization of the imperial bureaucracy and electoral successes of nationalist parties. Nationalists served as clerks and governors, officers and bureaucrats, and were often the backbone of local Habsburg authority.[982] It was only at a later stage of the war, when various nationalist groups came into open conflict with the idea of the Austrian Empire, that antisemitism came to be a key element of anti-imperial agitation. There was a lengthy transition in this process, which suggests that for Jews, especially in Galicia, as well as in other regions under Habsburg control, who suffered the brunt of antisemitism, experiences of antisemitism in 'imperial' and 'national' contexts were part of continuing and closely related processes rather than two separate phenomena.

Whereas the occurrence of antisemitic speeches and newspaper articles increased and intensified dramatically in the latter half of the war, and in many cases can be directly ascribed to certain (nationalist) ideologies, this is less the case for the day-to-day insults, attacks, and mistreatment Jews suffered throughout the war and beyond.[983] We usually do not know the political allegiances of the perpetrators of these daily actions and when the victims reported their names, this information does not necessarily reveal anything about their national self-identification. Most importantly, the formal (ascribed) identities or belongings of the perpetrators seem not to be sufficient evidence for proving a causal relation between national identification and anti-Jewish acts. What we do know, however, is that many of the perpetrators discriminated against and mistreated Jews in their positions as officials of the Habsburg Empire, as will become clear form the examples below. It was the imperial uniform that gave them leverage over the population. They could become a threat to Jews precisely because they were

---

Malíř (Brno: Matice moravská; 2006), 239–65; Börries Kuzmany, "Habsburg Austria: Experiments in Non-Territorial Autonomy," *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2016): 43–65. On the MGG Lublin: Tamara Scheer, Zwischen Front und Heimat: Österreich-Ungarns Militärverwaltungen im Ersten Weltkrieg (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009), 19–26; 55–97; Tamara Scheer, "Österreich-Ungarns Besatzungsmacht in Russisch-Polen während des Ersten Weltkriegs (1915–1918)," *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung/Journal of East Central European Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 4 (2009): 538–71; Keya Thakur-Smolarek, *Der Erste Weltkrieg und die polnische Frage: Die Interpretationen des Kriegsgeschehens durch die zeitgenössischen polnischen Wortführer* (Berlin, Münster: Lit Verlag, 2014), 245–52.

[980] Judson, *Habsburg Empire*, ch. 7; Vushko, *Politics of Cultural Retreat*, 232.

[981] There are innumerable studies on this topic. For an overview, see: Herbert A. Strauss and Werner Bergmann, ed, *Hostages of Modernization: Studies on Modern Antisemitism, 1870–1933/39*, *Vol. 2: Austria, Hungary, Poland, Russia* (New York: De Gruyter, 1993). See also the introduction.

[982] Gary B. Cohen, "Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867–1914," *Central European History*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2007): 241–78.

[983] Pauley, *Geschichte des österreichischen Antisemitismus*, 100–12; Thomas Stoppacher, "A time of upheaval in an anti-Semitic environment – the Representation of the Jewish Population in Austria in the Parliamentary Debates from 1917–1919," *Jewish Culture & History*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (2016): 217–32.

in a position of power and not because of their supposed nationality. An analysis of the confiscated letters which had been sent to *Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv* shows that only a minority of those complaining of antisemitic mistreatment mentioned the nationality of the perpetrators. They do almost always mention, however, the rank and the position of the perpetrator in the state hierarchy.[984] The same was true in a number of other cases, for instance, for a number of protocols involving interviews with refugees from East Galicia who had arrived near Nikolsburg in Moravia in 1914, were treated badly by local authorities, and had been forced to move into the refugee camp, where the conditions were appalling. None of the interviewees mentioned the (suspected) nationality of the gendarmes, whose excessive brutality they attributed to antisemitism.[985] For them, the threat appeared not as Polish, Czech, or German but in the form of officials and officers of the imperial state – and the reason they could mistreat the Jews was that they were officials of the imperial state.

Of course, these descriptions were often made to identify the perpetrator, but the question remains, which of the 'categories' allows us to assume a causal relation. The mention of the officials' rank and position within the imperial hierarchy probably also shows how Jews – just as anyone else for that matter – had actually trusted in the rule of law, had hoped to be protected by the state, and now expressed their disappointment. Rather than reiterating the narrative of the upsurge in nationalist antisemitism as an antithesis to the multiethnic imperial state, I argue that the broad outbursts of antisemitism, just as the rise of nationalist forces, were an integral part of the lengthy process in which the imperial state disintegrated, and it can therefore only be understood in an imperial context.

This representation of antisemitism in a national explanatory framework, was, however, a major trope in the representation of the incidents by the Zionists. It was part of their wider argument for validating the Jews as a legitimate national group within the empire and beyond, in which both the harm done to them, and the merits they earned, were represented in a national frame. This representation as anti-Jewish acts in a national frame are clearly different from the way in which other institutions, such as, for instance, representatives of the various Jewish Community Boards addressed cases of discrimination of Jews or mistreatment by the authorities, who did not mention the perpetrators' supposed nationality.[986] It was a political

[984] K. u. k. 2. Armeekommando, Quartierabteilung to k. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Report: "'Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv': Unzulässige Propaganda"*, 07.08.1916, ÖStA KA, KM KÜA Akten 156, File No. 83871.
[985] Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv, *Protocol/Interviews with Ignatz Friedental, Iro Neumann, and Moritz Schapira*, 30.10.1914, CAHJP, AU-259.4
[986] On Chełm, see: Millner, Kupfer on behalf of the Kahal, *Petition to Generalgouverneur of the MGG Lublin*, 05.07.1916, AGAD, 312/205. On Prague and some other cases in Bohemia and Moravia: Israelitische Kultusgemeinde-Repräsentanz Prag, *Letter to Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Vienna*, 25.07.1916, CAHJP, A-W/357.3; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Letter to Israelitische Kultusgemeinde in Prague*, 19.07.1916,

decision by the Zionists to understand and represent the mistreatment of Jews in national terms, a decision that was rooted in very practical and strategic considerations. They were aware that after Galicia had been retaken and the combined armies had conquered large parts of the Kingdom of Poland, there was a small window of opportunity in which power relations on the ground would be established. Their main concern was to avoid Polish nationalist dominance, in both Galicia, and the Militärgeneralgouvernement Lublin/Generalne Gubernatorstwo Lubelskie. They perceived such a 'Polonization' as a threat to Jewish national interests, since it would foster 'assimilationist' tendencies.[987] It was in this context that petitions were drafted. Leo Herrmann wrote to Robert Stricker, asking him to compose an exposé on Polish-Jewish relations which should be used to influence the German and Austrian governments' decisions. He wrote:

"We must present evidence about how reliable the Jewish population in Galicia had been during this severe crisis, whereas the Poles have proven their unreliability. The presentation of convincing evidence is necessary. It must be shown how the Jews have always, and especially during time of war, been the best, if not the only, pillars of centralism. […] It must be shown how it is in the vital interest of the state to protect the Jewish population, especially in the East, from Polonization and protect their special character, since it is their Jewishness and the interests that come with it that connects them inseparably with the interests of the Austrian state."[988]

It was with this motivation and in this framing that Zionists addressed the government, making an argument that juxtaposed Poles, their alleged treason of the Empire and oppression of the Jews, with the Jews' unbreakable loyalty and suffering for the imperial cause. The exposé decried the 'Polish administration' of Galicia. It was this very administration that "gave a

CAHJP, A-W/357.3; Cultusgemeinde Jechnitz, *Letter to Israelitische Kultusgemeinde in Vienna*, 17.07.1916, CAHJP, A-W/357.3; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde-Repräsentanz Prag, *Letter to Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Vienna*, 02.02.1917, CAHJP, A-W/357.4; Jüdisches Volksverein "Zion", *Letter to Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Vienna*, 03.03.1917, CAHJP, A-W/357.4; Alfred Stern, *Letter to Israelitische Kultusgemeinde in Prague*, 26.02.1917, CAHJP, A-W/357.4. On Vienna: Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Beilage zum Plenar-Protokoll, 28.04.1915*, CAHJP, A-W/71.16; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Kundgebung der Wiener israel. Kultusgemeinde und der österr. Kultusgemeinden gegen die antisemitische Verhetzung der Bevölkerung (in the protocols of the public plenary session)*, 26.07.1918, CAHJP, A-W/71.16. The joint proclamation of many of Austria's Jewish community boards 'against the antisemitic incitement of the population' (the last reference here, also published in *Oesterreichische Wochenschrift*, 02.08.1918) only mentioned the *Deutsche Volkstag* as one incident, while generally mentioning violence and pogroms without specifying the perpetrators. It generally used a religious (rather than a national) frame, speaking of a "systematic subversive activities […] which has the clear purpose of inciting the entire Christian population auf Austria against the Jews". Zionists criticized this declaration by stating that it was weak and misguided, as it did not propose a self-conscious Jewish self-organization, and popular mass response, and that it did not "evolve from the vital interests of the Jewish people". They explained this precisely in national terms: "Of course, it is impossible that a national community whose entire force rests on the broadest masses of the people, will be led by some who are estranged from their nation, even see themselves as members of other nations." *Jüdische Zeitung*, 02.08.1918.

[987] S. Szper, *Letter to Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich*, 12.03.1916, CZA, Z3/142; S. Halpern, *Letter to Zionist Action Committee*, 1915, CZA, Z3/140.

[988] Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 14.09.1915, CZA, L6/102.

friendly welcome" to the Russians, creating a "Russophile atmosphere" which had supposedly already been prepared in previous years by Polish-Russian propaganda and pro-Russian espionage. It was only logical, that many of the traitors later voluntarily left Galicia with the Russian army.[989] The exposé quoted a number of articles from Polish newspapers, which had appeared under Russian rule and had slandered Austria-Hungary and Germany. This was juxtaposed with the behavior of the local Jews, who "were therefore persecuted not only by the Russians but also by their Polish allies. […] In most places the Poles directly spurred on the Russians to plunder Jewish businesses and take Jewish hostages."[990] The biggest scandal, however, was that after the liberation of Galicia, the same old, rotten, treacherous Polish administration was put in place again. The only way to end this misery, which was not only a threat to his majesty's most loyal subjects, the Jews, but to the Empire itself, would be to replace those traitors with loyalists. Who could play this role? Obviously, only those Jews who really defended Jewish interests and were not aligned with the Poles through 'assimilation', in short, the Zionists.[991] It was clearly a strategic, political decision to concentrate on 'Polish antisemitism' in those petitions. While internally the fear that "the Ruthenians will now try to implement their antisemitic instincts which they could satisfy without impediment under Russian rule"[992] seemed to have been even stronger or at least equally important, there was hardly any mention of 'Ruthenian antisemitism' or Ruthenians' alleged treason in the documents.[993] The representation of 'Polish antisemitism' and 'Polish treason' in the official declarations of the Zionist movement must be read in this context.

This exposé, as well as the two petitions to the government, put strong emphasis on the perpetrators' supposed Polish nationality. The complaint about the authorities' mistreatment of Jews in the town of Jędrzejów (between Kielce and Cracow), for example, did not fail to detail the nationality of the perpetrator: "Civil commissar Dr. Huppert, an Austrian official of Polish nationality from Galicia. Based on all accounts […] Dr. Huppert has made it his goal to ruin the Jews."[994] Huppert's 'Polish' antisemitism was juxtaposed against the behavior of the former mayor: "The former mayor, Bolechowski (a Christian) was accused by Dr. Huppert as a Jew-

[989] Jüdischer Nationalverein in Oesterreich, *Exposé on the Situation in Galicia*, 1915, CZA, Z3/155.
[990] Ibid.
[991] Ibid.
[992] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Shmaryahu Levin*, 07.05.1915, CZA, Z3/396.
[993] This was in a marked difference to the general image of Ruthenians during the war, who were collectively portrayed as treasonous and were brutally repressed by the state. This specific Zionist position most likely came from established positive pre-war relations with Ukrainian nationalists in East Galicia.
[994] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, Jüdischer Nationalverein in Oesterreich, Zentralkomitee der galizischen Zionisten, Zionistisches Zentralkomitee der Bukowina, Poale Zion, *Petition to k. u. k. Armee-Oberkommando*, 29.03.1915, CZA, F1/5.

protector."[995] Bolechowski was probably no more or less 'Polish' than Huppert was 'Christian,' but this rhetorical instrument was important for arguing that antisemitism was a specifically national problem. Eventually, what occurred in the region was a national conflict between Poles and Jews. The trope of Polish antisemitism was even stronger in the petition describing antisemitism in Galicia. The introduction stated:

"Many cases of blatant perversion of the law against Jewish citizens can be noted and it has to be stated that certain layers of the Polish population and categories of officials have apparently taken up the task of systematic persecution of the Jews, their repression, impoverishment, and humiliation before the authorities and the population."[996]

The petition then detailed a number of cases in which Jews had been discriminated against and mistreated by local 'Polish authorities'. The most common anti-Jewish acts were the exclusion of Jews from public food distribution, forced labor, non-issuing of necessary official documents, and the expropriation of goods (mainly food). The 'stories' of the cases were very similar: the 'Polish' officials had been installed by the Russian authorities during the brief occupation of Galicia and had then already engaged in anti-Jewish measures. Now, after the Austrian army had returned, they continued their antisemitic actions, which not only violated the state's laws and were discriminatory against Jews but represented in many regards a continuity of Russian rule in the region and were therefore an existential threat not only to the Jews, but also to the Empire as such.[997] These acts and statements were then often described as "truly Russian".[998]

This strategy of accusing other supposedly national groups of treason against Austria and mistreatment of other – supposedly most loyal – groups was not confined to the Zionists. Historian Frank Schuster noted that many Jews were accused of treason and espionage for Russia, and there are indeed numerous documents about such accusations in the records of the Ministry of Interior and of the regional court.[999] It seems doubtful that this was a particularly 'Jewish' experience. The archival records are full of accounts of various people accusing others

[995] Ibid.
[996] Jüdischer Nationalverein in Oesterreich, *Petition to the K. k. Ministry of Interior*, 03.09.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2116.
[997] Ibid.
[998] Ibid.
[999] See for example: K. u. k. Armee-Oberkommando to k. k. Ministerium des Inneren, *Denkschrift über die Verhältnisse in Lemberg während der russischen Invasion*, 25.02.1916, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A2117; K. k. Statthalterei Galizien to K k. Ministerium des Inneren, *Verhalten der Polen in Galizien gegenüber der dortigen jüdischen Bevölkerung; anonyme Anzeige*, 04.02.1916, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A2117; Präsidium des k.k. Ministerium des Inneren, *Report: Stimmung in Galizien*, 21.12.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A2116. See also the collections in AGAD, 305/323.

of collaboration with the Russian occupiers, often framing this in national terms.[1000] Ruthenians, in particular, were collectively accused of treason, which led to a horrific persecution by the authorities.[1001] Similarly, while Zionists decried discrimination of the Jews in the MGG Lublin, Polish nationalists there complained about the alleged discrimination of Poles by Jewish officials.[1002] It is not clear to what extent those local accusations actually shaped the government's attitude towards the population, not least since the official, central reports tend to put little to no emphasis on Jews' alleged collaboration.[1003] The denunciation of other groups as treacherous, opportunistic, and so on, came to be the way in which one could represent one's own exceptional loyalty to the monarchy, expecting to base further claims on this.[1004] The Zionists made the argument that since the Jews were most loyal to the Empire, they should also be granted legal national rights, as Leo Hermann stated when discussing strategy for the petition: "In regard to [our] concrete demands, we should say that the military authorities should ensure that the Jews would be granted authoritative representation in autonomous institutions […]."[1005] The most obvious representatives of the Jews were those who had no ties to treacherous Poles, therefore

> "it is necessary to find Jewish representatives who are free of Polish influence, especially Jewish-national candidates. At this point, one should ideally point out that for choosing those men, the military authorities should contact the competent representatives of national Jewry (the Jewish National Association and Oberingenieur Robert Stricker)."[1006]

Stricker's exposé was presented by representatives of the Committee for the East who came to Vienna in September 1915 and met with the Chief of the General Staff, Conrad von Hötzendorf, and the "very amiable" heir to the throne, Archduke Karl.[1007] The Austrian authorities were apparently willing to meet with representatives of a German committee that had a good standing with the German government but they were less interested in meeting with Austrian Zionist representatives. Overall, Vienna did not show much concern for improving the Jews'

[1000] Ibid.
[1001] Anton Holzer, *Das Lächeln der Henker. Der unbekannte Krieg gegen die Zivilbevölkerung 1914–1918* (Vienna: Primus Verlag, 2008), 56–65.
[1002] K. u. K. Militär-General-Gouvernement in Polen, Collected File: *"Kmdo. Sandomierz, angebliche Bevorzugung einzelner Bevölkerkungsgruppen"*, 15.11.1916, AGAD, 312/205.
[1003] Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Denkschrift des Legationsrates Baron Andrian über seine Informationsreise nach Galizien*, 06./13.09.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A2116.
[1004] Judson, *Habsburg Empire*, 405–7.
[1005] Leo Herrmann, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 14.09.1915, CZA, L6/102. Autonomy should also be granted for Jewish schools, since Polish control over the school system was obviously dangerous.
[1006] Ibid.
[1007] Komitee für den Osten, *Report on the Journey to Vienna, 11.09.–02.10.1915*, October 2015, BAB, R-1501-119802.

situation.[1008] In September 1915 Leopold von Andrian, one of the main architects of Habsburg war aims in the East,[1009] visited East Galicia on a fact-finding mission. Although his lengthy report did not mention largescale collaboration by any group, he nonetheless noted briefly that it might be helpful to support those groups of Jews in Galicia, which did not identify as Polish; this did however refer to unnamed people who identified as German and excluded the Zionists. In general, this official report treated the Jews as a mere side note to the events. They did not seem a decisive factor in the reorganization of the region.[1010] In fact, the Austrian authorities had very little interest in improving the situation of the Jews, not in Galicia and certainly not in the MGG Lublin. Just as in the Generalgouvernement Warschau, the old Russian antisemitic laws remained in place.[1011]

Liberation or the Decline of the Imperial Option?

As most Austrians, Zionists throughout the monarchy rejoiced over the retaking of East Galicia and especially Lwów in May 1915.[1012] In Vienna, Zionists organized a jubilant rally to celebrate the victory. Although they did invite representatives of the Kultusgemeinde, they did so on the day of the rally, making it virtually impossible for its representatives to attend, turning the event into a more exclusive Zionist demonstration.[1013] While their claim that more than 100,000 people attended the march was probably quite exaggerated,[1014] Zionists did manage to lead a significant number of people in a clearly Jewish-national form of representation. They had

[1008] Friedmann, *Austro-Hungarian Government*, 154.
[1009] Frederik Lindström, Wolfdieter Bihl, "Zu den österreichisch-ungarischen Kriegszielen 1914," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 16 (1968): 505–30.
[1010] Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Denkschrift des Legationsrates Baron Andrian über seine Informationsreise nach Galizien*, 06./13.09.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2116.
[1011] K. u. k. Kriegsministerium, *Allgemeine Grundzüge für die k. u. k. Militärverwaltung in den besetzten Gebieten Polens*, May 1915, ÖStA KA, AOK Qu. Abt. 2589 Referenten-Faszikel 1915–1918 Polen.
Like the German government, the Habsburg authorities argued this was necessary due to the Article 43 of the Hague Convention on the Conduct of War of 1899, which stated that local laws should be left in place in occupied territories.
[1012] This was a notably short moment of enthusiasm. The Viennese police's weekly report on the mood of the public noted the enthusiasm and confidence in victory only on 24 June and 1 July 1915, so immediately after news about the victory broke. K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien, *Stimmungsbericht*, 24.06.1915, Wienbibliothek im Rathaus (WBR), Stimmungsberichte aus der Kriegszeit: 1914, Exlibris Ignaz Pramer C-328501; K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien, *Stimmungsbericht*, 01.07.1915, WBR, Stimmungsberichte aus der Kriegszeit: 1915 Exlibris Ignaz Pramer C-328501. Already on 8 July, the police had to report that "The confidence in victory and patriotic mood of the population is notably impaired by the continuous troubles in regard to nutrition." K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien, *Stimmungsbericht*, 08.07.1915, WBR, Stimmungsberichte aus der Kriegszeit: 1915 Exlibris Ignaz Pramer C-328501.
[1013] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien*, 23.06.1915, CAHJP, A-W/357.2b; Vizepräsident der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 23.06.1915, CAHJP, A-W/357.2b.
[1014] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 25.06.1915. The official *Wiener Zeitung* reported 15,000 participants: *Wiener Zeitung*, 24.06.1915.

mobilized many of the refugees from Galicia and Bukovina in whose lives they had begun to play an important role through their welfare activities throughout the previous months.[1015] "Singing national and patriotic anthems" the people rallied around the Radetzky monument in front of the Ministry of War, whose pedestal Benno Straucher, the leader of Bukovina's Jewish National People's Party and member of the *Reichsrat*[1016] climbed to give a speech in which he

> "celebrated the glorious bravery of the army and the adamant confidence of the Jewish people in a victorious outcome of the war. […] The masses were waiting in silent emotion until they rejoiced and cheered as the music band started and the flag-bearers crossed the black-yellow and the white-blue flags."[1017]

These ritualized celebrations were not limited to the Zionists. A separate Ruthenian-nationalist demonstration articulated its gratitude to the emperor and his army in very similar terms,[1018] as did German and Polish nationalists.[1019] The jubilations seemed to have been confined to the capital city. In most other places in the empire, Jewish communities did not hold rallies but rather celebratory religious services and sent messages of praise to the emperor.[1020] Military and civil authorities seemed to have had no desire to see masses of people in the streets. The report of the Ministry of the Interior on public assemblies for 1915 does not refer to any rallies and demonstrations in Galicia.[1021]

Where it was possible for them, Zionists used Jewish community spaces to shape the celebrations according to their political ideas and demands. One set of examples, though happening slightly later on the occasion of emperor Franz Joseph's name-day on 4 October 1915, were the celebrations in Brody (Brod). The "Jerusalem of Austria"[1022] had been the last major Galician city to be reconquered by the Central Powers. On this Monday, the Jewish community gathered in the great synagogue to celebrate its liberation and to praise his majesty. An unnamed local, probably a member of the Jewish Community Board, which at the time was

---

[1015] See Chapters 2 and 3.
[1016] On Straucher and the Jewish National People's Party, see: Gaisbauer, *Davidstern*, 354–68; Rechter, *Becoming Habsburg,* ch. 6.
[1017] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 25.06.1915.
[1018] *Wiener Zeitung*, 24.06.1915.
[1019] *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 24.06.1915; *Polen: Wochenschrift für Polnische Interessen*, 09.07.1915.
[1020] There is evidence for this in Stryi and Przemyśl, see. *Jüdische Volksstimme*, 18.06.1915; as well as by refugees in Kadaň (Kaaden) in northwestern Bohemia, see *Selbstwehr*, 02.07.1915. The official celebration of Vienna's Jewish community was also confined to a special service and festive event of the Community Board: *Minutes of the Viennese Jewish Community Board Meetings*, 24.07.1915, CAHJP, A-W/71.16.
[1021] K. k. Ministerium des Inneren, *Versammlungsausweis für das I. und II. Quartal 1915*, 07.08.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 1615. The report on the 3rd and 4th quarter of the year are missing, but celebratory public assemblies should have been included in this report since they happened in late June 1915.
[1022] Nathan Michael Gelber*, Toldot Yehudi Brody, 1584–1943* (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kuk, 1955), 9.

dominated by the Zionists under the leadership of Nachman Gelber,[1023] wrote a report of this fabulous event: "In their thousands, the Jews of the last liberated city of Galicia flocked into the gloriously decorated grand synagogue, in order to express their feelings of unbreakable fidelity and devotion to the sublime person of our emperor."[1024] Army officers were present and the main speech was delivered by Abraham Glasberg, a leading Zionist activist in the city.[1025] The phrases condemning Russian barbarism, praising the emperor and his glorious troops did not differ in any way from other ritualized praises and declarations by other contemporary actors as they were traditionally delivered on such occasions.[1026] The speech did, however, contain several key tropes that reflected particularly Zionist argumentative strategies of the time, most importantly that the Jewish people was the most loyal of all the peoples of the Empire, that in fact it had suffered more than any other for Austria's sake:

"There is no lack of enemies who say that the Jews only claim their rights without fulfilling their duties. All these unfounded accusations are proven wrong by the armed feats of our brothers, who in the struggle against our archenemy died the heroes' death on the field of honor. Also, the fact that we Jews, amongst all the peoples of Galicia, have been beset the most by the Russians, who saw us as *the only representatives of Austria* and ruthlessly attacked us for this, is proof *that we have done our duty*."[1027]

Whether Glasberg used the terms 'nation' and 'people' as interchangeable, as many at the time did, whether he might have tried to stick more to the official terminology when addressing such an official crowd, or whether he believed, as Martin Buber argued at the time, that 'people' (*Volk*) even implied a greater degree of distinctiveness than 'nation',[1028] cannot be said with certainty. What is clear however, is that he built his argument for political claims through stating the suffering of the Jews under the occupation and their unbreakable fidelity to the Empire and his majesty. The Jews, so the argument went, were one of the peoples of Galicia, just as the Poles and the Ruthenians, and they were, for that matter, the most loyal people, if not the only loyal people, the "only representatives of Austria." For Zionists, the context of the retaking of Galicia provided the opportunity to present Jewish nation- and peoplehood in the region not

[1023] Börries Kuzmany, *Brody: A Galician Border City in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2017), 133. Not to be confused with Zionist activist and historian Nathan Gelber.
[1024] Unknown Author, *Report on the Celebrations on 4 October 1916 in Brody*, CAHJP, P-83-H-42.
[1025] In 1918/19, Glasberg would become the head of the Jewish National Council. Gelber, *Toldot Yehudi Brody*, 38.
[1026] On the rituals of imperial celebrations and proclamations of loyalty, see: Daniel Unowsky, *Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848–1916* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2005).
[1027] Unknown Author, *Report on the Celebrations on 4 October 1916 in Brody*, CAHJP, P/83-H-42. Emphasis in the original.
[1028] See Martin Buber's polemic with Hermann Cohen: *Der Jude*, August 1916.

only as existing categories, but to implicitly or explicitly argue that the recognition of the Jews as such would benefit the Empire.

In a very similar tone, Austrian Zionists had written to the Prime Minister earlier in 1915, demanding that "since in its unstoppable march to victory, our glorious army has liberated Galicia and Bukovina", now it was the time "for an objective and just reorganization of conditions in Galicia."[1029] A central element was the granting of national rights to the Jews, who had deserved to be made equal with the other nations, since

> "no other people of Austria has suffered as much as the Jews. Nobody, and this can be said with pride, could surpass them in their tenacious adherence to the idea of the Austrian state and their ardent love for emperor and Empire. […] They have literally suffered for Austria in the truest sense of the word and for this reason Austria must grant them their right!"[1030]

Of course, Zionists were not the only ones who tried to make claims in this situation. In July 1915 high-ranking Jewish officials from Galicia, including four members of the Reichsrat, as well as the presidents of the Jewish communities of Lwów, Cracow, and Przemyśl, started collecting signatures for a petition calling for Polish national rights, which included Jewish rights as good Poles of Mosaic faith. They argued that the fate of the Galician Jews was inseparable from that of the Polish nation and antisemitism had only been imported by the Russians, the archenemies of both Christian and Jewish Poles. Only as part of the Polish nation would the Jews flourish in the future.[1031] The petition ended with the sentence "The Jewish question in Poland is part of the Polish question."[1032] In a letter to Franz Oppenheimer, Robert Stricker decried this "infamy" but also had to admit that this "assimilationist" argument seemed to find a lot of support in Galicia.[1033] Oppenheimer was equally furious over the petition and its apparent popularity, since "it was crafted with such diabolic skill."[1034] The main problem seemed to be that since those prominent representatives promised more rights to the Jews alongside more rights for the Poles, this seemed to be a very positive perspective for many. He therefore urged Stricker not to openly attack the "assimilationists".[1035]

[1029] Karl Pollak, Adolf Stand, Benno Straucher, *Letter to k. k. Prime Minister*, 1915, CZA, Z3/845.
[1030] Ibid.
[1031] *Polen: Wochenschrift für Polnische Interessen*, 09.07.1915.
[1032] Ibid.
[1033] Robert Stricker, *Letter to Franz Oppenheimer*, 06.07.1915, CZA, A15/659. Stricker lumped the petition's last sentence together with the central statement of an earlier publication by Herman Feldstein from May 1915 that "Poland's freedom is the Polish Jews' freedom." Herman Feldstein*, Polen und Juden* (Cracow: Verlag des Obersten Polnischen Nationalkomitees, 1915), 19
[1034] Franz Oppenheimer, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 15.07.1915, CZA, A15/659.
[1035] Ibid.

Despite the affirmation of joy over the 'liberation' of Galicia, the above-mentioned petitions by the Zionists to the government showed how locals often saw more of a continuity of violence rather than liberation and change. For the petition's authors, this continuity was embodied by 'Polish' rule. Leaving 'the Poles' in power meant a continuation of anti-Austrian, Russian rule and an ongoing oppression of the Jews. One place in which this was the case – and which serves as an example here – was the town of Żydaczów (Zidichov/Zhydachiv) (near Lwów, the origin of the Hassidic Zidichov dynasty).

"The Jews had to suffer tremendously under a certain Bolec (a Pole) who used to be a secretary in the district administration. This did not prevent him from joining the service of the Russians during the Russian invasion as a policeman, and from bloodily persecuting the Jews in this capacity, playing the role of the ringleader in raids on houses and robbery. It was only thanks to his truly Russian police-spirit that the well-hidden university students Wolf Bienenstock and Josef Bienenstock were discovered, which led to their death by hanging. He actively participated in the robbing of households, including those of mayor Gottlied and [Jewish] Community President Jakob Bienenstock, furthermore the shops of hardware dealer Steif and cloth merchant Haber. In his service to the Russians he forced the Jews to do heavy labor in the trenches and beat them terribly with the Nahajka, including the 70-year-old Hersch Bayer and the rabbi's father-in-law Chaskel Goldschlag, also 70 years of age. And all those truly Russian characteristics of Bolec, his well-known deeds, were not seen as an obstacle for reinstating him in his position after the Russians were driven out. In the district administration, he was then responsible for handing out travel permits and refused to give any to Jews."

The argument was one of continuity. Bolec, the Pole, the epitome of 'the Pole',[1036] who had served previously in the Austrian administration, had a chance to show his real character once the Russian army had taken the city. His 'Russianness' is underscored by his use of the 'Nahajka'.[1037] When the Russians left, he just continued in his position and continued to torment the Jews. Despite having shown his true colors, he was allowed to do so even under Austrian rule, embodying the continuous danger 'the Pole' posed. The report continued:

"Lamentations and complaints did not help, since the k. k. District Commander [Kazimierz] Jaworczykowski did not have any time and therefore delegated the responsibilities to an official named Kocol, 22 years of age. This deputy Kocol accepted that for the labor in the trenches (dismantling of the Russian trenches) the Jewish population had to do most of the work, with no consideration for the women and children. […] Therefore, for instance, 40-year-old Mrs. Labin and her 17-year-old daughter, Mrs. Fuhrmann and her little daughter had to work in the trenches. Wolf Teitelbaum, 50 years old, who had returned from Vienna, was ordered to work in the trenches and

[1036] Bolec (usually spelled with a k) is short for Bolesław, not only a very typical Polish given name, but also the name of many of the medieval Polish kings.
[1037] A heavy horsewhip, which was common throughout Central and Eastern Europe. The authors used (and misspelled) the Russian term *Nagaika* (нагáйка) which was associated with the Cossacks, in order to enforce the argument of Bolec's 'Russianness'.

then arrested by Mr. Kocol, since he said that the [Austrian] Gendarmes were beating [them] harder than the Russians….. When the rabbi of Zurawno went to meet the District Commander, asking for support for the Jewish population, k. k. District Commander Jaworczykowski declared that he does not have any money for the Jews since they are bad Austrians."[1038]

Two aspects are of great importance here: not only did the Jews continue to be tormented under Austrian rule, which seemed to beat them 'harder than the Russians', but the argument shows the interplay between local, national, and imperial dimensions. Local appeals could not be successful, not least because Poles continued to exert their power as they had done under the Russians, and for this reason Zionists needed to appeal to the highest authorities in the land, as they were doing with this petition. At the same time, the district commanders' argument that the Jews were 'bad Austrians' also shows the overlap between imperial and national belongings and strategies, not only on the Zionists' side.

Whereas the Zionists' report suggested that the violence occurred in a national context, other accounts of the situation had a somewhat different interpretation of what happened in the town. A few weeks after the Russian army had been expelled from the town, Josef Wolf Wirth, a local merchant wrote to his children in Vienna, asking both for aid and describing his experiences under Russian and then Austrian rule. He mentioned the mistreatment by Cossacks,[1039] the problem that the Austrian authorities were not handing out travel permits to Jews[1040] and that the authorities were not willing to listen to any complaints.[1041] To those grievances he voiced a new one:

"8 days ago, the municipality ordered us to repair [?] and distemper the house, and to repair the roof, and it cost a lot of money, and we nailed shingles on the roof, and suddenly […] we were ordered to evacuate the house within 3 days, and there was no one to talk to [about this] since everybody is exerting his antisemitism."[1042]

While contrary to the Zionist report, he did not regard it necessary to mention the perpetrators' nationality but rather located the problem in the authority itself. He did, however, strikingly

[1038] Jüdischer Nationalverein in Oesterreich, *Petition to the K. k. Ministry of Interior*, 03.09.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2116. The petition did not have much impact. While we do not know anything about Bolec and Kocol, we know that Kazimierz Jaworczykowski remained in office as the District Commander of Żydaczów until 1918. He even received several honors and medals, including the Franz Joseph Order, which strongly suggests that he was honored precisely for his service as District Commander in Żydaczów. *Hof- und Staatshandbuch der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie für das Jahr 1918. XLIV Jahrgang. Nach amtlichen Quellen zusammengestellt* (Vienna: Druck und Verlag der K. K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1918), 229; 1001.
[1039] Josef Wolf Wirth, *Letter to his children*, 15.09.1915, CAHJP AU/259.3.
[1040] Josef Wolf Wirth, *Letter to his children*, 17.09.1915, CAHJP AU/259.3.
[1041] Josef Wolf Wirth, *Letter to his children*, 15.09.1915, CAHJP AU/259.3.
[1042] Josef Wolf Wirth, *Letter to his children*, 17.09.1915, CAHJP AU/259.3.

show the continuity of anti-Jewish rule in the town. The mistreatment by the Cossacks and by the new Austrian District Commander were described in the same paragraph.[1043]

This experience of continuity of misery and mistreatment by the authorities seemed to have been widespread throughout East Galicia. A report by the Ministry of the Interior noted that "following patriotic enthusiasm after the troops' entry, there is now a sobering-up and much hypocrisy."[1044] In Rohatyn, Jews were not allowed to leave the village any more, while in Burszatyn local commanders had taken all their livestock and in Bursztyn, they were no longer allowed to walk on the sidewalks.[1045] The Ministry of the Interior files are full of accounts on this, mainly based on petitions and complaints by individuals or local Jewish Community Boards.[1046] While Zionists represented this in the language of national belonging, suggesting a national response, for most Jews the severe day-to-day problems in the war-torn region were probably more important than any such larger considerations. This was also true for local Zionists. After the reconquest of Lwów, Max Geyer, the local party secretary, who had remained in the city during the Russian occupation, wrote two letters to the Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin, describing the situation there. While he mentioned poverty, starvation, and the financial troubles of the organization, he did not touch on the questions of 'Polish antisemitism', or the general reorganization of the region, like his comrades in the center did.[1047] There was an apparent disconnect between the 'big' political efforts of Zionist functionaries in the center and local activists, who were more concerned with the questions of daily life.[1048]

Whereas the expulsion of the Russian army from Galicia had aroused many hopes amongst the Jewish population, and especially amongst Zionists, it seemed increasingly clear that none of them – neither a reorganization of the crownland along national lines nor an improvement of local material conditions – would be fulfilled.[1049] While the oppression of the Jews by the Russian army and its collaborators seemed to have ended (although not really, as Zionists insisted), the authorities were incapable of providing basic goods to the population and the overall situation increasingly deteriorated. The all-dominating question was food provision. As

[1043] Josef Wolf Wirth, *Letter to his children*, 15.09.1915, CAHJP AU/259.3.
[1044] Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Stimmung in Galizien"*, 21.12.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres, MdI Präsidium A 2116.
[1045] Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report on East Galicia*, 04.09.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2116.
[1046] See especially: ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2116; A 2117.
[1047] Max Geyer, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 08.07.1915, CZA, Z3/733; Max Geyer, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 29.07.1915, CZA, Z3/733. The correspondence ended abruptly since he was drafted to the army in early August 1915.
[1048] Those local efforts are be the focus of Chapters 2 and 3.
[1049] Schuster, "Between all fronts," 7.

supplies became ever scarcer, the government increasingly restricted the goods available to the public. It repeatedly ordered the rations of bread, sugar, and meat to be reduced,[1050] although locally many goods were sometimes completely unavailable in any case.[1051] It also imposed severe restrictions on trade between Galicia and the occupied territories. Especially in the border regions between Galicia and the MGG Lublin, as Salomon Lieben wrote in a letter, this ruined many Jewish merchants, led to supply shortages, and "to such hardships, such misery, and such an increase in diseases".[1052] In his report on the local situation in Lwów, Max Geyer concluded: "The destitution is indescribable. Inflation and diseases destroy even the last things that could somehow give stability."[1053] For many in East Galicia, Austrian rule was evidently not the liberation for which they had hoped. In its regular report on the public mood in the region in late 1916 the Army Command in Przemyśl concluded in the section on Jews: "Amongst the population (even amongst the higher classes) one can often hear that it is irrelevant who rules. The most important thing is that one can live well and cheaply, which had been the case under the Russians."[1054]

It was the lack of essential goods that triggered alienation from the state and sectarian infighting.[1055] In this struggle over resources, the Jews were undoubtedly the weakest group. Moritz Stern from Gorlice (Gorlits), southeast of Cracow, wrote, for instance, that government-promised aid did not arrive and that locally Jews only received a fraction of available goods.[1056] Local authorities regularly discriminated against the Jewish population when it came to the distribution of vital foodstuffs and other supplies[1057] and Polish nationalists generally favored 'Polish' businesses, worsening the economic crisis for many Jews in the region.[1058] The central

---

[1050] On bread: *Landes-Gesetz- und Verordnungsblatt für das Königreich Galizien und Lodomerien samt dem Großherzogthume Krakau*, 31.03.1915; 01.06.1916. On sugar: *Landes-Gesetz- und Verordnungsblatt für das Königreich Galizien und Lodomerien samt dem Großherzogthume Krakau*, 11.03.1916. On meat: *Landes-Gesetz- und Verordnungsblatt für das Königreich Galizien und Lodomerien samt dem Großherzogthume Krakau*, 15.05.1915; 24.07.1916. All in: BSB, 4 Austr. 213 k-1916/18

[1051] Hans Loewenfeld-Rus, *Die Regelung der Volksernährung im Kriege* (Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1926).

[1052] Salomon Lieben, *Letter to Armand Kaminka*, undated (probably late 1915 or early 1916), CZA, 147/17-18.

[1053] Max Geyer, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 29.07.1915, CZA, Z3/733.

[1054] Evidenzbureau des Generalstabes to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Politischer Stimmungsbericht des Militärkommandos Przemysl*, 25.11./05.12.1916, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2064.

[1055] Philipp Ther, "War versus Peace: Interethnic Relations in Lviv during the First Half of the Twentieth Century," in *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture*, ed. John Czaplicka (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 258.

[1056] Moritz Stern, *Letter to Israelitische Allianz zu Wien*, 04.10.1915, RGVA-OA, f675k op1 d80.

[1057] See for example: Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report on the Situation in Galicia*, 04.09.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2116. See also the confiscated letters to *Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv*: K. u. k. 2. Armeekommando, Quartierabteilung to k. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Report: "'Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv': Unzulässige Propaganda"*, 07.08.1916, ÖStA KA, KM KÜA Akten 156, File No. 83871.

[1058] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, August 1918, YIVO, Vilna Collection 000000056. However, there was no full-scale politically organized boycott of Jewish businesses as in some parts of formerly Russian Poland.

authorities gave local authorities, who discriminated against Jewish citizens, a pass. When Jews sent complaints and petitions to the Ministry of the Interior, the bureaucrats there usually asked local Galician authorities to comment on the allegations. They, unsurprisingly, vigorously refuted the accusations and the Ministry accepted their positions.[1059]

To this came rumors that Jewish merchants were buying up and hoarding foodstuff. This accusation was also raised in the higher echelons of the Habsburg administration, in the Ministry of the Interior, not necessarily suggesting the central state's consent to anti-Jewish incitement, but at least that it tolerated it.[1060] Others went even further: a report submitted by the Army's High Command to the Ministry of the Interior argued that "for the sake of the East Galician population" it would be necessary to take away the Jews' "control over trade" and place it in "other hands."[1061] Over the course of the war, as Austria had largely secured its hold over the reconquered territories, it became increasingly clear to Zionists that the appeal to the central imperial authorities was a futile act. Nothing came out of it. For now, they did not have many options other than to continue this strategy, but subsequent events would eventually lead them to re-orientate themselves and their strategies.

Fighters for Human Rights and National Freedom

From late 1916/early 1917 onwards, the supply situation in the Empire deteriorated even more. Both central and local authorities were increasingly incapable of providing the necessary goods for the survival of the population.[1062] This brought with it a rise in food riots and a deterioration of the security situation. Historians have shown how the fact that the Empire was incapable of providing either food or security to its citizens was one of the main reasons for the alienation of formerly loyal subjects from the Empire and for its disintegration in 1918.[1063] There is some debate over the extent to which those local revolts were implicitly or explicitly anti-Jewish and

[1059] For example: Statthalterei Galizien to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Collected File: "Verhalten der Polen in Galizien gegenüber der dortigen jüdischen Bevölkerung; anonyme Anzeige"*, 04.02.1916, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2117.
[1060] Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Stimmung in Galizien"*, 21.12.1915, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2116.
[1061] K. u. k. Armee-Oberkommando to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Denkschrift über die Verhältnisse in Lemberg während der russischen Invasion*, 25./29.02.1916, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2117.
[1062] Peter Heumos, "'Kartoffeln her oder es gibt eine Revolution': Hungerkrawalle, Streiks und Masenproteste in den böhmischen Ländern, 1914–1918," in *Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Beziehungen zwischen Tschechen, Slowaken und Deutschen*, ed. Hans Mommsen et. al. (Essen: Klartext, 2001), 255–86; Kučera, *Rationed Life.* One of the most symptomatic aspects in this regard is that the regular reports on the mood of the population by authorities in all corners of the Empire then almost exclusively concentrated on the availability and prices of food, as this was the most important factor that determined the stance of the population.
[1063] Judson, *Habsburg Empire*, 399–405; 411–3.

how far they had a political character. This mirrors to a certain extent debates over the hunger-riots and political protests and whether there is a dividing line between the phenomena, which I believe is not the case.[1064] What is of particular interest here are not categories but the dynamic over time, that is, how the 'character' of the protests changed, how political, and especially nationalist, movements came to play a part in them, how the state's responses changed, how this forced Jews in general and Zionist activists in particular to rethink and adapt their relation to the state.

The local case of Cracow is very interesting in this regard, not least since the revival of Zionist activities in the city coincided with hunger-revolts, and nationalist, and anti-Jewish violence. As everywhere else, the Zionist organization had been severely affected by drafts to the army and only by late 1915 could the remaining local activists revive some of their political work and reconnect with other groups.[1065] In December 1916, Fischel Waschitz described the local situation as characterized by "lethargy" and that little work was being done.[1066] But in March 1917, after a visit by Arthur Hantke, local activists Samuel Wahrhaftig and Shimon Feldblum could already report that party activities had resumed, a social center had been established, and a new Local Committee had been constituted.[1067] A few months later, Poale Zion, which, according to the secret police, had "not shown any activities since the outbreak of the war, since all its functionaries had been drafted for military service,"[1068] also began to revive its work.[1069] In July 1917, the Poale-Zionist Yiddish-language *Der Yudisher Arbeyter* (The Jewish Worker) reappeared,[1070] and the Mizrahi's Hebrew-language *HaMitspeh* was published regularly from September 1917 again.[1071]

From February 1917 onwards, protests and riots over the lack of food and other goods in the city began to erupt and continuously escalated.[1072] After learning that there was neither bread nor potatoes nor milk after standing in line for hours on 24 February, 500 women and children "of the poorest section of the working class" protested in front of the municipal building. The following day, 600 who had been waiting for bread since 3 o'clock in the morning

---

[1064] Rudolf Kučera has shown very well how this juxtaposition reiterates the contemporary representation of such events and how this distinction actually cannot be supported. See: Kučera, *Rationed Life,* 133–5.
[1065] Unknown Writer, *Letter to Shimon Feldblum in Cracow*, 03.12.1915, CZA, L6/300.
[1066] Fischel Waschitz, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 25.12.1916, CZA, Z3/815.
[1067] Samuel Wahrhaftig, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 16.03.1917, CZA, Z3/815; Shimon Feldblum, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 13.03.1917, CZA, Z3/815.
[1068] Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *File: "Jüdisch sozialistische Arbeiterorganisation 'Poale Sion', Bureau im Haag; Agitation"*, 15.07.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2069.
[1069] Jüdisch-sozialistische Arbeiter-Partei Poale Zion in Oesterreich, *Internal Newsletter: "Memorandum Nr. 3"*, May 1917, ILPA, 4-8-1903-11-1.
[1070] *Der Yudisher Arbeyter*, July 1917.
[1071] *HaMitspeh*, 14.09.1917.
[1072] This assessment is based on authorities' reports. Censorship prevented both local and countrywide press (Jewish or otherwise) to report on the incidents.

began rioting and shouting angry slogans.[1073] Over the following months, a demonstration over the lack of potatoes and rutabaga could only be pacified by promises of soon-to-arrive deliveries,[1074] whereas two demonstrations of several hundred women over the lack of coal escalated into looting and had to be broken up by the police.[1075] By May, the number of protesters and looters had grown to 1,000 and the police needed to resort to increasing violence to disperse the crowds.[1076] In January 1918, well over 3,000 women were out in the streets in Cracow,[1077] and the local governor reported to Vienna that the situation became "threatening."[1078] The looting was increasingly directed against the predominantly Jewish neighborhood of Kazimierz where heavy riots took place in May 1917,[1079] and the Jewish district increasingly came to be the target and the endpoint of hunger-demonstrations.[1080]

The escalation of violence and the authorities' loss of control reached a turning point in April 1918.[1081] On 16 April a conflict over grain prices erupted in the local market, which led to an outburst of hitherto unseen levels of violence.[1082] A group of women, youngsters, and soldiers rioted in the streets and specifically targeted Jewish citizens and businesses. While the local police chief's report initially claimed that the rioters had been dispersed by police forces, the local Military Command's report stated that in fact the local police as well as the Military

---

[1073] K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Strassendemonstration wegen Brot- und Kartoffelmangel"*, 26.02.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2117.
[1074] K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Straßendemonstration Kartoffelmangel und Wrauke-Mangel"*, 26.03.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2117.
[1075] K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Strassendemonstration wegen Kohlenmangels"*, 26.03.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2117; K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Kohlenunruhen wegen Mangels an Brennstoffen"*, 28.03.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2117.
[1076] K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Strassendemonstration wegen Lebensmittelmangels"*, 08.05.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2117.
[1077] K. k. Pol. Dir. Krakau, *Tages-Rapport "Hunger-Demonstration"*, 16.01.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.
[1078] K. k. Statthalterei Krakau, *Telegram to k. u. k. Militärkanzlei Wien*, 17.01.1918, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM 28-2/6 1918.
[1079] K k. Ministerium der Justiz to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Krakau; Ausschreitungen wegen Lebensmittelmangels"*, 06.06.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2117.
[1080] K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Hunger- und Strassendemonstration"*, 06.12.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2117.
[1081] Most scholarly accounts concentrated on the dynamic of the anti-Jewish violence itself, and subsequently on its 'classification' (as a pogrom, hunger riot, nationalist violence, etc.), thereby reiterating the debates of the time. See: Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence*, 97–100; Jan Małecki, "Zamieszki w Krakowie w kwietniu 1918 r. Pogrom czy rozruchy głodowe?," *Jews in Poland*, Vol. 1, ed. Andrzej K. Paluch (Cracow: Jagellonian University, 1992), 245–57; Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten*, 425–6. I am a lot more interested in Jewish, especially Zionist, responses to this violence.
[1082] K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Tagesreport: Strassenexzesse*, 16.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118; C. k. Dyrekcyi Policyi w Krakowie, *Report to the Ministry of Interior (draft)*, April 1918, ANK, 247/118; C. k. Dyrekcyi Policyi w Krakowie, *Report to Kommando der k. u. k. Militärpolizeiwachabteilung in Krakau*, 26.04.1918, ANK, 247/118.

Police stood idly by and did not intervene against the anti-Jewish riots.[1083] After a nightly curfew, groups of young people and soldiers, both regular soldiers and members of the Polish Legion, gathered in the streets again on the following day, plundered Jewish businesses and violently attacked Jewish citizens.[1084] On 17 April the mob stopped tramways and dragged commuters they recognized as Jews due to their traditional clothing to the streets and beat them up.[1085] Pessachja Meller, 52 years old, originally from Stryj (Stryi) who had come to Cracow to see off his son who had been drafted to the army, was murdered.[1086] The local Jewish population was outraged and some activists began organizing self-defense. A quickly drafted and distributed handwritten leaflet called on Jews to gather in front of the Temple-Synagogue, since "the only [chance for] rescue is that all Jews stand together in Podbrzezie 25. Quick! Quick!"[1087] The police reported on 19 April that "Today, around midday, over 100 young Jews gathered in the old Jewish temple in Szerkoa-street, armed with sticks, iron rods, etc."[1088] The defense seemed to have been organized jointly by activists of the Zionists, Poale Zion, and Poale Zion's youth group.[1089] Besides those more militant activists, several thousand Jews gathered in the streets of Kazimierz trying to protect their neighborhood against the raging mob.[1090] The police immediately cracked down on both the group of youths and the large gathering.[1091]

[1083] K u. k. Militärkommando Krakau to K. u. k. Kriegsministerium Wien (Abt. 5), *Report on the Unrest in Cracow*, 17.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118; Prezydyum c. k. Namiestnictwa Lwów, *Report to Kierownik c. k. Dyrekcyi Policyi w Krakowie*, 24.07.1918, ANK, 247/117/13; Kommando der K. u. k. Militärpolizeiwachabteilung in Krakau to Präsidium der k. k. Polizeidirektion Krakau, *Report: "Passives Verhalten der Mannschaft anlässlich der Exzesse im April 1918"*, 04.05.1918, ANK, 247/118; K. u. k. Militäranwalt des K. u. k. Militärkommandanten in Krakau, *Letter to K. k. Polizeidirektion in Krakau*, 29.04.1918, ANK, 247/118. The role of the Military Police is of special interest, since it was part of the imperial army and not the local police force. Many representations of the event juxtaposed the behavior of the 'bad' local Police with that of the 'good' imperial army. A closer look makes clear that it was a general failure of the state and not only the local authorities.

[1084] K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Tagesreport: Strassenexzesse*, 17.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118; C. k. Dyrekcyi Policyi w Krakowie, *Protokół Dr. Zygmunt Ehrenpreis*, 26.04.1918, ANK, 247/118. For the damages to property and theft, see also: ANK, 218/0/3.3/184

[1085] K. k. Gendarmariekommandant für Galizien und die Bukovina to K. k. Ministerium für Landesverteidigung, *Report on the events in Cracow*, 21.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.

[1086] K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Tagesreport: Strassenexzesse*, 17.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.

[1087] Unknown Author, *Leaflet "Yud'n!"*, April 1918, ANK, 247/118. Podbrzezie 25, the square in front of the Temple Synagogue, is on the northwestern end of Kazimierz, very close to the non-Jewish parts of the town, from where the rioters probably came.

[1088] K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Tagesreport: Gemeinderatssitzung, jüdische Exszesse*, 17.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.

[1089] C. k. Dyrekcyi Policyi w Krakowie, *Report*, 19.04.1918, ANK, 247/118; *Folksblat* (Łódź), 23.04.1918.

[1090] K. u. k. Militär-Polizei-Wachabteilung in Krakau to K. u. k. Abteilungskommando, *Bericht über die Exzesse am 19. April 1918*, 19.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.

[1091] Ibid. and K. k. Polizei-Direktor in Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Tagesreport: Gemeinderatssitzung, jüdische Exzesse*, 17.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.

The importance of the events in Cracow cannot be underestimated. It was not merely one violent incident amongst many, but for many activists, it was a turning point, as they experienced firsthand that none of the authorities, whether central nor local, were willing to protect them and that their only response could be militant self-organization and self-defense.[1092] Zionists and Poale Zionists played the key role in the organization of self-defense. An unnamed activist reported:

"Of course, amongst the Jews the outrage is great. Even though the 'authoritative' representatives of the Jews [referring to the Kahal; JR] wanted to preserve their positions and therefore did not always do their part, all of Jewry has gathered together under the active leadership of national-Jewish elements to organize solidarity and resistance."[1093]

Activists now decided that it would be necessary to establish permanent self-defense structures.[1094] They were tested just a few days after the initial excesses. On 24 April, a local leader – most likely Fischel Waschitz – wrote: "The self-defense [illegible], which is organized under Zionist and Poale-Zionist leadership works well. This time, this pack was not able to come to the Jewish quarter, to Kazimierz – some tried though. They received a terrible beating."[1095] For those activists, self-defense was not only a matter of urgency but strongly connected with the struggle for Jewish honor and national pride. An unsigned leaflet, which was distributed at the funeral procession for Pessachja Meller, proclaimed:

"In an inhuman way, old Jews and defenseless women had been beaten. Innocent blood has been spilled. Jews! This was done by the brutalized [*tservilderter*] mob amongst which there were also many bourgeois and so-called intelligent elements, even Polish defenders of the fatherland, legionaries. Jews! Whoever holds our honor sacred shall join the ranks of the fighters for human rights and our national freedom!" [1096]

[1092] Unknown Author, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, April 1918, CZA, L6/342. Internally, the military authorities themselves realized this problem, stating that the police had given the rioters a free pass "can only be explained if we assume that the policemen sympathize with the rioters or that they have received an order [to stand down] from a third, unknown, source." K. u. k. Militärkommando Krakau, *Report: Verhalten der k. u. k. MilPolizeiwachmannschaften während der Demonstrationen und Exzesse*, 19.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.
[1093] Unknown Author, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, April 1918, CZA, L6/342.
[1094] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, 08.05.1918, CZA, Z3/1169.
[1095] Fischel Waschitz [?], *Letter to Victor Jacobsohn*, 24.04.1918, CZA, Z3/815. The letter's signature is not clearly readable, but it could mean 'Waschitz' and both the handwriting and the paper itself are similar to that of Waschitz's other letters. It also makes sense to assume that Waschitz, who organized the Jewish Rifle Corps in 1914, played a role in the Jewish militia in Lwów in November 1918, and was in Cracow at the time would be an organizer of the self-defense group.
[1096] Anonymous, *Leaflet: "Yuden! Birger!"*, April 1918, ANK, 247/118. The original leaflet is not undersigned, the German Zionist *Jüdische Rundschau*, 23.04.1918 that reprinted a part of it claimed that it had been distributed by Poale Zion (which is probably true).

After the funeral procession, people gathered in the house of the local Jewish Merchants' Association. According to the report in *HaMitspeh*, the local dignitaries "expressed their gratitude to the Zionists, whose actions in the past few days have brought great relief to the community."[1097]

In the capital, Robert Stricker, in his capacity as a member of the Viennese Jewish Community Board, insisted that the largest and most powerful Jewish community would stand up for its brethren in West Galicia.[1098] Both Kultusgemeinde President Alfred Stern and a delegation of the Zionist Organization met with the Minister of the Interior and demanded more security for the Jews.[1099] In the following weeks, a struggle erupted over the interpretation of the events. Most newspapers, including the official *Gazeta Lwówska* (Lwów Gazette), insisted that what had happened was nothing more than a deplorable food-riot, ignoring or refuting an antisemitic character of the violence and claiming that Pessachja Meller had died of a preexisting heart-failure rather than from the violence.[1100] For the various Jewish parties, discussions revolved mainly around who was to blame and to whom one could look for security in the future. In a striking difference to Zionist accounts, both Liberals and Orthodox refrained from blaming Polish nationalism and mainly held the local police force responsible, while celebrating the military and the imperial authorities for stepping in, reiterating a very traditional pattern of argument.[1101] Zionist papers, whose initial reports had been strictly censored,[1102] however, strongly criticized those accounts and saw them as proof that the traditional leaders of Austrian Jewry were so out of touch with reality that it seemed almost treacherous.[1103] They highlighted both elements, the responsibility of 'the Poles' and of the authorities – both local and central – and their failure in protecting the Jews. They concluded that only self-organized self-defense could protect the people.[1104] While their reactions were restricted by censorship, they could be more straightforward outside of the country. In Zurich, Jakob Klatzkin, a Zionist

---

[1097] *HaMitspeh*, 25.04.1918.
[1098] Vorstand der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Protokoll der Plenums-Sitzung vom 24. April 1918*, CAHJP, A-W/71.16.
[1099] Vorstand der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Audienz des Präsidenten Dr. Alfred Stern bei Sr. Exzellenz dem Minister des Inneren Grafen Toggenburg in Angelegenheit der Krakauer Exzesse (Beilage zum Plenarprotokoll vom 2. Mai 1918)*, CAHJP, A-W/71.16; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 26.04.1918. The minister, Friedrich von Toggenburg promised that all necessary measures had already been implemented.
[1100] *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 26.04.1918; *Gazeta Lwówska*, 26.04.1918; *Reichspost*, 24.04.1918.
[1101] *Dr. Bloch's Österreichische Wochenschrift*, 26.04.1918; *Jüdische Korrespondenz*, 25.04.1918. See also Alfred Stern's representation of events to the Minister of Interior: Vorstand der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Audienz des Präsidenten Dr. Alfred Stern bei Sr. Exzellenz dem Minister des Inneren Grafen Toggenburg in Angelegenheit der Krakauer Exzesse (Beilage zum Plenarprotokoll vom 2. Mai 1918)*, CAHJP, A-W/71.16.
[1102] *Der Yudisher Arbeyter*, 01.05.1918; *Selbstwehr*, 26.04.1918.
[1103] See especially the accounts in *HaMitspeh*, 03.05.1918; *Jüdische Volksstimme*, 03.05.1918; *Selbstwehr*, 03.05.1918.
[1104] *Der Yudisher Arbeyter*, 15.05.1918; *Jüdische Volksstimme*, 03.05.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 03.05.1918; *Selbstwehr*, 03.05.1918. In Vienna, Zionists began collecting donations for the self-defense groups in Cracow.

leader from Russian Poland, then living in Switzerland, gave a speech to the meeting of the Action Committee of Eastern Jewish Organizations on 5 May, parts of which were later reprinted in the Austrian Zionist press.[1105] He was convinced that the pogrom had been planned for a long time by the Poles and stated:

> "The Poles are not alone in their responsibility for the excesses. The local authorities are jointly responsible, since when the Jews asked them to intervene against the plunderers, they gave the clever response in the traditional Russian style: 'We do not have an order to do this!" The central authorities are jointly responsible since they tolerated and sometimes encouraged the years-long anti-Jewish incitement."[1106]

The international newsletter of the World Union of Poale Zion struck a similar tone and described the events as "a pogrom styled after Kishinev"[1107] and stated that "[t]he Austrian government and the authorities of Galicia are aware of their joint responsibility for the current situation in Galicia."[1108] Both, the reference to Russian pogroms, which in the traditional narrative had been orchestrated by the Russian imperial regime,[1109] and the insistence on holding the Austrian imperial government responsible were key to the Zionist interpretation of events and marked a critical turning point in their attitude towards the Empire and in their security strategies.

Poale Zion had titled its above-cited article "The permanent pogrom in Galicia."[1110] Indeed, the situation in the region increasingly deteriorated and Jews could rely less and less on the authorities for their protection. In Wieliczka, just a few kilometers south of Cracow, violence erupted exactly a month after the events in Cracow. Jews were dragged out to the streets and beaten, their houses and the synagogues were severely damaged and partially plundered. As the gendarmerie stood idly by, the president of the Jewish community called for the army to intervene, which eventually ended the riots.[1111] The state increasingly lost control over the situation. Even the local authorities – whose responsibility it was to maintain order – had to

---

[1105] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 31.05.1918; *Selbstwehr*, 31.05.1918.
[1106] Jakob Klatzkin, *Die Judenverfolgungen in Galizien und Rumänien* (Zurich: Verlag der Loge Al Hamischmar, 1918), 7–8.
[1107] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, 08.05.1918, CZA, Z3/1169.
[1108] Ibid.
[1109] Steven J. Zipperstein, *Pogrom: Kishinev and the Tilt of History* (New York, London: Liveright, 2018).
[1110] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, 08.05.1918, CZA, Z3/1169.
[1111] Rosenzweig, Vorsteher der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wieliczka, *Telegram to the Minister of Interior*, 19.05.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118; K. k. Statthalter in Lemberg to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: Judenfeindliche Exzesse in Wieliczka*, 20./24.05.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118. See also the report in *HaMitspeh*, 23.05.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 24.05.1918; *Oesterreichische Wochenschrift*, 24.05.1918.

admit their failure in reports to Vienna.[1112] By late summer/early fall 1918, the government no longer even attempted to step in against anti-Jewish incitement and violence. In early September, the governor in Lwów shut down the legal prosecution of two soldiers who had publicly incited riots against Jews earlier in July, since their prosecution "would make it more difficult to retain public order."[1113] In Cracow, where in April a certain Josefine Spero had spread rumors that Jews were hoarding foodstuffs and had murdered a priest and a Christian girl calling for revenge against the Jews, the local prosecutor wanted to indict her, but the Ministry of Justice intervened and prevented a trial, since this "would not be in the interest of public order."[1114] The authorities proved incapable or unwilling to protect Jewish citizens and property against the escalating violence. The Army Command in Przemyśl reported that since the authorities did not do enough to prevent the pogroms (the report even used this very charged term), Jews throughout Galicia were forced to organize self-defense. "The Hunger has led to attacks on grocery stores and in connection with that to pogroms against Jews. […] The authorities did not always intervene against the pogroms with the necessary determination […] which in numerous cases has led to self-help by armed Jews."[1115] This aspect of self-defense came to be increasingly important in Zionist security strategies. It was part of a general tactical re-orientation of the movement.

The number of appeals to the imperial authorities decreased significantly and the arguments made no longer stressed the particular loyalty of the Jews and their suffering 'for Austria' but rather their disappointment and feelings of betrayal, which were also reflected in official state documents.[1116] They based their arguments for Jewish national rights now precisely on the failure of the central state.[1117] What was clear, however, was that the traditional strategy of aligning with central authority, to appeal for its protection and for it to grant national

[1112] See for example: Generalstabsleitung des k. u. k. Militärkommandos Krakau to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Stimmungsbericht des Militärkommandos Przemysl*, 02./17.07.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2119; K. u. k. Militärkommando Przemysl to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Situationsbericht des Militärkommandos Krakau*, 12./30.09.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2119.
[1113] Statthalter in Lemberg to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *P. Sroka Michael, Landsturm-Sappeur, Lamut Franz in Koszyce, Aufreizung zu Feindseligkeiten gegen die Juden*, 08./14.09.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2119.
[1114] K. k. Justizministerium to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren *Spero Josefa in Krakau-Podgorze, Aufreizung zu Feindseligkeiten gegen die Juden*, 24./28.10.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2119.
[1115] K. u. k. Armeeoberkommando to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Stimmungsbericht des Militärkommandos in Przemysl*, 18.06./04.07.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.
[1116] Ministerium des Inneren, Staatspolizeiliches Bureau, *Copy of a Letter to the Minister of Interior*, 28.06.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.
[1117] For example: *Der Yudisher Arbeyter*, 01.09.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 14.10.1918; *Selbstwehr*, 05.07.1918; 09.08.1918; *Tagblat*, 19.08.1918.

rights became increasingly futile. In this context, Zionists had to search for new strategies, and new potential allies.

Despite this experience of betrayal by the imperial state, Zionists continued, almost until its very end, to argue for its preservation.[1118] They still took the imperial framework as their reference point for the re-organization of society they sought. In the discussion in the Reichsrat in October 1918, Benno Straucher, representative of the electoral district Bukovina I, and of "the Jewish nation in Austria"[1119], demanded the recognition of this Jewish nation in the empire, especially at this very time, when apparently national self-determination came to be the new societal norm. He closed with an appeal for peace and for Austria's unity: "We Jews desire the quickest end to this horrendous human slaughter, this terrible bloodletting, we want peace for humanity, for the Jewish people and for the Austrian state whose continuation as a stronghold for the unification of free peoples we ardently desire."[1120] Of course, these proclamations for a large part had the character of ritual. The most high-profile ritual display of imperial loyalty in this regard was from the newly appointed Viennese chief rabbi Zvi Perez Chajes'[1121] reception by Emperor Karl. He not only praised the emperor and pledged the Jews' unshakeable loyalty to him, but he also reiterated that the Jewish nation's future could only be secured if the central state would grant it national autonomy – especially in Galicia – and if the empire would also endorse and support Jewish claims for Palestine.[1122] This not only provoked angry protests amongst many Viennese Jews,[1123] but many activists outside the capital increasingly believed that it would be necessary to distance the movement from the empire and its authorities. They demanded that the organization re-orient itself towards the various nationalist movements who they expected to run the show in the future.[1124] By October 1918, it was clear to most Zionists that they had to prepare for a new order in which they had to relate the Jewish-national demands

[1118] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 120; 127.
[1119] Benno Straucher, "Rede Abgeordneter Benno Straucher, Haus der Abgeordneten – 87. Sitzung der XXII. Session am 4. Oktober 1918," in *Stenographisch Protokolle Haus der Abgeordneten. XXII. Session* (Vienna: 1920), 4434.
[1120] Ibid.
[1121] Zvi Perez Chajes was a Zionist and his appointment changed the dynamics in Vienna quite a lot. See also Chapter 6.
[1122] Unknown Author, *Report on the Visit by Zvi Perez Chajes to the Emperor*, 02.10.1918, CZA, L6/358; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 04.10.1918; 11.10.1918.
[1123] Several letters and protest resolutions were sent to the Community Board, protesting against Chajes' allegedly unauthorized misrepresentation of the Austrian Jews' political interests, national self-identifications, and political loyalties. Some of the protest letters can be found here: CAHJP, A-W/725.4.
[1124] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 17.10.1918, CZA, Z3/214; Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Robert* [Weltsch?], 08.10.1918, CZA, Z3/214.

to new nation states rather than to the old Empire.[1125] The most important organizational structure that came out of this transition, the Jewish National Councils, and their day-to day work will be the subject of Chapter 5. Here I focus on how Zionists positioned themselves in relation to those new actors on the ground that increasingly succeeded imperial power, the nationalists.

The National and the Local

In many respects, Zionists in the Habsburg Empire felt a strong kinship with other nationalist movements, a kinship that was active, self-conscious and openly proclaimed. Take for example Nathan Gelber who in 1916 when the Germans had declared Polish 'independence', wrote in a diary-like entry, recalling the Polish-Jewish heroes of the uprisings in 1831, 1848, and 1863:

"Together we fight in the trenches; Jewish blood flowed on the battlefields of Russian-Poland as well in the struggle for freedom […] Freedom was the core of your [Polish] people's religion. Now it […] is there and for the Jews as well. Not as fake/masked [*verkappte*] Poles of Mosaic faith but as free Jews, our brothers shall be citizens of the new Polish realm."[1126]

They were usually quick to voice support for their respective causes, combining those statements with a demand that Jewish national rights should be guaranteed in their future states. There were indeed strong differences and activists formulated their proclamations according to local situations and what they believed those circumstances required. Taking the case of Polish and Ukrainian nationalism – the most important movements when it came to the future of Galician Jewry – a clear centralized strategy is not discernable, but rather one may observe expressions of support for either side that reflected the strategic considerations of various actors.[1127] After the separate peace between the Central Powers and Ukraine in Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, for example, Zionists of the Habsburg Empire sent a message of praise to the new rulers in Kiev:

"The nationally organized Jews of Austria send their warmest greetings of peace to the Ukrainian People's Republic and wishes the new state of freedom good fortunes. The great Ukrainian people has made the most honorable use of its hard-fought freedom by guaranteeing the minority peoples in its midst full national rights and

[1125] For example: Wiener Zionistisches Büro, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 11.10.1918, CZA, Z3/214; Leo Hermann, *Letter to Max Brod*, 21.10.1918, CZA, Z3/783.
[1126] Nathan Gelber, *Tagebuchreflexionen*, 07.11.1916, CAHJP, P/83/A/8.
[1127] Alexander Prusin argues that Jewish political actors – including the Zionists – mainly supported the imperial cause in East Galicia and sided with Ukrainian nationalists against Polish ambitions in the region. I cannot read such a kind of coherent strategy in the sources. Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 71–3.

due representation in the people's government. […] By doing so, the Ukrainian People's Republic has secured for itself the sympathies of all nationally conscious Jews and especially the gratitude of nationally organized Jewry in Austria […]"[1128]

This was not a straightforward position, however. The German Foreign Office asked the Zionist leadership to refrain from articulating this position too loudly, to which the center in Berlin adhered.[1129] The main problem was that the treaty contained the secession of the Chełm (Cholm) territory, then a part of MGG Lublin, to Ukraine, a region that Polish nationalists considered to be an integral part of Poland. This initiated a wave of protests by Polish nationalists in occupied Poland and Galicia.[1130] In many cases these protests targeted not only Austrian and German rule but also the Jews, as was for instance reported from Strzyżów, where Jakub Tenzer witnessed a Polish-nationalist rally and quoted its speaker as saying "Our enemies are not only the Austrians and the Germans but also the perfidious and dangerous Jews."[1131] The crowd followed this call, destroyed symbols of imperial reign and attacked Jewish homes.[1132] All across Galicia, incitement was followed by attacks on Jews and their property as well as on symbols of German and Austrian authority.[1133] Polish nationalists – not all of them, for sure, but a significant and very noticeable part of the movement – created the image of an Austrian-German-Jewish amalgam, as one grand imagined foreign enemy of the Polish nation.[1134]

This did not mean, however, that Zionist activists generally rejected Polish nationalists' claims for independence and on the Chełm region. It was more complicated than that. Whereas activists outside the region expressed rather abstract sympathy for the Polish cause and mainly focused on condemning anti-Jewish violence in the wake of the protests,[1135] Zionists in Galicia itself often actively participated in the protests and endorsed Polish nationalist demands. In this, they did respond to an apparent mood amongst significant layers of the Jewish population in

[1128] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 12.02.1918, CZA, Z3/848. I could not find the original telegram to the Ukrainians. The letter includes the full text. A slightly altered version was also published in *Jüdische Zeitung*, 15.02.1918.
[1129] Auswärtiges Amt, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 18.02.1918, CZA, Z3/23. *Jüdische Rundschau* printed a short version of the telegram, naming it an "Austrian position" and generally seemed to have tried avoiding the issue. *Jüdische Rundschau*, 22.02.1918.
[1130] Thakur-Smolarek, *Erste Weltkrieg und die polnische Frage,* 523–32
[1131] Jakub Tenzer, *Report on the events in Strzyżów*, Bundespolizeidirektion Wien Archiv (BPDW-A), Staatspolizei Geschlossene Faszikel Kriegsakte Jg. 1917 Scha. St1.
[1132] Ibid.
[1133] For reports on Galicia, see: ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118; ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2078; AGAD, 305/323; ANK, 247/0/-/119; ANK, 247/0/-/120. For reports on events in the MGG Lublin, see: AGAD, 312/386; AGAD, 312/460.
[1134] Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 72. A typical mass-produced leaflet would for instance show the eagle with a kippah and a circumcised penis, holding, a bag of money and a menorah in his claws. Anonymous, *Leaflet "Orzeł: Państwa Austro-polskiego"*, February 1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118.
[1135] *Jüdische Volksstimme*, 14.03.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 22.02.1918.

Galicia itself. In a small town near Cracow, fifteen-year old Marta wrote in her diary about what she saw during her walk from the train station home:

"I had a chance to realize the current mood of the people [meaning the Poles; JR]. They are all so depressed and sad, at the same time so impressive in their genuine love for their fatherland and their lively spirit of revenge. And truly, a great injustice has been done to them […] Their pride is hurt, their honor had been trampled on, and their dreams had been discarded. I agree with them as they grieve from their heart."[1136]

In some places, Jewish public servants participated – after some initial hesitation – in the Polish demonstrations,[1137] and the Cracow-based *HaMitspeh* reported that Jews and Poles were protesting together "against the rupture of the Polish nation."[1138] The secret police even reported on negotiations between Michael Ringel, head of the Zionists in Lwów, and Polish nationalists, with Ringel allegedly offering the organization's full support for Polish national claims if Polish nationalists would support the Zionists' demands in return.[1139] The discrepancy between the center and local activists was most pronounced in the case of Poale Zion. Poale Zionist activists in Galicia and MGG Lublin participated in Polish-nationalist demonstrations.[1140] In Chrzanów, they distributed a leaflet "To the Polish people".

"A common thought lives in us! […] The voice of the blood which had been spilled by our equally oppressed nations calls us. May the laments and complaints that have hitherto obfuscated our relationship sink in the sea of oblivion. Now that the majestic sorrow of you, the Polish people, shines, the Jewish working class will stand at the ready at your side. We are joining in the protest! Long live the principle of national self-determination! Long live the free, united Polish Republic! Long live the Jewish people! Down with the oppressors and annexionists!"[1141]

Poale Zionists in the center were eager to distance themselves from this all-out endorsement of Polish nationalism.[1142] The Austrian party's internal bulletin of March 1918 contained a stern

[1136] Marta Müller, *Diary*, Entry of 17.02.1918, CAHJP, PL/1238.143.
[1137] Statthalter in Galizien to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Politische Manifestationen in Galizien am 18.2.1918"*, 04.10.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A2119.
[1138] *HaMitspeh*, 21.02.1918.
[1139] Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Sammelakt Galizien*, February 1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2118. I did not find any evidence from the side of the Zionists. Arguably, since this was a rather sensitive subject, they probably would not have written about it.
[1140] K. u. k. Kreiskommando Lublin, *Massnahmen für die Bewältigung von Ausschreitungen*, 17.02.1918, AGAD, 312/460; K. u. k Militärgeneralgouvernement Lublin, *Situationsbericht vom 22.2. Vormittags*, 22.02.1918, AGAD, 312/460.
[1141] Kierownictwo zach.-galic. Żydowskiej socyalistycznej part. rob. 'Poale-Syon', *Leaflet "Do narodu polskiego!"*, AAN, 1213/0/-/29. See also: K u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt to Ministerialkommission im k. u. k. Kriegsministerium, *File: "Ostgalizische jüdisch-sozialistische Arbeiterorganisation Poale Zion; Aufruf"*, 23.02.1918, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA 238 Akt Nr. 14190.
[1142] Jüdische Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei Poale Zion in Oesterreich, *Declaration*, February or March 1918, CZA, Z3/148.

reminder to all members that no local chapter of the party was allowed to publish any statement on a topic "of more than local relevance and sign it in the name of the party."[1143] It is evident that Zionist activists in the various places acted differently because they were subject to different pressures and had to maneuver in a rapidly changing political environment. The shift of local (that is, Galician) activists in particular towards an attempted alliance with local Polish-nationalist forces happened both despite and because of the violence. As horrible as the attacks on Jews were – and they would get worse in the following months – the political scene was increasingly dominated by nationalists with the imperial authority failing ever more. It was logical that in the search for new allies, Zionists would concentrate increasingly on local nationalists.

This new strategic orientation became central when the empire finally disintegrated in the fall of 1918 and nationalists proclaimed their independence in the region. To be sure, contrary to those nationalists' claims, they did not represent anything resembling a nation state at this point but were initially merely local political and military actors. It was these local-nationalist actors who initially played the central role in shaping local situations.

For the Jewish population of Galicia, the final disintegration of state power in the region and the supposed triumph of nationalism entailed a wave of pogroms and repression. This has been well-documented in scholarly literature and the purpose of this section is not a descriptive recollection of events.[1144] Instead, I look at local dynamics in four selected cases: Chrzanów and Cracow in West Galicia and Przemyśl and Lwów in East Galicia. I argue that the local dynamics rather than the 'big' developments were the decisive factors that shaped events. I am particularly focusing on the factor of Jewish armed self-organization and the question of local arrangements.

Contrary to many assessments of the events, the collapse of the Empire was not immediately followed by anti-Jewish violence. In fact, often the opposite was the case. In the power vacuum that followed the end of Habsburg rule, people's initial reaction was often to arrange local agreements based on mutual recognition that would guarantee safety and security for all the citizens of the respective locations. In all four cases, Zionists – either as political

[1143] Parteisekretariat der Jüdischen Sozialistischen Arbeiter Partei Poale Zion in Oesterreich, *Internal Bulletin No. 3*, March 1918, Kommunistische Partei Österreichs Zentrales Parteiarchiv (KPÖ-ZPA), PZ Collection 2898.
[1144] Amongst others: Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great War, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 101–30; William Hagen, "Murder in the East: German-Jewish Liberal Reactions to Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland and Other East European Lands, 1918–1920," *Central European History*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (2001): 1–30; Hagen, *Anti-Jewish Violence*, 87–172; Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 75–113; Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten*, 419–53.

parties or in the form of Jewish National Councils dominated by them – came to be the partners of the local Polish and (in the East) Ukrainian nationalists.

In early November, Zionists in Cracow created a militia, made up of discharged soldiers of the Habsburg army for the sake of defending the Jewish population of West Galicia and Cracow in particular. The unit was officially created as a result of negotiations between the Jewish National Council and the Polska Komisja Likwidacyjna (Polish Liquidation Commission) which the National Council had petitioned to intervene against the wave of violence in West Galicia.[1145] The Komisja Likwidacyjna recognized the Jewish National Council as the representative of the Jewish population.[1146] The militia was officially a unit of the Polish militia, under the supreme authority of the Polish Army Command in Cracow and would include non-Jewish Polish officers.[1147] The new authorities assigned them a school for accommodation and recruitment, provided arms and ammunition, while the Jewish population was supposed to pay "taxes" for the unit.[1148] On 8 November the Jewish Military Committee, the Jewish National Council, and the Polish Liquidation Commission jointly signed a proclamation to all Jewish soldiers in the city, "to whom the wellbeing of Jewry is dear", calling on them to enlist in the militia.[1149] Both general Zionists and Poale Zionists praised this development as a great show of Polish leaders' understanding of the Jews' concerns,[1150] a "first expression of the awakened consciousness of Polish leaders."[1151] The unit, eventually numbered 1,000 members and kept order in the Jewish quarter of Cracow. It was also dispatched to a number of towns to defend local communities against violence.[1152]

The initial situation was not entirely different in Chrzanów, where some Zionist activists – especially Poale Zion – had previously already established relations with Polish nationalists in the context of the Chełm-protests (see above). A joint report by the local committees of Poale

[1145] Zjednoczony Komitet Żydowski dla Ochrony Ludnosci Żydowskiej, Rady Narodowej Żydowskiej, *Letter to Polska Komisja Likwidacyjna*, 09.11.1918, ANK, 247/0/-/128; Polska Komisja Likwidacyjna, *Komunikat urzędowy o wykroczeniach zachodniej Galicji przeciwko żydom*, 20.11.1918, AAN, 36/0/3/44; *Nowy Dziennik*, 09.11.1918; 10.11.1918.
[1146] Unknown Author, *Report on the visit of the Jewish National Council to the Polish Liquidation Committee*, 08.11.1918, CZA, Z3/816; Otto Warburg, *Telegram to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 12.11.1918, CZA, Z3/178.
[1147] Unknown Author, *Report on the Reserve Unit of Jewish Soldiers and Officers in Cracow*, 07.11.1918, CAHJP, P83/G/262.
[1148] *Nowy Dziennik*, 12.11.1918.
[1149] Jewish Military Committee Cracow, *Jewish National Council, Polish Liquidation Committee, Proclamation to the Jewish Soldiers (translation)*, 08.11.1918, CAHJP, P83/G/256. See also: Pełnomocnik Głównego Urzędu Likwidacyjnego w Wiedniu, *Komunikat urzędowy o wykroczeniach zachodniej Galicji przeciwko żydom*, 20.11.1918, AAN, 36/0/3/44.
[1150] *Der Yudisher Arbeyter*, 08.11.1918; *Nowy Dziennik*, 08.11.1918.
[1151] Leon Chasanowitch, *Les Pogroms Anti-Juifs en Pologne et en Galicie en novembre et décembre 1918: Faits et documents* (Stockholm: Bokförlaget Judea, 1919), 22
[1152] Israel Cohen, *A Report on the Pogroms in Poland* (London: Central Office of the Zionist Organization, 1919), 10. On Cohen's journey through the region, see: Israel Cohen, "My Mission to Poland (1918–1919)," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1951): 149–72.

Zion, the Jewish Socialist Party, and the Zionists detailed that the Jews' self-armament followed an order by the head of the district to form a general citizens' militia, to which mainly Jews volunteered, apparently because of their greater fear of violence. On 2 and 3 November, this unit was armed – not sufficiently, but nonetheless equipped – by the local Polish authorities and fulfilled its task not only to safeguard the Jewish population but to maintain security in the town in general.[1153]

The situation in East Galicia, where Polish and Ukrainian nationalists clashed over control of the region was indeed more complicated. However, even here the initial situation was marked by cooperation, rather than by an immediate outbreak of violence. In Lwów, the most famous and best-studied case,[1154] the Jewish militia was established by Zionists (with Fishel Waschitz playing an important role) in coordination with their Ukrainian and Polish counterparts.[1155] The Jewish militia of approximately 300 men, mainly former soldiers and officers of the imperial army, protected the Jewish neighborhood during the struggle over the city in the first three weeks of November.[1156] On 10 November the militia even reached an agreement with the Polish command, confirming the neutrality of the Jewish militia in the Ukrainian-Polish fight and determining the geographical area that would be under its control.[1157] In essence, the same agreement was established with the Ukrainian forces in the city, eventually establishing a – highly instable – balance of forces.[1158]

Under the impression of developing conflicts between Ukrainian and Polish nationalist forces in the region, Zionists in Przemyśl set up a Jewish militia in early November. On 3 November 1918, a bilingual Polish-Ukrainian leaflet declared the militia's absolute neutrality in the fight over the city.[1159] On the following day, Ukrainian forces took most of city on the east bank of the river San (Sian), which created a military stalemate between the two sides, with

---

[1153] Poalej Syjon, Żydowska Partia Socjalistyczna, Partia Syjonistyczna, *Report on the Pogrom in Chrzanów*, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 18; also in: YIVO, RG 28 Box 2 Folder 53. See also: CZA, L6/110.
[1154] David Engel, "Lwów, 1918: The Transmutation of a Symbol and Its Legacy in the Holocaust," in *Contested Memories: Poles and Jews during the Holocaust and Its Aftermath*, ed. Joshua D. Zimmerman (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 32–46; Fink, *Defending the Rights*, 101–30; William Hagen, "The Moral Economy of Popular Violence: The Pogrom in Lwów, November 1918," in *Antisemitism and Its Opponents in Modern Poland*, ed. Robert Blobaum (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 124–47; Mick, *Lemberg*, 137–208; Svyatoslav Pacholikov, "Zwischen Einbeziehung und Ausgrenzung. Die Juden in Lemberg, 1918–1919," in *Vertraut und fremd zugleich: Jüdisch-christliche Nachbarschaften in Warschau-Lengenau-Lemberg*, ed. Alexandra Binnenkade et. al (Cologne: Böhlau, 2009), 155–216; Jerzy Tomaszewski, "Lwów-Listopad 1918. Niezwykle losy pewnego dokumentu," *Dzieje Najnowsze*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (1993): 164–73.
[1155] Fishel Waschitz, *Milicja Żydowska we Lwowie*, undated (probably late 1918), CAHJP, PL/164.
[1156] Philipp (Fishel) Waschitz, *Der polnisch-ukrainische Konflikt und die Juden*, 12.02.1919, CAHJP, PL/164.
[1157] Bronisław Łapiński, Isidor Fuchs, Reiss, Alexandrowicz, *Agreement between the Jewish Militia and the Polish Army*, 10.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.
[1158] Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 78–9.
[1159] Żydowska Rada Ludowa/Zhydivska Narodna Rada, *Leaflet "Do społeczeństwa polskiego i ukraińskiego!/ Do ukrain'skoyi i pol'skoi suspil'nosty!"*, early November 1918, Archiwum Państwowe w Przemyślu (APPr), 140/0/3.

the Jewish militia keeping neutrality.[1160] By all accounts the Jewish militia not only remained neutral and continued to protect Jewish citizens and property, but also maintained a good understanding with both of the local nationalist forces, maintaining close contact and coordination with both the Ukrainian and the Polish National Council and being recognized by both sides.[1161] The Ukrainian city command publicly declared that in the part of the city it controlled, only the Ukrainian and the Jewish militia were entitled to bear arms,[1162] and the Polish National Council distributed a leaflet on 5 November, countering accusations and rumors spread by "reckless [*lekkomyślnych*] or malignant" people, that Jews were supporting the Ukrainians, stating: "we consider it our duty to insist with all emphasis that these rumors are untrue. The Jewish People's Council takes the most neutral and correct position towards us […] The same position is taken by the Jewish militia organized by the same 'Jewish People's Council' of the Jewish population […]."[1163]

I will elaborate further in chapter six on local relations between the various Zionist-led Jewish National Councils and their Polish and Ukrainian counterparts. What is important here is to recognize that locally, the immediate situation that came with the collapse of the Empire's power was not marked by outbursts of anti-Jewish violence, but in fact by cooperation and attempts by various actors to fill the power vacuum and at the same time assert themselves. In this sense, the Zionists' shift in their security strategy away from the central imperial authority and towards reaching an understanding with various nationalist forces, while at the same time building their own self-defense units, seemed to be successful. However, these successes and the stability were short-lived. They reflected very particular local circumstances and the situation radically changed once outside military forces came into the city, thereby shifting power dynamics, rendering local agreements meaningless, and subsequently unleashing a wave of violence against the Jewish population.

[1160] Curt Dunagan, *The Lost World of Przemyśl: Interethnic Dynamics in a Galician Center: 1868 to 1921* (PhD Dissertation: Brandeis University, 2009), 359–60; John E. Fahey, "From Imperial to National: Przemyśl, Galicia's Transformation through World War I," *Region*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2015): 214.
[1161] Żydowska Rada Ludowa w Przemyślu, *Letter to Rady Narodowej Polskiej w Przemyślu*, 05.11.1918, APPr, 140/0/2/12; Żydowska Rada Ludowa w Przemyślu, *Letter to Rady Narodowej Polskiej w Przemyślu*, 08.11.1918, APPr, 140/0/2/12; Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu, *Letter to Żydowska Rada Ludowa w Przemyślu*, 09.11.1918, APPr, 140/0/2/12;
[1162] Ukrayins′ke Viys′kove Komenda Voyenna Peremys′koho Okruha, *Poster: "Opovistka. Loraznyy Sud"*, 04.11.1918, APPr, 140/0/3/26.
[1163] Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu, *Leaflet "Odezwa!"*, 05.11.1918, APPr, 397/0/-/2824.

"Dreadful Events have taken place in our town"

In all four cases described above, it was not primarily local dynamics but outside forces that crushed the agreements, and it was their arrival that triggered large-scale anti-Jewish violence. Let us remain in East Galicia for now. On 11 November Polish reinforcements that had arrived from the West took Przemyśl under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Michał Tokarzewski.[1164] The Jewish militia was incapable of offering any meaningful resistance to the violence that followed.[1165] In the evening, a certain Dr. D. wrote:

"The 11 November dreadful events have taken place in our town that have not been seen during all this cruel war. […] When Zasanie [the west bank of the San] was in the hands of the Poles, the Polish government [the Polish rule] over the other nationalities living here was chicanes and oppression, but, comparatively it could be borne. But in the moment when the Polish army, having driven away the Ukrainiers [sic] entered the town, robbing, plundering, and pillages began. Everyman who offered resistance and would not allow to rob was killed on the place. So was killed Abraham Rotter, and Gros is near death in [the] infirmary his father was beaten and hurt in a dreadful manner that cries vengeance to the heaven."[1166]

In the wake of hundreds of seemingly uncoordinated arrests, the Jewish militia was dissolved, and its members arrested leaving the Jewish population vulnerable to attacks by marauding soldiers and civilians.[1167] An unsigned account from the city stated:

"At last Przemysl has been conquered by the Poles. Polish small detachments came into the streets and their first deed was the arrest of all the Jews they met on the streets, particularly of the members of the militia. The magazine of arms of the Jewish militia was confiscated. The Jewish officers and militia-men have been arrested and led away in the Zasanie. In [sic] the same time, the detachments of the 45th regiment blend with local hooligans, made a pogrom."[1168]

[1164] Fahey, *Przemyśl*, 214–5. Generally on the Przemyśl pogrom, see: Wacław Wierzbiniec, "Zajścia antyżydowskie w Przemyślu pod koniec 1918 r," in *Świat niepożegnany: Żydzi na dawnych ziemiach wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej w XVIII-XX wieku*, ed. Krzystof Jasiewicz (Warsaw: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, 2004), 573–80.
[1165] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Einige Auszüge aus den beim jüdischen Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich erliegenden Materialien über die polnischen Pogrome*, undated (probably November 1918), CZA, Z3/178, 13–15.
[1166] Dr. D., *Letter from Przemyśl*, (translation by Israel Cohen), 11.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.
[1167] Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu, *Letter to Żydowska Rada Ludowa w Przemyślu*, 12.11.1918, APPr, 140/0/2/12. The military command gave another order dissolving the militia on 17 November, which was probably done because not all units had given up their arms, but more importantly, also as a means to assert itself vice versa the Polish National Council. Komenda Miejskowa Wojsk Polskich w Przemyślu, *Leaflet "Ogłoszenie"*, APPr, 397/0/514. For a Zionist account on events, see: *Nowy Dziennik*, 19.11.1918.
[1168] Anonymous, *Report on the Pogrom in Przemyśl*, (translation by Israel Cohen), 18.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.

Local resident Sala Finkelhammer reported a few days after the Poles had taken the city how civilians and soldiers felt like they were given permission to plunder, rape, and murder. They argued this, towards the Jews, and most likely to themselves as well, by referring to the myth that the Jewish militia had sided with the Ukrainians: "the barbarian horde fell into the town, with the cry that the Jews have formed an alliance with the Ukrainians and have shot at Poles from the Synagogue, which is absolutely false. The Poles know better than we that the Jews are strictly neutral, but they [use this] as a pretext to take revenge on the Jews. The Russians have proceeded in quite the same manner."[1169] While Finkelhammer revived the old image of equating 'Russian' and 'Polish', both accounts show how it was the changed dynamic in view of the taking of the city, which had been enabled by the outside forces, that unleashed the horrors. The Jewish People's Council reiterated this in a letter to its Polish counterpart on 13 November after the dissolution of its militia: "In the city in which, up to that moment, despite the exceptional relations, the personal security of the Jews was not breached, an orgy broke out! Unjustified mass arrests, killing and tortures began, and they took directly horrifying forms."[1170] While both Tokarzweski and the Polish National Council claimed to be in control of the city,[1171] the initiative clearly lay with the military command, which accused Jews of disloyalty, treason to the Polish cause, and insisted on "the well-known fact that in the battle over Przemyśl, the Jews fought en masse on the side of the Ukrainians despite their promise of neutrality."[1172] While an intervention by local Polish nationalists could avert the worst (see Chapter 5), nonetheless, anti-Jewish violence and repression, especially directed against members of the Jewish militia and the Zionists, whose office was destroyed a few weeks later, continued.[1173]

The accusation of breaking neutrality and siding with the Ukrainians in the fight over the city was similarly a key factor in instigating the pogrom in Lwów just a few days after the violence

[1169] Sala Finkelhammer, *Letter from Przemyśl*, (translation by Israel Cohen), 15.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.
[1170] Żydowska Rada Ludowa w Przemyślu, *Letter to Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu*, 13.11.1918, APPr, 140/0/2/12.
[1171] Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu, *Leaflet "Do ludności Miasta Przemyśla!"*, 11.11.1918, APPr, 397/0/2825; Tokarzewski ppułk., *Leaflet, "Polskie Dowództwo Okręgu Wojskowego Przemyśl"*, 13.11.1918, APPr, 397/0/509.
[1172] Michał Tokarzewski, *Odezwa do ludności Przemyśla, wyznania mojżeszowego*, 17.11.1918, APPr, 397/0/511. There was absolutely no evidence that the Jewish militia had fought on the side of the Ukrainians. The only thing that might have been interpreted as such is that according to one report on the events to Israel Cohen, on 9 November the Ukrainian militia had forced the Jewish militia's command to abandon its headquarters which happed to be an important strategic point in the city. The Jewish militia moved to the buildings of the Kahal and the Ukrainians used this old building. But indeed, this was no evidence for Jews' support for the Ukrainian side. Unknown Author, *Report on the Pogrom in Przemyśl*, (translation by Israel Cohen), 18.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.
[1173] Syjonistyczny Komitet w Przemyślu, *Telegram to the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organisation*, 17.12.1918, CZA L6/371.

in Przemyśl. The Lwów pogrom has been studied extensively and gained great symbolic importance both at the time and in later decades mainly because a) it was the pogrom with the highest number of victims in Galicia, a number that was dramatically inflated in initial reports,[1174] and b) because public discourse over the pogrom centered to a large extent on the supposed (dis)loyalty of the Jews to Poland, a debate in which the specific local case was representative for many of the question in Poland in general.[1175] It may be argued that an explicit enumeration of the course of events in Lwów is not of direct relevance to the present study and for this reason I do not outline the occurrence in detail here. I would direct the reader to the extensive body of literature on the matter.[1176] Of particular interest to the present study, however, are the activities of the Jewish militia, what its activists hoped they could achieve, and the manner in which it functioned.

In the unsteady situation in which the Ukrainians had taken over the city, Polish units still held some areas, deserters and recently freed criminals roamed the streets, and the Jewish militia – which by mid-November numbered forty-five officers and 302 soldiers – protected the territory that had been agreed upon with the Ukrainian and Polish sides.[1177] The unit was mainly composed of soldiers, which had been discharged from the Habsburg army, and it was armed with 200 rifles.[1178] Max Reimer, an eyewitness reported: "The Jewish population wanted to guarantee the security in the 'ghetto' itself. Following a proclamation, several hundred Jewish soldiers volunteered for the Jewish militia, who were identified with a stamped white

[1174] Initially, most Zionist newspapers reported 600 dead: *Nowy Dziennik*, 27.11.1918; *Jüdische Rundschau*, 29.11.1918; *Jüdische Volksstimme* (Brno), 29.11.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 29.11.1918. The Prague-based *Selbstwehr* wrote of "at least" 2,000 to 3,000 dead: *Selbstwehr*, 29.11.1918. Later investigations spoke of 73 deaths: Cohen, *Report*, 15; Tobiasz Ashkenazy, *Statistical Report on the Lwów Pogrom*, (undated), AAN, 1774/0/1/15. Joseph Tennenbaum (under the pen-name Josef Bendow) mentioned 72 deaths in his statistic: Josef Bendow (Joseph Tennenbaum), *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom* (Vienna, Brno: M. Hickl Verlag, 1919), 161. The Morgenthau-Report concluded that 64 Jews had been murdered: *The New York Times*, 18.01.1919. The official Polish side was, of course, interested in downplaying the number of fatalities. The Polish government first simply denied that any Jews had been killed: Komitet Narodowy Polski w Paryż, *Declaration*, 29.11.1918, AAN, 39/0/14/2140. The provisional Polish ruling committee in Lwów wrote of 25 Jews that were injured or killed during the violence: Tymczasowy Komitet Rządzący we Lwowie, *Wypadki w dzielnicy żydowskiej we Lwowie*, undated (probably December 1918), AAN, 1774/0/1/2. Interestingly, a report by a delegation sent by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated 17 December, concluded that at least 150 Jews had been murdered: Leon Chrzanowski, Józef Wasercrug, "Raport Delegacji Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych R. P. w Sprawie Wystąpień Antyżydowskich we Lwowie," printed in: Jerzy Tomaszewski, "Lwów, 22 listopada 1918," 279–85.

[1175] Engel, "Lwów, 1918," 32–46.

[1176] Ibid., Fink, *Defending the Rights*, 101–30; Hagen, "Moral Economy," 124–47; Mick, *Lemberg*, 137–208; Pacholikov, "Zwischen Einbeziehung und Ausgrenzung," 155–216; Tomaszewski, "Lwów-Listopad 1918," 164–73.

[1177] Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 78–81. A report by Elias Nacht, a Zionist from the city who lived through the events stated that the Jewish militia had 800 men, which was undoubtedly an exaggeration. Elias Nacht, *Das Blutbad von Lemberg*, undated (probably late November or early December 1918), CZA, Z3/174. Another report which was given to the Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin mentioned 600 militiamen. Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Report on Lemberg*, 28.11.1918, CZA, Z3/179.

[1178] Fischel Waschitz, *Milicya Żydowska we Lwowie*, undated, CAHJP, PL/164.

band and served only in the Jewish quarter. They were primarily tasked with maintaining public order and to prevent plunders and robbery."[1179] Joseph Tenenbaum, a Zionist leader and one of the organizers of the militia recalled:

"The militia was soon established under the command of Captain Eisler and so many volunteered that one was forced to close the list and reject volunteers. The Jewish militia soon became the most popular institution in Lemberg, whose services not only Jews used, even non-Jews entrusted the Jewish militia with the protection of their property. Many Christian merchants let their shops be protected by the militia. But the two fighting parties also needed a neutral, mediating factor and, for this reason, the militia could establish itself as an equally fruitful factor for both sides. In defiance of death, under the strongest hail of bullets, the Jewish militia did its duty, providing food for the starving, bringing wounded to the hospitals, burying bodies, protecting the municipal gasworks, organizing the provision of the Jewish quarter, easing the hardships of the situation."[1180]

Reports mention numerous military encounters with bandits as well as Polish patrols.[1181] The militia was on patrol "by day and by night", as Hersch Lauterpacht recalled.[1182] The reports show that over time though, the militia increasingly lost control over the neighborhood, failed to prevent the entry of hostile elements, began to function more as a mobile unit, and eventually itself came to be a prime target of attacks. As a response to the insecurity, the Jewish militia decided to directly confront some of the marauders which were under Polish command. This led to a gunfight causing several deaths on both sides on 17 November. The Ukrainian command later claimed that Ukrainian and Jewish forces had fought together to repel a Polish attack, which was not the case and the Ukrainians later retracted this, but it fed into the narrative of the Jews breaking neutrality and siding with the Ukrainians.[1183] This and other incidents, often only based on rumors, were subsequently the main 'argument' for the onslaught against the Jewish civilian population.[1184] Polish authorities later produced a great number of

[1179] Max Reimer, *Die Pogrome in Lemberg*, undated (probably late November 1918), CZA, Z3/174.
[1180] Bendow (Tennenbaum), *Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 25–6. Fischel Waschitz also reported that a Christian (although the context makes it clear that he was Polish) approached the Jewish militia asking for help. This reiterates the rhetorical nationalization that could be observed earlier, with the positive example being named Christian and the violent perpetrators being framed in national terms (i.e. 'Polish'). Fischel Waschitz, *Report on the events in Lemberg*, undated, CAHJP, PL/164.
[1181] Bendow (Tennebaum), *Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 22–9; Fischel Waschitz, *Report on the events in Lemberg*, undated, CAHJP, PL/164; Fischel Waschitz, *Milicya Żydowska we Lwowie*, undated, CAHJP, PL/164; Max Reimer, *Die Pogrome in Lemberg*, undated (probably late November 1918), CZA, Z3/174. Also: *Tagblat*, 20.11.1918.
[1182] Quoted in: Elihu Lauterpacht, *The Life and Times of Sir Hersch Lauterpacht* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 21
[1183] Bendow (Tennebaum), *Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 22-23; Cohen, *Report*, 26.
[1184] David Engel argued that the key factor for the violence was the absence of the rule of law, wherefore individuals and collectives took the implementation of what they saw as justice in their own hands: "However, the commanders who either instigated the violence or allowed it to proceed unchecked had little knowledge of positive state law governing conduct in the situation they faced. Hence, when confronted by reports, rumors, or suspicions that local Jews had thrown potentially decisive weight behind the enemies, which is what precipitated

documents to convince an international audience that the Jewish militia had sided with the Ukrainians.[1185] However, one can argue that it was the neutrality itself that was enough to outrage Polish nationalists, who saw the Jews' neutrality, their refusal to side with them against the Ukrainians as treason.[1186] Zionist activist Elias Nacht recalled one episode from before the outbreak of the full-scale pogrom:

"Jews were dragged from the houses and the streets and to the office in Leona Sapiehy street, where they were requested to join the [Polish] Legion. Of course, they refused, because they knew that [there] they would only be tolerated. To a lieutenant's question whether they would join, they declared: 'We are Jews and neutrals'. 'You are Jews' he shouted at them, 'damned guys, but born and fed on Polish soil. We will soon settle scores with you. Go, out with the Jews!'"[1187]

Similarly, Joseph Tenenbaum quoted a pogromist as saying: "The Jewish quarter will pay for its neutrality, we will butcher all the Jews."[1188] On 21 November Ukrainian troops withdrew under heavy pressure from the Polish troops, which had been strengthened by the arrival of new forces from the West, with General Roja, and from Przemyśl with Lieutenant-Colonel Tokarzewski. The Jewish militia was disarmed and with rumors that Jews were killing Poles and that the Polish command had given its troops permission to plunder the city for forty-eight hours, all-out violence erupted.[1189] Shops were plundered, three synagogues were burned, and Torah scrolls were desecrated. Dozens of Jews were killed, and hundreds were injured. On 28 November, the dead were buried. *Nowy Dziennik* reported:

"At 9 o'clock in the morning, the funeral procession started from the old synagogue (which was burned down). The bodies of the dead were already at the cemetery. At the head of the procession was Prof. Dr. Hausner who carried the remains of the Torah scrolls, he was followed by Jewish officers who also carried burned remains of Torah scrolls. 30,000 people took part in the procession."[1190]

---

anti-Jewish violence in these places, they responded with a purely intuitive sense of what justice demanded – death to the offenders, collectively identified on the basis of stereotypic associations." Engel, "What's in a Pogrom," 33.

[1185] Tymczasowy Komitet Rządzący we Lwowie, *Mémoire Concernant les Troubles Hostiles a la Population Juive qui sont eu lieu á Lwów le 22 et 23 Novembre 1918*, undated, AAN, 1774/0/4/28; Tymczasowy Komitet Rządzący we Lwowie, *Wypadki w dzielnicy żydowskiej we Lwowie*, undated (probably December 1918), AAN, 1774/0/1/2.

[1186] David Engel, *In the Shadow of Auschwitz: The Polish Government in Exile and the Jews, 1939–1942* (Chapel Hill, London: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 149.

[1187] Elias Nacht, *Das Blutbad von Lemberg*, undated (probably late November or early December 1918), CZA, Z3/174

[1188] Bendow (Tennenbaum), *Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 30.

[1189] Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 81–5.

[1190] *Nowy Dziennik*, 02.12.1918.

The Jewish militia in Chrzanów was initially capable of protecting the local population from marauders that came in from surrounding villages. For several days the small unit repulsed numerous attacks.[1191] On 5 and 6 November rioters from surrounding villages again gathered near the city, preparing to plunder Jewish homes and shops. The command of the Polish Legion forcefully disarmed the Jewish militia, and those militiamen who put up a fight were shot.[1192] Marauders from the surrounding villages subsequently entered the town and were joined by locals, who now apparently felt permitted to commit violence, plundering Jewish shops and homes.[1193] A report stated that "[a]s the Jews were now defenseless, the legionaries signaled to the mob that the situation was ripe now and with beastly greed the incendiaries and murderers threw themselves onto the Jews."[1194] The local committees of the three Jewish parties reported: "Everybody could see that almost the entire Christian population participated in the pogrom, furthermore the farmers who have grown rich during the war and numerous workers from the pits in the area, while the urban Polish intelligentsia watched or even encouraged the marauders."[1195] On the following day, a unit of the Jewish militia in Cracow arrived in the city, trying to intervene against the pogrom. After a short battle with the Legionaries, during which four Jewish militiamen were injured, they had to withdraw.[1196] Activists in the city continued to try and offer resistance and protect Jewish shops and homes, but were met with gunfire by legionaries, against which they could not defend themselves.[1197] The three local Jewish parties summed up the scene in the city: "While the Jews feared for their lives, oddly enough, in the church around which the Jewish shops were plundered, some kind of festive church service was held. For the windows were illuminated in bright light, and the organ sounded loudly, like a triumphant hymn for the 'victories' of the newly created Polish army and people."[1198]

In Cracow, the Jewish militia managed to maintain order and security in the Jewish quarter for several days.[1199] Besides the above-mentioned case of Chrzanów, the Cracow militia

[1191] *Nowy Dziennik*, 05.11.1918.
[1192] Reuben Ernst, *Report on the Pogrom in Chrzanów*, November 1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17. Reuben Ernst seemed to have been a member of the Jewish militia.
[1193] Chasanowitch, *Les Pogromes Anti-Juifs*, 37–8
[1194] Samuel Horowitz, *Zu den Judenpogromen in Galizien*, undated (probably November 1918), CZA, L6/112. Horowitz, a Zionist and formerly a field rabbi of the Habsburg army, described himself as an eyewitness to the events.
[1195] Poalej Syjon, Żydowska Partia Socjalistyczna, Partia Syjonistyczna, *Report on the Pogrom in Chrzanów*, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 18.
[1196] Also: Cohen, *Report*, 12
[1197] Poalej Syjon, Żydowska Partia Socjalistyczna, Partia Syjonistyczna, *Report on the Pogrom in Chrzanów*, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 18.
[1198] Poalej Syjon, Żydowska Partia Socjalistyczna, Partia Syjonistyczna, *Report on the Pogrom in Chrzanów*, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 18.
[1199] Leon Wasilewski (?), *Report to Komisji Likwidacyjnej w Krakowie*, November 1918, CAHJP, PL/578.6.

also dispatched units to Brzesko and Mielec to stop the violence there.[1200] A report by the head of the Brzesko Kahal noted that it had sent a delegation to Cracow to plead for help from the Jewish National Council there, which sent a unit.[1201] For two days, the militiamen were involved in heavy gunfighting with armed peasants and Polish soldiers from the villages around Brzesko, but were eventually defeated, leaving the Jewish population defenseless in outbursts of violence that killed five and seriously injured eight.[1202] Similarly in Mielec, where after anti-Jewish riots had broken out, the local community sent a delegation to the Jewish National Council in Cracow, pleading for help. A detachment of the Cracow Jewish militia was sent to Mielec but was overpowered and disarmed by the local Polish militia and armed peasants.[1203]

Similar to other cases, the Jewish militia in Cracow was dissolved once outside forces, who showed little interest in local relations, came to the city and asserted their power. In the Cracovian case, this change came with the arrival of General Bolesław Roja who ordered the dissolution of the militia on 15 November 1918.[1204] Armed self-defense units nonetheless continued to exist. In March 1919 a police raid found 300 guns which had been hidden by members of the unit in private homes and a synagogue.[1205] What was left of the Jewish self-defense unit came to be of great importance in early June 1919 when General Józef Haller arrived in Cracow. His troops instantly attacked Jewish citizens on the streets, robbing and mistreating them, cutting of beards, and so on.[1206] Jewish socialists, mainly members of Poale Zion and the Jewish Socialist Party appealed to Polish workers to stand alongside them in defense against reactionary violence: "Workers' solidarity must pave the way, and the workers of all nations will embrace each other to become the instrument that will break down, destroy the structure of oppression and rape, and thus of the pogroms."[1207] It is unclear what came from these proclamations. It is clear, however, that the remnants of the Jewish militia defended Kazimierz against Haller's soldiers, while the violence was eventually stopped once Oszias

[1200] Cohen, *Report*, 11; 15. See also the reports in: YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.
[1201] Meier Hofstätter, *Protocol on the pogrom in Mielec, recorded by the Jewish National Council in Vienna*, 15.11.1918, CZA, Z3/178. The report was re-printed in: Chasanowitch, *Pogromes*, 32–4.
[1202] *Nowy Dziennik*, 10.11.1918; 14.11.1918.
[1203] Jehuda Kohn, Ascher Meilech Strom, Scyja Sternglanz, Alexander Stempler (and three others whose signatures are illegible), *A short description of the antisemitic excesses in Mielec from November the 1st 1918*, 01.01.1919, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.
[1204] Cohen, *Report*, 10.
[1205] Unknown Author, *Telegram to Zionist Press Office Copenhagen*, March 1919, CZA, L6/94; Jüdisches Pressbüro Wien, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 25.03.1918, CZA, L6/94.
[1206] Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych, *Collected File on the events in Cracow in June 1919*, 16./22.06.1919, AAN, 9/0/4.1/I2262.
[1207] Rada Żydowskich Delegatów Robotniczych w Krakowie*, Leaflet "Towarzysze – Robotnicy polscy!"*, June 1919, AAN, 9/0/4.1/I2262.

Thon, a leading Zionist and representative of the National Council managed to persuade the general to intervene and stop the excesses.[1208]

All these militias had at best mixed records to show for their efforts. There were a number of other local cases in the region – for which fewer documents are available – where Jewish activists, also set up militias, in most cases under Zionist leadership. In the East Galician town of Jarosław (Yaroslav/Yareslov) and in nearby Tuczempy (Tsaryns'ke), militias were disarmed by stronger Polish forces.[1209] Similarly in Rozwadow (Rozvedov) and Trzebinia (Tchebin), militias formed by local activists at the beginning of November proved incapable of resisting the more numerous and better-armed local Polish forces.[1210] There are some hints that a Jewish self-defense unit in Tarnów stopped plunders and violence, but unfortunately there is not much material on this.[1211]

One comparatively well-documented case in which Jewish self-defense was successful was in Oświęcim (Oshpitzin).[1212] *Nowy Dziennik* reported that on a meeting on 9 November 1918 local Polish dignitaries and officers demanded that Jewish representatives Dr. Reich and Dr. Pilzer (both Zionists) convince Jewish merchants to hand over their goods for heavily reduced prices, threatening violence if they would not do so. Reich and Pilzer refused to negotiate over this and left the meeting.[1213] Zionist activists then called all the young men to the Beith Midrash, where they swore an oath on the Torah scrolls that resembled in many respects the ideas expressed in the leaflet distributed in Cracow in April 1918:

"Let us not stretch forth our throats to the slaughter! As long as we are able to maintain our honor and our right to human existence, we can hope that we will eventually achieve independence as they [the Poles] have. We must demonstrate by our stance both our strength and our determined decision: We will defend our families' lives and our honor, we will defend ourselves by force!"[1214]

[1208] Unknown Author, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, June 1916, CZA, L6/116; *Chwila*, 06.06.1919; *Kurjer Lwowski*, 23.11.1918.
[1209] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Report on the Polish Pogroms*, November or December 1918, CZA, Z3/178; Cohen, *Report*, 13; 19; Chasanowitch, *Pogromes*, 29, 31.
[1210] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Report on the Polish Pogroms*, November or December 1918, CZA, Z3/178.
[1211] *Nowy Dziennik*, 12.11.1918; Cohen, *Report*, 18; Chasanowitch, *Pogromes*, 30.
[1212] On the history of the Jewish community in Oświęcim before and during the war, see: Lucyna Filip, *Juden in Oświęcim*, 1918–1941 (Oświęcim: Scientia, 2005), 13–43. The book interestingly does not mention the self-defense efforts of 1918.
[1213] *Nowy Dziennik*, 10.11.1918.
[1214] Uri Hanis, "Oshpitzin," in *Sefer Oshpitsin*, ed. Ch. Wolnerman, A. Burstin, and M. S. Geshuri (Jerusalem: Oshpitsin Society, 1977), 368. Translation according to JewishGen [https://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/oswiecim1/Oswiecim.html#TOC]

The combination of the immediate urge to resist violence and to protect the community were perceived as a fight for honor and independence. The clear reference to Polish independence also suggests the national impetus in the process of fighting to be a recognized, independent nation alongside all the others. Uri Hanis from Oświęcim remembered that Jewish youth took over an old Austrian military depot and took the arms for themselves, subsequently setting up defensive positions throughout the town. He wrote about 500 Jewish fighters, which was probably an exaggeration but there was undoubtedly a potent Jewish self-defense force in town. The unit included both men and women. Hanis continued to describe subsequent events:

"That night, the scouts reported suspicious movements on the road leading to Zator and immediately thereafter a second report came in that an armed mob led by Polish soldiers had arrived by train. They were all carrying sacks, suitcases and baskets, which were supposed to serve as containers for the loot. The way the gangs moved, approaching in two formations, it was clear that they were well organized and using military tactics. They seemingly had all the likelihood to carry out their program easily and get away with much plunder under the cover of the darkness of the night. The young defenders quickly set up the machine-guns at various strategic points and it was all accomplished efficiently and shrewdly. At midnight explosions and shots reverberated, surprising the gangs who had not expected such a 'warm' reception. The battle was short and decisive and with first light the attackers dispersed in all directions, escaping head first, in panic and without discipline. They left behind three dead and a number of severely wounded. According to the traces of blood it could be surmised that they had many losses, but that they had managed to extract most of the wounded as they left the battlefield. None of the defenders was hurt. […] The victory was complete. The city's Jews breathed a sigh of relief. News of this victory soon spread and the Jews of the nearby towns requested and received advice and help from the Oswiecim youthful defenders. The 'Heroes' of the gangs, who had heretofore been able to pour out their wrath only against defenseless Jews, came to realize that this was dangerous and were deterred. The activities of the hooligans had been hampered and they came to an end. The lesson of Oswiecim was equivalent to a cold shower. Finally, the leaders of the Polish nation came to the realization that the lawlessness directed against the Jews could yet harm them as well."[1215]

Another resident of Oświęcim remembered:

"Near the gate of our house I found several Jewish young men of the self-defense, and they told me that they had learned that hundreds of rioters were planning to attack the town that night. Since it was probable that they would come via the bridge it had been decided, for safety's sake, to post guards at all the entrances to the city as well as in the city proper. The shots had come from the direction of the bridge. Near the bridge was a hill on which stood the district governor's offices. It was on that hill that the men of the self-defense were posted, armed with previously prepared firearms. They had let the murderers and robbers advance to the middle of the bridge, and then attacked them. Many were killed and the rest ran for their lives. On the corpses left behind on the battlefield they found axes and sacks. From then on, after the lesson they learned from our heroes, they didn't dare to conduct

[1215] Ibid., 369–70.

riots against the Jews of Oswiecim. For many years we spoke with pride about our youngsters who had upset the plans of the rioters."[1216]

A good deal of this account seems to have been inspired by later experiences. However, this was indeed a case in which a Zionist-led Jewish self-defense unit successfully defended the community against attackers.[1217] The idea of self-reliance and national pride was a key factor in these events. On 9 November, *Nowy Dziennik* had commented on the threat of violence from Oświęcim's Polish dignitaries that this "proves clearly that the Jews have to consolidate at all costs, organize themselves and make themselves self-devoted, otherwise they will end up miserably. Any help, strangers, the state, legionnaires – will fail thoroughly! Jews of Galicia, organize yourselves for self-defense!"[1218] However in most cases, the self-defense units, as well as the attempts to find local agreements and understandings with other forces on the ground failed in its goal of providing security, leaving many Jews, including many Zionist activists with an experience of helplessness and desperation. The three Jewish parties that had organized the militia in Chrzanów ended their report:

"A peace of the graveyard lays over the town's alleys. The Jews fear their own shadow and do not dare to go to the streets. Whatever is still left of the Jewish population here lives in agony over the uncertainty for things to come in the next days. And there is no prospect for help, for protection, the Jews have become completely without rights, and the pressing question is like a nightmare: what will happen to us tomorrow????"[1219]

The above-quoted Dr. D. from Przemyśl concluded his report in a very similar way. "We are quite forceless and defenseless against the violence. We have no power to render [?] the life of the victims – one means remains to us – that is to protest. We protest before the whole civilized world, before Wilson, the conscience of the world."[1220] For many Jews in the region, even those who were not directly affected by the violence, the new situation came with a feeling of helplessness and fear. Fifteen-year old Marta wrote in her diary on 1 December 1918: "Entire cities are being ruined. […] What one experiences, especially since the High Holidays, is impossible to describe. To put it simply, it is a collapse of the world. Who would have expected

[1216] Yitzhak Tzivoni (Farber), "En route to the Homeland (Memoirs of Oshpitzin before it became the 'Auschwitz Vale of Death')," *Sefer Oshpitsin*, ed. Ch. Wolnerman, A. Burstin, and M. S. Geshuri (Jerusalem: Oshpitsin Society, 1977), 400. Translation according to JewishGen [https://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/oswiecim1/Oswiecim.html#TOC]
[1217] On the role of Zionists in the defense, see: Yakov Better, Shmuel Bochner, "The Zionist Movement", *Sefer Oshpitsin*, ed. Ch. Wolnerman, A. Burstin, and M. S. Geshuri (Jerusalem: Oshpitsin Society, 1977), 270.
[1218] *Nowy Dziennik*, 09.11.1918.
[1219] Poalej Syjon, Żydowska Partia Socjalistyczna, Partia Syjonistyczna, *Report on the Pogrom in Chrzanów*, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 18.
[1220] Dr. D., *Letter from Przemyśl*, (translation by Israel Cohen), 11.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.

such an end? And is this already the end? Who knows? What are we going to see. For sure it will be terrible."[1221]

For many, the violence following the collapse of the local security strategy meant a profound disillusionment, a crushing of the hopes they had for the Jews' place as an equal part of the new society. Dr. D. continued: "The Polish [sic] have covered themselves with shame, with the blood of the Jewish citizens. The government of the Poles in Przemysl has been inaugurated with our blood."[1222] And Joseph Tennenbaum wrote: "On 22 November in the evening the Jewish quarter burned brightly ad maiorem Poloniae gloriam."[1223] What led to this feeling of despair and disillusionment? How can the fact that besides Oświęcim (and possibly in Tarnów), the Jewish militias failed in protecting the communities be interpreted? When confronted with superior forces, they usually decided to lay down their arms, knowing that they would not be able to muster enough resistance and fearing that an all-out conflict would even worsen the subsequent violence. Whether this would have actually been the case is interesting but not relevant here. What this shows is, how the Jewish militias were not a contradiction or a rejection of local cooperation with other forces but functioned precisely in the context of such an agreement. With the above-named exception, they were less of a Jewish army in the making, but the armed expression of a vision of national autonomy within a multinational framework of mutual understanding.

Protest and Autonomy

At an initial stage, many Zionists framed their fight against the pogroms as a struggle for the good of the new state itself. In this they often reiterated claims that resembled those of imperial days, namely that local or subordinate authorities were to blame for anti-Jewish acts and not the centers of power. The Jewish National Council of German-Austria's comprehensive report on the earlier pogroms in West Galicia emphasized the devastating role local actors played in the attacks against Jews. It did not argue that there was a general Polish strategy of persecution.[1224] Especially interesting are the arguments about the relation between the self-defense units and the authorities. Contrary to the dynamics on the ground, the report tended to place the responsibility with local actors. For example, it called General Roja's decision to

[1221] Marta Müller, *Diary*, entry of 01.12.1918, CAHJP, PL/1238.143.
[1222] Dr. D., *Letter from Przemyśl*, (translation by Israel Cohen), 11.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.
[1223] Bendow (Tennenbaum), *Lemberger Judenpogrom*, 39.
[1224] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Report on the Polish Pogroms*, November or December 1918, CZA, Z3\178.

disarm the militia in Cracow "irresponsible"[1225] – a term that did not necessarily suggest ill-will – while complementing the role of the Liquidation Commission.[1226] This meant that initially an abstract idea of appealing to a benevolent high, central power persisted. The communiqué of the Zionist Organization of Poland stated on 6 December:

"The Jewry of Warsaw and of all Poland, in its mourning protests to-day solemnly against the crime which has been committed against the Jews of Lemberg. With an inhuman cruelty, which is without parallel, even in the blood-stained pages of Jewish history, hundreds of Jews were murdered, old men, women and children were burned, the property of thousands plundered and destroyed by fire. The moment when Lemberg was delivered from the hands of the Ruthenians, the moment of victory after the heavy and obstinate battle, has been sealed with innocent Jewish blood. Those who were destroyed, those who have been murdered and burnt were taken from the vistorious [sic] army. And the whole army and its commanders during forty-eight hours did nothing to bring to an end the murderous brutality, to protect the innocent, in order that the Polish name should not be covered with shame."[1227]

The positive reference to the Polish victory in Lwów was very important in this context. Here, the violence was local, and the perpetrators were not named, while the commanders and Poland itself mainly failed to prevent the violence, which was framed as a danger for Poland's good name. The proclamation continued: "When just before Poland's liberation, attacks on the Jews began in Warsaw, we turned to the Polish leaders with a serious warning and demand, saying to them that we did not for a moment admit that there could be a madman in Poland who would wish for a Jewish pogrom, but why were they, the leaders of the nation, why were they silent?"[1228] Poale Zion similarly appealed to an abstract idea of a positive Poland, calling on the Polish working class: "Before the international and the entire civilized world, we appeal to the Polish proletariat which has for decades fought a heroic struggle against Czarism, not to tolerate that the name of Poland is desecrated by pogroms and the oppression of the Jewish population. [The] Polish working class has to be the consciousness of Poland."[1229] In some respects, these early, centralized statements reiterate many of the strategies that had been employed in imperial times. The similarity becomes most apparent in the rhetoric with which Zionists addressed the new authorities directly. In late November 1918, for instance, Oszias Thon met Józef Piłsudski, the new head of the Polish state and appealed to him in regard to the pogroms in Galicia.

[1225] Ibid.
[1226] Ibid. See also: Unknown Author, *Eine Erklärung der Polnischen Liquidierungskommission zu den galizischen Ausschreitungen*, 27.11.1918, CZA, Z3/178.
[1227] Zionist Organization of Poland, *Communiqué No. 22*, (translation by Israel Cohen), 06.12.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 20.
[1228] Ibid.
[1229] World Union of Poale Zion, *Telegram*, 28.11.1918, CZA, Z3/179.

"They [the pogroms] were of different magnitudes in different places, the largest taking place with loss of life in Chrzanów and Brzesko – the latter, however, was a consequence of the triumphant march of the army fighting the Ukrainians in central and Eastern Galicia. […] I know that the government bodies condemn these disgraceful excesses, which damage the Poles in the world's estimation. This natural consequence of the horrible disorders fills with care the hearts of Jewish citizens who have often shown their unshakeable will to co-operate in the building of Poland, whose loyal subjects they wish to be."[1230]

This approach subsequently changed. On 16 December, the Jewish National Council in Vienna – which continued to play a coordinating role for much of the former monarchy – vehemently complained about the National Councils in Galicia who in respect the composition of a commission that would investigate the pogroms constantly "act against our intentions and are usually too obedient to the wishes of the Poles."[1231] Outside of the control of the Polish state, Zionists generally applied a severely harsher language when addressing the violence in Poland. In particular, German Zionists – responding to corresponding feelings in significant layers of the German-Jewish population – stressed that the pogroms had shown that "already in the few days of their freedom the Poles have shown that they are not mature/ready [*reif*] for freedom."[1232] *Jüdische Zeitung* in Vienna wrote after learning about the Lwów pogrom: "Not without reason is the white eagle before a red field the Polish symbol: an innocent face amidst the blood of the pogroms – that is the Polish flag. We Jews never refused our sympathies for the oppressed Polish people's desire for freedom. But with horror we turn away from a people that uses the phrase of freedom only to revive Czarism's reign of terror."[1233] Already on 20 November, a Zionist-organized rally of Jewish students from Galicia at the University of Vienna protested against the "systematic extermination of the Jews by the Poles" and the "medieval barbarism which hides behind the Polish strive for freedom" and called on the international powers to intervene against the pogroms and to guarantee the security of Jews under Polish rule.[1234]

[1230] Zionist Organization of Poland, *Communiqué No. 42*, (translation by Israel Cohen), 29.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 18.
[1231] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Letter to Arieyh Lauterbach*, 16.12.1918, CZA, A166/15.
[1232] *Jüdische Rundschau*, 03.12.1918. See also the pamphlet by Zionist activist Salomon Gewürz on the pogroms in which he stated: "A people that created [the pogrom in] Lemberg, cannot readily be handed the control of a government, not the control over the destiny of those it had brutally tyrannized." Salomon Gewürz, *Lemberg: Eine kritische Betrachtung des Judenpogroms vom 21. bis 23. November 1918* (Berlin: Verlag von Louis Lamm, 1919), 12.
[1233] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 29.11.1918.
[1234] Anonymous, *Protestresolution der in Wien studierenden jüdischen Hochschüler aus Galizien gegen die Pogrome in Westgalizien*, 20.11.1918, CAHJP, P83/G/236. On the protest, see: *Jüdische Zeitung*, 22.11.1918.

In Poland itself, arguments and strategies shifted as well. On 23 December, Itzhak Gruenbaum stated in his opening speech of the preliminary conference of the Jewish National Assembly in Warsaw:

"We find ourselves here at what is a moment of crisis for us. We hoped that the liberation of Poland would bring happiness to us Jews: but we were much mistaken: in a whole series of towns in Galicia and latterly in Lemberg Jewish blood has been shed in streams. […] The attitude towards us of the Socialist Government [meaning Piłsudski; JR] is no better than that of the Czar. At every turn, we meet with restrictions and persecutions: no one cares for our interests. […] The Peace Conference approaches. The Jews of all lands are preparing to send their delegates. Polish Jewry must not remain an idle spectator at this historic moment."[1235]

What Dr. D. in Przemyśl had already stated on 11 November, that the only hope were Wilson and the international powers, now became the central strategy of the Zionist movement, both in and outside the affected regions. I will discuss the Zionists' role in regard to international diplomacy after the war in Chapter 5. What is important here is that the pogroms constituted a key argument for the political goal of national autonomy, which was seen as the only solution to end the violence.[1236] Leon Reich from Lwów put it in a speech he held at a conference of East European National Councils in Switzerland:

"The Poles themselves are convinced that the Jews will never be assimilated and if they are honest have to accept the only possible form of living together by granting them national autonomy. It is unacceptable to try with the most brutal means to destroy and expel a people, which has for centuries strongly participated in the economy and culture of the country and have always proven to be loyal citizens. Poland itself owes its independence to the people's sense of justice. It has to be just to the Jews as well."[1237]

What is remarkable here is that Reich explained the pogroms by referring to the conviction of the Poles that Jews would not be assimilated. The cause of the violence in his view was this antagonism, the only solution being national autonomy, which would diffuse these tensions. This was the central concept of the Zionists at the time. As described throughout this chapter, the political response to anti-Jewish violence and discrimination throughout war was to call for national autonomy. This had been the case in imperial times, and it continued to be so after the war. This leads to the question of why Zionists believed that their recognition as a nation and the granting of national autonomy would improve their security situation?

[1235] Zionist Organization of Poland, *Communiqué No. 55*, (translation by Israel Cohen), 26.12.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 18.
[1236] Fink, *Defending the Rights*, 125–30.
[1237] Quoted in: *Pressedienst der Delegation des Jüdischen Nationalrates für Ostgalizien*, 11.03.1918, CAHJP, P83/G/265.

One possibility is that they approached the question of anti-Jewish violence primarily in an instrumental way. Back in 1915, Leo Herrmann's instructions on how to draft the petition on 'Polish antisemitism' and Poles' alleged treason to the Empire points in this direction, but there is not sufficient evidence that would suggest that this was the general approach to the problem. A more likely interpretation is that basically Zionists did not hold a concept of 'antisemitism' as we would understand it today, but instead interpreted the oppression, mistreatment, and violence against Jews largely as an inter-communal conflict, one that was based on hierarchies, indeed, but a conflict that almost naturally evolved from the improperly regulated cohabitation of two (or more) nations in a particular territory. In his 167-page-long book on the pogrom in Lwów, Joseph Tennenbaum did not use the term 'antisemitism' once. He explained the "Jew-hatred", as he called it, as a result and decidedly not the cause of a) economic competition between the urbanized Jews and the Polish peasants, and b) the awakening Polish national movement's (misguided) fear of the fact that on the Polish lands, there existed another non-Polish nation.[1238] This was a common concept, closely connected to raising according political demands. *Jüdische Zeitung* reported on the message Zvi Perez Chajes conveyed to Emperor Karl in October 1918.

"Every reasonable politician has to be aware that tolerable conditions in the East, especially in Galicia and Poland, can only be created if the Jewish problem as well will be solved in a satisfying way. […] In light of the pogroms in Galicia, in light of the ongoing pogrom-incitement by Polish chauvinism in Poland and Galicia, in light of the political and national deprivation of rights [*Entrechtung*] and the brutal economic expropriation of the Jews by the Polish rulers, it was justified that Dr. Chajes spoke about the severity of the situation in respect of the bad relation of the Poles to the Jews."[1239]

The violence was interpreted as merely one aspect of a national conflict that existed in 'the East', and the pogroms were seen as resulting from a 'bad relation'. This was one and the same problem, for which he proposed a solution. Chajes continued:

"The Jewish people has always tried in vain to peacefully come to terms with the Polish people. […] Instead of working towards a necessary peaceful coexistence, the Poles stirred up conflicts and want [their] resolution only through total suppression. The Jewish people, which holds its national goods as sacred as any other people, defends itself against this. The Jewish people therefore demand a guarantee for its right, to live its national life as a national minority and to organize its own matters by itself. This only solution for the minorities-problem in Austria in general has to be applied to the Jews as well."[1240]

[1238] Bendow (Tennenbaum), *Lembergr Judenpogrom*, 6–8.
[1239] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 11.10.1918.
[1240] Ibid. The report noted that the emperor did not comment on these demands.

Again, Chajes made the argument that Polish anti-Jewish hostilities stemmed from cohabitation in the same region and the Polish national claim itself, whose validity in and by itself he did not reject, but which could not be accepted as long as it entailed the suppression of Jewish national demands. In this argument national autonomy would lead to a resolution of Poles' anti-Jewish hatred and would dissolve the threat to Jews' physical security, since the cohabitation would be legally regulated, allowing for mutual understanding.

Galician Zionists made the same argument when appealing to the Peace Conference in 1919. They explained the pogroms as a result of the conflict of nationalities in East Galicia and as an attack on Jewish autonomy and Jewish national rights:

"In fact, there is not a single town in East Galicia that has an absolute Polish majority if the Jews refuse to be spinelessly passed off as Poles. In the struggle of the two peoples, the Jews could not support either of the two sides, if they wanted to avoid that their co-nationals living under the Ukrainians or the Poles would be subject to the severest harassment. In its vast majority, the Jews therefore declared themselves to be neutral. But already this statement, which included the abandonment of the forced allegiance to the Poles, was considered by the entire Polish public opinion as perfidious treason. The Polish masses, traditionally full of Jew-hatred, regarded the beginning of their national freedom as identical to the right to declare the Jews outlaws and to treat them accordingly. A series of excesses against the Jews in many towns followed. The most terrible epilogue of these excesses was the pogrom in Lemberg, which represented a political measure, to exorcise from the Jews every movement towards political independence once and for all."[1241]

The memorandum also commented on other factors that had played a role: "That besides this political tendency of the Lemberg pogrom other elements, such as traditional antisemitism, instincts for plunder and murder and so on also played a role is needless to say."[1242] In this interpretation the main factor was not antisemitism, but a rationally explicable struggle amongst various nations, to which there was a rational answer: "There is only one effective guarantee as to how the equality of the Jews which only exists on paper can be implemented and that is the recognition of the Jews as a nation, the guaranteeing of rights of a national minority. The deeper meaning of national-cultural autonomy lies in the fact that every people can organize all of its own matters by itself."[1243] Such an arrangement, the memorandum's authors believed, would diffuse the national conflict and would subsequently guarantee security. This reflects an understanding that the new rulers (both the Polish government and the great powers) would

[1241] Zionist Organization of East Galicia, *Memorandum to the Peace Conference*, undated (early 1919), CZA, F3/6. For the Polish government's discussion on the demands for Jewish national autonomy, see: *Protokuł 22 posiedzenia Rady Ministrów Rzecyposlitej Polskiej*, 28.01.1919, AAN, 8/ 0/1.2/I/5.
[1242] East Galician Zionist Organization, *Memorandum to the Peace Conference*, undated (early 1919), CZA, F3/6.
[1243] Ibid.

have some kind of vested interest in accommodating the various national groups in the new states, somewhat similarly to how the old rulers had often tried to do, albeit with little success.

Conclusion

During the war and its aftermath, the question of security was a central problem facing Jews throughout the region. The regional case study shows the application of several security strategies by Zionists. First of all, they appealed to the central, imperial authorities, arguing that the Jews were the most loyal subjects of the state. From this profession of loyalty, especially juxtaposed with the alleged treason of 'the Poles', they tried to derive the right to be recognized as one of the many nations of the Empire, equal to the others and first in the fight for the common cause. There is little to no evidence that the imperial authorities showed any particular interest in the proclamations of this particular Jewish political movement and they certainly had no intentions of granting more than the already-existing equal rights of all citizens to the Jews.

What is important is that the juxtaposition of the good and benevolent multinational Empire against the nationalist and anti-Jewish Poles did not necessarily reflect the experiences of larger segments of the Jewish population. The anti-Jewish outrages that occurred during the war, even when they were perpetrated by people that could be identified as 'Poles' happened in an explicitly imperial context. This became most obvious towards the end of 1917 and throughout the year 1918, when the central authorities failed to protect the Jewish population against numerous, ever-worsening outbursts of violence against them. It was in this situation that Zionists were forced to recognize that their traditional approach to the security question had failed and that they had to respond to the immediate needs on the ground. One central factor in this was the organization of armed self-defense against violence, in which Jewish activists not only protected their neighborhood, but they understood this as a struggle to assert themselves, to fight for their rights and their honor. This put Zionist activists at the center of the Jewish communities, making them key factors in the lives of Jews in the region. It is very notable that in the defense against violence and in the organization of armed groups the usual differences and conflicts amongst the various Zionist parties and factions disappeared. There is no discernable difference in the conduct of socialist, religious, or General Zionists in the organization of self-defense.

At the same time, as Zionists realized that the Empire was increasingly losing ground, they shifted their attention increasingly away from the old imperial authority and towards the emerging nationalist forces on the ground. This had a particularly local dimension. None of

these national movements, even after their states were proclaimed, represented anything resembling a nation state. They were local or at best regional forces that tried to fill a particularly local or regional power vacuum such as that left behind by the disintegrating Habsburg army. In this situation, Zionist activists tried to assert themselves and protect the Jewish community as one of three (or two, in West-Galicia) communities, entitled to its own self-organization and self-defense. In some respects, it was an attempt to organize national autonomy in practice and reality in a very volatile local situation. These local understandings worked better or worse in different situations, but generally speaking, they were broken once outside forces, who had no interest in local relations, arrived and tipped the balance, thereby unleashing local outbreaks of violence.

Besides exceptional cases, where the self-defense units were strong enough to resist the attack, the self-defense units disintegrated under this pressure. This in turn forced Zionists again to turn to outside forces for help. In this, they re-connected with the previous strategy of appealing to the higher authorities, reiterating claims and formulating them in a language that could have come directly from the years 1915 or 1916.

Besides the practicalities of security, especially in the case of organizing armed self-defense, the general response of the Zionists to the security threat was to make an argument for national recognition and national autonomy. Today, this might seem odd and raises the question as to how they believed that a change in the legal status of Jews would prevent outbursts of violence. However, this must be understood in the context of the Zionists' interpretation of this violence, not as a result of a kind of eternal problem that today one calls antisemitism, but as the result of a conflict between nations sharing the same territory. As nationalists who saw themselves as one nation, just as others, it would not have made sense for them to consider Poles' hatred of Jews as something qualitatively different to the conflict between Poles and Ukrainians, Germans and Czechs, and so on in the imperial era. They were a nation, and this was a national conflict – it had been since imperial times. Such a national conflict demanded a national solution, which was autonomy.

Chapter 5: Representing the Nation

Reiterating the traditional Marxist idea of 'nations without history',[1244] Rosa Luxemburg commented in late 1918 on the phenomenon of nationalism as the new paradigm for the organization of European society:

"Everywhere, nations and nationlets [*Natiönchen*] claim their right to form a state. Decayed corpses rise from hundred-year-old graves, full of springtime energies [*vom Lenztrieb erfüllt*], and peoples 'without history' who have never formed an independent state now feel the immediate urge to do so. Poles, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Czechs, Yugoslavs, ten new nations in the Caucasus; Zionists are already creating their ghetto in Palestine."[1245]

What the Polish-German-Jewish revolutionary mainly regarded as a distraction from the pressing needs of imminent world revolution, seemed indeed to be the dominant Zeitgeist by the end of the war. This interpretation of the events unfolding from late 1918 onwards was not limited to Luxemburg and it continued to dominate the way this period was understood. Eric Hobsbawn wrote that "if ever there was a moment when the nineteenth century 'principle of nationality' triumphed, it was at the end of World War I, even though this was neither predictable, nor the intention of the future victors."[1246] Whether nationalism's triumph was feared or anticipated, it appeared to be inevitable. To many, nationalism seemed to be the only viable political option of the time, the only game in town, and they had to play along. This national-teleological narrative has been severely challenged by recent historiography of the

Marcos Silber read an earlier draft of this chapter and I am incredibly grateful for his invaluable comments, critique, feedback, corrections, and encouragement!

[1244] Karl Marx and especially Friedrich Engels adopted the concept of 'nations without history' from Hegel who had argued that "[i]n the existence of a people the substantial aim is to be a state and preserve itself as such. A nation with no state formation (a mere nation), has, strictly speaking, no history, like the nations which existed before the rise of states and others which still exist in a condition of savagery." Gottfried Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel, "Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse III (1830)," in *Gottfried Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel Werke*, Vol. 10 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), 350. Engels was most explicit in this respect in his comments on the 1848 revolutions: Friedrich Engels, "Der magyarische Kampf," in *Karl Marx Friedrich Engels Werke*, Vol. 6 (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1959), 165–73. He continued to hold this view in later years. Friedrich Engels, "Brief an Eduard Bernstein in Zürich: London, 22. Febr. 1882," in *Karl Marx Friedrich Engels Werke*, Vol. 35, (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1967), 281–2. The concept had great importance in the labor movement's theoretical development in regard to nationalism. It is no coincidence that Otto Bauer concentrated much of his magisterial work on the national question on "the awakening of the nations without history". Otto Bauer, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (Vienna: Verlag der Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1907), 216. On this concept and its implications for the relation to Jewish nationalism, see: Jan Rybak, "Marxismus, jüdischer Nationalismus und Zionismus. Historische Analyse eines angespannten Verhältnisses," C*hilufim: Zeitschrift für jüdische Kulturgeschichte*, No. 20 (2016): 3–32.

[1245] Rosa Luxemburg, "Fragment über Krieg, nationale Frage und Revolution," in *Rosa Luxemburg Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. 4 (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1974), 367.

[1246] Hobsbawn, *Nations and Nationalism*, 131

region, especially in regard to the (former) Habsburg Empire.[1247] Nevertheless, the end of the war, the collapse of the old empires, and the declaration of the right to self-determination of nations – that is, the rights of those nations the great powers deemed worthy or ready for self-determination[1248] – created a powerful new ideological framework, which made national claims a primary point of reference both in terms of international law and of power politics, and turned 'the nation' into the new paradigm of international politics.[1249] As Hannah Arendt put it:

> "The whole question of human rights, therefore, was quickly and inextricably blended with the question of national emancipation; only the emancipated sovereignty of the people, of one's own people, seemed to be able to ensure them. As mankind, since the French Revolution, was conceived in the image of a family of nations, it gradually became self-evident that the people, and not the individual, was the image of man."[1250]

As human rights and agency were derived from the people – the nation – there seemed to be few alternatives to adapting to this overpowering logic. This corresponded well with the pre-war traditions of many nationalist movements, including the Zionist movement, which now saw both the necessity and the opportunity to adapt to a paradigm in both international and local politics that corresponded to the way in which they themselves conceptualized the world.

One of the most important organizational structures in this regard were the National Councils which were established in late 1918 by various nationalist movements in the contested regions of Central and Eastern Europe. As will be shown in this chapter, those structures, while evolving out of local and regional conditions, in some cases also came to gain importance in the transnational context in which the region was reorganized. In some respects, Jewish-nationalist activists, especially Zionists, attempted to follow similar patterns of national organization to their non-Jewish (Polish, Ukrainian, German, Czech, etc.) counterparts. At the core of these National Councils was the activists' claim to speak for and represent the nation and its supposed interests in its entirety. The evolution from this claim to an actual situation in which the Councils gained legitimacy in larger segments of the Jewish population was not always successful and this chapter aims to show where this was the case, where not, and what

[1247] Karen Barkey, Mark von Hagen, ed., *After Empire*; Robert Gerwarth and Uğur Ümit Üngör, "The Collapse of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires and the Brutalisation of the successor States," *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2015): 226–48; Judson, *Habsburg Empire*. See also the introduction.
[1248] Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 19–34.
[1249] Stefan Berger and Alexei Miller, ed., *Nationalizing Empires* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2015); Manela, *Wilsonian Moment*; Andreas Wimmer, *Waves of War: Nationalism, State Formation and Ethnic Exclusion in the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
[1250] Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 291.

the reasons were. I argue that success or failure – in this respect – was determined on the one hand by relations with other national movements and to a large extent by the previous engagement of the activists with the local Jewish communities during the war. The way Zionist activists could position themselves under different conditions in the immediate post-war order reflected their previous experiences and the positions they had gained during the war. The chapter therefore revisits a number of places that have already played an important role in previous chapters and looks at local discussions and efforts around the question of national (self-)representation.

The second key question is what role the national councils played in the various communities on a daily basis, what visions they had for the future of the Jewish nation in the new national framework, what their primary day-to-day activities looked like, and how they managed – or failed – to play an important role for the local Jewish population. This in turn was essential for the first problem, that is, whether the project of National Councils was successful in gaining mass support or not. The third aspect is the international frame and the exchange between local activists and the new international center in London and its efforts during the Paris Peace conference, showing how visions for the future, ideas about the role of the National Councils, and political priorities were often quite different in the leadership of the Zionist movement and amongst activists on the ground in East-Central Europe.

Uniting the People

Throughout the war, Zionists had insisted that a future peace settlement would have to grant them the right to settle in Palestine and build a national homeland there, and that it would ensure national autonomy for the Jews in Europe.[1251] With respect to the peace conference in Brest-Litovsk they had tried to implement some of these policies practically.[1252] The war itself, not least due to the welfare and relief politics that have been described in the previous chapters, put 'nation' at the center of political considerations. The later adaption to the nationalist paradigm in Central and Eastern Europe to a large extent built on experiences gained in this earlier process. The attempts to create unified organizational structures that could represent Jews more effectively as society was reshaped was neither unique to the Zionists, nor was it a special feature of East-Central Europe, although the problem of Jewish representation was undoubtedly

[1251] Zionist Organization, *Memorandum on a Peace Settlement*, December 1916, CZA, Z3/6; Julius Berger, *Letter to Markus (Rosenblüth?)*, 08.01.1918, CZA, Z3/147; Bureau de la Confédération Ouvrière Socialiste Juive Poalé-Zion, *Letter to Zionist Action Committee*, 08.10.1915, CZA, Z3/935.
[1252] Matityahu Mintz, "The Zionist Movement and the Brest-Litovsk Negotiations in January 1918," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (1980), 31–61. See also Chapter 6.

most pressing there. As part of this process, from 1916 onwards Jewish activists in the United States, Germany, German-occupied Poland and Ober Ost, the Habsburg Empire, and revolutionary Russia and Ukraine worked to create united structures that could represent the countries' Jewry. While the contexts in which these attempts took place were quite different, they nonetheless featured common problems and discussions that would later resurface in the debates over post-war Jewish representation and organization in general and the National Councils in particular. It is therefore worth taking a look at these discussions and problems to see how Zionist activists interpreted and built on them and how they related to them.

The two most important attempts to create unified Jewish structures were made in the United States and in revolutionary Russia and Ukraine. In the United States, the movement to establish Jewish National Congresses was both a transnational phenomenon, and, especially relevant here, strongly connected to practical aspects of Zionist work in Europe. From the beginning of widespread welfare activities in the East, Zionists had been confronted with the problem that the American Jewish Committee, the traditional Jewish representative body in the United States, which played a dominant role in most of the funding structures, such as the Joint, repeatedly created difficulties when it came to the allocation of funds for Zionist causes, especially for schools.[1253] From 1916 onwards, Zionists and other Jewish organizations in the United States began organizing alternative representative structures.[1254] One of the arguments used in this process drew on reports sent from East-Central Europe, complaining about the ineffectiveness of established 'philanthropic' welfare, and demanding national-productive aid instead.[1255] Uniting with other Jewish movements in order to speak on behalf of the entire nation nevertheless demanded that the Zionists put aside some of their central beliefs, and in some cases that they settle for ambiguous and more acceptable formulations (such as the demand for 'peoples' rights' rather than 'national rights') and the postponement of vital programmatic points, such as the question of Palestine.[1256] A report from the United States argued that these compromises were necessary "if one wants to talk about a general 'Jewish' Congress. Otherwise, we would have lost the right to this name and also could not claim to speak to the

[1253] *Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee*, 25.10.1915, CAHJP, M33/1; Leo Motzkin, *Letter to Victor Jacobson*, 21.11.1916, CZA Z3/143; Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Leo Motzkin*, 07.02.1917, CZA Z3/144; Leon Chasanowich, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 13.01.1917, CZA Z3/158.
[1254] On the American Jewish Congress movement, see: Jonathan Frankel, "The Jewish Socialists and the American Jewish Congress Movement," *YIVO Annual*, No. 16 (1979): 202–341; Morris Frommer, *The American Jewish Congress: A History* (PhD Thesis: Ohio State University, 1978).
[1255] For example: Exekutiv-Komitee der Zionisten Österreichs, Geschäftsführender Ausschuss, *Letter to American Jewish Congress Committee*, March 1917, CZA L6/320.
[1256] L. L. [activist in New York], *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 17.10.1916, CZA Z3/502.

world on behalf of the entirety of American Jewry."[1257] Although the American Jewish Congress only officially convened in December 1918, its Provisional Executive Committee, which was under clear Zionist dominance, already succeeded in becoming a central point of reference for the government, speaking for the supposed collective interests of American Jewry.[1258]

The other important case outside the region of this study was revolutionary Russia.[1259] It was the diaspora-nationalists around the Folkspartey (People's Party), which organized preliminary meetings with other Jewish parties in spring 1917 to prepare for a Jewish National Congress.[1260] Russian Zionists, as their leading figure Yehiel Chelnov stated in his opening speech to the first Zionist conference after the revolution in June 1917, felt obliged to participate in the congress in order to organize Russian Jewry, to raise its national consciousness, to implement national autonomy in Russia, and to participate in the building of a new, democratic Russian society and state.[1261] Of course, for him this was "only a step on our way to the final goal, the revival of our people in its ancient homeland"[1262] but the fight for the establishment of this national representative body of Russian Jewry was the order of the day. A little over a month later Chelnov travelled to Copenhagen where he reported to the Inner Zionist Action Committee about the broad support that national demands in general and Zionism in particular had gained in this context.[1263] While Zionists confirmed the Helsingfors-program, putting their efforts into *Gegenwartsarbeit*, they also saw it as their task to put the demand for a national home in Palestine on the agenda of the Congress,[1264] which sparked intense debates with non- and anti-Zionist parties, primarily the Bund.[1265] Generally speaking, however, all parties fundamentally agreed on the Russia-related demands, calling for the election of autonomous

[1257] Ibid.
[1258] Martin Rosenblüth and Leo Motzkin, *Report on the Situation in America*, 07.11.1917, CZA Z3/502. On the December 1918 conference, see: Dariusz Jezirony, "'The most momentous epochs in Jewish life' American Jewish Congress in Philadelphia (December 15–18, 1918)," *Przegląd Nauk Historycznych*, No. 3 (2018): 181–203.
[1259] Oleg Budnitskii, *Russian Jews Between the Reds and the Whites, 1917–1920* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 50–3; Shmuel Ettinger, "The Jews in Russia at the Outbreak of the Revolution," in *The Jews in the Soviet Union since 1917*, ed. Lionel Kochan (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 26–7; Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 205–47.
[1260] Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 224–5.
[1261] Yehiel Chelnov, *Speech at the Conference of Russian Zionists*, June 1917, CZA, Z3/408.
[1262] Ibid.
[1263] *Minutes of the Meeting of the Inner Zionist Action Committee in Copenhagen, 29 to 31 July 1917*, CZA, L6/592. The mood had been quite positive for the Zionists already before, as Chelnov had stated in April: Yehiel Chelnov, *Letter to Victor Jacobson*, 17./30.04.1917, CZA, Z3/408.
[1264] Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 226–7.
[1265] Ibid.; Arye Gelbard, *Der jüdische Arbeiter-Bund Rußlands im Revolutionsjahr 1917* (Vienna: Europaverlag, 1982), 140–4; Zvi Y. Gitelman, *Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics: The Jewish Section of the CPSU, 1917–1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 77–8; Lucien Wolf, *On the Political Situation and the Jewish Aspects of the Revolution*, (copy of an article from *Dielo Pomoshtshi*, 25.04.1917), July 1917, YIVO, RG 348, Folder 67;.

Jewish bodies in the various communities that would delegate their members to an all-Russian Jewish congress, governing all aspects of Jewish life.[1266]

Further south, in Ukraine, new possibilities for Jewish national organization opened up with the collapse of the Czarist Empire and the Ukrainian nationalists' struggle for independence. Whereas most Zionists initially remained rather cautious, preferring closer connections to Russia, various Jewish socialist parties responded to the new possibilities and took up the offer that the Ukrainian Central *Rada*, the revolutionary assembly in Kiev, had made in the summer of 1917 with the establishment of a secretariat for Nationality Affairs that included a Jewish Deputy Secretariat, which was later transformed into a Ministry for Jewish Affairs. Zionists did join in the process, participating in the Jewish National Assembly that constituted itself in close cooperation with this institution.[1267] In most respects this continued despite the hitherto unseen wave of pogroms that shook Ukraine, many of them perpetrated by troops loyal to the Ukrainian government. The Ukrainian case seemed to show that Jewish national autonomy in Europe was actually possible.[1268] For reasons of scope, the present study does not elaborate further here on events in Ukraine. What is important, however, is the connection between the developments in Ukraine and those in the later West Ukrainian People's Republic, and the relation between the state and the Councils.

Generally, the American, Russian, and Ukrainian cases had great ramifications for developments in the regions that are at the center of this study. From the beginning, the congress movements were seen as examples for what could be achieved in other countries. In his speech at the Russian Zionist conference, Chelnov had referenced the great successes of the Congress

---

[1266] Kenneth B. Moss, J*ewish Renaissance in the Russian Revolution* (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 2009), 44–5; Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 226–7. See also various parties' propositions: YIVO, RG 348, Folder 115; Conjoint Committee, *The Situation in Russia. The New Jewish National Council*, 17.09.1917, YIVO, RG 348 Folder 121.

[1267] Henry Abramson, "Jewish Representation in the Independent Ukrainian Governments of 1917–1920," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (1991): 542–6; Henry Abramson, *A Prayer for the Government: Ukrainians and Jews in Revolutionary Times, 1917–1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 34–40; 64–6; Jonathan Frankel, "The Dilemmas of Jewish National Autonomism: The Case of Ukraine 1917–1920," in *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective*, ed. Howard Aster and Peter J. Potichnyj (Edmonton: Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies Press University of Alberta, 1988), 263–79; Matityahu Mintz, "The Secretariat of Internationality Affairs (Sekretariiat mizhnatsional'nykh sprav) of the Ukrainian General Secretariat (1917–1918)," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1982): 25–42; Matityahu Mintz, "Kiev Zionists and the Ukrainian National Movement," in *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective*, ed. Howard Aster and Peter J. Potichnyj (Edmonton: Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies Press University of Alberta, 1988), 247–61.

[1268] For the pogroms in Ukraine, see: Leon Chasanowich, *Der Yidisher Hurbn in Ukrayne* (Berlin: Ferlag Yuda, 1920); Federation of Ukrainian Jews, ed., *The Ukraine Terror and the Jewish Peril* (London: The Federation of Ukrainian Jews, 1921); Elias Heifetz, *The Slaughter of the Jews in the Ukraine in 1919* (New York: T. Seltzer, 1921); Nahum Stiff, *Pogromen in Ukrayne* (Berlin: Wostok, 1923); Elias Tsherikover, *Antisemitizm un pogromen in Ukraine in di yorn 1917–1918* (Berlin: Yidisher Literarisher Farlag, 1923). Also: Irina Astashkevich, *Gendered Violence: Jewish Women in the Pogroms of 1917 to 1921* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018).

movement in the United States in highlighting the potential for organizing the masses of Jewry in Russia as well.[1269] Hantke tried to convince Robert Stricker about the necessity of adapting slogans in order to form a broad Jewish congress by referencing the successes in the United States and Russia.[1270] The printed version of Chelnov's speech was used as a "pamphlet for orientation" especially for the Polish party.[1271]

There were a number of locations in which Zionist activists tried to organize a broader Jewish representative body in the latter half of the war. In 1916, they tried and failed to set up a joint Jewish platform in Poland.[1272] German Zionists, as well as certain other German-Jewish organizations tried to initiate a Jewish Congress in their country from 1917 onwards, an endeavor that gained some traction after the end of the war, but eventually failed to materialize.[1273] One of the main countries where an attempt to organize a national congress movement was undertaken during the war, and which is the most relevant case for our purposes here, was in the Austrian half of the Habsburg monarchy. As David Rechter has pointed out, the idea of organizing a Jewish Congress in the monarchy emerged in the context of Emperor Karl's ascension to the throne in 1916 and the various concepts for reorganization of the Empire that came with it.[1274]

It was no coincidence that Siegmund Kaznelson, editor of the Zionist weekly newspaper *Selbstwehr* in Prague – a city in which both German and Czech nationalists were then heavily debating the possibilities for a nationally-framed reorganization of the country they shared – suggested that Jews should have a unified, representative body that could be a credible part of this conversation.[1275] This suggestion initiated a sharp debate amongst Austrian Zionists. Being aware that bringing together a larger number of Jewish organizations would be impossible on the narrow basis of a strictly Zionist program (that is, defining Jews as a nation and the demand for Palestine as a national home), Kaznelson and others were willing to withdraw some of their

[1269] Yehiel Chelnov, *Speech at the Conference of Russian Zionists*, June 1917, CZA, Z3/408.
[1270] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 16.09.1917, CZA, Z3/215.
[1271] Signatures illegible (sent from Vienna), *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 08.02.1918, CZA, L6/335.
[1272] Silber, "Development of a Joint Political Program," 211–26.
[1273] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Helene Cohn*, 16.07.1917; Martin Buber, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 15.11.1917, CZA, Z3/207; Vorläufiger Ausschuss zur Vorbereitung eines jüdischen Kongresses in Deutschland, *Leaflet "Der jüdische Volksgedanke"*, undated (probably 1918), CZA, A233/2; Ausschuß zur Vorbereitung eines jüdischen Kongresses in Deutschland, *Pamphlet "Der jüdische Kongreß in Deutschland"*, undated (probably 1918), CZA, 233/2; *Protokoll der Plenarsitzung des Zentralkomitees der Zionistischen Vereinigung für Deutschland*, 07.04.1919, CZA, Z3/718; *Jüdische Rundschau*, 15.02.1918; 19.04.1918.
[1274] David Rechter, "Autonomy and its Discontents: The Austrian Jewish Congress Movement, 1917–1918," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, Vol. 12 (1997): 163. See also: Panter, *Jüdische Erfahrungen*, 296–302; Roenblit, *Reconstructing*, 115–9.
[1275] *Selbstwehr*, 15.12.1916.

key demands, as their comrades in other countries had done. Others, like Robert Stricker, the leader of the Zionist movement in the Western parts of the Empire, who also had strong influence on the other regional parties of the monarchy, strongly objected to what he perceived as a watering down of Zionist ideals. The international center argued that he should adapt to the understandings of Jewish nationalism in a more global sense, as "in America and in Russia, where nationalism and loyalty to the folk [*Stammestreue*] are quite identical terms. It is a precondition for the congress-movement [there] that the sharp version of the national idea is relegated to the background in order to be able to bring in outside elements."[1276] In Germany, the Zionist organization had already made significant compromises in preparation for a future German Jewish Congress. They did not suggest a demand for national autonomy in the Diaspora, and in regard to Palestine, they only suggested the formulation of "free immigration" as to any other part of the Ottoman Empire.[1277]

Those who criticized these concessions mainly raised the question of what would happen to Zionism if it refrained from raising its most important demands. Indeed, it would be very positive if Austria's Jews would raise their voices as one, just as the other nations seemed to do at that time, as the constitution was about to be changed, but would they speak as a nation? And what would they say?[1278] Even Kaznelson had to admit that while he was personally in favor of the recognition of the Jews as a nation, in Bohemia and Moravia, this would practically do more harm than good, as he argued that in the current situation, public sector jobs were proportionally distributed between Germans and Czechs, among them many German- or Czech-speaking Jews. Since the percentage of Jews working in the public sector was disproportionally higher than their share of the population, an ascribed recognition of the Jews as a nation would necessarily mean that many of them would lose their jobs.[1279] Furthermore, the initiative for a Jewish Congress had also been motivated by the idea of lowering the programmatic bar to mobilize non-Zionists, who would eventually be won over for Zionist work, but who at this point still shied away from nationalist demands that were too radical.[1280] This perspective was exactly what worried many of his comrades, since they were skeptical about what kind of people would join then. They were convinced that only a congress with a clear-cut nationalist program

[1276] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Robert Stricker*, 16.09.1917, CZA, L6/328.
[1277] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Martin Buber*, 08.01.1918, CZA, Z3/207.
[1278] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich (Taussig), *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 24.09.1917, CZA, Z3/215. Of course, this was quite a misreading of the situation in which other nationalists found themselves, as they also had to struggle with many internal conflicts and contradictions and were far from representing a united national position.
[1279] Siegmund Kaznelson, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 15.11.1917, CZA, Z3/215.
[1280] Unknown Author, *Letter to Taussig*, 16.09.1917, CZA, L6/328.

would bring in good people and help the movement.[1281] The solution conceived by the opponents of congress was to insist on formulating sharp nationalist demands and conditions, which, however, none of the other Jewish organizations could possibly accept.[1282] Eventually, Kaznelson lost this debate and was purged from the leadership of the Bohemian Zionist organization.[1283] In May 1918, he wrote a frustrated letter, concluding on the failure of the Congress movement, which he regarded as a failure for Zionism itself:

"I regard it to be rather unlikely to establish any meaningful and serious work in the city [Prague]. […] In my opinion, the condition of the Zionist organization in Austria will continue to deteriorate […] after the congress with its incredible opportunities has definitively failed (and it failed due to the Zionists, not due to the non-Zionists […]) there will be no chances for a real reconstruction of the Austrian Zionist organization. It is impossible to reach the people most valuable to us, with the traditional Zionist means of agitation, and even if that would be possible, we could never keep them [in our ranks] with activities like events, collections, propaganda-events, discussions, and also not with courses on history and Hebrew, but only by engaging in serious present-day-work [*Gegenwartsarbeit*]."[1284]

The struggle over a Jewish Congress was largely concerned with the question of how to formulate Jewish nationalist, Zionist demands in the framework of the imperial order. In many regards, it reiterated earlier discussions over whether the Zionists' activism should concentrate on Palestine or on the daily needs of the Jewish population in the region, discussions that had been fought exceptionally hard due to the pressures of the war. When the imperial order collapsed, a new space was created in which the Zionists could again attempt to re-define their program, offer nationalist answers to the question of what it meant to be Jewish, and attempt to speak on behalf of their nation.

With the Central Powers' implosion in October/November 1918, in many respects the scene was set anew, creating a situation in which the national program, not only that of the Zionists, but of many national movements, almost instantly gained new relevance as it corresponded to the new possibilities created in the new situation. In a last, desperate attempt to save the Empire,

---

[1281] Taussig [?], *Letter to the Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, CZA, Z3/846. Kaznelson wrote after the project had collapsed: "I am also afraid that Dr. Weltsch and Dr. Bernfeld [who had acquired leading positions; JR] will not be successful in rebuilding the Zionist organization. The precondition for that would be to win over new people. After all, this had been one of my main motivations for my effort for the congress. Unfortunately, I found myself in an ill-fated circle [of people]." Siegmund Kaznelson, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 14.05.1918, CZA, Z3/215.
[1282] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Zionistischer Distriktverband für Böhmen und Mähren in Prag*, 15.08.1917, CZA, Z3/215; Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 18.06.1917, CZA, Z3/847.
[1283] Zionistischer Distriktverband für Böhmen in Prag, *Letter to Zionist Action Committee in Berlin*, 10.08.1917, CZA, Z3/781.
[1284] Siegmund Kaznelson, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 14.05.1918, CZA, Z3/215.

prime minister Max Hussarek (von Heinlein) promised a federal re-organization of the South Slav lands on 2 October, which was followed by Emperor Karl's manifesto for a federal-autonomist re-organization of the Cisleithanian half of the monarchy two weeks later.[1285] In this atmosphere, local nationalists, often members of the imperial parliament, constituted themselves as national councils and practically took power in the regions that they claimed was the territory of their respective nations.[1286] The Emperor still resided in Schönbrunn palace, but had lost all relevance in the process. As the secret police noted: "In the last days of his residence in Schönbrunn palace, Emperor Karl was still greeted with cheers and waves [when taking a stroll in the park] but afterwards one could often hear people say: 'Well, he is a rather nice person, but we actually do not need him. He was unable to help us.'"[1287] The Polish Liquidation Commission, residing in Cracow practically took steps to take over West Galicia, whereas East Galicia saw a quick power-grab by Ukrainian nationalists, who took over much of the region including Lwów and proclaimed the West Ukrainian People's Republic on 1 November.[1288] In Prague, the Czech National Council took power at the end of October, replacing Habsburg rule.[1289] Already on 21 October, German deputies of the *Reichsrat* had convened to proclaim themselves the Provisional National Assembly of a future German-Austrian state. On 11 November, Karl Habsburg relinquished his participation in the government and on the following day, 150,000 people were on the streets, as the republic was proclaimed.[1290] The old order also crumbled in the occupied regions of Central and Eastern Europe, with workers' councils and locally-based 'national' governments springing up in the MGG Lublin in early November and Polish nationalists demanding independence in Warsaw.

On 9 November, the German Emperor had abdicated and fled to The Netherlands under pressure from a revolutionary mass-uprising in the streets. On 11 November, the same day as the last of the Habsburg emperors gave up his throne, an armistice was signed in the West,

[1285] Helmut Rumpler, "Die Sixtusaktion und das Völkermanifest Kaiser Karls. Zur Strukturkrise des Habsburgerreiches 1917/18," in *Versailles–St. Germain–Trianon. Umbruch in Europa vor fünfzig Jahren*, ed. Karl Bosl (Munich, Vienna: Verlag Oldenbourg, 1971), 111–25. See the emperor's manifesto: *Neue Freie Presse*, 18.10.1918.
[1286] Judson, *Habsburg Empire*, 430–6.
[1287] Polizei-Direktion Wien, *Stimmungsbericht*, 13.11.1918, BPDW-A, Stimmungsberichte Februar-Dezember 1918.
[1288] Mick, *Lemberg*, 137–45; Prusin, *Nationalizing*, 75–8; Torsten Wehrhahn, *Die Westukrainische Volksrepublik. Zu den polnisch-ukrainischen Beziehungen und dem Problem der ukrainischen Staatlichkeit in den Jahren 1918 bis 1923* (Berlin: Weißensee, 2004), 102–26.
[1289] Richard Lein, "Der 'Umsturz' in Prag im Oktober 1918: Zwischen Mythen und Fakten," in *Schlaglichter auf die Geschichte der böhmischen Länder vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. David Schriffl and Niklas Perzi (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011), 185–206.
[1290] Hans Hautmann, *Geschichte der Rätebewegung in Österreich, 1918–1924* (Vienna, Zurich: Europaverlag, 1987), 237–42; Wolfgang Maderthaner, "Utopian Perspectives and Political Restraint: The Austrian Revolution in the Context of Central European Conflicts," in *From Empire to Republic: Post World War I Austria*, ed. Peter Berger, Günter Bischof, and Fritz Plasser (Innsbruck: Innsbruck University Press, 2016), 52–66.

about a week after the Dual Monarchy had signed an armistice with Italy. In Warsaw, political power was handed over to the Regency Council, who passed it on to Piłsudski on 14 November. The Germans pulled out. German troops remained in the Ober Ost region, however, in accordance with Entente wishes in order to prevent a Bolshevik offensive there. The Germans finally handed over power to local nationalists by January 1919.[1291]

What all these proclamations, coups, and power-grabs had in common was that groups of activists, who in the vast majority of cases had little to no formal democratic legitimacy – they had either been elected to parliament in 1911 (in the Austrian case) or were simply (self)-appointed – made the claim that they represented their nations' wishes and desires, that they implemented the will of the nation. Whether all members of 'the nation' agreed with all that was proclaimed in their name was of secondary importance. These new nationalist institutions effectively were the dynamic force on the ground, creating a political framework in which Zionists' ideas of national self-organization became an increasingly convincing, possibly the only, option for Jewish representation.

Nation and Community: Prague and Vienna

On 11 October (already days before the emperor's proclamation), the first page of *Jüdische Zeitung* in Vienna called on Jews to organize within the Zionist movement, since "the day on which the peoples [will] negotiate over peace and the reorganization of the world must not hit us unprepared."[1292] On the same day, the Zionist office there wrote to Berlin: "The political situation is such that – whatever may happen – it can be expected that the various nations will constitute themselves in one way or another. It is important that in this moment we will be ready so that we can demand to be included [in the process]."[1293] A key in preparing for this new situation was calling for mass assemblies of Viennese Jewry.[1294] On 14 October, Zionists called for a mass meeting in Vienna's concert hall. Well over 5,000 attendants listened to speakers of the various Jewish-nationalist parties, including orthodox and socialist, from across the monarchy who were present in the capital. All called for the recognition of the Jewish nation in Austria and its inclusion in the remaking of the country, as well as the right to a homeland in

[1291] Mieczysław B. Biskupski, *Independence Day: Myth, Symbol, and the Creation of Modern Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 23–6; Liulevicius, *German Myth*, 148–54; Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2003), 60–2.
[1292] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 11.10.1918.
[1293] Wiener Zionistisches Büro (probably Robert Weltsch), *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 11.10.1918, CZA, Z3/214.
[1294] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 17.10.1918, CZA, Z3/214.

Palestine.[1295] Zionists were – quite literally – overwhelmed by the development. Only 600 of the thousands of attendees had actually registered for the event, suggesting that the vast majority had few established connections to the movement, which could not cope organizationally with the new importance and responsibility it gained in those days.[1296] A few days later, a conference of the Zionist organization proclaimed the establishment of a Jewish National Council for Austria as "the sole legitimate representative of the Jewish nation."[1297] More than anything else, this was a formal act at this point. Robert Weltsch complained on 28 October "The saddest thing is that our crds. are not up to the task. [...] On the 20th, the National Council was installed and [up] until today nobody has done a thing. I called for a meeting of the program commission yesterday and nobody besides me and Böhm showed up."[1298]

The gradual disintegration of the empire meant that very soon the all-Austrian (imperial) perspective of the council became irrelevant.[1299] First, a 'Jewish National Council for the Bohemian State' was founded in Prague on 23 October 1918.[1300] A letter from Prague Zionists to their Moravian comrades on the same day shows that they were still not sure what would come out of this transitional process – whether the region would end up as part of Empire or of some other entity. However, the essential task was now to organize coordinated national structures which could negotiate the Jewish nation's place in it. This was not seen as an anti-imperial act. The letter ended with the words: "In the hope for a joyful future for the Jewish people in all of the ancient Austrian lands, we salute you […]."[1301] The editorial of *Selbstwehr* in Prague similarly reflected the uncertainty of the moment. On one side it made concessions to "the Czech people [which] stands at the eve of the fulfillment of all its aspirations. And we see that this people in almost its entirety has proven itself worthy for this advancement. We believe that in their new state, the Czechs will provide justice for the other peoples."[1302] At the same time, the strategic demands were drafted in reference to a reformed but persistent Habsburg state: "Austria's Jews have to concentrate on two […] tasks: On the one side the

[1295] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 18.10.1918. See also the reports in: *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 15.10.1918; *Fremden-Blatt*, 15.10.1918.
[1296] Robert Weltsch, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 16.10.1918, CZA, Z3/850.
[1297] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 25.10.1918; The same formulation in: Arthur Hantke, *Telegram to Zionist Office Warsaw*, 22.10.1918, CZA, Z3/214.
[1298] Robert Weltsch, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 28.10.1918, CZA, Z3/850.
[1299] On the debate over all-Austrian representation or representation in the various successor states, see: Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 166–173.
[1300] Max Brod, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 23.10.1918, CZA, Z3/217. The term 'Bohemian state' shows how activists there did not fully anticipate that Czech nationalists would take power and declare independence at this point. The term mirrored more an idea that the Kingdom of Bohemia would acquire a status similar to that of Hungary in the monarchy.
[1301] Zionistischer Distriktverband für Böhmen in Prag, *Letter to Zionistischer Distriktverband für Mähren*, 23.10.1918, CZA, Z3/217.
[1302] *Selbstwehr*, 25.10.1918.

official recognition of the Jewish nationality by the Austrian federal state, on the other side the expansion of the Kultusgemeinden into autonomous, commonly organized representations of Jewry."[1303] This was, again, not specific to the Zionists. At this point, nobody knew what was coming and most people indeed imagined their future in terms that they knew, on the basis of concepts of their more recent past.

In an official statement regarding its foundation, the National Council in Prague, which was made up of representatives of the Zionist party and the socialists of Poale Zion, primarily addressed 'the Czech people' and the Czech National Committee, distancing the Jews from German nationalism and promising their loyalty to the new regime.[1304] This was crucial, since previously, most so-called 'assimilated' Jews, who had usually led the communities, tended to regard themselves more as German, than as Czech. Even more importantly, Czech nationalists tended to regard Jews as being members or supporters of the opposing national camp.[1305] On 28 October, the day the Czechoslovak state was proclaimed in Prague, members of the now re-named Jewish National Council of the Czechoslovak State met with representatives of the Czech Národní Výbor (National Committee). Now, as the future of the Bohemian lands seemed clearer, *Selbstwehr*, in its report on the meeting, emphasized the strong Czech-Jewish relations: "Dr. Singer [Ludvik or Ludwig; a General Zionist here as representative of the Jewish National Council; JR] wholeheartedly congratulated the Národní Výbor, for the Czech people has achieved its national ideal, and emphasized that nationally conscious Jewry had always fought for the oppressed peoples of Austria [...]."[1306] The representatives raised demands for the recognition of the Jews as a nation by choice. "Recognition of the Jewish nationality and the freedom of confession to it. There shall be no coercion exercised on those Jews who consider themselves to be members of the Czech or German people."[1307] The meeting seems to have been a complete success. In the evening, Max Brod, one of those representatives present at the meeting, wrote an enthusiastic letter to his friend Leo Herrmann about the Committee's full support for the Jewish-national cause and the impressive success this meant for Zionism:

[1303] Ibid.
[1304] Jüdischer Nationalrat für den Tschechoslowakischen Staat, *Declaration*, 31.10.1918, CZA, Z3/217. See also: Lichtenstein, *Zionists*, ch. 2; Tatjana Lichtenstein, "'Making' Jews at Home: Zionism and the Construction of Jewish Nationality in Interwar Czechoslovakia," *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2006): 49–71.
[1305] Frankl, *Tschechischer Antisemitismus*, 27–44; Markéta Weiglová, "Jews as a Barometer of the National Struggle in Bohemia and Moravia, 1890–1910," *Judaica Bohemiae*, No. 43 (2007): 103–11.
[1306] *Selbstwehr*, 01.11.1918. See also: *Židovské Zprávy*, 07.11.1918. Ludwig/Ludvik Singer originally came from the Czech-Jewish movement which somewhat predestined him to negotiate with the Czech nationalists. See: Kieval, *Making of Czech Jewry*, 98.
[1307] *Selbstwehr*, 01.11.1918.

"The assimilationists are simply overrun by the events. Our cause is in a splendid situation, the Czechs sympathize with Zionism and might hand over the entire school system to us for its nationalization. [...] Centralist frivolities with Vienna are useless after today's events. Of course, we will continue to report to Vienna, but we will absolutely not let them interfere anymore, because only we here can decide what is necessary in the situation of the new state."[1308]

Another Zionist activist wrote on 31 October: "Things and events move quicker and more unexpectedly than we thought, and the Jews have to hurry a lot to ensure a place or a niche in the Czechoslovak state and not to be lumped together with provocative Germans and pseudo-German Jewish brats [*Judenjüngeln*]."[1309]

Besides the Czech nationalists' interests in weakening German nationalism by supporting Jewish-nationalist claims, they were undoubtedly also motivated by myths about Jewish (and specifically Zionist) power in the American administration, whose support they wanted to acquire for their new state.[1310] The official declaration of the Jews' equal rights in the new state was not proclaimed by Czech activists in Prague, but by Tomáš Masaryk, who was still in New York at the time, to the Zionist Organization of America, just as if this organization represented the Jews of the Bohemian and Moravian lands as well.[1311] The future president also declared his support for Zionism, which would lead "to the regeneration of the Jews."[1312]

This recognition, however, did not mean that the new regime necessarily made fully sure that the Jews living under it were protected. The transitional period also entailed severe threats to Jews' safety and security throughout the new state. Under the impression of anti-Jewish riots that had taken place in Písek (Pisek) in Southern Bohemia four days earlier, Max Brod had written to Leo Herrmann on 18 October, telling him that pogroms were to be expected in the Bohemian lands, as soon as the old order would collapse. If this should be the case, he would send an encoded message.[1313] On 3 December, he then wired: "Congratulations on wedding congratulations for the opening of your business."[1314] According to the code, this

[1308] Max Brod, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 28.10.1918, CZA, Z3/783. See also: Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 144.
[1309] Leo Stemicher (?), *Letter to Siegfried Bernfeld*, 31.10.1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 39. The writer's last name is not clearly legible.
[1310] Some Zionists later used this trope of alleged Jewish power in order to secure a Jewish national position in the state. See: Tatjana Lichtenstein, "Jewish Power and Powerlessness: Prague Zionists and the Paris Peace Conference," *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (2014): 2–20.
[1311] Lichtenstein, *Zionists*, 69
[1312] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Ludwig Singer*, 04.11.1918, CZA, Z3/783. Masaryk's statement had been forwarded to the Zionist Office in Copenhagen, from there to the center in Berlin, which passed it on to Singer in Prague. On Masaryk's ideas about the supposed necessity of Jewish 'regeneration', see: Kieval, *Languages of Community*, 208–10.
[1313] Max Brod, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 18.10.1918, CZA, Z3/783.
[1314] Max Brod, *Telegram to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.12.1918, CZA, Z3/783.

translated as "pogroms have broken out in Prague" and "Jewish shops are being plundered".[1315] For two days a mob rioted in the streets, attacking people they identified as Jews.[1316] The Zionists' reaction to this was mainly characterized by distancing the perpetrators from the Czechoslovak government and Czech nationalism in general. The official response published in *Židovské Zprávy* (Jewish News) and *Selbstwehr* insisted that the government had immediately stepped in and suppressed the attacks which was probably not the case.[1317] The primary concern was to maintain the good relation with the new Czech-nationalist rulers who had promised them national rights in the new state.[1318] This approach also avoided openly criticizing the participation of two heavily antisemitic parties in the new government.[1319] In another response to the excesses in Prague in December 1918, the Jewish National Council primarily blamed an unnamed German-Jewish 'assimilationist' paper for "creating a hostile atmosphere" which had allegedly led to the attacks.[1320] The main reason for this approach was that Czechoslovak Zionists had very good reasons to assume that their traditional demands for the recognition of the Jewish nation, which they had raised for a long time in vain in the Empire, would now be realized in the new multinational state and they needed to stay on good terms with the new rulers.

Their official recognition positioned Prague Zionists and their National Council at the center of the new state's Jewish society. The insecurity that accompanied this transitional period meant that many Jews saw their best option as associating themselves with the institution that was recognized by the new rulers. Even Max Brod seemed surprised and overwhelmed by these successes and wrote on 4 November:

"We have seen the complete victory of the Jewish-national idea over assimilationism, and we are part of a development that is more fantastic than we could have ever hoped for. Jewish nationalist soldiers' councils have been founded in Prague, Theresienstadt, Olmütz, Brünn. All Jewish community representations [*Kultusgemeinden*] in Moravia have accepted the Jewish-national idea and have recognized the Jewish National Council. […] The German-assimilated Jews have lost their ground and might be absorbed by us."[1321]

[1315] Max Brod, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 18.10.1918, CZA, Z3/783.
[1316] Ines Koeltzsch, "Antijüdische Straßengewalt und die semantische Konstruktion des 'Anderen' im Prag der Ersten Republik," *Judaica Bohemiae*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (2011): 78–81.
[1317] *Selbstwehr*, 06.12.1918; *Židovské Zprávy*, 11.12.1918. See also the response to the pogrom in Holešov (Holleschau) around the same days. The official protest note did not include a reference to the nationality of the perpetrators, although it was clear that they were identified as 'Czech'. *Selbstwehr*, 13.12.1918.
[1318] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Ludwig Singer*, 04.11.1918, CZA, Z3/783.
[1319] This despite internal communications in which the antisemitic propaganda of the *Česká Strana (Národně) Sociální* (known as the Nationalist-Socialist party) and the *Republikánská Strana Zemědělského a Malorolnického Lidu* (known as the Agrarian party) was seen as a severe danger. See: Unknown Author, *A declaration by Klofáčs*, late 1918, CZA, Z3/217.
[1320] Židovská Národní Rada, *Report on the events in Prague (sent to the Copenhagen and Berlin Offices of the Zionist Organization)*, December 1918, CZA, Z3/783.
[1321] Max Brod, *Letter to Leo Herrmann*, 04.11.1918, CZA, Z3/217.

Most remarkable – even to contemporary actors – was the fact that the previously very small Zionist group in Prague that within days, if not hours, had attained a central position within Jewish society, came to be a reference point for state officials, and evolved from claiming to speak on behalf of Jewry to turning this claim into a reality. By the end of November, the Jewish National Council received a pledge of loyalty by the orthodox association Sinai.[1322] In this, the organization, which claimed to represent all orthodox communities in Bohemia, followed one of its central figures, Heinrich Brody, the chief rabbi of Prague, a long-standing member of the Mizrahi movement. This nonetheless rather unusual alliance – if compared to the relation between Orthodoxy and Zionism in other regions – was, as Kateřina Čapková argues, largely due to the fact that Orthodoxy in the Bohemian lands was traditionally rather small and not able to develop a political position of its own.[1323] What also seems important, however, are the pre-1918 experiences of cooperation between Zionists and Orthodox on a practical basis.

All protests by the Prague Jewish community board were in vain. The Zionists had managed to position themselves – namely on the National Council, which was still exclusively composed of Zionists – as the sole representatives of the Jewish people.[1324] As the main Jewish point of reference for the government, the National Council, and with it the small group of Prague Zionists, increasingly spoke for a large part of the population, since numerous institutions and organizations pledged their allegiance, even if they did so for lack of alternatives. As shown in chapters 2 and 3, throughout the war, Zionists had a working relationship with the established community leadership in Prague and numerous other communities in the Czech lands. Even if the respective boards had not been happy about it, much space and support had been given to Zionist relief activities, which in turn legitimized them in the eyes of many as key factors of Jewish social life. These war-time traditions seemed to have played a key role in the newly reformulated relations between the National Council and the traditional communal structures. The National Council in Prague also quickly spread its influence across the boundaries of the city. Already on 30 October 1918, the Federation of Moravian Jewish Communities endorsed the National Council. They were followed by the Federation of Southeast Silesian Jewish Congregations less than two weeks later.[1325]

[1322] Židovská Národní Rada, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 28.11.1918, CZA, Z3/783. (Sinai: Spolek k podpoře konservativního židovství v Praze; Sinai: Society for the Support of Conservative Judaism in Prague)
[1323] Kateřina Čapková, *Czechs, Germans, Jews? National Identity and the Jews of Bohemia* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012), 194–6.
[1324] Sionistický Svaz Obvodový Král. České v Praze, *Telegram to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 05.12.1918, CZA, Z3/783. Note that the writing of the organization's name had been changed from German to Czech.
[1325] Martin J. Wein, "Zionism in Interwar Czechoslovakia: Palestino-Centrism and Landespolitik," *Judaica Bohemiae*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (2009): 26

If it was the specific national position of the National Council in the process that reshaped the region according to national criteria that gave it influence and legitimacy, retaining this legitimacy meant that the nationalist activists needed to deliver and work on improving the Jewish population's lives. This aspect of its work largely built on earlier experience gathered during wartime. While the educational endeavors that had been started during the war were continued, internal reports on the work of the National Council, drafted in December 1918 and January 1919, suggest that the strategy largely followed the traditional methods of nationalists in the Habsburg Empire, to obtain state recognition and funding for their national schools.[1326] Much of the preparation for a national education system was done by the Working Group for Jewish Education (*Arbeitskreis für Jüdische Erziehung*), which had been initiated by Siegfried Bernfeld, in coordination with the National Council.[1327] While the activists attempted to continue their war-time traditions, they did not have the means to undertake this massive new task. During the war, it had somehow worked to run a few small educational institutions in Prague, but now, the entire country's Jewish schools should be remade in a new image, while funds, qualified teachers, (Hebrew) teaching material, and most importantly official recognition were lacking.[1328] In so many respects, the Jewish National Council continued the work the Zionists had done during the war, albeit under significantly different general conditions.

The most important and most urgent social work conducted by the National Council was for refugees. For those from Galicia and Bukovina who had survived the war in the territories now named the Czechoslovak Republic, misery continued and the hostility of the local authorities against them reached new heights. The new regime instantly cut support for refugees and moved to deport them to war-torn Galicia, where pogroms were raging at the same time.[1329] Zionists were aware of the catastrophe this entailed for the refugees.[1330] In internal communications, they attributed this development to the massive antisemitism in the new

[1326] Jüdischer Nationalrat, *Report on the Activities of the Jewish National Council in Prague*, 23.12.1918, CZA, Z3/783; Židovská Národní Rada, *2nd Report on the Activities of the Jewish National Council Prague*, January 1919, CZA, Z3/783.
[1327] *Selbstwehr*, 13.12.1918. I am dealing with these educational endeavors in more depth in chapter 3.
[1328] Židovská Národní Rada (Siegmund Kaznelson, Ludwig Singer)*, Circular No. 1 to all Jewish National Councilors and Party Representatives*, 12.10.1919, CZA Z3/784. This internal document, marked "strictly confidential", also shows the complete overlap of Zionist and National Council Activities, not least, because it was sent out simultaneously to councilors and Zionist party representatives. On the subsequent development of the Jewish-national school system in Czechoslovakia, see: Lichtenstein, *Zionists*, 190–225.
[1329] Klará Habartová, "Jewish Refugees from Galicia and Bukovina in East Bohemia during World War I in the Light of the Documents of the State Administration," *Judaica Bohemiae*, No. 43 (2007/2008): 164–5.
[1330] Engel [activist in Prague], *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, December 1918, CZA, L6/85; Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Telegram to Chaim Weizmann and Nachum Sokolow*, 01.12.1918, CZA, Z3/783.

state.[1331] Refugees often pleaded to the National Council to help them stay or at least to secure their deportation to Cracow rather than to the East.[1332] Remarkably this demand was not taken up by the Zionist press in Prague and the *Jüdische Volkszeitung* in Brno simply published the authorities' proclamation, which ordered the return of the refugees without comment.[1333] Those who remained in the country were in a desperate situation. The National Council collected donations, trying to ease some of the gravest misery of some 18,000 refugees in the state.[1334] Until May 1919, the National Council in Prague managed to collect 80,000 Crowns.[1335] The National Council was also the main address for individuals who wanted to support camp inmates.[1336] Children, especially orphans, were the most affected by the situation and the National Council reported in December 1918 that it would have to take care of 400 of them still interned in Nikolsburg.[1337] It seemed that some of the children were deported in early 1919, as by March of that year a report talked about only 200 orphans left in the camp.[1338] Nonetheless, "The Jewish National Council is literally forced to summon up all its energy and time for the protection of the interests of the refugees."[1339] In April, a delegation of the National Council in Prague visited the Nikolsburg camp and reported on the dire situation there. There were no schools or kindergartens, but a lack of food and clothing, which the National Council did its best to provide.[1340] Activists also tried to get work- and residency permits for refugees, especially when during the year 1919 funds to support the camp inmates ran out.[1341]

Things also moved quickly in Vienna in the fall of 1918, where Zionist activists found themselves confined to a new German-Austrian republican entity, to be more precise, to its capital Vienna. On 4 November leaders of the Zionist and Poale Zionist parties in the city

---

[1331] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 28.11.1918, CZA, L6/371.
[1332] Kohn, *Protocol of statements by refugees in Nikolsburg: Feiwel Steinberg, Salomon Brandes, Samuel Kimmel*, 13.11.1918, CAHJP, P83/G/294.
[1333] *Jüdische Volkszeitung*, 29.11.1918. In its internal report, the National Council claimed that it had managed to postpone the deportation date from 1 to 15 December 1918 but then conceded that the main reason that many refugees could remain in the country was the chaos in the transportation system that hampered the deportations. Jüdischer Nationalrat, *Report on the Activities of the Jewish National Council in Prague*, 23.12.1918, CZA, Z3/783.
[1334] Siegmund Kaznelson (on behalf of the Jewish National Council), *Draft Thank-You Letter to Donors*, 09.02.1919, CZA Z3/783; Židovská Národní Rada, *2nd Report on the Activities of the Jewish National Council Prague*, January 1919, CZA, Z3/783.
[1335] Engel, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.05.1919, CZA, Z3/784.
[1336] See the files of the rabbi of Nikolsburg: CAHJP, CS/191.
[1337] Ibid. Other figures name 300 orphans in Nikolsburg. See: *Selbstwehr*, 20.12.1918.
[1338] Engel, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 31.03.1919, CZA, Z3/784.
[1339] Ibid.
[1340] Refugee Relief Commission, *Report on the inspection in Nikolsburg on 17 April 1919*, April 1919, CZA, Z3/784.
[1341] Židovská Národní Rada (Siegmund Kaznelson, Ludwig Singer)*, Circular No. 1 to all Jewish National Councilors and Party Representatives*, 12.10.1919, CZA, Z3/784.

founded a new Jewish National Council for German-Austria, claiming that "in this decisive moment, the national group within Jewry has taken over the leadership and will serve the interests of the people with all its force,"[1342] demanding the people's support and calling on the government to guarantee the recognition of the Jewish nation and autonomy in regard to cultural and educational matters.[1343] Notably on the day before the publication of this proclamation, the National Council had submitted a memorandum to the government of the new state, professing its loyalty:

> "The Jewish National Council for German-Austria as representative of the Jewish nation that lives as a minority in the state welcomes the creation of the free People's State [*Volksstaat*] German-Austria and professes its conviction that this free state is destined to a blessed future, which will be achieved by the harmonious cooperation of all its citizens. The citizens of the Jewish nationality will strive to give all their productive forces for the sake of this free state."[1344]

The memorandum demanded the full recognition of the Jewish nation and everyone's right to decide his or her belonging to it, national minority rights and autonomy in cultural and educational affairs, full civil equality, as well as a rather vaguely defined "guarantee for appropriate representation in the territorial representative bodies and authorities,"[1345] a demand that actually went beyond minority rights, calling for full national autonomy. The response from the government was underwhelming. There were some negotiations, especially with Christian-Social ministers who allegedly made encouraging promises.[1346] While the general Zionists around Robert Stricker and the antisemitic Christian-Socials agreed on two concepts, namely that the Jews were distinct from the German nation and that the foremost threat of the day was

---

[1342] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutsch-Österreich, *Proklamation: "An die Juden in Deutsch-Oesterreich!"*, 05.11.1918, CZA, L6/93.
[1343] Ibid. On the foundation of the Jewish National Council in Vienna: Evelyn Adunka, "Die Israelitische Kultusgemeinde und der Jüdische Nationalrat," in *Weltuntergang: Jüdisches Leben und Sterben im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Marcus G. Patka (Vienna et. al.: Styria, 2014), 149–58; Freidenreich, *Jewish Politics*, 52–3; Dieter J. Hecht, "Die jüdischnationale Partei 1918–1938," *Chilufim: Zeitschrift für Jüdische Kulturgeschichte*, No. 7 (2009): 110–2; Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 166–73; Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 151; Marsha L. Rozenblit, "Jewish Ethnicity in a New Nation State: The Crisis of Identity in the Austrian Republic," in *In Search for Jewish Identity: Jewish Identities in Germany and Austria, 1918–1933*, ed. Michael Brenner and Derek J. Penslar (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 139–40.
[1344] Präsidium des Jüdischen Nationalrates für den Deutschösterreichischen Staat, *Denkschrift an die Regierung des deutschösterreichischen Staates*, 04.11.1918, CZA, Z3/214.
[1345] Ibid. For the Viennese Jewish National Council's view of the state, see: Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 152–3.
[1346] Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 173. Rechter makes the argument that negotiations "yielded promising signs that Jewish nationality might indeed be recognized", based on three articles in *Jüdische Zeitung*. However, there is very little evidence in other sources suggesting that cooperation and recognition was something government and Christian-Social circles seriously considered. In contrast, Marsha Rozenblit suggests that "[e]ven Stricker must have realized that the government would never grant Jewish voting curias or full national autonomy […]." Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 151.

the revolutionary labor movement,[1347] these occasional promises did not materialize into a substantial government policy. Indeed, the government itself showed no interest whatsoever in the National Council or its demands.[1348] Subsequently, most of the debates within the Jewish National Council and between it and other actors in the Jewish community over the Jews' place in the new order took place in a type of a bubble with no one other than the discussants themselves engaging the demands or criticisms. This was one of the factors for which, contrary to developments in Czechoslovakia, the primary focus of the Jewish National Council in Vienna was the struggle over the Kultusgemeinde. In contrast to the situation in Prague, Viennese Zionists had previously organized much of their relief work during the war independently of the community leadership, which put the two actors in sharper conflict with one another. Additionally, since no state authority was willing to fully accept the National Council's claim to represent the Jews, nationalists had to gain these credentials from the institution that had traditionally played this role as representative.

The conflict with the Viennese Kultusgemeinde had been a constant feature during the war and had intensified when in the summer of 1918 Zvi Perez Chajes, the former chief rabbi of Trieste had attained the office of chief rabbi of Vienna.[1349] Chajes was not only a prolific scholar and religious conservative, but also an outspoken Zionist. This had already created conflicts with the presidium of the Kultusgemeinde, as well as numerous individual members,[1350] and conflicts intensified with the proclamation of the National Council and its claim to be the sole legitimate representative of the Jews. To be sure, both liberals and Orthodox did not deny the legitimacy of national demands – especially when it came to the situation in the East – and were inclined to make concessions to those who saw a future Jewish home in Palestine, but they strongly warned about the practical implications the promulgation of a Jewish nation would have in German-Austria.[1351]

[1347] On Christian-Social support for Jewish nationality: *Reichspost*, 05.11.1918; 29.11.1918. The general Zionists largely refrained from attacking the right-wing press and concentrated on decrying antisemitism in the Social Democratic press. For example, in response to *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 03.12.1918. Karl Renner was at times called a "dictator": *Jüdische Zeitung*, 22.11.1918.

[1348] The above-cited memorandum was put ad acta in the records of the chancellery without any signs that it had been consulted in decisive circles. See: Präsidium des Jüdischen Nationalrates für den Deutschösterreichischen Staat, *Denkschrift an die Regierung des deutschösterreichischen Staates*, 04.11.1918, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Archiv der Republik (ÖStA AdR), BKA Allg. Reihe 1. Rep. Karton 5324.

[1349] On Chajes, see: Moritz Rosenfeld, *H. P. Chajes' Leben und Werk* (Vienna: Self-Published, 1933). On his appointment, see the files of the IKG Vienna: Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Sitzung des Vertreterkollegiums*, 24.04.1918, CAHJP, A-W/725/2.

[1350] See for example the protest against his statement on Jews' national demands he gave to the emperor in mid-October. Various signatories, *Protest resolution to the Presidium of the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde*, 17.10.1918, CAHJP, A-W/725-4; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Protokoll der Plenar-Sitzung vom 20. Oktober 1918*, 20.10.1918, CAHJP, A-W/71.16

[1351] *Dr. Bloch's Wochenschrift*, 01.1.1918; *Jüdische Korrespondenz*, 01.11.1918; 07.11.1918.

The National Council rallied its supporters. Thousands streamed into Zionist-organized assemblies in which the demands of the National Council for the recognition of the Jewish nation, the democratization of the Kultusgemeinde and its transformation into a *Volksgemeinde* (People's Community) were raised.[1352] In addition, thousands of Jewish soldiers had returned from the fronts, laying the basis for a Jewish-nationalist militia. In fact, activists of all political persuasions began organizing militias. Socialists organized the *Volkswehr* (People's Defense), communists participated in them or organized separate Red Guards, whereas the Christian-Social-dominated city administration set up an armed *Stadtschutzwache* (City Watch).[1353] A number of Galician Jews, including some activists of Poale Zion, who increasingly saw the revolution as their most imminent task, joined the *Volkswehr* or the Red Guards.[1354] Those Jewish soldiers – by some accounts up to 5,000 men – who had not already joined any of the established militias came together in a mass assembly on 2 November (by other accounts on 4th), to form a Jewish Soldiers' Council under the leadership of the Zionists, with the aim of both ensuring calm in the city in general and of protecting Jewish lives and property in particular. As Julius Deutsch, the commander of the Socialist *Volkswehr*, would not accept an exclusively Jewish unit in its ranks, the militia became part of the *Stadtschutzwache*. There, it received arms and accommodation, and was assigned to protect vital infrastructure, such as the Northern Train Station and a number of government warehouses.[1355] The Jewish National Council called on Jews "to serve the city and their people" by enlisting.[1356] The militiamen, wearing blue-white armbands subsequently took control over the two Viennese districts with the biggest Jewish populations (the II. and the XX.) where it was supposed to guarantee safety and security on the streets.[1357] What individual militiamen expected from joining the unit is hard to tell. Eugen Froehlich (Moshe Yaacov Ben-Gavriêl), one of the commanders of the militia seemed to have regarded it as an element for both a political and spiritual revolution of the Jewish nation itself, while others seemed to have seen it merely as an opportunity to get by

[1352] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 01.11.1918.
[1353] On the organization of the militias, see: Joe C. Dixon, *Defeat and Disarmament: Allied Diplomacy and the Politics of Military Affairs in Austria, 1918–1920* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986), 37–50.
[1354] Deutschösterreichisches Staatsamt des Inneren, *Sammelakt: Rote Garde; kommunistische Umtriebe*, 9./20.11.1918, ÖStA AdR, BKA Allg. Reihe 1. Rep. Box 5066; Staatspolizei Wien, *Preßpolitischer Wochenbericht. Berichtwoche vom 31.10.–6.11.1918*, 06.11.1918, BPDW-A, Stimmungsberichte Februar bis Dezember 1918; Deutschösterreichisches Staatsamt des Inneren, *Kommunistische Versammlungen am 4. und 5. März 1919*, 06.03.1919, ÖStA AdR, BKA Allg. Reihe 1. Rep. Box 5066.
[1355] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 08.11.1918; 15.11.1918; Warburg, *Telegram to Zionist Center in Warsaw*, 08.11.1918, CZA, Z3/150; Arthur Hantke, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 06.11.1918, CZA, Z3/214. See also: Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 173–6.
[1356] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Leaflet: "Juden! Jüdische Soldaten, Arbeiter, Angestellte, Bürger, Jugend!"*, November 1918, CZA, Z3/214.
[1357] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Bericht über die Tätigkeit des Jüdischen Nationalrates für Deutschösterreich im Ersten Monat seines Bestandes*, 10.12.1918, CZA, L6/93.

in those hard times.[1358] In practice, one of the militia's main tasks was to serve as an instrument of the Jewish National Council to assert its power on the Jewish street. The resolution adopted by the soldiers' meeting stated:

"We Jewish soldiers stand together as national comrades (*Volksgenossen*), carry the blue-white ribbon on our caps and make ourselves available to the Jewish National Council. […] From our fathers and brothers in civilian clothes too, for whose honor we have bled, we demand subordination under the Jewish National Council."[1359]

Under this pressure – *Jüdische Rundschau* would later write that "only with difficulty could an assembly of 2,000 soldiers be prevented from staging a coup against the Kultusgemeinde"[1360] – Zionists presented an ultimatum to the *ancien régime*: community board president Alfred Stern would have to step down, and a permanent commission made up of three members of each the National Council and the old liberal leadership would develop an electoral reform which – Zionists believed – would eventually grant them the majority in forthcoming elections and allow them to transform the *Gemeinde*.[1361] On 5 November Alfred Stern was forced to resign: "I was told that the precondition for peace in the Kultusgemeinde is the resignation of the president. If this resignation would not take place, there would be street battles, blood would flow."[1362] He decided to step down in order to avoid bloodshed but he continued to warn against the devastating effects of the policies of the Jewish National Council, especially the demand for national autonomy, and the declaration of a distinction between Jews and Germans. Still, he was aware that by allowing this compromise, nationalism would gain strength: "Should the National Council be recognized by the Kultusgemeinde today, not as equal but as dominant, dictating the laws unto the Jewish population? By doing so, the National Council will really be legitimized in the eyes of the world."[1363] The subsequent agreement in fact tasked the commission with drafting an electoral reform.[1364]

Strengthened by this victory, Zionists and the National Council continued to mobilize the streets, now mainly directed towards the government, fighting for the recognition of Jews

[1358] Eugen Froehlich (Moshe Yaacov Ben-Gavriêl), *Tagebücher 1915 bis 1927* (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 1999), 59–60.
[1359] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 08.11.1918.
[1360] *Jüdische Rundschau*, 13.06.1919.
[1361] Adunka, "Israelitische Kultusgemeinde," 149–58; Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 179–86.
[1362] Alfred Stern, *Rede des Präsidenten Dr. Stern. Plenarsitzung vom 5. November 1918*, 05.11.1918, CAHJP, A-W/71.16.
[1363] Ibid. At the next meeting of the IKG's board, on 13 November, Stern was named Honorary President. He died a few weeks later on 1 December. Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Protokoll der Plenar-Sitzung vom 13. November 1918*, 13.11.1918, CAHJP, A-W/71.16.
[1364] See the minutes of the *Permanenzkommission*'s meetings on 27 February, 13 March, 26 March, 3 April, 10 April, 19 May, 26 May 1919. All in: CAHJP, A-W/71.17.

as a nation, while at the same time guaranteeing their civic rights as citizens of a state that defined itself as nationally German. Both the majority of the Kultusgemeinde board and the liberal Austrian-Israelite Union, protested vehemently against the possible recognition of Jews as a nation, perceiving this as a danger to their status.[1365] The National Council reacted by stating that of course the profession of Jewish nationality and full civic rights was not a contradiction and that the actual cases in which state authorities had stated that German nationality was the precondition for acquiring citizenship were mere "misunderstandings"[1366] which turned out to be a dangerous misreading of the situation. The question of citizenship, however, was most pressing in the case of the tens of thousands of refugees who were still in Vienna. As in the Czechoslovak state, the new regime moved quickly to deport the refugees.[1367] Zionists directed their criticism against this measure mainly because they had originally expected (and promised) that former imperial citizens resident in the new state would be able to instantly acquire German-Austrian citizenship and stay in the city,[1368] which was evidently not the case.[1369] The representatives of the Jewish National Council of East Galicia, together with the Viennese Zionists tried to intervene but the government insisted that due to the shortages of basic goods, Vienna would need to get rid of the refugees.[1370]

Scholars have argued that the Jews of Vienna mourned the downfall of the monarchy and had serious difficulties defining their relation to the new state and its new ethnocentric identity.[1371] While this was probably the case for many Viennese Jews, Zionists continued to raise very similar demands to those they had raised in imperial times. They argued that national identity and loyal belonging to the state were not in contradiction, as they had not been until very recently, and that the new German-Austrian state should recognize the Jewish nation. The same was true in other fields. Whereas German-nationalist university students demanded the

[1365] Vorstand der Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Proclamation "An die Mitglieder der Wiener israelitischen Kultusgemeinde"*, November 1918, CAHJP, A-W/79; Oesterreichisch-Israelitische Union, *Letter to Staatsrat der deutsch-österreichischen Republik*, 30.11.1918, ÖStA AdR, BKA Allg. Reihe 1. Rep. Box 5324.
[1366] Jüdischer Nationalrat Wien, *Circular*, 08.12.1918, RGVA-OA, f727k o1 d5. The most important case in this respect was the oath of loyalty expected from employees of the state railways, who should confess their loyalty to the German nation. As Robert Stricker, the head of Austria's Zionists himself had a professional background at the railways – he was *Staatsbahningenieur* – this, of course, was a major issue. Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Leaflet: "An die jüdischen Staatsbahnbediensteten"*, 21.11.1918, CAHJP, AU/120.
[1367] Hoffmann-Holter, *Abreisendmachung*, 225–39; Albert Lichtblau, "Zufluchtsort Wien: Jüdische Flüchtlinge aus Galizien und der Bukowina," in *Weltuntergang: Jüdisches Leben und Sterben im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Markus G. Patka (Vienna, Styria Premium, 2014), 134–43; Pauley, *Political Antisemitism*, 154.
[1368] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 20.12.1918.
[1369] Jüdisches Pressbureau Wien, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.05.1919, CZA, L6/98.
[1370] Delegation of the Jewish National Council for East Galicia, *The Fate of the Jewish Refugees*, 20.05.1919, JDC NY AR, 1919-1921/4/19/1/139.1.
[1371] Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 162–4; Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 153–9.

expulsion of "foreign" Jews from the university,[1372] Zionist students declared in a conversation with the rector that "while fully maintaining the German character of the University of Vienna [we demand] the immediate recognition of the Jewish nation".[1373] Robert Stricker, who was elected to the Constituent Assembly on 16 February 1919[1374] put forward this strategy in his new role in parliament. He was the only parliamentarian who voted against German-Austria's association with Germany.[1375] However, his arguments did not revolve around matters of identity and belonging but had a purely technical nature, although arguably, this was the only way he could have phrased them in this environment.[1376]

In many ways, Zionists in Vienna "behaved as if Habsburg Austria still existed."[1377] Indeed, one can argue this was in many respects due to the fact that not much had actually changed. Eugen Hoeflich wrote in his diary on 13 November 1918: "Austria is a Republic. Strange: I do not feel any new sentiments, and I believe there are no new ones forthcoming. What is happening is ridiculous."[1378] Their arguments for the recognition of the Jewish nation, alongside the dominant German nation, were not much different to those they had raised in imperial times. Against the protests of the Community Board,[1379] the Jewish National Council proclaimed: "The transformation which brings the final liberation of the world from all oppression and foreign rule also has to liberate the Jews from their ignominious position." Demanding the recognition of the Jewish nation, minority rights, and the transformation of the religious Kultusgemeinde into a people's community (*Volksgemeinde*) it declared: "Through such institutions we create the possibility for the free development of our national individuality, while at the same time we create the preconditions for a frictionless and dignified coexistence with the other nation of the state."[1380] This was essentially a reiteration of the very same

[1372] For example: Polizeidirektion Wien, *Report "Versammlung der Hochschüler Wiens"*, 27.11.118, ÖStA AdR, BKA Allg. Reihe 1. Republik Karton 2435.
[1373] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 15.11.1918.
[1374] Kathrin Glösel, "Biographien: Robert Stricker (1879–1944)," in *Jüdische Identitäten und Antisemitische Politiken im österreichischen Parlament, 1861–1933*, ed. Saskia Sachowitsch and Eva Kreisky (Vienna: Böhlau, 2017), 266. The Jewish Press Bureau praised Stricker's 7,000 (in fact 7,760) votes as evidence for the strength of Jewish nationalism in the new country, arguing that the 'assimilationist' candidate Dr. Ofner only received 5,000 votes, of which they were sure at least 2,000 came from non-Jewish voters. Jüdisches Pressbureau Wien, *Die Wahlen zur Deutschösterreichischen Nationalversammlung*, February 1919 (exact date illegible), CZA, L6/93.
[1375] Hödl, *Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt,* 297.
[1376] Robert Stricker, "Rede auf der 3. Sitzung der Konstituierenden Nationalversammlung für Deutschösterreich am 12. März 1919," in *Stenographische Protokolle über die Sitzungen der konstituierenden Nationalversammlung der Republik Österreich* (Vienna: Deutschösterreichische Staatsdruckerei, 1919), 49–50.
[1377] Rozenblit, *Reconstructing*, 155.
[1378] Hoeflich, *Tagebücher*, 59.
[1379] Vorstand der Wiener Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde, *Kundgebung der Wiener israelitischen Kultusgemeinde*, 05.11.1918, CAHJP, A-W/79
[1380] Jüdischer Nationalrat für Deutschösterreich, *Proclamation*, early November 1918, CAHJP, A-W/79.

argument that had been raised under the imperial state, and just as in the old imperial state, none of the authorities was willing to make any concessions in this respect.

Comparing the experiences in Prague and Vienna shows that eventually two factors were decisive for the success or failure of the National Councils: recognition by the state and the question of political and institutional alternatives available to the Jewish community. As the government of the newly founded German-Austrian state was unwilling to recognize the Jewish National Council, let alone the Jewish nation as such, Zionists had no other alternative than to concentrate their energies on other aspects of their program, in particular the transformation of the Jewish community and its institutions into a national community. In this respect, high hopes and initial successes were met with rather sobering results. The reform of the Kultusgemeinde's electoral bylaws included some democratization,[1381] but Jews who were now citizens of other countries still had no voting rights, which meant that the social group amongst which Zionists had gained their main basis in the previous years was excluded from voting. The majority of women were also excluded from the vote.[1382] Amongst the approximately 300,000 Jews in Vienna, only between 18,000 and 19,000 were allowed to vote, of which around fifty-five percent cast their ballot. The joint Zionist list, which included several other nationalist factions, massively increased its share of the vote and the mandates, but failed to win the expected majority, which remained in the hands of the liberals.[1383] The elections to parliament in October of that year brought similar results. Zionists increased their number of votes from 7,760 at the elections to the Constituent National Assembly in February 1919 to around 20,000 (18,000 of them in Vienna), but due to the changed electoral laws that favored big parties, Robert Stricker lost his mandate.[1384]

In many regards, Zionists and the National Council were extremely successful in adapting to the new nationally-defined space in Bohemia and Moravia. By telling the Czech nationalists what they wanted to hear, by pledging loyalty to the new state, they negotiated the

[1381] Hecht, *Feminismus und Zionismus*, 217.
[1382] See the protest of the Zionist members of the Kultusgemeinde-board after the elections: Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, *Beilage zum Protokolle der Plenarsitzung vom 30. September 1920, Punkt 3b*, 30.09.1920, CAHJP, A-W/71.17.
[1383] Total votes: 10,553. Liberals: 5,912 votes (56 percent and 20 mandates; down from 34); Zionists: 3,714 votes (35 percent and 13 mandates; up from 2); Orthodox: 878 votes (8.32 percent and 3 mandates; up from 0). 300 votes were invalid. *Jüdische Zeitung*, 09.07.1920; *Jüdische Korrespondenz*, 02.07.1920; *Wiener Morgenzeitung*, 28.06.1920. There are no reliable figures for the total number of Jews in the city at this point. The numner of 300,000 is according to the above-cited article of *Jüdische Zeitung*. *Jüdische Korrspondenz* estimated 290,000 people. The number seems very high and might have been inflated by the papers' editors in order to illustrate the undemocratic nature of the elections and that the newly elected board was not representative of the community.
[1384] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 29.10.1920; *Wiener Abendpost: Beilage zur Wiener Zeitung*, 18.10.1920; *Wiener Morgenzeitung*, 18.10.1920; 19.10.1920.

place of the Jews within the new order, thereby forcing many not necessarily nationally minded Jews to join them, since, who else would represent them? This was also reflected in the elections to the Prague Jewish community board, in which the Zionist list won an absolute majority of the vote,[1385] and notably in the formal recognition of Jewish nationality by the new regime.[1386] At the same time, these practices for a large part reflected imperial traditions and followed the established way in which the various nationalist movements had related to the imperial regime before the war. To quote again from the above-cited letter to Siegfried Bernfeld, "[w]e will have no other option than to feel as loyal citizens of this state, which will treat us at least like the old Austria of unblessed memory, and to avoid anything that may lead to unpleasant confusions [of us] with other peoples who are the archenemies of the Czech people."[1387] The main difference was that now no other Jewish institution or political movement could offer any credible alternative whatsoever. Not only did the new nationalized order of the land fit the Zionist concepts and they were the first to adapt to it, but the old leadership of the Community had lost much of its standing within Jewish society during the war. One case in point was the failure of the community leadership to organize large-scale relief for both locals and refugees. Zionists had criticized them throughout the war and had been handed a number of responsibilities during those years. Now, it seemed, was the time when they could step in and show how their concepts and promises were more credible and realistic. It is important to note, nonetheless, that despite the great differences in the developments in Vienna and Prague, one outcome was notably similar: neither of the National Councils could prevent the expulsion of the refugees and secure their status in the new states.

East Galicia: Survival as a Nation

The national conflict that would plunge East Galicia into sectarian warfare had already been foreshadowed during the war. As the central authorities grew increasingly incapable of providing stability, security, and provision, large segments of the local population increasingly referred to their respective national groups as agents in the struggle over distribution, and as the

[1385] In Greater Prague, Zionists gained 8,046 votes (of 15,000 cast votes), totalling 53.64 percent. *Židovské Zprávy*, 24.06.1919. It was reported as 60 percent to Zionists in other countries. Sionistický Svaz Obvodový Král. České v Praze, *Telegram to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 20.06.1919, CZA Z3/783; *Jüdische Rundschau*, 24.06.1919.
[1386] This was most notably the case in respect to the census, where Jews had the option to opt for either nationality, including Jewish. Lichtenstein, *Zionists*, ch. 3.
[1387] Leo Stemicher (?), *Letter to Siegfried Bernfeld*, 31.10.1918, YIVO, RG 6 Folder 39.

Empire collapsed, the National Councils filled the gap.[1388] Nationalists had anticipated a national re-organization of the region already before the collapse of the Empire.[1389] East Galician Zionists had raised this demand very explicitly at their regional conference in Lwów in August 1918,[1390] regarding "the realization of national autonomy in Austria as the only way out of the chaos of continuous national strife and the increasingly escalating crisis of state" and calling for the creation of autonomous legal national bodies for all national groups.[1391] Emperor Karl's manifesto of 16 October, which promised the re-organization of the Cisleithanian half of the monarchy as a federal state, seemed not to have been too important in and by itself, although it was welcomed by Zionists, but it helped to speed up the process of nationalizing public discourse and action.[1392] Although the manifesto did call for the formation of National Councils (made up of members of the Reichsrat), local dynamics took over quickly. As Zionist activist and historian Nathan Gelber noted, everyone had soon lost interest in ideas of autonomy within the old state.[1393] Zionists – as everyone else for that matter – were unsure how things would develop, in what country, behind which borders they would eventually find themselves. What was clear, however, was that they would need to organize the Jews as one of the national groups, just as all the others, both for the sake of securing the nation's place in the new order and to establish Zionism as a dominant force in Jewish political and social life.[1394]

In October 1918 Zionists were not in a very good position to lead the Jewish nation of East Galicia. Years of deprivation, isolation, organizational weakness, and sacrifices had created a situation in which factional and personal infighting paralyzed the regional party.[1395] On 15 October, Michal Ringel, until then the head of the party's executive, stepped down.[1396] This crisis eventually created a situation in which "the Zionist organization in Galicia is without a united leadership and the conflicts amongst the various comrades lead to a complete paralysis of the work – in a situation in which the fate of national Jewry and the Jewish population of

[1388] This has been shown in illuminating local studies, for instance on Lwów and Przemyśl. Mick, *Lemberg*, 137–93; Fahey, "From Imperial to National," 195–218.
[1389] Thakur-Smolarek, *Erste Weltkrieg*, 350–453
[1390] *Jüdische Rundschau*, 30.08.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 30.08.1918; Leon Reich, P*rivate Notes on the conference of the Galician Zionist Organization*, 18.08.1918, CZA, A14/17.
[1391] Unknown Author, *Report on the conference of the party council of the Zionist Organization in Galicia in Lwów on 18 August*, undated, CZA, F3/23.
[1392] *Nowy Dziennik*, 17.10.1918; 18.10.1918.
[1393] Nathan Michael Gelber, *Die nationale Autonomie der Juden in Ostgalizien während der Ukrainischen Republik*, 1918–1919, unpublished manuscript, undated, CAHJP, P83/E/82.
[1394] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 17.10.1918, CZA, Z3/214.
[1395] Leon Reich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 24.08.1918, CZA, Z3/507; Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Leon Reich*, 21.10.1918, CZA, Z3/507; Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Central Committee of Galician Zionists*, 21.10.1918, CZA, Z3/816.
[1396] Michal Ringel, *Letter to Executive of the Zionist Organization of Galicia in Lwów*, 15.10.1918, CZA, Z3/816.

Galicia in general for a long time can be shaped."[1397] The most important outcome of this situation for our purposes here was that Zionist activists faced the new developments not as a unified party with a coherent strategy but rather as individuals and as local groups with rather different outlooks and a lot of animosities dividing them. Local activists acted according to local needs and possibilities, rather than on the basis of a joint program or a united party-line for reshaping the region. When on 1 November, Ukrainian nationalist forces, aided by the remnants of the disintegrating Austrian state, took over most of the region without facing any serious resistance by the surprised and overwhelmed Polish forces,[1398] Zionist reactions to this new situation depended largely on local circumstances.

After brief skirmishes between Polish and Ukrainian forces in Przemyśl on 31 October and 1 November, during which both took positions in the town, the two opposing sides agreed on a truce and even on the establishment of a joint administration of the city.[1399] This multinational administration, promised to safeguard all citizens by establishing a multinational city guard.[1400] On 3 November, Zionist activists formed a People's Council (*Żydowska Rada Ludowa*) and a militia, which I have already mentioned in the previous chapter. The organization's first act was to arrest the members of the Kahal leadership and to declare its will to represent and protect the Jewish population just as the Polish and Ukrainian national councils and militias did for theirs.[1401] The poster announcing the establishment of the Jewish Peoples' Council stated:

"By the will of all parties and social groups, the Jewish Peoples' Council was established in our city, [and] it took over all functions of the former religious authority. Representatives of the Polish and Ukrainian peoples recognized the Jewish People's Council as the only representative of the Jewish population. In agreement with Polish and Ukrainian representatives it took over the Jewish militia as a security guard to look after the safety and peace of the Jewish districts. […] Jews! At this serious moment, we are calling you all to join your only representative [body]. In this historical moment the Jewish people will safeguard its vital interests and the transformation of the now inexistent 'Israelite Religious Community' into a truly democratic Jewish community."[1402]

[1397] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Leon Reich*, 29.10.1918, CZA, Z3/816.
[1398] Tymczasowy Komitet Rządowy we Lwowie, *Dokumenty współudziału władz austriackich w zamachu ukraińskim na Lwów, [memoriału cz. III]*, 1918/1919, AAN, 1774/0/3/22; Tymczasowy Komitet Rządowy we Lwowie, *Mémoire sur la complicité des autorités autrichiennes*, 1919, AAN, 1774/0/1/4.
[1399] Dunagan, *Lost World*, 357–60; Fahey, "Imperial to National," 213–4.
[1400] Volodymyr Blazhkovski, Herman Liberman, Feliks Pryemski, Dr Leonard Tarnavski, Andriy Alyskevych, Volodymyr Zahajkevych, and Ivan Zhovnir Evhen Forostyna (the administrative commission), *Leaflet "Do naselennya mista i povitu"*, 02.11.1918, APPr, 397/0/2823.
[1401] *Nowy Dziennik*, 06.11.1918. See also: Fahey, "Imperial to National," 213–4.
[1402] Żydowska Rada Ludowa, *Poster "Żydzi!"*, APPr, 140/0/3/28.

This statement illustrates not only the positive relations – supposedly amongst equals – to Polish and Ukrainian nationalists, but also that the task of the Council internally was for the nationalization of the Jewish community itself.[1403] On the same day, the representatives of the People's Council joined Polish and Ukrainian nationalists in the multi-national city-administration.[1404] Here was an apparent initial understanding amongst the three groups in the city – Ukrainians, Poles, and Jews – that one could find an agreement for keeping the city largely out of conflict and protecting the safety and property of all citizens.[1405] The local understanding was destroyed as outside Ukrainian military units took the city and arrested the Polish members of the city administration on 3 November. Polish volunteers mobilized and the Jewish militia remained intact, continuing to protect the Jewish district.[1406]

The Jewish People's Council at the same time maintained both its neutrality and its relatively good relations with both their Ukrainian and Polish counterparts, even once the city was divided along the San river.[1407] On 5 November the Polish National Council publicly affirmed its agreement and cooperation with the Jewish People's Council.[1408] On the same day, the local Ukrainian-nationalist paper *Volya* (Will) argued that there should be a good understanding with the Jews, since they respected the Ukrainian National Council and did not seek to rule over the city.[1409] Even while the city was split along the river San and the Jewish People's Council and militia were mainly concentrated on the Ukrainian-ruled eastern side of the city, they maintained regular and apparently well-functioning contact with its Polish counterpart, coordinating about matters that affected both communities.[1410]

But it was not the local National Councils but the much more powerful Polish expeditionary forces of Michał Tokarzewski that took over. I have described the outburst of anti-Jewish violence in the previous chapter. To illustrate the local dynamics of nationalization here, one event is of special interest. On 17 November Tokarzewski demanded from the Jewish

[1403] This was similar to other places, such as Vienna, but also very similar to the task other national movements faced in that period.
[1404] *Nowy Dziennik*, 06.11.1918.
[1405] See for example the joint leaflet of the multinational city-administration calling for peace in the city: Volodymyr Blazhkovski, Herman Liberman, Feliks Pryemski, Dr Leonard Tarnavski, Andriy Alyskevych, Volodymyr Zahajkevych, and Ivan Zhovnir Evhen Forostyna, *Leaflet "Do naselennya mista i povitu"*, 02.11.1918, APPr, 397/0/2823.
[1406] Polska Komenda miasta, *Leaflet "Rozkal"*, 04.11.1918, APPr, 397/0/111.
[1407] Sala Finkelhammer, *Report on the Pogrom in Przemyśl*, 18.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448, Folder 17; *Nowy Dziennik*, 19.11.1918.
[1408] Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu, *Leaflet: "Odezwa!"*, APPr, 397/0/2824.
[1409] *Volya*, 05.11.1918. I am very grateful to Galyna Kostiukevych for helping me with the translation of Ukrainian-language sources.
[1410] Żydowska Rada Ludowa w Przemyślu, *Letter to Polskiej Rady Narodowej w Przemyślu*, 05.11.1918, APPr, 140/0/2/12; Żydowska Rada Ludowa w Przemyślu, *Letter to Szanownej Rady Narodowej Polskiej w Przemyślu*, 08.11.1918, APPr, 140/0/2/12; Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu, *Letter to Żydowska Rada Ludowa w Przemyślu*, 09.11.1918, APPr, 140/0/2/12.

population to pay three million Crowns as a deposit (*kaucyi*), otherwise "I will order my military units to take the 3 million Crowns from the Jewish population."[1411] This reflects on the dynamic of nationalization in the region. Although the proclamation avoided the term 'Jewish people' or 'nation' but used 'of mosaic faith' (*wyzania mojżeszowego*) it was directed at every Jew, even those whom Jewish nationalists had traditionally attacked as pro-Polish 'assimilationists'. And while Tokarzewski demanded the money from the 'Jewish community' (*gmine żydowska*), the addressee was the Jewish People's Council.[1412] The Jewish People's Council again built on the local understanding that had existed only two weeks before and asked the Polish National Council for support. It was only the pressure of the local Polish Nationalists that eventually prevented the enforcement, with Tokarzewski withdrawing the order two days later due to "the presentation [*przedstawienie*] of the Polish National Council in Przemyśl and after guarantee by the Jewish People's Council to ensure that the Jewish population is neutral and not hostile to the Polish Armed Forces".[1413] This did not fully prevent violence by Polish troops, but, again, shows how the local dynamics of the National or People's Councils could function.[1414]

In subsequent months, despite the horrific experiences with the Polish army, Zionists locally resumed their relations with the Polish National Council, not least because there was no alternative to doing so. The Polish National Council had taken over the administration of the city and was responsible for the distribution of foodstuff and outside aid.[1415] Only days after Tokarzewski had left the town, marching his troops to Lwów, the Polish National Council set up a new city council. It eventually turned out to be Polish-dominated and without Ukrainian representation, but there was a significant participation of members of the Jewish People's Council.[1416]

[1411] Michał Tokarzewski, *Odezwa do ludnosci Przemyśla, wyznania mojżeszowego*, 17.11.1918, APPr. 397/0/511. Also in: CZA L6/110. The Polish Liquidation Commission's representatives in Vienna denied that this order had been given by Tokarzewski. See: Pełnomocnik Głównego Urzędu Likwidacyjnego w Wiedniu, *Telegram*, 21.11.1918, AAN, 36/0/3/44.

[1412] Ibid. See also the statement of the Polish National Council of Przemyśl in the local Polish-nationalist paper *Ziemia Przemyśka* (The soil/land of Przemyśl): *Ziemia Przemyska*, 19.11.1918.

[1413] Michał Tokrazewski, *Poster: "Ogłoszenie"*, 19.11.1918, APPr, 397/0/512; *Ziemia Przemyska*, 19.11.1918. Also: Cohen, *Report,* 21–2.

[1414] Sala Finkelhammer, *Report on the Pogrom in Przemyśl*, 18.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448, Folder 17; *Nowy Dziennik*, 19.11.1918; Syjonistyczny Komitet w Przemyślu, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 17.12.1918, CZA L6/371. I elaborate on the pogroms and Jewish self-defense in chapter 4.

[1415] Wydział Wykonawczy Polskiej Rady Narodowe, *Do Ludnosci!*, 05.12.1918, APPr, 140/0/1/3; Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu, *Leaflet "Do ludności m. Przemyśla!"*, APPr, 140/0/3/23. See also the files of the welfare-office of the Polish National Council: APPr, 140/0/2/20.

[1416] APPr, 140/0/1/4. Local activists began to publish *Der Prsemysler Yud* (The Przemyśl Jew) from February 1919 onwards. It generally shows a working agreement with the local Polish authorities, although the paper was subject to strict censorship and a number of issues were confiscated (07.03.1919; 16.05.1919; 30.05.1919; 13.06.1919)

There were both similarities and differences in the events in Lwów. In contrast to their comrades in Przemyśl, Zionists in East Galicia's biggest city rather than trying to replace the Kahal, coordinated with its leadership to establish a joint Jewish security committee, set up a militia, and to begin negotiations with Ukrainian authorities and the Polish National Committee.[1417] To be sure, contrary to Przemyśl, these were only the remnants of a Kahal-leadership as most members of its board had fled the city in previous years, whereas Zionist activists had already gained a vitally important position in the Jewish community, due to their relief activities during the war.[1418] It therefore seemed unnecessary for nationalists to assert their position against the Kahal by force. It was only when Polish forces moved into the city on 20 November that Zionists, Poale Zionists, Mizrahi and members of the Jewish Socialist Party (Żydowska Partia Socjalistyczna; ŻPS) formed a National Council claiming to speak on behalf of the Jewish nation in the city, thereby sidelining the Kahal.[1419] After the pogroms, much of the Polish authorities' repression was directed against members of the National Council, whom, as the self-proclaimed representatives of the city's Jews, they deemed responsible for the Jews' alleged treacherous actions (for both their 'treacherous neutrality' and for siding with the Ukrainians). An unnamed activist wrote:

"In the night of 11 to 12 December, between 1 and 3 [o'clock] in the night we were dragged out of our beds by Polish military patrols and walked to the train station from where we were transported with an escort to Przemyśl. There at the train station, a Polish officer told us that following higher orders, we were taken as hostages who should be held responsible for the behavior of the Jewish population towards the Polish troops."[1420]

Under massive repression from the new Polish rulers the National Council appealed to foreign powers for aid, for instance, in a telegram sent on 22 December 1918:

"Jewish National Council for East Galicia announces [its] constitution as only legitimate representative of eight hundred thousand Jews [who are] currently due to the civil war deprived [of] their political freedoms under

[1417] Jewish National Council for East Galicia in Lwów, *Report on the Situation in Lwów since 1 November*, 27.12.1918, CZA, F3/26. See also: Kapinski, Fuchs, Reiss, and Alexandrowicz, *Verabredung zwischen der Juedischen Miliz und dem Polnischen Heer, getroffen am 10. November 1918 in Lemberg*, 10.11.1918, YIVO, RG 448 Folder 17.
[1418] See Chapter 2.
[1419] Jewish National Council for East Galicia in Lwów, *Report on the Situation in Lwów since 1 November*, 27.12.1918, CZA, F3/26.
[1420] Unknown Author, *Letter from Przemyśl*, 12.12.1918, CZA F3/23. It is unclear who was the addressee of this letter.

pressure and in fear of their lives hope that with reordering of [the] country one will not decide without the Jews."[1421]

This repression by Polish rulers, meant that the Jewish National Councils in most places under Polish control were in no position to negotiate with the government over major political questions, but were instead confined to working locally amongst the Jewish population. This meant especially the nationalization of the community's institutions and providing relief for those suffering from the effects of war and pogroms, that is, a continuation of the work that they had done in the previous years, albeit under new conditions. Activists of the National Council concentrated much of their energy on trying to convince the Jewish public that it was the old 'assimilationist' leadership of the Kahal that had led to the catastrophe of the Jews being crushed between the Poles and the Ukrainians, for which, as the paper of Poale Zion in Lwów put it: "we have to fight against the lazy assimilationist-Kahal-clique, therefore our masses have to take the Kahal in our hands. The Kahal has to become the cell from which our autonomous national organism will develop."[1422] The pogroms, in which Jews had been killed as Jews, were proof that 'assimilation' had failed, that Jews could only rely on themselves and had to organize themselves nationally.[1423]

However, this claim needed to be followed by deeds and just as during the war, the main field in which Zionists – and anyone else for that matter – had to deliver, was relief. The matter of who would distribute relief funds was essential, since if the 'assimilationists' "would be in control of relief funds, this would lead to a strengthening of the prestige of the assimilationist rulers and could be used to damage the authority of the Jewish-nationals."[1424] The constant insistence that the National Councils were the only legitimate representatives of East Galician Jewry, was therefore not only a matter of principle, but also strongly connected to the question of who would receive the relief funds, since the donors would likely prefer to hand them to a body representing all Jews. From early December onwards, Zionists had urged all Jewish institutions to send relief money exclusively to the Jewish National Council in Vienna, who would then pass it on to its counterparts in East Galicia.[1425] Activists were content with the

[1421] Jewish National Council for East Galicia, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 22.12.1918, CZA, L6/87. The leaders of the Zionist Organization in the city were instantly arrested by the Polish army and imprisoned in Cracow. See: Leon Reich, *Letter to Inner Zionist Action Committee*, 18.01.1919, CZA, Z3/349. The letter was sent from the prison in Cracow.
[1422] *Folksblat*, 01.01.1919.
[1423] *Tagblat*, 23.12.1918.
[1424] Jüdischer Nationalrat Wien, *Letter to the aid committees in The Hague and Stockholm*, 04.01.1919, CZA, L6/87.
[1425] Jüdischer Nationalrat Wien, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 07.12.1918, CZA, L6/371.

amount of money they could collect in all parts of Europe and channel through Vienna to Lwów.[1426] There were significant sums being sent to the city via its former capital.[1427] Most important were the funds that came from Stockholm via the National Council in Vienna, something, the local Relief Committee promised "Lemberg will never forget".[1428] The majority of donors, however, preferred to continue their cooperation with Israelitische Allianz zu Wien as they had done during the war.[1429] The Allianz issued guidelines that acknowledged the new relevance of the National Councils and suggested including their representatives in organizing the distribution of relief, but "under no circumstances can even a part of the money be allocated [for] political purposes that have nothing to do with aid for the suffering Jewish population."[1430] Just as during the war, however, much of the funds eventually ended up in relief structures that were under Zionists' (or now the National Councils') control and aid was now distributed by the National Councils.[1431]

In contrast to the situation in Lwów and Przemyśl, the National Councils set up in regions that for the time being remained under Ukrainian control and were in a significantly better position in relation to the authorities. These cases have attracted some scholarly attention, most notably by two of its functionaries, Nathan Michael Gelber and Reuven Fahn.[1432] This was at least in part due to the fact that the project of national autonomy, organized around the Jewish National Councils, developed significantly further in this region and in most others. While maintaining their neutrality – at least officially – the understanding with the Ukrainian authorities was initially very positive. This not only built on long-standing informal agreements for mutual benefit between Jewish and Ukrainian nationalists in the region,[1433] but also on attempts to

[1426] Heschel Farbstein, *Letter to Unknown Addressee (writing from Vienna)*, 13.01.1919, CZA, Z3/184.
[1427] For example: Simonson (head of the Scandinavian Aid Committee in Copenhagen), *Letter to Warburg*, 30.12.1918, CZA, Z3/614. The Jewish National Council Vienna sent numerous receipts (in the form of telegrams) for payments to Eastern Galicia, especially to Lwów. See for instance: CZA, L6/98.
[1428] Unknown Author (writing on behalf of the Lwów Relief Committee), *Letter to Scandinavian Aid Committee in Stockholm*, December 1918, CAHJP, PL/164.
[1429] Jüdischer Nationalrat Wien, *Letter to Dutch Aid Committee and Stockholm Aid Committee*, 04.01.1919, CZA, L6/87. See also chapter 3.
[1430] Vorstand der Israelitischen Allianz zu Wien, *Instruktionen für die Hilfskomitees der Isr. Allianz*, December 1918, ŻIH, 108/1.
[1431] See also chapter 3.
[1432] Reuven Fahn, *Geshikhte fun der Yudisher natsyonaloytonomye in'm period fun der Mayrev-Ukraynisher republik* (L'viv: Spółdzenia Wydawnicza Kultura, 1933); Nathan Michael Gelber, *Die nationale Autonomie der Juden in Ostgalizien während der Ukrainischen Republik*, 1918–1919, unpublished manuscript, undated, CAHJP, P83/E/82. For the later published and translated version: Nahum Michael Gelber, "The National Autonomy of Eastern Galician Jewry in the West Ukrainian Republic, 1918–1919," in *A History of Polish Jewry During the Revival of Poland*, ed. Isaac Lewin (New York: Shengold Publishers, 1990), 221–309.
[1433] The annual conferences of the Ukrainian National Party, for instance, had traditionally been held in the house of the Jewish artisan's association *Yad HaRutism* (spelled 'Jad Charutzim' in the documents) in Lwów. See: K. K. Statthalterei Lemberg, *Report on the conference of the Ruthenian National-Democratic Party*, 29.12.1910, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2114.

weaken Polish nationalism, which had traditionally counted the Jews as Poles in order to inflate the Polish proportion of the population in an effort to support claims for supremacy in the region.[1434] This was one of the reasons why Polish nationalists were so vehemently opposed to Jewish national self-representation and already in October 1918 had tried to prevent the formation of a Jewish-National Council in still nominally Habsburg East Galicia.[1435] Austrian Zionists had officially welcomed the establishment of an independent Ukrainian Republic in February 1918,[1436] and members of the Jewish National Council for East Galicia, such as Nathan Gelber, who was its secretary, were accepted as representatives of the Jewish nation and given Ukrainian diplomatic passports.[1437] For many, this positive relationship, however, remained superfluous, since throughout the existence of the West Ukrainian Republic, civilians and soldiers committed attacks, pillage, and pogroms against the Jewish population, not lagging behind their Polish counterparts in this respect.[1438]

Zionists and other national activists had set up National Councils and similar structures in about twenty-two cities and towns across the region, which mainly aimed at representing local interests and negotiating on behalf of the communities in the immediate situation.[1439] In Stanisławów (Stanislau/Stanislawiw; today Ivano-Frankivsk), the Jewish National Council proclaimed itself as the organizer and speaker of a unified Jewish nation of the region and called on people to rally behind it.[1440] The newly founded *Jüdische Volkszeitung* (Jewish People's Paper) in Stanisławów, which was published in German "now a neutral language in this land

[1434] On Polish-Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Eastern Galicia before the war, see: Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 258–65.
[1435] Franz Oppenheimer, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 22.10.1918, CZA, L6/109.
[1436] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 12.02.1918, CZA, L6/335. The letter included the official statement hailing the newly won freedom of the Ukrainian nation, asking the Copenhagen Office to distribute and publish this message internationally. See also Chapter 4.
[1437] *Diplomatic Passport of Nathan Gelber*, CAHJP, P83/A/2.
[1438] Unknown Author, *Memorandum on the mistreatment, arbitrary acts, and violence against Jews by the civilian and military institutions of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic*, CAHJP P83/E/82; Josef Tennenbaum, *Die Lage der Juden in Ostgalizien*, probably early 1919, CAHJP, P83/G/273. In his autobiography Alexander Granach from Kołomyja wrote about his experiences in Galicia in late 1918: "The Poles and the Ukrainians continued to fight over the train station, the city of Stryz, Galicia; the returnees and the Jews were in the middle. The Galician Jews who have hitherto lived peacefully suddenly felt that with Austria they had lost the war as well. Because both armies, the Poles and the Ukrainians had the same slogan: 'Bej Zyda! – Beat the Jew!" Alexander Granach, *Da geht ein Mensch: Autobiographischer Roman* (Augsburg: Oelbaum Verlag, 2003), 349–50. The idea that until then the Jews of Galicia had lived in peace is quite remarkable (given the war-time experience) and shows the traumatic effect the pogroms had on the Jewish population.
[1439] Delegation of the Jewish National Council of East Galicia in Stanisławów, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 20.01.1919, CZA, L6/112. With the siege of Lwów in early 1919, the city's National Council officially passed the responsibility of representing all the Jews of East Galicia to the National Council in Stanisławów. See: Jewish National Council of East Galicia, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 12.01.1919, CZA, L6/87.
[1440] *Mittaylungen funim Ostgalitzishen Yudishen Natzionalrat*, January 1919.

[which] we chose for our weekly paper so that we can be understood by non-Jews as well,"[1441] reported that in all cities National Councils had been founded which moved to replace the Kahal. This was, however, often a rather superfluous project:

"Every one of those National Councils usually chose the former isr. Kultusgemeinde as a seat and therewith transformed it overhastily into a 'People's Community'. In order to fully take over the administration almost all – even meritorious – members of the Kultusgemeinde board were ruthlessly expelled. One is principally satisfied with this sweeping transformation, less or not at all, however, with the newly-formed pompously-talking administration. It is reminiscent of a cow that moos a lot but gives little milk… These National Councils are usually made up of doctors and university-educated gentlemen and know very well how to present resolutions, give ceremonial addresses and even more how to debate. These gentlemen forget that theory and national pomp will not help the Jewish people much […]."[1442]

The paper attributed this problem to the fact that the majority of National Councils had not been elected by the people, but rather proclaimed and run without transparency by self-appointed representatives who happened to be members of various nationalist associations.[1443] Elections were held in May. The National Council reported that around eighty percent of the region's Jews, including women, gave their vote. Zionists won seventy percent, followed by lists of professional associations (13%), ŻPS (9%), and Poale Zion (8%).[1444]

In part, this sweeping success was possible because of the loss of influence and prestige the traditional elites, the leaders of the Kahal, had suffered during the war, which had opened a political space for the other – nationalist – forces to fill. The other factor was that the Ukrainian authorities were interested in enlisting Jewish support for their cause and therefore recognized the Jewish National Councils as the Jewish population's representatives and put them de facto into positions of influence.[1445] The National Councils' aim was to build on this position and participate in a state-building project in which the Jews were one of three nations, segregated, but with equal rights and representation. In this situation, the activists formulated their vision for a future Jewish autonomy.

[1441] *Jüdische Volkszeitung* (Stanisławów), 06.12.1918. In a later issue, the paper argued that it used the German in a kind of reverse mission of salvation: Western – especially German-speaking – Jewry was in need of the spiritual and national energies of the East. However, the only way East European Jewry could connect to their weak Western brethren was by learning and speaking German to them. *Jüdische Volkszeitung* (Stanisławów), 20.12.1918. The *Jüdische Volkszeitung* was not a party organ but published privately by Ch. Spund, a businessman and long-standing Zionist in the city. It published party-news and Zionist news in general but also often took a very critical stance towards developments the editor disagreed with.
[1442] *Jüdische Volkszeitung* (Stanisławów), 10.01.1919.
[1443] *Jüdische Volkszeitung* (Stanisławów), 24.01.1919.
[1444] *Pressedienst der Delegation des Jüdischen Nationalrates für Ostgalizien*, 31.05.1919, CAHJP, P83/G/265.
[1445] On the position of the Ukrainian authorities towards the National Councils, see: Jüdischer Nationalrat für Ostgalizien, *Report on activities*, 27.12.1918, CZA, F3/23. See also: *Jüdische Volkszeitung* (Stanisławów), 07.02.1919; 07.03.1919. See also: Gelber, "National Autonomy of Eastern Galician Jewry," 253–64.

In February 1919, the National Council in Stanisławów, then still under Ukrainian control, set up a school commission "to prepare the establishment of a future Jewish school system."[1446] On behalf of the National Council, Nathan Gelber wrote guidelines for a future Jewish education system: For the transitional period, the existing schools should be kept and the Hebrew language should gradually replace the other languages (Yiddish and Polish) as the language of instruction. Eventually, there would only be Hebrew-language schools and kindergartens, while parents who insisted on having Yiddish education for their children could send them to special classes. There was no mention of Polish or Ukrainian language courses in those future Jewish-national schools. In towns where there were not enough children for a Jewish school, they should be taught in separate Jewish-only classes.[1447]

These visions for a new national educational system went hand in hand with proposals for re-modelling the system of the Kahal,[1448] and most importantly, for transforming the Jewish National Councils into permanent, officially recognized representatives of the Jewish nation as part of a project to transform East Galicia into a state of many nations. In late December 1918, representatives of the various National Councils had met for a conference in Stanisławów. Karl Halpern, a Zionist veteran, opened the conference in Hebrew, while the rest of the event was held in German. The adopted resolutions were based on the traditional Zionist demands for personal-national autonomy in the Diaspora and did not differentiate whether the region would eventually end up in Polish or Ukrainian hands. The conference demanded Jewish-national schools with Hebrew as the language of instruction, reparations for damages and losses due to war and pogroms, the establishment of a Jewish reconstruction-bank, and so on. The National Council's demand for Jewish rights in Palestine was only mentioned in one sentence of the twenty-page long conference protocol. The most important resolution was adopted in regard to the future organization of Jewish national representation, a kind of draft constitution for the Jewish nation. It adopted a clear regionalist East Galician perspective and refrained from relating the representative structures in any way to those of the state at large (whether Polish or Ukrainian). The basis of this organization would be the Jewish 'people's community'. In contrast to the religiously-defined community it would represent "the entirety of all the Jews in one town."[1449] With all this vagueness, it was clear that national belonging would be ascribed and not chosen. Every community should then vote for a local National Council, which would

[1446] *Pressedienst des Jüdischen Nationalrats für Ostgalizien*, 11.03.1919, P83/G/265.
[1447] Nathan Gelber, *Guidelines for a Cultural Section in the Department for Jewish Affair*s, 1919, CAHJP, P83/E/82.
[1448] Jewish National Council for East Galicia (Stanisławów), *Powstanie związku izraelskich gmin wyznaniowych w Galicji*, January 1919, YIVO, RG 28 Box 12 Folder 358.
[1449] *Minutes of the conference of Jewish National Councils in Stanisławów*, 18./19.20.12.1918, CZA, L6/112.

send delegates to a district council, which would then send delegates to the East Galician Jewish National Council. It should be the task of all these structures to "represent the Jewish interests towards the national bodies of the other nations."[1450] In this state of nations that the national activists envisioned, each national group would collect its own taxes for national purposes and would organize its cultural life (again a consciously vague term) autonomously.[1451]

In April 1919, the Ukrainian authorities officially recognized the National Council as the representative of the Jewish nation and guaranteed them full autonomous rights along the lines of the above-mentioned draft constitution the National Councils had voted on in Stanisławów a few months earlier.[1452] They even offered to incorporate the National Council into the state structure, giving it the form of a Department for Jewish Affairs,[1453] thereby trying to copy one-to-one the institutions of Jewish national autonomy which already existed in Ukraine itself.[1454] This in turn created a severe conflict between those East Galician Councils under Ukrainian control, who saw this as a major chance for implementing national autonomy, nationalizing Jewish educational institutions and so on, and those under Polish control who saw this as a serious threat, that would inevitably provoke a violent backlash. The National Council on the other side of the trenches in Lwów officially protested against any move in that direction.[1455] The danger was that while the political proximity to Ukrainian rulers enabled the National Councils to exert their influence there and play a part in the prospective shaping of the region, it could put neutrality into jeopardy. The 'neutrality' factor was crucial, not only for tactical and security reasons – although it failed in this respect – but also to express a concept of Jewish national unity and independence that transcended borders and battle lines. In the negotiations between the National Council and the Ukrainian authorities, the activists made clear that they regarded themselves as the only legitimate representation of the Jews of all of East Galicia, regardless of which side of the front they found themselves.[1456] This neutrality also entailed a vehement protest against the recruitment of Jews to any of the two belligerent armies.[1457]

[1450] Ibid.
[1451] Ibid.
[1452] *Pressedienst der Delegation des Jüdischen Nationalrats für Ostgalizien*, 08.04.1919, CAHJP, P83/G/265.
[1453] *Law on the Establishment of a Jewish Department, Pres. 639-19*, 20.04.1919, P83/G/258.
[1454] On the attempt to incorporate the East Galician Jewish National Councils into the wider Ukrainian system of Jewish national autonomy, see: Abramson, *Prayer for the Government*, 155–7.
[1455] *Minutes for the XII Meeting of the Delegation of the Jewish National Council for East Galicia*, 08.05.1919, CZA, F3/55.
[1456] Ibid.
[1457] *Mittaylungen funim Ostgalitzishen Yudishen Natzionalrat*, 13.04.1919; Unknown Author, *Report on the Recruitment of Jews in East Galicia*, 03.03.1919, CZA, L6/94.

When the Polish army conquered the rest of East Galicia during May and June 1919, the National Councils disintegrated. Karl Halpern, who was a leading member of the National Council in Stanisławów wrote that in the chaos that marked the final days of Ukrainian rule there, the retreating Ukrainian army mistreated the Jewish population to such an extent that most welcomed the establishment of Polish rule in the city. This was, however, followed by brutal attacks and humiliations by Polish soldiers against the Jews. The National Council was incapable of providing any defense or effective representation.[1458] Polish authorities subsequently disbanded most of the National Councils and arrested around 250 representatives whom they sent to internment camps.[1459] In many – but not all – of the places where the Councils had replaced the Kahal, the old structures were reinstated to represent the population towards its new rulers.[1460] The Jewish National Council for East Galicia was condemned to a shadow-existence in the form a delegation it had set up in Vienna as an instrument for coordination. Minutes show that after the Polish conquest of East Galicia it had no way of influencing the situation on the ground any longer. The envisioned reinvention of Galicia as a society of many nations had failed in reality. Activists subsequently reoriented themselves towards diplomacy, towards convincing the Great Powers to implement this vision, or at least a part of it, from the outside.[1461]

For a few months, the National Councils and their claim to represent the Jewish nation in the region had dominated the Jewish political and social scene in East Galicia. The factors that made this possible were the weakening of the traditional Jewish institutions of self-organization, the Kahal, and the loss of prestige and influence the traditional elites had suffered during the war. These factors had created an open space in which new activists could assert themselves. The overall circumstances of a nationalist civil war made it logical that this space would be filled by nationalists. In many regards, the Zionists' concept fitted in well into the logic of nationalization of East Galicia's civil war. Jews were excluded and prosecuted as Jews, as people who did not belong to the dominant nation. The National Councils implicitly adopted this logic and tried to defend and represent the Jews as Jews, not belonging to any of the other nations. Both in the ill-fated Western Ukrainian People's Republic and in the parts of the region

[1458] *Pressedienst der Delegation des Jüdischen Nationalrats für Ostgalizien*, 19.06.1919, CAHJP, P83/G/265.
[1459] *Pressedienst der Delegation des Jüdischen Nationalrats für Ostgalizien*, 10.07.1919, CAHJP, P83/G/265.
[1460] For this representation, see for example the communication between the Kahal in Stanisławów with the Polish Ministry of Provisions in Warsaw: Zarząd Izraelickiej Gminy Wyznaniowej w Stanisławowie, *Letter to Ministerstwo Aprowizacji w Warszawi*, 08.09.1920, AAN, 19/7.11/10.11.
[1461] Delegation des Jüdischen Nationalrats für Ostgalizien, *Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee*, 21.08.1919; 19.09.1919; 25.09.1919, CZA, F3/68.

under Polish control, they attempted to build corresponding national structures that could later be adopted by a new 'state of nations.' The strategy of the National Councils however failed insofar as, with few exceptions, they could not offer any effective protection to the communities they claimed to represent, and in the logic of the struggle of nations, they clearly represented the weakest actor. Josef Tennenbaum concluded in one of those meetings that "we find ourselves in a crisis. We have promised much to the people but so far have delivered very little. We now have to do many things that used to be done by the government."[1462] This meant in practice to concentrate on relief and day-to-day political work, the kind of work that Zionists had already done in Lwów under Polish control, and to try to convince world opinion to implement national rights for the Jewish minority.

Other Paths to National Representation

The chapter has so far discussed three examples in which the establishment of National Councils were relatively successful for a brief period. Activists succeeded to varying degrees insofar as they managed to gain a significant amount of influence amongst the Jewish population, to challenge or even replace established Jewish institutions, and in some cases even become recognized by new state authorities as the legitimate representatives of the Jewish nation, thereby turning the claim of representing the nation into reality. However, these developments depended strongly on local circumstances, both on the relations within Jewish society, as well as between the new state powers and the Jews. There were other cases throughout East-Central Europe where Zionists attempted to create national representation and fit the Jewish nation into the new order that did not take the form of National Councils. To examine these let us return to the two German-occupied wartime regions, the Generalgouvernement Warschau and Ober Ost.[1463]

Previous attempts to create a joint Jewish platform in the Generalgouvernement in 1916 had failed in the context of Polish, German, and Austrian political pressures and the disunity of the Jewish political parties.[1464] After those failures to organize an institutionalized structure that

[1462] Delegation des Jüdischen Nationalrats für Ostgalizien, *Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee*, 25.09.1919, CZA, F3/68.
[1463] There is also the rather unique case of the *Jüdische Volksrat* (Jewish People's Council) in Poznań (Posen). I wrote on it in an article forthcoming in the Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook. Here, I will just refer to the *Volksrat*'s journal *Mitteilungs-Blatt des Jüdischen Volksrats in Posen* and the relevant files in the local archive: Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu (APPo), 418/0/1/67. See also: Max Kollenscher, *Jüdisches aus der Deutsch-Polnischen Übergangszeit: Posen 1918–1920* (Berlin: Ewer, 1925); Max Kollenscher, *Memoirs*, LBI, ME 368; Beata Mache, "Jüdische Positionen in der wieder polnisch gewordenen Provinz Posen 1918–1923," *Jahrbuch des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im Östlichen Europa*, Vol. 25 (2017): 141–58.
[1464] Silber, "Development of a joint political program," 211–26.

would represent Polish Jewry, in October 1918, Zionists in Warsaw attempted again to set up an all-encompassing Jewish-national representation under their leadership that would negotiate the Jews' place in the new Polish state. Jewish politics in the former Generalgouvernement were, however, very different from East Galicia, Bohemia or Vienna. From October 1918 onwards, Zionists tried to bring together the various Jewish political parties in Warsaw on a joint platform in order to prepare a national Jewish assembly. However, given the Zionist dominance of the project, the other parties, the Bund, the Folkists, and Poale Zion, quickly abandoned the project, leaving only general Zionists and Mizrahi.[1465]

Zionism had indeed experienced a massive surge in membership and influence, which encouraged many hopes, but this had been in the context of party-politics and not in terms of general Jewish community activism (as in East Galicia for example). On 26 December 1918, 498 delegates from 144 cities and towns in Poland (without East Galicia), representatives of various Zionist and Mizrahi associations, came together for what they called a pre-conference and proclaimed themselves to be the provisional Jewish National Council in Poland, preparing a National Congress for March 1919.[1466] The impressive number of representatives reflected the strength the Zionist movement had gained in the previous years but not that the Zionists had rallied other movements to a common cause. Yitzhak Gruenbaum reported:

> "All this happened despite the active opposition of those parties who do not recognize the value and the task of the pre-conference. At the conference men and women of all social layers except for the workers participated, although some of them had participated in the elections. What is missing are only the generals, the leaders of the various parties, who fought against the conference because they obviously feared that most participants of the conference would be against them and would accept the Zionist resolutions. […] they therefore prefer to struggle against the pre-conference in and by itself, which they brand as not democratically elected, as merely a Zionist movement."[1467]

Indeed, even Poale Zion condemned the pre-conference as a bourgeois and undemocratic endeavor and refused to participate in this national project.[1468] The Warsaw-based daily paper *Haynt* had already warned when negotiations over national representation had begun that the

[1465] Isaac Lewin, "The Political History of Polish Jewry, 1918–1919," in *A History of Polish Jewry During the Revival of Poland*, ed. Isaac Lewin (New York: Shengold Piublishers, 1990), 69–71; Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 91–4. There were indeed a few non-Zionists who accepted the national program and even the demand for Palestine. They did not play any significant role, however, other than to showcase that this was more than a purely Zionist and Mizrahi endeavor. For the negotiations, see the files of Yitzhak Gruenbaum: CZA, A127/7.
[1466] Zionist Organization Warsaw, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 07.01.1919, CZA, L6/114; *Haynt*, 02.12.1918.
[1467] Itzhak Gruenbaum, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.01.1919, CZA, Z3/151. The letter was translated from Hebrew into German and forwarded to the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization: CZA, L6/114.
[1468] *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung*, 27.12.1918.

Zionists failed to see that Jewish politics in Poland had "the character of a competition amongst storekeepers."[1469] The appeals of the National Council for unity of the Jewish nation to stand together in the face of pogroms and in a situation when its place in the new order would be decided, were in vain.[1470] The pre-conference asserted the Jewish nation's loyalty to the Polish state and declared that the only possibility for Jews to gain their democratic rights lay in gaining national autonomy. The pre-conference rejected the liberal Polish-nationalist discourse, which, according to the conference, gave Jews "the alternatives – be assimilated or destroyed and expelled."[1471] The conference raised the argument for national autonomy particularly in response to the anti-Jewish violence taking place across the country, and directed it to a large extent towards the international powers, making the argument that a Jewish national assembly with representative character would be best suited to address the Polish and international authorities: "The decisions of the Assembly, which for the expression of the Jewish people's will in Poland must be confirmed in the presence of the Constituent Assembly which will be called upon to reconstruct the entire life of the state."[1472]

It became clear that no other party would subordinate itself under these pre-determined principles, so that neither the National Council nor the National Congress ever gained any significance comparable to what it held in East Galicia, the Czechoslovak Republic, or even in Vienna. Zionists did make some electoral gains in the general elections, but this reflected their strength as a political movement, not their position as representatives of the nation.[1473] The preliminary Jewish National Council, which had come out of the pre-conference remained preliminary and a purely Zionist structure with little impact.[1474] The struggle amongst political parties, which had played out in the realm of welfare- and relief-politics in the previous years, in which every party tried to care for its own, was continued in a new setting.[1475]

[1469] *Haynt*, 28.10.1918, quoted in: Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 92.
[1470] See for example: *Dos Yidishe Folk*, 15.01.1919.
[1471] Zionist Organization of Poland, *Report No. 57*, December 1918, YIVO, RG 448, Folder 20.
[1472] Ibid.
[1473] Of the nine representatives of Jewish parties elected for the Polish Constitutional Assembly, four were Zionists (Folskparty: 2, Orthodox: 2, Poale Zion: 1). Of the 27 mandates Jewish parties gained in the elections for the city council in Warsaw, five went to the Zionists, five to the Bund, four to the Orthodox, 3 to the Folkspartey, four to the Jewish Merchants' List, and two to Poale Zion; two more went to other groups. *Jüdisch-Politische Nachrichten*, 20.03.1919, PA-AA, RZ-207-III-2-R78685.
[1474] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 92–3.
[1475] The struggle over welfare-funds was in fact continued, with the Scandinavian Aid Committee, for instance, re-orientating itself from mainly supporting the Zionists to supporting the National Council (which it expected would continue the Zionists' welfare work). For them, this seemed to have been more a question of form than of content. Skandinavisk Jødisk Central-Komite, *Letter to the Provisional Jewish National Council in Warsaw*, 28.01.1919, NLI, ARC/4°/1180.

Previous developments and experiences during the war also determined the attitude of Zionists in the former Ober Ost region towards the question of a National Council. As a matter of fact, while the centers in Berlin, Copenhagen, and London pressured them to form a National Council,[1476] local activists did not set up a National Council as representation of the local Jewish population, as their comrades had done in parts of Poland, Galicia, Vienna, and Prague. On the surface, events in the region resembled those in East Galicia. As the German occupation forces withdrew, armed conflicts broke out between Lithuanian, Polish and Bolshevik forces.[1477] There was also – just as in East Galicia – a strong demand amongst many Jews to declare themselves neutral in this conflict in the hope of thereby avoiding being crushed between the three big forces.[1478] There was also a tradition of cooperation between Jewish and Lithuanian national activists, not dissimilar to pre-war Jewish-Ukrainian cooperation.[1479] Zionists here, however, believed that it would be impossible to establish and hold an independent, neutral position, believing that the organization of self-defense forces was doomed to fail.[1480]

The crucial factor here was the Zionists' experience with the German occupation. Their special place in this context put the movement in a precarious position at the end of the war. While the elections to the Kahal board in Wilno (held from 24 to 26 December 1918, still under German control) gave the Zionists twenty-four of the eighty seats and making it the strongest single party, this was far from an all-out victory,[1481] and day-to-day political work and the conditions of the organization were less positive. The Central Committee of Lithuanian Zionists reported: "The state of our work here is very difficult. Over the three years of occupation Zionist work had languished, and additionally the politics of the Zionists was full of mistakes."[1482] The mistakes to which this letter referred consisted primarily in their reliance on support from above. However, there seemed to be no other alternative now. As they had done during the German occupation, Zionists continued their strategy of trying to compensate for the lack of

[1476] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Simon Rosenbaum*, 10.12.1918, CZA, Z3/101; Warburg, *Telegram to Zionist Organization in Wilno*, 09.01.1919, CZA, Z3/101.
[1477] Tomas Balkelis, "Turning Citizens into Soldiers: Baltic Paramilitary Movements after the Great War," in *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War*, ed. Robert Gerwarth and John Horne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 126–44; Liulevicius, *War Land*, 228; Przemysław Różański, "Wilno, 19-21 kwietnia 1919 roku," *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, No. 1 (2006): 13–34; Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, 61–3; 126–44.
[1478] Wollstein, *Letter to Fritz Löwenstein*, 06.01.1919, CZA, Z3/135-1.
[1479] Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas, ed., *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century* (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2012).
[1480] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to Staatsrat Oppenheim*, December 1918, YIVO, RG 348 Folder 161.
[1481] Zionist Organization Wilno, *Telegram to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 27.12.1918, CZA, Z3/135-1. Only 30 percent of eligible voters participated. The Bund (winning 23 mandates) was the second-strongest party.
[1482] L. Joffe, I. Berger (on behalf of the Central Committee of Lithuanian Zionists), *Letter to Inner Zionist Action Committee*, 29.12.1918, CZA, Z3/135-1.

day-to-day work and grassroots activism by cooperating with the authorities. In a formal sense, this had brought a number of positive results during the War, such as the official recognition of the Jewish nation.[1483] While politically most of the Zionist leadership in what came to be Lithuania maintained a German orientation in respect of the future of the region, a gradual rapprochement with the Lithuanian Taryba took place towards the end of the war.[1484] For Zionists, the 'Lithuanian option', especially in the case of Wilno, which Lithuanian nationalists claimed on the basis of 'historic rights' and Polish nationalists based on the numerical dominance of Polish-speakers in the city,[1485] became ever more attractive, since in such a Lithuanian state, there were no overwhelming majorities for one nation, which would allow for something more closely resembling the vision of a state of many nations.[1486] Already in May 1918, Simon Rosenbaum wrote: "The Litwiner gentlemen know that the more Jews are represented in parliament the better it is for them, since they will be a support for them against Polish as well against all other aspirations."[1487] The idea of preferring a Lithuanian state to Polish rule was confirmed by news of the November pogroms in the newborn Poland.[1488] The Zionist leadership in the region eventually continued the politics of cooperation with the authorities when power was handed from the Germans to the Lithuanians. In December 1918, three of their activists joined the provisional Lithuanian government as Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary of State for Trade and Industry and, most importantly, as minister of the Ministry for Jewish Affairs.[1489] This Ministry for Jewish Affairs subsequently took over a number of tasks, such as welfare and educational work for the Jewish population, that in other places had been fulfilled by the National Councils.[1490]

[1483] See chapter 1.
[1484] Marcos Silber, "Lithuania? But Which? The Changing Political Attitude of the Jewish Political Elite in East Central Europe toward Emerging Lithuania, 1915–1919," in *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*, ed. Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2011), 137–49; Šarūnas Liekis, *A state within a state? Jewish autonomy in Lithuania 1918–1925* (Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003), 60–9.
[1485] Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, 53–60.
[1486] Mendelsohn, *Jews of East-Central Europe*, 217–9; Theodore R. Weeks, "Between Poland and Lithuania: Jews and the Vilnius Question, 1918–1925," in *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*, ed. Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2011), 210–9.
[1487] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to Paul Nathan*, 06.05.1918, CZA, Z3/133. Zionists often used the term 'Litviner' rather than 'Lithuanians' in order to separate the concept of the Lithuanian state from the nationality, suggesting that the Litviner would be one of the nationalities of a Lithuanian state, alongside the Litvaks, the Lithuanian Jews.
[1488] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 10.12.1918, CZA, Z3/135.
[1489] Unknown Author, *Report on the entrance of the Jewish Nation into the Lithuanian Taryba*, December 1918, CZA, Z3/135-1.
[1490] On practical work of the Ministry: Žydų Reikalams Ministeris Kaunas, *Memorandum*, 20.11.1919, CZA, Z3/191; Žydų Reikalams Ministeris Kaunas, *Letter to the Zionist Organization*, 06.12.1919, CZA, Z3/191.

There was quite a lot of opposition to this move in the ranks of the Zionist movement. Many felt that continuing the strategy of associating with rulers would endanger the movement on the ground. Some activists went even further. Youth activists especially, many of whom had come back from Russia after the peace treaty, as one report mentioned, were strongly influenced by the revolutionary events in Russia and rejected some of the core national demands as "reactionary," such as separate Jewish electoral curia.[1491] Binding Zionist work to the fate of the Lithuanian state eroded the possibilities of a wider Jewish national representation. For one, when the German army left in early January 1919 and handed the city over to the Poles, Lithuanian forces withdrew to Kowno, and this meant that the Ministry of Jewish Affairs lost all influence it might have had on Jewish life in Wilno.[1492] Secondly, the participation of the Zionists in the government gave them a share of the blame when Jews suffered, as was the case with a number of pogroms committed by Lithuanian soldiers in June 1919.[1493] A Poale Zionist wrote:

"Have you heard about the pogrom in Ponjewesch [sic!]? This first pogrom by Lithuanian soldiers took place at the beginning of June, immediately after the new Lithuanian government was formed. The government sent a commission in which Soloweitschik [Maks Sołowiejczyk/Maksas Soloveičikas; Zionist activist and then the Lithuanian Minister for Jewish Affairs] participated. With this work, Soloweitschik began his new position as minister."[1494]

It also meant that in some cases Zionist leaders chose the side of the government over other Zionist groups – such as Poale Zion, which was subject to severe repression by the state – with whom they cooperated closely in other regions.[1495] Continuing the strategy of close cooperation with the Lithuanian authorities in the region in many respects continued the same risks and opportunities that had already come from the relation to the Ober Ost authorities.

[1491] Simon Rosenbaum, *Report on the situation in Lithuania*, late 1918, CZA, Z3/135-1.
[1492] On the fights over Wilno, see: Jerzy Borzęcki, *The Soviet-Polish Peace of 1921 and the Creation of Interwar Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 10–16.
[1493] Yad Vashem, ed., *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Lita: entsiklopedyah shel ha-yishuvim ha-Yehudiyim le-min hivasdam ve-'ad le-ahar Sho'at Milhemet ha-'Olam ha-Sheniyah* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), 39
[1494] Unknown Author (of Poale Zion), *Letter to Leon Chasanowich*, 28.06.1919, ILPA, 1-2-1919-14.
[1495] Ignatz Kornfeld, *Letter to Leon Chasanowich*, 06.06.1919, ILPA, 1-2-1918-184; Leon Chasanowich, *Letter to Minister for Jewish Affairs Maksas Soloveičikas*, 21.06.1919, ILPA, 1-2-1918-184. The Zionist-led ministry denied that there was any repression against Poale Zionists in Lithuania. Lithuanian Ministry for Jewish Affairs, *Telegram to Leon Chasanowich*, June 1919, ILPA, 1-1-1919-9.

Representing the Will of the Jewish Nation to the World

The National Councils were not necessarily local initiatives. Functionaries in the Zionist movement's political centers in Berlin, and especially in Copenhagen, and London held very different concepts from those of many local activists in East-Central Europe. The international leadership promoted the implementation of Jewish national autonomous rights, as part of a general peace settlement, both in Europe in the form of national autonomy, and in Palestine in the form of a national territorial homeland. On 28 October 1918, the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization published a manifesto on "The Demands of the Jewish People", calling for:

"1) The securing of Palestine in its borders according to historical tradition, political and economic necessities, as a national homeland of the Jewish people as well as the creation of the necessary precondition for the construction of this homeland; 2) full and effective equality of the Jews in all countries; 3) national autonomy in cultural, social, and political spheres for the Jewish population in the countries of mass Jewish settlement, as well as in other countries should the Jewish population demand it."[1496]

The manifesto, which called on all Zionist parties to concentrate all their efforts on the implementation of these demands, both in respect to their countries and to the Peace Conference, was widely circulated and printed in major Zionist and Jewish-nationalist newspapers.[1497] The leadership of the movement fully concentrated on the international dimension of its demands, seeing the National Councils primarily as instruments that would give its claims credibility. Jacobson wrote to Nahum Sokolow:

"It will be one – and not the smallest – of our tasks in Palestine to stand out as an inspiring example for the whole of Jewry; this will be possible only if we can place before the shapeless agglomeration of Jewry in the Diaspora an organization in which perfect harmony reigns and which presents itself as a firmly organized body."[1498]

This referred both to the condition of East-Central Europe's Jews, and to the question of how to make a claim for Palestine, how to prove that the Jews really wanted this land. Where National Councils had not yet been established by local activists, the various central offices of the Zionist movement sent letters to the local groups, urging them to do so. They should come to a conference of national Councilors in Switzerland and send their statements of support for

[1496] Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization (Victor Jacobson), D*ie Forderungen des jüdischen Volkes (Copenhagen Manifesto)*, 28.10.1918, CZA, Z3/214.
[1497] *Der Moment*, 01.11.1918; *Die Jüdische Presse: Konservative Wochenschrift*, 01.11.1918; *Haynt*, 01.11.1918; *Jüdische Rundschau*, 08.11.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 01.11.1918.
[1498] Victor Jacobson, *Letter to Nahum Sokolow*, 28.10.1918, CAHJP, P83/J/74.

the Zionist representation in Paris. The reasoning was made clear as in this letter to Heinrich Schein, a Zionist organizer in the Romanian city of Galaţi (Galatz):

"It is already clear that the Zionist organization will have the opportunity to represent its demands through a delegation of its own at the Peace Conference. […] In agreement with all Jewish institutions of the Zionist Organization, we ask you to immediately nominate representatives of the nationally-minded Jewry of your country and send them to Switzerland in order to form an authoritative joint representation [and] to prepare and defend the Jewish national demands. […] This representation must be composed in a way that […] with its program it can appear as the representative of the entire Eastern Jewry in front of the Peace Conference."[1499]

For the international leadership, the form mattered less than the content that it wanted to present to the world in Paris: the united Jews of the East supported the leadership and demanded a national home in Palestine. From Warsaw, where Zionists had not yet set up their provisional National Council by the end of December 1918, the central leaders demanded a formal mandate for the negotiations in Paris, writing: "The mandate must absolutely come from an adequately legalized body. We will leave it to you which form you will find for that."[1500] The National Councils were urged to send "a written statement in which the Jewish National Council as the legitimate representative of the Jews […] commissions the Zionist delegation at the Peace Conference to represent [their] rights and interests."[1501] Almost all National Councils eventually sent a largely identical statement to the Berlin, Copenhagen, and London Centers of the movement, as well as to U.S. President Wilson and the British Foreign Office, expressing the demand of the Jewish nation – which they claimed to represent – for Palestine as a national homeland.[1502] These statements seemed valuable even when those who sent them had very little connection to the local population and the current situation on the ground, as was the case for the Jewish National Council of Bukovina. There was a 'classical' Jewish National Council in Czernowitz,[1503] but the activists who sent the statement on behalf of the Jewish nation had previously fled the region during the war and now stayed in Vienna. They nevertheless wrote:

[1499] Pal. [unclear], *Letter to Heinrich Schein*, 13.01.1919, CZA, Z3/101. The almost exact same letter was sent to Białystok: Unknown Author, *Letter to the Zionist Organization in Białystok*, 12.01.1919, CZA, Z3/101.
[1500] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Zionist Organization of Poland*, 31.12.1918, CZA, Z3/101.
[1501] Richard Lichtheim, *Letter to Jewish National Council for German-Austria*, 10.01.1919, CZA, Z3/101. In this letter, it was about the representation of the Jews of German-Austria. The same requests were sent to National Councils in other regions.
[1502] Jewish National Council of Czechoslovakia, *Telegram to London Office of the Zionist Organization, US President Woodrow Wilson, the Foreign Office*, January 1919, CZA, Z3/101; Brith Jehudith Leumith be Transylvania, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 27.01.1919, CZA, L6/86; Jewish National Council for East Galicia, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 13.01.1919, CZA, L6/112.
[1503] See: *Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 26.04.1919; 10.05.1919.

"[The] Jewish National Council of Bukovina as representative [of] all of Jewry of the land affiliates with [the] demand of all Jews to raise the demand at [the] peace conference that Palestine in its historic boundaries should be placed under political administrative economic conditions which guarantee its development into [a] Jewish commonwealth. Jewish National Council of Bucovina Address Doctor Markus Kraemer Vienna Nine [the IX. City District, Alsergrund; JR] Loebichgasse 10/17."[1504]

After some debate, the leadership of the very small Zionist Organization in the newly founded Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes won an internal vote to declare itself the representative of all the estimated 43,600 Jews of the country. It also already anticipated representing the additional roughly 100,000 Jews who would be added to the country by the transfer of Hungarian territory. Of course, they felt confident in representing their demand for a Jewish homeland in Palestine.[1505] In a similarly ambitious way, the equally small Zionist organization in Hungary claimed to speak "on behalf of the entirety of Hungarian Jewry" and demanded a national homeland in Palestine.[1506]

In Lithuania – as mentioned above, local Zionists seemed to see no benefit in setting up a national council and disregarded the directives from the center.[1507] Rabbi Yitzhak Rubinstein informed the center in Berlin that it would probably take quite some time to form a National Council there and asked whether it would also be possible to simply ask representatives of the Wilno Kahal to come to Switzerland.[1508] A note on a conversation with Josef Berger from Kowno, a member of the Lithuanian Zionists' Central Committee, who had briefly visited Berlin, stated that given the state of the organization and the development in the country, it would be unthinkable to form a National Council.[1509] The center nevertheless insisted on having Zionist delegates at the conference and the official statement of national demands, and wrote to its activists in Lithuania that the "Zionist Bureau London demands from [the] National Council or if necessary from [the] Zionist Organization to name delegates for [the] Swiss conference [and] furthermore [to] send telegrams to English French Italian government and Wilson

[1504] Jewish National Council of Bukovina, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, January 1919, CZA, L6/83.
[1505] Central Committee of the Zionist Organization of the South Slav Lands, *Letter to Zionist Information Bureau in Montreux, Switzerland*, 23.12.1918, CZA, Z3/101. Note the continuation of the traditional Habsburg name for the region. The activists there were very optimistic and promised that "soon, 90% of them [the Jews] will be members of our organization."
[1506] Magyarországi Cionista Szervezet, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 22.01.1919, CZA, Z3/922. They also sent a telegram with the same content to the Office in Copenhagen.
[1507] The first call to establish a National Council was sent on 10 December 1918 but nobody seemed to respond. Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Simon Rosenbaum*, 10.12.1918, CZA, Z3/101.
[1508] Eisenmann (Member of the Zionist District Committee in Wilno), *Telegram to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 20.12.1918, CZA, Z3/135-1.
[1509] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 07.01.1919, CZA Z3/101.

demanding the following: Palestine in its historic boundaries [etc.]."[1510] As absolutely nothing came out of this, the Zionist Office in London decided that if necessary, they would also accept delegates from the Zionist Organization without a formal National Council.[1511] Some of these formations had obviously very little to do with the demands of Jews in their respective regions. From the perspective of the leadership in the West, the 'creation' of those National Councils was to represent to the international powers the image of a united Jewish nation in Eastern Europe, which now unanimously voiced its longing for Eretz Israel and demanded its rights to the land. This would become an important feature in the following months.

With the end of the war the center of power within the World Zionist Organization also shifted decisively away from Berlin (and Copenhagen) to London. With the Balfour Declaration, the London-based leaders were the ones that had something to show for their efforts, whereas the Zionists of the Central Powers had obviously lost the war alongside their respective governments.[1512] The German-Austrian leadership wrote: "We have to protest decidedly against being perceived as inferior by our comrades, just because by coincidence, by political constellations, we happen to belong to a state that is an enemy of the Entente."[1513] In a letter to the Copenhagen Office, Nahum Sokolow, writing also on behalf of Chaim Weizmann, praised the Office's work during the war in the most flowery language, but then made clear that London demanded to be in charge: "With regard to the Copenhagen Bureau, whose co-operation we fully appreciate, and whose services in the future we look forward to, we take it for granted that it will act in close contact with, and with strictest loyalty to, London."[1514] This was done in preparation for the Peace Conference in Paris, where the leadership hoped that the Balfour Declaration would be confirmed by the other great powers. Sokolow warned against mixing up the demand for Palestine and that for Jewish rights in Europe: "As for the Zionist Delegation, that must have a simple, clear and distinct case to present to the Peace Conference, a case clearly defined and free from complications. That is Palestine. But in addition to this main task, we consider it desirable to give the utmost moral support to the Delegations on the question of

[1510] Warburg, *Telegram to Zionist Organization in Wilno*, 09.01.1919, CZA, Z3/101.
[1511] Warburg, *Telegram to Jaffe in Wilno*, 09.01.1919, CZA, Z3/135-1. Nothing game out of this. The Zionist-led Ministry for Jewish Affairs eventually set up a Jewish National Council in early 1920, but this had nothing to do with similar structures in Vienna, Galicia, etc. Žydų Reikalams Ministeris Kaunas, *Letter to Committee of Jewish Delegations to the Peace Conference in Paris*, 14.01.1920, CZA, Z3/124.
[1512] Laqueur, *History of Zionism*, 178–9.
[1513] Austrian Zionist Organization, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, undated (early 1919), CZA, Z3/851.
[1514] Nahum Sokolow, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 18.11.1918, CZA, Z3/400. On 31 December 1919, the Zionist Office in Copenhagen finally shut down "by the order of the Zionist leadership in London". Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization, *Letter to all Zionist organizations*, 11.12.1919, ILPA, 1-1-1918-4.

Jewish Rights […]."[1515] He acknowledged that Jewish national rights were important for the Central and Eastern European activists – and was prepared to give them moral support – but the focus had to be on Palestine, nothing else. In this perspective, the Jewish National Councils had two tasks: first to give credibility to the Zionists' claim that they represented the demand for Palestine on behalf of all of Jewry, and second, by leaving the debate over national rights in Europe, which were expected to be more controversial to the Eastern Europeans, the Zionists could avoid being drawn into such a potentially toxic debate.

"Essential as it is for the Zionist Delegation to the Peace Conference […] to present the purely Zionist Palestinian Cause in the name of the whole Jewish people, we feel that it would be out of proportion for it to represent the whole of the separated Jewries in the various countries on the question of Jewish rights in those countries. This question is not a purely Zionist question. In the first place, there is the question of mandate. It is necessary to make absolutely certain, that there will be no rival claims to represent individual Jewries or over-lapping representation."[1516]

This was the context in which the Zionist organization called for the delegates of the various National Councils to convene in Switzerland in early 1919, where they should coordinate their program and their strategies based on the Copenhagen Manifesto.[1517] What was supposed to be primarily a supportive instrument for the Zionist delegation in Paris, turned out to be more complicated than anticipated and did have a dynamic of its own. It soon became clear that the delegates from East-Central Europe arrived with rather different expectations, hoping to use this forum to appeal to the great powers for the demands of their particular countries. Julius Berger, who had been sent to Switzerland to prepare the conference together with the Swiss Zionist organization,[1518] expected the worst from the delegates:

"Who will that be? Exclusively representatives of the former K. k. Jewry. Apart from the countries of Austria-Hungary, only delegates from Poland have announced themselves. In other words, this will be something like a former Austrian conference and they will discuss the same things which our friends there have always been known for. […] Under these circumstances I look towards the conference not only with low expectations but with great worries. I do not even know for sure if this Austrian body, in its well-known humility […] will not feel entitled to try to influence the politics of Nahum [Sokolow] and Chaim [Weizmann] and establish something like an alternative government here."[1519]

[1515] Nahum Sokolow, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 18.11.1918, CZA, Z3/400.
[1516] Ibid.
[1517] Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization, *Letter to East Galician Zionist Organization*, 08.12.1918, CZA, F3/23.
[1518] Correspondence Juive, *An die Jüdischen Nationalräte*, 06.02.1919, CZA, Z3/102.
[1519] Julius Berger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 26.01.1919, CZA, Z3/718. The term 'friends' was meant cynically. In a later letter, after the arrival of the delegates, Berger described some of them, like Dr. Diamant (from Bukovina, "an unbelievably small, bumptious phrasemonger of the worst kind"), Jakob Landau

At the same time the World Zionist Organization convened a conference in London, primarily in preparation for the Paris conference, insisting on its demands for Palestine as a national homeland.[1520] Unsurprisingly, many of the delegates of the National Councils in Switzerland felt somewhat sidelined and raised doubts about the purpose of their stay.[1521] Trying to obtain visas to go to London or Paris for its participants, the conference moved to Bern in order to be closer to the respective embassies.[1522] Being trapped in Switzerland without visas the delegates conferred with each other. Berger wrote:

"Meanwhile – ut aliquid videatur [to see something] – the pre-negotiations were started so to speak. Yesterday, the 'demands' of the East Galicians and the Bukovinians, today those of the Czechoslovaks and German-Austrians were heard. That is not uninteresting, several curious and unknown facts come up, […] but obviously it does not have much of a purpose. The gentlemen have their fixed opinions and memoranda, which are so much less important than the consultations and negotiations which take place in Paris with the institutions that are relevant for the respective countries."[1523]

Eventually, time passed and Sokolow wrote from London that the conference there had closed, and that the National Councilors' presence was no longer required. "For dealing with the Jewish question, an office will be established in Paris. It seemed desirable to Sokolow that a discussion of the representatives of Eastern Jewry takes place, [with] those one can be sure that they will provide valuable services and also have enough time."[1524] Of course, the result was quite a lot of embitterment and frustration amongst the delegates, many of whom had travelled very far and abandoned their important work in their home regions to come to the conference in Switzerland, "the memory of it" wrote Michal Ringel in a letter to back to his comrade in East Galicia "will remain only as an accusation against the organizers."[1525]

From the beginning of the Peace Conference in Paris, the Zionist representatives concentrated their efforts fully on the question of Palestine. After the Peace Conference's decision to break off large parts of the Ottoman Empire they submitted their demands on 3 February, calling for

(from Prague, "without any [intellectual] content"), Dr. Tenenbaum (from East Galicia, "I forgot to mention him, and that says it all"), Zvi Perez Chajes (from Vienna, "with not too much deepness"). Julius Berger*, Letter to Zionist Central Bureau in Berlin*, 06.03.1919, CZA, Z3/718.

[1520] See the communication by the Copenhagen Office: CZA, Z3/102; the minutes of the Greater Action Committee: CZA, Z4/454 Also: *Jüdische Rundschau*, 04.03.1919; 11.03.1919; 14.03.1919. The fact that the files on the lists of delegates and on organizing visas for them is held in the files of the Zionist delegation in Paris shows how central this conference was particularly in preparation for the Peace Conference: CZA, L8/241.

[1521] Julius Berger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.03.1919, CZA, Z3/718.

[1522] Julius Berger, *Report on the National Councils' Conference in Switzerland*, 25.03.1919, CZA, Z3/718.

[1523] Julius Berger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.03.1919, CZA, Z3/718.

[1524] Julius Berger, *Report on the National Councils' Conference in Switzerland*, 25.03.1919, CZA, Z3/718.

[1525] Michal Ringel, *Letter to Leon Wechsler*, 16.03.1918, CAHJP, P83/G/247.

the establishment of a Jewish national home and the administration of the land by British mandate.[1526] One instrument for achieving this goal was the submission of the many resolutions, telegrams, and statements of the various National Councils throughout East-Central Europe, as well as numerous Zionist organizations world-wide, endorsing the nationalist claim to Palestine and expressing their trust in the Zionist delegation on behalf of the Jewish people.[1527] In a report to the Conjoint Committee of 10 March, Lucien Wolf expressed his anxiety over the results the conference might bring for the Jews, since "the conference had not been made aware of the existence of a Jewish question outside the Zionist claim in Palestine."[1528]

On 17 March the representatives of the various National Councils present in Paris met to coordinate with each other for the forthcoming negotiations over the future states of East-Central Europe. The representation that was created in this meeting, however, continued to be dominated by activists rooted in American and in British Zionist contexts.[1529] Some of the Zionist representatives from East-Central Europe took a rather different approach to the matter. Most notably, Simon Rosenbaum came to Paris not as a representative of Lithuania's Jewry or the Zionist movement there, but as the Minister of Jewish Affairs and part of the Lithuanian delegation.[1530] The delegates of the Jewish National Council of Czechoslovakia concentrated almost exclusively on their own case and were there on an explicitly local mission.[1531] The representatives from Prague also did not take part in the coordinating group of National Councilors but Rosenbaum did.[1532] In this form of activity, the various representatives reflected different strategies that stemmed from their own local situations.

This tendency was also reflected in the demands they raised. One of the reasons why the Czechoslovak delegates were not part of this group was that contrary to the Polish, Galician, and other representatives they did not call for full national autonomy but rather for minority rights, especially cultural ones, on a national basis.[1533] This was a significant difference. The call for minority rights, as the delegates from Czechoslovakia raised, did include recognition as a minority nation and, most importantly, self-controlled schools, cultural, and social institutions. Contrary to the demand for national autonomy, which the majority of East-Central

[1526] Fink, *Defending the Rights*, 160–9.
[1527] Zionist Organisation London Bureau, *Letter to Secretary Organisation Sioniste, Bureau de Paris*, 20.02.1919, CAHJP, P83/J/74. Enclosed to the letter, the London Bureau sent all the resolutions etc.
[1528] Lucien Wolf, *Report*, 10.03.1919, YIVO, RG 348 Folder 82.
[1529] *Pressedienst der Delegation des Jüdischen Nationalrates für Ostgalizien*, 04.04.1919, CAHJP, P83/G/265.
[1530] Egle Bendikaite, "One Man's Struggle: The Politics of Shimshon Rosenbaum (1859–1934)," *Simon-Dubnow-Institut Jahrbuch/Yearbook*, No. 13 (2014): 102.
[1531] Lichtenstein, "Jewish power and powerlessness," 2–20. According to Julius Berger, Hugo Bergmann from Prague was travelling with Czechoslovak (and possibly other Entente powers') diplomatic documents. Julius Berger, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 06.03.1919, CZA, Z3/718.
[1532] *Pressedienst der Delegation des Jüdischen Nationalrates für Ostgalizien*, 04.04.1919, CAHJP, P83/G/265.
[1533] *Selbstwehr*, 08.11.1918; *Židovské Zprávy*, 07.11.1918.

European Jewish National Councils raised however, it did not include for example national electoral curiae. Whereas the call for national autonomy generally demanded elected Jewish self-government and the representation of the Jewish nation as such towards the general authorities, the call for minority rights included self-rule only in respect to cultural and some social aspects.[1534] These differences created problems right from the beginning. Already in December 1918, the leadership was aware that if the Czechoslovaks made their argument at the Peace Conference, it would undermine the general strategy, which argued that all of 'Eastern' Jewry wanted national autonomy. Acknowledging that the demands reflected local circumstances, they were asked to refrain from articulating their demands too enthusiastically in Paris.[1535]

However, the main focus of the Zionist representation remained Palestine. Michael Ringel, a representative of the Jewish National Council for East Galicia, who was present in Paris wrote in a report to his fellow councilors on 20 March 1919 under the headline "The defense of our national rights.": "As I have already mentioned, for various reasons, absolutely nothing has happened in respect of this issue. Only in the past three days, after intense discussions with our two representatives [Weizmann and Sokolow] with suitable insistence, could we put this matter on its due place on the agenda."[1536] Leon Reich expressed similar frustration that "for the cause for which we are here nothing has happened so far."[1537] He attributed this to the fact that Weizmann and Sokolow spent all their energies on Palestine, having no time for and no real interest in the demands of the Eastern Europeans, whose delegation was initially not even financed by the general fund for the Zionist delegation, which in turn caused heated arguments.[1538]

Ringel and Reich, both of them ardent Zionists, perceived the Palestine-centered strategy to be increasingly a problem for their demands for national autonomy, if not in fact contradicting them, and this, as Ringel had put it, was the reason why they were there. This fear was well-founded, as for instance some in the British delegation at the Peace Conference, believed that "if there was to be a Jewish nationality it could only be by giving the Jews local

[1534] Compare for example the demands raised by the Jewish National Council in Cracow and the Jewish National Council in Prague: Żydowska Rada Narodowa w Krakowie, *Program for Personal National Autonomy of the Jews in the Polish State*,06.01.1919, CZA, Z3/349; *Selbstwehr*, 08.11.1918; *Židovské Zprávy*, 07.11.1918.
[1535] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Jewish National Council in Prague (Ludwig Singer)*, 03.12.1918, CZA, Z3/783. Hantke did not express his private opinion or that of the German leadership here, but the letter reflected the positions of the center in London and especially Sokolow and Weizmann.
[1536] Michal Ringel, *Letter to Delegation of the Jewish National Council for East Galicia*, 20.03.1919, CAHJP, P83/G/247.
[1537] Leon Reich, *Letter to Delegation of the Jewish National Council for East Galicia*, 22.03.1919, CAHJP, P83/G/252.
[1538] Ibid.

habitat and enabling them to found in Palestine a Jewish state. Any Jew who was, however, a national of the Jewish state would *ipso facto* cease to be a Polish citizen."[1539] It was this fear that to a large extent motivated the non-Zionist representatives in the Comité des Délégations Juives in Paris, the Alliance Israélite Universelle and Lucien Wolf's Joint Foreign Committee of British Jews, in their refusal to accept the call for national autonomy. Indeed, as much of the literature has stressed, they were Westerners and the idea of Jewish nationality was alien to them. But it was equally alien to Western Zionists, such as the Zionist Organization of America, whose leader Jacob de Haas had written to Victor Jacobson that "we can under no circumstances agree to any policy which suggests authonomy [sic] for the Jews in western lands, and we think that it is a very dangerous and unwise policy to foster."[1540] The Americans nonetheless supported the Eastern European Zionists in their demand for autonomy in their regions. As a matter of fact, everyone, including the Alliance and Lucien Wolf, agreed that the Jews of East-Central Europe needed some kind of special protection, although this special protection was decidedly not the same as national autonomy as many Zionists had envisioned it.

During the negotiations over the fate of Poland news arrived of further atrocities against the Jewish population in the new Polish state. In particular, the violence in Pińsk on 5 April 1919 was a decisive factor that eventually played a role in shifting the debate in favor of some protection for minorities. During the negotiations, Zionists strongly emphasized the violence and the toxic anti-Jewish climate in the Polish state as an argument for autonomy rights.[1541] It is important to note here that although all the involved Jewish parties later claimed that it was their doing that brought about the minorities' treaty – and Polish nationalists agreed with them, a fact that poisoned Polish-Jewish relations for decades – it was probably not them but rather larger strategic considerations of the Entente powers, especially regarding the German minority in Poland, that led to the treaty.[1542] However, for the Zionists, the news of a renewed wave of violence and the pressure from East-Central European activists meant that they now had to shift their focus on these problems. At the May Meeting of the Zionist Action Committee in London, Julius Simon stated:

[1539] James Headlam-Morley, "Chapter II: The Treaties for the Protection of Minorities," in *A History of the Paris Peace Conference, Vol. V.: Economic Reconstruction and Protection of Minorities*, ed. Harold Temperley (London: Henry Frowde and Hodder & Stoughton, 1921), 137.
[1540] Jacob de Haas, *Letter to Victor Jacobson*, 19.11.1918, CZA, Z3/350.
[1541] Fink, *Defending the Rights*, 193–202. On the violence Pińsk, see the files of Yitzhak Gruenbaum: CZA, A127/75. For the Polish perspective on events, see: Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie, *Referat z Komisyjnej Czynności w Pińsku*, AAN, 490/0/2604.
[1542] Leonhard Smith, *Sovereignty at the Paris Peace Conference 1919* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

"I am afraid that the following will happen: We will be accused everywhere in Eastern Europe for having concentrated everything on the Palestine-question. This could be well argued by us Zionists if there would be a different outcome than the one we have to expect. But if the masses will be disappointed by [the outcome of the debates on] the Palestine-question, and at the same time we have not done anything to prevent the slaughtering of thousands of Jews, we will find ourselves in quite a difficult situation."[1543]

The minorities' treaty with Poland, which was signed on 28 June 1919, promised equality before the law regardless of religion, language, or race (the term 'nation' was not used) and allowed for education in minority-languages in state schools, as well as the self-organization of Jewish schools with funding and under the auspices of the state. This, indeed, lagged far behind the hopes and expectations of the Galician, Polish, and other representatives of the National Councils. The leadership of the Zionist movement presented the treaty as a "resounding success for the Jewish cause".[1544] Despite the lack of recognition of the Jewish nation and provisions for autonomy, Zionists in Poland nonetheless decided to celebrate the treaty as a victory.[1545] At the same time, much of the Zionist press directed its attention to proving that contrary to the claim of Polish nationalists, the treaty was not an attack on Polish sovereignty but in Poland's very own interest, fostering harmonious Polish-Jewish relations in the future.[1546] On the treaty itself, *HaTsefirah* acknowledged positively that rights with respect to religious and linguistic questions were accepted, but mourned that "our most important demand", national autonomy was ignored, which "is the great thorn in the side of the victory that we celebrated in Paris."[1547] A week later the same paper noted that the treaty meant that "in Poland we are on a threshold of a new era."[1548] The official statement of the Central Committee of Poland's Zionists used similar terms.[1549] In some respects the public interpretation of the treaty was also a response to the fierce Polish nationalist opposition to it. An editorial in *Chwila* stated, the treaty was "far

[1543] *Minutes of the Meeting of the Zionist Action Committee*, 20.05.1919, CAHJP P83/J/76. At this specific point of the negotiations in Paris, the Zionists were not too confident that the Peace Conference would reconfirm the Balfour Declaration and their claim to Palestine as a Jewish homeland.
[1544] *Bulletin of the Jewish Press Bureau Stockholm*, 03.07.1919, CAHJP, P83/G/297.
[1545] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 106–7. In other countries, Zionist newspapers dealt with the minorities' treaty according to their own local political needs. *Jüdische Rundschau* in Berlin celebrated the minority-protection clauses as a success, although it admitted that not all of the demands of East European Jewry had been fulfilled. *Jüdische Rundschau*, 11.07.1919. Very similar: *Selbstwehr*, 11.07.1919. In its second issue the newly founded *Jüdische Volkszeitung* in Bratislava (Preßburg/Pozsony) mentioned the Polish minorities' treaty as a positive reference for the implementation of minority rights in Czechoslovakia. *Jüdische Volkszeitung* (Brartislava), 29.08.1919. In Czernowitz, where the Jewish National Council had called for national autonomy, including a separated Jewish curia, (*Ostjüdische Zeitung*, 03.05.1919), the local *Ostjüdische Zeitung* decided to ignore the treaty completely.
[1546] *HaTsefirah*, 03.07.1919; *Chwila*, 30.06.1919; 07.07.1919; *Mitteilungs-Blatt des Jüdischen Volksrats Posen*, July 1919.
[1547] *HaTsefirah*, 10.07.1919.
[1548] *HaTsefirah*, 07.08.1919.
[1549] *Haynt*, 11.08.1919.

from fulfilling the wishes and aspirations of the Jewish people, but as a verdict of the world the Jews will respect and accept it."[1550]

Conclusion: Two Contradictory Tasks

What else could they have done but celebrate the treaty? The summer of 1919 saw a renewed wave of anti-Jewish violence perpetrated by Polish soldiers and civilians, as well as a rise of toxic antisemitic rhetoric by Polish nationalists, portraying Jews as a danger to the Polish nation, which at the threshold of Polish national freedom mobilized the entire world against it and infringed on the country's sovereignty. This was not what the National Councils had envisioned.

Regarding the process of nationalization of Jewish politics in East-Central Europe, the 'Wilsonian moment' can be seen more as one of many aspects that created the post-1918 situation, than a defining 'moment' itself. However, for Zionists, as well as for other nationalists it created a situation in which claims based on nationhood dominated the local and international negotiations over the reorganization of society. The National Councils, which local Zionists had founded in correspondence with other nationalist movements in the linguistically mixed regions of the former empires, represented an adaptation to this paradigm. However, these were no new phenomena, but built on the experience that had been gained during wartime. This was true concerning the nationally-defined organization of welfare, as well, as the claim to speak not only on behalf of a specific Jewish political movement, but of the entire nation. In regard to the latter aspect, the attempts to create a Jewish National Congress were not expressions of the alleged triumph of nationalism at the end of the war, but rather a project within the imperial state that also incorporated the international experiences of the Zionist movement.

It was only in the vacuum that developed with the implosion of imperial rule that Zionists could put their idea of a nationalist representation of 'the entirety of Jewry' into practice. When national belonging was not chosen but ascribed and could have horrific consequences, especially in the case of East Galicia, the Zionists fitted well into the nationalist framework created by Polish, German, Ukrainian, Czech among other. nationalists. Less due to their own activism and more due to the general situation, local Zionist groups who a few months before often had not counted more than a handful of members, came into a position in which they effectively represented the Jewish nation, as it was seen by them and by the various other nationalists. Zionists went along with the idea of ascribing national identification, while at the

[1550] *Chwila*, 14.07.1919.

same time they knew it was not a linear process. As Julius Becker wrote in a letter in early 1919: "It is necessary to force the German Jews to accept the idea of nationhood."[1551] Through their positions vis-a-vis the authorities and through the national organization of welfare, Zionists eventually did 'force' many Jews in the respective region to accept the idea of nationhood, simply because there was a lack of alternatives.

The form in which post-war Jewish national representation presented itself and the ways in which Zionists tried to find the Jewish nation's place in the new order depended on two factors: First, on whether the new rulers were willing to cooperate with the National Council and to recognize it. Second, on how Zionists had worked in the war-years and how they related to the community and its institutions.

The development in the Czechoslovak State was determined by the fact that the new government recognized the National Council and by the fact that Zionists and the Jewish Community Board had cooperated in many respects very closely during the war, which put activists in a more central position. In Vienna, where the government did not recognize the National Council and where the war-years had been characterized by conflict with the Kultusgemeinde leadership (and to a large extent by the contempt the liberal leadership there had for Zionists), the struggle focused naturally on the Kultusgemeinde itself. The experience in East Galicia was characterized – as it had been during the war – by the fact that Zionist activists were isolated from the party, strongly integrated into the local Jewish communities, a vital part of the communities' struggle for survival. These activists were therefore also accepted by many Jews as the real representatives of the Jewish people after the end of empire and it was not too complicated for them to take over from the Kahal-leadership, which had lost influence during the war. The nationalist warfare in the region additionally created a situation in which national self-organization and neutrality were credible options. In the former Generalgouvernement, where the war-years had been characterized by inter-party struggles, it was obvious that no other actor was willing to accept the Zionists – or an institution they would lead – to claim hegemony in Jewish society and represent it to the government and to the outside world. Whereas in some regions of former Ober Ost, especially in Lithuania, Zionists continued their old strategy of cooperating with, even being part of the authorities, largely transferring their tactics from the German to the new Lithuanian rulers.

At the same time, the international leadership of the Zionist movement had a rather different understanding of the purpose of the National Councils. They saw them primarily as an asset in the negotiations with the major powers about a national homeland in Palestine. While

[1551] Julius Becker, *Letter to Zionistische Vereinigung für Deutschland*, 22.01.1919, CZA, A233/2.

local National Councils made brief statements about the Jewish nation's claim on Palestine, this did not play any major role in their day-to-day activism. The international centers, in return, showed little concern for the actual situation in Eastern/Central Europe. This led to the 'creation' of a number of National Councils that did not primarily reflect local conditions but mainly existed in relation to the wishes of the international leadership and the imaginations of world leaders. The conflict between the local and the transnational would eventually come to the fore during the negotiations in Paris themselves, when local activists forced the Zionist movement not only to talk about the distant homeland in the Middle East, but also to negotiate the Jews' place in the European East.

Chapter 6: The Ancient Ideal and the New World

Much of the general literature on Zionism centers around the Balfour Declaration as the main 'outcome' for Zionism in the First World War and a crucial paradigm shift for the Zionist movement.[1552] There is no doubt about the importance of the Balfour Declaration in the history of Zionism and I do not intend to challenge the idea that it was a milestone in the history of the movement. What I intend to argue, however, is that for many in East-Central Europe it held a different meaning. I have addressed this in the introduction to the thesis and believe that I have shown in the previous chapters that Zionism involved much more than the question of Palestine. The Balfour Declaration nonetheless had important ramifications for the region in question. At the very same time, however, the revolutions in Russia and shortly after, revolutionary waves throughout Central and Eastern Europe presented powerful counter-proposals to the idea of emancipation through the creation of a national homeland in Palestine. In his memoirs, Chaim Weizmann, one of the main architects of the Balfour Declaration wrote about the reactions the first Russian revolution, of March 1917 created in Zionist circles:

> "At that time the whole world – and the Jews more than anyone else – had been thrilled by the overthrow of the czarist régime in Russia, […]. This too, was a danger of a sort. 'Some of us – some of our friends even, and especially some of our opponents,' I told the conference, 'are very quick in drawing conclusions as to what will happen to the Zionist movement after the Russian Revolution. Now, they say, the great stimulus of the Zionist movement has been removed. The Russian Jews are free; they do not need any places of refuge outside Russia – somewhere in Palestine."[1553]

This chapter analyzes these two great promises of emancipation that were made in 1917: the promise for national emancipation in a homeland in Palestine, most notably (but not only) in the form of the Balfour Declaration, and the Russian and European Revolutions and their promise of universal emancipation. I do not intend to make an argument about how 'realistic' these promises were. It is too easy to make the argument that hopes in the revolution were utopian and destined to be crushed by subsequent events (both by counterrevolution and by Stalinism). There is much wisdom in hindsight, but it is not very helpful, as it does not tell

[1552] Amongst many others: Michael Krupp, *Die Geschichte des Zionismus 1882–1948* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2001); Laqueur, *History of Zionism*; Hermann Meier-Cronemeyer, *Zionismus: Von den Anfängen bis zum Staat Israel*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Haag und Herchen, 1989); Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to Our Time*, 3rd ed. (New York: Albert Knopf, 2007), Geoffrey Wheatcroft, *The Controversy of Zion or How Zionism tried to resolve the Jewish Question* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1996); Jacob Tsur, *Zionismus: Geschichte einer Befreiungsbewegung* (Bonn, Hohwacht-Verlag, 1978).
[1553] Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 253. Weizmann referred to a special conference of various Zionist groups, which was held in London on 20 May 1917.

anything about peoples' reactions, ideas, hopes, and fears at the time. This chapter concentrates on the simultaneous promises of revolution and the Balfour Declaration and analyzes how Zionist activists interpreted the two events and their ramifications, how they gave them meaning for themselves, how they saw new opportunities in each, and what kind of practical conclusions they drew from them.

New Mass Politics following the February Revolution

On 8 March (23 February according to the old calendar) striking workers in the Putilov factory in Petrograd joined with women protesting against food shortages. The subsequent mass uprising forced the Czar to abdicate. A new republican provisional government took power, rivalled by the Soviet of Workers' Deputies. As one of the first measures of the new regime, all special restrictions and laws on Jews and other minorities were abolished.[1554] *Evrejskaja Zhizn'* (Jewish Life), the main paper of Russia's Zionists, wrote on 12 (25) March 1917: "A miracle has happened. Within a few days Russia has become a free country without bloodshed and major convolutions. […] With great joy, together with all the other peoples living in Russia, the Russian Jews experience these days."[1555] This sentiment was mirrored throughout the Jewish world. Finally, as Poale Zion activists stated enthusiastically, the "archenemy of the people"[1556] has been overthrown. Adolf Friedemann wrote in his diary "Heavenly justice has worked swiftly. The House of Romanov, probably the bloodiest in history, has ceased to rule and the Czar is imprisoned."[1557] From a location in Ober Ost, Alexander Adler wrote to his mother that she could be optimistic for the future, since the revolution meant that now, one could have hope again that for the Jews, everything would be better someday.[1558]

[1554] On the earlier stages of the Russian Revolution in general: Ėduard Nikolaevich Burdzhalov and Donald J. Raleigh, *Russia's Second Revolution: The February 1917 Uprising in Petrograd* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 40–57; Stephen Smith, *Russia in Revolution: An Empire in Crisis, 1890–1928* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 101–50; Leo Trotzki, *Geschichte der russischen Revolution* (Berlin: S. Fischer Verlag, 1960), 96–184. On Jews in the earlier stages of the Russian Revolution: Budnitskii, *Russian Jews*, 49–61; Ettinger, *Jews in Russia*, 14–28; Gitelman, *Jewish Nationality*, 69–101; Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 205–9.
[1555] *Evrejskaja Zhizn'*, 12.(25.)03.1917.
[1556] Confédération Ouvrière Socialiste Juive Poalei-Zion, *May Day Proclamation 1917*, ILPA, 1-10-1917-99.
[1557] Adolf Friedemann, *Diary*, Entry of 04.04.1917, CZA, A8/10.
[1558] Alexander Adler, *Letter to his mother*, 06.05.1917, CAHJP, P234/48.

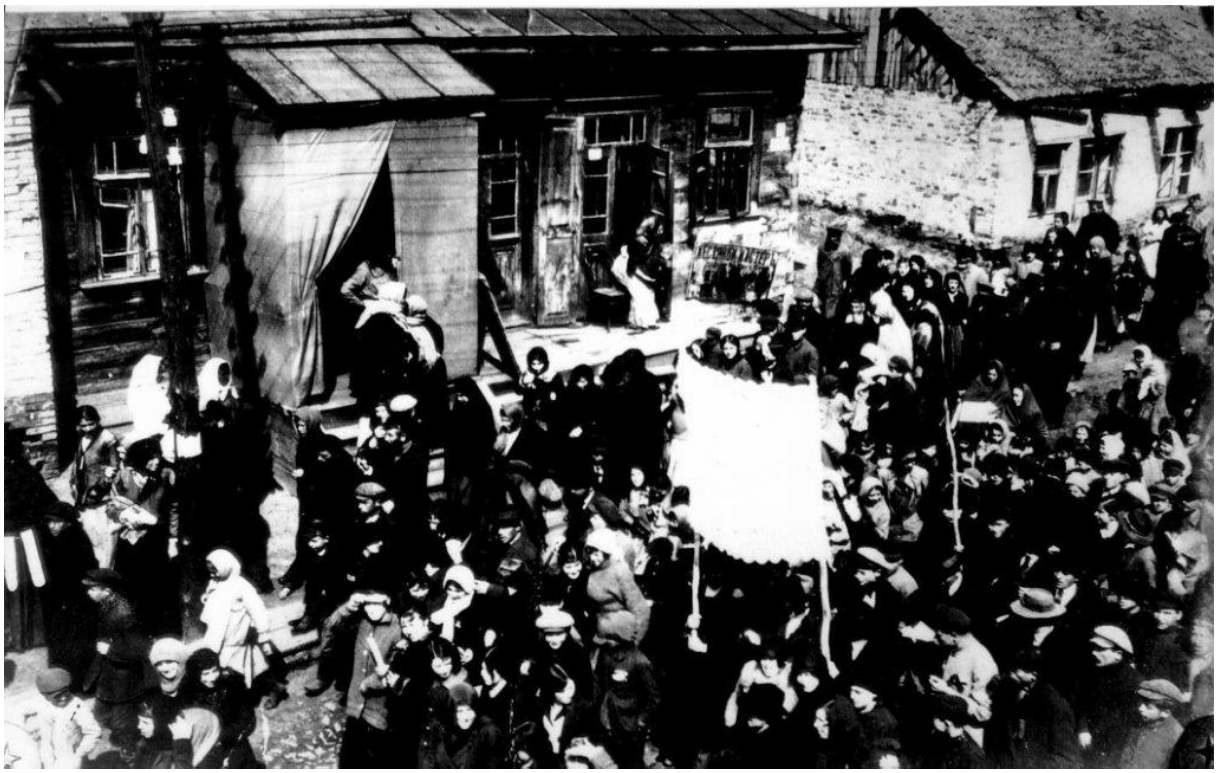


Figure 3

Jews in Dąbrowica (Dubrovytsia/Dombrovza) demonstrate to welcome the Russian Revolution in 1917.[1559]

For many, Jews and non-Jews alike, the revolution offered a spark of hope. This in turn was observed with considerable anxiety amongst the authorities. The German Governor-General in Warsaw reported in early April 1917: "The Jews are not pro-German anymore. […] The revolutionary movement in Russia will turn the Jews completely towards Russophilism."[1560] His *Verwaltungschef* (head of the administration) reported that "the revolution […] has been greeted everywhere with joy."[1561] The imperial authorities in Lwów expressed sincere worries about the enthusiasm the revolution had created amongst the local Jewish population.[1562] The authorities were indeed afraid that people under their rule would feel inspired by the Russian Revolution and would try to take matters into their own hands as well. Listening to the conversations women had in the bread lines in Vienna, police spies noted that they all agreed

[1559] CZA, PHZPR/1254820. [I do not own the rights to this picture.] The town is today in northwestern Ukraine and was then occupied by German and German-aligned Polish troops.
[1560] Generalgouverneur des Generalgouvernements Warschau, *6. Bericht des Generalgouverneurs über die Verwaltung des Generalgouvernements Warschau. Zeitraum: 1. Oktober 1916 bis 31. März 1917*, BAMA, N-234-5.
[1561] Verwaltungschef des Generalgouvernements Warschau, *2. Halbjahresbericht des Verwaltungschefs bei dem Generalgouvernement Warschau für die Zeit vom 1. April 1917 bis zum 0. September 1917*, BAMA, PH-30-II-16.
[1562] K. k. Statthalterei in Galizien to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Politische Verhältnisse im Königreiche Polen"*, 07.05.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2068.

with statements such as "We should do like the workers in Petersburg, lock up the ministers and slay the policemen, then there would soon be enough food and the war would end."[1563] The monthly report of the censor made similar observations in letters people had sent.[1564] In late March, early April both German and Habsburg authorities gave directives to their police and censors on how to deal with the apparently enthusiastic response the Russian Revolution had elicited amongst the people under their rule. Fearing that the revolutionary fervor would spread, they emphasized that any attempt to make a connection between events in Russia and the situation in the lands of the Central Powers was inacceptable had had to be suppressed.[1565]

These fears were not unfounded. For political activists of all persuasions, even if they were not directly affected by events in Russia, the revolution was a push of energy and mobilization, a motivation to resume or intensify political activities. In the Habsburg Empire, Poale Zion resumed its activities in the spring of 1917, after the draft of most of its members to the army had paralyzed its work in the previous years.[1566] The party, whose membership had changed significantly during the war, with many Galician and Bukovinian members now living in the West of the Empire and Russian activists who had found themselves stranded in Austria at the outbreak of the war, felt energized by the Russian Revolution.[1567] Activists drew their conclusions for their own situation in the Empire, with the internal newsletter from May 1917 stating: "The glorious victory of the Russian revolutionary proletariat cannot remain without consequences for the rest of Europe. Here in Austria as well, things are beginning to move and

[1563] K. k. Polizeidirektion in Wien, Zentralinspektorat der k. k. Sicherheitswache, *Stimmungsbericht*, 22.03.1917, BPDW-A, Stimmungsberichte Jänner-April 1917. Two weeks later the report noted that "all these conversations usually end with the observation that here there are the same conditions as in Russia, wherefore it is time that the same events as in Russia will take place." K. k. Polizeidirektion in Wien. Zentralinspektorat der k. k. Sicherheitswache, *Stimmungsbericht*, 05.04.1917, BPDW-A, Stimmungsberichte Jänner-April 1917.
[1564] K. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Monatsbericht für Mai 1917 der Zensurstelle Wien*, 15.06.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2069.
[1565] Polizeidirektion Wien to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Russische Revolution; Richtlinien für die öffentliche Erörterung*, 28./30.03.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2067; Deutsche Armee, Abteilung IIIb Kriegspresseamt Oberzensurstelle, *Richtlinien an sämtliche Zensurstellen bzgl. Kommentierung revolutionärer Prozesse in Russland*, BAB, R-1501-114414.
[1566] This is illustrated by the fact that there were neither any relevant publications during this period nor any sustained communication between the local party and the World Union's leadership in the Hague and Stockholm. Reports by the police and the Ministry of Interior also concluded unanimously that there was no political activity. K. k. Polizeidirektion in Prag to k. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Report: "Bureau der jüdisch-sozial. Arbeiterorganisation Poale Zion in Prag"*, 14.06.1917, ÖStA KA, ZSt KÜA 207 File No. 114,702; Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *File "Jüdisch Sozialistische Arbeiterorganisation 'Poale Sion', Bureau im Haag; Agitation"*, 15./21.07.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2069.
[1567] On Poale Zion in the Habsburg Empire before 1914, see: Gaisbauer, *Davidstern*, 368–41; Unger*, Po'ale Tsiyon beKisarut haOstrit*. Specifically on Galicia: Shabtai Unger, "Tnuet HaPoalim HaYehudit beGalitsia Erev Malhamat HaOlamHaRishonat – Kishalun magmut Halibud," *Gal-Ed*, Vol. 10 (1987), 121–46; Weinstock, "La Formation des Organisations Ouvrières Juives," 29–44. On Russian Poale Zionists in Austria during the war: Hoffmann-Holter, *Abreisendmachung*, 75–94; 120–3; Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 58.

one seems to realize that the people's rights can no longer be trampled on […]"[1568] The activists must have been aware that they were constantly under surveillance by the state,[1569] which is why they chose this rather tame formulation, directly relating to the re-opening of the Reichsrat in May 1917, which would "again give the people the possibility and opportunity to raise its demands."[1570] In the case of Poale Zion this demand was the Jewish proletariat's call for "peace, justice, and freedom."[1571] With this, Poale Zion raised demands for national autonomy in the Empire.[1572]

On the evening before the reopening of the Reichsrat, on 29 May 1917, the radical left organized a demonstration in Vienna, with Poale Zionist participation. A certain Leo Pjatagorsky, who later re-appeared in a Poale Zionist context,[1573] and who had already been arrested for his role in the protests for the release of Friedrich Adler a few days earlier, together with two other Russian activists "of mosaic faith,"[1574] distributed leaflets calling for immediate peace, no trust in the government and the leaders (of Social Democracy) and "to be prepared, if necessary to force peace with your own blood."[1575] On that same day, a group of one hundred radical demonstrators "apparently Galicians" was broken up by the police.[1576] At least two of the ringleaders were identified as "members of the Zionist association" who proclaimed "Long

[1568] Jüdische Sozialistische Arbeiter-Partei Poale Zion in Oesterreich, Parteisekretariat Wien, *Mitteilungen Nr. 3*, May 1917, ILPA, 4-8-1903-11-1.
[1569] There are numerous files from various police and military sources monitoring the activities of Poale Zion throughout the war. K. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt to k. k. Ministerium des Inneren, *Report: "Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz Den Haag"*, ÖStA KA, ZSt KÜA 120 File No. 65,583; K. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt to k. k. Ministerium des Inneren, *Report: "Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz"*, ÖStA KA, ZSt KÜA 131 File No. 71,244.
[1570] Jüdische Sozialistische Arbeiter-Partei Poale Zion in Oesterreich, Parteisekretariat Wien, *Mitteilungen Nr. 3*, May 1917, ILPA, 4-8-1903-11-1.
[1571] Ibid.
[1572] On Austrian Poale Zionists' call for nationl autonomy in this period, see: Max Rosenfeld, *Nationales Selbstbestimmunsgrecht der Juden in Polen* (Vienna, Berlin: R. Löwit Verlag, 1918); Rosenfeld, *Die Polnische Judenfrage*; Marcos Silber, "Poalei-Tsion beAustriah beMalamah haOlamah haRishonah ve haMaavak leUtunumih Le'umiuyt shel Yehudi Galitsiah ve Polin," *HaTsioniah*, No. 22 (2000): 99–128.
[1573] Bunzl, *Klassenkampf*, 127.
[1574] K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien, *Report: "Teilnahme von Russen an Demonstrationen"*, 22.07.1917, BPDW-A, Staatspolizei: Geschlossene Faszikel Kriegsakte, Jahrgang 1917 Scha.St/9. In 1916, Friedrich Adler, son of party leader Victor Adler, had murdered Austrian Prime Minister Karl Stürgkh as a protest against the war and was subsequently sentenced to eighteen years in prison. The call for his release was a rallying cry and decisive campaign for all on the radical left. See: John Zimmermann, *"Von der Bluttat eines Unseligen": Das Attentat Friedrich Adlers und seine Rezeption in der sozialdemokratischen Presse* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2000).
[1575] Revolutionäre Sozialisten Wien, *"Leaflet: 'Arbeiter! Sozialisten!"*, in: k. k. Polizeidirektion Wien to k. u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Report: "Revolutionäre Flugschrift"*, 07.07.1917, BPDW-A, Staatspolizei: Geschlossene Faszikel Kriegsakte, Jahrgang 1917 Scha.St/9. The leaflet was undersigned "Revolutionäre Sozialisten Wiens" (Revolutionary Socialists of Vienna) but after investigating the manner the police was sure that the activists had nothing to do with the actual group of that name. K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien, *Report: "Teilnahme von Russen an Demonstrationen"*, 22.07.1917, BPDW-A, Staatspolizei: Geschlossene Faszikel Kriegsakte, Jahrgang 1917 Scha.St/9. On the Föderation Revolutionärer Sozialisten 'Internationale', see: Peter Haumer, *Geschichte der F.R.S.I.: Die Föderation Revolutionärer Sozialisten "Internationale" und die österreichische Revolution 1918/19* (Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2018).
[1576] K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien, *Stimmungsbericht*, 31.05.1917, BPDW-A, Stimmungsberichte Jänner–April 1917.

live the revolution!" and shouted down mainstream Social Democratic representatives who wanted to calm the mood.[1577] Poale Zionists felt inspired by the events in Russia to intensify their own revolutionary activities amongst both Jewish and non-Jewish workers. Together with other activists, Poale Zionists concentrated their efforts on revolutionizing the workers, agitating for revolutionary action in and around factories. One case was the Arsenal artillery factory in Vienna, where, according to the police, "anarchist students and refugees"[1578] were agitating amongst the workers, distributing a leaflet calling on them to "Learn Russian! Learn from Petrograd! […] Down with the war! Long live peace!"[1579] One of the leading activists there was Abraham Samuel Juris, a refugee from Kołomyja (Kalamyi/Kolomea/Kolomyia) in East Galicia. He was not an anarchist but a central figure of Poale Zion.[1580] In Vienna, young activists who had come from Galicia worked closely with others on the radical fringes of the labor movement, such as Johannes Wertheimer, in the case of the Arsenal factory,[1581] and Franz Koritschoner, in the case of a number of other factories.[1582] Both men would later play central roles in the founding of the Austrian Communist Party.[1583]

Whereas Poale Zionists in many cases were drawn closer to the wider revolutionary movement, the news from Russia had also inspired Zionism more generally. The Action Committee of the Zionist Organization celebrated the revolution, since "Russian Jewry, freed of its shackles and conscious of its national tasks gives our movement new and unheard-of force for the realization of our ancient ideal of Zion."[1584] Of course, although General Zionists drew different conclusions from this event, they nonetheless responded to the new situation by engaging in broader mass-politics. Whereas Poale Zion drew conclusions for revolutionary change, Zionists

[1577] K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien to k. k. Ministerrats-Präsidium, *Report: "Demonstration von radikaler Sozialistengruppe am 29. Mai 1917"*, 01.06.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2131.
[1578] K. u. k. Kriegsministerium to k. k. Ministerium des Inneren, *Report: "Aufwiegelung der Arsenalarbeiter durch anarchistische Studenten"*, 30.05.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2131.
[1579] Revolutionäre Sozialisten Wiens, *Leaflet "Arbeiter und Arbeiterinnen!"* (copy), May 1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2131.
[1580] K. k. Polizeikommissariat Baden to k. k. Polizeidirektion Wien, *Amtsnotiz*, 17.06.1918, BPDW-A, Staatspolizei: Geschlossene Faszikel Kriegsakte, Jahrgang 1917 Scha.St/5. Juris left Vienna soon after in order to avoid arrest and settled in Wiener Neustadt. There is a notable tendency in police reports to give political labels to 'troublemakers' that did not necessarily reflect their own self-understanding. Therefore, many people who would have never identified as anarchists themselves were named as such. After the Bolshevik revolution the term 'bolshevist' would equally be applied to almost everyone who challenged the existing order, regardless of they had anything to do with Bolshevism as such.
[1581] K. u. k. Kriegsministerium to k. k. Ministerium des Inneren, *Report: "Aufwiegelung der Arsenalarbeiter durch anarchistische Studenten"*, 30.05.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2131.
[1582] K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report: "Koritschoner Franz, Schönfeld-Pichler, Friedenspropaganda"*, 16.09.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2071.
[1583] Verena Moritz, "Teil 1: Staatsgeschäfte," in *Kommunismus in Österreich 1918–1938*, ed. Barry McLoughlin, Hannes Leidinger, and Verena Moritz (Innsburck, Bozen, Vienna: Studienverlag, 2009), 23–81.
[1584] Zionist Action Committee, *Resolution on the Russian Revolution*, 25.04.1917, CZA, Z3/128.

in the Generalgouvernement started a mass campaign to engage the Jewish public with the idea of a national home in Palestine.

To the news from Russia came what today might be called 'fake news' from the United States. In April 1917 rumors about President Wilson's support for the establishment of a Jewish republic in Palestine circulated,[1585] something that, according to the Bundist paper *Lebens-Fragen* (Questions/Matters of Life) in Warsaw, had led to a "mass-delusion" amongst Zionists.[1586] It was an interpretation with which even Zionist leaders, such as Simon Rosenbaum from Wilno agreed, who believed that the idea of a Jewish republic in Palestine was completely unrealistic, given the Arab majority there. He stated that the rumors had "created a Tohuwabohu in the heads of our beth midrash-politicians," and that "the talk about a Jewish republic also damages us insofar as one will stop taking us seriously."[1587] It is not clear to me how this news made its way to occupied Poland, but it did. Local Zionists took up this news to stage a broad public campaign for Palestine, not because they necessarily believed Wilson's promise, or because they differed in the assessment of how realistic it was, but because a broad campaign would engage the mass of the Jewish population with the demand for Palestine.[1588]

From 3 July 1917 (the anniversary of Theodor Herzl's death), until 26 July (Tisha B'av), Polish Zionists launched a major campaign to collect signatures, demanding that a future peace settlement should grant the Jews the right to Palestine, and collecting money for the national effort.[1589] When *HaTsefirah*, announced the campaign, it stated that this would be "a huge manifestation for the eyes of the world, in which the whole of our people in all countries of their dispersion [show their] absolute unity and express their longing […] for Eretz Israel."[1590] The Jews of Poland were called to express their will to return to their ancient homeland, to liberate themselves from the illusions of assimilation, and to join the ranks of the nation, for the redemption of the people and of one's own soul.[1591] 400 activists dedicated their time to the campaign, distributing 500,000 leaflets and putting up 10,000 posters.[1592] In a mass-produced

[1585] It is still not totally clear to me how this rumor emerged. There are only very few publications that mentioned it: *Bnai Brith Messenger*, 11.05.1917; 01.06.1917; *The New York Times*, 27.04.1917. The *New York Times* reported here that president Wilson had in fact never promised the establishment of a Jewish Republic in Palestine.
[1586] *Lebens-Fragen*, 13.07.1917.
[1587] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 02.05.1917, CZA, Z3/509.
[1588] The campaign did not receive much scholarly attention so far. They were only mentioned briefly: Blobaum, *Minor Apocalypse*, 163; Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 45–6.
[1589] *Der Moment*, 13.07.1917.
[1590] *HaTsefirah*, 05.07.1917.
[1591] Organizacja Sjonistyczna w Polsce, *Leaflet "Do młodzieży żydowskiej/Al HaTzeyrim HaIvrim"*, July 1917, AAN, 1214/0/1.4/30/I/5. The Polish title would be "To the Jewish Youth", whereas the Hebrew title means "To the young Hebreans".
[1592] *Bulletins of the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organisation*, 27.09.1917.

leaflet Zionists described the self-sacrificing struggle and the hardships that the pioneers in Eretz Israel endured on behalf of the entire nation and stated:

"We are awakened by a feeling of joy because of the great national happiness [*szczęścia*] that awaits us, because we face the greatest breakthrough in our history when we shake off the shackles of the Golus and fulfil the dreams of the best sons of our nation, because now most countries recognize our right to free national life in Palestine."[1593]

But the fate of the nation did not lie only with the pioneers that were working the land already. In fact, each and every Jew could participate in the great national mission. A poster that was put up in Łódź called on the Jews to join in:

"Jews! Do you realize the gravity of the present moment? Do you feel the great events that take you from the moment when all the nations of the world are going towards independent life? Do you know that with every grosz given to our brothers in Palestine, with every vote given for Palestine increases the possibilities of a free national life in the Land of Israel? Learn that our generation has grown to the great tasks of the present moment! Reveal your organized national will to revive the land of Israel!"[1594]

The propaganda for the campaign suggested that the situation was absolutely urgent and that each and every Jews could now, merely by giving a few grosze and his or her signature/vote, contribute to the national cause:

"We are not asking you for charity, we are not calling you to philanthropy, but we will challenge you to organize and work for Palestine! Remember your great duty! Remember that the Land of Israel should be the slogan of those in whom a Jewish heart beats. Remember that by offering sacrifices to your brothers in Palestine, you do not just fulfill your duty to them, but also contribute to the building of which the whole generation of the Jewish nation has been dreaming about."[1595]

Although the campaign seemingly concentrated many efforts on raising money and collecting signatures, this was not its actual purpose. This campaign was not about the money, and it would have been delusional to expect the collection of meaningful funds.[1596] The funds that

[1593] Organizacja Sjonistyczna w Polsce, *Leaflet "Żydzi!/Yehudim!"*, July 1917, AAN, 1214/0/1.4/30/I/5. The leaflet was published in Polish and Hebrew. The date said "Tamuz-Av 5677", which would be from 26 June to 18 August 1917. The German censor approved the leaflet on 30 June.
[1594] Organizacja Sjonistyczna w Królestiw Polskiem, *Poster "Żydzi!"*, July 1917, APL, 603/0/2.1/10310.
[1595] Zionist Organization in Poland, *Leaflet "Żydzi/Yuden"*, 30.06.1917, AAN, 1214/0/1.4/30/I/5. The bi-lingual Polish/Yiddish leaflet was dated 30 June 1917, but the context makes it clear that it was (also) distributed during the campaign.
[1596] While money was collected for Palestine, local institutions suffered. On 26 July, the day before the campaign ended, the worker's kitchens of Poale Zion in Karmelicka street in Warsaw announced that they had to shut down due to a lack of funds and that orphanages and other institutions would follow soon. Arbeyterheym, *Telegram to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 26.07.1917, CZA, Z3/158.

even the biggest campaign could have raised amongst the impoverished, often starving Jewish population of Poland were not relevant. As a matter of fact, there was not even any clarity and agreement on what exactly should happen with the money after the campaign, which later led to internal conflicts.[1597] The campaign, including the call for donations, was a way to engage the local Jewish community. Donations and signatures were a way in which someone could contribute even just a little, and thereby feel part of something bigger, part of the national movement, part of the movement to regain the Land of Israel. The collection of signatures and donations, as *HaTsefirah* reported, was often connected with the distribution of aid, for example, by having activists with the petition lists present in soup kitchens and other institutions run by the organization.[1598]

Of course, the Palestine-campaign faced serious resentment from other political movements. The orthodox *Dos Yidishe Vort* accused the campaign of exploiting Jews' religious feelings for a completely unrealistic demand, notably referring to the Arab majority in Palestine as the reason why nobody would ever give the land to the Jews.[1599] The Bund's weekly *Lebens-Fragen* attacked the Zionists for their alleged irresponsibility; with so much poverty and misery in Poland, those activists who sincerely cared about their fellow Jews, should not concentrate on Palestine but rather help them here and now.[1600] In a letter to his wife Rabbi Carlebach lamented "the terrifying devastations already caused by Zionism and nationalism."[1601] Many perceived the applause given by Polish antisemites to the Zionist argument that the Jews' real homeland was Palestine as particularly troubling.[1602] During the campaign, tensions rose between the Orthodox and the Zionists, with the former lobbying the administration to prohibit the petition, accusing it of being perfidious, of exploiting welfare for political gains, and of being deceptive, since it allegedly hid its Zionist intentions.[1603]

Zionists claimed that when the campaign closed, one third of Warsaw's Jews – 95,000 people – and half Poland's Jewry outside the capital had signed the petition.[1604] While there is no way to verify the figures, the signatories' motivations were instantly questioned. Of every 1,000 signatories, *Dos Yidishe Vort* claimed, 999 had not known what they were actually

[1597] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Zionist Central Committee Warsaw*, 12.09.1917, CZA, Z3/172.
[1598] *HaTsefirah*, 05.07.1917.
[1599] *Dos Yidishe Vort*, 10.07.1917.
[1600] *Lebens-Fragen*, 20.07.1917.
[1601] Letter of Joseph Carlebach to his wife, dated 13.07.1917, in: Alexander Carlebach, "A German Rabbi goes East," *Leo Beack Institute Year Book*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1961): 109.
[1602] *Dos Yidishe Vort*, 28.08.1917.
[1603] See the Zionists' response to these allegations: Julius Berger, *Letter to Ludwig Haas*, 19.07.1917, CZA, Z3/161.
[1604] *Der Moment*, 03.08.1917. See also: Blobaum, *Minor Apocalypse*, 163.

signing.[1605] Polemics aside, it is important to note that there is no evidence that the collected signatures were eventually submitted to any higher authority. It was – somewhat surprisingly – not even used as an argumentative tool for activists outside of Poland. The main Zionist papers in Berlin and Vienna, *Jüdische Rundschau* and *Jüdische Zeitung*, both mentioned the petition in short articles, but never cited it later as evidence for mass support of their program.[1606] Zionists had also made clear from the beginning that a donation or a signature did not constitute a declaration of membership in the Zionist organization.[1607] The purpose of the campaign was to engage the Jewish public, to give everyone a way to participate, even on a low level and in a small way, in the national movement, to go beyond mere welfare- and relief-politics and to spread the ethos of connection to the Land of Israel. Were they successful in this? The German administration's report mentioned the increased activities of the Zionists, and that their international program came to be discussed broadly in the press. Yet it also stated that developments in Russia dominated public discourse amongst the Jewish population.[1608]

In many respects, the February/March Revolution in Russia created an atmosphere of hope and energy, and an urgency to engage in mass politics. This, regardless of whether the demands raised during such activities related to events in Russia or not. The interesting thing about these months was that almost everybody could project his or her ideas, hopes, and fears onto the situation. What is important is that it set the stage for a re-awakening of mass politics on the streets, in which people became agents, for campaigns in which everyone's participation mattered. This set the stage for the events that would unfold only a few months later with the great promises that were given in November of that year.

History's Categorical Imperative

This grassroots-campaigning happened at the very same time when two very different groups of Zionist activists were engaged in negotiations to gain support for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The first to obtain such an endorsement, however, was not Chaim Weizmann through his negotiations with the British government, but the leadership of Poale Zion from the Social Democratic movement. The leadership of the socialist-Zionist Poale Zion

[1605] *Dos Yidishe Vort*, 28.08.1917.
[1606] *Jüdische Rundschau*, 10.08.1917; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 17.08.1917. The Viennese *Jüdische Zeitung* copied the article from its Berlin counterpart.
[1607] Julius Berger*, Letter to Ludwig Haas*, 19.07.1917, CZA, Z3/160.
[1608] *2. Halbjahresbericht des Verwaltungschefs bei dem Generalgouvernement Warschau für die Zeit vom 1. April 1917 bis zum 30. September 1917*, BAMA, PH-30-II-16; also: AGAD, 532/0/010.

lobbied the remnants of the Socialist International for its endorsement of the demand for a Jewish Palestine.

Poale Zion had tried and failed for more than a decade to gain recognition and admission as the representative of the Jewish labor movement by the Socialist International.[1609] Now the war had shattered the unity of the international labor movement and had left only remnants of the organization, which, as Mario Keßler argues, forced the remaining Social Democrats to search for new allies. This was eventually the precondition for the successful re-encounter of the Poale Zionists' with it.[1610] In 1917, a group of socialists from various neutral countries came together in what was called the Dutch-Scandinavian Socialist Committees, trying to rebuild the International.[1611] The leadership of Poale Zion got in touch, attempting to win an endorsement for its demands.[1612] The international leadership of Poale Zion – Ber Borochov (on his way back to Russia), Leon Chasanowich, Shlomo Kaplansky, Berl Locker and Yakov Zerubavel – met the committee on 26 July in Stockholm, and poropsed a concept of national-personal autonomy in Europe "influenced principally by Karl Renner's administrative proposals"[1613] and Jewish national rights in Palestine.[1614] The concept for national-personal autonomy foreshadowed the demands raised by the Jewish National Councils a little over a year later.[1615] In regard to Palestine, it demanded the protection of Jewish colonization there and the right to free immigration.[1616] The document was not really discussed and the Dutch socialist Pieters

[1609] Balshan, *Ihud Mefulag*, 105–28. In his memoirs Zalman Shazar (Rubashov) recalled that as a representative of Poale Zion, he was not even allowed attend the Second International's congress as a visitor or consultative delegate. Zalman Shazar, *Morning Stars* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1967), 225. One of the main reasons was the Socialist International's insistence on the 'territorial principle', wherefore only 'territorial' parties would be accepted. This was, of course, in contradiction to the World Union of Poale Zion's claim to represent the Jewish working class in all countries. Keßler, *Antisemitismus, Zionismus und Sozialismus*, 35.

[1610] Keßler, *Zionismus und international Arbeiterbewegung*, 103. The first success in this respect was that in 1916 the Palestinian section of Poale Zion was granted one of the three representative positions for the Turkish territory in the representative body of the Socialist International. This was not a break with the 'territorial principle' but showed the new openness of the International towards Poale Zion.

[1611] On the creation of the committee, see: Braunthal, *Geschichte der Internationale*, Vol. 2, 82–5.

[1612] Keßler, *Zionismus und international Arbeiterbewegung*, 103.

[1613] Jewish Socialist Labour Confederation Poale-Zion, *Forms of National Autonomy*, CZA, A77/6.

[1614] For the minutes of the meeting, see: Dutch-Scandinavian Socialist Committee, *Sitzung des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees mit der Delegation von Poale Zion*, 26.07.1917, CHA, N. & C., Juli 1917:3. Hschr. (Arthur Engelberg), 25. There were probably some other delegates as well, including Max Rosenfeld from Austria. K. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt, *Jüdische Sozialisten (Poale Zionisten) Reise nach Stockholm*, 16.08.1917, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA Akten 210. Three others (Meier Rosner, Mendel Singer, Falim Herz) had applied for passports but were apparently denied by the authorities. K. u. k. Ministerium des Aueßeren to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Jüdisch sozialistische Arbeiterpartei "Poale Zion" in Wien. Beteiligung an der Friedenskonferenz in Stockholm*, 09./12.07.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2069.

[1615] Jewish Socialist Labour Confederation Poale-Zion, *Guiding Principles for a Legislative Project of National Autonomy*, CZA, A77/6. Also: see chapter 5.

[1616] Dutch-Scandinavian Socialist Committee, *Sitzung des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees mit der Delegation von Poale Zion, 26.07.1917*, CHA, N.&C., Juli 1917:3. Hschr. (Arthur Engelberg), 25.

Jelles Troelstra and the Belgian Camilles Huysmans argued that the Committee should simply adopt the demands since in the limited time available, one would need to focus on political problems considered to be more important.[1617] The socialist peace conference eventually accepted the proposition without relevant changes and included the Poale Zionists' demands in their final resolution on peace:[1618] "Jewish Question: Recognizing its international character and suggestions for its solution in the peace treaty: 'personal-national autonomy' in the closed areas of settlement in Russia, Austria, Romania and Poland as well as protection for the Jewish colonization in Palestine."[1619] Although this can hardly be seen as an enthusiastic endorsement, Poale Zion celebrated the official recognition of its demands by the remnants of the socialist movement. It subsequently represented it as the earlier, socialist version of the Balfour Declaration. As *Der Yudisher Arbeyter* wrote, it would prepare the ground for the entire nation's emancipatory struggle: "We must [now] unite all of our people's power for a vigorous struggle for our rights, for our existence, for our development."[1620] The Jewish people, as the Farbands-Biro insisted, "is not willing to identify its national interests with the war aims of any major power,"[1621] and, for this reason, the socialist conference's declaration was of even greater importance:

> "The only reason why the Jewish colonization of Palestine could be included in the generous peace program of the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee is that the worldwide democratic forces are increasingly aware that it is not a narrow-minded national aim but history's categorical imperative that drives Zionism."[1622]

In the following months, socialists in other countries passed resolutions endorsing Poale Zion's demands. The United Kingdom's Labour Party expressed support for Zionism in August

---

[1617] Ibid.
[1618] For the original draft, see: Jewish Socialist Labour Confederation Poale Zion, *Declaration to the Hollando-Scandinavian Socialist Committee, Stockholm*, 06.08.1917, ILPA, 1-1-1917-1. For the press communiqué, see: Dutch-Scandinavian Socialist Committee, *Pressekommuniqué zur Sitzung des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees mit der Delegation von Poale Zion*, 26.07.1917, CHA, N. & C., Juli 1917:2. IISg. (NL Troelstra), 433.
[1619] Pieter Jelles Troelstra, ed., *De Stockholmsche Conferentie, haar werk en beteeknis* (Amsterdam: Brochurenhandel der S.D.A.P., 1917), 31. Apparently, the committee was not completely convinced by Poale Zion's idea of adopting Karl Renner's concept for personal-national autonomy. For all other countries the territorial concepts by Bauer and the Brünn Program for territorial autonomy with rights for the minorities (the suggestion for Austria-Hungary was almost the identical formulation of the Brünn Program: "Transformation into a federal state with equal rights for the nationalities and extensive autonomy for them."). See: "Brünner Nationalitätenprogramm der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei Österreichs (1899)," in *Österreichische Parteiprogramme 1868–1966*, ed. Klaus Berchtold (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1967), 144–5. The somewhat contradictory (or at least inconsistent) formulation "'personal-national autonomy' in the closed areas of settlement" which was suggested for the Jews appears to have been an attempt to achieve a compromise between the two concepts.
[1620] *Der Yudisher Arbeyter*, 07.08.1917.
[1621] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, 15.01.1918, CZA, Z3/1069.
[1622] Ibid.

1917,[1623] and later successfully submitted a resolution to the Inter-Allied Conference of Socialist and Labour Parties.[1624] Some activists, such as Tom Mann, the famous trade union militant and later founder of the Communist Party of Great Britain, enthusiastically supported socialist Zionism and in late 1917/early 1918 he brought forward numerous resolutions at workers' assemblies in the UK that endorsed its claim for Palestine.[1625]

The endorsement of the Palestine-related demands of Poale Zion were of some importance in later years, especially in relation to the British Labour governments of 1924 and 1929–31, when Britain was also the mandate power in Palestine.[1626] However, both at the time and in later historiography, this earlier declaration of support seemed less relevant given the promise of the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine by Arthur James Balfour in his letter to Lionel Rothschild. The process that led to the crafting of the Balfour Declaration, the different interests and various conflicts have been studied extensively.[1627] The question is – what did this promise mean for people in East-Central Europe?

The impact of the Balfour Declaration on East-Central European Jewry is hard to assess and remains a matter of debate.[1628] Most accounts of the time suggest that the response both among Zionists and the wider Jewish public was absolutely enthusiastic.[1629] It is difficult to assess how

[1623] Joseph Gorny, *The British Labour Movement and Zionism 1917–1948* (London and Totowa: Frank Cass, 1983), 7. On the British Poale Zion's activism in regard to the Labour Party, see: Jakov Pomerantz, *Report on Activities since the Outbreak of the War*, 22.01.1918, CZA, Z4/40117.
[1624] "Memorandum on War Aims," in *British Labor and the War: Reconstructors for a New World*, ed. Paul U. Kellog and Arthur Gleason (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1919), 359. This was again celebrated by Poale Zionists (at least those in the allied and neutral countries): *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, 05.03.1918, CZA, Z3/1069.
[1625] Tom Mann, *Letters to Leon Locker*, 13.12.1917; 08.01.1918; 18.01.1918; 26.01.1918; 07.02.1918, YIVO, RG 116, Box 67 Folder 31.
[1626] Joseph Gorny, *British Labour Movement*, 25–109.
[1627] Michael J. Cohen, *Britain's Moment in Palestine: Retrospect and Perspectives, 1917–1948* (London, New York: Routledge, 2014); Isaiah Friedman, P*alestine: A Twice Promised Land? The British, the Arabs, & Zionism, 1915–1920* (New Brunswick, London: Transaction Books, 2000); Bernard Regan, *The Balfour Declaration: Empire, the Mandate and Resistance in Palestine* (London, New York: Verso 2017); James Renton, *The Zionist Masquerade: The Birth of the Anglo-Zionist Alliance 1914–1918* (Houndsmills: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007); James Renton, "Flawed Foundations: The Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate," in *Britain, Palestine and Empire: The Mandate Years*, ed. Rory Miller (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), 15–37; Maryanne A. Rhett, *The Global History of the Balfour Declaration: Declared Nation* (New York: Routledge, 2016).
[1628] Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 248.
[1629] Baruch Ben-Avram, "Das Dilemma des Zionismus nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg," *Historische Zeitschrift*, Vol. 244, No. 3 (1987): 610–11; David Ben-Gurion, *Israel: Der Staatsgründer erinnert sich* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1998), 98; Berkowitz, *Western Jewry*, 23; Isaiah Friedman, "The Response to the Balfour Declaration," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (1973): 105–24; Gorny, *Converging Alternatives*, 86; Golda Meir, *My Life*, 7th ed. (London: Futura Publications, 1979), 46–7; Colin Shindler, *Israel and the European Left: Between Solidarity and Delegitimization* (New York: Continuum, 2012), 30; Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism, 1600–1918*, Vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1919), 83–127.

far this was the case in the region. Most responses in the Zionist and Jewish-nationalist press were decidedly cautious. In Warsaw, *Haynt* argued that the declaration did not change anything in regard to the alleged traditional Jewish sympathies for the Ottoman Empire and that any future arrangement could only come as part of a wider peace settlement.[1630] The religious-Zionist *HaTsefirah* initially responded to the declaration with a lot of skepticism, describing it as a "breakthrough of English Judaism", analyzing this mainly as a victory of Jewish nationalists against assimilationists there.[1631] Only on 29 November, about two weeks after news of the declaration had arrived in the region, did the paper comment at length.[1632] While it was clear that the British government and the Entente had made the promise not out of love for the Jews, but because of their strategic interests in the region, the importance lay in the fact that Zionism was recognized and that its demands would be on the table of a future peace conference.[1633] *HaMitspeh* in Cracow argued similarly that the promise should not be confused with British sympathies for the Jews, and in fact, Jews were terribly mistreated by the British.[1634] It was indeed good to have this promise, but of all governments the Jews should trust "Babylon" the least.[1635] The response of the non- or anti-Zionist press was actually not completely different. *Dos Yidishe Vort* mainly emphasized how unspecific the promises were,[1636] and that the future of Palestine could not be decided by Britain alone but only in a future peace conference.[1637] Both *Der Moment* and *Dos Folk* (The People; the paper of the Folkspartey) emphasized that despite the promise, the Jewish masses suffered here and now, and Zionists should do their duty to ease this immediate suffering.[1638]

The leading Zionist *Jüdische Rundschau* in Berlin proclaimed that the declaration was of great importance as for the first time a major power had recognized Zionism. The same article was then printed in *Jüdische Zeitung* and *Selbstwehr*. It also emphasized that Great Britain had indeed its own interests and what was now required was a German and Ottoman response.[1639] This statement reflected the ambiguity of the situation. Indeed, Zionists were thrilled that they had obtained this declaration but as it came from Britain, it put their professed loyalty to the Central Powers, as well as their strategic orientation in jeopardy. On 22 November

[1630] *Haynt*, 30.11.1917.
[1631] *HaTsefirah*, 22.11.1917.
[1632] The first report that I could find: *Der Moment*, 15.11.1917.
[1633] *HaTsefirah*, 29.11.1917.
[1634] *HaMitspeh*, 16.11.1917.
[1635] *HaMitspeh*, 23.11.1917. In Jewish tradition, Babylon, here used as an image to describe Britain, is seen as an oppressor against whom one has to struggle.
[1636] *Dos Yidishe Vort*, 15.11.1917.
[1637] *Dos Yidishe Vort*, 22.11.1917.
[1638] *Dos Folk*, 07.12.1917; *Der Moment*, 20.11.1917.
[1639] *Jüdische Rundschau*, 16.11.1918; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 23.11.1917; *Selbstwehr*, 23.11.1917.

the leadership of the German Zionists sent out guidelines for any discussions over the Balfour Declaration to its members. The text emphasized that this was merely a tactical move of the English aggressors but that it would be difficult for German Jews to reject it. In a somewhat acrobatic reasoning it argued that if German Jews protested against these hideous British plans, than this would a) not have any impact on the ground, b) endanger Jews in the United States, Russia, and Britain, and c) effectively damage German and Ottoman interests, because the two countries could then no longer present themselves as the protectors of the Jews and would be incapable of issuing their own promises for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, which the guidelines assured they had planned to do all along.[1640]

The plan to obtain an equivalent to the Balfour Declaration from the Central Powers dominated the efforts of the Zionist leadership there in the weeks after the declaration. On 12 November, the leadership wrote to the German Foreign Office, informing it about the text of the declaration, the importance that for the first time a major power had recognized the Zionist claim, and insisted that it was crucial to have a conversation about it.[1641] In December the Committee for the East wrote to the newly appointed German chancellor Georg von Hertling, asking for a public statement or a public appearance of them with a representative of the state in order to counter the alleged pro-British mood that had come with the Balfour Declaration, emphasizing the excellent relations the committee had had since 1914 with key state leaders, including Hindenburg and Ludendorff.[1642] In subsequent weeks and months negotiations were under way between Zionists and the German government, trying to gain a statement resembling the Balfour Declaration. The German government coordinated with its Ottoman ally and on 5 January expressed its support to representatives of the Zionist leadership and the Committee for the East.[1643] The statement expressed the government's sympathies and support for the development of culture and independent life of the Jewish minorities.[1644] While the Zionist press tried to present this as a great success, in fact it was underwhelming.[1645] Julius Berger

[1640] Zionistische Vereinigung für Deutschland (Arthur Hantke), *An die Ortsgruppen und Vertrauensmänner*, 22.11.1917, CZA, Z3/801.
[1641] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Staatssekretär des Auswärtigen Amtes Berlin*, 12.11.1917, CZA, Z3/22.
[1642] Komitee für den Osten, *Letter to Georg von Hertling*, 19.12.1917, BAB, R-703-67.
[1643] Klaus J. Herrmann, "Political Response to the Balfour Declaration in Imperial Germany: German Judaism," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (1965): 303–20; Saadia E. Weltmann, "Germany, Turkey, and the Zionist Movement, 1914–1918," *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (1961): 265–8; Zechlin, *Deutsche Politik*, 373–448.
[1644] *Jüdische Rundschau*, 11.01.1918; Komitee für den Osten*, Eine Erklärung der Deutschen Regierung*, January 1918, CZA, A8/33.
[1645] Press reports: *Jüdische Rundschau*, 11.01.1918; *Jüdische Presse*, 11.01.1918; *Selbstwehr*, 18.11.1918. On the reactions to the declaration, see: Unknown Author, P*rotokoll der Veranstaltung im Hotel Bristol am 26. Januar 1918, veranstaltet von der Zionistischen Vereinigung für Deutschland*, 26.01.1918, PA-AA, RZ/207/III/S/R-78728; Komitee für den Osten, *Niederschrift über das Frühstück am 24.1.1918 mittags 1 1/2*

wrote that he was "certainly not delighted by the development and we did everything to change the matter."[1646] This declaration came in addition to a similarly vague promise of support and sympathy by the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs Count Czernin from late November 1917, which the Central Powers' Zionists had equally tried to promote as a response to Balfour, but which was in fact even less meaningful than the German proclamation.[1647]

These hectic efforts had two purposes. As Martin Buber had written shortly after the British promise became public, a similar declaration by the Central Powers would mean the absolute breakthrough of Zionism.[1648] If this was the goal, whatever the activists gained in the following weeks was clearly disappointing. Another aspect, however, seems at least equally important: the British promise raised significant doubts about the Zionists' loyalty and their unequivocal support for the German and Habsburg governments. The files of the state's surveillance apparatus, especially in the Habsburg Empire, clearly show that in the aftermath of the Balfour Declaration, a general suspicion about the loyalties of Zionists was raised. Already on 27 November the central censorship office in Austria produced a special report on the Zionist movement, concluding that it was in close and suspicious contact with neutral and hostile countries.[1649] A report from Budapest that the local Zionist group had organized a festive event on 24 November and celebrated the 'liberation' of Palestine by the British army made the entire movement look potentially treasonous.[1650] This news was distributed to the various local authorities in the crownlands with the instruction to closely monitor any Zionist activities.[1651] In January the distribution of the newsletter of the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization was forbidden and the necessary postal license revoked.[1652] Zionist newspapers were subject to more intense attention and censorship than before.[1653] Many in the state

Uhr im Hotel Kaiserhof, Berlin, auf Einladung des Herrn Dr. Paul Nathan, 25.01.1918, JMB-A, MF13/6; Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich*, 15.01.1918, CZA, Z3/848.

[1646] Julius Berger, *Letter to Markus (?)*, 05.11.1918, CZA, Z3/147.

[1647] Anonymous, *Note on the reception of Arthur Hantke by Ottokar Czernin*, 19.11.1917, CZA, Z3/848; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 23.11.1917; 30.11.1917; *Selbstwehr*, 23.11.1917. Also: Friedman, "Austro-Hungarian Government," 159–65; Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 55. On the attempts to present the German and Austro-Hungarian responses as successes, see: Max Cohen (Reuß), *Die politische Bedeutung des Zionismus* (Berlin: Deutsches Komitee zur Förderung der jüdischen Palästinasiedlung, 1918).

[1648] Martin Buber, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 26.11.1917, CZA, Z3/207.

[1649] G. Z. N. B. Zensurabteilung Deutsch A, *Jüdisch- politisch- zionistische- Korrespondenzen*, 27.11.1917, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA 227.

[1650] K. u. k. Armeeoberkommando Chef des Generalstabs to Ministerialkommission im k. u. k. Kriegsministerium, *Report "Zionistische Propaganda in Budapest"*, 06.12.1917, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA 228; also in: ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A2073.

[1651] Prezydium c. k. Namiestnictwa to C. k. Dyrektorowi Policyi we Lwowie i w Krakowie, *Syonistyczna propaganda w Budapeszcie*, 28.01.1918, ANK, 247/0/-/117.

[1652] K u. k. Kriegsüberwachungsamt to Ministerialkommission im k. u. k. Kriegsministerium, *Joodsche Correspondentie Bureau: Entziehung des Postdebits für Österr.*, 26.01.1918, ÖStA KA, ZSt KM KÜA 231.

[1653] For example regarding *HaMitspeh* in Cracow: Prezydium c. k. Namiestnictwa to C. k. Dyrekcyi Policyi w Krakowie, *Ruch Syonistyczny*, 28.01.1918, ANK, 247/0/-/117.

authorities came to believe that the Zionists, if not all the Jews, were at least potential supporters of the enemy.[1654] The Austrian Army Command in Przemyśl reported in September 1918 that "The creation of a Jewish state, as promised by the Entente, seems to move many minds and to create sympathies for the Entente."[1655]

It is impossible to prove or disprove whether broader layers of the Jewish population actually developed sympathies for the Entente. This is also beyond the point I intend to make here. The question is what the declaration meant for Zionists. As mentioned above, they had to be very cautious in their public proclamations and usually combined their statements with warning of 'perfidious Albion'. In their private communication, Zionists celebrated it as an amazing success. From the Ober Ost headquarter, Hermann Struck sent his "heartfelt congratulations on the great success, which I see in the English government's declaration."[1656] Mordechai Ehrenpreis wrote to the editors of *HaMitspeh* in Cracow: "The great hour has come for our ancient dream! This first official declaration by a world power for our ancient idea of Palestine is a start, an auspicious start."[1657]

Despite the initial enthusiasm amongst many, references to the Balfour Declaration and the German/Ottoman declaration appeared in the papers only for a short time. In many respects, the impact on the ground seems to have also been very short-lived and from early 1918 onwards, reports and letters from the region hardly ever mention the declaration or its impact on the local situation. References, if they were made at all, tended to be rather abstract. In April 1918 a conference of delegates of the Galician Zionist Organization took place in Lwów. The delegates did refer to Palestine, deciding that their main task after the war and a peace settlement would be the systematic colonization of the land.[1658] This demand was undoubtedly moved to the fore by the Balfour Declaration, however, the declaration itself was referenced only insofar as the conference insisted that Palestine should not be ruled by England.[1659] Activity reports from Vienna and Prague, even those that covered the relevant period immediately after the declaration, refrained from mentioning any impact.[1660] The same was true for reports that came

[1654] Friedman, "Austro-Hungarian Government," 164–6.
[1655] K. u. k Militärkommando Przemyśl to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Simmungsbericht des Militärkommandos Przemysl*, 17./28.10.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A2119.
[1656] Hermann Struck, *Letter to Arthur Hantke*, 15.11.1917, CZA, Z3/131-2.
[1657] Mordechai Ehrenpreis, *Letter to HaMitspeh*, mid-November 1917, ANK, 247/0/1/117. The letter was confiscated by postal censorship.
[1658] Zionist Organization East Galicia, *Minutes and Resolutions of the Delegates' Conference*, 17.–18.04.1918, CZA, F3/54.
[1659] Präsidium der k. k. Polizeidirektion Lemberg to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Report "Zionistische Konferenz in Lemberg"*, 19./23.04.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2076.
[1660] Zionistisches Districtkomitee für Böhmen, *Arbeitsbericht für die Monate November, Dezember, Jänner und Februar (1917/1918)*, March 1918, CZA, Z3/783; Exekutiv-Komitee der Zionisten Österreichs, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 01.05.1918, CZA, Z3/849.

from the Generalgouvernement. Indeed, some mentioned an upswing of Zionist activities, an increase in membership, greater participation in meetings and assemblies, and generally an improvement of the standing of Zionist groups in Jewish society, but this was, as activists reported, not necessarily related to the declaration.[1661] Another activist stated in regard to discussions amongst some hitherto non-Zionist groups: "The mood amongst the masses is absolutely Zionist, nobody dares to speak up as an opponent of Zionism, whereas the Zionists seem to be extraordinarily unpopular."[1662] It does seem that the Zionist idea gained some attraction but this did not mean that the Zionist movement became more attractive. Arthur Hantke had an explanation for this. In a letter to Schmarja Levin in New York in early December 1917, he reported that there was indeed an awakening of national consciousness amongst Eastern European Jewry. He explained this, however, with the effects of the war, which had a nationalizing effect.

"I do not want to dispute in any way that the external, political conditions, the declarations by governments and the like, make a strong impression on the Jews. But we should not overestimate it. The inner-Jewish development is not so absolutely dependent on external conditions. Already Herzl had been mistaken in that and overestimated the impact of his audiences [*die Wirkung seiner Audienzen*; referring to the meetings of Herzl with state-leaders and dignitaries; JR]. Equally important as the external relations is the inner development which the thinking of the Jews, including that of the assimilated Jews, goes through. Large groups of assimilated Jews have realized in those past three years that they are different than their environment, that this otherness is not based on religion but in what can only be called national factors, and that they do not even have the wish to lay down this otherness. On the contrary. Thousands of assimilated Jews, who due to the circumstances have been cast into a non-Jewish environment for the first time mainly have the burning desire to live together with Jews again, to live as it is natural for them to satisfy their spiritual needs which remain unconsidered and unsatisfied in the non-Jewish environment."[1663]

There was one very notable exception to this; and that was in Ober Ost, where local reports repeatedly indicate that the Balfour Declaration had made an important impression on local mood and Zionist activities. A report from Pińsk stated:

"The declaration by Balfour on Palestine made a great impression in the widest layers. [People] feel the urge to organize and start Zionist work. For the organization of Zionist work, a big assembly was called in which Mr. Josef Bergmann gave a great speech. He referred to the work of the World Zionist Organization during the war and to the recent victory of the Zionist idea. He talked about the importance of Balfour's declaration and about the

[1661] For example: J. Kronitz and A. Hurwitz, *Letter to Inner Zionist Action Committee*, 11.04.1918, CZA, Z3/132-2.
[1662] Unknown Author (signature illegible), *Letter to Julius Berger*, 16.05.1918, CZA, Z3/168.
[1663] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Schmarja Levin*, 05.12.1917, CZA, Z3/397.

grandiose work which awaits the Jewish people now. At the end of the assembly a Zionist committee of 9 members was elected, which should lead the work of the general Zionists."[1664]

In January 1918, Simon Rosenbaum, the leader of the Zionist movement in Lithuania wrote: "Since the English declaration of last November, an excellent atmosphere for Zionism, especially in the provinces, has emerged here. A number of new associations were founded which are able to raise significant sums."[1665] This is curious in two respects. First, Rosenbaum himself had expressed severe doubts about the Balfour Declaration and continued to argue that its importance was overestimated and that the situation in the region itself was more important.[1666] And second, at the same time as Rosenbaum connected the upswing in Zionist activities to the 'English declaration', he had already written about a positive organizational development and the establishment of new associations on 21 November. However, he had not connected this to the declaration, at a time when one may surmise that he probably already knew about it, though it could not yet have had time to take a positive effect.[1667] In the following months, Zionists in Ober Ost were engaged in successful Palestine-oriented campaigns, including surprisingly successful – given the overall conditions of poverty – fundraising and Shekel-campaigns.[1668] A report by an activist who had travelled through Ober Ost mentioned that the recent strengthening of Zionism as a dominant ideology, weakened those movements like the Folkists and Bundists who rejected Palestine as a national homeland.[1669]

This exceptional development in Ober Ost is consistent with what I described already in previous chapters, that with the absence of large-scale grassroots relief work in the region, due to the particular relationship to the occupation, the idea of Palestine and more classical Zionist demands and strategies were more at the center of Zionist activities there. This does not necessarily mean that Jews in this region perceived the Balfour Declaration differently, but that the Zionists gave it a different meaning, and attributed more importance to it than in other regions, where their main focus was grassroots work, often in the areas of relief and education The activists themselves were therefore inclined to interpret an increase in the success of their organization in this context. Ezra Mendelsohn wrote that the declaration "made a tremendous stir in Poland"[1670] while a few pages earlier he had emphasized strongly that "[t]he Balfour

[1664] Zionist Local Committee Pińsk (Bergmann, Obrow, Lifschitz, Boxer, Berkmann), *Letter to Inner Zionist Action Committee*, 18.03.1918, CZA, Z3/132-2.
[1665] Simon Rosenbaum, *Report on the Situation of Zionism in Lithuania*, January 1918, CZA Z3/510.
[1666] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 23.09.1918, CZA, Z3/176.
[1667] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 21.11.1917, CZA, Z3/131-2.
[1668] Simon Rosenbaum, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 05.04.1918, CZA, Z3/509.
[1669] Julius Berger (?), *Die Lage der Juden in Litauen (Nach der bei meiner letzten Reise Ende April 1918 gesammelten Erfahrungen)*, 06.05.1918, CZA, Z3/136.
[1670] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 66.

Declaration followed the Zionist boom in Poland – it did not cause it."[1671] These two statements do not contradict one another. As a matter of fact, the Balfour Declaration fitted into the general trend of nationalization in many regions. For Zionists, the important question concerned how they could use it, but also, whether other events might overshadow its impact.

The Russian Way

On 7 November (25 October) 1917, two days before the Balfour Declaration was published in the British press, the Bolsheviks took power in Petrograd. While initially many, including many Zionist activists, believed that their rule would only be a short episode in the radical transformation that Russia was undergoing, this turned out not to be the case.[1672] While the revolution did indeed have an immediate impact on activists in Russia, it seems that the most important effect it had on those further to the west was in the proclamation of a ceasefire and the beginning of peace negotiations with the Central Powers in Brest Litovsk in early 1918.

Zionists saw the peace negotiations as a possibility to position themselves as representatives of East European Jewry and to gain recognition for the Jewish nation in the region, not dissimilar to how they saw the Paris Peace Conference. For this purpose, the Zionist Organization sent Leon Chasanowich, a member of the Farbands-Biro of Poale Zion to revolutionary Russia in order to negotiate with the new regime.[1673] Chasanowich, who tended to be on the moderate wing of Poale Zion and had played a crucial role in negotiations with the Socialist International for its endorsement of their Palestine-related demand, had no sympathy for Bolshevik rule which he described as "born out of anarchy", an expression of "Russia's decay", and the "rule of the army barracks".[1674] In Petrograd, he met with local Zionist and Poale Zionist leaders who for the majority opposed Jewish participation in the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations, fearing that close association with the Bolsheviks would risk the security of the Jews, as the forces of counter-revolution would attack them for such a cooperation, and would also be seen as a rejection of a possible alignment with Britain, which was deemed necessary, given the Balfour Declaration.[1675] He nonetheless had this assignment and together

[1671] Ibid., 45.
[1672] Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization, *Forward of a letter from Russia to the Zionist Action Committee*, 16.01.1918; CZA, Z3/128; Leon Chasanowich, *Report: "Zur Jüdischen Lage in Russland"*, 24.03.1918, CZA, Z3/892; G., *Letter to the Zionist Organization in Warsaw*, 25.09.1918, CZA, Z3/128.
[1673] Mintz, "Zionist Movement and the Brest-Litovsk Negotiations," 31–61. There were similar attempts by the German Zionists and the Committee for the East to represent the Jews on the side of the German delegation. This also did not materialize. Julius Berger, *Letter to Markus (?)*, 01.01.1918, CZA, Z3/147.
[1674] Leon Chasanowich, *Report: "Zur Jüdischen Lage in Russland"*, 24.03.1918, CZA Z3/892.
[1675] Leon Chasanowitsch, *Die Friedensverhandlungen in Brest Litowsk und die Judenfrage*, 1918, CZA, Z3/892.

with Nahum Rafalkes (Nir), a leader of the Russian Poale Zion, he drafted a memorandum of Jewish demands for the peace negotiations which included Jewish representation in the negotiations, the recognition of national autonomy rights and free emigration to Palestine.[1676] Chasanowich then contacted Georgy Chicherin, the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, whom he knew from London during the time of exile they had spent there together a few years earlier. Chicherin, himself a Bolshevik, agreed in essence with his demands and suggested that he should simply travel to Brest-Litovsk and meet there with Trotsky. Apparently, Lenin and the Left Social Revolutionaries in the government also agreed to the proposal and after some negotiation a Jewish-national delegation was formed.[1677]

The importance of Chasanowich's long reports about his diplomatic endeavors in revolutionary Russia does not concern the diplomacy itself, although, I would argue that, given the later evolution of communist-Zionist relations, the Bolsheviks' willingness to cooperate with the Zionists to this extent, is quite remarkable, even given their flexibility in regard to nationality politics in this period.[1678] The Jewish delegation never made it to Brest Litovsk, since just before it wanted to depart, news came that Trotsky had broken off the negotiations.[1679] The important aspect – for the purposes of the present study at least – is that Chasanowich provided an analysis of how the revolutionary dynamic, as well as the promises of national emancipation in Palestine, were perceived by the Jews and especially the Zionist activists with whom he had met. Based on the conversations he had held with several Poale Zionist and general Zionist representatives in Petrograd, he asserted (not completely truthfully), that "no Jewish socialist party cooperates with the ruling party."[1680] The reason for this was the evident fear that the anticipated fall of the regime would be followed by pogroms:

"Jewish society is dominated by a terrifying fear of the events to come. It is generally assumed that the Bolsheviks are bankrupted and when the reaction comes, it will take its gruesome revenge on the Jews. […] This is why there

[1676] Leon Chasanowitsch, Nahum Rafalkes (Nir), *Die Notwendigkeit einer jüdischen Delegation in Brest. Memorandum (Übersetzung)*, Januar 1918, CZA, Z3/892.
[1677] Leon Chasanowitsch, *Die Friedensverhandlungen in Brest Litowsk und die Judenfrage*, 1918, CZA, Z3/892. Chasanowich and Chicherin maintained a rather friendly relationship and contact in the following years. See for example: Leon Chasanowich, *Letter to Georgi Chicherin*, 01.09.1920, CZA, A277/6.
[1678] Relations were generally rather positive in the earlier phase of Bolshevik rule. There is some evidence that the Bolsheviks initially even offered the position of People's Commissar for Jewish Affairs to Nahum Rafalkes. Frankel, *Crisis*, 175. Generally, however, the Bolsheviks mostly remained indifferent to the question of Zionism. An important point in this regard was made by Robert Wistrich; that is that the Bolsheviks in their early phase in power were simply pre-occupied with other matters and did not show any interest in the issue. Robert Wistrich, "Anti-Zionism in the USSR: From Lenin to the Soviet Black Hundreds," in *The Left Against Zion: Communism, Israel, and the Middle East*, ed. Robert Wistrich (London, Totowa: Valentine and Mitchell, 1979), 273. On Poale Zion in Soviet Russia, see: Baruch Gurevitz, "Un cas de communism national en Union Soviètique: Le Poale Zion: 1918–1928," *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviètique*, Vol. 15, No. 3/4 (1974): 333–61.
[1679] Ibid.
[1680] Leon Chasanowich, *Report: "Zur Jüdischen Lage in Russland"*, 24.03.1918, CZA Z3/892.

is a noticeable effort in Jewish society to characterize Bolshevik tendencies as alien to Jewish character and to avoid any association with the Bolsheviks."[1681]

The fear that a fall of the Bolsheviks would lead to a wave of anti-Jewish violence was reflected in several letters from Russia in the months after the revolution.[1682] Chasanowich subsequently argued that Jews did not support the Bolsheviks. He implied however that this was not because they rejected their program, but rather because they feared it would fail. Another letter sent in early January from Russia expressed it like this: "The reason for the Jews' bitter opposition against the Bolsheviks is indeed not their antisocial worldview. On the contrary, amongst the Jews there is a great understanding for those far-reaching social reforms, but they do not want them to be implemented at the price of their [own] bones."[1683] The other key observation Chasanowich made was in regard to the electoral results to the All-Russian Jewish Congress. The Zionist list gained a clear victory while voter turnout was remarkably low.[1684] He interpreted the results as follows:

"The elections to the Jewish Congress have shown the immense strengthening of bourgeois Zionism. Not all results were known already when I left. However, it seemed clear that the Zionist Organization won the majority of votes and mandates. To a large extent, this great success of Zionism is thanks to the English declaration. The declaration has clearly strengthened Zionism in Russia extraordinarily and has made bourgeois Zionism the dominant party in Jewish society […] The position of Poale Zion was similarly strengthened significantly by the manifesto of the Dutch-Scandinavian [Socialist] Committee."[1685]

Eventually, Chasanowich left Russia and returned to Stockholm to report on his journey. In his report he captured the mood that he experienced in Petrograd: "Everyone was tense and excited. Civil war had started in many parts of the country, including Belorussia and Ukraine. The governmental parties were living in a fever of enthusiasm due to the events in Austria and Germany, which they regarded as the outbreak of social revolution."[1686] The "events in Austria and Germany" he referred to, were the uprisings that shook the Central Powers in January 1918, as hundreds of thousands of workers went on strike, mainly motivated by outrage over the dire

[1681] Ibid.
[1682] Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization, *Forward of a letter from Russia to the Zionist Action Committee,* 16.01.1918; CZA, Z3/128; G., *Letter to the Zionist Organization in Warsaw*, 25.09.1918, CZA, Z3/128.
[1683] Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization, *Copy of an Anonymous Letter to the Zionist Action Committee*, 16.01.1918, CZA, Z3/892.
[1684] Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights*, 229–30.
[1685] Leon Chasanowich, *Report: "Zur Jüdischen Lage in Russland"*, 24.03.1918, CZA, Z3/892. The "English declaration" refers to the Balfour Declaration.
[1686] Leon Chasanowich, *Die Friedensverhandlungen in Brest Litowsk und die Judenfrage*, 1918, CZA, Z3/892.

material conditions and hopes for peace that had been inspired by the Russian Revolution and the subsequent peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk.[1687]

For many, this signaled the arrival of the revolution in their own countries. The activists of Poale Zion threw their full force into the movement. The party claimed that in the industrial areas near Vienna it had organized a strike of 30,000 to 40,000 Jewish workers in the arms industry.[1688] While the figures are probably exaggerated, Poale Zion undoubtedly played an important role. Samuel Juris was elected by the workers in Wiener Neustadt as a representative,[1689] and leading Poale Zionist Michael Kohn-Eber, from the Galician town of Podhajce (Pidhajci), then living in Vienna, was named by the authorities as one of the most dangerous revolutionary agitators in the region.[1690] By all accounts, Poale Zion, and especially Kohn-Eber, played an important role in the strike movement in the capital as well. The party distributed leaflets to strikers, calling on them to "unite under the red flag" and to create workers' councils as in Russia.[1691] On the evening of 20 January, hundreds of strikers gathered in a courtyard somewhere in Vienna, listening to Kohn-Eber's speech: "We do not need a government. We have to do it the Russian way. We want revolution. Fritz Adler must get free. The railways, tramways, electricity and gas-workers must join the strike. If the military is armed, we need to arm ourselves as well. Long live the revolution!"[1692] In its first issue after the strike, *Der Yudisher Arbeyter* praised "the power of the masses" and decried the "treason" of the Social Democratic leadership, which had, according to the paper, ended the strike prematurely.[1693] As part of this revolutionary activism, Poale Zionists in Vienna grew ever closer to other radicals on the fringes of the capital's labor movement. A detailed police report

---

[1687] On the January-Strike, see: Hautmann, *Geschichte der Rätebewegung*, 153–67.

[1688] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, 05.03.1918, CZA Z3/1169. On the January-Strike in this region, see: Karl Flanner, *Nieder mit dem Krieg! Für sofortigen Frieden! Der große Jännerstreik 1918 in Wiener Neustadt* (Wiener Neustadt: Verein Museum und Archiv für Arbeit und Industrie im Viertel unter dem Wienerwalt, 1997).

[1689] *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 27.01.1918.

[1690] K. k. Statthalterei Niederösterreich to k. k. Minister des Inneren, *Report: "Arbeiterbewegung im politischen Bezirk Neunkirchen und dem Polizeirayon Wiener Neustadt"*, 09.05.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2131.

[1691] K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien to k. k. Staatsanwaltschaft Wien, *Report: "Baral Arnold u. Genossen, Hochverrat"*, 21.01.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2001.

[1692] Ibid.

[1693] *Der Yudisher Arbeyter*, 02.01.1918. The Social Democratic leadership had been eager to end the strike as soon as possible. Kohn-Eber spoke at workers' assemblies for a continuation of the strike, for immediate peace, and for the revolution. See: K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien, *Report: "Sozialdemokratische Friedensversammlungen"*, 15.01.1918, BPDW-A, Staatspolizei: geschlossene Faszikel, Kriegsakte Jahrgang 1917 Scha.St/5. Social Democratic functionaries did not even refrain from using antisemitism, explicitly blaming Jewish agitators for trying to continue the strike. The main Social Democratic daily paper *Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Workers' Paper) explicitly blamed "Polish-Jewish refugees who were naturally against a return to work." *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 22.01.1918. Franz Koritschoner, later one of the founders of Communist Party, who then cooperated closely with Kohn-Eber and others, reported that at one assembly he was beaten up and defamed as a "Jewish bourgeois" by party functionaries. See: Sigmund Popper, *Letter to Präsidium der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei Oesterreichs*, 30.01.1918, Verein für die Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung (VGA), Partei-Archiv vor 1934, Mappe 77. I am very grateful to Sebastian Kugler for his help with the VGA files.

mentioned left wing socialists, Bundists, anarchists, a number of future founders of the Communist Party, radical trade unionists, and so on who seemed to belong to the same circles as the Poale Zionists in the city. The main meeting place for those radicals was the – very closely monitored – Café Stefanie, in the II. District of Vienna, where in the same building, one floor above, the party offices of Poale Zion were located.[1694]

The strikes of January 1918 also spilled over into occupied Poland. Poale Zionist activists strongly participated in the struggles, concentrating their efforts on the unity of multi-national workers, as the report from the strikers' demonstration in Lublin stated:

"Here, the Polish and Jewish proletariat acted in full unity, which gave the strike a particularly impressive character. On 25 January a giant demonstration of Polish and Jewish workers took place. Red flags of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) and the Jewish Social Democratic Workers Party Poale-Zion with slogans against the war, against the Regency Council, for an immediate convocation of a constituent assembly, etc. written on them, were carried. Polish and Jewish workers' songs were sung. […] On the same day the Jewish Social Democratic Workers' Party Poale-Zion organized a separate demonstration as well. Since the Polish comrades asked for it, the speaker again explained the demands of the Jewish proletariat in the Polish language as well."[1695]

All across occupied Poland, workers in industry and the civil service went on strike against the miserable living conditions.[1696] Poale Zion reported that "in most of the bigger cities the Jewish workers celebrated together with the Poles and demonstrated for immediate peace, for the establishment of a Polish Republic and for the national liberation of the Jewish proletariat."[1697] In Warsaw, where the authorities were convinced that the strike had been "organized by Social Democracy in a purely political form, following the Russian example,"[1698] *Haynt* reported that Jewish youth participated in great numbers in the demonstrations.[1699] The local activists of Poale Zion focused their efforts on the city hospitals where some of their members worked, distributing the following leaflet to strikers and the general public:

"Comrades! Workers! The workers of the city hospital have gone on strike. During the entire time of this war, they had been subjected to misery; the fathers of the city did not care about their fate. Driven by suffering, hospital

[1694] K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien to k. k. Staatsanwaltschaft Wien, *Report: "Baral Arnold u. Genossen, Hochverrat"*, 21.01.1918, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2001.
[1695] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, 05.03.1918, CZA, Z3/1169. This account corresponds basically with the report in the local *Ziemia Lubelska*, 26.01.1918.
[1696] *Robotnik*, March 1918; Verwaltungschef des Generalgouvernments Warschau, *3. Halbjahresbericht des Verwaltungschefs bei dem Generalgouvernment Warschau für die Zeit vom 1. Oktober 1917 bis 31. März 1918*, BAMA, PH-30-II-17.
[1697] *Jüdische Arbeiterkorrespondenz*, 05.03.1918, CZA, Z3/1169.
[1698] Verwaltungschef des Generalgouvernments Warschau, *Report to Reichsamt des Inneren*, 03.02.1918, BAB, R-1501-119867.
[1699] *Haynt*, 27.01.1918.

workers demand an improvement of their situation. […] Hospital workers have decided to end these disgraceful working conditions and raise their just demands. […] Whereas the workers stand together as a wall to defend their just demands, the magistrate remembers the rotten czarist laws which threaten to punish the struggle for human rights and [better] working conditions with forced labor. It can do so, since it knows that it has the help of the occupation force. […] Comrades! Workers! Let us help the strikers in their just struggle! They shall know that the entire working class is standing by their side. Let us help them to carry the victory for the proletariat in this struggle! May no one sell his labor to replace the strikers! May unity and solidarity reign amongst us! Down with the oppressors of the people! Down with the occupation! Down with the war! Long live revolutionary class struggle! Long live socialism!"[1700]

The strikes of January 1918 expressed the revolutionary re-orientation some activists had experienced in the previous weeks and months. It appears that in this situation, when Zionists, both general and socialist, celebrated their recognition by important international actors, a large segment of their activists, especially those who had traditionally been on the left of the national movement, came to regard the promises of social emancipation and peace that were made in Russia as even more appealing and more urgent. The apparent orientation of many activists towards revolutionaries of other national groups and indeed the idea of radicalization worried some in the leadership. In this situation, just months after the Balfour Declaration, Arthur Hantke wrote that activists in Poland "are ever more radically removing themselves"[1701] from Zionist politics. In early 1918 the Zionist leadership sent Zalman Rubashov, a Russian Poale Zionist living in Berlin, who tended to be to the right of the movement, to Poland to calm the activists down since "during the war, the movement there has developed in a very radical way and it would be of general interest if Mr. Rubaschoff [sic!], who enjoys the greatest authority in the ranks of Poale Zion, would have a chance to exert his moderating influence."[1702]

What is striking in the context of this early radicalization following the Russian Revolution and the promise of peace was the speed with which activists became radicalized and how quickly they turned to fight alongside other radicals for Europe-related goals, rather

[1700] Komitet Warszawski Żydowskiej Socjaldemokratycznej Partji Robotniczej (Poale-Sjon), *Leaflet*, 12.01.1918, AAN, 1213/0/-/29/1. Also in the files of the German authorities: R-1501-119867. What added an interesting aspect to this particular strike was that – according to the above-cited report by the German *Verwaltungschef* – the strike was also directed against the magistrate's attempt to use catholic nuns as cheap labor and strikebreakers in the hospital.

[1701] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Lazarus Barth*, 03.01.1918, CZA, Z3/160.

[1702] Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Königliche Kommandantur Berlin*, 03.01.1918, CZA, Z3/147. See also: Arthur Hantke, *Letter to Ludwig Haas*, 03.01.1918, CZA, Z3/147. That general Zionists worked with the authorities in order to influence the politics of Poale Zion was not unique to the Polish case. In summer 1917, when Austrian Poale Zionists applied for passports in order to attend the international socialist conference in Stockholm, Robert Stricker contacted the police and tried (eventually in vain) to prevent the authorization of the necessary documents. See: K. k. Polizeidirektion Wien to Präsidium des k. k. Ministeriums des Inneren, *Entsendung von Zionisten ins neutrale Ausland*, 16.06.1917, ÖStA AVA, Inneres MdI Präsidium A 2069; Athur Hantke, *Letter to Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich*, 14.09.1917, CZA, L6/328.

than orient themselves towards Palestine. This is especially notable, since this process coincided with the Balfour Declaration and other promises of national emancipation in Palestine. This did not mean that these declarations were not seen as important victories, but they simply did not have much impact when it came to the everyday situation of people's lives. It might have brought greater numbers of people to support Zionists in general, as the results of the elections to the All-Russian Jewish Congress show, but it did not have an impact on the immediate situation. As Ezra Mendelsohn put it: "Palestine, after all, was 'music of the future', but the revolution was now, and Poale Zion must take an active part in it."[1703] The profound societal changes, the opening up of new opportunities, that occurred from November 1918 onwards, would juxtapose the two promises in an even more profound way.

"Der proleytariat hot dos vort!"

"The old [order] is dead. We want to dig a deep grave for it. But together with the old [order] its accomplices must perish from the stage of history. The new events must create a new world," wrote Alexander Serpow, a Poale Zionist in Vienna, in November 1918. He continued:

> "Never again shall a capitalist system which has brought such a catastrophe for the people come to power! No! Only the proletariat, which had warned of the war, fought and bled, it alone has the right to build a society where there is no master and no slave and where there will never be war again. And the proletariat not only has the right but the power to do that. Therefore: All power to the freely elected workers' councils!"[1704]

As was the case of many workers, socialists, and revolutionaries of different persuasions, Poale Zionists saw the uprisings of November 1918, the revolutionary upheavals that followed them over subsequent months, and the election of workers' councils as the beginning of the revolution they had hoped for and that they deemed necessary.

Local party activists in Vienna built on their experiences during the January strikes and threw themselves into the revolutionary movement from November 1918 onwards. About sixty Poale Zionists were elected as worker representatives in their districts[1705] and at least five of them – Michael Kohn-Eber, Hersch Nagler, Alexander Serpow, Saul Sokal, and Ascher Zoczower – were elected to the regional workers' council.[1706] Reports on their meetings, as published in the communist daily *Die Rote Fahne* (The Red Flag), show close cooperation

[1703] Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 139.
[1704] *Freie Tribüne*, 07.02.1919. The article had been written in November 1918 for *Der Yudisher Arbeyter* but internal conflicts had prevented it from being published then.
[1705] *Freie Tribüne*, 17.01.1920.
[1706] Hautmann, *Geschichte der Rätebewegung*, 369–70; 519.

between Poale Zionist and communist councilors, whereas specifically 'Jewish' demands were only very rarely raised and generally played no central role.[1707] Many activists continued to intensify their cooperation with the radical left.[1708] Kohn-Eber and Samuel Juris spoke at Communist and Socialist-Revolutionaries' rallies and conferences.[1709]

Poale Zion activists in the former Generalgouvernement equally saw the events of November 1918 and the following months as the beginning of the world revolution. With its first headline "*Der proleytariat hot dos vort!*" ("It is the proletariat's time!" Literally: "The proletariat has the word!"), the newly founded *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung* (The Workers' Paper) in Warsaw set the tone for the movement's orientation in late 1918.[1710] Activists lashed out against nationalist promises by the bourgeoisie and aimed to counter this with working-class unity: "Be on guard, comrades! Against the unity of the bourgeois – the united front of the socialist proletariat."[1711] The party paper instantly called on its members to participate in the newly founded workers' councils.[1712] Just as the Bund and the SDKPiL (which would merge with the PPS-Left to become the Communist Party),[1713] Poale Zion saw the workers' councils as the beginning of the spread of the Russian Revolution westwards and the foundations of a socialist Poland.[1714] All across Poland, workers' councils sprang up in late 1918 and spring 1919. In at least fourteen cities and towns, Poale Zionists were elected as representatives of the workers there and were delegated to workers' councils.[1715] In the workers' council in Warsaw, where

[1707] For example: *Die Rote Fahne*, 07.01.1920; 10.02.1920; 02.06.1920. See also: Karl Heinz, *Geschichte der österreichischen Arbeiterräte* (unpublished Typescript), VGA, Altes Parteiarchiv Mappe 21c.
[1708] See also: Soxberger, *Revolution am Donaukanal,* 116–9.
[1709] Polizeidirektion Wien to Staatsamt für Inneres und Unterricht, *Report: "Arbeitslosenversammlungen am 13. August 1919"*, 18.08.1919, ÖStA AdR, BKA Allg. Reihe 1. Republik Karton 2435; Polizeidirektion Wien to Staatsamt des Inneren, *Report: "Reichskonferenz der kommunistischen Partei Deutschösterreichs"*, 12.02.1919, ÖStA AdR, BKA Allg. Reihe 1. Republik Karton 5066. In fact, Kohn-Eber gave the first welcome address to the conference, which suggests an important standing amongst the delegates. Although he is mentioned as a representative of the FRSI, he spoke about the struggle of a group of Jewish workers (clearly referencing Poale Zion). See: Kommunistische Partei Deutschösterreichs, *Der erste Parteitag der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschösterreichs* (Vienna: Verlag der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschösterreichs, 1919), 2.
[1710] *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung*, 14.11.1918.
[1711] *Dos Arbeyter-Vort*, 08.11.1918. The paper was soon closed down and replaced by *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung*.
[1712] *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung*, 22.11.1918.
[1713] PPS: Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (Polish Socialist Party); SDKPiL: Socjaldemokracja Królestwa Polskiego i Litwy (Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania)
[1714] Gertrud Pickhan, *"Gegen den Strom" Der Allgemeine Jüdische Arbeiterbund "Bund" in Polen 1918–1939* (Munich, Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2001), 79–80.
[1715] Rady Delegatów Robotniczych w Polsce, *List of Delegates*, undated (late 1918 or early 1919), AAN, 1296/0/1/167/1/1; Częstochowska Rada Delegatów Robotniczych, *Letter to Sekretarjatu Warszawskiej Rady Delegatów Robotniczych*, 18.02.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Rada Delegatów Robotniczych w Koninie, *Letter to Sekretarjatu Rady Centralnej Rad Delegatów Robotniczych w Wasrzawie*, 11.04.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Rada Delegatów Robotniczych w Łęczycy, *Letter to Komisji organizacyjnej zjazdu R. D. R. w Warszawie*, 31.03.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Grupa Komunistyczna Komitetu Wykonawczego Rady Robotniczej m. Łodzi, *Letter to Sekretarjatu Warszawskiej Rady Delegatów Robotniczych,* 03.06.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Rada Delegatów Robotniczych w. Maków*, Letter to Sekretarjatu Warszawskiej Rady Delegatów Robotniczych*, 15.11.1918, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Rada Delegatów Robotniczych w Miedzyrzeczu, *Letter to Komisji organizacyjnej zjazdu R. D. R. w Warszawie*, 19.03.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Żydowska

the newly formed Communist Party (*Komunistyczna Partia Polski*, KPP) had almost as many delegates as the PPS, Bundist and Poale Zionist councilors closely cooperated with them and often tipped the balance to the left.[1716] In his memoirs, Hersch Mendel, then a member of the Bund, recalled how in local struggles Poale Zionists, Bundists, and communists cooperated closely and how in the workers' councils major struggles evolved between the revolutionary left and the PPS.[1717] In Kielce, Poale Zion was even the dominant force in the workers' council.[1718]

These revolutionary-socialist Zionists saw the workers' councils and cooperation with non-Jewish revolutionaries as the instruments for bringing about a better world. One case of this revolutionary activism were the mass strikes of July 1919. Together with other Jewish and non-Jewish revolutionary parties, Poale Zion in Poland mobilized, publishing the following call to action:

"Louder than ever before must our call to struggle be heard, the struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie, which must lead to the overthrow of the old order and the creation of a new socialist society. On 20 and 21 July, the days of the awakening revolutionary struggle, in which the entire working class of Europe will show its international, proletarian solidarity, we call on you, Jewish workers, to lay down your work and join the ranks of the struggling proletariat. This strike shall also be a strong protest against the murderous politics of the bourgeoisie, against the agitation for pogroms, against the daily-spilled Jewish blood, in which the Polish reaction wants to drown the growing revolutionary struggle. Against the oppression of the workers' movement in Poland. Together with the revolutionary proletariat of England, France, Italy, Germany and Austria, we raise our voice: Long live international workers' solidarity! Down with imperialism! Long live the power of the working class! Long live the social revolution!"[1719]

Rada Robotniczych w Nowym Sączu, *Letter to Komisyi Zjazdowej przy Warszawskiej Radzie Delegatów Robotniczych*, 24.05.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Rada Delegatów Robotniczych w Opatowie, *Letter to Komitetu Wykonawczego Warszawskiej Rady Delegatów Robotniczych*, 17.02.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Stowarzyszenie "Strzecha Robotnicza" w Siedlce, *Letter to Sekretariatu Rady Delegatów Robotniczych w Warszawie*, 15.02.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Rada Delegatów Robotniczych w Włocławku, *Letter to Rada Delegatów Robotniczych w Warszawie*, April 1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2; Rada deleg. Rob. przy. Żyd. Soc. Dem. Partyi rob. Poale-Syon w Krakowie, *Letter to Komisji Zjazdowej przy Warszawskiej R. D. R.*, 28.05.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2. For Warsaw, see the collections of ballots of the various local committees in the election to the Jewish delegation to the Warsaw Workers' Council in December 1918: AAN, 1296/0/6.1/167/III/4.

[1716] Marian K. Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland: An Outline of History*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 1976), 82.

[1717] See the minutes of the meetings of the Warsaw Workers' Council: AAN, 1296/0/6/163/VIII/2. Also: Hersch Mendel, *Erinnerungen eines jüdischen Revolutionärs* (Köln: Arbeiterpresse Verlag, 2004), 152–4.

[1718] Sekretariat Rady Delegatów Robotniczych w Kielcach, *Letter to Sekretarjatu Rady Delegatów Robotniczych w Warszawie*, 17.02.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2. This subsequently led to a severe persectutionof the organization by the authorities. Pinchas Cytron, *Sefer Kielce. Toldot Kehilat Kielce. Miyom Hisvuduh V'ad Churbanah* (Tel Aviv: Irgun Olei Kieltz beIsrael, 1957), 307.

[1719] *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung*, 18.07.1919.

For Poale Zion, the struggle for the revolution, against the 'reactionary' politics of the PPS, and the defense of Jews against pogroms and antisemitism were all part of the same struggle.[1720] The pogroms were interpreted as an integral part of the counterrevolution and could only be fended off through proletarian solidarity.

Despite severe state repression, the strike mobilized tens of thousands of workers.[1721] *Der Moment* reported on clashes in the city between "communists and their Jewish counterparts" on the one side and the police and PPS militants on the other.[1722] Poale Zion concentrated its agitation during the strike on the international revolution, denouncing the PPS. *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung* printed the speech on the international struggle, delivered by Lampe, a member of the workers' council in which he heralded the forthcoming worldwide revolution led by the Comintern.[1723] A report on the strike described: "Finally, comrade Zerubavel spoke about the relation between the Jewish proletariat and international socialist politics, and called on the Jewish workers in Poland to continue their revolutionary struggle regardless of the pogroms and the counterrevolutionary politics of the PPS."[1724]

During this European general strike, Poale Zionists in Vienna had also played an important role. A report to the Farbands-Biro detailed:

> "Our party has played a crucial, if not the decisive role in bringing about the decision for [calling the] general strike. After the Saturday-meeting [of the regional workers' council] on 13 July rejected the motion for a general strike on 21 July, due to the stance of Fritz Adler, comrade Nagler was successful in uniting the left-radicals who had voted for the general strike with the communists in one revolutionary block. It is thanks to their agitation that the regional workers' council in its meeting on 17 July revised its decision and decided on [calling for] the general strike."[1725]

As general Zionists decried the strike as "the rule of a small, terrorist minority"[1726] in predominantly Jewish districts of the city, Poale Zion coordinated with communists to organize separate Jewish workers' assemblies that would later join in the general demonstrations. It is to be noted that in the various districts, there were always three speakers – one for the socialists,

---

[1720] On the relations with the PPS, see: Jerzy Holzer, "Relations between Polish and Jewish left wing groups in interwar Poland," in *The Jews in Poland*, ed. Chimen Abramsky, Maciej Jachimczyk, and Antony Polonosky (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 144–5.
[1721] *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung*, 22.07.1919; 25.07.1919.
[1722] *Der Moment*, 22.07.1919.
[1723] *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung*, 22.07.1919. This was of special importance, since on 20 July, the first day of the strike, the KPP officially joined the Communist International. Jaff Schatz, *The Generation: The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communists of Poland* (Berkely, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), 107.
[1724] *Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung*, 22.07.1919.
[1725] Parteisekretariat der Jüdischen Sozialistischen Arbeiterpartei Poale Zion in Österreich, *Letter to Farbands-Biro*, 24.07.1919, ILPA, 1-10-1919-111.
[1726] *Wiener Morgenzeitung*, 22.07.1919.

one for the communists, and one on behalf of the Jewish proletariat.[1727] The local party claimed that a large part of those Jewish workers who turned out were influenced by the intense agitation of the party on Jewish street and in factories that employed Jewish workers. This, they claimed, gave them enormous respect not only amongst Jewish workers, but also their non-Jewish comrades.[1728] It was around the same time that Eugen Hoeflich noted in his diary that "Poale Zion has declared themselves for communism while renouncing Zionism"[1729] whereas the old party leader Mendel Singer wrote to the Farbands-Biro full of disappointment about the takeover of the party by the radicals and the lack of respect from those young members towards his long years of work, concluding: "Here, in Vienna, there is no place for me in the party."[1730]

It was not only the activists of Poale Zion who were affected by the revolutionary mood. There is evidence that even some members of the more mainstream general Zionists were caught up in the revolutionary mood. In Mszczonów (Amshinov), near Warsaw, General Zionists also participated in the workers' council.[1731] The above-quoted Eugen Hoeflich, a commander in the Zionist-organized Jewish militia in Vienna, mainly criticized the revolution for not being radical, not revolutionary enough, and that with all the bloodshed it failed to bring about communism.[1732] "Every decent person today", he noted, "is a communist."[1733] This fascination for the revolution, as Hoeflich represented it, was arguably unusual for those in the General Zionist movement outside of Russia. In August 1918 an emissary who had been sent by the Central Committee of Russia's Zionists profoundly confused his fellow Zionists in Warsaw with his praise of the Bolsheviks. In their report on their conversations they described him as "a true Bolshevik, a delegate of the Zionist C[entral] C[ommittee] […] The man is a good Zionist, of a somewhat superficial intelligence".[1734]

"The man is wholeheartedly for Bolshevism. He reports that the Bolsheviks are undoubtedly the strongest and only truly organized party. […] If Russia will remain somewhat safely in the hands of the Bolsheviks for another half year, it will become the happiest country on earth. They will make sure that capital comes into the 'right'

[1727] *Freie Tribüne*, 26.07.1919.
[1728] Parteisekretariat der Jüdischen Sozialistischen Arbeiterpartei Poale Zion in Österreich, *Letter to Farbands-Biro*, 24.07.1919, ILPA, 1-10-1919-111.
[1729] Hoeflich, *Tagebücher,* 77.
[1730] Mendel Singer, *Letter to Farbands-Biro*, 15.08.1919, ILPA, 1-1-1919-9.
[1731] Rada Delegatów Robotniczych w Mszczonowie, *Protokól*, 23.02.1919, AAN, 1296/0/1/167/I/2.
[1732] Hoeflich, *Tagebücher*, 75–8
[1733] Ibid., 77.
[1734] Unknwon Author (signature illegible; a leading Zionist activist from Warsaw), *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 24.08.1918, CZA, Z3/163.

hands that it will be distributed 'correctly' etc. Finally, he expressed his belief in a blessed future especially for the Jews under the Bolshevik regime."[1735]

That a Zionist, especially one with such good credentials from the Central Committee, would speak so highly of Bolshevism provoked a certain unease in the Warsaw Zionists. More than individual activists, however, the promise of the revolution affected the wider masses of the Jewish population, precisely those whom Zionists believed they could win over, especially now with the backing of the great powers. In 1917 and 1918, a number of reports by Zionists and their sympathizers from Russia had described how Bolshevism represented a viable alternative to Jewish-national demands and was quickly gaining ground amongst the Jewish population.[1736]

Nowhere was the growing confrontation between Bolshevism and Zionism more direct than in former Ober Ost, especially in Wilno and what came to be Lithuania. After Polish forces had briefly taken over Wilno from the Germans on 1 January 1919, the Red Army conquered the city four days later. Josef Berger, who had left Wilno with most of the Zionist leadership wrote from Kowno:

"The Jews stand between two fires, that of the Bolsheviks and that of the Poles, and they will unavoidably decide to join the Bolsheviks. Although the rule of the Bolsheviks is generally terrible for the bourgeoisie, and the Jews who represent the majority of the bourgeoisie in the Lithuanian towns will be heavily affected by Bolshevik rule. But it is a fact that the Bolsheviks do not act against the Jews directly and refrain from excesses against the Jews completely."[1737]

He, as many others, including many historians, made the argument that Jewish sympathies for Bolshevism derived primarily or even exclusively from the fact that the alternative was worse. As he put it: "The Jews of Lithuania are in great fear of the Polish invasion and because of this fear they tend towards the Russian regime, in many cases they join the Bolsheviks."[1738] This concept – which is an understandable response to the antisemitic defamation of Żydokommuna (Judeo-communism) – however, tends to deny agency to Jews, implicitly arguing that they were merely reactive in this situation. Josef Berger stressed how important the fear of the pogroms was. However, he also went further:

[1735] Ibid.
[1736] Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization, *Forward of a Letter from Russia to the Central Zionist Bureau Berlin*, 31.10.1917, CZA, Z3/128; Josef Sušický, *Letter from the officers' POW camp Pescenka near Chita*, 19.08.1917, CZA, Z3/936; G., *Letter to the Zionist Organization in Warsaw*, 25.09.1918, CZA, Z3/128.
[1737] Josef Berger, *Letter from Kowno*, 07.01.1919, CZA, L6/113. It is not clear who the recipient of this letter was. It was presumably sent to the Zionist Office, either in Berlin or in Copenhagen.
[1738] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization (report on a conversation with Josef Berger)*, 07.01.1919, CZA, Z3/135-1.

"Compared to the atrocities the Jews are expecting from the Poles, the rule of the Bolsheviks clearly seems to be the significantly smaller evil and given the general enmity of all the counterrevolutionary parties against the Jews, the Bolsheviks managed to win the sympathies of the Jews to a certain degree. Youth flocks to them in great mass; their officials, speakers, etc. are for a good part Jewish."[1739]

Berger made clear that it was not only the fear of pogroms by anti-Bolshevik forces that produced Jewish support for Bolshevism, but also a genuine enthusiasm, especially amongst the youth. This had serious effects on the Zionist moment, the very movement whose leader had announced just a year earlier that "since the English declaration from last November, an excellent atmosphere for Zionism, especially in the provinces, [has] emerged here."[1740] On 17 January an activist and teacher in a Zionist-run high school wrote: "The masses are becoming more Bolshevik by the day, Zionism is increasingly losing ground, since it is regarded as reactionary."[1741] The effects were to be felt in both Wilno and Kowno. As part of this radicalization in broad layers, left-wing Zionists, such as Poale Zion, openly sided with Bolshevism, refusing any cooperation with general Zionists or other Jewish forces deemed 'bourgeois' or 'reactionary'.[1742] This confrontation between the revolutionary Jewish parties (including Poale Zion) and the general Zionists continued, severely weakening the stance of general Zionists in Jewish society.[1743]

After the war Lithuanian Zionism suffered a crisis for a number of reasons.[1744] The process of radicalization contributed to the crisis. The leadership of the Lithuanian Zionists had to write to the Action Committee in London in 1919 that an organized Zionist movement was almost non-existent.[1745] A Zionist activist wrote on 22 June 1919: "That Zionist work in Lithuania is in decay will not surprise you. […] The root cause remains the passivity of the few Zionists who are living in the territory of Lithuania."[1746] The response to this crisis could only

[1739] Josef Berger, *Letter from Kowno*, 07.01.1919, CZA, L6/113.
[1740] See above. Citation: Simon Rosenbaum, *Report on the Situation of Zionism in Lithuania*, January 1918, CZA, Z3/510.
[1741] Georg Wollstein, *Letter to Dr. Löwenstein*, 17.01.1919, CZA, L6/113.
[1742] Nathan Pincuk, *Report on the Situation in Lithuania, undated (probably early 1919)*, ILPA, 1-1-1917-1; N. N., *Letter to Ignatz Kornfeld*, 18.05.1919, ILPA, 1-1-1918-184. World Union of Poale Zion, *Minutes of the V. World Conference*, July 1920, Pinhas Lavon Institute for Labour Movement Research (PLI), III-11-1-36, 65. The Lithuanian Poale Zion was subsequently in close contact with their comrades in Russia, who supported the Bolsheviks already since summer 1917. See: Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI), f278 o1 d187.
[1743] Arthur Hantke, *Meine Reise nach Kowno in der zweiten Hälfte November*, 25.11.1919, CZA, Z3/824.
[1744] See the previous chapters.
[1745] Zionist Organization Kowno: Provisional Committee for unoccupied Lithuania, *Letter to Inner Zionist Action Committee,* 1919, CZA, Z3/824.
[1746] I. Rolinza (signature hardly legible), *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 22.06.1919, CZA, Z3/136.

be an extensive propaganda campaign. For this, he urgently requested material and information in regard to Palestine and the prospects of emigration.[1747]

Ready for Departure

War and destitution, pogroms and antisemitism may have led a number of activists to conclude that a revolutionary break with the old world was necessary, and indeed feasible within Europe. For many others, however, there remained only one option, and that was to leave as soon as possible. This feeling was most widespread in those regions in which war continued to rage and amongst refugees from those regions who in November 1918 found themselves facing hostile new Czechoslovak and German-Austrian governments that wanted to expel them.[1748] In his memoirs, H. Kluger, who had just returned to his East Galician home from a prisoner of war camp in Russia described the horrors of civil war in the region and how "every Jew wanted to escape."[1749] The urgent wish of many people to leave put severe pressure on the Zionists, who had been advocating for emigration to Palestine for decades. In December 1918, the Zionist Organization mentioned this urgency in a telegram: "Complete cities ready to depart. Containment impossible. Waiting for statement by organization. Total silence creates suspicion and panic STOP immediate directives and public announcements necessary otherwise impression arises that Zionism not up for the task. We lose control of everything."[1750] On 18 November the Zionist leadership in Vienna reported that "A great number of the Galician Jewish refugees here and in Bohemia do not intend to return to their homes, but to move to Palestine as soon as possible."[1751] The letter stressed the urgency of a response by the Zionists to this situation:

"People are already preparing to move and since the German-Austrian and the Czech states indicate ever more clearly that they intend to expel the refugees from their territory, and it is impossible for them to return to Galicia under these circumstances, this question has become exceptionally urgent and we are faced with a situation in

[1747] Ibid.
[1748] As mentioned in the previous chapter.
[1749] H. Kluger (Mikolajewer), *Autobiography*, 1952, YIVO, RG 102, File no. 82, quote from p. 26. He himself left for the United States in 1920.
[1750] Unknown Author, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 17.12.1918, CZA, L6/371. This was not an isolated case, there are a number of news with very similar content. For example: Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Jüdischer Nationalfonds Sammelstelle für Österreich*, 01.12.1918, CZA, L6/371; *Minutes of the meeting of the Jewish National Fund Committee in The Hague*, 27.11.1918, CZA, KKL10/34.
[1751] Zionistisches Zentralkomitee für Westösterreich, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 18.11.1918, CZA, Z3/850.

which already in the next days, thousands of families will come here to demand their onward transportation to Palestine."[1752]

It is impossible to say with certainty how many of those people who expressed their wish to go to Palestine did so for ideological reasons, and how many simply wanted to seize any opportunity they could to leave. There is also no necessary contradiction between those two motivations. Some Zionists did express their doubts about many of those who desired to leave, considering many of them to be undesirable, and stating that "the only reason they are coming to Palestine is that they have to flee from Galicia and Poland."[1753] What is clear, however, is that a significant number of them approached the Zionist organization, expecting its help for emigration to Palestine. This at a moment in which Zionists particularly emphasized the importance of Palestine as a national homeland. On the occasion of the first anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, the Viennese *Jüdische Zeitung* praised it on behalf of "the Jewish people, whose will the Zionist organization embodies"[1754] as one of the greatest achievements in 2000 years of Jewish history. Whereas no appropriate praise had been possible under old regime censorship, now one could profess that: "On 2 November 1917 the Jewish people received the guarantee from the most powerful government in the world that it will regain its national homeland in the land of its fathers."[1755] Added to this were numerous articles about the great achievements Jewish society had made in Palestine despite the war, and how great prospects would be now under British rule.[1756] The newspapers usually did not call explicitly for immediate emigration to Palestine, but the message was quite clear: with the British promise, the end of the war, and the will of the people the return to the homeland was imminent.

For many activists who did not live at the centers of the movement (Copenhagen, Berlin, London), it was absolutely self-evident that emigration to Palestine would happen then. This was despite – or possibly because of – the fact that they knew little to nothing about the actual situation in Palestine. The Executive of the Zionist Organization in West Galicia wrote:

"Given the general truce, the Executive for West Galicia regards it as its foremost duty to take up the work for Palestine with full energy. […] According to reports the Jewish inhabitants of many villages have been expelled

[1752] Exekutiv-Komitee der Zionisten Oesterreichs (Geschäftsführender Ausschuss*), Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 18.11.1918, CZA, Z3/850.
[1753] Zionist Central Bureau Berlin, *Letter to Exekutivkomitee der Zionisten Österreichs*, 01.12.1918, CZA, L6/371.
[1754] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 01.11.1918.
[1755] Ibid.
[1756] *Der Jüdische Wille*, Oktober/November 1918; *Selbstwehr*, 08.11.1918; *Židovské Zprávy*, 07.11.1918.

or have fled and amongst them could be some who would want to go to Palestine. They are of course a useful element for colonization."[1757]

Activists in Cracow requested the leadership to send them information about travel routes and formalities, employment opportunities in Palestine, and so on. They asked about whether a "development plan for the Jewish settlement in Palestine, especially in regard to work opportunities for a large number of unlearned Jewish workers (discharged and impoverished soldiers)," already existed and if so, that it would be sent to them.[1758] Two months later, activists in Lithuania would proclaim their optimism even more strongly, pressing forward with the promise of almost immediate emigration to Palestine, calling "on all friends of Zion! Be ready for departure!"[1759] They promised: "The moment is near when it will be possible to move to Palestine. The departure will expectedly be possible in the fall of 1919. It is better to prepare in a timely fashion for this moment so that everything can happen in an orderly manner."[1760] They asked hopeful emigrants to register their details with the organization, to pay a small fee, and promised that they would then be prepared and duly informed. Zionist functionaries were assured that nothing stood in the way of mass-emigration now, although "we have no news from Palestine and are disconnected from our central branch."[1761] With this information, they sent out an extensive questionnaire to prospective emigrants, in which they should detail their skills, qualifications, family relations, and financial situation.[1762]

This confidence that mass emigration would be possible now and that development of the land would start instantly, was rooted in the political principles of the Zionist movement, which had always proclaimed that with the attainment of international guarantees for the homeland, the return to the land would commence. The optimism shown by the above-cited activists was only logical. Added to this was the massive pressure of emigration and the evident fear that if Zionism would not be able to respond to this pressure, it would completely embarrass itself. In this context, the leadership in Vienna wrote about the great number of people who came to the city asking for help to emigrate to Palestine, stating: "It is our position that it is

[1757] Executive of the Zionist Organization for West Galicia, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 12.11.1918, CZA, Z3/816.
[1758] Ibid.
[1759] District-Committee of the Zionist Organization in Southern Lithuania, *Proclamation to all Friends of Zion*, 16.01.1919, CZA, Z3/135-1.
[1760] Ibid. On what basis they assumed that departure would be possible in fall is unclear to me.
[1761] District-Committee of the Zionist Organization in Southern Lithuania, *Letter to all local Zionist societies*, January 1919, CZA, L6/113.
[1762] District-Committee of the Zionist Organization in Southern Lithuania, *List of Questions for Emigrants*, January 1919, CZA, L6/113.

impossible to artificially halt such a movement, but that the journey has to be made possible, at least for the better elements."[1763]

Figure 4

'*Pioneers' in Grodno (then under Polish rule, but part of the South Lithuanian district of the Zionist movement) before their departure to Palestine, early 1920*.[1764]

Activists demanded the support of the organization. In late November 1918, a group of twelve young Jews from Będzin (Bendin) in Poland, had come to Vienna, asking the Zionists to support them in their journey. As the party could not offer any help they left on their own and apparently got stuck in Trieste. Many more, especially young men who wanted to avoid conscription to the Polish army, took the same route. Viennese activists blamed the international leadership for this mess, as it provided neither information nor practical help.[1765]

On behalf of the leadership in Berlin, Berger and Warburg expressed their understanding of the pressure on comrades in the East and Vienna, but stated emphatically:

[1763] Exekutiv-Komitee der Zionisten Oesterreichs (Geschäftsführender Ausschuss), *Letter to Zionist Central Berlin*, 18.11.1918, CZA, Z3/850.
[1764] CZA, PHG/1016194. [I do not own the rights to this picture.]
[1765] Keren Kajemeth LeIsrael, Vienna Office, *Letter to Jewish National Main Office in The Hague*, 05.12.1918, CZA, L6/371.

"They [activists from the East; JR] even write to us that containment of the push to emigration to Palestine is impossible and would compromise [*kompromittieren*] the Zionist idea if we do not put forward a slogan (that is the slogan for emigration). We cannot contradict this conception strongly enough. It is generally well known that currently there is absolutely no possibility for even a journey, let alone emigration to Palestine."[1766]

The leadership explained that in this situation, when Europe and Palestine were still technically in a state of war, it was absolutely impossible to organize safe passage. Additionally, the Zionist settlements in Palestine were incapable of absorbing greater numbers of new immigrants. Another key point – which in some respects contradicted the two previous arguments – was that emigration to Palestine at this point would suggest to the Entente governments that Zionists wanted to create facts on the ground and could endanger the negotiations with them.[1767] This latter argument was raised again in the following months, expressing the fear that individual, unauthorized, and unorganized emigration might endanger the entire project, offending the British authorities who might react with restrictions on Jewish emigration in the future.[1768]

As a direct response to the pressure from below, and as a result of the painful experience of being unable to help hopeful emigrants, Zionist activists in Vienna established the Palestine Office in late November 1918.[1769] The Office's position was extremely ambivalent. While its first announcement warned against self-organized, hasty emigration,[1770] activists did proclaim the institution's purpose to be the "organization of immigration to Eretz Israel."[1771] The Office also stated clearly that it was not interested in those who simply wanted to escape, but only in committed emigrants whose goal it was not "to improve their own lives by emigration but [who intend to] carve out a beautiful future for all of Jewry."[1772] In subsequent days (and in some cases months) numerous other Palestine Offices were set up throughout the region with the purpose of again taking control over the process.[1773] The center of these efforts remained in Vienna. This had of course practical purposes, since the city was situated on the way to the

[1766] Berger, Warburg, *Letter to Zionist Office Vienna*, 18.12.1918, CZA, L6/371.
[1767] Ibid.
[1768] Zionist Organization of America, *Letter to Chaim Weizmann*, 12.06.1919, CAHJP, P83/J/74. This letter was sent particularly in respect to 130 Polish Jews who somehow managed to get to Egypt via Italy and were detained by the British authorities there.
[1769] Keren Kajemeth LeIsrael, Vienna Office, *Letter to Jewish National Fund Main Office in The Hague*, 05.12.1918, CZA, L6/371; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 29.11.1918; 06.12.1918.
[1770] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 29.11.1918.
[1771] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 06.12.1918.
[1772] Ibid.
[1773] Palestine-Offices were founded in the following cities: Warsaw (December 1918): Palestine-Office at the Central Committee of the Zionist Organization for Poland, *Circular No. 1*, December 1918, CZA, Z3/151. Prague as a center for the Czechoslovak state (in early December 1918): Sionistický Svaz Obvodovy pro Království České v Praze*, Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.12.1918, CZA, Z3/783. Plzeň (January 1919): Jüdischer Volksrat Pilsen, *Letter to the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 15.01.1919, CZA, L6/85. Ukraine, probably Kiev (summer 1919): Palestine-Office for Ukraine, *Statutes*, August 1919, CZA, Z3/190.

Mediterranean ports, but it also represented the continuity of imperial connections, as its activists did "not want to see ourselves as a mere organ for German-Austria, but we have to state the claim right from the beginning that we wish to form the center for all countries of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy including the territories it formerly occupied in Poland."[1774]

What all the Palestine Offices had in common was that they operated in a highly ambiguous and uncertain space, on the one side professing their confidence in the possibility of mass-emigration to Palestine, and professing the viability of this perspective, while at the same time, trying to hold people back from going there individually. They were effectively confined to mere 'preparatory' work. This meant mainly the registration and vetting of prospective emigrants, the distribution of literature on Palestine and so on.[1775] This also meant that activists could only pretend to be organizing emigration, while in reality the immediate effect of their work was to hold it back.

This situation was less than ideal. The Viennese Palestine Office wrote to its colleagues: "Between us we have to admit to ourselves that such a containment of the attempt to emigrate will undoubtedly create discord, even amongst good Zionists, if we do not demonstrate at the same time that we are doing everything in our power to speed up the possibilities of large-scale emigration."[1776] The word 'demonstrate' was underlined in the text. The activists were aware that in Vienna, Berlin, The Hague, or Copenhagen, they had no ability to influence the situation in Palestine or to change the British government's attitude to immigration. There were, however, two things they could do: First, they could publish a great number of articles that promoted the same message that the ancient goal was just about to be fulfilled, that just a little bit of patience was necessary, that as soon as everything was settled mass emigration would be possible, that "the centuries-long dream is about to be fulfilled"[1777] and that hopeful Jews should prepare themselves now as best as they could.[1778] Secondly, hoping that this would improve the situation in East-Central European countries, activists made the argument that emigration to Palestine offered the possibility of settling the refugee problem in the region. In this, they reiterated earlier ideas that had been raised during the war, of settling victims of war and

[1774] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 12.01.1919, CZA, L6/87. See also: Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 07.01.1919, CZA, Z3/851.
[1775] Palestine-Office at the Central Committee of the Zionist Organization for Poland, *Circular No. 1*, December 1918, CZA, Z3/151.
[1776] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.01.1919, CZA, L6/87. Emphasis in the original.
[1777] *Jüdische Zeitung*, 10.01.1919; 17.01.1919.
[1778] Just a few examples: *Jüdische Volksstimme* (Brno), 01.01.1919; *Jüdische Zeitung*, 03.01.1919; 10.01.1919; 17.01.1919; 31.01.1919; *Wiener Morgenzeitung*, 20.01.1919; 22.01.1919.

pogroms in Palestine.[1779] Now, the argument was made that help for emigration to Palestine and support in building the land might be an alternative to repatriation and compensation payments for lost property.[1780]

This situation created much frustration and discord. A report stated that "impatient, desperate, yearning emigrants will express their impatience, desperation, and yearning as anger against Zionism."[1781] Activists had to report that they actually found it necessary to "contain the striving for emigration" which, of course, left many people angry and disappointed. Activists wrote from Vienna: "Recently two Polish Jews left our office where they pointed at the signboard that reads 'Keren Kajemeth Lejisroel', [lit. 'Eternal Fund of Israel; JR] saying scornfully 'What they don't tell you is that it is supposed to say Kewer Jisroel.' [lit. Israel's Tomb; JR]"[1782] In March 1919, activists from Czechoslovakia wrote about their work amongst Galician and Bukovinian refugees in the refugee camps who "cannot remain here any longer but it is equally impossible for them to return to their former homes, ravaged by war and fighting."[1783] The positive news about Zionist prospects in Palestine in some ways made the situation even more complicated.

> "As we have mentioned before, we could not give those interested persons any information and had to limit ourselves to registering them. Especially now, after news about the Paris Peace Conference and the London [Zionist] Conference broke, we are bombarded with requests for information and should this time as well pass without us being able to offer anything to those interested in [emigration to] Palestine, the institution of the Palestine Office will be completely discredited."[1784]

On a practical level, the main task of the Palestine Office was the registration of hopeful emigrants and the selection of those that were deemed worthy and useful in Palestine, not least because, as one activist put it, "human material has degenerated during the war."[1785] As with most of the early efforts in the Palestine Offices, the above-mentioned registration also proceeded without much of a plan behind it.[1786] Activists had certain broad ideas that physically

---

[1779] Hauptbüro des Jüdischen Nationalfonds, *Letter to Jüdischer Nationalfonds, Sammelstelle für Österreich*, 25.06.1915, CZA, L6/295. See also: Leo Rosenberg, *Das Ostjudenproblem und Palästina* (Berlin: Deutsches Komitee zur Förderung der jüdischen Palästinasiedlung, 1919).
[1780] Unknown Author (signature illegible; a functionary of the Palestine Office), *Letter to Isidor Margulis*, 03.04.1918, CZA, L6/94.
[1781] Ibid.
[1782] Keren Kayemet LeYisrael/Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.01.1919, CZA, L6/87. Transliteration from the original.
[1783] Palestine Office Czechoslovakia, *Letter to Zionist Central Office London*, 28.03.1919, CZA, L6/91.
[1784] Ibid.
[1785] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Jewish National Fund*, 10.01.1919, CZA, L6/87.
[1786] There was one draft concept for the tasks of the Palestine Office, but it remained decidedly vague in basically all respects. Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 07.01.1919, CZA, Z3/851.

fit young people, ideally with technical or agricultural skills, were needed, and that the country required capital, but there was no real strategy.[1787] Professions, and financial and family situations were duly noted, but the people who recorded the notes did not really know who and what was needed in Palestine, and they begged the international leadership for information.[1788] In this sense, this work remained an effort "to fill the waiting period" until actual emigration was possible.[1789] This was done in Vienna, as in all other places. In April 1919, for instance, the Palestine Office for Galicia and Silesia in Cracow asked for advice and information, because for three months it had not received any instructions but had spent much time and energy in registering people and making propaganda for emigration without really knowing much about the actual possibilities.[1790]

Reports on the registration efforts mainly allow insight into the social composition of the hopeful emigrants. In January and February 1919, the Palestine Office in Vienna registered around 3,500 people, 2,000 of them as families and about 1,500 people who travelled individually. The vast majority of them, 2,200 people, were either entrepreneurs or in free professions, 400 came from agriculture, 200 were craftsmen, and 250 were students. Two thirds of them were male.[1791] By 1 April 1919, the Palestine Office in Warsaw had registered 5,000 families. The vast majority of them (85 percent) were either self-employed, in free professions, merchants or entrepreneurs, ten percent came from agriculture (some of them probably coming from the training farms), and the rest had other professions.[1792] To a certain extent this did reflect the social composition of Jewish society in East-Central Europe, and especially those layers in which the Zionist idea had found wider support, although some of the categories were rather vague.

The inability of the Palestine Office to actually bring people to Palestine had two results. First, a number of people left Vienna in disappointment and anger, trying to find a way themselves. In the early months especially, most of them were eventually stranded somewhere in Italy, without money, completely exhausted, often getting sick, and often unable to return. The Palestine Office in Vienna forwarded a report by a high school student from Koło (near

[1787] Unknown Author, *Letter to Jüdischer Nationalfonds Sammelstelle für Österreich*, 01.12.1918, CZA, L6/371; Keren Kajemeth LeIsrael, Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Keren Kajemeth LeIsrael Main Office The Hague*, 05.12.1918, CZA, L6/371; Berger, Warburg, *Letter to Zionist Office Vienna*, 18.12.1918, CZA, L6/371. For registration-forms, see: CZA, Z3/6.
[1788] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Chaim Weizmann and Nahum Sokolow*, 03.02.1918, CZA, L6/93.
[1789] Warburg, Berger, *Letter to Palästina-Amt Wien*, 10.01.1919, CZA, L6/87.
[1790] Biuro Palestynskie dla Galicyi i Slaska w Krakowie, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, CZA, April 1919, L6/116.
[1791] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Report to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 27.03.1919, CZA, Z3/852.
[1792] Palestine Office Warsaw, *Telegram to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 01.04.1919, CZA, L6/94.

Łódź) who with some friends had made it as far as Naples, but then had to return after experiencing many disappointments. He mainly blamed misleading reports in the Polish Zionist press that had described successful emigration efforts. He also reported how while in Rome, he had seen posters celebrating the Balfour Declaration, but then he and his companions were summoned by the Zionist organization in Rome and were told that onward travel to Palestine was impossible and that they should turn back.[1793] In the following months, others undertook adventurous journeys, arriving as far as Corfu and Egypt, and a small group somehow even managed to get into Palestine. But the majority of self-organized emigrants had to turn back.[1794] The other result was that even Zionists had to consider emigration to destinations other than Palestine as a possibility. Especially given that other, often commercial, travel-organizations were advertising emigration to places like the United States and Brazil.[1795] Activists wrote:

"A central question that cannot be simply dismissed is whether the Zionist Organization and possibly the National Councils will not also have to deal with emigration to America etc. We believe that we should, first of all because the redirection of the stream of undesirable emigrants away from Palestine will only be possible this way, and also because we Zionists indeed claim to be the only representatives of the Jewish people."[1796]

The focus, however, remained on Palestine, although the situation did not improve much. Even after the great powers had settled the future of Palestine in Paris, there were still no real possibilities, and this created a "more than embarrassing situation" for the activists who had "for weeks and months put off the people."[1797] At the same time, there were new pressures. Those Polish Jews, especially young men, who had waited in Vienna to travel on to Palestine could under no circumstances return, since they "have not followed the invitation of their stepfatherland Poland to fight against its neighboring countries and now have to face the penalty for desertion."[1798] Activists, especially in those regions where war and violence raged on, continued to beg the leadership to help them in the emigration efforts, with little to no success.[1799]

[1793] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 23.02.1919, CZA, Z3/852.
[1794] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Palestine Department of the Zionist Organization London*, 21.05.1919, CZA, L6/98.
[1795] Joseph Wachmann, *Letter to unknown addressee (probably a member of the Poale Zion Farbands-Biro)*, 13.08.1919, ILPA, 1-1-1917-3.
[1796] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Zionist Central Bureau Berlin*, 03.01.1919, CZA, Z3/851.
[1797] Unknown Author, *Letter to Zionist Organization London*, 22.09.1919, CZA, L6/99. The last page of the letter is missing in the files, but it seems to have been written by an activist of the Palestine Office in either Warsaw or Lwów.
[1798] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Letter to Zionist Organization London*, 19.09.1919, CZA, L6/99.
[1799] Biuro Palestynskie Lwów, *Letter to Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organization*, 12.09.1919, CZA, L6/123; Delegation des Jüdischen Nationlrats für Ostgalizien, *Letter to Arieyh Lauterbach*, 15.08.1919, CZA, A166/17.

It took until 1920 when a somewhat safe and organized form of actual emigration from Europe to Palestine could be organized.[1800] The main transit route still went through Vienna, and leading activists still had to inform members that emigration was not guaranteed, that the British authorities were still creating problems, and that the situation in Palestine still made it impossible for a greater number of Jews to settle there.[1801] By 1922 the Palestine Office in Vienna reported that since its existence it had helped over 10,000 emigrants, the majority of them men in their twenties, to Palestine, most of them passing from other East-Central European countries through Vienna.[1802]

Figure 5

On the way to Palestine, children, orphaned by the pogroms, receive presents for Purim in Trieste; probably 1920.[1803]

[1800] Jüdisch-palästinensische Reise- und Transportgesellschaft m. b. H., *Merkblatt für Palästinareisende*, February 1920, CZA, L6/101.
[1801] For example: Zionistische Vereinigung für Deutschland, *Letter to all local branches and functionaries*, 07.10.1920, CZA, A233/2.
[1802] Palästina-Amt Wien, *Report "Tätigkeit des Wiener Palästina-Amtes"*, April 1922, CSHAL, f338 d490.
[1803] CZA, PHAL/1614946. [I do not own the rights to this picture.]

Conclusion: Conflicting Alternatives?

When the Palestine Offices were established, left-wing socialist-Zionist activists generally participated in them and sometimes played an important role, cooperating with General and religious Zionists in setting up these institutions and calling for emigration to Palestine.[1804] However, the course of events changed the attitude of the radical left towards the question. How far this was because the emigration efforts of the Palestine Offices remained futile for such a long time is hard to say, but towards the end of 1919 and in the first half of 1920, an increasing number of socialist-Zionist activists began to rethink their relationship to Palestine as a national homeland and a destination for Jewish mass emigration, leading to intense discussions in the ranks of Poale Zion.[1805] In November 1919 a Poale Zion activist raised doubts about the role of Palestine in this revolutionary period.

> "The revolution is no dream any more, but an existing fact that needs to be reckoned with. But if the revolution has become a fact and socialism is not a utopia anymore, what do we need Palestine for? We never wanted it because of our love for Grandmother Rachel's grave but because of our love for socialism which grants the right to work to everyone."[1806]

Malke Schorr, one of the radical activists in Vienna, wrote in March 1920 that the revolutionary experiences "have made the revision of all previous programs by all workers' parties an absolute necessity."[1807] For her, this revision meant that given the revolutionary wave, Palestine would lose its role as a national home for socialist activists. At best, it might be a destination for Jewish migration, but such a wave of emigration from Eastern Europe was doubtful. Her appeal for revision concluded that, given the current situation, "we cannot speak of any

---

[1804] Shlomo Kaplansky, *Letter to Poale Zion Party Secretariat Vienna*, 05.01.1919, ILPA, 1-10-19119-111; Poale Zion Party Secretariat East Galicia, *Letter to Farbands-Biro*, 03.08.1919, ILPA, 1-1-1917-3. Mendelsohn, *Zionism*, 142–5.

[1805] Locally, the discussions are reflected in the party papers. See for instance for Galicia: *Der Kemfer*, 05.09.1919. For Bukovina: *Frayhayt*, 03.07.1919; 10.07.1919; 28.08.1919; 30.10.1919. For Czechoslovakia: *Der Jüdische Sozialist*, 20.02.1920; 27.02.1920; *Židovský Socialista*, 02.08.1919; 18.08.1919; 06.09.1919. Internationally, this was heavily discussed at the Fifth World Conference of the World Union of Poale Zion. See the minutes: World Union of Poale Zion, *Minutes of the V. World Conference*, July 1920, PLI, III-11-1-36; Alveltlicher Yidisher Sotsialistisher Arbeyter-Farband Poale-Tsion, *Di Finfte Veltkonferents: Bericht un Resolutsim* (Vienna: Farlag fun Farbands-Biro, 1920) and subsequently at the 1922 conference of the left Poale Zion World Union in Danzig: World Union of Poale Zion Left, *Minutes of the World Conference in Danzig*, June 1922, RGASPI, f272 o1 d55. On the Poale Zion Left in Poland, see: Bina Garncarska-Kadary, "The Po'alei-Zion Left Party in the Municipal Councils in Poland, 1919–1929," *Gal-ed: On the History & Culture of Polish Jewry*, Vol. 12 (1991): 61–4.This shift was decidedly due to the particular situation in Europe. Anita Shapira has shown how for socialist Zionists in Palestine enthusiasm for the revolution was absolutely not in contradiction with their dedication to the national project there. Anita Shapira, "Labor Zionism and the October Revolution," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (1989): 623–56.

[1806] *Freie Tribüne*, 22.11.1919.

[1807] *Freie Tribüne*, 06.03.1920.

exceptionalism of Palestine […] and not of a solution of the Jewish workers' problems through it."[1808]

For these radicalized activists, the prospect of social emancipation through a European revolution seemed more immediate, more realistic, and possibly more desirable, than an uncertain future in a national home in Palestine. It is remarkable that these comments came less than two years after the Balfour Declaration, and the endorsement of the Palestine-related program by the Socialist International seemed to have put this at the center of attention. The fear addressed by Chaim Weizmann at the beginning of this chapter seemed to have been well-founded, although in a different way than he thought. It was less the end of oppression that endangered support for Zionism, but it was the possibilities for political activism and the promises of revolutionary self-emancipation – alongside non-Jewish revolutionaries in Europe – that seemed, for some, to offer an alternative to the promise of the national homeland in Palestine.

The Balfour Declaration represented one promise, amongst many, that were given towards the end of the war, albeit the one with the heaviest weight. It indeed sparked enthusiasm amongst many, but its actual, immediate effects on the ground have to be doubted. Marek Scherlag wrote about a depressing situation at the end of the war: "The Zionists gathered up but the echo of the Balfour Declaration was still very weak."[1809] Probably more than awakening ancient hopes, it contributed to legitimizing Zionism and giving the Zionist movement credibility in Jewish society. When the war ended and many had to leave their homes, it was natural that they turned to the Zionists, who had received the British promise, and who had made a promise and a claim themselves.

For two decades before the Balfour Declaration, Zionist activists had proclaimed that the only hope for the Jewish nation was in mass-emigration to Palestine and the establishment of a national homeland there. This was an ethos and an idea, more than a practical policy. Through the collection of money for the National Fund, through petitions and other activities activists gave individual Jews in Europe the possibility to be part of something bigger, to feel belonging to the nation and to establish a connection with Eretz Israel. It was an ethos, but it was a successful one, perhaps even too successful. Being confronted with turning an idea into policy, Zionist activists were forced, in essence, to act against their own ideas, or at least it appeared this way too many. They were forced to hold people back and prevent them going to Palestine.

[1808] Ibid.
[1809] Marek Scherlag, *Geschenkte Jahre: Erinnerungsbilder aus meiner Lebensgeschichte*, undated, CZA, A47/35.

Did this in turn make the revolution in Europe a more viable, more credible option? It is hard to say. Eventually, the revolutionary hopes of many were disappointed. The crucial experience during the years 1917 to 1919, or even 1920, was that for both socialist and main stream Zionists, the great ideas and hopes they developed, the promises that they had made in previous years, now seemed to become reality. This reality, of course, often looked very different than they had anticipated.

Conclusion

She made a wry face and said, 'Why should I take on myself the burden of past generations? Let past generations look after themselves and my generation look after itself. Just as the generations before me lived in their own way, so my generation lives in its own way. And as for what you said, that every daughter of Israel should think of herself as a daughter of kings, there's nothing more foolish than that. Today, when the crowns of kings are lying in museums and no one takes pride in them, you come and say: Every daughter of Israel should think of herself as a daughter of kings.'"[1810]

Evidently, Agnon's alter ego had a difficult time convincing Rachel, the innkeeper's younger daughter, of the virtues of having a strong connection to her people and to take pride in the deeds of past generations. When the war had ended millions of people in East-Central Europe had decided that for them the crowns of kings and emperors no longer meant much and were nothing but the relic of an ever-more distant past. A new generation had come of age during the war. Many were traumatized and disappointed, but many also felt inspired by either or both of the two promises that had been made in November 1917. The promise of national emancipation through building a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, and the promise of social emancipation through a revolution that aspired to turn the entire old world upside-down. In one way or another, a new world came into being in these days.

In many respects, these radical changes forced people to rethink their traditional ideas and allegiances, the ways they had interpreted the world around them and the ways they had hitherto formulated strategies and theories about what needed to be changed and how to change it. For years, Zionists had argued for a 'publicly and legally assured home in Palestine', and for years Poale Zionists had aimed for a socialist revolution to break the chains of the Jewish working class all over the world. Now, at the end of a war that had destroyed empires and millions of lives, theory seemed to be turning into reality, and this new reality in many respects turned out to be more complicated than had been anticipated.

The conflict between theory and ideology, on the one hand, and reality and facts on the ground, on the other, was a central feature of the Zionists' experience during the war. In some respects, this conflict also exists in historiography as a clash between 'big' stories and the form of these 'big' stories on the ground both locally and regionally, and what they meant for people who lived through them. Just as Zionist activists often had to rethink and adapt their theoretical and ideological understandings in light of the realities they encountered during the war and in

[1810] Agnon, *A Guest for the Night*, 35.

its aftermath, this thesis aimed to refine our understanding of what Zionism meant, not as a 'big' political movement, but what it meant for people as they lived their lives, on a daily basis.

Jonathan Frankel wrote about the First World War and its aftermath that "the experience of the Jewish people mirrored – but also magnified – that of the belligerent societies in general."[1811] Indeed, Jews in general and Zionists in particular went through many of the same experiences as non-Jews and non-Zionists and many of their responses and practices showed commonalities. Much of the continent shared the defining horrors of the war, mechanized death in the trenches, the starvation of civilians, and disintegration of the social order as well as the corresponding feelings of fear and hope, patriotism and solidarity. Zionists also had very much in common with other political activists, and in particular with those of other national movements. Similar to German nationalists, German Zionists were convinced that they would bring civilization to the East. Similar to Ukrainian nationalists, Galician Zionists tried to prove themselves a loyal nation amongst the nations of the Austrian Empire. Similar to German, Czech, and Polish nationalists, Zionists worked to save the children of their people and to raise them to become proud sons and daughters of their nation.

However, the experiences of Zionists and the outcome of developments were often markedly different to those in other contexts. There were also significant differences in the form Zionism took and the role it played in the various regions. One central aspect was the different relations between Zionists and the ruling powers in the various regions, which also produced notably different strategies and outcomes. The most obvious difference can be observed in the comparison between the Generalgouvernement Warschau and Ober Ost. Whereas the incorporation of German Zionists into the ruling apparatus of Ober Ost allowed them to gain concessions and results, which by all common standards represented remarkable achievements, this happened to a large extent as detached from the masses of the Jewish population in the region. In the Ober Ost region German Zionists actually tried to implement practically the tasks that came with their civilizing mission in the East. These brought formal results but utterly failed to anchor the Zionist movement in the masses of the Jewish population of the region. By contrast, Zionists in the Generalgouvernement were forced to build from a bottom-up foundation, everyday organizing and relief work, first and foremost because their German comrades had failed to acquire a comparable position within the administration. It was through this bottom-up activism that Zionism in the Generalgouvernement managed to become a highly

[1811] Jonathan Frankel, "An Introductory Essay: The Paradoxical Politics of Marginality: Thoughts on the Jewish situation During the Years 1914–1921," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry: An Annual, No. 4: The Jews and the European Crisis, 1914–1921*, ed. Jonathan Frankel (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 4.

influential force within Jewish social and political life and allowed Zionists to acquire central positions within Jewish society. In many respects it was the failure to acquire a position within the administration that was the precondition for the successes in the Generalgouvernement. A somewhat similar pattern can be observed in Galicia, where local activists' inability to organize fully independent relief activities forced them to integrate their work into the broader institutions and relief efforts in the region. Zionists thereby gained important standing within the community, being able to replace the often-discredited old leadership of the communities and gain recognition as dedicated leaders of the people, and not merely of a political party.

That some of those seeming disadvantages turned out to be the biggest assets for the movement was a pattern of this period. Zionists – as everyone else for that matter – could only act with the means and in the frameworks that were at their disposal. At least initially, they often responded to pressures and wider developments and were forced to shelve their original plans but later often turned what they had initially perceived as shortcomings into virtues. In short, they worked with what they had. The fact that Zionists in Vienna set up a clinic and legal aid bureaus was not only due to the need of refugees for healthcare and legal advice but very simply also due to the fact that a number of doctors, medical professionals, and lawyers were members of the Zionist organization. Something similar can also be said about educational efforts in many regions. That the Zionist movement had a significant number of teachers in its ranks may not have been the main reason for their large-scale educational endeavors in this period, but it was at least a strong incentive to become active in this field and made this work much easier.

It was through these relief and educational efforts that the movement came to play an important role in people's lives. Activists who could deliver much-needed aid were undoubtedly taken more seriously and won respect in a society that was starving and besieged. One of the greatest assets of the Zionist activists in this context were its transnational connections. As the various Jewish political movements struggled over access to funds and goods, the fact that Zionists could rely on a network that despite wartime constraints and conflicts still functioned as a network of solidarity and mutual support was of crucial importance. Not only could activists show that the Jewish nation was standing together, and its unity created bridges over trenches, but it also allowed them to acquire much-needed funds and practical aid that could make a significant difference on the ground.

It was not only the delivery of aid that was important, but also the question of how that aid should be used. Zionists saw their efforts not only as a means of easing immediate suffering but as part of a project to save and regenerate the Jewish nation. This was particularly the case

for those efforts that focused on relief and education for children. Raising children in a national spirit, to help them become conscious and valuable members of the nation was a central task that Zionists assigned to themselves, as did members of many other national movements. The language question, re-interpreted as a question of national belonging and political identity, was often at the center of debates on childcare and education. Children would need to learn Hebrew so that they would someday be able to talk to the children in the Land of Israel. In many respects the years of war were also years of experiment and innovation, not least in the field of pedagogy that was so central to these efforts. Zionist youth work can be differentiated from that of other Jewish movements for reasons that go beyond the language question. 'Zionism' in these pedagogical endeavors may have been primarily a label at certain times, as there was a lack of Hebrew teachers and teaching materials. At the center of the efforts, however, was the attempt to give agency to the Jewish nation. One way in which this attempt manifested itself was in the increasingly independent activism of young people who often joined together in social spaces provided by the Zionist movement. This in turn often led to conflicts with older generations.

Nowhere was the question of agency so central as in the struggle for security. The war and all the horrors and violence that came with it forced Zionists to rethink their relations to the state and to wider society. Jews in the Habsburg Empire had ample reason to hope for and trust in the protection of the state and to fear its demise and replacement with something worse and more exclusionary. However, the imperial state failed the Jews during the war, as it failed its other citizens. Jews were to suffer from violence perpetrated in overlapping imperial and national contexts. The violence continued throughout the years after the official end of the war. Seventeen-year old Marta in a small town near Cracow wrote in her diary in early 1919: "The long, savage World War has brought many things, much grief, misery, very often terror and fear. […] But that its end and its consequences would be even worse, no one, dear god, could have imagined this. […] One lives through the weeks as in a state of ecstasy, ever more terrifying and alarming news reaches us."[1812] Zionists tried to organize security on many levels, appealing to central authorities (whether imperial or national), trying to gain local arrangements, and organizing self-defense. These alliances were not always vertical and centered less on authority itself but instead emphasized the position of the Jewish nation and the attempts of Zionists to gain agency. The organization of armed self-defense may have been the most impressive and most ideologically important attempt to obtain security, but with few exceptions the proposals and application of security strategies all focused on demands for self-organization and autonomy as responses to discrimination and violence. In the light of

[1812] Marta Müller, *Diary*, Entry of 06.02.1919, CAHJP, PL/1238.143.

developments over the following decades, the idea that national autonomy would be a useful instrument for guarding the safety and security of the Jews seems misguided. However, it made sense not only in the way contemporaries interpreted inter-communal relations and the place of Jews in the European order but also in respect to what Zionist believed 'national autonomy' would actually entail.

Zionists interpreted this violence as a confirmation of their national demands, both internally and externally. A month after the Lwów pogrom, the editorial of *Tagblat*, the city's main Yiddish Zionist paper, proclaimed "The end of assimilation" and stated: "For years and decades, we are leading the struggle against assimilation. Our 'I believe' [*unzer ani-ma'amin*] is, a Jew cannot be a Pole and no Ukrainian, a Jewish can only be a Jew. Only due to its great influence, only due to its money and its patronage [by the Poles] could assimilation succeed in misleading the people."[1813] Zionists in Lwów as anywhere else were convinced that the nationalist reorganization of the region and the violence that accompanied it required first and foremost nationally-conscious Jewish self-organization and a break with the illusion that was 'assimilation.' The call for national autonomy was both directed towards the Jewish population and served as an appeal to wider society. The institution of the National Council corresponded to the paradigm of nationalism that reshaped the region.

Whether Zionists were able to turn their claim that they represented the Jewish nation into a reality (even a short-lived reality) depended on both the overall circumstances and relations with other nationalists, as well as on the role Zionists now played in Jewish society thanks to their activism during the previous years. As much as the events in the fall of 1918 are often seen as a break, the integration of the Zionists into the nationalist post-war order followed a pattern that had developed in previous years: from the transfer of cooperation from Ober Ost to cooperation with the new Lithuanian government, to the party infighting in Warsaw, the struggle against the Kultusgemeinde in Vienna, to the rise of leaders in the communities of East Galicia. The most successful National Council was undoubtedly that in Prague whose demands corresponded perfectly with the interests of the new nationalist rulers, which explains how a hitherto relatively small group of activists could almost overnight acquire an absolutely central role in the representation and leadership of Jewish society.

Whereas these forms of activism were determined by local conditions and often the decisions of individuals, they were not isolated from the 'big' political developments and decisions that took place on a continental or international scale. The promise of the Balfour Declaration was undoubtedly of tremendous importance for the development of Zionism.

[1813] *Tagblat*, 23.12.1918.

However, this was not a linear development. In his work on Zionist activism in pre-war Galicia, Joshua Shanes noted in his conclusion that "Zionism generally remained a fringe political movement until 1917, when Britain issued the Balfour Declaration and seemed to fulfill Herzl's dream of an international charter for a Jewish home in Palestine."[1814] Yosef Gorny noted in his comparison between the Bund and Poale Zion: "The Bund's rejectionism gathered strength and ferocity after the war due to the Balfour Declaration, the Jews' greatest international and national achievement since their dispersion. This achievement […] catapulted the Zionist movement to a vastly higher status in the Jewish street."[1815]

I do not believe that these generalized statements reflect the experiences of many on the ground. Indeed, the Balfour Declaration was important, but it could mean very different things to different people, depending on their circumstances. The debate over what to do with this British promise – both in regard to negotiations in Paris and the organization of emigration – indeed show the conflict between central and local strategies, needs, and demands, and that both the Balfour Declaration, as well as the ethos of Palestine itself could be ascribed very different meanings from which very different conclusions could be drawn. This was not least the case because for many the transformation of the Russian into a European revolution represented a credible alternative liberation. To be sure, few activists at the time regarded the aim for national liberation in Palestine and revolutionary emancipation as contradicting each other, as they and much of the left would see it in subsequent decades. Local pressures and opportunities demanded that they shift their focus, their work, and their strategies to respond to either one of these supposed alternatives. This was the case between East European National Councilors and the leadership in the negotiations in Paris, as it was between various regional parties of Poale Zion, whose World Union would not survive these tensions.[1816]

Was there a special characteristic of Zionist activism during the war and in its immediate aftermath? Many activists showed an enormous amount of flexibility in responding to the changing circumstances and needs of the Jewish population, even if they made changes in political activism and ideologies very reluctantly. Where activists were able (or forced) to build the movement from the bottom-up, their institutions, activists, leaders, and ideas came to put

[1814] Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism*, 284.
[1815] Gorny, *Converging Alternatives*, 86.
[1816] In a speech at the Fifth World Conference of Poale Zion Nahum Rafalkes (Nir) summed up this internal conflict: "You must understand the basics of our movement to understand why some problems have occurred over which our parties simply cannot find an agreement. The movement is worldwide and that is its big mistake that leads to misunderstandings. Every regional party lives under specific political and economic circumstances that determine its policy." World Union of Poale Zion, *Minutes of the V. World Conference*, July 1920, PLI, A, III-11-1-36, 28.

down roots among the local Jewish population and establish the movement as a central force in Jewish political life. This was a nation-building project in Europe under some of the harshest conditions the people living in the region had hitherto experienced.

Were Zionists successful in this project? I believe that success or failure can be measured in many different ways. Whether the numbers of Shekels sold, or signatures and donations collected for Eretz Israel can be a reliable indicator of 'success' or 'failure' seems doubtful. These numbers, just as with election results, may reflect newly gained strength and importance, but they cannot stand alone and outside of context. During the period in question tens of thousands attended Zionist cultural, political, and social events, thousands of children went to Zionist-organized schools, kindergartens, and orphanages (and many were saved from starvation, which in itself counts as success). In many places, Zionists acquired central positions in the Jewish Communities or succeeded in replacing the religious communities with national communities, even if it was only for a short time. They also managed in many places to establish themselves as a powerful counterweight to liberal, socialist, and orthodox movements and also influenced these movements whose leaders at times were forced to make concessions to Zionist ideas.

However, what seems most important to me is the politicization and rise of self-organized activism of many people throughout the region. The Zionist concept of acquiring agency for the Jewish nation was reflected in increased bottom-up activism. Many who had not hitherto played a central role in the movement, most notably young women, began to assert themselves more forcefully not only towards society at large, but also against their older male peers who represented the Zionist traditions of older generations. From optimistic pioneers in Lithuania, to Zionists girls' clubs in Galicia, to revolutionaries on the streets of Vienna, bottom-up activism gained an ever-increasing importance in the region. This was not limited to Jewish society and to Zionist movements, but for its part the Zionist movement and its everyday activists played a central role in this phenomenon.

Bibliography

Archives

AAN (Archiwum Akt Nowych; Warsaw)
- 2: Gabinet Cywilny Regencyjna Królestwa Polskiego w Warszawie
- 8: Posiedzenia Rady Ministrów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Protokoły z załącznikami
- 9: Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych
- 19: Ministerstwo Aprowizacji w Warszawie
- 36: Pełnomocnik Głównego Urzędu Likwidacyjnego w Wiedniu
- 39: Komitet Narodowy Polski w Paryż
- 473: Przedstawicielstwo Rady Regencyjnej w Berlinie
- 490: Ambasada RP w Waszyngtonie
- 1213: Żydowska Socjaldemokratyczna Partia Robotnicza "Poalej Syjon"
- 1214: Ogólno-Żydowski Związek Robotniczy "Bund" w Polsce
- 1296: Rady Delegatów Robotniczych w Polsce
- 1774: Tymczasowy Komitet Rządzący we Lwowie

AGAD (Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych; Warsaw)
- 305: C. K. Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości
- 312: Generalne Gubernatorstwo Wojskowe w Lublinie
- 531: Cesarsko-Niemieckie Generał-Gubernatorstwo Warszawskie
- 532: Szef Administracji przy Generał-Gubernatorstwie Warszawskim
- 533: Cesarsko-Niemieckie Prezydium Policji w Warszawie

ANK (Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie; Cracow)
- 218: Starostwo Grodzkie Krakowskie
- 247: C.K. Dyrekcja Policji w Krakowie
- 530: Naczelny Komitet Narodowy

APL (Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi; Łódź)
- 166: Urząd Wojewódzki Łódzki
- 221: Akta miasta Łodzi: Wydział Oświaty i Kultury
- 228: Łódzka Gmina Wyznaniowa Żydowska
- 603: Zbiór druków i pism ulotnych

APPo (Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu; Poznań)
- 418: Starostwo Grodzkie miasta Poznania

APPr (Archiwum Państwowe w Przemyślu; Przemyśl)
- 140: Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu Polska Rada Narodowa w Przemyślu
- 397: Afisze, plakaty i druki ulotne z terenu Przemyśla

APW (Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie; Warsaw)
- 642: Cesarsko-Niemiecka Prokuratura w Warszawie

BAB (Bundesarchiv Berlin; Berlin)
- R-703: Stellvertreter des Reichskanzlers
- R-1501: Reichsministerium des Inneren

BAMA (Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv; Freiburg)
N-30: Beseler, Hans von
N-234: Trotta, Franz von
PH-30-II: Generalgouvernement Warschau
PH-30-III: Ober Ost

BPDW-A (Bundespolizeidirektion Wien Archiv; Vienna)
Staatspolizei Geschlossene Faszikel Kriegsakte
Stimmungsberichte

BSB (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek; Munich)
Befehls- und Verordnungsblatt des Oberbefehlshabers Ost
Landes-Gesetz- und Verordnungsblatt für das Königreich Galizien und Lodomerien samt dem Großherzogthume Krakau

CAHJP (Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People; Jerusalem)
A-W: IKG Wien
AU: Austria
CS: Czechoslovakia
M33: Joint
M71: Deutschland
P83: Gelber, N. M.
P97: Grunwald, Max
P234: Adler, Joel
PL: Poland

CSHAL (Central State Historical Archive L'viv; L'viv)
f338

CZA (Central Zionist Archives; Jerusalem)
A8: Adolf Friedemann
A14: Leon Reich
A15: Max Bodenheimer
A47: Marek Scherlag
A77: Lucien Wolf
A124: Hermann Struck
A127: Yitzhak Gruenbaum
A137: Shlomo Kaplansky
A147: Armand Kaminka
A161: Franz Oppenheimer
A166: Ariyeh Lauterbach
A167: Robert Weltsch
A233: Julius Becker
A277: Leon Chasanowich
AK82: David Farbstein
F1: Österreichische Zionistische Organisation
F3: Ostgalizische Zionistische Organisation
F4: Zionistische Vereinigung für Deutschland
F33: Polnische Zionistische Organisation
KKL: Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael
PHAL: Collection of Albums (Photographs)

PHG: General Collection (Photographs)
PHIS: Information Service Collection (Photographs)
PHZPR: Ariyeh Rafaeli Zenzipper Collection on the History of Zionism in Russia
L6: Copenhagen Office
L8: Paris Office
Z3: Berlin Office
Z4: London Office

ILPA (Israel Labor Party Archive; Beit Berl)
1: World Union of Poale Zion
4: Berl Locker Private Archive

JDC (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Archive; New York)
New York AR, 1914–1918/4/6/1: Galicia, 1915–1919
New York AR, 1914–1918/4/14/1: Poland General
New York AR, 1914–1918/4/14/2: Poland
New York AR, 1914–1918/4/14/3: Poland, Children and Education
New York AR, 1919–1921/3/1: Childcare, 1919–1921
New York AR, 1919–1921/4/19: Galicia
New York AR, 1919–1921/4/34: Poland, Child Care 1919–1921

JMB-A (Jüdisches Museum Berlin Archiv; Berlin)
MF13: Komitee für den Osten
R-2000-291: Hermann Struck

KPÖ-ZPA (Kommunistische Partei Österreichs Zentrales Parteiarchiv; Vienna)
Poale Zion Collection

LBI-A (Leo Baeck Institute Archive; New York)
ME: Memoirs Collection

NLI-A (National Library of Israel Archives Department; Jerusalem)
ARC/4°/1180: Samuel Abraham Poznański
USA V. 703 2 105: Levin Epstein

ÖStA AdR (Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Archiv der Republik; Vienna)
Bundeskanzleramt

ÖStA AVA (Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv; Vienna)
Inneres Ministerium des Inneren Präsidium

ÖStA KA (Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Kriegsarchiv; Vienna)
Armeeoberkommando Quartierabteilung
Zentralstellen Kriegsministerium Allgemeine Reihe
Zentralstellen Kriegsministerium Kriegsüberwachungsamt

PA-AA (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes; Berlin)
IA-WK: Weltkrieg: Juden
RZ-207: Jüdisches Referat

PLI (Pinhas Lavon Institute for Labour Movement Research; Tel Aviv)
III-11: World Union of Poalei Tsiyon

RGASPI (Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History; Moscow)
f272: Poalei Zion Organizations in the USSR, 1917–1928

RGVA-OA (Russian Military State Archive – Special Archive; Moscow)
f675k: Israelitische Allianz zu Wien
f727k: Judenstaatszionisten Österreichs

VGA (Verein für die Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung; Vienna)
Alter Parteiarchiv/Partei-Archiv vor 1934

WBR (Wienbibliothek im Rathaus; Vienna)
Stimmungsberichte aus der Kriegszeit: 1914 Exlibris Ignaz Pramer C-328501

YIVO (Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut; New York)
RG 4: Polish Autobiographies
RG 6: Siegfried Bernfeld
RG 28: Poland (Vilna Archives)
RG 102: American Autobiographies
RG 116: Territorial Collection, Poland
RG 348: Lucien Wolf and David Mowshowitch Papers
RG 448: Israel Cohen
Vilna Collection

ŻIH (Żydowski Instytut Historyczny; Warsaw)
107: Gmina Wyznaniowa Żydowska w Krakowie
108: Żydowskie Stowarzyszenia Krakowskie
113: Gminy Wyznaniowej Zimowskiej miasta Włocławka

Newspapers

Arbeiter-Zeitung (Vienna)

Bnai Brith Messenger (Los Angeles)

Bulletins of the Copenhagen Office of the Zionist Organisation (Copenhagen)

Chwila (Lwów)

Darkest Russia: A Weekly Record of the Struggle for Freedom (London)

Das Größere Deutschland: Wochenschrift für Deutsche Welt- und Kolonialpolitik (Berlin)

Der Jude: eine Monatsschrift (Berlin)

Der Jüdische Sozialist (Brno)

Der Jüdische Wille (Berlin)

Der Kemfer (Cracow)

Der Moment (Warsaw)

Der Prsemysler Yud (Przemyśl)

Der Yudisher Arbeyter (Vienna/Cracow)

Di Arbeyter-Tsaytung (Warsaw)

Die Jüdische Presse: Konservative Wochenschrift (Berlin)

Die Rote Fahne (Vienna)

Die Welt (Berlin)

Dos Arbeyter-Vort (Warsaw)

Dos Folk (Warsaw)

Dos Yidishe Folk (Warsaw)

Dos Yidishe Vort (Warsaw)

Dr Bloch's Österreichische Wochenschrift (Vienna)

Evrejskaja Zhizn' (Moscow)

Folksblat (Łódź)

Folksblat (Lwów)

Frankfurter Israelitisches Familienblatt (Frankfurt am Main)

Frayhayt (Czernowitz)

Freie Tribüne (Vienna)

Fremden-Blatt (Vienna)

Gazeta Lwówska (Lwów)

HaAhduth (Jerusalem)

HaMitspeh (Cracow)

HaTsefirah (Warsaw)

Haynt (Warsaw)

Jüdische Korrespondenz (Vienna)
Jüdische Rundschau (Berlin)
Jüdische Volksstimme (Brno)
Jüdische Volkszeitung (Bratislava)
Jüdische Volkszeitung (Stanisławów)
Jüdische Zeitung (Vienna)
Jüdisches Archiv: Mitteilungen des Komitees “Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv” (Vienna)
Jüdisches Kriegsgedenkblatt (Vienna)
Jüdisches Volksblatt (Ostrava)
Katholische Kirchenzeitung (Salzburg)
Kol Mewaser (Berlin)
Korrespondenz B (Kowno/Białystok)
Kurjer Lwowski (Lwów)
Lebens-Fragen (Warsaw)
Mittaylungen funim Ostgalitzishen Yudishen Natzionalrat (Stanisławów)
Mitteilungs-Blatt des Jüdischen Volksrats Posen (Poznań)
Neue Freie Presse (Vienna)
Neue Jüdische Monatshefte (Berlin/Munich)
Neues Wiener Tagblatt (Vienna)
Nowy Dziennik (Cracow)
Ostjüdische Zeitung (Czernowitz)
Pilsener Tagblatt (Plzeň)
Polen: Wochenschrift für Polnische Interessen (Vienna)
Prager Tagblatt (Prague)
Reichspost (Vienna)
Robotnik (Warsaw)
Salzburger Wacht (Salzburg)
Selbstwehr (Prague)
Tagblat (Lwów)
Teplitz-Schönauer Zeitung (Teplice)
The New York Times (New York)
Ungarländische Jüdische Zeitung (Budapest/Bratislava)
Varshaver Tagblat (Warsaw)
Volya (Przemyśl)
Warschauer Mitteilungen: Berichte aus dem Königreich Polen (Warsaw)
Wiener Morgenzeitung (Vienna)

Wiener Zeitung (Vienna)
Židovské Zprávy (Prague)
Židovský Socialista (Prague)
Ziemia Lubelska (Lublin)
Ziemia Przemyska (Przemyśl)

Published Sources

Abramovicz, Hirsz. *Profiles of a Lost World: Memoirs of East European Jewish Life Before World War II*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999.

Agnon, Shmuel Yosef. *A Guest for the Night*. New Milford and London: Toby Press, 2014.

Agnon, Shmuel Yosef, and Eliasberg, Ahron, ed. *Das Buch von den polnischen Juden.* Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1916.

Allweltlicher Jüdischer Arbeiterverband Poale Zion. *Die Juden im Kriege. Denkschrift des Jüdischen Sozialistischen Arbeiterverbandes Poale-Zion an das Internationale Sozialistische Bureau*. The Hague: Verlag des Jüdischen Sozialistischen Arbeiterverbandes Poale Zion, 1915.

Alveltlicher Yidisher Sotsialistisher Arbeyter-Farband Poale-Tsion. *Di Finfte Veltkonferents: Bericht un Resolutsim*. Vienna: Farlag fun Farbands-Biro, 1920.

American Jewish Committee. *Der Shvartzer Bukh: Di Yudn in di Malhamah-Gegenden fun Mizrah-Eyiropa*. New York: American Jewish Committee, 1916.

An-Sky, S. A. *1915 Diary of S. An-sky: A Russian Jewish writer at the Eastern Front*. Translated from the Russian and with an Introduction by Polly Zavadivker. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016.

An-Sky, S. A. *The Enemy at His Pleasure: A Journey through the Jewish Pale of Settlement during World War I*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2004.

Bauer, Otto. *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie*. Vienna: Verlag der Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1907.

Ben-Gurion, David. *Israel: Der Staatsgründer erinnert sich*. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1998.

Ben-Zvi, Itzhak. *The Hebrew Battalions: Letters*. Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Post Press, 1969.

Bendow, Josef (Tennenbaum, Joseph). *Der Lemberger Judenpogrom*. Vienna and Brno: M. Hickl Verlag, 1919.

Berchtold, Klaus, ed. *Österreichische Parteiprogramme 1868–1966*. Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1967.

Wolnerman, Ch., Burstin, A., and Geshuri, M. S., eds. *Sefer Oshpitsin*. (Jerusalem: Oshpitsin Society, 1977.

Blumenfeld, Kurt. *Der Zionismus: Eine Frage der Deutschen Orientpolitik*. Berlin: Verlag Georg Stilke, 1915.

Bodenheimer, Max I. *Prelude to Israel: The Memoirs of M. I. Bodenheimer*. New York and London: Thomas Yoseloff, 1963.

Borochov, Ber. "Our Platform (1906)." In *Class Struggle and the Jewish Nation: Selected Essays in Marxist Zionism*. Edited by Mitchell Cohen, 75–103. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Books, 1984.

Borochov, Ber. "The Socialism of Poale Zion here (1915)." In *Class Struggle and the Jewish Nation: Selected Essays in Marxist Zionism*. Edited by Mitchell Cohen, 155–62. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Books, 1984.

Brod, Max. *Das gelobte Land: Ein Buch der Schmerzen und Hoffnungen*. 3rd ed. Leipzig: Kurt Wolff, 1917.

Brod, Max. *Streitbares Leben, 1884–1968*. Munich, Berlin, and Vienna: F. A. Herbig, 1969.

Carlebach, Alexander. "A German Rabbi goes East." *Leo Beack Institute Year Book*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1961): 60–121.

Chasanowich, Leon. *Der Yidisher Hurbn in Ukrayne*. Berlin: Ferlag Yuda, 1920.

Chasanowitch, Leon. *Les Pogromes Anti-Juifs en Pologne et Galicie en novembre et décembre 1918: Faits et documents*. Stockholm: Bokförlaget Judea, 1919.

Cohen (-Reuß), Max. *Die politische Bedeutung des Zionismus.* Berlin: Deutsches Komitee zur Förderung der jüdischen Palästinasiedlung, 1918.

Cohen, Israel. *A Report on the Pogroms in Poland*. London: Central Office of the Zionist Organisation, 1919.

Cohen, Israel. "My Mission to Poland (1918–1919)." *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1951): 149–72.

Cytron, Pinchas, ed. *Sefer Kielce. Toldot Kehilat Kielce. Miyom Hisvuduh V'ad Churbanah*. Tel Aviv: Irgun Olei Kieltz beIsrael, 1957.

Engelman, Morris. *Four Years of Relief and War Work by the Jews of America: A Chronological Review, 1914–1918*. New York: Shoen, 1918.

Engels, Friedrich. "Brief an Eduard Bernstein in Zürich: London, 22. Febr. 1882." In *Karl Marx Friedrich Engels Werke*, Vol. 35, 278–85. Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1967.

Engels, Friedrich. "Der magyarische Kampf." In *Karl Marx Friedrich Engels Werke*, Vol. 6, 166–73. Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1959.

Fahn, Reuven. *Geshikhte fun der Yudisher natsyonaloytonomye in'm period fun der Mayrev-Ukraynisher republik*. L'viv: Spóldzenia Wydawnicza Kultura, 1933.

Federation of Ukrainian Jews, ed. *The Ukraine Terror and the Jewish Peril*. London: The Federation of Ukrainian Jews, 1921.

Feldstein, Herman. *Polen und Juden*. Cracow: Verlag des Obersten Polnischen Nationalkomitees, 1915.

Frei, Bruno. *Jüdisches Elend in Wien: Bilder und Daten*. Vienna and Berlin: R. Löwit Verlag, 1920.

Fritz, Georg. *Die Ostjudenfrage. Zionismus und Grenzschluß*. Munich: J. F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1915.

Froehlich, Eugen (Moshe Yaacov Ben-Gavriêl). *Tagebücher 1915 bis 1927*. Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau, 1999.

Gemeinde Wien, ed. *Ein Jahr Kriegsfürsorge der Gemeinde Wien*. Vienna: Verlag des Wiener Magistrates, 1915.

Gelber, Nahum Michael. "The National Autonomy of Eastern Galician Jewry in the West Ukrainian Republic, 1918–1919." In *A History of Polish Jewry During the Revival of Poland*. Edited by Isaac Lewin, 221–309. New York: Shengold Publishers, 1990.

Gewürz, Salomon. *Lemberg: Eine kritische Betrachtung des Judenpogroms vom 21. bis 23. November 1918*. Berlin: Verlag von Louis Lamm, 1919.

Granach, Alexander. *Da geht ein Mensch: Autobiographischer Roman*. Augsburg: Oelbaum Verlag, 2003.

Hameiri, Avigdor. *The Great Madness*. Haifa: Or-Ron Publishing House, 1984.

Headlam-Morley, James. "Chapter II: The Treaties for the Protection of Minorities." In *A History of the Paris Peace Conference,* Vol. V.: *Economic Reconstruction and Protection of Minorities*. Edited by Harold Temperley, 112–49. London: Henry Frowde and Hodder & Stoughton, 1921.

Hegel, Gottfried Friedrich Wilhelm. "Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse III (1830)." In *Gottfried Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel Werke*, Vol. 10. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970.

Heifetz, Elias. *The Slaughter of the Jews in the Ukraine in 1919*. New York: T. Seltzer, 1921.

Hershberg, Abraham Shmul, ed. *Pinkos Biyalistok*, Vol. 2. New York: Bialystok Jewish Historical Association, 1949.

Herzl, Theodor. *Altneuland*. Leipzig: Hermann Seemann Nachfolger, 1902.

Herzl, Theodor. *Der Judenstaat. Versuch einer modernen Lösung der Judenfrage* (1896). Zurich: Menasse, 1988.

Hof- und Staatshandbuch der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie für das Jahr 1918. XLIV Jahrgang. Nach amtlichen Quellen zusammengestellt. Vienna: Druck und Verlag der K. K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1918.

Jabotinsky, Vladimir. *The Story of the Jewish Legion*. New York: B. Ackermann, 1945.

Kahan, Anne. "The Diary of Anne Kahan: Siedlce, Poland, 1914–1916." *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Studies*, No. 18 (1983): 141–371.

Kellok, Paul U., and Gleason, Arthur, ed. *British Labor and the War: Reconstructors for a New World*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1919.

Klatzkin, Jakob. *Die Judenverfolgungen in Galizien und Rumänien*. Zurich: Verlag der Loge Al Hamischmar, 1918.

Kollenscher, Max. *Jüdisches aus der Deutsch-Polnischen Übergangszeit: Posen 1918–1920*. Berlin: Ewer, 1925.

Kommunistische Partei Deutschösterreichs. *Der erste Parteitag der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschösterreichs*. Vienna: Verlag der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschösterreichs, 1919.

Loewe, Heinrich. *Die jüdischdeutsche Sprache der Ostjuden*. Berlin: Komitee für den Osten, 1915.

Ludendorff, Erich. *Meine Kriegserinnerungen 1914–1918*. Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1919.

Luxemburg, Rosa. "Fragment über Krieg, nationale Frage und Revolution." In *Rosa Luxemburg Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. 4, 366–73. Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1974.

Meir, Golda. *My Life*, 7th ed. London: Futura Publications, 1979.

Mendel, Hersch. *Erinnerungen eines jüdischen Revolutionärs*. Köln: Arbeiterpresse Verlag, 2004.

Mill, John Stuart. *Representative Government* (1861). Kitchener: Batoche Books, 2001.

"Pressekommuniqué zur Sitzung des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees mit der Delegation von Poale Zion am 26. Juli 1917." Cit.: CHA, N. & C., Juli 1917:2. IISg. (NL Troelstra), 433. In *Social History Portal*, [http://www.socialhistoryportal.org/stockholm1917/documents/111648] (accessed 05.03.2019).

Rakovsky, Puah. *My Life as a Radical Jewish Woman: Memoirs of a Zionist Feminist in Poland*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002.

Rosenberg, Leo. *Das Ostjudenproblem und Palästina*. Berlin: Deutsches Komitee zur Förderung der jüdischen Palästinasiedlung, 1919.

Rosenfeld, Max. *Nationales Selbstbestimmunsgrecht der Juden in Polen*. Vienna and Berlin: R. Löwit Verlag, 1918.

Rosenfeld, Max. *Die Polnische Judenfrage: Probleme und Lösung*. Vienna and Berlin: R. Löwit Verlag, 1918.

Ruppin, Arthur. "Gegenwartsarbeit." In *Die Stimme der Wahrheit: Jahrbuch für wissenschaftlichen Zionismus*. Edited by Lazar Schön, 61–6. Würzburg: N. Philippi, 1905.

Shazar, Zalman. *Morning Stars*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1967.

Shmulewitz I., ed. *Der Bialystoker Yisker-Bukh*. New York: Bialystoker Center, 1982.

Shohet, Azriel. *The Jews of Pinsk, 1881 to 1941*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012.

Singer, Isaac Bashevis. *In my Father's Court*. 5th ed. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975.

"Sitzung des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees mit der Delegation von Poale Zion, 26. Juli 1917." Cit.: N. & C., Juli 1917:3. Hschr. (Arthur Engelberg), 25. In *Social History Portal* [http://www.socialhistoryportal.org/stockholm1917/documents/111646] (accessed 25.04.2015).

Sokolow, Nahum. *History of Zionism, 1600–1918*, Vol. 2. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1919.

Stenographische Protokolle Haus der Abgeordneten. XXII. Session. Vienna: Deutschösterreichische Staatsdruckerei, 1920.

Stenographische Protokolle über die Sitzungen der konstituierenden Nationalversammlung der Republik Österreich. Vienna: Deutschösterreichische Staatsdruckerei, 1919.

Stenographisches Protokoll der Verhandlungen des II. Zionisten-Congresses gehalten zu Basel vom 28. bis 31. August 1898 (Vienna: Verlag des Vereins Erets Israel, 1898),

Stiff, Nahum. *Pogromen in Ukrayne*. Berlin: Wostok, 1923.

Strack, Hermann L. *Jüdischdeutsche Texte: Lesebuch zur Einführung in Denken, Leben und Sprache der osteuropäischen Juden*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1917.

Struck, Hermann, and Eulenberg, Herbert. *Skizzen aus Litauen, Weissrussland und Kurland*. Berlin: Verlag Georg Stilke, 1916.

The Jewish Welfare Board. *Final Report on War Emergency Activities*. New York: The Jewish Welfare Board, 1920.

Troelstra Pieter Jelles, ed. *De Stockholmsche Conferentie, haar werk en beteeknis*. Amsterdam: Brochurenhandel der S.D.A.P., 1917.

Tsherikover, Elias. *Antisemitizm un pogromen in Ukraine in di yorn 1917–1918*. Berlin: Yidisher Literarisher Farlag, 1923.

Warburg, Felix M., and Lucas, Albert. *Reports Received by the Joint Distribution Committee of Funds for Jewish War Sufferers*. New York: Clarence S. Nathan, 1916.

Waschitz, Fischel. *Derekh Hayav shel Tsiyoni Lohem: Kovets Mismakhim Metuch Archivun shel Ephraim Washitz*. Jerusalem: Ahi'asaf, 1947.

Weizmann, Chaim. *Trial and Error*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1949.

Weizmann, Chaim. *Trial and Error*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949.

Wohlgemuth, Joseph. *Das Bildungsproblem in der Ostjudenfrage*. Berlin: Verlag des Jeschurun, 1916.

Yad Vashem, ed. *Pinkas hakehillot Polin: entsiklopedyah shel ha-yishuvim ha-Yehudiyim le-min hivasdam ve-'ad le-ahar Sho'at Milhemet ha-'olam ha-sheniyah*, Vol. 1. Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1967.

Yad Vashem, ed. *Pinkas ha-kehilot. Lita: entsiklopedyah shel ha-yishuvim ha-Yehudiyim le-min hivasdam ve-'ad le-ahar Sho'at Milhemet ha-'Olam ha-Sheniyah*. Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996.

Zweig, Arnold, and Struck, Hermann. *Das ostjüdidische Antlitz*. Berlin: Welt-Verlag, 1920.

Zweig, Stefan. *Tagebücher*. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1984.

Literature

Aberbach, David. *The European Jews, Patriotism and the Liberal State 1789–1939: A Study of Literature and Social Psychology*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013.

Aberbach, David. "Zionist Patriotism in Europe, 1897–1942: Ambiguities in Jewish Nationalism." *The International History Review*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (2009): 268–98.

Abramson, Henry. "Jewish Representation in the Independent Ukrainian Governments of 1917–1920." *Slavic Review*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (1991): 542–50.

Abramson, Henry. *A Prayer for the Government: Ukrainians and Jews in Revolutionary Times, 1917–1920*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Adunka, Evelyn. "Die Israelitische Kultusgemeinde und der Jüdische Nationalrat." In *Weltuntergang: Jüdisches Leben und Sterben im Ersten Weltkrieg*. Edited by Marcus G. Patka, 149–58. Vienna: Styria, 2014.

Agranovskii, Genrikh. "Jewish Socialist Parties during the 1905 Russian Revolution." *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (2012): 69–78.

Almog, Shmuel. *Zionism and History: The Rise of a New Jewish Consciousness*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987.

Alroey, Gur. "Bureaucrats, Agents, and Swindlers: The Hardships of Jewish Emigration from the Pale of Settlement in the Early 20th Century." *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, No. 19 (2003): 214–31.

Anderson, Benedict. *Die Erfindung der Nation: Zur Karriere eines folgenreichen Konzepts*. 2nd ed. Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus Verlag, 2005.

Appelbaum, Peter C. *Loyal Sons: Jews in the German Army in the Great War*. Edgeware: Valentine Mitchell, 2015.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New Edition. San Diego, New York, and London: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1966.

Ascher, Abraham. *The Revolution of 1905,* Vol. 1: *Russia in Disarray*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988.

Ascher, Abraham. *The Revolution of 1905,* Vol. 2: *Authority Restored*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992.

Aschheim, Steven E. *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German-Jewish Consciousness, 1800–1923*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982.

Aschheim, Steven E. "Eastern Jews, German Jews, and Germany's Ostpolitik in the First World War." *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (1983): 351–65.

Avineri, Shlomo. *Profile des Zionismus: Die geistigen Ursprünge des Staates Israel. 17 Portraits*. Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser/Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1998.

Balkelis, Tomas. "Turning Citizens into Soldiers: Baltic Paramilitary Movements after the Great War." In *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War*. Edited by Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, 126–44. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Balshan, Zvia. *Ihud Mefulag: Habrit ha'olamit shel miflegot po'ale-tsyon, 1907–1920*. Beer Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, 2004.

Barkai, Avraham. "*Wehr dich!" Der Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens (C.V.) 1893–1938*. Munich: C. H. Beck, 2002.

Barkey, Karen, and Von Hagen, Mark, ed. *After Empire.* Boulder: Perseus Books, 1997.

Bartal, Israel. *The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772–1881*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.

Barth, Daniel. *Kinderheim Baumgarten. Siegfried Bernfelds "Versuch mit neuer Erziehung" aus psychoanalytischer und soziologischer Sicht*. Giessen: Lahn, 2010.

Bassok, Ido. *Tehiyat haNe'urim: Mishpahah veHinukh beYahadut Polin ben Milhamot ha'olam*. Jerusalem: The Shalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2015.

Becker, Jean-Jacques. *1914: Comment les Francais sont entrés dans la guerre: Contribution à l'étude de l'opinion publique printemps-été 1914*. Paris: Les Presses de Sciences Po, 1977.

Beller, Steven. "Patriotism and the National Identity of Habsburg Jewry, 1860–1914." *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, Vol. 41 (1996): 215–38.

Beller, Steven. *Vienna and the Jews, 1867–1938: A Cultural History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Beller, Steven. "The World of Yesterday Revisited: Nostalgia, Memory, and the Jews of Fin-de-siècle Vienna." *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1996): 37–53.

Ben-Avram, Baruch. "Das Dilemma des Zionismus nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg." *Historische Zeitschrift*, Vol. 244, No. 3 (1987): 605–31.

Bendikaitė, Eglė. "'Hier und jetzt': über Bedingungen und Wirkungsspielräume der zionistischen Bewegung in Litauen 1906–1940." *Forschungen zur Baltischen Geschichte*, Vol. 5 (2010): 143–67.

Bendikaitė, Eglė, "One Man's Struggle: The Politics of Shimshon Rosenbaum (1859–1934)." *Simon-Dubnow-Institut Jahrbuch/Yearbook*, No. 13 (2014): 87–110.

Berenbaum, Michael, and Skolnik, Fred, ed. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. 2nd ed., Vol. 18. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007.

Berger, Stefan, and Miller, Alexei, ed. *Nationalizing Empires*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2015.

Berkowitz, Michael. "Towards an understanding of fundraising, philanthropy and charity in Western Zionism, 1897–1933." *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1996): 241–58.

Berkowitz, Michael. *Western Jewry and the Zionist Project, 1914–1933*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Biemann, Asher D. "Aesthetic Education in Martin Buber: Jewish Renaissance and the Artist." In *New Perspectives on Martin Buber*. Edited by Michael Zank, 87–95. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006.

Binder, Harald. "'Galizische Autonomie' – ein streitbarer Begriff und seine Karriere." In *Moravské vyrovnání z roku 1905 / Der Mährische Ausgleich von 1905*. Edited by Lukáš Fasora, Jiří Hanuš, and Jiří Malíř, 239–65. Brno: Matice Moravská, 2006.

Biskupski, Mieczysław B. *Independence Day: Myth, Symbol, and the Creation of Modern Poland*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Blecking, Diethelm. "Jews and Sports in Poland before the Second World War." *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, Vol. 23 (2008): 17–35.

Blobaum, Robert. “Criminalizing the ‘Other’: Crime, Ethnicity, and Antisemitism in Early Twentieth-Century Poland.” In *Antisemitism and its Opponents in Modern Poland*. Edited by Robert Blobaum, 81–102. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Blobaum, Robert. *A Minor Apocalypse: Warsaw during the First World War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017.

Blobaum, Robert. “A Warsaw Story: Polish-Jewish Relations during the First World War.” In *Warsaw: The Jewish Metropolis: Essays in Honor of the 75th Birthday of Professor Antony Polonsky*. Edited by Glenn Dyner and François Guesnet, 271–97. Boston: Brill, 2015.

Bodenheimer, Henriette Hannah. *Max Bodenheimer, 1865–1940: Political Genius for Zionism*. Edinburgh, The Pentland Press, 1990.

Borin, Jacqueline. “Embers of the Soul: The Destruction of Jewish Books and Archives in Poland during World War II.” *Libraries and Culture*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (1993): 445–60.

Borzęcki, Jerzy. *The Soviet-Polish Peace of 1921 and the Creation of Interwar Europe*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

Braunthal, Julius. *Geschichte der Internationale*. Vol. 2, 3rd ed. Berlin and Bonn: J. H. W. Dietz, 1978.

Brenner, Michael. *Geschichte des Zionismus*. 3rd ed. Munich: C. H. Beck, 2008.

Breuilly, John. *Nationalism and the State.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982.

Bristow, Edward J. *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight against White Slavery, 1870–1939*. New York: Schocken Books, 1983.

Brookes, Barbara, and Dunk, James. “Bureaucracy, archive files, and the making of knowledge.” *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (2018): 281–8.

Brubaker, Rogers. “The ‘diapora’ diasporas.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2005), 1–19.

Bruendel, Steffen. “100 Jahre ‘Augusterlebnis’: Deutungskonstruktionen eines historischen Phänomens.” In *Europa 1914: Wege ins Unbekannte*. Edited by Nils Löffelbein, Silke Fehlemann, and Christoph Cornelißen, 193–218. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2016.

Buchen, Tim. *Antisemitismus in Galizien: Agitation, Gewalt und Politik gegen Juden in der Habsburgermonarchie um 1900*. Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2012.

Buchen, Tim. “’Herkules im antisemitischen Augiasstall’: Joseph Samuel Bloch und Galizien in der Reaktion auf Antisemitismus in der Habsburgermonarchie.” In *Einspruch und Abwehr: Die Reaktionen des europäischen Judentums auf die Entstehung des Antisemitismus (1879–1914)*. Edited by Ulrich Wyrwa, 193–214. Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus Verlag, 2010.

Budnitskii, Oleg. *Russian Jews Between the Reds and the Whites, 1917–1920*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.

Bunzl, John. *Klassenkampf in der Diaspora: Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Arbeiterbewegung.* Vienna: Europaverlag, 1975.

Burdzhalov, Ėduard Nikolaevich, and Raleigh, Donald J. *Russia's Second Revolution: The February 1917 Uprising in Petrograd*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.

Burton, Antoinette M. *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home, and History in late Colonial India*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Buszko, Józef. “The Consequences of Galician Autonomy after 1867.” *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 86–99.

Cała, Alina. *Asymilacja Żydów w Królestwie Polskim 1864–1897: Postawy, Konflikty, Stereotypy*. Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1989.

Cała, Alina. “Jewish Socialists in the Kingdom of Poland.” *POLIN*, Vol. 9 (2008): 3–13.

Čapková, Kateřina. *Czechs, Germans, Jews? National Identity and the Jews of Bohemia*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012.

Chowers, Eyal. *The Political Philosophy of Zionism: Trading Jewish Words for a Hebraic Land*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Chu, Winson. “A Sonderweg through Eastern Europe? The Varieties of German Rule in Poland during the Two World Wars.” *German History*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (2013): 318–44.

Clifford, James. “Diasporas.” *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (1994), 302–38.

Cohen, Gary B. “Jews in German Liberal Politics: Prague, 1880–1914.” *Jewish History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1986): 55–74.

Cohen, Gary B. “The Jews in German Society: Prague, 1860–1914.” *Central European History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1977): 28–54.

Cohen, Gary B. “Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867–1914.” *Central European History*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2007): 241–78.

Cohen, Michael J. *Britain’s Moment in Palestine: Retrospect and Perspectives, 1917–1948*. London and New York: Routledge, 2014.

Cole, Laurence. *Military Culture and Popular Patriotism in Late Imperial Austria*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Cole, Laurence, Horejs, Marlene, and Rybak, Jan. *“Das ist Krieg”: Reaktionen auf den Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkriegs in Salzburg*. Essen: Klartext Verlag, forthcoming 2020.

Cornwall, Mark. “News, Rumour and the Control of Information in Austria-Hungary, 1914–1918.” *History*, Vol. 77, No. 249 (1992): 50–64

Corrsin, Stephen D. “Progressive Judaism in Poland: Dilemmas of Modernity and Identity.” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 22 (1998): 89–99.

Czerep, Stanisław. *II Brygada Legionów Polskich*. Warsaw: Bellona, 1991.

Deák, István. “Comparing Apples and Pears: Centralization, Decentralization, and Ethnic Policy in the Habsburg and Soviet Armies.” In *Nationalism and Empire*. Edited by Rudolph. L. Rudolph and David F. Good, 225–42. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992.

Deak, John, and Gumz, Jonathan E. “How to Break a State: The Habsburg Monarchy’s Internal War, 1914–1918.” *American Historical Review*, Vol. 122, No. 4 (2017): 1105–36.

Dekel-Chen, Jonathan. “Faith Meets Politics and Resources: Reassessing Modern Transnational Jewish Activism.” In *Purchasing Power: The Economics of Modern Jewish History*. Edited by Rebecca Kobrin and Adam Teller, 216–37. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.

Dekel-Chen, Jonathan, Gaunt, David, Meir, Nathan M., and Bartal, Israel, eds. *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011.

Derrida, Jacques. *Mal d‘archive: une impression freudienne*. Paris: Edition Galilée, 1995.

Dixon, Joe C. *Defeat and Disarmament: Allied Diplomacy and the Politics of Military Affairs in Austria, 1918–1920*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986.

Domansky Elisabeth. "Militarization and Reproduction in World War I Germany." In *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870–1930.* Edited by Geoff Eley, 427–64. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996.

Doron, Daniella. *Jewish Youth and Identity in Postwar France: Rebuilding Family and Nation*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2015.

Downes, Laura. *Histoire des colonies de vacances*. Paris: Perrin, 2009.

Dubin, Lois C. "Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, the Royal Alliance, and Jewish Political Theory." *Jewish History*, No. 28 (2014): 51–81.

Dunagan, Curt. *The Lost World of Przemyśl: Interethnic Dynamics in a Galician Center: 1868 to 1921*. PhD Dissertation: Brandeis University, 2009.

Dynner, Glenn. *Men of Silk: The Hasidic Conquest of Polish Jewish Society*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Dziewanowski, Marian K. *The Communist Party of Poland: An Outline of History*. 2nd ed. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1976.

Efron, John M. "The Zionist World of Arnold Zweig." In *Nationalism, Zionism, and Ethnic Mobilization in 1900 and Beyond*. Edited by Michael Berkowitz, 191–212. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004.

Ehrenpreis, Petronilla. *Kriegs- und Friedensziele im Diskurs. Regierung und deutschsprachige Öffentlichkeit Österreich-Ungarns des Ersten Weltkriegs*. Innsbruck, Vienna, and Bozen: Studienverlag, 2005.

Eidherr, Armin. "Die jiddische Kultur in Wien der Zwischenkriegszeit und ihre Positionierungen in Bezug auf Akkulturation, Diasporanationalismus und Zionismus." In *Wien und die jüdische Erfahrung, 1900–1938: Akkulturation–Antisemitismus–Zionismus*. Edited by Frank Stern and Barbara Eichinger, 175–95. Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau, 2009.

Eisenstein, Miriam. *Jewish Schools in Poland, 1919–1939: Their Philosophy and Development*. New York: King's Crown Press, 1950.

Elon, Amos. *The Pity of It All: A History of the Jews in Germany, 1743–1933*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2002.

Eloni, Yehuda. *Zionismus in Deutschland von den Anfängen bis 1914.* Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1987.

Engel, David. "Away from a Definition of Antisemitism. An Essay in the Semantics of Historical Description." In *Rethinking European Jewish History*. Edited by Jeremy Cohen and Moshe Rosman, 30–53. Oxford and Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2009.

Engel, David. *In the Shadow of Auschwitz: The Polish Government in Exile and the Jews, 1939–1942*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.

Engel, David. "Lwów, 1918: The Transmutation of a Symbol and Its Legacy in the Holocaust." In *Contested Memories: Poles and Jews during the Holocaust and Its Aftermath*. Edited by Joshua D. Zimmerman, 32–46. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003.

Engel, David. "HaMeser haKaful: HaTsionut haClalit bePolin Lenokhach Medinat Hale'am." *Gal-Ed: On the History & Culture of Polish Jewry*, Vol. 20 (2006): 55–79.

Engel, David. “What’s in a Pogrom? European Jews in the Age of Violence.” In *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European Jewish History*. Edited by Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan M. Meir, and Israel Bartal, 19–37. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011.

Engel, David. “World War I and Its Impact in the Problem of Security in Jewish Society.” In *World War I and the Jews: Conflict and Transformation in Europe, the Middle East, and America*. Edited by Marsha L. Rozenblit and Jonathan Karp, 17–31. New York: Berghahn Books, 2017.

Engel, David. *Zionism.* Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2009.

Engelstein, Laura. “’A Belgium of Our Own’: The Sack of Russian Kalisz, August 1914.” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (2009): 441–73.

Ettinger, Shmuel. “The Jews in Russia at the Outbreak of the Revolution.” In *The Jews in the Soviet Union since 1917*. Edited by Lionel Kochan, 14–28. London: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Fahey, John E. “From Imperial to National: Przemyśl, Galicia's Transformation through World War I.” *Region*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2015): 195–218.

Feldman, David. “Towards a History of the Term ‘Anti-Semitism’.” *American Historical Review*, Vol. 123, No. 4 (2018): 1139–50.

Filip, Lucyna. *Juden in Oświęcim, 1918–1941*. Oświęcim: Scientia, 2005.

Fink, Carole. *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great War, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Fishman, David E. “The Bund and Modern Yiddish Culture.” In *The Emergence of Modern Jewish Politics: Bundism and Zionism in Eastern Europe*. Edited by Zvi Gitelman, 107–19. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003.

Fishman, Judah L. *The History of the Mizrachi Movement*. New York: The Mizrachi Hatzair of America, 1928.

Fitzpatrick, Sheila. *The Russian Revolution*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Flanner, Karl. *Nieder mit dem Krieg! Für sofortigen Frieden! Der große Jännerstreik 1918 in Wiener Neustadt*. Wiener Neustadt: Verein Museum und Archiv für Arbeit und Industrie im Viertel unter dem Wienerwald, 1997.

Frankel, Jonathan. “Assimilation and the Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Towards a New Historiography?” In, *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Edited by Jonathan Frankel and Steven Zipperstein, 1–37. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Frankel, Jonathan. *Crisis, Revolution and the Russian Jews*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Frankel, Jonathan. “The Dilemmas of Jewish National Autonomism: The Case of Ukraine 1917–1920.” In *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective*. Edited by Howard Aster and Peter J. Potichnyj, 263–79. Edmonton: Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies Press University of Alberta, 1988.

Frankel, Jonathan. “An Introductory Essay: The Paradoxical Politics of Marginality: Thoughts on the Jewish situation During the Years 1914–1921.” *Studies in Contemporary Jewry: An Annual,* No. 4: *The Jews and the European Crisis, 1914–1921*. Edited by Jonathan Frankel, 3–21. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Frankel, Jonathan. “The Jewish Socialists and the American Jewish Congress Movement.” *YIVO Annual*, No. 16 (1979): 202–341.

Frankel, Jonathan. *Prophecy and Politics: Socialism, Nationalism, and the Russian Jews, 1862–1917*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Frankl, Michal. *“Prag ist nunmehr antisemitisch”: Tschechischer Antisemitismus am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2011.

Frankl, Michal. “Zwischen Staat und Nation: Tschechisch-jüdische Reaktionen auf den Antisemitismus vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg.” In *Einspruch und Abwehr: Die Reaktionen des europäischen Judentums auf die Entstehung des Antisemitismus (1879–1914)*. Edited by Ulrich Wyrwa, 180–92. Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus Verlag, 2010.

Freidenreich, Harriet Pass. *Jewish Politics in Vienna, 1918–1938.* Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Friedlander, Albert H. “Gegner Herzls und des politischen Zionismus aus der Reformbewegung.” In *100 Jahre Zionismus: Von der Verwirklichung einer Vision*. Edited by Ekkehard W. Stegeman, 119–26. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2000.

Friedman, Isaiah. “The Austro-Hungarian Government and Zionism: 1897–1918.” *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (1965): 147–67.

Friedman, Isaiah *Germany, Turkey and Zionism, 1897–1918*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Friedman, Isaiah. *Palestine: A Twice Promised Land? The British, the Arabs, & Zionism, 1915–1920*. New Brunswick, London: Transaction Books, 2000.

Friedman, Isaiah. “The Response to the Balfour Declaration.” *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (1973): 105–24.

Frommer, Morris. *The American Jewish Congress: A History*. PhD Thesis: Ohio State University, 1978.

Gaisbauer, Adolf. *Davidstern und Doppeladler: Zionismus und jüdischer Nationalismus in Österreich, 1882–1918*. Vienna, Cologne, and Graz: Böhlau, 1988.

Gałęzowski, Marek. *Na wzór Berka Joselewicza: żołnierze i oficerowie pochodzenia żydowskiego w Legionach Polskich*. Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2010.

Gans, Chaim. *A Just Zionism: On the Morality of the Jewish State*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Garncarska-Kadary, Bina. “The Po’alei-Zion Left Party in the Municipal Councils in Poland, 1919–1929.” *Gal-ed: On the History & Culture of Polish Jewry*, Vol. 12 (1991): 61–91.

Gąsowski, Tomasz. “From *Austeria* to the Manor: Jewish Landowners in Autonomous Galicia.” *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 120–36.

Gąsowski, Tomasz. “Jewish Communities in Autonomous Galicia: Their Size and Distribution.” In *The Jews in Poland*, Vol. 1. Edited by Andrzej K. Paluch, 205–21. Cracow: Jagellonian University, 1992.

Geinitz, Christian. *Kriegsfurcht und Kampfbereitschaft: Das Augusterlebnis in Freiburg. Eine Studie zum Kriegsbeginn 1914*. Essen: Klartext, 1998.

Gelbard, Arye. *Der jüdische Arbeiter-Bund Rußlands im Revolutionsjahr 1917*. Vienna: Europaverlag, 1982.

Gelber, Nathan Michael. *Toldot ha-tenu'ah ha-tsiyonit be-Galitsyah, 1875–1918*. Jerusalem, Ruben Mass, 1958.

Gelber, Nathan Michael. *Toldot Yehudi Brody, 1584–1943*. Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kuk, 1955.

Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1983.

Gerwarth, Robert, and Horne, John, eds. *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Gerwarth, Robert, and Üngör, Uğur Ümit. "The Collapse of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires and the Brutalisation of the Successor States." *Journal of Modern European History*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2015): 226–48.

Gitelman, Zvi. *A Century of Ambivalence: The Jews of Russia and the Soviet Union, 1881 to the Present*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.

Gitelman, Zvi. "A Century of Jewish Politics in Eastern Europe: The Legacy of the Bund and the Zionist Movement." In *The Emergence of Modern Jewish Politics: Bundism and Zionism in Eastern Europe*. Edited by Zvi Gitelman, 3–19. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003.

Gitelman, Zvi. *Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics: The Jewish Section of the CPSU, 1917–1930*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.

Glösel, Kathrin. "Biographien: Robert Stricker (1879–1944)." In *Jüdische Identitäten und Antisemitische Politiken im österreichischen Parlament, 1861–1933*. Edited by Saskia Sachowitsch and Eva Kreisky, 265–7. Vienna: Böhlau, 2017.

Golczewski, Frank. "Die Westgalizischen Bauernunruhen 1898." In *Polnisch-Jüdische Beziehungen, 1881–1922: Eine Studie zur Geschichte des Antisemitismus*. Edited by Frank Golczewski, 60–84. Wiesbaden: Frank Steiner, 1981.

Goldin, Semion. "Deportation of Jews by the Russian Military Command." *Jews in Eastern Europe*, Vol. 1, No. 41, (2002): 70–8.

Goldstein, Joseph. "The Zionist Movement in Congress Poland: The Victory of the *Hasidim* over the Zionists?" *POLIN*, Vol. 5 (1990): 114–30

Goltermann, Svenja. *Körper der Nation: Habitusformierung und die Politik des Turnens, 1860–1890*. Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1998.

Gorny, Joseph. *The British Labour Movement and Zionism 1917–1948*. London and Totowa: Frank Cass, 1983.

Gorny, Yosef. "Changes in the Social and Political Structure of the Second Aliya between 1904 and 1940." In *Essential Papers on Zionism*. Edited by Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira, 371–421. New York and London: New York University Press, 1996.

Gorny, Yosef. *Converging Alternatives: The Bund and the Labor-Zionist Movement, 1897–1985*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006.

Grady, Tim. *A Deadly Legacy: German Jews and the Great War*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017.

Grady, Tim. *The German-Jewish Soldiers of the First World War in History and Memory*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011.

Granick, Jaclyn. “Waging relief: the politics and logistics of American Jewish war relief in Europe and the Near East (1914–1918).” *First World War Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2014): 55–68.

Green, Abigail. “The ‘West’ and the Rest: Jewish Philanthropy and Globalization to c. 1880.” In *Purchasing Power: The Economics of Modern Jewish History*. Edited by Rebecca Kobrin and Adam Teller, 155–70. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.

Grill, Tobias. “’Pioneers of Germanness in the East’? Jewish-German, German, and Slavic Perceptions of East European Jewry during the First World War.” In *Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe: Shared and Comparative Histories*. Edited by Tobias Grill, 125–58. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2018.

Grill, Tobias. “The Politicisation of traditional Polish Jewry: Orthodox German rabbis and the founding of Agudas Ho-Ortodoksim and Dos yidishe vort in Gouvernement-General Warsaw, 1916–18.” *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (2009): 227–47.

Grimsted, Patricia Kennedy. “Roads to Ratibor: Library and Archival Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg.” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2005): 390–458.

Grünwald, Michael. “Antisemitismus im Deutschen Heer und Judenzählung.” In *Jüdische Soldaten, Jüdischer Widerstand in Deutschland und Frankreich*. Edited by Michael Berger and Gideon Römer-Hillebrecht, 129–44. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012.

Guesnet, François. “*Khevres* and *Akhdes*: The Change in Jewish Self-organization in the Kingdom of Poland before 1900 and the Bund.” In J*ewish Politics in Eastern Europe: The Bund at 100*. Edited by Jack Jacobs, 3–12. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001.

Guesnet, François. *Polnische Juden im 19. Jahrhundert: Lebensbedingungen, Rechtsnormen und Organisation im Wandel*. Cologne: Böhlau, 1998.

Gurevitz, Baruch. “Un cas de communism national en Union Soviètique: Le Poale Zion: 1918–1928.” *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviètique*, Vol. 15, No. 3/4 (1974): 333–61.

Gutwein, Daniel. *The Divided Elite: Economics, Politics, and Anglo-Jewry, 1882–1917*. Leiden, New York, and Cologne: Brill, 1992.

Habartová, Klará. “Jewish Refugees from Galicia and Bukovina in East Bohemia during World War I in the Light of the Documents of the State Administration.” *Judaica Bohemiae*, No. 43 (2007/2008): 136–66.

Hacohen, Malachi. “Juden und Österreicher in der Ersten Republik.” In *...der Rest ist Österreich. Das Werden der Ersten Republik*. Edited by Helmut Konrad and Wolfgang Maderthaner, 281–316. Vienna: Carl Gerold’s Sohn, 2008.

Hacohen, Malachi. “Nation and Empire in Modern Jewish European History.” *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (2017): 53–65.

Hagen, William W. *Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland, 1914–1920*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Hagen, William. “The Moral Economy of Popular Violence: The Pogrom in Lwów, November 1918.” In *Antisemitism and Its Opponents in Modern Poland*. Edited by Robert Blobaum, 124–47. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Hagen, William. “Murder in the East: German-Jewish Liberal Reactions to Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland and Other East European Lands, 1918–1920.” *Central European History*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (2001): 1–30.

Halkin, Hillel. *Jabotinsky: A Life.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014.

Halliday, John D. "Censorship in Berlin and Vienna during the First World War: A Comparative Approach." *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 83, No. 3 (1988): 612–26.

Halpern, Ben, and Reinharz, Jehuda. "Nationalism and Jewish Socialism: The Early Years." *Modern Judaism*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1988): 217–48.

Halpern, Ben, and Reinharz, Jehuda. *Zionism and the Creation of a New Society*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Hämmerle, Christa. *Heimat/Front. Geschlechtergeschichte/n des Ersten Weltkriegs in Österreich-Ungarn*. Vienna: Böhlau, 2014.

Haumann, Heiko. *Geschichte der Ostjuden*. 6th ed. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2008.

Haumer, Peter. *Geschichte der F.R.S.I.: Die Föderation Revolutionärer Sozialisten "Internationale" und die österreichische Revolution 1918/19*. Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2018.

Hautmann, Hans. *Geschichte der Rätebewegung in Österreich, 1918–1924*. Vienna and Zurich: Europaverlag, 1987.

Healy, Maureen. "Becoming Austrian: Women, the State, and Citizenship in World War I." *Central European History*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (2002): 1–35.

Healy, Maureen. *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Hecht, Dieter J. "Die jüdischnationale Partei 1918–1938." *Chilufim: Zeitschrift für Jüdische Kulturgeschichte*, No. 7 (2009): 109–36.

Hecht, Dieter J. "'Meine Pflicht zu verstehen und zuerst den Juden zu dienen' Anitta Müller-Cohen (1890–1962)." In *Jüdische Wohlfahrt im Spiegel von Biographien*. Edited by Sabine Hering, 307–19. Frankfurt am Main: Fachhochschulverlag, 2006.

Hecht, Dieter J. *Zwischen Feminismus und Zionismus: die Biografie einer Wiener Jüdin. Anitta Müller-Cohen (1890–1962)*. Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau, 2008.

Heid, Ludger. *Maloche – nicht Mildtätigkeit. Ostjüdische Arbeiter in Deutschland 1914–1923*. Hildesheim, Zurich, and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1996.

Heller, Joseph. "Zeev Jabotinsky and the Revisionist Revolt against Materialism: In Search of a World View." *Jewish History*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (1998): 51–67.

Herrmann. Klaus J. "Political Response to the Balfour Declaration in Imperial Germany: German Judaism." *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (1965): 303–20.

Heumos, Peter. "'Kartoffeln her oder es gibt eine Revolution': Hungerkrawalle, Streiks und Masenproteste in den böhmischen Ländern, 1914–1918." In *Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Beziehungen zwischen Tschechen, Slowaken und Deutschen*. Edited by Hans Mommsen, Dušan Kovác, Jirí Malír, and Michaela Marek, 255–86. Essen: Klartext, 2001.

Hobsbawn. Eric J. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Hödl, Klaus. *Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt: Galizische Juden auf dem Weg nach Wien*. Vienna: Böhlau, 1994.

Hödl, Klaus. "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna." *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 147–63.

Hoffmann-Holter, Beatrix. "*Abreisendmachung": Jüdische Kriegsflüchtlinge in Wien, 1914–1923.* Vienna: Böhlau, 1995.

Holquist, Peter. "The Role of Personality in the First (1914–1915) Russian Occupation of Galicia and Bukovina." In *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History*. Edited by Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan M. Meir, and Israel Bartal, 52–73. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011.

Holzer, Anton. *Das Lächeln der Henker. Der unbekannte Krieg gegen die Zivilbevölkerung 1914–1918*. Vienna: Primus Verlag, 2008.

Holzer, Jerzy. "Relations between Polish and Jewish left wing groups in interwar Poland." In *The Jews in Poland*. Edited by Chimen Abramsky, Maciej Jachimczyk, and Antony Polonosky, 140–6. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.

Holzer, Jerzy. "Zur Frage der Akkulturation der Juden in Galizien im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert." *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (1989): 217–27.

Horowitz, Brian. *Russian Idea – Jewish Presence: Essays on Russian-Jewish Intellectual Life*. Brighton: Academic Studies Press, 2013.

Hroch, Miroslav. *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the smaller European Nations*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Hroch, Miroslav. "Zionismus als eine europäische Nationalbewegung." In *100 Jahre Zionismus: Von der Verwirklichung einer Vision*. Edited by Ekkehard W. Stegmann, 33–9. Stuttgart, Berlin, and Cologne: Kohlhammer, 2000.

Jensen, Angelika. *Sei stark und mutig! Chasak we'emaz! 40 Jahre jüdische Jugend in Österreich am Beispiel der Bewegung "Haschomer Hazair" 1903 bis 1943.* Vienna: Picus Verlag, 1995.

Jezirony, Dariusz. "'The most momentous epochs in Jewish life' American Jewish Congress in Philadelphia (December 15–18, 1918)." *Przegląd Nauk Historycznych*, No. 3 (2018): 181–203.

Judaken, Jonathan. "Introduction." *American Historical Review*, Vol. 123, No. 4 (2018): 1122–38.

Judson, Pieter. *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006.

Judson, Pieter. "Nationalism and Indifference." In *Habsburg neu denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa. 30 kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte*. Edited by Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl, 148–55. Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau, 2016.

Judson, Pieter. *The Habsburg Empire: A New History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016.

Judson, Pieter. "When Is a Diaspora Not a Diaspora: Rethinking Nation-Centered Narratives about Germans in Habsburg East Central Europe." In *The* Heimat *Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness*. Edited by Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal, and Nancy Reagin, 219–47. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005.

Kaplan, Marion. "Prostitution, Morality, Crusaders and Feminism: German-Jewish Feminists and the Campaign against White Slavery." *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 5, No. 6 (1982): 619–27.

Kaps, Klemens. *Ungleiche Entwicklung in Zentraleuropa. Galizien zwischen überregionaler Verflechtung und imperialer Politik (1772–1914).* Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau, 2015.

Karlinsky, Nahum. "Jewish philanthropy and Jewish credit cooperatives in Eastern Europe and Palestine up to 1939: A transnational phenomenon?" *The Journal of Israeli History*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (2008): 149–70.

Kassow, Samuel. "Community and Identity in the Interwar *Shtetl*." In *The Jews of Poland between the two World Wars*. Edited by Yisrael Gutman, Ezra Mendelsohn, Jehuda Reinharz, and Chone Shmeruk, 198–220. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1989.

Katz, Shmuel. *Lone Wolf: A Biography of Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky*, Vol. 1. New York: Barricade Books, 1996.

Kauffman, Jesse Curtis. *Elusive Alliance: The German Occupation of Poland in World War I.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015.

Kauffman, Jesse Curtis. *Sovereignty and the Search for Order in German-occupied Poland, 1915–1918*. Ann Arbor: ProQuest, 2011.

Keating, Michael. *Nations against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia, and Scotland.* Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996.

Kedourie, Elie. *Nationalism*. 3rd ed. London: Hutchinson, 1966.

Keren, Michael, and Keren, Shlomit. *We are Coming Unafraid: The Jewish Legions and the Promised Land in the First World War*. Lanham: Rowan and Littfield, 2010.

Keßler, Mario. *Antisemitismus, Zionismus und Sozialismus: Arbeiterbewegung und jüdische Frage im 20. Jahrhundert*. Mainz: Decaton Verlag, 1993.

Keßler, Mario. *Zionismus und internationale Arbeiterbewegung 1897 bis 1933*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994.

Kieniewicz, Stefan. "Assimilated Jews in Nineteenth-Century Warsaw." In *The Jews in Warsaw: A History*. Edited by Władysław T. Bartoszewski and Antony Polonsky, 171–80. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991.

Kieval, Hillel J. "Imperial Embraces and Ethnic Challenges: The Politics of Jewish Identity in the Bohemian Lands." *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (2012): 1–17.

Kieval, Hillel J. *Languages of Community: The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Kieval, Hillel J. *The Making of Czech Jewry: National Conflict and Jewish Society in Bohemia, 1870–1918*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Kieval, Hillel J. "Nationalism and Antisemitism: the Czech-Jewish Response." In *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*. Edited by Jehuda Reinharz, 210–33. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1987.

Klier, John D. "Pale of Settlement." In *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Pale_of_Settlement (accessed 05.03.2019).

Klier, John D. *Russians, Jews, and the Pogroms of 1881–1882*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Klier, John D., and Lambroza, Shlomo, eds. *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Kohlbauer-Fritz, Gabriele. “Die jiddische Subkultur in Wien und die jüdische Arbeiterbewegung.” In *Judentum und Arbeiterbewegung: Das Ringen um Emanzipation in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Edited by Markus Börner, Anja Jungfer, and Jakob Stürmann, 51–62. Munich and Vienna: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018.

Kohlbauer-Fritz, Gabriele. “Yiddish as an Expression of Jewish Cultural Identity in Galicia and Vienna.” *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 171–6.

Kobrin, Rebecca. *Jewish Bialystok and Its Diaspora*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

Koeltzsch, Ines. “Antijüdische Straßengewalt und die semantische Konstruktion des ‘Anderen’ im Prag der Ersten Republik.” *Judaica Bohemiae*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (2011): 73–99.

Kopff-Muszyńska, Katarzyna. “’Ob Deutsch oder Polnisch’ przyczynek do badań nad asymilacja Żydów we Lwowie w latach 1840–1892.” In *Jews in Poland*, Vol. 1. Edited by Andrzej K. Paluch, 187–203. Cracow: Jagellonian University, 1992.

Koss, Andrew M. “From Theory to Practice: The Fight for Jewish Education in Vilna during the First World War.” *POLIN*, Vol. 30 (2018): 195–219.

Kraft, Claudia. “Das galizische Bürgertum in der autonomen Ära (1866–1914): Ein Literaturüberblick.” In *Polen und die böhmischen Länder im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. Edited by Peter Heumos, 82–110. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997.

Kressel, Getzel. “Haolam.” In *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., Vol. 8. Edited by Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 336. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007.

Krupp, Michael. *Die Geschichte des Zionismus 1882–1948*. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2001.

Kučera, Rudolf. *Rationed Life: Science, Everyday Life and Working-Class Politics in the Bohemian Lands, 1914–1918.* New York: Berghahn, 2016.

Kugelmass, Jack. *Jews, Sports, and the Rites of Citizenship*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007.

Kuhn, Rick. “Jewish Anti-Zionism in the Galician Socialist Movement.” In *Rebels against Zion: Studies on the Jewish Left Anti-Zionism*. Edited by August Grabski, 47–65. Warsaw: Jewish Historical Institute, 2001.

Kupfert Heller, Daniel. *Jabotinsky’s Children: Polish Jews and the Rise of Right-Wing Zionism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017.

Kupovetsky, Mark. “Population and Migration: Population and Migration before World War I.” In *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Population_and_Migration/Population_and_Migration_before_World_War_I (accessed 05.03.2019).

Kuzmany, Börries. *Brody: A Galician Border City in the Long Nineteenth Century*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017.

Kuzmany, Börries. “Habsburg Austria: Experiments in Non-Territorial Autonomy.” *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2016): 43–65.

Lamprecht, Gerald. “’Allein der Antisemitismus ist heute nicht mehr bloße Idee…’: Strategien gegen den Antisemitismus in Österreich.” In *Einspruch und Abwehr: Die Reaktionen des europäischen Judentums auf die Entstehung des Antisemitismus (1879–1914)*. Edited by Ulrich Wyrwa, 153–79. Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus Verlag, 2010.

Lappin, Eleonore. “Pädagoge, Psychoanalytiker, Psychologe und Marxist: Siegfried Bernfeld 1892–1953.” In *Jüdische Wohlfahrt im Spiegel von Biographien*. Edited by Sabine Hering and Sandra Schönauer, 84–101. Frankfurt am Main: Fachhochschulverlag, 2007.

Lappin, Eleonore. “Zwischen den Fronten: Das Wiener Jüdische Archiv. Mitteilungen des Komitees ‘Jüdisches Kriegsarchiv’, 1915–1918.” In *Identität, Nation, Sprache – Jüdische Geschichte und jüdisches Gedächtnis. Der Westen im Osten, der Osten im Westen – Konzepte jüdischer Kultur*. Edited by Elenonore Lappin and Michael Nagl, 229–46. Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2008.

Laqueur, Walter. *The History of Zionism*. 3rd ed. New York: I. B. Tauris, 2003.

Lauterpacht, Elihu. *The Life and Times of Sir Hersch Lauterpacht*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Lederhendler, Eli. “America.” In *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/America#id0emeag (accessed 05.03.2019).

Lehn, Walter. *The Jewish National Fund*. London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1988.

Lehmann, Matthias B. “’A new book in Jewish affairs begins’: Maurice de Hirsch and the waning power of Jewish philanthropy at the *Fin-de-Siècle*.” *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (2018): 472–86

Lehnstaedt, Stephan. “Imperiale Polenpolitik in den Weltkriegen: eine vergleichende Studie zu den Mittelmächten und zu NS-Deutschland.” *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (2012): 409–40.

Lein, Richard. “Der ‘Umsturz’ in Prag im Oktober 1918: Zwischen Mythen und Fakten.” In *Schlaglichter auf die Geschichte der böhmischen Länder vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*. Edited by David Schriffl and Niklas Perzi, 185–206. Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011.

Léon, Abraham. *Die jüdische Frage: Eine marxistische Darstellung*. Essen: Arbeiterpresse Verlag, 1995.

Levin, Dov. *The Litvaks: A short History of the Jews in Lithuania*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2001.

Levin, Vladimir. “The Jewish Socialist Parties in Russia in the Period of Reaction.” In *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia’s Jews*. Edited by Stefani Hoffman and Ezra Mendelsohn, 112–7. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

Levin, Vladimir. “Lithuanians in Jewish Politics of the Late Imperial Period.” In *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*. Edited by Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas, 77–118. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2012.

Lewin, Isaac. “The Political History of Polish Jewry, 1918–1919.” In *A History of Polish Jewry During the Revival of Poland*. Edited by Isaac Lewin, 9–205. New York: Shengold Publishers, 1990.

Lichtblau, Albert. “Ambivalent Modernity: The Jewish Population in Vienna.” *Quest: Issues in Contemporary Jewish History*, Vol. 2 (2011).

Lichtblau, Albert. “Antisemitismus, 1900–1938: Phasen, Wahrnehmungen und Akkulturationseffekte.” In *Wien und die jüdische Erfahrung, 1900–1938: Akkulturation–Antisemitismus–Zionismus*. Edited by Frank Stern and Barbara Eichinger, 39–58. Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau, 2008.

Lichtblau, Albert. “Integration, Vernichtungsversuch und Neubeginn – Österreichisch-jüdische Geschichte 1848 bis zur Gegenwart.” In *Geschichte der Juden in Österreich*. Edited by Eveline Brugger, Martha Keil, and Albert Lichtblau, 447–565. Vienna: Ueberreuter, 2013.

Lichtblau, Albert, and John, Michael. “Jewries in Galicia and Bukovina, in Lemberg and Czernowitz: Two Divergent Examples of Jewish Communities in the Far East of the Austro-
Lichtblau, Albert. “Zufluchtsort Wien: Jüdische Flüchtlinge aus Galizien und der Bukowina.” In *Weltuntergang: Jüdisches Leben und Sterben im Ersten Weltkrieg*. Edited by Markus G. Patka, 134–43. Vienna, Styria Premium, 2014.

Hungarian Monarchy.” In *Jews at the Frontier: Accomodation, Identity, Conflict*. Edited by Sander L. Gilman and Milton Shain, 29–66. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Lichtenstein, Tatjana. “’An Athlete Like a Soldier Must not Retreat’: Zionists, Sport, and Belonging in Interwar Czechoslovakia.” *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (2015): 1–26.

Lichtenstein, Tatjana. “Jewish Power and Powerlessness: Prague Zionists and the Paris Peace Conference.” *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (2014): 2–20.

Lichtenstein, Tatjana. “’Making’ Jews at Home: Zionism and the Construction of Jewish Nationality in Interwar Czechoslovakia.” *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2006): 49–71.

Lichtenstein, Tatjana. “Racializing Jewishness: Zionist Responses to National Indifference in Interwar Czechoslovakia.” *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 43 (2012): 75–97.

Lichtenstein, Tatjana. *Zionists in Interwar Czechoslovakia: Minority Nationalism and the Politics of Belonging*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016.

Liekis, Šarūnas. *A State within a State? Jewish Autonomy in Lithuania 1918–1925*. Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2003.

Lindström, Frederik, and Bihl, Wolfdieter. “Zu den österreichisch-ungarischen Kriegszielen 1914.” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, No. 16 (1968): 505–30.

Liulevicius, Vejas Gabriel. *The German Myth of the East: 1800 to the Present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Liulevicius, Vejas Gabriel. *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Loewenfeld-Rus, Hans. *Die Regelung der Volksernährung im Kriege*. Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1926.

Lohr, Eric. “1915 and the War Pogrom Paradigm in the Russian Empire.” In *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History*. Edited by Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan M. Meir, and Israel Bartal, 41–51. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011.

Lohr, Eric. *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: The Campaign against Enemy Aliens during World War I*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Lohr, Eric. “The Russian Army and the Jews: Mass Deportation, Hostages and Violence during World War I.” *The Russian Review*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (2001): 404–19

Luz, Ehud. *Parallels Meet: Religion and Nationalism in the Early Zionist Movement, 1882–1904*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1988.

Mache, Beata. “Jüdische Positionen in der wieder polnisch gewordenen Provinz Posen 1918–1923.” *Jahrbuch des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im Östlichen Europa*, Vol. 25 (2017): 141–58.

Maderthaner, Wolfgang. “Utopian Perspectives and Political Restraint: The Austrian Revolution in the Context of Central European Conflicts.” In *From Empire to Republic: Post World War I Austria*. Edited by Peter Berger, Günter Bischof, and Fritz Plasser, 52–66. Innsbruck: Innsbruck University Press, 2016.

Mahler, Rafał. *The Economic Background of Jewish Emigration from Galicia to the United States*. New York: YIVO Yiddish Scientific Institute, 1952.

Małecki, Jan. “Zamieszki w Krakowie w kwietniu 1918 r. Pogrom czy rozruchy głodowe?” In *Jews in Poland*, Vol. 1. Edited by Andrzej K. Paluch, 245–57. Cracow: Jagellonian University, 1992.

Mandel, Maud. “Assimilation and Cultural Exchange in Modern Jewish History.” In *Rethinking European Jewish History*. Edited by Jeremy Cohen and Moshe Rosman, 72–92. Oxford and Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2009.

Manekin, Rachel. “Hasidism and the Habsburg Empire, 1788–1867.” *Jewish History*, Vol. 27, No. 2–4 (2013): 271–97.

Manekin, Rachel. “Politics, Religion, and National Identity: The Galician Jewish Vote in the 1873 Parliamentary Elections.” *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999): 100–19.

Manela, Erez. *The Wilsonian Moment Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Marcus, Joseph. *Social and Political History of the Jews in Poland, 1919–1939.* Berlin, New York, and Amsterdam: Mouton Publishers, 1983.

Markowski, Artur. “Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Kingdom of Poland.” *POLIN*, Vol. 27 (2015): 219–55.

Marzec, Wiktor. “Under one common Banner: Antisemitism and Socialist Strategy during the 1905–07 Revolution in the Kingdom of Poland.” *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. 51, No. 3/4 (2017): 269–91.

McCagg, William O. *A History of Habsburg Jews, 1670–1918*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.

Meier-Cronemeyer, Hermann. *Zionismus: Von den Anfängen bis zum Staat Israel*. 2nd ed. Frankfurt am Main: Haag und Herchen, 1989.

Mendelsohn, Ezra. *Class Struggle in the Pale: The Formative Years of the Jewish Workers' Movement in Tsarist Russia*. London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Mendelsohn, Ezra. “From Assimilation to Zionism in Lvov: The Case of Alfred Nossig.” *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 49, No. 117 (1971): 521–34.

Mendelsohn, Ezra. *On Modern Jewish Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Mendelsohn, Ezra. “The Jewish Socialist Movement and the Second International, 1889–1914: The Struggle for Recognition.” *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (1964): 131–45.

Mendelsohn, Ezra. *The Jews of East Central Europe between the World Wars*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983.

Mendelsohn, Ezra. *Zionism in Poland: The Formative Years, 1915–1926*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981.

Mendelsohn, Ezra. *Zionism in the Jewish Community of Poland during the Twenties*. Tel Aviv: Tamah, 1982.

Mendelsohn, Ezra. "Zionist Success and Zionist Failure: The Case of East Central Europe between the Wars." In *Essential Papers on Zionism*. Edited by Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira, 171–90. New York and London: New York University Press, 1996.

Mentzel, Walter. "Kriegserfahrungen von Flüchtlingen aus dem Nordosten der Monarchie während des Ersten Weltkriegs." In *Jenseits des Schützengrabens. Der Erste Weltkrieg im Osten: Erfahrungen–Wahrnehmungen–Kontext*. Edited by Bernhard Bachinger and Wolfram Dornik, 359–90. Innsbruck, Vienna, and Bozen: Studienverlag, 2013.

Meyer, Michael A. "Liberal Judaism and Zionism in Germany." In *Zionism and Religion*. Edited by Shmuel Almog, Jehuda Reinharz, and Anita Shapira, 93–106. Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1998.

Mick, Christoph. *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914–1941: Violence and Ethnicity in a Contested City*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2016.

Mickutė, Jolanta. "Making of the Zionist Woman: Zionist Discourse on the Jewish Woman's Body and Selfhood in Interwar Poland." *East European Politics and Cultures*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2014): 137–62.

Mikietynski, Piotr. *Niemiecka droga ku Mitteleuropie. Polityka II Rzeszy wobec Królestwa Polskiego, 1914–1916*. Cracow: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze Historia Iagellonica, 2009.

Minczeles, Henri. *Vilna, Wilno, Vilnius: Le Jérusalem de Lithuanie*. Paris: Éditions la Découverte, 2000.

Mintz, Matityahu. "Ber Borokhov." In *Essential Papers on Jews and the Left*. Edited by Ezra Mendelsohn, 122–44. New York and London: New York University Press, 1997.

Mintz, Matityahu. "Kiev Zionists and the Ukrainian National Movement." In *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective*. Edited by Howard Aster and Peter J. Potichnyj, 247–61. Edmonton: Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies Press University of Alberta, 1988.

Mintz, Matityahu. "The Secretariat of Internationality Affairs (Sekretariiat mizhnatsional'nykh sprav) of the Ukrainian General Secretariat (1917–1918)." *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1982): 25–42.

Mintz, Matityahu. "Work for the Land of Israel and 'Work in the Present': A Concept of Unity, a Reality of Contradiction." In *Essential Papers on Zionism*. Edited by Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira, 161–70. New York and London: New York University Press, 1996.

Mintz, Matityahu. "The Zionist Movement and the Brest-Litovsk Negotiations in January 1918." *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (1980): 31–61.

Mitchell, Robert E. *Human Geographies Within the Pale of Settlement: Order and Disorder during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

Morelon, Claire. "L'arrivée des réfugiés Galicie en Bohême pendant la Première Guerre Mondiale: Rencontre problématiques et limites du patriotism autrichien." *Histoire@Politique*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2016): 5–18.

Moritz, Verena. "Teil 1: Staatsgeschäfte." In *Kommunismus in Österreich 1918–1938*. Edited by Barry McLoughlin, Hannes Leidinger, and Verena Moritz, 23–81. Innsbruck, Vienna, and Bozen: Studienverlag, 2009.

Moss, Kenneth B. *Jewish Renaissance in the Russian Revolution*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Motta, Giuseppe. *The Great War against Eastern European Jewry, 1914–1920*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017.

Motylewicz, Jerzy. "Ethnic Communities in the Towns of the Polish-Ukrainian Borderland in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries." In *Galicia: A Multicultured Land*. Edited by Chris Hann and Paul Robert Magosci, 36–51. Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2005.

Muller, Jerry Z. *Capitalism and the Jews*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

Nalewajko-Kulikov, Joanna. "*Die jiddische Schule der Erwachsenen*: Warsaw Yiddish Press and German-Jewish Contacts in 1915–18." *Acta Poloniae Historiae*, No. 113 (2016): 89–111.

Nalewajko-Kulikov, Joanna. "'Who Has Not Wanted to Be an Editor?' The Yiddish Press in the Kingdom of Poland, 1905–1914." *POLIN*, Vol. 27 (2015): 273–304

Naor, Arye. "Jabotinsky's New Jew: Concept and Models." *Journal of Israeli History*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2011): 141–59.

Natkovich, Svetlana. "The Rise and Downfall of Cassandra: World War I and Wladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky's Self-Perception." *Medaon: Magazin für jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung*, No. 10 (2016): 1–11.

Neumann, Boaz. *Land and Desire in Early Zionism*. Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2011.

Nolte, Claire Elaine. *The Sokol in the Czech Lands to 1914: Training for the Nation*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.

Nordheimer Nur, Ofer. *Eros and Tragedy: Jewish Male Fantasies and the Masculine Revolution of Zionism*. Brighton: Academic Studies Press, 2014.

Norrell, Tracey Hayes, *For the Honor of Our Fatherland: German Jews on the Eastern Front during the Great War*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017.

Olson, Jess. *Nathan Birnbaum and Jewish Modernity: Architect of Zionism, Yiddishism, and Orthodoxy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013.

Pacholikov, Svyatoslav. "Zwischen Einbeziehung und Ausgrenzung. Die Juden in Lemberg, 1918–1919." In *Vertraut und fremd zugleich: Jüdisch-christliche Nachbarschaften in Warschau-Lengenau-Lemberg*. Edited by Alexandra Binnenkade, Ekaterina Emeliantseva, and Svjatoslav Pacholkiv, 155–216. Cologne: Böhlau, 2009.

Pajakowski, Philip. "Dynamics of Galician Polish Conservativism in the late Nineteenth Century." *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (1995): 19–33.

Panter, Sarah. *Jüdische Erfahrungen und Loyalitätskonflikte im Ersten Weltkrieg*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014.

Patay, Raphael. *The Jews of Hungary: History, Culture, Psychology*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996.

Paucker, Arnold. "The Jewish Defense against Antisemitism in Germany, 1893–1933." In *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*. Edited by Jehuda Reinharz, 104–32. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1987.

Paucker, Arnold. “Zur Problematik einer jüdischen Abwehrstrategie in der deutschen Gesellschaft.” In *Juden im Wilhelminischen Deutschland. 1890–1914*. 2nd ed. Edited by Werner E. Mosse, 479–548. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998.

Pauley, Bruce. *Eine Geschichte des österreichischen Antisemitismus: von der Ausgrenzung zur Auslöschung*. Vienna: Kremayr & Scheriau, 1993.

Pawlak, Grażyna, Grinberg, Daniel, and Sadowski, Maciej. *Bądź silny i odważny: Żydzi-sport-Warszawa/Be strong and brave: Jews-sport-Warsaw*. Warsaw: Fundacja im. Profesora Mojżesza Schorra, 2013.

Peled, Yoav. *Class and Ethnicity in the Pale: The Political Economy of Jewish Workers’ Nationalism in Late Imperial Russia*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989.

Penslar, Derek J. *Jews and the Military. A History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.

Penslar, Derek J. *Shylock’s Children: Economics and Jewish Identity in Modern Europe*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

Petrovsky-Shtern, Yohanan. *The Golden Age Shtetl: A New History of Jewish Life in East Europe*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014.

Picht, Clemens. “Zwischen Vaterland und Volk: Das deutsche Judentum im Ersten Weltkrieg.” In *Der Erste Weltkrieg, Wirkung, Wahrnehmung und Analyse*. Edited by Wolfgang Michalka, 736–55. Munich: Piper, 1994.

Pickhan, Gertrud. *“Gegen den Strom” Der Allgemeine Jüdische Arbeiterbund “Bund” in Polen 1918–1939*. Munich and Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2001.

Polonsky, Antony, “The German Occupation of Poland during the First and Second World War.” In *Armies of Occupation*. Edited by Roy A. Prete and A. Hamish Ion, 97–142. Waterloo: Wilfried Laurier University Press, 1984.

Polonsky, Antony. *The Jews in Poland and Russia.* Vol. I: *1350 to 1881*. Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010.

Polonsky, Antony. *The Jews in Poland and Russia.* Vol. II: *1881 to 1914*. Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010.

Polonsky, Antony. “The New Jewish Politics and Its Discontents.” In *The Emergence of Modern Jewish Politics: Bundism and Zionism in Eastern Europe*. Edited by Zvi Gitelman, 35–53. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003.

Poppel, Stephen M. *Zionism in Germany, 1897–1933: The Shaping of Jewish Identity*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976.

Porter, Brian. “Antisemitism and the Search for a Catholic Identity.” In *Antisemitism and its Opponents in Modern Poland*. Edited by Robert Blobaum, 103–23. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Porter, Brian. *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in 19th Century Poland*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Prusin, Alexander Victor. *Nationalizing a Borderland: War, Ethnicity, and Anti-Jewish Violence in East Galicia, 1914–1920*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005.

Pulzer, Peter. “The First World War.” In *German-Jewish History in Modern Times,* Vol. 3: *Integration and Dispute, 1871–1918*. Edited by Steven M. Lowenstein, Paul Mendes-Flohr, Peter Pulzer, and Monika Richarz, 360–84. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

Pulzer, Peter. *The Jews and the German State: The Political History of a Minority, 1848–1933*. Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992.

Pulzer, Peter "Lueger's Heritage: Anti-Semitism in Austrian Party Politics." In *Hostages of Modernization: Studies in Modern Antisemitism 1870–1933/39,* Vol. 2: *Austria–Hungary–Poland–Russia*. Edited by Herbert A. Strauss and Werner Bergmann, 700–19. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1993.

Rabinovitch, Simon. *Jewish Rights, National Rites: Nationalism and Autonomy in Late Imperial Russia.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014.

Rachel, Elior. *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism*. Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2006.

Rainbach, Anton G. "The Migration of Galician Jews to Vienna, 1857–1880." *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 11 (1975): 43–54.

Ram, Uri. *Israeli Nationalism: Social conflicts and the politics of knowledge*. Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2011.

Rechter, David. "Autonomy and its Discontents: The Austrian Jewish Congress Movement, 1917–1918." *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, Vol. 12 (1997): 161–84.

Rechter, David. *Becoming Habsburg: The Jews of Bukovina, 1774–1918*. Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2013.

Rechter, David. "Geography is Destiny." *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (2008): 325–37.

Rechter, David. "Die große Katastrophe: die österreichischen Juden und der Krieg." In *Weltuntergang: Jüdisches Leben und Sterben im Ersten Weltkrieg*. Edited by Marcus G. Patka, 12–25. Vienna: Styria Premium, 2014.

Rechter, David. *The Jews of Vienna and the First World War*. Oxford and Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2008.

Rechter, David. "Nationalism at the Edge: The *Jüdische Volksrat* of Habsburg Bukovina." *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden*, Vol. 18/19 (2008/2009): 59–89.

Regan, Bernard. *The Balfour Declaration: Empire, the Mandate and Resistance in Palestine*. London and New York: Verso 2017.

Reifowitz, Ian. *Imagining an Austrian Nation: Joseph Samuel Bloch and the Search for a Supraethnic Austrian Identity, 1846–1918*. Boulder: East European Monographs/Columbia University Press, 2003.

Reinharz, Jehuda. "The Conflict Between Zionism and Traditionalism Before World War I." *Jewish History*, Vol, 7, No. 2 (1993): 59–78.

Reinharz, Jehuda. "Ideology and Structure in German Zionism, 1882–1933." in *Essential Papers on Zionism*. Edited by Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira, 268–97. New York and London: New York University Press, 1996.

Renton, James. "Flawed Foundations: The Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate." In *Britain, Palestine and Empire: The Mandate Years*. Edited by Rory Miller, 15–37. London and New York: Routledge, 2010.

Renton, James. *The Zionist Masquerade: The Birth of the Anglo-Zionist Alliance 1914–1918*. Houndsmills: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007.

Rhett, Maryanne A. *The Global History of the Balfour Declaration: Declared Nation*. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Richards, Thomas. *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Phantasy of Empire*. London: Verso, 1993.

Richter, Klaus. "'Go with the hare's ticket' mobility and territorial policies in Ober Ost (1915–1918)." *First World War Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2015): 151–70.

Ritschl, Albrecht. "The pity of peace: Germany's economy at war, 1914–1918 and beyond." In *The Economics of World War I*. Edited by Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison, 41–76. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Robinson Divine, Donna. *Exiled in the Homeland: Zionism and the Return to Mandate Palestine*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009.

Robinson Divine, Donna. "Zionism and the Transformation of Jewish Society." *Modern Judaism*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (2000): 257–76.

Rose, Alison. *Jewish Women in Fin de Siècle Vienna*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Rosenberg, William G. "Reading Soldiers' Moods: Russian Military Censorship and the Configuration of Feeling in World War I." *American Historical Review*, Vol. 119, No. 3 (2014): 714–40.

Rosenblueth, Pinchas Erich. *Martin Buber: Sein Denken und Wirken*. Hannover: Sponholtz, 1968.

Rosenfeld, Moritz. *H. P. Chajes' Leben und Werk*. Vienna: Self-Published, 1933.

Rosenthal, Jacob. *"Die Ehre des jüdischen Soldaten": Die Judenzählung im Ersten Weltkrieg und ihre Folgen*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2007.

Różański, Przemysław. "Wilno, 19–21 kwietnia 1919 roku." *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, No. 1 (2006): 13–34.

Rozenblit, Marsha L. "Jewish Ethnicity in a New Nation State: The Crisis of Identity in the Austrian Republic." In *In Search for Jewish Identity: Jewish Identities in Germany and Austria, 1918–1933*. Edited by Michael Brenner and Derek J. Penslar, 134–53. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998.

Rozenblit, Marsha L. "Jewish Immigrants in Vienna before the First World War." *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (2007): 35–53.

Rozenblit, Marsha L. "Jews, German Culture, and the Dilemma of National Identity: The Case of Moravia, 1848–1938." *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2013): 77–120

Rozenblit, Marsha L. "The Jews of Germany and Austria: A Comparative Perspective." In *Austrians and Jews in the Twentieth Century: From Franz Joseph to Waldheim*. Edited by Robert Wistrich, 1–18. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

Rozenblit, Marsha L. *The Jews of Vienna, 1867–1914: Assimilation and Identity*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983.

Rozenblit, Marsha L. "A Note on Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna." *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1983): 143–52.

Rozenblit, Marsha L. *Reconstructing a National Identity: The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Rumpler, Helmut. "Die Sixtusaktion und das Völkermanifest Kaiser Karls. Zur Strukturkrise des Habsburgerreiches 1917/18." In *Versailles–St. Germain–Trianon. Umbruch in Europa*

vor fünfzig Jahren. Edited by Karl Bosl, 111–25. Munich and Vienna: Verlag Oldenbourg, 1971.

Rusel, Jane. *Hermann Struck (1876–1944). Das Leben und das graphische Werken eines jüdischen Künstlers*. Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, New York, Paris, and Vienna: Peter Lang, 1997.

Rybak, Jan. "Marxismus, jüdischer Nationalismus und Zionismus. Historische Analyse eines angespannten Verhältnisses." C*hilufim: Zeitschrift für jüdische Kulturgeschichte*, No. 20 (2016): 3–32.

Rydell, Anders. *The Book Thieves: The Nazi Looting of Europe's Libraries and the Race to Return a Literary Inheritance*. New York: Viking, 2015.

Sachar, Howard M. *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to Our Time*. 3rd ed. New York: Albert Knopf, 2007.

Salomon, Yosef. "Zionism and Anti-Zionism in Traditional Judaism in Eastern Europe." In *Zionism and Religion*. Edited by Shmuel Almog, Jehuda Reinharz, and Anita Shapira, 25–43. Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1998.

Samid, Yaacov. *The Immortal Spirit: The Bialystok Hebrew Gymnasium Poland, 1919–1939*. Haifa: Traffic Publications, 1995.

Schatz, Jaff. *The Generation: The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Communists of Poland*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Oxford: University of California Press, 1991.

Schechtman, Joseph B. *Rebel and Statesman: The Vladimir Jabotinsky Story. The Early Years*. New York: American Book-Stratford Press, 1956.

Scheer, Tamara. "Österreich-Ungarns Besatzungsmacht in Russisch-Polen während des Ersten Weltkriegs (1915–1918)." *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung/Journal of East Central European Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 4 (2009): 538–71.

Scheer, Tamara. *Zwischen Front und Heimat: Österreich-Ungarns Militärverwaltungen im Ersten Weltkrieg*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009.

Schoeps, Julius H. "Kriegsbegeisterung und Ernüchterung: Über das Selbstverständnis und die Befindlichkeiten deutscher Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg und danach." *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (2014): 76–89.

Schorsch, Ismar. *Jewish Reactions to German Anti-Semitism, 1870–1914*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1972.

Schreiner, Stefan. "'Instrumentalisierte Religion' – Juden in Wilna unter deutscher Besatzung während des Ersten Weltkriegs." *Medaon: Magazin für Jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung*, 10 (2016): 1–19.

Schuster, Frank M. "Between all Fronts: The Impact of World War I on Eastern-European Jewry." *Medaon: Magazin für jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung*, Vol. 10, No. 18 (2016), 1–12.

Schuster, Frank M. *Zwischen allen Fronten: Osteuropäische Juden während des Ersten Weltkriegs (1914–1919)*. Cologne: Böhlau, 2004.

Schwara, Desanka. *"Ojfn weg schtejt a bojm": Jüdische Kindheit und Jugend in Galizien, Kongreßpolen, Litauen und Rußland 1881–1939*. Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna: Böhlau, 1999.

Schweid, Eliezer. “The Rejection of the Diaspora in Zionist Thought: Two Approaches.” In *Essential Papers on Zionism*. Edited by Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira, 133–60. New York and London: New York University Press, 1996.

Seton-Watson, Hugh. *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*. London: Methuen, 1977.

Sha’ari, David. “The Jewish Community of Czernowitz under Habsburg and Romanian Rule.” *Shevut: Studies in Russian and East European Jewish History and Culture*, Vol. 6, No. 22 (1997): 150–83.

Shanes, Joshua. *Diaspora Nationalism and Jewish Identity in Habsburg Galicia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Shapira, Anita. *Ben-Gurion: Father of Modern Israel*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014.

Shapira, Anita. “Labor Zionism and the October Revolution.” *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (1989): 623–56.

Shelef, Nadav G. *Evolving Nationalism: Homeland, Identity, and Religion in Israel, 1925–2005*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2010.

Shemurek, Chone. “Aspects of the History of Warsaw as a Yiddish Literary Center.” *Studies from POLIN: From Shtetl to Socialism*. Edited by Antony Polonsky, 120–33. Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1993.

Shilony, Zvi. *Ideology and Settlement: The Jewish National Fund, 1897–1914*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1998.

Shimoni, Gideon. *The Zionist Ideology*. Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1995.

Shindler, Colin. *Israel and the European Left: Between Solidarity and Delegitimization*. New York: Continuum, 2012.

Shtakser, Inna. *The Making of Jewish Revolutionaries in the Pale of Settlement: Community and Identity during the Russian Revolution and its Immediate Aftermath, 1905–07*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014.

Shtakser, Inna. “Self-Defence as an Emotional Experience: The Anti-Jewish Pogroms of 1905–07 and Working-Class Jewish Militants.” *Revolutionary Russia*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2009): 153–79.

Shudairov, Vladimir N., and Norkina, Ekaterina S. “Law, Imperial Bureaucracy and Russian Jews outside the Pale of Settlement in 19 – Beginning of 20th Centuries.” *Bylye Gody*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (2015): 623–32.

Shumsky, Dimitry. “Brith Shalom’s uniqueness reconsidered: Hans Kohn and autonomist Zionism.” *Jewish History*, No. 25 (2011): 339–53.

Shumsky, Dimitry. *Zweisprachigkeit und binationale Idee: Der Prager Zionismus 1900–1930*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013.

Sieg, Ulrich. *Jüdische Intellektuelle im Ersten Weltkrieg: Kriegserfahrungen, weltanschauliche Debatten und kulturelle Neuentwürfe.* Berlin: DeGruyter, 2008.

Siegel, Björn. *Österreichisches Judentum zwischen Ost und West: Die Israelitische Allianz zu Wien 1897–1938*. Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus Verlag, 2008.

Silber, Marcos. “The development of a joint political program for the Jews of Poland during World War I – success and failure.” *Jewish History*, No. 19 (2005): 211–26.

Silber, Marcos. “Lithuania? But Which? The Changing Political Attitude of the Jewish Political Elite in East Central Europe toward Emerging Lithuania, 1915–1919.” In *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*. Edited by Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas, 137–49. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2011.

Silber, Marcos. *Le‘umiuyt Shonah Ezrahut Shavah: haMa’amets leHasagat Otonomyah liYehudeh Polin beMilhemet ha’olam haRishonah*. Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center at Tel Aviv University, 2014.

Silber, Marcos. “Poalei-Tsion beAustriah beMalamah haOlamah haRishonah ve haMaavak leUtunumih Le‘umiuyt shel Yehudi Galitsiah ve Polin.” *HaTsioniah*, No. 22 (2000): 99–128.

Silverman, Lisa. *Becoming Austrians: Jews and Culture between the World Wars*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Sirutavičius, Vladas, and Staliūnas, Darius, eds. *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2012.

Sked, Alan. *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815–1918*. London and New York: Longman, 1989.

Smith, Anthony D. *Theories of Nationalism*. 2nd ed. London: Duckworth, 1983.

Smith, John T. “Russian Military Censorship During the First World War.” *Revolutionary Russia*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2001): 71–95.

Smith, Leonhard, *Sovereignty at the Paris Peace Conference 1919*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Smith, Stephen. *Russia in Revolution: An Empire in Crisis, 1890–1928*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Snyder, Timothy. *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003.

Soxberger, Thomas. *Revolution am Donaukanal: Jiddische Kultur und Politik in Wien 1904 bis 1938*. Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2013.

Spät, Robert. *Die “Polnische Frage” in der öffentlichen Diskussion im Deutschen Reich, 1894–1918*. Marburg: Verlag Herder Institut, 2014.

Spät, Robert. “Für eine gemeinsame deutsch-polnische Zukunft? Hans Hartwig von Beseler als Generalgouverneur in Polen 1915–1918.” *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, No. 58 (2009): 469–500.

Sroka, Marek. “The Destruction of Jewish Libraries and Archives in Cracow during World War II.” *Libraries and Culture*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (2003): 147–65.

Staliūnas, Darius. “Collaboration of Lithuanians and Jews during the Elections to the First and Second Dumas.” In *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*. Edited by Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas, 45–75. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2012.

Staliūnas, Darius. *Enemies for a Day: Antisemitism and Anti-Jewish Violence in Lithuania under the Tsars*. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2015.

Staliūnas, Darius. “Lithuanian Antisemitism in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries.” *POLIN*, Vol. 25 (2013): 135–49.

Stauter-Halsted, Keely. *The Devil's Chain: Prostitution and Social Control in Partitioned Poland*. Itahaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015.

Stauter-Halsted, Keely. "Jews as Middlemen Minorities in Rural Poland: Understanding the Galician Pogroms of 1898." In *Antisemitism and its Opponents in Modern Poland*. Edited by Robert Blobaum, 39–59. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Stauter-Halsted, Keely. *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848–1914*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.

Steinlauf, Michael C. "Jewish Theatre in Poland." *POLIN*, Vol. 16 (2003): 72–83.

Stempin, Arkadiusz. "Generał-pułkownik Hans Hartwig von Beseler – generalny gubernator warszawski w latach 1915–1918." *Dzieje Najnowsze*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (2011): 21–34.

Sternhell, Zeev. *The Founding Myths of Israel: Nationalism, Socialism, and the Making of the Jewish State.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Stoppacher, Thomas. "A time of upheaval in an anti-Semitic environment – the Representation of the Jewish Population in Austria in the Parliamentary Debates from 1917–1919." *Jewish Culture & History*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (2016): 217–32.

Strauss, Herbert A., and Bergmann, Werner, eds. *Hostages of Modernization: Studies on Modern Antisemitism, 1870–1933/39*, Vol. 2: *Austria, Hungary, Poland, Russia*. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1993.

Strauss, Herbert A. "Austria – Vicissitudes of Anti-Modernism: Origins and Continuities of Populist Antisemitism." In *Hostages of Modernization: Studies in Modern Antisemitism 1870–1933/39,* Vol. 2: *Austria – Hungary – Poland – Russia*. Edited by Herbert A. Strauss and Werner Bergmann, 669–74. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1993.

Stražas, Aba. "Die Tätigkeit des Dezernats für Jüdische Angelegenheiten in der 'Deutschen Militärverwaltung Ober Ost'." In *Die baltischen Provinzen Russlands zwischen den Revolutionen von 1905 und 1917*. Edited by Andrievs Ezergailis and Gert von Pistohlkors, 315–29. Vienna and Cologne: Böhlau, 1982.

Strazhas, Abba. *Deutsche Ostpolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg. Der Fall Ober Ost 1915–1917*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1993.

Sujecki, Janusz. "The Relation of the Polish Socialist Party: Proletariat to the Bund and the Jewish Question, 1900–1906." *POLIN*, Vol. 9 (2008): 32–44.

Szajkowski, Zosa. "East European Jewish Workers in Germany during World War I." In *Salo Wittmayer Baron Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday*. Edited by Saul Lieberman and Arthur Hyman, 887–918. Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1974.

Szajkowski, Zosa. "The German Appeal to the Jews of Poland, August 1914." *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 59, No. 4 (1969): 311–20.

Szajkowski, Zosa. "Jewish Relief in Eastern Europe, 1914–1917." *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, No. 1 (1965): 24–56.

Szajkowski, Zosa. "The Komitee für den Osten and Zionism." *Herzl Year Book*, No. 7 (1971): 199–239.

Tessaris, Chiara. "The war relief work of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in Poland and Lithuania, 1915–18." *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2010): 127–44.

Thakur-Smolarek, Keya. *Der Erste Weltkrieg und die polnische Frage: Die Interpretationen des Kriegsgeschehens durch die zeitgenössischen polnischen Wortführer*. Berlin and Münster: Lit Verlag, 2014.

Ther, Philipp. "War versus Peace: Interethnic Relations in Lviv during the First Half of the Twentieth Century." In *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture.* Edited by John Czaplicka, 251–84. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.

Ticker, Jay. "Max I. Bodenheimer: Advocate of Pro-German Zionism at the Beginning of World War I." *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (1981): 11–30.

Tobias, Henry J. *The Jewish Bund in Russia: From Its Origins to 1905*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972.

Tomaszewski, Jerzy. "Lwów-Listopad 1918. Niezwykłe losy pewnego dokumentu." *Dzieje Najnowsze*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (1993): 164–73.

Tokarski, Sławomir. *Ethnic Conflict and Economic Development: Jews in Galician Agriculture 1868–1914*. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Trio, 2003.

Toury, Jacob. "Defense Activities of the Österreichisch-Israelitische Union before 1914." In *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*. Edited by Jehuda Reinharz, 167–92. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1987.

Traverso, Enzo. *The Marxists and the Jewish Question: The History of a Debate, 1843–1943.* Amherst: Humanity Books, 1994.

Trotzki, Leo. *Geschichte der russischen Revolution*. Berlin: S. Fischer Verlag, 1960.

Tsur, Jacob. *Zionismus: Geschichte einer Befreiungsbewegung*. Bonn, Hohwacht-Verlag, 1978.

Unger, Shabtai. *Po'ale-Tsiyon baKesarut haOstrit, 1904–1914*. Beersheba: Ben Gurion University of the Negev, 2001.

Unger, Shabtai. "Tnuet HaPoalim HaYehudit beGalitsia Erev Malhamat HaOlamHaRishonat – Kishalun magmut Halibud." *Gal-Ed*, Vol. 10 (1987), 121–46.

Unowsky, Daniel. "Peasant Mobilization and the 1898 anti-Jewish Riots in Western Galicia." *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2010): 412–35.

Unowsky, Daniel. *The Plunder: The 1898 anti-Jewish Violence in Habsburg Galicia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018.

Unowsky, Daniel. *Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848–1916*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2005.

Ury, Scott. *Barricades and Banners: The Revolution of 1905 and the Transformation of Warsaw Jewry*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012.

Ury, Scott. "The Generation of 1905 and the Politics of Despair: Alienation, Friendship, Community." In *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia's Jews*. Edited by Stefani Hoffman and Ezra Mendelsohn, 96–110. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

Ury, Scott. "Strange Bedfellows? Anti-Semitism, Zionism, and the Fate of 'the Jews'." *American Historical Review*, Vol. 123, No. 4 (2018), 1151–71.

Van der Linden, Marcel, and Mergner, Gottfried. "Kriegsbegeisterung und mentale Kriegsvorbereitung." In *Kriegsbegeisterung und mentale Kriegsvorbereitung. Interdisziplinäre Studien*. Edited by Marcel van der Linden and Gottfried Mergner, 9–23. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1991.

Verhey, Jeffrey. *The Spirit of 1914: Militarism, Myth, and Mobilisation in Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Vital, David. "Nationalism Political Action and the Hostile Environment." In *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*. Edited by Jehuda Reinharz, 234–52. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1987.

Vital, David. *The Origins of Zionism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Vital, David. *Zionism: The Crucial Phase*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987.

Vital, David. *Zionism: The Formative Years*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Vogt, Stefan. *Subalterne Positionierungen. Der deutsche Zionismus im Feld des Nationalismus in Deutschland 1890–1933*. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2016.

Vushko, Iryna. *The Politics of Cultural Retreat: Imperial Bureaucracy in Austrian Galicia, 1772–1867*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2015.

Wapiński, Roman. "The Endecja and the Jewish Question." *POLIN*, Vol. 12 (1999), 271–83.

Watts, Martin. *The Jewish Legion and the First World War.* Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Weeks, Theodore R. "Assimilation, Nationalism, Modernization, Antisemitism: Notes on Polish-Jewish Relations, 1855–1905," in *Antisemitism and Its Opponents in Modern Poland*. Edited by Robert Blobaum, 20–38. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Weeks, Theodore R. "Between Poland and Lithuania: Jews and the Vilnius Question, 1918–1925." In *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*. Edited by Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas, 210–9. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2011.

Weeks, Theodore R. *From Assimilation to Antisemitism: The "Jewish Question" in Poland, 1850–1914.* DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006.

Weeks, Theodore R. "Jews in the Kingdom of Poland, 1861–1914: Changes and Continuities." *POLIN*, Vol. 27 (2015): 305–20.

Wehrhahn, Torsten. *Die Westukrainische Volksrepublik. Zu den polnisch-ukrainischen Beziehungen und dem Problem der ukrainischen Staatlichkeit in den Jahren 1918 bis 1923*. Berlin: Weißensee, 2004.

Weiglová, Markéta. "Jews as a Barometer of the National Struggle in Bohemia and Moravia, 1890–1910." *Judaica Bohemiae*, No. 43 (2007): 93–120.

Wein, Martin J. "Zionism in Interwar Czechoslovakia: Palestino-Centrism and Landespolitik." *Judaica Bohemiae*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (2009): 5–47.

Weinberg, Robert. "Workers, Pogroms, and the 1905 Revolution in Odessa." *The Russian Review*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (1987): 53–75.

Weinryb, Bernard. "East European Immigration to the United States." *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (1955): 497–528.

Weinstock, Nathan. "La formation des organisations ouvrières juives de Galicie (1892–1911)." *Le Mouvement Social*, No. 127 (1984): 29–44.

Weiser, Keith. *Jewish people, Yiddish nation: Noah Prylucki and the Folkists in Poland*. Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2011.

Weiss, Yfaat. "'Wir Westjuden haben jüdisches Stammesbewußtsein, die Ostjuden jüdisches Volksbewußtsein': Der deutsch-jüdische Blick auf das polnische Judentum in den beiden

ersten Jahrzezhnten des 20. Jahrhunderts." *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, Vol. 37 (1997): 157–78.

Weltmann, Saadia E. "Germany, Turkey, and the Zionist Movement, 1914–1918." *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (1961): 246–69.

Wertheimer, Jack. *Unwelcome Strangers: East European Jews in Imperial Germany*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Westerhoff, Christian. "'A kind of Siberia': German labour and occupation policies in Poland and Lithuania during the First World War." *First World War Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2013): 51–63.

Westerhoff, Christian. *Zwangsarbeit im Ersten Weltkrieg. Deutsche Arbeitskräftepolitik im besetzten Polen und Litauen 1914–1918*. Munich, Vienna, and Zurich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012.

Wheatcroft, Geoffrey. *The Controversy of Zion or How Zionism tried to resolve the Jewish Question*. London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1996.

Whiteside, Andrew G. "Pan-Germanism: Anti-Semitism in Mass-Style Politics." In *Hostages of Modernization: Studies in Modern Antisemitism 1870–1933/39,* Vol. 2: *Austria–Hungary–Poland–Russia*. Edited by Herbert A. Strauss and Werner Bergmann, 689–99. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1993.

Wierzbieniec, Wacław. "The Process of Jewish Emancipation and Assimilation in the Multiethnic City of Lviv during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century." In *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture*. Edited by John Czaplicka, 223–50. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.

Wierzbiniec, Wacław. "Zajścia antyżydowskie w Przemyślu pod koniec 1918 r." In *Świat niepożegnany: Żydzi na dawnych ziemiach wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej w XVIII-XX wieku*. Edited by Krzystof Jasiewicz, 573–80. Warsaw: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, 2004.

Wimmer, Andreas. *Waves of War: Nationalism, State Formation and Ethnic Exclusion in the Modern World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Wistrich, Robert. "Anti-Zionism in the USSR: From Lenin to the Soviet Black Hundreds." In *The Left Against Zion: Communism, Israel, and the Middle East*. Edited by Robert Wistrich, 272–305. London and Totowa: Valentine and Mitchell, 1979.

Wistrich, Robert. *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph*. Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1989.

Wistrich, Robert. "Zionism and its Jewish 'Assimilationist' Critics (1897–1948)." *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1988): 59–111.

Wittmayer Baron, Salo. *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*. 3 Volumes, 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1960.

Wlaschek, Rudolf M. *Juden in Böhmen: Beiträge zur Geschichte des europäischen Judentums im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. 2nd ed. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997.

Wodziński, Marcin. *Hasidism and Politics in the Kingdom of Poland, 1815–1864*. Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2016.

Wodziński, Marcin. *Hasidism: Key Questions*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Wodziński, Marcin. *Historical Atlas of Hasidism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014.

Wortman, Richard. “Nicholas II and the Revolution.” In *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia’s Jews*. Edited by Stefani Hoffman and Ezra Mendelsohn, 31–45. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

Wróbel, Piotr. “Jewish Warsaw before the First World War.” In *The Jews in Warsaw: A History*. Edited by Władysław T. Bartoszewski and Antony Polonsky, 246–77. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991.

Wróbel, Piotr. “The Jews of Galicia under Austrian-Polish Rule, 1869–1918.” *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 25 (1994): 97–138.

Wrzosek, Mieczysław. *Polski czyn zbrojny podczas pierwszej wojny światowej, 1914–1918*. Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1990.

Yerushalmi, Yoseph Hayim *The Lisbon Massacre of 1506 and the Royal Image in the “Shebet Yehudah”*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Annual Supplements, 1976.

Yeykelis, Igor. “Odessa Maccabi 1917–1920: The Development of Sport and Physical Culture in Odessa’s Jewish Community.” *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (1998): 83–101.

Zahra, Tara. “’Every nation only cares for its own’: Empire, Nation, and Child Welfare in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1918.” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 111, No. 5 (2006): 1378–402.

Zahra, Tara. “Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis.” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 69, No. 1 (2010): 93–119.

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

Zahra, Tara. “Reclaiming Children for the Nation: Germanization, National Ascription, and Democracy in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1945.” *Central European History*, No. 37 (2004): 499–540.

Zalkin, Mordechai. “Lithuanian Jewry and the Lithuanian National Movement.” in *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the 20th Century*. Edited by Vladas Sirutavičius and Darius Staliūnas, 21–44. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2012.

Zalkin, Mordechai. *Modernizing Jewish Education in Nineteenth Century Eastern Europe: The School as the Shrine of Jewish Enlightenment*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016.

Zechlin, Egmont. *Die Deutsche Politik und die Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969.

Zerubavel, Ya’akov, ed. *Yidisher arbiter pinkes: Tsu der geshikhte fun der Po’alei-Tsiyon Bavegung,* Vol. 1. Warsaw: Nowa Kultura, 1927.

Zielecki, Alojzy. “Żydzi w polskim ruchu niepodległościowym w Galicji przed pierwszą wojną światową i w czasie jej trwania.” In *Żydzi w Małopolsce: studia z dziejów osadnictwa i życia społecznego*. Edited by Feliks Kiryk, 289–96. Przemyśl: Południowo-Wschodni Instytut Naukowy, 1991.

Zieliński, Konrad. “Jews, Poles, and the Legion.” In *Jew, Pole, Legionary 1914–1920*. Edited by Artur Tanikowski, 37–58. Warsaw: Museum of the History of Polish Jews, 2014.

Zieliński, Konrad. “Liberation or Occupation? Jews in the occupied territories of the Kingdom of Poland.” *Medaon: Magazin für jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung*, Vol. 10, No. 18 (2016): 1–13.

Zieliński, Konrad. *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie na ziemiach Królestwa Polskiego w czasie pierwszej wojny światowej*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2005.

Zieliński, Konrad. "Żydzi pod okupacją austro-węgierską w wyborach do samorządu miejskiego 1916 roku." *Kwartalnik Historyczny: Organ Towarzystwa Historycznego*, No. 1 (2002): 61–78.

Ziemann, Benjamin. *Front und Heimat: Ländliche Kriegserfahrungen im südlichen Bayern, 1914–1923*. Essen: Klartext, 1997.

Zimmermann, John. *"Von der Bluttat eines Unseligen": Das Attentat Friedrich Adlers und seine Rezeption in der sozialdemokratischen Presse*. Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2000.

Zimmerman, Joshua D. *Poles, Jews, and the Politics of Nationality: The Bund and the Polish Socialist Party in Late Tsarist Russia, 1892–1914*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004.

Zimmermann, Moshe. "Muscle Jews and Nervous Jews." In *Emancipation Through Muscles: Jews and Sports in Europe*. Edited by Michael Brenner and Gideon Reuveni, 13–26. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2008.

Zipperstein, Steven J. *Pogrom: Kishinev and the Tilt of History*. New York and London: Liveright, 2018.