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Becoming Hungarian: Jewish Culture in Budapest, 1867-1914

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Becoming Hungarian:
Jewish Culture in Budapest, 1867-1914

By

Daniel Viragh

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor John M. Efron, Chair
Professor John Connelly
Professor Ronald S. Hendel

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Abstract

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Doctor of Philosophy in History

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Professor John M. Efron, Chair

This dissertation examines the successful merging of two highly divergent and developed historical and linguistic traditions into an organic and varied cultural matrix, under the twin conditions of Empire and nationalism. Specifically, this project discusses the linguistic, cultural, communal and organizational attempts of Hungarian Jewish community leaders to synthesize the Hungarian nationalist narrative, and Jewish religious and cultural traditions, into a meaningful whole, at a time when the Kingdom of Hungary, as part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, experienced rapid industrial development, urbanization and population growth. It is in the Dualist Period (1867-1914) that the literary output and the community-building efforts of Jews living in Hungary reached the highly organized stage of development which warrant us ascribing to them a national signifier, distinguishing them from Jews living in other linguistic spheres. Thus it is in this period that we can begin to speak of “Hungarian Jews,” who came to identify nationally, culturally and linguistically with the Hungarian people and their language.

I use archival and print sources to argue that Jews in Hungary became Hungarian out of political necessity and in order to secure their economic well-being within the Kingdom of Hungary. As a result of this choice Jews participated greatly in the economic development and modernizing of the Kingdom during Dualism as financiers, bankers, investors, and the founders of factories. I treat the development of Hungarian-Jewish ideology in the first two chapters of my work, by examining the personal papers of Budapest Chief Rabbi Samuel Kohn, and by analyzing the prime Hungarian-language communal newspaper of the era, the Egyenlőség (lit. “Equality”). In chapters three and four, I focus on communal efforts to promulgate this ideology through textbooks for Jewish children, which ‘packaged’ the new ideology in terms easily remembered, and through scholarly publications, which sought to create a Wissenschaft des Judentums in the national language, in order to raise communal self-esteem. The first chapter relies heavily on archival sources, gleaned from the Hungarian Jewish Archives in Budapest. The second, third and fourth chapters rely on print primary sources obtained at the library of the Hungarian Rabbinical Seminary, the YIVO archives in New York, and at the Hungarian Jewish Archives.

By its subject matter, this dissertation is most closely related to those recent studies of modern Jewish societies which seek to account for how certain Jewish communities adapted their use of
language and culture to both conform to the norms of the majority, while also retaining a sense of distinctiveness. Thus, Hillel Kieval’s work on national conflict and Jewish society in Bohemia is a useful comparative starting point, as is Marsha Rozenblit’s treatment of the Jews of Vienna in the Dualist period, and David Sorkin’s study of German-Jewish subculture between 1780 and 1840. This study argues that similar processes as those described by Kieval, Rozenblit, and Sorkin were at work in Budapest. But the process there was conditioned by the unusual nature of language politics. Under conditions of Hungarian nationalism, the group tried its best to conform to ruling cultural norms, while preserving, modifying, and accommodating the various aspects of its Jewish cultural heritage to suit the needs of the time.

This work is dedicated to the memory of my mother,

Kathy Viragh

(Budapest, Hungary, 15 August 1951 –
Montreal, Canada, 2 April 2014).

May her memory be for a blessing.
## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

List of Tables

Introduction: Jewish Acculturation in Dualist Hungary

A/ Basic Indicators of Diversity Amongst Hungarian Jews
B/ Dissertation Argument and Chapter Outline
C/ Literature Review
D/ The European Sociopolitical Context of Jewish Emancipation and Acculturation (18th-19th Centuries)
E/ The Hungarian Sociocultural Context of Jewish Emancipation and Acculturation
F/ Argument Overview

Chapter One: Nationalism in the Synagogue

A/ Köhn’s Task
B/ Köhn’s Personal Notes on Hungarian Culture
C/ The Cultural Context of Köhn’s Interest
D/ Köhn’s Espousal of Hungarian Nationalism
E/ The Limits of Nationalism
F/ Conclusion

Chapter Two: Acculturation Through the Press

A/ Circumscription of Hungarianization
B/ Beginnings of Hungarianization
C/ What Hungarianization Meant
D/ The Role of the Egyenlőség in Promoting Hungarianization
E/ Effects of Hungarianization
F/ Conclusion: Assessment of Hungarianization

Chapter Three: Hungarian Ideologies for Jewish Children

A/ Two Early Versions of Hungarian Jewishness Presented to Jewish Children
B/ Three Later Reading Books for Jewish Children
C/ Function of the Reading Books
D/ Institutionalization of the Narrative: The National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute
E/ Institutionalization of the Narrative: The National Association of Israelite Teachers
F/ Conclusion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Four: Wissenschaft des Judentums, auf ungarisch</th>
<th>64</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A/ The Beginnings of the National Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B/ Ignáž Goldziher’s Threefold Dedication to Wissenschaft, Judaism and Nation</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C/ The Intellectual Environment at the National Rabbinical Seminary in its First Decades</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/ The Products of Wissenschaft des Judentums in Hungarian and The Magyar Zsidó Szemle</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E/ Ethnographic Scholarship in the Magyar Zsidó Szemle</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/ Conclusion: Rabbinical Students as Poets, Translators and Yiddishists</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion: The Problematics of Hungarian-Jewish Historiography</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References | 93 |

Bibliography | 132 |
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The other members of the team are also members of my family, to whom I owe an immense debt of gratitude. Their support, understanding, love and compassion are the prime reasons I felt the inner stamina to undertake a complex project such as this one. There is something about my parents George and Kathy having left Hungary in 1988 when my Esther, Suzy and I were three and five years old, respectively, that made us especially sensitive to the power and the need for stories about the old country. My mother -- may her memory be for a blessing -- planned our emigration from Hungary in stages. Aside from helping my grandmother Ági emigrate as well, my mother’s biggest achievement was the relocation of my father’s several thousand-volume library to Canada. Through these books we children received our portable heritage in Hungarian even though we were removed from most members of our extended family on a daily basis.

Some of my family members stayed in Budapest. The Hungarian comedian András Kern joked that people who did so, did so out of a desire for adventure. My aunt Klári and uncle Géza always cooked for me, listened to my archival journeys and were replete with suggestions during my three research trips to the ‘old country’. They were steadfast supporters of this project and they helped in every way possible. So was my mentor Marina Swoboda. Thank you as well to my aunts Christina and Edit; to my cousin Dóri; and to Brahms E. Silver and Vivianne M. Schinasi-Silver.

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List of Tables

Table I. Jewish Population of Hungary, 1735-1910. ix
Table II. Religious Affiliation of Jews in Hungary According to Select Indices, 1897. ix
Table III. Mother Tongues of Hungarian Jews, 1880-1910 (Percentages). x
Table IV. Percentage of Hungarian Jews in Budapest, 1869-1910. 1
Table V. Number of Jewish Elementary Schools in the Kingdom of Hungary. 51
Table VI. Hours of Weekly Instruction in Certain Subjects at the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute, 1860-1897. 54
Table VII. Mother Tongues of Students Attending the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute. 55
Table VIII. Books Authored By 22 Graduates of the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute (1862-1906). 56
Table IX. Denominational Schools Across Hungary in Dualism: Certain Indicators. 58
Table X. Membership in the National Association of Israelite Teachers. 59
Introduction

Jewish Acculturation in Dualist Hungary

The history of Jews in Hungary is a vast and generally unexplored territory in the English-speaking academic realm. The remoteness of the Hungarian language from its Indo-European neighbors is one reason behind this isolation but there are many more: the ethnic and linguistic diversity of Austria-Hungary and the concurrent diversity of the Jewish population of the land, led to the presence of a vast catalogue of conflicting and intersecting reactions to modernity that are comparable to Jewish reactions to modernity experienced elsewhere, but are nevertheless unique in their juxtaposition and persistence. Beyond the linguistic challenges inherent to learning (at the very least) German, Hungarian, Yiddish, and Hebrew a scholar interested in unraveling the historical experience of what became the second-largest Jewish population in Europe prior to the First World War (roughly 910,000 individuals) must also understand that more often than not, the Jewish communities of the Kingdom of Hungary were usually unique entities facing the problems of modernity in their own idiosyncratic manner depending on the language and religion of the surrounding local population; the economic avenues at their disposal; the geographic origin and religious inclinations of the Jewish community; and personal preferences and choices.

The questions that industrialization, economic development and modernity pose are generally similar across geographical contexts. These are questions of language, religious practice, cultural belonging, social advancement. The answers individuals and communities give to these questions vary according to local contexts. This diversity in Jewish answers to modernity from village to village, and town to town is what makes the study of the Jewish experience in the Kingdom of Hungary so fascinating and so rewarding. On the other hand, diversity also leads to a sense of frustration for no one paradigm, no one answer adequately captures the experience of the many. It might have been that a certain group of urban Jews in Budapest gave a certain set of answers to the questions of linguistic acculturation that they felt their environment required of them: but Jews in Pressburg or Máramarossziget behaved according to quite different paradigms, for different local reasons. This led to communal splits, misunderstandings and a general lack of unity amongst the Jewish populations of the land. One could argue that this lack of unity reflected an analogous lack of unity amongst the population of the Kingdom as a whole.

This dissertation describes one set of answers given by Jews in Budapest to the questions of ethnic and cultural belonging, linguistic acculturation, national loyalty, and modern Jewishness in the Dualist Period. Though their works might seem to indicate otherwise, it was by no means the only set of answers possible in the Dualist Period.

A/ Basic Indicators of Diversity Amongst Hungarian Jews

In the Dualist Period (1867-1914), the Kingdom of Hungary faced the perplexing questions of modernity, urbanization, secularization, and industrialization all at once. These problems were exacerbated by the national movements which (eventually) tore the Kingdom apart, during and after the First World War. Dualist Hungary was a society in transition in which many social spheres, languages, and modes of thinking coexisted and in which no one voice, no
one political agenda nor theory, could establish prevalence, both in Jewish and in non-Jewish circles. This lack of prevalence sharpened the intransigence with which parties to debate argued and determined to solve the political problems of the day. As a result of these tumultuous changes -- in which they themselves participated, as industrialists, bankers, workers, writers, tailors, shopmen, entertainers and so on -- Jews in Hungary in the later half of the nineteenth century differed in considerable ways from each other. Some were more religious than others; some lived in cities, others in small villages; some had come to Hungary from Galicia, and others from Poland and Russia, whilst some had lived in Hungary for at least one hundred years. Some Jews lived in Eastern Hungary, were disciples of mystical rabbis, spoke Yiddish and traded in Russian; other Jews spoke German and Hungarian, lived in Budapest, and contributed to the leading newspapers of the German-speaking world.

One can schematically represent the differences between Jews living in the Kingdom of Hungary in the Dualist Period as follows: they differed in language spoken (Hungarian, German, or Yiddish); religiosity (anywhere between traditional or completely secular); and living conditions (urban or rural) from each other. These categories, however, are merely simplifications of the level of the multitude of individual choices, which existed, on all of these levels, and more. At various points in one's life, one could choose to live a traditional Jewish life in rural Hungary; one could establish one's self in Budapest or Szeged, eventually learn German and Hungarian, and become more or less secular. One could attend one of the hundreds of yeshivot; one could read Jewish newspapers in German, Yiddish, or Hungarian.

There existed several hundred different, independent Jewish congregations (kehilot), which could choose to associate themselves with one of three quasi-nationally representative bodies, which described themselves as religiously progressive ('Neolog'), religiously conservative ('orthodox'), or 'status quo,' meaning that these communities had opted not to join either of the two previous organizations. Though it remained the dream of many, the goal of 'unifying' Hungarian Jewry was paralyzed on several different occasions by the vestedness of the political interests, and the shortsightedness of the Jewish communal leaders involved, each trying to push one's own political agenda. The three factions formally split as a result of a national congress of Jewish leaders, held in Budapest in 1867-1868. Despite the differences and intransigent communal divisions which existed between them, most Jews in Hungary in the Dualist period spoke Hungarian, German, Hebrew, and Yiddish, and had family members or relatives living traditional and less traditional lives, in rural and urban settings.

The Jewish population of Hungary increased as follows between 1735 and 1910:
Table I. Jewish Population of Hungary, 1735-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Jewish Population</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Population</th>
<th>Natural Increase</th>
<th>Migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1735</td>
<td>12,219</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785-7</td>
<td>80,775</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1805</td>
<td>126,620</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>340,000</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>542,279</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>624,826</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>-48,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>707,961</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>-42,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>831,162</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>-17,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>911,227</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>-428</td>
<td>-36,187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers show a clear increase in the early 19th century due to migration. Israeli historian Michael Silber has argued that many of the migrants were Moravian or Galician Jews who benefitted from the economic opportunities that Hungary provided. As Table I shows, despite the out-migration of Hungarian Jews between 1880 and 1910 (chiefly to America), the net number of Jews in Hungary increased until the turn of the twentieth century due to natural factors.

Table II, below, attempts to capture the diversity of Hungary’s Jewish congregations at the turn of the century based on certain indicators:

Table II. Religious Affiliation of Jews in Hungary According to Select Indices, 1897

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Orthodox (%)</th>
<th>Status Quo (%)</th>
<th>Neolog (%)</th>
<th>Total (Numbers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent Communities</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Communities</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>1,826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbis</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Judges (Dayanim)</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>1,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Born</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>7,158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys Born</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>8,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys Circumcised</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>8,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Marriages</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>4,286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We notice that the number of independent and dependent communities was highest amongst the Orthodox, who were present mainly in Hungary’s rural areas. Thus, the Orthodox also employed the highest number of rabbis and religious judges, who ensured conformity with religious law (Halakhah). Professor Silber has argued that “the aging composition of the Neolog and Status Quo is apparent from the ratio of marriages to births”. He has also characterized the religious differences between Jewish communities geographically:
The strength of the Neolog group lay in the south and the center of the country; the Orthodox were strongest on the northeast. Oberland [the part of the Kingdom that today forms Slovakia] was about half Orthodox and half the other two trends, while Transdanubia [the area of Hungary to the West of the Danube] was only about a quarter Orthodox. The strength of the Status Quo lay in Oberland (20 to 25%), Transdanubia (15%), and the Left Bank of the Tisza and Transylvania (13–20%).

**B/ Dissertation Argument and Chapter Outline**

Between the 1860s and the 1910s, the Jewish communities of the Kingdom of Hungary underwent a tremendous set of cultural changes. Some communities sought to replace the indigenous religious, Yiddish- or German-language culture of their ancestors, with a Hungarian-language culture, which they felt was their own. The participants in this process referred to it as ‘magyaro’ (or ‘magyarsit’). These Hungarian coinages can be translated as “becoming Hungarian,” or “Hungarianization,” or “becoming like the Hungarians”. The only slight difference between the two terms is one of activity versus passivity: magyaro implies a voluntary cultural process whilst magyarsit implies one that is forced onto someone.

Hungarianization occurred as both an individual and a communal process. At its most basic, individual level, Hungarianization meant learning the Hungarian language and using it on a day-to-day level, in one's personal life. At a more advanced stage, Hungarianization might mean changing one's German- or Yiddish-sounding name to (what was felt) was a more Hungarian-sounding one. At a still more refined stage, Hungarianization could mean learning the names of Hungarian writers; learning the cultural background to Hungarian nationalism, and indeed the literature and history of the Kingdom, and sharing in the historical vantage point of Hungarians, with respect to interacting in the world. And finally, at a fourth stage, it could mean consciously modifying elements of, and contributing to, one's the received Hungarian cultural sphere, to accommodate ideas, thoughts, feelings, religious motifs, and sketches from the 'shtetl' of the past, and speaking of these things as one thought "real" Hungarians would have spoken of them, had they had similar cultural needs. At an even more abstract stage, one could even forego speaking of Jewish themes, and simply be a Hungarian writer.

The net effect of Jews’ cultural attempt to learn Hungarian is shown by the relative rise in the number of Jews who declared Hungarian as their mother tongue on national censuses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hungarian</th>
<th>German</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However we should note that almost two-third of Jews in Hungary declared themselves bilingual and thus fluent in German and Hungarian in 1900 and 1910.
But Hungarianization was not restricted to the individual sphere. On a communal level, the process could mean changing the names of Jewish organizations to sound Hungarian (e.g., from "Chevrah Kadisha" to "szent egylet" (meaning holy society)); keeping Jewish associational and synagogue records in Hungarian; and insisting that rabbis in synagogues preach in Hungarian, when in the past they had delivered sermons in German, Yiddish, and Hebrew. At a more advanced communal level, Hungarianization might mean teaching Hungarian language in the chadarim (Jewish religious schools); translating stories and aphorisms from the Talmud into Hungarian; founding Hungarian-speaking, Jewish women's societies which raised money for worthy causes; giving scholarships to attend the national (i.e., Hungarian-language) rabbinical seminary in Budapest; or helping launch a Hungarian-Jewish newspaper, in which the steps towards achieving all of these goals were debated in the national language.

One thing on which a segment of Jews in Hungary could agree on, at least in theory, were the benefits of magyarosodás. Jewish communal leaders might have disagreed with one another on how to balance 'Hungarianization' with other cultural and linguistic loyalties; might have squabbled at keeping the religious precepts of the Shulchan Aruch; or complained that the so-called nationally representative organizations were not doing much for Jewry as a whole, and were not representative of rural Jewish communities. But by and large the impetus to ‘become Hungarian’ by (at the very least) learning the language was present in various forms across rural, urban, religious, secular and German- and Yiddish-speaking Jewish communities.

Indeed it is the primary argument of this dissertation that the belief in learning Hungarian and becoming Hungarian is the single principal unifying factor which eventually molded the Jews living in Hungary, into ‘Hungarian Jews,’ with certain specifically recognizable cultural traits. But this assertion requires a rather large caveat: ‘Hungarianization’ only truly became the defining ideology of Jews living in Hungary after the disappearance in the Shoah of Hungary’s rural Orthodox communities. After 1945, the Jewish population of Budapest (roughly 100,000) remained essentially the only Jewish community in the country and the largest in Eastern Europe. Its members were the intellectual descendants of the individuals described in these pages, whose intellectual opponents first found themselves in nation states outside of Hungary’s borders after 1918, and then generally murdered in the Holocaust.

In Hungarian, the word ‘magyarosodás’ implies a process of becoming, which is, by definition, never quite complete. It implies that one strives to completely associate one’s self with the Hungarian nation and people, at some date in the future; as well, the term implies that the process itself would never be complete, and that there would always be some more distant, more final goal towards which to strive. As a result of this felt incompleteness, those who subscribed to magyarosodás as an ideology – and thus those who, subsequently, became quintessential Hungarian Jews – always felt compelled to prove to themselves (and to those around them), that they were doing their utmost to become Hungarian, whether it was by changing their names, or lauding Hungarian national heroes, and so forth. Thus, proving to one’s self that one was Hungarianizing ostensibly became the basis for feeling like a Hungarian Jew.

The second aspect of the argument, which this dissertation makes, is that their fanatical emphasis on Hungarian nationalism led the adherents of magyarosodás to misconstrue, and to categorically reject those aspects of their cultural surroundings, which they felt the most to be
un-Magyar: the Yiddish and German languages, and political Zionism. The Hungarianizers felt that if the cultural import of these elements were acknowledged openly, the Hungarian polity, which had welcomed the Jews in Hungary into its fold, and had emancipated them, might revoke these legal privileges. As a result, the adherents of magyarosodás often openly rejected these other cultural spheres. On the other hand, the creators of Hungarian-Jewish identity could not realistically part with these other cultural spheres. They could not simply jettison their knowledge of German or of Yiddish; the sense of closeness they felt with the Holy Land; or their desire to understand more fully the textual roots of tradition. There thus arose a need to reincorporate these sources of the past into Hungarian. To develop, for example, a Hungarian-language prayer book; sermons and Bible translations in Hungarian; and a science of Judaism in Hungarian as well. These cultural innovations are the aspects of Hungarian-Jewish acculturation, which this dissertation describes, explains and elucidates.

The first chapter details a two-fold process of acculturation, within a single individual. I show how Pest Chief Rabbi Sámuel Kóhn (1841-1920) learned and read Hungarian literature, to then incorporate passages thereof in his Saturday morning sermons at the biggest synagogue in Budapest, the Dohány. This was a protracted cultural act on his part, meant to ensure that he was familiar with the cultural context of the upper and middle class and that he was able to speak in elevated terms about the Hungarian homeland. In Chapter Two, I continue the discussion through the work of another important framer of Hungarian-Jewish identity: Miksa Szabolcsi (1857-1915), the editor of Hungarian-Jewish weekly “Egyenlőség” (lit., “Equality,” published 1882-1938). Szabolcsi’s weekly was a vocal supporter and creator of the ideology of acculturation and helped develop the language through which Hungarian Jews could come to represent their own history in Hungary and their relationship to its people, culture and language.

The first two chapters deal primarily with two individuals, and their specific creation of the cultural contexts (the synagogal sermon and the newspaper article) which allowed for Jews in Hungary to develop their own way of being Hungarian, which included the cultural elements of Jewishness. Conversely, chapters three and four detail the environments in two cultural institutions, which again allowed for a feeling of affinity to develop by Jews for this “second Canaan”. In Chapter Three I examine the textbooks prepared by members of the National Association of Israelite Teachers, which were published in order to ensure that children attending communal Jewish schools in Hungary learned the Hungarian language and developed a clear sense of loyalty to the Jewish religion and to the Hungarian homeland, in equal parts. Finally, in Chapter Four, I detail the evolution of the academic study of Jewishness (Wissenschaft des Judentums) into Hungarian, through the clear and dedicated efforts of the orientalist Ignáž Goldziher (1850-1921) and his colleagues at the National Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest, an institution founded in 1877.

Much to their chagrin these creators of Hungarian-Jewish culture never truly became Hungarian. They became Hungarian Jews who created out of the Yiddish, Germanic, and Hungarian cultural aspects at their disposal a unique mixture of these three cultural spheres: which mixture their ideology had difficulty recognizing, but which is eventually what gave Hungarian Jewry its own unique national identity and character. In its earliest years – i.e., between the 1840s and the Ausgleich – Hungarianization had been a reactive political process, whereby Jewish communities in Hungary evaluated the cultural and linguistic demands of the
times, and made a pragmatic choice as to the political opportunities which were given to them, in the current set of political and cultural circumstances. On the other hand, once the assessment to become Hungarian had been made, the desire to create a viable, Hungarian-Jewish identity became the honest and truthful effort of all involved. As a result of the rapidity of Hungarianization, the first generation of Hungarian Jews, who grew up between the 1860s and the 1880s, freely drew on Talmudic references, Yiddish aphorisms and German literature, in order to make a point in conversation. Subsequent generations of Hungarian Jews retained the aphorisms and references, but not the original cultural spheres themselves. They inherited a generally Hungaro-centric Weltanschauung from the first generation, into which much non-Hungarian content had been infused, but which additions they did not usually recognize.

C/ Literature Review

By its subject matter, this dissertation is most closely related to those recent studies of modern Jewish societies which seek to account for how certain Jewish communities adapted their use of language and culture to both conform to the norms of the majority, while also retaining a sense of distinctiveness. Thus, Hillel Kieval's work on national conflict and Jewish society in Bohemia is a useful comparative starting point, as is Marsha Rozenblit's treatment of the Jews of Vienna in the Dualist period, and David Sorkin's study of German-Jewish subculture between 1780 and 1840.

Kieval has made the case that the response of Jews to Czech nationalism was bipolar: the Czech Jewish movement was fundamentally opposed to Prague Zionism, and each movement saw itself as the sole vehicle for Jewish integration into European modernity. Rozenblit has argued that Viennese Jewry was split between its desire to assimilate into modern Austrian society and its urge to maintain a separate Jewish presence within it: the community negotiated this tension by finding for itself niches in the professional and white collar domains of the city, by living close to each other, and maintaining an associational life separate from Gentiles. Finally, Sorkin has argued that though German-Jewish group ideology between 1780 and 1840 proclaimed that group members could and would become fully German upon legal emancipation, German Jews did not have an ideology with which to explain why legal emancipation was incomplete until 1870. Thus the group could not realize that the dream of emancipation in and of itself had become the basis for the group's own middle-class German-Jewish (i.e., not simply German) group identity and ideology.

This study argues that similar processes as those described by Kieval, Rozenblit, and Sorkin were at work in Budapest. But the process there was conditioned by the unusual nature of language politics. The crafters of modern, urban Hungarian-Jewish identity were very much aware of their humble origins; of the fact that their forebears had spoken Yiddish or German; and of the fact that such parliamentary events as the legal emancipation of the Jews in 1867, and the achievement of religious equality in 1895 did not magically transform Jews into anonymous members of the Hungarian nation. On the other hand, this study differs in a number of significant ways from previous scholarly works on Hungarian Jewish history. As of yet, no work has treated the Jewish response to Hungarian nationalism in such a comprehensive manner. Most other works in the minuscule subfield of Hungarian Jewish history are either analyses of the varying attitudes of Hungarian political leaders towards the so-called 'Jewish question'; chronicles of
antisemitic outbursts; large-scale surveys; biographies of intellectuals; or theoretical works. In addition, two publications have treated the relationship between Orthodox Jews and progressive religious reformers in the periods previous to 1867. However, no large-scale study has yet been devoted to the internal processes of cultural adaptation at work within the Budapest community in the Dualist Period.

This study differs from its predecessors in that it tries to engage the crafters of Hungarian Jewish identity dispassionately, in an attempt to understand their motives and to thus also dislodge the historically negative image of Hungarian Jews in the West. This negative image can be traced back precisely to the group’s ubiquitous, if not ostentatious, displays of Hungarian patriotism at the beginning of the century. By showing that such displays of patriotism were part and parcel of the unique cultural agreement that had enabled both political emancipation and religious equality, one can understand why Hungarian Jewish leaders rejected Zionism in the early 1900s – a common enough sentiment among world Jewry – and why most unusually, if not uniquely, they also refused the help of various international Jewish organizations in the early 1920s, when the latter would have liked to fight Hungary's recently-enacted, discriminatory numerus clausus law.

D/ The European Sociopolitical Context of Jewish Emancipation and Acculturation (18th-19th Centuries)

The basic vocabulary of Jewish acculturation and emancipation in Hungary can be seen as part and parcel of other European facets of the same discussion. That discussion tied the legal, and political emancipation of Jews as citizens of the countries they inhabited to the acculturation and sociolinguistic integration of Jews into the national fold, combined with the renunciation of any claims to a separate existence as a nationality. Depending on where one lived, the majority opinion in the social discussion between the local political class and Jewish representatives determined whether emancipation would precede or follow acculturation.

In France, for example, during the debate in the French National Assembly on the eligibility of Jews for citizenship on 23 December 1789 Monsieur the Count of Clermont-Tonnerre had famously thundered that “the Jews should be denied everything as a nation, but granted everything as individuals”. The French National Assembly emancipated all of the Jews of France between 1790 and 1791: thus in France, emancipation preceded acculturation. The American scholars Jay R. Berkovitz and David H. Weinberg have addressed in detail both the changes and the consequences of the process through which Jews in France came to subscribe to a narrow, religion-based definition of Jewish identity in the nineteenth century, as an effect of emancipation by the French Revolution.

Conversely in Germany the majority social opinion held that acculturation should precede emancipation. David Sorkin traced this particular framing of the question in the German lands to Christian Wilhelm von Dohm’s (1751-1820) treatise On the Civic Improvement of the Jews (1781), and to Dohm’s attribution of the “degraded” nature of Jewry to the “moral deficiencies of their political condition”. As is well known, Dohm’s text contained legal, economic and educational recommendations for the betterment of the Jews’ condition. Dohm’s
framing of emancipation as a quid-pro-quo characterized the long, drawn out process of Jewish emancipation and acculturation in Germany.

The political events leading to Jewish emancipation in Hungary were more analogous to the stop-and-go process experienced by German Jews than to the immediate emancipation from which French Jews benefitted. Jews in Hungary first received religious freedom via the Toleranz Patent Joseph II issued in 1783. As the American-Israeli historian Raphael Patai recounts in his history of the Jews of Hungary, the patent ended all special regulations relative to Jews, who were henceforth allowed to “rent lands, [...] engage in crafts and commerce” in most of the cities of the Austrian Empire; it forced them to use German, Hungarian, or Latin in official correspondence; it specified that Jews were to adopt German family names, establish modern communal schools for their children, and refrain from “wearing beards and all external signs of their religion”. After the Emperor’s death, the Hungarian Diet of 1790 legislated that most of the provisions enacted by the Toleranz Patent would retain legality within the Kingdom of Hungary. The Hungarian Diet next considered the full legal emancipation of the Jews at its 1839-40 sitting. That Diet passed a law which, though stopping short of full emancipation, nevertheless granted Jews some important rights. According to Patai:

This law granted Jews who were either born in Hungary or had obtained legal residence, permission to live freely in the country and the attached lands, with the exception of the mining towns, to practice manufacture with the help of Jewish journeymen, and to establish factories. The law also obliged the Jews to use permanent first and family names, to register all births in registers to be kept by the clerics of their religion, and to use in their documents and contracts the living languages current in the fatherland and the attached parts. It also confirmed their right to acquire “civil plots of land” in cities in which they enjoyed this right at present.

The revolutionary government of Lajos Kossuth emancipated the Jews in August 1849 in the dying days of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848-49. This was meant as a way of thanking Jews for their financial and physical involvement on the Hungarian side. That law remained a dead letter following the crushing of the revolution by Austrian and Russian forces in the same month. Finally, the Hungarian parliament awarded full legal and political emancipation to the “Israelite inhabitants of the country,” on 25 November 1867, five months after the proclamation of the Dual Monarchy (8 June 1867). As a final act of equalization mixed marriages between members of the Jewish religion and other Christian denominations were allowed by a parliamentary act in 1895. This act put the Jewish religion on equal footing with the other Christian denominations.

The formative period, in which the elements of the social discussion surrounding Jewish emancipation and acculturation in Hungary were crystallized, occurred in the short period between the 1839-40 Hungarian Diet, and the 1848-9 Hungarian Revolution. Much of the debate took place at the Diet; some politicians (most notably, Lajos Kossuth), treated the topic in the political newspapers of the time. In his recent work A Zsidókérdés Magyarországon [The Jewish Question in Hungary], the Hungarian scholar János Gyurgyák characterized this formative phase of the discussion as one between three parties:
(a) those who optimistically endorsed emancipation on humanitarian grounds, with a view that acculturation would inevitably follow;
(b) those who endorsed emancipation with caution, and sought to tie it to specific acculturative requirements, for the protection of the Hungarian nation;
(c) those who negated emancipation outright, primarily due to undesired economic competition by Jews.

According to Gyurgyák, though the opinion of the parliamentarians of 1839-40 was split on the question, most members of the lower nobility optimistically endorsed emancipation; most representatives of the higher nobility (i.e., of the aristocracy) favored gradualism; and most representatives of the cities were against emancipation outright.31

The political push-and-pull between the three parties eventually resulted in the tortuous route to the full emancipation of the Jews in 1867. However, the basic social equation of Jewish acculturation and integration within the Hungarian nation in exchange for political rights crystallized itself in May 1844 when Hungarian revolutionary leader Lajos Kossuth (1802-1894) stated his views on the subject in comments to an article on the front page of his newspaper, the Pest Hírlap [Pest Newspaper]. Kossuth argued that one could not deprive someone of rights because they praised God in a different temple. He continued by saying that there were political and social aspects to emancipation, and that only the political aspect of emancipation depended on the ruler. The purpose of political emancipation was to remove the natural boundaries, which prevented social fusion. Political emancipation did not in and of itself solve the question of assimilation.32

Gyurgyák remarks that it is unclear what Kossuth meant by “social fusion”.33 I think it is fair to equate to the terms with complete integration into the Hungarian nation and complete disappearance of any shade of difference between Jews and the Hungarian population amongst which they lived. Kossuth closed his comments by arguing that “Moses’s religion” was not only a religion, but a “political organism” [politikai organizmus], a constitution, and a theocratic system of government. Kossuth could not answer the question of whether the Jews were a nation or not: he would let the Jews declare loyalty to the Hungarian nation, and reform their religion in order to purify it of those elements, which made Jews a separate group amongst the people.34

Due to his prestige as a national leader, Kossuth’s views formed the basis for the discussion of the relationship between emancipation and Jewish acculturation even after the failed revolution of 1849. It seems worthwhile to point out that Kossuth’s view rested on two implicit, contradictory assumptions:

(a) that there was a manner in which to reform the Jewish religion by eliminating the syncretic elements that had fused religious belief and belief in peoplehood;
(b) that the Jews would simply disappear as a people following their declaration of loyalty to the Hungarian nation.

These false assumptions characterized the entire public debate on Jewish identity, and Hungarian-Jewish acculturations in the nineteenth century. They had a number of important formative consequences. Chiefly, the debate on Jewish emancipation in Hungary, on Hungarian-
Jewish acculturation, on Jewish identity in Hungary, and on later Jewish responses to Hungarian antisemitism were characterized by an inability by many Jewish and Hungarian discussants to see the issues at stake in any other terms than those outlined above. This inability was primarily an inability to officially recognize or speak of Jews in Hungary as anything but Jewish members of the Hungarian religion even though it was sometimes felt that Jews truly did constitute a separate group of individuals. The conversants lacked the vocabulary and the terms of the conversation did not allow for modification of definitions on this point.

E/ The Hungarian Sociocultural Context of Jewish Emancipation and Acculturation

One of the defining differences between Jewish emancipation and acculturation in Western Europe and the similar process that occurred in the Hungarian Kingdom has to do with the context in which Hungarian nationalism arose. Germany and France were unitary states by the end of the 19th century, in which a single language predominated. Austria-Hungary was the most multi-ethnic and multi-religious state in Europe. Aside from the ideal of “Habsburgtreu,” which denoted loyalty to the ruling family, the state had no overarching national spirit of which it could convince its subjects.

Amongst the ethnic groups of the Empire, Germans and Hungarians held the privileged position of being the two groups with political prerogatives, which they refused to share these with the members of other nationalities. As a result, the American historian Peter Sugar characterized both the ruling German and the Hungarian nationalisms of the Empire as being based on a certain amount of fear, which was linked to their losing their privileged positions within Austro-Hungarian society. According to Sugar:

Magyar nationalities policy after 1867 is the best example of what happens if a minority [...] [as defined by Sugar's article] acquires most privileges in a state and builds a policy on the assumption that these are endangered by others who would like to share them. Hungary was not only ruled by an ethnic minority with maximum privileges, but all people in that state, including most Magyars, were suffering from manifestations of micro-minority, a minority within the minority, mentality.35

Hungary also differed from Western states in the power and privilege that its social system accorded to the Hungarian nobility. Hungary never experienced a traumatic event akin to the French Revolution. In 1840 the total population of Hungarian Kingdom had only been 12 million: this population had been formally split into noble and non-noble classes. The noble population of approximately 600,000 individuals counted for approximately five percent of the total population. This group of individuals enjoyed all political rights and owned 70% of landholdings, with the remainder split amongst the luckier peasants and non-nobles.

The “Hungarian nobility” was actually quite a variegated strata of individuals, with the majority of nobles holding small crops of land, not paying any taxes, and living only slightly better than the peasants under their nominal rule. Statistics as to earnings are sometimes difficult to find. The Hungarian historian István Dioszegi reported that according to the 1809 census, the aristocracy (i.e., the highest strata of the nobility) counted a few thousand families, and that the head of the family made approximately 3,000 Forint per year. The upper segment of the lower
nobility counted approximately 27,000 families in 1809, where the head of the family made between 500 and 3,000 Forint per year. The lower nobility counted for approximately 400,000 to 500,000 families; there, the head of the family made approximately 180 Forint per year. Dioszegi counted 80,000 members of the intelligentsia in 1809, and did not mention their income.36

Proposals for social reform of any type generally originated from the aristocracy, the intelligentsia, and the upper segment of the lower nobility. The latter of these groups had much to gain from the reforms, which primarily consisted of economic measures designed to make their land-holdings more competitive versus Western ones. The aristocracy was generally in favor of reforms because its members were worldly and well travelled, spoke German and French, had read the works of Enlightenment authors and wanted the principles of the Enlightenment applied to their Kingdom. The intelligentsia had no land to loose from supporting reforms, and was thus generally progressive-minded. It was the lower nobility that had the most to lose from enlightenment reforms. Its members objected to taxation for absence from taxation was one aspect in which the lower nobility would claim to distinguish itself from the peasantry. The lower nobility also objected to the redistribution of lands since their own parcels were so small and its members had much to lose. Unfortunately the lower nobility expressed its power through its control of the various county governments in Hungary. In counties where the majority of the population was not ethnically Hungarian, this led to cultural repression (through oppressive linguistic practices) in the Dualist period.

The reason why the Hungarian nobility was so contradictory in its response to modernity was because its attitude was thus split: part of its members favored reforms, and part of its members were against the reforms. However, all of the members of the nobility would stand to lose their political prerogatives vis-à-vis the other nationalities of the Kingdom if they let the full scope of the enlightenment project run its course. Thus the protection of noble prerogatives was something all members of the nobility could agree on. The protection of noble privileges led to the rise of a system of values that the Hungarian literary critic Antal Szerb called the inner codex of the nobility, which permeated the literature of the nineteenth century and defined the entirety of the cultural and intellectual life of Hungary during the period under study.

According to Szerb, the Hungarian noble was much poorer than his Western counterpart. Though some Hungarian nobles took on the pathos of the Western bourgeoisie (e.g., German idealism, French liberalism), these nobles were quite alien to the bourgeois ideals of progress and economic growth on which Western bourgeois idealism and liberalism depended.37 But the defining ideal of the Hungarian nobleman was not tied to anything that could be attained through natural means: thus this ideal was out of reach of anyone not born a nobleman. In Szerb’s words:

If one is born a bourgeois, in and of itself, that is nothing; if one is born a rich bourgeois, that is luck; but if one is born in possession of that mystical, ungraspable, illusion of values [illúzióérték] which is nobility: that is Divine Grace, predestination. And [such birth] brings with it the eternal presence of another, non-bourgeois, spiritual value system, which is independent of material wealth [nem pénzszerű]. This is the cosmos of values, which finds expression in that untranslatable Hungarian word of luxurious connotation: űr.38

Notwithstanding Szerb's own (albeit subtle) insistence on linguistic and cultural uniqueness, and
bearing in mind the translator's task of facilitating one culture to find its voice in a language not its own, we can approximate the word úr with the words Sir, Sire, or Esquire. Szerb continued by describing the significance of the word úr:

In the nineteenth century, the older ideals of the Saint and of the Courtier were replaced by the ideal of the Nobleman [úri ember] or, more precisely as they used to say then, the Hungarian Lord [magyar úr]. This is the ideal type in which the entire country becomes one, [and the ideal] which even the non-Hungarian, the non-úr, the member of the nationalities, the bourgeois and the child of peasant parents – if he can afford it – aspire to realize.39

Szerb traces the existence of this inner codex of what it meant to be noble to a shift between the 17th and the 18th centuries. In the 1600s, nobility in Hungary still meant chivalry and battlefield assistance to the Habsburg King. By the 1700s the noble ideal in Hungary meant that one had to be well read, educated and imbued with a knowledge of European languages and culture. So Pest Chief Rabbi Sámuel Kóhn’s notes on Hungarian literature (described in Chapter One) and the similar attempts of students of the National Rabbinical Seminary to acquire the rudiments of Hungarian and European literature, theater and poetry (described in Chapter Four) are quite simply the attempts of these individuals to master the inner codex of the nobility in all of its trivial, fact-filled, fantastical and at times useless details, in order to become a part of the Hungarian nation, whose highest ideal was that of the Hungarian nobleman, due to the sociopolitical reasons here described.

Literature in Hungary in the 19th century was a required component of the social code of the caste, which owned all political prerogatives. Kóhn’s notes (Chapter One), the insertion of Hungarian literature into the Hungarian reading books for Jewish children (Chapter Three), and the teaching of Hungarian literature and language (Chapter Four) thus reflect various attempts by members of an under-privileged group, to try to speak the language of the privileged. As Chief Rabbi, Kóhn’s starting salary of 1,500 Forint per year placed him on equal footing with the upper echelons of the lower nobility; his salary was increased a number of times during his tenure.40 And yet, in a certain sense, Kóhn, like all Hungarian Jews who aspired to join the Hungarian nation, could never become neither Hungarians, nor nobles and the Hungarian-Jewish ideology which Kóhn, Szabolcsi, and their peers created reflected their deep awareness of this fact. Their vociferant support of Hungarian nationalism was so loud and so proud precisely because they knew that it was so utterly impossible for them to ever become Hungarians in the full, úri sense of the word because they would always remain alien to the social system which had emancipated them politically (at least on the surface), but would never emancipate them socially, at least not in the Dualist period.

Thus the argument can be made that Hungary, unlike Germany, or France, or England, never emancipated its Jews, since full emancipation of the Jews should have also entailed full and complete destruction of the social system of feudalism and privilege. And this is the biggest difference between the emancipation of Jews in Hungary and in other European countries: the emancipation of the Jews in Hungary was a gesture, an idea, on the part of the nobility which, however never wanted to cede to the logical conclusions to which emancipation would have led, since those conclusions would have entailed the loss of its power. The nobility only favored
those reforms which did not threaten its position in society: the emancipation of the Jews could be allowed, since it was understood that Jews could never become true Hungarians, but they would help modernize the Kingdom in the process of being freed from some of their legal curtailments. It is not without reason that the Hungarian-American historian George Barany (1922-2001), stated that "in Hungary, Dualism meant an effort to ossify the existing semifodal socioeconomic structure and to keep the non-Magyar nationalities 'in their place'". The slightly more poetically inclined Peter Sugar called Austria, and after 1867 Austria-Hungary "a curious half-way house presenting many modern ornaments affixed to a basically feudal structure".

**F/ Argument Overview**

This dissertation thus describes the attempts of a small number of individual leaders in the Budapest Jewish community between 1867 and 1914 to adapt a system of values centered on the *feudal* ideal of the Hungarian nobleman to the *modern* needs of urban Jews who were keen to become part of a *modern* nation which, due to the feudal land-relation still extant in Hungary, *did not yet exist*. As a result, while the rhetoric of acculturation amongst Jews in Hungary resembled the rhetoric of acculturation voiced in France and Germany, the social reality of acculturation was entirely different.

By and large, the individuals examined in this study attempted to find their way against the social idea of the Hungarian nobleman – which they could never join – by subtly emulating that ideal in newly-created *Jewish* contexts in which they felt at home. Thus though Pest Chief Rabbi Sámuel Kóhn attempted to learn Hungarian literature, he would quote from Hungarian literature in the secluded, Jewish context of the Dohány synagogue. While the students attending the National Rabbinical Seminary were urged to attend plays at the Hungarian opera and the Hungarian National Theater, they would discuss these cultural events within the confines of a *Jewish* institution. While some of the authors in the Hungarian-Jewish academic paper *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* and the Hungarian-Jewish weekly *Egyenlőség* would laud their love for their homeland, they would develop entirely new forms of Hungarian in order to represent their Yiddish, German, Hebrew and Aramaic linguistic roots amongst themselves. And finally, while Jewish teachers would develop textbooks for the learning of Hungarian, they would do so in order to cater to an audience of Jewish schoolchildren, whom (they hoped) would attend Jewish communal schools throughout the land, because the existing textbooks conveyed Christian ideals.

This dissertation does not consider the manifold numbers of Jews who contributed in no small manner to the emergence of Hungarian culture as *Hungarians*. Jews participated in many ways on the Hungarian literary and scientific scenes, but it would be besides the scope of this dissertation to consider them here. In this context we are concerned solely with those individuals who, for their own reasons, thought that the Hungarian language could be made to accommodate the conditions under which full discussions of the Jewish experience could be carried out. We will consider their attempts, failures and ultimately successful results. We will seek to understand their motives and deal empathetically with their works.
Chapter One
Nationalism in the Synagogue

Synagogues have traditionally been centers of Jewish life and Dualist Hungary was no exception. In 1859, the Pest Israelite Community inaugurated what still is the biggest synagogue in Europe: the Dohány Street synagogue, designed in beautiful Moorish style by the Austrian architect Ludwig Förster (1797-1863). Architecturally it resembles in many ways the Neue Synagogue, completed in 1866 on the Oranienburger Straße in Berlin.

Amongst the Jewish communities of the Kingdom of Hungary, the Pest Israelite Community would eventually become the richest and one of the largest. As the national center of the Neolog community the Dohány synagogue was also the natural epicenter of the cultural movement to Hungarianize the Jews of the country. To its ranks belonged Jewish industrialists who helped modernize Hungary's economy during the period. The congregational president during the 1880s was Mór Wahrmann (1832-1892), the first Jew to become a member of the Hungarian parliament, and one of the chairmen of both the Hungarian branch of Lloyd's of London and of the Budapest Industrial and Commercial Board of Trade.43

Prior to unification in 1873, the current urban area of Budapest had consisted of the independent royal free cities of Buda and Pest, and of the private agrarian market town of Óbuda (Altofen). The growth of the Budapest Jewish community into the second-largest urban Jewish community in the world (following Warsaw) in the Dualist Period can be seen as a reflection of the commercialization and enrichment of Budapest as a whole. Indeed as shown by Table IV, the percentage of Jews living in Budapest increased exponentially during the period under study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Budapest Population</th>
<th>Jews</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>270,685</td>
<td>44,890</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>370,767</td>
<td>70,879</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>491,938</td>
<td>103,317</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>733,358</td>
<td>186,047</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>880,371</td>
<td>203,687</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not all Jews in Budapest were Neolog. In 1913 the Pest Orthodox community financed and completed building the great Orthodox synagogue on Kazinczy street, just a few hundred meters away from the Dohány synagogue. But the prestige that the Dohány synagogue enjoyed ensured its persistence as a symbol of Hungarian-Jewish acculturation, even more than a century after its erection. One of the first items on the Neolog cultural agenda was the institution of sermons in Hungarian at the Dohány. It was a matter of prestige for the Pest Israelite Community, for sermons at its richest synagogue to be delivered in the national language even if, at the beginning, most of the congregants did not understand and the congregation had to hire a seconpreacher (Dr. Mayer Kayserling) to deliver Saturday sermons in German as well.

The person chosen to deliver Hungarian sermons at the Dohány was a young rabbi named Sámuel Kóhn (1841-1920). He was born in Baja, a village on the Hungarian plain, on the banks of the Danube, in what is today Southern Hungary. He attended yeshivas in Kismarton (today:
Eisenstadt, Austria) and Pápa before receiving rabbinical ordination from the Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar in Breslau, and obtaining his doctorate from the University of Breslau in 1865. After the National Rabbinical Seminary was successfully established in 1877 (see Chapter Four) he would teach homiletics to its upper division students between 1899 and 1905. Köhn authored a partial history of the Jews in Hungary, a history of the Sabbateans, and a number of biographies and sources relating to Jewish life in Hungary. In the later stages of his career he served as president of the Hungarian Israelite Literary Society and was a member of the chief executive of the Rabbinical Seminary.

The purpose of this chapter is to use Köhn's (now archival) notes on Hungarian literature, available at the Hungarian Jewish Archives, in order to see how he understood the Hungarian national literary canon. Köhn's task at the Dohány essentially consisted of translating and filtering that canon into his sermons and of thus conveying a Hungarian national context into a Jewish sphere. This process of translation allowed Köhn's congregants to eventually develop the sort of patriotic loyalty towards the nation that the leaders of the Pest Israelite Community thought would help advance the project of acculturation. Thus Köhn was at the crossroads of a historical cultural project of which he became the mouthpiece. Rarely do we get a glimpse into the minds of those who channel cultural politics but in Köhn's case we can compare his notes on Hungarian literature to the sermons he delivered on Saturdays. From this latter set of documents (also kept at the Hungarian Jewish Archives) we can derive Köhn's interpretation and use of Hungarian nationalism in order to see its limits and its uses within a new Jewish context.

A/ Köhn’s Task

It seems as if at the beginning of his tenure as one of the rabbis of Pest Köhn himself was more at home in the German language than in Hungarian. Köhn’s employment contract specified the performative aspects of the social role that he was required to play. It was signed on 28 June 1866, in Hungarian, in two versions but contained no actual job description. It was the addendum to the contract signed on the same day which outlined, in both German and Hungarian, Köhn’s duties as follows:

1. he was to be a member of the Rabbinate, during the meetings of which he would have a vote, and a member of the ritual and educational committees, on which he would only have a votum informaticum (i.e., he would serve an advisory role);
2. he would give two sermons on Saturdays every month, of which one would be unconditionally given in Hungarian;
3. on holidays, the Chief Rabbi would give a sermon in German, and Köhn would give a sermon in Hungarian; time permitting, he would offer a sermon in Hungarian at the closing service on the Day of Atonement;
4. on days of special festivities or festivities of celebrating high births (i.e., in the royal family), Köhn would deliver a German or a Hungarian sermon depending upon the wish of the community;
5. during the Chief Rabbi’s absence Köhn would perform all of his superior’s duties;
6. on wedding occasions in the community Köhn would be obliged to give a Hungarian sermon if he had been given prior notice; in case the community leaders needed his services, and with prior notice, he could also be asked to give a German sermon;
(7) at funerals, if the party or the community leaders so wished Kóhn would give a sermon in Hungarian; if the community leaders needed his services he could again also be asked to preach in German;
(8) at introductions and according to the needs of the community Kóhn would function as a chief orator and would take part in conferences and councils in the interest of the religion or the community;
(9) finally, Kóhn would supervise Hungarian religious instruction both within and without the community’s schools and the community would expect Dr. Kóhn’s deep scientific knowledge, vocational zeal, and most industrious dedication to ensure his collaboration in these regards.49

Most notable in this job description is the emphasis given on the presence of German in the synagogue. According to the second point of the contract half of Kóhn’s sermons could be in German; Kóhn would give the second sermon on holidays and the Day of Atonement; he had to be given prior notice if he was to speak in Hungarian at a wedding service; he could give sermons in both languages at funerals, if the community members so wished. All of these instances clearly allude to the fact that in 1866 the Pest Israelite Community was slightly more comfortable with German than with Hungarian at the synagogue and that Kóhn’s efforts to Hungarianize the community would take a number of decades.

Still his insistence on the relevance of Hungarian nationalism in the synagogue in his very first, ‘practice’ sermon – given on Saturday 2 June 1866, even before his contract was signed – reveals a cultural agenda bent on complete acculturation, and favoring the acceptance of Jews into the Hungarian national fold. In that sermon, Kóhn proposed an argument for Israel’s survival through the ages, which simultaneously negated Israel’s contemporary existence as a nation, and which emphasized that, in Kóhn’s day, Israel was no more than a religious denomination:

Our nation [nemzetünk] has experienced great torments and anguish, which have borne bigger and stronger [nations] to the ground; [our nation] has endured and tolerated [these difficulties] unlike any other people [nép]. That which cruel destiny could wrench away from Israel, it did: destiny despoiled Israel of her independence, of her freedom, and of her ancestral home, indeed it often denies Israel human rights. One [thing, however] destiny could not snatch away, of one [thing] it could not deprive [Israel]: that is the Divine spirit, which manifested itself her; which lives within her; and which always gave her new strength.

[...][Israel’s] misfortune expelled it from amongst the ranks of the nations, since she now lacks every criterion for nationhood: the collective cradle and the collective grave, a native land [haza], a language, [and] a reigning prince [fejedelem]. Israel has ceased, has ceased since long ago a nation to be. She is now but a religious denomination [hitfelekezet]. [The] Jewish nationality became the sacrifice of the times, but the Jewish religious denomination lives and will live on, until the stars up above shine into our eyes, and the golden rays of the sun radiate daylight on our human-inhabited Earth.
[...] It does not stand up to cause, and it is untrue, that Israel is a foreign and obstructive [akadályos] body amongst the constitutions of [the] countries; [it is] slander and falsehood [to say] that [Israel is] ‘am bein ha’amim, a people within the people [nép a népben], a separate nation [nemzet] [with its] separate goals and separate interests with which the goals and the interests of the greater public cannot be harmonized. Israel, like we said, is no longer a people. She has welded itself to that nation, amongst which she lives, and she shares in the strivings and hopes of that nation on the one hand, and in its burdens, troubles and destiny, on the other. And for this, she yearns for the [legal] rights of that nation, which she deservedly can yearn for.

The Jew only differs from his fellow citizens insofar as his understanding of some somewhat important, nay the most important, of questions. But insofar as this particular understanding, he has nothing in common with [his fellow] citizen. And if [this particular understanding affects] his relationship [with his fellow citizens], if could only affect it by helping [the Jew] apply the laws of religion to his civic and patriotic duties [i.e., by applying the legitimating factor of the laws of religion to his civic and patriotic duties].

In Kóhn’s very first sermon, then, we see present the basic argumentative vocabulary which would characterize his official rhetorical position. Kóhn is particularly insistent on his definition of Jewishness as a religious denomination. However, his lack of clarity with respect to his use of the words ‘nation,’ [nemzet] and ‘people’ [nép] to describe the previous state of the Jews (i.e., before they became a religious denomination) destabilizes the definition on which he so ardently insists. The most interesting aspects of Kóhn’s sermon is that it does not leave open any avenue for different interpretations of Jewishness. Kóhn’s definition of Jewishness implies a give and take with the Hungarian nation, which emancipated the Jews and accorded them equal rights; however, Kóhn also assumes the benevolence of the nation, with respect to the magnanimous irrevocability of emancipation.

B/ Kóhn’s Personal Notes on Hungarian Culture

Rabbi Sámuel Kóhn loved Hungarian literature. One of the boxes in the collection of documents bearing his name at the Hungarian Jewish Archives contains his extensive, exhaustive notes on Hungarian poetry and theater between the 1790s and the 1830s, alongside smaller snippets on European Romanticism, the French Revolution, Kant, women in 18th century literature, Schiller, Voltaire, Dante and Homer. The slips of paper sometimes contain but a couple of sentences; more often, they include longer quotes from four to five newspapers detailing historical events of the 1810s and 1820s; copies of author’s biographies and published correspondence; copies of literary criticism relating to certain works; relevant statistics; and act-by-act summaries of plays. Kóhn was a scrupulous researcher, who generally noted his reference sources with due care, detailing either the newspaper title or the book that was being consulted, alongside the mandatory page number. Kóhn also kept detailed notes on Hungarian language use, noting phrases that bothered him, translations from Latin or German, and difficulties he encountered.

Illustrative examples best convey the message. One note is entitled: "Kaz. and the Young Literature," and cryptically states that after 1825, "they" do not come and see him anymore.
There follows a list of names and dates, amongst which we can read: KK - 1820; Toldy - 1822; Vörösm. - 1824. A different note is entitled: "The nádor and Hungarian literature," and states: "Even the nádor supports the [newspaper] Tudományos Gyüjtemény [Scientific Collection]," before adding a date: 6 January 1820, and the phrase: "Kaz. to Dessewffy, [vol.] III, [p.] 75." A third note is entitled: "KK and Shakesp. (and Lessing)" The note reads: "He forever read, learned, and read him daily, until in the end he only read him. He often said that it was from him and Lessing that he learned everything, which was dainty". There follows the bibliographical reference: Toldy, National Library, Life of KK, VIII. Finally, the top portion of a fourth note reads:

**Repertoire:** 1807-1808, 1808-1812, 1812:
**Shakesp.:** Second Kázmér, Corjolanus 1812-1813, Hamlet (1814), Othello (1813)
**Schiller:** Charles Moor 1812
**Molière:** The Imaginary Invalid 1792
The Miser 1813
The School for Wives 1814
**Lessing** Emilia Galotti 1813

There is an internal consistency to the over one hundred slips of paper, which make up the collection of Kóhn’s private notes: this allows one to eventually map out Kóhn’s references, and to reconstruct the world of his interest. “Kaz.,” for example, above, is a reference to the Hungarian author, translator, and literary organizer Ferenc Kazinczy (1759-1831); “KK” is the author Károly Kisfaludy (1788-1830); the nádor is a reference to Archduke Joseph (1776-1847), Palatine of Hungary (1796-1847), and thus the official in Hungary of Austrian Emperor Ferdinand I (1793-1875). “Dessewffy” is Count Aurél Dessewffy de Csernek et Tarkeő (1808-1842) a Hungarian journalist and politician. In the third note, “Toldy” is a reference to the literary critic Ferenc Toldy (1805-1875). Finally, the “Repertoire” in the fourth note is a listing of the major plays played in Hungarian translation by the Hungarian National Theater, in the first two decades of the nineteenth century.

By themselves, these notes would not tell us much about Jewish life in Hungary in the nineteenth century, were it not for the Hungarian nationalist cultural context in which they were created. Kóhn’s personal notes rarely touch Jewish subjects. However, juxtaposed with known elements of Kóhn’s career and the public elements of literary and political life in Hungary in the 19th century one can paint an extremely detailed and fascinating image of the cultural context which Kóhn and his contemporaries functioned in and – more to the point – the inner logic, the cultural boundaries, and the hidden signifiers of that context. It is this cultural context – or rather, Kóhn’s interpretation thereof – which this second part of the chapter purports to discuss, analyze, and explain, in order to shed light on the interior, personal dynamics of Jewish acculturation to Hungarian society in the Dualist period. For it is in this received, Hungarian national cultural context that Kóhn and his community had to learn to position Jewish institutions and Jewish public life. Broadly, we can categorize Kóhn’s notes into the following four categories:

(1) Kóhn kept linguistic notes on Hungarian homophones, synonyms, irregular spellings, stress patterns that bothered him; he also took notes of abstract vocabulary, primarily relating to philosophy, between German, Latin, and Hungarian. Except for two philosophical dictionaries,
published in 1793 and 1834, it is unclear what his main sources of reference were, though he was also fond of copying the published letters of the Hungarian poet Mihály Csokonai Vitéz (1773-1805).

(2) Kóhn was interested in the origins of modern Hungarian literature as it had come into being through the efforts of its earliest devotees, from the 1790s onwards. Kóhn took extensive notes on *Aurora*, a popular literary supplement published 1822-1837; Károly Kisfaludy, and Ferenc Kazinczy, both mentioned above, reoccur on many occasions. Kóhn took notes on literary criticism; the lives of his literary protagonists; and, most importantly, the specific significance of these figures in the Hungarian literary canon, a topic to which we shall return below. Kóhn kept detailed statistics on every poem and author who appeared in the *Aurora*; as well, Kóhn’s sources included several published volumes of Kazinczy’s and Kisfaludy’s correspondence, as well as literary criticism by the founder of Hungarian literary studies, Ferenc Toldy, also mentioned above.

(3) Kóhn kept specific notes on the origins and development of Hungarian theatre between 1790 and 1825. His interests extended to disputes between the three standing German theatres of the capital and a visiting Hungarian theatrical troupe, which came to visited Pest in the 1820s. As we saw above he was also interested in the translations and original works presented by the Hungarian National Theater; in those Hungarian writers who wrote or translated plays for the Hungarian scene; and in the aesthetical comparisons of theater in 1790 and 1817. Kóhn also took scene-by-scene notes of relevant plotlines; and culled his information from two newspapers (*Hazai Tudósítások* [Homeland News, published 1806-1839] and *Erdélyi Múzeum* [Transsylvania Museum, 1814-1818]). His additional sources were the diaries of the first Hungarian opera singer Róza Széppataki (1793-1872). In most cases, Kóhn was interested in factually recording historical occurences.

To give just one further example of Kóhn’s meticulousness here are some details he noted about the German theatre in Pest, which opened on 22 December 1815. There were, on the parterre, ten padded benches on the right, and ten on the left; 12 long and 3 short benches in the middle; and 180 ‘closed seats’ (zárt szék). On the first floor, there was a Court box with six seats, a game table, a two-headed eagle gilded with gold and -- here Kóhn could not help slipping back into German -- a nachtstuhl im Ihr Zimmer, that is, a commode in its own room. The first floor also had twenty other boxes with four seats in each and six nachtsühle samt Töpfe, that is, commodes with covers. The second floor had fifteen padded benches, 81 closed seats and ten boxes, but here the boxes only had four seats in them (i.e., there was no bathroom); the third floor a total of twenty padded seats and ten boxes; the fourth floor had twenty ordinary benches. Kóhn noted that artists and the industrialists who had built the theater received 96,600 Forint for its construction.53

(4) Finally, Kóhn took notes on what might call “general European culture”: he copied out much of the second section of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, entitled *The Transcendental Dialectic*; he was very interested by women authors of the 18th century, e.g., Mme de Staël; he read *Macbeth, Othello, Hamlet*, Molière’s *Tartuffe* and *The Miser*; and he knew about Homer, Virgil, and Tacitus.
Had Kóhn been an ordinary member of Budapest society we might pass over his notes on these various subjects as mere interest. However, given the performative aspects of his communal role as outlined above it seems more likely that Kóhn’s private studies were meant to ensure the success of his performance, and (more importantly) his own acceptance into the higher echelons of Hungarian society, whose members Kóhn would be in contact with on a regular basis. Simply put Kóhn needed to be able to pass as a cultured European in order to fulfill his functions and this implied widespread familiarity with the breadth of European literature from Homer to Molière. Particularly, his outlines of European history seem suited for the kinds of conversations in drawing rooms where one is expected to display some sense of familiarity with the topics but a very deep engagement is not required, since the objective is to “pass” as being of the same group as one’s interlocutors.

But the fact that Kóhn wanted to pass as ‘cultured’ is in itself only part of the story. Indeed to those familiar with Hungarian literary history, the works in the second and third categories above read like a concise summary of Hungarian Romantic literature and pre-Romantic literature. Kóhn’s selection of works can hardly be termed arbitrary: as we will show presently, he was determined to appreciate each literary work for what it meant, within the literary culture of Dualism.

C/ The Cultural Context of Kóhn’s Interest

Kóhn’s notes concern mainly the major period of regeneration and rebirth at the end of the 18th century. Since the foundation of the Kingdom of Hungary by Saint Stephen in the year 1000, Hungarian had coexisted with Latin as one of the languages of a multinational and multietnic land; after the Habsburg conquest (1686-1699), German was added to the mix. Latin had acquired official status because Stephen I (c. 969 -1038, r. 1000-1038), Hungary’s first king, adopted Roman Catholicism as the state religion in 1000; it was the Christianizing activities of priests in the 11th and 12th centuries that had positioned Latin as the official language of the kingdom, a status it would not loose until 1836. The individuals who appear in Kóhn’s notes are the ardent devotees of the Hungarian linguistic revival, who, under the influence of Enlightenment ideas and Romanticism, helped Hungarian transition from the underdeveloped language of peasants into a vehicle for the highest of literary forms. By Kóhn’s time – i.e., the second half of the nineteenth century – Hungarian had undergone a major literary revival and had become the official administrative and government language of the Hungarian Kingdom. The linguistic revival itself had become the part of the nationalist, legitimating narrative of the Kingdom’s political acts. Thus Kóhn’s notes reveal a desire to learn the elements of that narrative for it was by knowing these cultural elements that he could hope to be accepted as a “Hungarian”. Moreover, it was this cultural context which he would have to pass on to his flock, so that they too might one day become Hungarians.

The well-known Hungarian literary critic Antal Szerb (1901-1945) assigned Ferenc Kazinczy (1759-1831) the epithet “the dictator”. Szerb compares Kazinczy’s role to that of Dr. Samuel Johnson: his significance was not in the innumerable poems he translated and of which he was so proud, nor in the few verses he penned himself, but in the twenty-four published volumes of his correspondence, which directly conserve Kazinczy’s doctrinaire efforts at mentoring of young Hungarian writers, particularly in matters of attaining perfection in style.
The Hungarian literary critic István Sötér compared the life of the lyric poet Mihály Vitéz Csokonai’s (1773-1805) to that of Robert Burns. Like the great Scottish poet, Csokonai also oeuved under the imperium of foreign rule; though according to Sötér Csokonai's “cultural level” sagged, he retained a touch of folklore, which enabled his lyricism to stay earthy.

Csokonai reacted with “curious sensitivity” to the folk tendencies in Rousseau-ism and the Rococo. It is in him that Enlightenment could melt into those trends that were already present in the literature of more advanced nations, e.g., the antiquizing effect of classicism. Csokonai wrote love poems to a woman he named Lila, a number of odes, and a comic epic entitled Dorotya.56

Ferenc Kölcsey (1790-1838) was one of Kazinczy’s best students: he met Kazinczy at Csokonai’s funeral, and remained a lifelong devotee. According to Antal Szerb, Kölcsey is the person who successfully raised the love of one’s country to the level of philosophical thought, and onto the plains of religious ethos. He was the “most painful” of the nation’s sons, as it was he who found the words for the Hungarian idealism Kazinczy so sought to bring out in the works of his students. The Hymn from the Tempestuous Centuries of the Hungarian Nation which Kölcsey penned on 22 January 1823 is to this day the national anthem of Hungary. Kölcsey served briefly as a member of the Hungarian Diet (1832-6), before his untimely passing.

Kóhn channeled his interest for early Hungarian-language theater by researching two of the first modern Hungarian playwrights, József Katona (1791-1830) and Károly Kisfaludy. Katona is primarily known for the posthumous success of his play Bánk Bán, a tragedy set in thirteenth-century Hungary: the plot centers on the assassination of Queen Gertrude, wife of King Andrew II, in 1213. Sötér emphasizes the 'revolutionary' characterization of the play's hero, Bánk Bán, one of Hungary's great lords; the play was banned for its nationalistic connotations after the 1848 revolution.57 Szerb, on the other hand, emphasized the author's successful adaptation of Sturm und Drang to the Hungarian scene.58 Unlike Katona, Kisfaludy was well known and respected even during his lifetime. It is under his pen that Hungarian literature adopted Romantic forms: Kisfaludy was known and liked for his romantic tragedy, Iréne; his elegy on the Ottoman defeat of the Hungarians at Mohács in 1526; and his tragedies on the “Tatars in Hungary” and the capture of Belgrade.59

By examining the histories of the different publication vehicles, which held Kóhn’s interest, we can find even more literary connections between these authors. It was a conversation Kazinczy had with the Hungarian poet Gábor Döbrente (1785-1851) which led the latter to publish the first Hungarian literary journal, the Erdélyi Muzéum (1814-1818). As the Hungarian historian Miklós Szabolcsi tells us, Döbrente's journal was programmatic from the beginning. It had as its goal the cultivation of the national language on the model of the Enlightened nations, with the goal of catching up, and eventually surpassing the latter; calling for the establishment of national cultural institutions (e.g., a national academy of sciences, and a national theater); the placing of the great figures of the national past on an exemplary pedestal. As well, the newspaper wanted to encourage general literacy, and the development of fine literature which under Kazinczy’s guidance, should be free from pedagogical doctrinarism and should be written in an elevated style, existing solely for itself (l'art pour l'art). Kazinczy, Kölcsey, Döbrente and a number of other poets contributed lyric verse, epigrams, sonnets and songs to the pages of Erdélyi Muzéum.60 It is in response to the first dramatic competition announced on its pages that that Katona wrote his Bánk Bán, though since the manuscript was not received, the play was not
Hazai Tudósítások was the first modern Hungarian political newspaper. Its publisher was the author István Kultsár (1760-1828). As Miklós Szabócsí recounts, the newspaper's first issue specified, that the paper would transmit news about ecclesiastical and 'worldly' appointments, national institutions, new discoveries, the biographies of individuals influential in the kingdom, the price of wheat, civil and military orders; it would also publish rare stories and historical narratives. In short, Hazai Tudósítások would be a modern newspaper, serving the interests of the nation; after the first few years, the paper expanded to include news from Transylvania, Croatia, Moldavia, Romania and Serbia. Kultsár was a strong devotee of the Hungarian language reform, and several of the linguistic battles relating to the process were fought amongst the columns of his newspaper. Aurora (1822-37) was published as the literary supplement to Hazai Tudósítások, and was edited by Kisfaludy until the end of his life. According to the American literary critic Albert Tezla, the supplement was "the most important periodical of young writers in Pest", though Kazinczy’s works appeared in its pages, it represented a conscious shift from the classicism, which the “dictator” represented, towards Romanticism and nationalism. Kölcsey’s poetry was displayed prominently in its pages.

To complete this rough sketch of Hungarian literature during the period of Kóhn’s interest, we should add that István Kultsár also briefly served as the director of a Hungarian theater troupe in Pest (1813-15). there, he directed an actress who would be best known by her married name of Déryné, but who had earlier been known as Róza Széppataki (1793-1872). It was with Déryné that József Katona would fall hopelessly in love; it was in Déryné’s diary (published posthumously in 1879) that Sámmuel Kóhn would read treat a description of Széppataki’s father in 1798, and of her courtiers in 1809, and which Kóhn would treat as an indicator of the changes in fashion during in that decade. Finally, we should add that Kóhn was an avid reader of the works of the first Hungarian literary critic, Ferenc Toldy (1805-1875). As the Hungarian Biographical Lexicon tells us, Toldy essentially created the field of ‘scientific’ Hungarian literary studies: he is best known for his romanticized literary speeches on the lives of Hungarian authors (usually given as funeral orations), for which Antal Szerb would criticize him in the introduction to his own work.

D/ Kóhn’s Espousal of Hungarian Nationalism

If we have spent this long describing the literary actors whom Kóhn was interested in, it was with the objective of conveying at least a minute fragment of the literary interconnectedness and intricate web of references which Kóhn had to master, in order to fully assume his social functions. One could not simply know about Kölcsy, nor read his poetry: one had to know about Kazinczy, Kultsár, Déryné and the others as well. What is more, one had to be able to share the nationalist connotations which these figures – who had mostly all lived in the first third of the 19th century – had come to assume in the Dualist period, when Hungarian nationalism had developed into a potent political force. Thankfully (for the researcher), Kóhn was quite aware that only the ideology of nationalism provided the necessary glue behind the facts. He took notes on Hungarian nationalism as well, to which we now turn.
The notes of Sámuel Kóhn reveal not only awareness, but a full-fledged cognizance of the national narrative of fear, alluded to in the introduction. In a telling note entitled “How many Hungarians? Who are the Hungarians?” Kóhn copied out from an issue of Hazai Tudósítások the following statistics, which Kóhn claims were originally published in Georg Hassel’s Statistischer Abriss des östreichischen Kaisertums (Nürnberg, 1807) that the Austrian Empire counted 3.3 million Hungarians, but 4.95 million Germans in 1807. He also moreover, took to heart the following nationalist argumentation, which he copied out in full, from the same source (and in which the numbers do not altogether add up correctly):

One cannot without shivering listen to those who argue that [...] there are too few Hungarians. [...] According to the law, every magnate [mágnás], every noble [nemes], [...] [and] every citizen of the cities is Hungarian. There are 95 counts, 82 barons, 80,000 nobles, [...] 80,487 [members of the] nationalities, 88,422 citizens of the cities; so altogether 168,909 [members of the] nobility [nemesség] consider themselves Hungarian in front of the law.

But let us step closer: let us look at those who, by their language, are Hungarians. The Hungarian is not uncleaved from the Hungarian by his language. But between the other nationalities the difference is so enormous, that is impossible to forge them into one nation. Can you forge together the Serb and the Slovak? The Ruszyn and the Croat? The forefathers of all of these peoples were present at the Tower of Babylon. Independently, however, what is each of these nationalities as compared to the Hungarians? This nation in and of itself alone is master in 3668 localities, amongst them N[agy] Körös, Vásárhely, Kecskemét, [and] Debreczen. [...]  

There are [...] no more than four million Hungarians. Let us add to this those valiant Serbs and Greeks who, at the most, speak Hungarian; let us add to this the Slovaks, who for commercial needs have learned the language; let us add finally the burgers of the cities, who though they are considered Germans, still speak Hungarian. [...] We surely cannot consider it an exaggerated number if we say that Hungarian is the language of five million men in Hungary, and yet in total [Hungary] has no more than eight million inhabitants.

What is most striking about Kóhn’s espousal of Hungarian nationalism is the fact that he was so fluent in the basic political vocabulary. This political vocabulary rested on the considering the Hungarian nation as a threatened element within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, even though, through the Ausgleich, the Hungarian nation had been accorded more political powers than any other nationality present. It was the fear of losing these privileges, which made such a narrative of fear necessary for the Hungarians. Conversely, it was the fear of losing legal emancipation, which made compliance to this rhetoric necessary for Jewish communities. Acculturation was a means for Jews in the Hungarian Kingdom to participate in public life as Hungarians: clearly, in a political environment so centered on fear, there was absolutely no room for Hungarian Jews to call themselves “a nation”. Rather, they made every effort to appear as though they were (and had always been) Hungarians – albeit, of a Jewish religion. Had they not, they would have faced the severe policy of cultural repression the Hungarians imposed on the
Romanians, Slovaks and Ukrainians, in an effort to make the members of these nations Hungarians in tongue and in belief.

E/ The Limits of Nationalism

We have arrived at the crux of the argument. Under the cultural goals of the project of Hungarianization, Jews like Kóhn and his ideal congregants should have become familiar with the Hungarian literary canon, should have associated completely with Hungarian nationalism and should have shared in its trials and tribulations. Unfortunately, due to the exclusivity of the Hungarian national ideal, as explained in the introduction, full membership in the nation was not fully available to those who could not, due to their provenance, become a member of the Hungarian noble class. As explained in the introduction, the úri (i.e., noble) ideal was unattainable for Jews, due to the specific semi-feudal political relationships that governed the country. As such, the rhetoric of Hungarian-Jewish nationalism had to break down somewhere and induce a palliative method for explaining away and accepting perpetual rejection by the Hungarian nation. This palliative rhetoric is very much present in two of Kóhn’s sermons and serves to underline the hidden dynamics and limits of Hungarian-Jewish acculturation. A close reading of two of Kóhn’s sermons dealing specifically with instances of the rejection by the Hungarian nation of Jews, shows just how sensitive Kóhn was to the above elements of the public discussion and how, in essence, he was also powerless to change the terms thereof.

On Sunday 15 October 1882, the capital city of Budapest organized a celebration in honor of the unveiling of a statue next to the Danube to the Hungarian national poet Sándor Petőfi (1823?-1849). The circumstances relating to the placing of the statue are recounted in an article by the Hungarian historian Gyula Soós: briefly put, it was a nationally funded, ostentatious affair, where every Hungarian was wont to be present. Kóhn spoke about the event the following Saturday, 21 October 1882, and addressed the fact why the Jews were not represented as a separate denomination amongst the celebrants. It is unclear, from Kóhn’s words, whether Christian denominations had been invited to participate as groups: from the sermon, it seems as if they might have been.

We carry Israel’s God in our hearts, and love him in our synagogues; but outside, in life, let us consider ourselves as organic members of the nation, from which we do not separate ourselves, and from which we cannot be separated; to which we belong, and with which we are together everywhere. And this is the answer to the question, which in these days [people] have ignited in our very eyes: that we were not represented, as a separate religious denomination and as a separate Jewish community, where the enthusiasm of the nation erected a statue to its immortal poet.

If anyone has a reason to respect and laud Petőfi, it is us: he is the quintessential Hungarian poet; the poet of freedom, of equality of rights, and of love. No one has been devoid of the freedom for which he burned so passionately, than Israel. He was the herald of legal equality: no one has striven as much [for this] as much as we. And the love which his lute sang, no one searches for it as much, and as much without avail, as the Jew, who knows, who feels deeply, that if the poet’s visionary spirit and the
principles extolled by him, much would not have happened, and much would have happened differently in this our homeland [e hazában].

But true, we at his statue were not there as Jews, nor we did not want to be there. Because in the public spaces of the capital, we too – the citizens of the capital of the Jewish religion – are represented, just like the citizens of the other denominations. And where the religious denominations are not represented individually, but the nation celebrates a holiday: we too celebrate together, and not separately. We have never voluntarily accepted a separate [political] position; and if other make allusions [to such separateness] we reject it: now and forever.\(^{25}\)

Kóhn’s words sympathize perfectly with the sense of rejection that his congregants might have felt, had they attended the unveiling and had they been represented as a separate religious denomination at the event. On the whole, this in itself is not such a grave slight. But the significance of it and its appearance in Kóhn’s rhetoric allow us to see how Kóhn and his congregants would cope with similar acts of rejection in the future: and how rejection would eventually strengthen their feeling of affiliation with the Hungarian nation. Kóhn’s answer to rejection is that it does not matter and that it should not affect the determination of Jews to love and be loyal to the Hungarian nation. This is a difficult position to take and it bespeaks both Kóhn’s impotence and his acquiescence in being part of a cultural process between Jews and Hungarians that was not reciprocal.

Kóhn had similar words of consolation for his congregants in 1906, when the ashes of the national hero Ferenc II Rákóczi (1676-1735), Prince of Transylvania, and leader of a Hungarian revolt against the Habsburgs in 1703-11, were returned by the Ottoman Empire for burial at Rákóczi’s Hungarian hometown of Kassa (today: Košice, Slovakia). The interment took place on Monday 29 October 1906, in an equally grandiose setting, as described by the Hungarian historian Katalin Mária Kincses.\(^{26}\) Since the Jewish community again was not represented as a separate delegation, Kóhn had following things to say the Saturday previous:

Abraham too was a hero, he wielded weapons and fought to free and take back his property, which had been taken away illegally and with force.\(^{77}\) If we look at Abraham from this perspective – if we see in him the hero, who fights against oppression, for justice and for freedom – we can use his image to conjure up from the past the figures of that national hero, who now benefits from the fervent ardor of our Hungarian nation’s enthusiasm. Let us all look at him!

Ferenc II Rákóczi also fought for freedom: for the liberation of our homeland and our nation. He, too armed his nation, his homeland’s children, and exhorted them to go into battle. Where he went, he too [like Abraham] raised an altar – that is, to the autonomy and the independence of Hungary – and he preached the name of God, of the God of freedom. For that which he fought, he suffered defeat. [...] But God governs and directs history, out of the will of the nation and of our glorified, reigning, kindly King. The great Prince returns in his ashes to the home, which two centuries ago he had to leave. It is with the piety, the gratitude, [and] the joyous, proud self-respect of our nation, that we receive him with enthusiasm.
Where the nation celebrates, we are there too. Our capital and our national Parliament: the official institutions of our Hungarian nation also represent us. But nevertheless, in this House too, we give thanks to the Lord of history, that he triumphally brought to success the holy cause for which Rákóczi and his disciples fought and bled; he triumphally brought him to success, if not in his person, then in his ashes, which today arrive on Hungarian soil. We, too bless these dear ashes. Let them find rest in the saint soil of our eternal home, where the [...] loving, respectful, undiminishable piety of our Hungarian nation resonates high above them. May the Lord give justice and freedom to the illustrious spirit of the hero who fought for his homeland. And if our Hungarian homeland and our Hungarian nation were to pray at his eternal throne [világtrónján], let their prayers be heard by the God of history. Amen.78

Emancipation is a political act: acculturation is a social process characterized by the private choices of individuals. Both of Köhn's sermons contain the words of one who is in a clear position of political weakness; who cannot change political reality to suit the ideal which he was asked to promote; and who must, nevertheless, convince his congregants that the only way for Jews to be Hungarian, was to laud those very national heroes, from whose celebrations the very nation which the Jews were purported to join, was turning away.

The first of these two sermons, above, was spoken in 1882, fifteen years after the political emancipation of the Jews; the second was spoken in 1906, eleven years after the Jewish religion was put on par with the Christian denominations. However, both sermons show that the integration of Jews as full members of the Hungarian nation was still incomplete. Indeed, Köhn’s reference, in the first sermon, that "that if [Petőfi’s] visionary spirit and the principles extolled by him, much would not have happened, and much would have happened differently in this our homeland," can be construed as a reference to the Tiszaeszlár blood libel which occurred in the same year (1882).

According to the terms of the political dialogue between Jews and Hungarians as established by Kossuth, the reasons for the incompleteness of social emancipation must have rested with the Jews' persistent inability to become Hungarians: to fully learn the Hungarian language, or rid their religion of the political aspects which Kossuth had reproached to them. Köhn's sermons contain a sublimated sense of guilt and not yet having achieved social fusion, combined to an frustrated inability to either explain social reality, or to invent an alternative set of discursive paradigms. However, the discursive paradigm in which he operated prevented him from doing anything else, but suggesting to his congregants to continue becoming 'better Hungarians' than they were, and of turning positive rejection into a individual choice (“we at his statue were not there as Jews, nor did we want to be there”).

For the historian, the best manner in which to interpret these texts is through their function, rather than through their message. There is no purpose to try and argue with Köhn about whether (as in the first text) one should, as a Jew, respect Petőfi or (as in the second text), about the likelihood of Rákóczi truly having been like Abraham. The correct interpretation is to see the functions, which the text served. Köhn’s texts had the purpose of filling a social need, i.e., of having to provide some Jewish-sounding, edifying, nationalistic words, on the occasion of public events of importance to the nation, in a nationalistic setting where Jews felt a sense of
separateness, but where this sense of separateness could not be openly acknowledged. Köhn’s words thus needed to be nationalistic, edifying, and consolatory. The tools at his disposal were his pulpit, and the weekly Sabbath reading, on which his sermons had to draw. The result were the two sermons, of which the most important parts we have quoted above.

A deconstructive critique of the texts reveal the basic tension which Köhn’s words are meant to cover over. In fact, the texts argue for Jewish participation and membership in the nation at the very same time as they fails to account for the separateness of the Jewish community. Thus the texts acknowledge, in an underhanded manner, the separateness of the Jewish community, even while they emphasize the fact that Jews are represented, like other members of the nation, in the nationally representative institutions of the nation (e.g., the capital and the Parliament). The telling phrases of the sermons are Köhn's repeated use of the words “we, too”: *we too* celebrate together, and not separately; *we, too*, bless these dear ashes; the official institutions of our Hungarian nation *also represent us*; *nevertheless*, in this House *too*, *we give thanks* to the Lord of history. Inadvertently, Köhn’s edifying words reinforce the feeling of separateness between the Jewish community and the national environment it finds itself in. Saying that the Jews are also members of the nation underscores the fact that they are not members thereof: or, if they are, they are members only on the surface, whilst the separation continues, hidden under generous amounts of rhetoric.

And yet, one can read Köhn's texts -- which were spoken to an all-Jewish audience, in an all-Jewish setting -- and find a sense of pride, both in being Jewish and in being Hungarian. If one was happy with the official institutions of the Hungarian nation which "also represent us," why would there be a need to "nevertheless, in this House too, [...] give thanks to the Lord of history"? The answer is that the meaning of the text is again not to be found in its message, but in its function: due to the nature of the political discourse, Hungarian nationalism had become the means by which Jews in Hungary could express their pride in being Jewish.

**F/ Conclusion**

This analysis of the interplay between the public and the private papers of Rabbi Sámuel Köhn, juxtaposed to existing historical findings on Hungarian history and literature, and existing research on the sociocultural politics of Jewish acculturation in nineteenth century Europe, have allowed us to problematize, question and discard a basic and misunderstood binary, which characterized Hungarian-Jewish relations during the period under study. At the public level, the official discussions regarding the emancipation of Jews in Hungary centered on an exchange: the emancipation of Jews, in exchange for the full integration (and eventual disappearance) of Jews into Hungarian society, by becoming Hungarian. We have seen that the terms of the discussion were not fully representative of the aims and intents of either "party" to the discussion, (i.e., the Hungarian government as a representative of the Hungarian nation, or of Jewish communal leaders). Thus, the social discussion on Jewish acculturation led to a number of misunderstandings and misrepresentations, which the participants in the discussion could neither address nor explain, especially not openly.

Jewish communal leaders like Köhn agreed that emancipation was desirable since Jews would benefit from the legal protections and commercial rights the Hungarian Kingdom afforded
its Christian subjects. They took the representatives of the Hungarian nobility at their word, and set out to urge their flocks become perhaps the best Hungarian patriots. They believed in the "emancipatory deal," and were genuinely interested in and involved in becoming "Hungarians of the Jewish religion". But it turns out that Jews also misunderstood the terms of the conversation stemming from emancipation: the Jewish leaders had misjudged, and debased their own self-worth in the emancipatory "discussion". Superficially, at least, they too felt that Jewishness could be discarded and that one could simply "become Hungarian" by learning the language and affiliating with the national symbols. In other words, the weak political position in which they found themselves had led Jewish communal leaders to misjudge the level of esteem at which they held their own religion and peoplehood.
Chapter Two
Acculturation Through the Press

Miksa Szabolcsi was editor-in-chief of the Hungarian-Jewish weekly *Egyenlőség* (“Equality,” published 1882-1938) between 1886 and 1915. He was born in 1857 in Tura, a town 50 kilometers east of Budapest, and died in Balatonfüred, a resort town close to the northwestern tip of Lake Balaton. He attended *yeshivot* (i.e., Jewish religious academies) in his youth at various rural Hungarian localities, before becoming a tutor to the children of prominent Jewish families. He became a journalist, and covered the Tiszaeszlár blood libel (1882-83) for the *Wiener Neuzeit*, and the *Neue Freie Presse* in Vienna, the *Pester Lloyd* and the *Egyenlőség*. Between 1884 and 1886, Szabolcsi edited the *Pester Jüdische Zeitung*, a newspaper printed in Jüdisch-Deutsch. Szabolcsi became the editor of the *Egyenlőség* in 1886, and he remained in this post until his death in 1915. Szabolcsi spoke at four languages: Yiddish, Hebrew, German and Hungarian and from the articles he wrote for the *Egyenlőség*, it is evident that he was also familiar with French, Latin, and English. Szabolcsi’s major works include *Pearls from the Talmud and the Midrash* [*Gyöngyszemeek a Talmudból és Midrából*, 1898] and *Journey to the Holy Land* [*Utazás a Szentföldön*, 1905]. He also helped edit and translate the Hungarian edition of Graet zn’s *History of the Jews* (1908-09).

The paper was titled “Equality”, because it strove to obtain Jewish acceptance, on equal terms, into the Hungarian ethnic group. This newspaper thus helped bring about, mold, organize and streamline a linguistic and political movement, which had begun in earnest twenty years previous to the launch of the newspaper itself. This chapter considers the *Egyenlőség* as a social vehicle for the larger process of Hungarianization. Hungarianization was an organic social process, which left telltale traces in the most incospicuous aspects of Szabolcsi’s paper. It is these traces – comments in letters from the editor, turns of phrase, obtuse references – which I have contrasted with the more programmatic, ideologically-centered articles, which the newspaper emphasized, in order to distill a balanced and (hopefully) ideologically neutral assessment of Hungarianization.

In many ways, Szabolcsi reflected different paths the Jews of Hungary took in the nineteenth century. He had been born into an Orthodox Jewish family in rural Hungary; as a German- and a Hungarian-language journalist covering the Tiszaeszlár blood libel, he had contributed the solving crime by contributing the key piece of evidence; he had owned and edited a Jüdisch-Deutsch newspaper, which catered to the Yiddish-speaking, Orthodox readership of the Hungarian capital in the mid-1880s; and he then spent the last thirty-three years of his life making *Egyenlőség* into a prime, Hungarian-language, Jewish cultural vehicle.

This chapter treats its subject in a number of sections. Section A circumscribes the ideology of Hungarianization, by describing the three cultural elements of which its adherents were most critical, in an effort to define themselves: the Yiddish-language “culture of the Ghetto”; the German language; and political Zionism. Section B traces the beginnings of Hungarianization to top-down communal efforts, and to grassroots “Hungarianization Societies”. Section C examines what Hungarianization actually meant, in everyday life, aside from learning the Hungarian language: namely, the changing of names, and the delivery of synagogal sermons in Hungarian. Section D details the role of the *Egyenlőség* in promoting and streamlining
Hungarianization, by detailing the influential effect of Szabolcsi; the newspaper’s encouragement of the emergence of a native, Hungarian Jewish literature; and its ability to provide the Jews of Hungary with their own, unique sense of history (and destiny). Section E studies the effects of Hungarianization, on two fronts: the import of Jewish words into the Hungarian language, and the unstated, yet very present, Habsburg context of the Hungarian Jewishness, which developed. And finally, Section F concludes this chapter, with an assessment of the social process herein described, inclusive of some critiques thereof, from the German-speaking cultural world.

A/ Circumscription of Hungarianization

When reading the Egyenlőség, it is often easiest to come to terms with the cultural contexts and political movements, which the newspaper’s writers were against, than it is to understand what these same writers were for. By and large, we can say that the adherents of Hungarianization, who contributed to the Egyenlőség, were against three things:

(a) the Yiddish-language culture of what they termed “the ghetto”;
(b) the urban, German-language culture of their intellectual predecessors and;
(c) political Zionism.

The Hungarianizers had different reasons for being against each. The rejection of “the ghetto” was a rejection on so-called civilizational grounds, and out of linguistic and cultural considerations. The adherents of Hungarianization were not against Jewish religious practice itself, insofar as religious practice could be conducted in a ‘civilized’ setting. Thus, the denigration with which the Hungarianizers treated the civilization of rural, religious Jewry had many parallels to the denigration with which Viennese and Berlin Jews treated their own Ostjuden.

The Hungarianizers thought of themselves as good Magyar nationalists. As a result, though many of them had attended universities in Germany or in the German-speaking areas of the Habsburg Empire and were fluent in German, they rejected the influence of German culture on the culture of the Hungarian Kingdom. The Hungarianizers copied this rejection from the early Magyar nationalists, whose earliest aristocratic adherents, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, had also been immersed in German culture. Finally, the Hungarianizers rejected political Zionism. This was understandable enough, in light of the fact that the Hungarianizers argued vocally, to anyone who would listen, that they were Jewish members of the Hungarian nation. Let us look at each of these three points of opposition separately.

A/ Against the Culture of the “Ghetto”

In 1888, Miksa Szabolcsi wrote (under a pseudonym) of an altercation in a synagogue in Máramaros-Sziget (today: Sighetu Marmației, Romania) on a Saturday, during Sabbath services. One congregant grabbed the Torah out of the hand of the other, while the second threw the first down from the reader’s platform (bimah). While shouting curses and profanities, the two took to the candelabras and the shtender (individual pulpits in the synagogue), which they threw at each others' heads. The brawl (dulakodás), noise (lárma), and moaning (jajveszékelés) in the pavilion
consecrated to piety and devotion, lasted until the authorities emptied the synagogue by force of arms.\textsuperscript{79} Szabolcsi wrote that it was with this kind of behavior that these communities filthied the four-thousand-year-old honor of Israel, and how they “trampled into the mud the repute of our denomination”. He criticized “the ghetto,” on behavioral, sartorial, and educational grounds, objecting to specific aspects of life in “the ghetto.” Among these were the presence of mystical rabbis; the wearing of caftans, the \textit{shtreimel} (the fur hat worn by Hasidic Jews), and sidelocks (\textit{peyes}).

Two specific behavioural patterns which Szabolcsi objected to were the institution of marriage at a very young age, and the practice of sending children to religious schools (\textit{cheder}), instead of to Jewish (or Hungarian) elementary schools. According to Szabolcsi, many 17-18-year-old Jewish boys took for themselves, by arranged marriage, 13-15-year-old Jewish girls, as wives, and had no shame calling their wives their lovers, and their offspring as bastards, in front of city magistrates, until the marriages were legitimized, often 10 years afterwards.\textsuperscript{80} With respect to education, Szabolcsi found it unacceptable that Jews whose parents had immigrated to Hungary, who themselves had been born on Hungarian soil, still looked like their parents, and participated \textit{in Hungary} in the civilization of the shtetl, ”as if they had just now come from Dobremil [a town in today’s Poland].” There were some 30,000 Jews in county Maramaros, and, though they made up one-seventh of the county’s population, not a single (modern) Jewish day school existed. Of the 40,492 Jewish children in the county, about half had gone to the regular, state schools, while the others had only taken classes with a traditional “Polish,” Jewish teacher (\textit{melamed}).\textsuperscript{81}

Szabolcsi’s ‘civilizational’ criticism of the ’ghetto Jews’ was married to a nationalist criticism of their linguistic habits. Szabolcsi had no qualms about reserving and keeping Hebrew for use as the holy and religious language of the Jews. “We pray in the holy language,” he wrote, “we read [our] holy books in the language in which Moses wrote them, [and] if we eliminate the [Hebrew] language and the text, we eliminate Judaism itself”. Hebrew was a euphonious (\textit{zengzetes}) and majestic (\textit{magasztos}) tongue, in which God himself and his angels had spoken. If Jews abolished the significance of the holy texts containing these linguistic memories, they were engaging in religious profanation and desecration.\textsuperscript{82} But, Szabolcsi asked, what holiness, was there in that other, gibberish tongue, which in actuality [was] not even a language, which [had] no laws, no grammar, nor rules; in which writers did not write, in which works did not flourish? This [was] a tongue, which [used] twisted Slavic, German, Spanish, Hebrew, Latin words, which [was] pronounced differently in every locality, but which, if one [spoke] it, one [was] exposed to guile? If that so-called language [was] holy, then holy too [was] the ghetto, the yellow stain, and the priest [i.e., rabbi], who call[ed] it a crime to proclaim God’s word in a language other than \textit{zsargon}; crime for him also who dressed freely, according to one’s whims; and who moved about freely in the world.\textsuperscript{83}

The Yiddish \textit{zsargon} was earsplitting (\textit{fülszaggató}) and repulsive to every good taste. Those who spoke it carried the “yellow stain” on their tongues.\textsuperscript{84} The marriage between a ‘civilizational’ critique of rural Hungarian Jewish customs, and a nationalistic critique based on linguistic considerations, is quite clear in these two Szabolcsi texts. It is significant that Szabolcsi
used a pseudonym, to write the first of these two articles: after all, having once been a rural Hungarian Jew himself, he could not openly risk alienating some of his dedicated readers.

b/ Rejection of German Culture

The Hungarianizers rejected German culture because of their adoption of Hungarian nationalism as a basis of their identity. In a front-page article from 1892 entitled “The Hungarianness of the Jews” (A zsidók magyarsága), Lajos Palágyi responded on the pages of the Egyenlőség against charges by a populist newspaper, that the Jews living in Hungary were still “too enthusiastic” for German-language culture: this was unacceptable, if the Hungarian nation was to count on the Jews, like it did on “normal Hungarians,” in times of national crisis.85

Charges of national disloyalty are a common leitmotiv of modern Jewish history. But in Hungary, the potential charge of disloyalty was mingled with the impetus to “modernize” the Jews of the Kingdom, which had originated in 1782 at the court of Joseph II, and had first sought to expose the Jews of the Kingdom to German (and not Hungarian) culture. The first modern Jews of the Kingdom of Hungary had willingly participated in the German-language culture of the Kingdom’s cities.86 Thus, the early Hungarianizers had to reject both the cultural worlds of Yiddish and of German, and accept the Hungarian cultural world as their own, before they could authetically call themselves “Hungarians”. The double about-face, which these cultural maneuvers required explains all the more their vehement devotion to the Hungarian language.

These are the background factors as to why, in Palágyi’s 1892 article, we find an incorporation of Hungarian national cultural insecurities, into what is essentially a discussion of the place of Jewry in the Kingdom. The author answered the accusations of his adversary as follows: “It truly is a sad fact that [...] that in its every aspect, Hungary is under the influence of foreign cultures, [and] especially under the influence of German culture.”87 Everything in Hungary, continued Palágyi, was under the influence of a foreign culture and, especially, of German culture. “Our science” compiled its findings from from German books; “our” thinking [was] under the influence of German thinking; “our” educational system was modelled on the German system, and German was a compulsory language in “our” Hungarian middle schools. The best of the Hungarian nation, the pioneers of the independent Hungarian spirit, relentlessly fought and continue to fight against German culture. “A whole bunch of languages, religions, races, classes, and casts,” this was Hungary. Palágyi wrote that his critics blamed the culture ministry, for teaching the German language; they blamed the defense minister, for new recruits’ having to take an officer's exam in German; they blamed the entire Hungarian government, for doing nothing, to achieve independence; they blamed the Hungarian Scientific Academy for not promoting Hungarian science; they blamed the Christian denominations for delivering sermons in German; and they blamed the Jews (for being Jews).88

The most striking part of the article is the author’s willingness to accept the borderline-xenophobic views of his critics, and to argue for the acceptance of Jews into the folds of the Hungarian nation based on their patronage of the Hungarian arts. This type of argumentation is a direct result of Hungarianization being a reactive social process. The claims against the non-Hungarian identity of the Jews were unfounded, because:
Who goes to the Hungarian theater? The Jews. Who supports every cultural goal? The Jews. In the last Slovak or Romanian town, who speaks Hungarian? The Jews. In which elementary school is Hungarian the language of instruction, without expression? What [did his] critics want? That in one day, the Jews not only learn Hungarian, but also forget German? [How was that] possible?\footnote{Palágyi concluded his article with the following *envoi*: if one day in the near future, one met a monolingual Hungarian travelling the Kingdom, unless that person was a Calvinist, he was bound to be a Jew!}\footnote{This article shows clearly a Jewish adoption of what the American historian Peter Sugar has called the ‘feeling of minority,’ which is such a prevalent aspect in Hungarian nationalism.} 

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Thus, the Jewish conception of what it meant to be Hungarian picked up on, and incorporated the feeling of *inferiority* the Hungarians felt towards German culture and sought to distance itself from it.

c/ Anti-Zionism

Understandably, the adherents of Hungarianization could not in any way be Zionists; indeed, for adherents to an ideology which was so focused on one’s having a national home in Hungary, it would be impossible to share the dream of a national home for the Jewish people, in the land of Israel. The rejection of Zionism happened essentially outright – on the pages of the *Egyenlőség*, in the years 1896-7, upon the appearance of Herzl’s *Der Judenstaat*, and the first Zionist congress in Basel. The Hungarianizers had no reason to consider Zionism as a viable political alternative to their own ideology. Zionism was a threat, which could have derailed the entire project of Hungarianization and hence had to be rejected. Additionally, it was not enough to reject Zionism on an individual basis. The entire Hungarian Jewish community had to reject Zionism, out of fear that even a single adherent to Zionism would allow antisemites to raise the claim, that Jews were disloyal to the Hungarian nation.

After Herzl’s death in 1904, Szabolcseli printed the transcript of a conversation he had had with the movement’s founder, a few years earlier, in Vienna. According to Szabolcseli, he had said to Herzl that “the Jew in Hungary [was] totally satisfied with being Jewish in terms of his religion, [...] [and did] not want to be anything else but [...] Hungarian nationality.” \footnote{Herzl had argued that the Hungarians did not want to recognize the Jews as Hungarians. Szabolcseli had counterattacked with inflamed gusto:} We are not Hungarians in order to be liked by others, but are Hungarians because our heart, our feeling, is Hungarian, because we cannot be anything else, because we do not want to be anything else. [...] The love of the fatherland often breaks through without our wanting it. Because it has become our blood, because it has struck its roots in our hearts [...] How can you reconcile a new nationalist idea with this deeply deep love of the fatherland?\footnote{Herzl had argued that the Hungarians did not want to recognize the Jews as Hungarians. Szabolcseli had counterattacked with inflamed gusto: We are not Hungarians in order to be liked by others, but are Hungarians because our heart, our feeling, is Hungarian, because we cannot be anything else, because we do not want to be anything else. [...] The love of the fatherland often breaks through without our wanting it. Because it has become our blood, because it has struck its roots in our hearts [...] How can you reconcile a new nationalist idea with this deeply deep love of the fatherland?}
Herzl acquiesced and conceded that he would not push the Zionist agenda in the land of his birth. He contented himself to call Hungary’s Jews “a desiccated branch on the tree of Jewry,” and to utter the following prophecy, which has oft since been quoted in studies of Hungarian Jewry:

Before long you will have such an antisemitism in Hungary that compared to it our [Austrian antisemitism] will seem like nothing. If I were to force political Zionism there now, they would say that antisemitism was provoked by Zionism. I do not want that. In any case, you will become ours; antisemitism will drive you into our arms.  

The Hungarianizers shared a sense of distance between the Jews of Hungary, Jews living in liberty elsewhere, and “persecuted Jews” in other countries, though differences arose between conceptions of who the persecuted Jews were. Szabolcsi considered Romanian, Persian, and Moroccan Jews as persecuted, and the Jews of France, Germany, England and Holland, as free. For the first group of “wretched persecutees” [nyomorúlt üldözötteknek] every Jewish community in the world was trying to find a new home, in the United States, in Argentina, in Africa, in Palestine, and elsewhere. For the second group, a new home was not needed.

A different writer argued that Russian Jews could be Zionists, since they did not have a home in Russia; another writer wrote that that there were Zionists in Germany and in Austria, because, though these countries allowed Jews civil rights, while “in Austria, the law turned a blind eye towards justice, when one talked about Jews…; there were no Jewish judges, officers, state employees in Germany, [through which positions] Jews could discharge their civil duties.

The Jews of Germany and Austria wanted to free themselves from the oppression; but that they would have never thought of the idea of a Jewish state in the first place, had they not been emancipated themselves. As a result, the author argued (correctly) that Zionism was not a movement initiated by persecuted Jews; it was a truly modern invention. Szabolcsi ensured that these views were echoed by a number of different writers on the pages of the Egyenlőség during the coming year. A non-Jewish writer compared the sufferings of the Hungarian nation through time, with those of the Jews: history’s bright example, he wrote, could confirm, through the example of the Hungarians, that patience, persistence and patriotism could uphold even the dreams of small nations, like the Hungarians.

There remained the difficulty of relating to the ancient homeland of Israel, and of clarifying what it meant for the Jews of Hungary. Dr. Adolf Silberstein wrote in the pages of Szabolcsi’s paper, explaining that ancient Israel “was a historical memory; a magical, mystical mirror image, [which had] nothing to do with the commandments of reality”. Silberstein argued that though the Jews had made a pact with God to keep his commandments, here in Hungary, they had received a home; at any rate, Palestine was a political impossibility. A different article concurred: there was no more Jewish political power; Judaism was only a system of ethical values. The political mission of the Jews was over; Jews were a nation of martyrs, and that had been their political mission, until emancipation; since that had now been completed, there was no way to turn back time.
B/ Beginnings of Hungarianization

From the hints, which the “Communal News” sections of the earliest issues of the Egyenlőség impart (i.e., in the early 1880s), it is possible to hypothetically reconstruct, how a congregation ‘suddenly’ decided to adopt Hungarian as a language of internal communication, and how Hungarianization actually happened, or at least started. It seems as if Hungarianization proceeded on a community-by-community basis, based on both

(a) the efforts of the local leadership to institute Hungarian as the official language of communication within the community, and to fund local Hungarian schools;
(b) grassroots efforts to fund “Hungarianization Societies” which would encourage literacy in the national language.

Both of these types efforts were internally motivated, and achieved spectacular success in the 1880s, in those parts of the Kingdom where Hungarian was not yet spoken by Jews.

a/ Communal Efforts, from Above

By the sounds of things, Hungarianization usually required the efforts of an ‘ardent volunteer,’ or of a charismatic individual, who had been convinced, through personal experience or otherwise, of the need for Hungarianization, and of the beauty of the Hungarian language. The case of the Jewish community in Apostag, a town 76 kilometers south of Budapest, in the center of the modern Hungary, seems to be a case in point. A letter to the Egyenlőség dated 2 January 1884, argued that the community had much to thank the new communal president, Dr. Mór Hetényi, for. He was “one of the most eager members of our community, whose every step is commanded by patriotism, and dedication to our religious denomination”.101 Not long before, the correspondent writes, Dr. Hetényi pushed through the measure that all signs in the synagogue henceforth be written in Hungarian. During the past year, the author concluded, Dr. Hetényi’s activities have been so blessed and so salutary, that he was unanimously voted president of the congregation for a second term: such a magisterial and eminent man as Dr. Hetényi truly deserved the congregation's communal trust and love.102

Such a top-down model seems to have been followed elsewhere. Though the details are unclear, the effects of such top-down implementation seem to have been quite rapid. A different author, writing from Munkács (today: Мукачеве [Mukacheve], Ukraine), wrote of his experiences, in an unnamed town in the County of Sáros (today in eastern Slovakia) in which he had lived in the mid-1870s. The author wrote the following, in May 1883:

It has been eight years, since I have lived in the County of Sáros, which was completely German-speaking [then]. At that time [i.e., probably in 1875], the Hungarian word was as rare there as an oasis in the wasteland [puszta]. Everywhere I went, only German words hit my ears.103

The author explains that some family affairs led him back to Sáros County in the days previous to his writing his letter:

The effects of Hungarianization amongst my coreligionists completely surprised me.
Hungarian is the favorite language of the young generation: its members put in every effort, to see the language spread everywhere.\textsuperscript{104}

But according to the author, learning the language was not limited to the young:

\begin{quote}
It is a joy to see, with what living love, the older generation has for the language of our [national] home.\textsuperscript{105}
\end{quote}

And this author too, emphasized the “true patriotism” with which, the heads of the community and the communal preceptors of education (all “ardent, patriotic men”), acted to “conquer as many areas as possible for Hungarianization”. The same author added to his arguments, by saying that, in the past few months, the congregation at Eperjes (today: Prešov, Slovakia) had months earlier decided that at congregational meetings, only the Hungarian language would be used; that official documents of the congregation would only be written in Hungarian; and that advertisements would likewise only be posted in the national language. The author ended his article with a note saying that this example ought to be copied, for it helped much in the spreading of the Hungarian language.\textsuperscript{106}

A top-down push also seems to have characterized the Hungarianization efforts of the richest Jewish community in the Hungarian Kingdom: the Jewish community of Pest, whose headquarters lay close to the Dohány Street Synagogue. On 2 March 1884, the \textit{Egyenlőség} reported that the president of the community, and later member of Parliament Mór Wahrmann, outlined the community’s goals as follows:

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(a)] emphasizing the “scientific and literary activities” of Jews;
  \item[(b)] helping mold a new generation of youth, by establishing special High Holiday services for them; publishing a Hungarian songbook by the end of the year; and improving the state of communally-run Jewish schools.\textsuperscript{107}
\end{itemize}

Wahrmann emphasized that the community should be the first amongst the communities in the Kingdom; what is most notable from his address is the fact that it emphasizes the education of a new generation of young Hungarian Jews, whose identities would be firmly informed by Hungarianization.

\textbf{b/ Grassroots Efforts: Hungarianization Societies}

The first “Hungarianization Society” operating amongst Jews was founded by students at the medical faculty at the University of Pest in 1843. According to the \textit{Hungarian Jewish Lexicon}, by the following year, it had 400 members, and organized a Hungarian kindergarten, language school; it operated a reading room, where members could check out Hungarian newspapers and works of literature; and it organized literary evenings. In 1848, that Society published the \textit{First Hungarian Jewish Calendar and Yearbook},\textsuperscript{108} which, according to the \textit{Lexicon}, showed to what a high level, Jews could bring their knowledge of the national language, and in what short a period of time.\textsuperscript{109} After the 1848 Revolution, the Hungarianization efforts stopped, until after the period of Austrian absolutism ended. In 1860, a second Hungarianization Society was founded, this time with 600 initial members: that society organized weekly readings
of literature; scheduled Hungarian language courses; published Hungarian readers; and published a similar Hungarian Jewish Calendar and Yearbook.\textsuperscript{10} We do not know much about how these first Hungarianization Societies operated; however, based on reports that the \textit{Egyenlőség} published in the 1880s about other such societies, we can paint a rough sketch of the efforts of Jews to become Hungarian, through such efforts.

We can follow the activities of a \textit{Hungarian Society}, which was founded in December 1883, by a number of Jews in Terézváros, a densely populated district of Budapest. The \textit{Egyenlőség} reported that the purpose of the \textit{Hungarian Society} (\textit{Magyar Egylet}) was to “help as much as possible the spreading of the Hungarian language, national feeling, and the most excellent products of Hungarian literature, in that part of the capital, which is the most backwards in this regard. [...] If [this] \textit{Magyar Egylet} understands well its tasks, and carries them out well, it will carry out a great service not only for the Hungarian Jew, but also for the entire nation.”\textsuperscript{111}

From a sociological perspective, it is interesting to note that this particular Hungarian Society was not a \textit{Jewish} society per se. Though the majority of its members might have been Jews, and though in large part its activities could have been geared towards allowing Jews to become better speakers of the Hungarian language, it is noteworthy that the Association was not exclusive in terms of religious affiliation.

A week later, the \textit{Egyenlőség} reported that at the initial regular meeting of the \textit{Magyar Egylet} the officers of the society had been elected, and the scouring committee had reported that the Society had almost 200 members, and that more were joining at a great pace. The Society had received various offers for a free office location, that one of the members would print advertisements, while another would offer promotional materials free of charge. A great number of books had already been bought, or had been given to the Association free of charge. These would be offered to the needy for free.\textsuperscript{112} A month later, we notice that the Hungarian Association had achieved quite a remarkable degree of popularity. The \textit{Egyenlőség} reported on 28 January 1883, that:

the \textit{Magyar Egylet} organized an immensely successful evening [in the ballroom] of the National Hotel. Appropriate to its name, an honest Hungarian spirit reigned over the evening’s activities. Dr. Géza Kenedi opened the evening, by reading Hungarian literature, for which he was roundly. Then, 150 dinners were served. [The Directors of the Association toasted one another, to] the sounds of the Rákóczi March [one of the unofficial anthems of Hungary], and to booming \textit{éljens} [cheers]. After dinner, the youth danced with merry cheer until dawn. One hundred and twenty pairs danced the quadrille.\textsuperscript{113}

By the description, this sounds very much like an urban, upper-middle-class evening gala event. “Hungarianization” within this context had simply become the excuse for different people to get together, and enjoy each other’s company, all the while participating in the sort of noble goal, which gala dinners are meant to promote. If one separates the performative aspects of the event (the \textit{éljens}, the Rákóczi March, the reading of poetry) from the event itself (the toasts, dinners served, the dancing), one can essentially recognize the contours of any charity event, though we might posit that most of the individuals in attendance had been Jews. \textit{Magyarsodás} had simply
become a fashionable thing to engage in.

It is important to note, that Hungarianization Societies were not a Jewish invention per se. However, the Jews who became adepts at Hungarianizing wholeheartedly adapted the language of Hungarian nationalism – learned from non-Jewish devotees of Hungarian nationalism – for use within their own communities. Here, for example, is a call from the Association for Spreading the Hungarian Language in Zemplén County, which the Egyenlőség published on 18 February:

Proclamation! Only a few years separate us from that time, when our Home's thousand-year foundation celebration. The pages of our nation’s history books are thick with evidence of [our nation’s] unbroken patriotism and wholehearted self-sacrifice, [which] sparkles with glory. [...] Our duty is thus to take into our hands the weapons of the present, and [to] let fly on high the flag, on which the future of the nation and of the Homeland is writ large: [all of this,] according to the traditions of old. [...] Our motto is: FREEDOM. [...] Our goal is the civilization of the general populace, so that public education grow roots as fast as possible within the boundaries of our county, [for] this also has [direct] bearing on the moral life of the nation, and [on] the nation’s economic growth.

The article ended with a call for approximately 100 members, to start such an Association and to send their names to the executive committee in Sátoraljaújhely. This Association also no doubt organized literary evenings, and Hungaro-centric activities; the Jewish membership (if any) of this particular Association is unknown. What is remarkable, though, is the ease with which this model – and this language and tone – of Hungarianization was successfully adopted in Jewish circles.

C/ What Hungarianization Meant

Having thus contextualized and circumscribed the process of Hungarianization, and having described its beginnings, we are ready to examine two of its most visible forms, at the individual and at the communal levels: name changes, and the practice of giving sermons in Hungarian.

a/ At the Individual Level: Name Changes

By far, the most visible effect of Hungarianization was the changing of personal names into Hungarian. It was the deliberate personal policy of the Hungarian Ministry of Interior to encourage this process: indeed, that ministry published on a half-yearly basis, the statistics of the individuals who had changed their names to Hungarian. On the occasion of the Hungarian millennial celebrations of 1896, the Hungarian Heraldic and Genealogical Society collated and published these reports, in the form of a repertory. This volume provides invaluable information as to a social process, which in many ways defined Dualist Hungary. It is unclear, what percentages of name changes were the result of peer pressure; and what percentage were due to genuine dedication to the Hungarian national cause. One of the early writers in the Egyenlőség explained, in not too many words, the increase in name changes in 1884. In an article entitled “About the Name Changes,” he had argued in 1884 that the increase in name changes had been a result of the unrelenting pressure (for the past two years) of two Budapest
newspapers: the Függetlenség (Independence, published 1879-1887) and the Budapesti Hírlap (Budapest Review, published 1881-1938). The first was the newspaper of the National Antisemitic Party; the second was a conservative paper, whose editorial line was nationalist.

It is probably difficult to verify the link between the editorials published in these papers, and the actual incidence of name changes: what is easy to ascertain, though, is that changing one’s name allowed one to carry one’s self with pride and that a new, elegant Hungarian name was a matter of envy. In the first few years of its publication – even and especially (!) during the Tiszaeszlár blood libel trial – the Egyenlőség published a column entitled “Magyarosodunk,” i.e., We are Hungarianizing, which consisted solely of a list of names of individuals who had changed their names.

The individual entries give us a glimpse of the magnitude of the process. For example, on 12 November 1882, the column reported that Mór Mautner, who had a registered address in Kálmáncsa, changed his own name, as well as those of his ten children (Kálmán, Katalin, Berta, Imre, Teréz, Zsigmond, László, Róza, József and Judit) to Mátrai. In the same column, we learn that Ferencz Vlaszty, registered and domiciled in the capital, changed the names of his own and his four children (Gizella, Jenő, János, and Margit) to Varádi. Still in the same column, we also learn how Károly Schiffel (registered in Késmárk, but domiciled in Ungvár) changed the names of his own and his three children’s names Béla, Gusztáv and László to Révész. And finally, Jakab Grosz, originally of Kápolnásszék, but now of Budapest, changed his own and his daughter Pirokka’s name to Gellért. Though these are but individual examples, they all convey the sense of hope, which the current generation placed in its children, by changing their names as well. It is interesting to note that the given names of the children were already Hungarian-sounding, at birth: Kálmán, Katalin, Berta, László, János, Béla, Gusztáv and Pirokka all sound very Hungarian.

A different tendency which the column painfully makes evident is the general mobility of the individuals traced. A week later, one could read in the column that József Schlesinger, registered in Fehértemplom, but now domiciled in Saint Petersburg (Russia), had changed his name to Sugár. One could also read: the minor Rudolf Novoszák, registered in Pozsony, but born and domiciled in Pécs, took the name of Graf, after his percepteur, Gratián Graf. Adolf Weltner, registered in Keszthely, but living in Budapest, after the maiden name of his mother – who is referred to as Mrs. Adolf Weltner – Báronyi Lujza, took the name Baronyi. (His father’s name, evidently, had not been Hungarian enough).

The Egyenlőség took great pride in publishing statistics: on 20 March 1883, it happily proclaimed that according to the Interior Ministry, the Minister had authorized 1065 name changes during the past year, of which 560 had been for those of Jewish religion. This tendency to demonstrate with numbers the efforts of individuals further increased the sense of legitimacy, which the Jewish communities of Hungary felt, when noting the progress of Hungarianization. By 1897, the Egyenlőség was no longer publishing individual names of people who had changed their names, but the Interior Ministry was still collecting and publishing this information. The paper reported with glee on 29 August 1897, that in the first half of the year, 822 individual requests for a name change had been approved by the ministry. This was 139 cases (or 16.91%) more than during the same period in the previous year; 475 of the cases (so
57.78%) of the applications had come from Jews; almost all name changes happened in the capital. These numbers certainly hint at the tendency of name changers to move to, or to be in, the capital; the numbers also confirm the popularity of name changes amongst Jews. However, we should not overlook the fact that Jews were not the only ones changing their names: and that this was a general social phenomenon, in which Jews also participated, as regular members of society.

To return to the statistics published by the Egyenlőség: the satisfactory results were due in no small measure due to the efforts of the Central Association for the Hungarianization of Names (központi névmagyarosító társaság), which we might surmise was a specifically Jewish association. The Association’s president, Simon Telkes, was an economics writer. In a backhanded manner, the article gives some of the reasons why individuals chose to change their names. Some names ‘sounded unusual’ [szokatlan hangzású], such as Bienenstock, who became Bárdi, or Bogenglück, who became Bogdány, or still Chajmovits Lajzer, who became Borsovai. Other names were felt to be derisory [gúnyos], such as Katz (who became Kovács), or Kapusza (which means ‘sauerkraut’), who became Lipcses, and Schmutzer, who became Szegő. The author of the article complained that it was unfortunately typical, that the Jews did not take up some of the more ancient Hungarian names, even though they were generally criticized for not doing so. This comment might allow us to make the subtle point, that Jews still preferred names, which could lead to a sublimated sense of group identity: although this is just conjecture.

The most instructive part of this specific article is that which concatenates the names that Jews chose to abandon, and from which we can learn which names were felt to be most Jewish-sounding (and thus the most to be avoided). In the first half of 1897, six Blaus, four Fridmanns, ten Rosenfelds, six Rosenzweigs, nine Rosenbergs, twenty-five Weiszes, eight Schlesingers, five Löwys, thirteen Sterns, 19 Kleins, and 58 Kohns took on “new, suitable and correct Hungarian names”. Of course, there seems to have been plenty more individuals with the name ‘Kohn’ in the Kingdom. In a derisory tone mocking the entire enterprise of magyarisation, the Viennese Zionist paper Die Welt noted a few years later that the Kohns of the Kingdom were probably the most unhappy with their names, for (according to the statistics of the Interior Ministry) published for the first half of 1902, no less than 95 Kohns had taken on new, fully, Hungarian-sounding names for themselves. “The lucky ones!” crowed Die Welt.

b/ At the Communal Level: Sermons in Hungarian

Having examined the most personal aspect of Hungarianization, what did it mean for rabbis across the country to give sermons in the national language, and to publicly display the allegiance of their community to the nation? I would argue that the Hungarian-language sermon was the first instance whereby a clear mixing of cultures took place, where of Jewish content was married to Hungarian aesthetics. Such a mix was quite new, and experimental for those involved, but it seems to have been a rather natural outgrowth of the need and the desire to learn a new language.

We see this clear mixing of characteristics in a critique, which the Egyenlőség published in 1888 about a sermon given by Lipót Kecskevényi, then a student at the National Rabbinical Seminary, and later the Chief Rabbi of Nagyvárad (today: Oradea, Romania). He was praised
for possessing “rare, beautiful Hungarianness, poetic élán [lendület], exquisite idiom, sumptuous performance, beauteous movement, superior, and flexible [?] voice and - which is by no means trifling – [an]engaging and handsome manly build are the characteristics of Dr. Kecskeméti.”138

And yet, the newspaper critiqued Kecskeméti’s sermon, for “still lack[ing] something, which generally constitutes, the nucleus, the most engaging part of the Jewish sermon. We missed the thought [eszme], the galvanizing verse explication. Upon the Jewish believer, the biggest effect is still – and this has to stay as such – the “drásá” style of the sermon [quotes in the original].”139

The word “drásá” is a Hungarian transliteration of the Hebrew word, meaning sermon. The verse explication was what the Jewish believer kept, and what he passed on to his neighbors. “Though [the believer] does not recapitulate the flowers of language (lit. nyelvvirágokat) [which he heard], but he tells his neighbor, he tells him with gleaming eyes, how the priest [i.e., rabbi] explained this or that “poszuk”140 or midrás.141 With regards to this, those who listened to Dr. Kecskeméti left the temple empty.”

Of course, the author of the article conceded that Dr. Kecskeméti could easily improve on the difficulties here mentioned.142 The author would like the sermon to be delivered according to the highest aesthetic standards, with the the diction, and the choice of words, the equivalent to those used by the best Hungarian poets. On the other hand, the sermon should also be – as much as possible, a Jewish sermon. It should be centered on the explication of Biblical texts (which, too, had been translated into Hungarian), and it should leave the listener in awe at both God’s word, and at the preacher’s ability to convey it.

D/ The Role of the Egyenlőség in Promoting Hungarianization

a/ The Role of Miksa Szabolcsi

Through the columns it published, the statistics it conveyed, and the letters to the editor it printed, Szabolcsi’s newspaper allowed Jews in the Hungarian-speaking part of the Kingdom of Hungary to feel a sense of community, which eventually allowed them to feel a sense of distance between themselves and Jewish communities elsewhere, on the basis of national identity. Reliable statistics for readership are difficult to come by, but during the first years of its existence, Szabolcsi’s paper answered letters to the editor from 170 different localities, most of which were rural places, within the Kingdom of Hungary.

The newspaper indelibly bore the stamp of Szabolcsi’s energy, pragmaticism, and – as described by his son, in the latter’s memoirs – conservatism. Lajos Szabolcsi characterized his father Miksa as follows:

Conservatism in religious matters; sharp opposition to pushes [törekvés] for reform. [...] [His] conservatism meant a half-way meeting point with Orthodoxy: somewhat like what German Modern Orthodoxy was like. So, a European way of worship, but true religiosity [hívő vallásosság]. No kaftans, but no services on Sunday, either. No harming of the Hebrew text, but sermons in Hungarian. No [religious] reform, but no fanatical zealousness [vakbuzgóság] either.
Lajos Szabolcsi noted that, for the “Jewish masses” who were “thrown about” in Hungary between the zealous Jews of the East and the incredulous Jews of the West, the program encouraged by Miksa Szabolcsi truly became their credo.\textsuperscript{143}

Miksa Szabolcsi’s conservatism essentially meant that he wanted to help create a new, Hungarian-Jewish cultural sphere. The elements and models at his disposal were Talmudic wisdom and rabbinic literature, to which he had been exposed as a child, in yeshiva, German literature and language, to which he had been exposed as a young man, and Hungarian language and literature, which he devoured as a mature adult. Thus, the Hungarian-Jewish culture, which Miksa Szabolcsi helped create ended up being a unique, mix, which combined elements of \textit{all} three cultural spheres. It was this unique combination, expressed in the Hungarian language, that essentially ended up becoming the culture of Hungarian Jews.

The seemingly contradictory nature of the sentiments inherent to this new culture indicate its complexity. Take for example the arena of politics. Szabolcsi had a most positive attitude towards the land of Israel though he decried Zionism. His paper regularly printed articles about the new Jewish colonies in Palestine; he personally visited the Holy Land, and wrote about it; and he was one of the earliest supporters of Israel Zangwill’s autonomist project. Compare, for example, Szabolcsi’s exchange with Herzl, above, with the conversation he had with Zangwill in Vienna in late 1912. Zangwill asked Szabolcsi what could the Austrian and Hungarian Jews do for territorialism? Szabolcsi answered that “Hungarian Jews could do everything, because there was no Zionism in Budapest.” Within a couple of months in 1913, Szabolcsi and his friends had helped create the Hungarian branch of Zangwill’s Jewish Territorial Organization, with 42 chapters across the Kingdom, and more than a thousand members.\textsuperscript{144} Szabolcsi gladly printed a translation of \textit{Hatikva},\textsuperscript{145} as an example of modern Hebrew literature;\textsuperscript{146} and his son remarked that if we look at the Hungarian Jewish events of the first decade of the twentieth century from the vantage of \textit{Egyenlőseg}, we see that “though it was not called Zionism, there was a religious Palestine cult in the Hungarian Jewish hearts, as in no other country.”\textsuperscript{147}

One of our best ways of noting how Szabolcsi personally encouraged the intermeshing of cultures, is by looking at his answers to letters he received. These were often quite long; and though we do not have the original questions, these letters paint a fascinating portrait of the man and his ideology. So fond was Szabolcsi of quoting from the Talmud and other rabbinic literature that he sometimes even printed the original Hebrew text alongside his answer. On 15 January 1888, for example, Szabolcsi quoted the Talmud three times in his answers to a certain Dr. G. Ph.:

\textit{Rabbi Jeremiah [son of] Abba said: Four classes will not receive the presence of the Shechinah: the class of scoffers, the class of flatterers, the class of liars, and, the class of slanderers.}\textsuperscript{148} The Nobleman [about whom Szabolcsi’s interlocutor had complained] scoffs, lies, flatters and slanders out of hobby, nature or malice, and still acts as if the Shechinah, the angelic chorus, and the Holy One are his friends. And you Gentlemen... believe him!\textsuperscript{149}

In a different letter on the same day, he answered to a certain P-G that the Talmudic word “hedjut” [sic] reminded one of the word “idiot”.\textsuperscript{150} On a different occasion, Szabolcsi used the
Talmud to explain Hungarian election results.\textsuperscript{151} He was equally happy to engage his readers by solving Hebrew riddles,\textsuperscript{152} telling jokes from his yeshiva days,\textsuperscript{153} and to regularly publish aphorisms from rabbinic literature, which he collected into a book towards the end of his career.\textsuperscript{154}

One of the things which Szabolcsi was talented at, was finding a correct Hungarian word for a specific Jewish need. In doing so, Szabolcsi was a transposer, and a translator of Jewish concepts and ideas, into Hungarian, which was specifically what Jews in Hungary were in need of, or at least he thought they were in need of, at the end of the nineteenth century. One of Szabolcsi’s interlocutors had written to him about the establishment of a society to help the relatives of sick heads of families, and also poor women lying in sick beds. The society’s founding members had chosen the name *Miszgov Ladoch* for their new society: this is the Hungarianized transliteration of the Ashkenazi pronunciation of the Hebrew words *Miszgov Ladoch* which appear in Psalm 9:10, and mean “help for the needy,” or “haven for the oppressed.”\textsuperscript{155} For some reason, the Interior Ministry had not accepted the words *Miszgov Ladoch* as the name of the association, on account of the fact that this was not a Hungarian name and so the founding members had written to Szabolcsi for advice, and the following was his response:

What an intriguing [situation]! [...] In the end, [names of societies such as] *Chevra Kadisa*,\textsuperscript{156} *Talmud Tora*,\textsuperscript{157} *Poel Czedek*,\textsuperscript{158} *Malbis Arumin*,\textsuperscript{159} *Tiferesz Bachurim*,\textsuperscript{160} *Eczi Chajim*,\textsuperscript{161} *Tomech Oni*,\textsuperscript{162} *Kanfé N’sorim*,\textsuperscript{163} [my italics] and so on, also cannot be said to be somewhat deeply-rooted Scythian appellations [i.e., Hungarian-sounding names], but this aside, innumerable Jewish associations with like names [similar to yours] live well, and in peace. However, if the minister would like a Hungarian translation next to the Hebrew name, this is a just legal requirement. The meaning of “Miszgov Ladoch” can be aptly conveyed by the Hungarian word *Segítség* [meaning ‘help’].\textsuperscript{164}

Szabolcsi suggested that the new society be called “Segítség – Miszgov Ladoch” and that the founding members include a verse explication with their new application. From Szabolcsi’s answer, we can clearly see the desire to help find an appropriate, Hungarian name for a clearly Jewish society. The word “Segítség” conveys none of the hidden, cultural references to the Psalm in question, and yet it is difficult to see what the alternatives might have been, since the context of rabbinic explication surrounding this Biblical reference did not yet exist in Hungarian.

The Hungarian translation of the Bible by Gáspár Károlyi – the standard, classical Hungarian translation – translates the Hebrew words *Miszgov Ladoch* as “nyomorultak kővára” i.e., roughly, the *fortress of the wretched*.\textsuperscript{165} However, a society with such a name would have been a laughing-stock for the entire Hungarian-speaking community of the Kingdom, Jews included. Clearly, then, if the Biblical reference could not be kept, a suitable alternative had to be found. Hence, Szabolcsi’s suggestion, for a simple, but poignant alternative.

b/ Encouraging the Emergence of Jewish Literature in Hungarian

There is no space within the confines of this chapter, to survey the entire extent of what might be called “Hungarian Jewish literature.”\textsuperscript{166} What we can say, however, is that like Ludwig
Philipsson, founder and editor of Germany’s leading Jewish newspaper, the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, Szabolcsi encouraged the development of Jewish-themed short stories and poems, from the very moment that he became the paper’s editor-in-chief. The short stories were usually original, though the paper also published translations of Jewish-themed literature from other languages. The poetry mostly consisted of Biblical translations; and of original, patriotic fugues on occasions of national importance.

Not all of the literature was of great quality: but the purpose was to encourage a young generation of writers to consider writing about Jewish themes in the national language. Here for example is a snippet, describing a case of unrequited, Jewish love in a Hungarian country setting, from Lipót Kompert’s novel “Kadis” (i.e., “Kaddish” – the choice of title is unknown), which the *Egyenlőség* published in tens of installments through the 1880s:

The attention with this Jákó overloaded Blümele, pierced deep into the heart of Mayer. He felt as if now, he should with all of his energy, free Blümele from Jákó's net. He was of a peaceful personality, but all of a sudden, he became like a lion. He opened both of his arms towards Blümele. ‘Great God!’ shouted Jákó with mock fear, while he led Blümele backwards a few steps. ‘Let us return a little, before it is not too late, before he does not clutch us to death; he is like a spider, when it wants to become full of a fly.’

The objective in this melodrama, a story about young Jews in the Hungarian countryside, experiencing the first joys (and pains) of love, is clear. And the broader point is that the *Egyenlőség* was willing to lend its pages be a sounding board, for the eventual development of truly artistic, new aesthetic forms, over time.

The nascent, Hungarian Jewish literature, which Szabolcsi’s paper encouraged, also served as a platform for discussing the subtle realities of Jewish existence in Hungary, at the time. In the 1890s, the newspaper serially published a novel by Samu Haber, entitled “One Religion, Two Religions”. The literary premise were the difficulties encountered by a Jew, who wandered rural Hungary, in the hopes of obtaining the approval of some Orthodox rabbis, for the establishment of a new Jewish community (called, in Hebrew, a *kehilla*, or, in the Ashkenazi spelling transliterated into Hungarian: a *kile*). Haber’s story poked fun at the infighting between the various Jewish communities in Hungary, and at the often meaningless, trivial intrigues, which resulted from the simple request to a board of rabbis, to have a new community approved.

It is difficult to convey the originality and meaning, in English, of the Hungarian translations of Biblical and Hebrew poetry, which Szabolcsi encouraged. Amongst the many who submitted translations, was the internationally recognized poet József Kiss (1843-1921), who (according to the Israeli-Hungarian historian Anna Szalai) first “wrote within existing Hungarian literary traditions,” and whose later “historical, folk- and Jewish ballads became most popular”. According to Szalai, Kiss’s “later poetry and verse novels dealt mainly with urban topics but were noteworthy also for their Jewish subject matter”. Szabolcsi’s paper often published patriotic-sounding poetry, such as the following ode to the Emperor, published on the occasion of his 1892 Jubilee:
Majesty!
Your soul buried, embraced, melted us
into this holy land’s bosom.
We became the Homeland’s loyal sons,
Hungarian became our language.
The Magyar now the Jew his brother declares.
The Jew’s every heartbeat resonates for this lands;
and if needed, he flashes for it his sword.\(^{171}\)

Such poems allowed the readers of the *Egyenlőség* to partake in the patriotism in the national language. Moreover, it extended the reach of this patriotism to all of the paper’s readers.

c/ Their Own History

Finally, the *Egyenlőség* often published the proceedings of the communal meetings from around the Hungarian-speaking parts of the country. In so doing these reports of institutional successes (i.e., the establishment of new schools, synagogues, associations, and so forth) eventually allowed Jews in Hungary to feel a distinct sense of corporate, communal identity, which separated them, from Jews elsewhere.

In early 1888, for example, the newspaper published the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Pest Israelite Community, where, among other nationally pressing issues, the delegates debated the coming establishment of a Jewish high school (*gimnázium*) in the capital. In his address to the delegates, the community president Mór Wahrmann noted the achievements of his community with great joy. Members of his community had advocated for the abolition of the Tolerance Tax in 1806, had instigated the legal push for (partial) Jewish emancipation at the sessions of the Hungarian parliament in 1825, 1832, 1839 and 1840, had helped found the first Hungarianization Society in 1840, had participated with glory in the 1848 revolution, and had established, since 1867, numerous associations for Hungarian Jews. Clearly, given this illustrious history, the Pest congregation now had to take a leading role in establishing the Jewish high school.\(^{172}\)

The year 1892 was the jubilee of the Emancipatory Law, and with it, Jews in Hungary could celebrate many of the unique aspects, of their history, which they felt, distinguished them from other Jews. As examples: in 1892, the community in Miskolc conveyed its pride in having had Hungarian sermons delivered in its synagogue, for 25 years.\(^{173}\) In the same year, the *Hungarian Israelite National Teachers’ Association* could look back on a quarter-century of educational achievements: Hungarian-Jewish readers published, lesson plans shared, national conventions organized.\(^{174}\) And finally, there was a sense in which the children born since Emancipation were the first of a new type of modern Jew: Árpád Zempléni, wrote in 1892 that, ”still young [were] those Jews, who in Hungary [have been] born into freedom. They are altogether only 25 years of age. Still, these 25 years have created a new era, and a new generation.”\(^{175}\)

A belief in their own sense of uniqueness (and a desire to create their own narrative), as well as an implantation of that sense uniqueness in the new generation, were the twin tools, with
which Hungarianization successfully became the ideology of Hungarian Jews. By establishing their own history as separate from Jews elsewhere, the adherents of Hungarianization could establish their own, unique, independent criteria for legitimacy; by transferring this ideology to their children, they ensured that the ideology would be adhered to. Children who grew up “in freedom,” as Zempléni wrote, considered the ideology of Hungarianization as their own. Later generations would seek to question Hungarianization from within its confines, but not the ideology itself.

**E/ Effects of Hungarianization**

The effects of Hungarianization were numerous, and, as stated above, resulted primarily in an organic mixing of Jewish cultural content, with German and European literary references, voiced in the Hungarian national language. Two of the most important effects of this mixture were the importation of Jewish words into Hungarian, and the subtle, yet unacknowledged importance of the Habsburg Empire to the stability of Hungarian-Jewish identity.

**a/ Jewish Words in Hungarian**

Until now, we have come across two instances of the use of transliterated, Hebrew words in Hungarian. When discussing Rabbi Kecskeméti’s sermon, and when discussing Miksa Szabolcsi’s suggestion for the Hungarian appellation of the *Miszgov Ladoch* society we made use of a number of words of Jewish origin, which had been transliterated for the purposes of conveying to a Hungarian-speaking Jewish audience a specifically Jewish message, which had originally been conveyed with Hebrew words in a Yiddish linguistic setting. For example, in the article about Rabbi Kecskeméti, above, the author uses the words *drásá* (Hebrew for ‘sermon’), *poszuk* (Hebrew for ‘Biblical verse’) and *midrás* (Hebrew for ‘Biblical explication’), to convey concepts not natively available to him in Hungarian. It is notable that the first two of the words are used in quotes, indicating that the author felt as though these were not fully Hungarian words yet; the word *midrás* was not used in quotes, which thus indicates its more widespread acceptance.\(^{176}\) Similarly, Szabolcsi’s letter about the *Miszgov Ladoch* society lists a number of Jewish societies with Hebrew names, which had been transliterated.\(^{177}\)

The transliteration, and eventual acceptance, of foreign words into the native language of a locality is not a new phenomenon. (The *Oxford English Dictionary*, for example, traces the use in English of the word “Midrash” to 1613.) The adoption of Hungarian transliterations for words of a Jewish context appeared clearly in the second half of the nineteenth century, as a direct result, of the process of Hungarianization and thus, Hungarianization enriched the Hungarian language itself in many ways.

The four-volume *The Historical-Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language* lists at least seven words, which entered the Hungarian language in the second half of the nineteenth century, which became common coinage. The word *tréfli*,\(^{178}\) originally from the Hebrew *tre’fah* (meaning food forbidden to eat) was first recorded in 1845, the form of *traif*, in a romantic novel by the Hungarian Baron Miklós Jósika.\(^{179}\) The word *samesz* (from the Hebrew for beadle) was a more recent addition: its use in Hungarian was first noted in a large encyclopedia in 1897, and then in the weekly comic paper *Borsszem Jankó*, in 1912.\(^{180}\) The transliteration of the Yiddish
word for ‘sidelocks,’ \textit{pajesz}, was noted in 1884, in a humorous work by the Hungarian author Sándor Teleki (1821-1892).\textsuperscript{181}

But loanwords into Hungarian were not limited to words of a specifically religious origin. The use of the word \textit{mázi}, from the Hebrew \textit{mazal}, meaning luck, was traced to a Hungarian text of 1882.\textsuperscript{182} The less obviously Jewish-sounding word \textit{pacák} – a colloquial word denoting “bloke” or “guy” – first appeared in Hungarian in 1880. The dictionary was uncertain of the origins of this word, but posited that its roots lay in the Yiddish \textit{parzef} (meaning cheek, or the jowl of an animal, or a mask), and the Talmudic Aramaic \textit{partsuf} meaning face.\textsuperscript{183} The word \textit{haver}, a colloquial form of saying “pal,” or “buddy” first appeared in 1862: it is of clear Hebrew origin, from the word for \textit{chaver}, for friend.\textsuperscript{184} (Here, the dictionary felt compelled to note that in Hungarian, this was a word of the slang, and only used in the informal language of everyday life.) So too with the word \textit{hapsi},\textsuperscript{185} which one could approximate with the American English “dude”, which first appeared in 1924, as a truncated and modified version of \textit{haver}.

But these entries do not convey the sense of insecurity one faces, when first rendering a word from one linguistic background, into another. Szabolcsi himself, at times did not know how to render a specific, Yiddish linguistic situation into his adopted, national tongue, and resorted to transliteration. He once described the following scene, in a letter to one of his readers:

\begin{quote}
I was a child, when I first saw the “rebbe” [the quotes are Szabolcsi’s]. He was a wandering “saint,” who came to my since-deceased father with the words: “\textit{B’ách elech tāke essen},” which one can translate as: I will indeed eat by you. My father was not in the least touched by this distinction; he warned the thaumaturge that in his house, the food was no more kosher than at the houses of the other Jews of the village; and thus, if the “rebbe” had religious scruples, he could not eat by Szabolcsi’s father either. The “rebbe” became wide-eyed, pulled a few times on his hirsute \textit{torzonborz} beard, winked roguishly with his eyes, and responded speciously \textit{fifikusan}: “I do not want to eat here, because it is not Kosher enough elsewhere; but because, in the other houses, they will not give [me] to eat!”\textsuperscript{186}
\end{quote}

Why did Szabolcsi feel compelled to convey the rebbe’s line in transliterated Yiddish? We will probably never know. We can probably guess, though, that there was a communal, situational sense to that particular line, which he felt, could not quite be captured by his Hungarian translation of the events and, indeed, of the other parts of the exchange. And, momentarily, this discomfort even overrode Szabolcsi’s ardent desire to convey the story in Hungarian, to an audience, which was just beginning to converse and reflect in the new national language.

\textbf{b/ The Habsburg Context of Hungarian Jewishness}

In their ardent super-patriotism, the Hungarianizers often liked to forget that the Kingdom of Hungary was still only one of the parts of the Habsburg Empire, and that, even as Magyars, the Jews of Hungary owed allegiance to the Habsburg Emperor-and-King. Of course, this allegiance was often explained away as follows: the Jews only praised the Emperor because the Emperor had been chosen by the Hungarians as the \textit{King of the Hungarians}; they praised the
Emperor first as Hungarians and only then as Jews; they prayed for the Emperor only in Hungarian. But the fact of the matter is that loyalty to the House of Habsburg was an essential and unquestioned, basic tenet of the Hungarian-Jewish ideology, which developed in the Dualist period.

The Kingdom-wide, Jewish celebrations, which were held in honor of Franz Josef I’s twenty-fifth jubilee on the Habsburg throne in 1892, and on which, the Egyenlőség reported, allow us to assess the specific role, which loyalty to the Habsburgs played in the consciousness of the Hungarianizers. Miksa Szabolcsi himself expressed the following views, in a front-page article:

We would have to write down that which cannot be written, if we were to paint that warmth, that heart and soul traversing enthusiasm, and enchantment, with which our Hungarian nation just finished celebrating the truly glorious days of its King. [...] We took part in this celebration as children of the Hungarian nation, with which we feel togetherness, and with which together we have melted, and become one; but we participated also, as Jews. [For] holy feelings of thankfulness fill us towards the kindly king and the chivalrous nation, [both of whom] almost 25 years ago, accepted into the ranks of political and civil equality, those Hungarians, who believe in the Israelite faith, and worship the One God.  

Whether by historical accident, or political design, the Jews of Hungary were emancipated a little over six months after the Ausgleich. These two political events were thus linked in the ideology of communal memory and identity, which Jews in Hungary developed in the years of Dualism. The political system, which developed under Dualism gave political dominance to Hungarian nationalism, within the Kingdom of Hungary. This same political system is also what had allowed for the emancipation of the Jews, hence, the self-conception, which Jews in Hungary developed under Dualism also reflected both the allegiance of the Jewish communities to the Magyars, and to the Habsburgs (who had given the Magyars the rightful internal autonomy, which the Magyars deserved).

I would argue that loyalty to the Habsburgs served to temper the demands of Hungarianness, by introducing a subtle, yet forceful limit on rhetoric. The mixture of cultural elements, which occurred as a result, is evident in the celebrations themselves. On the occasion of the Jewish jubilee celebration for Franz Josef, “the almost boundless, beautiful hall [of the Great Dohány Synagogue in Budapest] was filled until its last crevice by an audience, dressed in its best attire. The enormous, double gallery was filled with [the] most illustrious women and young ladies. [...] On the stand [stood] the congregational president, [dressed] in sumptuous diszmagyar [the ceremonial attire traditionally worn by Hungarian noblemen] with a sword by his side, surrounded by the congregational leaders. [...] Adolf Lazarus, [the teacher and Chief Cantor] sang the twenty-first psalm ravishingly, with choral accompaniment.”

Rabbi Sámuel Kóhn gave a sermon in Hungarian, peppered with verse explications. The evening ended with singing of the Hungarian National Anthem, and the Hungarian translation of Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser, the Habsburg anthem. The article concluded with a vignette about the congregational president – Mór Wahrmann – leaving the sanctuary after the service. He was
wearing a typically Hungarian hat called a kalpag, which was decorated with the feather of an aigrette-heron; he was wearing boots and spurs; and over his shoulder he had thrown a Hungarian decorative cloth called a mentőj, decorated with gold.\textsuperscript{189}

This scene offers a complex mix of Jewish, Hungarian and Habsburgtreue elements. Specifically, we see a Jewish ceremony, in a Hungarian linguistic and sartorial setting, whose objective is the glorification of the Habsburg King, on the occasion of his jubilee. Loyalty to the Habsburgs served as an important super-limit, and a means of tempering the heated, flowery, rhetoric Hungarian nationalism. The scene – and the peculiar mixture of Jewish loyalty in Hungarian to the Austrian Emperor – was repeated everywhere in Budapest, and throughout the Kingdom, in roughly the same proportions, though with local varitions. In the synagogue on Rombach street, in Budapest, Chief Cantor Bachmann led the service, and Dr. Adolf Büchler, a student of the National Rabbinical Seminary, expounded, through some Biblical verses the “\textit{dual meaning of the day}” [my italics] in a “flowery, elevated tone [and in] beautiful Hungarian language”.\textsuperscript{190} Of course, the dual meaning of the day here referred to the Jewish celebration of both the Ausgleich and of Emancipation. In the Rombach street synagogue, the reporter emphasized that Rabbi Pollák read a beautifully written Hungarian prayer to the Emperor; in the Óbuda suburb of Budapest, “Dr. Gyula Klein’s beautifully worded, Hungarian explications” adorned the service. Even in places where the rabbi did not yet speak Hungarian, the goal was to emphasize the patriotic nature of the sermon.\textsuperscript{191}

Over the month of June 1892, the \textit{Egyenlőség} reported on more than seventy such celebrations, Kingdom-wide. Non-Jewish dignitaries were often invited to the celebrations, as in Miskolc:

The temple swimming in a sea of light gave an imposing picture: in its first rows, the local army officers, with at their head Field Marshall Baron Albori; the chamber of commerce, the industrial group, the teachers of the schools, the Catholic priests, [and] the reformed priests, with Bertalan Kún at their head.

The author described how Cantor Wolfgang with the choir sang a number of “ecclesiastical songs” (probably psalms), after which Chief Rabbi M. Rosenfeld gave an “eloquent, Hungarian speech for the occasion,” and then gave a “touching prayer for the King and his Consort”. The evening ended with the singing of the (Hungarian) National Anthem.\textsuperscript{192} Likewise, in the small town of Mór, in Western Hungary, Rabbi P. Büchler also gave an “effective, Hungarian address” which the best of the city’s Christian intelligentsia also listened to.\textsuperscript{193}

These scenes show that, despite the anti-German feeling, which Hungarianization implied and encouraged, staying \textit{Habsburgtreue} was the outer limit of all feelings of Hungarian exuberance, for the Jews involved. Though it was probably unacknowledged on a daily basis, in the Dualist Period, Hungarian Jewishness was bounded within a direct and unchallenged allegiance to the Habsburgs. This limit served to maintain a sense of balance.
F/ Conclusion: Assessment of Hungarianization

The Viennese Jewish press was a most vocal critic of the project of magyaro sódás. Two different articles194 in the Viennese Jewish weekly Die Neuzeit, in the late 1880s, tried to understand “the spread of indifference with respect to religious issues, and the growth of indolence with respect to Jewish interests, amongst my [emphasis added] coreligionists in Hungary”. 195 Both articles ascribed this indifference and indolence to what the Viennese Zionist press had once called the Magyarisierungsmanie. 196 The Neuzeit argued vehemently that Hungarianization led to the cultural degeneration of the Jews of Hungary; however, it seems as if the Viennese press either did not fully understand the reasons behind Hungarianization or, if it did, that its critique of this social process was rooted in a pronounced Viennese sense of cultural superiority. The Neuzeit argued that

the root causes for the degeneration of Torah study, and the disrespect of the ceremonial laws – and [thus for] indifference and indolence, lay not in the spread of Realism, but in the fact that [the leadership of] both [the Neolog and the Orthodox] factions have been inundated by a large group of ignoramuses.197

Since the Mendelssohnian period, the Jews of Hungary had participated in the cultural life of the West, through their exposure to and knowledge of German, and of German-Jewish literature. Now, the article complained, that link had been broken, by both the Orthodox and the “Romantically inclined” [i.e., Neolog] communities. The author continued:

Magyarisation was carried out with a whip. As such, the lifeblood [Lebensnerv] from which for one hundred years, Hungarian Jewry [had drawn] its juices and invigoration, has been killed. [...] The imprudent and rushed Magyarisation mania has fooled the crowds. Careerists [Streber] have gotten the upper hand. [...] Because of partiality, the dissemination of Jewish-German Literature and Bildung [has been] done away with; [has been] labeled a crime and stamped “Betrayal of the Fatherland”....

In our midst, when the hunt [against German-Jewish elements] began, no one was found, to till this field. There was a deficit of Jewish knowledge and feeling. Today, we need no such [German-Jewish] literature; even if Judaism stumbles, no one cares. The cost of Magyarisation, was that Jewish spiritual life, which prevails in the family and the community, has been sacrificed. That is the root cause, why indifference and indolence have so rapidly received the upper hand. The leaders of the Hungarian Jews have misled us.198

The second article reiterated the problems of the “disappearance of every Jewish feeling in youth, and the unbounded indifference in manhood,” more subtly, but found the reasons behind it in the fact that “school and synagogue, the nursery of the youth and the prayer rooms of the adults, lack[ed] every feeling, with which they were once filled,” and with the reality that both “teachers and rabbis disavow[ed] the essence of Jewish education and of Jewish indoctrination”. The Neuzeit bemoaned the watered down Jewish content, which students at Jewish high schools received. The lack in religiosity could be ascribed to a laxity in paying the ecclesiastical tax.199 The Egyenlőség could not resist striking back. Since when could Hungarian Jews only cultivate
themselves in German? The Neuzeit had it all wrong, for it thought that

Hungarian Jewry [was] not Jewry anymore, but Magyar barbarians one-to-one, who sport twisted mustachios, csardas hats and boots with spurs, and whose rabbis also only give their sermons on horseback.\footnote{200}

Hungarianization had three different effects. First, the dedication and honesty with which an entire generation of Jews in Hungary learned and appropriated for themselves the Hungarian language and Hungarian nationalism, was a successful process of cultural transformation. Second, on the economic level, Hungarianization allowed for massive Jewish participation in the modernization, industrialization, and economic development of Hungary’s economy under Dualism. Unfortunately, Hungarianization was unsuccessful in stemming the tide of antisemitism in Hungary, and of preventing the kind of national rejection, which Herzl predicted.

In 1908 the \textit{Egyenlőség} reported on an orchestral evening put on by the Israelite Teachers’ College:

The alumni association of the Israelite Teachers’ College organized a truly successful evening last Saturday night at the \textit{Royal}, under the direction of Vilmos Szilágyi, the Director-in-Chief of the Budapest Comical Theatre [\textit{Vígszínház}]. On the programme were Ilona Komlóssy, Sándor Papír, Lajos Győző, [and ] Arabella Szilágyi. The audience clapped with special enthusiasm for Dezső Smetana, who delivered a few Schubert songs with heartfelt, masterful artistry. Henrik Stroke, who appeared both as a performer and a composer, also received the acknowledgement of the audience. Dancing followed the performance.\footnote{201}

In this report we see how the Hungarian language and European culture in general, had worked to transform Jewish identity in Hungary. Above, we noted the evening organized by the Hungarian Society in the Terézváros, in January 1884. That evening had been marked by an ostentatious display of Hungarian symbols. I would argue that this was all the more so because the individuals participating in that evening, had not yet become entirely comfortable in their newly acquired, Hungarian and European vestments. They were still very much in the process of \textit{magyarosítás}, of “becoming like the Hungarians.” By contrast, those who attended the evening at the \textit{Royal} in 1908, were fully comfortable, in their new cultural skins.
Chapter Three
Hungarian Ideologies for Jewish Children

The previous chapters of this dissertation have made the case that becoming Hungarian meant learning a narrative of Hungarianness from the environment and then reformulating it and adapting it for Jewish communal use. Thus, Chapter One detailed the efforts of Budapest Chief Rabbi Sámuel Kóhn to learn the names of Hungarian poets and writers in an effort to pepper his weekly Hungarian sermons with adequate cultural references to the Hungarian literary canon. Similarly, Chapter Two examined the efforts of Miksa Szabolcsi, editor in chief of one of the most successful Hungarian-language Jewish weekly Egyenlőség, to create an organic version of Hungarian-Jewishness which incorporated elements from both the Hungarian and the Jewish literary canons. The previous two chapters have argued that the Jewish communities of Hungary embarked on the cultural project of Hungarianization in the Dualist Period. In other words they sought to replace the Yiddish and German-language culture of their predecessors with a Hungarian-language Jewish culture that they felt was their own.

This chapter continues the examination of the Hungarian-Jewish ideology as it developed in the Dualist Period. I focus on the means through which the narrative of Hungarian-Jewishness emerged through a unique cultural product: reading books meant to solidify the Hungarian language skills of Jewish children who were attending Jewish elementary schools across the country. I make the argument that the streamlining and codification of the Hungarian-Jewish narrative prepared for Jewish children attending Jewish public schools in Hungary was the result of three factors:

(a) the development of Jewish elementary public schools;
(b) the version of the assimilationist ‘contract’ which the Jewish communities chose to follow;
(c) the professionalization and institutionalization of certain aspects of the narrative due to the continued activities of the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute and the National Association of Israelite Teachers.

At first glance there is nothing to distinguish reading books from the gamut of other learning tools developed by Hungarian educators in the Dualist Period, especially following the introduction of compulsory elementary education in 1868. Most reading books were developed to teach the growing number of elementary schoolchildren the language(s) of the land. As a genre reading books had first surfaced in the 1780s in the German-speaking parts of the Habsburg Empire and had been used to communicate to children the rudiments of Hungarian and German. But reading books were much more than mere reading tools. Indeed most reading books aimed at fostering a sense of ethical responsibility, patriotism and knowledge of the history and geography of the land to their young readers. As such they aimed to convey a specific cultural package, which would make the readers eventually feel a sense of attachment to their land and a sense of moral responsibility. By examining the cultural package which was communicated to children we can come to various conclusions about the patriotic inclinations of the authors and what they felt children ought to know about their country. In other words we can distil an idealized image of Hungarian Jewish children from these books and then use that image to
explain in part the process of cultural assimilation for Jewish communities in Hungary as a whole.

This first part of this chapter thus examines the Hungarian-Jewish narratives given by five different reading books for Jewish children published at various points in the Dualist Period. Beyond the vagaries of what one can find at the Hungarian National Library and at the Hungarian Jewish Archives I have chosen five books through which the shaping of narrative forms can be elucidated. In part because surveying the entire market of Hungarian-Jewish textbooks at the time would be fruitless I have chosen to focus my research on the five books here detailed. The first two books were published in 1861 and 1864 so I have chosen to examine them together. The third, fourth and fifth books were written in 1889, 1909 and 1913 and I treated these as a group as well. The second part of the chapter contextualizes the narratives examined in the first in terms of the following three areas of inquiry:

(a) the sociological process of Hungarian-Jewish acculturation,
(b) into which is inscribed the story of the establishment of Jewish schools,
(c) in the confines of which the personal experiences of the teachers themselves existed, resulting in the establishment of a national association for Jewish teachers and a limited market for Hungarian-Jewish children’s books.

I argue that developments in each of the above three spheres worked to shape the message given over to children. Specifically, it is the sociological process of Hungarian-Jewish acculturation which created the need for Hungarian-Jewish elementary schools that delivered a specific ideological message. These schools employed teachers who wrote reading books for this newly developed audience.

A/ Two Early Versions of Hungarian Jewishness Presented to Jewish Children

Sámuel Kohányi’s First Sound-Making Reading Book for the use of Hungarian Israelite Public Schools (1861) and Salamon Neumann’s Reading Book for Higher Israelite Schools (1864)

The Hungarian Jewish Lexicon lists Sámuel Kohányi (Czabócz [today Bačkov, Slovakia], 15 April 1824 – Budapest, 5 July 1905) as a composer. Kohányi moved to Budapest at the age of thirteen, as an orphan who knew neither Hungarian nor German. He sustained himself by giving Hebrew lessons. In 1844 he obtained a Latin diploma from the Pest Lutheran gymnasium, as well a diploma from the national music academy. Kohányi held numerous positions during his career: he worked at a preceptor for children in Pest between 1846-49; he operated a private school for boys between 1850 and 1862. Between 1862 and 1872 he directed the congregational nursery at the Pest Israelite Community. Between 1872 and his retirement in 1895 he worked in the Jewish congregational boys’ school behind the Dohány St. synagogue.

Kohányi liked using songs to teach children and he authored numerous books. His first Kinder-Lieder für Familienkreise, Elementarschulen und Kinder-Bewahr-Anstalten appeared in Pest in 1852. It was followed by at least ten other books in German and in Hungarian over the next forty years, which used songs to introduce children to German and Hungarian language skills.
I have been unable to find Neumann’s birthdate. His biography in one of the most extensive Hungarian bio-bibliographical encyclopedias only acknowledges 1877 as the year of his death. Neumann died in Óbuda after working for more than 44 years at the local practicing school. In the 1860s he was also the principal of the school. In 1868, he became into the service of the city, as the Jewish community gave up the school in favor of the municipality.²⁰⁶

Kohányi’s First Sound-Making Reading Book for the use of Hungarian Israelite Public Schools (1861)²⁰⁷ is fascinating because it opens with a trilingual picture dictionary (Hebrew-German-Hungarian). The picture dictionary is clearly geared towards German-speaking children who’s parents expect them to learn rudiments of Hebrew as well as everyday Hungarian. It is noticeable that Kohányi omitted the (as-of-yet inextant) Hebrew equivalents of some modern German words such as soup bowl, writing utensil and coffee-grinder. Of course, the book was also meant to instill in Jewish children the love of the fatherland. It is interesting to observe the balance which Kohányi strikes between belonging to the people of Israel and being a member of the Hungarian nation. In fact, he avoids defining outright what it means to be a Hungarian of the Israelite religion. Instead he presents the two series of information separately. At the beginning of the longer readings, the child could read:

My parents belong to glorified Israel’s people, which loves the only one God. They are therefore Israelites. My grandparents and ancestors have all been Israelites. I am also therefore an Israelite child. Our people has been a people since many millenia. Therefore, it is an ancient people. That which keeps itself up for a long time, is generally respected and illustrious (jeles); I am therefore the member of an ancient and illustrious people, which in many times could boast of pious and excellent men, and even now boasts of them. I also want to be good and pious.²⁰⁸

A couple of pages later Kohányi explained to children what it meant to be patriotic in the following words:

The place, where we are born, is the land of our birth. This is where [our parents] rocked us in our cribs. This is where our dear parents take care of us, this is where we started going to school. This is where we played with our other children friends. Even if one day we were to move away from it we would always want to move back to [this] land. [...] The country where the land of our birth is located is part of our sweet home. This is where our friends from childhood live; where our community leaders are, who govern and protect us.²⁰⁹

If we contrast Kohányi’s two descriptions we notice that his description of the attachment to Hungary is formulated as an attachment to the land or, to the soil of the Kingdom. This attachment is cemented in the localities, which the child frequently turns up in, while growing up: from the crib, to the school, to the friendships which one forms while a child. Primarily, Kohányi documents a personal connection based on intimate first-hand memories, which are equated to long-term attachment and thus happiness. Comparatively, Kohányi’s description of the child’s attachment to the Israelites (with whom the child presumably has daily contact) is anchored in an attachment to a people. It is a tribal description based on the child’s family origins, which is itself justified by and anchored in religious belief. The description specifically
co-opts the child as a member of the Israelite people: “our people,” the child reads, “have been a people since many millenia.” Here it is the fact that the closest members of one's family are (supposedly) member of the Israelite people that is used to convince the child that he or she is a member of the Israelite people.

So both parts of the definition are anchored in terms of the two types of information a child is likely to be most familiar with, in order to ensure loyalty to both “Israelite” and “Hungarian” ideals: spatial information regarding where the child has spent time, and family-related information regarding one’s personal background. Most notable from the first definition is the absence of the words “Jew” or “Jewish” in any context. We can only speculate as to this absence. I would venture the guess that Kohányi’s editors probably felt it safer if the children reading the textbooks were not confused in this regard.

Kohányi felt the need to include in his work two songs emphasizing nationality and how one ought to comport one’s self with respect to foreigners. The following “Little Children’s Song” is about what Kohányi felt it might mean to be a Hungarian child:

I am a Hungarian child.
I speak Hungarian.
The language of my sweet home, I would never sell it.
[The] Hungarian home gave birth to me,
[the] Hungarian soil feeds me.
How then could I be disloyal towards my home,
[and act towards it] as a foreigner?210

In the next song, entitled “The Hungarian Boy – or Girl,” the emphasis on nationality was even more clearly made:

I am a Hungarian boy (girl).
I was born a Hungarian.
All of my clothes are tailored in Hungarian fashion.
[...]
Hungarian is my father, my mother.
I sucked Hungarian milk.
Hungarian was the first word, which I heard.
Hungarian blood pushes against each of my arteries;
In Hungarian do I love my God.
However, I also take my Hungarianness in that,
I do not look down on or hate, those who are not Hungarian,
because it is uncivilized and rough to do so.211

The interesting aspect in these passages is the emphasis on disloyalty towards the home, which Kohányi examples as one of “being a foreigner” towards it. On the other hand, foreigners are not to be despised because it is unbecoming of Hungarians to be xenophobic. In a different part of the text Kohányi makes it a point of of emphasizing that though it is pleasant to hear the sound of the national language, there live “in our sweet home those too, who do not speak Hungarian – for
example, Croast, Serbs, Rumanians, Germans, Czechs, Slovaks – but these are all our loved brothers.”  

And in a nod to the polyglot nature of the Jewish children, Kohányi seems to have added:

> It is not shameful but useful and needed if, in addition to the sweet Hungarian national language we also understand and speak other languages. But the main emphasis should be on the tending to our Hungarian tongue, which is our holy and dear obligation.  

The other parts of Kohányi’s book include short snippets about Abraham’s youth; Moses as a shepherd; and Judah the Maccabbee. The collection is rounded out by certain short texts on the beauties of Hungarian natural geography.

Salamon Neumann’s *Reading Book for Higher Israelite Schools* (1864) also displays signs of being a transitional publication intended for children who speak German fluently and who are struggling to learn the language of the land. Neumann’s book contains three sections: a first section with German and Hungarian on facing pages conveying on simple and complex sentences; a second section with more difficult readings about for example plants, animals, the Mediterranean sea, London, St. Petersburg, and Moscow; finally, a third section with longer, two-three-page historical tales drawn from the Jewish and Hungarian historical traditions. Sections two and three only contain Hungarian text so it is evident that the first section was meant to raise the childrens’ reading level to a strong enough degree where they could follow seemlessly a Hungarian text. We can learn much from the introduction to Neumann’s text:

> During my many years of activity, I often found it difficult [to teach] without a helpful book which, aside from easing the learning of the Hungarian language also gave a good selection from the [required] school materials [...] *while also resonating with the Jewish spirit from its every line*. [...] In the end I decide to write and edit such a book by myself. Those who have like me felt so keenly the lack of a Hungarian reading book written in the Jewish spirit should judge whether I have succeeded in the execution of my main goal. [...] [While writing,] I had in my mind’s eye especially those Israelite schools, where the teaching of the Hungarian language is meeting with some difficulty.

From his introduction to his text we can learn that for Neumann, the reality of having Hungarian-speaking Jewish children was still something of a dream to be achieved through the guidance of teachers such as himself. He clearly argues for the need and the possibility of combining Hungarian and Jewish narratives into a usable whole, which a Jewish child with native Hungarian language skills could use in order to feel himself at home as a patriotic Hungarian of Jewish religion.

The second section of Neumann’s book presents a variety of geographical readings and the third section uses Biblical tales and narratives of Hungarian heroes in order to hone advanced reading skills. But the real interest in Neumann’s work for historians of identity comes in the first section, which Neumann wrote in order to teach simple and complex sentences, and moods. It is through this first section that we can see the complexity of the worldview, which Neumann purported to create for his young readers whereby he meticulously combined – sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph in facing German and Hungarian pages – strands from the
Hungarian national canon, popularized references to Jewish stories and a cultural context, which we would qualify as either ‘general European culture’ or moral and ethical training.

Take for example the following paragraph, from the section on phrases of intent (célzatok):

God created the world. Joshua conquered Canaan. Cain killed Abel. Joseph was sold by his brothers. Árpád\(^{217}\) founded this national home. Stephen I\(^{218}\) defeated Kupa\(^{219}\) Somogyi.\(^{220}\)

Or, for example, the following partial paragraph, on attributive sentences, from the same section:

The good God shows mercy. Solomon the Wise was once the king of the Jews. The valiant János Hunyadi\(^{221}\) is immortal. Let blossom our beautiful homeland! The pious Hillel was peace-loving. The earnest shepherd stands guard.\(^{222}\)

Or this following paragraph, on determinants of space:

The people of Israel wandered for forty years in the Arabian desert. The best iron products are made in England. Cotton is imported from America. Andrew II\(^{223}\) went to the Holy Land. At the top of the Carpathian Mountains, there are lakes.\(^{224}\)

Or finally, the following section, on indeterminate sentences:

The righteous are not afraid of death. Do good and do not be afraid of anything! [...] What did Joseph dream of? The motherland [haza] does not forget about us. God provides for us. Judah guaranteed Benjamin’s security. [...] God conveyed His will through Moses. The Germans offered Louis the Great\(^{225}\) an imperial crown. [...] I don’t drink wine. [...] The funeral march is approaching the cemetary. The girl cuddles up to her mother. [...] We chose many of the books. [...] How do the Tatars make a living?\(^{226}\)

What we are reading here is a writer essentially brainstorming model sentences for the various sections he has to fill. His objective is to convey to the student a number of different types of sentences, in order for the child, to be able to read. As we can see in this first part of the book it was not necessary for the adjacent content to be continuous. Rather the objective was to give certain examples of what might be said with the types of sentences. But Neumann is searching for sentences while consciously focusing on sentences conveying certain aspects of the Hungarian national historical canon (Árpád, Stephen I., János Hunyadi, Andrew II, Louis the Great) and the cultural heritage of the Jewish Bible and commentaries thereof (Joshua, Cain, Joseph, Solomon, Hillel). There is also a hint of geographical descriptors – usually reserved for the idealization of Hungarian regions – which are here applied to the Holy Land. We also see the idealization of certain agricultural professions. Finally, the two overarching themes seem to be the fact that God cares for human beings and the all-encompassing nature of the nation of which the student is part. As a result what comes across for the reader is a carefully-constructed ideological frame of reference where cultural signifiers exist on a level playing field, modulated
but by the all-encompassing belief in both the will of the divine and the children’s partaking in the nation’s destiny.

**B/ Three Later Reading Books for Jewish Children**

Náthán Halász’s *Treasure Chest: Educational and Entertaining Stories and Poetry from the Writings of the Jewish Sages for Jewish Youth of Both Sexes* (1889); Ignác Kondor’s *Hebrew Reading Book with Pictures* (1909); and Jónás Barna’s *Hungarian Reading Book for the Fourth Grade of the Israelite Public Elementary Schools* (1913)

When compared to the textbooks produced by Neumann and Kohányi in 1861 and 1864, the reading books published by Náthán Halász, Ignác Kondor and Jónás Barna in 1889, 1909 and 1913, respectively, we can clearly see that many of the emphases have shifted from one of helping German-speaking Jewish children acquire rudiments of the Hungarian idiom and national spirit to one where Hungarian-speaking Jewish children are introduced to certain aspects of a very circumscribed version of Jewishness, with which they are brought into contact through the medium of the reading books.

Halász (1834-1910) was the oldest of the three writers and was only ten years younger than Kohányi. He was born to a family of industrial workers who could not afford his schooling. As a result he seems to have been mostly home-schooled: he passed his exams for matriculation and for teacher certification after lengthy periods of home study. Halász received his teacher certification from the Catholics Teachers’ Training Institute in Pest in the mid-1850s; thereafter, he was a school teacher in Kajászó-Szent-Péter, Lovasberény and Sátoraljaújhely before moving to the capital in 1867, where he taught first in the public Israelite school of the capital. Some time in the 1870s Halász became the principal of the Israelite girls’ school in Pest.

Unlike Halász, Barna and Kondor were both approximately thirty years younger than Neumann and Kohányi, having been born in 1851 and 1852, in Kecskemét and Kaposvár, respectively. Both Barna and Kondor graduated from the Israelite Teacher Training Institute in Budapest in 1870 and 1872, respectively. Barna obtained a teaching credential in 1873 and continued his studies at the university level, probably in Budapest. In 1876 according to two biographical entries in different encyclopedias, he seems to have given a strong-worded speech at the national congress of Israelite teachers where he seems to have argued for the granting of tenure to teachers in Jewish schools. Based on this speech, the minister of cults and religions passed a decree forcing Jewish communities across the land to grant tenure to their teachers; this incurred Barna several difficulties and he seems to have been forced to resign his position as director of a Jewish school. Thereafter Barna worked as a primary school teacher in several state elementary schools in Budapest. Kondor’s path was slightly different. He lost his father at the age of sixteen and had to interrupt his studies at the local gymnasium in Kaposvár in order to pursue a career, which required less formalized training. He obtained his teaching degree after teaching at the Jewish school in Osztópán. After graduation he held various jobs until teaching from 1875 onwards at the Jewish schools in Makó, Siófok, Sátoraljaújhely and finally from 1884 onwards, Pest.
All five of the teachers – Kohányi, Neumann, Halász, Barna and Kondor – wrote on average seven school books during their careers as educators. Kohányi wrote the most number of books: nine were song books for children, one was a pedagogical work for the teaching of music to children, three were reading books in German and Hungarian for Jewish and general audiences. Only two of Kohányi’s (earliest) books were in German; after 1868 he only published in Hungarian. Conversely all of the books Neumann authored were bilingual German-Hungarian although as a sign of the changing linguistic conditions the titles of his works were in Hungarian after 1859. Neumann authored five Hungarian-language learning texts for a German-speaking audience and one “short Biblical history” in both Hungarian and German. After 1859 he authored a short history of Hungary in both languages, as well as a geography primer and the above-discussed reading book for Israelite children.\(^{239}\)

The three later authors – Halász, Barna and Kondor – generally wrote in Hungarian, though the titles of their works can lead us to guess that they were clearly proficient in German as well. Barna wrote the most number of books (seven) of which only two were German textbooks. Aside from the reading book we discuss here it is unclear whether Barna wrote any additional works for a specifically Jewish audience. He wrote a total of four Hungarian language learning textbooks and a geography as well as a history text too. Conversely Halász wrote five books of which four were on Jewish topics which were meant to convey Jewish beliefs to his readers; his first book was a Hungarian primer. As far as I could tell, Kondor only wrote three books, all of which discussed Jewish religion and beliefs.

Halász’s *Treasure Chest: Educational and Entertaining Stories and Poetry from the Writings of the Jewish Sages for Jewish Youth of Both Sexes* (1889)\(^{240}\) was meant as an “educational, pedagogical and educational” anthology of “stories and poetry from the writings of the sages,” for “Jewish youth of both sexes,” which was meant to be given as a gift on special occasions or as a prize for successful completion of examinations. In other words it is the type of book given to children, which serve to reinforce their integration in and acceptance of the master narrative, which has been communicated to them by means of the school system. The book itself is elegantly decorated with elaborate Orientalizing prints of King Solomon and of various places in the Holy Land (e.g., Jerusalem, and the tombs of Esther and Mordechai).

At first glance there are many similarities between Neumann and Kohányi’s books and Halász’s. The *Treasure Chest* is essentially a story book and as such it shares similarities in subject material with both Neumann’s and Kohányi’s works. Neumann’s work included adaptations of the first psalm, of Jeremiah’s lament and of the Maccabees.\(^{241}\) Kohányi’s work also included an adaptation of the Judas Maccabeus’s life in addition to a retelling of Abraham’s youth and a story about Moses as a young shepherd.\(^{242}\) But Halász’s work displays a consistency in style and tone which is lacking from the first two works in a number of ways.

Halász’s work is clearly meant for children who speak Hungarian on a native level, who feel at home in the mother tongue and who also feel Jewish. Halász’s work is not meant as a linguistic primer: rather it is a tool to introduce students in a popular fashion to the stories of the Jewish tradition, to which they might not have been exposed in a school setting. The book presupposes some sense of familiarity with Jewish customs and texts, but it is clearly not meant for students with a *yeshivah* background. More importantly, while the Kohányi and Neumann texts
were meant to also introduce their readers to aspects of general Hungarian culture in the form of geographical descriptions and selections from Hungarian literature. Halász’s text was clearly written in order to reintroduce aspects of Jewishness into the lives of children whose lives had already taken a secular turn. We see this most clearly from the selection of text itself: Halász’s subject material is either Biblical or Talmudic, ethical or geographical (i.e., descriptions of places in the Holy Land). A retelling of “Jews in Babylonian captivity” follows “King Solomon’s wise judgment (with image)”; selections on “Hillel’s patience” and David and Goliath are interspersed with teachings of modesty and ostentatiousness (szerénység és hivalkodás) and descriptions Rachel’s tomb. Though there is no price marking on the book itself, the decorated cover, high quality paper and elaborate images probably meant a higher price for the customer than the rather cheaply bound Kohányi and Neumann books, which obviously were not illustrated.

Conversely the fourth edition (1909) of Ignácz Kondor’s Hebrew Reading Book with Pictures is a different style of publication altogether. First and foremost – as its title indicates – the book is a Hebrew reading book meant to convey the essentials of the language of the prayerbook to children who were by then at least one generation removed from a religious lifestyle. As the subtitle indicates the book aims to convey “knowledge of the Hebrew letters with reading exercises, [...] elementary rudiments of religion, Biblical history until Abraham [and] selections from the Hebrew prayers”. The book was meant for the first grade of the elementary schools and was published by the (neolog) Pest Israelite Community. The book is organized into three sections. The first section is an introduction to religious concepts, for example the belief in one God. The second consists of adaptations of Biblical stories from the first part of the book of Genesis (mainly about Creation, the first sin, Noah, the tower of Babel and Abraham). The third part of the book introduces students to the Hebrew alphabet and elementary prayers in that tongue. Though it is not a Hungarian reading book per se insofar as its content I nevertheless chose to examine Kondor’s work because on various occasions Kondor seeks to define the relationship of Jews to their homeland of Hungary. Kondor stumbles to argue for the relevance of Jewishness for the Hungarian-speaking Jewish children he is making his argument for and this makes his work interesting.

We are Hungarians, Hungary is our sweet home, Hungarian is our mother tongue; this prayer too is in Hungarian. [...] Our religion is Israelite (Jewish). We are Hungarians of the Israelite (Jewish) religion. [...] Human beings do not love the good God in the same way. One is of a certain religion depending on how one loves the good God. Hungarians are also of varying religions. Our religion is the Israelite religion or in other words, the Jewish religion. As a result, we are of Israelite, that is of Jewish, religion.

The most interesting part of this text is to see how Kondor stumbles repeatedly over the meanings of the words “Israelite” and “Jewish”. Since the book is written for six-year-olds who presumably do not yet have the sophistication to understand that by “Israelite” one would be euphemistically speaking of “Jewish” people Kondor has to explain that the term “Israelite” is the proper way to express the fact that one is “Jewish”. Kondor also stumbles on why one ought to be Jewish (or Israelite) when one already considers one’s self Hungarian. The fact that he stumbles also underscores the fact that it is not necessarily self-evident either for him or for the children that Jewishness ought to be important at all within the context of Hungarianness and
that some explanation has to be provided for why the cultural material of the reading book ought to be learned at all.

Kondor was writing for children whose native tongue was Hungarian. As a result he Kondor was left with the arduous task of explaining why – despite being Hungarian speaking Israelites (Jews) – children still ought to learn how to pray in Hebrew. He wrote:

Our fathers prayed in the Hebrew language. We too would like to pray according to the forms of our forefathers. Not all those who are of Israelite religion are Hungarians. There are Israelites of other mother tongues. But all Israelites love the good God in the same way and the language of their prayers is the same, which the language of the fathers was. Our forefathers were Hebrews who were later called Israelites or Jews. They prayed in Hebrew and in Hebrew did they write their holy books as well. As a result we would like according to the ways of our fathers to pray in Hebrew.251

In other words Kondor had to stress the fact that despite the ease with which Hungarian (Jewish) children could pray in their native tongue there was still relevance to learning what (at this point) was a foreign language in order to maintain consistency with the past. This argument is all the more difficult for Kondor to make because he had expounded so clearly and arduously in the previous passage which I quoted, that the readers of his textbook were to think of themselves as Hungarians. So if one was an especially curious and quick-witted child one could have asked Kondor the obvious question: which came first, the Hungarians or the Jews and which group ought the child think himself part of? Ultimately there could be no correct answer and hence Kondor’s message is weakened by his thorny attempt to define an organic fusion which had no simple definition.

By the 1913 edition – the sixth – of Jónás Barna’s Hungarian Reading Book for the Fourth Grade of the Israelite Public Elementary Schools,252 we see a completely organic version of Hungarian-Jewishness, which is firmly integrated and where we see that the strands of ethical teaching, Hungarian folktales and history and Jewish traditions are completely packaged together in an organic whole. Barna’s book has twelve distinct sections. A first section on legends, teachings and narratives is followed by a section on Pictures from the Bible. The subsequent sections treat “our holidays,” “pictures from our national home’s history,” and “pictures from the history of Hungarian Jews.” Then, the author transitions to a number of sections on “geographical pictures,” (i.e., physical descriptions of the land) before giving a generous selection of Hungarian literature and sayings especially through the poetry of the Hungarian poets Kálmán Tóth, Mihály Vörösmarty, Sándor Petőfi and János Arany.

In truth this fifth book is the least remarkable of the five we are here considering. First of all it contains no hints of either German nor Hebrew. Second it makes no attempt to define Hungarian Jewishness presents a maturely intertextual and complex text in each of the types of texts which reading books had evolved to convey. Finally the language is modern and the book includes equal amounts of material about ethical teachings, Biblical stories, geographical descriptions and historical material, and Hungarian literature. It is perhaps in two sections on Jewish holidays and on Jewish history that we can evaluate the major changes in the Hungarian-Jewish narrative of national belonging, which Dualism had enabled. In the section on Jewish
holidays the child could read two adaptations of poems by Solomon ibn Gabirol and Isaac ibn Ghiyyat by the Hungarian-Jewish poet Joseph Kiss (1843-1921). These were the refined literary translations of a poet who had by the end of his life attained the acclaim of non-Jewish Hungarian literary society and who had been chosen in his latter years as a member of the Petőfi and Kisfaludy Literary Societies. The fact that Barna’s text could include such texts bespeaks the wider social success of the cultural program of acculturation.

But it is in the section on Hungarian-Jewish history where we mostly see the narratological effects of five decades of cultural give-and-take and refinement. Barna authored the entire section and he presents Jewish history to his young readers solely as a function of Hungarian history. Barna gives a quasi-Biblical legitimation for his presenting Jewish history as such. “Great was the sin of our fathers,” begins the first line. “They turned away from God and thus God too turned away from them.” Barna continues by saying that even within punishment, one can still sense God's goodness, for though other great nations [népek] have disappeared, the Jewish nation has survived even until today, notwithstanding the fact that it was persecuted. Providence guarded the Jews, and repaid to them a thousandfold the loyalty of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. From the flames of persecution, the Jews called out to God, and God pitied them: with time, the fate of the Jews got better. And then comes the part which is worth quoting in full:

Though the Jews have been scattered around the face of the Earth, no Jews have ever found as much protection as the Hungarian Jew has in our sweet homeland, Hungary. Love, my precious children, the Hungarian homeland [haza]! For as a result of the generosity of the Hungarian nation, we rejoice in all of the same rights as any of the other sons of our homeland; and what is more, the crowned king and the nation have enacted into law the equality of our religion with the other faiths.

Barna’s aim is to reinscribe and squeeze Jewish history squarely within the boundaries of the Hungarian historical narrative. Here too, the method chosen is romanticized historical portraiture, and pictoriality. What is most interesting about the account is the lack of reference to any aspects of the Jewish historical experience outside of Hungary, aside from a few gratuitous allusions to the three patriarchs, and to the Khazar myth. There is no notion of the Jewish communities of Ashkenaz; no reference to the Spanish expulsion; no allusion to Hasidism, nor to German Reform movements; no exposition on Shabbetai Zvi; no reference to Rashi, nor to the Talmudic academies of Babylonia. Instead, we are treated to a lacrymose and superficial account of Jewish "wanderings" before they reached the Hungarian National Homeland; to a tenuous link – through the Khazar myth – between the historical origins of the Hungarian and Jewish people; and to accounts of the condition of Hungarian Jews in Hungary at various crucial junctures of Hungarian history.

In the main Barna likes to focus on those choice moments of Hungarian Jewish history through which the distinction between the two Hungarian and Jewish cultural ascriptions can be blurred through grandiose portraiture and rhetorical or explanatory flourish. These moments allow Barna to show his readers a subtle way to be proud of being Hungarian nationals of Jewish faith. The moments Barna carefully choses are generally points of great importance in the Hungarian national story, where the argument can also be made that the Jews took part, and with
great gusto. The two occasions where such portraiture occurs at sustained length in the Reading Book are the description of the medieval Hungarian King Matthias's entry into Buda in 1477, and the account of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848.

It is indicative that, in accounting for the longevity of the Jews, Barna feels constrained to refer to them as a nation. For all of his attempts to mask the existence of a Jewish ethnic affiliation, Barna cannot keep himself from referring to Jewish nationhood in Biblical and pre-Hungarian times; he also cannot avoid contrasting the fate of Hungarian Jews with the fate of other Jews "scattered around the face of the Earth". One might call these two instances simple slips of the tongue (or of the mind), both of which human faculties sometimes have difficulty distinguishing between the increasingly fine distinctions scholars assign to the words "nation," and "people". I would argue, however, that it is better to think of them as the first of two aspects of Barna's subsumation of the Hungarian narrative into an extended and all-encompassing version of the traditional and pre-modern Jewish narrative, present (with certain modifications) since Biblical times.

Having thus surveyed the five reading books it is worthwhile to summarize our findings. First we saw that between the first and second groups of works we surveyed there was an undisguised switch in emphasis from teaching German-speaking children how to be Hungarian, to teaching Hungarian-speaking children how to be Hungarian Jews. In the first two books we examined German-language supporting materials played an important role in helping students understand the Hungarian language texts. This was not the case in the second group of texts. As a result it is obvious that by the time the second set of reading books had been published a strong linguistic change had taken place amongst Jewish schoolchildren. Second we saw that a certain consistency emerged in terms of the language which was used to convey Jewishness through the Hungarian case: in all books we find selections from the Bible which are adapted into easy Hungarian. There was also a sense of consistency insofar as what the authors considered "Hungarianess": i.e., selections from the Hungarian national heroes and national poetry. Thus the only change in this regard is the solidification and streamlining of the narrative. Third I would argue that between the Kohányi and the Kondor books, Hebrew was generally always a secondary language to be learned over and above one’s daily needs of communication. And finally I would argue that the version of Jewish history as inscribed into Hungarian history which appeared in Barna’s book attests to the maturity of the historical narrative which Dualism had allowed to evolve.

### C/ Function of the Reading Books

Each of the five reading books aims to strike a balance between the versions of Hungarianness and Jewishness which they each communicated. The Kohányi, Neumann, Kondor and Barna books were meant to be used in so-called “Israelite Public Elementary Schools”. These were Jewish day schools organized by local Jewish communities across the Hungarian Kingdom in order to meet the requirements of the 1868 public educational law, which made education compulsory. Elementary schools could be organized by religious communities or the state. The number of Jewish day schools across the country has been compiled as follows by the Hungarian historian of education László Felkai:
Table V. Number of Jewish Elementary Schools in the Kingdom of Hungary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total number of schools</th>
<th>No. of Jewish schools</th>
<th>Total number of teachers</th>
<th>Total number of students</th>
<th>Total number of Jewish students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>13,198</td>
<td>490</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>13,855</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>17,870</td>
<td>1,111,705</td>
<td>34,897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>15,559</td>
<td>516</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>16,571</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>26,650</td>
<td>2,224,334</td>
<td>36,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>16,725</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>28,629</td>
<td>2,384,122</td>
<td>35,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>16,445</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>32,306</td>
<td>2,457,002</td>
<td>33,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>16,929</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>35,253</td>
<td>2,512,134</td>
<td>33,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>15,390</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>28,893</td>
<td></td>
<td>32,125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We thus notice that the number of schools increased sharply in the 1880s and 1900s before dropping significantly in 1910. The rise in the number of schools in the 1880s has been attributed to the rise in antisemitism due to the Tiszaeszlá blood libel (1882-83) and the subsequent decrease in the 1910s due to the decrease in state funding for schools operated by religious denominations.256

However the above table does not give us any clues as to the number of children who actually attended Jewish schools. Indeed the French-Hungarian sociologist Viktor Karády has argued after several studies analyzing public schooling statistics for the Kingdom that most Jewish parents opted not to send their children to Jewish elementary schools. According to Karády in 1900 there were quite a good number of Jewish schools in the Western parts of the Kingdom, with one school for on average 761 students. However in (what is currently) Eastern Slovakia there was only a Jewish school for 2709 students. In Transylvania there was one Jewish public school for 7,580 students, and in between the Danube and the Tisza rivers there was one Jewish public school for 2,277 students. Based on these figures, Karády argued that Jews in the Western parts of the Kingdom were more likely to establish Jewish public schools for their children. Jews in the Eastern parts of the Kingdom were least likely to establish such schools and Jews in the central part of the country (e.g., between the Danube and the Tisza) were only slightly more likely to establish such schools than Jews in the Eastern counties.257

Karády thus argued that Jews pursued a tri-partite assimilation and schooling strategy across the country. The best Jewish schools were located in the western parts of the country, with some presence as well between the Danube and the Tisza rivers. The members of these congregations accepted the so-called ’assimilationist contract’ and they wished to stave off the possibility of the new generation falling prey to harmful indentity crises or a loosening of identity. In the Western parts of the country most Jewish communities belonged to the status quo.

Conversely in the eastern parts of the country the majority of the Jewish population originated in Galicia and in Russia and were staunchly orthodox. They were according to Karády generally mistrustful of the ‘assimilationist contrast’ and did their best to reject it. These communities kept using Yiddish as a daily language of communication and though some communities in the counties of Szabolcs, Hajdušág and Szatmár learned Hungarian in order to
interact with their environment, almost all communities kept up a corporate sense of separateness based on religion and tradition. As a result, these communities only opened Jewish public schools in the most special of cases and generally relied on *heders* and *yeshivot* to educate their children.

Finally in the center of the country the (mostly Neolog) Jews who moved to the urban areas of Szeged and Budapest did not usually establish their own schools. They fully accepted the ‘assimilationist contract’ and sought to use the state school system (and the school system of other denominations) to enable their children to acquire the cultural knowledge and Hungarian linguistic skills necessary in order to fit into non-Jewish society. At the turn of the century Budapest was home to over 200,000 Jews. And yet though the city offered 208 state public schools and 47 denominational schools, of the latter type only 9 schools were of Jewish orientation. The Jewish high school in Budapest was only founded in 1919.258

Within this context it is easy to see that insofar as our reading books were used in Jewish public elementary schools they would probably have been most used in status quo (and, to a lesser extent in Neolog) institutions. We can surmise that their function was to convey what was thought to be an adequate sense of Jewishness and Hungarianness to those children whose parents wanted to convey a sense of balance these two cultural worlds to their children. These children benefitted from a truly modern interspersing of the two cultural identities even though the majority of Jewish children were not exposed to such cultural content in the state schools they attended.

### D/ Institutionalization of the Narrative: The National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute

The narrative presented in the reading books for Jewish children published across Hungary benefitted mostly from the institutionalization which two central institutions promoted and developed. These were the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute and the National Association of Israelite Teachers, founded in 1859 and 1867, respectively. I would argue that these two institutions and the journal published by the latter served to coalesce the narrative presented by teachers in the pedagogical works which they authored and allowed for the creation of a cadre of Jewish teachers who then travelled and taught in most Jewish public schools of the Kingdom.

A number of communal discussions preceded the establishment of Jewish schools in Hungary. These discussions have been chronicled in English by the American historian Aron Moskovits and in Hungarian by Viktória Bányai259 both of whom wrote their doctoral dissertations on the historical developments of the Jewish schooling system in Hungary.

In his dissertation on “Jewish Education in Hungary (1848-1948)” the American historian Aron Moskovits describes the foundation in 1859 of the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute. It was the first institution of its kind in Hungary: its financing came from a Jewish school fund which had originated as a fine that the Austrian government had meted out on the Hungarian Jewish communities of Arad, Cegléd, Kecskemét, Irsa, Nagykőröös and Pest for their participation in the failed Hungarian revolution of 1848-49. That fine of 2.3 million florins had
eventually been commuted to a school fund of 1.2 million florins payable by all the Jewish communities in the country.\textsuperscript{260}

As Moskovits details the communal discussions surrounding the form of the pedagogical institute were part and parcel of the eventual split between progressive and conservative factions of the Jewish communities in Hungary. What is interesting is that even prior to the foundation of the institution the need to coalesce a viable narrative to be handed to children was seen as primordial. As Moskovits points out Abraham Hochmuth the Chief Rabbi of Veszprém wrote a thesis in May 1851 entitled \textit{Die Jüdische Schule in Ungarn: Wie sie ist und wie sie sein soll}, in which he reflected on the direction that Jewish education in Hungary ought to take. Hochmuth wrote the following:

It is reasonable, and does not require too much argumentation, that one German-speaking Seminary in Austria should be sufficient to meet the rabbinic requirement of our country, as positions for rabbis with a secular background are still limited. This however is not true of the teacher; we cannot depend on teacher-training schools in Moravia. [...] We, therefore, must have our own teaching institute for many reasons. First of all we need four or five times as many teachers as we need rabbis; secondly, the Hungarian teacher in order to teach Hungarian children, must receive his education in an Hungarian institute. To the rabbi the language is a minor problem because all Hungarian students who seek to attend the German rabbinic school must beforehand complete the gymnasiu at home; such residence has furnished them with good Hungarian background on which they can draw upon along with their rabbinic studies.\textsuperscript{261}

Throughout the Dualist Period the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute remained the only institute in the country to train teachers to teach Jewish subjects in the Jewish public schools of the land. Seven hundred and ninety-three students graduated from the institution between 1861 (the year diplomas were first awarded) and 1897, the year of the Hungarian millenial celebrations which prompted the publication of a \textit{festschrift} of sorts to celebrate the institutions achievements.\textsuperscript{262} Of these three-quarters attended the institution full time and a quarter studied at home and passed exams at the Institute after a period of preparation.\textsuperscript{263} Most of the students who graduated were 20 years old.\textsuperscript{264}

Until 1861 instruction was offered in German only; between 1861 and 1869, instruction was in both Hungarian and German; and after 1869 instruction was offered only in the national language.\textsuperscript{265} As the institution matured so too did the number of years of schooling which it offered: until at least 1872 the course of study was two years;\textsuperscript{266} between 1872 and 1881 the course of study was three years; after 1881 an additional fourth year of study was added.\textsuperscript{267} Extending the number of years of instruction provided for the means to expand on the number of hours of Hungarian and Jewish religious instruction as shown by the data below. As the table below makes clear the rise in the number of hours devoted to Jewish religious subjects, Hungarian and German was clearly linked to the institution extending the period of study first to three, then to four years.
### Table VI. Hours of Weekly Instruction in Certain Subjects at the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute, 1860-1897.\(^{268}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Years and Subjects</th>
<th>Number of Hours of Weekly Instruction By Grade</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1860/61</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew subjects</td>
<td>I 9 4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>I 5 2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>I 3 2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1872/73</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew subjects</td>
<td>II 5 5 5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>II 3 3 2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>I 3 2 2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1881/82</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious studies, i.e., Hebrew subjects</td>
<td>II 4 6 5 6 1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian language and literature</td>
<td>I 3 3 2 2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German language</td>
<td>I 2 2 2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1896/97</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious studies, i.e., Hebrew subjects</td>
<td>II 5 5 5 6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian language and literature</td>
<td>I 3 3 2 2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German language</td>
<td>I 3 2 2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the educator József Bánóczi makes clear in his detailed history of the institution it was a specific goal of the institution to train Jewish teachers who were fully Hungarian and devoted to national ideals:

> [In 1861,] the movement of Hungarianization broke into the walls of the school. Let us add: [...] this breaking in was not the result of a struggle, but was rather the victorious entry on lowered bridges and across open gates. And within [there was found] not an adversary which leaned towards peace, but a comrade-in-arms which was prepared to join [the fight].\(^{269}\)

But it seems as if the institution also helped streamline a movement towards Hungarianization which was already well on its way by the time of its foundation. Indeed Bánóczi gives the following statistics as to the mother tongues of the students attending the institution between 1880/81 and 1896/97, which attests to the fact that (at least by the 1880s) the mother tongue of most students attending the institution was already Hungarian.
Table VII. Mother Tongues of Students Attending the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>1880/81</th>
<th>1896/97</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bánóczi provided data as to the geographical provenance of the students frequenting the institution. His data seems to correlate with Karády’s argument (described above) that the popularity of specifically Jewish public elementary education ranked highest amongst the communities of the northern and western areas of the Kingdom. According to the admissions data which Bánóczi collated a plurality (over 40%) of the students entering the Institute were originally from the western and northernmost counties of Nyitra, Veszprém, Pest, Trencsén, Fejér, Komárom and Pozsony.

The relationship between the graduates of the institution and the narrative conveyed in the reading books surveyed in the first part of this chapter can be tentatively examined by comparing the list of graduates of the institution with the entries in what is arguably the most complete multi-volume Hungarian bibliographical encyclopedia of the Dualist period: the Hungarian bibliographer József Szinnyei (1830-1913)’s fourteen volume *Lives and Works of Hungarian Writers*, published posthumously in 1914. As its title makes clear this encyclopedia is based on written works and so its criteria for inclusion rested on one’s publishing works. So while the encyclopedia cannot help us establish the percentage of graduates of the institution who wrote reading books versus those who did not we can certainly use the encyclopedia’s detailed biographical and bibliographical entries to help us establish the kinds of works certain graduates wrote. These are detailed as follows:
Table VIII. Books Authored By 22 Graduates of the National Israelite Teacher-Training Institute (1862-1906)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Matter</th>
<th>Number of Books</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Subjects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian Language</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Language</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic, Mathematics, Etc.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jewish Subjects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Jewish Institutions in Hungary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew Grammars and Reading Books</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Jewish History</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian Translations of the Bible and Prayerbook</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Religious Instruction</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>69</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While it is unclear as to what percentage of graduates formulated the narrative which was to be found in reading books for children we can see that those graduates of the institution who did write books (and on whom we have data) wrote for both a Jewish and a general audience and wrote substantially more general Hungarian language textbooks than books in any other single category. These graduates seem to have been substantially committed to creating the means towards Hungarian Jewish children being Jewish in the Hungarian language. As the table above shows they seem to have been committed to this mission in terms of establishing the history of Jews in Hungary, the translation of religious texts and the conveyance of Jewish ethical values.

**E/ Institutionalization of the Narrative: The National Association of Israelite Teachers**

The personal experiences of Jewish teachers conveying a mixture of Jewish and Hungarian material to Jewish elementary school children across the kingdom played as defining a role in the narrative which the produced as the institution which some of them had attended as students. The National Association of Israelite Teachers (Országos Izraelita Tanítóegyesület) was founded in 1867. Most of its founding members were belonged to the modern Jewish school operated by the Pest Israelite Community and the Association of Teachers in Buda and Obuda. The mission of the Association was threefold: to “raise the intellectual level of Jewish teachers”; to care for the “Hungarian national spirit”; to provide material care for widowed and sick teachers as well as orphans.²⁷³

Initially the poor pay of Jewish teachers in rural parts of the Hungarian countryside is what prompted the founding of the association. These were often reprinted in the Association’s monthly newsletter. As detailed on the tenth anniversary of the National Association by
Ábrahám Lederer, the first director of the Teacher-Training Institute and one of the founding members of the National Association,

Our salaries [were] meted out with such avarice that [we were] unable to meet even the most austere needs of the family. This kind of family is forever doomed to starvation and to [economic] hardship. [...] If the head of the family [was] filled with deep worries, [...] what [would] happen when the the body which pines in his vocation [would] no longer be able to walk out of lack of energy and strength?274

These grievances were echoed by other teachers. In an article entitled “Jewish Penuries” one of the early presidents of the Association Eleázár Szántó (1829-1893) detailed how a teacher in Pozsony had committed suicide after being relieved of her duties by the congregation she was employed by; in Baja a different woman was fired because the new principal at the school she was employed at was not on friendly terms with her. The woman had six children. As well, wrote Szántó, a different teacher in Siófok275 was relieved of his duties because a community leader supposedly wanted to install his own acquaintance in that position.276 A different article entitled “The Persecution of Israelite Teachers” made similar grievances: in Siófok the congregation apparently raised the salaries of its teachers on the condition that they find other means of employment from the following year onward. In Mező-Tur the congregation apparently forced teachers to teach without stop over the hot summer months. And in Čegléd (a city south of the capital) a teacher was subject to needless insulting.277

One teacher – Sándor Knopfler writing from Sátoraljáújhely – revealed in 1882 that the Jewish teacher positions advertised in a national teaching magazine (the Néptanítók Lapja) were actually better paid at 500-600 forints per year than the Christian teacher positions, at 300-400 forints per year. We cannot know if this Knopfler was biased but he certainly thought that Christian teachers lived better than the Jewish ones. According to him Christian teachers received

a decent apartment in a very comfortable and healthy location together with a garden, [...] some [acres] of land to sow on, which it was the community’s duty to cultivate. [Sometimes, the community also provided] firewood, salt, straw and [some revenue from the] ecclesiastical tax.278

According to Knopfler Jewish teachers received none of these benefits. Knopfler argued that if we took these side incomes into consideration, it was evident that the Christian teacher made a lot more money than the Jewish teacher. It is difficult to assess his claims but his article a good picture of the type of life a Jewish teacher might have had at the time. According to Knopfler the yearly salary of the Jewish teacher was 500-600 forint. This amounts to a monthly budget of approximately 50 forint. According to Knopfler rent in the countryside was approximately 10 forint per month; out of the remaining 40 forint one had to pay the maid, the heating, the associational fees, the royal communal (községi) and Jewish communal (községi) taxes and a sort of (Jewish) communal fund to help the local poor Jewish families. According to Knopfler there were various other expenses which the teacher could not cover and it was impossible for him to live on 1.33 forint per diem, which was lower than the earnings of an average landless peasant (napszámós).279 For Knopfler – writing no doubt from personal experience – a typical day
consisted of 6-7 hours of teaching at school after which he still visited a number of private houses, giving lessons.

As one browses the pages of the Association’s monthly publication one comes across dozens of articles such as these. With respect to teacher salaries we should take Knopfler’s complaints with a grain of salt. Viktor Karády has pointed out that teachers in Jewish schools were actually the best paid teachers in the Kingdom as in the table below:

| Table IX. Denominational Schools Across Hungary in Dualism: Certain Indicators.  |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
|                                 | Catholic | Calvinist | Lutheran | Jewish | Total |
| Number of schools (1868-69)     | 5,356   | 2,356   | 1,415   | 364    | 13,313 |
| Percentage                      | 40.2    | 17.7    | 10.6    | 2.7    | 100.0  |
| Number of schools (1907-08)     | 5,306   | 1,882   | 1,327   | 455    | 12,515 |
| Percentage                      | 42.4    | 15.0    | 10.6    | 3.6    | 100.0  |
| Percentage of schools subsidized by the churches | 62.2 | 99.0 | 98.9 | 96.9 | 86.5 |
| Number of schools to one school library | 7.2 | 5.8 | 2.7 | 2.1 | 6.3 |
| Average salary of the teachers in Kronen | 910 | 998 | 1044 | 1103 | 952 |
| Money spent on one student, in Kronen | 19.8 | 23.7 | 27.0 | 54.5 | 21.7 |
| Average church subsidy based on one school | 883 | 1,113 | 1,394 | 1,535 | 910 |

As Karády’s data shows if one aggregates salaries from the Dualist Period the average salary for a regular teacher was highest in the Jewish schools, which also received the highest subsidies from their respective congregations and also spent the most amount of money per student. Thus though Knopfler’s comments are perhaps illustrative of the day-to-day realities of a single teacher living in rural, eastern Hungary his comments cannot be counted as normative. However they do reveal the often tendentious relations between the Jewish teachers in public elementary Jewish schools and the Jewish communities which employed them.

According to the general public educational law passed in 1868 referenced above, teachers in all schools should have been offered job security (i.e., tenure) after three years of service. According to minutes of the 1877 meeting of the National Association the Jewish communities would often hire teachers on repeated temporary basis in order to evade this requirement. (This is not altogether a new tactic.) Jónás Barna himself seems to have been active in fighting this practice: as the Hungarian Jewish Lexicon points out he persuaded the educational minister of the land in 1877 to issue a ministerial decree banning this practice and promptly lost his employment with the Budapest Jewish community as a result.

Arguably the Association eased the financial burdens of teachers. It operated somewhat like an insurance company or a savings bank with benefits, or both. The Association had a
number of funds at its disposal: membership fees from regular members; a number of investment holdings; revenues from books and other publications and direct donations. There were different types of memberships: regular, founding (alapító), supporting (pártoló), and honorary; all, except the last one, carried with it the requirement that the teacher be from the Lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen, pay 2 forint as an initiation fee, and a 4 forint yearly membership fee. If one gave more than 50 forint, one became a “founding” member; if one gave more than five forint for five consecutive years, one became a supporting member; alternatively, if one received some sort of special merit, or “moved forward the common good or decorated himself (kitünteti magát) through striving for the love of humans” he could be chosen as an honorary member.284 As shown in the table below the number of members rose consistently throughout the period and included a sizeable number of members from outside of the capital.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table X. Membership in the National Association of Israelite Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorary Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Members – Budapest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Members – Budapest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Members – Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Members – Rural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Association gave a variety of different kinds of financial aid to its members. If a member was sick, the teacher would receive 4 Forint weekly, for a maximum of six weeks; in exceptional cases (rendkívüli segélyezések), the person could receive 20 forint, to go visit a therapeutic bath. The Association also instituted something entitled a “final donation” (végadomány), where a teacher would receive 60 Forint, when he or she was unable to go to work; as well, if a regular member died, the widow would receive 100 Forint. Finally, one could borrow mone from the Association, at 6%, of up to 100 Forint, which one was required to pay back in about 12 payments. One lost all rights in the Association if one took up another profession; one moved away from Hungary; or if one did not pay membership dues. Three-quarters of the association’s expenses would go towards meeting the Association’s everyday expenses; one-quarter would go towards the capital.289

In terms of the narratives presented by the reading books the Association served as a forum through which ideas regarding lesson plans teaching techniques and pedagogical content could be exchanged and commented upon by the members. This helped especially in those cases where teachers worked far away from each other, in remote parts of the country. The need to unify the lesson plans for Hebrew subjects seems to have come from a certain sense of losing one’s tradition in the face of modernity.

One teacher speaking at the 1883 meeting of the Association argued that religious autonomy in the country meant that one could teach as one liked. There was not so much as one Israelite middle- or high-school in the country and as a result one essentially had to ask for a
favor from the local public schools to teach the Jewish subjects; even then “they [did] not always tolerate us”. In state schools lessons continued on Saturday. If students did not want to miss material they had to be present despite it being the Sabbath. So asked the teacher:

how would this student, show the least amount of devotion to (ragaszkodás) for his religion, which he does not know, into the exaltedness of which he is not initiated, and towards which he never had the opportunity to fulfill an obligation

The teacher ended his argument with the conclusion that children of the Jewish community could only be brought up to be true Jews and self-sacrificing (áldozatkész) citizens in the Jewish day schools.

This is a very modern argument and it is by no means unique to Hungarian Jews. The above-cited work by Abraham Hochmuth spoke of these same difficulties in 1851. Hochmuth had argued that Jewishness had declined in Hungary because religion “religion [had] become a specific subject”. He had added that:

We live in a changing civilization, when material substitutes have an upper hand on spiritual values. We seem to lose sight of the fact that our way of life differs from that of our fathers. This difference results in the gradual disappearance of the old without trying to supplement it with the new. It is, or at least it should be, clear that the study of religion in these modern times rests upon the pattern that the parents and the teacher jointly must set for the child to follow. They must set an example by actual deeds rather than by specific courses given in the school.

As evidenced by the 1883 meeting of the National Association there seems to have been ongoing confusion as to what material the Jewish teachers of religion ought to convey to students. The 1868 general education law provided for two weekly hours of religious instruction in state schools and teachers conveying religious instruction in state institutions (i.e., outside of the Jewish public school network) seem to have been at a loss as to what to convey. As explained by a frustrated delegate to the 1883 meeting:

One of the religious teachers is teaching chumash (i.e., the Pentateuch) with Rashi’s commentary; the other one is conveying the texts of some Medieval philosopher of religion; the third is teaching translations of the Psalms.

There was a lack of organization and because of a lack of effective higher authority in adjudicating the curriculum, the schools and the teachers were lost. Thus,

the student is able to count the Egyptian dynasties; to name the Greek and Roman heroes, but they did not know anything about our heroes, for example, Judas Maccabeus.

The debates between members of the National Association generally centred on the ‘correct’ form of Hungarian to use in reading books and the content of the reading books themselves. These debates crystallized in the late 1870s and early 1880s as the Association entered the second decade of its existence.
a. Debates on Linguistic Form

The journal of the Association has preserved some of the early debates regarding linguistic use in reading books similar to the ones we examined in the first part of this chapter. A teacher named Vilmos Radó (1847 – 1919) was one of the earliest redactors of Hungarian reading books for the Jewish schools and his Hungarian reading books for students in the third and fourth grades of the Jewish public schools, published in the late 1870s and throughout the 1880s, formed the loci of many an argument at meetings of the National Association. Radó’s biography in the Hungarian Jewish Lexicon also lets on that he was a writer of children's books, a teacher at the Hungarian National Teacher-Training Institute, and a devotee of Herbart’s educational philosophy.296 Throughout the early 1880s Radó argued in the Association’s journal in favor of the older almost archaically literary form of Hungarian for the Biblical translations which appeared in his readers. His argument for the use of such language had been that every literary genre commanded a specific style which beffited it most, based upon the time period in which the literary text to be translated had been produced.297

One could not use the language of the modern novel for Biblical passages since that was not (according to Radó) the type of language used in the original text itself. Radó acknowledged that the literary form he applied to the Biblical passages was not the language of everyday: he argued, however, that the Hungarian literary language itself had been created by earlier translators of the Bible and reminded his colleagues of the revolutionary effects of Luther's translation in the 16th century. Chief Rabbi Jakab Steinhardt (1818-1885) of Arad was one of Radó’s more vocal opponents in this aspect of the debates. According to him if the purpose of the reading books was to impart upon children a workable knowledge of the Hungarian tongue, why then hand them a text which was simply “incorrect” when compared to everyday usage?298 Steinhardt seems to have won this round of the debate. At the general meeting of 1883, the textbook committee enacted a resolution that, in future texts, the “religious and patriotic element” be in “all ways subordinated to pedagogical and didactic requirements.”299

b. Debates on Content

The National Association adopted in the early 1880s the following tentative religious curriculum: four hours of religious instruction in the first grade, six hours in the second, and eight hours in grades three through six. Religious instruction was divided roughly equally between translation of Pentateuchal texts; an overview of the weekly and festival prayers; a review of some aspects of the Sayings of the Fathers; and the reading of Biblical stories in Hungarian.300

The communities and individual authors then debated with gusto the number of hours a week to devote to Bible study, versus study of the prayer book, or of the Sayings of the Fathers; but the larger point is that all parties were very much conscious of themselves as guardians of these texts which, they felt, it was also their duty to pass on to their students, even within the Hungarian context in which they found themselves. This dedication to passing on Jewish tradition within the Hungarian context is evident if we glance at the reference works these teachers had compiled for their students by 1883 for the specific learning of Jewish traditions. These included: a Hebrew aleph-bet book; a Hebrew grammar; a dictionary of the Bible; a
history of Israel as related in the Bible, including translations of Biblical songs and parrables; and a compendium of Biblical Jewish history, with an appendix connecting Jewish religious ritual with its textual sources and ethical meaning. The most striking aspect of this list is its length. It shows that the religious teachers and authors active within the National Association were completely comfortable within the Hungarian cultural environment, and saw it as an adequate milieu in which they could perpetuate their Jewishness.

In 1891, two authors from the Orthodox community, Gábel and Spitzer, had published Hungarian reading books similar in tenor and scope to Radó's. And yet, both of the reviewers of the book in the journal of the National Association took issue with a number of minutiae: that the authors had designated the Orthodox Jews as those who were “true to [the] religion [hithû]”; that the readings had been (apparently) chosen at random from the Biblical sources and other, previously-published reading books; and that [Hungarianized] Hebrew-sounding names for the Biblical heroes had been used, instead of Hungarian translations of Biblical Hebrew names, as used in Radó's books. The second reviewer even concluded that the book was not of the type that could “move real religious sensibilities and true, pious Jewish thinking,” for the moral beliefs presented in the work were false – why teach Lot's drunkenness to seven-year-olds? – and pedagogically, the book was not in accord with the latest (scientific) advances. This debate shows the extent to which the Orthodox-Neolog polemic divide had infiltrated even the most tangential aspects of Jewish communa life in Hungary by the end of the Dualist era. It also shows though how similar both factions were in terms of their cultural strivings: indeed both Neologs and Orthodox were essentially struggling with similar issues of cultural transmission.

Finally the early 1880s also saw the teachers debate methodological questions relating to the teaching of the Hungarian-Jewish symbiosis, which they were evolving. On various occasions, it was suggested that readings from the Biblical and national Hungarian canons of similar ethical scope be taught together. Thus, Budapest teacher Ábrahám Lederer suggested in 1882 with respect to Radó's books that the reading on Goliath the Giant be read together with the one on "Prince Béla's Duel with the Pomeranian Lord". Radó himself commented, upon the publication of a new edition of his reader in 1884, that the material had been culled and collated with the specific didactical purpose of combining Hungarian folktales, legends, and sagas with relevant edificatory stories from the midrash and aggadah. This willingness to minutely combine both traditions is thus at the origin of the sense of balance prevalent in Barna's reader, above: it was an understood value of the Neolog version Hungarian-Jewish symbiosis, to treat both traditions as equal, up to their minutest details.

F/ Conclusion

The constant worry to please the Hungarian public was an ever-present leitmotif to the teachers’ debates. In 1882, the journal of the Association reprinted an article from the non-Jewish Néptanítók Lapja [Teachers’ Journal], which praised the National Association's reading books as a model for a new type of 'national' reading books, which no other denomination had yet produced in Hungary. Conversely, in 1898, a teacher would argue in the pages of the association’s journal that “we have have to show that we have not fallen in any way behind the other religious denominations, that we are good patriots, true Hungarians, and Jews true to our
faith”. Both of these instances are indicative of the ceaseless concern to live up to cultural norms.

The reading books we have surveyed present a series of individual, idealized versions of Jewishness in Hungarian, which their authors sought to present to school-age children. They reflect the processes by which some Jewish communities in Hungary partially accepted the ’assimilationist contract’ and some of the means by which they sought to preserve aspects of Jewishness for future generations despite the modern challenges they faced. The reading books reflect, broadly, the professionalization and institutionalization of a modern Jewish narrative specific to Hungary, through the debates at the National Association of Israelite Teachers. And finally, the reading books reflect the modern trend of marketization of a narrative through the institution of publishers specifically oriented towards a Jewish textbook market, which had just barely been present at the start of the period under study.
Chapter Four  
*Wissenschaft des Judentums, auf ungarisch*

The previous chapters of this dissertation have explored why and how Jewish communal leaders in Budapest in the Dualist Period developed and maintained a feeling of affinity for the Hungarian language and nation amongst Jews and how they sought to create a Jewish cultural sphere in Hungarian.

The current chapter extends the field of inquiry to the domain of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*: the academic study of Jewish sources, the Jewish people and Judaism, in university settings. *Wissenschaft des Judentums* originated in Berlin with the work of Leopold Zunz and Immanuel Wolf between 1818 and 1822. Its first promulgator and developer in Hungary was Szeged Chief Rabbi Leopold Löw (1811-1875), whose German-language academic journal *Ben Chananja* (1844, and 1858-1867) explored social and political issues relating to Jewish emancipation in Hungary and initiated the study of historical sources relating to Jewish settlement in Hungary.

The general objective of this chapter is to give a broad overview of the lives and works of the seminal men who successfully created a Hungarian-language version of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Budapest in the Dualist Period. Their activities centred on the National Rabbinical Seminary, which opened in 1877. The more specific objective of this chapter is to argue that the institution attracted teachers who believed in an idealistic fashion in the ability to fuse, in students’ minds and in those of the general public, the following three elements:

(a) loyalty to the Hungarian nation through knowledge of its language and literature;  
(b) dedication to a modern Orthodox lifestyle in keeping with religious precepts (*halakhah*);  
(c) the academic rigors of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, expressed in Hungarian.

As we will see, the idealism of the teachers invigorated the students and it is from the fusion of these three elements that a new type of rabbi eventually developed, who was as much imbued with an idealistic loyalty to Hungary as he was dedicated to pursuing academic inquiry into classical Jewish sources and maintaining the basic requirements of tradition by observing religious precepts.

After a general summary of the events leading up to the opening of the National Rabbinical Seminary in 1877, we will first examine the specific and personal reasons behind why the most internationally famous of the Seminary’s teachers – the Orientalist Ignáž Goldziher (1850-1921) – combined loyalty to the three above-mentioned ideals. Much has been written about Goldziher’s German-language diaries, in which he presents less-than-appealing personal views on Jewish community leaders in Budapest. This chapter focuses instead on Goldziher’s much less-known Hungarian writings on Jewish history, which this chapter uses to account for Goldziher’s dedication to the development of *Wissenschaft* in Hungarian.

We will then transition to the learning environment that Goldziher and his colleagues at the Seminary created for their students and the students’ mastery of the material that was presented to them. Here we will rely on personal recollections of students, which convey a first-
hand look at the internal motifs common to the Seminary’s functioning. And finally we will examine some of the Hungarian-language academic fruits that students and teachers alike contributed to the world of Wissenschaft, primarily through one of the most successful and respected Hungarian-language academic journals ever: the *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* (Hungarian Jewish Review), which appeared between 1884 and 1948. As a joint project headed successively by various professors employed by the Seminary, and a journal to which a wide number of its students contributed, the *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* was the primary organ through which *Wissenscafft des Judentums* was created and diffused in Hungary at the turn of the century and later. The *Szemle* was extremely well respected in Hungary and abroad and served to establish both the linguistic apparatus relative to *Wissenscafft des Judentums* and the fields of inquiry themselves, in Hungarian.

**A/ The Beginnings of the National Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest**

The Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest sought to train rabbis who were distinctively loyal to the Hungarian national ethos, who were well-versed in the traditional sources of Judaism and who espoused a scientific dedication to objective, modern scholarship. In the last two regards the institution was molded upon a similar school, founded in 1854 in Breslau: the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar*, of which two of the Budapest institution’s initial faculty members were graduates. But the origins of the institution extend into the second decade of the nineteenth century.

As recounted by the Israeli historian Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, the German rabbi David ben Meir haKohen Friesenhausen first proposed the idea for a rabbinical seminary in Hungary, in 1806. Friesenhausen was of German origin; he settled in Hunfalva and then Pest at the beginning of the nineteenth century. On 26 July 1806, Friesenhausen appeared before Archduke Joseph, Palatine of Hungary and requested in a memorandum the creation of a rabbinical seminary. He proposed the hiring of two professors, who would split between them the teaching of religious and secular subjects. The school would be composed of a college and a secondary school. At the former, the director of the school would teach codes of Jewish law; the secular subjects to be offered included geometry, astronomy, the natural sciences, geography, world history and philosophy. In the secondary school, students would learn the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, Daniel and Chronicles, as well as Hebrew grammar before breakfast and morning prayers. They would learn tractates *Berachot* and *Moed* from the Babylonian Talmud before noon. In the afternoon they would have some time for walks or physical exercises, before pursuing Talmud studies until eight in the evening. Their afternoon studies would be interrupted by exposure to secular subjects (e.g., math and writing exercises in Hungarian, German and Latin).

Nothing came of Friesenhausen’s proposal: the government rejected it on 13 February 1813 on the grounds that the Jewish communities of the land could not sustain such an institute, since the yearly Tolerance Tax imposed on the communities (160,000 Florins) already created an enormous financial burden. The next three decades were characterized by lack of communal or political will to establish the institution. In 1844, Leopold Löw argued in an article in the daily *Pesti Hirlap* for the creation of a Seminary; the two houses of the Hungarian Parliament gave
initial approval to the project on 27 September of that year, but the question was then removed from the parliamentary agenda and the project got no further.315

In 1850, a year after the Hungarian Revolution of 1848-49, Franz Josef I relieved the Jews of Hungary of having to pay the fine of 2.3 million Florins, that the Austrian government had initially imposed on Hungary’s Jewish communities for their ardent participation in the revolution, on the Hungarian side. One million Florin were designated as a “Jewish Educational Fund,” part of which would go towards the building of a Seminary. In early 1864, a committee of three rabbis – Samuel Lőb Brill (head of the rabbinical council of Budapest), Mark Hirsch (Chief Rabbi of Óbuda) and Jacob Steinhardt (Chief Rabbi of Arad) – convened at the government’s request, to help draft the curriculum of the new institution.316

The committee’s proposal followed in many ways the suggestions of Friesenhausen. In Carmilly-Weinberger’s words: “the objective was to imbue the students with a desire for scientific research for the benefit of the community, keeping in mind the principles of ‘positive historic Judaism’ emphasized in the Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar of Breslau.”317 The committee imagined again a two-level institution comprised of a secondary school and a college. In theological matters, the students would study the Bible and its commentaries (especially Rashi,318 and Onkelos);319 the Talmud and its commentaries (especially those of Maimonides, the Rashba,320 and Isaac Luria);321 codes of Jewish Law (including the Mishneh Torah,322 Arba'ah Turim323 and the Shulchan Aruch);324 and Jewish philosophy and ethics through the works of Philo of Alexandria,325 Saadiah Gaon,326 Solomon ibn Gabiro,327 and Jehuda Halevi.328 The committee published its suggestions under the title of “Elaborat,”329 which was then reprinted by Leopold Löw’s weekly, Ben Chananja.330

This time, the proposal faced the concerted opposition of the Orthodox communities of the land. On 15 March 1864, a number of Orthodox rabbis met in Nyíregyháza – a village in Eastern Hungary – at a meeting chaired by Jehuda Aszód (1794-1866), who was the rabbi of Dunaszerdahely.331 These rabbis published a petition on 8 April 1864 with 92 signatures against the new institution.332

The Orthodox opposition to the project would eventually be defeated. At the last session of the Congress of Hungarian Jews held on 21 February 1869 – which most Orthodox participants had boycotted – the remaining Neolog delegates decided to ultimately establish the institution. In addition to Brill, Hirsch and Steinhardt, the delegates to the Congress elected rabbis Abraham Hochmuth of Veszprém, Sáül Köhn of Pest and Májér Zipser of Rohonc, as well as Henrik Deutsch, the director of the National Institute of Israelite Teachers, to develop a final curricular outline. Compared to the “Elaborat,” the committee suggested the addition of Midrash literature, Jewish history, and Semitic languages (Aramaic, Syriac, and Arabic) to the curriculum. As well, the Seminary would offer courses in Hebrew grammar, homiletics and the methodology for teaching Jewish religion. The language of instruction would be Hungarian and German, with the long-term intention of switching completely to Hungarian.333

Emperor Franz Josef I gave official approval on 6 May 1863 for construction to begin; the institute was built between 1874 and 1877 at the corner of Bodzafa-Bérkocsis and Rókk-Szilárd streets in the eighth district of Budapest. The institute opened on 4 October 1877, with
various dignitaries in attendance. Heinrich Graetz, then lecturer in Jewish history and Bible at the Jewish Theological Seminary of Breslau, said in his inaugural address for the Budapest Seminary that the Breslau seminary “may consider itself the mother of this newly created institute” and that he hoped that the Seminary in Budapest would pursue similar goals to the one in Breslau. In his own words:

to imbue students of Jewish theology with the spirit of pure religiosity and genuine scholarship and thus to prepare them for their holy charge, to spread the lofty concepts of the noble and profound teachings of Judaism among its adherents and to dispel the prejudice from which the Jewish creed and the Jewish people still have to suffer now and then.  

Given that the new Seminary’s first two full-time professors – Wilhelm Bacher (1850-1913) and David Kaufmann (1852-1899) – were both graduates of the seminary in Breslau, the link between the institutions in terms of methodology, curricular scope and dedication to the pursuing of the ideals of Wissenschaft des Judentums was assured. Though the National Rabbinical Seminary would train rabbis for service in the Jewish communities of Hungary, and the focus of the institution would eventually acquire a ‘national’ Hungarian character, the positive-historical brand of Judaism that the seminarians would be exposed to (in Hebrew, German and Hungarian) would ultimately be similar to the intellectual underpinnings of the Breslau institute. And while, in the words of a former seminarian, the “training of rabbis for employment abroad” was not one of the Seminary’s goals, it could be seen as a “sign of appreciation and recognition” of the success and rigor of the education the institution offered that some of the Seminary’s graduates found employment with congregations in “Karlsbad, Reichenberg, Mährisch-Ostrau, Prossnitz, Bisenz, and Landsberg a/Warthe” or “like [the graduates] Adolf Büchler, Márton Schreiner and Sámuél Krausz, to become professors in the seminaries of London, Berlin and Vienna”.

In the recapitulative essay he wrote on the occasion of the Seminary’s fiftieth anniversary (1927) rector Lajos Blau argued that the institution had served its purpose thus far very well. In its first fifty years the Seminary ordained 135 rabbis, of whom twenty-two had since passed away. Twelve graduates were employed outside of the country. Twenty-two graduates worked as religious instructors; of the seven rabbinical seminaries functioning in Europe at the time, three were led by graduates of the Budapest Seminary. Two graduates became high school teachers; two went to America after the First World War; four pursued different paths in business or administration. But the majority of the graduates stayed in Hungary and became congregational rabbis in its various smaller or larger settlements, ranging from Budapest, to Mór, a town of 13,000 in central Hungary, to Zalaegerszeg, a city of 61,000 in Western Hungary. Thus the ideological message of the institution reached rural communities and helped unify religious practice and beliefs in Hungary.

B/ Ignaz Goldziher’s Threefold Dedication to Wissenschaft, Judaism and Nation

Having given an overview of the elements and motifs that informed the founding of the institution that would be central to the development of the academic study of Judaism in Hungarian, we can turn to some of the personal reasons why one of the institution’s world-
famous teachers believed in the environment that he was partially responsible for creating. One’s relationship to the languages one speaks and the countries one inhabits is often fluid and it is often difficult to pinpoint the exact mix of national, religious, and linguistic loyalties that exist within a single person. The generally under-studied Hungarian-language writings allow us to shed some light on the intimate reasons why so many Jewish scholars strove with all of their energies to create a legitimate and authentic version of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Hungarian.

Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921) taught at the Seminary between 1901 and his death in addition to being a full professor at the University of Budapest from 1905 onwards. At the Seminary Goldziher taught courses on Maimonides’s *Guide for the Perplexed*, the Jewish *kalaam*, Rabbi Saadia Gaon’s *Emunot ve-Deot*, Bahya ben Joseph ibn Pakuda’s *Chovot HaLevavot*, Judah Halevi’s *Kuzari* and a general course on “the determinants of religious development”. Goldziher was born in the Western Hungarian town of Székesfehérvár. His father forced him into a regimented study of Talmud from the age of three and he published his first scholarly essay at the age of twelve. His family moved to Budapest in 1865, where he attended university courses before graduating from high school. One of his teachers was the famous Turkologist Ármin Vámbéry (1832-1913), from whom Goldziher became rather estranged in his later years. Goldziher received a scholarship from the Hungarian minister of Cults and Religions Baron József Eötvös for study abroad. His travels took him to Berlin, Leipzig and Leiden. He defended his doctoral dissertation on a “thirteenth-century Arabic-speaking Jewish biblical commentator” of the *Tanchum Yerushalmi* in 1870. His subsequent studies took him on a tour of the Middle East, between September 1873 and April 1874. He was the first European to attend lectures at the Al-Azhar Theological University in Cairo. When Goldziher returned to Budapest after the completion of his studies abroad he found that the university professorship that Eötvös had promised him prior to his departure was occupied. In the meantime Eötvös had passed away and his illiberal brother-in-law, Ágoston Trefort, had succeeded him in his ministerial post. Trefort would bar Goldziher’s appointment to the University until 1905. Consequently Goldziher accepted a position as secretary of the Pest Israelite Community and would produce most of his scholarly works during his vacations.

Goldziher had a complicated relationship with the Seminary in particular as well as with the Budapest Jewish community in general. Much has been made of the vituperative language with which he disparaged his colleagues at the Pest Israelite Community in two of his diaries: the personal diary he kept from 1890 onwards and his so-called “Oriental Diary,” which detailed Goldziher’s travels while a student. The former diary was edited and published in German by the Hungarian scholar Alexander Scheiber in 1978, who was then rector of the National Rabbinical Seminary; the later diary was edited, translated and published in English in 1987 by the orientalist Raphael Patai.

Goldziher’s Hungarian writings are of a different tone and tenor than the better-known and more widely translated German works, which occasioned his international fame. It is worthwhile to note that Goldziher probably thought in both German and Hungarian, even though the man was clearly a great Hungarian patriot. In other words, Goldziher was a product of the polyglot social environment of late-nineteenth-century Hungary. In an essay on “Goldziher’s Mother Tongue: A Contribution to the Study of the Language Situation in Hungary in the
Nineteenth Century,” the Hungarian scholar István Ormos (Keeper of Arabic Manuscripts at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) wrote the following about Goldziher’s mother tongue:

a careful evaluation of available data leads us to believe that [Goldziher's] mother tongue was probably a variety of German, probably with Jewish features in it. It is virtually certain that he learned Hungarian very early, and that as a Hungarian patriot, he considered Hungarian to be his national language, the language closest to his heart. He also required, relatively early in his life, an excellent knowledge of Standard Literary German (Hochdeutsch), and used it extensively throughout his life, both privately and in scholarly publications.348

Based on his extensive reading of Goldziher’s correspondence and diaries, the British historian Lawrence I. Conrad characterized the relationship between Goldziher’s usage of German and Hungarian as follows:

In German, he presents the mature results of his research to his orientalist colleagues worldwide: he focuses on the orderly presentation of closely and extensively documented arguments, the tone is dispassionate, and his objective is to establish his case for the precise topic under consideration. [...] The Goldziher of these studies is the Goldziher of the Tagebuch: a man with a dry sense of humour and a devastating talent for sarcasm, an observer of the absurd and a debunker of nonsense, a passionate scholar who embraces and discusses a specific methodological program, fulminates over the ways in which erroneous scholarship will mislead others, and worries for the future of his field.349

A number of articles discuss Goldziher’s complex personality and it is impossible within the confines of this chapter to do justice to the man’s mind.350 As stated above our objective here is simply to trace the contours of Goldziher’s relationship to the academic study of Judaism, within the context of our overall discussion of the Hungarian manifestation and development of Wissenschaft des Judentums. He elucidated these views most clearly in a series of six lectures on “The Essence and Meaning of Judaism” [A zsidóság lényege és fejlődése] which he presented in the winter of 1887-88 at the Jewish Community Center in Budapest for a young audience.351

According to Goldziher his lectures were not very well received: apparently the audience was surprised that he wanted to treat such matters as the modern meaning of Jewishness in such depth. Goldziher confided to his diary that the last of the six lectures had to be cancelled due to lack of attendance. “Never again,” he wrote in his diary in dejected fashion, “will I cast pearls before swine”.352 Thus his lectures were not translated into German and he generally strayed from such projects at later point of his life. But the fact of the matter is that we have proof that certain people appreciated his work. Szeged Chief Rabbi Immanuel Löw wrote the following consolatory lines to his colleague on 5 January 1888:

My dear friend, why are you so downhearted? [...] As to the general Jewish concern, you despair more than you need. You behave as if similar situations had never occurred before in other places, only here and now in Hungary. Religious renewal requires a different Zeitgeist from ours. I am not only talking about spiritual trends; I mean the material depression and the political situation of our time as well. What is needed now is
not inner transformation, but organization with a strong counteraction to priestly influence. This must be promoted, and in the meantime work in the synagogue and in the school must go on, to educate a better Jewish generation.\textsuperscript{353}

Löw wrote again to Goldziher a few weeks later as follows:

God bless you for your lectures. You will be above Geiger when it shall be completed whole. (I mean the Vorlesungen.) I hope you will dedicate a separate chapter to the newer development of the synagogal service, too.\textsuperscript{354}

And praise came not only from Goldziher’s friends. Bertalan Kohlbach, a student at the Seminary whose reflections we will examine in more detail below, wrote about Goldziher as follows:

Some of us felt truly honored by [...] Ignaz Goldziher’s genuine attentiveness. Goldziher acquired several grateful and devoted disciples from among us with the seminars he conducted in his home, or rather by the way he taught, and with the lectures on the history of religions, which he gave at the community house of the Jewish congregation.\textsuperscript{355}

Indeed it seems that Kohlbach considered Goldziher’s scholarly achievements the very apogee of what Seminarians should strive for. According to Kohlbach, “the Seminary answered [a] need in the past,” and it would be “even more effective” in Kohlbach’s times and “in the future, when the former students will themselves have become professors and taken their places next to Goldziher”.\textsuperscript{356}

How then did Goldziher consider the relationship between modernity, Jewishness and Wissenschaft? In his first lecture he argued that Judaism should be treated not as an archaeological question, nor as a relic, but as a “living organism,” in which every single Jew had his or her own part and of which each Jew was collectively part of. Judaism was “not only our science, but our [very] lives, not [only] a catalogue of the past, but an atmosphere in which we breathe, live and exist”. One’s investigation of the historical past of Judaism was not only a scientific question for the intellect to ponder, but a tightly practical question reflected in actuality, “which influences in a decisive manner the direction and content of [...] [the] religious lives” of modern Jews.\textsuperscript{357}

Goldziher argued that the traditions of Judaism did not arise in one great blow, but were the results of “the common spiritual work of generations of thinkers”.\textsuperscript{358} The continued development of Judaism consisted of the “deeper and deeper building” of its foundations by “using the truths of science, against which no other truth can stand”.\textsuperscript{359} It was shameful that the youth neglected the results of this scientific work, since only by “embracing the scientific results” of Wissenschaft des Judentums and applying them to the religious life of Jewish communities could “true religious development” take place.\textsuperscript{360} Goldziher added that the motifs of religious development were common to different ethnic groups.\textsuperscript{361}
Goldziher’s six lectures traced the contours of Jewish religious development from Biblical times to the present. In his sixth and final lecture he argued that the modern stage of Jewish religious development was inseparable from the fruits of science. Indeed, he said that the modern goal of Jewish religious development is to consider again [the meaning of our] religious thoughts, with respect to the general tasks facing mankind and the nation; to then enable our religion to fulfill these tasks; and to finally make religion relevant by living it.\textsuperscript{362}

Thus not only was \textit{Wissenschaft} necessary to make the Jewish religion meaningful in an era when everything was being infused with the fruits of science; Jewishness also had to be ‘nationalized’ and somewhat adapted to be able to serve both humanity in general and the nation specifically. For only then could religion be truly lived by its protagonists, who were the members of the community.

In a separate article on “Tradition and Dogma,” Goldziher added to the above by saying that what was important for him was \textit{continuity} between the generations who had created Jewish thought.\textsuperscript{363} Previous generations had created thought processes and traditions that represented their religious feelings. The current generation found itself in a knowing relationship of continuity with the past bearers of tradition that had created religious institutions and customs. Through intellectual and scientific work, these spiritual traditions could be re-created (i.e., made relevant) in the present.\textsuperscript{364}

Of course in practical terms there remained for Goldziher the problem of having been slighted by the University of Budapest on account of his religion, which barred him from a fully remunerated teaching position until late in his career. The interplay between Goldziher’s abstract, interwoven dedication to the above three elements and this bitter rebuff by the university are recounted in a personal essay entitled “Ignaz Goldziher, The Man,”\textsuperscript{365} by Goldziher’s protégé, the Budapest writer and journalist Károly Sebestyén (1872-1945).\textsuperscript{366} Goldziher and Sebestyén—they first met when Goldziher was eighteen years old—remained lifelong friends. Through Sebestyén’s recollections we meet an extremely kind and personable intellectual who exhibits none of the painful, wrenching self-deprecating cynicism we meet in the Goldziher’s diaries.

Sebestyén’s recollections confirm the interplay between the three domains of nationalism, Jewishness and \textit{Wissenschaft}. Sebestyén recounts an anecdote from which we can reconstruct an important, intimate aspect of Goldziher’s relationship to Jewishness. Goldziher had great respect for the Austrian philosopher and classicist Theodor Gomperz (1832-1912), in whose honor the Hungarian Philosophical Society organized a memorial evening in 1913, at which event Sebestyén gave an address. Goldziher was in attendance. Towards the end of his address, Sebestyén thought that for the sake of completeness and accuracy he should read the following lines, from Gomperz’s autobiographical \textit{Essays und Erinnerungen} (1905):

My relationship to the inherited faith was only heartfelt in the time of my youth. Still, as I now see it with injustice, I thought it a matter of honor and conscience, to not give up the
old religious community, and as a result I blocked for myself for a long time the way to fruitful activity.\(^{367}\)

Sebestyén admits that he was rather ashamed at the weakness he thus revealed to the audience about Gomperz, since the great classicist admits wholeheartedly that it was not the deep-seated conviction, nor continuity with the historical community, nor the deep anchored-in-blood solidarity that tied him to his brothers, but simply that (according to Sebestyén) the words of his own honor and conscience led him astray. Because if he had not listened to these, he could have much earlier pursuing “fruitful activity”.\(^{368}\)

In his text Sebestyén admits to realizing that he should have not read this paragraph: he understood while reading the words that he had infringed upon the rules of polite society by pointing at the failure of polite society to fully accept secular Jews amongst its ranks. After the event, Goldziher approached Sebestyén and loudly congratulated him in front of the others, then pulled his young colleague aside, and whispered in his ear “with such violence, such anger” as Sebestyén had never heard him speak: “What you just uncovered about Gomperz and Jewishness, it would have been a lot more intelligent to conceal. Why bring such a thing to market?”

Sebestyén, already completely aware of his mistake, tried to stammer some excuse:

“Still, the truth—”

“The scientific truth would have suffered no damage, had you concealed this matter. And in the end I also have an inkling of what service we render to scientific truth”.

Sebestyén concluded the episode by saying that this was the only hard lesson that he ever received from Goldziher, which he both learned and deserved.\(^{369}\)

This anecdote reveals as much about the rules of polite society in Budapest in 1913 as about Goldziher’s efforts to be a full member of it, and his ongoing sensitivity and hurt pride, which stemmed from the fact that he was fully aware, that the scientific truths to which polite society around him paid lip service, also contained a strategically placed glass ceiling that barred Jews from fully joining its ranks. Based on Goldziher’s Hungarian writings on Jewishness it does not appear that he remained Jewish solely (like Gomperz) because of “honor and conscience”. Had that been the case Goldziher would not have gone to such lengths to idealistically inspire Jewish youth about the merits of modern Jewish scholarship and a rebirth of religion through the findings of Wissenschaft. Rather Gomperz was Goldziher’s model for the heights that Jewish intellectuals could ascend to if they combined rigorous science, dedication to their nation and faith in Jewishness. The fact that Sebestyén reminded Goldziher that such idealism about the place of Jews in nineteenth-century Budapest was somewhat ill-placed threatened one of the main tenets of Goldziher’s idealistic belief system. And hence the sharp rebuke to his protégé after the session.
C/ The Intellectual Environment at the National Rabbinical Seminary in its First Decades

Having surveyed some of the personal reasons why a luminary such as Ignácz Goldziher considered Jewish studies to be foundational to the further development of Judaism in the modern age, we can turn to the learning environment that Goldziher and his colleagues created at the National Rabbinical Seminary in order to imbue their students with the ideals of national loyalty, religious observance and scientific pursuit. We have access to two descriptions of this learning environment, through the reminiscences of two of the institution’s graduates: the Hungarian-Jewish teacher and folklorist Bertalan Kohlbach (1866-1944), and the Budapest rabbi Imre Benoschofsky (1903-1970). Both published detailed essays about their studies at the Seminary and reflected on the material they learned, the interactions between students and faculty and the camaraderie between students, in addition to the ideological agenda pursued by the institution’s leaders.

Kohlbach was amongst the first students of the newly founded Seminary. He was born in Liptószentmiklós and attended both the secondary school and the college of the Seminary between 1879 and 1889 and the Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar in Breslau for an exchange year in 1884-85. After graduation he became rabbi of the congregation in Temesvár (1890-96) but he left this position after disagreements with the congregation. Apparently his views were too reform-minded. In 1907 he was a high school teacher in Nagyvárad (today Oradea, Romania) after which he moved to the capital. He was fluent in Hungarian, Hebrew, German, Latin and Slovak and read Arabic, Syriac, Greek, French, English and Spanish. His publications included a study of the life and works of the eleventh-century philologist Judah ibn Balam, on whom he wrote his doctoral dissertation; a number of studies of Jewish folklore and a study of Hellenistic influences in Judaism. Kohlbach died in Budapest in 1944, a victim of Nazi terror.

Imre Benoschofsky was a generation older than Kohlbach and attended the Seminary in the 1920s. He received his doctorate from the University of Budapest in 1926 and his rabbinical ordination in 1928. He was chief rabbi of Buda from 1936 onwards and taught homiletics and religious philosophy at the Seminary from 1945 until his death.

From Kohlbach’s recollections, entitled “The First Decade” and published in 1918 in the annual volume of the Hungarian-Israelite Literary Society (IMIT) it is possible to reconstruct at least partially what it might have been like to attend the Seminary in the first years of its existence. His comments provide a lucid and behind-the-scenes account of the results of the idealism that helped give birth to the Seminary.

Both Kohlbach and Benoschofsky wrote about how poor the Seminarians were. “Most of us were the sons or orphans of rabbis and poor parents,” wrote Kohlbach. Benoschofsky added that, “most of the students were from the countryside,” and that “they rented furnished rooms in the capital” and “gave private lessons to make ends meet”. Though the “Etz Hayyim [Tree of Life] Association provided students with some financial support,” most of the students were struggling. The students “ate breakfast after the morning service in a coffee shop near the Seminary,” paying for it with breakfast coupons, which were “pieces of cardboard bearing the stamp of the Seminary”. Lunch was also subsidized: students from the countryside ate at the cafeteria of the Seminary, which was a “peculiar, privately-run establishment” in which a
religious woman who lived close to the Seminary served the “broth, boiled beef and vegetables,” which she prepared in her own kitchen.382

Kohlbach and Benoschofsky also wrote about the interesting duality of seminarians, which reflected the duality in the Jewish communities of the land. The Seminary allowed students who had not completed four years of secondary schooling to take the entrance examination for the Seminary in all of the subjects taught at the Seminary. As well, students could also sit for entrance examinations to the secondary school, whether or not they had obtained some form of elementary schooling. Thus, the Seminary’s doors were open to both “gymnasiasts” who had obtained a secondary-school education somewhere in Hungary, and to graduates of Hungarian yeshivot, who had mastered enough of the material in order to pass the entrance examination. As a result the student body was made up of two groups:

(a) young Jewish men from secular backgrounds, who knew fairly little about Jewish tradition, religiosity and piety but who were comfortable with world history, literature and languages; and

(b) young Jewish men from Orthodox backgrounds, whom both authors referred to as “bakhurim” 383 who were more or less familiar with the Talmud, the commentaries to the Bible and with religious literature, but who had almost no secular education and no critical, scholarly apparatus for analyzing traditional Jewish sources from a wissenschaftlich perspective.

According to Benoschofsky, the men from secular backgrounds were “aware of their weakness in Hebrew and Jewish studies” and so “approached the Seminary with awe and trepidation” because they “considered it a sacred institution where they would have to fulfill the ever-increasing requirements of piety”.384 Comparatively, the men from religious backgrounds “were troubled by forebodings that stemmed from a guilty conscience,” because in the yeshivot of Hungary the Seminary was seen as “the house of sin, the very antechamber of hell”. The weakest students from both groups soon dropped out but the students who remained soon “realized the unity of secular and religious subjects,” and assumed “the common burdens and pleasures of faith and knowledge”.385 Thus, the Seminary provided for a way to unify the religious and secular fields of knowledge and for a new generation of Hungarian Jewish men to become well-rounded, modern leaders. Kohlbach added that the men of different backgrounds had a good effect on each other:

they [i.e., the graduates of the yeshivot] challenged us [i.e., the men of secular backgrounds] to compete with them. We had to substitute hard work for the quick perception and acute thinking, coupled with diligence, with which they had acquired knowledge. As a result, all of us progressed quickly in certain disciplines. We studied a great deal and learned more in fewer hours per week than students in other high schools, although the classes in Hebrew and Talmud caused us to be greatly overworked.386

The initial faculty of the institute included a number of luminaries in the fields of Jewish studies. The rector of the institute was the Orthodox rabbi Moses Bloch, who ascended to the position at the age of sixty-two, after having studied in the yeshivot of Nagytopolsány,387 Pilsen388 and Prague, and having been a rabbi in Hermann-Mestetz,389 and Leipnik.390 He taught Talmud for
thirty years and retired at the age of 92, in 1907. Kohlbach noted that “Bloch was an exceedingly perspicacious and lively lecturer, a scholar of European reputation [but that] he was not a pedagogue, [and] thus, he failed to sustain general attention”. When he lectured on the Talmud, he was “profoundly absorbed in the subject, totally submerged in the immense material” and “forgot that he was supposed to be a teacher and an educator” for his “imagination had transported him into the world of the beth hamidrash”. The students from secular backgrounds usually stopped what they were doing in the back benches – usually reading for the next class – and watched “with amazement” as the students from religious backgrounds “were enraptured” by Bloch’s lecture and how “they hung on every word, [...] listening, weighing, interrupting, repeatedly nodding in agreement, and supplementing the thoughts and interpretations of the master”. But Kohlbach added that though Bloch was pleased to be heading this institution, [and] enjoyed the recognition he received from the government, [...] the heart of this conservative descendent of great forebears [...] could never warm to the Seminary. [...] He looked with apprehension toward the big Orthodox camp, which regarded him as a renegade.

Kohlbach added that Bloch “must have harbored a deep conflict in his heart”.

The other teachers at the Seminary were well known and respected scholars in their fields. I mentioned above that the Orientalists Wilhelm Bacher and David Kaufmann were the first two full-time professors at the institute. Bacher taught introduction to the Bible, Biblical commentaries, the history of Exegesis and Midrash literature at the college level; in the secondary school, he taught Bible, Jewish History and German language. Kaufmann taught Jewish history, philosophy and homiletics at the college level, and German and Greek languages in the secondary school. Bacher became the rector of the institution after Bloch’s death in 1907, and assumed that position until his own death.

Both Bacher and Kaufmann were originally from outside of the capital and had received their doctorates from the University of Leipzizg after their studies at the university and rabbinical seminary in Breslau. Bacher had been born in Liptószentmiklós; Kaufmann was from Kojetein, Moravia. Both continued to publish extensively alongside their teaching duties at the Seminary in Budapest. Bacher edited (amongst others) the Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums and the Revue des Études Juives. His main areas of interest were Biblical commentaries, Hebrew grammar, Jewish religious philosophy and Persian and Arabic studies. He wrote on “Abraham ibn Ezra as a Grammarian,” the “Agjadot of the Babylonian amoraim” and on the life and works of Abulvalid Mervan ibn Ganah. Kaufmann wrote on Jewish religious philosophy in the Middle Ages; he also wrote on the medieval psychology and contributed studies on the expulsion of Jews from Vienna and Lower Austria and family histories of Samson Wertheimer and Chayim Bacharach. His Gesammelte Schriften appeared under the redactorship of Marcus Brann in 1910, ten years after his death.

Amongst the part-time faculty we should note Dr. Józef Báőzi (1849-1926), who taught Hungarian language and literature, and philosophy at the secondary school and who was a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Báőzi was a literary historian who had attended gymnasium in Veszprém and Budapest before his university studies in Budapest, Vienna,
Berlin, Göttingen, Leipzig, Paris and London (1869-75). After receiving his doctorate from the University of Leipzig, he was hired by the Seminary upon its opening. He edited the writings of the Hungarian authors Kelemen Mikes, Dániel Berzsenyi and Miklós Zrínyi; he co-translated Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* and a number of Schopenhauer’s works into Hungarian; and wrote a history of philosophy from Thales to Comte. 

Finally, some of the other faculty members included Dr. Heinrich Bloch (the son of Moses Bloch), who taught world history, German and Greek; Dr. Károly Bein, who taught mathematics, physics and the natural sciences; and Salamon Schill, who taught Latin and Greek.  

Bertalan Kohlbach had fond memories of both Bacher and Kaufmann. He wrote that:

Whatever [Bacher] produced in writing, whatever he communicated orally, and whatever he taught in the upper division and in the gymnázium, was the result of conscientious, and objective, research and thorough knowledge. We, his students, recognized this, came to his classes well prepared, and accepted enthusiastically his leadership and his guidance.  

He added that:

As a homilist and orator, David Kaufmann's remarkable versatility and brilliant lectures mesmerized both his students and audiences. Our successes in homiletics and rhetoric, aside from aptitude, were due to his guidance and severe criticism. His appreciation enabled us to conquer the jitters when we, young men of twenty-one and twenty-two years of age, mounted the pulpit. Though he knew that we would be among strangers and critics, Kaufmann allowed us, based on our performance on the pulpit of the Seminary, to visit congregations at home and abroad. And we did not disappoint him.  

Of course this did not preclude the occasional critique of his former teachers. Kohlbach argued that though “whatever Kaufmann taught greatly broadened the scope of our knowledge,” the students “deeply regretted that in all three of his disciplines -- Jewish history, philosophy of religion, and history of religions -- he confined himself to a narrow field: that of Jewish culture in medieval Spain and Italy”. Kohlbach compared how Bacher and Kaufmann taught German language:

The former, with his accustomed thoroughness, made us read German romantic novels and ballads, and collected our written assignments punctually, while the latter swept us along with his brilliant lectures. [However,] Kaufmann was a versatile scholar, not a pedagogue. He had us read Schiller's *Wallenstein's Tod* and Goethe's *Iphigenia*. [...] The themes of our written assignments made us think and advance independent criticism. His method of criticism, which was extraordinarily instructive and vivid, held us spellbound. [...] But since German was not his speciality, he lacked in methodology. In our senior year, he could have acquainted us with the full scope of German history and literature, but we ran out of time. Thus, we only memorized excerpts of Kluge's works towards the end of the year. However, we knew Lessing, Schiller and Goethe well.  

One of the ways in which the Seminarians developed the bonds of friendship and became a distinct group, was by enjoying the fruits of Hungarian drama, literature, and music. Their
introduction to these fields was mainly the work of József Bánóczi. He taught the Seminarians “how to dress and conduct [themselves] appropriately”. Bánóczi was a “molder of [...] minds, a teacher and a fatherly friend” to the students. Those who spent some Saturday afternoons at his apartment received “books, counsel and direction” in order to become “humanists” who were “educated” and “civilized”. Bánóczi encouraged the Seminarians to attend the Hungarian National Theater, through which the seminarians became acquainted with the works of the Hungarian national poet Mihály Vörösmarty, the Hungarian dramatist Imre Madách, and the works of Molière and Shakespeare performed in Hungarian translation by the famous Hungarian actors of the day. At the National Theater they learned “through enjoyment [...] the correct way to converse, give speeches, make an entrance, sit down and greet people”. The students also attended the People’s Theater, where they were exposed to “Hungarian folkways”; the Hungarian State Opera; and were projected by a “thirst for culture” to read current Hungarian dailies.

Thus the Seminarians learned the main tenets of Hungarian literary and European culture by absorbing the various influences that existed around them, in the Hungarian capital. They “became Hungarian” through the encouragement of their teacher and developed a love and an affinity for the cultural works in their midst by being introduced to them on the stage, in the newspaper or at the opera. The students also helped themselves develop the ability to critique and comment the works they saw performed, or the works they read. One of the first student associations that the students founded – at the encouragement of Bánóczi – was the “Önképzőkör,” which is most easily translatable as “Self-Formative Society”. The Önképzőkör functioned as a literary and debating society in which, the students from secular and religious backgrounds again forged a new type of unity, through their common enjoyment of Hungarian literature. These were new types of links that had not existed between Jewish youth prior to the establishment of the Seminary. Kohlbach reminisced:

The Önképzőkör generated much activity. In it, both the student with a secular background and the bahur [Talmud student] had their first taste of success. The former as a reciter of poetry, a writer, a translator; the latter, as a sharp-minded critic and judge. There was no national celebration in which our modest group did not participate. [...] The [group] enabled us to become thoroughly acquainted with our national literature. We recited the poems of Vörösmarty, Petőfi, Arany, József Eötvös, Pál Gyulai, József Kiss and, of course, János Garay, as well as the works of the great precursors, Berzsenyi and Kőlcsey. Some of us presented their poems and short stories, others read their historic essays. All of it was written in Hungarian. Now and then, a work of one of our great poets would be recited in Hebrew translation.

Kohlbach summed up his experiences as a student of the National Rabbinical Seminary by saying that the institution “continued to fulfill successfully its most important task: the training of Hungarian rabbis for the Jews of our land.” Except for the few rabbis who were Zionists and who were “of no consequence and for whom we, Jewish citizens of the Hungarian nation, feel extremely sorry,” most of the rabbis of the land were “Hungarians in spirit and deed”. Those rabbis whom the Seminary educated could now spread Jewish scholarship in the Hungarian language with “fervor, perseverance and zeal”. He concluded his remarks by writing that the institution needed only “enthusiastic, active and impassioned students,” that idealism “must be
part of Jewish life, [and] its universality, culture, people and forms” and that the students of the first generation of the Seminary are proud to have shared in the idealism of its founders and to have “willingly endured hardship, often cold and hunger, in the hope of the future”.411

Bertalan Kohlbach and Imre Benoschofsky were only two of the more than one hundred rabbis who graduated from the Seminary between its founding and the beginning of the Second World War. Through their words and reminiscences – no doubt somewhat rosily colored due to the passage of time – we can appreciate somewhat the idealism and the dual love of Hungarian and Jewish culture that the institution, through its professors, inspired in the students. Not only did the institution manage to break down an important divide between secular and religious Jewish children, but it allowed them to develop a newfound love for Hungary as their national homeland and for Hungarian language and culture as meaningful purveyors of the national spirit. The institution managed to do this because it was centrally located in the capital; because it was the only such institution in the country; and because its teachers were dedicated to the specific aspects of their educational missions, to inspire students.

D/ The Products of Wissenschaft des Judentums in Hungarian and The Magyar Zsidó Szemle

Having examined the environment, which Bacher, Bá nócki, Kaufmann and their colleagues created for the development of a new type of rabbi, who would be at once loyal to the Hungarian nation and also embrace the ideals of Wissenschaft des Judentums, we can turn to the specific reasons they gave for their dedication to this project of renewal and adaptation. Bacher and Bá nócki spelled these reasons out most clearly in their introductory article to the journal they started together, the Magyar Zsidó Szemle (Hungarian Jewish Review). This journal, whose sixty-five volumes spanned the period 1884-1948, became Hungary’s pre-eminent academic journal for Jewish and related studies, to which the best of Hungary’s academic elite contributed a formidable set of articles spanning linguistics, Biblical exegesis, communal histories and ethnography. The Magyar Zsidó Szemle was instrumental in helping scholars in Hungary develop the vocabulary and linguistic tools necessary to write about these subjects in the language of the land.

In 1957 Ferenc Galambos, one of the former librarians at the Hungarian National Széchenyi Library, prepared the index of authors and topics for the journal, and noted that though the “Magyar Zsidó Szemle was not the first Hungarian-language Jewish periodical, [...] given its scientific weight and its lifespan, it had no competitors during its long career. Sixty-five volumes is an achievement with which no other Hungarian journal can boast, with the exception of a few scientific journals, such as the Budapesti Szemle”.412 Galambos added that the scientific results of the journal were catalogued in Hebraistic literature the world over and that from the history of the journal itself the prevailing situation of the Hungarian Jewish communities could be discerned at all times:

Between 1884 and 1895, the journal appeared in ten issues [yearly]; between 1891 and 1895, twelve issues appeared [yearly]. Between 1896 and 1926, four issues appeared yearly, albeit the total number of yearly pages never decreased, except during the period following 1919. Six issues appeared in 1927, ten in 1928, [and] between 1929 and 1937
twelve issues yearly, of course many times in combined editions. In 1938 four issues in one combined volume, and from 1940 until its disappearance, a [single yearly] volume consisted of only one issue.413

After Bacher and Bánóczi, rabbi Lajos Blau (1861-1936) and the lawyer Ferenc Mezey (1860-1927) took over the editorship of the journal in 1891; after 1898, Blau remained the sole editor through the 1920s. During the interwar period, Blau alternated in the role of editor-in-chief with rabbis Simon Hevesi (1868-1943) and Dénes Friedman (1903-1944). The last volume – published in 1948 – was edited by the historian and linguist Alexander Scheiber (1913-1985).

Bacher and Bánóczi published their statement of goals in the very first issue. They wrote that though every matter in Hungary had for itself a journal, Jewry did not. More than anything – especially in the wake of the Tiszeaszlár blood libel (1882-83) – Jewry needed its own academic organ. Bacher and Bánóczi wrote:

For an entire millenium, we have been living together with our compatriots of other religions in this our national home [i.e., Hungary] and the question is raised: do they know us? [Italics added.] We are not afraid of getting to be known [megismerés], but [rather] of being misunderstood [félreismerés].414

We can distil from these two sentences one of the prime reasons for the founding of Wissenschaft des Judentums in Hungarian: to make Jewish studies and the academic study of Jewish culture accessible to an educated, modern Hungarian-speaking, non-Jewish audience that was – ostensibly, so the editors believed – interested in learning about and incorporating its acculturated, Jewish minority into the national fold. The editors added that they hoped that their non-Jewish fellow citizens [polgártársaink] might find orientation [tájékozás] and eventual familiarity [eligazdás].415 Thus we can speak of a general social goal to the journal, which the journal evidently lived up to, if we consider Galambos’s accolades.

The two editors continued by arguing that such an organ was needed because Jews themselves had neglected the study of their own archival and historical sources in the past decades.

Our religion and its sources, our old literature and the general [level] of Jewish studies had been in such incredible decline for a generation – [...] with this neglect comes the neglect of the interests of the Jewish religious denomination and the indifference and the lack of sympathy [részvételség] [which previously assured] the unity of Jewry.416

Thus we can also see in the Hungarian manifestation of Wissenschaft an attempt to reinvigorate Jewish life in Hungary by providing community members with a modern, scientific and (hopefully) engaging manner in which they could be (or stay) Jewish. The editors specified that that the journal would give the opportunity for the Hungarian members of their community of faith [hitsorsaink] to receive “guidance and enlightenment” in matters Jewish-related.

The editors sought to achieve these two large goals through a number of specific and practical objectives. They wanted to effect the cultivation [művelés] and the spreading of Jewish
scholarship in an articulate and easy-to-understand manner. But the entire undertaking had a tangible, national dimension as well, which bespoke an ongoing and successful effort by Jewish communities in Hungary (especially in the capital) to acculturate. The editors decried the fact that those individuals who wanted to engage in Jewish science “in our national home” had to do so in a foreign language (i.e., German). Likewise, the intended audience had to turn to foreign-language publication(s) if it wanted to satiate its need for the latest developments in the field. Thus the editors specified that they would print reviews of secondary literature in Jewish studies from foreign countries, alongside its original studies. As a result, the journal became a veritable bridge between scholars of Jewish Studies in French, German and English-language academic journals, and a fledgling audience for the fruits of their labors in Hungarian. Undeniable though is also the corollary to this argument: that modern Hungarian Jews eventually would lack the linguistic skills to follow such ‘foreign’ academic endeavors in languages not of their ‘homeland’. In order to partially compensate for this isolation, Lajos Blau edited a Hebrew-language supplement to the *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* entitled “ha-Tsofeh le-hokhmat Yisrael,” between 1911 and 1931.

In the second issue of the journal, Immanuel Löw – Chief Rabbi of Szeged and the son of Leopold Löw – pointed out that by starting on this project Hungarian Jews were fulfilling a “moral duty” [erkölcsi kötelesség]. Löw’s was an interesting response to the question of the relationship between nationalism and early Jewish studies. Löw argued that Dutch, French, and (in part) Russian and American Jews were all rushing to “nationalize” Jewish science, which Jews who had written in German had originally created, though not all of them had been of German nationality. The *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* wanted to give a Hungarian voice to Jewish science. According to Löw it was superfluous to debate whether such strivings were needed or not: his point was, though, that it should be the central task of Hungarian rabbis to undertake this initiative, which was salutary from both a national and a religious perspective. Based on the widespread participation of the rabbinical teaching faculty at the Budapest Rabbinical Seminary in the editorship and authoring of articles for the journal, and the substantial contributions of at least two (but maybe three or four) generations of Neolog rabbis to the journal, we can easily demonstrate that Löw’s call to action was fulfilled.

There is no space within the confines of this chapter to deal extensively with all of the fields of knowledge, which the writers of the *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* enriched through their writings. If we constrict ourselves to the fields of knowledge affecting Hungarian Jews, we can group the articles within the *Szemle* into categories as below.

General articles on Hungarian Jewish history tended to focus on the path towards Hungarian Jewish emancipation; specific acts by Hungarian leaders to help Jews; accounts of blood libels in the eighteenth century; and the occasional painstaking, community-by-community analysis of living conditions and literacy. A different type of article focused on the institutions that Jews in Hungary had created during the course of the nineteenth century: for example, there was an article on burial societies in Óbuda. A number of scholars were also fond of publishing reprints of archival documents, without analysis, which they had transcribed from communal sources. Joseph II’s enlightened absolutist regulations of 1783, trying to incorporate Jews into the body politic, is one such example. By far the most common type of Hungarian Jewish historiography consisted of local histories. We find in the pages of the *Magyar*
had to be developed, for transcription. Related languages had to be foregone; and that a specific set of criteria and stylistic guidelines were asked from those who would send in information from the regions; that ideological ‘aversion’ to the study of Yiddish and its Jewish

1945). Seminar’s rector Lajos Blau

of personages, historical events, and the like could contribute to the study of Yiddish. The ethos of the journal, its material, its authors and the general tenets of Wissenschaft des Judentums. The Jewish ethnographic studies that were published in the journal allow us to illuminate both the functioning of the journal, some of its fruits and the relationship of the authors to their subject matter. These studies consisted of an attempt to capture the allure and appeal of the Yiddish-speaking, religious Hungarian hinterland in modern Hungarian in ways entirely similar to the An-ski Ethnographic Expedition.

The rationale behind these studies was a scientific one of preservation and understanding of cultural forms, which the authors of the studies no longer participated in. They were written (or contributed or initiated) by individuals who were generally comfortable in their identities as Hungarian Jews and who wanted to preserve the histories of the communities of the hinterland. The results of this project were development of a scholarly apparatus for incorporating at least the partial history of rural Hungarian Jewish communities into the Hungarian-language academic fold; the deployment and development of a substantially new scholarly apparatus in the fields of ethnography and history; and the translation of a fair amount of Yiddish poetry into Hungarian.

The ethnographic studies in the Magyar Zsidó Szemle were initiated by two scholars: the Seminar’s rector Lajos Blau and the Hungarian linguist and folklorist József Balassa (1864-1945). In both of their calls to action in order to preserve the culture and linguistic forms of Jewish settlements in Eastern Hungary, they sought to work in a scientific and pragmatic frame of mind. Such an attitude meant that specific questions had to be asked from those who would send in information from the regions; that ideological ‘aversion’ to the study of Yiddish and its related languages had to be foregone; and that a specific set of criteria and stylistic guidelines had to be developed, for transcription.

\textit{Zsidó Szemle} articles on the building of the synagogue in Debrecen,\textsuperscript{425} the sixty-year jubilee of the Jewish community school in Liptószentmiklós,\textsuperscript{426} Jewish participation in the 1848-49 revolution in Kecskemét,\textsuperscript{427} a town in central Hungary; and a whole bevy of articles on small localities such as Bözöd-Ujfalú\textsuperscript{428} in Transylvania,\textsuperscript{429} or Bonyhád, a town in southern Hungary.\textsuperscript{430} Literary studies and literary criticism were two areas of the journal’s strength. The journal offered a space for literary criticism of the poetry of Salomon ibn Gabirol\textsuperscript{431} and translations from the \textit{Diwan} of Samuel Hanagid,\textsuperscript{432} and parts of the synagogal service.\textsuperscript{433}

The \textit{Magyar Zsidó Szemle} was by no means immune to the ideology of Hungarianization described in other parts of this study. Indeed the very first article in the very first issue – after Bacher and Bánóczí’s letter from the editors – was an article by none other than Pest Chief Rabbi Sámuel Kóhn about the “The Hungarian Conquerors of the Homeland and the Jews,”\textsuperscript{434} in which he argues that even before the Hungarian tribesmen conquered the Carpathian basin, there existed links between Jews and Hungarians. The \textit{Magyar Zsidó Szemle} also sometimes printed articles on “The Hungarianness of Biblical Names,”\textsuperscript{435} and “Biblical Elements in the Language of [Hungarian national poet Sándor] Petőfi”.\textsuperscript{436} By and large, though, the editors took care to assume a scientific outlook and to thus ensure the legitimacy of the journal as a whole.

Having given an overview of some general areas that held the interest of the academics who wrote for the \textit{Magyar Zsidó Szemle}, we can turn to a single area through which we can examine the relationship between the journal, its material, its authors and the general tenets of Wissenschaft des Judentums. The Jewish ethnographic studies that were published in the journal allow us to illuminate both the functioning of the journal, some of its fruits and the relationship of the authors to their subject matter. These studies consisted of an attempt to capture the allure and appeal of the Yiddish-speaking, religious Hungarian hinterland in modern Hungarian in ways entirely similar to the An-ski Ethnographic Expedition.

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\textsuperscript{425} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 1.
\textsuperscript{426} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 2.
\textsuperscript{427} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 3.
\textsuperscript{428} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 4.
\textsuperscript{429} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 5.
\textsuperscript{430} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 6.
\textsuperscript{431} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 7.
\textsuperscript{432} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 8.
\textsuperscript{433} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 9.
\textsuperscript{434} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 10.
\textsuperscript{435} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 11.
\textsuperscript{436} Zsidó Szemle. Budapest, 1926, no. 12.
Lajos Blau considered it the duty of scholarship to capture how “the nation” lived and worked. “We must not denigrate anything, which will safely lead us to develop an acquaintance with the soul and the character [jellem] of the nation”. And he defended this scholarly interest as a scientific pursuit, which would lead Hungarian Jews to better understand themselves and their origins. Unlike so many of the ideological strivings described elsewhere in this dissertation, Blau’s attitude is one of uncompromising dedication to accurately portraying and constructing the historical record. As such it bespeaks the inner strength of an individual, who is comfortable enough in his cultural identity as a Hungarian Jew to engage in a study of previous manifestations of Jewish culture. He wrote:

This scholarly study [of jargon] does not clash with any type of understanding or any type of sentiments. We can consider [vallhatjuk] ourselves Jewish Hungarians or Hungarian Jews, we can speak Hungarian well or poorly, like the civil servant in Debrecen or the anti-Semitic landowner; all of this does not change the fact that, our father partially did not speak Hungarian and between themselves they used the German-Jewish tongue. We have no reason to forget this fact or to be shameful about it.438

Balassa agreed with this scientific attitude. In an article that appeared in 1900 he wrote that “it would be good to gather together and valorize for the purposes of science the data illuminating the origins, lifestyle, customs, language and poetry of Hungarian Jewry.” Balassa was concerned that “in greater parts of the country, almost every originality and particularity” that made Hungarian Jewry distinct from its neighbors was “on the verge of extinction”: as a result, action had to be swift in order to “save that which was still savable”.439

Thankfully, Balassa printed in the journal a copy of the questionnaire he wished to send out to the remote Jewish communities of Eastern Hungary. Balassa was, first and foremost interested in the origins of these small communities, and the questions he posed attest to the fact that he was aware that most of these communities were relatively new (i.e., they had been settled and founded by newcomers from Galicia, Moravia, and Russia in the early eighteenth century, following the Peace of Karlowitz). Balassa asked his respondents about the immediate origins of the communities; of the region that the community members outgrew from; whether there were on hand original immigration documents or other tangential proofs that could support evidence given in oral histories.440

As a linguist, Balassa was very much aware and interested in the mixing of languages and – judging from his writings – he did not seem to have an ideological agenda that would have obscured these processes in favor of an ideological take on either Hungary’s or Jewry’s destinies. He asked specific questions about linguistic usage in the communities, especially if linguistic usage differed between community members when talking amongst themselves, and when talking with non-members of the in-group: “If the language of Jewry [in the area] has the coloring of a dialect, it has to be mentioned: Jew-ish [zsidős] German, Polish- or Spanish-Jewish jargon, or maybe a different mixed language”.441 If the person answering the questions was doing so “with pleasure” the researcher should collect as many connected and contiguous [összefüggő] texts as possible – such as stories and funny anecdotes – with the “faithful rendering” [hű feltüntetés] of pronunciation.
The researcher was also to gather together the “characteristic peculiarities” \([\text{jellemző sajátságait}]\) of the zsargon [i.e., of Yiddish] “illuminating it” as many examples as possible. The researcher was to collect with as much completeness as possible the characteristic family- and personal names, the derisive names people gave to others, and popular sayings. Balassa was interested in the ‘collection’ – that is, the scientific description – of ritual, of original poetry and of material ethnography, as well as describing “superstition and superstitious acts,” inclusive of magic, and the astrology.\(^{442}\)

We see in Balassa’s questionnaire a distinct interest in capturing pre-modern cultural forms that are no longer present in the modern, urban Jewish culture that the Seminary and other Jewish institutions helped create. Interestingly, it seems that the editors of the \(\text{Magyar Zsidó Szemle}\) were originally against the project: Balassa wrote that editors of the \(\text{Szemle}\) were of the opinion that “there was nothing to be gathered”. Miksa Szabolcsi, the editor of the \(\text{Egyenlőség}\), had been of the opposite opinion: according to him, there would be too much to do, since the task was so enormous.\(^{443}\) Of course the \(\text{Magyar Zsidó Szemle}\) eventually printed dozens of folklore-related articles: sayings heard in the countryside, superstitious behaviors, the occasional anecdote and a variety of songs from the villages grace its pages.

Lajos Blau was very much concerned with standardizing the written forms of the Yiddish phrases and sayings that his informants would gather. In his instructions to those future article-writers who would contribute to the pages of the \(\text{Magyar Zsidó Szemle}\) we see the contours of a \(\text{wissenschaftlich}\) movement, which is still struggling to emancipate itself from its German-language forebears. Blau wrote that every \([\text{Yiddish}]\) word had to be transcribed with the “correct” Hungarian spelling:

\[\text{German orthography can only be applied, if it is necessary for the recognition of the word [italics added]. To Germanize the jargon (according to today’s literary language) is not allowed. Of course, the Hebrew expressions do not fall under this rule. But if these are being used as jargon-words, or alternatively that they are being transcribed in Hungarian letters, then they do not form an exception to the rule.}^{444}\]

We can see from this snippet the changes through which the scholars of folklore were themselves undergoing, just as they were creating their own field of inquiry. The fact that Blau’s fear was that Hungarian-speaking readers of an article in Hungarian on Jewish folklore would have trouble recognizing the cultural phenomena, which such a future article would have presented the readers with, bespeaks volumes about the cultural about-face that Blau and his fellow ethnographers were themselves undergoing. This snippet also provides clues as to the indebtedness of Hungarian ethnography to its German precedents and to the application of linguistic nationalism to what was a growing field. And finally, the transliteration of words into Hungarian was bound to occasion some discussion about the ‘correct’ way to Hungarianize names. Understandably, perhaps, one reader complained to the editorial board of the \(\text{Magyar Zsidó Szemle}\) that its writers were not Hungarianizing Biblical names in the ‘correct’ fashion.\(^{445}\)
E/ Ethnographic Scholarship in the *Magyar Zsidó Szemle*

The ethnographic sections of the *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* give much insight into the confluence between linguistic traditions that existed in rural Hungary on a regular basis. The journal often printed sayings in Yiddish that correspondents had sent in from various rural localities. These were often printed as lists, without any commentary, according to the spelling rules developed above. The two sets of examples below in transliterated, Hungarianized Yiddish help us see both the transliteration efforts and the results of the research methodologies of the journal and thus the layers of meaning that current users of the journal must peer through to reap its linguistic gems. First, let us look at the types of transliterated sayings that the journal often printed:

Venn dez cházer hárner het, het de velt ká ruh;
*If the pig had horns, the world would know no peace. (Meaning: if you give power to the mediocre, the world will know no peace.)*

Hündszgebill ün kátzengesrei géht niks for Gott;
*The barking of the dog and the meowing of the cat does not go in front of God. (Meaning: God does not care for whiners.)*

Me zéht niks af den hünd, nar vém er ókher;
*One does not look at the dog, but at its owner (Meaning: a person's character is more important than his or her appearance.)*

Párnosze hált álle mákesz auz;
*A steady income takes care of all plagues. (Meaning: if you have money, everything will be fine.) A steady income keeps all plagues at bay*

Der rashkól liegt e lá áf den bészhákvóresz
*The congregational president is lying dead in the cemetery (Meaning: the congregation lost its main financial supporter.)*

Unfortunately for the researcher, we often know very little as to the provenance of these sayings and so their research value is quite limited. However, these snippets of popular culture, filtered through the atmosphere of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and transposed into a Hungarian-language Jewish academic journal at the turn of the century can tell us much about the process through which urban, modern nineteenth century Jews came to understand themselves and their the environments of their ancestors. Why the emphasis on sayings? Perhaps because the snippets in themselves are deemed not to be threatening in themselves to the general cultural goal of acculturation. If one drops Yiddish phrases into an otherwise Hungarian conversation between two Jews, the saying can convey much implicit meaning, without threatening a newly-acquired Hungarian identity. Thus I would argue that these sayings were published not so much in order to enable a complete ethnographic study but mainly to remind or entertain the readers of the journal of how certain Jews in Eastern Hungary still spoke.
Sometimes, however, longer pieces showing significant linguistic and cultural interpolination were printed. Below is a section in Hungarianized Yiddish of a parody of Schiller’s *Das Lied von der Glocke*:\(^{447}\)

```
Feszt hajczt den Ojfen, desz Csolet zoll geruthen,
Ajltsz enk Kinder, esz vert sojn späť,
Frátig isz Czát czi kochen, czi bruten,
Gesvind nor Kinder, czi der Arbet zéht!
Kinder, Kinder
Nor gesvinder,
Befor esz titsz den Kigely knéten:
Zógcz e tchine in titsz Gott béten.\(^{448}\)
```

The literal translation of the parody is something as follows:

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Heat the oven, to give the cholent calm,
Hurry up children, it’s late,
The time to cook and to roast has ended,
Hurry up children, the work awaits!
Children, children,
only hurry,
Before you knead the kugel,
Say a prayer for God to glory.\(^{449}\)
```

This is a magnificent example of a cultural product that could only have been produced in an environment where its creators were familiar with German, Yiddish, and Hungarian on a daily basis. The poem was submitted by rabbi Ignác Friedlieber (1847-?), who was originally from Sátoraljaújhely in eastern Hungary and who at the end of the nineteenth century was a rabbi in Szolnok, a town in central Hungary. Friedlieber mentioned that children used to sing the parody in his youth to the tune of an aria in Verdi’s *Othello* (he neglected to specify which one) and that its author was a comedian named Mechele Marsellik, from Máramarossziget.

Here again, we see at once that various levels of text exist at the same time and that the parody as such is in itself a cultural artifact. A first layer of text consists of the transcriber’s diligent adaptation of Hungarian spelling (as per the *Magyar Zsidó Szemle*’s guidelines) to transcribe a song in Yiddish. A second layer of text consists of the Yiddish text itself. And the third layer consists of the German original, with which the contemporary readers of the article would have no doubt been familiar, and which ultimately gives the entire parody its very form.

As an aside the transcriber added that after writing down these lines as he heard them, he came across a “travesty” of it in German type (i.e., Fraktur), which appeared in Vienna but that “that version was an uninteresting, botched piece of work [érdektelen férczmunka], with many long, boring, Moravian-Jewish bad imitations of the above”. Notwithstanding the (customary?) denigration of the Moravian-Jewish hinterland it is again interesting for us to learn that it might have been common to parody such songs across the countryside. Indeed, if we consider that
German might not have been the only source language for borrowing and transcription into Yiddish we receive a much more interesting picture.

**F/ Conclusion: Rabbinical Students as Poets, Translators and Yiddishists**

If some contributors to the *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* were interested in preserving rural Hungarian Jewish culture ‘as it was,’ a substantially higher number of the contributors to the journal were interested in transplanting the fruits of Yiddish, Aramaic and Hebrew poetry into Hungarian. Such exercises served three purposes. First, they helped the contributors to the journal develop a solid and literary grasp of Hungarian to the depths required for intelligent, academic and literary contributors to various domains. Second, they helped legitimize an interest in Jewish literary forms by transmuting such forms into the national language where (ostensibly) these forms would be accessible to the larger Hungarian population as well. And finally, they helped bring forth Jewish-themed literature in the national language, which implicitly drew on Biblical, Prophetic and Talmudic themes that the transposers and translators of Jewish literature had brought forth.

As two leading teachers of the Seminary Bacher and Báñoczi generally encouraged the poetically-inclined students to translate Jewish sources into Hungarian.⁴⁵⁰ Most of those students taking part in these exercises became rabbis in various corners of Hungary. To name just a few: Béla Vajda (1861-1927), originally from Makó, studied at the Rabbinical Seminary as a high school and then as a university student between 1878 and 1888. For most of his career – between his appointment in 1902 and his death in 1927 – he was rabbi in Losonc.⁴⁵¹ He translated the dirge of Abraham ibn Ezra, which the latter wrote when his son converted to Islam; he was also the first to complete a translation of Judah haLevi’s *Zion*.⁴⁵² Lipót Kecskeméti (1865-1936) followed a similar path: he was originally from Kecskeméét, and graduated from the Rabbinical Seminary in 1890, at which time he became the Chief Rabbi of Nagyvárad,⁴⁵³ a post which he held until his death. The Hungarian Jewish Lexicon described him as poet with a strong style. During his time at the Seminary, he translated Biblical poetry from the prophets for the Bible translation for youth, which the IMIT organized. Kecskeméti published the fruits of his early labours in a volume entitled “From the Jewish Writers” (Budapest, 1887).⁴⁵⁴

But the pre-eminent and most talented of these young students transposing words from Jewish sources into contemporary Hungarian was the poet and journalist Emil Makai (1870-1901) who completed the gymnasium (i.e., high school) attached to the Rabbinical Seminary between 1884 and 1889 and studied at the seminary until 1893 (without taking a degree) before working as a translator, poet and journalist until the end of his short life. Makai’s first work was entitled *Religious Songs* (1888), in which he presented songs of his own, alongside translations from the Yiddish. His *Jewish Poets* (1892) presented translations of ibn Gabirol, haLevi, haNagid, ibn Ezra, Charizi and Manello and his lyrical translation of the Song of Songs (1893) helped launch his stellar career as a dramatist, translator, journalist and poet. His later works, published between 1893 and 1900, include operettas, comedies and lyrical plays.⁴⁵⁵

The reason why Makai’s work – and that of this first generation of students at the Rabbinical Seminary – is important from our perspective is that these were the first individuals who managed to combine both Hungarian and Jewish contexts. Lajos Blau commented on the
continuity of ‘suffering’ between the Hungarian and Jewish canons, which allowed for such transfusion of sentiments between the cultural spheres:

The Jewish poets who brought to life the thousand sufferings of the Jewish people gave inspiration to the kindred soul of the young [poet], and [these sufferings] accompanied [him] until his last breath. Emil Makai was a Hungarian poet, but his heart and his intellect were fertilized by Jewish poets and of his laurel wreath more than one leaf belongs to Salamon ibn Gabirol, Judah Halevi and the other bright stars of the Hebrew Muse.456

This sentiment sheds some light on the cultural processes through which Jewish culture could be made to find a home within Hungarian literature. First, we can argue that one of the necessary elements was a youthful creativity and a familiarity and a facility with the Hungarian language, that was only present in students, who could be inspired to learn Hungarian as children and as a teenagers, albeit in a Jewish setting. The Rabbinical Seminary provided the ingredients through which Jewish children from rural parts of Hungary could be exposed to such a mixture of cultures in an urban setting. These children would have been exposed to the Hungarian literary tradition and to the long tradition of Jewish textual sources. Then, the children could be encouraged to find common strands between the Hungarian and Jewish spheres and to promote a new type of literature.

Why would Bacher and Bánoczi encourage the creation of an organic mix of Jewish and Hungarian cultures especially through children and students? Because both of them, as teachers at the Seminary, were too old to create the culture of which they dreamed, which Makai and his colleagues created in Hungarian. They were a generation older than their students and though they spoke Hungarian on a regular basis they were both essentially products of the German linguistic sphere.

The National Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest fulfilled several important, historical functions in the overall acculturationist strivings of Hungarian Jewry in the later half of the nineteenth century. First, it provided a closed, Jewish space where students from Orthodox and more secular backgrounds could meet, overcome their differences and develop the bonds of friendship and solidarity that would enable them to present a unified version of Hungarian Jewishness to their future congregants. This environment was important because for historical reasons Hungarian Jewish communities were disorganized and feuding with each other based on religious grounds.

Second, the Seminary introduced knowledge of Hungarian literature, culture and language into the minds of future rabbis. By unifying Jewish youth from different backgrounds and by being the only institution forming rabbis for service in Hungary, the long-term effects of the educational and cultural program that the Seminary offered included the hope of the unification of Hungarian Jewry, on national and cultural, rather than on religious lines.

And finally the Seminary was the institution, which enabled Hungarian Jewry to develop for its own needs the tools of Wissenschaft des Judentums, in the national language. This was an important development, which resulted in the creation of the field of Jewish studies in
Hungarian, and also in the nationalization of Jewish history in Hungary. The teachers and graduates of the Seminary successfully created the language and academic paraphernalia necessary for them to write their own histories and create their own studies of their communities. In doing so, they ‘emancipated’ themselves from the German academic sphere and successfully came into their own.
Conclusion

The Problematics of Hungarian-Jewish Historiography

In 1990 the Israeli historian Nathaniel Katzburg delivered a lecture at the newly-formed Jewish Studies research group at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences; it was entitled “The Problematics of Hungarian-Jewish Historiography” and was subtitled with the provocative question: “Why was there no Hungarian Dubnow or Jewish Szekfű?”

As is well known Shimon Dubnow (1860-1941) was one of the most prominent Jewish historians of the modern era. In 1906, he founded the Jewish Literature and Historical-Ethnographic Society in St. Petersburg, and later edited the Jewish Encyclopedia. His masterwork was his ten-volume “World History of the Jewish People” Dubnow was a Jewish nationalist, but not a Zionist. His political position, known as “Autonomism,” argued that the strength of the Jewish people as a nation resided in their cultural and spiritual strength, wherever they resided in the Diaspora.

Gyula Szekfű (1883-1955), on the other hand, was a Hungarian historian whose historical study entitled “Three Generations and That Which Follows” (1934) captured the interwar non-Jewish Hungarian intelligentsia’s re-evaluation of the liberalism of the Dualist period as a historical mistake, especially because of the role that Jews played in the modernization of Hungary's economy. In the Dualist period that role had been seen as positive for the country's modernization and development. After the First World War, Hungarian liberalism was re-evaluated as a negative influence on the country by the nascent conservative and nationalist Hungarian political environment of the interwar years.

For the members of the audience that evening at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, the title was provocative in every way. Katzburg himself was of Hungarian origin and was best known for his in-depth study of antisemitism in Hungary in the Dualist period, and his atlas-like treatment of the histories of individual Hungarian Jewish communities until their decimation in the Holocaust. In and of itself, the invitation to give such a lecture signaled the liberalization of the Hungarian academic scene after four decades of state socialism and the reemergence of the will to examine the Hungarian-Jewish acculturationist project of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

At such a propitious historical moment and as a guest of the country he had left earlier in his life Katzburg spared no one. He argued that one of the uniquenesses of Hungarian-Jewish historiography was that it always sought to examine the common historical links between Jews and Hungarians. According to Katzburg Sámuel Kóhn's historiographical works, as published in the Magyar Zsidó Szemle and elsewhere, formed the prime example of historiography written in service of the ideology of assimilation that the Hungarian-Jewish intelligentsia of the Dualist and interwar periods desperately wanted to believe in. This is why, Katzburg believed, that though Kóhn's historiographical works received scant attention and were dismissed by the journal of the Hungarian Historical Society as “historically worthless, though deserving attention as a curiosum” his works were held in high regard by “Jewish public awareness” and became “one of the main arguments of the [Jewish] apologetics of the 1920s and 1930s.”
Katzburg opined that as Hungarian-Jewish self-understanding developed in the Dualist period it sought to support the assimilationist ideology by bringing out those elements of the Hungarian and Jewish historical experiences that could be shown in the most positive light. “It seems,” Katzburg argued, “that from the beginning, Hungarian-Jewish historiography always had a sociopolitical goal: making known to both Jewish and non-Jewish public opinion the positive aspects of Hungarian and Jewish historical connections”. Katzburg argued that Hungarian-Jewish historiography was not unique in this regard for the homiletical works of Leopold Zunz in the nineteenth century had also had “such practical goals” as had the works of the contemporary nationalist historians of Eastern and Central-Europe.

Katzburg concluded his remarks with the acknowledgment that Hungarian-Jewish historians were thus most comfortable writing local histories of particular communities; editing and publishing historical documents in source anthologies; and generally avoiding critical study of both Hungarian-Jewish acculturation and the extensive Jewish participation in Hungary's economy in the Dualist Era. In general, Hungarian-Jewish historiography “was of a denominational nature,” since the political atmosphere of the 1920s and 1930s did not permit discussion of these “sensitive” political and economic issues. Thus, no scholar wanted to write a comprehensive history of the Jewish people in Hungary on Dubnow’s model even though individual Jews contributed to Hungarian historiography in many ways.

One of the discussants that evening was the Hungarian historian András Kovács, who currently teaches at the Central European University. He argued that Katzburg correctly identified the fact that writing such a comprehensive history of Jews in Hungary meant taking a stance on the questions of assimilation and acculturation, but that the history of Jews in Hungary ought not only to be discussed in terms of the binary of assimilation/dissimilation. The history of Jews in Hungary was not identical to the history of assimilation; indeed, according to Kovács, though assimilation had come to a close and the history of Jews in Hungary had not, and should be examined in terms of a certain “otherness” that persisted.

There is much truth to Katzburg’s words. As we have seen, Sámuel Kóhn sought to bring nationalism and Hungarian literature to the Dohány synagogue for the prime reason of wanting to encourage congregants to feel themselves to be Hungarian. Miksa Szabolcsi had similar goals with the publication of the Egyenlőség, as did the authors of the Hungarian-Jewish reading books. And if the creators of Wissenschaft des Judentums in Hungarian did so in the national language, they did it because they loved the country which had emancipated them and which had included them amongst its citizens.

On the other hand we should refrain from inscribing these creators of Hungarian-Jewish identity in the Dualist period within a teleological mindset or from blaming them for either the sins (or the impotence) of their intellectual descendents or for the deterioration of a generally liberal, Dualist Hungarian intellectual environment into one of conservative nationalist pathos in the interwar. For one, Dualist Hungary was only culturally liberal if one was willing to ‘become Hungarian’: Slovak, Romanian, Croatian nationalism was generally repressed or outlawed. The framers of Jewish identity in Hungary during Dualism understood this and sought to make the best of the intellectual and sociopolitical environment that they found themselves in. As we have seen through the examples of Goldziher, Szabolcsi, Kóhn and the others, it was possible to be
proudly Jewish and Hungarian under Dualism. True, the sense of ‘otherness’ of which Professor Kovács spoke persisted and the “social fusion” of which Lajos Kossuth spoke did not take place. But this absence of the complete disappearance of Jews into the fabric of the Hungarian nation was nobody’s fault in particular. Rather, it was a contemporary misunderstanding of the goals of acculturation and of its possible outcomes, which was not uncommon to other European contexts as well. If interwar apologists of acculturation sought to defend Jews in Hungary as loyal Hungarians they did so because the political environment had changed, much to the Jews’ detriment. Though this dissertation did not treat the interwar environment at all, we can note that the interwar period also saw the development of a Hungarian Zionist movement.

Still, the question remains: was the Hungarian-Jewish acculturative process successful? If one examines the evidence given above, the answer must clearly be a resounding “yes”. After all, the extensive literature we have surveyed clearly points to the development of a communal sense of Jewish identity, which was happy to incorporate itself into the Hungarian nation. On the other hand, there is much material and many communities and individuals that this dissertation could not account for. The history of Orthodox and Hasidic communities in the Kingdom of Hungary is all but unexplored. Many of the archival sources perished in the Shoah, along with their creators and we have but fragmentary records of the rural communities that once housed them. Clearly, the comprehensive history of the Hungarian Jewish historical experience awaits its historians even though a number of recent works have served to rectify the balance.466

I have often fielded the following question when writing this project: "but still, why were the framers of Hungarian-Jewish identity in the Dualist period so successful and so persuasive for their audience?" Posing the question in such a way prevents us from historical objectivity. The framers of Hungarian-Jewish identity were only so very successful from our perspective as historians of the period. Goldziher and Sámuel Kóhn greeted each other in German on an everyday basis, which points to the fact that the ideology they helped create was only one single aspect of their lives and not its entirety. The Orthodox Jewish communities of rural Hungary, which provided an alternative to the acculturationist model, are no longer. And so forth.

Why then were Goldziher, Szabolcsi, Kóhn and Bánóczi so dedicated to their work? Often they had personal reasons. Goldziher loved his country because he felt thankful for the scholarship he had received from the Hungarian minister of Cults and Religions, which had enabled him to study abroad. Szabolcsi had witnessed the successful proof of the innocence of the defendants in the Tiszaeszlár blood libel trial (1882-83) and had fought and obtained Egyenlőség for the Jewish denomination in 1895. Kóhn and Bánóczi loved Hungarian literature.

All of the individuals surveyed in this study were positive that their cultural project had merit and value and that it would serve generations of Hungarian Jews well. They sought to unify the hundreds of Jewish communities of the Kingdom of Hungary under the motto of Hungarian national values, and Jewish ethical and religious teachings. Considering the multifaceted and polyglot social reality of Dualist Hungary and of its Jewish communities at the time, we might wonder if their project would have succeeded without their utmost dedication, especially if Hungary had stayed multicultural after the First World War. We have no way of knowing. The framers of Hungarian-Jewish identity in the Dualist Hungary loved their country. Somehow they managed to obey Dubnow’s (ostensibly later) injunction to write and record
Jewish history, and to *still* become Hungarian. Let us respect them for this and study their works.
References


3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.


16 The law discriminated against Jewish students by forcibly reducing their enrollment at universities.


18 Sephardic Jews were emancipated by decree on 28 January 1790; the Constitution of France of 3 September 1791 provided for the extension of the rights of the citizen to all Jewish residents of France; thereupon all remaining legal disparities between Jews and non-Jews were removed by a resolution of the National Assembly of 28 September 1791. See Ibid., 117–118.


21 Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry, 1780-1840*.


25 Ibid., 214.


28 *IX. Törvénycikk [Law IX]*, 1849.

29 Law 1867:XVII.

30 Law 1895:XLII.


34 Fábián, “Zsidó Emancipáció [Jewish Emancipation].”


38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 “Contract of Employment for Sámuel Kóhn, Version 1.,” June 18, 1866, KS Box IV, 87.130/1, Hungarian Jewish Archives.


“Addendum to Contract of Employment for Sámuel Kóhn (No. 2), in Hungarian and in German”, June 28, 1866, KS Box IV, 87.130, Hungarian Jewish Archives.


“[Notes of Sámuel Kóhn]”, n.d., KS Box IV, 78.25, Hungarian Jewish Archives.

The paper was known as *Hazai Tudósítások* (Homeland News) between 1806 and 1808; afterwards, the title was changed to *Hazai s Külföldi Tudósítások* (Homeland and Foreign News).

Sámuel Kóhn, “[Notes on German Theatre in the Capital]”, n.d., KS Box IV, 78.25, Hungarian Jewish Archives.

Szerb, *Magyar Irolalomtörténet [Hungarian Literary History]*, 228.

Ibid., 228–235.


58 Szerb, Magyar Irodalomtörténet [Hungarian Literary History], 258.


61 Szerb, Magyar Irodalomtörténet [Hungarian Literary History], 257.


68 Róza Déryné Szeppataki, Déryné Naplója [Diary of Ms. Déry], ed. Kálmán Tors (Budapest: Ráth M., 1879).

69 “[Notes of Sámuel Kóhn].”


71 Szerb, Magyar Irodalomtörténet [Hungarian Literary History], 19.

72 “[Unnamed Article],” Hazai tudósítások II (n.d.): 378, 186–188.


Kóhn is referring to Abraham’s defeat of Chedorlaomer and his allies described in Genesis 14:13-18.


Ibid., 4.

Ibid., 4–5.


Ibid., 8.

Ibid.


Rózsa Osztern, Zsidó Ujságírók És Szépirók a Magyarországi Németnyelvű Időszaki Sajtóban, a “Pester Lloyd” Megalapításáig, 1854-Ig [Jewish Journalists and Writers in Hungary’s German-Language Press Press until the Foundation of the “Pester Lloyd” in 1854], Német philologial dolgozatok [German philological theses] Vol. 45 (Budapest: Pfeifer Ferdinand (Zeidler Testvérek), 1930).


92 Miksa Szabolcsi, “Látogatás Herzl Theodor Dr.-Nál, [A Visit At Dr. Theodor Herzl’s],” Egyenlőség, July 10, 1904, 4–5; Patai, The Jews of Hungary, 344.


94 Ibid.

95 Miksa Szabolcsi, “Nem Kérünk Az Uj Hazából: Válasz Dr. Herzel Tivadar Röpiratára [We Don’t Want of the New Homeland: Response to Dr. Theodor Herzl’s Pamphlet],” Egyenlőség, March 6, 1896, 2.


97 Ibid.

98 Árpád Zempléni, “A Sionisták [The Zionists],” Egyenlőség, May 9, 1897, 2.


100 Ödön Gerő, “Még Egyszer a Sionizmus [Zionism Once Again],” Egyenlőség, July 18, 1897, 1–2.


102 Ibid.

103 M. Sch., “Magyarosodunk [We Are Becoming Hungarian],” Egyenlőség, May 20, 1883, 5.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

106 Ibid.

A Honi Izraeliták Között Magyar Nyelvet Terjesztő Pesti Egylet [Pest Society for the Spreading of the Hungarian Language Amongst our Nation’s Israelites], *Első Magyar Zsidó Naptár És Évkönyv 1848-Ik Szökőévre* [First Hungarian Jewish Calendar and Yearbook for the 1848 Leap Year] (Pest: Landerer és Heckenast, 1848).


Ibid.; *Első Magyar Zsidó Naptár És Évkönyv* [First Hungarian Jewish Calendar and Yearbook] (Pest: Landerer és Heckenast, 1861).

“Magyar Egylet a Terézvárosban [Hungarian Association in the Terézváros],” *Egyenlőség*, December 17, 1882, 11.


Today, the territory of the former County of Zemplén is split between Slovakia and Hungary. The County lay in what are today the easternmost regions of both countries.

“Zemplénmegyei Magyar Nyelvet Terjesztő Egylet [Association for Spreading the Hungarian Language in Zemplén County],” *Egyenlőség*, February 18, 1883, 10.

Ibid., 11.


121. A small village, currently in southwest Hungary.

122. Today: Kežmarok, Slovakia.

123. Today: Ужгород [Uzhhorod], Ukraine.

124. I have been unable to identify this locality. The typesetter might have erred, and meant the village of Kápolnásnyék, a small town almost to the immediate south-west of Budapest, close to Lake Velence.

125. “Magyarosodunk [We Are Hungarianizing],” Egyenlőség, November 12, 1882, 11.


129. A town on the western shore of Lake Balaton, in Hungary.

130. “Magyarosodunk [We Are Hungarianizing],” Egyenlőség, December 3, 1882, 11.


Ibid.

“Namensänderungen in Ungarn [Name Changes in Hungary],” *Die Welt* (Vienna, October 24, 1902), 8.


“A Dohány-Utczai Nagy Templomban [In the Great Temple on Dohány Street],” *Egyenlőség*, July 29, 1888, 8.

Ibid.

I.e., Hebrew for *verse*.

I.e., “Midrash”.

“A Dohány-Utczai Nagy Templomban [In the Great Temple on Dohány Street],” 8.


Ibid., 92–93.

The Zionist anthem, and today, the national anthem of the State of Israel.

147 Ibid., 96–97.


149 “Dr. Ph. G. Úrnak [To Dr. G. Ph.],” *Egyenlőség*, January 15, 1888, 11.


151 Miksa Szabolcsi, “Jól van Ez Így [It Is Good Like This],” *Egyenlőség*, November 1, 1896, 5.


153 “G. V. H. Urnak Cs. [To Mr. H. G. V. in Cs.],” *Egyenlőség*, February 26, 1888, 16.


156 Transliterated Hungarian, for the Hebrew for “Holy Society,” i.e., a burial society.

157 Transliterated Hungarian, for the Hebrew for “Talmud Torah”. Could have been the name of a school.
158 Transliterated Hungarian, for the Hebrew for “the righteous worker”.

159 Transliterated Hungarian, for the Hebrew for “the one who clothes the naked”. This is an alternate Hebrew name for God.

160 Transliterated Hungarian, for the Hebrew for “the one who adorns young men.”

161 Transliterated Hungarian, for the Hebrew for “the tree of life.”

162 Transliterated Hungarian, for the Hebrew for “the supporter of the poor.”

163 Transliterated Hungarian, for the Hebrew for “the wings of vultures.”


171 Atala Gerő, “A Királyhoz [To the King],” Egyenlőség, June 3, 1892, 2.


176 “A Dohány-Utczai Nagy Templomban [In the Great Temple on Dohány Street].”

177 “G. M. Urnak Hajdú-Nánás [To Mr. M. G. in Hajdú-Nánás].”


“Jubileumi Istantiszteletek a Fővárosban [Services for the Jubilee in the Capital],” *Egyenlőség*, June 10, 1892, 8–9.

Ibid.

Ibid., 9.

Ibid.

R. M., “Miskolczon [In Miskolcz],” *Egyenlőség*, June 17, 1892, Supp. 3.

S. K., “Moóron [In Moór],” *Egyenlőség*, June 17, 1892, Supp. 3.


P....., “Die Ursache Der Ueberhandnahme Des Indifferentismus Bei Der Ungarischen Juden [Root Causes of the Propagation of Indifference amongst the Hungarian Jews].”

“Die Magyarisierungsmanie [Hungarianization Mania],” *Die Welt* (Vienna, November 26, 1897).

198 Ibid.


201 “Hangverseny [Concert],” Egyenlőség, March 22, 1908, 11.


205 Ibid.


Ibid., 21.

Ibid., 46.

Ibid., 47.

Ibid., 47–48.

Ibid., 46.

Ibid., 46–47.

Ibid., 29–31.


Ibid., III–IV.

Árpád (c. 845-907) was the leader of the confederation of Hungarian tribes when these occupied the Carpathian basin. He is held by many Hungarians (Neumann included) to be the founder of Hungary.

Stephen I (970 or 980-1038) was the first king of Hungary.

I.e., Koppány, a Hungarian nobleman of the tenth century who challenged Stephen’s claim to the Hungarian throne.

John Hunyadi (1407-1456), Hungarian military commander of Transylvanian origin. Defeated the Turks at the Battle of Belgrade in 1456.

Neumann, Olvasókönyv Felsőbb Izr. Iskolák Számára [Reading Book for Higher Israelite Schools], 8.

Andrew II, King of Hungary, r. 1205-1235.

Neumann, Olvasókönyv Felsőbb Izr. Iskolák Számára [Reading Book for Higher Israelite Schools], 22.

Louis I of Hungary (1326-1382, King of Hungary and Croatia (r. 1342-1382), King of Poland (r. 1370-1382)).

Neumann, Olvasókönyv Felsőbb Izr. Iskolák Számára [Reading Book for Higher Israelite Schools], 17–18.


Today: Kajászó, a village in Fejér county in central Hungary.

A different village in Fejér county in central Hungary approximately thirty kilometers to the east of Kajászó.

A village currently in eastern Hungary on the border with Slovakia.


City in the central part of Hungary.

City in southwestern Hungary, south of Lake Balaton.

235 Small village to the south of Lake Balaton.

236 Town in Csongrád county, Hungary on the southern border with Romania.

237 City on the southern bank of Lake Balaton in Somogy County.


239 Szinnyei, “Neumann Salamon A.”


241 Neumann, Olvasókönyv Felsőbb Izr. Iskolák Számára [Reading Book for Higher Israelite Schools], 228–230.

242 Kohányi, Első Hangoztató És Olvasókönyv a Magyarországi Izráelita Népiskolák Számára [First Sound-Making and Reading Book for the Israelite Public Schools of Hungary], 28–30.

243 Halász, Kincses Szekrényke: Oktató, Nevelő, Mulattató Elbeszélések És Költemények a Zsidó Bölcsék Irataiból a Mindkét Nembeli Zsidó Ifjúság Részére [Treasure Chest: Educational and Entertaining Stories and Poetry from the Writings of the Jewish Sages for Jewish Youth of Both Sexes], 108.
244 Ibid., 97.

245 Ibid., 159.

246 Ibid., 145.

247 Ibid., 157.

248 Ibid., 117.


250 Ibid., 7–8.

251 Ibid., 8.


253 Ibid., 117.

254 Ibid., 117–118.


257 Ibid., 29.

258 Ibid., 29–30.

259 Bányaí, Zsidó Oktatásügy Magyarországon 1780-1850 [Jewish Education in Hungary, 1780-1850].


261 Ibid., 26–27; Abraham Hochmuth, Die Jüdische Schule in Ungarn; Wie Sie Ist Und Wie Sie Sein Soll (Miskolcz: D. Deutsch, 1851), 141–152.

262 József Bánóczi, Az Országos Izraelita Tanító-Intézet Története 1857-1897 (Budapest: Hornyánszky Viktor, 1897), 69–79.

263 Ibid., 66.

264 Ibid., 67.

265 “Izraelita Tanítóképző Intézet [Israelite Teacher-Training Institute],” Magyar Zsidó Lexikon [Hungarian Jewish Lexicon] (Budapest, 1929), 403.

266 Bánóczi, Az Országos Izraelita Tanító-Intézet Története 1857-1897, 39.

267 “Izraelita Tanítóképző Intézet [Israelite Teacher-Training Institute],” 403.

268 Bánóczi, Az Országos Izraelita Tanító-Intézet Története 1857-1897, 35, 39, 40, 42.

269 Ibid., 35.

270 Ibid., 60.

271 Ibid., 68.


A town close to the southern shore of Lake Balaton.


Ibid.

Karády’s table is a compilation of various official statistics. He excluded state schools from the ‘total’ column, hence the number of schools listed in the ‘Catholic,’ ‘Calvinist,’ ‘Lutheran’ and ‘Jewish’ categories do not total the number of schools listed in the ‘total’ column.


“Barna Jónás”; Szinnyei, “Barna J(ónás).”


“Egyesületünk Tagjai 1885-Ben [Members of Our Association in 1885],” *Izraelita Tanügyi Értesítő [Israelite Educational Beacon]* 10 (1885).


“A Magyar Izraelita Országos Tanítóegylet Alapszabályai [Constitution of the National Association of Israelite Teachers],” 29.

Ibid.

Moskovits, Jewish Education in Hungary (1848-1948), 25.


“[Report of the 1883 Congress of the National Association of Hungarian Israelite Teachers],” 159.

Ibid.


“Hittani Tanterv a Zsidó Felekezeti VI-Osztályu Népiskola Számára [Religious Curriculum for the Sixth Grade of the Elementary Schools of the Jewish Denomination],” Izraelita Tanügyi Értesítő [Israelite Educational Beacon] 8, no. 10 (1883): 164.


303


310 Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, “One Hundred Years of the Seminary in Retrospect,” in The Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest, 1877-1977: A Centennial Volume (New York: Sepher-

311 Today Huncovce, in North-Central Slovakia.

312 Carmilly-Weinberger, “One Hundred Years of the Seminary in Retrospect,” 3.

313 Ibid., 4.

314 Ibid., 5.

315 Ibid., 6.

316 Ibid.

317 Ibid.

318 Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (1040-1105), medieval commentator of the Torah from Troyes, France.

319 Roman convert to Judaism in the first century CE and author of a commentary on the Torah known as the Targum Onkelos.

320 Shorthand name for Rabbi Shlomo ben Aderet (1235-1310), medieval Spanish rabbi and Talmudist.

321 Rabbi Isaac ben Solomon Luria Ashkenazi (1534-1572) Jewish mystic and Kabbalist who worked in Safed, northern contemporary Israel.

322 The code of Jewish law compiled by Maimonides between 1170 and 1180.

323 The code of Jewish law put together by Rabbi Jacob ben Asher (1270-1340).

324 Rabbi Yosef Karo (1488-1575)’s compilation of Jewish law, first published in Venice in 1565.

325 Hellenistic Jewish philosopher, lived c. 20 BCE – 50 CE.
326 Medieval Jewish rabbi, philosopher and exegete who lived in Egypt and Baghdad, c. 882/892-942.

327 Andalusian Hebrew poet and philosopher, lived c. 1021-1058.

328 Spanish Jewish physician, poet and philosopher, lived 1075-1141.

329 *Das Elaborat Der Rabbiner-Commission* (Arad: H. Goldscheider, 1864).


331 Today: Dunajská Streda, a village in southwestern Slovakia.

332 Carmilly-Weinberger, “One Hundred Years of the Seminary in Retrospect,” 7.

333 Ibid., 9.


336 Today: Liberec, a town in the Northern Czech Republic close to the country’s borders with Germany and Poland.

337 Today: Ostrava, in the eastern part of the Czech Republic.

338 Today: Prostějov, in the central eastern part of the Czech Republic.
Today: Bzenec, in the southeastern part of the Czech Republic.

Today: Gorzów Wielkopolski, town in Western Poland, close to the German border.


Ibid.


Ibid., 66–67.

Ibid., 32.

Ibid., 33.

Ibid., 35.

Ibid., 39.

Ibid., 125.


Ibid.

Ibid., 26.

Today: Liptovský Mikuláš, located in central Slovakia.


“Kohlbach Bertalan.”

“Kohlbach, Bertalan.”


“Kohlbach Bertalan.”


Kohlbach, “The First Decade.”


Ibid.

“Ibid.”

“Bakhur” is Hebrew for “young man”. It is a shortened form of the appellation “yeshiva bakhur” (in Hebrew) or “yeshiva bokher,” (in Yiddish) meaning “a young man who attends yeshiva.”


Ibid.


Today: Topoľčany, a town in west-central Slovakia.
Today: Plzeň, Czech Republic.

Today: Heřmanův Městec, a town in central Czech Republic.

Today: Lipník nad Bečvou, a town in eastern Czech Republic.


Ibid.

Ibid., 64.

Ibid.


Today: Liptovský Mikuláš in central Slovakia.


403 Kohlbach, “The First Decade,” 64.

404 Ibid., 65.

405 Ibid.

406 Ibid., 61–62.

407 Ibid., 60.

408 Ibid., 58.

409 Ibid.

410 Ibid., 57.

411 Ibid., 67.

412 Ference Galambos, A Magyar Zsidó Szemle Írói És Írásai [The Authors of the Magyar Zsidó Szemle and Their Writings] (Budapest: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár [National Széchényi Library], 1957), 1.

413 Ibid.


415 Ibid.

416 Ibid.

417 Ibid.


428 Today: Bezidu Nou, Romania. The town no longer exists as it was artificially flooded in 1988.


It is generally difficult to illustrate the functioning of one journal through a sample of all articles. As well, not all subject matters lend well to translation. The communal histories, for example, aluded to in the previous section make for interesting reading for the Hungarian reader, but would be uninteresting for an English-speaking audience. As well, the language barrier makes it difficult to explain the beauty of Hungarian translations of Biblical poetry. Thus ethnography proved to be that field, which is the most illustrative of the journal’s goals.


Ibid., 9–10.
Ibid., 9.

Ibid., 10.

Ibid., 9.


The original text is as follows:

Festgemauert in der Erden
Steht die Form aus Lehm gebrannt.
Heute muß die Glocke werden,
frisch, Gesellen, seid zur Hand!

Von der Stirne heiß
rinnen muß der Schweiß,
soll das Werk den Meister loben;
doch der Segen kommt von oben.

My thanks to my father, George Viragh, for helping with these lines.


Today: Lučenec, Slovakia.

Today: Oradea, Romania.

Szabó, “Kecskeméti Lipót.”


Katzburg, Antishemiyut Be-Hungaryah 1867-1914 [Antisemitism in Hungary, 1867-1914].

Nathaniel Katzburg, Pinkas Ha-Kehilot Hungaryah : Entsiklopedyah Shel Ha-Yishuvim Ha-Yehudiyim Le-Min Hiyasdam Ve-‘ad Le-Aḥar Sho’at Milḥemet Ha-‘olam Ha-Sheniyah [Register
of Jewish Communities in Hungary: An Encyclopedia of Hungarian Jewish Communities, from Their Foundation until Their Destruction in the Holocaust] (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976).


463 Sándor Büchler, A Zsidók Története Budapesten a Legrégebbi Időktől 1867-Ig [History of the Jews in Budapest from the Earliest of Times until 1867] (Budapest, 1901).


466 Komoróczy, A Zsidók Története Magyarországon [History of the Jews in Hungary].
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