

Eker, Karol Dresdner, Daniel Ihr, Juliusz Wit, and critic Izydor Berman. *Chwila* also organized literary events and competitions, among them the literary competition “Why Do I Love Palestine?” in 1927.

Chwila provided information on Jewish society in both Poland and Palestine, featuring Szymon Wolf’s *Felietony palestynskie* (Palestinian Feuilletons) and Bernard Zimmerman’s reports from Palestine. In 1935, the paper introduced a regular column on issues in Palestine, edited by Saul Langnas. The daily featured political, economic, social, and cultural sections. In the latter, Adolf Plohn wrote about music, Hescheles covered the theater, and Artur Lauterbach dealt with the fine arts. Special sections catered to university students (*Chwila akademicka*, later renamed *Ruch młodzieży* [Youth Movement]), and women (*Głos kobiet* [Women’s Voice]). Sections on sports, chess (edited by Julian Madfes), and satire (edited by Zygmunt Schorr) appeared along with reports on court proceedings. Among its supplements were *Chwilka dzieci i młodzieży* (Little Moment for Children and Youth), edited by Runa Reitmanowa; *Dodatek Literacko-Naukowy* (Literary and Scientific Supplement), edited by Hescheles; *Przewodnik ekonomiczny* (Economic Guide); and, from 1932, *Dodatek ilustrowany* (Illustrated Supplement).

Chwila also published translations of Jewish literature into Polish, including works by Y. L. Peretz, S. An-ski, Israel Joshua Singer, Uri Tsevi Grinberg, Ḥayim Naḥman Bialik, Shemu’el Yosef Agnon, Sha’ul Tshernichowsky, Itsik Manger, and Sholem Asch, as well as works of world literature (Joseph Roth was one of the authors included). Popular literature (e.g., popular novels published in installments) appeared with more elitist writings.

Like other Polish Jewish publications, *Chwila* criticized radical assimilation, supported Jewish national revival, and called for the building of a Jewish state in Palestine. At the same time, it stressed the value of contributions to Polish culture made by assimilated Jews. One of its recurring themes was the situation in higher education, reflecting the concerns of Jewish students at the University of Lwów, and the question of the *numerus clausus* (enrollment quotas).

The paper devoted more attention than other dailies to local and regional issues (e.g., it had a column titled “Z gminy żydowskiej” [From the Jewish Community]) and featured regular news about

ern towns (*Chwila Drohobycka* and *Chwila Tarnopolska* [Drohobycz and Tarnopol *Chwila*, respectively]). This local focus also reflected *Chwila*’s interest in Galician Jewish culture; it featured articles about the region’s towns, luminaries, and Jewish writers.

• Barbara Łętocha, “*Chwila*: Gazeta Żydów lwowskich,” *Rocznik Lwowski* (1995–1996): 63–79; Eugenia Prokop-Janiec, *Polish-Jewish Literature in the Interwar Years*, trans. Abe Shenitzer (Syracuse, N.Y., 2003).

—EUGENIA PROKOP-JANIEC

Translated from Polish by Christina Manetti;
revised by Magda Opalski

CHWOLSON, DANIEL. See Khvol’son, Daniil Avraamovich.

CILIBI MOISE (1812–1870), author of adages and aphorisms. Froim Moise, known in Romanian literature as Cilibi Moise, was the son of Alexander Sender Schwartz, a native of Galicia. Illiterate in Romanian, Moise would dictate his compositions to printers and sell them in pamphlets in the market towns of Walachia, where he was a traveling merchant. The 14 pamphlets issued as of 1858 included adages and sayings, maxims, thoughts, and moral lessons drawn from the school of life, revealing a picturesque and lively mixture of popular wisdom, Balkan humor, and Jewish folklore.

Beyond Cilibi Moise’s words of wisdom, he presented a philosophy of life that combined skepticism with serene resignation to poverty and hardship, and also demonstrated a critical and ironic overview of social rules and injustice. He commented on the manners of his times, as well as on human nature and the human condition, with echoes from Ecclesiastes (“Remember where you come from, where you stand and where you are headed to”). Several thoughts are extremely powerful, though expressed in a lapidary style: “It is hard for the poor to live, while it is hard for the rich to die”; “Time is a stairway: one goes up, another comes down.” His self-mockery and black humor derive from Jewish popular origin: “Moise the Jew keeps a bell on his table; when he rings once, he brings water himself as he does not have a servant”; “One day Cilibi Moise suffered a great embarrassment: thieves broke into his house at night and didn’t find anything”; “Cilibi Moise has been asking poverty for several years to get out of his house at least for as long as it takes him to get dressed.”

Encouraged by Moses Gaster, the folklorist Moses Schwarzfeld collected and edited a posthumous book of Cilibi Moise’s sayings, titled *Practica și apropourile lui Cilibi Moise vestitul din Țara Românească* (The Practice and Sayings of the Renowned Cilibi Moise from Walachia; 1883). Cilibi Moise became, mostly after his death, a legendary figure, an embodiment of popular wisdom and humor, nostalgically evoked by a great Romanian writer (Ion Luca Caragiale) or turned into a character in several plays. He is considered to be the first Jewish author of literary pieces, naive though captivating, and enjoyed by both Romanian readers and the Jewish public. Rightfully considered an “oral genius,” his style set the stage for Romanian Jewish writers of the modern age.

• Țicu Goldstein, “Cilibi Moise vestitul din Țara Românească,” in *Practica și apropourile lui Cilibi Moise vestitul în Țara Românească*, pp. 115–136 (Bucharest, 2000); A. B. Yoffe, *Be-Sadot zarim: Sofrim yehudim be-Romanyah, 1880–1940* (Tel Aviv, 1996), pp. 33–40.

—LEON VOLOVICI

Translated from Romanian by Anca Mircea

CINEMA. Perhaps because the birth of cinema in the late nineteenth century coincides with the migration of Jews from the Pale of Settlement to the cities of Eastern Europe, newly urbanized Jews were prominent in the development of Eastern European cinema—if only intermittently as Jewish artists addressing Jewish themes or a Jewish public.

Early Cinema

While motion picture technology was first exported to Eastern Europe around the turn of the twentieth century, limited production did not begin for another decade. Not until 1911, when A. M. Smolenskii’s “singing” troupe was reported touring the Pale of Settlement, providing silent movies with live Yiddish-language accompaniment—a hybrid form known in Russian as *kino-deklamatsiia* (talking pictures)—does the record show indigenous motion picture entertainment aimed at a Russian Jewish audience. The same year, Pathé Frères’ Moscow released the highly popular *L’khaym* (To Life), a bucolic tragedy of shtetl life, while Jewish producer Aleksander Hertz, who left Pathé in 1910 to found Poland’s first indigenous production company, Sfinks, adapted Eliza Orzeszkowa’s *Meir Ezofewicz*, in which an idealistic young Jew revolts against clerical constraints to join the struggle for Polish freedom.

Anecdotal information suggests that many of Russia's pioneer movie exhibitors and distributors were Jews; Jewish entrepreneurs were even more prominent in the early Polish and Hungarian cinemas. Between 1911 and 1913, approximately one-third of all Polish films were of Yiddish plays. The Siła firm, owned by Warsaw exhibitor Mordka Towbin, filmed a number of productions staged by the Kaminski troupe—as did its successor Kosmofilm, Poland's most important production company before World War I, founded by Towbin's onetime partner Samuel Ginzberg and film-lab owner Henryk Finkelstein. Interest in the Yiddish stage extended to more established studios: in 1912, Pathé Frères Moscow adapted Sholem Asch's *Got fun nekome* (God of Vengeance) and Moscow Gaumont produced Jacob Gordin's *Mirele Efros*. In Riga, another center of Jewish filmmaking, the S. Mintus Company released at least seven productions made with Yiddish theatrical troupes.

The most widely distributed Jewish film, however, was produced by the Mizrakh company in Odessa: *Zhizn' evreev v Palestine* (The Life of Jews in Palestine) had its world premiere at the Eleventh Zionist Congress in Vienna before playing some 30 separate engagements throughout Europe and Russia; its extraordinary success inspired similar feature-length documentaries produced in Poland, one by Kosmofilm, and in Czechoslovakia.

World War I and After

Although World War I disrupted film production in the Russian Empire, Hungarian cinema boomed while French, Italian, and American imports were unavailable. Hungarian Jews deeply involved in the nation's cultural life—particularly the nascent motion picture industry—included Mihály Kertész (later Michael Curtiz), who directed the first Hungarian feature film, and Sandor Korda (Alexander Korda), the leading Hungarian producer.

Several Jewish-themed films were produced during this period, all with literary antecedents: Adolf Mérei's *Simon Judit* (Judith Simon; 1915), based on the nineteenth-century ballad by Jewish poet József Kiss; Korda's *Lyon Lea* (1915), adapted from Sándor Bródy's play (later filmed in the United States as *Surrender*); Jenő Illés' *Szulamit* (1916) from Avrom Goldfadn's Yiddish operetta; Kertész's *Az árendás zsidó* (The Jewish Tenant Farmer; 1917), from the folk drama by Szidor Bator, and Béla Balogh's *Israel* (1918),

from Henry Bernstein's play. Korda, Kertész, and Balogh were all involved in the nationalized film industry of the short-lived Council Republic, and all three left Hungary after it fell in 1918.

After the overthrow of the tsar in 1917, Mizrakh contributed to a brief revival in Russia of Jewish-themed pictures that included a dramatic reconstruction of the Beilis blood libel case, a film version of Evgenii Chirikov's play *Evrei* (Jews), and several adaptations from Yiddish literature directed by Aleksandr Arkatov. The October revolution and ensuing Civil War again disrupted Russian filmmaking, although several short propaganda films produced in 1919 by the Mos-Kino-Komitet were specifically directed at Jewish audiences.

Polish film production did not return to prewar levels until the early 1920s. In 1921, Sfinks released *Tajemnice Nalewek* (Secrets of the Nalewki), which exposed poverty in Warsaw's Jewish district. *Śmierć za życie* (Death Instead of Life; 1924) told the tale of a Jewish innkeeper's son who, thanks to the friendship of a Polish prince, blossomed into a great national poet. More significant were the three movies produced by Leo Forbert, the owner of Warsaw's largest photo lab, between 1924 and 1929. *Tkies kaf* (The Handshake), the first and most successful, starred Ester-Rokhl Kaminska and her daughter Ida; it was followed in 1925 by

Jeden z 36 (One of the 36) and an ambitious, ill-fated adaptation of Yosef Opatoshu's novel *Poylishe velder* (The Polish Woods; 1929).

The new Soviet film industry made the most programmatic attempt to develop a credible Jewish cinema. In 1925, a year after the state motion picture agency Sovkino was established, the Soviet Union's two major Jewish theaters were involved in film production. Aleksandr Granovskii, the founder of the Moscow GOSET, directed Solomon Mikhoels in *Evreiskoe schast'e* (*Yidishe glikn*; Jewish Luck), which drew on Sholem Aleichem's Menakhem Mendl stories and featured inter-titles written by Isaac Babel, while Sovkino invited members of the Hebrew-language Habimah to appear in the adaptation of Sholem Aleichem's novel *Der mabl* (The Deluge).

Subsequent Jewish-themed films were made under the auspices of the Ukrainian national studio VUFKU. These included two projects developed by Babel—*Benia Krik* (1926), based on his stories of Odessa's Jewish underworld, and *Bluzhdaiushchie zvezdy* (Wandering Stars; 1927), from Sholem Aleichem's novel of the Yiddish theater *Blonzhende shtern*. Sholem Aleichem's work also provided the theme for Grigorii Gricher-Cherikover's *Skvoz slezy* (Through Tears; 1928). Given the substantial Jewish population of Ukrainian cities, VUFKU's commit-

Solomon Mikhoels (center) and other actors in *Yidishe glikn* (Jewish Luck), directed by Aleksandr Granovskii, USSR, 1925. (YIVO)



ment to these films was as much commercial as political. Such productions were made through 1930, becoming increasingly tendentious in their emphasis on social divisions and their idealization of Jewish collective farmers. In addition, Sovkino produced several features between 1929 and 1931 in the service of an official campaign against antisemitism. At the same time, Grigorii Roshal', who directed a politically risky film about the Bundist hero Hirsh Lekert, was unique in his attempt to portray specifically Jewish revolutionary heroism.

From the silent period through World War II, a significant number of Soviet directors were Jews. In addition to Roshal', these include Mark Donskoi, Fridrikh Ermler, Iosif Kheifits, Grigorii Zozintsev, Iurii Raizman, Mikhail Romm, Abram Room, Esfir Shub, Leonid Trauberg, and Dziga Vertov. Also prominent were screenwriter Natan Zarkhi (whose scripts include those for V. I. Pudovkin's silent classics *Mat'* [Mother] and *Konets Sankt-Peterburga* [The End of St. Petersburg], film composer Isaak Dunaevskii, and documentary filmmaker Roman Karmen. Sergei Eisenstein, the most celebrated and influential Soviet director, was of Jewish descent; although his mother was Russian Orthodox and his German Jewish paternal grandfather had been baptized, the director was considered by many to be a Jew and, during World War II, served as a spokesman for the Jewish Anti-Fascist League.

As Soviet policies regarding national minorities shifted in the early 1930s, Jewish themes disappeared altogether, with the remarkable exception of Mikhail Dubson's 1935 *Granitsa* (Border); the 1936 *Iskateli shast'ia* (Seekers of Happiness), which marked the opening of Birobidzhan to foreign settlers; and two antifascist features, *Professor Mamluk* (1938) and *Sem'ia Oppengeim* (The Family Oppenheim; 1939).

Yiddish Talkies

The first sound film made by the Belorussian studio Belgoskino, a short subject released in 1931, featured traditional Belorussian, Polish, and Yiddish songs. In 1932, the studio went a step further with *Nosn Beker fort aheym* (The Return of Nathan Becker), the first—and, only—Soviet Yiddish talking picture, written by Perets Markish and starring Mikhoels.

Yiddish talkies had been produced in the United States as early as 1929; although these were distributed in Poland, the first Polish productions were not



Shooting the film *Freylekhe kabtsonim* (Jolly Paupers), starring Zygmunt Turkow, his daughter Ruth Turkow, Shimon Dzigan, and Yisroel Shumacher, Poland, 1937. (YIVO)

made until 1935. The melodrama *Al khet* (I Have Sinned) directed by Aleksander Marten, and *Mir kumen on* (We're On Our Way), a feature documentary by Aleksander Ford on the Vladimir Medem Sanatorium for tubercular children, were both produced by Shaul Goskind, co-owner of the Warsaw film laboratory, Sektor. In 1936, the Polish-born Yiddish actor Joseph Green returned to make *Yidl mitn fidl* (Yiddle with a Fiddle), the first of four Yiddish talkies, all of which featured American stars but were produced with Polish supporting players and technicians. One of the three top-grossing Polish movies of 1936, *Yidl* was the first international Yiddish hit—released throughout Western Europe as well as South Africa, Australia, and (dubbed into Hebrew) Palestine.

Poland's nascent Yiddish cinema benefited from changes in the national film policy. As the ticket tax was reduced on Polish films and increased for foreign ones, output rose dramatically. Four of the 23 Polish films made in 1937 were Yiddish talkies: Green's *Der purimshpiler* (The Jester), *Freylekhe kabtsonim* (Jolly Paupers), starring the popular comedians Dzigan and Schumacher, a sound remake of *Tkies kaf*, and *Der dibek* (The Dybbuk), directed by Michał Waszyński. The latter two were produced by major studios, Leo-Film and Sfinx, and shown with Polish subtitles in the principal Warsaw cinemas. A final three Yiddish talkies were produced in 1938, two by Green (*Mamele*

[Little Mother] and *A brivele der mamen* [A Little Letter to Mother]) and Marten's *On a heym* (Without a Home).

Yiddish talkies were not only comparable to those of the Polish mainstream but were produced by the same people. Indeed, the most successful Yiddish talkies were directed by established industry figures, including Waszyński, Ford, Henryk Szaro, Jan Nowina-Przybina, Leon Trystan, and Konrad Tom (all, save Nowina-Przybina, Jews), while Marten was a refugee from the German film industry. As the Polish movie industries received Jew-

Lili Liliana in *Der dibek* (The Dybbuk), directed by Michał Waszyński, Poland, 1937. (YIVO)



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ish émigrés, however, Hungary's newly restrictive laws, implemented in 1938, prevented Jews—highly represented as filmmakers—from working. These included the industry's three leading directors, István Székely, Béla Gaál, and Viktor Gertler, as well as the popular comedian Gyula Kabos, whose character humor was understood as typically Jewish.

Post-World War II Period

Yiddish-language cinema, which depended on two markets—one in America, the other in Poland—was dealt a serious blow by the outbreak of World War II and a fatal one by the murder of Polish Jewry. Nevertheless, beginning in 1946, Shaul Goskind produced a series of Yiddish newsreels on postwar Jewish life. According to Goskind's director Natan Gross, these short documentaries, screened as special shows attended almost entirely by Jews, were the first films made in Poland after the war.

In 1947 and 1948, Gross and Goskind made two ambitious features, *Mir lebngelibene* (We the Living Remnant) and *Undzere kinder* (Our Children). Neither would be shown in Poland although two movies released in 1948 did address the fate of Polish Jewry: Wanda Jakubowska's *Ostatni etap* (The Last Stage; 1948) based on her own experiences in Auschwitz, and Aleksander Ford's *Ulica graniczna* (Border Street; 1948). *Ulica graniczna*, which has as its climax the Warsaw ghetto uprising, was held for release for over a year; so was the most notable Czechoslovakian representation of the Holocaust, Alfred Radok's 1948 *Daleká cesta* (Distant Journey), which focuses on a Jewish doctor who briefly forestalls her deportation to Terezín by marrying a gentile colleague. These films were victims of the upsurge of government antisemitism within the Soviet Union. Among Soviet directors, Trauberg and Vertov were particular targets of the antic cosmopolitan campaign of the late 1940s and early 1950s, as was Sergei Iuktevich who, like Eisenstein, was identified as a Jew. (Eisenstein was under attack when he died in 1948.) The cosmopolitans were accused of promoting an international cinema culture and of "groveling" before Western films. Virtually all Jewish directors were stigmatized; some, including Kozintsev, Romm, and Room, compensated by making egregiously conformist and anti-Western movies.

Jewish themes were slow to reemerge on the Soviet screen. In 1966, Mikhail Kulik struggled in vain to make a movie

about the Vilna Ghetto. Aleksandr Askol'dov's 1967 *Kommisar*, which drew on Jewish authors Isaac Babel and Vasilii Grossman as well as the shtetl films of the 1920s, was banned for more than two decades.

While many of the leading Polish directors of the 1950s were Jews—Ford, Jerzy Hoffman, Janusz Morgenstern, Andrzej Munk, and Roman Polanski among them—few movies featured Jewish protagonists. The two exceptions were both lavish period pieces, Wojciech Has's 1974 adaptation of Bruno Schultz's *Sanatorium pod klepsydra* (Sanatorium under the Hourglass) and Jerzy Kawalerowicz's 1981 *Austeria*. Andrzej Wajda, a gentile, was the only major Polish director to consistently represent Polish Jews, notably in his Warsaw ghetto dramas, *Samson* (1961), *Korczak* (1990), and *Wielki tydzień* (Holy Week; 1995).

In the mid-1960s, *Daleká cesta* was rediscovered by the Czech "new wave" and the persecution of Czech Jews used as a metaphor for the postwar fate of the Czech nation. After directing *Transport z raje* (Transport from Paradise; 1963) from Arnošt Lustig's Terezín novel, Zbyněk Brynych universalized the plight of a Jewish family under the Nazis in . . . *a pátý jezdec je Strach* (. . . The Fifth Horseman Is Fear; 1964). Jan Němec's *Démanty noci* (Diamonds of the Night; 1965), based on Lustig's story of two Jewish boys who escape from a transport, similarly aspired to universalized Jewish themes. The tendency's most celebrated example, *Obchod na korze* (The Shop on Main Street; 1965) by Jan Kadár and Elmar Klos, starring Ida Kaminska, won an Academy Award for best foreign feature; further instances are Antonin Moskalyk's 1967 adaptation of Lustig's *Dita Saxová* and Juraj Herz's *Spalovač mrtvol* (The Cremator of Corpses; 1968). As if to validate their larger anti-totalitarian readings, all of these were shelved and/or vilified in Czechoslovakia after the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion.

Unlike Poland or Czechoslovakia, Hungary produced no postwar representation of Jewish wartime suffering, although the fate of Hungarian Jewry was acknowledged in a number of movies, including Félix Máriássy's 1955 *Budapesti tavasz* (Springtime in Budapest) and János Herskó's 1963 *Párbeszéd* (Dialogue). A few discreetly Jewish characters appeared in the work of István Szabó and Sándor Simó but Jews were as underrepresented on the screen as they were prominent behind the camera. Indeed, the lead in introduc-

ing Jewish subject matter was taken by gentiles. Miklós Jancsó, whose extended family included Yiddish-speaking Transylvanian Jews, made a number of poetic documentaries meditating on the destruction of Jewish life in Hungary. Imre Gyöngyössy and Barna Karbay's *Jób lázadása* (The Revolt of Job; 1983) was the first Hungarian movie to center on the wartime deportation of the Jews.

After Communism

Beginning in the mid-1980s and gaining momentum with the dissolution of Communism, Jews repopulated the East European cinema, albeit almost entirely as historical figures. Juraj Herz, who had been deported to Ravensbruck as a child, directed a second Holocaust feature *Zastihla mi noc* (Night Caught Up with Me; 1986). Veteran filmmaker Karel Kachyňa made three pictures on the history of Czech Jews: *Smrt krásných srnců* (The Death of the Beautiful Roebuck; 1986), based on the autobiographical novella by Jewish journalist Ota Pavel; *Poslední motýl* (The Last Butterfly; 1990), about Jewish children in Terezín; and *Hanele* (1999), adapted from the novella by Ivan Olbracht. The drama of sheltering a Jew during the Nazi occupation, a theme previously treated in *Budapesti tavasz* and by Czech director Jiří Weiss in his *Romeo, Julie a tma* (Romeo, Juliet and Darkness; 1959), returned in Wajda's *Wielki tydzień*, Jan Hřebejk's *Musíme si pomáhat* (Divided We Fall; 2000), and Jan-Jakub Kolski's *Daleko od okna* (Far from the Window; 2000).

In Hungary, a late twentieth-century resurgence of Jewish subject matter was largely associated with Jewish filmmakers. Gyula Gazdag's 1985 Auschwitz documentary *Társasutzás* (Package Tour) was followed by *Tutajosok* (Memoirs of a River; 1989), in which Judit Elek addressed the taboo subject of the Tiszsaeszlár trial. Andras Jeles dramatized the Jewish deportations in *Senkiföldje* (Why Wasn't He There; 1993); Herskó returned to Hungary in 1995 to make the documentary *A Kenyereslánya Balladája* (The Ballad of the Bread Girl), in which he revisited the sites where he had been sent as a Jewish slave-laborer. A related trend involves the reworking of amateur 16mm movies shot by Hungarian Jews in the 1930s and 1940s, most notably in the movies made by video artist Péter Forgacs.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union brought a brief flurry of adaptations from _____ S
Babel and Sholem Aleichem—three ver- _____ R
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sions of Babel's Benia Krik stories were released in 1990. There have also been a number of largely undistinguished documentaries on the Soviet Yiddish culture of the 1920s and 1930s and its post-World War II destruction but no sustained examination of Russian, Ukrainian, or Soviet Jewish life.

[See also the biographies of Balázs, Ford, Kozintsev, Romm, Trauberg, and Vertov.]

APPENDIX: JEWISH FILM PERSONALITIES

Arkatov, Aleksandr (1889–1961), film director. Russia's first maker of Jewish films, Arkatov (Mogilevskii) was initially employed by Pathé Frères Moscow; later he directed a quartet of literary adaptations in Odessa: *Kantonisti* (Cantonists; 1917), based on Grigorii Bogrov's novel *Zapiski evreia* (Notes of a Jew); *Der blutiker shpas* (The Bloody Oath; 1917) and *Ven Ikh Bin Rotshild* (If I Were Rothschild; 1918), both adapted from Sholem Aleichem's stories; and *Orupgeloste oygen* (Downcast Eyes) from Y. L. Peretz. After directing for the Mos-Kino-Komitet, Arkatov came to the United States where his career was confined largely to industrial films.

Bojm, Henryk (Yekhiel; 1890s–1944?), screenwriter. The catalytic figure in Poland's silent Jewish cinema, Bojm rebelled against but drew upon his Hasidic upbringing, writing three screenplays for producer Leo Forbert in the 1920s. A fourth, adapted from Sholem Asch's *Motke ganev*, was never realized. Bojm was also a photojournalist for the Jewish press. He died in the Warsaw Ghetto.

Elek, Judit (1937–), director. An original member of Hungary's experimental Béla Balázs Studio, Elek was rooted in documentary but had an international hit with her first feature *Sziget a Szárazföldön* (The Lady From Constantinople; 1969). After exploring a traumatic experience in Hungarian Jewish history with *Tutajosok* (Memoirs of a River; 1989), she recounted a Jewish girl's coming of age in the early 1950s in *Ébredés* (Awakening; 1994), and has since produced documentary portraits of Elie Wiesel (1995) and Holocaust survivor Ernő Fisch (1999).

German, Aleksei (1938–), director. German, son of Stalin-era writer Yuri German, was the most highly regarded filmmaker who emerged in the late Soviet period despite the fact that (or because) virtually all his features were

shelved. German's masterpiece *Moy drug Ivan Lapshin* (My Friend Ivan Lapshin; completed in 1982 but not shown for three years) used one of his father's novels to comment on the illusions of the 1930s; his even more atmospheric postcommunist follow-up, *Khrustalyov, mashinu!* (Khrustalyov, My Car!; 1998), is a frenzied phantasmagorical account of Stalin's final days from the perspective of a military doctor whose family, like the filmmaker's, is part Jewish.

Goskind, Shaul (1907–2003), producer. A key figure in Polish Jewish film culture, Goskind founded the Yiddish film journal *Film velt* in 1928, operated a Warsaw film lab throughout the 1930s and produced the first Polish Yiddish talkie, *Al khet* (1935). In the late 1930s, he and his brother Yitshak documented Jewish life in Poland with a series of brief newsreels; Goskind revived his production company after World War II, making Yiddish documentaries and features before immigrating to Israel in 1950.

Kadár, Ján (1918–1979), director. Born in Hungary but raised in Czechoslovakia, Kadár had his film studies interrupted by World War II and survived several Nazi concentration camps. After liberation, he collaborated with Elmar Klos on a number of documentaries and features, including *Obchod na korze* (The Shop on Main Street; 1965). Kadár left Czechoslovakia in 1968; his subsequent films included *Angel Levine* (1970), made in the United States from the story by Bernard Malamud.

Munk, Andrzej (1921–1961), director. One of the most talented members of the Polish new wave, Munk graduated from high school the summer World War II broke out; he fought in the underground and, after the war, enrolled in the Łódź film school. Munk's features are characterized by their ironic, formally adventurous treatment of Polish history. He died in a car crash while shooting *Pasażerka* (Passenger), an account of concentration camp survivors.

Norstein, Iurii (1941–), animator. Deeply influenced by the art of the Soviet avant-garde and the writings of Sergei Eisenstein, Norstein emerged in the 1970s as one of the world's most innovative makers of animated films. His independence resulted in numerous clashes with the Communist cultural authorities although he has since been recognized among Russia's leading artists.

Room, Abram (1894–1976), director. Room had worked at a Vilna Yiddish theater, as well as with V. I. Meyerhold, before directing the 1925 short *Evrei na zemle* (Jews on the Land), from a script by Vladimir Mayakovsky and Viktor Shklovskii. His second feature, *Tret'ia meschchanskaia* (translated as Bed and Sofa; 1927), also by Shklovskii, is a classic comedy; Room directed the first Soviet sound feature, *Plan velikikh rabot* (Plan for Great Works; 1930). Political difficulties in the early 1930s made him increasingly conformist.

Roshal', Grigorii (1899–1983), director. A onetime Habimah stage manager, Roshal' broke into filmmaking in the late 1920s. His 1928 *Ego prevoskhoditel'stvo* (His Excellency) adapted the story of Bundist hero Hirsh Lekert; *Chelovek iz mestechka* (A Man from the Shtetl), made for VUFKU in 1930, was another evocation of Jewish revolutionary martyrdom. Roshal's career spanned 40 years; among his many literary adaptations was *Sem'ia Oppengeim* (The Family Oppenheim; 1939), from Lion Feuchtwanger's novel, with Solomon Mikhoels as a persecuted German Jew.

Shub, Esfir (1894–1959), editor. An associate of Soviet avant-garde artists, Shub was hired in 1922 to recut and retitle foreign films for Soviet consumption. With *Padenie dinastii Romanovyykh* (Fall of the Romanov Dynasty; 1927), Shub invented a new form of documentary that took newsreel footage as its raw material. Her other compilation films concerned the Spanish Civil War and the history of Soviet cinema.

Szabó, Istvan (1938–), director. Szabó is Hungary's most internationally renowned filmmaker, having won an Academy Award for his 1981 *Mephisto*. The son of a Budapest doctor, he experienced as a child the wartime suffering of the city's Jews. Many of his movies have autobiographical elements, including *Apa* (Father; 1966), *Tüzoltó utca 25* (25 Fireman Street; 1973), and *Bizalom* (Confidence; 1979); the epic *Sunshine* (2000) refracts the story of twentieth-century Hungary through three generations of Budapest Jews.

Waszyński, Michał (1904–1965), director. Born in Volhynia, Waszyński (Wachs) went to Warsaw in the late 1920s by way of Berlin. In addition to *Der dibek*, he directed 40 films during the 1930s, working in almost every genre—melodra-

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mas, musicals, romantic fantasies, farces, military films, and adventure films. Waszyński survived the war in the Soviet Union, then settled in Italy where, among other activities, he assisted Orson Welles. His *Variety* obituary lists him as Prince Michael Waszyński.

Weiss, Jiří (1913–2004), director and screenwriter. The son of a Jewish industrialist, Weiss was an established social documentarian when he left Prague for London in 1938; after World War II he became one of Czechoslovakia's leading filmmakers. His 1959 *Romeo, Julie a tma* (*Romeo, Juliet and Darkness*), in which a Jewish girl is sheltered by a Czech schoolmate, was an international success. Weiss left Czechoslovakia in 1968 but returned in 1989 to film the quasi-autobiographical *Martha und Ich* (*Martha and I*).

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—J. HOBERMAN

CIRCUMCISION. Popular customs and practices regarding circumcision (Yid., *bris*; Heb., *berit milah*) seem to have been fairly consistent within the East European Jewish community, both Hasidic and Misnagdic, although there were some regional variations as to details. Throughout the days leading up to the *bris*, care was taken to prevent the demon Lilith from taking the child: schoolboys were brought to recite the Shema' prayer every night (for which they were rewarded with sweets), and amulets were placed in the room with the child. The night before the ceremony was to take place, a special vigil (*vakhtnakht*) was kept. Candles were lit throughout the house. After a special meal (*se'udah*), the men present recited psalms and studied Torah until midnight. The ritual circumciser (*mohel*) who was to perform the ceremony would also be present and would sometimes leave his

Rosh Hashanah card depicting a circumcision ceremony (Yid., *bris*; Heb., *berit milah*). The fruits on the "tree of life" are labeled (left to right), "luck," "life," and "joy," and the Yiddish verse reads: "A child, boy is born / May he have happiness and live long! / A child, a joy, sugar-sweet / Today was his *bris*." Published by Verlag Central, Warsaw. (YIVO)



א קינד, א יונגעלע בעבארן,
זאל זיין מיט גליק און לאנגע יארען;
א קינד, א נחת, צוקפר-זיס —
ס'איז היינט בעווען זיין ברית.

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