

teenth-century Hungarian authors' perception of the Bible and of Jews; and also examined the nineteenth century with particular interest in the Hungarian reform era. A summary of this work, hastily arranged and published in the shadow of the Holocaust, is the study *Magyar irodalom és a zsidóság* (Hungarian Literature and the Jews; 1943). This collection is not widely known, but its bibliography is indispensable to anyone working in this field. In his introductory essay to his document collection, *1848–49 a magyar zsidóság életében* (1848–49 in the Life of Hungarian Jewry; 1948), Zsoldos points out that Jewish assimilation had remained illusory because the emotional criteria for acceptance had never been present in Hungary. With József Turóczi-Trostler he also edited *Az első magyar zsidó írónemzedék* (The First Generation of Hungarian Jewish Writers; 1940). Zsoldos's bibliography was published by Sándor Scheiber in volume 14 of *Magyar Zsidó Oklevéltár* (Hungarian Jewish Archives; 1971).

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—JÁNOS KŐBÁNYAI

Translated from Hungarian by Imre Goldstein

## HUNGARY

[To treat the history of Jewish presence in Hungarian lands, this entry includes three chronologically arranged articles. The first covers early history and Habsburg rule through the end of World War I and the dissolution of the empire; the second covers the interwar and Holocaust periods (1918–1945); and the last covers Hungary during the Communist and postcommunist eras.]

## Hungary before 1918

Hungary, the most diverse national and religious state in Europe, became home to the second-largest Jewish population on the continent, numbering almost a million on the eve of World War I. It was a young Jewry, composed of a few thousand persons at the beginning of the eighteenth century; however, 200 years later it had developed a unique, recognizable character. This was all the more striking because of the community's internal diversity. It was the product of two waves of migration of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe who retained their distinctive dispositions. In time, Hungary became the arena of an acute religious conflict between Orthodoxy and the local variant of Reform—Neolog—unmatched in intensity elsewhere. In the last third of the nineteenth century, a significant proportion of Hungarian Jewry, including even sectors of Orthodoxy, fervently assimilated the Magyar language and culture, and passionately identified with Hungarian nationalism.

Within a few generations, Jews came to occupy a central position in the country's economy; by the turn of the twentieth century, they began to play a key role in the cultural world, and briefly before the dissolution of the monarchy, in the politics of Hungary. Regional variations were significant: the urbane life in Budapest, with its acculturated metropolitan Jewry, the largest on the continent after Warsaw, contrasted sharply with the simple pious existence eked out by Hasidic peasants and lumberjacks in villages nestled among the Carpathian Mountains. Despite this polarization, or perhaps because of it, foreign observers were struck by a characteristic shared by Hungarian Jews of all stripes: a disdain for half measures and a passion for radical, even extreme positions.

Before the dissolution of the dual monarchy in 1918, Hungary included the territory of the present-day states of Hungary, Slovakia, and Croatia, as well as parts of Serbia, Romania, Ukraine, and Austria. From the second third of the nineteenth century, Hungary was the scene of serious national conflicts. Moreover, alongside the Roman Catholic majority, there were Lutherans, Calvinists, Unitarians, Greek Catholics, and Greek Orthodox, as well as Jews. The diversity proved to be a source of both religious toleration and religious tension, espe-

cially when confessional differences were reinforced by national ones.

Hungarian society possessed a politically powerful and substantial nobility (5% of the inhabitants, of whom about 30,000 families were estate owners with true political power), an extensive peasant population, a weak largely non-Magyar Christian urban class, and a sizable Jewish population. In time, the proportion of Jews in the country totaled about 5 percent, situating Hungary between Germany (somewhat under 1%) and Poland (close to 10%).

### Population Growth, Immigration, and Regional Diversity: 1700–1840

While Jews had first settled in the Roman province of Pannonia and there was a considerable Jewish population in medieval Hungary, the origins of modern Hungarian Jewry are relatively recent, extending no farther than the end of the seventeenth century when after a century and a half of Ottoman occupation, Hungary was reconquered by the Habsburgs. Due to immigration and natural increase, the Hungarian Jewish population numbers multiplied many times over by World War I.

Although the rapid population growth from the second third of the nineteenth century can be attributed to the high rate of natural increase characteristic of Jews during most of the nineteenth century not only in Eastern Europe, but even in Germany, the rise of the Jewish population in Hungary in the preceding period, from a few thousand toward the end of the seventeenth century to an estimated 300,000 by the 1830s, was certainly due largely to immigration. Throughout the eighteenth century, millions of immigrants primarily from the Balkans and the German states, and even from far afield as France, poured in to colonize the fertile southern regions recently liberated from Turkish control. The promising economic conditions and the relatively favorable legal circumstances also attracted Jews. In origin and destination, as well as in timing, however, Jews arrived independently of these general currents of migration (see Table 1).

A relatively reliable census of the Jewish population held in 1735–1738, the so-called *Conscriptio Judeorum* ordered by Charles IV, recorded about 12,000 Jews. The scale of Jewish migration in the half century between 1735 and 1785–1787 can be estimated at roughly 60,000. They came in two streams. The first wave of

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TABLE 1. The Jewish Population of Hungary, 1735–1910\*

Year	Jewish Population	%	Natural Increase (NI)	Migration
1735	12,219	0.7	12.0	
1785–1787	80,775	1.3	15.0	60,000
1805	126,620	1.8	18.0	20,000
1827	250,000	3.0	20.0	45,000
1842	340,000	3.0	20.0	
1850	400,000	4.3	20.0	
1857	450,000	3.7	20.0	
1869	542,279	4.0	19.5	
1880	624,826	4.5	18.4	–48,994
1890	707,961	4.7	17.5	–42,005
1900	831,162	4.9	13.8	–17,127
1910	911,227	5.0		–36,187

\*While modern censuses were taken for Hungary beginning in 1869 (hereon including Transylvania), there are no reliable population figures or annual rates of natural increase (NI) for the earlier period; hence they are presented in italics. The figures from 1827–1857 are my estimates.—Michael K. Silber

about 30,000–35,000 Jews arrived mainly from neighboring Moravia and to a lesser degree from Bohemia, where since 1726 the so-called Familiant Laws placed a set limit on the number of Jewish families. The vast majority settled in the northwest border counties not far from their mother communities, along the western marches of Burgenland near Vienna or in the Slovakian highlands, where they constituted a mirror twin of Moravian Jewry that Hungarian Jews came to call Oberland. Nevertheless, a thin scattering of Moravian Jews did settle in the south as far afield as Croatia and the military border, as well as in Banat and Transylvania. Here one could also find small numbers of Sephardic Jews from the Balkans. Jews also arrived from the German states and Alsace, though in smaller numbers.

The second wave of migration came from Poland, and after its dismemberment, mainly Galicia, slowly at first, but gaining momentum in the last third of the eighteenth century until the 1830s. An estimated 25,000 arrived before the mid-1780s and another 45,000 by the 1830s. Hungary became a land of opportunity for tens of thousands of Galician Jews. Galicia, especially its eastern half, was the most densely settled area by Jews in Europe, a region that proved to be an almost inexhaustible reservoir of outmigration, feeding streams of migrants not only to Hungary, but also to the neighboring Romanian principalities, Ukraine, and southern Russia, as well as Vienna and the United States toward the end of the nineteenth century.

Both hostile geography and onerous

exclusion from settling in privileged regions such as the mining counties and the Jász-Kún and Hajdu territories effectively created a barrier to Jewish settlement in the center of the country, checking the expansion of Galician migration to the west and Moravian-Bohemian resettlement to the east. The buffer zone contributed toward maintaining two distinct areas of Jewish settlement in Hungary, with a divide running from the sources of the Vág (Vah) River due southeast to the Transylvanian city of Kolozsvár (Cluj). Even after residence restrictions were removed in the middle of the nineteenth century, this division proved remarkably durable: the linguistic divide between Central and Eastern Yiddish in Hungary among Holocaust survivors corresponded to the areas of Moravian and Galician settlement noted in the 1735 Jewish census.

Most of Hungarian Jewry was concentrated in three relatively compact regions in the northeast, northwest, and the center within a radius of about 50 miles around Pressburg (Bratislava), Sátoraljaujhely, and Buda-Pest respectively. The 1787 census recorded two-thirds of Hungary's Jews living in the border counties. To the south, Jews were thinly spread in villages and in a string of larger communities stretching in a crescent from Nagykanizsa in the west to Arad in the east. Most Jews lived among German, Slovak, Rusyn (Ruthenian), and Romanian populations for most of the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, the center of gravity of the Jewish population began to drift southward to Magyar ethnic areas. Around 1830, about a third of the population was located in what

is present-day Hungary; by 1880, these numbers had grown to almost half, a proportion that did not change significantly until World War I.

### Patterns of Settlement and

#### Occupations: 1700–1780

In the eighteenth century, there were severe limitations on Jewish settlement, and a number of regions were granted the privilege of not tolerating Jews (Croatia, Jász-Kún, and Hajdu territories, the mining cities and their surrounding regions) or of restricting residence to one settlement (the military border, Banat, Transylvania). Leopold I (1655–1705) excluded Jews from the royal free cities, Charles IV (1711–1740) considered introducing the Bohemian Family Laws, and Maria Theresa (1740–1765) even contemplated wholesale expulsion (and at the very time of the Prague expulsion she did expel Jews from the royal free city of Buda in 1746).

Market towns with populations of 2,000–10,000 constituted the type of settlement where the proportion of Jews in the general population was the highest. These towns most reflected the function that Jews characteristically played in the economy, as mediators between the city and the countryside. They were also the typical locus of communal life. Jews settled in such towns owned by the great magnate families: Esterházy (Eisenstadt, Mattersdorf, Pápa), Batthyány (Rechnitz, Nagy Kanizsa), Pálffy (Pressburg, Stampfen), Károlyi (Nagykároly), Festetics (Keszthely), Zichy (Óbuda until 1765), Schönborn (Munkács, Beregszász), some of the prelates (Makó, Veszprém), the royal chamber (Óbuda), and others.

Where they formed sizable settlements, Jews received a privilege that granted them rights to residence, the pursuit of certain occupations, as well as maintenance of religious institutions, in return for certain obligations and payments (*Schutzgeld* or protection money). The traditional *kehilah* was soon replicated; often the statutes of mother communities across the border served as models of organization. However, the communal life of Hungarian Jewry at the time of Joseph II was not very impressive. Not more than 5 percent of Hungarian Jews lived in the three communities with more than 1,000 Jews (Pressburg, Óbuda, and Vágújhely); another 10–15 percent lived in two dozen midsized communities with populations ranging from 400 to 1,000. However, if in the middle of the century Akiva Eger I,

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briefly rabbi of Pressburg (1756–1758), could write despairingly of Hungary as an appalling cultural wasteland, a generation later conditions had improved significantly, at least in the regions along the western and northwestern borders.

The communities of Burgenland and Oberland came to be seen as extensions of well-organized Moravian Jewry. Hungary's provincialism was also mitigated by familial, commercial, and cultural networks that bound at least the upper strata to the great Jewish centers outside of Hungary. Wealthier families sent their talented sons to study at yeshivas in German and Bohemian lands. During the very years that Eger had voiced his complaint, there were a dozen or more students from Mattersdorf and Eisenstadt in the yeshiva of Yonatan Eybeschütz at Hamburg-Altona, while several of Eybeschütz's own sons were living in or visiting Hungary. From the middle of the century, important scholars came to serve in the Pressburg rabbinate; during the tenure of Me'ir Barby (1729–1789), the community maintained one of the most important yeshivas in Europe.

Such communal life, however, was not representative of the existence led by the overwhelming majority of Jews in eighteenth-century Hungary. What was striking was that about 60 percent of Hungarian Jews lived scattered about the countryside, with one or two families to a village. Thus immigrants from Moravia and Galicia encountered patterns of Jewish settlement in Hungary that stood in stark contrast to those of their countries of origin. Migration to Hungary therefore meant for the most part abandoning dense communal networks for a relatively desolate Jewish environment.

In the eighteenth century, with the exception of the so-called "Seven [later Five] Communities [*kehilot*]" of Burgenland (Eisenstadt, Mattersdorf, and others), no supracommunal organizations existed in Hungary, although most communities were loosely organized at the county level. Where no sizable community existed, a county rabbi (or, as in the case of Yehezkel Paneth in Transylvania, a *rav medinah*, or "country rabbi") ministered to the religious needs of the scattered village Jews, often making a circuit among the village Jews on horse and buggy, and a lay head served as *rosh galil* or *rosh medinah* (head of the county). The Tolerance Tax instituted in 1749 by Maria Theresa (hence the term *malke-geld*; queen's gold or money) was annually ap-

portioned and collected by an assembly of representatives of a county's Jewry. These usually would be convened at the fairs in Pest not only to allocate the tax burden, but also to deal ad hoc with an exceptional crisis such as military conscription or to formulate a strategy to lobby a forthcoming Diet. Members of the prominent Theben family of Pressburg were often chosen as *shtadlonim* to intercede with authorities. Only in the 1840s was a more permanent national body formed around efforts to abolish the Tolerance Tax, and briefly in 1848 in order to wage a public struggle for emancipation. The largely decentralized character of Hungarian Jewry came to an abrupt end only in the wake of the Jewish Congress of 1868–1869 when rival Neolog and Orthodox nationwide organizations were first established.

Jewish occupational structure was largely shaped by the country's agrarian economy. A census taken in 1767–1768 gives a glimpse of the economic pursuits of some 5,500 heads of family. About one-third had no known profession, and most of these were classified as very poor. Leaseholders (*arendatores*), innkeepers, and distillers constituted about 17 percent of family heads. Most village Jews, and in the northeast counties bordering Galicia nearly all Jews, were engaged in this type of activity. A further 17 percent were artisans; the majority were butchers and tailors; and furriers, glaziers, shoemakers, and assorted crafts made up the rest. The remaining 1,800 family heads were engaged in trade. Of these, a thin upper stratum consisted of established merchants (*mercatores*); about a quarter were tradesmen (*quaestores*) in specific goods such as leather, textiles, wool, and tobacco; and more than half were peddlers.

At the lowest rung of the itinerant traders was the so-called "bundle Jew" (*Pinkel-jude* or *dorsarius*) who wandered from village to village chased by dogs and stoned by wanton youths, a heavy knapsack on his back, selling peasants such knickknacks as rouge, ribbons, needles, threads, umbrellas, hats, scissors, and utensils, while collecting old clothes (for the *Flickschneiders* in town, tailors who specialized in mending and patching), small animal hides (especially rabbit skins, which came to be identified with Jews), feathers and other farmyard surplus, all of which would otherwise go to waste. Many had their so-called *medine*, their staked-out circuit of villages they would visit once a week before returning

home for the Sabbath. The ambitious sought to progress higher up the ladder as traveling tradesmen with carts (*quaestores ambulantes*) seeking out "every corner of the beloved homeland," as one Jewish contemporary petition put it, to buy up "tobacco, every sort of fruit, honey, fat, various pelts, potash, and wool." The more prosperous would contract with estates for their produce in grain or wool, and bring their stock to warehouses in town. In turn, they would supply the rural gentlefolk with colonial goods, spices, coffee and tea, ironware, and fancy textiles. Many worked on commission for wholesale merchants in Vienna, Pressburg, and Pest, engaged in import-export with foreign markets. Beside buying and selling, peddlers and publicans could provide important information and services for traders in the market towns, who in turn were linked in a vertical network with wholesale merchants in the urban centers. These few had commercial ties with faraway markets, as did, for example, the Theben family in Pressburg with the Netherlands.

#### Enlightened Absolutism of Joseph II: 1780–1790

The accession of Joseph II (1741–1790) to the throne in 1780 promised to usher in a new era. His policies, characterized as enlightened absolutism, continued and radically extended Maria Theresa's program to centralize power in the hands of the crown. Joseph issued a series of Edicts of Toleration for Jews beginning in the fall of 1781, promulgated for the Jews of Hungary as *Systematica Gentis Judaicae Regulatio* on 31 March 1783. The census that was taken to assess the resources of the Jewish communities in 1782 had delayed the edict in Hungary by more than a year after it had been issued for the other lands (Galicia excepted). It echoed earlier edicts for Vienna and the Bohemian lands by calling for the cultural and economic transformation of Jews in the spirit of populationist and physiocratic notions then enjoying currency. The Hebrew and Yiddish languages were to be confined to strictly religious matters; documents of a legal or public nature had to be written in German, Latin, or Hungarian.

The edict elaborated at much greater length than previous edicts on compulsory education and the establishment of Jewish "normal" schools (*Normalschulen*; named after a pedagogic method) that would instruct Jewish boys (in time girls

writing the languages of the country, as well as other useful subjects [see Normalschulen]. To ensure success, the edict declared that no Jew under the age of 25 would be allowed within 10 years to engage in crafts, keep an inn or a leasehold, or trade in any number of products unless he could produce an official certificate testifying to his having attended a Jewish or Christian school. Talented Jews could be admitted to universities and institutions of higher learning. In order to effect their economic transformation, Jews were to be excluded from their old "harmful" occupations and channeled into "productive" means of livelihood. Thus, leasing rural lands was to be permitted only if Jews personally worked the land. They could engage in transport and crafts, and even enter guilds and apprentice their youths. Only the mining towns were to continue to be beyond their bounds. Finally, all distinguishing signs that segregated Jews from others were to be abolished. Not only could they wear swords, but they were to remove their beards and other external signs of their religion.

Hungarian Jewry reacted swiftly to the edict and submitted a petition on 22 April 1783. Thanking the emperor profusely for the edict, its spirit of toleration and equality as well as the desire to make Jews useful citizens without harming their religion in the least, it noted only one disturbing item. Interestingly, it was not the introduction of compulsory secular education, for which the petition expressed its gratitude, but rather the order to shave beards. The emperor explained that this measure was meant only to uphold Jewish dignity, and that of course the offending decree would be rescinded. He acted in a similar spirit with regard to the Toleration Tax. While he did not intend to abolish the tax, as he considered it a fair fiscal contribution, he did change its name in 1785 to the Chamber Tax. It was purely a symbolic act, nevertheless not without significance as one more manifestation of his desire to eliminate humiliating signs.

A few months later, on 8 August 1783, the first normal school opened amid joyous celebrations in Pressburg, with the rabbi expressing his gratitude before an audience of dignitaries. About 2,000 children attended the 23 or more schools that were established in Hungary during Joseph II's reign. The 1786 decree that made school certification a prerequisite

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Joseph's liberalization of the universities, Joseph Manes Österreicher (1756–1832) became the first Jew to receive a medical degree from Buda University in 1782 and was soon appointed the officiating doctor at Balatonfüred spa. Also now, the study of law was permitted.

Between 1785 and 1787, the emperor's policies underwent a certain radicalization and began to touch on matters not considered in the initial round of edicts. Thus the state now intervened in the internal religious affairs of the community. Separate rabbinic jurisdiction, the ability to excommunicate, and the autonomy of the Jewish community in anything other than strictly religious matters were abolished. The general Marriage Patent also impinged upon specific Jewish laws and customs, as did the mandated waiting period of 48 hours before the burial of the dead.

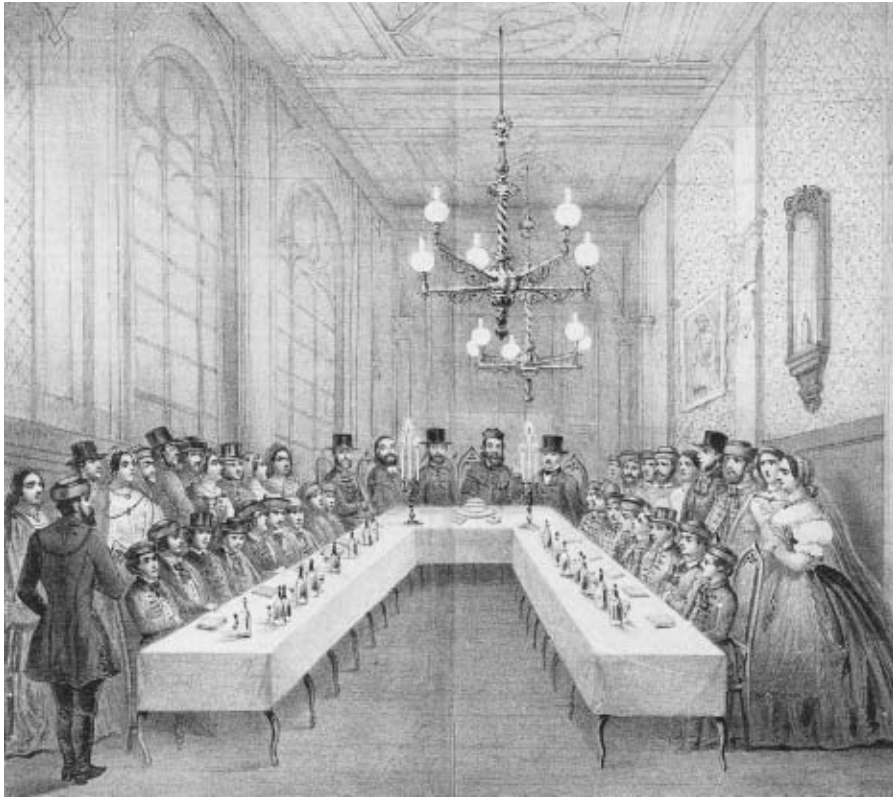
Potentially more damaging were the emperor's proposed regulations on Jewish economic activities. While new branches of livelihood were made available, Joseph also proposed in May 1786 to exclude Jews from traditional occupations in the rural countryside, "in order to protect more the poor tax-paying population from the destructive deceitfulness of the Jews." After the termination of present leases, Jews were to be prohibited from leasing inns. The measure would have been disastrous to the approximately one-third of Hungarian Jewry engaged in some form of rural leasing. It took the combined efforts of the Hungarian Vice-Chancellor Pálffy and Court Councilor Eszterházy to dissuade the emperor, arguing that morally the problem lay with leasing liquor per se, and that there was no reason to assume that Christian lessees would be less harmful, while economically the damage would be extensive.

Another measure with far-reaching consequences was the 23 July 1787 decree ordering Jews to adopt personal and family names. Only personal names had to be German, but most chose German family names as well, though a few elected typical Hungarian ones that became identified as Jewish, such as Farkas. While the intention of the decree was to acculturate and standardize, paradoxically a new ghetto of names came into being. The personal names adopted by Jews soon came to be identified as Jewish no matter how Teutonic in origin and were rapidly abandoned by non-Jews, only to have Jews shift to the new onomastic

"neighborhood" in the next generation and repeat the process. Likewise, toward the end of the nineteenth century the peculiar constellation of German family names—colors, animals, occupations—usually identified their bearers as Jews. This transparency was made somewhat opaque by the presence of Calvinists with their share of Old Testament names and of German Schwabs who also had some family names in common with Jews, including Gross or Klein. Even when Jews began to Magyarize their names, a trend (exaggerated by historians) that began in earnest in the 1880s and was brought to a near standstill in Trianon Hungary, there was a tendency to cluster in the choice of names, thus vitiating the assimilatory intent. [See Names and Naming.]

The military conscription of Jews in Hungary was ordered on 10 August 1788, half a year after it had gone into effect in Galicia. Jews were not to serve in combat units, but only in the transport corps. Initially, 204 Jews were to be conscripted. Representatives of Hungarian Jewry met immediately at the Pest fair and appointed Koppel Theben and Naftali Rosenthal as *shtadlonim* to attempt to avert the decree. Their repeated intercessions in Vienna, however, fell on deaf ears.

At the close of Joseph's reign, he faced the consequences of his riding roughshod over the privileged estates—he had made powerful enemies whose patience had run out at the end of the decade. Threatened with wholesale revolt, on his deathbed Joseph withdrew all of the laws he had legislated for Hungary excepting the Edict of Toleration and two others. Almost immediately after Joseph's death, the royal free cities sought to expel Jews from their precincts. Probably it was the *maskil* and *shtadlan* Eliyahu Rosenthal who was behind the unique Latin petition submitted by Hungarian Jewry in November 1790, stating their case with bathos, "In the whole world, outside Hungary we have no fatherland . . . no other brothers than those with whom we live and die in one society." In Law 38 of 1790, the so-called De Judaeis, the reconvened Hungarian Diet ruled that the status quo as of 1 January 1790 was to be preserved. While this was understood by Jews to relate to the legal situation, and therefore implied that there would continue to be no restrictions on settlement in the royal free cities, the burghers interpreted the law to mean that the size of the Jewish population was to be frozen at 1790 levels. Another half century was to



Passover Seder for members of the MIKEFE Association, founded in 1842 to attract young people to productive trades, Hungary, 1860. From a drawing published in *Allgemeine illustrierte Judenzeitung*. (The Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem. Photograph courtesy of Beth Hatefutsoth, Photo Archive, Tel Aviv)

go by until the Diet would once again consider more comprehensive legislation to determine Jewish legal status. In the intervening period, the royal free cities succeeded in excluding Jews for the most part, with the notable exception of Pest. [See Josephinian Reforms.]

In the absence of state intervention under Joseph's successors, the Josephinian school system in Hungary readily collapsed, not because of principled opposition, but rather due to the heavy financial burden placed upon the communities. Only a few schools survived in the larger towns. Moreover, the reconvened Hungarian Diet insisted that providing the military with recruits and paying taxes were two areas strictly within its exclusive purview. Hence, any attempt to recruit Jews or levy the Toleration Tax without the Diet's assent was unconstitutional.

For most of the period of the French Wars, Hungarian Jewry escaped the burdensome personal military service that Jews in the other lands of the empire had to provide. Moreover, the same strategy was employed for paying the Toleration Tax. Despite repeated petitions protesting

their incapacity to pay the taxes, these must be considered with more than a dash of skepticism in light of the comparatively far heavier burden shouldered by Jews in Galicia and the Bohemian lands. The original sum set by Maria Theresa in 1749 had risen from 20,000 to 160,000 florins by 1813, but it was proportionate to the population's increase of Hungarian Jewry. Moreover, per capita it fell far below the rates in neighboring lands. Hungarian Jews relied on the Diet to postpone payment of this "illegal" tax, so that for the period between 1819 and 1849, when their share in the empire's Jewish population was roughly 40 percent, they paid only about 7 percent of the total Jewish taxes collected, less than that of Moravian Jewry, a bit more than one-tenth its size. Hungary's unique constitutional position within the empire thus shielded its Jews from Viennese meddling until the 1850s.

#### **Haskalah, Reform, and Orthodoxy: 1780–1848**

By the 1830s, the Hungarian Jewish population had grown threefold since the Josephinian census. True, Jews were still

largely excluded from the royal free cities, but due mainly to their infiltration into Pest, now about 13,500 or 6 percent of the country's Jews resided in urban centers. Their proportion in the villages had dropped somewhat, but they still constituted about half of Hungarian Jewry. In absolute terms, however, they had increased to about 100,000 people. Most significant was the growth of their presence in the market towns where slightly more than 40 percent of the country's Jews resided. Almost 100,000 Jews now lived in sufficient concentrations to maintain viable communities. About 300 rabbis functioned in 64 larger communities and another roughly 250 in smaller ones.

Those decades also witnessed considerable economic growth. The quarter century of French wars provided opportunities for army purveyors and contractors. The demand for raw agricultural produce and finished goods rose sharply, and prosperity trickled down even to the lowest classes. Consumption patterns expanded and generated a demand that Jews, from the lowly peddler to the privileged wholesaler, were well positioned to supply. A brief postwar depression was soon followed by an agricultural boom that accompanied the industrial takeoff from the late 1820s in nearby Austria. Men such as Moritz Ullmann and Sámuel Wodianer stood at the apex of a considerable number of Jewish merchants and manufacturers who made their fortunes in those years.

A wealthy stratum emerged in the larger towns that came to embrace the lifestyle and values of the modern bourgeoisie readily observable on business trips to nearby Vienna. By virtue of their wealth, they were automatically coopted to serve in positions of leadership and thus were ideally located to introduce institutional innovations into their largely traditional communities. The Haskalah and the religious reform movement emanating from Germany provided ideological guidelines for that change beginning in the second decade of the nineteenth century.

The Haskalah had made inroads into Hungary a generation earlier, in the 1780s. Some of the teachers of the Josephinian schools identified with the movement, but the clash between the Haskalah and traditional society that was so sharp in Germany during that decade was largely avoided in Hungary precisely because of the Josephinian system. The

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initial confrontation in Germany had taken place over educational reforms, but in Hungary the educational program of the enlightened absolutist state was far more acceptable to the traditional camp. Moreover, the most influential adherents of the Haskalah in Hungary, including the wealthy patrician Rosenthals of Mór, remained quite traditional. Eliyahu and especially Shelomoh Rosenthal stood at the center of a network of Hungarian *maskilim*, maintaining close ties with their counterparts in other parts of the empire, especially with the circle around the Jeitteles family in Prague, whose vision of harmonizing the Haskalah and traditional rabbinic culture they readily embraced.

Toward the end of the Napoleonic wars, around 1810, the *modus vivendi* between tradition and Haskalah was disturbed. Under the impact of the French and Westphalian Sanhedrins, *maskilim* and their allies throughout the Habsburg Empire embarked upon a campaign of educational reforms to fill the vacuum left by the withdrawal of the state. In Pest, this was undertaken by the rabbi himself, Yisra'el Wahrman, who solicited advice from the circle of reformers in Westphalia around the journal *Sulamith*. The Westphalian Consistory also proved the inspiration for the first religious reforms in Hungary, introduced in the southeast community of Arad by the maverick *maskil* rabbi Aharon Chorin. However, in Pressburg the first of several clashes occurred with the town's rabbi, Mosheh Sofer (Ḥatam Sofer), over the introduction of a Haskalah-oriented school. The Pressburg *Primärschule*, established over the objections of the conservatives in 1820, not only taught secular studies to which there was really no objection, but also provided religious instruction informed by Haskalah priorities. The Pressburg confrontation was to be one of many such clashes between innovators, often the community's lay leaders, and the mostly conservative rabbis throughout Hungary.

The spread of religious reforms further exacerbated these conflicts. The Westphalian Consistory under Israel Jacobson (1768–1828) had introduced a series of moderate aesthetic reforms in the religious services in the first decade of the century. But by the middle of the next decade, reformers first in Berlin and then in Hamburg went further, altering prayers

and playing the organ on the Sabbath. These situations posed serious halakhic problems. Three rabbis from Hungary defended the Berlin reforms: Chorin; Mosheh Kunitz, the sometime *dayan* in Pest and rabbi of Buda; and a young Hungarian rabbinic scholar Eli'ezer Liebermann, who played an important role publishing their views in 1818. When similar innovations were introduced in Hamburg, the traditional rabbis there canvassed the foremost rabbis of Europe and published a collection of responsa condemning the reforms. The cogent rejoinder of Mosheh Sofer marked the emergence of a reflective, self-conscious ideology of traditionalism that has come to be known as Orthodoxy.

In the following two decades until his death, Ḥatam Sofer imbued a generation of traditionalist Hungarian Jews with a combative *élan* that was not to be found in neighboring lands. He was the preeminent halakhic authority in world Jewry in the 1830s, an unusually gifted preacher and communal rabbi, and above all a charismatic teacher who taught thousands in his yeshiva. He exerted enormous influence on the course of Hungarian Jewry in his lifetime and in generations to come. More than 100 of his students went on to occupy rabbinic posts in Hungary alone, an unprecedented number. These disciples drew on his charisma and traditionalist teachings, endeavoring to emulate his forceful style of communal leadership. They sought to replicate his yeshiva with its unique bond between master and disciple. At a time when yeshivas were fast flickering out in Central Europe and not yet coming into their own in Eastern Europe, there was an efflorescence of this institution in Hungary, which now emerged as the center of gravity of the yeshiva world. Hungary retained this undisputed pride of place until contested by the rise of the Lithuanian yeshivas in the last third of the nineteenth century.

The forces of tradition were reinforced by the Hasidic movement that began to make inroads in the northeastern regions. The first native rebbe, Yitshak Isaac Taub, rabbi of Nagykovács, was joined in the first half of the nineteenth century by several other colleagues with Hasidic leanings who in time founded dynasties in Hungary: Mosheh Teitelbaum (Újhely, Sziget, Szatmár), Tsevi Elimelekh Shapiro (Munkács), and Yehezkel Paneth (whose son founded the Dés dynasty). The much larger and powerful courts in Bucovina

(Vizhnits) and Galicia (Belz and to an lesser extent Zhidachov) also exercised influence over the region. Nevertheless, Hasidim remained a minority even in Máramaros county until the second half of the century.

Others, however, were keen to introduce innovations in the religious services. They followed the moderate path chosen by the preacher Isaak Noah Mannheimer (1793–1865) in Vienna who rejected the Berlin and Hamburg reforms, restricting himself to aesthetic changes. Such reforms were introduced first in Pest in 1827, and by the decade of the 1840s in many of the larger communities in Hungary. A new building for the synagogue, the election of a new rabbi, and the introduction of a school in this period often occasioned conflict within the community. Pest, with its moderate reforming rabbi, Löw Schwab, was among those communities that avoided conflict (until 1848) by adhering to a policy of judicious compromise.

#### Nationalism and Revolution: 1840–1849

An era of nationalist revival and reform was inaugurated in Hungary in 1825 by Count Stephen Széchenyi. The main carriers of liberal Hungarian nationalism were the nobility, and they saw economic and social transformation as the necessary means to ensure that national goals were attained. Hence, projects and reforms proliferated. Aware that Magyars constituted a minority within Hungary, these Hungarian nationalists sought to assimilate the country's various nationalities into the Magyar nation. By means of casinos (social clubs), they aimed to overcome class differences and create greater solidarity.

Among the many issues hotly debated at the time was Jewish emancipation. The turning point came in 1840. Baron Joseph Eötvös's pamphlet on Jewish emancipation and the liberal attitudes expressed at the Diet took observers at home and abroad by pleasant surprise. It was only due to the opposition of the Upper House and the crown that a proposal to grant Jews full equality with the non-noble population was pared down. Nevertheless, Law 29 of 1840 permitted Jews to settle in all cities except mining towns, thus eliminating a legal obstacle to the dynamic urbanization that was to take place in the following decades. Moreover, although Jews were still excluded from many casinos, especially those run by

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burghers, they were unexpectedly welcomed in some clubs where nobles dominated.

Hungarian Jews, in particular those who leaned toward reforms but not exclusively, reacted with enthusiasm. Patriotic pamphlets such as those by the Pest rabbi Löw Schwab and by Mór Ballagi appeared in Hungarian, as did a translation project of the Bible and the prayer book into Hungarian by Ballagi. Productivization societies aimed at training Jews for agriculture and crafts were set up in several communities. Jews embraced Magyar nationalism with neophyte fervor and a society was set up in Pest in 1844 to disseminate the Magyar language among Jews.

By this time, however, the public mood had begun to turn against emancipation. Count Széchenyi argued that high percentage of Jews in the population made Western-style integration unsuitable for Hungary. An important editorial by the leading liberal politician of the day, Louis Kossuth, appeared in May 1844. Declaring himself to be firmly in favor of emancipation, he sought to understand why the public had retreated from its favorable stance. Legal equality was certainly important, but true social integration, "fusion," was even more so. There were elements in Judaism that preserved Jewish separateness not only as a religion, but also as a "political organism." Kossuth urged Jews to purge their religion of political and national elements that hindered meaningful emancipation. While Kossuth did not expressly make emancipation conditional on religious reforms, his circumlocutions implied that this was an offer that should not be refused.

Just a few years later, many Jews were swept up in the enthusiasm that greeted the revolution of 15 March 1848. In Pest, while the 12-point demand of the radical youth was printed up, a young Jewish doctor named Rosenfeld joined the speakers to address the excited crowd. Hundreds of Jews enlisted in the National Guard, appearing the following day armed with sabers, and wearing red, white, and green cockades and armbands. Hopes ran high in the Jewish community that emancipation was close at hand. There was some unease, however, over the fact that although the 12 points did demand "civil and religious equality," there was no explicit mention of Jewish emancipation. Nevertheless, most Jews

adopted a cautious but optimistic attitude, hoping for the best.

These expectations were soon dashed. Within days, burghers demanded that Jews be excluded from the National Guard. Between 18 and 21 March, street violence flared into anti-Jewish riots. In Pressburg, where the Diet was in session, burghers pressed a petition that sought to nullify the residential gains made by Jews since 1840 and further demanded that the Jewish editor of the *Pressburger Zeitung*, Adolf Neustadt, be dismissed. Under the cloud of rioting and the burgher petition, the Diet turned to the issue of Jewish emancipation. Proposals were raised in the spirit of Kossuth's editorial linking equality with religious reforms. Kossuth himself counseled patience, lest untimely Jewish demands "jeopardize the propitious moments of the rebirth of our homeland." Jonas Kunewalder, the president of the Pest community, also urged that Jews forego lobbying for their specific interests and place their trust in the government. However, Kunewalder, the foremost champion of Jewish rights during the 1840s, was himself unconvinced, and joined his family on 5 April at the baptismal font of the Catholic church. He was not alone. If the wave of conversions predicted by the press did not materialize, nevertheless there were dozens who abandoned their faith that year, among them former activists for emancipation following the example set by Ballagi several years earlier.

A far fiercer surge of violence erupted at Easter in towns throughout Hungary. The Slovak highlands and the Transdanubian towns were especially hard hit; ironically, only the northeastern counties inhabited by the most traditional Jews were spared. Pressburg suffered the worst anti-Jewish disturbance in all of revolutionary Europe. In Pest, burghers now pressed for demands similar to those called for in Pressburg a month earlier: they wanted to disarm and expel Jews from the National Guard; evict those Jews who had settled illegally in Pest after 1838; and dismiss the Jewish editor of *Ungar*, Hermann Klein. Minister President Lajos Batthyány disingenuously surrendered to these demands, moreover ordering a Jewish census conducted throughout the country to ascertain the legality of Jewish residence.

This proved too much. Emigration societies were set in Pressburg and Pest at the end of April and the beginning of May with the blessing of the local rabbis. As in

Vienna and Prague, it was the radical Jewish intelligentsia, men including Philipp Korn, a Pressburg bookseller who had published Ballagi's Hungarian translations a few years earlier and Adolf Dux, a translator of Hungarian poetry into German, who now called on Jews to leave their beloved homeland un sentimentally, and set off for the land of true freedom, America. Close to 100 emigrants from Pressburg left that summer, but the movement, enthusiastically taken up by the Jewish public, soon fizzled out. The threat posed by Serb and Croat insurgents in September caused patriots like Korn to take up a new call, "Against the Rebels!" for the formation of a Jewish corps. Within a month, having exhausted his options as a Jew in Hungary, Korn too converted and went on to become the second in command of the German Legion that fought alongside the Hungarian forces.

Radical reform societies sprang up during the initial months of the revolution in several communities, the most important being the Pest Reformgenossenschaft, modeled along the lines of the radical reform society in Berlin. Ignác Einhorn, who began publishing the first Jewish weekly in Hungary, *Der ungarische Israelit*, in mid-April, was elected to be the society's preacher. Far-reaching reforms such as abolishing circumcision and dietary laws, moving the Sabbath to Sunday, praying in the vernacular, and allowing mixed marriages were contemplated. Rabbi Schwab vehemently accused the society of bartering religious principles for emancipation, a charge that Einhorn vigorously denied. The society received the status of an independent community in 1849 and was only abolished in 1852 after much lobbying by Schwab and the Pest community.

Not until the summer of the following year, in the very last days of revolutionary independent Hungary, was a law emancipating Jews passed (on 28 July) by the rump parliament in Szeged. By this time, only the most radical MPs were left, and after an impassioned speech by Prime Minister Bertalan Szemere, the bill was passed. Typically, the formulation bore Kossuth's fingerprints, with clauses limiting immigration and convening a Sanhedrin to institute necessary reforms ungenerously tacked on. With this law, Hungary became the last country in revolutionary Europe to emancipate Jews, four months after reactionary Austria's

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imposed constitution did so in a straightforward, unconditional fashion.

The events of 1848–1849 were selectively remembered by Hungarian Jews in years to come as the highpoint of Magyar–Jewish relations. The patriotic participation of Jews in the armed forces—20,000 was the inflated number that was circulating even during the revolution; 3,000, quite in proportion to the Jewish share in the population, seems more reasonable—was perceived as a “covenant of blood” that could never be expunged from memory. It would be evoked on the eve of World War II when descendants of the 1848 *honvéds* (as Kossuth’s soldiers were known) petitioned pathetically to be exempt from the Jewish Laws, to no avail.

#### Emancipation and Religious Culture Wars: 1850–1880

The decade of the 1850s has been called the era of neo-absolutism. Having crushed Hungary with the aid of Russia, a centralized Austria now ran the country from Vienna. The once lively public sphere now became quiescent; even the fiery debates and conflicts that had agitated Hungarian Jewry in the 1840s dampened. Yet paradoxically, the policies of the reactionary Austrian state also initiated considerable economic and cultural change. In the 1850s, the urbanization of Hungarian Jewry began in earnest and witnessed the genesis of metropolitan Budapest Jewry. By 1869, more than a quarter of the Jewish population, some 135,000 Jews, lived in urban centers, 45,000 of these in the capital. The economic expansion that began during those years laid the basis for a broad urban-based Jewish middle class and later the rise of the Jewish *zaibatsu*, a small coterie of businessmen that helped to foster Hungary’s independent national industry and banking system.

State intervention in Jewish cultural affairs, almost nonexistent after Hungary regained its autonomy in 1790, now returned with a vengeance. The war fine that had been leveled at Hungarian Jewry for its part in the revolution was transmuted in 1850 by the young emperor into a school fund. It financed the introduction of compulsory secular education and the founding of Jewish schools on an impressive, if not universal, scale. By the end of the decade, there were more than 300 schools, almost 10 times as many as there had been in the previous decade. The language of instruction was German, and indeed by the end of the decade the

shift from Yiddish to German was more or less an accomplished fact in all but the northeast regions of the country. (To be sure, Jüdisch-Deutsch—German in Hebrew characters—did not disappear.)

The pent-up energies of a silenced decade were released when Hungary regained a measure of autonomy in 1860. A new generation of young Jewish intellectuals once again embraced Hungarian nationalism with fervor, founded a Magyarization society, and published the first Hungarian language weekly, *Magyar Izraelita*. The seething religious ferment that had been bottled up for a decade now burst forth. The old divisive issues: religious services and the synagogue; the rabbinate; education and the schools, now acquired an added edge, as the control of considerable resources was at stake. The school fund had already financed a teacher-training seminary in 1857 in addition to elementary schools, and had earmarked a considerable sum for a rabbinical seminary. Urbanization, population growth, and prosperity had also spurred a building boom of synagogues. Jews in the new urban centers were recent arrivals; the solidarity of long-settled communities was largely missing. There was little consensus over the character of these institutions.

In the meantime, the number of protagonists had multiplied; no longer was the confrontation solely between two opposing sides. Discord raged within each camp. The conservative Neolog faction led by the recently ennobled Schosberger, implicated by its collaboration with the Austrians, hesitated to align itself with the Hungarians, whereas the young intelligentsia threw itself wholeheartedly into the Magyar cause. A new generation of modern, reform-oriented rabbis had appeared in Hungary since the 1840s; some, such as Leopold Löw who advocated principled reforms on the pages of his German weekly *Ben Chananja*, confronted latitudinarian laymen like the head of the Pest Jewish community, Dr. Ignác Hirschler, who sought to avoid clashes over dogma and claimed that religion was not really at issue.

The Orthodox camp was even more differentiated. It was divided over how to confront the challenges posed by secular education, linguistic acculturation, Hungarian nationalism, and even moderate religious innovations. In the 1850s, Esiel Hildesheimer, a young rabbi from Germany, created the first modern yeshiva in

Eisenstadt, combining traditional studies with a classical secondary-school curriculum. To him, Hungary was fertile ground for the propagation of his brand of neo-Orthodoxy: it was already acculturated, a process he viewed positively, yet traditional religious life still flourished as it did no longer in Germany. Hildesheimer’s yeshiva was a great success and soon became the largest yeshiva after Pressburg in Hungary. In general, he was treated by respect by the mainstream Orthodox until the issue of a rabbinical seminary came up in 1864. Unlike his peers who vehemently opposed even contemplating the institution, Hildesheimer sought to preempt the Neologs by offering to establish an Orthodox rabbinical seminary. He soon felt the wrath of the Orthodox establishment. But mainstream Orthodoxy as represented by the son and successor in Pressburg of the famous Ḥatam Sofer, Avraham Shemu’el Binyamin Sofer, also did not go unchallenged within the camp. An ultra-Orthodoxy emerged in the early 1860s, and with its edict (*pesak din*) of Michalovce in 1865 it sought to give backbone to a supine mainstream Orthodoxy that in their eyes had compromised itself, albeit none too happily, on such issues as secular education and the abandonment of Yiddish for German, gave lip service to Hungarian nationalism, and was willing to countenance such innovations as German preaching.

In 1867, Hungary reached a historic compromise with Austria and gained a semi-independent status within the newly formed Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Jews were finally emancipated unconditionally at the turn of 1868, although the specter of mass Jewish immigration had still hovered over the discussions in the mid-1860s. Unlike neighboring Austria, however, Hungary did not recognize Judaism as a “received religion,” thereby giving it a second-rate status that not only rankled, but also had adverse financial implications for its state-supported budget. Still, from that point on, state interference shaped Jewish religion and culture directly and indirectly. Overnight, the Jewish school system universally switched to Magyar as the language of instruction. The liberal minister of cults and education, Baron Joseph Eötvös, decided to regulate relations between state and synagogue by establishing a centralized consistency that would represent Jewish interests to the state. Accordingly, he summoned a Jewish Con-



Studio portrait of a Jewish family (Adolf Neu with two of his grandchildren), Budapest, ca. 1880s. Photograph by Herz Henrik. (Centropa)

gress of representatives of Hungarian Jewry in the winter of 1868–1869 to constitute such a body. That until now Hungarian Jewry had been a loosely atomized collection of communities had helped isolate individual conflagrations. The Congress and the contemplated consistory were prescriptions for fueling the flames of conflict.

The Congress ended in failure. The Orthodox, who had been in the minority, successfully insisted on setting up their own centralized organization. Communities that had long been rent along religious lines but had been forced to share institutions, were now permitted to split into rival Neolog (Congress) and Orthodox communities. In addition, some refused to join either countrywide organization, seeking to effect a compromise

among its members. These came to be known as the Status Quo communities, which eventually also created their own nationwide umbrella organization.

In 1877, the Neologs inaugurated their Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest, the sole state-supported rabbinical seminary in Central Europe. Modeling itself on the Breslau Jewish Theological Seminary, it aimed to create a cadre of Hungarian-speaking modern rabbis. Although the rector was the respected Talmudic scholar Moshéh Bloch who was brought in from Moravia, the faculty was staffed by outstanding young scholars in their twenties, including Vilmos Bacher, David Kaufmann, and Ignác Goldziher, a wise gamble that proved itself over the years.

The yeshivas of the Orthodox also flourished. For the Orthodox, the schism was a blessing that freed them from the tyranny of the majority. Belonging to the Orthodox organization became in itself a religious obligation, and no one was fought as fiercely as those Jews who remained traditionally observant but within the framework of the Status Quo, although reluctant concessions were made for Hasidim, some of whom kept aloof from the Oberland-dominated Orthodox organization and occasionally defined their separate communities as Status Quo or even Sephardic. (See Table 2.)

Regional differences played an important role in these divisions. The strength of the Neolog group lay in the south and the center of the country; the Orthodox were strongest on the northeast. Slovak Oberland was about half Orthodox and half the other two trends, while Transdanubia 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%).

#### The Dualist Monarchy: 1867–1918

It is a historical commonplace that the need to tip the demographic balance between the nationalities contributed to a

favorable stance toward Jewish emancipation. That is, without Jews, Magyars constituted a minority in Hungary; with Jews, they just attained majority. This notion is of late provenance. Even as late as the 1860s, leading liberals viewed Jews primarily as a German element in Hungary. It was the Dualist Era (1867–1914) that saw the rapid Magyarization of Hungarian Jewry. By 1910, three-quarters of the Jewish population stated that Magyar was their mother tongue—Hungarian statistics did not measure national affiliation, only language—the rest, mostly located in the northeast counties, declared German in the absence of Yiddish as an option. (The 1941 census was unique in providing figures for Yiddish speakers: 99 percent lived outside Trianon Hungary, in the northeast territories newly [re-]annexed.) Yet it must not be overlooked that even at the end of that era, the vast majority of Hungarian Jews were bilingual. Thus, even as Hungarian Jews were becoming more provincial as the percentage of monolingual Magyar speakers grew, this process was offset by the fact that two-thirds still spoke German. Ironically, throughout a period of intense Magyarization, Hungary had the largest German-speaking Jewish population in Europe (see Table 3).

There were differences, of course, in the degree of Magyarization of the different religious factions. State statistics on the language of sermons for the years 1903 and 1912 note 78 and 88 percent Magyar respectively for the Neologs, 59 and 68 percent for the Status Quo, and 9 and 13 percent for the Orthodox. However, even at the Neolog Rabbinical Seminary, the hothouse where Magyar preachers were produced, lectures in Talmud were delivered in German.

Family name changes have also been evaluated as indicators of Magyarization. The state played a crucial role in this process: during the Dualist Era, Hungary, unlike Germany and Russia, encouraged

TABLE 2. Religious Affiliation of Jews in Hungary according to Select Indices, 1897 (percentages)\*

Affiliation	Independent Communities	Dependent Communities	Rabbis	Dayanim	Girls Born	Boys Born	Boys Circumcised	Religious Marriages
Orthodox	54.8	68.4	62.4	65.5	40.2	40.2	41.2	33.2
Status Quo	13.2	10.1	10.2	10.2	9.2	9.9	9.8	11.2
Neolog	32.0	21.5	27.4	24.3	50.7	49.9	49.0	55.7
Total (percent)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (numbers)	569	1,826	383	1,219	7,158	8,075	8,092	4,286

\*The large number of Orthodox communities is a function of their rural makeup, while the aging composition of the Neolog and the Status Quo is apparent from the ratio of marriages to births.

TABLE 3. Mother Tongue of Hungarian Jews, 1880–1910

	Magyar	German	Other	Bilingual		Monolingual	
				Magyar	German	Magyar	German
1880	58.0	34.6	7.4				
1890	63.7	33.0	3.3				
1900	71.5	25.1	3.5	82.2	68.0	25.6	
1910	76.9	21.6	1.5	87.4	66.0	30.2	5.0

Jews to change their names, while during the Trianon era, it prevented such practices. When the trend was at its height between 1881 and 1919, altogether an estimated 45,000 Jews changed their names, constituting about 60 percent of all name changers. Presumably a disproportionate number of these Jews came from Budapest. To gauge the impact of the process on Hungarian Jewry, it should be kept in mind that between one-third and one-half were registered as minors. Moreover, many, perhaps most, of the Jewish converts to Christianity were drawn from people who had first changed their names. In the period between 1896 and 1919, about 37,000 Jews changed their names and close to 17,000 converted. Hence, it is not unreasonable to assume that at least one-third of the name changers did not remain within the Jewish fold. Consequently, even taking into account the cumulative effects of demographic growth and minors, one might estimate the number of Hungarian Jews with Magyar family names at the end of the era in 1919 as being certainly no more than 50,000, out of nearly 1 million Hungarian Jews. Thus Magyarizing family names was a relatively marginal phenomenon that surely did not reflect accurately the true extent of robust Jewish identification with Magyar nationalism.

Nevertheless, antisemites were quick to seize on name changes as an example of the superficial assimilation of Jews. "Magyarization of Jewish names is a 'G'schäft' [lucrative business]," wrote an indignant contributor, "one whose venerable family name was appropriated by a Jew," in Győző Istóczy's monthly *12 Rőpirat* in 1881. Istóczy had made his first anti-Jewish speech in parliament as early as 1875, several years before antisemitism emerged in Germany. Later, the rise of German and Austrian antisemitism, as well as the Russian pogroms, fueled the local movement. He gave voice to the

whose sole beneficiaries seemed to be the Jews. How much of the anti-Jewish feelings of 1848 of dislocated traditional burghers and craftsmen remained seething under the surface only to reemerge after a generation is unclear. But new, more influential carriers of antisemitism appeared: the "gentry." No longer the liberal middle nobility of the reform era, but a rather disparate group constituted not only of noblemen who had lost their lands and who now formed the backbone of the country's civil service, but also of other elements of the Christian middle class, they were all united, as one observer noted, "on the sole basis of their common antisemitism."

The large proportion of Jews in the law and medical faculties prompted students at the University of Budapest to petition in 1881 against Jewish overrepresentation. The acquittal of the accused in the Tiszaeszlár ritual murder trial in August 1883 launched a wave of anti-Jewish riots that rocked the country for two months and led to the founding of the National Antisemitic Party in October of that year. The party enjoyed initial success in parliament, but soon declined, rent by dissension, and disappeared in the 1892 elections. The economic upswing at the end of the 1880s helped chill the feverish antisemitism of the early part of the decade, but as elsewhere on the continent, the decline of political parties dedicated exclusively to antisemitism did not mean that antisemitism had disappeared. On the one hand, the anticapitalist agrarian associations and the clerical circles who founded the Catholic People's Party in 1895 during the *Kulturkampf* against the introduction of civil marriage and the "reception" of Judaism appropriated many elements of the anti-Jewish platform, and on the other hand, a diffuse genteel antisemitism now pervaded social life. An element that created additional resentment among national minorities especially in Slovakia was the identification of Jews as agents of Magyar nationalism.

The Jewish communal response to anti-

semitism in Hungary seemed feeble in comparison to that of other countries. This inactivity was rationalized by the trust placed in the willingness of the liberal regime to do what was considered necessary. Even the campaign to legislate Judaism as equal to other "received" religions in Hungary, with all the attendant benefits of that status, was initiated by young intellectuals and not the communal establishment. Miksa Szabolcsi's weekly *Egyenlőség*, founded in midst of the antisemitic agitation around the Tiszaeszlár blood libel trial, became the leading voice of a group of young Jewish intellectuals that also included the budding politician and future minister Vilmos Vázsonyi. The reception of Judaism, Law XLII of 1895, was the outcome of a larger culture war waged between 1892 and 1895 in parliament on the separation of church and state. The passing of the law coincided with the millennium celebrations of 1896, a time for lofty patriotic speeches and self-satisfied congratulations for past achievements and contributions. [See Antisemitism and Antisemitic Parties; and Tiszaeszlár Blood Libel.]

Some 103 Jewish MPs served in the lower house of parliament between 1867 and 1918. By virtue of the restricted franchise and the so-called virilist system by which half of the municipal council

Studio portrait of brothers Jeno (left, holding violin) and Pal Antal (right), Budapest, ca. 1910. Jeno later immigrated to the United States, where he became a member of the Roth String Quartet. (Centropa)



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was drawn from the highest taxpayers, Jews played a disproportionate role in the political life of the cities. Several were elected mayors. Their economic power was felt at the upper reaches as owners, directors, or board members of major banks, heavy industry, and the press. Some 370 Jews were ennobled between 1863 and 1918, more than three-quarters in the quarter of a century after the millennium celebrations. While proportionately these numbers fell below what Jews deserved, nevertheless it was high recognition of their services.

Lagging behind most religions and nationalities at mid-century in literacy and elementary education, by 1900 Jews had become the most highly educated group in Hungary. In secondary schools, their numbers had grown from 680 (5%) in 1853 to 10,000 (20%) in 1903; in the university from 90 (13%) in 1851 to 1,400 (30%) in 1900. Half of the students of the medical faculty, and a third of the law faculty, were Jewish. The free professions reflected this disproportionate presence; almost half of Hungary's medical doctors were Jewish. The rise of Jews in the legal profession is even more arresting, as a generation earlier statisticians had been struck by their absence from the field. In 1890, 21.8 percent of lawyers were Jewish by confession; in 1900, they totaled 34.1 percent; in 1910, 45.2 percent, and 1920, they represented 50.6 percent. Toward the end of the period, yet an additional 10 percent were converts of Jewish origin. The low percentage of Jews among bureaucrats, judges, and prosecutors, all drawn from the pool of law graduates, indicates that a tacit *numerus clausus* was in place in these occupations reserved for the gentry. Similarly, only toward the turn of the twentieth century did unconverted Jews begin to be appointed as professors. The first crop of Jewish journalists, editors, writers, and poets in the national language who had already made a substantial appearance on the cultural scene were but an adumbration of the outpouring of Jewish literary talent after the turn of the century. In quantitative terms, 42 percent of journalists in 1910 were Jewish, but qualitatively their weight among the more important newspapers and journals was much higher. In particular as editors, publishers, and critics, as well as theater and cabaret directors, they played a key role as cultural gatekeepers (see Table 4).

Jews in the free professions constituted about 7–8 percent of the total active Jew-

TABLE 4. Share of Jews in the Active Population of Selected Occupational and Social Groups, Hungary, 1900–1910

<i>Occupational or Social Group</i>	1900	1910
Large landowners with more than 1,000 hold*	18.4	19.2
Landowners with 100–1,000 hold	10.9	10.1
Lessees with more than 100 hold	55.3	48.6
Small landowners with less than 100 hold	0.5	0.4
Self-employed in industry	12.7	12.5
Self-employed in commerce	58.6	54.1
Self-employed in transport	20.7	20.9
Bailiffs and estate managers	21.7	23.2
Clerks and employees in industry	38.9	42.7
Clerks and employees in trade and banking	57.9	53.3
Clerks and employees in transport	13.4	13.0
Public officials and free professions	12.3	13.5
Administrative officials	4.7	5.2
Teachers	11.9	9.6
Lawyers	34.1	45.2
Doctors	48.3	48.9
Pharmacists	7.7	14.5
Veterinarians	24.8	40.0
Journalists	30.7	42.4
Actors	16.5	22.6
Private engineers	23.8	37.6
Army officers	6.5	4.5
Noncommissioned officers	6.0	3.6
Soldiers	3.9	2.8
Workers and servants in agriculture	0.3	0.2
Workers in mining	0.1	0.1
Workers in industry	7.7	6.4
Workers in trade	42.7	34.9
Workers in transport	3.5	2.4
Day laborers	3.0	2.5
Domestic servants	2.1	1.7
Rentiers and pensioners		6.3

\*1 hold = 1.43 acres.

ish population. But about 70 percent of the Jewish population was evenly divided between industry and commerce. Their share in commerce and banking was extraordinary, constituting 52.3 percent in 1900 and 46.6 percent in 1910. The decline after the turn of the century was indicative of a growing Christian middle class and was also reflected in the peaking of Jewish share among university students. Alongside the high percentage of Jews among lessees and owners of larger estates, a significant number of small plot owners, located especially but not exclusively in the northeast regions, accounted for the roughly 7–10 percent of Jews engaged in agriculture. The occupational structures of the Jewish and the non-Jewish population contrasted sharply. (See Table 5.)

Despite these considerable achieve-

ments and progress, there was a negative side to the account. The anti-Jewish slogan of a Christian Hungary propagated by the Catholic People's Party and the growing Christian middle class that viewed askance the disproportionate presence of Jews in the economy and culture, foreshadowed the conflicts of the post-Trianon era. Hungarian Jewry also came under attack from the radical intelligentsia (largely of Jewish extraction), grouped around the journals *Huszadik Század* (Twentieth Century; founded 1900) and *Nyugat* (West; 1908), that was indifferent at best, but mostly hostile to things Jewish, critical of Jews' "bourgeois pretensions" and hyperpatriotism.

The Neolog establishment was also condemned by the fledgling Zionist movement for embarrassing excesses of self-congratulatory assimilation. Despite

TABLE 5. Occupational Structure of the Jewish and Non-Jewish Active Population in Hungary, 1900–1910

Occupation	% of Jews in Total		Jews		Non-Jews	
	1900	1910	1900	1910	1900	1910
Agriculture, forestry	0.6	0.5	9.7	6.5	68.3	62.6
Industry, handicrafts	10.1	9.3	33.8	36.4	13.0	16.6
Commerce and banking	52.3	46.6	35.0	37.0	1.4	2.0
Public service and free professions	10.8	11.0	6.8	8.0	2.4	3.0
Others			14.8	12.2	14.9	15.8
Total	4.1	4.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

the fact that Theodor Herzl and Max Nordau were native sons, Zionism enjoyed but modest success in Hungary. Led by János Rónai and Samu Bettelheim, the movement was initially centered in Pressburg (attracting numerous yeshiva students), drawing its strength primarily from the provincial towns located in the non-Magyar periphery, though in time a university student association, Makkabea, was also founded in the capital in 1903. That year the first Hungarian Zionist Conference was held in Pressburg, which also became the venue of the first world congress of the religious Zionist party, Mizrahi, in 1904. Fearing accusations of dual loyalty, the Neolog establishment, the rabbinical seminary, and the weekly *Egyenlőség* had repeatedly lashed out against all manifestations of Zionism. The Orthodox authorities were not to be outdone. In response to the Mizrahi Congress, 120 rabbis issued a public prohibition condemning Zionism. Despite their shared abhorrence of Zionism, the Orthodox rejected a bid by the Neologs to heal the secessionist breach and unite under one organization.

On the eve of World War I, there was a growing sense of inner crisis. True, the rabbinical seminary was producing a fine cadre of rabbis, and the faculty was universally honored for its high scholarship. And if one were to cast an eye at the Orthodox world, there, too, yeshivas flourished, Hasidic courts prospered, and great rabbis produced rabbinic literature of a high standard and enduring value. But religious indifference was prevalent not only in the metropolis, but also throughout Hungary. While conversion was the choice of only a small percentage, it took a great toll among the cultural and economic elites. It was an indicator of Hungarian society's incapacity to tolerate truly Jewish difference and the failure of contemporary Judaism and Hungarian

most talented sons and daughters. There was a need to create a viable, attractive secular Jewish culture that would steer a course between the strictly religious culture of both the Orthodox and the Neolog factions, and Hungarian culture that was in fact more and more the sole culture of Hungarian Jews. Some soul searching began toward the end of the era; József Patai's high-quality periodical *Múlt és Jövő* ("Past and Future", founded 1911) was one of the more successful responses.

The outbreak of war in the summer of 1914 was greeted by a burst of enthusiastic patriotism by all sectors of Hungarian Jewry as they faced their primary enemy, the antisemitic Russian Empire. Thousands of Galician refugees from the eastern front fled to Hungary and the capital, arousing mixed feelings of solidarity and resentment. Thousands of Hungarian Jews served in the joint Austro-Hungarian armed forces as well as the Hungarian Honvéd (National Home Guard). Although few Jews had served as career officers before the war, the peculiar practice of recruiting reserve officers from graduates of high school created a situation where the large pool of well-educated Jews came to constitute 17 percent of reserve officers in the joint army on the eve of the war. The proportion of reserve officers in the Hungarian Honvéd was much higher. Nevertheless, accusations of draft evasion, shirking service at the front and war profiteering began to mount early into the war. The community countered by assembling military statistics and evidence of Jewish heroism. The analysis of the rising tide of antisemitism led to a highly critical assessment of Hungarian Jewry by a social democrat, Péter Ágoston, in his *A zsidók útja* (The Path of the Jews; 1917). The book in turn prompted the editor of *Huszadik Század*, the radical politician and sociologist Oszkár Jászi, to initiate a circular question-



Lajos Erdős, a Jewish soldier in the Austro-Hungarian army, Budapest, World War I. Photograph by Hungaria Fényképészeti Társaság. (Centropa)

naire on the existence of a Jewish question in Hungary addressed to 150 leading figures in Hungary. Sixty replies were published as *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon* (The Jewish Question in Hungary; 1917), covering a wide spectrum of opinion, much of it critical of Hungarian Jewry.

As the war progressed, Jewish soldiers encountered new situations and realities on the eastern front. Especially the captured prisoners of war were exposed to new ideologies in the rapidly changing Russian Empire. Many returned to Hungary inspired by the two key events of 1917: the October Revolution and the Balfour Declaration, espousing the radical ideals of communism and the equally subversive message of Zionism.

With the dissolution of the dual monarchy in the fall of 1918, a small cadre of activist radicals, almost all converted Jews, came to play disproportionate roles in the bourgeois, but especially the Communist revolutions of 1918 and 1919. The Zionist movement also enjoyed brief

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popularity in Hungary until the counter-revolution and antisemitic backlash that accompanied the drastic reduction of the country's territory and population following the Treaty of Trianon led to a certain decline in the much-truncated Hungarian state. On the other hand, the rise of the new successor nation-states contributed to the realignment of national identification. While many Jews retained Hungarian national loyalties in German Austria, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia, others assumed new ones, including Jewish national identities.

[Many of the principal figures and families mentioned are the subject of independent biographical entries.]

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### Hungary from 1918 to 1945

Even though some 10,000 soldiers of the "Israelite faith" lost their lives on the battlefields, traditional antisemitism continued to grow after World War I: Hungarian Jews were accused of sabotaging military service, cowardice, black marketeering, and fraud in military deliveries. Polemics about the "Jewish question" flared up in the contemporary press, the most influential being a survey of leaders of public opinion in Hungary, conducted and published by the *Huszadik Század* (Twentieth Century), the most important social scientific periodical of the time, edited by Oscar Jászi) in 1917.

As a consequence of losing World War I, greater Hungary was dismembered and greatly reduced in both geographic size and population. Bourgeois radicals and social democrats, many of whom were Jewish or Jewish-born intellectuals, gained an important role in the bourgeois revolution led by Mihály Károlyi. This provoked a negative reaction from the public that only intensified when the Communists under Béla Kun (who was Jewish) took power in March 1919 [see the biography of Kun].

While Jews or those of Jewish origin

had served as ministers in the Károlyi government, their proportion among the highest echelons of the Hungarian Soviet Republic was unprecedented. Of the 29 members of the Revolutionary Governing Council, 19 were Jews. Similar proportions obtained among leaders and activists in the countryside. The Bolshevik attempt failed by the end of July 1919 due to internal difficulties and foreign intervention, and after a short time, the national army—composed of right-wing antirevolutionary radicals and adherents of the old system led by Admiral Miklós Horthy—took power.

Only a small fraction of Hungarian Jews participated in the revolutions; the majority, who were middle class, opposed the Commune from its very first days and some actively supported counterrevolutionary activities. Nevertheless, antisemitism flared up in wide-ranging sectors of Hungarian society to an even greater extent than before. Anticomunist and anti-Jewish atrocities in the central region of the country and the towns and villages of Transdanubia accompanied the establishment of the regime in August 1919. The antisemitic acts were meant as retribution for the "Red Terror" that in reality had had many more Jewish than non-Jewish victims (the number of Jews was estimated to be about 3,000).

There were several reasons for this "new" antisemitism: the search for a scapegoat to blame for the defeat in World War I; negative sentiments raised by difficulties experienced by Hungarian refugees from successor states; economic competition; the prominence of Jews in economic and cultural life; and the role some Jews—or those perceived to be Jewish—played in the revolutions. The most vital ingredient of anti-Jewish sentiment was the manner in which Hungary was established anew following the loss of national territories: national integration was now based on ethnic principles.

After the stabilization of the political situation in 1921, violent antisemitic acts subsided but Hungarian society continued to be characterized by nationalistic, right-wing and anti-Jewish attitudes. The new government's policy—contrary to the earlier prewar liberal period—remained openly antisemitic. The Horthy regime tried simultaneously to consolidate and repress Hungarian Jewry as much as possible. One of the means of achieving this was to limit Jewish access to higher education.

In 1920, influenced by antisemitic stu-