



Jewish Literatures and Cultures in Southeastern Europe

Experiences, Positions, Memories

böhlau

**Edited by
Renate Hansen-Kokoruš
and Olaf Terpitz**



Schriften des Centrums für Jüdische Studien

Band 37

Herausgegeben von Gerald Lamprecht und Olaf Terpitz

Renate Hansen-Kokoruš / Olaf Terpitz (eds.)

Jewish Literatures and Cultures in Southeastern Europe

Experiences, Positions, Memories

BÖHLAU VERLAG WIEN KÖLN



Published with the generous support of:

Amt der steiermärkischen Landesregierung, Referat Wissenschaft und Forschung

Center for Jewish Studies, Karl-Franzens-University Graz

With 33 Figures

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek:

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data available online: <https://dnb.de>.

© 2021 by Böhlau Verlag, Zeltgasse 1, 1080 Vienna, Austria, an imprint of the Brill-Group (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands; Brill USA Inc., Boston MA, USA; Brill Asia Pte Ltd, Singapore; Brill Deutschland GmbH, Paderborn, Germany; Brill Österreich GmbH, Vienna, Austria) Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Hotei, Brill Schöningh, Brill Fink, Brill mentis, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Böhlau, Verlag Antike and V&R unipress.

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any other information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Cover Illustration: Southeastern Europe; Artist: Grit Oelschlegel, 2021; Based on the map "Ethnographic overview of the European Orient" (Ethnographische Übersicht des Europäischen Orients) by Heinrich Kiepert (Berlin 1876), <https://archive.org/details/EthnographischeÜbersichtDesEuropaischenOrient>

Cover design: Michael Haderer, Vienna

Typesetting: le-tex publishing services, Leipzig

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage | www.vandenhoeck-ruprecht-verlage.com

ISBN 978-3-205-21289-8

The volume was double-blind peer reviewed.

Contents

Acknowledgments	11
-----------------------	----

Renate Hansen-Kokoruš, Olaf Terpitz (Graz)

Introduction: Southeastern Europe in Jewish Experience and Imagination....	13
--	----

I. Imperial Experiences, Entanglements and Encounters

Tamir Karkason (Be'er Sheva)

The “Entangled Histories” of the Jewish Enlightenment in Ottoman Southeastern Europe	21
---	----

Alessandro Grazi (Mainz)

On the Road to Emancipation: Isacco Samuele Reggio’s Jewish and Italian Identity in 19 th -century Gorizia	33
--	----

Fani Gargova (Vienna)

Marcus Ehrenpreis and the Literary Circle <i>Misal</i>	47
--	----

Martin Stechauner (Vienna)

<i>El Koreo de Viena</i> : A Sephardic Newspaper on the Western Fringes of Southeastern Europe	63
---	----

II. Cultural Production in Modernity

Damir Šabotić (Sarajevo)

The Role of the Newspapers <i>Židovska svijest</i> and <i>Jevrejski život</i> in the Formation of a Jewish Cultural and National Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina Between the Two World Wars	83
--	----

Menachem Keren-Kratz (Ramat ha-Sharon)

Cultural Centres in Small Communities in Southeastern Europe: The Cases of Sighet, Zagreb, and Trieste.....	101
--	-----

Željka Oparnica (London)

Writers of the Sephardi Past: Historians and Sephardi Studies

Scholars in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1900–1930 115

Iskra Dobрева (Sofia)

The Multilingualism of Balkan Jews as Reflected in Judeo-Spanish

Sources From the 16th to the 20th Centuries 129

Tatjana Petzer (Halle/Berlin)

Rhythms of Creation: The Impact of Bergsonian Thought on

Serbian Modernism 143

Renate Hansen-Kokoruš (Graz)

Jewish Life Perspectives from a Non-Jewish Writer's Viewpoint: Ivo Andrić .. 161

Mirjam Rajner (Ramat Gan)
Il Kal Grandi—Sarajevo's Great Sephardic Temple: At the

Crossroads Between Orient and Modernity..... 175

Mirjam E. Wilhelm (Vienna)

Vjera Biller (1903–1940) and the Neo-Byzantine: A Jewish

Avant-Gardist in Budapest, Berlin, Belgrade and Beyond 197

III. Shoah

Olga Ungar (Tel Aviv)

Remembering the Victims: Vojvodina Holocaust Memorials 217

Rebecca Krug (Mainz)

Just a Small Cog in the Wheel? Imagined Identities and the

‘Banality of Evil’ in David Albahari's *Gec i Majer* 237

Eva Kowollik (Halle)

The Motif of the Hidden Child in Goran Paskaljević's Film *Kad*
svane dan and Filip David's Novel *Kuća sećanja i zaborava* 251

Sabina Giergiel (Cracow)

Closeness or Distance? Practices Used to Speak About the Sajmište
Camp in Cultural Texts..... 265

Maciej Czerwiński (Cracow)

Imagining Evil and Guilt: Miljenko Jergović's *Ruta Tannenbaum*
and Ivo Andrić's *Bar Titanic* in the Context of Collective Memory
of the Holocaust in Croatia 279

Bojan Aleksov (London)

Exile on Korčula 295

IV. Contemporary Positions

Bettina Hofmann (Wuppertal)

George H. W. Bush Sr. in Babi Yar: The Holocaust in Aleksandar
Hemon's *Nowhere Man* (2002) and *The Lazarus Project* (2008)..... 317

Giustina Selvelli (Venice)

Multilingualism, Polycentrism and Exile in Angel Wagenstein's
Jewish-themed Works 329

Dijana Simić (Graz)

Writing Jewish Post-/Memory in Judita Šalgo's *Trag kočenja* and *Da
li postoji život* 345

Goran Lazičić (Graz)

Kabbalah Revisited in Milošević's Serbia: The Case of David
Albahari's Novel *Leeches* 359

Miranda Levanat-Peričić (Zadar)

(Re)Writing the Holocaust in Aharon Appelfeld's and Daša
Drndić's Novels: Lost and Found Languages..... 375

V. Biographical Perspectives

Branko Ostajmer (Zagreb)

Mavro Špicer (1862–1936) and His Views on the
Austro-Hungarian Monarchy 395

Yitzchak Kerem (Jerusalem)

Albertos Nar, From Historian to Author and Ethnographer:
Crossing from Salonikian Sephardic Historian to Greek Short Story Writer... 407

List of Figures 419

Notes on Contributors..... 421

Acknowledgments

Without the support of numerous institutions and sponsors, the international conference “Jewish Literatures and Cultures in Southeastern Europe. Experiences – Positions – Memory”,¹ that took place in Graz in fall 2019, on which this volume is based, would not have been possible.

The volume, in turn, is indebted to a great variety of persons and institutions. First, we want to thank our contributors for their detailed insights into matters hitherto neglected, under-researched or un-connected. Through the tremendous efforts of our student assistant Jakob Gruber, their contributions gained their formal appearance as required by the publisher. He thus completed the work begun by our other student assistants Diana Brunnthaler, Judith Enzenhofer, Haris Fatić and Lukas Sperlich, who invested much of their time and energy in making the conference happen. The task of sensitively copy-editing the contributions according to English (be it American or British) standards was masterly fulfilled by Ky Kessler. Last not least, we want to thank our peer reviewers who dedicated much of their precious time to helping sharpen the arguments and analyses of individual articles. Though this list is, due to personal preferences, incomplete, our thanks go to: Andreas Bouroutis, David M. Bunis, Vinko Drača, Davor Dukić, Aleksandar Kadijević, Magdalena Koch, Sonja Koroliov, Vladimir Levin, Leszek Mańczak, David Malkiel, Andrea Meyer-Fraatz, Paweł Michalak, Nataša Mišković, Julia Phillips Cohen, Marina Protrka Štimec, Angela Richter, Silvia Schultermandl, Katarzyna Taczyńska, Aleksandra Twardowska, Krinka Vidaković-Petrov, Ivana Vučina Simović, Sarah Zaides Rosen, and Vladimir Zorić.

Without financial support, this volume would not have seen the light of day. We would therefore like to thank the Land Steiermark that generously funded the publication of this volume.

A last word on spelling: according to their preference, the authors of this volume have used either British English or American English. All quotations from languages not based on the Latin alphabet (e.g., Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek, Hebrew, Yiddish) have been transliterated.

The editors
Graz, January 2021

1 Please see for further information: https://static.uni-graz.at/fileadmin/gewi-institute/Slawistik/Dokumente/Programm_Konferenz4_2019.pdf. Accessed January 2021.

Renate Hansen-Kokoruš, Olaf Terpitz (Graz)

Introduction

Southeastern Europe in Jewish Experience and Imagination

You can't escape the history of the twentieth century. Everything takes place in a mishmash of Croatian, Judeo-Spanish and Hebrew until my head threatens to burst. Then, they grumble that my generation doesn't understand anything and that everything was totally different from what we believe today. In the evenings, when I cower, close to tears from exhaustion, they show me, in their tiny apartments on scruffy sofas, their black and white photographs, capturing how they lead the brigades alongside Tito under the red flag, liberate Hvar and Rab and bury the camp guard alive.
(Adriana Altaras)¹

The regions of Southeastern Europe are characterized in historical as well as in contemporary perspectives by a high degree of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural diversity and heterogeneity. Belonging to the Ottoman Empire or Austria-Hungary, forming supranational nation states such as Yugoslavia, or arising as nation states such as Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, but also Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, and (European) Turkey, they were framed in different legal, referential and ideological settings, providing spaces for various encounters, entanglements and conflicts. Jews, whether Sephardim, Ashkenazim or Romaniots—settling there in different periods—experienced divergent *life worlds* (Lebenswelten) which engendered a rich cultural production over the centuries. The language they chose depended on their respective cultural and political positions—be it Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino, a Slavic language such as Croatian, Bosnian or Serbian, German, Turkish, Greek or Italian.

1 These are excerpts from Adriana Altaras' debut novel *Titos Brille: Die Geschichte meiner strapaziösen Familie* (Tito's Glasses: The Story of My Exhausting Family). Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, from 2011; in our translation: "Aus der Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts kann man nicht austreten" (115); "Alles geschieht in einem Mischmasch aus Kroatisch, Spaniolisch und Hebräisch, bis mein Kopf zu platzen droht. Dann lasse ich mich beschimpfen, dass meine Generation nichts versteht und alles ganz anders war, als wir jetzt glauben. Wenn ich dann abends vor Erschöpfung den Tränen nahe in ihren winzigen Wohnungen auf schmutzigen Sofas hocke, zeigen sie mir ihre Schwarz-Weiß-Fotos, auf denen sie an der Seite von Tito unter der roten Fahne die Brigaden anführen, Hvar und Rab befreien und den Lageraufseher bei lebendigem Leib begraben." (208)

Scholarly interest in this heterogeneous region has grown impressively in recent years, however, predominantly in the realms of historiography, anthropology, cultural studies and sociology. Literature, language and cultural production are, in general, still an under-researched area demanding attention.

To be sure, in the last decades a number of remarkable studies in this field have emerged, motivated, though, rather by individual interest than by a systematic approach. More recently established interdisciplinary research centres or networks committed to Jewish Southeastern Europe² intend to and contribute to tackling this lacuna. Nevertheless, comprehensive studies are still lacking and desired. Such studies could address various questions concerning the medial representation of the tremendous shifts but also the continuities Jews in Southeastern Europe have experienced in the general European transformation processes from the nineteenth century until today—in the form of micro- or macro-studies, and from the perspectives of literary, comparative, or cultural studies and others. In other words, this means how Jewish experience and expression generally (re)acted to the transition from the premodern to the modern world, from the imperial setting to national, nationalizing and nationalized settings. In particular, this includes research topics and foci such as:

- How did Jewish writers position themselves in the multicultural and multilingual setting of the literary field? In which ways did/do they reflect on identification processes (Jewish – Jewish, Jewish – Muslim, Jewish – Christian encounters; secularism, gender, intersectionality, etc.);
- In what ways did/do they reflect on those experiences in religiously informed literary genres (e.g., Musar literature);
- Which topics did/do they address and how (e.g., segregation/integration; empire/nation; relations between Jewish and Christian and Muslim groups; the Shoah; World Wars I and II; migration; the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s);
- Which processes of entanglement and encounter took/take place (e.g., choice of genre; topics; translation) since the Enlightenment;
- How did/do writers define their relationship to and their understanding of Europe and the idea of the European;
- Which processes accompanied the transition from pre-modern times to modernity and postmodernity (self-perception; language choice—e.g., from Ladino

2 A few examples include: the “Network for Southeastern European Jewish Studies” within in the frame of the European Association for Jewish Studies (<https://independent.academia.edu/SoutheasternEuropeanJewishStudiesSEEJS>), the Stroums Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Washington (<https://jewishstudies.washington.edu/sephardic-studies/>), the issue “Sefarad in Österreich-Ungarn”, *transversal* 2 (2012), or the periodical *Sephardic Horizons* (<https://www.sephardichorizons.org/index.html>). Accessed 18 Mar. 2021

- to Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, or from Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian to German; translation practices);
- Which experiences were/are elaborated in literature, e.g., shared experiences vs. differing experiences (e.g., alienation; belonging; situativity of belonging and multiple attachments; similarity vs. difference; perceptions and attributions; gender constructions; ambivalences; ambiguities; contiguities; the role of cultural heritage in transnational and trans-lingual perspective);
 - Which preferences in genre choice were/are displayed (e.g., the novel; biography; autobiography) and why;
 - How were/are literary processes (avant-garde; modernism; postmodernism) reflected in Jewish literatures;
 - What impact did/do conceptions of memory and post-memory have (Marianne Hirsch) on Jewish literatures in Southeastern Europe;
 - To what extent and in which ways did/do translation activities enhance the visibility of these literatures and create an awareness among the readership of world literature;
 - What were/are the positions and dispositions of non-Jewish writers such as Miljenko Jergović or Aleksandar Hemon writing about Jewish conditions (compared, e.g., to the nineteenth-century Polish writer Eliza Orzeszkowa);
 - To what extent and in which ways can Jewish experiences in Southeastern Europe be compared to other multiethnic regions such as the Russian and Habsburg Empires;
 - What were/are the relationships between Southeastern, Central and Eastern European Jewish writers?

Our volume *Jewish Literatures and Cultures in Southeastern Europe. Experiences, Positions, Memories*, of course, cannot address, due to the sheer abundance of (hitherto neglected or under-researched) themes and topics, and does not intend or pretend to address all those subjects mentioned above that, moreover, certainly could be expanded further. Rather, it seeks to address selected research fields and questions. The volume is structured in five general sections: “Imperial Experiences, Entanglements and Encounters”, “Cultural Production in Modernity”, “Shoah”, “Contemporary Positions” and “Biographical Perspectives”.

The first section encompasses reflections on the manifold and ambivalent interactions and encounters within Jewish experiences in various imperial settings. Whereas Tamir Karkason, in his contribution on the Enlightenment, traces the encounters between Ottoman-influenced Southeastern Europe and Western-orientated Central Europe, Alessandro Grazi presents a case study of Isacco Samuele Reggio whose life and work oscillated between his Jewish and Italian identities and notably articulated this space of negotiation. Fani Gargova, in turn, illuminates the inter-imperial intellectual and geographical mobility of Marcus

Ehrenpreis, who, through translations and the workings of the literary circle *Misal* introduced the works of Sigmund Freud into Bulgarian(-Jewish) thought. Martin Stechauner, finally, reconstructs meticulously the creation of the Judezmo Press (*El Koreo de Viena*) in Vienna and its interrelations with broader Sephardic print culture in Southeastern Europe.

The second section is dedicated to the rich and diverse cultural production in modernity, including developmental aspects in ideological, linguistic, philosophical and literary perspectives as well as architecture and the arts in different cultural centres. While Damir Šabotić showcases the role of the press in shaping (modern) Jewish identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Menachem Keren-Kratz offers a comparative analysis of small cultural centres under different political and historical conditions in Southeastern Europe. In her contribution, Željka Oparnica provides insights into interpretations of the Sephardic past by historians and scholars in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the early twentieth century. Iskra Dobрева's article focuses on the specific multilingualism of Balkan Jews since their arrival on the Balkan peninsula. Whereas Tatjana Petzer examines the impact of Bergsonian thought on the works of the Serbian-Jewish modernist writer Stanislav Vinaver, Renate Hansen-Kokoruš addresses the portrayal of Jews in the works of the non-Jewish writer and Nobel laureate Ivo Andrić. The last two articles are dedicated to topics of architecture and the arts: Mirjam Rajner shows how the architecture of *Il Kal Grandi*, Sarajevo's Great Sephardic temple, is based on European and Oriental concepts, and Mirjam Wilhelm presents the nowadays nearly unknown Jewish Avant-garde artist Vjera Biller, who drew on cultural values from different centres in Europe and Byzantium.

The third section concerns the Shoah, its actors, its repercussions, the relevance of post(memory) and transmedial aspects of representation. In her article, Olga Ungar focuses on the Vojvodina Holocaust memorials, their cultural and political embeddedness and divergent ways of remembering victims. Four contributions are dedicated to the presentation of the Shoah in literature and film. Whereas Rebecca Krug analyses the novel *Gec i Majer* (Götz and Meyer) by David Albahari with a view to imagined identities, Sabina Giergiel turns to the presentation of the Sajmište camp in literary texts, e.g., from David Albahari, Filip David and Zoran Penevski, as well as—understood more broadly—in other cultural texts such as comics, films, and epistolary narration. Eva Kowollik examines the motif of the hidden child in Filip David's novel *Kuća sećanja i zaborava* (The House of Remembering and Forgetting) and Goran Paskaljević's film *Kad svane dan* (When Day Breaks) in her comparative study. Maciej Czerwiński compares Miljenko Jergović's novel *Ruta Tannenbaum* and Ivo Andrić's story *Bife Titanik* (Bar Titanic) in light of evil and guilt. Finally, Bojan Aleksov presents a historiographical analysis of Jewish exile on the island of Korčula based on autobiographical accounts.

The fourth complex accentuates contemporary positions in (more) recent literature. Bettina Hofmann focuses, thus, on the representation of the Holocaust in the novels *Nowhere Man* and *The Lazarus Project* by the American-Bosnian author Aleksandar Hemon, whereas Giustina Selvelli analyses multicultural aspects in the works of the Bulgarian author and popular screenwriter Angel Wagenstein. The specifics of Jewish memory as represented in the works of the Serbian-Jewish woman writer Judita Šalgo are explored by Dijana Simić. Goran Lazičić, in turn, examines how David Albahari caricatures Milošević's Serbia in his novel *Pijavice* (Leeches). Miranda Levanat-Perićić closes this section with her comparative reflections on how the Holocaust is represented (and present in experience as well as in imagination) in the works of the Bukovina-born Hebrew writer Aharon Appelfeld and the Croatian writer Daša Drndić.

The brief fifth section concentrates on biographical perspectives. Branko Ostajmer examines the life and work of Mavro Špicer, the pioneer of Esperanto in Croatia, and his cultural and political views on the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The Salonikian author, historian and ethnographer Albertos Nar, in turn, is presented by Yitzchak Kerem, who pinpoints his work at the intercultural crossroads of Greek Salonikian and Izmir Sephardic culture.

The present volume is based on the contributions of an international conference held at the University of Graz, 16–17 September 2019,³ and on additional contributions, having all passed a double-blind peer review. It seeks to bring together scholars working in the fields of literature, the arts, philosophy, and historiography, who—living and working around the globe—affiliate in various ways with the regions of the European South. Their contributions bridge genre divisions as much as they interconnect and challenge current theoretical strands of thought.

The volume aims at creating a dialogue between Jewish studies, Balkan studies, and current literary and cultural theories. The volume highlights in an exemplary and survey-like way the diverse and conflicting Jewish experiences in Southeastern Europe from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries, and the various forms and strategies of their representation and their repercussions in literature, the arts, historiography and philosophy. It is thus hoped that this volume provides a space of interlingual, intercultural and interregional communication and exchange that enables as well as inspires new research in the aforementioned fields of inquiry.

3 The conference was jointly organized by the editors and their institutions, the Institute of Slavic Studies and the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Graz, please see: <https://slawistik.uni-graz.at/de/veranstaltungen/jewish-literatures-in-southeastern-europe/>. Accessed January 2021.

I. Imperial Experiences, Entanglements and Encounters

Tamir Karkason (Be'er Sheva)

The “Entangled Histories” of the Jewish Enlightenment in Ottoman Southeastern Europe¹

Abstract:

In this paper I apply the methodology of “entangled histories”—which describes social, cultural, and political formations that are assumed to be interrelated—to the subject of Jewish Enlightenment in Ottoman Southeastern Europe. Through several case studies, particularly that of the Salonican maskil Judah Nehama (1825–1899), the article seeks to paint a nuanced picture of the historical circumstances that led to the emergence of relations between Jewish intellectuals in the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the Italian territories.

The concept and methodology of entangled histories emerged about a generation ago in historiography in response to the end of the Cold War and “the more concerted reflection on the methodological pitfalls of the global turn in historical scholarship” (Burson 4). According to Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, this concept “associates social, cultural, and political formations [...] that are assumed to bear relationship to one another” (Werner and Zimmermann 31). The concept of entangled histories brought with it a change in the techniques used to explore the subjects of historical research that interface with diverse historical contexts. It emphasizes the need to be alert to the specific historical contexts in which terms evolve, rather than assuming that these are “natural”. It also highlights the awareness that the subjects of a comparative study undergo mutual changes through contact, even if their relations are asymmetric (Werner and Zimmermann 33–38, 44–49; see also Burson 5–6).

The *Haskalah* (Jewish Enlightenment) movement appeared in Berlin in the second half of the eighteenth century, and Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) was the figure to whom its fundamental ideas are indebted. According to the definitions of Shmuel Feiner, the *maskilim* joined together

in a unique Jewish enterprise of modernity and have considered themselves to be responsible to an unprecedented historic move [...]—the rehabilitation of traditional society

1 I am indebted to the editors and the anonymous reviewer, as well as to Prof. Yaron Ben-Naeh, Prof. Michelle Campos, Prof. Eyal Ginio, Dr. Menashe Anzi, Dr. Amos Noy, Dr. Miriam Szamet, Dr. Alex Waldman and Or Pitusi, for their valuable advice and generous help.

in light of the values of Enlightenment, distribution of broad general knowledge of the world of nature and human being, [and] the education of the young generations for their integration in life as productive citizens that have access to the European society and culture [...]. (Feiner 2010: 29–30. My translation – T.K.; see also Weiner 2001)

During the Tanzimat and Hamidian eras, between 1839 and 1908, around one hundred *maskilim* were active in the Ottoman Empire. These *maskilim* operated in the urban Jewish centers in the Southern Balkans, mainly Salonica and Edirne, and Western Anatolia, primarily Istanbul and Izmir. They wrote predominantly in two languages: Hebrew, the *lingua franca* of the *Haskalah* movement; and Ladino (Judeo-Spanish), the Ottoman Sephardi vernacular. Some also wrote in additional languages, particularly French and Ottoman Turkish. The three most prominent Ottoman *maskilim* were Judah Nehama of Salonica (1825–1899); Barukh Mi-trani (1847–1919), who travelled across Europe and Asia; and Abraham Danon (1857–1925), who was active in Edirne, Istanbul, and Paris (Cohen and Abrevaya Stein; Karkason 2018; Karkason 2020: 147–154).

Judah Nehama and his correspondence

Judah Nehama was born in Salonica in 1825 to an affluent merchant family, and during the 1840s, he was introduced to *maskilic* literature by some other *maskilim* he corresponded with. In his early days as a Judaic studies scholar, Nehama was introduced, for example, to the Austro-Hungarian *maskilic* periodicals *Bikurei ha-Itim* and *Kerem Hemed* (Nehama 1893: 2, 10). *Bikurei ha-Itim* (First Fruits of the Times, Vienna 1820–1831) was edited by Isaac Samuel Reggio (1784–1855), Judah Jeitteles (1773–1838), and others, and its successor, *Kerem Hemed* (Vineyard of Delight, Prague and Vienna, 1833–1856) was edited by Samuel Goldenberg Leib (1807–1846) and Senior Sachs (1816–1892).²

The young Judah Nehama also looked through some of the *maskilic* works of Shmuel David Luzzatto (Shadal) of Padua (1800–1865), such as *Ohev Ger* (The Love of the Proselyte, Vienna 1830), a guide to the understanding of *Targum Onkelus* (the Jewish Aramaic translation of the *Torah*), and *Betulat Bat Yehudah* (Virgin Daughter Judah, Prague, 1840)—extracts from the *diwan* of Judah ha-Levi, edited with notes and an introduction (Nehama 1893: 21, 22). Nehama found great interest in the critical study of the *maskilim* and the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* scholars,

2 On *Bikurei ha-Itim* and *Kerem Hemed*, see Pelli 2010: 181–229.

who sought to understand Jewish texts in the context of their time and place and insisted on its right to “free exploration” (Schorsch 177–183).³

Serving as an agent for European commercial companies in Salonica, Nehama also made his living as a bookseller, an occupation that allowed him to indulge in his bibliophilic passion. Nehama maintained extensive contacts with European peers, which he became acquainted with through intermediaries—or “connectors” in terms of network research (Moreno 2014: 39–48; Moreno 2020). The two main figures who mediated between Nehama and European *maskilim* were an unknown Eastern European *maskil* named Israel Stern (Karkason 2018: 181, 188, 190, 195, 200, 217–218, 288) as well as the Austro-Hungarian bookseller and bibliographer Chaim David Lippe (1823–1900), who was born in the Galician city of Stanisławów (today Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine) and since 1873 had lived in the capital Vienna.⁴

Many of Nehama’s correspondences, dated between 1850 and 1895, have been preserved in his printed collection of letters, published in two volumes, entitled *Mikhtevei Dodim mi-Yayin* (Letters More Delightful than Wine). Almost all the letters in these volumes were written in Hebrew (except one in Ladino); Nehama probably also conducted correspondences in other languages, such as Ladino and French, but these letters were not printed (Karkason 2018: 173). The first volume of *Mikhtevei Dodim mi-Yayin* was published in Salonica, on Nehama’s own initiative (Nehama 1893); the second volume, only partially edited, was published four decades after his death (Nehama 1939).

The themes of Nehama’s letters were diverse: many letters in the collection included discussions on *maskilic* topics, such as recent studies, mainly philological and historical, and various controversies (for instance, in the field of biblical criticism). In numerous letters Nehama was asked to obtain rare books and manuscripts, with the help of various Ottoman colleagues, for his European correspondents, or to supply them “unmediated” historical knowledge on the Ottoman Jewry (Karkason

3 In the early 1860s, Nehama was one of the founders of the local committee of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in Salonica. In this framework, he was engaged in a lively correspondence with senior *Alliance* officials in Paris ahead of the opening of its first school in Salonica (Nehama 1893: 150–154), though this only opened a decade later. The *Alliance* organization was established in 1860 by some members of the French Jewish elite with the aspirations of “regeneration” among Jewish communities its leaders perceived as “traditional”, mainly in the Eastern Mediterranean. The founders of the *Alliance* believed that in order to constitute a “rational” and “progressive” society, the members of these communities should be transformed into “useful” citizens. The prominent means for that end were the schools, meant to uproot the “rotten” past of their students (Rodrigue 1990; Rodrigue 1993). This article is focusing on Nehama’s activity as a *maskil* and not in the other sub-groups of the Ottoman Jewish intelligentsia, including the “Westernizers” who promoted “Westernization” as a lifestyle in the spirit of the *Alliance*. On the internal division of the Ottoman Jewish intelligentsia, see Karkason 2018: 44–55; Karkason 2020: 150–151.

4 On the ongoing relationship between Lippe and Nehama, see Karkason 2020.

2018: 192–196). Many of the letters were relatively laconic and included “technical” documentation of the purchase of books or subscription of periodicals, as well as requests for donation addressed to Nehama by different East European *maskilim* (Karkason 2018: 196–199). Other letters reveal warm friendships between Nehama and some *maskilim*, mainly the abovementioned Lippe (Karkason 2018: 199–201; Karkason 2020: 164–167). By publishing his letters after decades of extensive intellectual activity, Nehama apparently hoped to display his *maskilic* enterprise to his counterparts, and particularly to his Jewish peers in Central Europe. Publishing the edited letters might have helped him accrue great honor, as an Ottoman Jew strongly connected to the *Haskalah* “republic of letters”.

Nehama's two volumes together contain 315 letters, many of them were exchanged with luminaries, especially Austro-Hungarian ones, such as Luzzatto of Padua, Solomon Rubin (1823–1910), Moritz Güdemann (1835–1918), Adolf Jellinek (1821–1893), Isaac Hirsch Weiss (1815–1905), and Meir Ish Shalom (Friedman, 1831–1908) of Vienna, Meyer Kayserling (1829–1905) of Budapest, the forefather of the discipline of “Sephardi Studies”, and even Yom-Tov (Leopold) Zunz (1794–1885) of Berlin.

I have mapped Nehama's exchange of correspondence in order to illustrate the geographical dispersion of the Ottoman *Haskalah* and offer a profile of the relations between Ottoman *maskilim* and their European peers (Karkason 2018: 154–204). I have found that almost half of Nehama's exchanges of correspondence were with peers living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire—140 letters out of 315. Almost 90 percent of the letters from Austria-Hungary were sent from Vienna, Galicia, and the Italian provinces—regions that formed the heartland of the *Haskalah* and the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in the empire. We can illustrate this phenomenon with reference to the Viennese Hebrew periodical *Bikurei ha-Itim*: Moshe Pelli has shown that the appearance of this periodical during the 1820s marked the shifting of the center of gravity of *maskilic* literature and the revival of Hebrew from Berlin and its surroundings to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This area was home to a large Jewish population that had not yet undergone intensive secularization and which was gradually exposed to the ideas of the *Haskalah*. The periodical *Bikurei ha-Itim* was edited by *maskilim* who lived mainly in Galicia and Italy, as did the vast majority of the writers whose articles appeared in the publication (Pelli 2006: 62–64; Pelli 2010: 181–182, 192).

The Jews of Austria-Hungary thus constituted Nehama's principal reference group. Nehama's correspondents came from all corners of the expansive Austro-Hungarian Empire: Austria (58% of Nehama's correspondents in the Austro-Hungarian Empire), Galicia (20%), Hungary (9%), the Italian domains (9%), Moravia (2%) and Bukovina (2%) (Karkason 2018: 174–186). These bonds are particularly notable given the relative dearth of contacts with other *maskilic*

centers, such as the Russian Empire: we are in possession of just eight letters with contacts from the Russian Empire (Karkason 2018: 186–189).

Although we know much less about the network of contacts of other *maskilim*, it appears that they also maintained closer links with Austria-Hungary than with other areas. Nehama did not print books in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but Barukh Mitrani and Abraham Danon developed contacts in this field, printing their works in Vienna, Pressburg, and Budapest. Around one-fourth of the works written by Ottoman *maskilim* were published in Austria-Hungary (Karkason 2018: 244–246). It is also interesting to note that the Viennese bookseller Yisrael Knöpfelmacher, who worked with Judah Nehama in the 1850s (Nehama 1893: 16, 24, 27, 30, 35, 38, 39–40, 69, 72, 85, 146), appears to have been a relative of the Viennese printer Moritz Knöpfelmacher, who in the 1890s printed one issue of *Carmi Sheli* (My Vineyard, Pressburg and Vienna 1890–1891), a bilingual periodical (Hebrew and Ladino) edited by Barukh Mitrani.

The importance of Austria-Hungary

That being the case, we might ask ourselves why Austria-Hungary assumed this dominant role in the networks of Ottoman *maskilim*. In the spirit of the methodology of entangled histories, I will offer a very concise portrait of the historical background that facilitated these contacts between Ottoman *maskilim* and their Austro-Hungarian peers. Southeastern Europe has since ancient times served as a bridge between Central Europe and the Aegean and Anatolia. Moreover, from the fourteenth through the nineteenth centuries, the Ottoman Empire controlled almost all of the southeastern part of Europe, which served as a buffer zone with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As a crossroads between “East” and “West”, Southeastern Europe—the Balkans—also constituted a transitional zone between cultures as well as an area prone to frequent military invasion (Ginio 11–25).

A clear example of entangled histories in Southeastern Europe is Bosnia-Herzegovina, having passed from Ottoman to Austro-Hungarian control in 1878. The country’s population comprised Muslims, Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and a small Jewish population. Following the transition to Habsburg rule, the capital Sarajevo underwent rapid modernization from the late nineteenth century, as the new rulers sought to “extricate” the city from its Ottoman Muslim heritage and transform it into an Austro-Hungarian city (Donia 37–67; Sethre).

Any discussion of the entangled histories of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires should take into account the importance of the history of Italy and its relations with these two empires. Austria-Hungary controlled extensive Italian territories, and the Ottoman Empire and its Jewry maintained a strong affinity to certain parts of Italy, such as Venice, Livorno, and Trieste (Rozen; Lehmann;