

BETWEEN "CENTER" AND "EAST" - THE SPECIAL WAY OF JEWISH EMANCIPATION IN HUNGARY

The division between "East" and "West" in Jewish historiography has traditionally been linked to other terms and concepts. "West" has been identified with progress, economic development, and deep integration of the Jews into their respective European homelands. Western Jews (*Westjuden*) were generally presented as important contributors to the economic and cultural development of their homelands, a model of success to be emulated by Eastern Jews (*Ostjuden*). A more critical view of Western Jews, generally associated with Orthodox and Zionist historiography, described them as "assimilating" Jews who blindly sacrificed their roots and identity for the material benefits of integration. On the other hand, Eastern Europe was identified with political, economic and social backwardness, and its Jews, it was often said, remained in the Ghetto. Some scholars, primarily of eastern European origin, identified the "East" with pristine Jewish authenticity undamaged by modernity and retaining a collective loyalty to traditional or national values.

Jewish historiography of the last decades has dissociated itself from the East-West dichotomy and opted for a more complicated, contextualized and comparative approach.¹ Some scholars - like Todd Endelman and David Sorkin - have used comparisons to emphasize the differences and the uniqueness of each modernization process.² While Endelman attempts to differentiate English Jewry from the German-Jewish model, Sorkin actually denies the applicability of a German-Jewish model as the basic route of Jewish modernization, using a comparative perspective in order to understand the uniqueness of German Jewry. Sorkin therefore presents the modernization of the Jews in the German speaking countries within the framework of a "Central European" model, which is based on a different reality and dynamics from those of the "West" (England and France) as well as the "East" (mainly Russia).³ Sorkin's and Endelman's discussions make it clear that the "East"- "West"- "Center" typology can still be very useful in a comparative examination of the modernization process and crisis in various communities, helping to highlight the special paths and distinguish them from one another.⁴

1 J. Frankel, 'Introduction,' in *Assimilation and Community, The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. J. Frankel and S. J. Zipperstein (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 1-37.

2 T. M. Endelman, 'The Englishness of Jewish Modernity in England,' in *Toward Modernity, The European Jewish Model*, ed. J. Katz (New Brunswick and Oxford, 1987), pp. 225-46.

3 D. Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry 1780-1840* (New York and Oxford, 1987), pp. 176-7.

4 Cf. *Comparing Jewish Societies*, ed. T. Endelmann (Michigan, 1997).

This article will discuss the major processes of modernization in Hungarian Jewish history until 1920. The discussion will consider current historiography in a comparative perspective, with an emphasis on the parallel processes in German Jewry. I have borrowed the term "special way" (*Sonderweg*) from German historiography, where it is in order to compare the development of Germany to those of the "East" and the "West" (England and France).⁵

With regard to Hungarian Jewry, German Jewry serves a fruitful object of comparison for three reasons. First, the German and German-Jewish worlds contributed to the general European discourse on Jewish emancipation and assimilation, establishing the major paradigms that were applied to other Jewish communities.⁶ Second, as an integral part of the Habsburg Empire, Hungary was connected to the German world. As Michael Silber has shown, models of modernization that took shape in the German and German-Jewish world reached Hungary mainly through Vienna and Prague, with the German-Jewish press playing a key role in Hungarian-Jewish polemics, and German remaining the primary language of many Hungarian Jews up to second half of the 19th century.⁷ For modern Hungarian Jews, German Jewry served as a "reference group", especially since the absence of a modern Hungarian bourgeoisie meant that there was no local reference group close at hand. For conservative Hungarian Jews, from whose midst modern Orthodoxy and ultra-Orthodoxy would later emerge, German Jewry served as a negative model – the source of all evil.

German Jewry can serve as a suitable object for comparison for a third reason, namely the sheer amount of scholarly attention devoted to problems of Jewish integration in German society, the inner German-Jewish world, anti-semitism and various other problems. This research on German Jewry has contributed to the elucidation of basic concepts in Jewish historiography like "assimilation", "dissimilation" and "cultural code" and has yielded plenty of empirical studies in social history and Gentile-Jewish relations.⁸

5 See for example D. Blackbourn and G. Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History* (Oxford, 1984).

6 For the examination of the influence of the German model of Emancipation and Jewish modernity in other European countries see *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model*, ed. J. Katz (New Brunswick and Oxford, 1987).

7 M. Silber, 'The Historical Experience of German Jewry and Its Impact on Haskalah and Reform in Hungary,' in *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model*, ed. J. Katz (New Brunswick and Oxford, 1987) pp. 107–47, see especially pp. 127–9, 143.

8 The literature in the field is very extensive, so I will give only a few examples. For the elucidation of the terms "Emancipation," "Assimilation," and "Dissimilation" see D. Sorkin, 'Emancipation and Assimilation: Two concepts and their application to German-Jewish history,' *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* [LBIYB], vol. 35 (1990), pp. 17–33; S. Volkov, 'The Dynamic of Dissimilation: Ostjuden and German Jews,' in *The Jewish Response to German Culture*, ed. Y. Reinharz and W. Schatzberg (Hanover and London, 1985), pp. 195–211. For the concept of Cultural Code as an interpretation to modern German antisemitism see S. Volkov, 'Antisemitism as a Cultural Code,' *LBIYB*, vol. 23 (1978), pp. 25–46; For studies in social history on Jewish-Gentile relations see for example J. F. Harris, *The People Speak! Anti-Semitism and Emancipation in Nineteenth-Century Bavaria* (Ann Arbor, 1994).

From the perspective of Jewish historiography the scholarly literature on Hungarian Jewry has not been extensively integrated into the overall history of European Jewry, as it was first composed by German-Jewish historians from Isaac Marcus Jost and Heinrich Graetz onward. Graetz, for example, ignored Hungarian Jewish history because, as he put it, "the role of the Hungarian Jews in the over-all Jewish history is very marginal if they had a role at all."⁹ The pioneers of Hungarian Jewish historiography, whose studies were mostly written in German, were themselves disciples of these German-Jewish historians that tried to cultivate the very research field that had been ignored by their mentors. However, when Rabbi Samuel Kohn, Sándor Büchler and other Hungarian Jewish historians began writing in Hungarian, the fruit of their labors became inaccessible to the vast majority of Jewish scholars, thereby leaving Hungarian Jewish historiography on the margins of the European Jewish historical discourse up to the Holocaust. Like the pre-Holocaust German Jewish historians, Hungarian Jewish historians wrote first and foremost for Jewish periodicals, read by Jewish readers and their works were studied in Jewish institutions like the Budapest rabbinical seminar.¹⁰

After the Holocaust Hungarian Jewish historiography became more international and developed three centers – Israel, the United States and Hungary.¹¹ However, the obstacle of the language still prevented historians who tried to write a comprehensive European Jewish history from including the Hungarian Jewish case in their writings. Even Salo Baron, the great American Jewish historian, admitted in one of his articles that his lack of command in Hungarian limited him very much in integrating the events in Hungary into his research on Jews in 1848.¹²

Recently, interest in Jewish history has grown among Hungarian non-Jewish scholars, thereby contributing to the further integration of the research of Hungarian Jewish history in the context of the overall modernization processes in the 19th and 20th centuries.¹³ However, these studies

9 In a letter to the Hungarian Jewish historian Joseph Bergel, who claimed that this declaration motivated him to deal with the Hungarian Jewish history himself, see J. Bergel, *Geschichte der Ungarischen Juden* (Kaposvár, 1879), p. 34, cited in N. Katzburg, 'Jewish Historiography in Hungary,' (Hebrew) *Sinai*, vol. 40, 5717 (1957), p. 123.

10 Katzburg, 'Jewish Historiography in Hungary,' pp. 314–5. An important exception in this context was Sándor Büchler who was nominated in 1914 to lecture on Jewish history in the Budapest University, see Katzburg, 'Jewish Historiography in Hungary,' p. 308.

11 For a rich bibliography, updated till 1992 see L. Gonda, *A zsidóság Magyarországon 1526–1945* (Budapest, 1992).

12 S. Baron, 'The Revolution of 1848 and Jewish Scholarship' (II), *Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research*, vol. 20 (1951), p. 84. My thanks to Dr. Howard Lupovitch who drew my attention to this article.

13 In this context one should mention especially the works of Viktor Karády which be discussed later. For the integration of Jews in the national Hungarian history, see *A History of Hungary*, ed. P. F. Sugar (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1994); Ignác Romsics dealt with the Jews as a part of the Hungarian social history: I. Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century* (Budapest, 1999). See also G. Gyáni, 'Gondolatok a honi zsidóság modern kori történetéről,' *Tisicum*, vol. 11 (1999), pp. 321–3.

are generally not substantially linked to the wider discourse on modern Jewish historiography (partly because of another language problem, in this case Hebrew).

There are, of course, some exceptions to the rule, first and foremost, Jacob Katz, who grew up in Hungary and studied in Germany before coming to Israel. Katz was a pioneer in integrating the Hungarian Jewish experience into the overall picture of modern Western and Central European Jewry. His contribution was unique especially in the area of orthodoxy.¹⁴ Michal Silber, Katz's student, has also presented Hungarian Jewish history as a part of the wider Jewish history.¹⁵ Nathaniel Katzburg has dealt with varied aspects of antisemitism and Jewish society in Hungary.¹⁶ Viktor Karády, one of the most prolific scholars in this field outside of Israel, has elucidated Hungarian Jewish history from a wider Hungarian social historical perspective, and also given a broader perspective on general processes in modern European Jewish history.¹⁷

1.

The difficulty in placing Hungarian Jewry on the "East"–"West" spectrum begins with Hungarian history itself. Several aspects of the history of Hungary, its political, social and economic structure, clearly correspond to the "Eastern" model, especially up to the mid-19th century. On the eve of the Revolution of 1848, Hungary was still economically backward, compared to Western and central Europe. Its social structure retained characteristics of the medieval feudal system, and its nobility made up five percent of the population but had an almost total monopoly on social and political power. The vast majority of the population – Magyars, Romanians, and the various Slavic peoples – were still ensnared. Hungarian towns, where

¹⁴ See J. Katz, *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770–1870* (Cambridge, MA, 1973); 'The Uniqueness of Hungarian Jewry,' *Forum* II, 27 (1977), pp. 45–53; *A House Divided: Orthodoxy and Schism in Nineteenth-Century Central European Jewry* (Hanover, NH, 1998); 'The Identity of Post Emancipatory Hungarian Jewry,' in *A Social and Economic History of Central European Jewry*, ed. J. Don and V. Karády (New Brunswick and London, 1990), pp. 13–31.

¹⁵ Silber, 'The Historical Experience'; see also, *Roots of the Schism in Hungarian Jewry: Cultural and Social Change from the Reign of Joseph II until the Eve of the 1848 Revolution*, Ph.D. diss. (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1985); 'The Entrance of Jews into Hungarian Society in Vormärz: The Case of the Casinos,' in *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. J. Frankel and S. J. Zipperstein (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 284–323.

¹⁶ N. Katzburg, *Antisemitism in Hungary 1867–1944* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1992); N. Katzburg, *Hungary and the Jews, Policy and Legislation 1920–1943* (Ramat Gan, 1981).

¹⁷ See, for example V. Karády, *Zsidóság, modernizáció, polgárosodás* (Budapest, 1997), and in English, 'Religious Divisions, Socio-economic Scarification and the Modernization of Hungarian Jewry after the Emancipation,' in *Jews in The Hungarian Economy 1760–1945*, ed. M. Silber (Jerusalem, 1992), pp. 161–84; in German, *Juden in Ungarn: Historische Identitätsmuster und Identitätsstrategien* (Leipzig, 1998).

most of the inhabitants were of German origin, were dominated by traditional guilds, thereby delaying the development of a modern middle class like in Western and Central Europe.¹⁸ Whereas the new German middle class (*Besitz- and Bildungsbürgertum*) was the dominant agent of modernity in German society and the only social sector that German Jews could readily join it had no real parallel in Hungary.

The second half of the 18th century was characterized, in several German states, as well as Austria, by enlightened absolutism. The Habsburg rulers Maria Theresa and Joseph II shaped their territories into a more homogeneous political, judicial, and economic unit under a unified administration, a process that also had important implications regarding the status of the Jews. This tendency was clear especially under Joseph II, who tried to integrate the Jews economically and culturally in his empire.

According to Joseph II's vision, Hungary was not supposed to differ from the other Habsburg lands and should have been subjected to the same policy of centralist modernization. However, its huge dimensions and diversity, and especially the power of the Hungarian nobility failed to absorb the absolutist reforms in Hungary. Hungarian nobles insisted that their country remain an independent political entity with its own tradition, an entity whose connection with Austria be based only on a personal union. Joseph II, who refused to be crowned in the traditional way as king of Hungary and wished to merge his Hungarian territories into a unified Germanized Austrian monarchy (*Gesamtmonarchie*), ended with the repeal of almost all his reforms in Hungary before he died.¹⁹ The victory of the autonomist tradition in Hungary meant that Hungarian Jews were the only Habsburg Jews whose congregations were not subjected to intervention of the Austrian administrators. Joseph II's educational reform, which was meant to foster modernization and Germanization, collapsed very quickly in Hungary without really touching the life of the Jews.²⁰

The failure of Josephinism in Hungary during the 1780s was a key factor in retarding Hungary's social and economic progress, thereby relegating the country still largely to the "East." While some of the other regions of the Habsburg Empire as well as the Prussian kingdom and other German states were governed in the late 18th century by centralist bureaucracies, Hungarian society was still loyal to medieval traditions. Furthermore, in spite of the reactionary atmosphere of the post-Napoleonic period, centralized German states, like Prussia, Baden, and Württemberg, began to

¹⁸ About the structure of Hungarian society at the time see for example the second chapter of A. C. János, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary 1825–1945* (Princeton, 1982).

¹⁹ C. A. Macartney claimed that January 28th 1790, the day that Joseph II surrendered to the demands of the Hungarian nobility, was the beginning of the process of the decline and fall of the Habsburg Empire, see C. A. Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire 1790–1918* (New York, 1969), pp. 1–2. See also L. Hajdu, *II. József igazgatási reformjai Magyarországon* (Budapest, 1982).

²⁰ Silber, 'The Historical Experience,' p. 112.

shape constitutional regimes in a process that paved the way to the future centralist German Nation state.²¹ In Hungary, on the other hand, political traditions were not challenged in the first quarter of the 19th century.

In most cases, the post-Napoleonic constitutions of the German states initiated a process of naturalization and emancipation. No doubt, it was a long, twisted and sometimes also frustrating process, part of a wider process in the rise of the bourgeois society.²² The Jews of the "Center" were not emancipated by a single decree, as was the case in revolutionary France. Civil and political rights were given to the Jews of the "Center" as reforms from above – part of an "educational" process rife with many retreats.²³

The process of change in the legal status of the Jews in Hungary began at the second quarter of the 19th century, known as the *Reformkor* in Hungarian historiography. The beginning of this "belated modernization," as well as the awakening of modern Hungarian nationalism, is identified with the figure of István Széchenyi, who challenged the backwardness of Hungary and raised new ideas in the public discourse about its economic and social structure.²⁴ Széchenyi was the strongest voice, calling for extensive reform in Hungary, centering around the concept of citizenship (*polgárosodás*).

Széchenyi and others brought about a new discourse in the *Reformkor*, similar to the liberal discourse of Western and central Europe at the time, but with one major difference. While the new values were represented in the West and the Center by the new rising middle class – the liberal bourgeoisie which gradually became an important factor in some of the German state bureaucracies – most of Széchenyi's supporters came from the (mostly untitled) Hungarian nobility. It was not the bourgeoisie but rather the more progressive element of the untitled nobility led by Lajos Kossuth that later radicalized the Hungarian national movement.²⁵

In addition to the perennial conflict with the Habsburgs in Vienna and the multi-ethnic character of Hungarian society, Hungary differed from Western and Central Europe in the class profile of the agents of modernization. The modernization processes in Western and Central Europe, which served as models for Széchenyi and others, were carried out economically, socially, and politically by the rising new middle class. In Hungary the

21 For the developments in Germany in this period see T. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800–1866* (Munich, 1984), pp. 272–354.

22 On the emancipation of the Jews in Germany as part of the development of the German bourgeois society see R. Rürup, 'Jewish Emancipation and Bourgeois Society,' *LBIYB*, vol. 14 (1969), pp. 67–91.

23 See for example in Sorokin, *The Transformation*, and also in Katz, *Out of the Ghetto*, chapter 12.

24 About Széchenyi during the "Reformkor" see G. Barany, *Stephen Széchenyi and the Awakening of Hungarian Nationalism, 1791–1841* (Princeton, 1968).

25 About Kossuth and his and his supporters' social background see I. Deak, *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians 1848–1849* (New York, 1979).

middle class as a whole was much more conservative and continued to stick to the traditional forms of economic activities, as dictated by the guilds. The German origin of most of the middle-class town dwellers also prevented them from identifying with the Hungarian nationality, at least at this stage. It was therefore the liberal faction of Hungarian nobility that led the struggle for modernization and stood at the forefront of the Hungarian national revival, thereby playing the role reserved for the modern middle class in most of Central Europe.

Towards the middle of the 19th century Hungary differed from the more advanced countries of the "Center" and the "West" in its social and economic structure. However, it also differed from the "East", which was mostly under the autocratic rule of Tsar Nicholas I and was much less open to liberal ideas. At this time, Hungary experienced a wave of Jewish immigration, mostly from the "East." The fact that this took place at a time when the liberal faction of Hungarian nobility sought to modernize their country, shaped the unique character of the absorption and integration of the Jews into Hungarian society.

2.

Jacob Katz understood the uniqueness of Hungarian Jewry as a function of its recent origins.²⁶ Hungary had a Jewish community in the middle ages, but the century and a half of Ottoman occupation and the endless wars between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs, constituted a rupture in Hungarian Jewish life. Jews began to resettle in Hungary in small numbers only towards the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century, as the Habsburg armies pushed the Ottomans out from Hungary.²⁷ This Jewish resettlement took place in the face of severe objections by Hungarian town dwellers – most of them Germans – who feared Jewish economic competition. The Jews won the protection of the Habsburg army and crown, and some came under the protection of powerful Hungarian landowners, whose economic interests they served.²⁸

The Jewish population steadily grew in the 18th and 19th centuries. The number of Jews in Hungary, estimated at 11,600 in 1735, rose to 81,000 in 1787, and in both cases the actual numbers were probably higher.²⁹ At this stage most of the Jews arrived from other Habsburg provinces – mainly Moravia and Austria, but also Galicia. Following the Josephinian reforms

26 Katz, 'The Uniqueness of Hungarian Jewry.'

27 A. Peri, 'Jewish Settlement in Hungary under the Habsburgs, 1686–1747,' (Hebrew) *Zion*, vol. 63 (1998), pp. 319–50.

28 Y. Ben-David, 'Beginnings of Modern Jewish Society in Hungary during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century,' (Hebrew) *Zion*, vol. 17 (1952), pp. 101–3.

29 N. Katzburg, 'Hungarian Jewry in Modern Times, Political and Social Aspects,' *Hungarian-Jewish Studies*, ed. R. L. Braham, vol. 1 (1966), p. 138.

and continued economic development, the Jewish immigration, mainly from Galicia, rose tremendously in the 1830s and 1840s. At this stage, Hungary became the most important destination for Eastern European Jews, prior to the mass immigration to Western Europe and the United States some decades later. In 1840 the number of the Jews in Hungary rose to 244,000, in 1850 to 340,000 and in 1857 to 407,000. Subsequently, Jewish immigration to Hungary decreased significantly due to the opening of Vienna to Jews and the mass migration to the west. However, the growth of Jewish population in Hungary continued, primarily due to natural increase, reaching 930,000 on the eve of the First World War.³⁰

This process of growth made Hungarian Jewry different from most other Jewish communities in East and Central Europe and exercised a powerful influence in the long run on the structure of the community, its internal disputes, and the forms of modernity that it adopted. Of course, German Jewry was also very divided, due to the political split of Germany, the different status of the Jews in various parts of the country, as well as diverse economic conditions and local traditions. However, the relative continuity of Jewish settlement in parts of Germany, combined with the existence of several urban communities numbering in the thousands, served as a base for the formation of a common "German Jewish" consciousness, rooted in the traditions of medieval Ashkenazi Jewry. Under these circumstances one could speak about "German Jewry" as an existing entity already at the eve of the emancipation period.³¹ In contrast, the different traditions that Hungarian Jews brought with them from their various countries of origin, the conditions of their rural settlement in the Hungarian feudal economy, the relative backwardness of Hungary, and the big difficulties of transportation prevented a national or even regional Hungarian Jewish communal consciousness from taking shape at the beginning of the 19th century.³²

Furthermore, while German Jewry developed through the 19th century as one socio-economic and cultural unit, in Hungary the absence of a single common tradition in the religious-cultural and the organizational-communal spheres continued to determine the character of Hungarian Jewry even during the emancipation period. A modern urban and liberal Hungarian-Jewish type began to appear towards the middle of the 19th century and even more so in its second half, but it never became dominant within Hungarian Jewry as was the case in Germany.

The formation of one mainstream Hungarian-Jewish form was prevented first and foremost because of the dimensions of the religious split between Orthodox and Neologs, which was much deeper than the Orthodox-Reform split in Germany. This split, whose severity in Hungary was clear

already towards the middle of the 19th century, became national after the Jewish Congress of 1868–1869 and no community could avoid it.³³ After state patronage failed to bring communal unity to Hungarian Jewry, even those communities that opted for the status-quo between conservatives and innovators became involved, de facto, in the split since they were placed under ban by the Orthodox. Jacob Katz claimed that the institutional split was followed by an on-growing alienation between the two factions of Hungarian Jewry, until the Orthodox and the Neologs actually became two separate social entities.

While the separatist vision of the Hungarian Orthodox leader Moshe ("Mahram") Shick was fully realized, Samson Raphael Hirsch, his German counterpart and partner in the creation of this schism, failed in Germany. Hirsch was successful in building a strong and stable Orthodox community in Frankfurt am Main, and in 1876 his aim of getting official sanction for full separation from the majority liberal community was achieved. However, just at the height of his success Hirsch's separatist vision could not persuade most Orthodox leaders in Germany. Common interests and, just as important, a consciousness of common German-Jewish ancestral origin proved to be stronger than Hirsch's separatism. These factors, which were absent in the younger Hungarian Jewry, moderated Hirsch's vision, and even in his own city, Frankfurt am Main, most of the Orthodox chose the option of coexistence with the liberals and formed "Community Orthodoxy" (*Gemeindeorthodoxie*).³⁴

Religious separation was only one of several communal, cultural, and regional schisms that characterized Hungary's Jewry even at the turn of the 20th century. On the eve of the First World War there were still significant differences between the rural and the urban sectors of the Neolog communities, as well as between "Western Orthodoxy," whose origin was in Pressburg and whose cultural roots were in Central Europe (Prague, Moravia, Vienna), and "Eastern Orthodoxy," whose roots were in Hasidic Eastern Galicia.³⁵ These schisms prevented the development of a central and homogeneous mainstream in Hungarian Jewry, at a time when such centralized Jewish forms were taking shape in Germany. Despite the religious and the regional schisms in Germany, and the Western migration of eastern European Jews, German Jewry was much more homogeneous than its Hungarian counterpart. Due to the rapid modernization and urbanization, especially after the foundation of the Second Reich, by the turn of the

30 Karády, *Juden in Ungarn*, p. 5; see also in J. Gyurgyák, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon* (Budapest, 2001), pp. 63–4, 76–9.

31 The crystallization of German Jewry in this period and the forming of its modern characters are discussed extensively in Sorkin, *The Transformation*.

32 Ben-David, 'Beginnings of Modern Jewish Society in Hungary,' p. 102.

33 On the development of the split in its first decades, see Silber, *Roots of the Schism*; on its deepening after the Jewish congress in 1868 see Katz, *A House Divided*.

34 R. Liberles, *Religious Conflict in Social Context: The Resurgence of Orthodox Judaism in Frankfurt am Main, 1838–1877* (Westport, CN and London, 1985), pp. 189–226.

35 Karády, *Religious divisions*. On the immigration from Galicia and its influence on Hungarian Jewry see W. Pietsch, 'Die jüdische Einwanderung aus Galizien und das Judentum in Ungarn,' in *Juden in Ostmitteleuropa von der Emanzipation bis zum ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. G. Rhode (Marburg, 1989), pp. 271–93.

20th century, a significant majority of the German Jews lived in big cities, belonged to the new middle class, and were deeply immersed in German culture and German liberalism.³⁶

3.

As in other European countries, the problem of integrating Jews into Hungarian society first appeared on the agenda of the Hungarian intellectual and political elite towards the end of the 18th century. The basic positions of the supporters as well as opponents of Jewish integration were similar everywhere. Supporters justified the naturalization of the Jews in terms of economic "efficiency" and general humanistic values. Opponents, on the other hand, believed that Jews would never be able to integrate because their national traditions would not enable them to participate fully and wholeheartedly in the general national life.³⁷

However, the economic vitality of the Jews in the process of Hungary's modernization made the Hungarian discourse about the Jewish emancipation different. For supporters of Jewish integration, this vitality helped them justify their position, which was raised during the *Reformkor*.³⁸ On the other hand, even the strongest supporters of Jewish emancipation wished to limit the flood of Jewish immigration into Hungary, resembling the pioneers of emancipation in Central Europe, e.g. Christian Wilhelm Dohm, who supported giving rights only to Jews already living in Prussia, but always preferred non-Jews immigrants over foreign Jews.³⁹ Széchenyi, for example, supported the idea of citizenship in principle, but opposed the naturalization of the Jews. At the Hungarian Diet of 12 October, 1844, Széchenyi explained why Hungary should not give its Jews equal rights like France and England – states that were seen as models of modernization. According to Széchenyi the percentage of Jews in Hungary was simply too high. He compared the Jews in the Western countries to a bottle of ink which, when poured in a lake, dissipates; when poured into Hungarian goulash, in contrast, the ink would spoil the soup.⁴⁰ Széchenyi's position

36 Even Steven Lowenstein, who presented the process of modernization of 19th century German Jewry as slower and more graduated than it was previously seen, claimed that in the last third of the century the vast majority of German Jews was already in a rapid process of modernization and Germanization, see S. M. Lowenstein, 'The Pace of Modernization of German Jewry in the Nineteenth Century,' *LBIYB*, vol. 21 (1976), pp. 41–56.

37 Katz, *Out of the Ghetto*, chapters 5 and 6; Gyurgyák, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon*, chapter 7.

38 S. B. Várdy, 'The Origin of Jewish Emancipation in Hungary: The Role of Baron Joseph Eötvös,' in *The Austro-Hungarian Mind. At Home and Abroad*, ed. S. B. Várdy and A. Huszár Várdy, (New York, 1989), pp. 103–4.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 104. About Dohm's position see R. Liberles, 'Dohm's Treatise on the Jews – A Defense of the Enlightenment,' *LBIYB*, vol. 33 (1988), pp. 29–42.

40 J. Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction, Anti-Semitism, 1700–1933* (Cambridge, MA, 1980), pp. 232–5; Gyurgyák, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon*, p. 267.

reflected his view of the Hungarians as a small nation surrounded by national and ethnic minorities. This connection was not always used to legitimize a negative approach to the Jews. On the contrary, the national and ethnic heterogeneity of Hungary – when compared to the relatively homogeneous nation-states in Western (England, France) and Central (the future German Reich) Europe – made other Hungarian-speakers more inclined to support Jewish citizenship, under certain conditions.

The clear representative of this approach, which became to a large extent the official policy of the Hungarian government in the last third of the 19th century, was Lajos Kossuth, the future leader of the Hungarian war of independence against Austria.⁴¹ Kossuth supported full emancipation of the Jews, but only on condition that they introduce radical religious reforms and give up all symbols of their separate collective identity. This position was linked to his aspiration to integrate the Jews in order to bolster the Magyar component in multi-ethnic Hungary.

The form of emancipation that Kossuth proposed and the political motives that drove him characterized the attitude of the Hungarian liberal public towards the Jews from 1867 to the First World War.⁴² Of course, the very idea of proposing a quid pro quo deal of assimilation and acculturation in exchange for equal rights was not unique to Hungary. In the research of Jewish emancipation in Europe this quid pro quo formula was usually presented as the base for the emancipation process in the "Center" – first and foremost in Germany – in contrast with the Western European countries in which the civil rights of the Jews were based on the principle of natural rights and were given without explicit conditions.⁴³ The emancipation policy of the "Center" was gradual. The state gave the Jews partial rights and conditioned the continuation of the process on the fulfillment of its expectations by the Jews. This attitude was prominent mostly in the south-western German states (Baden, Württemberg), whose constitutions in the post-Napoleonic period were designed to encourage the Jews to reform their religion, education, and occupational structure.⁴⁴ Kossuth's position resembled the emancipation

41 On the development of Kossuth's position on the Jewish question see Silber, *Roots of the Schism*, pp. 150–8; Gyurgyák, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon*, pp. 272–4.

42 Viktor Karády, who tends to stress the political background of the process of Jewish assimilation in Hungary, claims that it is based on an informal "assimilationist social contract" between the Hungarian liberal nobility to the Jews, see for example his *Zsidóság*, pp. 19–21 and *Religious divisions*, pp. 162–3. For a critical illumination of the use of the concept "Assimilation" in Hungarian social history see G. Gyáni, 'Concept of Assimilation in recent Hungarian Social History,' in *History & Politics, III. Bratislava Symposium*, ed. D. Kovács (Bratislava, 1993), pp. 86–92. Gyáni points out that in addition to the national-political emphasis of the Assimilation process, there are attitudes which stress more "the economic and social modernization" and "tend to see assimilation as a form of necessary social and cultural adaptation, part of a universal integration process" (*ibid.*, p. 91).

43 Sorkin, *Emancipation and Assimilation*, p. 19. For a discussion in the different forms of emancipation – the revolutionary (France) and the graduate reformist (Germany) see Katz, *Out of the Ghetto*, chapter 10.

44 Sorkin, *The Transformation*, p. 36.

form of the "Center," but one can still point to some differences due to Hungary's special conditions. Kossuth wanted a more accelerated process and confronted the Jews with more explicit demands. While some of the German states expected the Jews to implicitly reform their religion, Kossuth demanded it explicitly. He also rejected the gradual approach that typified the German bureaucratic state. The multi-ethnic situation of Hungary made the integration of the Jews (i.e. their Magyarization) much more vital and urgent to Kossuth and his followers than their Germanization had ever been to any German counterparts. Unlike the German rulers, however, the Hungarians had neither time nor bureaucratic tools to enforce and inspect a gradual "reeducation" of the Jews. The outcome was that Hungary – which was "Eastern" in its social and economic structure – offered the Jews, for the sake of their loyalty, a fuller and more rapid emancipation than they received in the "Center." This proposal derived more from the unique geo-political and demographic situation of Hungarian nationalism than from the deep-rootedness of liberal values in Hungary, but it still left its marks on the development of modern Hungarian Jewry.

The Hungarian revolutionary government, headed by Batthyány, probably intended to grant the Jews full civil rights as part of the April 1848 legal reform, but a series of pogroms in several Hungarian towns, as well as fears among the Jews, prevented it then.⁴⁵ In July 1849 the Hungarian national assembly in Szeged granted full emancipation to the members of the Mosaic faith, but this decision was only symbolic, because the defeat of the Hungarian revolution soon thereafter resulted in the repeal of revolutionary legislation. After the Hungarian defeat the Jews were severely punished by the Austrians, because of their support for the Hungarian national cause.⁴⁶

A comparison to parallel processes among German Jewry at the time shows that religious reform in Hungary was influenced much more directly by the political atmosphere and by pressures on the Jews than by more general processes of modernization. While the religious reforms in Germany can also be seen as a response to such political pressures from the surrounding society and state, recent scholarship has presented them as a part of a much wider process of religious regeneration occurring simultaneously among German Christians, especially Protestants.⁴⁷ It is difficult to speak about a parallel process of rational religious regeneration in Hungarian Christian society. The formation of a Hungarian liberal Judaism was not so much rooted in broader processes of religious and intellectual

regeneration in the Hungarian society, but rather in the expectation that Jews meet the Hungarian terms for social and political reform, (often using models that were formed in German and Viennese Jewish contexts).

The suppression of the Revolution of 1848–49 was followed by two decades of Neo-Absolutism, during which Emperor Franz Joseph and his court tried to direct the development of Hungary from Vienna and fully integrate it into his empire. While this process brought political oppression, especially in the first decade, it also brought Hungary significant economic and industrial development, in which the Jews played an active part.⁴⁸ Hungary did not catch up with the more advanced and industrialized "West" or with the German "Center", but the gap between them was beginning to narrow. Towards the end of the Neo-Absolutist period, when political circumstances enabled the Hungarian liberal elite to once again influence the future of their homeland, this elite found the economic integration of Jews – especially in the modern urban middle class – in an advanced stage, especially in Budapest. The Austrian regime tried to promote the Germanization of the Jews, but most Hungarian Jews supported Hungarian nationalism. In these circumstances, the *Ausgleich* (Compromise) of 1867 created the conditions for the renewal of the political alliance between Hungary's liberal elite and its Jews, leading to the full realization of the Jewish emancipation in Hungary.

4.

In 1867 Hungary regained its national autonomy as a part of the reorganization of the Habsburg Monarchy. The new dualistic character of the Empire enabled the Hungarians to form their own government and direct their own country by themselves, with the exception of military and foreign affairs, which were still coordinated with Vienna.⁴⁹

The two major challenges of the new Hungarian government at the beginning of the Dualist Era – the crystallization of an integral Hungarian nation state and the acceleration of its economic modernization – had a significant impact on the status of Hungarian Jewry. The conditions for the formation of a unified Hungarian nation-state on all the territories of "Greater Hungary" were much more problematic than in western or central European nations. The Hungarians had to cope not only with the economic backwardness but also with the problem of the national minorities, which was more typical of eastern and south-eastern Europe than western or central Europe. The

⁴⁵ Deak, *The Lawful Revolution*, pp. 113–116.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

⁴⁷ See David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780–1918* (Oxford and New York, 1997), pp. 283–302. For a similar interpretation to the Jewish enlightenment regeneration in Germany in the late 18th century as a part of a whole German process, see D. Sorkin, *The Berlin Haskalah and German Religious Thought* (London and Portland, 2000).

⁴⁸ P. I. Hidas, *The Metamorphosis of a Social Class in Hungary during the Reign of Young Franz Joseph* (New York, 1977); É. Somogyi, 'The Age of Neoabsolutism 1849–1867,' in *A History of Hungary*, ed. P. F. Sugar (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1994), pp. 237–41.

⁴⁹ About the process which led to the Austro-Hungarian *Ausgleich* and the function of the dualistic system, see Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire*, pp. 551–68; A. Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815–1918* (London and New York, 1989), pp. 187–202.

dimension of the nationalities' problem in Hungary was so critical that the Hungarians were a minority in their own homeland. Whereas the Hungarian regime of the Dualist Era gave non-Magyar citizens full personal civil rights in the classical liberal sense, it highly restricted their collective autonomy in the cultural-linguistic sense, not to mention the political.⁵⁰ The Hungarian governments tried to conduct a policy of Magyarization of the various nationalities, using the legal, the administrative, and the educational systems. They used the Hungarian language as the central administrative language of the entire kingdom, with the exception of Croatia, whose autonomy was respected, and they tried to impose their language and culture on the young generation of the various nationalities and set up obstacles to the development of national institutions of the minorities.⁵¹

Assimilation in Hungary was not, therefore, a policy directed only towards the Jews. Furthermore, it had certain successes among some of the nationalities. Between 1880 to 1910 around 500,00 Germans, 300,000 Slovaks and tens of thousands of southern Slavs and Rumanians adopted Hungarian language and culture.⁵² This assimilation policy based on an open and liberal definition of the Hungarian national identity – based on language, culture, and political loyalty, and not on narrower ethnic or racial bases.⁵³ In spite of all this the success of this policy was only partial. With the exception of most Germans and some Slovaks, the majority of Hungary's non-Magyar inhabitants remained loyal to their own national identity and refused to succumb to the pressures of Magyarization.

These circumstances made the assimilation of the Jews a key issue in Hungary. Their percentage in the general population reached 5% in the late 19th century – a proportion that was typical to Eastern Europe and not Western or Central Europe where Jews made up less than 1% of the population. In fact, the support of the Jews and their identification with the Hungarian language and nationality brought a Magyar majority in the Kingdom. Since Jews were considered a religious and not a national minority, and since they had no territorial claims within Hungary or political allies outside of it, they were attractive allies to the Hungarian authorities. Jews felt comfortable with the liberal definition of the Hungarian national identity and gained full emancipation almost immediately after the *Ausgleich*. Full emancipation was an expression of the "assimilationist social contract" – full emancipation for the Jews in exchange for their loyal

integration into the Magyar component in the kingdom. The Jews fulfilled these expectations – in 1910, 74% declared Hungarian as their mother tongue, thereby comprising 7% of all Hungarian native speakers.⁵⁴ Even parts of the Orthodox sector, whose leaders were suspicious of emancipation until 1867 and rejected the idea of assimilation, underwent a rapid process of cultural and linguistic integration in the late 19th century, especially in the more modern and urban sectors of Hungary. The Orthodox felt apprehensive about the conditions of emancipation in terms of religious reform, as Kossuth had formulated it. They were also afraid that their communities would be subordinated to the Neologs, as almost happened in 1868. However, as these fears were not realized, many members of the more modern, western Orthodox sector of Hungarian Jewry – which was different in character from the northeastern, mostly Hasidic and ultra-conservative sector – accepted Hungarian language and culture, as well as political loyalty to the kingdom, while continuing to keep the traditional Jewish laws. Their decision to accept the formula of separation of religious and national identity and their readiness to view Judaism as a denomination while taking part in the secular assimilation process meant that Western Orthodoxy also took part in the process of Jewish integration in Hungary.⁵⁵

A comparison to the German Jewish case sheds light on the Hungarian Jewish uniqueness in this context. The unified German Empire, which was founded in 1871, put the national integration of its diverse population and its economic modernization at the center of its internal agenda. As with Hungarian Jews, German Jews also got their full emancipation when the new nation state was established. The emancipation law of united Germany completed a long and gradual process. However, the percentage of Jews in the German population was much lower than in Hungary, and Germany differed from Hungary also in its much more advanced industrial infrastructure and its relative absence of national minorities. Under these circumstances, the assimilation of the Jews was far less central in Germany. German elites viewed assimilation as part and parcel of the emergence of modern national consciousness, but it had much less to do with a national struggle, as was the case in Hungary.⁵⁶

54 Karády, *Juden in Ungarn*, pp. 10–4; Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, p. 37.

55 See for example Karády, *Zsidóság*, pp. 28–9. Katz compared the level of integration of the western Orthodox in the economy and the national culture to that of the Neologs. Thus, for example, he cited an Orthodox leader who distinguished between belonging to the Hungarian state and joining the Hungarian nation. Katz contrasted this with German Orthodoxy whose identification with the German nation was deeper, see Katz, *The Identity*, pp. 20–31. Unlike Katz, Mordechai Breuer claimed that German Orthodox, while patriots of the German state, did not really see themselves as part of the German nation, see M. Breuer, *Modernity within Tradition: The Social History of Orthodox Jewry in Imperial Germany* (New York, 1992), pp. 303–11.

56 About the connection between the processes of assimilation to the formation of a modern middle class in Germany see Sorkin, *Emancipation and Assimilation*, p. 22; About assimilation processes and the adoption of German identity by several minority groups in the German Empire see Blackburn, *The Long Nineteenth Century*, p. 425.

50 About the nationalities' problem in the 1848–49 revolution see Deak, *The Lawful Revolution*, pp. 119–29.

51 T. Frank, 'Hungary and the Dual Monarchy, 1867–1890,' in *A History of Hungary*, ed. P. F. Sugar (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1994), pp. 254–5.

52 G. Jeszenszky, 'Hungary through World War I and the End of the Dual Monarchy,' in *A History of Hungary*, ed. P. F. Sugar (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1994), p. 274.

53 On the liberal character of Hungarian nationalism in the dualistic period and the centrality of cultural and linguistic components in it see V. Ranki, *The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion: Jews and Nationalism in Hungary* (London and New York, 1999), pp. 37–44. Ranki discusses also the implications of this liberal national definition on the Jewish integration in Hungary.

The efforts of the Bismarckian regime to consolidate German society – especially the *Kulturkampf* against the Catholics in the 1870s and the anti-socialist campaign of the 1880s – were concerned mostly with religious, political and class divisions in German society.⁵⁷ In Hungary, in contrast, the demographic situation dominated the politics of the liberal governments in the late 19th century. In this context, the political loyalty of the Jews and their linguistic and cultural identification with the Magyars was crucial. In relatively homogeneous Germany, in contrast, where the Jews did not play the same role, the political elite did not promote full integration of the Jews in the civil service, nor did they fight actively against antisemitism.⁵⁸ Furthermore, the German elites – conservatives and liberals alike – viewed nationalism in more ethnic than civil terms. They demanded from the Jews a much deeper integration in Germany and a total abandonment of their collective identity.⁵⁹

The situation was different in Hungary, which was more prepared to accept the Jews' collective religious and communal uniqueness and to fight modern antisemitism. In the period of Kálmán Tisza the Hungarian state opened to the Jews many positions in the state civil service, many joined the ruling party, hundreds were ennobled and some were even appointed to the Upper House of the Hungarian parliament.⁶⁰ Furthermore, in 1895 Hungarian Jews finally succeeded in their struggle to get recognition to Judaism as an "accepted religion" in Hungary, giving Judaism equal status

57 About the internal policy of Bismarck in these fields see for example H.-U. Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte, Dritter Band, Von der "Deutschen Doppelrevolution" bis zum Beginn des Ersten Weltkrieges 1849–1914* (München, 1995), pp. 889–965. Germany of that time had of course some problems of national minorities. In this context Wehler mentions the Danish in Schleswig-Holstein, the French in Alsace and mainly the Polish national minority. Bismarck and his successors conducted a policy of Germanization towards these minorities, see also T. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866–1918, Zweiter Band, Machtstaat vor der Demokratie* (München, 1992), pp. 266–86. However, in spite of this Germanization policy, it is clear that unlike Hungary, it was not the integration of the national minorities that was on the top of the integration policy of Germany but rather the problems of other social, cultural, and political splittings in the Second Reich.

58 One does not have to conclude from the comparative glance between Germany and Hungary that the German society was fully homogeneous in the late 19th century. Its situation was far from it. Bismarck's Reich had to cope with various political, economic, religious, and ethnic tensions, see for example Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century*, pp. 259–310. It was also the clear Prussian character of the unification of Germany, as well as symbols of the new regime, which deterred many, mostly in southern Germany, from identification with the new Reich. See for example about Bavaria W. K. Blessing, *Staat und Kirche in der Gesellschaft. Institutionelle Autorität und mentaler Wandel in Bayern während des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1992), pp. 233–8.

59 For the illumination of these problems see U. Tal, *Christians and Jews in Germany: Religion, Politics and Ideology in the Second Reich, 1870–1914* (Ithaca, 1975).

60 Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire*, p. 206. Romsics claimed that in these times the Hungarian elites continued to block the Jews from entering the state service, but in the beginning of the 20th century there was already an extensive growth in the number of the Jews in the Hungarian civil service.

with the accepted Christian religions.⁶¹ This success of Hungarian Jewry brought them close to the emancipation level of the "West" (France).⁶² In this context the integration of the Jews in Germany was more backward – only a few of them entered the civil service and Judaism was never given equal status to Christianity. In Prussia, where the majority of German Jews lived, Jewish religious institutions were still subordinate to the commander of the local police station – whereas the Christian churches were inspected by the internal ministry.⁶³

In sum, Hungarian Jewish emancipation and assimilation took place in an environment with backward social and economic infrastructures, typical to the "East," but were conducted according to "Central" and sometimes even "Western" forms. This gap between the Eastern socio-economic reality and the Western political forms caused internal contradictions, which were only exposed later, in times of crisis. Until the First World War, the backwardness of Hungarian society on one hand and the depth of the integration of the Jews in Hungary on the other hand were reflected in the dominance and the prominence of the Jews in various modern economic and cultural sectors – a much deeper prominence than they ever had in the "Center" or the "West." This prominence cannot be explained solely by the application of concepts like liberalism, which are usually brought to explain the Jewish integration in the "West" and the "Center." In pre-World War I Hungary, liberalism paved the way to Jewish emancipation, but Hungary's backwardness, its nationalities' problem and the willingness of its Jews to assimilate were also key factors in their emancipation.⁶⁴

61 Gonda, *A zsidóság Magyarországon*, pp. 156–62; Gyurgyák, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon*, pp. 65–75. For an analysis of the public discussion about the status of Judaism as an "accepted religion" in the context of the Cultural struggle (*Kulturkampf*) in Hungary see P. A. Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism and Antisemitism in inter-war Hungary, 1919–1944*, Ph.D. diss. (University of Chicago, 2000), pp. 27–40. Hanebrink cites declarations of various liberal Hungarian politicians, some of them Jews, which presented the question of the reception of the Jewish religion as a test for the national sovereignty of Hungary (p. 38).

62 France recognized in 1831 the official status of the Jewish religion in what can be considered as the last step to full Jewish emancipation in France, see J. R. Berkovitz, *The Shaping of Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-Century France* (Detroit, 1989), p. 130; Paula Hyman presents the situation of French Jews towards as full integration which included entrance of many Jews to the state civil service, see P. E. Hyman, *The Jews of Modern France* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1998), pp. 91–5.

63 Up to the beginning of the 20th century the Prussian state even financed the Protestant and the Catholic religious education as part of the state schooling system, while Jews were deprived from this right and had to finance their religious education by themselves, see M. Lamberti, *Jewish Activism in Imperial Germany: The Struggle for civil Equality* (New Haven and London), chapter 7, pp. 123–75.

64 See in this context P. Hanák, 'Problems of Jewish assimilation in Austria-Hungary in the Nineteenth and twentieth centuries,' in *The Power of the Past*, ed. P. Thane, G. Crossick and R. Floud (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 244–5. Hanák claims that the Jews were needed also for the "idea of the Magyar national state."

5.

After 1867, the integration of the Jews in the urbanization and modernization of Hungary intensified, particularly in Budapest. 44,890 Jews lived in Budapest in 1870, rising to 70,227 in 1881, 102,377 in 1891, and 168,985 in 1900.⁶⁵ Such rapid and large-scale urbanization was not unique to Budapest, but typified Central European Jewry as a whole in this period. Vienna and Berlin also became the home of tens of thousands Jews, representing a significant percentage of the Jews in their respective countries. However, the percentage of Jews in Budapest was still unique. In 1910 the Jewish inhabitants of Budapest represented approximately 23% percent of the whole population – a much higher percent than in Vienna or Berlin.⁶⁶ Only the major Polish cities – most notably Warsaw, the largest city in Russian Poland – could compete with Budapest in this respect.⁶⁷

Jews were very involved in the establishment of modern capitalism in Germany and Austria, as well as with the shaping of urban cultural institutions there, but it seems that the dimensions of their centrality and the variety of the areas in which they were dominant, were much higher in Hungary. At the beginning of the 20th century more than 50% of Budapest's lawyers were of Jewish origin (623 out of 1199), as well as more than a third of the city's doctors and pharmacists (658 out of 1782). Jews were very prominent in areas like insurance – they made up more than 60% of the insurance agents in the city (513 out of 806) – in various branches of agricultural trade and in banking.⁶⁸ Whereas Jews in Germany and Austria were dominant in certain fields of urban bourgeois economy and culture, like finance banking, the textile trade, and big department stores, the Jews in Budapest were prominent overall and held relatively many more key positions in more areas.⁶⁹ This centrality of the Jews in Budapest resulted in hostile claims about an "internal occupation" (*belső honfoglalás*) of Hungary. Viktor Karády explains the unique dominance of the Jews in the

modernization of Hungary in terms of the relative weakness of all other groups – the potential rivals of the Jews in the forming of the educated capitalistic bourgeoisie.⁷⁰ In contrast, the Hungarian social historian Gábor Gyáni described the collective Jewish role in the development of Hungary as far less unique and uniform than it actually was.⁷¹ However, nobody can deny that Jews had a key role, though not necessarily so unique, in the development of modern Hungary.

The Jews of the "Center", and especially the German Jews, went through a process of assimilation to the "new" German middle class (*neuer Mittelstand*) – the modern section of the German bourgeoisie, which differed from the conservative town dwellers that were organized in the guilds (*alter Mittelstand*). The Jews saw the new German bourgeoisie as their reference group. Their absorption in the German society in the 19th century until the First World War can therefore be interpreted as a process in which they tried to become a part of the German bourgeoisie, even though it ended with the transformation of most of them into a separate, or perhaps half separate section within the German bourgeoisie.⁷² This situation is reflected also in the contribution of the Jews to the modernization of Germany. As one of many components of the German middle class, the Jews took part in the development of the modern state and capitalistic economy, as well as in free professions. Their involvement was, as we saw, very important in certain sectors, like banking, but they never played such a decisive role in this process like the Hungarian Jews.

In Hungary, unlike Germany, the Jews were integrated into a society that had no strong modern middle class. "Actually we do not have a middle class," wrote the Hungarian sociologist István Weiss in 1942 when he attributed, with some exaggeration, the weakness of the Hungarian middle class to the long delay in its development and to the fact that a very major part of its members were not of Hungarian origin but either Germans or Jews.⁷³ In these circumstances the Jews became a major factor in the very formation of the Hungarian bourgeoisie and therefore were not in a position to join an existing class in the Hungarian society. Hungarian nobility, which formed the country's political elite, aspired to integrate the Jews

65 Gonda, *A zsidóság Magyarországon*, p. 163

66 To a comparative discussion about the development of the Jewish population in Budapest, Vienna, and Prague see W. O. McCagg Jr., 'The Jewish Position in Interwar Central Europe: A structural Study of Jewry at Vienna, Budapest and Prague,' in *A Social and Economic History of Central European Jewry*, ed. J. Don and V. Karády (New Brunswick and London, 1990), pp. 47–81, and especially pp. 50–2; see also P. Hanák, 'A közép-európai háromszög, A zsidóság kulturális szerepe Bécsben, Budapesten és Prágában,' in *A kert és a műhely* (Budapest, 1999), pp. 217–29.

67 In 1910 39% of the population of Warsaw – 306,000 out of 781,200 inhabitants – were of Jewish origin. See *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora, The Warsaw volume*, ed. I. Gruenbaum (Hebrew) (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, 1953), table one, p. 127.

68 Gonda, *A zsidóság Magyarországon*, p. 163; Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, p. 43.

69 About the integration of the German Jews in various economic sectors see M. Brenner, 'Between Revolution and Legal Equality,' in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, ed. M. A. Meyer (New York, 1997), vol. 2, pp. 301–8; S. Volkov, 'Die Juden in Deutschland 1780–1918,' in *Enzyklopädie deutscher Geschichte*, vol. 16 (München, 1994), pp. 42–3.

70 Karády, *Zsidóság*, p. 35.

71 G. Gyáni, 'Embourgeoisement as Jewish Identity,' *Budapest Review of Books* (Fall 1997), pp. 107–13. For a recent review and critique of Karády's concept concerning the "social contract of assimilation" of Hungarian Jewry see K. Vörös, 'A Unique Contract: Interpretations of modern Hungarian Jewish History,' *Jewish Studies at the CEU*, vol. III (2002–2003), pp. 229–55.

72 J. Katz, *Die Entstehung der Judenassimilation in Deutschland* (Frankfurt a. M., 1935) and see also Sorkin (The Transformation) who claimed that the formative period of this process was already in the last decades of the 18th century and the first of the 19th.

73 See *Magyarország társadalomtörténete*, ed. G. Gyáni and Gy. Kövér (Budapest, 1998), p. 224; and see in this context Gy. Ránki, 'The Development of the Hungarian Middle Class: Some East-West Comparisons,' in *Bourgeois Society in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. J. Kocka and A. Mitchell (Oxford and Providence, 1993), pp. 439–55.

into a modern Hungarian liberal society that it wanted to develop, but not in its own ranks. Instead, this elite expected the Jews to take upon themselves the mission of forming a modern middle class in Hungary.⁷⁴ While the process of the social integration of the Jews in their German environment was based on the principle of adaptation – an effort by the Jews to resemble to the educated and wealthy modern middle class, to adopt its economic tendencies and its basic values – Hungarian Jews had no local non-Jewish reference group. The social base of Jewish integration in Hungary was therefore weaker and a major change in the external circumstances could therefore endanger it more easily, as eventually happened after the First World War.

6.

The relationship between the Jews and the Hungarian political establishment fostered Jewish integration along Western lines, but it did not lead to real social integration. The integrating Hungarian Jews became a central component in a developing modern sector of the Hungarian society, but even when they obtained full political rights and economic success, they still had to face major social and the cultural distinctions between themselves and the traditional aristocratic elites, as well as the non-Jewish gentry and middle class. Of course, there were cases of mixed marriages between Jews and Christians and certain Jews were even accepted to the nobility, but since it was based on pre-modern concept of legitimation, the Hungarian nobility could not offer the Jews real social integration. Jews continued to be seen as foreigners in the social clubs of the noble elites as well as in their cafés, and had to develop their own alternative social groups.⁷⁵ In Germany the situation was somehow different – Jews were absorbed at least partially as a sector within the German bourgeoisie. Only at the end of the 19th century – partially but not only because a new wave of antisemitism – can one speak about a process of dissimilation of the Jews in Germany.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Romsics (Hungary in the Twentieth Century, p. 45) relates to this with the term "assimilationist social contract" which originated, as we have seen, from Karády's work. Romsics speaks about a "division of labor" between the magnates and the Jews in the process of the modernization of Hungary. Others, like Gyáni stress that the Hungarian social structure was not so dichotomous and that modernization processes took place also in some non-Jewish sectors, see G. Gyáni, 'Érvek a kettős struktúra elmélete ellen,' *Korall* 3–4 (2001), pp. 221–31. See also Vörös, 'A Unique Contract.'

⁷⁵ About the tendency of Jews to integrate in the Hungarian nobility, see W. O. McCagg Jr., *Jewish Nobles and Gentiles in Modern Hungary* (New York and Boulder, Colo., 1986); about the unwillingness of the Hungarian ruling elite to integrate the Jews in its society see Silber, 'The Entrance of Jews.'

⁷⁶ Volkov, 'The Dynamic of Dissimilation: Ostjuden and German Jews.'

In comparison to Poland or Germany, antisemitism did not have deep roots in Hungarian society. The relatively quiet pluralism between Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist and Orthodox Christians, which typified Hungarian society, made the social acceptance of the Jews easier and decreased their "otherness."⁷⁷ However, the manner in which the Jews were integrated in the Hungarian modern national economy created a new basis for hostility against them, which developed into the Hungarian form of modern political antisemitism.

The hostility to the new capitalist economy and to the liberal values attached to it was typical also to the rise of modern antisemitism in Germany and Austria.⁷⁸ The "old middle class" (*alter Mittelstand*) members – artisans and other guild members whose status and security were based on the traditional economic and social order – were deeply hurt by capitalistic modernization. Many became anti-modernists and tended to support the new antisemitic parties.⁷⁹ The German town dwellers in Hungary were also hostile to the economic rise of the Jews, but because of Hungary's social structure they did not become the backbone of modern Hungarian antisemitism. Indeed, the Hungarian gentry, which suffered economic decline in the face of modernization became stalwarts of the anti-modernist and anti-Jewish political agenda. Traditionally, the gentry's members were reluctant to integrate in the modern economy and preferred to turn to what they viewed as more honorable fields of local politics and administration. However, some of them still had to turn to the free market, where they confronted Jewish dominance.⁸⁰

Antisemitism in Hungary, as in Germany, developed as a political movement in the early 1880s. In neither country did the antisemitic parties become mass parties in the long run, due in large part to internal struggles and lack of a clear political agenda.⁸¹ The heart of the antisemitic campaign in Hungary centered around the blood libel of Tiszaeszlár. The leaders of Hungarian antisemitism, headed by Győző Istóczy, succeeded in turning it to a public discussion about the "Jewish question" in Hungary, which was

⁷⁷ Karády, *Zsidóság*, p. 9; Karády, *Juden in Ungarn*, p. 17.

⁷⁸ See for example P. G. J. Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Cambridge, MA, 1988), pp. 42–6, 138–41.

⁷⁹ About the crisis of the old middle class in Germany and its political implications see S. Volkov, *The Rise of Popular Antimodernism in Germany: The Case of the Urban Master Artisans, 1873–1896* (Princeton, 1978).

⁸⁰ R. Fischer, *Entwicklungsstufen des Antisemitismus in Ungarn 1867–1939. Die Zerstörung der magyarisch-jüdischen Symbiose* (München, 1988), p. 89.

⁸¹ See for example Katz, *From Prejudice*, pp. 245–72. There are different opinions in the historiography of modern German antisemitism about the level of success or failure of German antisemitism in the Second Reich and the degree of continuity between it and the later Nazi antisemitism. See in this context S. Volkov, 'The Written and the Spoken Word: Continuity and Discontinuity of Antisemitism in Germany 1870–1945,' in *Unanswered Questions: Nazi Germany and the Genocide of the Jews*, ed. F. Furet (New York, 1989), pp. 33–53.

accompanied also by anti-Jewish violence.⁸² However, in contrast to Germany, the Hungarian regime acted clearly against the antisemitic outburst and was quite effective in oppressing it.⁸³ Later on, from the mid-1890s onward, antisemitism became a factor in the Hungarian conservative parties which based their agenda on anti-modernism, anti-liberalism and anti-urbanism. One can point on a parallel German process also here – in the 1890s the center of German antisemitism shifted from the declining antisemitic parties to the Conservative Party and to its allied Agricultural League (*Bund der Landwirte*).⁸⁴ However, in spite of the parallels there was a certain difference in the impact, at least until the 1910s. The Jewish problem was less central in the Hungarian political agenda in the Dualistic Era than in Austria or Germany, and Hungarian antisemites failed to undermine Jewish integration in the decade prior to World War I.⁸⁵

The vitality of Jewish integration under the Hungarian ruling elite, the feudal structure of major sectors of the Hungarian society, and the fact that many members of the gentry found positions in the civil service, diminished the conflict between Hungarians and Jews prior to the First World War. It was precisely the circumstances of the Hungarian "East" – the backwardness of the social and the economic structure, the multi-national character of the society, and the delay of Hungary's emergence as a modern nation-state – which postponed the powerful emergence of antisemitism and enabled the continued integration of Jews into the Hungarian economy and administration. Although the major clash between Jews and gentry was postponed until after the First World War, the antagonism between them was pronounced already in the Dualist Era. Many members of the Hungarian gentry, who saw themselves as the authentic representatives of "Hungarianness", felt offended by the pact between the ruling political elite and the Jews. Their antagonism to the Jews had cultural and political implications. In the last decades of the 19th century the Jewish question became the focus for a variety of tensions and anxieties aroused by modernity in various Hungarian social sectors, first and foremost the gentry. Urbanism, political radicalism, modernism, and other such phenomena were understood by many as outcome of alien powers, connected to the Jews, and opposed to the nation spirit.⁸⁶ Whereas the gentry's spokesmen

stressed values like deep-rootedness and connection to the soil, the Jews were mostly identified with enlightenment and cosmopolitanism. Prominent Jewish writers, who were identified with modern urban culture, challenged traditional Hungarian values, whereas gentry writers were more romantic, peaceful, and traditional.⁸⁷

7.

A comparison of Germany and Hungary during and after the First World War shows many parallels. In the first months of the war, Hungarian and German societies alike experienced a sweeping wave of patriotism, with a stress on national unity.⁸⁸ The declaration of the German emperor on "Civilian peace" (*Burgfriede*) between the various parties and social groups in Germany, as well as the atmosphere in Hungary after the government's decision to join the war, led among other things to an ephemeral decrease in the antisemitism in both countries.⁸⁹ The vast majority of Hungarian and German Jews showed a full willingness to serve their homeland and saw the war also as an opportunity to prove their loyalty and patriotism once and for all.

However, the unexpected long duration of the war, the terrible losses at the front, and the dire economic situation on the home front brought the old social tensions and especially antisemitism back to the surface. Antisemitic accusations against German and Hungarian Jews were clearly heard already in 1916 and became more pronounced in 1917. The Jews were accused of not participating in fighting units and of war profiteering. In Germany, Jewish combat soldiers were counted, in order to make sure that enough Jews were severing in fighting units.⁹⁰ Antisemitic publications by Georg Fritz in Germany (1915) and Péter Ágoston in Hungary (1917) engendered an intensive public discourse about the Jewish question.⁹¹

87 Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 57–9, 69–71. About the radical-liberal orientation in opposition to the neo-conservative tendencies in the Hungarian public discourse from the beginning of the 20th century to the First World War see *Magyar művelődéstörténet*, ed. L. Kósa (Budapest, 1998), pp. 386–8.

88 About Hungary see Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 85–6. About Germany see H. Mommsen, *The Rise and the Fall of Weimar Democracy* (Chapel Hill and London, 1996), p. 1.

89 About Germany see E. Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik und die Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen, 1969), pp. 516–7; D. Engel, 'Patriotism as a Shield – The Liberal Jewish Defense against Antisemitism in Germany during the First World War,' *LBIYB*, vol. 31 (1986), pp. 152–4; About Hungary see Fischer, *Entwicklungsstufen*, p. 117.

90 About the Jewish roll call in Germany see W. T. Angress, 'The German Army's "Juden-zählung" of 1916, Genesis – Consequences – Significance,' *LBIYB*, vol. 23 (1978), pp. 117–37. About the strengthening of antisemitism in Germany during the war see also Engel, 'Patriotism as a Shield,' pp. 155–6. About Hungarian antisemitism during the war, see Fischer, *Entwicklungsstufen*, pp. 117–23; Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, p. 88.

91 G. Fritz, *Die Ostjudenfrage, Zionismus und Grenzschluss* (Berlin, 1915); P. Ágoston, *A zsidók útja* (Nagyvárad, 1917).

82 Fischer, *Entwicklungsstufen*, pp. 42–56; Katzburg, *Antisemitism*, chapter 2, pp. 42–60.

83 Katz, *From Prejudice*, p. 274; see also Frank, 'Hungary and the Dual Monarchy,' p. 264.

84 About Hungary see Fischer, *Entwicklungsstufen*, pp. 95–116; Jeszenszky, 'Hungary through World War I and the End of the Dual Monarchy,' pp. 271–2. About Germany see Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism*, pp. 111–9.

85 Fischer, *Entwicklungsstufen*, pp. 115–6; Ranki, *The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion*, pp. 60–2; Hanák, 'Problems of Jewish assimilation,' pp. 244–5.

86 Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, p. 18, and see also p. 78 where he uses the term "Cultural Code" which was proposed originally by Shulamit Volkov in the context of German antisemitism. For a new evaluation of the Jewish component in the modernist culture of Budapest see G. Gyáni, *Identity and the Urban Experience: Fin-de-siècle Budapest* (New York, 2004), pp. 220–2.

Post-war events brought about an unprecedented wave of antisemitism in both countries. Jews were prominent in both republican revolutions in October–November 1918, which overthrew the old monarchies. Furthermore, Jews were even more dominant in the radical left revolutions – the Spartakus revolt in Berlin (December 1918 – January 1919), the *Räterepublik* in Bavaria (April 1919) and the soviet government in Hungary (March–August 1919).⁹² These radical left revolutions, which were seen by many as Jewish attempts to take over Germany and Hungary, were eventually suppressed in very cruel ways, giving expression to radical antisemitism in both countries. In Hungary, where the revolutionaries were actually in power for a few months and even tried to impose an anti-religious campaign, the violent anti-revolutionary struggle was stronger. During the “white terror” approximately 1,500 people were murdered, many of them Jews; many other thousands were arrested or left Hungary as political refugees.⁹³

The post-war political upheavals harmed the Jews in both Germany and Hungary, but there were significant differences. In Germany, the events ended with the formation of the Weimar Republic, whose ruling coalition was based on the moderate left and the center and whose constitution was democratic. In fact, the republic brought an improvement in the legal status of German Jews and even opened the civil service to them. German Jewish cultural activity enjoined a great prosperity in this period.⁹⁴ At the same time, however, the war and the post-war trauma were not forgotten and the social split between Jews and non-Jews deepened.⁹⁵ Nonetheless, in the early and mid-1920s, the republic seemed to have recovered from the crisis and the situation of German Jews did not seem so precarious.

In post-revolutionary Hungary, things were different from the beginning. The suppression of the soviet regime brought about the formation of a national conservative regime with a Christian emphasis. Furthermore, the Trianon Peace Treaty, which was imposed on Hungary by the victorious powers, dissolved historical Hungary. Germany also lost territories and felt

⁹² About this period in Germany see Mommsen, *The Rise and the Fall of Weimar Democracy*, pp. 20–50; U. Kluge, *Die deutsche Revolution 1918/1919* (Frankfurt a. M., 1985). About German Jews during this period see D. Niewyk, ‘The German Jews in the Revolution and Revolt 1918–1919,’ *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 4 (1988), pp. 41–66.

⁹³ Gyurgyák, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon*, pp. 113–5.

⁹⁴ About the improvement in the legal situation of the Jews in Weimar Germany, see M. Richarz, *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland. Selbstzeugnisse zur Sozialgeschichte 1918–1945* (Stuttgart, 1982), p. 13. About the cultural prosperity see M. Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Republic* (New Haven and London, 1996). The claims that were raised about the signs of decline in German Jewry in this period related mainly to the demographic and economic crisis and not so much to signs to the decline of Jewish emancipation see M. Zimmermann, *Die deutschen Juden 1914–1945* (München, 1997).

⁹⁵ About the rising of violent antisemitism in Weimar Germany see D. Walter, *Antisemitische Kriminalität und Gewalt. Judenfeindschaft in der Weimarer Republik* (Bonn, 1999). For the understanding of the Weimar Republic as the critical turning point in the history of German antisemitism see for example Volkov, ‘The Written and the Spoken Word.’

humiliated after the Versailles Treaty, but it seems that Hungary faced a much harder disaster after Trianon. The Hungarians lost close to 60% of their former population and more than two thirds of their former territories, which were transferred to Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Yugoslavia. Also, more than three million Hungarian now lived in neighboring countries.⁹⁶ The drastic decrease in Hungary's territory and population, as well as its cutting-off from the old Austro-Hungarian economy, severely damaged the Hungarian economic infrastructure.

The deep change in Hungary's demographic structure and political climate in the post-Trianon period created a totally new situation for the Jews. From a status of a relatively favored group whose Magyarization was crucial to the national liberal regime of the multi-ethnic Hungarian kingdom, they became the most visible exception in a new ethnic Magyar and Christian state under a conservative regime. In these new circumstances the dominance of the Jews in the various sectors of modern economy and in the free professions began to seem unbearable to more and more Hungarians, whereas the new regime, which no longer needed them for ethnic balance, had no motive to protect them. The tension between the Jews to the developing Hungarian middle class, which came mostly from the gentry, became much sharper since the loss of many administrative and political posts held by the gentry in the Dualist Era brought its members to a much harsher economic competition with the Jews.⁹⁷

Hungary introduced antisemitic legislation already in 1920, making it the first European state to do so. The Numerus Clausus law, which was passed under the pressure of the public opinion, limited Jewish university students to 6% – their proportion in the general population.⁹⁸ This decision by the Hungarian government was an official expression of its abandonment of the liberal tradition and of the open national concept of the 19th century and consequently spelled the end of the “assimilationist social contract” with the Jews. Even if many Hungarian Jews did not accept this change and hoped that it was only temporary, the historical circumstances of the unique Hungarian-Jewish emancipation type had reached its end. Post-Trianon Hungary now turned to an internal ethnic Magyarization policy, which was tantamount to dejudatization.⁹⁹ Whereas the consolidation of the Hungarian regime under István Bethlen from 1921 onward had restrained the radicalization of these processes throughout the 1920s and part of the 1930s, the political culture that interwar Hungary had from its very

⁹⁶ Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 117–25.

⁹⁷ Rankl, *The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion*, p. 12, 86.

⁹⁸ Katzburg, *Antisemitism*, pp. 103–5. Actually the law brought to their limitation in a more moderate rate that moved between 8% to 12% during the 1920s and 1930s, but considering the fact that the Jews were between 30% to 34% of the students in pre-World War I Hungary it still created a very hard situation for them. See Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, p. 153.

⁹⁹ Compare to Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, p. 149.

foundation was based on national Christian – and no longer liberal – values. With ups and downs, the basic tendency of Hungarian government and society in the interwar period was anti-Jewish – but mostly in the traditional Christian and not in racial terms.¹⁰⁰

CONCLUSION

The Hungarian historian Ignác Romsics claimed that the deep changes which took place in Hungary after World War I – the disintegration of the Habsburg Empire and the creation of a much smaller but more homogeneous Hungary – were a logical and inevitable result of an organic process.¹⁰¹ Romsics, in line with Oscar Jászi and others, claimed that the multi-ethnic structure of the Hungarian kingdom could not have lasted longer because of modernization processes and the rise of modern nationalism.

It seems that we can draw a parallel conclusion about the unique form of Jewish emancipation and modernization in Hungary. Of course, the development of Jewish history in Hungary did not have to lead deterministically to the rise of radical and widespread antisemitism and the Holocaust. However, one may argue that a deep change in the Jews' pre-World War I situation was inevitable. The modernization process of growing segments of Hungarian society had to end or at least diminish the scale of Jewish representation in Hungary's modern sectors, even though it could have been happened in many ways.

The unique form of integration of the Jews in Hungarian economy, society, and state originated from the ideology and interests of the Hungarian ruling elite in the Dualist Era. The peculiar combination of backward social and economic structure and a multi-national kingdom created an exceptional opportunity for those Jews who were ready for integration and modernization. Hungarian Jews became vital allies of the Hungarian political elite in the preservation of the integrity of their historical kingdom, and a crucial component in the process of its economic modernization. Many of them felt that they could become Hungarians without giving up their religious identity.¹⁰²

The peculiarity of this process is demonstrated by its comparison to the German "Center," which was much more advanced than the Hungarian

"East" in its socio-economic situation, as well as in its national integration. Modern Germany did not need the Jews as a vital component for the preservation of its national sovereignty, and in spite of their important economic contribution, German Jews were much less crucial for the economic modernization of their homeland. In these circumstances, German Jews could not get an open and direct invitation from the German political elite to integrate in the German state and society. German Jews also did not enjoy political defense against modern antisemitism. Like in the West, the emancipation of the Jews in Germany was an integral part of the social modernization process and could be seen also as one of its inevitable by-products. The general progress of Germany in the Second Reich also created the difference between the Jews in Germany and in the West. Indeed, France had its own antisemitic, mainly Catholic tradition, which erupted during the Dreyfus Affair, but eventually the tradition of the French Revolution proved stronger. In Germany, on the other hand, the persistent continuity of conservative political forms, the clear Protestant character of Prussia – the backbone of the second German Reich – and the rising of an organic national concept did not leave a place for Jews in German nationalism and made Jewish integration more problematic and more limited than in the West.

The examination of the degree of integration of the Jews in the German state and of the level of their social acceptance in the German society in comparison to their brethren in the "East" (Russia and Poland) and the "West" (France, England) shows the meaning of their being in the "Center." They enjoyed legal equality and political rights which fitted the level of development of Germany – which was much higher than that of the "East." However, they continued to suffer from discrimination and could not be absorbed in several fields, because of the relative conservatism of the German socio-political structure in comparison to the "West."¹⁰³

Whereas the level of Jewish integration in Germany reflected a generally more advanced state of progress, its scale in Hungary was based on a certain anomaly. Hungary, whose socio-economic structure was closer to the "East," enabled its Jews to integrate more than the German "Center." However, this situation was based on temporary and fragile conditions. It originated mainly from the political ideals and social interests of the liberal Hungarian political elite in certain geopolitical circumstances which, as Romsics and others presented it, could not last too long.¹⁰⁴

The unique emancipation of Hungarian Jews was therefore dependent on a specific state of affairs. As long as Hungary existed as a multi-ethnic

¹⁰⁰ About this see in Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, especially pp. 196–7.

¹⁰¹ Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, p. 81.

¹⁰² It can be added also that the ability of a significant group of Hungarian Jews (mostly the eastern Orthodoxy) to continue the traditional Jewish life forms, to develop them further and to close itself from modernization, was possible because of the backward living conditions in the Hungarian periphery. In Germany the pressures of modernity were so strong that the very existence of such Orthodoxy was not possible in the long run. The German Neo-Orthodoxy, as well as the Hungarian western Orthodoxy, took part in the modernization processes while trying to preserve their uniqueness.

¹⁰³ This is the basic claim of Sorkin in the summary of his book *The Transformation*.

¹⁰⁴ Compare to Karády, *Juden in Ungarn*, p. 13, and also to what he wrote in *Zsidóság*, pp. 36–7. According to Karády not liberalism but the "úriság" model of Hungarian nobility was the base of the political values of dualistic Hungary. For a different opinion see G. Vermes, *Tisza István* (Budapest, 2001), pp. 40–1. Vermes claims that liberalism, though not in its most universal version, was a genuine ideology of the Hungarian ruling elite.

state and as long as its regime needed the Jews for the formation of a Magyar majority, the Jews also benefited from this situation. Furthermore, it was the low level of Hungary's economic development that enabled the involvement of the Jews at such an unprecedented scale in the modern capitalistic sector and their disproportionate overrepresentation in universities and in the free professions. However, the very continuation of the modernization processes in Hungary and the fact that it influenced larger segments of Hungarian society led to a situation that threatened the continuation of the Jewish dominance and contributed to the rise of sectors that challenged it. In the post-World War I period, the end of the multi-ethnic Hungarian kingdom made the capitalistic progress an inevitable process for much wider social sectors than before, and this brought to an almost immediate change in the attitude towards the Jews. This seems to be the explanation to the fact that Hungary, whose antisemitism did not have long and deep roots like in Poland or Germany, was the first European state to introduce the anti-Jewish Numerus Clausus law.

Jewish integration in Germany was an integral part or a by-product of modernization. Apparently, a direct continuation of these processes could have enabled the continuation of the Jewish integration in Germany, at the possible prize of gradual moderation or "normalization" of their dominance in certain economic sectors. What caused the eventual collapse of Jewish emancipation in Germany was the economic, social, and cultural crisis of the whole German society, which severely damaged its modernization and ruined the social groups and the liberal values that were the base of Jewish emancipation. In this sense, the tragic end of Jewish emancipation in Germany, like its beginning, was a by-product of the modernization process. The fate of the Jews was determined, to a certain extent, by the dynamic that shaped the whole development of the German society.¹⁰⁵

In Hungary, on the other hand, the problem was connected more directly from the beginning to the very form of Jewish emancipation. Due to the relative weakness of the ethnic Magyar modern urban middle class which identified with liberal values, the integration of the Jews in the state and the society was based on historical state of affairs that had to do mainly with the political values and interests of the ruling elite. The inner contradiction was that the Jews were supposed to help advance the capitalistic economy and the modernization process in the service of traditional social groups that sought to preserve their own traditional dominance in the post-feudal order. It was not merely the crisis of modernity but rather its very success that led to the crisis in the status of Hungarian Jews in the aftermath of the First World War.

¹⁰⁵ It is important to note that with the Nazi movement's success the fate of the Jews in Germany got a much more central place than a by-product of the whole German modernization crisis. However, it seems that this should not be attributed to the basic dynamic of the German society but rather to the centrality of antisemitism in the Nazi ideology and to the fact that this movement, of all others, was the one to rise to power in Germany.

NEUTRAL SWITZERLAND, NATIONAL SOCIALIST PAST, AND THE LEGACY OF HISTORY

Switzerland had difficulty finding its place in the new international system in the immediate post-World War II period as well as after the end of the Cold War. In the post-war period, Geneva, which had previously been the seat of the League of Nations, partially lost its importance, and only in 2002, after long abstaining from the United Nations, did Switzerland become a full member. It seems that such a political contradiction is interlocked with more than fifty years of amnesia which included forging and preserving myths about the history of Switzerland during and after the National Socialist Period. Since the 1960s, overcoming the Nazi past itself has become an enduring scandal in most European countries, but in Switzerland this really only occurred in the 1990s. An international indignation over unresolved Holocaust legacies and victims' assets disgraced a country that had traditionally embraced humanitarian values. The Swiss public woke up from a mental paralysis engendered by a metaphorical neutrality and the illusion that debates abroad were irrelevant for Switzerland. Many European as well as non-European countries felt obliged to give answers to the question of restitution or compensation for assets and goods once looted by the National Socialists. Ironically, the shock contributed much to a new political orientation of Switzerland towards the international community in today's changing global order; in 2001, Switzerland became a member of the United Nations Organization.

A POLICY OF MEMORY AND CONTINUITY

The classic view of neutrality is fundamentally still that which, apart from minor changes, emerged in the period prior to 1939-1945. It is viewed as necessary and useful, even if not understood by outsiders. Despite the aforementioned reservations, Swiss neutrality during World War II is regarded as successful. Long after the end of the war in 1945, Switzerland appeared to enjoy the respect of the rest of the world. The fact that the Swiss policy of neutrality is held to be in agreement with international and neutrality law, as interpreted at that time, is based on a setting of justification and explanations. Strict observation of legal imperatives, a justification that tends to employ reasons of state, made the argument of neutrality susceptible to criticism as "legalistic" and lacking "moral standards"; in this view,