

# Program

## 5 FEBRUARY, TUESDAY

Location: Eötvös Loránd University, 1088 Budapest, Múzeum krt. 4/A. Meeting Hall (039.)

### Greetings and Introductions (13.00)

András Heisler, President, Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities

*From the Austro-Hungarian Compromise to the Jewish Congress: The Formative Years of Liberal Hungary* – Tibor Frank (prof. emeritus, Eötvös Loránd University)

### First panel (13.30–15.00) – CONTEXT

Chair: Mary Gluck (Brown University)

*The Pursuit of the Sanhedrin: The Hungarian Jewish Congress in the Tradition of Nineteenth-Century Synods* – Carsten Wilke (Central European University)

*Confessional Autonomy in Hungary: József Eötvös's Point of View* – Gábor Gángó (Max Weber Center for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, University of Erfurt)

*Truth and/or Peace: The Political Toolbox of the Jewish Congress* – Tamás Turán (Institute for Minority Studies, HAS; Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

### Excursus (15:30-17:30)

Documents Related to the Jewish Congress, Preserved in the Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives – Exhibit and guided tour, by Zsuzsanna Toronyi, Director

### Keynote (18:00-18:45)

Chair: Géza Komoróczy (prof. emeritus, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

*The Inevitable Breach? The Congress of 1868–69 and the Fissures within Hungarian Jewry* - Michael K. Silber (The Hebrew University, Jerusalem)

## 6 FEBRUARY, WEDNESDAY

Location: MTA HTK, 1097, Budapest, Tóth Kálmán u. 4. K 011.

9.00 Greetings

Attila Papp Z., Director, Institute for Minority Studies, HAS

## **Second panel (9.00-10.30) – STRUGGLES**

Chair: Tamás Biró (Eötvös Loránd University; Jewish Theological Seminary - University of Jewish Studies, Budapest)

*Defending the Old from the New: The Preservative Aims of the Hungarian Jewish Congress* – Howard Lupovitch (Wayne State University)

*The Progressive Political Role of Rabbi Mihály Morgenstern during the Congress of 1868–69* – Mihály Huszár (Museum of Marcali)

*The Divide of the Jewish Community from Nagyvárád after the Hungarian Jewish Congress (1868–1869). The Creation of the Community Status-quo ante from Nagyvárád* – Edith-Emese Bodo (University of Oradea)

## **Third panel (11.00-12.00) – ECHOES**

Chair: Michael L. Miller (Central European University)

*Cisleithanian Lesson from the Schism* – Daniel Baránek (Jewish Museum in Prague)

*The Echoes of the Hungarian Jewish Congress (1868–69) Among the Jewish Communities in Croatia* – Ljiljana Dobrovšak (Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Zagreb)

## **Fourth panel (14.00-15.30) – AFTER-EFFECTS**

Chair: László Csorba (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

*Unfinished Emancipation: the "Schism" in Context of Religious Equality of the Jews* – Anikó Prepuk (University of Debrecen)

*Why did the Neolog Establishment Strive for the Reunification of Hungarian Jewry?* – Miklós Konrád (Institute of History, HAS)

*Reunification Efforts and Metalanguages in Hungarian Jewish Press* – Norbert Glässer (University of Szeged) and András Zima (Jewish Theological Seminary – University of Jewish Studies, Budapest)

## **Fifth panel (16.00-17.00) – ORTHODOX IMPLICATIONS**

Chair: Michael K. Silber (The Hebrew University, Jerusalem)

*What Was it All About? Two Orthodox Retrospectives on the 1869 Schism* – Yoav Sorek (Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel)

*The Geography of Post-Schism Responsa in the Hungarian Hinterlands: The Case of Bychkiv* – Elli Fischer (Tel Aviv University)

First panel: Context

## **The Pursuit of the Sanhedrin: The Hungarian Jewish Congress in the Tradition of Nineteenth-Century Synods**

CARSTEN WILKE

While research on the Hungarian Jewish Congress of 1868–1869 is mainly interested in its trigger role for the schism of Hungarian Jewry, this paper will attempt to study this event in a European and comparative perspective. The Congress was almost contemporary with the Jewish assemblies and synods that emerged in the process of the political unification of Germany and Italy with similar aspirations to establish community federations and national institutions of Jewish learning. Moreover, contemporaries perceived all these assemblies as standing in a tradition line of earlier Jewish synod projects and rabbinical assemblies that had confronted the post-Emancipation challenges of legal, social, and cultural change. In particular, the Great Sanhedrin, convened in 1807 in the Napoleonic Empire with government pressure and great propagandistic skill, provided an example of a centralized political framework capable of containing the forces that competed within European Jewish societies. During the run-up for the Congress in Pest, the Jewish press discussed intensely the merits and shortcomings of the organization models found in Jewish history since the Middle Ages, in modern Jewries abroad, as well as in the Protestant and Greek Orthodox churches of Hungary. Contemporaries frequently challenged the powerful success narrative that had come to be associated with the Napoleonic Sanhedrin and the central administration of French Jewry. The comparison of the Hungarian Jewish historical experience with other nineteenth-century religious unification attempts can teach us much about the expectations and doubts that were projected onto the effort to control the Jewish pluralization processes with the devices of parliamentary democracy.

*Carsten Wilke* is Professor at the Departments of History and Medieval Studies at Central European University in Budapest and Director of CEU's Center for Religious Studies. He obtained his doctorate in Jewish Studies from the University of Cologne (1994). His studies on intercultural aspects of Jewish religious history include the book publications *"Den Talmud und den Kant": Rabbinerausbildung an der Schwelle zur Moderne* (Olms, 2003), *Biographisches Handbuch der Rabbiner, I: 1781-1871* (2 vol., Saur, 2004), *Histoire des juifs portugais* (Chandeigne, 2007), *The Marrakesh Dialogues* (Brill, 2014), and *Farewell to Shulamit: Spatial and Social Diversity in the Song of Songs* (De Gruyter, 2017). He has edited collective volumes on *Modern Jewish Scholarship in Hungary* (with Tamás Turán, De Gruyter, 2016) and *Isaac Orobio* (De Gruyter, 2019).

First panel: Context

## **Confessional Autonomy in Hungary: József Eötvös's Point of View**

GÁBOR GÁNGÓ

At the Jewish Congress 1868–1869 in Hungary all the political values and principles of József Eötvös, minister of religion and education at that time, seem to have been at stake: his liberal-philanthropic project of human and civic emancipation, his moral vision of the Western (in his wording: “Christian”) civilisation as a *minima moralia* distilled from Jewish, Roman and Christian thought, and his political efforts towards a liberal state. My paper revisits Eötvös's activity with relation to the Jewish Congress in this threefold context.

The source basis of my approach encompasses the possibly complete corpus of Eötvös's written and unpublished works and manuscript notes. I shall lend special attention to his extended personal, political and official correspondence.

For a better understanding of the schism within the community of Hungarian Jews in the context of the religious policies of the Hungarian government, my paper's claims are as follows:

- Eötvös regarded the establishment of religious autonomy in Hungary as a personal project/achievement, contributing to the unity of his life's work;
- He was aspiring to be first putting the principle “a Free Church in a Free State” into practice, gaining thereby a regional leading position for his country and a European reputation for himself;
- His principal target was the Catholic Church and negotiations with other religious communities were instrumental to the goal of Catholic autonomy;
- As a politician he was used to negotiate either with leaders of established hierarchies or with representatives of assemblies that were summoned by the government to make their decisions by majority. Therefore he was unprepared to face situations where, like with the Jewish Congress, none of them worked;
- He rejected the recognition of the Orthodox Jews not because they were Orthodox but because their assembly was not summoned by him. The status of a private association was all what a from-below get-together could obtain from the minister. Anything else seemed impossible from Eötvös's point of view.

*Gábor Gángó* is a fellow at Max Weber Centre for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, University of Erfurt. Fields of research: East European intellectual history, History of Early Modern and Modern philosophy.

First panel: Context

## **Truth and/or Peace: The Political Toolbox of the Jewish Congress**

TAMÁS TURÁN

It may be argued that in the given circumstances the Jewish Congress was doomed to failure, and Hungarian Jewry doomed to split, due to the emergence of two Jewish religious parties, well before the Congress started its proceedings. The religious dimension of the struggle between the “progressives/Neologs” (the “right”) and the “conservatives/Orthodox” (the “left”), as well as the religious bones of contention at the Congress (the role of rabbis within the communities; the status of, and reference to, the Shulhan Arukh; and the need for a “rabbinical seminary”) are well-known. Yet most of the issues on the Congress-agenda were political rather than religious. Was the political agenda of the Congress as divisive as the religious one?

Hardly so. More precisely, divisions in most of the practical-political issues at the Congress crossed party lines. The presentation offers a political reading of the published protocols of the Congress. (A document of 702 folio pages, which has never been analyzed in detail by historians in any respect.)

The Congress delegates represented a whole ideological spectrum. Nevertheless, contemporary Hungarian political culture exerted a profound impact on most delegates and on the Congress deliberations in general.

The practical-political content of the Congress and its deliberations can be classified into three categories. (1) General political rhetorics and slogans, such as autonomy, freedom of conscience, rejection of “hierarchy”. These ideas were embraced by all “parties”/“fractions” and were used at the Congress liberally and with great talent by speakers of all shades of the ideological spectrum to support widely different and indeed contradicting standpoints. (2) Issues such as the legitimacy and the purview of the Congress, the application of the majority principle, or various procedural issues, where the main divisions between conflicting opinions indeed run roughly between the “right” and “left”. (3) In other discussions (e.g. on electoral issues, centralization) where the debates crossed “party” lines.

We will show that the overwhelming majority of the practical-political debates at the Congress belong to the third category. After a brief inventory of the political agenda and “toolbox,” we will take a brief look at three issues: (a) statistics and gerrymandering; (b) centralization; (c) references to Catholic and (especially) Greek Orthodox precedents and parallels.

## First panel: Context

An overarching or “metapolitical” difference in the political behavior of the delegates was whether to pursue their “truth” (that is, inflexible fighting for the principles of their party platform) or seeking “peace” (i.e. compromise, within certain limits). In that respect too, divisions manifested themselves across the party divide.

*Tamás Turán* is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Minority Studies at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and teaches at the Dept. of Assyriology and Hebrew at ELTE Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. His fields of research are rabbinic literature, the history of the Hebrew book, the history of Judaic scholarship, and the intellectual history of modern Hungarian Jewry.

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### KEYNOTE

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## **The Inevitable Breach? The Congress of 1868–69 and the Fissures within Hungarian Jewry**

MICHAEL K. SILBER

The Hebrew University, Jerusalem

After introducing the place of the Jewish Congress in the history of Hungarian Jewry, the presentation will be devoted to analyzing the fissures within Hungarian Jewry on the eve of the Congress, within both the Orthodox and the Neologue camps, in order to ascertain whether the schism might have been avoided. Ideological positions as well as voting patterns and regional differences will be analyzed both before and during the Congress. The aftermath of the Congress exposed new types of Jewish identity and ideology within the two camps. Comparison with other Jewries highlights the uniqueness of the historical experience of Hungarian Jewry.

## Second panel: Struggles

### **Defending the Old from the New: The Preservative Aims of the Hungarian Jewish Congress**

HOWARD LUPOVITCH

This paper will explore the Hungarian Jewish Congress as a reflection of the religious outlooks articulated by an under-explored religious mentality within nineteenth century Hungarian Jewry. The central aim of the paper is to suggest a corollary to Michael Silber's seminal argument that Ultra-Orthodoxy was "the invention of a tradition." Thus the paper will argue that the Congress and the statutes crafted and codified by its delegates culminated a century-long effort by like-minded Hungarian rabbis and lay leaders to defend and preserve the mentality of pre-nineteenth century Jewish traditionalism in the face of challenges from German-Jewish style Reform Judaism, on the left, and Ultra-Orthodoxy on the right.

More specifically, drawing on halachic works published by Aron Chorin, Leopold Löw, and other leading Hungarian rabbinic figures, the paper will situate the statutes that the delegates fashioned at the end of the 1860s within the mentality of Hungarian Jewry's "silent moderate majority," that was articulated during the preceding century, at times explicitly and at times implicitly. The paper will focus on three elements of this mentality. First, the paper will argue that Chorin, Löw, and other disciples of Rabbi Ezekiel Landau -- and disciples' disciples -- who populated dozens of Hungarian pulpits during the nineteenth century, evinced an un-self-consciously dynamic and evolutionary set of ideas and practices that, contrary to the emerging "*humra* culture," of Hungarian Ultra-Orthodoxy, embraced both lenient and stringent approaches to observance. As such the statutes are a useful, illustrative example of the tension between a willingness to contenance a broad array of innovations while, more conservatively, requiring all innovations to be justified within the corpus of existing halachic precedent.

Second, the paper will root the centrist and moderate outlook that pervades the statutes in an outlook shared by Hungarian rabbis who, during the century leading up to the Congress, crafted a working balance between uniformity and diversity in religious observance, particularly with regard to local and regional customs. In this way, the statutes and the outlook that informed them reflect a mentality later described by Menachem Friedman as "life tradition" and by Haym Soloveitchik as mimetic Judaism; and the rejection of the Statutes represented not only an Orthodox rejection of religious innovation but, more broadly, a more rigid nineteenth century approach to religious observance challenging and rejecting a more fluid pre-nineteenth century approach.

Third, the paper will show how a central aim of the statutes was to preserve a sense of unity in the face of sectarian impulses. As such, the statutes not only echoed a long-standing Jewish preference for unity over divisiveness, but, more immediately, implicitly rejected and condemned the secessionist impulses of Samson Raphael Hirsch, preferring the "unitarian" impulses of Seligmann Bamberger. While placing smaller communities under the jurisdiction of larger ones, the statutes protected the autonomy

## Second panel: Struggles

individual communities to maintain their autonomy in the face of super-communal movements and institutions (e.g. *Shomri ha-Dat*).

*Professor Howard Lupovitch* is a member of the History Department and Director of the Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies at Wayne State University. He is the author of *Jews at the Crossroads: Tradition and Accommodation during the Golden Age of the Hungarian Nobility* and the co-editor of *Polin 31: Poland and Hungary -- Jewish Realities Compared*. He is currently completing a history of the Jews of Budapest and writing a history of the Neolog Movement.

## **The Progressive Political Role of Rabbi Mihály Morgenstern during the Congress of 1868-69**

MIHÁLY HUSZÁR

The lecture will deal with a rabbi who, along with three other delegates, represented the Jews of Somogy county in the Hungarian Jewish Congress of 1868–69. Mihály Morgenstern (1824–1889) came from a rabbinic family of Western Hungary. After spending years in famous yeshivas, he became a student of Lipót Lőw in Pápa, where he graduated from the secondary school of the Reformed (Calvinist) Church. Afterwards, he even pursued higher studies in Prague. Mihály Morgenstern had been elected a rabbi in Marcali in 1851, and he served in that capacity for the rest of his life. In 1858 a correspondent to the *Ben Chananja* periodical described him as “an ambitious mind”, the proclaimer of “knowledge for a greater good and real religiousness” without any fanaticism, and “the founder of the local community”.

When Lengyeltóti became the centre of the Jewish constituency of Somogy county in 1868, it created great tension between thriving Marcali and diminishing Lengyeltóti, as well as Tab, the only religious community considered orthodox at that time. Based on the sources (documents from public records of the central committee organizing the elections; the local newspaper *Somogy*; and the Jewish periodicals *Magyar Izraelita* and *Magyar Zsidó*) I will present the public rivalry between these towns to serve as a center for the district, and will discuss also the clashes between the candidates. The elections of the delegates for the congress were held on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 1868; Mihály Morgenstern was elected, along with Jakab Stein (Kaposvár), Ignác Lackenbach (Szigetvár) and Salamon Mayerhoffer (Curgó). The latter three barely spoke up at the Congress, but the remarks of Morgenstern on matters of community organization and religious education are recorded in the protocols.

## Second panel: Struggles

I want to shed more light on the life of Morgenstern after the congress, as well, using further sources. How he did manage his everyday work as a Neolog religious leader in the community? How people regarded him at that time? His son, the historian Henrik Marczali (1856–1940) answered these questions as follows: “His idea was that [Jewish] leaders of the past had had to set some limits to keep the idle, superstitious [Jewish] mob within bounds – limits that were no longer needed among educated, enlightened and kindhearted people. His reform was so radical that he was excommunicated by many rabbis.”

The memory of Mihály Morgenstern has faded away. Yet considering his local role in promoting the progressive agenda, his efforts to organize Jewish education, his achievements in strengthening Jewish religious institutions, and his exemplary role as the head of a family, he was undoubtedly an outstanding figure of Hungarian Jewish history.

*Mihály Huszár* is a historian, museologist (Marcali Museum), PhD student (PTE-BTK), member of the Marczali Henrik Research Group (Jewish Theological Seminary - University of Jewish Studies) Fields of research: the history of the Jewish religious community in Marcali in the 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the biography and the history of outstanding personalities and families of Marcali. Contact: huszarstruve@gmail.com

## **The Divide of the Jewish Community from Nagyvárad after the Hungarian Jewish Congress (1868–69). The Creation of the Community Status-quo ante**

EDITH-EMESE BODO

In Nagyvárad, the Congress did not solve the inner turmoil of the local Jewish community. On the contrary, the tension and divergence between the two parties deepened. The debate revolved around the issue whether to accept or not the statutes of the Congress? The dispute was brought to a definite end in April 18, 1870, at a meeting of the Jewish community leadership. The majority faction took a negative stance toward the statutes, and the minority left the assembly. That assembly unanimously rejected the Congress statutes and decided to stick to its old statutes approved by the authorities in 1865.

The official declaration of the split of the old local Jewish community into an Orthodox and a Neolog one occurred in August 5, 1870.

In the midst of the community there was a group with a third type of orientation, called Status-quo ante, who wanted to maintain the administrative setting as it was before of the congress. By doing that they wished to save the unity of the community.

## Second panel: Struggles

Thus, in 1882, in Nagyvárad existed three parallel Jewish religious communities. The president of the Orthodox community was Izidor Ullman, the president of the Neolog ("Congressist") community was Mór Reisman, and the President of the so-called Status-quo ante group was Herrmann Held.

In the present study I intend to delineate the history of the short-lived Status-quo ante community in Nagyvárad, in light of the archival materials that I discovered at the Bihor County Branch of the National Archives-in Romania: its statutes, its differences from the Orthodox, and its disappearance.

*Edith-Emese Bodo* is a PhD lecturer. Affiliation: University of Oradea, Faculty of History, International Relations, Political Sciences and Communication Sciences, Department of History. Fields of research: The era of transition from medieval to modern in the Central Europe, History of the Jewish Population in Nagyvárad (Oradea).

Third panel: Echoes

## **Cisleithanian Lesson from the Schism**

DANIEL BARÁNEK

The paper examines the effect of the schism of the Hungarian Jewry on the organization of the Cisleithanian Jewry. It focuses especially on the question of how the schism has influenced the creation of the Law on the Jewish Religious Society (RGI. 57/1890), how the Austrian Ministry of Religion and Education reflected the situation in Hungary, what was the reaction of the (Galician) Orthodox Jews and which legislative means were finally created to ensure the maintenance of the formal unity of the Cisleithanian Jewish religious society.

The second part of the paper analyzes events in several Moravian and Silesian Jewish religious communities, where also an Orthodox minority lived (Brno/Brünn, Fryštát/Freistadt, Moravská Ostrava/Mährisch-Ostrau). It especially focuses on the process in which liberal leadership of the Jewish communities had changed its attitude to Orthodox immigrants. At the beginning, the liberals wanted to “reeducate” the Orthodox Jews and sometimes even refused them to establish their own prayer room, however as time went on and the liberals were attacked by Zionists, the attitude of the leadership changed from refusal to cooperation. Based on this analysis and on the comparison with Vienna, the paper examines the crucial question whether in the reality the legislative instruments were able to ensure the peaceful coexistence of the reform and Orthodox Jews within one community and at what costs.

*Daniel Baránek* studied history and Jewish studies at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague. He has recently finished his Ph.D. thesis *Emancipatory Jewish Communities in Moravia and Silesia* at the same university. His research focuses on the Jewish history, especially on the religious, social and political development of the Jewry in the Czech Lands in 1848–1942. He published articles in *Judaica Bohemiae* and monographies about Jews in Frýdek-Místek (2015) and Ostrava Region (2017).

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Third panel: Echoes

## **The Echoes of the Hungarian Jewish Congress (1868–69) among the Jewish Communities in Croatia**

LJILJANA DOBROVŠAK

The topic of this presentation is the echoes of The Hungarian Jewish Congress among Jewish Communities in Croatia. After the Croatian–Hungarian Settlement of 1868, the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia enjoyed autonomy in religious and ecclesiastical affairs, so that all laws concerning religious denominations, including the regulation of the status of the Jewish communities in Croatia, fell under the competence of the Croatian Parliament. At the same time when relations between Croatia and Hungary were being regulated, The Hungarian Jewish Congress began in Pest. Representatives of Jewish communities from Croatia could not participate because only the Jewish representatives from Hungary and Transylvania were invited.

Although the decisions of The Hungarian Jewish Congress did not have a direct impact on the Jewish communities in Croatia, they did lead to a division into Orthodox and Reformed communities. According to Croatian law, Jewish communities were required to resolve problems among themselves independently, under the supervision of the Department (Ministry) of Religion and Education. As this Department had just begun working, it did not want to interfere in the internal problems of the Jewish communities, and thus transferred the issue of the schism to the Croatian Government. The Government then sought the advice of the Hungarian Government. In the end, the decisions and the outcome of The Hungarian Jewish Congress profoundly shaped the fate of the Jewish communities in Croatia.

*Ljiljana Dobrovšak* is a Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar in Zagreb. She has been awarded four doctoral fellowships for her research in Budapest by (CEEPUS 2004, Hungarian Scholarship Board, 2005, 2016 and the Rothschild Foundation Europe, 2008). She is the author of three books, co-editor of four article collections and published 32 papers and articles, along with reviews. So far she has participated in numerous international and domestic conferences. Her areas of scientific interest include the history of minorities, history of Jews in Croatia and Hungary, Habsburg Monarchy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the First World War in general.

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Fourth panel: After-Effects

## **Unfinished Emancipation: the “Schism” in Context of Confessional Equality of the Jews**

ANIKÓ PREPUK

In 1867 the Hungarian parliament declared civil emancipation of the Jews, however achievement of the confessional equality – reception of the Jewish denomination as “recepta religio” –followed almost three decades after the individual emancipation, in 1895. The reasons why the religious emancipation was not put on the agenda for two decades are complex. On the one hand the topic was connected with concept of separation of the state and the church. The Jewish religious equality linked to the process of the Hungarian “Kulturkampf” and legislation on the religious issue, the idea of civil marriage and registration, and realization of liberal principle of freedom of religion. On the other hand institutional separation of three trends of the Jewish denomination contributed to the long delay, too. The paper deals with the latest, trying to show how the “schism” between Orthodox and reform trend, and lack of the central authority offered explanation and suitable reason for refusal of any change in legal position of the Jewish religious community between 1867 and 1895.

The analysis is based on documents of the parliamentary debates and the Neolog Jewish press, focusing on activity of lead Neolog newspaper, the Equality (Egyenlőség). The parliamentary debates give opportunity to survey main topics of the political discussion in which the “schism” became central argument mainly among the conservatives creating formal obstacle against the religious emancipation of the Jews. The Equality participated in these discussions and represented standpoint of the Neology: in the 1880-ties the newspaper supported reunification of the Jewish denomination on behalf of the religious equality. However, in the 1890-ties Miksa Szabolcsi and his friends changed tactics, and set apart question of religious emancipation and central authority. The newspaper – disregarding the separation– organized political movement among all Jewish communities in 1892, and contributed to success of religious emancipation during the “Hungarian Kulturkampf”.

Although in 1895 the Hungarian parliament declared the Jewish denomination as “recepta religio” despite of the “schism”, lack of the central authority hindered its realization in the future, too. Finally the paper gives examples how the separation could contribute to that the emancipation remained “unfinished” in some way: it can be seen in low level of financial state support, and lack of political representation of the Jewish denomination in the Upper House of the parliament during the Dual Monarchy.

*Aniko Prepuk* is associate professor of history at the University of Debrecen. Her major field of interest is modern European history; she teaches modern political ideologies, economic and social modernization, development of modern nations, history of totalitarian systems and international relations. Her research subject is modern Hungarian Jewish history. She wrote a comparative study of the modern history of Central and East European Jews in the 19th and 20th centuries. Her habilitation (2014) analyses the formation of modern Jewish group identity in Hungary after the 1867 emancipation through the mirror of the reform

## Fourth panel: After-Effects

Jewish press. She has published several studies on 19th century Hungarian Jewish modernization, and has edited books on this topic. In 2014 she spent one semester as visiting associate professor at Josai International University in Tokyo. E-mail: prepuk.aniko@arts.unideb.hu

### **Why did the Neolog Establishment Strive for the Reunification of Hungarian Jewry?**

MIKLÓS KONRÁD

From the 1890s onward, the heads of the Neolog national organization addressed lengthy memorandums to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education, in order to convince the authorities to reconvene the Jewish Congress that alone had the legal competence to reunite Hungarian Jewry.

To many authors writing in Neolog newspapers, the reunification of Hungarian Jewry appeared as the best way to accelerate the acculturation of the Orthodox masses and/or to work at the “rejudaization” of the educated middle class supposedly engaged on the slippery slope of alienation from anything Jewish.

Yet the issue of the reunification of Hungarian Jewry was also a matter of politics and power. In this game, the two parties involved were not the “Neolog” versus the “Orthodox” Jews, but the growingly powerful Jewish bourgeoisie that wished to obtain full legal and financial equality for the Jewish denomination and a political power that for a number of reasons was reluctant to give in to their demands.

So why in fact did the Neolog establishment wanted to reunite Hungarian Jewry and why successive liberal governments refused to reconvene the Jewish Congress that would have made this reunification theoretically possible, this is the subject of our paper.

*Miklós Konrád* is a research fellow at the Institute of History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His research focuses on the identity dilemmas of acculturated Hungarian Jews in the age of emancipation. His first book, titled *Zsidóságon innen és túl. Zsidók vallásváltása Magyarországon a reformkortól az első világháborúig* (Within and Beyond Jewishness. Jewish Conversion in Hungary from the Age of Reform to the First World War) was published in 2014. A second edition was published in 2015. His current research includes a book project about the myth of the Galician Jewish immigration to Hungary.

## Fourth panel: After-Effects

### **Reunification efforts and Metalanguages in Hungarian Jewish Press**

NORBERT GLÄSSER AND ANDRÁS ZIMA

The Jewish denomination that had been raised to the status of established denomination could have asserted its state-controlled autonomy only if it was a unified body. The debate on unification was therefore a debate on the church policy of the Hungarian state in the process of modernisation. However, the spinoffs of the debate within the Jewish denomination were lodged in the press discourses of the different trends and were continuously reinterpreted with changing social frames and current political problems. In this sense they represented a metalanguage in that they were not only about church policy affairs of the wider society but also conveyed additional messages in the communal language of another discourse.

The Jewish denominational press in Hungary was shaped by the debates over the split in a period that saw the appearance of newspapers proclaiming ideals. The Jewish institutional papers were publications with a national readership directed at different trends. Due to these characteristics they were addressed to a specific reading public, making it possible for discussion of the unification problem to function also as a metalanguage. In the debates among the different trends on unification articles on loyalty to the state and legislators appeared at first sight to be addressed to the majority society that had included the Jews. They joined in its more important current events, such as the state patriotism rite of the 1916 royal coronation. Seen from the viewpoint of the Neology trend, the unification debates were generally surrounded by an aura of patriotism, linguistic and cultural Hungarianisation and integration. The attacks on the Orthodox trend by Neology were attacks on the organisation, not on the prestige of the rabbis, despite the fact that the Orthodox organisation was under strong rabbinical control. The responses from Orthodoxy strove to justify loyalty to the state and the Hungarian nation, and also to convince the majority society that there were fundamental differences between the two trends in world-view and belief. The writings on both sides were linked to the main social discourse. During the time of the Dual Monarchy Neology linked the cause of unification with the question of equal rights and Hungarianisation, while Orthodoxy argued on the grounds of freedom of conscience. The former pointed to the question of national minorities and the increase in the numerical proportion of Hungarians, while the latter stressed liberal public thinking in the mainstream. In the interwar years for Neology unification was intertwined with the equal rights won in the course of emancipation and reception, while as Orthodoxy saw it, the thought of religious renaissance was the main issue. The former pointed to the changing social situation of the Jews, the latter to the new trends among the Christian denominations. At the same time they made use of the major social discourses to strengthen internal group interests. Unification publicistics in the

## Fourth panel: After-Effects

denominational press was addressed mainly not at the majority society or readers of the other trend but rather at their own followers. The aim was to strengthen internal group values and strategies. Thus, what we see in the press is not a substantive dialogue but two parallel narrative strategies. In our paper we examine the symbolic meanings of unification and how they were embedded in the discourses.

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Fifth panel: Orthodox Implications

## What Was it All About? Two Orthodox Retrospectives on the 1869 Schism

YOAV SOREK

In 1920, more than fifty years after the secession of the conservative rabbis from the Jewish congress of 1868-1869, two Orthodox rabbis published in Transylvania short articles that refer to its rationale: Moshe Shmuel Glasner (1856–1924), the distinguished rabbi of Cluj (Kolozsvár), and the much older Yissochor Ber Kohn (1830–1922), the former rabbi of Erdőszentgyörgy.

Following the Treaty of Trianon, a large part of the Orthodox Jewry ceased to be in Hungarian territory, and its connection to the Orthodox Central Bureau in Budapest was terminated. On top of that, the denominational identity which has been central to Orthodox Jews in the former decades was under attack: In the aftermath of WWI, the peoples of Transylvania organized themselves according to national (ethnic) identity lines, seeking rights as national minorities. The Jews were not an exception: Finding their adopted Hungarian identity useless and following the Balfour declaration, a dramatic success of the Jewish national aspirations, they started to see themselves as a people rather than as a church. The new situation pushed some Transylvanian rabbis, concerned by these changes, to establish an Orthodox federation for Transylvania.

Glasner opposed this move. In a German-language pamphlet proclaiming the truth of Zionism from an Orthodox point of view, he addressed the new attempt and criticized it. The only reason to justify a division in the Jewish people, claimed Glasner, is the danger of assimilation. Not dogma differences, nor the lack of adherence to religious law. According to Glasner, the fast path to assimilation was the main reason for the former generation to secede from the Jewish congress and create Orthodoxy as a separate church – a separation he himself defended in a famous 1897 responsa. In post WWI Transylvania, when assimilation is not an option and Jewish nationalism becomes a unifying platform, the orthodox separatism is not needed anymore and can't be justified.

Glasner's approach was fiercely challenged by Kohn, who printed a short polemic response in rabbinic Hebrew (Marosvásárhely, 1921). The Schism was definitely about religious practice and rabbinic education, claimed Kohn, reinforced by his own memories as a junior rabbi in the court of Rabbi Yirmiyahu Lev, one of the main figures in the congress. Kohn was the opening speaker in the new Orthodox federation, and his speech demanded clear distancing from any Zionist activity or organization.

As Jakob Katz showed in his detailed study, Orthodox separatism was much more the result of a defensive act than the fulfillment of an initial goal. Nevertheless, in the following decades it turned to be seen, from within the Orthodox camp, as a precious strategic policy – and the debate over its basic rationale can teach us a lot on the self-concept of Hungarian orthodoxy in the 1920s.

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## Fifth panel: Orthodox Implications

the founding editor of the literary supplement there. Sorek is the author of *Habrit Hayisreelit* (the Israeli Covenant) and of numerous essays dealing with theology, sociology and Israeli politics. PhD Candidate, Department of Jewish History, Ben Gurion University of the Negev.

# The Geography of Post-Schism Responsa in the Hungarian Hinterlands: The Case of Bychkiv

ELLI FISCHER

The responsa literature offers an image of a hierarchical rabbinic republic of letters. When a rabbi voluntarily poses a question about a matter of Jewish law to another rabbi, there is an implied acknowledgement of the second rabbi's greater status and a conferral of authority. Nevertheless, there is always a multiplicity of greater rabbis to consult. What determines which particular rabbi is consulted about a specific problem?

This is one of the questions underlies *HaMapah* (Hamapah.org), a project I created in order to visualize and quantitatively analyze rabbinic correspondence in its various forms. We have found that spheres of rabbinic authority and influence largely conform to broader cultural patterns, as will be demonstrated. Our visualizations also help us detect outliers, where things do not conform to the typical patterns.

We find one such outlier in late-19th/early-20th century Bychkiv (Nagybocskó in Hungarian; today Velykyi Bychkiv, Ukraine), a town on the Tisza River in the former Hungarian province of Máramaros. Like many Jewish communities in Máramaros and Carpathian Ruthenia, the Jewish community of Bychkiv retained strong cultural ties with Galicia and Bukovina, territories annexed by Austria in the Partitions of Poland and the Russo-Turkish War in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Many Jews from Bychkiv belonged to the Vizhnitz Hasidic court, based in Wischnitza, Bukovina (now Vyzhnytsia, Ukraine). Rabbi Shalom Mordechai Schwadron, the leading Galician jurist of Jewish law in the decades before World War I, addressed seventeen responsa to Bychkiv, among hundreds to towns dotting the Hungarian hinterlands.

At the same time, Bychkiv, like other towns in these territories, was part of Hungary and subject to the political, social, and national vicissitudes particular to Hungary and its Jewish community during the latter half of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th. The city of Sziget (Máramarossziget; today Sighetu Marmăției, Romania), a mere fifteen kilometers from Bychkiv, was the site of some of the bitterest post-schism conflicts.

In terms of rabbinic correspondence, we find that the same Bychkiv rabbis who sought instruction from leading Galician rabbis also posed questions to leading rabbis of

## Fifth panel: Orthodox Implications

Hungary. An analysis of the questions sent from Bychkiv to Galician and Hungarian rabbis, respectively, can shed light on how rabbis of Jewish communities in the towns of Hungary's northeastern hinterlands perceived the religious culture of their own communities and the realities of Hungarian-Jewish schism.

Based on the responsa to Bychkiv, as well as additional responsa from Transylvania and Bessarabia, it will be argued that when questions of cooperation and affiliation arose, communities in Hungary turned to Hungarian authorities of Jewish law, even if under other circumstances they preferred to consult Galician authorities, while communities outside of Hungary remained wary of their communities being afflicted by the fractiousness that characterized the Hungarian communities.

This analysis will also demonstrate how tools like *HaMapah* can be valuable for the study of phenomena that are very difficult to quantify, like rabbinic authority and cultural spheres of influence.

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