

# **Letters to Hohenems:**

A Microhistorical Study of Jewish Acculturation  
in the Early Decades of Emancipation

Eva Grabherr

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies

University College London

2001

# Table of Contents

Acknowledgments

Prologue	6
1) Introduction	8
2) Letters to Hohenems: The Löwenberg Collection and its Historical Context	19
3) Dense Communication: On the Preservation of Translocal Family Connections and Jewish Letter Writing Culture as a Reflection of Acculturation	49
4) “Everyday Stories”: Everyday Jewish Life in the Early Decades of Emancipation as Reflected in the Löwenberg Correspondence	87
5) Conversions: Jewish Writing and Language Transformation as "Entry Ticket" into the Modern Era	104
6) Multilingualism among the Rural Jews: A Microhistorical Study	138
7) <i>vos vir fir bikher hoben vi folgt!</i> On a Bourgeois Library and the Question of the Actors in Jewish Modernism	165
8) The Letters of the Löwenberg Collection: Jewish Writing and Language Transformation "en détail"	182
9) Conclusion	206
Bibliography	210
Appendix	
Documents and Databank	

## Acknowledgements

Without the support and help of the following institutions, colleagues and friends, this work would not have been possible. A grant of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science in the years 1997 to 1999 enabled me to start with this project. The American Friends of the Jewish Museum Hohenems granted generous support in its final stages. I thank Stephan Rollin and Uri Taenzer from this association for their encouraging enthusiasm. Johannes Inama, my former colleague at the Jewish Museum of Hohenems, provided me with the help and support I needed.

I am greatly indebted to Bernhard Purin (Fürth), Sabine Offe (Bremen), Emile Schrijver (Amsterdam), Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek (Vienna), Martha Keil (St. Pölten), Johanna Gehmacher (Vienna), Monika Bernold (Vienna), Kurt Greussing (then Vienna, now Pretoria), Rabbi Dr. Hermann Schmelzer (St. Gallen), Andrea Schatz (Duisburg), Hermann Süß (Fürstenfeldbruck), Michael Schmid (Tromsø), Marianne Bereuter (Alberschwende), and Rotraud Ries (Herford) for advice, comments, bibliographical suggestions and many productive, incisive and open discussions. Without the very special support of Evelyn and Albert Friedlander in London, I could not have done this project. I am deeply grateful to them for their generous hospitality, which made my years in London a unique experience.

I am especially grateful to Hugh Denham, my supervisor, adviser and supporter in so many aspects of this project. He introduced me to the field of Jewish languages and inspired me to appreciate the richness and complexity of languages as historical and cultural manifestations par excellence. He guided me through the many stages of my research and was consistently generous with his time, resources, and spirit. He keeps on surprising me with his deep and extensive knowledge in so many different fields, and I owe him many thanks for his willingness to share this knowledge with his students.

With love and gratitude, I dedicate this work to Reinhard, who believed in me even in times when I had stopped doing so myself, my son Benjamin and my parents.

## Prologue

*... That brings me to the second part of your letter, a Jewish Museum. I am not so sure if it makes sense, and for whom? The history of the Jews in Germany, as far as I can see, falls into three phases. The first, before 1806 when Napoleon forced emancipation, is the history of a community, a group of people, who lived, we must admit, as a foreign body in Germany, with no involvement in the life of the Germans other than economic relations. They lived in small rural communities, which is important – not in cities – with their own religion, their own customs, their own traditions, their own language (which nowadays is called Judeo-German, it is not Yiddish, but related) and with their own writing system. The history of this first long phase can no longer be written since nothing has been preserved other than the memoirs of a few larger families such as Glückel von Hameln, Mendelsohn, Rothschild or Warburg. All documentation disappeared in 1938. The second phase then followed, a beginning period of nearly half a century, during which integration into the German culture steadily gained pace. The account books from H. Landmann & Söhne, my mother's family, during the first decade of the firm's existence, 1830-1840, were still written with Hebrew letters in Judeo-German; they were understandably – albeit regrettably – burnt. And my great grandfather on my father's side – who is described as a "Handelsjud" in the registry office document – definitely spoke German as a foreign language, for his external affairs, so to speak. The assimilation first began with the generation of my father, born in 1854 (!), and my mother's grandparents (and great grandparents who had already moved to Nürnberg in 1855, and were thus no longer "Landjuden"). One spoke German and became – my generation – patriotic (of course I volunteered for the war in 1916-18). But socially, actually, one still had contact only with Jewish families from the same social class. But there was always the exception of the "great" Jewish families, who had for the most part converted to Christianity, thereby bringing the assimilation, as they believed, to its logical end. Mendelsohn, Bleichröder, Haber, and so on; not Warburg or Mosse, they remained Jews ...<sup>1</sup>*

---

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Prof. Dr. Richard Krautheimer from 30 December 1988, sent from Rome to Dr. Dagmar Salomon in Fürth on the question of establishing a Jewish Museum in Fürth. Richard Krautheimer was born in Fürth, Germany, in 1897, emigrated in 1933 to Italy and in 1935 to the USA. He studied Italian art of the early period to the Renaissance and has written standard works in this area. He died in 1994 in Rome, where he had lived since being granted the status of Professor Emeritus. The letter from which I am quoting can be found as a loan

---

in the collection of the Jewish Museum of Franken in Fürth, whose director, Bernhard Purin, I thank for referring me to the document.

## 1) Introduction

Richard Krautheimer's 1988 letter to Dagmar Solomon of the German town of Fürth would be a suitable abstract for my dissertation. But it seems a bit too audacious to simply hand over the task to this world-class historian of early Christian art who migrated from Germany to the USA by way of Italy in 1933. I will remain satisfied with the pleasure of having discovered Richard Krautheimer as an unexpected witness to the historical picture I sketch out based on newly found historical sources. Although my scholarly historical text relativises Krautheimer's family history in terms of a few nonessential details, for the most part his version based on his family history over the past four generations in Bavarian Franconia confirms the course and the dynamics of the process that I outline: the Jews' entry into national bourgeois society. The present work outlines the history of the early decades of this political, social and cultural process based on the example of upper class Jewish families of the southern German realm.

According to the Israeli historian Shulamit Volkov, at the end of the eighteenth century roughly 80 percent of the Jews in the German-speaking areas numbered among the lower social classes. They lived, so to speak, from *hand to mouth*. The Jews in Germany seemed to be hopelessly distanced from the social group that already at that time could be described as the "German bourgeoisie". In 1871, however, the year of the founding of the German Empire, the majority of the Jews could be considered part of the German bourgeoisie according to generally recognised criteria such as juridical status, "Bildung", and property. *Apparently, between about 1800 and about 1870, says Volkov, the Jews seem to have 'made it'.*<sup>2</sup> The general political and social conditions that led to these radical transformations in the Jewish community were the formation of the modern bourgeois nation states and the resulting integration into a central state of the former subjects of the diverse groups of rulers, autonomous corporations and communities. This development affected and changed not only the Jewish community; it also changed the basic political, social and cultural conditions in the European states as a whole. In these decades of dismantling feudalisation and of secularisation in Europe, not only were the tracks laid for modern Jewish history and its

---

<sup>2</sup> Shulamith Volkov, 'The "Verbürgerlichung" of the Jews as a Paradigm', in Kocka and Mitchell, eds. (1993), 367-8.

challenges (acculturation, nationalism); but can also find the roots of our current political and social system in the events of these decades.

What was decisively new about all of these transformations was the formation of an active, formative and also tutelary state that aimed at securing wide-scale access to the affairs of its subjects. It demanded and assumed (and certainly also provided) responsibilities that had previously been carried by the community and corporations. The goal of this “new” state was a “productivisation” of the subjects, which went well beyond the level commonly prevalent in feudal society. Along the way, this led to the formation of a “new” community (the nation) at the cost of the “old communities”. The inner borders between the communities were relaxed through the creation of a “common” national culture and the external borders – to other nations – were tightened. These changes constituted a massive challenge to the “old” communities (for example, the Jewish community) and their members. Up for debate were not only their relationships to the other groups, but also mainly their relationship to the newly forming community: the nation. For Diaspora communities such as the Jewish community, this relationship to the nation presented a special challenge as it involved the degree to which the “own” and “particular” characteristics were endangered by taking on those that had previously been clearly “other”. For this specific confrontation, the cultural arena (language and religion, as well as habitus and everyday life) was central, as culture always has been in fulfilling the function of producing and mediating meaning.

For the Jewish community, the political and legal history of these processes is delineated in the emancipation regulations of the various German states in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These regulations expressed this new understanding of state which rested on the integration rather than segregation of social groups, and which likewise created conditions enabling Jews in Germany and the Habsburg Empire to become citizens with equal rights.<sup>3</sup> The decisive social processes in question were the urbanisation and transformation of the occupational structure of these social groups. The legal protection of residency rights, as well as the lifting of the occupational prohibitions spurring these changes, was intended to advance the goal of the highest possible “productivisation” of these groups. The most prominent cultural event in the Jewish history of these decades is the Jews’ entry into the “common” national bourgeois culture. Like almost no other cultural process of these decades,

---

<sup>3</sup> Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, ‘Legal Status and Emancipation’, in Meyer, ed. (1997).

this process represents the relinquishment of the Jews' "own" language, Yiddish, and the adoption of the "other" language, German.<sup>4</sup>

All of the processes which I have mentioned here can also be found in the short and concise family history from Richard Krautheimer:

- the political, social and cultural segregation of premodern Judaism in the image of the *Fremdkörper* (foreign body), which the Jews were in Germany;
- *commercial relations* as the most important of the few areas of contact to non-Jewish society in these centuries;
- the *small rural community* as representative of the manifestation of Jewish life in Germany prior to emancipation and urban migration as the most prominent event of German-Jewish family history of the nineteenth century;
- and, finally, the Jews of Krautheimer's generation's *patriotism* at the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century in the image of the Jewish *war volunteer* in World War I, which definitely presents the peak of the German Jews' willingness to sacrifice in order to achieve entry into the bourgeois state's national culture.

Richard Krautheimer, like others before him, also describes the entry of the Jews into bourgeois society as the history of the acquisition of a language occurring simultaneously with the loss of a language. In the context of the self-contained existence of Jewish life in the premodern era, in addition to the *own religion* and *own customs*, he also introduces the *own writing and language* of the Jews ("*Judeo-German*" and not *Yiddish*).<sup>5</sup> Through his mother's

---

<sup>4</sup> Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, 'Population Shifts and Occupational Structure', in Meyer, ed. (1997). Michael A. Meyer, 'The Problematic Acquisition of German Culture', in Meyer, ed. (1997). In addition, see also David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry: 1780-1840* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

<sup>5</sup> Behind the distinctions that the descendant of an assimilated German-Jewish family made ("Judeo-German" not Yiddish"), I find resonance with the long standing debate on the question of the independence of the languages of the Jews in Germany. The Yiddish scholar, Bettina Simon, also a member of an old German-Jewish family, who lived in the former East Germany after 1945, makes a plea on the basis of positions from Werner Weinberg, among others, for the term "Jew's German" or "Jewish-German". She feels that the language of the Jews in Germany presented nothing more than a *socially determined variant of German*. A term that ignores this proximity to the base language, such as, "Yiddish", would *retrospectively* exclude the Jews from the German language community. Representatives of Anglo-Saxon and Israeli Yiddish studies, whose roots lie in the national Jewish atmosphere of Central and Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, have on the contrary, for decades vehemently demanded an inner-Jewish perspective for research into the Jewish languages. "Yiddish" (specifically "Western Yiddish") as a term for the language of the Jews in Germany in the



family's account books, still written *with Hebrew letters in Judeo-German* from 1830-1840, and through his grandfather who continued to speak German *as a foreign language, for external affairs so to speak*, he captures the image of *the starting period of nearly half a century*, that was necessary for the Jews' *Anschluss* onto the German culture. In hindsight, Krautheimer describes the onset of assimilation as beginning with *speaking German*. As I will show in greater detail, this German-Jewish emigrant of the twentieth century was not alone with this story line and its central motif. Those experiencing this cultural transformation, including the maskilim – the Jewish Enlightenment philosophers – who actively promoted the transformation, and others who were simply involved in it, describe this process in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as the history of the entry into the German language community.<sup>6</sup> Krautheimer's short outline of a German-Jewish history of the nineteenth century was not written with scholarly intentions, but, rather, as the personal perspective of a descendant of the actors involved. What we thus observe is an important motif that is still powerful in the twentieth century: in the reception of these cultural processes by the actors involved. This perception is also supported by the current historiography on nineteenth century German-Jewish history that sees the adoption of the German language as a key requirement demanded of the Jews for their political and social equality.<sup>7</sup> This language

---

premodern era is an expression of the inner-Jewish perspective and emphasises the commonality with the Jewish languages. The latter position has also established itself in the western German Yiddish studies of the post war era. The German and Yiddish scholar, Erika Timm, argued lucidly for the use of the term "Western Yiddish": *Decisions about the names for languages must always be made based on criteria external to the language*, says Timm in 1987. *Also for Dutch, no one ever thinks of refusing a term such as "middle Dutch" for older variants of the language although these variants are also very similar to the contemporary lower German and their speakers themselves called them "dietsch"*. Bibliographical references to these positions can be found in chapter 5, note 18. The art historian Krautheimer wrote his short family history, from which I quote here, with no scholarly intentions. His distinction ("Judeo-German", not Yiddish) nonetheless reveals – as I have shown – a perception and interpretation of historical phenomenon which is not entirely subjective. How can this be interpreted? In Krautheimer's and also Bettina Simon's position on the language of the Jews in Germany in the premodern era, for one, hints of the German Jews' aversion towards all "Eastern Jewish" manifestations (thus also the "Yiddish" language) are apparent. I also attempt to read this position, this maintenance of the interpretation of the German-Jewish history of the nineteenth century, as a German-Jewish symbiosis. The fact that after 1945, the "Jewish national" term also became established in the academic world to denote the Jews' particular language in Germany, is a late "victory" of the Jewish nationalist position which opposed the "assimilationists" (Max Weinreich) in the "Jewish Question" of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; a victory to which the Shoah made a decisive contribution.

<sup>6</sup> See chapter 5 , p. 106 f. in this work.

<sup>7</sup> Shulamith Volkov, 'The "Verbürgerlichung" of the Jews as a Paradigm', in Kocka and Mitchell, eds (1993),

transformation, however, was not a purely pragmatic matter in which the Jewish community acquired the necessary instrument for surmounting new social challenges. It was a highly ideological matter, as language acquisition acted as the signal of the Jews' general willingness and ability to integrate into the national community.

At the outset of this project I was undecided about the exact theme that I wanted to write about. In the beginning I had a newly discovered and as yet unexamined source collection, which in the course of its disclosure, brought me to my theme: The transformation in Jewish language, writing and everyday culture based on the example of upper class families of the southern German rural Jewry in the era of Emancipation. The initiative for this piece was my fascination with a pile of dusty papers from which I randomly pulled out a document in the winter of 1990. Upon closer investigation the document turned out to be an inventory list for a bourgeois library written in Hebrew letters. This inspired me to discover the basis for this fascination and to search for valid and arguable findings that other scholars could accept as significant.<sup>8</sup>

This "pile of dusty papers" is the family archive of the Hohenems Court Jews, Levi-Löwenberg, containing documents that can be dated from 1760 to 1865.<sup>9</sup> The discovery was made in 1986 in the attic of this family's former residence in Hohenems and was given to the Hohenems Jewish Museum in 1990. The great majority of the finding consists of business and private letters of this upper class Jewish family, who had strong ties in the southern German realm. For my work, the finding had to be first examined, roughly organised and described as a whole. In the detailed description and analysis of the material, I concentrated on the inner-Jewish material: the documents written in Hebrew script. These 171 documents are now compiled in a databank according to address, recipient, sender, etc. The databank also contains a short summary of the contents for each document and records the names of all

---

373.

<sup>8</sup> See also Peter Jelavich, 'Methode? Welche Methode?', in *Kultur & Geschichte: Neue Einblicke in eine alte Beziehung*, ed. Christoph Conrad and Martina Kessel (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 1998), 145. *At the beginning of a large research project I often have no clear catalogue of questions available, as my starting point is influenced by the personal fascination with the research object (i.e., a conglomerate of objects) and not by issues within cultural history. The knowledge of where the base of this fascination lies is the goal of my research. What makes me a Historian [cursive in original] is the conviction that there is an explanation for this fascination.*

<sup>9</sup> On the difficulties of the counting and exact limitation of the material, see chapter 2, p. 38.

persons and places that appear in the letters. In addition, a majority of the persons who come up have been biographically reconstructed. The language of the letters and the writing systems used, the formulae for address and greeting, as well as the Hebraisms that appear in the language of the correspondence are all recorded. A technical description records the paper, its format and watermark and also the condition of the document's conservation. Furthermore, for this project, I have transliterated and translated all of the documents written in Hebrew characters.<sup>10</sup>

The inner-Jewish correspondence from the Levi-Löwenberg family archive consists of business letters from the eighteenth century, and (primarily) family letters from the first decades of the nineteenth century. Through the latter, a further Court Jew family of the southern German realm is brought in view: the distinguished Ulmos, later Ullmanns, of Pfersee and Augsburg, a family which numbers among the “nobility” of the southern German rural Jewry of the Early Modern period. On the one hand, the preserved correspondence delivers a language testimony of the everyday language behaviour from three generations of these families during the decades of emancipation which were so decisive for the language and writing change; on the other, the family letters of the nineteenth century, in particular, provide insight into the daily life and the lifestyle of these families. For historical research into the embourgeoisement of these families, these family letters offer an especially rich source. A common thesis in current research on the bourgeoisie maintains that in the nineteenth century it was a particular culture and lifestyle that held the bourgeoisie together and no longer primarily property and legal status. Ego documents, as presented in the form of family letters, are central historical sources in this research approach.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> The Jewish Museum Hohenems is currently considering a scholarly edition from selected letters based on my transliteration.

<sup>11</sup> A detailed discussion of the current positions in research on the bourgeoisie can be found in the introduction in Rebekka Habermas, *Frauen und Männer des Bürgertums: Eine Familiengeschichte (1750-1850)*, Bürgertum. Beiträge zur europäischen Gesellschaftsgeschichte, no. 14 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 9-15. See there, also pages 22-7, for more on the meaning of ego documents and particular letters for research on the bourgeoisie. On ego documents as sources, see chapter ?, note ?. On the meaning of culture and ways of life for research on the bourgeoisie which aims to analytically summarise this non-homogenous bourgeoisie in terms of political and economic history, see Ulrike Döcker, *Die Ordnung der bürgerlichen Welt: Verhaltensideale und soziale Praktiken im 19. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt/Main: Campus Verlag, 1994, 10.

These letters do not enable a comprehensive view of the events and processes of the decades in which they were written. The insight that this correspondence allows is, to put it concisely; limited by the framework of the specific relations of the respective letter writers to each other, but also by this particular type of text, the “family letter”. The letters functioned mainly as a replacement for spoken conversation. The rules and conventions used for conversation as a bourgeois form of communication were also implemented in the written form. Controversial debates about the current events of the era, for example, were not within the ideal thematic realm for this sort of text whose middle point consisted of the family and the “events” of the family’s everyday life.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, these letters do not depict “the” everyday life of these families, but rather, a specific slice of it; that which was, from an inner-family perspective, considered worthy of passing on between the specific correspondence partners. Neither the general political context nor the social structures in which their producers lived were explicitly mentioned in the letters. This context must be recreated through other sources – in this work primarily through secondary literature – which can then likewise serve to further decipher of the information gained from the letters.

The particular value of these historical sources, in my opinion, comes from the fact that they are unmediated documents attesting to the cultural practices of their producers. These letters are evidence of the adoption of the bourgeois cultural practices by the Jewish families who wrote them simply because in practice, the writers apply the rules of the bourgeois family letter. It is not even necessary to re-examine the letters for the information they contain about everyday bourgeois practices to arrive at this conclusion. This correspondence is also unmediated evidence of the language and writing transformation of the Jews in Germany in the early decades of emancipation. In this respect, the letters show a more widely differentiated picture of this transformation process, for example, than that propagated by Jewish historians and other representatives of the science of Judaism of the nineteenth century, the after-effects of which were still noticeable in twentieth century research. The nineteenth century science of Judaism tended to orient itself on the ideal of these centuries of emancipation, in which the Jews leapt into the “other” culture with almost no transitional period. For Rabbi Tänzer, historian of the Hohenems Jews, they had always been *open to culture* (in the sense of the secularised concept of culture of the nineteenth century) and had always had command of the German language. The fact that important actors of modernisation of the community from the ranks of a bourgeois family of Court Jewish

---

<sup>12</sup> For more on the family letter as a certain type of text and its themes, see: chapter 3, p. 67 ff.

background such as the Levi-Löwenbergs, still wrote letters, although in German, using the Hebrew writing system and with a significant amount of Hebraisms well into the mid-nineteenth century, is a facet which does not come up in a picture oriented on the hegemonic ideal of the nineteenth century scholarship. Also defying this hegemonic ideal is the personal network of relations of the upper class families represented in this correspondence. This network remained consistently inner-Jewish despite flourishing participation in bourgeois social activities. The inner-Jewishness of these families' personal network defies the dominant image which claims the (cross-confessional) salon culture of the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century as a norm.<sup>13</sup>

The greatest significance of this source material for research, however, is that it allows us to examine the practices of those involved in this social and cultural transformation.<sup>14</sup> By concentrating on the practices of those involved it is possible to revise our understanding of these comprehensive transformations. This in turn pushes aside the results (the phenomena which were triumphant in the end) and allows our focus to fall on the actual dynamics of the processes of transformation and also on what was relinquished. Greater emphasis is given to the slow pace of such transformation processes and the many stages that they had to go through. This type of approach also places more stress on the forms of expression of cultural resistance, which although unsuccessful in the end, were at the time nonetheless meaningful and necessary. First and foremost, however, this type of source material makes the heterogeneity of such a transformation visible and reinstates those involved in these transformations as active actors in the events. These transformations were not merely formed

---

<sup>13</sup> On Tänzer, see chapter 6, p. 138 ff. On the removal of the traces of the Jewish language from the correspondence of Moses Mendelssohn in the editions of the nineteenth century, see chapter ?, p. ?. Also Steven Lowenstein expresses a consistent concern in his research on the history of the Jews in Germany in the nineteenth century with the aspect of the "slow" modernisation, which he sees as slightly neglected in the research. He sees one reason for this "partial" view, which has continued on into the twentieth century, in the fact that the conservative elements of the German Jewry in the nineteenth century had no real *spokesperson*. Samsom Raphael Hirsch, for example, in no way represented the rural Jewry. Steven M. Lowenstein, 'The Pace of Modernisation of German Jewry in the Nineteenth Century', in *21. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1976), 41-2.

<sup>14</sup> For the support of a historical study of the bourgeoisie oriented on the practices of the actors, see Rebekka Habermas, *Frauen und Männer des Bürgertums: Eine Familiengeschichte (1750-1850)*, Bürgertum. Beiträge zur europäischen Gesellschaftsgeschichte, no. 14 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 9-15, and Ulrike Döcker, *Die Ordnung der bürgerlichen Welt: Verhaltensideale und soziale Praktiken im 19. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt/Main: Campus Verlag, 1994, 23-5.

by the state with its legislative instruments perhaps aided also by the maskilim, the inner-Jewish mediators and promoters of the issues of the enlightened states, but also by the members of the community who carried out these transformations through their everyday practices.

This context for observation reveals a new perspective on “German in Hebrew characters;” this linguistic instrument widespread among the Jews in the German-speaking areas during the transition from Yiddish to German, and used in inner-family correspondence of already ‘embourgeoised’ Jewish families up to the second half of the nineteenth century. Used by the maskilim out of necessity to reach their audience, this form was gladly repressed by the representatives of Jewish studies in the nineteenth century (as evident in the way in which Moses Mendelssohn’s Jewish-German letters were treated in the nineteenth century). Although linguists have long considered the form uninteresting because it is merely an intermediary step in the transition from one language to another, it can be appreciated in the cultural studies context of this type of work as a vivid cultural expression of the actors’ active role in this transformation process.

Richard Krautheimer, as a late representative of an acculturated German-Jewish family, should not be called on to provide evidence for my research results without mentioning the catastrophic end which befell the “German-Jewish history of relations”, whose beginnings and early course I describe here. Only his emigration in 1933 allowed him to escape his own murder at the hands of National Socialist Germany. Only by fleeing a Europe, where – as a result of the religious wars – the idea was born that people could refer to a “common” cultural heritage regardless of their religious background, and thus come together as a community transcending their religious background, could this scholar of Jewish background, ultimately become, as he did, one of the most important cultural historians of early Italian (and thus “Christian”) art.

## 2) Letters to Hohenems: The Löwenberg Collection and its Historical Context

### The Finding

In October 1990, the newly establishing Jewish Museum in Hohenems, a small town in the Rhine valley of Vorarlberg in western Austria, received a collection of items. The items had been found several years before during renovation work on a house formerly owned by a Jewish family. In 1986, several bundles of texts, dozens of worn shoes and a few single objects had emerged from behind panelling during renovation work to the roof of the house at Schweizer Straße 4. The former owners of the house had placed these items there to serve as insulation, in keeping with the recycling principles common in that era. The cost of the actual material of a product was very high, therefore it usually had more than one life, and served more than one function. Less easy to explain is what inspired those who made the discovery in 1986 to place the dusty and dirty material that emerged from between the panels into thin transparent nylon material to be protected and stored rather than simply throw it away. The fact that they did this borders on a small miracle, as a first glance could certainly not have revealed the historical significance of the finding. Even the museum staff was only able to make an initial assessment after giving the material a rough cleaning, using dust masks and gloves. Perhaps the present (non-Jewish) owner had had this foresight because she was brought up in this house in the 1920s and 1930s and was therefore old enough to remember a time when Jewish neighbours were common and the synagogue was still used as a house of prayer. Along with others of her generation, she shares an awareness of her town's Jewish history and particularly the history of her family's house which her grandfather had acquired in 1884 from descendants of the Jewish family who had built it in the late eighteenth century.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> For a description of how the material was delivered to the Museum see the protocol: Waibel to Fischbach, October 1990, Archive JMH.

The collection was accepted by the museum as the "Löwenberg collection".<sup>16</sup> The first cursory examination had revealed that the majority of the documents were business and personal correspondence from the close of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries belonging to the influential and well connected Levi-Löwenberg family of Court Jews. There are records of this Jewish family in Hohenems going back as far as 1704/5.<sup>17</sup> In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, having been a Court Jew family for several decades, they were the leaders of the community and were among its most important donors. The house at "Schweizer Straße 4", in the centre of the former Jewish quarter, was built by the Court Jew and Parnass, Lazar Josef Levi (1743-1806) at the end of the eighteenth century. The house was home to descendants of one branch of this large family until 1884 when the first owner's great-grandson Moritz Löwenberg (1843-1887) sold it to a Christian inhabitant of Hohenems, the grandfather of the current owner of the collection.<sup>18</sup>

## Hohenems in the Jewish Landscape

Hohenems currently has a population of approximately 14,000 inhabitants and is the youngest town in Vorarlberg, having first received municipal status in 1983. Neither a shopping, administrative, nor educational centre, only its history and cultural heritage remain to give it an edge in the competition for distinction among the towns in the region. In Hohenems is to be found one of the few important Renaissance

---

<sup>16</sup> The collection is currently the property of the person who discovered it, but it has been placed at the disposal of the Jewish Museum of Hohenems as a permanent loan for research and exhibition purposes.

<sup>17</sup> For more on the geneology of this family, see the family register of the Jews in Hohenems compiled by Aron Tänzer, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems* (Meran, 1905; repr., Bregenz: Verlagsbuchhandlung H. Lingenhölle & Co., 1982), 737-40. In Tänzer's Register (p. 63), the geneology of this family begins with Wolf Hirsch Levi and his son Josef Wolf Levi. Both names can be found in the official census of the Hohenems Schutzjuden from 1744. In a register of protection tax from the County administration of 1704/05, the names "Wolf Levit Hürschlens sohn" and "Hürschle Levit" can be found together with other names. Cited from: Karl Heinz Burmeister and Alois Niederstätter, eds., *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Juden in Vorarlberg vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Forschungen zur Geschichte Vorarlbergs, no. 9 (Dornbirn: Vorarlberger Verlagsanstalt, 1988), 86. It can be assumed that Wolf Levit Hürschlen's son from the 1704/05 source is Tänzer's Wolf Hirsch Levi from the 1744 source. Based on the sources currently available, the first evidence of the later Levi-Löwenberg family in Hohenems dates from 1704.

<sup>18</sup> Dates for the history of the house are based on Hans Gruber, *Von Häusern und Menschen: Zur Sozial- und Besitzgeschichte des Jüdischen Viertels in*



style palaces north of the Alps. It is situated in what is now the most western province of Austria, and for centuries was the site of a Jewish community. This particular history has had an influence on the layout of the town that has lasted till the present day. Already in 1857, the Hohenems-born Jewish author Wilhelm Frei described *den Flecken H. im südlichen Deutschland* (the little spot H. in southern Germany) (most likely referring to his home town) as a place limited to *zwei regelmäßige Straßen* (two real streets): the *Judengass'* and the *Christengass'*.<sup>19</sup> Of course, Hohenems currently has more than two streets. However, the sixteenth century palace, former residence of the Imperial Count of Hohenems, and the former “Judengass” and “Christengass” of the description of the town by Wilhelm Frei continue to form the centre of the old town.

The establishment of these two main streets and the construction of the palace is attributable to Kaspar, Imperial Count of Hohenems (1573-1640) and the petty state's most important ruler of the Early Modern period. Kaspar completed the construction of the palace, begun in 1562 based on plans by the Italian architect Martino Longo, and moved his family and court down from the earlier castle to the newly built residence at the base of the "Schloßberg". This move was an important step for the further development of the community: it promoted the transformation of the tiny settlement into an impressive residence with a palace, park and zoological garden. The Count thus created a new architectural and political centre for his territory and established Hohenems as the real residence of a free Imperial County.<sup>20</sup> This move marks the beginning of the site's “Modern Era”.

Hohenems kept its political status as free Imperial County until the early nineteenth century. The Count of Hohenems was the direct subject of the emperor and pursued his political aims within the framework of the Empire. The process of territorial reorganisation, the fusion of large contiguous areas into single political entities and

---

*Hohenems im 19. Jahrhundert*, Unpublished Report (Hohenems, 1994), 21-2.

<sup>19</sup> Wilhelm Frei, *Das bunte Haus: Jüdische Erzählungen aus Hohenems*, edited by Bernhard Purin (Hard: Hecht-Verlag, 1996; repr. from *Erzählungen für die reifere Jugend und ihre Kreise*, Leipzig, 1857), 6-7.

<sup>20</sup> For more on the history of the Free Imperial County of Hohenems, see Ludwig Welti, 'Die Entwicklung von Hohenems zum reichsfreien Residenzort', in *Hohenems: Geschichte*, ed. Marktgemeinde Hohenems (Hohenems, 1975), *passim*.

the centralisation of legal authority over the subjects of an area were already fully underway in the Early Modern Era. A corollary of this was the Empire's growing political weakness as it increasingly developed into an umbrella organisation loosely holding together the area of the former Holy Roman Empire with weak political instruments. A weak Empire with little means to exercise its power served the need of these minor potentates to gain the most far-reaching political independence. The same process however, driven in particular by growing powers such as Prussia, Austria, Bavaria, Wuerttemberg, Baden etc., also had a negative impact on the development of these petty states. Their existence, representative of the non-uniform and territorially non-unified status of the Empire, hampered the development towards centralised territorial states constituting a homogeneous political, juridical, administrative and economical unit. The process of territorial reorganisation therefore imposed a great deal of pressure on these petty states. They were constantly on guard in order to avoid being absorbed into major territories. In the Early Modern period, Hohenems was one of very few non-Austrian enclaves located within the current province of Vorarlberg that resisted absorption into the Habsburg territory. It was able to retain this political status until the middle of the eighteenth century. In 1759, Count Franz Wilhelm III died without leaving a male heir, thus providing the Habsburgs with the opportunity to incorporate the petty state into their territories.

Economic strength was an important prerequisite for these minor territories to keep their relatively independent political status. From the perspective of the ruler, the economic strength of a dominion was measured by its capacity to collect and deliver taxes and measures were taken to strengthen the economic potential of a dominion by increasing its tax-paying population. Thus Count Kaspar's policy of attracting immigrants from all over Europe to settle in his newly established residence corresponded to a general pattern prevalent in this era. In 1605 he issued a "Marktprivileg", the permission to establish a place of trade on the newly founded "Thomprobstengasse" (named after count Kaspar's brother, Markus Sitticus, the Archbishop and Prince of Salzburg), which later became the "Christengasse". He even granted a release from serfdom for Christian craftsmen and traders willing to take up residence there, an offer which a significant number of families from great

distances accepted.<sup>21</sup> In 1617, the count promulgated an edict of protection (Schutzbrief) to attract Jewish traders and moneylenders to take up residence in his dominion. The ruler's expectations behind this policy are clearly expressed in the correspondence with his brother Markus Sitticus previous to the invitation for Jews to settle in his county and also in the preamble of the Charter of 1617. He wanted the Jews to engage in commercial trade (*allerhand commercien treiben*) in order to open and promote *unseren marckht Embs*. He even offered to provide them with accommodation in his county, in order to keep the "Thomprobstengasse" free from Jewish settlement. There is no conclusive evidence of the actual location of the houses of the first Jewish settlers in Hohenems in the first decades of the seventeenth century. It is interesting, however, to note that the area which the Count foresaw for the Jews in his letter to his brother in 1617 corresponds exactly with the subsequent location of the Jewish quarter.<sup>22</sup>

The political constellation of Hohenems in the early seventeenth century - as an independent enclave in an area which was already dominated by the House of Austria - corresponded very closely to the conditions under which modern Jewish communities were able to be established in the Early Modern period. Starting as early as the fourteenth century, and increasing in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Jews had been expelled from almost all of the large Imperial Cities and many larger territories.<sup>23</sup> Due to the territorial disunity of the Reich, however, it was

---

<sup>21</sup> Norbert Peter, 'Zeittafel zur Geschichte von Hohenems', *Gedenkschrift Stadterhebung. Hohenems 1333-1983*, ed. Marktgemeinde Hohenems (Hohenems, 1983), 33. For information on the history of the settlement of Hohenems, see: Werner Scheffknecht, 'Entwicklung des Siedlungsbildes', in *Hohenems: Natur und Wirtschaft*, ed. Marktgemeinde Hohenems (Hohenems, 1983), passim.

<sup>22</sup> Source quoted in Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 16-21. For more about the early history of the Jewish community in Hohenems, see Karl Heinz Burmeister, 'Die jüdische Gemeinde in Hohenems im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', in Grabherr, ed. (1996). For more on the first homes of the Jews in Hohenems, see Bernhard Purin, '"Der Teufel hat die Juden ins Land getragen": Juden und Judenfeindschaft in Hohenems 1617-1647', in *Antisemitismus in Vorarlberg: Regionalstudie zur Geschichte einer Weltanschauung*, ed. Werner Dreier, Studien zur Geschichte und Gesellschaft Vorarlbergs, no. 4 (Bregenz: Vorarlberger Autorengesellschaft, 1988). The first evidence of Jewish ownership in the section of town that later became the Jewish quarter was the house of "Meister Thomas Witwe" near the Emsbach river which the Schutzzjude Lämle Weil purchased in 1693. Gruber, *Von Häusern und Menschen*, Card 8.

<sup>23</sup> Stephan Rohrbacher regards the fourteenth century as the beginning of the escalating trend to expel the Jews from the richly traditional urban centres of Jewish life on the Rhine, Main and Danube; he sees the most significant conclusion to this movement in the downfall of the Jewish community in Regensburg in 1519. See: Stefan Rohrbacher, 'Stadt und Land:

impossible to launch a unified operation against the Jews similar to the measures implemented in England, France and Spain. But even so, these events represent a decisive blow, destroying the pattern of settlement and the communal system of medieval Jewish life. It is not until the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that we find evidence of a wave of new settlements, of which a substantial number were able to consolidate and build up the institutions needed for fully developed communal Jewish life. Most of these settlements were concentrated either in enclaves of major territorial dominions outside their more or less unified territories such as the "Vorderösterreichische Grafschaft Burgau", in Imperial Free Knights possessions (Reichsritterschaften) or in small dominions of rulers belonging to the Imperial Estates (Reichsstände) in the south and west of the German Empire such as Hohenems.<sup>24</sup> In these dominions were to be found rulers who were either vested with the "ius recipiendi iudeaeos" as an attribute of their territorial sovereignty or those who had claimed it. They needed Jewish communities in their regions as they promised an increase in income from taxation and a strengthening of the economic potential of their dominion. Economic strength was also desperately necessary to the court for the long term implementation of their interests in the context of federal or

---

Zur "inneren" Situation der süd- und westdeutschen Juden in der Frühneuzeit', in Richarz and Rürup, eds. (1997), 37. This transition from the primarily urban Jewish life of the Middle Ages to the Jewish existence of the Early Modern Era, which was mainly in rural regions with small villages, has been the subject of several recent studies. Whereas earlier research explained the expulsion from the cities and settlement in the surrounding villages as radical development with a causal relationship, today the ruralisation of the Jews is seen as an ongoing transformational process. Friedrich Battenberg speaks of a process which began in the fourteenth century, diminished in the seventeenth century but never really came to an end. However, Battenberg also shows that remnants of urban settlement from the medieval Ashkenazic areas were never fully eliminated. The expulsion from the cities in the Middle Ages first led mainly to a migration and re-migration movement between the cities and an urban existence on the periphery. The rural Jewish settlements that gradually established in the course of the sixteenth century were mainly the result of conscious policies of "Peuplisierung". These politics made use of the Jew's expulsion, although they did not derive from it. Friedrich Battenberg, 'Zur Vertreibung und Neuansiedlung der Juden im Heiligen Römischen Reich', in Richarz and Rürup, eds (1997), 14. Stefan Rohrbacher also maintains that based on the historical sources, it is not possible to determine a direct connection between the expulsion of the Jews from the cities and the founding of Jewish communities in the surrounding rural areas. He offers evidence and specific examples in: Stefan Rohrbacher, 'Die Entstehung der jüdischen Landgemeinden in der Frühneuzeit', in *Mappot ... gesegnet, der da kommt: Das Band der jüdischen Tradition/Mappot ... blessed be who comes: The Band of Jewish Tradition*, ed. Annette Weber, Evelyn Friedlander, and Fritz Armbruster (Osnabrück: Secolo-Verlag, 1997).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 39. The characteristic patterns of rural Jewish settlement had already developed their essential characteristics in the sixteenth century. Most of the rural communities, however, arose first in the era after the

imperial politics. In political terms, exercising the privilege of receiving Jews was a token of these rulers' possession of sovereign rights. This was of particular importance for many petty potentates as their sovereign status was permanently challenged by the increasingly powerful unified major states. Thus the patterns of Jewish settlement in the Old Reich in the Early Modern period were characterized by a petty-territorial situation and/or conflicting official claims concerning the sovereignty of a territory. These conditions applied in particular to the political situation in the southern and south-western areas of the Empire. The highest concentrations of Jewish settlement of this period could be found there.<sup>25</sup>

Whereas Jewish communities were established almost exclusively in cities and towns in the Middle Ages, the Jewish settlements of the Early Modern period could be found predominately in small and very small rural locations.<sup>26</sup> There, the Jews served as money lenders, providing the local economy with the ready money which was permanently in demand, and as agents, exporting locally produced (mostly agricultural) products and importing the manufactured goods for which there was a considerable demand.<sup>27</sup> When they found places to settle close to cities and towns, they established themselves in trade between the city and the surrounding countryside. Above all, however, it was the cattle-trade that was of particular importance to the Jewish economy of the German speaking countries of the Early Modern period. In principal, the "Landjuden" lived under the jurisdiction of their respective rulers, dependent on their goodwill, and were thus under constant threat of expulsion. After the end of the Thirty Years War their situation stabilised. The settlements were able to establish communal institutions which provided some

---

Thirty Years' War.

<sup>25</sup> For the power political requirements for Jewish settlement during the Old Empire, see Sabine Ullmann, *Nachbarschaft und Konkurrenz: Juden und Christen in Dörfern der Markgrafschaft Burgau 1650 bis 1750*, Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, no. 151 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 473: *Typically, the Jewish settlements had an advantage in the Old Empire in territories that fulfilled at least one of two criteria: they were either small regions of control or regions in which the controlling power was contested.*

<sup>26</sup> Rohrbacher emphasizes the importance of the small-town market places for Jewish existence in the Early Modern Era. Under the rule of Count Kaspar, Hohenems was also granted the privilege of having a market. On the issue of rural Judaism in the Middle Ages, see: Rohrbacher, 'Die Entstehung der jüdischen Landgemeinden', 37.

<sup>27</sup> On the economic activities of the rural Jews in the Early Modern Era, see: Michael Toch, 'Die ländliche Wirtschaftstätigkeit der Juden im frühmodernen Deutschland', in Richarz and Rürup, eds (1997).

security for individuals and enabled life according to the Jewish law, thus creating the necessary framework for a Jewish collective.<sup>28</sup> In the case of the Hohenems Jews, permission to establish their own cemetery was already provided for in the first edict of protection issued in 1617. The first evidence of a burial in the cemetery that still exists in the southern part of town is from the year 1641.<sup>29</sup> The first Hohenems edict of protection also permitted the free practice of religion. The only restrictions were on publicly conducted religious acts. A Synagogue was erected in 1770-72. Prior to that, Hohenems Jews gathered for communal prayers in private homes, generally in the house of the Parnass. In 1765 the Imperial County of Hohenems was taken over by the house of Austria. This did not interrupt the increasing process of consolidation of the Hohenems Jewish community.<sup>30</sup>

The community reached its demographic peak in the emancipation decades. The houses in the Jewish quarter acquired their present form at this time. In 1855 the congregation, not counting domestic servants and "foreign Jews", was roughly 12 percent of the total population of Hohenems and about 0.5 percent of the population of the province. These figures were comparable with Wuerttemberg, a state which also had a low percentage of Jewish inhabitants. Among the Hohenems community were wealthy and widely connected Court Jew families. Their stately homes, which lent the Judengasse its urban appearance, at the same time represented the bourgeois life style of the owners and the consolidation of the situation of the Jews who were now prepared to invest in real estate. In keeping with the spirit of enlightenment and emancipation, Jews were granted the freedom to settle wherever they chose.

---

<sup>28</sup> See also Stephan Rohrbacher, 'Medinat Schwaben: Jüdisches Leben in einer süddeutschen Landschaft in der Frühneuzeit', in Kießling, ed. (1995).

<sup>29</sup> Bernhard Purin, 'Der Hohenemser Judenfriedhof im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', *Montfort: Vierteljahresschrift für Geschichte und Gegenwart Vorarlbergs* 41, no. 3/4 (1989).

<sup>30</sup> With the death of count Franz Wilhelm III in 1759, the Hohenems family "expired in its male lineage" (as it is so nicely called). In 1765 Maria Theresia, emperess of the Holy Roman Empire, mortgaged the Habsburg (and thereby her own) Erzhaus Österreich with the imperial fief Ems. In 1767 the subjects of the Reichsgrafschaft took an oath to the new Herrschaft and the Jews also asked for the usual protection and supervision of the country. In 1769 the Hohenems Jews received the edict of protection of the new rulers in Vienna. Hohenems, however, was not integrated into the Austrian dominions "Vor dem Arlberg". It remained an Imperial County and Maria Theresia became the Reichsgräfin of Hohenems. Therefore, Hohenems was never represented in the Vorarlberg body of representatives. Until the end of the old Empire it had its seat in the Swabian Kreis. This solution for the integration of the Reichsgrafschaft Hohenems into the Habsburg dominions assured the Catholic dynasty a seat in the mixed confession Imperial

Although Austrian Jews first achieved complete civil equality with the constitution of 1867, from the early nineteenth century onward, more and more places opened their doors for Jewish inhabitants. The Jews left their rural environment in steady droves, settling in towns and cities and establishing the urban Jewish communities of the nineteenth century. In 1855, about 530 Jews were registered in the Hohenems community; in 1867 they numbered about 200, and in 1931 the community consisted of sixteen Jews. The few members of the Jewish community still in Hohenems after the disbanding of the community in 1940 were deported to Vienna in 1942 and subsequently perished in Nazi-concentration and extermination camps in the East.<sup>31</sup> After 1945, Jewish Displaced Persons lived in Hohenems; the last left for Israel or the United States in 1954. Today there is no longer a Jewish community in Hohenems.

The history of the Jewish community of Hohenems from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries developed in accordance with the general pattern of Jewish rural life in the southern and south-western areas of the Old Reich in the Early Modern and the Modern period. There was a beginning of communal life in the seventeenth century, decades under a pall of insecurity and uncertainty and increasing consolidation in the eighteenth century. A demographic peak came in the decades of emancipation, in the course of which Jews achieved complete civil equality. This led to a migration movement to the newly founded urban Jewish communities in the nineteenth century. The total annihilation of Jewish rural life came by the Nazis in the twentieth century. Throughout all of these centuries, manifold cultural, economic and personal ties connected the Jews of Hohenems with other Jewish communities and centres of the Old Reich. Areas of concentration within this network, maintained mainly by marriage ties, were Swabia, the "Vorderösterreichische Grafschaft Burgau", the Swiss Surbtal, the south of the duchy of Baden and the Austrian

---

parliament of the Swabian Kreis.

<sup>31</sup> The figures have been taken from the collective biographical databank on the history of the Jews in Hohenems und Vorarlberg from 1780 to 1914. Hans Gruber and Niko Hofinger, among others, compiled this databank on behalf of the Jewish Museum Hohenems and the Institute for Contemporary History of the University of Innsbruck. It can be viewed at both of these institutions and publication is planned. For the course of history of the Jewish community in Hohenems in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see: Eva Grabherr, ed., "*... eine ganz kleine jüdische Gemeinde, die nur von den Erinnerungen lebt!*": *Juden in Hohenems* (Hohenems: Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 1996).

territories of Northern Italy. Magnets for Jews leaving Hohenems in the nineteenth century were communities in the major cities of the Habsburg monarchy (Vienna, Prague), as well as those in Switzerland, Baden, Wuerttemberg, Bavaria, Northern Italy and the United States.<sup>32</sup>

Particular relations linked the Jews of Hohenems to the Jewish communities of the "Vorderösterreichische Markgrafschaft Burgau", an important centre of Jewish life in the Old Reich. In 1438/40 the Jews were banished from the Imperial Free City of Augsburg. In 1499 came the expulsion of the Jews from the Imperial Free City of Ulm. The Jewish inhabitants of the rural communities that were established in the sixteenth century in the surroundings of these two cities perceived themselves as the "sons" of these two important centres of medieval Jewish life. Decisive prerequisites for the formation of this distinguished Jewish landscape were the disunited state of this "Territorium non clausum", conflicting claims in relation to the sovereignty of many dominions within this territory and the existence of a large number of co-dominions.<sup>33</sup> The Jewish communities of Pfersee and Kriegshaber in particular, located in the hinterland of Augsburg, had a strong attraction for Jewish traders far beyond the territorial borders. Another important Jewish community with close trading and marital ties to the Hohenems Jews was located in Ichenhausen. The close connections between the Jews of these two dominions date back to the beginnings of the community in Hohenems. The Thirty Years War caused a mass exodus of Jews from the war-torn territories of Eastern Swabia. A large number of families found in Hohenems in the early seventeenth century can be traced back to places such as Thannhausen, Pfersee and other communities.<sup>34</sup> In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, family ties and economic connections between the communities of Hohenems (in particular Sulz, a community affiliated with Hohenems) and the outlying communities of Augsburg were so close that Bernhard Purin suggests that these two Jewish communities be considered as part of the Jewish landscape of Eastern Swabia.<sup>35</sup> When the Jews of Sulz were expelled from the village in 1744, the

---

<sup>32</sup> On the migration goals of the Hohenems Jews from 1785-1900, see: Hans Gruber, *Kollektivbiographische Datenbank zur Bevölkerung der Jüdischen Gemeinde Hohenems 1780-1900*, Unpublished Report (Feldkirch, 1996), 25-30.

<sup>33</sup> See also Sabine Ullmann: *Nachbarschaft und Konkurrenz*.

<sup>34</sup> Burmeister, 'Jüdische Gemeinde', 17.

<sup>35</sup> Bernhard Purin, *Die Juden von Sulz: Eine jüdische Landgemeinde in Vorarlberg 1676-1744*, Studien zur Geschichte und Gesellschaft Vorarlbergs, no. 9 (Bregenz: Vorarlberger Autoren Gesellschaft, 1991), 80-7. Sabine



Austrian authorities even considered settling them in their dominion in Kriegshaber.<sup>36</sup> Even in the decades of emancipation (1770 to 1820), the Jews of the margraviate of Burgau supplied the greatest number of women marrying into the Hohenems community.<sup>37</sup>

Hohenems was once the site of the oldest Jewish community with a history extending into the twentieth century in the west of what is now Austria.<sup>38</sup> After the process of restructuring the religious affairs of the Monarchy in 1890, Hohenems even became the seat of the Rabbinate of the Kronland Tirol thus managing the other communities in Innsbruck and Meran. That meant, for example, that until 1914 the Rabbi of the Hohenems community kept the records of all Jews living in the then united provinces. However, in accordance with the general trend of Jewish rural history, the population in Hohenems declined to the benefit of Innsbruck, the new urban centre of western Austria. In 1914, Innsbruck became the seat of the Rabbinate of the Monarchy's most western crown land.

## Hohenems in Jewish Cultural Mapping

It is less the objective significance for Jewish history within the territory of Austria, but rather the fact that the well-known and still widely respected historiographer and Rabbi, Aron Tänzer, came to Hohenems that places it so firmly on the map of Jewish culture. Aron Tänzer was born in 1871 in Bratislava (Pressburg), attended the famous Yeshiva of his hometown and studied Philosophy, Germanic Studies, Semitic Philology and History in Berlin and Bern. In 1896 he became Rabbi of Hohenems. In 1905 he left for Merano (today in the South Tyrol, Italy) and later Göppingen (today in Württemberg, Germany), where he died in 1937.<sup>39</sup> In 1905, the year of his departure from Hohenems, he published a history of the local Jewish community. This volume, comprising roughly 800 pages, can be found in all major Judaica-libraries world-wide. Tänzer's work is historiographically based in the

---

Ullmann, however, criticizes the vague terminology, *Nachbarschaft und Konkurrenz*, 227, note 382.

<sup>22</sup> Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 96.

<sup>37</sup> Gruber, *Kollektivbiographische Datenbank*, 22-23.

<sup>38</sup> See, in addition, Eva Grabherr, 'Die bürgerliche Gleichstellung der Juden im 19. Jahrhundert am Beispiel der Jüdischen Gemeinde Hohenems', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 43.

<sup>39</sup> Ilse Wegscheider, 'Leben und Werk von Dr. Aron Tänzer', in Burmeister,

tradition of the "Wissenschaft des Judentums". His *Geschichte der Juden in Württemberg*, published posthumously in 1937, is still currently considered an authoritative work.<sup>40</sup>

An important motive which led Tänzer to become the historiographer of the Hohenems Jews was the lack of attention, in his well founded opinion, that non-Jewish historians showed for the Jewish history of the province.<sup>41</sup> It was, in fact, not until the 1970s that local historians began seriously to consider the Jewish history of the region. The local historians' discovery of Jewish history followed a general trend in Germany and Austria in the 1970s and 1980s, which reached a peak in the activities of the remembrance year 1988, the fiftieth anniversary of the "November pogrom" of 1938. In the course of this pogrom, Jews in Germany and annexed Austria were murdered and arrested and hundreds of Synagogues throughout the entire Reich were demolished.<sup>42</sup> In larger cities and towns only a very few buildings were spared, but hundreds of rural synagogues, other Jewish buildings and cemeteries in the countryside survived. The Second World War and the Holocaust led to the total extinction of rural Jewish life in Germany and Austria. New Jewish life arose in only a few cities and towns after the catastrophe. The former Jewish buildings in the countryside decayed or were put to uses other than those for which they were originally intended. Starting in the 1970s, however, they were increasingly rediscovered as material evidence of a previous Jewish life and transformed into monuments to the Jewish cultural heritage of these sites. Hundreds of associations were founded aiming at the preservation and restoration of former Jewish buildings and the establishment of museums. The cemeteries of the former

---

ed. (1987), *passim*.

<sup>40</sup> See the bibliographical essay on the latest comprehensive German-Jewish history in the Modern Era by Michael A. Meyer, ed., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, Vol. 2, *Emancipation and Acculturation. 1780-1871*, by Michael Brenner, Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, and Michael A. Meyer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 370.

<sup>41</sup> See also: Karl Heinz Burmeister, 'Die Juden in der Vorarlberger Landesgeschichte', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), and Eva Grabherr, Johannes Inama, and Bernhard Purin, 'Auswahlbibliographie zur Geschichte der Juden in Vorarlberg', in Grabherr, ed. (1996).

<sup>42</sup> Figures for the destruction of the synagogues in Baden-Württemberg and Hessen can be found in Utz Jeggle, 'Nachrede: Erinnerungen an die Dorfjuden heute', in Richarz and Rürup, eds (1997), 405. On the museological debate of this phenomenon, see Sabine Offe, 'Verbaute Erinnerung: Orte jüdischer Geschichte nach 1945', in *Museum im Kopf*, ed. Roswitha Muttenthaler, Herbert Posch, and Eva S.-Sturm, *Museum zum Quadrat*, no. 7 (Vienna: Turia und Kant, 1997).

rural Jewish communities usually in remote, quiet areas also became objects of this newly awakened interest. Dozens of "Genisot", discovered in the attics of former Synagogues or even rescued from piles of rubbish, also served as a stimulus to further research.<sup>43</sup> One of the main characteristics of this re-discovery was its non-academic basis. The process was based mainly on the activities and initiatives of local and regional historians and history-groups of the grassroots history movement, or "Geschichte-von-unten-Bewegung" rather than academic institutions.<sup>44</sup> It was, however, at this time primarily non-Jews who researched local Jewish history. The most recent theoretical works place this movement in the context of the attempt, on the part of society both in Germany and Austria, to come to terms with guilt in relation to the Shoah.<sup>45</sup>

In Hohenems as well, the first evidence of a re-association with the local Jewish history comes in the context of on-site historical activity in the 1960s. In 1961, for the first time after 1945, a street was named after a public Jewish figure. Street names that reflected Hohenems Jewish history had existed many years earlier. In 1908, in the course of the official introduction of street names, the former "Judengasse", was named "Marco-Brunner-Straße" in honour of an early mayor of the Jewish community. Another street in the centre of the Jewish quarter was dedicated to the well-known Hohenems-born Cantor, Salomon Sulzer. With the National-Socialist take-over in Austria in 1938, these normal tokens of the integration of Jewish history into local history were, however, erased. The earlier Judengasse in Hohenems was re-named after a *martyr of the national-socialist movement*. In the local community papers, the National-Socialist mayor of the town explained his motivation: Any memorials of Jewish control in Hohenems are to be *eradicated*. In 1945, the name of the "national-socialist martyr" likewise disappeared from the town's street scene and the street running through the former Jewish quarter was renamed, quite neutrally, "Schweizerstraße" (Swiss Street). These proceedings point to a particular "historical loss of memory" in Austria in the decades following

---

<sup>43</sup> See also, Falk Wiesemann, ed., *Genizah: Hidden Legacies of the German Village Jews/Genisa: Verborgenes Erbe der deutschen Landjuden* (Wien: Bertelsmann, 1992).

<sup>44</sup> See also, Monika Richarz, 'Ländliches Judentum als Problem der Forschung', in Richarz and Rürup, eds (1997).

<sup>45</sup> Sabine Offe, *Ausstellungen, Einstellungen, Entstellungen: Jüdische Museen in Deutschland und Österreich* (Berlin and Vienna: Philo Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000).

the war. The treatment of the former Hohenems Synagogue also reflects this state of affairs quite succinctly. In 1954-1955, this building which had been opened in 1772 as a place of worship and meeting room, was reconstructed and made into a fire station. The foundation plaque, which was placed on the building in the spring of 1955, presented the building as a new construction.<sup>46</sup>

In the 1970s and 1980s there was a steady increase in the number of contributions on the part of local historians to the rediscovery of the city's Jewish history. The investigation of the early history of the Jews in Hohenems was given significant impetus through the purchase of the (hitherto privately owned) "Palastarchiv Hohenems" by the Vorarlberg provincial archives in 1986. The violent end of the Jewish community through National Socialism was made a topic by young historians who joined together in an organisation and discussed the theme with a frankness that gave rise to much controversy. All of these activities formed a basis for the founding of an organisation whose stated goal was the erection of a museum to document the Jewish history of the province and preserve the cultural heritage of this history. In 1991 the museum was opened in the former Jewish quarter of the city in the villa of a Jewish industrial family which was renovated and adapted for its new function.<sup>47</sup>

### **The Value of the Löwenberg Collection as a Source**

The Löwenberg find, discovered in 1986 and handed over to the museum just a few months before its opening, forms a central element of this young institution's collection. It is one of the museum's few original comprehensive items documenting the history of the Jews in Hohenems. A large portion of the documents and objects in its permanent exhibition are on loan from the permanent collections of other

---

<sup>46</sup> For the process of the rediscovery of the Jewish history of the city, see: Eva Grabherr, "Erinnerung ist Erinnerung an etwas Vergessenes": Die Wiederentdeckung der jüdischen Geschichte in einer Kleinstadt der österreichischen Provinz', in *2. Wiener Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte, Kultur und Museumswesen* (Vienna: Verlag Christian Brandstätter, 1995-96/5756). The references for the quotations used here can also be found there.

<sup>47</sup> On the history of the institution of the Museum see Kurt Greussing, 'Ein Jüdisches Museum in Hohenems: Das Konzept der Ausstellung und die Geschichte des Projektes', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), and Erik Weltsch, 'Die Geschichte des Vereins "Jüdisches Museum Hohenems"', in Grabherr, ed. (1996).

institutions and loans and some gifts from the descendants of former Hohenems Jewish families. The archive as well is primarily a documentation archive in which there are copies of documents from the collections of other institutions – as well as a few scattered original documents. In addition to the consistency and scope of the material, the documents of the Löwenberg collection can be counted among the few extant sources which give access to an inner-Jewish perspective on the history of the Hohenems Jews.<sup>48</sup> Excerpts from the community's protocol book exist from the years 1792 to 1825 (in Yiddish with a strong *loshn koydesh* component) and 1845-47 as well as 1897 (in German). This protocol book can currently be found in Jerusalem in the "Archives for the History of the Jewish People". There are also several business records, for example, from Jewish traders from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which present an important socio-historical resource for certain aspects of everyday Jewish life in Hohenems but for many other aspects there is no inner-Jewish source material.<sup>49</sup> Aron Tänzer, who came to Hohenems as a Rabbi in 1896, and who published his classical work on the history of the Hohenems' Jews in 1905, relied to quite a great extent on the resources of the archives of the Jewish community and the archives of the local dominion. His work is still considered to be highly valuable as he was able to bring in information based on inner-family knowledge and private documents from the Hohenems Jewish families. Such sources are, for the most part, currently unavailable, especially if our historical interest lies in the nineteenth century or earlier. The more recent historical works of recent decades therefore almost universally rely on the relevant dominion archives of the region; for example, the Hohenems "Palastarchiv" or the collections of the various other administrative institutions to which the Jewish community and its members were subject in these centuries. Additionally, local and regional newspapers and magazines were evaluated as source material for socio-historically

---

<sup>48</sup> In the archive of the Jewish Museum of Hohenems there is a second collection which contains ca. 150 years of history of a rural Jewish family (beginning of the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century): the collection Bollag-Landauer. The majority are legal documents (sales contracts, etc.) and official correspondence. See Eva Grabherr, 'Ivan Landauer - Aufenthalt auf Widerruf: Die Schweizer Flüchtlingspolitik im Spiegel eines persönlichen Nachlasses', in *"Wir lebten wie sie": Jüdische Lebensgeschichten aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*, ed. Thomas Albrich (Innsbruck: Haymon-Verlag, 1999).

<sup>49</sup> On the situation of sources on the history of the rural Jewry, see Monika Richarz, 'Die Entdeckung der Landjuden', in *Landjudentum* (1992), 14.

oriented works concerning the decades of the close of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.

The Löwenberg Collection is the family archive of a Hohenems Court Jew family containing documents, mainly letters dating from the middle of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth centuries. As such, it fills an important gap in the source material available for the investigation of the history of the rural Jewish community in Hohenems and the Jewish landscape to which this community belonged. The time span covered by the documents corresponds with the first decades of the emancipation process of the Jews in Germany and Austria. These were decisive decades for the process leading to the formation of what David Sorkin describes as the *Jewish-German-Subculture* of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>50</sup> This process was not only legal and political, but also social and cultural. His research, therefore, was not limited to the external legal and political conditions to which the Jews, as a group, were subject, merely reacting to its consequences. Jews in Germany and Austria also had an influence on this process and what is especially important is that they were also involved in designing this process and moulding their culture. In order to bring this aspect within the view of historical reflections, it is necessary to fall back on relevant sources. Sorkin describes his methods for the historical investigation of the transformation process that the Jewish community in Germany underwent in the decades of emancipation as a *cultural history of a particular sort*. He relies less on original source material from “high culture” and much more on popular material whose targeted audience was the emerging bourgeoisie of these decades. His main sources are taken from a mass of magazines, sermons, novels, popular-theological texts, etc.<sup>51</sup>

Letters, mainly private letters, enable another perspective on historical events. Like other types of sources recognised within the group of “ego-documents”, as important sources in cultural-historical history, they permit the posing of new questions concerning historical work, which, according to Winfried Schulze, has become the aim of research. The most recent historical research, says Schulze, asks more and more about perception and experience and is less interested in the factuality of

---

<sup>50</sup> David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry. 1780-1840* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 7.

<sup>51</sup> Sorkin, *Transformation*, 7.

macro-historical processes themselves than in their transposition into people's lives and the precipitation of these processes into their perception.<sup>52</sup>

The Löwenberg-collection's significance as historical source is therefore relevant for the following themes and aspects of research:

- for an investigation of the acculturation and embourgeoisment of Jewish upper-class families in the early decades of emancipation from an inner-Jewish perspective, based on cultural history;
- for a micro-historical investigation of the Jews' linguistic change in Germany in the context of this transformation process, as an example of how acculturation and its dynamics can be studied, and
- for the question of the relevance of private letters as source material for working historically from social and cultural historical orientation.

This, however, first requires the evaluation of the source collection; necessarily the first step in the present work.

## Description of the Löwenberg Collection

Masses of papers, a considerable quantity of used leather shoes and a few objects emerged from behind panelling in the attic of the house at Schweizerstraße 4. The papers and the objects are now in the archive of the Jewish Museum in Hohenems.<sup>53</sup> The portion of the collection that is irreparably damaged, according to current estimates, fills two 40 x 30 x 18 acid-free archive boxes. This is roughly 20 percent of the total material.<sup>54</sup> The portion of the collection that has been cleaned

---

<sup>52</sup> Winfried Schulze, 'Schlußbemerkungen zur Konferenz über "Ego-Dokumente"', in *Ego-Dokumente: Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte*, ed. Winfried Schulze, *Selbstzeugnisse der Neuzeit*, no. 2 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1996), 345. According to Schulze, ego documents are texts which give information either forced or voluntarily about a person's self-perception in his/her family, community, country or social class or reflect on his/her relationship to these systems and the changes which occur. A list of the ego documents of the bourgeoisie can be found in Rebekka Habermas, *Frauen und Männer des Bürgertums: Eine Familiengeschichte (1750-1850)*, *Bürgertum. Beiträge zur europäischen Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, no. 14 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 23, note 103: notebooks which present a mixture of diaries, notebooks of excerpted texts, collections of aphorisms, classical diaries, travelogues, autobiographical sketches, obituaries, etc. but, mainly, letters.

<sup>53</sup> The collection Löwenberg in the archive of the Jewish Museum Hohenems comprises the shelf-marks JMH A 1-16 and A 69-A 76.

<sup>54</sup> Boxes with the shelf-marks JHM A 14, A 15 and A 16. A cursory investigation indicated that this material did not contradict the content

and thoroughly examined includes about 360 hand-written letters and 35 miscellaneous items. The correspondence material consists of around 200 letters in Latin-German cursive and around 160 letters written in Hebrew characters. Within the framework of this project, the latter were recorded in a databank, examined for their content and described according to specific criteria. They comprise the inner-Jewish correspondence of the collection and stand at the centre of this project. The documents written in Latin-German cursive were consulted for categorisation purposes.

### **Classification of Family History**

According to an official estimate of the value of all Jewish houses in Hohenems, the house at Schweizer Straße 4 - in the nineteenth century Israelitengasse 2 - was owned in 1806/7 by the Parnass (head of the Jewish community) and Court Jew Lazarus Josef Levi (1743-1806), whose descendants took on the name Löwenberg in 1813. At that time the value of the building was estimated at more than 4,000 gulden which therefore placed it among the most highly valued houses in the Jewish community.<sup>55</sup> The official estimate of 1806/07 is the first historical evidence of the existence of the building whose exact construction date was not recorded. It can be assumed, however, with a degree of certainty that it was built by Lazarus Josef Levi in the years after 1777. Architectural characteristics point to a construction date during this time and this date can also be reconstructed from the construction history of the former "Judengasse" (later "Israelitengasse") and in particular from the early ownership-data of a neighbouring building. In 1777, a fire broke out in Hohenems from a house in "Christengasse", which caused a great deal of damage, particularly in the Jewish quarter. The fire consumed a considerable number of the Jews' houses. As a result of this catastrophic fire, the rows of majestic burgher homes, lending the neighbourhood an urban character, arose there where the houses in the centre of the quarter had burnt down to their foundations. The house at Schweizer Straße 4 also stands within this row of houses. Lazarus Josef Levi and his brother Hirsch (1735-1792), were already listed in the records as

---

evaluation of the collection described here. It contains, as far as can be determined, letters in Hebrew characters and in Latin-German cursive from the last third of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries as well as hand-bound simple note and business books.

<sup>55</sup> Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 165-8.



the owners of the prior building burnt down in 1777. They had run the business "Gebrüder Hirsch und Lazarus Levy" together, and after the fire, built separate houses for their families. Hirsch, whose descendants took on the name Hirschfeld in 1813, bequeathed his house, directly adjacent to the house at Schweizer Straße 4, to his son in 1792. From that, it can be concluded that Lazarus' house at Schweizerstraße 4 was also already built at this time. After the death of Lazarus, the building went to his youngest son Moritz (Moses) Levi-Löwenberg (1786-1836). The building remained in this branch of the family Levi until 1884. Moritz Löwenberg (1843-1887), the great nephew of the original owner and the last Jewish owner, sold it in 1884 to a Christian family from Hohenems.<sup>56</sup>

The house's ownership history is reflected in the collection of documents found there. Among the portion of the collection in a condition permitting evaluation, the oldest dateable documents date from before the assumed construction date of the current building. This is relatively easy to explain, since the same family had already owned the previous building; the documents survived the fire and were transferred at the time of the move into the new house. The oldest dateable document of the (workable) collection is a business letter from 1760 written in German gothic script. The most recent dateable hand-written document is a letter written in German gothic script from 1865.<sup>57</sup> Around 33 (currently) dateable letters originate from the eighteenth century: from between the years 1760 to 1785. Around 290 dateable letters can be assigned to the years from 1800 to 1865. Among these, only ten letters are from the years 1830 to 1839, and only three remain for the decade from 1840 to 1850. Dating the documents makes visible the clear concentration of the material in two major periods: in the eighteenth century, the years 1760 to 1785; and in the nineteenth century the years from 1800 to 1829.

---

<sup>56</sup> The dates of the ownership history of both houses, quoted from Gruber, *Von Häusern und Menschen*.

<sup>57</sup> The two most recently dated documents of the collection are Jewish periodicals from 1889, a year in which the house was already owned by a Christian. One possible explanation is that Jewish tenants continued to live in the Christian house. Jewish tenants in Christian houses and the reverse have been documented in Hohenems for the entire nineteenth century. See: Gruber, *Von Häusern und Menschen*, 21. My decision not to include these two documents in the actual dating of the collection is mainly because the type of document (newspaper) is not representative for the collection and because there is a two-decade gap until the next most recent document (1865). Since the recovery of the collection is not documented, we also do not know where these periodicals were found. The two periodicals are: *Jüdisches Familienblatt*, No. 5 (1889), and *Jüdisches Literaturblatt*, No. 5

The contents of the documents also refer mainly to the Jewish family who owned the building at Schweizer Straße 4 in which the find was made. Only a few documents are not clearly tied to the "Hoffaktor" family Levi-Löwenberg, a family that was widely disseminated and well connected throughout the southern German area.

First, however, we shall remain in the time period from which the great majority of the documents originate. In 1806, Lazarus Josef Levi died and the house fell into the ownership of his youngest son, Moritz (Moses) Levi-Löwenberg. Moritz or Moses (his Jewish name), was born in Hohenems in 1786 and after his father's death probably took over the business. This can be assumed because the largest portion of the business letters and many of the private letters of the collection until the 1830s are addressed to *Herrn Lazar Josef Levis sel. Sohn*. There is still a letter addressed to the border post office in Bregenz from 1826 which Moritz signed with the name *auf die Firma Lazarus Joseph Levy sel. Sohn*.<sup>58</sup> In 1807, Moritz Löwenberg married Klara Ullman (born 1786 in Pfersee), who came from a large and influential southern German rural Jewish family. Her father, "Hoffaktor" Henle Ephraim Ullman, was among the three Jews who in 1803, after more than 250 years of a ban on Jewish settlement, achieved permanent admission to the Imperial City-state of Augsburg. There he initiated the trade of state bonds and contributed to the development of a modern credit system. Moritz Löwenberg died in Augsburg in 1836. Klara died in Hohenems in 1854. Both are buried in the Jewish cemetery in Hohenems.<sup>59</sup>

In the context of these biographical facts, the collections can then be categorised more precisely. The great majority of the documents date from the decades in the first half of the nineteenth century in which Klara and Moritz Löwenberg were the heads of the household at Schweizerstraße 4. These were the "active" years for the

---

(1889); both published by Dr. M. Rahmer, Magdeburg.

<sup>58</sup> JMH A 10: Moritz Löwenberg, auf die Firma Lazarus Joseph Levy sel. Sohn, to Löblich K. K. Grenz. Postamt Bregenz, Hohenems, 8. ? 1826. Whether Moritz Levi-Löwenberg took over his father's firm alone or with one of his brothers, is not currently known.

<sup>59</sup> Biographical data, quoted from the *Kollektivbiographischen Datenbank zur Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems und Vorarlberg von 1780 bis 1914*, compiled by, among others, Hans Gruber und Niko Hofinger. On the resettlement of the first Jewish families in Augsburg in the nineteenth century, see: Volker Dotterweich and Beate Reißner, 'Finanznot und Domizilrecht: Zur Aufnahme

couple, in which Moritz was in charge of the business, which he had taken over from his father, and Klara bore eight children and raised seven who survived. There are hundreds of business letters from the southern German area and the close surroundings of Hohenems addressed to the firm "Lazar Levi sel. Sohn". There are also a great number of private letters, which for the most part are addressed to Klara Levi-Löwenberg. There are letters from Augsburg and other communities in the southern German area from members of her family and friends. There is also news from her husband about his business trips and letters from her children who were sent for a education to Jewish houses in the larger cities of the southern German area.

All of these findings suggest that the material uncovered in 1986 is the Levi-Löwenberg's family archive. The major part can be assigned to the married couple Klara and Moritz Levi-Löwenberg and their children. The letters from the last third of the eighteenth century are addressed to Lazarus, the father, and/or Hirsch Levi, the uncle, of Moritz Levi-Löwenberg. The collection contains this family's correspondence over three generations from the last third of the eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century. For both the business and private correspondence, the most frequent address from which the letters are written is Augsburg and the southern German area (primarily Bavaria). A significant number of letters from the neighbourhood of Hohenems can only be found among the business correspondence. The geographical scope of the correspondence, however, extends from Vienna to the east, Bolzano to the south, St. Gallen, Metz and Blamont to the west and Frankfurt/Main to the north. When sorted according to content, the collection contains quantitatively, in the following order: business letters, private letters, bound notebooks, business books and ledgers, lottery tickets and results of the lottery, notes, a library list, a notebook with exercises in French and German, a book of notes for *Piano Music*, a calendar, a map of the German Empire, business cards, a fragment of a prayer book and a small number of book fragments.

## **Languages and Writing of the Collection**

At the most, 5 percent of this material consists of printed documents. The great majority is hand-written material, written in Latin-German cursive (about 60 percent) or in Hebrew characters. In many cases the writers use both alphabets within one document. The systematic organisation of the material by language is quite complicated. Beginning with documents, which can be clearly assigned to one language, more than half of the collection is formed by documents in German, written in Latin-German cursive. In addition to an insignificant amount of miscellaneous items (among them also printed documents and works), this part of the collection consists primarily of business correspondence. Only very few private letters are written in this way. Several letters, a notebook with written and oral exercises and a language book in French have been preserved. Hebrew is represented in two letters and a fragment of a prayer book.<sup>60</sup> There remains a considerable collection of documents whose language cannot be so unambiguously determined. There are about 170 such documents: mainly letters and a few miscellaneous items. What is common to all is that they are written in Hebrew characters. At this point, it should be sufficient to introduce the language of these documents as "Western Yiddish" and "German in Hebrew characters". As this part of the collection forms the actual subject of this work, the language issue will be discussed at length. Composed in Western Yiddish are the letters from the last third of the eighteenth century. German in Hebrew letters is the language of a great number of letters and few miscellaneous items (library lists, notebooks and ledgers) from the first half of the nineteenth century.

If the letters are systematically examined according to the criteria of "language" and "content", the following picture arises: for the letters from the eighteenth century, no clear correlation between the content and the language can be made. Both the letters in German cursive as well as the Western Yiddish letters are business correspondence. The German letters are from non-Jewish business partners; the Western Yiddish letters - not surprisingly - are the inner-Jewish correspondence. The Western Yiddish letters consist mainly of inner-family correspondence, although the business content of the letters is highly predominant.

---

<sup>60</sup> Letters 71 and 145 of the data bank. Both letters originate from a Sofer Stam from Ansbach from the Jewish year 565 (1805/06) and are addressed to the Chief Rabbi Samel Löb or Rav Schmuël (Samuel Ullmann) in Hohenems. They refer to an order the Sofer received from Hohenems.

Private family letters, such as those contained in large numbers in the Löwenberg collection from the early nineteenth century, are not present. For the material from the nineteenth century, however, a very clear correlation between content and language/writing of the documents can be determined. There is hardly any business correspondence written in German in Hebrew characters. The remaining business correspondence is written completely in German and Latin-German cursive. The private family letters written in German with Hebrew characters sometimes allude to business affairs, yet private affairs in the sense of non-business matters, predominate. The main part of the private correspondence preserved is written in German with Hebrew characters. Only a few private letters are composed in German in Latin-German cursive.

### **The Representative Value of the Source Material**

The final question, which I would like to discuss here in connection with the first description of the collection, is the representative value of the documents of this find. To which social groups could statements made in the documents be relevant? In principle, this question can be asked of every document and every collection of documents adduced as source material for historical work. Historiography has therefore developed methods for "source critique". Whom and which perspective do documents represent and for which areas are they at all meaningful? In what larger context can that which has been reconstructed from source material be seen, and to what extent have these larger contexts already been researched?

Let's first deal with the contexts. Work with this difficult source material that is so tedious to decipher was considerably facilitated by the fact that important contexts have already been well researched. The key dates of the history of the Jews in Hohenems and of their surrounding society in the last centuries are already known. Through the historiographical work of the community Rabbi, Aron Tänzer, from 1905, important elements of the collective memory of his time have been preserved that are relevant to the present investigation. Through them, we have access to knowledge which could not have been discovered in any administrative archive. Our knowledge of the individual families in the Hohenems Jewish community in

particular relies heavily on Tänzer's work.<sup>61</sup> There have also been several relevant works published in the past few years on the Jewish history of Augsburg, especially in terms of the beginnings of the city's modern Jewish community. The process of emancipation of the Jews in the German speaking areas, which occurred in the decades covered by our collection, has also, in the meantime, been well described. Although investigations that deal mainly with the legal-social dimensions of this event still dominate, David Sorkin, in his standard text, deals extensively with the cultural and historical dimensions of these processes.<sup>62</sup> The phenomenon of the language transformation, which accompanied the process leading to the civil equality of the Jews in the German-speaking areas, is, on the other hand, a comparably recent theme in the German speaking research. Historians from the United States such as Steve Lowenstein and Werner Weinberg worked on this issue as early as the 1970s. Worthy of mention from recent German language literature is *Tradition und Akkulturation. Zum Sprachwandel der Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit der Haskalah* by Nils Römer, published in 1995. Much better and more detailed research exists for northern Germany than for the southern German area.<sup>63</sup>

In terms of the micro-historical level of the collection, the sources for the key dates in the family history of the Levi- Löwenbergs in Hohenems, have already been well developed.<sup>64</sup> For the history of the Ullmans in Augsburg, this has not occurred to such a great extent. How much can be determined however about the local Jewish community from documents which reflect these families? Within the

---

<sup>61</sup> Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*. General overview of the history of the Jews in Hohenems and Vorarlberg, see Grabherr, "... eine ganz kleine jüdische Gemeinde, die nur von den Erinnerungen lebt!"

<sup>62</sup> Sorkin, *Transformation*. Concerning the legal-social dimension of emancipation, see Reinhard Rürup, 'The Torturous and Thorny Path to Legal Equality: "Jews Laws" and Emancipatory Legislation in Germany from the Late Eighteenth Century', in 31. *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1986), and Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, Vol. 2.

<sup>63</sup> See Peter Freimark, 'Language Behaviour and Assimilation: The Situation of the Jews in Northern Germany in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century', in 24. *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1979). Steven M. Lowenstein, 'The Yiddish Written Word in Nineteenth-Century Germany', in 24. *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1979). Werner Weinberg, 'Language Questions Relating to Moses Mendelssohn's Pentateuch Translation', in 105. *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Cincinnati/OH: Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion, 1984.

<sup>64</sup> The birth, marriage and death registry of the Jewish community in Hohenems from the last third of the eighteenth through to the twentieth

Jewish community in Hohenems, the Hoffaktor family Levi formed an élite together with the other Hoffaktor and wealthy families. Although small in number, this élite was nonetheless powerful and at the close of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries also provided the community's authorities. The general trend in the history of the Jewish community in the German Empire also created massive social differentiation in the Jewish community in Hohenems, which brought with it tensions and several conflicts.<sup>65</sup> Keeping this background in mind, it can be assumed that the daily life reflected by the letters is that of a small group in the upper échelons of the community, and in consequence, conclusions cannot simply be drawn concerning other social groups within this community. What can legitimately be said from these letters dealing with the social milieu of these "Hoffaktor" families, tightly networked in terms of business and family, represents less the community as a whole, but rather the life of the élites of the Jewish community, at least in the southern German region during these decades. The "Hoffaktor" family Ullman, however, can be considered representative for the situation of the Jews in Augsburg at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In Augsburg, a community had not yet been formed and permanent residency was only granted to wealthy families.

The same caution and exact examination must be applied when attempts are made to draw conclusions about the situation of the entire community or general trends in the language behaviour of the Jews in Germany from the language behaviour and the writing culture reflected by this collection. It is interesting that the collection for the nineteenth century reveals a clear correlation between the language and function of the documents (private letters = German with Hebrew characters; business letters = German in Latin-German cursive). A retreat of the "Jewish language" to the private realm, however, can be predicated only when these findings can be confirmed by other local studies or by the general trend.

What, then, is the source value of this documentation and what benefit does it suggest for historiographical research on the history of the Jews in Germany and Austria in the decades of emancipation? Conceivably, it cannot serve as an

---

century have already been digitally compiled.

<sup>65</sup> On the social differentiation within the Jewish community in the time of absolutism, see Sorkin, *Transformation*, 43.

adequate source for a work oriented towards the structural history of the Jewish community involved. But there is a great deal which can be discovered from letters as historical source when one is addressing questions about how measures at the legal-social level affected the social environments of those concerned, how people perceived these events and changes and what cultural responses they developed to this confrontation with change. In terms of the language transformation, it is crucial that the letter writers (and the envisaged readers) belong to three consecutive generations. If a change in language can be discerned here, which is also supported by other findings and above all, corresponds with the inner logic of the political and social processes of these decades, then it is possible to arrive at "representative" statements based on such source material.



### 3) Dense Communication: On the Preservation of Translocal Family Connections and Jewish Letter Writing Culture as a Reflection of Acculturation

#### On "Scribblers" in Various Locations

*We Rothschilds are inveterate scribblers and cannot live without letter writing and letter receiving*, wrote Charlotte de Rothschild in 1874 from London to her children.<sup>66</sup> Thousands of private letters from the years 1812 to 1898 saved in 135 boxes in the London family archive attest to this banking family's addiction to letter writing. I could also introduce the Ullmans, a Jewish banking family in Augsburg, with a similar bon mot. Seventy-two of the Löwenberg collection's 128 private letters dating from the first decades of the nineteenth century come from this family and from one of the most important servants of the house, who resided in Augsburg as of 1803. The letters are addressed to Klara (also Kiale or Kile) Ullman (1786–1854), who married the Hohenems court Jew's son Moritz (also Moses or Moshe) Levi-Löwenberg (1786–1836). This marriage led her to move from one of southern Germany's most important trade and finance centres, the Free City of Augsburg (as it existed until 1806), with a population of 28,000 in 1807, to the little market town of Hohenems with a population of 2,300 in 1786.<sup>67</sup> Hohenems had already lost its local royal court in 1765 as a result of the empress Maria Theresia's take-over of the then self-governing county. The administrative reform of the Bavarian kingdom, which ruled the region as a result of the Napoleonic wars during the years 1805 to 1814, subsequently deprived the town of all administrative functions beyond local matters. Klara Ullmann's move therefore presented a remarkable change of location. She moved from the pulsating urban centre of Augsburg with its rich selection of goods, coffee houses, carnivals (which had taken place since the 1760s)

---

<sup>66</sup> Quoted from Niall Ferguson, *The World's Banker: The History of the House of Rothschild* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1998), 29. The private letters (X/109 series) of the Rothschild archives in London were an important source for this 800 page comprehensive family history told from the perspective of an economic history.

<sup>67</sup> Population of Augsburg based on Peter Fassl, *Konfession, Wirtschaft und Politik: Von der Reichsstadt zur Industriestadt. Augsburg 1750-1850*, Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der Stadt Augsburg, no. 32 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke-Verlag, 1988), 18. Population of Hohenems based on Josef Giesinger, 'Hohenems in der Statistik', in *Gedenkschrift Stadterhebung: Hohenems 1333-1983*, ed. Marktgemeinde Hohenems (Hohenems,

and concerts – in short, from a city with a great deal to offer in terms of social life – to the tiny rural Jewish community in the western Austrian provinces.<sup>68</sup>

It was mainly Klara's siblings who reported frequently and in great detail from Augsburg. The most prolific was Joseph Henle (born 1791), registered in the 1814 Augsburg register as the head of the family. Father and mother, Henle Efraim Ullmann and his wife Hauna, had died in 1807. At the time of the registry entry, Josef Henle was single and working in the exchange business, which means that he was working in Augsburg's financial centre.<sup>69</sup> Twenty-seven letters from Josef Henle to Klara and (occasionally) his brother-in-law Moritz from 1807 to 1819 have been recovered. The other siblings, who are also listed in the register, are present within the body of letters: the three sisters, Nina, Fanny and Henriette as well as the brother Isaak (also Isidor) and Efraim Henle Ullmann.<sup>70</sup> According to the register there were nine

---

1983), 280. In 1837 Hohenems had 4,031 inhabitants.

<sup>68</sup> For more on the Jewish traders from the outlying communities of Pfersee and Kriegshaber in the coffee houses in Augsburg, see Sabine Ullmann, *Nachbarschaft und Konkurrenz: Juden und Christen in Dörfern der Markgrafschaft Burgau 1650 bis 1750*, Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, no. 151 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 332. For more on the social life in Augsburg at the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Fassl, *Konfession*, 40-1.

<sup>69</sup> 'Matrikel und Ansässigmachung der Israeliten 1813-1814', quoted from Hans K. Hirsch, 'Zur Situation der Juden in Augsburg während der Emanzipation', in Kießling, ed. (1995), 309-10. The date of death of Henle Efraim Ullmann is 1807, based on Fassl, *Konfession*, 217. JMH LB, B 122/15.1.1809 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems) notes the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Adar as the *yohrtsayt unsers libn fattr* (*yohrtsayt of our dear father*). The inscription on Henle Efraim's and Hauna/Hana's double gravestone at the Jewish cemetery of Kriegshaber confirms this by giving the date of Henle's death as 3<sup>rd</sup> Adar 567 (11 February 1807). According to this source Hauna/Hana died on 11 September 1807. CAHJP, Jerusalem, P 160 - Harburger Notizen 101 (Kriegshaber), 106-7. See also Theodor Harburger, *Die Inventarisierung der jüdischen Kunst- und Kulturdenkmäler in Bayern*, 3 Vols. (Fürth and Jerusalem: Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People Jerusalem and Jüdisches Museum Franken-Fürth & Schnaittach, 1998). (I thank Bernhard Purin, director of the Jewish Museum of Franken in Fürth for his help in providing me with the relevant information from the Harburger notes.) For Hauna/Hana Ullmann, daughter of Löw Wertheimer (1742-1816) from Munich and Nachama Tuschkover, see Louis and Henry Fraenkel, *Genealogical Tables of Jewish Families. 14th-20th Centuries: Forgotten Fragments of the History of the Fraenkel Family*, Vol. 2, *Genealogical Tables*, edited by Georg Simon, 2nd revised and expanded edit. (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1999), table X (Wertheimer)/A/9(9th Generation).

<sup>70</sup> The only birth dates confirmed by sources outside of the correspondence are for Josef Henle and Klara: for Josef Henle, in the registry of 1814 (see note 4), and for Klara in JMH Kollektivbiographische Datenbank. The structure of the Ullmann family according to age, can be reconstructed from the correspondence as follows: Klara (born 1786), Josef Henle (born 1791), Efraim Henle (before 1800), Isaak and Nina (around 1800), Fanny

servants (male and female) employed in the house. Zirle Weil acted as the housekeeper for the Ullmans, who lost both of their parents in 1807. For many years she maintained a steady correspondence with Klara in Hohenems. Zirle, on her mother's side, was a member of the Uffenheimer Court Jew family from Innsbruck. Members of this family also lived in Hohenems in the eighteenth century. Twenty-three letters, which cover the time-span from 1807 to 1827, have been recovered from the exchange between these two women.<sup>71</sup> In Augsburg in 1814, only the Jewish banking families of Seligmann and Kaulla had a larger staff of servants than the Ullmans. Thus the Ullman family offers a view of one of Augsburg's most prominent Jewish bankers during these years.<sup>72</sup>

The dense correspondence of the Ullmann family, which covers the time period from 1807 to 1829, begins with the marriage of Klara, the oldest of the Ullmann children, and her move to Hohenems. Klara and Moritz's wedding took place on 11 November 1807. A letter from Augsburg had already arrived in September of that year. Zirle Weil reported to her *hertsige frayndin* (*dear friend*) in Hohenems, that the children and all the servants were doing well, that they were not greeting many visitors due to the mourning period (most likely due to the death of the mother in September 1807) and that according to her wishes she would continue to tell her everything down to the smallest detail. She would send her the *kokhbikhl* (*cookbook*) as soon as she got it and the other *shohn lengst ervehntn* (*long promised*) things

---

and Henriette (after 1800). Correspondence from the siblings apart from Josef Henle is found in the Löwenberg collection for the following years: Efraim Henle (1808, 1810, 1817, 1818, 1819); the letter of 1808 (JMH LB, B 6/12.5.1808) is very formulaic and shows hardly any individual power of expression although it is not a child's letter. Nina Ullmann (1816, 1820, 1822, 1824, 1829); there are formulaic children's letters from Nina without any individual expressive power and without any date, as though they were copied directly from a copy book. Isaak (Isidor) Ullmann (1824, undated, from Augsburg, undated in Latin-German cursive from Frankfurt with greetings from his wife). In JMH LB B 94/21.9.1807 Zirle Weil reports from Augsburg to Klara in Hohenems, that Nina and Isaak had already begun to read quite well; the two were probably born shortly before 1800. Fanni Ullmann (1809, 1816, undated). There are a few lines from Henriette in JMH LB B 117/9.12.1810 (Zirle Weil/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg) from 1810, as well as mentioned in 1810, 1813, 1817 and 1827.

<sup>71</sup> Zirle Weil was born in 1769 as the daughter of Moses Weil and Rachel Uffenheimer in Hohenems. The Uffenheimers were a Court Jew family with relatives in Innsbruck, Vienna and Hohenems. In 1826 or 1827 Zirle married Matthias Levi-Frey (1764-1839) in Hohenems, where she died in 1857. For more about the wedding, see JMH LB B 2/12.5.1827. Zirle's Brother, Leopold Weil, was "Commis" in the Levi-Löwenberg household and is recorded as a correspondence partner in JMH LB. Dates for Zirle and Leopold Weil, JMH Kollektivbiographische Datenbank.

<sup>72</sup> 'Matrikel und Ansässigmachung der Israeliten 1813-1814', Hirsch, 'Juden in Augsburg'.

would also follow. Josef Henle wrote to Klara on 19 November 1807, one day after his return to Hohenems, which he refers to in his letter. He must have been present at his sister's wedding.<sup>73</sup>

### **From the Suburbs into the City: the Ullmann Court Jew Family in Augsburg**

Henle Efraim Ullmann was one of the three Jews from the rural Jewish communities surrounding Augsburg who was granted permission to reside permanently in the Free City in 1803. Henle was an imperial Hoffaktor, Hoffaktor of the prince bishop of Augsburg and head of the Jewish community in Pfersee at the gates of Augsburg.<sup>74</sup> He belonged to the large Ullmann family, widespread throughout the Burgau, which can be traced back to the Ulma-Günzburgs, later, Ulmo. With their name alone, these families preserved the memory of their urban past in the medieval Jewish community of Ulm, and they considered themselves their progeny. The Ulma-Günzburg rank among the most prominent families of the Ashkenazic world: in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they pursued high-level marriage strategies, which connected them to Rabbinical families as well as élite business families throughout Europe. The structure of the Jewish community in Günzburg in the sixteenth century as well as the community in Pfersee, which as the seat of the "Landesrabbiner" developed into the centre of Judaism for Swabia as of 1648, was tightly knit around the members of this family.<sup>75</sup>

The granting of permanent residency rights to the Jewish families in Augsburg, enacted by the city council against the wishes of the merchants, was the beginning of a new chapter in the city's Jewish history. In 1438 the Jews had been expelled from the Imperial City. In the Early Modern Era the city nonetheless remained an important economic base of the rural Jewish communities at the city's gates, Pfersee and Kriegshaber in particular. Jews were permitted, if at all, only temporary residence in the city. At times of war, Jewish families received

---

<sup>73</sup> JMH LB B 94/21.9.1807 (Zirle Weil/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems). JMH LB B 15/19.11.1807 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>74</sup> Dotterweich/Reißner record Henle Efraim Ullmann as imperial Hoffaktor. Volker Dotterweich and Beate Reißner, 'Finanznot und Domizilrecht: Zur Aufnahme jüdischer Wechselhäuser in Augsburg 1803', in Kießling, ed. (1995), 285. The databank of the Court Jew-project from Rotraud Ries and Friedrich Battenberg describes him as 'bischöflich-augsburgischer Hoffaktor' and head of the Pfersee Jewish community. (I would like to thank Rotraud Ries for this information.)

<sup>75</sup> Stephan Rohrbacher, 'Medinat Schwaben: Jüdisches Leben in einer süddeutschen Landschaft in der Frühneuzeit', in Kießling, ed. (1995), 84. Ullmann, *Nachbarschaft*, 136-9.

protection within the city walls in exchange for a fee; in the eighteenth century they were granted entry restricted to several days a year to be paid in advance ("Judenakkord"). By granting the banks and exchange houses of Westheimer & Straßburger as well as Obermayer and Ullmann the right to permanently reside in the city in 1803, the history of the modern Jewish community in Augsburg began. Mandatory registration ("Matrikelpflicht"), introduced with the Bavarian Edict of 1813 (Augsburg was "mediatisiert", incorporated into the Bavarian kingdom, in 1806) inhibited the community's rapid growth for decades to come and it was first in 1855 that Jews could settle in Augsburg with no major restrictions. In 1861 the government sanctioned the founding of a religious community. In the same year, mandatory registration was repealed in Bavaria.<sup>76</sup> The surge of Jewish families from the outlying rural Jewish communities into the Imperial City corresponded with the general demographic trend of Jewish history in the German Empire in the decades of emancipation. Although the urbanisation of the Jews in the southern German states occurred more slowly than it did in other regions, the increasing opening of the cities for Jewish settlement and their economic appeal in the nineteenth century, still drained the rural Jewish communities of their members. Pfersee und Kriegshaber, at the gates of Augsburg, were affected in the same way as Hohenems.<sup>77</sup>

Although both Pfersee and Hohenems had rural Jewish communities, the basic situation in these towns was nonetheless very different. Pfersee, which lies directly adjacent to the gates of the Imperial City and on one of the important trade routes from upper Germany over the Alps down to Venice, offered completely different economic possibilities than the small and not very wealthy Imperial County of Hohenems. One piece of evidence of the great economic potential of Pfersee in particular, but also of Kriegshaber, is that in the largely agrarian structured middle Swabia they were the only rural Jewish communities where the Jewish upper class succeeded in elevating themselves to court service. These were the only two communities in which there were Hoffaktor families. One reason for this was their access to the Imperial City's business, due not only to the physical proximity but also the sovereign

---

<sup>76</sup> Peter Fassl, 'Die wirtschaftliche und soziale Stellung der Juden in Augsburg im 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert', in *Geschichte und Kultur der Juden in Schwaben: Wissenschaftliche Tagung der Heimatpflege des Bezirks Schwaben in Zusammenarbeit mit der Schwabenakademie Irsee*, ed. Peter Fassl, Irseer Schriften, no. 2 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1994), 134. Also see this source for more on the development of the Jewish population in Augsburg: 1840 (79 Jewish inhabitants), 1895 (1156), 1905 (1101), 1910 (including incorporated suburbs 1212).

<sup>77</sup> Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, 'Population Shifts and Occupational Structure', in Meyer, ed. (1997), 57-9.

legal situation. Pfersee, for example, housed several Augsburg landlords. These landlords who were interested in the financial potential of their subjects for tax reasons, thus eased their access to the Imperial City's market.<sup>78</sup>

The letters from the Löwenberg collection from the 1870s (see below) provide evidence that there was already contact between the Court Jew family Levi in Hohenems and the Ullmanns in Pfersee in the eighteenth century. But even extending beyond the Levi's and reaching back to the seventeenth century, the rural Jewish communities around Augsburg were important centres for the economic activities of the Hohenems Jews. These contacts were also often cemented through marital links.<sup>79</sup> The Hohenems Jews must therefore have belonged to the well-organised network of retail and trade businesses on which the "large" Court Jews could rely. There is evidence that the Jews in Vorarlberg were attributed with a special importance in the exchange of goods with the South (southern Switzerland and northern Italy) in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.<sup>80</sup>

The Ullmanns, Hoffaktors serving the Viennese imperial court, and the Augsburg prince-bishops dominated the Pfersee Jewish community in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the eighteenth century, important local administrative offices as well as the function of Hoffaktor were passed down within this "dynasty" for four generations.<sup>81</sup> These families were indeed rural Jews in the sense that they had their residence in the villages and spent at least part of their time there; their lifestyle, however, was only slightly influenced by their rural surroundings and much more by their royal surroundings. Klara Ullmann grew up in the rural Jewish community of Pfersee and had only lived in the Imperial City for four years before her

---

<sup>78</sup> Sabine Ullmann, 'Zwischen Fürstenhöfen und Gemeinde: Die jüdische Hoffaktorenfamilie Ulman in Pfersee während des 18. Jahrhunderts', *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben* 90 (1998), 167.

<sup>79</sup> Bernhard Purin, *Die Juden von Sulz: Eine jüdische Landgemeinde in Vorarlberg 1676-1744*, Studien zur Geschichte und Gesellschaft Vorarlbergs, no. 9 (Bregenz: Vorarlberger Autoren Gesellschaft, 1991), 85.

<sup>80</sup> There is, for example, evidence that the Jews from Sulz (those driven out of Hohenems, who also returned again to Hohenems), imported citrus fruit from Milan to the community in Augsburg in the middle of the eighteenth century and already in 1680 the Spanish ambassador to Switzerland, Graf Gio Francisco Aresio, had made efforts to obtain a trading permit for the Grisons for Wolf Levi's brothers in Sulz and Aulendorf, as well as Wolf's brother-in-law, Abraham Renner in Pfersee. Purin, *Die Juden von Sulz*, 40, 86.

<sup>81</sup> Ullmann, 'Zwischen Fürstenhöfen', 165.

marriage and move to Hohenems. Her urban lifestyle, which she tried to maintain in Hohenems, as the letters of the Löwenberg collection quite emphatically show, was not only a product of her years in Augsburg, but, rather, was part of a long family tradition. The heads of her family had circulated in court society and at the imperial market for decades. Her father, and other Jews from the outlying communities, maintained an office in Augsburg where they worked during the day.<sup>82</sup>

The permanent admission of Jewish families to Augsburg in 1803 was an issue of top priority in imperial state politics. The city council, the most important political body, where the patricians gathered, desperately needed a loan as the city had been heavily in debt for decades.<sup>83</sup> The potential Jewish creditors, however, demanded for themselves and their families the right to settle permanently. Competition and power political considerations led the merchants of the city to oppose the admission of the Jews. For them, this financially needy period offered a chance to advance their own political demands. But the city council was not willing to succumb to their demands. The agreement made in 1803 between the exchange houses of Westheimer & Straßburger, Ullmann and Obermayer and the parliament of the Imperial City allowed the Jews to carry out the business of exchange, wholesale and jewellery trade, and to purchase property in return for a loan and yearly payments. On the records, the Jewish bankers were granted equality with local merchants. Only one family member was allowed to carry out the business and the books had to be kept in German. In addition, they were allowed to practice their religion in private quarters and use their own butchers to slaughter meat.<sup>84</sup>

The Jewish banks were mainly involved in trade with state bonds. The centralized states, in the process of forming, had to finance their growing bureaucracies as well as the many wars which disrupted these decades and were therefore in dire financial need. Following and largely imitating the major stock exchanges in Amsterdam and London, a lively state bond trade developed in the last third of the eighteenth century which supplemented the traditional exchange business in Vienna, Berlin and Frankfurt am Main.<sup>85</sup> Augsburg was the most

---

<sup>82</sup> Dotterweich/Reißner, 'Finanznot', 285.

<sup>83</sup> For more on the social and political structure of the free Imperial City, see Fassel, *Konfession*, 44-6.

<sup>84</sup> For a detailed description of the admission of the three Jewish families in 1803 and the associated political controversies, see Dotterweich/Reißner, 'Finanznot'.

<sup>85</sup> The Rothschild family in Frankfurt also rose from the Court Jew milieu and to a great extent owed their

important exchange centre in the southern German area; however, it was first in 1815 that a considerable amount of bond trading took place. This development is largely attributable to the small and medium size Jewish banks. The Jewish firms had great difficulty in establishing themselves in trade bills and commodities, as they had to compete with the local non-Jewish banks, so they specialised in this new area. The earliest documented evidence for an Augsburg stock exchange in this new area of money business is dated 1809 and refers to Jakob Obermayer, one of the three Jews able to gain entry into the city in 1803.

The established Augsburg merchants and bankers remained very reserved towards the trade of state bonds which had been on the rise since the turn of the century. For them it was a "dishonest" business, which they contrasted with the long-standing tradition of the Augsburg exchange business. They therefore attempted to exclude the Jewish bankers from entry into the Augsburg "stock exchange" for many years. Not until 1820 were the Jews admitted without restriction. Jewish merchants and bankers were therefore well placed to practice this new branch of money trade; as Court Jews they had had many years of experience with procuring financial instruments and other services for the state (and its predecessor, the court). Nonetheless, it was still a risky business which can be illustrated by the Ullmann Bank's financial difficulties in the early years of the nineteenth century. In 1804 the bank of Henle Ephraim Ullmann was drawn into bankruptcy by the Munich bank, Westheimer & Straßburger. The cause was probably speculation in Bavarian bonds, which could only be sold with difficulty, if at all, immediately before the third coalition war. And also in 1816 the Ullmann Bank had to declare bankruptcy after the Bavarian bonds rapidly lost 50 percent of their value.<sup>86</sup>

The correspondence between Hohenems and Augsburg begins with Klara's marriage and her move to Hohenems in 1807. This explains why the financial difficulties of 1804 do not appear in the letters. There are, however, several letters from 1816 from Josef Henle, who became the head of the family and owner of the business, as well as his future wife Pepi and the housekeeper Zirla Weil. Josef Henle married Josefa (Pepi) Wertheimer from the Wertheimer family, Munich Court Jews, and moved into a new house in Augsburg in 1816, which is described in detail in the correspondence. There is, however, no mention of the bankruptcy

---

financial success to moving from the trade in credit to that of state papers, see Ferguson, *The World's Banker*, 1-33.

<sup>86</sup> Dotterweich/Reißner, 'Finanznot', 303.



documented in the literature. I cannot find any explanation for this exclusion as Josef Henle frequently wrote in great detail to his sister about his difficulties and problems.<sup>87</sup> The letters from Augsburg are primarily family letters. They form a part of the category of 'bourgeois' family letters that will be defined more precisely later. Business matters certainly did not belong to the central motifs of this type of letter, although business affairs are sometimes present as these families were financially connected and shared these concerns. It is mainly in the letters that Josef Henle – who took over the business after his father's death – wrote to his sister and (occasionally) to his brother-in-law that these matters can be found. Here, of course, the question of what can be understood as "business" arises. The steady exchange between Klara in Hohenems and Zirle Weil in Augsburg can certainly be considered part of the field of women's work. The exchange makes clear that although Klara lived in Hohenems, Augsburg remained an important source of her purchases, and that the households in Hohenems and Augsburg discussed and exchanged information, i.e., about food products. Klara, according to the household division of labour, was responsible for the maintenance and furnishing of her household in Hohenems, and Zirle took care of regular purchases and sent them to her in Hohenems. In addition, Klara conducted correspondence related to recruiting household personnel, which can also be seen as belonging to the realm of women's work.<sup>88</sup>

A letter from Josef Henle to Klara in 1808 might relate to the family's financial difficulties. The seventeen year old wrote of the *laydige action* (*sorrowful action*), which caused him great *shevron lev* (*heartache*). The *pretsiozen* (*jewels*) and *shpitsen* (*lace*) had just been sold and had achieved a good price. It was just now, however, that he felt the great loss of his parents (both of whom died in 1807). It seems as though Josef Henle is speaking about the sale of the furnishings from his parent's house which might not have happened had the financial need not been so great. Also in 1810, the Ullmanns appear to have had economic problems. Josef Henle asked his brother-in-law to come to Augsburg after Passover, as he needed his help. He

---

<sup>87</sup> For more on the impending marriage of Josef Henle Ullmanns to Josefa (Pepi) Wertheimer, JMH LB, B 52/27.4.1816 (Zirle Weil/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems); report about the impending move to the new house, JMH LB, B 8/9.9.1816 (Peppi, Nina, Fanni and Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems); JMH LB B, 85/30.9.1816 (Pepi and Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems) about life in the new house. Hirsch, 'Juden in Augsburg', 311: In 1816 Joseph Henle Ullmann and Nina Ullmann both bought half of the house at Haus Karlstraße 5 (earlier Judengasse).

<sup>88</sup> Several letters have been preserved which record Klara's search for a nanny for her children, among others an exchange with a Faile in Munich in 1809. JMH LB, B 133/undated (Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems to Faile/Munich); reply JMH LB, B 157/13.12.1809 (Faile/Munich to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems).

had heard from other people that *Herr Kaulla* no longer wanted to carry on the business. It appears to have caused a great stir that their *handlung* (*shop*) was not to continue. Josef Henle pleaded that negotiations at least continue long enough for him to receive power of attorney. How the story continues is unfortunately not included in this incomplete correspondence. The *Herr Kaulla* mentioned here had already appeared in a letter from 1808 about the sale of the family house. There as well, he appears as a type of business guardian for the Ullmanns. A second letter from Josef Henle from 1808 also refers to an unnamed guardian. This *Herr Kaulla* must be Blümle Veit Kaulla, who appears in the register of 1815 as the head of the "Handlung (firm) S. H. Kaulla". The register notes that this household maintained a staff of fifteen servants; the status and wealth of this Augsburg branch of the family therefore, must have done great credit to the Kaulla name, legendary in the southern German realm.<sup>89</sup>

Information about the credit market was also exchanged; who was credit worthy and who not, which bankruptcy had driven whom to ruin<sup>90</sup> and who was established in which trading activity in Augsburg: i.e. a *Reb Wallersteiner*, who received a residence permit in 1808 to trade in silver.<sup>91</sup> The inner-Jewish correspondence of the Löwenberg collection from the nineteenth century, mostly letters exchanged within the family between Klara Ullman-Levi-Löwenberg in Hohenems and her family in Augsburg contained, in keeping with the tenor of bourgeois letter correspondence, little about business. To judge by their content and their textual style, they serve much more as an example of the bourgeois life style of an upper class Jewish family from the southern German area. In contrast to this, the inner-Jewish letters in

---

<sup>89</sup> JMH LB, B 16/28.1.1808 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems); JMH LB, B 123/17.10.1808 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Moritz and Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems); JMH LB, B 95/24.4.1810 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Moritz Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems). For more on the Kaulla family, see Hirsch, 'Juden in Augsburg', 310.

<sup>90</sup> In JMH LB, B 115/6.6.1811 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems) Josef refers to the bankruptcy of the Hohenems merchant and manufacturer Nathan Elias. In Aron Tänzer, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems*, Meran, 1905; repr. (Bregenz: Verlagsbuchhandlung H. Lingenhölle & Co., 1982), 327, there is only a brief mention. He counts among the wealthiest of the Hohenems Jews. According to Josef, Nathan's bankruptcy was extremely fraudulent, he was meant to have been richer afterwards than before, and some said that he lost 200,000 gulden; others spoke about twice the amount. Some highly respectable merchants must have suffered from this.

<sup>91</sup> JMH LB, B153/5.5.1808 (Henla Ettinger/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems). The register from 1814/15 identifies a Simon Wallersteiner from Kriegshaber, who ran a silver business. Quoted from Hirsch, 'Juden in Augsburg', 309.

the collection from the eighteenth century are excellent examples of the significance of family networks for the economic existence of the Jewish upper class.

## Letter Cultures

The letter is the central medium of a conversational culture in written form. Recently this genre has been revived through email correspondence which increasingly dominates written communication. Already in 1952, Franz Kobler, the great collector of Jewish letters from all centuries, poetically describes the potential of this instrument of communication: *The letter gave the first wing to man.*<sup>92</sup> Andrew Lloyd Sunshine states it more sociologically when he sees the basic function of *letter-writing* as maintaining *interpersonal ties at a distance.*<sup>93</sup> For literary-scientific, letter-based research, the dialogic exchange of geographically separated partners and its function as a substitute for conversation are constitutive moments of this form of linguistic action.<sup>94</sup>

The particular strength of the letter as an instrument of communication lies in the possibility of exchange and the maintenance of personal ties across geographical distances. It frees human communication from the constraints of a face-to-face situation, which makes it particularly interesting for Jewish existence, as Jewish existence has been determined so strongly by the concept and reality of life in exile. Common ties did not (and do not) lie in a commonly occupied territory. The cohesion was (and is) created by culture: concretely, by language and religion, as well as by the knowledge of a common origin and a common destiny. To quote Kobler once again: *One can certainly hardly conceive that letter-writing should anywhere have been put to better use or been more urgently necessary than among a people that from an early period continuously suffered the fate of exile and dispersion, and yet remained one family, striving incessantly to preserve its own unity and at the same time to maintain fruitful relations with the surrounding world.*<sup>95</sup> The result, according to Kobler, is a

---

<sup>92</sup> Franz Kobler, ed., *Letters of Jews through the Ages: From Biblical Times to the Middle of the Eighteenth Century*, 2 Vols, Ararat Publishing Society, East and West Library, 1952, 19.

<sup>93</sup> Andrew Lloyd Sunshine, *Opening the Mail: Interpersonal Aspects of Discourse and Grammar in Middle Yiddish Letters*, Ph.D. diss., Columbia University New York, 1991, 111.

<sup>94</sup> Reinhard M. G. Nickisch, *Brief* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1991), 3. Rainer Baasner, *Briefkultur im 19. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer-Verlag, 1999), 14. A summary of the approaches to letter-theory from a literary arts perspective can be found in Nickisch, *Brief*, 1-9.

<sup>95</sup> Kobler, *Letters*, 19.

*letter-writing activity the records of which extend ... over a period of nearly three thousand years.*

Fairly large and cohesive collections of Jewish letters such as the private letters written from Prague to Vienna in 1619 or the Rothschild collection of "private letters" in the London Rothschild-Archives from the decades 1812-1898, represent a central function of Jewish correspondence: the maintenance of family ties across geographical distances, also serving as a basis for trans-local business activities.<sup>96</sup> The frequency of non-local marriage ties (one of the effects of exile at a microcosmic level) and the significance of trans-local business activities for the economic basis of the Jewish minority, made communication a central issue of Jewish existence. Since family and internal group solidarity as well as interregional contacts were of major significance for trans-local business activities, marriage and business strategies were related to each other. Marriage also served to secure a network for information, contact and solidarity. According to Andrew Lloyd Sunshine, the maintenance of inner-Jewish structures for communication and solidarity as a basis for Jewish economic activities is a central function of Jewish correspondence.<sup>97</sup> This thesis is supported by the collections of private Jewish letters from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with which he has worked in great detail. However, this thesis also quite precisely reflects the character of the inner Jewish correspondence of the Levi-Löwenberg collection.

### **The Letters of the Eighteenth Century: Trans-local Networks as a Basis for Family and Business**

Thirty letters from the eighteenth century in Western Yiddish – thus inner-Jewish correspondence – have been preserved in the Levi-Löwenberg collection. Twenty-three letters are dated from 1774, two from 1775/1776 and two from 1784 and 1806.<sup>98</sup> Three undated letters have also survived. The writing, language and social surroundings make it possible to assign them clearly to the eighteenth century. The content of this correspondence is of a business nature with a small number of very short private insertions: greetings to the wives,

---

<sup>96</sup> Alfred Landau and Bernhard Wachstein, eds, *Jüdische Privatbriefe aus dem Jahre 1619* (Vienna and Leipzig: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1911). Ferguson: *The World's Banker*, 29-31.

<sup>97</sup> Sunshine: *Opening the Mail*, 109-16.

<sup>98</sup> JMH LB, B 151/6.3.1806 (? to Lazarus and Gitl Levi/Hohenems) connects content and addressees with the letters of the eighteenth century.

children and other members of the family are always present and there are short reports on their well being and illness. With two exceptions, all letters are addressed to *Herren Gebrüder Hirsch und Lazarus Levi* usually to their address in *Hohenems bei Lindau*, in a very few cases also to their residence (*Trauben 4*) in St. Gallen in Switzerland.<sup>99</sup> The two Hohenems businessmen were involved in the so-called "Swiss trade" which explains their frequent residence there. The rapidly developing canvas and cotton industry in the neighbouring Swiss Canton of St. Gallen attracted many Jewish business men from Hohenems.<sup>100</sup>

The correspondence mentions textiles as objects of trade, but "corals" (possibly pearls), which are also items of exchange, diamonds, jewels and coffee are mentioned more frequently. The brothers also still traded in livestock. Basle, Zurich, Wil, Rorschach and the trade-fair Zurzach are frequently mentioned sites of trading activity. The major content of the correspondence, however, consists of information on the state of negotiations in diverse businesses, reminders of payment dates, strategic considerations concerning future ways of proceeding with diverse business partners, rumours circulating relevant to the business in hand, etc. They clearly represent how frequently these men travelled. In the first place, they wrote back and forth during their business trips. In addition, there are numerous references to stations along the way, departures and arrivals of the brothers, and so forth. This is not formal business correspondence such as invoices, contracts, and the like. On the contrary, these letters are extremely rich in content and not at all formalized in comparison with the letters from the eighteenth century in Latin-German cursive, which represent correspondence with the brothers' non-Jewish business partners; invoices, contracts or very formal requests for extension of payment dates.

Both of the Levi brothers were members of a family that, according to the sources, resided in Hohenems in 1704. The mother of Lazarus and Hirsch was Maria Moos, a sister of the long-time head of the Hohenems community, Maier Moos Kauschelis. Maier Moos was head of the community from 1753 until his death in 1777 and was described as a very rich and highly

---

<sup>99</sup> To locate Hohenems as being near Lindau, is a reflection of the postal system of the times. Lindau was an important postal site for the area south of Lake Constance. In the nineteenth century also, the Ullman's and the Levi-Löwenbergs sent many of their letters with the *Lindauer Post*.

<sup>100</sup> For further information on the "Swiss Trade" of the Hohenems Jews, see Sabine Fuchs, 'Der Aufstieg ins Bürgertum: Die wirtschaftliche und soziale Dynamik der Hohenemser Judengemeinde im 19. Jahrhundert', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 68.

respected man who carried out widespread trade relations.<sup>101</sup> We know very little about Lazarus and Hirsch's father, Josef Wolf Levi. Recognizing the finely tuned marriage politics of the upper-class Jewish families, it can be assumed that he was financially successful or at least was seen as having potential. After all, the Moos family, related to the Court Jew families of southern Germany as well as the Uffenheimers of Innsbruck and the Mays from the Churpfalz, (originally also from Innsbruck), would certainly not marry off their daughter to just anyone.<sup>102</sup>

Hirsch Levi was born in Hohenems in 1735 and died in 1792 during a visit to his sister Susanna (or Sheynle) in Bolzano. According to Tänzer, he was active in the grain and livestock trade; sources from 1784 and 1786 identify him as a tradesman. His descendants took on the family name Hirschfeld in 1813.<sup>103</sup> We know more from Lazarus Josef Levi (1743-1806), whose descendants took the name Löwenberg in 1813. From 1785 until 1806 he was the head of the Jewish community, founded charity foundations in the traditional Jewish foundation areas of religious instruction and welfare for the poor and was the owner of an important library. In 1795 he was named imperial Hoffaktor to the House of the Austrian emperor. He left behind a portrait that depicts him without a beard and in the bourgeois dress of his time. A portrait of his wife, Judith, has also been preserved. It shows her in a full bonnet with a double layer of lace and a quantity of ribbon, in dress sleeves with lace trim and also a four-string pearl necklace. Lace was a true luxury at the time and also a four-string pearl necklace was such a rarity that a similar necklace was listed separately in the will of the Austrian empress, Maria Theresa, rather than being listed together with her jewellery as a whole.<sup>104</sup> The existence of these bourgeois portraits alone is an expression of the self-confidence of this upper-class Jewish family. This is reinforced by the clothing, jewellery and

---

<sup>101</sup> For more on Maier Moos, see Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 316.

<sup>102</sup> For more on the familial relationships of the Moos family, see Karl-Heinz Burmeister, 'Der Hohenemser Pferdehändler Mayer Moos Jäcklis (ca. 1715-1779)', in *Jahrbuch des Jüdischen Museums Hohenems* (Hohenems: Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 1989), and JMH Kollektivbiografische Datenbank.

<sup>103</sup> Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 486.

<sup>104</sup> For more on Lazar Levi, see Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 326. Reproductions of the portraits can be found in Eva Grabherr, ed., "... eine ganz kleine jüdische Gemeinde, die nur von den Erinnerungen lebt!": *Juden in Hohenems* (Hohenems: Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 1996), Cat. No. 2/45 and 2/46. I would like to thank Ilsebill Barta-Fliedl, curator in the Kaiserliches Hofmobiliendepot Vienna, which administers a considerable portion of the cultural inheritance of the Austrian Habsburgs, for the information about the four-string pearl necklace in Maria Theresa's will.

pose of the persons presented, which clearly show their wealth and standing. Also the value of the houses of the Levi brothers allows us to draw conclusions about the wealth of this family. According to an official estimate of the houses of the Jewish community in Hohenems, Hirsch, Lazarus, as well as another brother remaining in Hohenems, Wolf, lived in houses that were assessed at just under or over 4,000 Gulden. Five of the seven most highly valued real estate properties in the Jewish quarter belonged to the Levi brothers and their sons.<sup>105</sup>

Twenty-two of the thirty letters preserved from the inner-Jewish correspondence of the eighteenth century, which centred around the Hirsch brothers and Lazarus Levi were exchanged within the family.<sup>106</sup> Although we must interpret the numbers carefully, as we do not know how representative the preserved letters are for the entire find and why these letters in particular have been preserved, whereas others not, they nonetheless clearly point to the familial network's importance for the economic basis of this wealthy Hohenems Court Jew family. They provide a further micro-historical example of Sunshine's thesis concerning the central function of inner-Jewish correspondence: the maintenance of interregional family ties as also being a base for trans-local business activity. In this way, the Hirsch brothers and Lazarus Levi informed each other during their business trips about the respective state of economic affairs. Michael Levi (1740-1824), another financially successful offspring of this family, reported to his brothers in Hohenems from Randegg (Baden), where he lived in 1774 at the latest. Like Lazarus, Michael Levi, later Neumann, was also appointed Hoffaktor by the imperial household in Vienna (1796). The third Austrian Court Jew of this financially exceptional Hohenems family, Wolf (1746-1823), received his appointment in 1797. All three owed their appointments as Imperial Hoffaktor to supplies delivered to the Imperial army during the Napoleonic wars.

Levi's sisters also played their part in the maintenance of the central family network so essential for financial success. Susanna (or Sheynle) was married to a Hoffaktor in Bolzano. He signed his letters as Henle bar Nachum von Buttenwiesen. His father came from the Jewish community of the town Buttenwiesen in the Burgau, on the outskirts of the Imperial City of Augsburg, and from the same Burgau-Swabian Jewry as the Ullmanns. Henle also wrote to the Levi brothers in Hohenems in 1774 from Augsburg. Henle's seal, which can be

---

<sup>105</sup> Hans Gruber, *Von Häusern und Menschen: Zur Sozial- und Besitzgeschichte des Jüdischen Viertels in Hohenems im 19. Jahrhundert*, unpublished Report (Hohenems, 1994), Card 5.

<sup>106</sup> Five of the correspondence partners cannot be identified as family members.

found on all of his letters, has the initials HH. Aron Tänzer also recorded him in his family register of the Hohenems community as Heinrich Henle. One of their daughters was born in Trieste in 1788, and the family may have lived there as well.<sup>107</sup> Both brothers also received letters from Federnsee from *gisi fayfr n`b*, a brother-in-law named Faifer N.B., Veit Neuburger (1746-1823), (later Hoffaktor of Karl Anselm, Prince of Thurn and Taxis), who was married to Sophie Levi (1752-1819), used this name for his signature.<sup>108</sup> The Levi brothers received letters from Ephraim bar Tevli Ulmo from Pfersee on the outskirts of the city of Augsburg, an important bridgehead for Jewish business activity in the Imperial City. Through this correspondence-partner a familial connection to the Ullmanns of our correspondence of the nineteenth century and thereby also back to the Levi's in Hohenems can be established; assuming that he can be identified as the Parnass Efraim Ullmann, Court Jew of the prince bishop of Augsburg. His son was the previously mentioned Henle Ephraim. Henle was the father of Klara who married into the Levi family of Hohenems.<sup>109</sup> The Levi-

---

<sup>107</sup> For more on the Jewish community of Bittenwiesen, see Ullmann, *Nachbarschaft*, 60-4. In the collection of the Jewish Museum in Vienna, a Parochet, sponsored by Henle and Susanna from 1799, has been saved: *Eigentum des Elchanan Henle, Sohn des Nachum, und seiner Frau Scheinl am 1. Tischri des Jahres 560 (1799)*. (Inscription in Hebrew).

<sup>108</sup> Identified through JMH Kollektivbiografische data bank, source: Genalogie George E. Arnstein. The mention of the patent from Veit Neuburger, issued on 29 Februar 1805, by Karl Anselm from Thurn und Taxis; a copy can be found in the archive of the Leo Baeck-Institute in New York (Folio 13. 518:162).

<sup>109</sup> The entry on Ephraim bar Tewli Ulmo comes from the databank of the Hofjuden project from Rotraud Ries and Friedrich Battenberg. There is presently insufficient evidence to determine whether Ephraim Ullmann from this databank is the same as Efraim bar Tewli Ulmo from the correspondence. It is, however, possible that this Efraim bar Tewli corresponds to the person who in the eighteenth century owned the illustrated Hebrew prayer book (completed 1589) that can be found today in the German National Museum (HS 7058). On Ephraim bar Tewli Ulmo as owner of this manuscript, see Rohrbacher, *Medinat Schwaben*, 88. Both Ephraims were important members of the Pfersee community during the same time period. The correspondence of first and family names in the very clear situation of a small rural community permits the conclusion that they are one and the same person. The familial connections revealed in the overall context of the correspondence Ullmann-Levi-Löwenberg, also attest to this. Further evidence of a relationship between the Ulmo/Ullmann in Pfersee and Levi-Löwenberg in Hohenems in the eighteenth century can be found in the index of gravestones in the Jewish cemetery of Kriegshaber/Pfersee found in the documentarist Theodor Harburger's records of the the rural Bavarian Jews in the 1920s (see



Neumanns in Randegg were also linked to the Ullmanns in Augsburg through marital connections.<sup>110</sup>

Before we lose ourselves completely in the ever tighter web of the families Levi, Ullmann, Henle and Neuburger, we should stress the most important connections. In the first place there is the geographical area that the Levi's opened up for their business activities; an area in which they themselves also sustained ties and channels for information and goods for other members of the network. Augsburg, until the early nineteenth century, was the most important financial and trading centre in the south of Germany and of key importance for trade with Italy. Bolzano was the site of an important trade-fair on the way to Italy and via Randegg in Baden – not far from the important trade-fairs in Zurzach, often mentioned in the correspondence – they attained access to Switzerland, which experienced a rapid development of the textile industry in the eighteenth century. The correspondence also provides evidence of the interregional ties of the Jewish élite far beyond their communities. Thus, the Levi's, in the small and insignificant market town of Hohenems, were part of the network of relatives of the Ullmann and Wertheimer Court Jew families, who certainly numbered among the most important families of southern German Jewry in the early Modern Era. This familial anchoring in the Jewish landscape was an important basis for their interregional business

---

note 4, 95). There, a Miriam bat Lezer from Hohenems (ob. 31.12.1792) can be found, who is married to a Henli Ulmo from Pfersee. Documentation of this is confirmed in the *Genealogical Line of the Löwenberg family and the Descendants of Lazarus Joseph Levi and Judith Daniel in Hohenems*, 1842, by Rabbi Abraham Kohn (1807-1848). JMH Kat. no. 9/13. According to this genealogy, Maria, daughter of Lazarus/Lezer Levi, was married to an Ullmann in Augsburg. Unfortunately there is no reference to this person either from Tänzer, or in the genealogic data banks which refer to the Hohenems registry. Sabine Ullmann, *Nachbarschaft*, 178, provided evidence for the eighteenth century trade relations of other members of the Ullmann Hoffaktor family from Pfersee with Hohenems: Löw Simon Ulman senior and Löw Simon Ulman junior, not only had business contacts with the Imperial Court in Vienna and the Prince Bishop of Augsburg, but also with the Imperial Count of Hohenems.

<sup>110</sup> Moses Levi-Neumann (1769-1842), son of Michael Levi-Neumann, was married to Judith Wertheimer (born ca.1774) from Munich, a sister of Hauna Wertheimer, who was married to Henle Efraim Ullmann; JMH Kollektivbiographische Databank and Fraenkel, *Genealogical Tables*. According to Wertheimer's genealogy, Judith and Hauna Wertheimer are grand-nieces of Wolf Wertheimer (1681-1765), a son of the important Oberhoffaktor and Burgenland Rabbi, Samson Wertheimer in Vienna.

activity and thereby also their material wealth. This type of secure familial network, for example, gave the Court Jews as part of the Jewish élite, a decisive organisational advantage. This advantage, in addition to their susceptibility to blackmail and their lack of integration into the structures of the corporate society (in comparison to their Christian competition), made them easier to work with and therefore more interesting to the princes.<sup>111</sup> The particular connection to the princes and their inner Jewish anchoring predestined families such as the Levis in Hohenems for their position within the Jewish community where they held important local administrative offices.

These letters offer little insight into the feelings and personal attitudes of their writers about anything other than business matters. There are remarks about the problems that they had with business partners and about disappointments. But here as well, business aspects dominated. The significance given to the maintenance of familial networks is shown by the numerous although brief (in comparison to the correspondence from the nineteenth century) greetings to wives, children, sisters, etc. They are present in every single letter. A slight hint at what the interregional business activity and the many related journeys must have meant for the family fathers can be found in the closing sentence of a letter from Hirsch Levi written to his brother Lezer (Lazarus Josef Levi) from Schaffhausen, in which he asks him to hug his children every evening.<sup>112</sup>

### **The Letters of the Nineteenth Century: The Bourgeois Family Letter**

Feelings, personal attitudes and positions on the most varied affairs, states of mind of the writers and their surroundings, all filled a great deal of the content of the correspondence from the nineteenth century preserved in the Levi-Löwenberg collection. These letters, between Klara in Hohenems and her family in Augsburg, as well as letters to Klara from Moses Levi-Löwenberg and the children are, in this respect, quite different from those of the eighteenth century. From the nineteenth century as from the eighteenth, both inner-Jewish correspondence and letters of non-Jewish origin have been preserved. The latter are of a

---

<sup>111</sup> Rotraud Ries, 'Hofjuden als Vorreiter?: Bedingungen und Kommunikationen. Gewinn und Verlust auf dem Weg in die Moderne', in *Ökonomische Potenz und Interkulturalität: Bedeutungen und Wandlungen der mitteleuropäischen Hofjudenschaft auf dem Weg in die Moderne*, ed. Friedrich Battenberg and Rotraud Ries (Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau-Verlag, 2001, in press).

purely business nature, and similar to the eighteenth century, letters from non-Jewish correspondents are for the most part very formulaic, mainly invoices. In the nineteenth century as in the eighteenth, the great majority of the letters in this collection were written in the Hebrew alphabet. However, the dividing line between Jewish and non-Jewish correspondence no longer ran so clearly along the border of script, as it had in the letters preserved from the eighteenth century. Wilhelmine Löwenberg (born 1808 in Hohenems), the daughter of Klara Ullmann and Moritz Levi-Löwenberg, and thus a grandchild of the letter-writers from the eighteenth century, addresses her parents in both forms of writing: in German in Hebrew characters and in German in Latin-German cursive.<sup>113</sup> Theres Rothschild from Munich, with whom Wilhelmine (or Mina) stayed in 1819 for the finishing touches to her education, also reported to her pupil's parents in Hohenems in German in Latin-German cursive.<sup>114</sup>

Whereas the inner-Jewish letters of the eighteenth century had a clearly distinguishable pragmatic function, namely the exchange of information relevant to business, and were therefore function-oriented, the inner-Jewish letters of the nineteenth century can be located almost exclusively in the context of written conversation within the family. They are oriented on everyday family matters and mainly arise from the desire to maintain personal ties (with family and friends) over geographic distances. Only in very few cases was a concrete affair or

---

<sup>112</sup> *bitti yeladim sheli alle obent tsu halten*. JMH LB, B 160/20.10.1774 (Hirsch Levi/Schaffhausen to Lazarus Levi/Hohenems).

<sup>113</sup> JMH LB, B 154/13.3.1819 (Wilhelmine Löwenberg/Munich to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems), German in Hebrew characters. JMH A 11: A German letter from Theres Rothschild from Munich contains an addition by the Löwenberg-daughter in German written in Latin cursive. For more on the language transformation of the Jews in the German speaking areas, see chapter 5 in this work.

<sup>114</sup> JMH 11: Five letters from Theres Rothschild in Munich to Klara and Moritz Levi-Löwenberg in Hohenems from the years 1819/1820 were preserved in the Löwenberg collection. In her letter from 8 February 1819 she expresses hope *to have soon made a tamed 'Widerbellerin' [?]*. Although I am not yet certain of the exact meaning of the term "Widerbellerin" the comment allows us to make conclusions about the function of Mina's stay in Munich.

request the main reason for writing.<sup>115</sup> Reading the letters of the nineteenth century as a whole leaves behind the impression that there was a great need to maintain contact, to find out the other person's views and to relate one's own views. For the most part, these letters correspond to the type of "freely written, personality-dependent letter", which is modelled on oral conversation. This type of letter blossomed in the German speaking areas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, based to some extent on foreign role models from France and England. The definitive pattern for this type of private correspondence (like the friendship letter, the bourgeois family letter is a specific sort within this categorical-type) was developed by the emerging and expanding group of "educated (Gebildete) classes", the "educated bourgeoisie". Therefore, in the research it is considered a specific product of bourgeois culture during these decades that were so decisive for the formulation of the bourgeois lifestyle.<sup>116</sup>

The significance which bourgeois culture attributed written conversation in the form of correspondence, this "overpowering urge to write letters" (Reinhard M. G. Nickisch) expressed by the bourgeois classes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, corresponded with both the high status of social life as well as the emphatic need for self-formation and presentation of the bourgeois individual. In this sense, the increase in private correspondence, which the research clearly shows for this decade, mirrored the growing economic and political significance of the bourgeoisie which sought appropriate means of expressing their newly gained sense-of-self.<sup>117</sup> Similar to the bourgeois portrait from the Renaissance, the bourgeois

---

<sup>115</sup> The correspondence which Klara carried out in her search for service personnel and nannies, is an exception to this. In these letters the pragmatic function dominated. The correspondence between Klara Levi-Löwenberg and Zirle Weil is also influenced by the fact that Zirle had to take care of requests for Klara in Augsburg. However, even these letters correspond to the norm of the conversationally oriented bourgeois family letters.

<sup>116</sup> Nickisch, *Brief*, 44. On the terminology: Baasner, *Briefkultur*, 13, speaks in this context in general from *private exchange of letters*, Nickisch, 44, from a *freely written personality-dependent letter*. Both associate this type of letter with bourgeois culture. Schikorsky, 265, is occupied with the *bourgeois family letter*. Isa Schikorsky, 'Vom Dienstmädchen zur Professorenngattin: Probleme bei der Aneignung bürgerlichen Sprachverhaltens und Sprachbewusstseins', in Cherubim, Grosse, and Mattheier, eds. (1998).

<sup>117</sup> Nickisch, *Brief*, 44. Rebekka Habermas speaks in this context of a *proper obsession*, which can't be explained by increased mobility alone. Letters and other types of ego-documents

private letter was also considered an outgrowth of a growing reflection on the self. This need resulted from an economically and socially expanded individual leeway, made possible by the increasing dissolution of corporative societal order and its limitations throughout the Early Modern Era. The questions "Who am I?", "What makes me who I am?", and "How can I show who and what I am?", became ever more relevant, relative to the extent that activities, achievements, etc., went into determining a person's social status; making the individual no longer entirely pre-determined by their social standing. The individual's formation of self, mainly through education, and their self-presentation are central motifs of bourgeois culture which provided not only the context for reflection on these questions, but also the cultural forms of expression. Like portraits of individuals, the exchange of letters used for bridging geographical distances within a family or circle of friends became a specific signet of bourgeois culture. The bourgeois private or family letter thus not only functioned to inform, but also served the individual and inner-family identity-building process and, in addition, was a recognised form of bourgeois self-presentation.<sup>118</sup>

### **Excursion: Letter Delivery – Technical-Logistical Conditions for the Development of Bourgeois Communication Patterns**

The significance of the private letter for a bourgeois lifestyle is also reflected to a great degree in the actual increase in the volume of postal traffic in these decades.<sup>119</sup> Beginning in the sixteenth century, it became possible for the first time to transport a significant amount of private letters with a degree of certainty. Until the close of the eighteenth century, business

---

played an equally large role in the need for self-explanation and staging of these women and men, who took up the task of helping in the breakthrough of a new bourgeois idea of society. Rebekka Habermas, *Frauen und Männer des Bürgertums: Eine Familiengeschichte (1750-1850)*, Bürgertum. Beiträge zur europäischen Gesellschaftsgeschichte, no. 14 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 24.

<sup>118</sup> Schikorsky, *Bürgerliches Sprachverhalten*, 265.

<sup>119</sup> According to Nickisch, *Brief*, 52, also the flooding of the book market with letter-writing manuals in the second half of the eighteenth and nineteenth century can be considered proof of the bourgeoisie's growing need for correspondence. On the letter-writing manuals of the nineteenth century, see also Cécile Dauphin, 'Letter-Writing Manuals in the Nineteenth Century', in Chartier, Boureau, and Dauphin (1997), 112-57.

post dominated the non-state and non-diplomatic postal traffic.<sup>120</sup> That is not surprising in light of the fact that, in 1760, the fee for sending a letter from Frankfurt to Berlin was still 6 groschen, which equalled the week's wages for a cook and the daily earnings of a carpenter. The earliest and most efficient postal connections were between cities. At the end of the eighteenth century there were already manifold opportunities to send and receive daily mail. Nonetheless, a letter from Königsberg to Rome at this time took nearly three months. Not until the beginning of the nineteenth century was it possible to take full advantage of the rationalised era of the postal coach which assured safer and more punctual arrival of letters in an ever-shorter time. From 1835 onward, the introduction of the railroad also created a further noticeable shortening of the delivery time for postal traffic.

As of the beginning of the nineteenth century, postal service extending beyond the cities to the larger rural sites was secured. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the service area covered the isolated regions. As of the 1830s, greater speed, lowered prices, effectiveness and finally, internationalisation of the postal service enabled decisive progress towards the extent of postal service that has now become normal. In 1823/24, the first letterboxes were set up in larger towns. In 1850, Prussia and Austria signed a contract regulating the postal delivery between the two states. Other German states joined in. A further merger of the state-regulated postal delivery service in the area of the German Empire followed in 1867 within the framework of the international treaties signed between the Northern German Federation and the southern German states. In the same year, a uniform rate for all distances in the German and Austrian postal area was introduced (previously determined by weight and distance).<sup>121</sup> In 1872, the Imperial German Post took over the service for the entire German Empire (with the provisional exception of Württemberg and Bavaria).<sup>122</sup>

The technical-logistical changes outlined above formed a crucial framework for living out this *overly powerful urge to write letters (diesen übermächtigen Drang zum Briefeschreiben)*,

---

<sup>120</sup> A large scale investigation of the postal situation of rural France of 1847 revealed that for this year 8 out of 10 letters were business letters. Even when the result must be seen as relative due to the absence of the postal station in Paris, it is nonetheless informative. Roger Chartier, 'An Ordinary Kind of Writing: Model Letters and Letter-Writing in Ancien Régime France', in Chartier, Boureau, and Dauphin (1997), 1-23.

<sup>121</sup> In France this step followed in 1849. Chartier, 'Model Letters', 8-13.

<sup>122</sup> Baasner, *Briefkultur*, 7-12; Nickisch, *Brief*, 215-18.

which Reinhard Nickisch detected in the bourgeois lifestyle and culture at the close of the eighteenth and in the nineteenth centuries. It thereby also led to a certain democratisation of private correspondence. The creation of a technically and logistically uniform communication realm was driven forward by the economic and administrative merger of the German states, which comprised the German Empire as of 1871. One driving force in the development of the nation state was the absolutist state's efforts to provide the framework for an all-inclusive politics and economy. One way to do this was through transportation technology – to connect the states by streets and postal connections. The communication conditions created in this way could also increasingly be used for private, non-business correspondence. It is futile to ask whether or not Klara would have corresponded so frequently with her siblings simply to assure their mutual well-being in what were often very short letters had the postal fees been as high as in 1760 – this can never really be answered. In any case, the amount and density of private correspondence preserved in the Levi-Löwenberg collection from the nineteenth century, as well as the dominant conversational style of these letters corresponds to the general trend of letter-writing history from these decades.

Nonetheless, it is still questionable if the Jewish letter-writing history of the Early Modern Era of Ashkenaz unfolded entirely in the context of the general letter-writing history of these centuries. The preserved collections of Central European Jewish letters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have been comprehensively studied and can, in most cases, be described as private letters.<sup>123</sup> Although they also contain business matters, there is a steady exchange of family news between family members who live in different locations due to either business reasons or because they followed their spouse to another Jewish community. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not the preserved and known letters are representative for Jewish letter-writing culture of the Early Modern Era. Little has been preserved and the quantity of the base material is unknown. If, however, we approach the question sociologically, then it is fairly safe to assume that the volume of private letters in the Jewish letter-writing culture as opposed

---

<sup>123</sup> A good description of the larger collections of Jewish letters can be found in Sunshine, *Opening the Mail*, 118-73. Also Helmut Dinse lists letters in his comprehensive bibliography of Jewish literature: *Die Entwicklung des jiddischen Schrifttums im deutschen Sprachgebiet* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1974). I mainly consider Jewish correspondence in Yiddish here because it forms the context of the letters which I deal with, but also, because family correspondence among the Ashkenazi was mostly carried out in the vernacular, and therefore in Yiddish.

to the non-Jewish letter-writing culture is much higher as there is certainly a connection between a group's way of life and their communication culture. The decentralised existence of the Jewish people in innumerable Jewish communities in several countries allowed out-of-town marriage and the resulting interregional family connections to become a common pattern of Jewish family structure. Private – non-business – correspondence is more likely to surface in this kind of context than in a community in which a majority of the marriages take place internally. Andrew L. Sunshine also pointed out interregional family relations as the basis of Jewish interregional economic activity. Therefore, correspondence, not explicitly formulated or intended as a business letter, is nevertheless found in a (not exclusive, but also) business context.<sup>124</sup> The inner-Jewish private letters of the Levi-Löwenberg collection of the nineteenth century correspond in style and frequency with the general letter-writing history of this era, and yet at the same time are also part of a pre-modern Jewish tradition in which private letters had always been accorded a meaningful function.

Augsburg, the economic centre of southern Germany in the Early Modern Era, which first had to hand over this position to Munich in the early nineteenth century, already had a perfectly developed postal and delivery system in the eighteenth century. In 1802, several times a week both letter post and driving couriers were available between Augsburg on the one side and Lindau (Free Imperial City on Lake Constance), Bregenz (Austria) as well as Feldkirch (Austria) on the other. Once a week, the postal coach also drove letters, packages and passengers to Lindau and Bregenz.<sup>125</sup> Lindau (25 km north of Hohenems) and Bregenz (17 km north) were probably important postal stations for the Levi-Löwenbergs in Hohenems. From there, the post was transported further by courier or taken by travellers. The Lindauer post, through which letters arrived or were sent to Augsburg, is explicitly referred to several times in the letters of the collection. In 1809, Josef Henle Ullmann wrote from Augsburg to his sister Klara in Hohenems that their brother Efraim constantly went to the Lindauer Post, as he so eagerly awaited a letter from her. In 1821, Henle S. Ullmann from Augsburg told his sister-in-law Klara that Josef Henle had sent the birth announcement for his child through the

---

<sup>124</sup> Sunshine: *Opening the Mail*.

<sup>125</sup> The figures for 1802, based on Fassl, *Konfession*, 124: letter post from Augsburg to Bregenz 3 x weekly, from Bregenz to Augsburg 4 x weekly; letter post from Augsburg to Lindau 3 x weekly, from Lindau to Augsburg 4 x weekly; postal coach as well as riding couriers between Lindau and Augsburg 1 x weekly; letter post from Feldkirch to Augsburg 4 x weekly, from Augsburg to Feldkirch 3 x weekly.



Lindauer Post.<sup>126</sup> Letters often ended with a remark about the soon to depart post, which necessitated great haste. Zirle Weil, the housekeeper of the Ullmanns in Augsburg, writing to her friend Klara in 1821, said that she had to stop at that very moment or else she would miss the post. An 1819 letter from Theres Rothschild from Munich ends with almost the same words. Isidor Ullmann, one of Klara's brothers, in his letter of 1824, also mentions the departure of the post, which forced him to finish writing in a great hurry.<sup>127</sup> The departing post or the "postal day" is regularly mentioned as the concrete occasion for writing the letter. This shows that the limitations of the technical-logistical dimensions of communication were felt and a relevant factor in time management. In this sense, they were not able to drift off into the realm of the imperceptible as something self-evident. The increasing development of ever-greater areas through infrastructure such as postal connections and also streets was a signet of these decades. People perceived these changes, felt them in their daily lives and therefore made explicit references to these procedures in their testimonies.

The postal coach as a means of transportation for passenger travel is often referred to in the letters; it also surfaced regularly as a means of transport for packages sent between Hohenems and Augsburg. Sometimes private packages were also sent along with business goods. Zirle sent chocolate and a sample of *zaydentsayg* (*silk material*) in this way along with a shipment of goods from the Augsburg banking house Fröhlich in 1827. Moritz Levi-Löwenberg had close business ties with this banking house in the 1820s as evident from their dense correspondence.<sup>128</sup> A great portion of the letters were probably not brought by the official postal connections, however, but carried by travellers. Everyone who travelled was a potential courier for letters and packages that had to be brought somewhere. Numerous explicit remarks in the correspondence referred to this. Not everything that was asked for and desired was also gladly transported, as Josef Henle Ullmann clearly states in a letter in 1810 to his sister in

---

<sup>126</sup> JMH LB B 121/23.3.1809 (Josef Henle Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems); JMH LB B 87/18.3.1821 (H. S. Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

<sup>127</sup> JMH LB B 170/7.11.1821 (Zirle Weil, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems); JMH A 11/1819 (Theres Rothschild, Munich, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems); JMH LB B 44/31.3.1824 (Isidor Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

<sup>128</sup> See JMH A 13.

Hohenems. In the letter he appears sceptical that Zartle would be willing to take the heavy waffle iron from Augsburg that Klara had already asked for in several letters.<sup>129</sup>

But also implicit clues indicate the delivery services of travellers. Many letters show more notes about the recipient than addresses formulated with all the necessary details for postal delivery. Above all, however, only very few pieces of writing carried official postal stamps. This last point might also reflect the fact that sometimes letters were inserted in other letters and sent in that way. The inclusion of letters inside other letters was a standard practice until the middle of the nineteenth century as distance, more so than weight, was important for determining postal fees. Apart from a very few exceptions, the inner-Jewish correspondence, and thus those letters written mostly in Hebrew characters, in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, are addressed in Latin-German characters, reflecting the non-Jewish, or, rather, the general transportation infrastructure on which they were dependent. Only thirteen of the more than 150 letters carry a postal address in Hebrew characters. Jewish couriers must have transported these few since non-Jewish postal deliverers would not have been able to find an address written in Hebrew characters. Moreover, only very few of the letters are addressed explicitly to Klara: they are either addressed to her husband Moritz or to *Lazarus Levis sel. Sohn* (a type of business address) and first in the greeting expressly address Klara as the recipient of the letter.

Klara and other women in the correspondence were mostly addressed in both the letter's address as well as the greeting with the French titles: *Madame* or *Madmoisel*, whereas for men, the German greeting *Herr* was usually chosen: only in one letter was Moritz Löwenberg addressed as *Monsieur*. The French preposition of location *à* could be found in the address of numerous letters. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the use and mastery of French still constituted an element of bourgeois culture. Attempts of the language societies of the eighteenth century and the language ideologists of the Enlightenment, were, however, ultimately successful in repressing French (the language of the nobility and court) in favour of German and in elevating the value of the German language.<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>129</sup> JMH LB B 7/20.6.1810 (Josef Henle Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

<sup>130</sup> On the effects of the language societies, see Eric A. Blackall, *The Emergence of German as a Literary Language. 1700-1775*, 2d enl. ed. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978). The development and standardisation of national languages, also through the retreat of Latin as the scholarly language and French as

In several letters, male persons, to whom the letter-writer was referring, were titled *Reb* (Hebrew and Yiddish for *Herr*). In these letters, *Reb* can be found used parallel to *Herr* as a title and salutation for male persons. From the context it is possible to conclude that those who are addressed in Hebrew are older and well respected persons. For example, in the correspondence from the Ullmann-sisters and from Zirle Weil, from 1807 to 1827, a *Reb Ber* appears again and again. He visits the Ullman's house in Augsburg frequently and seems to be very close to the family. With all probability it is Ber Ullmann, the head of the Pfersee Jewish community and an uncle of the Ullmann-children in Augsburg, from whom two letters are preserved in the collection.<sup>131</sup> Also Koshel from Randegg, titled *Reb* in the correspondence, is an uncle of the Ullmann siblings; the very wealthy Moses Levi-Neumann from Randegg (1769-1842), married to Judith Wertheimer (ca. 1774-1816) from Munich, and son of the Hoffaktor Michael Levi-Neumann (1740-1824) from Hohenems.<sup>132</sup> The choice of titles and addresses was in no way random, but rather, a very conscious decision as is shown by a letter from Zirle Weil to Klara Levi in Hohenems in 1827. She titles the male persons consistently as *Herr*, but nonetheless switches (although in a teasing tone) to *r`*, the abbreviation for *Reb*, when she begins to speak about her future husband, Hohenems Jew, Mathias Frey.<sup>133</sup> At this point that must suffice as an indication of the linguistic and cultural complexity of these Jewish ego-documents in the era of emancipation. Detailed analysis will follow.

---

the courtly language in favour of the respective national languages, is considered a central process of the European Modern Era, which had effects in all realms of communication. See in addition Jörg Requate, 'Kommunikation: Neuzeit', in *Europäische Mentalitätsgeschichte: Hauptthemen in Einzeldarstellungen*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1993).

<sup>131</sup> The Databank that I created to record the correspondence of the Löwenberg collection that is written in Hebrew characters notes all salutations used. Ber Ullmann surfaced regularly in the Ullmanns' and Zirle Weil's letters between 1807 to 1827. He wrote the letters JMH LB B 38/7.11.1826 (co-author is his wife Sofie) and JMH LB B 61/24.9.1826, all to Moritz and Klara Levi-Löwenberg. Ber Ullmann can be identified by the Harburger-Notes about the Jewish cemetery in Kriegshaber, (which also lists the gravestone of his wife Sofie) as the head of the Jewish community Pfersee, who lived from 1751 to 1837. (See note 4.) For more about him, see also the *Chronicle of Ber Bernhard Ullmann*, 1803, translated by Carl J. Ullmann based on the German translation of the Hebrew original prepared by Jonas Ullmann, New York, 1928, currently at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York.

<sup>132</sup> JMH LB B 93/8.8.1811 (Josef H. Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

<sup>133</sup> Letter 131/28.2.1827 (Zirle Weil, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

A letter from Moritz/Moses from Lindau to his wife Klara, delivered without a date, allows us to draw an exact picture of the logistics of the news delivery and the diverse transportation and communication possibilities that were available. First of all, Moritz informed Klara that he would spend the night in Lindau, and would not, as arranged, arrive in Hohenems on that evening. Klara must have received this message from Lindau in Hohenems on the same day or else it would not have made much sense. Even without telegraph and telephone service, in the early nineteenth century it was possible to send messages between distances of less than 30 km within a few hours by means of: courier, the official post connection, or travellers acting as letter carriers. Moritz also took on such a task; he was meant to take two letters from his brother Daniel with him on his business trip to Augsburg and deliver them there. But because he forgot them in Hohenems, in this letter, he had to describe in minute detail to Klara exactly how the letters were to get to him in Lindau. The services of a visitor meant to arrive in Hohenems that day, who could then take the letters back to Lindau was brought into action as well as the official post to Bregenz, from where the letters could then be delivered to Lindau by courier. It is evident, transportation and communication infrastructures were adequately available, they simply tied up an extensive amount of time and demanded intensive organisational input. The years of the rising modern nation states, these decades of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, also mark the start of a communication structure organised so perfectly as a round-the-clock service that we can use the service and at the same time forget about it.

### **The Letters of the Nineteenth Century as a Testimony to Embourgeoisement**

The individual writing of letters was also oriented on social conventions. Although letters are private testimony and oriented on a specific personal communication situation, they are nonetheless an expression of a collectively created and accepted letter-writing culture. As the Löwenberg collection represents, family correspondence likewise mirrors changes in the general letter-writing culture in the decades that it encompasses. The letters from the 1770s and 1780s, written in Western Yiddish, are also furnished with a long formulaic address and comprehensive honorary naming of the addressee in "whole Hebrew". This type of letter, in terms of its organisation and the formulas which it uses, corresponds with the Jewish letters of the Early Modern Era as we know, for example, from Alfred Landau and Bernhard Wachstein's collection of Jewish private letters from 1619. Landau/Wachstein describe the *outgrowth of the formal elements, which in both the Hebrew as well as the 'Jewish' [=*

*Western Yiddish] texts are characteristic for this style of letter.*<sup>134</sup> This old type of Jewish letter with greeting and closing with extensive honorary forms of address in *loshn koydesh* corresponds in German to the letter culture as it was before the poet of the Enlightenment, Christian Fürchtegott Gellert (1715-1769). As a result of Gellert a less compulsory form and more relaxed linguistic style was established. Up until Gellert, the letter was considered an element of rhetoric; an exercise in the art of rhetoric. It was first at the close of the eighteenth century that the extensive forms of address used in letter introductions began to disappear from letter writing practice.<sup>135</sup> With emancipation, a style prevailed in literature and letter writing which supported and demanded individual and subjective expression and also rejected as courtly everything formulaic. Bourgeois virtues such as usefulness, truthfulness (in the sense of not disguising one's self) and honesty were also successfully established in the forms of communication.

The letters of the Löwenberg collection from the nineteenth century thus already acquiesce to the demands placed on the bourgeois letter. They are oriented on the spoken word, on conversation, are not very formulaic and with simple and short but heartfelt forms of address which articulate the trend of the times towards an egalitarian, as opposed to corporate, classification of society. Klara is addressed as *tayerste shvester* (*most precious sister*), *liebe frayndin* (*dear friend*), *liebste madam* (*most beloved Madam*), *beste Klara* (*dearest Klara*), *liebe mutter* (*dear mother*) etc. Only in very few cases is she given the title *marat* (*wife*) or *haqatsinah* (*princess*), which correspond to the forms of address of classical Yiddish and Hebrew letters. It is not surprising that the few letters from the nineteenth century which fall back on the title in "whole Hebrew" and the previously cited forms of address of the pre-emancipation Yiddish letter, are from people who were contemporaries of Klara's parents. Minkle Obermayer, for example, who signs as *minqlah ishat jitschiq auibrmair* (*Minkle, wife of Isaak Obermayer*), a signatory formula which does not otherwise arise in the letters and which also corresponds to the older type of letter, writes in 1820 and 1829 from Kriegshaber, one of the suburban communities from which Jews migrated to Augsburg in 1803. Content and letter characteristics indicate an older person, probably a member of Jakob Obermayer's

---

<sup>134</sup> Landau/Wachstein, *Jüdische Privatbriefe*, 21.

<sup>135</sup> Requate, 'Kommunikation', 393. Nickisch, *Brief*, 50, quotes *imperial orders* from 1783, which ordered a trimming of the formulaic and cliché nature of official correspondence in favour of more natural, true to life language.

family, one of the three Jewish bankers granted residency in Augsburg in 1803.<sup>136</sup> The second person from whom letters containing a whole Hebrew form of address were preserved, is the previously mentioned Ber Ullmann from Pfersee, who signed two letters in 1826 as the uncle of Klara. He not only formulates his address with the honorary titles of the pre-modern Yiddish letter, but also signed with the Hebrew *haqatan* (similar to "humble"); a formality of the classical Hebrew and Yiddish letters of the pre-modern era. This can otherwise be found in the collection in only the earliest letters of the brothers Josef Henle and Efraim Ullmann from 1808 to 1811, and from Moritz Löwenberg in a letter from 1816.<sup>137</sup>

As a general trait of the letters of the nineteenth century, it is remarkable how many lines and words in the content of the letter are dedicated to the theme of the relationship of the correspondents without telling a great deal about the world of the writers. Dominating the correspondence are elements of conversation, the exchange of pleasantries, the asking and telling of opinions, the assurance of writing as quickly as possible, the impatience at having to wait so long for an answer, all written in a very verbose fashion. This is especially true of the Ullmann siblings' correspondence between Augsburg and Hohenems. In a fifteen line letter from Efraim to his sister Klara in Hohenems from 1811, fifty percent is occupied by greetings to Klara and her family (whose members are greeted individually), inquiries about her and her well being and the well being of her husband and children, etc. In his letter from 1817 he dedicates two-thirds of the letter to asking not only about individual family members, but about the whole *kehille* (*wie gehts dan sinsten zu ihn hohenems, shraybn sie mir einige nayigkaytin*) (*how are things going in Hohenems, write me some news*), and elaborately formulated desires to see them again. And Efraim is no exception in this respect.<sup>138</sup> The exchange between Klara and the head of the family in Augsburg, her brother Josef Henle, is more strictly oriented on that which is newsworthy. He reported diverse news about the daily life of the family and business in Augsburg and occasionally asked for advice. Also the correspondence between Klara and the housekeeper Zirle Weil in Augsburg is marked by the

---

<sup>136</sup> JMH LB B 30/3.6.1820 and 19/1.1.1829 (Minkla Ishat Jitschak Obermayer, Kriegshaber, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

<sup>137</sup> JMH LB B 115/6.6.1811, B 116/21.2.1811, B 123/17.10.1808 (Josef Henle and Efraim Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems); 27/12.8.1816 (Moses Levi-Löwenberg, Innsbruck, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

<sup>138</sup> JMH LB B 45/3.1.1811 and B 20/3.10.1817 (Efraim Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

fact that Zirle had important things to take care of and also that Klara supplied Augsburg with products that Zirle requested of her from the countryside. The few letters that Klara received from women responding to her search for a nanny for her children have a clearly pragmatic function and are therefore not dominated so extensively by conversational stylistic elements. When surveying the entire collection of letters from the nineteenth century, however, the conversational style, so typical of the bourgeois family letter of the nineteenth century, which most of the letter-writers master perfectly, remains dominant. The main requirements of corresponding were: understanding the correspondence partner (empathy), expressing one's own feelings (emotionality), choosing the right (also affable conciliatory) tone, refined and benevolent dealings with each other, limiting the scope to select themes (family, friends and relatives' visits, health, leisure activities, the children's educational progress), avoiding controversies and presenting oneself modestly. The Ullmann letters in the collection can be placed completely within the typology of the bourgeois family letter, as described by Isa Schikorsky and Rainer Baasner based on non-Jewish German correspondence of these decades.<sup>139</sup>

Most clearly corresponding with this type of letter are the letters from Klara's younger correspondence partners, whether her younger siblings in Augsburg or, later, her daughter Wilhelmine (Mina or with her Jewish name, Miriam) who wrote in 1819/20 from Munich while there for the fine points of her education. These writers are not yet capable of synthesising the norm-letter and a personal verbal creative power. The norm-letter elements dominate and accordingly the page is filled with emotional inquiries about Klara's well being, emotive reports about their own well being, greetings to the family, assurances of writing again as soon as possible, demands about wanting to hear from the other as soon as possible.<sup>140</sup> Pragmaticians, who tied the letter with the "objective" necessity of exchanging information, would shake their head at the waste of so much time, space and money (for the postal charges). Such a position, however, ignores the significance of communication and exchange in bourgeois culture. The conversation, the civilised social behaviour among equals, is a value

---

<sup>139</sup> Schikorsky, *Bürgerliches Sprachverhalten*, passim; Baasner, *Briefkultur*, passim.

<sup>140</sup> JMH LB B 81/without date and B 79/without date (Nina Ullmann, Augsburg, to sister Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems); JMH LB B 164/without date (Heinrich Ullmann, Augsburg, to aunt Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems); JMH LB B 54/13.3.1819 and B84/20.4.1819 (Wilhelmine Levi-Löwenberg, Munich, to her mother Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

in and of itself; it is not bound by the objective necessity of an exchange of information. Like keeping company or managing leisure time, writing and receiving letters was part of a way of life; as a practice, it expressed that someone considered himself or herself as belonging to bourgeois culture.

In his typology of the nineteenth century practice of bourgeois correspondence, Rainer Baasner emphasises the obligation to write letters to which the correspondents felt subjected. Keeping the other waiting too long was considered impolite and was not "good practice". There should arise no impression of disinterest, which is why an amazing number of pardons and set explanatory phrases could be found in the introduction to the letters; expressions of a permanently guilty conscience for being late.<sup>141</sup> Pardoning and accusatory phrases with reference to belated correspondence can also be found throughout the Löwenberg-Ullmann correspondence. These can almost be described as a stylistic element of these letters. It seems as though there was no greater offence than leaving someone waiting for a letter and no greater insult than having to wait for an answer.

Both young and old appeared anxious, even indignant, about not having heard from a respective correspondence partner for so long, or overly excused themselves for the important business which had prevented the immediate reply to a letter. (*M*)ayne briefe (*my letters*), says Pepi (Josefa) Ullmann-Wertheimer 1816 from Augsburg to her sister-in-law Klara in Hohenems, *haben shohn Imahl das loss sie fangn immr mit entschuldigungen an (first of all have the fate of always starting with excuses)*. The *jomtev (new year)* and the move to the new house prevented a prompt answer to Klara's letter. But now, after taking care of the work, it was Pepi's *Iste Erholung (first chance to relax)*, to converse with the beloved Klara. Her failure to answer the correspondence promptly still did not stop Pepi from *schon den tekst ein bischen ... lesen (reading over Klara's text a bit)*, that did not answer a single syllable of her last letter. She hopes dearly that these lines *nicht glaykhs loss haben werden (won't share the same fate)* as the others, which Klara silently passed over. In this letter from Pepi from 19 February 1816, correspondence-related contents take up two-thirds of the entire letter.<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>141</sup> Baasner, *Briefkultur*, 17.

<sup>142</sup> JMH LB B 85/30.9.1816 (Pepi and Josef H. Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems); B124/19.2.1816 (Pepi Ullmann, Munich, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).



Also Josef Henle Ullmann excused himself on 6 June 1811 for his *shmirray* (*scribbling*), with which Klara *für heute verlihb nehmin* müsse (*will have to make do today*) as he did not mean to embarrass her by not receiving a letter from him. It is just because she should not be without news from him on the Sabbath. She should simply not be *broiges* (*angry*) about his poor writing. He could do it more beautifully if he wanted to but as for today, he isn't sure of where his mind is, as he still has several letters to write. In a letter from 1808 he expresses his understanding that he cannot demand that his brother-in-law write often and in great quantities, as he is much too busy. The *der herr shvager* (*sir brother-in-law*) must not believe that he would be insulted by not receiving a long letter from him everyday. On the contrary, it would please him greatly if Klara wrote him frequent long letters.<sup>143</sup>

Already in 1809, Josef Henle reported how perplexed their dear brother Efraim is because he always goes in vain to the Lindau post office where no letters arrive from Klara. Efraim bade Klara urgently to keep her word and write to him on the next post day. Klara's negligence in replying to Efraim's letters did not seem to have changed over the years (or maybe for Efraim, complaining about the other's failure to correspond was simply an unavoidable part of writing a letter). On 24 June 1818 and 14 September 1819 he also complained bitterly that he had not received an answer from Klara and asked her if he had insulted her.<sup>144</sup> Also his sister, Nina, the housekeeper Zirle Weil and Theres Rothschild from Munich knew and used these phrases relating to correspondence quite aptly. The greatest production of pressure to write in the Löwenberg collection came from Klara herself in her letter from 12 May 1827 to Zirle Weil in Augsburg. For twenty berating lines, she complained about Zirle's lengthy silence. She said that she had never expected something like that from such a trusted friend and she would repay her some time with the same treatment. This letter ended on a friendly note; otherwise it would seem as though a lifelong friendship had been destroyed by a neglected duty to correspond.<sup>145</sup>

This letter from Klara, and also the few preserved writing samples of her sister-in-law Pepi Ullmann-Wertheimer or her sister Nina are excellent examples of a letter-writing style that Isa

---

<sup>143</sup> JMH LB B 115/6.6.1811 (Josef H. Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems) and B 123/17.10.1808 (Josef H. Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara and Moritz Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

<sup>144</sup> JMH LB B 103/24.6.1818 and B 104/14.9.1819 (Efraim H. Ullmann, Augsburg, to Klara and Moritz Levi-Löwenberg, and also to Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems).

<sup>145</sup> JMH LB B 2/12.5.1827 (Klara Levi-Löwenberg, Hohenems, to Zirle Weil, Augsburg). In the Löwenberg

Schikorsky, in her study on bourgeois language behaviour and language consciousness, describes as the ideal of the bourgeois private family letter. They are entertaining, amusing, in a natural, lively and (self-) ironic tone and they attest to the intelligence and linguistic humour of their authors.<sup>146</sup> This corresponds to the norm of these decades. A letter should be an *expression of the natural language of the heart and the entire subjective individuality of its writer*.<sup>147</sup> Not all correspondence in the Löwenberg collection was capable of doing this. Moses' letters to his wife Klara provide an often somewhat hapless testimony of the letter-writing culture of their era. It is difficult to determine whether Moses was simply less talented than the others or had enjoyed slightly less of the education oriented towards the norms of bourgeois culture than the offspring of the Court Jew families in Augsburg (Ullmann) and Munich (Wertheimer). However, Moses and Klara's daughter Wilhelmine (or Mina or Miriam), had completely mastered the letter writing-norms of her time, as is shown by the preserved letters to her parents.<sup>148</sup>

A further important characteristic of the bourgeois family letter was their publicity within the family. This semi-public staged privacy corresponded to the typical contemporary self-evidence of the bourgeois family, the maxim of mutual openness, honesty and involvement. A circle of readers surrounding the concretely addressed person often enjoyed a letter. Received letters were shown around, passed around, and passages or the entire letter were read aloud. Also, often several people collaborated in writing the letter.<sup>149</sup> In the Löwenberg collection's correspondence, explicit evidence of this family publicity as a situational characteristic of this letter-writing culture is also evident. Four people composed a letter to Klara from Augsburg in 1816: the siblings Josef Henle, Nina and Fanni, as well as the sister-in-law Peppi. Peppi and Josef Henle also often wrote together. The same can be said for Ber Ulmo and his wife Sofie.<sup>150</sup> In addition, there are numerous clues in the letters that information had been gained from other letters written by the correspondence partner. All in all it comprises an extremely

---

collection two letters written by Klara are preserved.

<sup>146</sup> Sample examples of this competence are Klara's two letters to Zirla Weil and her husband Moses, and also the letters from Pepi and Nina Ullmann to Klara. See also the sample letters from the collection in the appendix.

<sup>147</sup> Schikorsky, *Bürgerliches Sprachverhalten*, 269-72, about the stylistic concepts of the bourgeois family letter.

<sup>148</sup> 84/1819; 154/1819. Both from Munich.

<sup>149</sup> Schikorsky, *Bürgerliches Sprachverhalten*, 266. On the semi-public character of the letter, see also Habermas, *Frauen und Männer*, 25.

<sup>150</sup> The letters from Ber Ulmann and his wife, Sofie, see note 66.

dense communication situation that is created not only by frequent writing, but also through the style of the conversation-oriented letter.

Phatic elements, linguistic elements directed at the creation and maintenance of contact, are not unusual for the "letter" as a type of text. They have shaped the linguistic style of letter-writing culture throughout the epochs. Mainly private letters, and therefore also family letters, show these elements prior to the bourgeois nineteenth century as, e.g. Andrew L. Sunshine has proven in detail for Yiddish private letters of the Early Modern Era.<sup>151</sup> The bourgeois letter-writing culture cast these elements – corresponding to the leitmotif of this culture such as the demand for "naturalness and individuality of expression", and the rejection of starkly formulaic forms of address, etc. – in new forms and, in keeping with the significance of conversation in this culture, granted them a great deal of space. In terms of these specific elements, the letters in the Löwenberg collection of the nineteenth century are strongly oriented on the non-Jewish letter-writing culture of their time.

Drawing an exact line of demarcation between Jewish and non-Jewish is, however, generally difficult if we closely analyse the letter-writing culture of the correspondence of the Löwenberg collection for both the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. At first glance, the letters from the eighteenth century which contain the date in a Jewish chronology, starkly formulaic and elaborate Hebrew forms of address in the salutation and are written entirely in Hebrew characters except for the address, seem to be anchored more strongly in a "Jewish" letter culture than those of the nineteenth century with their bourgeois dates in Latin cursive writing, terse German or French salutations, signatures in Latin cursive, and the linguistic stylistic elements of the bourgeois family letter such as elaborate pardons for neglecting correspondence. However, the non-Jewish German letter before emancipation was likewise dominated by lengthy honorary titles of the addressed person, and was more strongly a rhetorical artistic exercise than an expression of the individual narrative competence of its composer.

Seen in this way, the Jewish letter-writing culture of the premodern era also reflected the letter-writing culture of the surrounding society. However, for the letters from the eighteenth century, it is necessary to look carefully, go into them deeply so to say and take their structure into consideration to come to this conclusion. At first glance their appearance does not reveal

---

<sup>151</sup> Sunshine: *Opening the Mail*, 174-238.

their relationship to the surrounding non-Jewish society. On the contrary, at first glance even the outward appearance of the letters of the nineteenth century show this letter-writing culture's permeability to the influences of the non-Jewish society around them. They are dated according to the bourgeois calculation of time, have terse German or French salutations, and bear signatures written mostly in Latin cursive. As a whole, these manifestations illustrate an important phenomenon for the understanding of the modern bourgeois-constituted society: the levelling of the external appearance of the social and cultural communities (which were previously clearly marked by their special characteristics), the transfer of these differences to the non-visual sphere (from the religion to the confession) and the convergence of these communities towards a nationally defined society.

#### 4) “Everyday Stories”

##### *Everyday Jewish Life in the Early Decades of Emancipation as Reflected in the Löwenberg Correspondence*

Let us linger a moment at the dividing line between the Jews and the non-Jews that I discussed at the end of the last chapter based on the example of the Jewish letter-writing culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As I have shown, both the letters of the eighteenth century as well as those of the nineteenth century mirrored the hegemonic letter-writing culture of the surrounding, non-Jewish society – although each in a different way. At first glance the eighteenth century letters seem fully anchored in their Jewish reference system: the entire document (with the exception of the address) uses the Hebrew alphabet, the date corresponds to Jewish chronology and also the Hebrew greeting and signature draw a prominent outwardly visible border. It is necessary to translate (both literally and metaphorically) in order to also recognise in these letters the existing parallels to the non-Jewish letter-writing culture before Christian Fürchtegott Gellert: for example, the extent of the salutation with its numerous and elaborately honourable titles for the addressee, which articulates that the style of letter clearly falls into the category of current court rhetoric.<sup>152</sup>

The Löwenberg correspondence from the nineteenth century, on the contrary, immediately reveals that it has been permeated by the non-Jewish letter-writing culture in the outer appearance of the letters: starting at the margins, “non-Jewish” elements seep visibly into the letter-writing culture of the Jewish writers. The Latin writing system and the “general” chronology (also called “bürgerlich”) is already in use for the dates. Often the signature is written using the Latin alphabet and in some, even the salutation is in non-Jewish writing.<sup>153</sup> This process of visible integration of elements of non-Jewish culture into the Jewish, which my present work will deal with in one specific (although certainly quite representative) aspect; the gradual dissolution of the dividing line between the Jewish and non-Jewish realm, is central for understanding the dynamics of the transition from the Jewish premodern to the

---

<sup>152</sup> On the significance of Christian Fürchtegott Gellert for the German letter-writing culture, see Reinhard M. G. Nickisch, *Die Stilprinzipien in den deutschen Briefstellern des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts. Mit einer Bibliographie zur Briefschreiblehre (1474-1800)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969), 172-75.

<sup>153</sup> A detailed analysis of the writing transformation which can be drawn from the letters of the Löwenberg collection, can be found in chapter 8.

Modern Era. This process, however, should not be misunderstood as one of successful Christian assimilation of the Jews in Europe. Jumping to such a conclusion would be a fallacy as it would remain trapped in the structures of the premodern era and would also ignore one of the central developments of the Modern Era: secularisation, concretely “de-Christianisation” in Europe which, starting in the Early Modern Era, encompassed ever more social fields. Not only politics and the state, but also science and culture increasingly liberated themselves from theology.<sup>154</sup> Bourgeois culture and society was conceived as supra-confessional “per-se”. That also explains the great fascination during these decades with “pre-Christian” antiquity: a cultural inheritance that could be referred to by all without having to grant priority to any certain religion. The Jews did not enter Christian society in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth centuries, instead, they entered the supra-confessional conceived bourgeois society; they did not leap into “Christian history” but, rather, into “general history”.<sup>155</sup> This general context is important for understanding the high level of acceptance of this integration process among the Jews in Central and Western Europe. Far from being a defeat of the “old”, politically powerful opponent Christianity, integration provided an entry into something “new”, which in terms of religion was at least neutrally conceived.<sup>156</sup>

---

<sup>154</sup> See also Giacomo Marramao, *Die Säkularisierung der westlichen Welt* (Frankfurt/Main: Insel Verlag, 1999; 1st ed. Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1994).

<sup>155</sup> With this image of the *leap into general history* I allude to Jürgen Habermas, who, looking back at the process of social and cultural transformation of the Jews in the decades of emancipation spoke of a *leap into foreign history*. Jürgen Habermas, ‘Der deutsche Idealismus der jüdischen Philosophie,’ in *Philosophisch-politische Profile*, ed. Jürgen Habermas (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp), 44. This history remained “foreign” for many Jews, as Judaism was never conceived of merely religiously, but always nationally. An important inner-Jewish discussion of the nineteenth century was also concerned with the national identity of Judaism and the issue of (preliminary) relinquishment of this dimension and its rituals. The reformists were ready to give this up and to rename the synagogue as “temple”, etc.. Religious and Jewish national counter positions arose. The inner-Jewish scepticism of integration of the Jews into the national bourgeois society was justified to a great degree by the growing anti-Semitism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

<sup>156</sup> The social basis of bourgeois society was naturally always “Christian”. The Christian majority left their mark on this culture which understood itself to be trans-religious. Nonetheless, bourgeois culture’s ideal of transcending religious borders was decisive for the dynamics that it was able to unfold. Nonetheless, an important task remaining for scientific research on the bourgeois culture is to work out the contradictions in the ideal and the actual practice and point out the constitutive exclusions (in the sense of Michel Foucault). This “exclusion” can be seen, for example, in the refusal of bourgeois reading societies to accept Jews and thus the founding of Jewish reading societies as a response. See also, chapter 7, p. 176 f.

Until this point, my interpretation of the Löwenberg correspondence in terms of the transformation of the relationship between the Jews and non-Jews during the transition to the Modern Era has been based on the reading of these letters as an implicit testimony to this change. The content of the correspondence, the explicit statements and narratives of the writers, has not been used much in the analysis; my conclusions have come more from the implicit message of the testimonies: from the way that they wrote their letters, the writing system they used, how they dated them, etc. But what do we explicitly learn from these letters, for example, about the social environment of the Levi-Löwenberg family in Hohenems and the Ullmanns in Augsburg? How are the concrete encounters of Jews and non-Jews reflected in this correspondence? Where did encounters take place and to which social realm do they belong? Do these letters witness friendships between Jews and non-Jews or is the regular contact more or less limited to business interactions?<sup>157</sup>

A qualifying remark (that was also mentioned previously) must first be reiterated before these questions can be answered: these letters do not represent “the” everyday Jewish life in the decades of emancipation. For one, they are testimonies from the Jewish upper class and therefore do not represent the social heterogeneity of the Jewish community. For another, the messages in the letters themselves are limited both by the relationship of the respective correspondence partners as well as the function of the correspondence; the letters of the eighteenth century, for example, are inner-Jewish business correspondence. Family matters, everyday affairs, etc., are only touched upon peripherally if at all. Non-Jews and the non-Jewish world are merely mentioned in terms of a business context. This corresponds with what we already know of the Christian-Jewish relations of the Early Modern Era, and is not surprising in light of the function of this correspondence. The letters of the nineteenth century, on the other hand, are family letters. Not only male heads of households and fathers, but also women and children are involved in this exchange and are able to express their perceptions and experiences. Here the family’s daily life takes up the most space and business matters appear only occasionally as an aside. But also in these letters, everyday life does not really come up conclusively; only that which is deemed important and worthy of relating between

---

<sup>157</sup> See also Friedrich Battenberg, ‘Zwischen Integration und Segregation: Zu den Bedingungen jüdischen Lebens in der vormodernen christlichen Gesellschaft,’ *Aschkenas. Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 6, no. 2 (1996): 421-54. Sabine Ullmann offers an interesting analysis of Jewish-Christian co-existence in the rural communities of the Markgrafschaft Burgau, *Nachbarschaft und Konkurrenz: Juden und Christen in Dörfern der Markgrafschaft Burgau 1650 bis 1750*, Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, no. 151

the correspondence partners. In terms of the previously formulated questions about the family's social environment, we have been extremely fortunate with the preserved correspondence in the Löwenberg collection. The social network in which the correspondents live, the members of the immediate and the extended families, the acquaintances, and also the participation in social life are thematised often and comprehensively in the letters. If asked for a spontaneous estimate of the contents of the correspondence of the nineteenth century, I would describe the families' social network and their participation in social life in its various forms as the central content of these letters. The dominance of this theme is an immediate reminder of the great significance that sociability held in the bourgeois culture and way of life.<sup>158</sup> Furthermore, this element of content (as well as other elements already mentioned) identifies the letters as typical testimonies of the culture of bourgeois family letter-writing in the nineteenth century oriented on the oral conversation and its rules.<sup>159</sup>

### **Bourgeois "Sociability"**

From the reading of this correspondence, one gets the picture that there must have been a permanent coming and going in the houses of the Levi-Löwenbergs in Hohenems and the Ullmanns in Augsburg. Moritz Löwenberg travelled regularly to Augsburg, mostly for business reasons, as did Klara and the children. Also the Ullmann siblings in Augsburg,

---

(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 16-21, 481.

<sup>158</sup> Rebekka Habermas also speaks of the "restless sociability" of the actors of the letters and other ego documents that she uses to follow the embourgeoisement of the Merkel and Roth families in Nürnberg. Rebekka Habermas, *Frauen und Männer des Bürgertums: Eine Familiengeschichte (1750-1850)*, Bürgertum. Beiträge zur europäischen Gesellschaftsgeschichte, no. 14, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000, 139. On the central significance of sociability for the formation of bourgeois culture at the end of the eighteenth and in the nineteenth centuries, see *ibid.*, 137-145. Bourgeois sociability in the bourgeois research is considered (before R. Habermas) primarily from the aspect of class formation and the creation of a political consciousness. The numerous societies, lodges, social clubs, etc., formed a public arena that created a counter model to the old social system of class inequality. In addition, those men excluded from direct political influence were able to thus create a form of "indirect power in the absolutist state" (Reinhard Koselleck). R. Habermas criticises the "backward looking perspective" in this position. She asks less about the significance of the new sociability for the bourgeoisie and more about its function for the historical actors, both men and women. She mainly recognises these organisations or clubs as "agents of socialisation", to train a bourgeois manner. Habermas also criticised the research's failure to devote attention to the various forms of domestic sociability: "visits", "circles", etc.. Only when these forms are brought into the picture is women's sociability also adequately taken into consideration.

<sup>159</sup> See chapter 3. p. 69.



mainly Josef Henle, often report in their letters that they have had a safe return from Hohenems. Beyond that, there is scarcely a letter that does not mediate news about or greetings from people who had just arrived or departed. Not only the correspondence partner and perhaps their immediate family is greeted, but additional greetings are also offered in the letters: e.g. to the cook, the nanny, the private tutor, scribe, or commis in these Jewish houses where also persons well beyond the circle of the small family must have lived.<sup>160</sup> Often a separate note for these people was included in a letter. Likewise, the news related by visitors was immediately passed on. Often the narration began with the phrase: now the news “Khodoshim”, heard from this or that person. For those persons who formed the social environs of the family, interesting topics were: marriages (an important subject is the wealth and age of the “Khazen”),<sup>161</sup> pregnancies, births, “Bris Mile”- (Bar Mitsvah-) celebrations, as well as deaths, but also the unexpected return of a husband to his wife, who had nearly come to terms with her situation as an “Agune” (abandoned but not divorced woman) and now had a “Bris Mile” (circumcision) to celebrate.<sup>162</sup>

The festivals described above are often mentioned as social events in the letters: marriages and Brit Mila- or Bar Mitsvah-celebrations. Not every Ullmann felt comfortable in his or her element. On 16 November 1809, for example, Josef Henle, barely eighteen years old, wrote to his older sister in Hohenems that although he was invited to the inn for the marriage of “Bile, daughter of Binswanger”, he did not participate: due to the costs, but also because he expected few young people to be there, and, finally, he did not know how to dance. Apparently his younger sister Henriette was spared at least this latter fate: on 14 November 1813, Zirle Weil invited Miriam (Wilhelmine, Mina), the daughter of Klara and Moritz, to come to Augsburg to learn how to dance with Henriette.<sup>163</sup> Much more pleasurable for Josef Henle was the *zehr*

---

<sup>160</sup> JMH LB, B 8/9.9.1816 (Josef Henle, Peppi, Nina and Fanni Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems). The writers also greet, among others, the cook, Nenele. JMH LB, B 51/20.1.1813 und 10/10.6.1813 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/ Hohenems). Josef Henle greets Leopold Weil, scribe from Innsbruck, into the House of Moritz Löwenberg, and “Herr Campe” (Sigmund Campe from Fürth), scribe at Josef Löwenbergs.

<sup>161</sup> See, for example, JMH LB, B 153/5.5.1808 (Henla Ettinger/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems). Henla Ettinger provides information about a Madmoisel Samson, who would be well served by the scribe from Kaula, Reb Chaim Gunzenhausen.

<sup>162</sup> JMH LB, B 21/7.11.1811 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems).

<sup>163</sup> JMH LB, B 119/16.11.1809 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems). JMH LB, B 110/14.11.1813 (Zirle Weil/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems). JMH LB, B 86/24.5.1820 (Nina

*shene nitlikhe* house concert at the Binswangers which he told Klara about in June of 1812. Zirbele sang and Leo played the piano. Many people were present and they both received a lot of *kovid* (admiration).<sup>164</sup>

One of the domestic forms of sociability, which is often mentioned, mainly in the women's letters, are the visits or "fisitn" as they are commonly called in the correspondence. Zirle Weil, but also Pepi Wertheimer, Josef Henle's wife, and Nina Ullmann often report of the numerous "fisitn" to their houses. In 1807, Zirle Weil reported of numerous visits that had been announced (among others from Herrn Kaula), which she, however, did not want to receive due to the mourning period at the house, as these visits would also bring happiness and pleasure along with them. In 1816, Pepi reported in great detail about the house-warming visits that she received upon her move into the new house. Only the "alte Obermayer" did not show up due to her illness. In 1820, Nina from Augsburg reported to her sister that she had just returned from her journey, yet due to the steady stream of visitors had had no time to write. She urged Klara to try and understand her situation. Klara must certainly know herself what to expect upon returning from a journey: there is always something to do. First you receive "fisiten", and then you have "gegenbesukhe" (returning the visits) and so on. Receiving visitors and returning the visit were ritualised activities. These visits were also pleasurable, but – as Nina Ullmann's letter makes clear – they were nonetheless a social duty and were therefore experienced as "work". The circle that formed on a particular occasion was clearly determined as Pepi's remark that the alte Obermayer "had not yet called by" indicates. In order to "belong" one had to integrate into the game of receiving and being received. Rebekka Habermas emphasises the significance of these visits for the social life of the female bourgeoisie. In the Löwenberg collection as well, it is mostly women's letters that refer to the visitations as duty and work.

Sociability outside the home is also a theme that is gladly touched upon in this Jewish correspondence. Frivolities and festivities are written about extensively. In 1816, Josef Henle told about the "redouten" (masquerades) in which he had participated, one of which had been attended by 1,200 people. Nina reported of her visits to the casino in Augsburg and her frequent attendance at masquerades and harmony balls, in both Munich and Augsburg. She does not spend a single evening at home, she wrote to her sister in Hohenems in 1824, adding

---

Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>164</sup> JMH LB, B 112/21.6.1812 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems).

that she was happy to hear that Klara is also doing everything possible to amuse herself.<sup>165</sup> Zirle reported from Augsburg to Klara about the great applause that her daughter Mina (Wilhelmine, Miriam) was receiving at the “local balls”. In the “big city” of her maternal relatives (see above) she had not only been exposed to dancing but also the culture of the balls and social life. We also hear in the correspondence of another “rural Jewish” girl from Hohenems who enjoyed the social life of Munich and Augsburg. According to Nina in a letter to Klara from 1824, the niece of Moritz Löwenberg, Babette, born in 1801, had come to Augsburg from Munich and found that there was not enough going on in this city.<sup>166</sup> The cultural and educational diligence of the Ullmans and Löwenbergs is evident in their frequent theatre and museum visits. Pepi Ullmann-Wertheimer expresses in a letter from 30 September 1816 to his sister-in-law, that Josef Henle and she would not have the pleasure of any more theatre visits that year. Nina wrote in 1824 that she had learned from Efraim that Klara had gone to the theatre in Lindau. She reported of her own museum visits with her sister Fani in Munich. Moritz Löwenberg was also a true theatregoer during his journeys. In 1812, Zirle reported to Klara that Moritz had not travelled through Augsburg on his last trip home, and therefore he had been unable to visit the new theatre. In 1817, Moritz wrote to Klara from Vienna and told her that he had visited the Burgtheater. Moritz not only visited the famous theatre in the monarchy’s capital but also the “rotite” (Redoute/masquerade) and he travelled in the best Jewish circles: visiting the Wertheimers, Wertheimsteins, Königswarters and Biedermanns. He also tells Klara in 1817 from Vienna that the previous evening he had even met the Herr Baron von Eskeles at Moritz Königswarter’s.<sup>167</sup> The fact that Jews were diligent theatregoers, as well as concert and museum visitors can be considered a signet of embourgeoisement.<sup>168</sup> This made them part of a “general audience” (no longer fragmented by religious or class borders), which had formed in the eighteenth century in public dialogues

---

<sup>165</sup> JMH LB, B 108/28.2.1816 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg). JMH LB, B 130/12.12.1824 (Nina Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg). The Ullmans and the Löwenbergs could often be found in Munich. That was probably also due to their relationship to the Wertheimer family from Munich. On the Wertheimers, see chapter 3, note 45.

<sup>166</sup> JMH LB, B 163/April 1824 (Zirle Weil, Moshe Levi, Ber Ulmo, Nina Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg). JMH LB, B 130/12.12.1824 (Nina Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>167</sup> JMH LB, B 26/7.1.1812 (Zirle Weil/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems). JMH LB, B 125/19.11.1817 (Moritz Löwenberg/Vienna to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems). JMH LB, B 28/22.11.1817 (Moritz Löwenberg/Vienna to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>168</sup> Michael A. Meyer, ‘The Problematic Acquisition of German Culture’, In Meyer and Brenner, (eds.) 1997, 203.

about art. This “general audience” presented an important nucleus of the bourgeois public realm. The “new” public realm disputed the primacy of state and church as the former central organs of the public realm. In this sense, the early bourgeois public realm was also political, even if it did not argue about politics in the narrow sense, e.g., about state authoritarian control, but, rather, about literature, theatre performances, painting and music.<sup>169</sup>

### **Rural Jews and the City**

Yet another facet of bourgeois culture is reflected in Moritz Löwenberg as a theatre-goer in Augsburg, Munich and Vienna and Klara in the theatre in Lindau and at the Emperor’s ball in Bregenz<sup>170</sup> or Nina and Fani as museum visitors in Munich. This facet is their relation to the city. Ever since the eighteenth century, the city increasingly became the central site for the public realm that had previously been granted to the court; and it was those new institutions of the bourgeois sociability and self-improvement culture such as the theatre, the museum and the concert hall that secured the city’s predominance in the Modern Era.<sup>171</sup> The Jewish families whom we know from the letters of the Löwenberg collection enjoyed the cultural and social offer of the city and enthusiastically made use of it. This included those who (still) lived in the countryside and, through their inter-regional familial network had privileged access to the city – a privilege not only of the men employed in business, but also the women and children. The latter were also sent to the city for their education, as shown by the example of Wilhelmine/Mina/Miriam Löwenberg. She received the finishing touches of her education in Munich in 1819/20 at Theres Rothschild’s and also learned to play piano there, which she had probably already learned in Hohenems.<sup>172</sup> Taking all of these facts into consideration gives the impression that, although the Jews may have lived in the countryside, in their “minds” they had already long arrived in the city. The tracks of the Jewish urbanisation in

---

<sup>169</sup> On the development of the “audience” and on the institutions of the bourgeois public realm (coffee houses, dinner parties, salons, theatre, museums, concerts, etc.) see Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1996; 1st ed., 1962), 90-107.

<sup>170</sup> JMH LB, B 131 (Zirle Weil/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>171</sup> On the public realm’s move from the court to the city, which then became the central location of the bourgeois public realm, see Habermas, *Strukturwandel*, 92.

<sup>172</sup> JMH A 11: six letters (1819/20) from Theres Rothschild in Munich to Klara and Moritz Löwenberg in Hohenems. JMH 9: receipt for received 2 fl 24 kr. From L. Dülke, Munich, for a rented Piano-Forte for Rothschild, April 1819. JMH Löwenberg-Vitrine: "Clavier-Musik für Demoisell M. Löwenberg [---] 1817".

Central and Western Europe, which took place rapidly in the second half of the nineteenth century, had already begun to be laid in the early decades of the century. Although it was first the legal equality of residency rights that would enable the complete enactment of the move from the countryside into the city, this step had already been introduced several decades earlier.

How these Jewish elite-families with their urban ways of life and culture were perceived in the non-Jewish countryside remains an interesting question. There has been no investigation of these issues for Hohenems, the little market village in the Vorarlberg Rhine valley that had long lost all of its court and inter-local administrative functions at the beginning of the nineteenth century. I am also not aware of studies on the reactions of the non-Jewish bourgeois elites who must have met with these Jewish families at the Emperor's ball in Bregenz, the theatre in Lindau, or at the diverse social events in Augsburg. In this context I can merely quote a voice from 1839. The Bavarian public servant, travel writer, and ethnologist Ludwig Steub (1812-1888) also reports in his *Streifzüge durch Vorarlberg (Expeditions through Vorarlberg)* about the spa in Reuthe in the far reaches of the Bregenz forest. He distinguishes between the *society* that meets there as: the *educated classes*, thus the *city people*, and the *country people*. Among the *ladies* of the *educated classes*, in addition to the *beautiful young ladies of the lakeside cities and from Feldkirch* and the *free Swiss women*, he also includes the *beautiful Jewish ladies from Hohenems*. These had a good reputation for *their stately presence*, but are also well known for spending all of their time on *their grooming and accessories* at home.<sup>173</sup>

Interestingly, the “Jews from Hohenems” were clearly considered “city people”, although the village was decidedly not a city in the nineteenth century. Also noteworthy is the allusion to these women's urban appearance and a tendency towards excessive grooming and accessories. While an old male prejudice of women's addiction to grooming may shine through from behind Josef Bergmann and Ludwig Steub's statement, the letters of the Löwenberg collection also confirm that clothing and outer appearance presented an important matter, at least for Klara Levi-Löwenberg. As we know from the correspondence, a good portion of Klara's wardrobe came from Augsburg and other cities that her husband visited on

---

<sup>173</sup> Ludwig Steub, *Streifzüge durch Vorarlberg*, (1839), Edition 1908, 20-21, 162. For the statement about “grooming and accessories”, Steub quotes and agrees with the Vorarlberg historian Josef Bergmann (1796-1872).

his business trips. *The beautiful Jewish ladies from Hohenems* certainly also owed their urban appearance to the urban origins of their clothing, wigs and accessories. The correspondence between Klara and her friend, the housekeeper at the Ullman's in Augsburg, Zirle Weil, is particularly embossed by this relationship of exchange. Zirle had Klara's items prepared in the *completely new fashion* (*ganz neuen Fasson*) in Augsburg, including coats, a net dress, veil with lace, and beautiful but costly bonnets and hats (a black velvet which was the latest fashion). She also bought her shoes and textiles (yellow merino, batiste, velvet to "attach", and muslin). Furthermore, she brought Klara's bonnets, veils and lace to the cleaners.<sup>174</sup> Moritz also often bought clothing, material, etc. for Klara and the children on his business trips. In a letter written prior to 1813, Klara describes for Moshe in great detail what he should buy for her and from whom. She would like a *beautiful large scarf of the latest fashion*, but this time not in green. Mrs. Obermayer knows where the latest ones are available. And she also asks for a *fine, pretty straw hat with a Bavarian band*. If he doesn't get to Zurzach (a well known fair town in Switzerland), then he should buy it at Rambacher in Memmingen. She doesn't want an Augsburg hat because the hat should be pretty and made from good straw, not bast. It also should not be too expensive, if it is, then she would rather buy it *plain* somewhere else and then purchase the band separately.<sup>175</sup>

Zirle emphasized constantly that she would always buy Klara the most up-to-date items. In 1821, she reported from Hohenems that she had obtained the merino from Rambacher and after the midday break she would bring it right to the tailor *Krä*. He often takes long for the work but it is made that much more beautifully. *Krä* also does not require any instruction on the latest *fasson*, since he subscribes to a weekly *journal* and thus is always up to date with what is new. *Krä* is extremely popular in Augsburg. Zirle will have Klara's dress made with a band in a completely new fashion, one that none of the *local Jewish ladies* have. Klara should not say anything about it to the women there (in Hohenems), or else they would also turn to *Krä*. Klara seemed to enjoy keeping the source of her clothing exclusive. In 1816, Zirle cautiously asked what she should do about Brainle Hirschfeld, also from Hohenems, who asked for the same dress as Klara. Zirle also worked as a *Perlfasserin* for her friend in the remote Hohenems in 1813. She formed some extra pearls into a brooch in the form of a rose. Klara could wear it with a turban, like the high court master *Obersthofmeister* of the crown

---

<sup>174</sup> A summary from the twenty-five letters between Klara Levi-Löwenberg and Zirle Weil.

<sup>175</sup> JMH LB, B 18/15.8.1819 (Moritz Löwenberg/Sbg. (?) to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems). JMH LB, B 127/23.5.(before 1813) (Klara Levi/Hohenems to Moritz Levi).

prince. Zirle seems quite ambitious, orienting herself on the courtly fashion for Klara's costume.<sup>176</sup> Unfortunately, it is not possible to reconstruct the extent to which Klara had a chance to wear these things in her rural environment and what impression she made with them. But for us, what is once again made clear is the amount to which not only the social and cultural life of these upper class rural Jews was oriented on the city, but also their consumer behaviour.<sup>177</sup>

### **Jewish - non-Jewish Relationships**

The starting point for my evaluation of the letters of the Löwenberg collection for information about the everyday life of the writers was to determine what we could say about the concrete encounters between Jews and non-Jews from this correspondence. It thus becomes obvious that, for example, in the inner-Jewish letters of this correspondence, those persons mentioned by name –with a few exceptions – can be identified as Jews precisely due to their names. In excess of 200 people are named in the inner-Jewish correspondence.<sup>178</sup> Mixed in are members of the families of the Augsburg Jewish community (Obermayer, Seligmann, Binswanger, Ettinger, Westheimer, Kaula, Levinau, etc.), who were able to gain residency in the city as of 1803, then the Hohenems Jewish families (Reichenbach, Hirschfeld, Lämmle, Brentano,

---

<sup>176</sup> JMH LB, B 170/7.11.1821 (Zirle Weil/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems) I read the name as a clear "Krä" ("ayin" pronounced "tseyre"). JMH LB, B 110/14.11.1813 (Zirle Weil/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems). JMH LB, B 85/30.9.1816 (Josef Henle and Pepi Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems). Josef Henle reported to his sister that he was ill and had called for the King of Württemberg's private physician. This physician then held a conference with the "Rofe" (Hebrew name for doctor, which indicates a Jewish doctor as opposed to a court doctor). When it came to clothing and medical care, that which was fit for the princes and kings was also suitable for the Ullmann's.

<sup>177</sup> Further consumer products that Klara bought in Augsburg were drinking chocolate, goose-dripping, and also clover salt. She sent farm products to Augsburg: sausage, smoked tongue and jomtev-fruits. On the intense ties of the rural Jews to the city as a factor in their embourgeoisement, see Monika Richarz, 'Emancipation and Continuity: German Jews in the Rural Economy', in *Revolution and Evolution: 1848 in German-Jewish History*, Werner E. Mosse, Arnold Paucker, and Reinhard Rürup (eds.), Schriftenreihe wissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen des Leo Baeck Instituts, no. 39 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981), 95-115. Also in the premodern era, members of the Ashkenaz Jewish upper class oriented themselves on the non-Jewish surroundings in terms of their clothing: for example, the Court Jews on the courtly culture. This behaviour alone cannot be read as a sign of embourgeoisement. See in addition, chapter 7, 172 ff.

<sup>178</sup> The databank of the inner-Jewish correspondence of the Löwenberg collection contains a data field that records all names cited in the correspondence. Many persons were merely listed with their first names. But also these names are clearly identifiable as Jewish names, and usually in their Yiddish form.

Rosenthal, etc.), families of the Viennese Jewish upper class (Wertheimstein, Wertheimer, Königswarter, Biedermann. etc.), and also many who carried names typical for the southern German rural Jewish families such as Wertheimer, Guggenheimer, Dreifuss, Mändli, Landauer, etc.. The few people with non-Jewish names, who are named in the correspondence, are business partners (e.g. the Bankers Fröhlich in Augsburg), servants (not the employees in the educational occupations such as private tutors, clerks, etc. but the lower servants such as the Löwenberg's stableboy and coachman, Johann, or a certain "Gebhart", who was meant to deliver something) or the craftsmen and women who Zirle had to arrange for Klara in Augsburg (the seamstress Mamsel Kramich, and also the tailor *Krä*).

Commercial trade was already a central structural point of contact between Jews and non-Jews in the Early Modern Era. The findings from the Ullmann-Löwenberg correspondence for the early nineteenth century also confirm this. A striking change from the premodern era, however, is the intense participation of these upper class families in the bourgeois social life of the city, which must have brought them into frequent contact with non-Jews of their social class. We know of the phenomenon of the Court Jew who participated in the courtly festivals of his noble client from the premodern era. But they presented an exception, and Jewish women and children were not at all involved in this social life. Although the contact between Jews and non-Jews at balls, theatre and concert performances, and in museums of the nineteenth century long remained limited to the upper classes, nonetheless an important new field for daily contact between Jews and non-Jews had opened up. The conclusions described previously which were derived by analysis of the persons named in the Löwenberg correspondence, lead us to believe that personal friendships were mainly between Jews; that networks of personal friends were formed among Jews. Newsworthy information about other persons, the correspondence suggests, only concerned family members and Jewish acquaintances. That did not change significantly over the course of the nineteenth century. According to the historian Marion A. Kaplan, in the second half of the nineteenth century the personal relationships between Jews and other citizens were still marked by distance. The more intimate the circles around a Jewish family, the fewer the number of non-Jews whom one encountered there.<sup>179</sup>

---

<sup>179</sup> Marion A. Kaplan, 'Freizeit - Arbeit: Geschlechterräume im deutsch-jüdischen Bürgertum 1870-1914', in *Bürgerinnen und Bürger*, (ed.) Ute Frevert, Göttingen, 1988, 169-72, 172.



## Travel

An evaluation of the Löwenberg-Ullmann correspondence in terms of all aspects of everyday Jewish life thematised therein would be beyond the framework of this work. However, I would like to conclude these observations with an aspect of everyday Jewish life to which, similar to sociability, a great deal of space and attention is devoted: mobility, or travel. Men in the rural Jewish communities, primarily employed in trade and money lending, had also travelled heavily in centuries previous, and the Jewish upper class, namely the Court Jews, also had to manage long distances to employ and maintain the inter-regional network on which their economic existence was based. Moritz Levi-Löwenberg's business day most likely did not differ greatly in this aspect from those of his ancestors. There is hardly a letter from an Augsburg Ullmann which did not report that Moritz had stopped by on one of his business trips to Vienna, Munich, etc.. The correspondence from Moritz to Klara (from Metz, Vienna, Innsbruck, etc.) also contains letters that he wrote while on business trips. He promised her repeatedly that he would write regularly and in every letter he promised the next. In 1817, he had to appease her in a letter, urging her not to worry if she did not hear from him; the situation might arise that he is unable to write. Klara's disappointment or even complaints about the lack of letters from Moritz and the precision with which he announced his next letter is understandable if one thinks of how long these married couples were separated by these business trips: in one letter, whose date is unfortunately damaged, but which was written prior to 1813, Klara asks Moritz to please come home at least before Sabbath. After being away for over two months, she would particularly miss him on a boring "jomtev". Klara's yearning for her husband, far away from her due to his profession, is a motif repeated often in the letters to her sister in Augsburg.<sup>180</sup>

Not only the men's business trips are reported, but also the journeys of the women and children. Among other things, they served to maintain the family network. Klara and her children, mainly the oldest daughter Mina/Wilhelmine/Miriam, whom we learn the most about of all the Löwenberg children, are often in Augsburg and also in Munich.<sup>181</sup> They probably visited the family of Klara's mother there, as she was a Wertheimer from Munich.

---

<sup>180</sup> JMH LB, B 125/19.11.1817 (Moritz Löwenberg/Vienna to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems). JMH LB, B 127/23.5.(? before 1813) (Klara Levi/Hohenems to Moritz Levi).

<sup>181</sup> JMH LB, B 21/7.11.1811 und JMH LB, B 112/21.6.1812 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems).

Munich is also an oft-cited travel goal for the Ullmann siblings from Augsburg. Mina also often travelled with her father. In 1821, for example, she travelled with him from Augsburg to Baden (Württemberg). In 1824, Nina reported to her sister Klara in Hohenems that while changing horses in Darmstadt someone had told her about a Mina Löwenberg in Metz who was staying at the house of “Madam Ansbach”.<sup>182</sup> Unfortunately, we do not find out from this letter whether Mina was there for her education or for other reasons. But in 1827 she married Abraham Lehmann from Blamont, a relationship that can possibly be traced back to this stay. The Löwenbergs had also previously been in contact with the Ansbach family. In 1819, Moritz from Metz reported to Klara that here in the *lovely Ansbach house* he had made many *charming acquaintances*.

There is also frequent talk of travelling *ins Bad (to the spa)*. Josef Henle seems to have especially appreciated this form of leisure activity and relaxation as he frequently reports on various stays at spas. Also Nina Ullmann must have been a passionate traveller. In 1825, she reports to her sister in Hohenems of a ten week journey to health resorts which had brought her to a number of villages: from Augsburg to Aschaffenburg, Wiesbaden, Schwalbach, Schlangenbad, Mainz, Neuwied, Nordhausen, Darmstadt, Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Mannheim, Stuttgart and Ulm.<sup>183</sup> This high mobility of women and children, people who were not travelling for business reasons nor for the purpose of securing their material existence but rather for relaxation and pleasure (or, to live up to bourgeois class expectations), mirrored a general trend in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Western and Central Europe: increasingly, territory within the forming nation states was comprehensively opened up through transportation technology. Of course, this development had primarily economic and political-administrative reasons behind it, but it nonetheless enabled an ever-larger group to travel for reasons other than business. Similar to the way in which the further development of communication technology presented the prerequisites for the unfolding of the bourgeois letter-writing culture in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the development of the territories through transportation technology in these decades also presented the necessary

---

<sup>182</sup> JMH LB, B 50/? .8.1821 (Zirle Weil/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems). JMH LB, B 130/12.12.1824 (Nina Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>183</sup> JMH LB, B 88/8.2.1825 (Nina Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems). The list of locations is written in Latin letters. Some of the locations cannot be deciphered due to the poorly preserved state of the documents.

conditions for a travel culture which presented an important aspect of the bourgeois way of life.

In the correspondence we find out very little about the religious practices of these families. The numerous festivals of the social surroundings of those writers who mention them were made a theme as occasions for a social gathering and as prominent events within family life. The festivals of the Jewish yearly cycle, for example, are also important reasons for correspondence. Details about the religious practices or even the religious significance of these festivals, however, are not mentioned. Josef Henle writes in an incidental remark to his sister that the Ullmans in Augsburg had observed the “yohrtsayt” memorial for the deceased father. However, there is not a single word in any of the letters about the children’s or the young men’s religious education. On the other hand, education (private tutors to teach writing and reading and also teachers for hand work and dancing, governesses, etc.) was certainly a theme in the letters, although not handled in great detail. We can thus assume that the young men in these families no longer received any truly thorough religious education. The prohibition of work on the Sabbath, however, was still observed. Moritz thus writes to Klara in 1817 that he had had to wait for the end of the Sabbath in order to write her a letter and therefore he is now in a great hurry as the post is about to depart. We also learn about the introduction of a “new” ritual in the practices of these families. In 1810, Josef Henle Ullmann complains to his sister in Hohenems that his workload was so great at the moment that he could not even find time for his “Sonntagsspaziergang”. Moritz observed the writing prohibition on the Sabbath on the one hand, and also made these casual remarks about the bourgeois institution of the Sunday stroll on the other, which shows us how self evidently the elements of a Jewish and bourgeois life could exist side by side.<sup>184</sup>

The inner-Jewish letters of the Löwenberg collection from the nineteenth century are a rich source for the reconstruction of everyday Jewish life in the early decades of the process of embourgeoisement of the Jews in the German-speaking areas.<sup>185</sup> However, conclusions about

---

<sup>184</sup> JMH LB, B 122/15.1.1809 and JMH LB, B 4/12.8.1810 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems). JMH LB, B 28/22.11.1817 (Moritz Löwenberg/Vienna to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>185</sup> All studies that I have looked at on the embourgeoisement of the Jews begin their investigation with the second half of the nineteenth century. Also the diverse contributions in the newest studies on the theme confirm this conclusion. Andreas Gotzmann, Rainer Liedtke, and Till van Rahden, (eds.), *Juden, Bürger, Deutsche: Zur Geschichte von Vielfalt und Differenz. 1800-1933*, Schriftenreihe wissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen des Leo Baeck Instituts, no. 63 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001). The letters of the Löwenberg collection, on the

the entire Jewish community should not be made from the actors in this correspondence, all of whom can be considered part of the upper class, living their daily life in correspondence with the many elements of a bourgeois culture. The noticeable trend in these testimonies is the increasing disappearance of visible cultural borders between Jews and non-Jews. And as the nineteenth century progressed, this process of embourgeoisement steadily expanded to encompass the entire community. The subsequent chapters of this work are devoted to a central part of this process of cultural transformation; the relinquishment of the particular Jewish language (in this case, Western Yiddish) and the entry of the Jews into the national linguistic community (in this case, German).

---

contrary, show that this process was already fully underway in the Jewish upper class – also in the countryside – in the early nineteenth century.

## 5) Conversions: Jewish Writing and Language Transformation as "Entry Ticket" into the Modern Era

*Although it seems to contradict expectations, writing systems are not ideal in an economic sense. Yet this merely shows that their genesis was not entirely affected by economic motives as writing systems, much more so than any other linguistic subsystem can be formed selectively. Writing is much more of a cultural product than other linguistic subsystems. It is tied more closely to culture than phonology or syntax. ... The fact that writing systems are less than optimal in terms of the economics of communication upholds the fact that culture does not optimise the economisation of social behaviour; but, rather, to a certain extent resists it.*

(Florian Coulmas)<sup>186</sup>

Eighty percent of the Jews in the German-speaking areas at the end of the eighteenth century numbered among the lower middle and lower classes according to socio-economic estimates. A great number lived hand to mouth, so to speak. It is well known that Court Jew families such as the Ullmanns in Pfersee and the Levis in Hohenems, did not count among this group. Statistically, they are in no way representative for Jewish life during these decades. In 1871, however, a great majority of the Jews in Germany belonged to the "German bourgeoisie" as measured by the criteria of "Bildung" (education) and "property". They constituted an economically secure and well-educated urban group employed mostly in commercial professions.<sup>187</sup> These figures and the clearly marked orientation date, 1871, refer concretely to the history of the German Empire. But they also represent a general trend in the Jewish history of the German-speaking areas during these decades. Thus, the social development of the Jews in the German-speaking areas of Habsburg Austria and in Bohemia and Moravia can also be integrated into this scheme.<sup>188</sup>

---

<sup>186</sup> Florian Coulmas, 'Zur Ökonomie der Schrift', in Baurmann, Günther, and Knoop, eds (1993), 110.

<sup>187</sup> Shulamith Volkov, 'The "Verbürgerlichung" of the Jews as a Paradigm', in Kocka and Mitchell, eds (1993), 367-8.

<sup>188</sup> Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, 'Population Shifts and Occupational Structure', in Meyer, ed. (1997).

Between 1800 and 1870, the Jews seem to have "made it", as Shulamith Volkov so casually puts it. For this Israeli historian of German Jewry, the entry of the Jews into the German bourgeoisie – a legal, social and cultural process – is the central paradigm for reflection on Jewish history from the late eighteenth until the end of the nineteenth centuries, the decades of emancipation and acculturation. And, according to Volkov, among the demands which the Jews as a community had to fulfil in order to be deemed worthy of emancipation, were: the reform of their occupational structures, the acceptance of the bourgeois ideal of learning and the bourgeois way of life, and, most importantly, the acquisition of the German language.<sup>189</sup>

The formation of the German nation as a cultural entity, which preceded political nation-state formation, was also primarily a language movement. The acquisition and use of the German literary language not only expressed membership in a certain social class, the educated bourgeois middle class, but it became also increasingly both an internal and external signet of national affiliation. Accordingly, the use of regional variants of German, the dialects, came to express backwardness and affiliation with a lower social class. This devaluation of the "other" (the local, etc.) variants of German applied to local dialects as well as to that particular pre-modern everyday language of the Jews in the German-speaking areas: Yiddish. It is therefore hardly surprising that giving up Yiddish and replacing it with German was a central concern for both the maskilim, representatives of Jewish Enlightenment and proponents of emancipation, and for enlightened officials who were not Jewish but nonetheless sympathetic to the Jews.<sup>190</sup>

The maskilim were the inner-Jewish motors for the entrance of the Jews into a society whose ideals were increasingly nationally defined and no longer structured along religious lines. In accordance with the general scholarly discourse of the time, they also attributed central importance to the language issue. In the longer standing tradition of Jewish language critique which had taken place since the late seventeenth century, a reform of the culture of the Hebrew language, including: "cleansing" contemporary Hebrew of the influences of rabbinical Jewry; an increased orientation on biblical Hebrew; and a reform of Hebrew

---

<sup>189</sup> Volkov, "Verbürgerlichung", 373.

<sup>190</sup> For more on the debate about the Jewish-German/Western Yiddish languages within the context of the depreciation of the dialects, see Peter Freimark, 'Language Behaviour and Assimilation: The Situation of the Jews in Northern Germany in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century', in *24. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1979). There is more on the German language movement later on in this chapter.

didactics, had been propagated and effectuated.<sup>191</sup> Additionally, they supported the Jews' acquisition of German. German was meant to enable the Jews entry into the world of science and rationality of the Enlightenment: a prerequisite for entry into the bourgeois society oriented on universalistic principles. In this sense, German was thus not perceived as the language of the "Gentiles", but, rather, as the language of rationality; the linguistic instrument of the newly forming nation, newly forming beyond the borders of religions. Yiddish had no place in the language concept of the maskilim. It was, for them, the embodiment of "mixture" and "impurity",<sup>192</sup> the signet of a particular Jewish identity that cannot possibly be integrated in a society conceived on universalistic principles; the expression of an era that must be overcome.

In 1988, the art historian Richard Krautheimer, who was born in Fürth and who used his own family history as an example, still described the process of the *integration [of the Jews] into the German culture* in the nineteenth century, as one of giving up *Judeo-German, still [written] with Hebrew characters* and entering into the German language community.<sup>193</sup>

Whether he was aware of it or not, with this specific perception of the acculturation process, he was part of a long-standing tradition. If one reads, for example, the collection of the early biographies of Moses Mendelssohn, written by both Jewish and non-Jewish contemporaries, a topos can be found in many of these texts: the one of Moses, a Jew, and therefore raised with Yiddish, *actually a stranger in our land and in our language ... [who] did not learn at any German school, and actually had to blaze a tiresome trail himself*. Yet, nonetheless, he arrived at the point of being able to drape *the most abstract concepts with the most beautiful expression* and lecture on the *most deeply meaningful teachings with vigour and grace* (Johann Erich Biester, 1786).<sup>194</sup> The topos of the young Moses, whose Jewish upbringing

---

<sup>191</sup> For more on the language critique starting in the late seventeenth century, see the introduction in: Morris M. Faienstein, ed., *The "Libes Briv" of Isaac Wetzlar* (Atlanta and Georgia: Scholars Press, 1996).

<sup>192</sup> The manuscript (to be published) by Andrea Schatz is inspiring, stimulating, and informative in terms of the linguistic images and concepts of the maskilim: *Entfernte Wörter. Reinheit und Vermischung in den Sprachen der Berliner Maskilim*. I thank Andrea Schatz for the fruitful intellectual exchange on this issue.

<sup>193</sup> Letter from Richard Krautheimer, Fürth, to Dr. Dagmar Salomon from 30 December 1988. See the prologue to this work.

<sup>194</sup> Johann Erich Biester: 'Zum Andenken Moses Mendelssohns', *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 7 (March 1786), 204-16, quoted from Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften. Jubiläumsausgabe*, Vol. 23, *Dokumente II: Die frühen Mendelssohn-Biographien*, edited by Michael Albrecht (Stuttgart and Bad Cannstadt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1998), 24.

provided him with seemingly poor qualifications for that which he would later become, but who nevertheless recognised that *the knowledge of languages is the base of all knowledge* (Itzik Euchel, 1788) and endeavoured to acquire the language with appropriate enthusiasm is found as a motif not only in Biester and Euchel, but also in several other similar texts: a.o. Friedrich Nicolai (1759 and 1786), Simon Höchheimer (1786), Karl Philipp Moritz (1786) and the Honoré Gabriel de Riqueti, Comte de Mirabeau (1787).<sup>195</sup>

The theme of the young Jewish scholar who desperately wants to acquire the German language, often having to autodidactically learn this language in order to free himself from his "old" world in order to be able to step into the "future" is also found in works by Peter Beer. In his *Lebensbeschreibungen gelehrter und sonst rühmlich sich auszeichnender Männer in Israel*, published in the maskilic journal *Sulamith* in 1810, he addresses mainly *like-minded youth*, and never tires of praising the efforts which this new generation of Jews undertook to acquire a secular education and non-Jewish languages. He also has no trouble in identifying and "depicting" the "total" opponents to these educational aspirations: *the orthodoxy* and its (in reality widely varied) opposition, ideally captured in the image of their sensing *nothing other than heterodoxy and an encouragement to break away from paternal beliefs upon looking at a book written in German or another non-Jewish language*.<sup>196</sup> But the language question was not only a central issue for the maskilim and their followers. As Monika Richarz has recorded in the first volume of her three volume work on the social history of Jewish life in Germany during these decades, even Jewish autobiographical texts from 1780 to 1871 bear witness to learning non-Jewish languages, mainly German, as a prominent and memorable event, and show a highly sensitive perception of the surrounding linguistic situation and transformation.<sup>197</sup>

---

<sup>195</sup> Itzik Euchel: *Die Geschichte des Lebens unseres weisen Lehrers Moses, Sohn des Menachem* (Berlin: Orientalische Buchdruckerey, 1788), quoted from Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, see note 9, 116. All Mendelssohn biographies from the Jewish and non-Jewish authors mentioned here can be found in this volume. Euchel wrote his texts in Hebrew, as he particularly wanted to reach the Eastern European youth.

<sup>196</sup> Peter Beer, 'Über die Notwendigkeit einer Sammlung von Lebensbeschreibungen gelehrter und sonst rühmlich sich auszeichnender Männer in Israel: Nebst biographischer Skizzen einiger gelehrter Israeliten in den österreichischen Staaten', *Sulamith: Eine Zeitschrift zur Beförderung der Kultur und Humanität unter den Israeliten* 1, no. 4 (1810).

<sup>197</sup> Monika Richarz, ed., *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland: Selbstzeugnisse zur Sozialgeschichte 1780-1871* (Nördlingen: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1976).



These "ego-documents" alone are not enough to adequately describe the multifaceted and complex process of the language transformation of the Jews in the German speaking areas. First of all, they do not portray the "reality" of this decade-long transformation process. Even the maskilim did not cast off their language and change to another from one year to the next. The best evidence for that is the ultimate paradigmatic figure of the maskilim, Moses Mendelssohn, and his extensive correspondence carried out in several linguistic variations: from the "Jewish-German" with strong *loshn koydesh* components in the letters to his mother-in-law; to "Jewish-German" with hardly any traces of elements from the *loshn koydesh* in letters to his wife Fromet; through to the German in Latin cursive in the correspondence with the non-Jewish scholars of his time, (not to mention the correspondence carried out in Hebrew with the Jewish scholars of his time such as Jehuda Halevi Hurwitz or Jacob Emden).<sup>198</sup> The texts cited above from these changing decades, however, quite aptly represent the great significance that the actors in this acculturation process attributed to the language transformation. Biographical propaganda-texts, as the testimonies of the maskilim must be seen – especially when they deal with "biographies" of exemplary contemporaries recommended as role models for the Jewish youth and autobiographies – represent a value judgement, they tell what is worth remembering and "worth noticing" and what should therefore be handed down.

The Löwenberg collection brings together letters from the peak of this linguistic acculturation process, which lead to an understanding of how the factors "generation", and also social affiliation influenced the course and dynamics of this transformation. Nonetheless, these letters are a different type of testimony than those described previously in terms of their significance with reference to the language transformation of the Jews in Germany. The Löwenberg-letters are not testimonies of a conscious language reflection of any type. Not a single explicit sentence in these letters can be attributed to the language transformation to which their actors are subjected. These letters are, much more, witnesses of an (unconscious) everyday linguistic behaviour and would therefore probably be especially well suited for a research project, which, according to Nils Römer (1995), has yet to be done: a linguistic work on the process of alignment of the Jewish-German variants to the German language.<sup>199</sup> The

---

<sup>198</sup> Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften. Jubiläumsausgabe*, Vol. 19, *Hebräische Schriften III: Briefwechsel*, Haim Borodianski (ed.) (Bar-Dayan) (Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1974).

<sup>199</sup> Nils Römer, *Tradition und Akkulturation: Zum Sprachwandel der Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit der Haskalah* (Münster and New York: Waxmann, 1995), 14. Paul Wexler attempts to undertake a linguistic analysis

present work cannot fill this gap, however it at least publicises a previously unavailable source collection that linguists can use as an empirical base for such a study. In terms of an interpretation of the language and writing transformation in this material, I use a thoroughly cultural-historical approach, which is limited in that I am not a linguist. However, it is probably due to this particular shortcoming that I perceived these letters as comprehensive language-cultural documentation of this transformation. Concentrating exclusively on subsystems of languages such as phonology, morphology and syntax unfairly pushes other fields of awareness, which are strongly expressive and meaningful for this cultural process, into the background; for example, the transformation of the writing system for the notation of the languages.<sup>200</sup> It is precisely the system of writing as the outer expression of a language and its (delayed) transformation process at the brink of modernism, which points to a trend inherently central to the Modern Era; the establishment of integrated bourgeois societies under the dominant paradigm of the disappearance of the externally perceived religious-cultural differences and their repression or internalisation "within" the people due to the formation of a nation, in short: the transformation from religion to confession.

## **The Appearance of the Language: The Connection between Language, Writing and Culture**

With a first glance at the documents, it becomes apparent that two writing systems are in use: the Hebrew and the Latin alphabets. About 60 percent of the documents are written in Latin letters, the rest are in the letters of the Hebrew writing system. In many cases, the writers, both men and women, use both alphabets in one document. Yet the choice of writing systems does not necessarily follow from the language of the recorded text. As linguists have always pointed out, alphabets are recording systems for languages but are external to language's function as a structure of phonology, morphology, lexicology and syntax.

---

of the variant "Ashkenazic German" in: 'Ashkenazic German. 1760-1895', *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 30 (1981). His empirical basis is derived from works published in this variant.

<sup>200</sup> For more on the writing issue for linguistic evaluation and categorisation of Yiddish, see: Andrew Lloyd Sunshine, *Opening the Mail: Interpersonal Aspects of Discourse and Grammar in Middle Yiddish Letters*, Ph.D. diss., Columbia University New York, 1991, 356-71.

The example of the "Jewish languages" shows this particularly well.<sup>201</sup> This collective term refers to the diverse languages that the Jews built up as a community over the course of their history. After disappearing as everyday languages, Hebrew and Aramaic remained preserved in the Holy Scriptures and central texts and were increasingly limited to the religious sphere. As *loshn koydesh*, the holy language, they stood at the peak of the inner-Jewish language hierarchy. Moreover, in the many locations of Diaspora existence, various Jewish everyday languages formed which were used in everyday internal communication. These languages were not completely excluded from the religious realm and served there as languages of translation, instruction and discussion. Their status in the inner-Jewish language hierarchy was, however, always lower than that of *loshn loydesh*.

These Jewish languages always arose from a basis that the Jews had absorbed from the languages of the surrounding local societies. This differentiated them from each other. They all, however, contain elements of *loshn koydesh* and are written in the Hebrew writing system. Linguists have had and still have a difficult time categorising and classifying these languages, something that can also be observed in the research history. For a long time, linguists approached them merely from the respective local language from which they had drawn their linguistic base. They therefore defined them as peripheral phenomenon of non-Jewish languages. It was Salomo A. Birnbaum and Max Weinreich, the twentieth century pioneers of linguistics of the Jewish languages (mainly Yiddish), who first vehemently demanded an inner-Jewish perspective for the study of these languages and who saw their establishment and existence in a Jewish milieu as the decisive criteria for language formation, which necessarily had to be expressed in the naming of these languages.<sup>202</sup> For the inner-Jewish everyday language of those Jews in the German-speaking areas of Imperial rule from the Middle Ages until into the Modern Era, there was still controversial debate in the late 1980s about how to name and therefore categorise it into the language system. "Western Yiddish" as a name – according to the German scholar, Erika Timm from Trier and in agreement with Anglo-American and Israeli Yiddish scholars – should express respect for the

---

<sup>201</sup> The introduction of the field of research "Jewish languages" into the scientific realm is tied to the name of the Yiddish scholar, Salomo A. Birnbaum. See his article "Jewish Languages" in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, Keter Publishing, 1972). Additionally, he dedicated the introductory chapter of his study *Die jiddische Sprache*, 3rd edit. (Hamburg: Helmut Buske-Verlag, 1997) to the 'Jewish languages'.

<sup>202</sup> The demand that Jewish languages be described from an inner-Jewish perspective, is made throughout Max Weinreich's *History of the Yiddish Language* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980; 1st edit., Yiddish, 1973).

inner-Jewish perspective, which defines this language through Yiddish and emphasizes its independence from German. Conversely, the Yiddish scholar Bettina Simon from Berlin claims that "Jew's German" or "Judeo-German" would, as a term, be much more adequate for the linguistic and historical reality of this Jewish everyday language which presents no more than a *socially conditioned variety of German*. This proximity to the local language – according to Simon – must be expressed in the name of the language. Anything else would equal a *repeated exclusion of the Jews from the German language community* and thereby *new and unacceptable discrimination*.<sup>203</sup>

These strong ideological conflicts therefore display that the categorisation and naming of these languages is no simple affair. It is a matter of: which criteria can decide whether a language variant is to be judged as an "independent" language or simply as a "peripheral" variant of another language? Can such questions even be answered based on purely linguistic criteria concerning the inner structure of language systems? What role does the group play as the carrier of a collective self-awareness? For this last issue in particular – the relationship between language and its socio-cultural carrier – writing is a highly meaningful element of language as a cultural system.

A language can, basically, be mediated in the most varied writing systems, which is not to say, however, that the connection between language and writing is arbitrary. The culturally determined connection of a specific language with a specific form of writing has great significance for the culture and collective identity of language carriers. The fact that Croatian is written in Latin cursive, that Serbian (which is very close to Croatian) is, however, written in the Cyrillic alphabet, shows the different religious-cultural backgrounds of the two language carriers. The Croats historically belong to the western Christian Church with its centre in Rome and therefore to the cultural realm of the Latin languages. The Serbs are historically members of an eastern church (with the cultural centre in the former Byzantium,

---

<sup>203</sup> Erika Timm, *Graphische und phonische Struktur des Westjiddischen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Zeit um 1600* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer-Verlag, 1987), 357-9. Bettina Simon, *Jiddische Sprachgeschichte: Versuch einer neuen Grundlegung*, rev. edit. (Frankfurt/Main: Jüdischer Verlag, 1993), 218, and 'Judendeutsch und Jiddisch', in *Die Juden in ihrer mittelalterlichen Umgebung*, eds. Alfred Ebenbauer and Klaus Zatloukal, (Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau-Verlag, 1991), 260.

later Constantinople and even later – until the present time – Istanbul) and therefore a Greek oriented Christian cultural realm.<sup>204</sup>

The spheres of religion and authoritarian control (inseparable before the era of a laic understanding of state in Europe) are founded and dependent on writing. Churches and administrations were the driving powers behind the development of systems for notation and they also maintained the institutions of writing. The awareness of the historical connections between writing (as a cultural phenomenon) and religion (in non-secular societies the central foundation of the cultural system) is largely absent in our present everyday knowledge. The religious-cultural domains, however, which formed in late antiquity and in the Middle Ages, can still be recognised in the present distribution of the various writing systems.<sup>205</sup>

The use of the Hebrew alphabet– in addition to the integration of elements from Hebrew and Aramaic – is considered a significant characteristic common to all Jewish languages.<sup>206</sup> This points to religion as the central factor in the formation of culture and tradition in Judaism.<sup>207</sup> A

---

<sup>204</sup> In 1974, Salomo Birnbaum can still introduce Serbo-Croatian without any major reservations as an example of one language using two systems of notation. Since the war divided former Yugoslavia and re-nationalised the politics and culture in the former nations in the 1990s, which led to an intensified emphasis on difference, this particular position must reckon with increased (political) resistance. Nonetheless, Serbo-Croatian provides a good example of the external, but no less meaningful character of notation systems used for languages. Birnbaum, *Jiddische Sprache*, 18.

<sup>205</sup> The radical cultural and political upheavals of the last centuries have naturally led to grave "border shifts" on this map. In Turkey in 1928, Kemal Atatürk replaced the Arabic writing system with the Latin, as a response to the introduction of the laic political system and as a conscious demarcation from the preceding Ottoman state-church Empire. The Latin writing system no longer stood for the Roman Catholic Church alone; following Humanism and the Enlightenment it was also associated with science and secularism and the writing system of the "western world".

<sup>206</sup> Birnbaum: *Jiddische Sprache*, 17. Exceptions to the rule (Jewish-Arabic and even Hebrew texts of the Karaites in Arabic writing), are referred to by Simon, *Jiddische Sprachgeschichte*, 14.

<sup>207</sup> Religion as a central factor for the formation of culture and tradition is of course not specific to Judaism. The possibility of thinking of culture and religion separately assumes a secular-based model of thought and analysis. Weinreich und Birnbaum refer to religion as the decisive factor for the linguistic formation of the Jewish languages. See also, Timm, who provides a very interesting structural analysis. In her analysis of the confrontation of the older Yiddish and German she differentiates between realms of the languages in which the speaker is relatively aware of co-signalising ideologically based valuations (including the pragmatic-textual-linguistic realm, vocabulary and alphabet, including graphematic consequences), and those essentially instrumental levels of the language (syntax, morphology, phonetics). In the realm of the former, the deviations of

uniform system of writing makes reference to the traditional sources and common historical origins of all Jewish communities. For languages and variants that are formed from completely different linguistic bases (Yiddish, e.g., from Germanic), a uniform system of writing reflects the tension in which the Jewish Diaspora cultures formed. To survive geographic scattering as a traditional community, attempted were both the preservation of common characteristic traits that reflected their "own" origins and also the absorption of elements of the respective "other" cultures.

The strong connection between writing and religion in Judaism (a connection which is not exclusive to the Jewish religion) is also shown in the traditional Jewish system of education.<sup>208</sup> The elementary educational institution of the Jews in Central and Eastern Europe, until the beginning of the Modern Era, which all Jewish boys more than five years old went through, was the "Kheder" (Hebrew for "room").<sup>209</sup> Learning the cultural techniques of reading and

---

the older Yiddish from German were present from the very start and as a rule could be traced back to the Jewish religion. Erika Timm, 'Der "Knick" in der Entwicklung des Frühneuhochdeutschen aus jiddistischer Sicht', in Röhl and Bayerdörfer, ed. (1986), 20.

<sup>208</sup> When I speak about the traditional Jewish educational system, I refer generally to the time before 1800. In many territories of the German Empire measures of the emancipation legislation had already come into effect in the last two decades of the eighteenth century, which also led to measurable changes internally in the Jewish community – including in the educational system. Geographically, I refer to the core area of the Ashkenazi Jewry: the German-speaking area of the Empire.

<sup>209</sup> Additional information on the organisational structure of the traditional Kheder of the pre-modern era: the community in the form of the Jewish communal institution in most places only bore the costs for the instruction of poor and orphaned children. The instruction of the children from the better-situated families often took place in small private schools headed by instructors paid for by the parents. Families who could afford it, took in private instructors who lived with them. Mordechai Breuer, 'Frühe Neuzeit und Beginn der Moderne', in *Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit*, ed. Michael A. Meyer, Vol. 1, *Tradition und Aufklärung. 1600-1780*, by Mordechai Breuer and Michael Graetz (München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1996), 177. The organisational structure varied, however, from place to place. In Hohenems, e.g., the parents paid the Melamed, the children's instructor in the Kheder, according to the number of children they had in instruction. For the children of the poor and the orphans, foundations bore the costs. For more on the Jewish schools in Hohenems, see chapter 6, 144 ff. Sabine Ullmann brings in evidence about the educational situation of the communities Pfersee, Kriegshaber and Binswangen in the "Vorderösterreichische Markgrafschaft Burgau" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and also provides evidence of private instructors in the households of wealthy families in this region. In Kriegshaber a large section of the community maintained a teacher in the village. In Binswangen, the "Vogt" (governor) in a dispute in the year 1680, ruled that four wealthy Jews, who wanted to have their own teacher, had to go along with the community. There is also evidence of social tensions in Binswangen in the eighteenth century which arose from wealthy members wanting better and thus better paid school teachers, but the less

writing was primarily directed towards one goal in this case: involvement with traditional texts and learning the prayers, which were written in Hebrew and Aramaic. The curriculum of the Kheder (in the first place, Bible and here mainly the five books of Moses and later Mishna and some Talmud) and the teaching method for that (reading the Hebrew texts, orally translating and clarifying in the everyday language) foresaw making the Jewish children literate using the Hebrew bible as base.<sup>210</sup> This corresponds to the traditional ideal of Jewish

---

wealthy Jews could not keep up with the costs. Sabine Ullmann, *Nachbarschaft und Konkurrenz: Juden und Christen in Dörfern der Markgrafschaft Burgau 1650 bis 1750*, Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, no. 151 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 167-9. The private instructor, however, could not only be found among the Jewish upper class, as shown by the example of Ascher Lehmann. Lehmann was born in Zeckendorf (Oberfranken) in 1769, offered himself at the servant's market in Eger as a teacher and was also a private instructor for a poor family who had no available Kheder as they lived beyond the borders of the community. Richarz, *Jüdisches Leben*, Lebenszeugnis 2. Jewish education was first made standard in areas of the Empire with the introduction of the emancipation legislation that made education a concern of the state. For more on the girls in the traditional Jewish education, see: Mordechai Eliav, 'Die Mädchenerziehung im Zeitalter der Aufklärung und der Emanzipation', in *Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Frau in Deutschland*, ed. Julius Carlebach (Berlin: Metropol-Verlag, 1993), 97-8. In the Jewish Middle Ages in Europe, only a few elementary schools were set up for girls. As a rule, their education was left entirely up to the parents. For Jewish women, however, Jewish prayer books and religious and also entertainment literature were produced. It is therefore possible to assume that a fair number of Jewish women were at least passively literate (in Hebrew). In a number of cases, women were also gainfully employed, which demanded at least rudimentary writing skills. As early as the seventeenth century, sources for the German-speaking areas convey – often in the form of rabbinical condemnation of these occurrences – the tendency of wealthy families to have their daughters instructed by private teachers, mostly in secular subjects. Isaac Wetzlar (ob. 1751) urged the instruction of the Jewish girls in the Torah and argued against Jewish scholars who forbade Hebrew instruction for girls but allowed them to be instructed in foreign languages such as Italian or French. Faierstein, "*Libes Briv*". 29. Negative rabbinical comments on the secular education of girls, also from Jona Landshofer (Prag 1719), Jakob vom Emden, Juspa Hahn (eighteenth century), and Zvi Hirsch Koidanover (kav hayashar). Hermann Pollack cites the 1691 communal legislation of Nikolsburg (Moravia), an entry in the minute's book from Runkel from 1733 and remarks in the memoirs of Glückel von Hammeln as evidence for girl's education in the Kheder. Hermann Pollack, *Jewish Folkways in Germanic Lands. 1648-1806* (Cambridge/MA and London: M. I. T. Press, 1971), 63. I thank Martha Keil (Institut für die Geschichte der Juden in Österreich, St. Pölten) for the information that it was not so much an educational ban for Jewish girls that stood in the way of their integration in the Kheder (and thereby in the traditional Jewish educational system) but more the strict demand for the separation of the sexes.

<sup>210</sup> In terms of the traditional Jewish education in the lands of Central and Eastern Europe before the nineteenth centuries, Pollack, *Jewish Folkways*, 52, points out that the child's first encounter with the Hebrew alphabet ideally took place at home. The children should be taught the Hebrew alphabet at the age of three. For more on the curriculum of the Kheder and the teaching methods, see: Pollack, *Jewish Folkways*, 54-7, and Erika Timm, 'Wörtlichkeit als Quelle sprachlicher Kreativität', in *Westjiddisch: Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit*, ed. Astrid

society, which drew up the image of the Jewish man who is capable of actively and independently studying the texts of the tradition without their being mediated through clergy (as, for example, in the Roman Catholic Church). This ideal is reflected, for example, in the "rite des passage", which marks the transition from child to adulthood. The central act of the fest in the synagogue, through which the thirteen year old boy (Bar Mitzvah = son of duty) becomes an adult (in the sense of religious duties and rights), is performing the appropriate torah reading.<sup>211</sup>

Certain conclusions can be drawn from a society's image of itself although it is both impossible, and inadvisable to equate a society's ideals as reflected in its rituals, with its reality. It can be assumed, for example, that in traditional Jewish society, all male members, although not all scholars, were at least literate. It is also possible to assume that a large portion of the women were at least rudimentarily literate.<sup>212</sup> Literate naturally meant literate in Hebrew; until the beginning of Jewish modernism in the late eighteenth century, the community maintained an educational system that was mainly directed at the instruction of the cultural skills which would be used for the study of traditional texts, their interpretation and use in community life (e.g., in the judicature), and also those skills necessary for the passing on of these texts. The traditional educational system did not consider itself responsible for Jewish children's "secular knowledge" that, for example, they had to learn for

---

Starck (Aarau: Verlag Sauerländer, 1994). Critique of the curriculum of the Kheder and the teaching methods that led to the children's lack of comprehension of what they learned, were expressed as of the late seventeenth century and consistently throughout the eighteenth century.

<sup>211</sup> According to the sources, which Pollack, *Jewish Folkways*, 60, cites, the Bar Mitzvah boy should take on as many tasks of the religious service in his celebration as he feels capable of carrying out. One requirement remained in every case: reading out loud from the Torah.

<sup>212</sup> Pollack, *Jewish Folkways*, 57. Already at the time of the Talmud, avoiding illiteracy was a goal. A type of compulsory education up to the age of thirteen is already anchored in the Talmud. Pollack sees a measurable difference to the non-Jewish society in that writing skills were widespread among the nobility and bourgeoisie but there was not – as in the Jewish society – a religious educational ideal which included all social classes. On the other hand, Graupe points to the statutes of the Hamburg Jewish community, which took away the voting rights of the illiterate in elections for community leaders. This indicates that there must have been cases of illiteracy. H. M. Graupe, *Die Statuten der drei Gemeinden Altona, Hamburg und Wandsbeck* (Hamburg, 1973), 226. Keeping the Jewish educational ideal in mind, at least a rudimentary Hebrew-writing education of the male portion of the Jewish society was a probable assumption. For more on the general issues of the research on literacy and the history of formal education of the non-Jewish society in Europe, see chapter ?.



their later economic existence.<sup>213</sup> Therefore, the number of Jews who mastered the writing of the languages of their surrounding society before the nineteenth century may be much lower and may possibly even be reduced to a few 'specialists'.<sup>214</sup> The Jewish adolescent's education in securing a material existence was a personal not a community concern. Such matters were taught to adolescents by the adults with whom they grew up; usually the father or a male teacher or the mother, in the case of the girls. In wealthier families, private instructors were also hired to teach secular knowledge. The community saw itself as responsible for passing on merely the community-relevant knowledge. Until the dawning of the Modern Era, that knowledge comprised the Hebrew-Aramaic and the traditional texts.<sup>215</sup>

The fact that the Jewish everyday languages were (and still are) written in the Hebrew alphabet can largely be attributed to traditional Jewish literacy education. The target language in the Jewish schools, the language with which they were directly and consciously occupied, was *loshn koydesh*: a term, which in this usage describes a body of language that comprises various historical layers of Hebrew and Aramaic, the languages of the traditional texts of the Jewish religion. The everyday languages of the Jews in the Diaspora – in the case of the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe, Yiddish – were not target languages of study. Rather, they were at most languages of instruction, and therefore secondary. Initially vehicles of verbal communication, they first extended into all realms of Jewish life over the course of a long

---

<sup>213</sup> According to Mordechai Breuer at least the basics of arithmetic were taught in the Kheder. Breuer, 'Frühe Neuzeit', 178.

<sup>214</sup> See also, chapter 6, p. p. 162.

<sup>215</sup> The lack of a general secular knowledge ("torat ha-adam", Naphtali H. Wessely) in the curriculum of the traditional Jewish educational system was a topos of Jewish critique of education in the eighteenth century. For controversial rabbinical positions on this issue, see Pollack, *Jewish Folkways*, 78-82. For the spread of secular knowledge in the Jewish society of the eighteenth century, see also: Römer, *Akkulturation*, 40-3. Also in the debates at the beginning of Jewish modernism, the question of the spread of "secular education" was discussed among the Jews in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For Azriel Shochat, the evidence for a turn of the Jews to secular education hints at a clear transformation from a previously self-contained Jewish lifestyle, which began as early as the eighteenth century. In contrast, Jacob Katz and Mordechai Eliav emphasise that this Jewish interest in secular education certainly had existed, but until the late eighteenth century presented an exception (and was found mainly in the Jewish upper class). The complete reversal in the educational system, according to Eliav, first occurred with Mendelssohn (and also the state intervention in the Jewish educational system),. Previously, general education among the German Jews had had an almost exclusively instrumental character. Only in a very few cases were they concerned with "education" as an end in itself in accordance with the ideal of

development as written languages. Employed for the recording of these languages was the writing system in which the youths were taught to read and write in the Kheder.

This technical-pragmatic explanation of the phenomenon of the exclusive use of the Hebrew alphabet for writing the Jewish languages is not intended to diminish awareness of the basic religious and thereby ideological nature of the writing. The use of the terms "galkhes" (a Yiddish term) and "ketivat galkhim" (a term used in the Hebrew medieval literature) for standard non-Jewish writing shows the strong awareness of this connection in the non-secularised European society.<sup>216</sup> "Gilakh" (Hebrew) means "to shave", "galakh" is a Catholic priest. Here, the tonsure as a symbol for the cleric must have become relevant for the formation of the terms. For our context, what is significant is the religious connotation of the writing, which is reflected in this formation of terms.

The phenomenon of the Jewish languages shows that there were hardly any reservations about taking on linguistic material from the surrounding society and even creating a separate Jewish language variant from that. But the same acceptance of foreign writing systems was not evident. These were all too simply perceived as religiously connoted.<sup>217</sup>

## **The Legal and Social Context of the Writing Transformation of the Jews in the German-speaking Areas**

In reference to the situation of the Jews in the German-speaking areas, until well into the nineteenth century it could be said that an audience was chosen not only by the choice of language, but also the choice of writing. In the Middle Ages, if a Jewish audience were to be

---

Enlightenment and the Bourgeois Era. Jacob Toury, 'Neue hebräische Veröffentlichungen zur Geschichte der Juden im deutschen Lebenskreise', *Leo Baeck Institut Bulletin* 4, no. 13-16 (1961): 62-3.

<sup>216</sup> On the term "ketivat galkhim", see Moritz Güdemann, *Geschichte des Erziehungswesens und der Cultur der abendländischen Juden während des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit*, Vol. 1, *Geschichte des Erziehungswesens und der Cultur der Juden in Frankreich und Deutschland von der Begründung der jüdischen Wissenschaft in diesen Ländern bis zur Vertreibung der Juden aus Frankreich (X.-XIV. Jahrhundert)* (Amsterdam, 1966, repr.; Vienna, 1880), 229.

<sup>217</sup> Weinreich, *Yiddish language, 185: Relating to worshipping God, the separation was absolute, and also the alphabet was an important expression of separateness. The aversion went so far, that up to the emancipation hardly a Jew knew the non-Jewish alphabet. They signed even in non-Jewish official documents their Jewish names in Jewish characters.*

supplied with material taken from German literature, these texts would have had to be mediated in the Hebrew alphabet.<sup>218</sup> And even the maskilim, the representatives of the Jewish Enlightenment in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and vociferous advocates of replacing Yiddish with German, had to use the Hebrew alphabet to communicate their texts, which were often written in German, if they intended to reach a Jewish audience.<sup>219</sup>

These socio-cultural and socio-linguistic aspects of the connection between language and writing reveal the categorising and distinguishing character of writing systems. By using the Hebrew alphabet, a linguistic variant – which (at least at the beginning and end of its development) was not greatly different from the language of the surrounding society on which it was based – became a genuinely Jewish variant. The "other" writing system was an element of cultural difference that separated Jews from the groups around them. Cultural difference was also an expression of and occasion for stigmatisation in the Middle Ages and the early Modern Era. Fundamentally, however, also the externally perceptible cultural differences corresponded with the corporative social organisation during these centuries and contributed decisively to the collective identity and cohesion of the individual groups. The perception of Jewish peculiarity rested on both the discriminating laws of the Christian authoritarian control as well as on the autonomy of the Jewish community in inner affairs organised in a religious-

---

<sup>218</sup> On the discussion of the language of the oldest known and dated "Yiddish" manuscript (Cambridge Codex von 1382), see Abraham Novershtern, 'From the Folk to the Academics: Study and Research of Yiddish after the Holocaust', in *Encyclopedia Judaica Yearbook 1988/89* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing, 1989), 22. Whereas the German philologist and German scholar J. W. Marchand emphasised the similarity of the language of these documents in Hebrew letters to the German language of his time, Max Weinreich points out the necessity of the inner-Jewish perspective when investigating these early Yiddish language documents. Paul Wexler argues for "Ashkenazic German" as a description of documents from the transitional time at the beginning and end of Yiddish in the German-speaking areas. Wexler, *Ashkenazic German*.

<sup>219</sup> Moses Mendelssohn's translation of the Pentateuch (Berlin, 1780-1783) was published in German in Hebrew letters. In 1820, the maskil Shalom haKohen still wrote in the forward to his letter writing guide *ktav Yosher* (Vienna: Anton Schmid), that he only included model letters in Jewish-German on request of the *book trade* since *it was requested by so many from our nation*. It would be desirable, however, that the *Jewish-German-writing* comes to an end and that the national language be written with characters that are normal for the country. In the maskilic schools, writing in Jewish-German was still initially instructed (in the Berlin Freischule until ca. 1825), because it was considered useful for correspondence (mainly with Polish Jews). In 1825 the parents of the students of the Israelite Freischule in Hamburg tried to push through the instruction of "German-Jewish writing" in the upper classes, as the lack of knowledge of this variant would be a disadvantage in later service at the comptoir. The school administration, however, rejected their appeal. This last example is based on Römer, *Akkulturation*, 74.

cultural framework.<sup>220</sup> The process of transferring externally visible religious difference to within the person, internally, the development from a religion to a confession, is a phenomenon of the Modern Era which ran parallel to the formation of the bourgeois society and its ideal of equality.

The integration of the Jews into bourgeois society, beginning in the late eighteenth century, and the associated dispersal of the communal structure based on autonomy in internal affairs, had a massive effect on the Jewish religion, culture and language. In light of the connection drawn here between language, writing and culture, it is therefore not surprising that we know of statements from ideological opponents to this integration which – fearing the loss of Jewish cohesion – called for the maintenance of Yiddish as a distinctive language for the Jews and opposed the appropriation of the local languages.<sup>221</sup> Neither was it astounding that, until well into the nineteenth century, it was the religious-political opponents of secularisation and its effects on the Jewish religion who already used the German language but maintained the Hebrew alphabet for religious texts (Jakob Toury refers to them as "Alt-Gläubige", a term from their era)<sup>222</sup>. In a religious-ideological sense, they opposed the maskilim, yet by writing in German with Hebrew letters, they followed their example. The difference in motivation is decisive; the maskilim had pragmatic reasons for using the Hebrew alphabet to write their texts in German. It was the only way for them to reach their audience who not only had difficulty with the German language, but also had not yet learned the writing system. The actual goal of the maskilim was, however, the implementation of German as a Jewish everyday language. Their use of the Hebrew alphabet in this transitional time was therefore instrumentally motivated and not ideological.<sup>223</sup> For the representatives of the orthodoxy, however, maintaining the Hebrew alphabet in the religious area certainly had ideological reasons. Here, the awareness of the religious connotation of writing and the distinctive

---

<sup>220</sup> Weinreich, *Yiddish language*, 183.

<sup>221</sup> The rabbi and teacher at the Pressburger Yeshiva, Khatam Sofer (1762-1839), was a distinguished opponent of maskilic ideas and the loss of Jewish uniqueness and a defender of the concept of the outer perceptibility of the Jew. See also chapter ?, note ?.

<sup>222</sup> Toury, 'Neue hebräische Veröffentlichungen', 71.

<sup>223</sup> See also the maskil Shalom haKohen in the forward to his letter writing guide *ktav yosher* (Vienna: Anton Schmid).

character of religion and culture seemed to be clearly present.<sup>224</sup> Together – although arising from different motivations – these two religious-political parties in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century created the body of texts which the maskilim described as "Jewish-German" and which we refer to today as "German in Hebrew letters" (Erika Timm) or "Ashkenazic German" (Paul Wexler).<sup>225</sup>

That concludes the chapter on the relationship between language, writing and religion; of comprehending writing as being external to language, but very much an inner phenomenon of culture and also indicative of the characteristic of building a collective identity. On the basis of the Löwenberg collection, I will later describe and analyse in detail how the linguistic transformation process of the Jews in Germany is reflected, moving first from Yiddish to "German in Hebrew letters" to German. First, however, I will describe the general language situation of the Jews in the German-speaking areas.

## The Languages of the Jews in Germany

---

<sup>224</sup> For more on the orthodoxy's maintenance of Hebrew writing for German texts in the nineteenth century, see Steven M. Lowenstein, 'The readership of Mendelssohn's Bible translation', in *53. Hebrew Union College Annual* (Cincinnati/OH: Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion, 1982), 197-213.

<sup>225</sup> Erika Timm uses "German in Hebrew letters" for works in the Genisa discovered in Veitshöchheim, as does Steven Lowenstein in general for this variant of linguistic testimony. Erika Timm and Hermann Süss (cooperation), *Yiddish Literature in a Franconian Geniza: A Contribution to the Printing and Social History of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Jerusalem: Akademon Press, 1988). Steven Lowenstein, 'The Yiddish Written Word in Nineteenth-Century Germany', in *24. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1979). Paul Wexler introduces the term "Ashkenazic German" for this variant. Wexler, *Ashkenazic German*. Steven Lowenstein and Werner Weinberg refer to "Jewish-German" as the contemporary description for this variant used mainly by the maskilim. Werner Weinberg, *Die Reste des Jüdischdeutschen* (Stuttgart et al: Kohlhammer-Verlag, 1969). Weinberg also uses "Jewish-German" for the variants which arose from Yiddish, the inner-Jewish and inner-family ones still in use in the twentieth century in the German-speaking realm. Römer, *Akkulturation*, 26-7, – referring to the contemporary awareness of the speaker – argues for the use of the term "Jewish-German" for the languages of the Jews in Germany in the eighteenth century. Considering both of these arguments, I have nonetheless decided, in agreement with Erika Timm, to use the term "German in Hebrew letters". My decision is influenced by Bettina Simon's plea for the term "Jewish-German" for all variants of the inner-Jewish everyday language of the German-speaking Jews throughout the centuries, which leads to confusion. It also seems advisable to introduce a type of "working term" for this variant at the end of the development of Western Yiddish, to provide it with a term of its own.

The existence of languages intended specifically for inner-Jewish use was consistent with the relative autonomy of the Jewish community in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Era in terms of internal (social and religious-cultural) affairs. Loshn koydesh (the holy language) was used for the religious realm (worship, education and legal administration) and Yiddish functioned as an everyday and communal language. Religious, welfare and educational institutions counted among the community's responsibilities, which also included the administration of its members in a variety of realms. The Jews had regular contact to the surrounding non-Jewish society and everyday social contacts between Jews and Christians were not at all uncommon. These relations, however, were largely limited to the commercial realm and dealings with the respective Christian authorities. The norm for the premodern era was segregation, which was ideologically supported by both groups.<sup>226</sup> The medieval and Early Modern Era societies were basically structured on a corporative model. The Jewish community, autonomous in its internal affairs, fit well into the vertically oriented structure of the society. What held these societies together were the individual groups' relationships to the authoritarian control. Powers connecting subordinate groups horizontally were hardly developed. A community's encapsulation was also seen as an important means for maintaining inner-cohesion.<sup>227</sup>

---

<sup>226</sup> Friedrich Battenberg, 'Zwischen Integration und Segregation: Zu den Bedingungen jüdischen Lebens in der vormodernen christlichen Gesellschaft', *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 6, no. 2 (1996). Battenberg provides an extremely informative discussion of various models of the historical evaluation of the relationship of the premodern Jewish community to its non-Jewish surroundings. He also refers to the discussion of this issue in 1960s Israeli historical writing. See also: Jacob Toury, 'Neue hebräische Veröffentlichungen zur Geschichte der Juden im deutschen Lebenskreise', *Leo Baeck Institut Bulletin* 4, no. 13-16 (1961). For more on this debate, see also Michael Graetz, 'Von einer Ideen- zu einer Sozialgeschichte der jüdischen Aufklärung', in Schochat (2000). For the issue of the segregation and integration of the Jews in the premodern era, see also Steven M. Lowenstein, 'Suggestions for Study of the Mediene based on German, French and English Models', *Studia Rosenthaliana: Journal for Jewish Literature and History in the Netherlands and related Subjects* 19, no. 1 (May 1985).

<sup>227</sup> Emphasising those aspects of social and cultural isolation that positively affected the inner cohesion of the community, Weinreich spoke about the insularity of the Jews in Ashkenaz. After the experiences of World War II, he rejected the term "ghetto" to describe the social, legal, and cultural situation of the Jews in Europe in the premodern era and suggested using this term only for the "ghettos" set up by the National Socialists. Max Weinreich, 'The Reality of Jewishness versus the Ghetto Myth: The Sociolinguistic Roots of Yiddish', in Joshua Fishman (ed.), *Never Say Die* (New York, 1981), 111, quoted from: Alt, 'Ideologische Komponente', 73.

The Christian society also had their own language specifically for the realms of religion and worship, science (under theological supremacy) and legal administration. This kind of hierarchical “internal bilingualism”, therefore, was not limited to Judaism and the relationship of *loshn koydesh* to the everyday Jewish language (which in Central- and Eastern Europe was Yiddish). In Christianity, Latin covered those functional realms that *loshn koydesh* covered in Judaism. Both languages were given cultural precedence over the common languages of their societies – Yiddish for the Jews, German (or much more so, German dialects) for the Christians. As of the late Middle Ages, a development began in Christian society that gradually suppressed Latin in favour of German.<sup>228</sup> It was, however, the Baroque and Enlightenment language societies and the literary scholars of the German classics of the eighteenth century, which first established German as a cultural high-language.<sup>229</sup>

In Judaism we can see a parallel, at least for the first part of this development: Yiddish, the everyday language, penetrated the religious realm that had been ideally reserved for *loshn koydesh*. This trend was expressed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the large

---

<sup>228</sup> A relatively homogenous communication society already existed in Christian society in the twelfth century. The Latin trained scholars and also the high court poets using colloquial languages referred to it. All official discourse in law, education and theology was carried out in Latin, which was likewise the “lingua franca”. The common language, however, was defined as noble and was important for use within the court society. The classical middle-high German literature can also be located in this social realm. The common language was also consistently used in the catechesis. Beginning in roughly the thirteenth century, linguistically, a decentralising tendency was again shown in Germany (increase in dialects) due to the political dissipation. The first signs of a counter-trend were seen after the translation of the bible by Martin Luther in the sixteenth century. Already as of the late thirteenth century, however, the relationship between Latin and German vernacular changed continually. First, there was an intense effort to translate Latin into the vernacular to make official documents linguistically available to the non-educated population. The breakthrough of the “common German” was then completed with the Reformation. Latin as a scholarly and administrative language continually lost its influence. For several centuries, it not only served as a “lingua franca”, but also was important for the common languages, which used it as a role model for grammar, lexicography and style. Albrecht Claasen, ‘Kommunikation: Mittelalter’, in *Europäische Mentalitätengeschichte*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher, Stuttgart: Kröner, 372-3. Konrad Ehlich relativises the meaning of the Reformation for the breakthrough of the German vernacular by pointing out the compromise made in the language issue. The elements of the laic movement were much more radical in the early doctrine of Luther than those that were then put into practice. At first the reformist theologians also continued to use Latin as a discourse language. Konrad Ehlich, ‘Rom - Reformation - Restauration: Transformationen von Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit’, in Baurmann, Günther, and Knoop, eds. (1993).

<sup>229</sup> See also Eric A. Blackall, *The Emergence of German as a Literary Language. 1700-1775*, 2d enl. ed. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978).

amount of religious literature written in Yiddish, but the major expression came with the inclusion of Yiddish as a language of prayer (also for printed prayer literature) and as a medium for moral religious literature.<sup>230</sup> The higher cultural value attributed to Hebrew as opposed to Yiddish was never questioned by those spokespersons that fought to make Yiddish a language used in the religious realm. Yiddish might owe its positive reevaluation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to the general trend of positively reevaluating colloquial languages relative to the traditional, elite high-languages. What is certain, however, is that this tendency, which led to the establishment of German as a national language, is also clearly responsible for the downfall of the Jews' internal colloquial language in Germany. The society into which the Jews were increasingly integrated starting at the end of the eighteenth century not only replaced Latin and French but also the multitude of regional variants. The spread and establishment of a national German language for writing and literature, which would overcome regional and social borders and create the cultural basis of a bourgeois society no longer structured along religious lines would also dissolve the social basis of Yiddish as an internal everyday language of an isolated religious group.

Although premodern Jewish society and Christian society shared the bilingual structure of their respective linguistic situations, there were nonetheless decisive differences. In the Christian society, Latin was at most a language for the religious and later also humanist "Gebildeten" (the educated) or for the elite employed in administration. As a language it was therefore highly class forming. The "common folk" possessed no knowledge of it. There was, likewise, no socio-religious ideal that postulated common knowledge of this language. *Loshn koydesh*, on the contrary, was the target language of the basic Jewish educational system, mandatory for all male Jews. The social ideal thus intended that all male members would have

---

<sup>230</sup> A good overview of the language and communication fields of Yiddish is offered by the bibliography in: Helmut Dinse, *Die Entwicklung des jiddischen Schrifttums im deutschen Sprachgebiet* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1974). Micro-historical insight into the themes of the fields of the Jewish languages for the Jews in Germany is offered by studies such as: Erika Timm and Hermann Süß (Cooperation), *Yiddish Literature in a Franconian Genizah: A Contribution to the Printing and Social History of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Jerusalem: Akademon Press, 1988), and Falk Wiesemann, ed., *Genizah: Hidden Legacies of the German Village Jews/Genisa: Verborgenes Erbe der deutschen Landjuden* (Vienna: Bertelsmann, 1992). For the advance of Yiddish, see Nils Römer, *Tradition und Akkulturation: Zum Sprachwandel der Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit der Haskalah* (Münster and New York: Waxmann, 1995), 34-9. An argument that openly supports Yiddish as a language of the religious Mussar-Literatur in the eighteenth century can be found in the "Libes Briv" from Isaac Wetzlar. Faierstein, *The 'Libes Briv'*, 11-5.



knowledge of this language. Basically, in this society's egalitarian ideal, every male Jew was potentially a "talmid khakham", a scholar.

The fact that the Jews in Germany used Yiddish, their own everyday language different from the ones of their Christian neighbours since the Middle Ages, corresponds with the previously mentioned internally and externally effective isolation of Jewish existence in the centuries before emancipation. The ascertainment of a general religious-cultural and social isolation of the individual groups in a corporatively-composed society is not meant to lead to misconceptions about the Jews' legal marginalisation in Germany (which differed from epoch to epoch). Although in many cases equality of the Jews in legal matters can be documented for the Middle Ages, persecution in the context of the crusades and the expulsion from the cities in the fourteenth century began a development which pushed the Jews even farther into the margins of social life. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the basic conditions for Jewish life in the Empire once again stabilised, which also affected their legal condition. Nonetheless, the Jews (with the exception of the Court Jews), did not at all enjoy the same rights as their Christian neighbours and were subjected to a number of exceptional burdens.<sup>231</sup>

The Jewish community reacted to the late Middle Age policy of expulsion and legal and economic marginalisation with specific strategies for separation and concentration on internal affairs. Thus, the codification of the "Minhag Ashkenaz" by important rabbinical scholars such as the "Maharil" occurred in these centuries.<sup>232</sup> In addition, these centuries create the context for the clearly divergent development of Yiddish and the German from which it had taken a large part of its linguistic basis. The Jews who immigrated to German language areas starting in the ninth century (or, as evidence documents, in the eleventh century at the latest) gave up their native languages and took on the languages of their surroundings. By at least the mid-thirteenth century, this became the mother tongue for all Jews born in German language areas.<sup>233</sup> They did not simply take on the colloquial languages without modification; they maintained, for example, elements of languages that they had spoken before their immigration (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Romance languages) and integrated them in the acquired linguistic

---

<sup>231</sup> Battenberg, 'Segregation und Integration', 428, 424.

<sup>232</sup> For the codification of the Minhag Aschkenaz in the late Middle Ages, see Mordechai Breuer, 'Das jüdische Mittelalter', in Michael A. Meyer, ed., *Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit*, Vol. 1, *Tradition und Aufklärung. 1600-1780*, by Mordechai Breuer and Michael Graetz (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1996), 60.

<sup>233</sup> Erika Timm, 'Der "Knick" in der Entwicklung des Frühneuhochdeutschen aus jiddistischer Sicht', in Röhl and

base. Slavic elements are also represented in the oldest known evidences of Yiddish. In the acquisition from German, certain lexical elements were simply not adopted because of their emphatically Christian associations and other elements quite quickly went through semantic changes or were combined into new terms through morphological processes. The motor for these changes was mainly the fact that specific aspects of Jewish life had to be described with elements of the language of a Christian culture. No remarkable differences to the local colloquial languages in terms of morphology and phonology or basic vocabulary arose until the fifteenth century as these areas lie beyond any ideological delimitation. This can be said of the high-German language areas, which the German components of Yiddish rest on as a basis. Beginning in the fifteenth century, however, the linguistic divergence became ever stronger. The Jews, thrown back and forth by expulsions, no longer adapted to the local German with every change of location. Instead, they oriented themselves on the language of the surrounding Jewish communities. That resulted in a broader based inner-organisation of Western Yiddish. Increasingly, the dialects from the demographic central axis of Judaism lying roughly between (Mainz-) Frankfurt on the one hand and , (Nürnberg-) Fürth on the other, came to the foreground.<sup>234</sup>

The first evidence of a counter-trend to this divergent development, namely the increasing influence of German in the Yiddish language testimonies, appears as of the seventeenth century. This developmental trend in the everyday language of the Jews was once again carried out in the context of a change in the basic political and social conditions of Jewish life in Germany. The cultivation of absolutist forms of authoritarian control in the German territorial states, which began at the end of the Thirty Years' War, counteracted the corporative organisation of the societies formed in the Middle Ages. The goal of the absolutist authoritarian state, which worked towards a centralisation of all aspects of power, was to dissolve all intermediary powers blocking its direct access to the members of society and their production power. This also applied to the Jewish community, whose autonomy in inner affairs was repeatedly undermined throughout the course of this development. If we consider that the Yiddish field of communication, like the inner-Jewish communal language, is a

---

Bayerdörfer, eds. (1986), 21.

<sup>234</sup> On this description of the linguistic development of Yiddish based on the criteria of a distancing from German, I follow Erika Timm, who dedicated detailed and interesting studies to this development: 'Zwei neu aufgefundene jiddische Briefe von 1602 und ihre Bedeutung für die Sozial- und Sprachgeschichte', *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 4, no. 2 (1994). Very detailed in: *Graphische und phonische*

precise representation of the broadly autonomous Jewish community, then the changes in the language behaviour of the Jews are logically consistent in terms of the general social developments.

One expression of the undermining of the internal autonomy of the Jewish community is the increasing willingness of Jewish plaintiffs to call on the jurisdiction of the secular ruling powers to settle inner-Jewish disputes that traditionally had been resolved in a Jewish court. In this case, the willingness of the Jewish plaintiffs to carry through on their demands and positions coincided with the interests of the emerging absolutist ruling state. The evolving absolutist rule was interested in acquiring every possibility of holding jurisdiction over their subjects.<sup>235</sup>

One result of this policy of the absolutist state towards the Jews was also a social differentiation of the Jewish community that had been unknown in the history of the Jews in Germany until this point in time. Until the first decades of the seventeenth century it is possible to assume that the community of “Schutzjuden” was socially relatively uniform. Although there were certainly poorer and richer members, these differences were internally balanced out in the framework of the traditional welfare institutions (“Zedaka”). That changed under the new conditions of the mercantilist principality, which practiced a settlement policy based on cameralism (the sciences of administration). This policy aimed at settling wealthy Jews and deporting those who could not pay the protection money or could not bring proof of their prosperity. Those poorer Jews were pushed to the margins of social life, denied entry into the Jewish community by strict police orders and thereby forced into the unstable life of beggars (“Betteljuden”).<sup>236</sup> The mercantilist state also had a particular interest beyond that in

---

*Struktur des Westjiddischen*. See also Timm, “Knick”.

<sup>235</sup> On the breakdown of the autonomy of the Jewish community, see: Breuer, ‘Frühe Neuzeit’. A prime example of the circumvention of the Jewish court, 177. Additionally, Michael Graetz, ‘From Corporate Community to Ethnic-Religious Minority. 1750-1830’, *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 37 (1992), and David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry. 1780-1840* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). 44-5.

<sup>236</sup> Battenberg, ‘Segregation und Integration’, 437-8. On the role of the head of the rural Jewry to issue the “Judengeleit” and thereby to decide on the inclusion of foreign Jews, see Breuer, ‘Frühe Neuzeit’, 192. On the expulsion of the poor Jews from Sulz by the Austrian government in 1688, who granted residency rights only to the three wealthiest families, see Bernhard Purin, *Die Juden von Sulz: Eine jüdische Landgemeinde in Vorarlberg 1676-1744*, *Studien zur Geschichte und Gesellschaft Vorarlbergs*, no. 9 (Bregenz: Vorarlberger Autoren Gesellschaft, 1991), 24.

the “special” services of Jewish subjects, who thus entered into a specific legal relationship to the court and thereby to the state. These Court Jews served their courts in a variety of ways: as monopoly owners and suppliers of luxury wares and as creditors (the Ullmanns of Pfersee supplied the emperor in Vienna and the Bishop from Augsburg), and military suppliers (the Levis of Hohenems supplied the emperor in Vienna). Their exceptional position had different effects on the community. They were important supporters of the institutions of the traditional community and crucial as spokespeople or advocates to the court, and contributed to the community’s security and stability. At the same time, they undermined the traditional community through their independence; an independence resulting from their special privileges. They were not only exempt from taxes, which the “Schutzjuden” had to pay, but they were also removed from the jurisdiction of the inner-Jewish rabbinical court and placed under that of the political court.<sup>237</sup> The numerous massive confrontations between Court Jews and their communities, which are characteristic for these decades, are an expression of these tensions.<sup>238</sup>

In the context of language development and social change during these decades, the groups at the top and at the bottom end of the scale of Jewish societies lived in circles of relationships that broke out of the community’s traditional framework. They also extended their contacts to the Christian society beyond business matters, which was simultaneously expressed in changed forms of language and behaviour. The numerous Hebrew and Western Yiddish elements that found their way into the underworld jargon “Rotwelsch”, are evidence of this intense contact between the Jewish and Christian lower classes. Additionally, there is a great deal of evidence that the Jews in this social segment had command of German.<sup>239</sup> The same can be said of the Jewish upper class. Knowledge of German and French can frequently be

---

<sup>237</sup> Breuer, ‘Frühe Neuzeit’, 106-25, dedicates an entire chapter to the Court Jews. Friedrich Battenberg and Rotraud Ries (eds.), *Ökonomische Potenz und Interkulturalität: Bedeutungen und Wandlungen der mitteleuropäischen Hofjudenschaft auf dem Weg in die Moderne* (Böhlau: Vienna 2001 (in print)).

<sup>238</sup> For a local example of this type of confrontation, see Sabine Ullmann, ‘Zwischen Fürstenhöfen und Gemeinde: Die jüdische Hoffaktorenfamilie Ulman in Pfersee während des 18. Jahrhunderts’, *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben* 90 (1998).

<sup>239</sup> Battenberg, ‘Segregation und Integration’, 440. R. Glanz, *Geschichte des niederen jüdischen Volkes in Deutschland: Eine Studie über historisches Gaunertum, Bettelwesen und Vagantentum* (New York, 1968). Paul Wexler, ‘Languages in contact: The Case of Rotwelsch and the two “Yiddishes”’, in R. Po-Chia Hsia and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), *In and Out of the Ghetto: Jewish-gentile relations in late medieval and early modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, 109-24).

found in these groups, which is also true of rabbis (e.g. Jakob Emden), who mastered German and other foreign languages and had a well-rounded secular education (were “gebildet”).<sup>240</sup>

But although the majority of the Jews in Germany whom Jacob Toury refers to as the “lower middle class”, certainly had a relationship with the non-Jewish world for business matters, in these decades of the unfolding of the absolutist state, daily life took place within the Jewish community and its institutions.<sup>241</sup> There is no evidence of secular education among this group and knowledge of German probably did not extend much beyond what was necessary for daily life and business contacts, and was largely limited to spoken competence. Knowledge of the Latin alphabet was also not very widespread. Thus, Moses Mendelssohn wrote his German translation of the Pentateuch in Hebrew characters (the Berlin edition was published from 1780 to 1783), and also the maskilim, the representatives of Jewish Enlightenment, still used this variant of German for its popular pedagogic effect until the first decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>242</sup> As contemporary reactions to Mendelssohn’s translation show, the German caused difficulty for many Jews despite his concession of writing in Hebrew letters.<sup>243</sup> Although there was a demonstrable knowledge of German, mainly in the upper and lower classes, and rudimentary knowledge of the surrounding language for daily use in the broad lower middle classes, Yiddish can be considered the internal colloquial language of the Jewish community until the late eighteenth century. Its replacement by German in this function was due to a massive increase in state intervention in previously internal affairs of the Jewish community. These interventions were carried out in the framework of the enlightened states of Central and Eastern Europe’s emancipation legislation, weakening the autonomy of the traditional community.

One field of state intervention in inner Jewish affairs was education. Before 1770, according to the current state of research, there is no evidence of state intervention in the school affairs of the autonomous Jewish communities.<sup>244</sup> It was first the regulation of the legal affairs of the Jewish subjects in the territories of the German Empire following the aims of enlightened

---

<sup>240</sup> Römer, *Akkulturation*, 40- 3. Toury, ‘Neue hebräische Veröffentlichungen’, 63.

<sup>241</sup> Toury, ‘Neue hebräische Veröffentlichungen’, 70.

<sup>242</sup> For the position of the maskilim with respect to this variant, which did not correspond with their ideal of the Jewish language situation, see Toury, ‘Neue hebräische Veröffentlichungen’.

<sup>243</sup> Examples of this type of reaction in Römer, *Akkulturation*, 90.

<sup>244</sup> Uri R. Kaufmann, ‘Das jüdische Schulwesen auf dem Lande: Baden und Elsaß im Vergleich. 1770-1848’, in Richarz and Rürup, eds. (1997), 294.

monarchies that subjected Jewish children to general mandatory schooling beginning in the late eighteenth century. These regulations maintained that instruction had to take place using the “Normallehrart” (normal teaching methods) and instruction had to be carried out in German. Joseph II’s tolerance patent from 1781 and the following years allowed Jews to choose whether they wanted to send their children to the already existing Christian schools or if they wanted to *send one of their members with the costs paid collectively, to Freyberg, to learn the standard instruction in German, to then enable the introduction of their own German schools at the main synagogues*. These schools, like the “German Christian schools”, should be under the leadership of the local imperial school director.<sup>245</sup> The founding of the German Normalschule in Hohenems in 1784 can be attributed to this ordinance from Josef II. In the Kingdom of Baden, there were already initiatives from the non-Jewish rulers for the education of the Jewish children in German schools in the 1770s. General compulsory state regulated education for Jews was demanded as early as 1801. Effective regulation, however, first occurred with the constitutional edict from 1808 and 1809.<sup>246</sup> In the short-lived Kingdom of Westphalia, Jewish state schools arose as of 1809.<sup>247</sup> In the Kingdom of Bavaria, the Jewish school system was given a completely new foundation by an edict in 1813, which prohibited the traditional private schools (so called, “Winkelschulen”). At the schools that the Jewish community was allowed to set up, only state-examined teachers, whom the community had to pay a set minimum wage, were permitted to teach.<sup>248</sup> The emergence of modern Jewish schools in cities such as Berlin (1778), Wolfenbüttel (1786/1807), Breslau (1791), Dessau (1799), Seesen (1801) and Frankfurt am Main (1804) can be attributed to the initiative of the Jewish upper class, not to state measures. Common to all of these projects was that the official language of instruction was German and secular disciplines were integrated into the curriculum.

These examples of state regulation of Jewish school matters is representative of a general trend of the emancipation legislation of the enlightened absolutist monarchies. All of these

---

<sup>245</sup> The patent published in Freiburg in the context of the Austrian tolerance patent legislation of Josef II, is documented in Karl Heinz Burmeister and Alois Niederstätter, eds., *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Juden in Vorarlberg vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Forschungen zur Geschichte Vorarlbergs, no. 9 (Dornbirn: Vorarlberger Verlagsanstalt, 1988), 162-3.

<sup>246</sup> Kaufmann, ‘Jüdisches Schulwesen’, 300-1.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid*, 297.

<sup>248</sup> Falk Wiesemann, ‘Zum Religionswesen der Landjuden in Bayern im 19. Jahrhundert’, in *Landjudentum* (1992), 120.

types of schools maintained Jewish religious instruction; thus Hebrew was likewise maintained as a subject of study, although in a very limited form. The former language of instruction of traditional Jewish education, Yiddish, however, was suppressed. Since it had never been the target-language of Jewish instruction, its acquisition was not institutionalised in any way. There was no formal study of the grammar available, nor any connection to rituals that could have acted to preserve the language. State intervention in Jewish education and the associated implementation of German in the Jewish school system thus form a major step towards a complete suppression of the Yiddish language which did not enjoy the protection of any religious institution. This process, however, did not come entirely from external forces. It also found inner-Jewish support among the maskilim, the representatives of Jewish Enlightenment.

In the state intervention in inner-Jewish affairs, one measure that had broad repercussions for the linguistic situation of the Jews in Germany was the banishment of the “Jewish national language” from all areas that would involve outer-Jewish obligations. In the context of progressing centralisation of the tutelage state and the dissolution of intermediary forces, this ban applied to ever more areas. As early as 1739, the electoral administration of the principality of Hessen-Kassel ordered the Jews to use German and not Hebrew or Yiddish in their business transactions.<sup>249</sup> The “Tolerance Edict” from Joseph II demanded that the Jewish national language should no longer be used for any *contracts, prescriptions, testaments, invoices, account books, testimonials or any other legally or non-legally binding negotiations with the exception of religious matters. Everything is to be done in the common legal language of each land [...]*.<sup>250</sup> State intervention, however, did not remain limited to these social areas. The Jewish community of Fürth in the Kingdom of Bavaria provides an especially succinct example of state regulation of rabbinical training and appointment, an intervention which directly affected the inner-autonomy of the community. Thus, in the new appointment of the rabbinate in 1819, the authorities insisted on an academically trained candidate with sufficient command of German – as established in the Bavarian edict from 1813. This led to a more than ten-year vacancy of the (officially recognised rabbinical function) and finally to the choice of the reformed rabbi, Isaak Loewi.<sup>251</sup> In addition, in all

---

<sup>249</sup> Volkov, “*Verbürgerlichung*”, 373.

<sup>250</sup> Burmeister, *Dokumente*, see note 20.

<sup>251</sup> Monika Berthold-Hilpert, ‘Emanzipation’, in *Jüdisches Museum Franken (Fürth & Schnaittach)*, ed. Bernhard Purin (Munich, London, and New York: Prestel, 1999), 33.

states of the German Empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century, inner-Jewish jurisdiction steadily dissipated, remaining in control of civil matters (marriages) at most.<sup>252</sup>

In Germany, Western Yiddish lost its function and social base with the dissolution of the traditional Jewish community, disappeared from ever more areas and was steadily replaced by German. In Eastern Europe, however, Yiddish (Eastern Yiddish) was elevated to a Jewish “national language” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Expelled from German cities and territories, Jews had migrated to the kingdom of Poland since the fourteenth century. There they founded the cultural realm of “Ashkenaz II” (Max Weinreich). “Ashkenaz”, a biblical geographical description, is the Jewish name that has been used for Germany since the Middle Ages. It not only describes a geographical unit, but also a cultural Jewish tradition, which formed in this area in the Middle Ages, clearly diverging from the culture and tradition of the Sephardic Jews (which came from medieval Spain). Among the connecting elements of this cultural realm are Yiddish, as the common colloquial language, and a common “Minhag”, a regional body of liturgical forms and religiously influenced rules and ways of life. The combination of both European Jewish cultural realms in the Ashkenaz I (Jews in the German-speaking countries) and Ashkenaz II (Jews in the Slavic-speaking countries) shows that the Jews in Eastern Europe remained in a cultural continuity with the place from whence they came. They were not only connected through language and Minhag; migratory movements between the two areas also upheld biographical and cultural relations.<sup>253</sup>

Until well into the sixteenth century, Jews migrated heavily from the German regions of the Empire to the East, where they mainly settled in the cities.<sup>254</sup> There they encountered a German speaking middle and upper class. It is also for this reason that the newly settled Jews retained the German-like Yiddish that they had brought with them from the West. German had a higher social status because of its speakers in contrast to the Slavic languages that were mainly spoken by the agrarian population in the rural areas, thus carrying connotations of this

---

<sup>252</sup> On the dissipation of the jurisdictional function of the rabbi in the Bavarian edict of 1813, see Wiesemann, ‘Religionswesen’, 116.

<sup>253</sup> Further regional cultural subsystems formed within the “Minhag Aschkenaz”. The Yiddish language is a binding element for all of these systems.

<sup>254</sup> On the emigration of the Jews from the Empire and their settlement in Poland and Lithuania, see Friedrich Battenberg, *Das europäische Zeitalter der Juden: Zur Entwicklung einer Minderheit in der nichtjüdischen Umwelt Europas*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990, 208.



social segment. However, the new immigrants did not completely exclude the Slavic language. Yiddish's structure as a component and fusion language also enabled the integration of elements of the new local surrounding languages. The lexicology and also the morpho-syntactical structure of Eastern Yiddish was mainly influenced by the Slavic, which led to the divergent development of the Yiddish in the East from the Yiddish in the West. The latter had not been exposed to any influence from the Slavic languages. At the level of literature, the printing presses counteracted this development up through the nineteenth century. The Yiddish printing press was established on the basis of Western Yiddish in the first decades of the sixteenth century. Books printed in Poland used this variant as well. It was first in the nineteenth century that a considerable number of works were published in a language similar to the spoken language of the Jews in the East. The first printed work with a religious content in one of the contemporary languages similar to spoken Eastern Yiddish was the 1813 translation of the bible by Menachem Mendl Lefin-Satanover.<sup>255</sup>

The migratory movement of the Jews in Ashkenaz was not simply eastward. Beginning in the seventeenth century, migration from the countries of Eastern Europe back to the German-speaking regions can be observed. A triggering factor for this wave of migration was a catastrophic occurrence in Eastern European Jewish history: Bogdan Chmelniecki's Ukrainian Cossack rebellion against the Polish Magnatenherrschaft in the years 1648 to 1657. He set off a decade long battle which ended in the Polish crown's loss of the Ukrainian areas. Due to the social characteristics of the rebellion, there were massive repercussions for the Jews in the Ukraine and Poland. It was not only a national revolt against an expanding Empire, but also a

---

<sup>255</sup> Eckhard Eggers, *Sprachwandel und Sprachmischung im Jiddischen*, Frankfurt/Main, et al: Peter Lang, 1998, 215-22. (See the very critical note from Marion Aptroot on Egger's study, in *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 8, No. 2 (1998), 553-4.) Chone Shmeruk (*Sifrut jidis bepolin. Yiddish literature in Poland, studies and perspectives*, Jerusalem 1981) on the question of Eastern and Western Yiddish is quoted from Eggers: *The Yiddish texts from Poland before the eighteenth century, do not give an authentic picture of spoken Yiddish of that time. Rather, they are concerned with avoiding all Slavic (and all Hebrew!) elements, to ease comprehension for those readers who come from the German language areas. This attempt even went so far as to Germanise Slavic place names.* According to Joshua A. Fishman, the bible translation by Menachem Mendl Lefin-Satanover from 1813 is the first work that reproduces a religious content in a form corresponding with the actual Yiddish of its time. The language integrates Slavic elements as well as Hebraisms. Joshua A. Fishman, *Yiddish: Turning to life* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1991). Witness statements from Jewish courts recorded in the eighteenth century prove the convergence of the written with the spoken Eastern Yiddish. These offer a picture of the spoken language before the nineteenth century. With the beginning of the nineteenth century, narratives from Chassidic masters appeared in a language that concurred with this oral Yiddish.

revolt of farmers against their oppressors and a freedom fight for the Greek-Orthodox Church against the Roman-Catholic nobility. This nobility had its property in the Ukraine but, in a great number of cases, had given the usufruct for this property to Jews. Because they were locally present in the eyes of the Ukrainian population, the Jews embodied the evil manorial system. According to contemporary accounts, 100,000 Jews fell victim to this cruel massacre.<sup>256</sup> In addition to the first major wave of return migration from Eastern to Central Europe, which this event set off, far-reaching effects on the religiosity of the European Jews were also felt. It promoted messianic movements that involved Jewish Europe in decade-long intense religious-ideological confrontations, which greatly shook the traditional institutions of the Jewish community and thus contributed to the development of Jewish modernism. In the contemporary sources of the history of the Jews in the German-speaking countries, these return migrants emerged, among others, in community functions such as rabbi and teacher. They influenced religious traditions, especially teaching methods in the Jewish educational system, which soon triggered criticism. In the testimonials of this inner-Jewish cultural pessimism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, whose topoi includes critique of the religious conditions and the traditional educational system, the Polish teachers and rabbis did not often appear in a positive light.

One decisive cause of this divergent development, which in the West led to the disappearance of Western Yiddish and in the East to the elevation of Eastern Yiddish to a national Jewish language, is the different course of emancipation of the Jews in the West and those in the “culture-geographic East” (Dan Diner). In Western Europe the formation of the ideally secular national state at the cost of the intermediary administrative powers and the development of the bourgeois society created the framework for Jewish emancipation. The movement was influenced by an anti-collective tendency in the sense that each individual should be freed from the fetters of tradition and religion both of which constituted collectives, to become a member of a principally egalitarian bourgeois society, subject only to a secular state which was neutral in terms of religion. The rights and liberties of the individual and the autonomy of the individual were emphasised. *Give the Jew as an individual everything, and Judaism as a nation, nothing*, was the well-known and oft cited statement by the French politician Tonnere, a slogan which aptly captured the trends of the western model of emancipation. The consequences of this social development for the internal colloquial

---

<sup>256</sup> Battenberg, *Europäisches Zeitalter*, Vol. 2: *Von 1650 bis 1945*, 34-5.

language of the Jews of the premodern era have already been described. In the countries of Eastern Europe, however, the emancipation of the Jews followed a different pattern.

In accordance with the political organisation of this region into major multi-ethnic Empires (the Habsburg Monarchy and Czar Empire), the acquisition of ideas of the Enlightenment but above all of Romanticism, led to the development of national identities and emancipatory movements of different ethnic groups. The central concepts of the Enlightenment such as “liberation” and “autonomy” were collectively interpreted and transformed in a movement of liberating peoples from foreign ethnic-cultural subordination. Likewise, the emancipation of the Jews of Eastern Europe was carried out within this framework. It was especially the pogroms in Russia, set off by the murder of Czar Alexander II, that withdrew the credibility of those western-based Enlightenment philosophers, and their belief in liberalism and progress. The idea of legal equality for Jews in a nation state was disavowed; other models for the solution to the “Jewish question” won the upper hand. Models that saw a solution in the formation of a Jewish national identity leading to liberation as a collective became dominant. Zionism, which envisioned Palestine as the site where the Jewish people could become a nation, emerged as the historical victor among the movements following this approach towards finding a solution. In contrast were the national Jewish movements that believed in the possibility of a national existence for the Jews in the Diaspora. Language and culture were meant to form the basis for a national Jewish identity. In this respect, the proponents of this movement were true followers of the ideas of the Enlightenment and Romanticism. Within this context, Hebrew (which the Zionist groups propagated as the national language) as well as Yiddish (the language of the Diaspora-national groups) completed their ascent to popular and literary European Jewish languages. This did not occur peacefully side-by-side, but at odds, because at issue were political movements both trying to win over the “Jewish masses” of Eastern Europe for their own purposes. Yiddish owed its development as a European cultural and literary language (although short-lived) to this movement. Its history ended suddenly with the National Socialist murder of the Eastern European Jews who had been the carriers of this language.<sup>257</sup>

---

<sup>257</sup> I thank Dan Diner for the insight into the significance of the different models of emancipation in Western and Eastern Europe. He described the effects of these models on the Israeli understanding of history in ‘Cumulative Contingency: Historicising Legitimacy in Israeli Discourse’, in *History and Memory. Studies in Representation of the Past* 7, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 1995): *Israeli Historiography Revisited*, 147-67. Dan Diner, ‘Zweierlei Emanzipation. Westliche Juden und Ostjuden in universalhistorischer Perspektive’, in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*,

When we speak of the disappearance of Western Yiddish and the replacement of the inner-Jewish everyday language with the non-Jewish surrounding language in the countries of Central and Western Europe, we must imagine a process that encompassed decades. The generation educated in German and using the Latin alphabet – which did not begin until state interventions in Jewish educational matters in the late eighteenth century – is the first from which we can expect comprehensive active and passive literacy in German. In German printing places, even in the second half of the nineteenth century, in addition to Yiddish works, books were printed in German in Hebrew letters and as a spoken variant there was still evidence of Western Yiddish in the twentieth century. At the geographic margins of the former language area – in Alsace, Switzerland and Hungary – it remained a relatively common means of communication.<sup>258</sup> In Austria and Germany, the “heartland of Western

---

No. 22 (27./28. January 1996), 17. *In the West [the emancipation] resulted – although at different times and in different ways from state to state – as an emancipation of the individual as citizen. The traditional unity of religion and nationality dissolved in favour of national affiliation. The Jews became English, French, and German; religion became increasingly a confession. In the East on the other hand, this type of emancipation was made difficult and sometimes even blocked entirely as a result of the particular historical context. Here, the consciousness of a Jewish nationality was as one among many nationalities: “Judaism in the West, the Jewish people in the East”.* He displays his thoughts about the “separately evolved” history of the Jews in the West and East before the Holocaust and their convergence in this occurrence, using the example of Herschel Grynszpan’s attempt to assassinate a German embassy employee in Paris on 7 November 1938. The story of the Polish Jew in Germany, Grynszpan, whose parents were among those despairing people with Polish citizenship and Jewish heritage who were expelled over the border to Poland by the NS-government on the night of 29 October 1938, is, for Diner, *a symbolic anticipation of the extermination of European Judaism: a collective experience that became a common history for European Jews – in the East as well as the West.* For our purposes, interesting is that the only cultural attribute which Diner assigns to Grynszpan is that he is *Yiddish speaking*. On the history of the Yiddish literature in Eastern Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see Benjamin Harshav, *The meaning of Yiddish* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), Chapters 5 and 6, and idem, *Language in Time of Revolution* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1993), part 1.

<sup>258</sup> On the history of Yiddish printing in the German-speaking countries, see Menahem Schmelzer, ‘Hebrew Printing and Publishing in Germany. 1650-1750’, *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 33, 1988, 369-83. Herbert C. Zafren, ‘Variety in the Typography of Yiddish: 1535-1635’, in *Hebrew Union College Annual* 53, (1982), 137-63. Herbert C. Zafren, ‘Early Yiddish Typography’, in *Jewish Book Annual* 44, (1986-1987/5747), 106-17. The lists of printed matter which Paul Wexler uses for his description of Ashkenazic German (German in Hebrew letters) give a first rough overview of the history of the works printed in this variant. He lists the German printing locations as: Altona (1823), Berlin (1760 - 1832), Dessau - Leipzig (1810), Frankfurt/Main (1834), Fürth (1765 - 1859), Hamburg (1786), Hannover (1842, 1861), Karlsruhe (1825), Nürnberg (1765), Rödelheim

Yiddish”, one must, however, look carefully for traces in the twentieth century. In these areas, the Jew’s appropriation of the German culture was particularly strong. Also, potential speakers of what remained of Western Yiddish were expelled or murdered through National Socialism. Nonetheless, investigations into post World War II migrant communities allow us to conclude that elements of the former Western Yiddish must still have been very much present at the beginning of this century in inner-Jewish, mainly inner-familial, communication.<sup>259</sup> These “Jewish-German” words, idioms and proverbs were essentially used only in the Jewish milieu, but they were also used in very specific contacts with non-Jews.<sup>260</sup> Western Yiddish was, namely, a type of sociolect of the rural livestock market, which was a traditional domain of southern German Jews. In this occupational field, Western Yiddish could depart from functioning as an inner-Jewish language and become a medium that crossed religious borders.<sup>261</sup> But also within the Jewish community, speaking Jewish-German was a social phenomenon in the sense that Jewish members of the upper classes had almost completely given up the use of this language and it could be encountered primarily in the middle and lower classes. Furthermore, the scope of the Jewish-German vocabulary of an individual speaker depended on their embedment in the context of religious traditions: a speaker’s instruction in Hebrew and regular synagogue visits seemed to have correlated to no small degree with the extent of their Jewish-German vocabulary.<sup>262</sup> In studies by Steven Lowenstein, the inner-Jewish communication in small, socially tightly knit rural communities appeared as the arena for this Jewish variant. The elements in use originated mostly – but not always – from the *loshn koydesh* components of Western Yiddish.

---

(1800 - 1895), Sulzbach (1802 - 1843), Vienna (1808 - 1842). In the Eastern European area, printing was carried out in this variant until the twentieth century. Wexler, ‘Ashkenazic German’, 128-29.

<sup>259</sup> See also Steven Lowenstein, ‘Results of Atlas Investigations among Jews of Germany’, in *The Field of Yiddish: Studies in Language, Folklore, and Literature*, Vol. 3, ed. Marvin I. Herzog, Wita Ravid, and Uriel Weinreich (London, The Hague and Paris: Mouton & Co., 1969).

<sup>260</sup> Werner Weinberg used the term “Jewish-German” for this variant. Lowenstein speaks of Western Yiddish. Werner Weinberg, *Die Reste des Jüdischdeutschen* (Stuttgart et al: Kohlhammer-Verlag, 1969), 15.

<sup>261</sup> Florence Guggenheim-Grünberg, ‘The Horse Dealers Language of the Swiss Jews in Eendingen and Lengnau’, in *The Field of Yiddish: Studies in Yiddish Language, Folklore, and Literature*, ed. Uriel Weinreich, New York: Linguistic Circle of New York, 1954. Idem, ‘Die Surbtaler Pferdehändlersprache’, *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 100 (1981). Uri R. Kaufmann, *Jüdische und christliche Viehhändler in der Schweiz 1780 – 1930* (Zurich: Chronos, 1988).

<sup>262</sup> Weinberg, *Reste des Jüdischdeutschen*, 12.

This reference to the slow disappearance of Western Yiddish does not aim at a revision of the general trend of development of the linguistic situation of the Jews in Germany in the nineteenth century. The inner-Jewish everyday language of the Jewish premodern era, Yiddish, was eventually replaced by German and was merely preserved in elements of the inner-Jewish, mainly inner-familial language use: as a “window” to the linguistic situation of another era and other basic social conditions for Jewish existence. This linguistic situation once again reflected the general conditions of Jewish existence. In a bourgeois society concerned mainly with the privatisation of religious and cultural distinction, all that remained for the old common language of the autonomous Jewish community was the limited linguistic field of private, inner-Jewish and inner-familial relations. And remaining as well was its function of maintaining a social and cultural network of relations that were not necessarily visible from the outside yet still continued to be inwardly effective.

## 6) Multilingualism among the Rural Jews: A Microhistorical Study

*Das Geschehen, das den Historiker umgibt und an dem er Teil nimmt, wird als ein mit sympathetischer Tinte geschriebener Text seiner Darstellung zu Grunde liegen.*<sup>263</sup>  
(Walter Benjamin)

According to the “Doktorrabbiner” Aron Tänzer, in Hohenems there were never *ghetto Jews*, whose intellectual growth was stunted in a so-called ‘*Kheder*’. As early as the seventeenth century, he continues, *all Hohenems Jews* could read and write German, and their *broad trading circles in the surrounding German states*, not only resulted in knowledge of language and writing but also *a certain cultural openness*.<sup>264</sup> With this description, Aron Tänzer (1871-1937) clearly displays the historical tradition of the academically trained liberal German “Doktorrabbiner” of the nineteenth century, whose positions on certain “Jewish issues” were rooted in a long-standing tradition. The pejorative reference to the “*Kheder*” the traditional educational institution of premodern times, in which the children – as Tänzer sees it – *were stunted* more than they were challenged, undoubtedly reminds us of the inner-Jewish critique of education at the end of the seventeenth and in the eighteenth centuries. Among the Jews this critique was taken up by the maskilim; in the non-Jewish surrounding society by the enlightened officials. A radical reform of the Jewish educational system in the context of the state’s emancipation legislation put this critique into action. The inner-Jewish critique of the educational system in the seventeenth and eighteenth century was mainly concerned with the neglect of Hebrew and the inadequate methods for language instruction. Further, they criticised the widespread method of children’s rote memorisation of religious material. They demanded that priority be placed on understanding the content of learning material rather than mechanical memorisation. They thus pleaded (at least at an earlier phase) for teaching the most important religious matters and rules of life in Yiddish. In addition came the call for the

---

<sup>263</sup> I dedicate this chapter to the “Doktorrabbiner” of the Hohenems Jewish community, Aron Tänzer (1871-1937), whose work continues to present the starting point for scholarly work with the Jewish history of Hohenems and Vorarlberg. Walter Benjamin, *Aufzeichnungen und Materialien: Erkenntnistheoretisches*, in Rolf Tiedemann, ed., *Das Passagen-Werk*, 1. Vol. (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1982), 595.

<sup>264</sup> Aron Tänzer, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems* (Meran, 1905, unpubl. reprint, Bregenz: Verlagsbuchhandlung H. Lingenhölle & Co., 1982), 505.

integration of “secular” content (mainly natural sciences and non-Jewish languages) into the Jewish educational system.<sup>265</sup> Regarding the language issue, the maskilim, the Jewish Enlightenment philosophers, became increasingly more radical, especially in the second half of the eighteenth century when they urged the replacement of the “corrupt jargon”<sup>266</sup> (as they pejoratively described the inner-Jewish everyday language) with German, the language of culture. This was in accordance with the general cultural patriotism of the German Empire of the time, which implied that Jews could only become fully valid members of society through affiliation with the German language and cultural community. Thus, Tänzer’s reference to the Hohenems Jews’ “generally” widespread knowledge of the German language since the seventeenth century and their “cultural openness” that had always been present and which he attributed to their “extensive business travel” which (to stay with Tänzer’s linguistic imagery) enabled them to leave the confines of the „ghetto”, is more an indication of the rabbi/historian’s reserved position on the culture and lifestyle of premodern Jewish existence, a position which was dominant in nineteenth century German academic study of Judaism, than a representation of the actual educational circumstances of the Hohenems Jewish community prior to emancipation.

Tänzer left us with a valuable historical work, still largely valid today. As with every historical work, however, the perspective and interests of the author are clearly prominent. Like many of his century, the “Doctor Rabbi” was concerned with presenting evidence of how

---

<sup>265</sup> For more on the inner-Jewish education critique in the premodern era, see Morris M. Faienstein, ed., *The “Libes Briv” of Isaac Wetzlar* (Atlanta and Georgia: Scholars Press, 1996), 17-21, and David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry: 1780-1840* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 44–61. For the results of a new interest in a thorough instruction of Hebrew, see Andrea Schatz, ‘Entfernte Wörter. Reinheit und Vermischung in den Sprachen der Berliner Maskilim’, unpublished article. *In the late seventeenth century, the interest in thoroughly mediating Hebrew grew in families and in education. As a result, glossaries and other reference materials were increasingly created for schools and self-teaching.*

<sup>266</sup> A. Ruppin refers to the change in meaning of the term “jargon” for Yiddish in his era, the late nineteenth century. He introduces this term with reference to *Judeo-German* or *Jew's German* (Germany), *Jewish* (Eastern Europe), and *Yiddish* (England, America). *Recently, protest from the side of the Jews has been raised against the term “jargon” because jargon means hotchpotch and it is not appropriate to describe a fully developed language which has become organic in such a way. But it seems that the term “jargon”, with reference to the Judeo-German, has become a proper name and no longer has any derogatory connotations.* Arthur Ruppin, *Die Juden in der Gegenwart. Eine sozialwissenschaftliche Studie* (3d unchanged ed. Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1920; 1st ed. 1904), 93. Evidence for this is provided by Sholem Aleykhem, who often referred to himself as a *shargon-shreyber*. (I thank Hugh Denman for this information.)



“patriotic” and loyal the Hohenems Jews were to their respective superiors through the centuries and how little appreciation they received for it.<sup>267</sup> Also, like others of his guild with the same inner-Jewish ideological position, he liked to overlook or marginalize the elements of the cultural and religious particularity of premodern Jewish existence; elements which were imposed from the outside, but also consciously maintained from within. This also reflects his religious-political position, placing him among those of a liberal persuasion. In keeping with this religious-political position, Tänzer also saw in the (universally interpretable) ethic, the lowest common denominator among Jews and rejected placing too strong an emphasis on the (particularistic) “outer manifestations” of the Jewish religion.

With this perspective (and its specific exclusions/omissions), Tänzer stood in the hegemonic tradition of the German scholarly study of Judaism of the nineteenth century. This tradition is illustrated, for example, by the publication history of the correspondence in “Judeo-German” (as it was called in the contemporary maskilic terminology) or “German in Hebrew script” of the key figure of the Jewish Enlightenment, Moses Mendelssohn. The early editors of his correspondence in the nineteenth century either did not even include these letters by the Jewish scholar and German philosopher or they could not resist rewriting them by either silently “improving” the language or simply eliminating entire passages – without indicating the changes.<sup>268</sup> Only a Moses Mendelssohn literate in German, and possibly also Hebrew,

---

<sup>267</sup> Cf: Christhard Hoffmann, ‘Jüdische Geschichtswissenschaft in Deutschland 1918-1938: Konzepte - Schwerpunkte - Ergebnisse’, in *Wissenschaft des Judentums. Anfänge der Judaistik in Europa*, ed. Julius Carlebach (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992). On the ideological background of the scientific work of Jewish historians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see Michael Brenner, ‘Geschichte als Politik - Politik als Geschichte: Drei Wege jüdischer Geschichtsauffassung in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts’, in *Erinnerung als Gegenwart: Jüdische Gedenkkulturen*, ed. Sabine Hödl and Eleonore Lappin (Berlin and Vienna: Philo Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000). According to Brenner's categorisation, Tänzer would be classified with historians such as Isaak Markus Jost and Heinrich Graetz, whose non-scientific goals were the legal and social recognition of the Jews as a religious minority.

<sup>268</sup> *The widespread view among educated Jews in the nineteenth century, that Judeo-German was a corrupted new high German, may have also influenced Kayserling in his edition of the Judeo-German letters. The respect and love for the 'Jewish Socrates' which he already displayed in his first works about Mendelssohn and which he maintained until his death, his deep respect for every pen stroke, and his efforts to present his works as true to the original as possible are, however, not noticeable to the same degree here. He allowed himself to linguistically 'improve' certain parts in the German transcriptions of these letters, and to completely leave out some which he did not understand without making any note of this. A large part of the letters, fifteen of the thirty-five, he left unprinted with the remark that they contained purely business matters.* Introduction to Moses

could fulfil this ideal image of the Judeo-German scholar which embodied the desired symbiosis.<sup>269</sup> The fact that Mendelssohn's mother tongue was Yiddish, that he enjoyed a traditional Jewish upbringing and therefore had to learn German as a foreign language just like the other non-Jewish languages that he would later master, and especially the fact that his correspondence was conducted in Yiddish or "Judeo-German" throughout his life, did not constitute a relevant criteria for nineteenth century academic studies of Judaism. The "discovery" and inclusion of this correspondence in the twentieth century Mendelssohn anniversary edition (this particular volume appeared in 1929) therefore also reveals changed perspectives within the field. The emergence of a folkloristic perspective on Jewish life of earlier centuries by scientists such as David Kaufmann and later Max Grunwald form the background for this re-evaluation. Also the cultural and scholarly activities of the early decades of the twentieth century summarised by the term "Jewish Renaissance" caused a certain re-evaluation of the "Jewish languages" in the German speaking states of central Europe.<sup>270</sup>

Tänzer's high regard for the German language and culture are shown by his commitment to German as the language for the sermon and the Haftarah-lecture in the Jewish religious service, and by his German-national enthusiasm at the outbreak of World War I.<sup>271</sup> These elements make him a prototype scholar of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (*the*

---

Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften. Jubiläumsausgabe*, Vol. 19, *Hebräische Schriften III: Briefwechsel*, edited by Haim Borodianski (Bar-Dayan) (Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1974), 10. This edition is based on the anniversary edition of the collected writings from 1929.

<sup>269</sup> According to David Sorkin, Mendelssohn's Hebrew-language work was long neglected by readers. It is only because of this that he can be perceived so exclusively as a philosopher of the Enlightenment. In his Hebrew language works on Jewish themes he is revealed as the first generation of the Haskalah who sympathised with the "religious Enlightenment" of the Christian society and did not question the foundations of Jewish tradition. David Sorkin, *Moses Mendelssohn and the Religious Enlightenment* (London: Peter Halban, 1996).

<sup>270</sup> David Kaufmann, *Die Memoiren der Glückel von Hameln* (Frankfurt/Main: J. Kauffmann, 1896). On the "rediscovery" of the "Jewish languages", see the chapter: 'Authenticity Revisited: Jewish Culture in Jewish Languages' in Michael Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996).

<sup>271</sup> Uri R. Kaufmann, 'Die Hohenemser Rabbiner Abraham Kohn und Aron Tänzer und die jüdischen Bestrebungen ihrer Zeit', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 52. *Erinnerungen des Feldrabbiners Dr. Aron Tänzer*, undated Manuscript at the Leo Baeck Institute, New York, fragment. Partial reproduction in Monika Richarz, ed, *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland*, Vol. 2, *Selbstzeugnisse zur Sozialgeschichte des Kaiserreiches* (Nördlingen: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1976), 445.

*assimilationist*) whom the Yiddish scholar Max Weinreich criticises in the second half of the century when he defends the concept of the *cultural uniqueness* of the Jews of the premodern era. *We must conclude*, says Weinreich (1973/1980), *that traditional Ashkenaz culture was not so much dominated by the negative approach of self-segregation as by the positive approach of Jewishness.*<sup>272</sup> Benjamin Harshav introduces the Frankfurt born Khatam Sofer (1762–1839), the nineteenth century’s most prominent representative of Hungarian Orthodoxy as a key figure in confirming the importance of Jewish particularity for inner-Jewish cohesion and identity. Moses Sofer, alias Khatam Sofer, was the founder of the Pressburg Yeshiva, which developed into one of the key institutions of Central European Orthodoxy in the nineteenth century. His descendants headed this institution until its forced closure in 1940. Although not a strict opponent of all secular education for Jews, the scholar nonetheless promoted the maintenance of the entire body of *holy traditions* and laws, which regulated the worship and the daily life of the Jew, and defended the Jew’s cultural distinction as necessary for the preservation of the tradition. A Jew, according to Khatam Sofer, differentiates himself from his environment through his language, clothing and beard (*bi-leshono, bi-levusho u-vi-zekano*). These differences are consciously created and should therefore be protected.<sup>273</sup> (It is almost possible to hear the words of David Friedlander from

---

<sup>272</sup> Max Weinreich, *History of the Yiddish Language* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980; 1st ed., Yiddish, 1973), 183.

<sup>273</sup> Benjamin Harshav, *Language in Time of Revolution* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1993), 24. Unfortunately, Harshav gives no clue to the source of his quote. Weinreich, *Yiddish language*, 283, refers to Khatam Sofer (1762-1839) and his student Hillel be Barukh Likhtenstein (1815–1819), who supported maintaining Yiddish as the inner-Jewish language. In the Yiddish version of his work (*Geshikhte fun der yidisher shprakh*, 1973), Vol. 3, 306–7, Weinreich refers in this context to Khatam Sofer’s work *Even ha`ezer* (reprinted Vienna, 1880, 2:11). The Jews, says Khatam Sofer, consciously changed their language to differentiate themselves from the non-Jews. Erika Timm also refers to the position of Khatam Sofer and his student Likhtenstein. With reference to W. C. J. Chrysander (W. C. J. Chrysander: *Jüdisch-Teutsche Grammatick*, Leipzig-Wolfenbüttel 1750) she wants to prove that this *language position* was valid for Germany as well, applying it as early as the first half of the eighteenth century. Erika Timm, *Graphische und phonische Struktur des Westjiddischen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Zeit um 1600* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer-Verlag, 1987), 422. I thank Rabbi Hermann Schmelzer for pointing out the evidence of this motif in the work of Khatam Sofer's student, rabbi and preacher Hillel Likhtenstein. In his work *Et la`azot*, Lemberg 1880, 113 b, he raised *speaking Jewish* to a religious duty. Yiddish should be a *cornerstone* to reinforce the *entire Jewishness*. For more on Khatam Sofer and his sons, see also Heinrich Flesch, ‘Das geistige Leben in Pressburg’, in ed. Hugo Gold, *Die Juden und die Judengemeinde Bratislava in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Brünn: Jüdischer Buchverlag, 1932), 23. Based on the many Haskamoth of Khatam Sofer, Flesch proves that these are not *anti-educational* (in the sense of rejecting a secular education) but certainly very *intransigent* when *enthusiastically*

1812 in the triad of *language, clothing and beard*. In his paper on the reforms which he deemed necessary as a result of the new organisation of the Jews in Prussia, the Berlin maskil, and therefore ideological opponent of Khatam Sofer, described the elimination of *all differences in outer appearance, language, dialect, clothing and so on* as the most urgent goal of Jewish instruction.)<sup>274</sup> Yiddish remained the classical language of instruction for Jewish learning and teaching at the Pressburg Yeshiva until the disbanding of the institution in 1940. This contributed greatly to the fact that this Jewish language remained vital for 100 years longer in western Hungary, western Slovakia and Burgenland (part of western Hungary until 1921; today an Austrian province) than in Bohemia or Moravia. In Germany, abandoning Yiddish as a language of instruction in the orthodox Yeshivas in Frankfurt, the centre of German style Orthodoxy, further contributed to the downfall of the old, inner-Jewish everyday language.<sup>275</sup> Yiddish disappeared from one social realm after another in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth centuries. Once a comprehensive linguistic means of communication, Yiddish became more and more an inwardly effective code primarily functioning to create a sense of inner belonging. Tänzer, born 1871 in Preßburg (Bratislava), received his first rabbinical education at the local, state-recognised Yeshiva, but later clearly distanced himself from the political-religious stance with which this learning institution was associated. Thus, his distanced position to Yiddish, which can be concluded from his remarks about “jargon” in his war diary from 1918, is not surprising. Nonetheless, he defended Yiddish against unqualified anti-Semitic attacks.<sup>276</sup>

### **The School Situation for the Jews in Hohenems**

---

*defending the most minor holy ritual*. He also approved of writing moral texts in German. For more on the language conflict within the Hungarian Jewry, in which Khatam Sofer’s son and successor as head of the Yeshiva, Abraham Samuel Benyamin (Wolf) Shreiber, was involved see Flesch, 32. In this conflict as well, the Pressburg Yeshiva seemed to have taken a less extreme position than the strict orthodoxy of the Nagy Mihályer resolutions.

<sup>274</sup> David Friedländer, quoted from Nils Römer, *Tradition und Akkulturation: Zum Sprachwandel der Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit der Haskalah* (Münster and New York: Waxmann, 1995), 122.

<sup>275</sup> Weinreich, *Yiddish language*, 283. Timm, *Westjiddisch*, 422.

<sup>276</sup> Karl Heinz Burmeister, ‘Jiddisch in Hohenems’, in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 20. On Tänzer’s education and biography, see: Kaufmann, ‘Die Hohenemser Rabbiner’, 50-3, and Karl Heinz Burmeister, ed., *Rabbiner Dr. Aron Tänzer: Gelehrter und Menschenfreund. 1871-1937*, Schriften des Vorarlberger Landesarchivs, no. 3 (Bregenz: fink’s Verlag, 1987).

Tänzer's statement that all Hohenems Jews had been capable of reading and writing German since the seventeenth century – 200 years before the state regulated the Jewish educational system, in an effort towards effectuating comprehensive literacy among Jewish children, also in non-Jewish languages – might be attributed to his scientific-political position, since he is in fact unable to support this statement with concrete sources. In addition, in the same chapter he describes the Jewish educational situation in Hohenems before Kaiser Josef II introduced the “Normalschule” as very traditional. The instruction before the emancipation had been limited mainly to *religious subjects* and the *Hebrew language*.<sup>277</sup> We now know that the educational framework, although not necessarily a decisive factor for oral language competence, is definitely crucial for the writing skills of a society. For historical statements about the writing skills that encompass not just individuals or individual families but also reflect the group as a whole, a deductive procedure is not merely legitimate; it is unavoidable and must consider first of all the educational framework of the society.<sup>278</sup> In the Kheder, the traditional Jewish educational system of the premodern era, the children were taught to become literate in Hebrew only (and were possibly also acquainted with fundamental arithmetic). Non-Jewish

---

<sup>277</sup> Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 505.

<sup>278</sup> Determining the “literacy”, or the linguistic capabilities of a community or society in a historical perspective is a complex undertaking. If you begin with the social conditions, the literacy of a society can be determined from the educational situation. Here, however, it is necessary to take into consideration that in the premodern era there was no mandatory state schooling; thus education was not available for everyone. In this way, several social criteria affected the literacy rates of a society or community: class, profession and confession. But even the definition of “writing ability” is no simple matter. Does the ability to place a signature at the bottom of a document constitute writing ability? Is mastering the technical skills enough or is text composition also included? The current research on literacy differentiates, for example, between active and passive literacy and has determined that for the German speaking area, the state's literacy efforts were more interested in the passive literacy of the subordinates (ability to read ordinances) than the active competence until well into the nineteenth century. See also Otto Ludwig, ‘Alphabetisierung und Volksschulunterricht im 19. Jahrhundert: Der Beitrag der Schreib- und Stilübungen’, in Cherubim, Grosse, and Mattheier, eds. (1998). *Literacy* - Andrew Sunshine differentiates – *is not a skill which one either has or doesn't. ... Capacities don't exist in the abstract. The same person who qualifies as literate in some situations may not in others.* Andrew Lloyd Sunshine, *Opening the Mail: Interpersonal Aspects of Discourse and Grammar in Middle Yiddish Letters*, Ph.D. diss., Columbia University New York, 1991, 35-6. For the Ashkenazi Jewish premodern era, he determines that “literacy” was not exclusively the affair of a religious or administrative elite, but rather, a general phenomenon that also differentiates the Ashkenazi situation from other cultures. Sunshine, *Opening the Mail*, 4. On the question of the literacy in the Jewish premodern era, see also note 24 in Chapter 5 of this work. The present chapter collects source evidence for an inductive analysis of the literacy in the Hohenems Jewish community. The concentration lies in the investigation of the written capabilities in non-Jewish languages and writing.

languages were not generally taught there. Tänzer's observations on the traditional school system in Hohenems confirm precisely this general situation. Therefore we can assume that although individual members of the Hohenems community may have had writing competence in the local non-Jewish languages, the great majority of the community did not.

Even sixteen years after a mandate required all Jewish children to attend German schools and receive an education according to the "Normallehrart" (normal teaching methods), it was not a given that all members of the Hohenems community were proficient in writing the local non-Jewish language, German. This is evidenced by a school inspection report from 1810. This report found fault with the persistent lack of skills in German writing among the children of the Jewish "Normalschule" in Hohenems. Only in reading, it was said, are some of the children *somewhat ready*. According to Lazar Levi, the teacher of the Jewish Normalschule in Hohenems, this was due mainly to the fact that the children were *in German lessons* for only two hours a day to avoid *cutting short their Hebrew lesson* as his report to the royal Bavarian district court in 1807 states. Lazar Levi also blamed these problems on the lack of support for the *public school* from the side of the well-off members of the community who had their children taught by private teachers and were therefore not really affected by the poor conditions at the public schools.<sup>279</sup> In the inspection report from 1810, the language proficiency of those Hohenems children taught by the six private instructors was described as excellent. They were reported to have been capable of reading *every German publication with great skill and clarity*, and to have known not just *every spelling rule but also German grammar*.<sup>280</sup> Here, structures of the pre-emancipation educational situation of the community are evident in two respects. For one, the teacher's remark that there were only two hours of German daily, in order to avoid *cutting short* the Hebrew instruction, shows the continued influence of the priorities of the old Jewish educational system that was preoccupied almost exclusively with traditional scriptures and Hebrew. For another, the practice of the Jewish upper class at the beginning of the nineteenth century, of hiring private instructors for the

---

<sup>279</sup> K. B. Landgericht Dornbirn to K. B. General-Kommissariat Kempten, 29 October 1810. Quoted from Thomas Albrich, 'Bildung zwischen Aufklärung und Tradition: Lazar Levi Wälsch und die Anfänge der deutschen Schule "bey der Judenschaft in Hohenems"', *Alemannia Studens* 3 (1993), 18.

<sup>280</sup> Same document as in note 17, this time quoted from Thomas Albrich, 'Zweierlei "Klassen"?: Öffentliche Schule und Privatunterricht in der jüdischen Gemeinde Hohenems während der bayerischen Herrschaft (1806-1814)', *Alemannia Studens* 4 (1994), 17. For an assessment of this information, it is important to know that the officials made an effort to promote the community teacher over the wealthy and their private teachers and that they also made a great effort to sponsor the public school.

children of several families is a continuation of the old organisational structure of the Kheder. In Hohenems, as in many other communities, the parents paid the Kheder-instructor relative to the number of children they had under his tutelage. Occasionally the community bore the costs for poor children – for example, in the form of grants from Jewish community organisations. The “Normalschule”, established by state mandate in 1784, was the first school to be financed by the community as required by the state. This also led to an increase in the “Erech”, the communal tax, in 1785.<sup>281</sup>

The state regulation of school affairs and the introduction of structures meant to assure all Jewish children instruction in the local language and in the "secular subjects", can be interpreted as elements of modernisation and a driving factor of acculturation. Nonetheless, the Jewish upper-classes in Hohenems – although supporters and advocates of such societal developments in many other respects - took a rather conservative stand on this particular point.<sup>282</sup> Until the 1830s, the Jewish community, whose responsibilities were mainly carried by the members of the wealthy families, quite obviously preferred the religious school, which was independent from the state-supervised “Normalschule”. This was shown, among other ways, through high expenditures for the religious teachers’ salaries. Foundations for the purpose of education set up by members of the Jewish upper class for poor children at the beginning of the nineteenth century still aimed at the religious and Hebrew instruction of these children.<sup>283</sup> The sponsorship of the religious education of the poor was traditionally considered a “mitzvah” and could therefore count on the support of the wealthy members of the community. Yet a community’s conscious sense of responsibility for a general (secular) education of all Jewish children in the sense of the enlightened state did not yet seem particularly well developed at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The “Normalschule” and its teachers, which the Jewish community was forced by the state to support as of the end of the eighteenth century, had to fight a difficult battle until they reached a status which granted them recognition as a regional model school in the middle of the nineteenth century;

---

<sup>281</sup> Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 507.

<sup>282</sup> Concerning the question of the Jewish upper-classes as promoters of modernity, see chapter 7.

<sup>283</sup> For the reorganisation of the religious schools in Hohenems, see Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 514-9. For more on the Judith Daniel foundation of 1810, set up to sponsor Hebrew instruction for her grandchildren and poor children, see Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 671. Copy of the testament, Karl Heinz Burmeister and Alois Niederstätter, eds., *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Juden in Vorarlberg vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Forschungen zur Geschichte Vorarlbergs, no. 9 (Dornbirn: Vorarlberger Verlagsanstalt, 1988), 178-9, 181-2. Zur Wolf Josef Levi’schen Stiftung, see Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 674, 520 -1.

As of this point, the teachers at these schools, still financially carried by the Jewish community, were paid well above the regional average.

To put matters into perspective, it is necessary to add that the Theresian school reform also met with strong criticism in non-Jewish communities. The state mandate to establish and maintain schools for all children brought with it high costs for the communities which were named the financial carriers.<sup>284</sup> It is also possible that the upper class of the Hohenems Jewish community opposed the anti-elitist trend behind the enlightened states' efforts towards education, which also placed education within the goal of making society more productive. The project of mass literacy, meant to create a nation through the integration of all inhabitants and classes in a communicational society and help the German state system integrate its multitude of small-sized states, also contained an anti-elitist element.<sup>285</sup> The Jewish upper classes understood the necessity and value of mastering non-Jewish languages and secular education and they made this available to their children in the form of private instruction. The sense of solidarity and responsibility for both the religious and general education of the entire community seemed to have spread only slowly.

That is the extent of our knowledge concerning school conditions in the Hohenems Jewish community and writing skills of members of this community in the non-Jewish local languages in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Whereas the traditional education system attended to making (at least) all male Jews literate in Hebrew, it is not possible to assume the Jews' general literacy in the local non-Jewish languages before the state measures for Jewish education at the close of the eighteenth century. This conclusion is also confirmed by the fact that the publication of the translation of the Pentateuch by Moses Mendelssohn into German (first edition, Berlin 1780 to 1783) had to be published in Hebrew characters to reach a Jewish audience. Nonetheless, oral and written competence in non-Jewish languages must have been represented in each Jewish community even before the emancipation. Since the beginnings of the Hohenems Jewish community, German is documented as a linguistic instrument. Without this knowledge, communication with the Christian authorities and representation of claims before Christian courts would be unimaginable. Concrete evidence shows that writing skills in non-Jewish languages was primarily a matter for "specialists".

---

<sup>284</sup> Harry Walser, "Erhebend für den Freund des Fortschritts", in *Landjudentum* (1992).

<sup>285</sup> Otto Ludwig introduces this reasoning to explain the state's forced mass literacy programme, in Ludwig, 'Alphabetisierung', 61.



This also corresponds with the general context of the premodern era. Especially for Christian society, reading and writing did not have the same social status as in the Modern Era.<sup>286</sup> It was first the transfer of premodern era educational ideals of the “Gebildeten” to the general society in the nineteenth century, which gave the technical skills of reading and writing a massive leap in status. Merchants and more prosperous tradesmen had always been able to hire someone who had these skills. This did not constitute a break with their social status. For the others, there was the copyist or scribe who was paid by contract. In the premodern era, writing was considered much more of a craft, more related to painting and drawing than speaking. It was first in the nineteenth century that it became mainly a communicative act and a primary linguistic tool.<sup>287</sup> This structure cannot simply be transferred to premodern Jewish society whose educational system, in keeping with the egalitarian religious educational ideal, aimed at the literacy of all male Jews (at least). But also here, reading ability was attributed a higher value than writing skills. Other than those who were considered scholars, everyone should at least be capable of reading a prayer book, studying biblical scripture and other traditional texts and reciting from the Torah. The ability to write Holy Scripture is also anchored in the religious ideal, but ritual forms for it were never established to the same extent as the required reading competence. An especially succinct example of a ritual based on reading competence is the Bar Mitzvah celebration. At the centre of this “rite de passage” is the young male Jew who becomes an adult through the act of reciting from the Torah.<sup>288</sup> In contrast, I am not aware of any relevant ritual for all (male) members of the community that requires writing competence. Competence in non-Jewish languages was not even included among the goals of the traditional Jewish educational system.

---

<sup>286</sup> Ulrich Knoop, ‘Zum Verhältnis von geschriebener und gesprochener Sprache: Anmerkungen aus historischer Sicht’, in Baurmann, Günther, and Knoop, eds. (1993), 219.

<sup>287</sup> Ludwig, ‘Alphabetisierung’, 152-3. Ludwig mainly investigates the implications of the changed position on the cultural techniques of writing and their effects on writing instruction in the elementary schools in the nineteenth century.

<sup>288</sup> Investigations on the role and function of the Sofer emphasise the ideal religious text writing Jewish man. *It was the obligation of each Jew in his life to copy one of the scrolls of the Torah, or the Pentateuch.* Colette Sirat, ‘Hebraic Signs. Calligraphies and typographies’, ed. Jacques Damase, *Hebraic Signs - Signes Hébraïques. Calligraphies & Typographies* (Paris, 1990), 6. *It is also the duty of every Jewish person to write for himself a Sefer-Torah.* Izzy Pludwinski, ‘The Experience of the Hebrew scribe’, *The Scribe. Journal of the Society of Scribes and Illuminators*, 46 (Summer 1989), 8. Neither author offers a source reference.

## Literacy and Language Skills of the Hohenems Jews

In June of 1999, in the mailing-list *History and Culture of the Jews*, a discussion, unfortunately a brief one, brought up the issue of the German-Jews' writing competence in the non-Jewish languages. The tone was clear. Non-Jews, like Jews, needed "mediators" for their communication with officials. The issue of whether or not a broad portion of the population had the ability to communicate through writing encompasses more than just the technical skills of this ability. To be able to write, in the sense of a skill, did (and does) not necessarily mean having textual competence, or knowing the appropriate addresses and formulas.<sup>289</sup> Both the craft of writing, and more importantly, composing texts pertinent to a certain situation were the tasks of specialists. This conclusion is supported over and over by evidence from the history of the Hohenems Jews. When the wealthy merchant and later Hoffaktor Jonathan Uffenheimer moved from Innsbruck to Hohenems in 1725, he had his scribe with him. This is clear as he obtained an exemption from the royal administration for having to pay protection money for him.<sup>290</sup> In the early nineteenth century the registration of servants of the Hohenems Jewish community still records the presence of numerous scribes and trade assistants for the upper class families.<sup>291</sup> Rabbis and teachers appear in the sources for the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as translators of inner-Jewish contracts (testaments, marriage contracts, sales contracts), if these were relevant for the non-Jewish authorities.<sup>292</sup> Text writing that arose for the Jewish community belonged to community teacher Lazar Levi's (1761-1836) regular work field.<sup>293</sup> He was only able to hold his family above water through additional work, *nebenschreibereyen* and attending to *legal concerns* for other community members. He performed these services for common community members as well as for the wealthy whom he accompanied on their business trips. Lazar Levi must have also carried out legal tasks for

---

<sup>289</sup> Mailing list *geschichte-juden: Subject: Deutsche Sprache*, Carl-Josef Virnich (Sat, 5 Jun 1999), Walter Roell (Mon, 7 Jun 1999), Birgit Klein (Tue, 8 Jun 1999).

<sup>290</sup> Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 60.

<sup>291</sup> *Verzeichnis bey den Hebräern in Hohenems dato am 15. März 1814 sich befindlichen Dienstboten*, printed in Burmeister, *Dokumente*, 203-6.

<sup>292</sup> Examples of this are a sales contract from 5 December 1712, which was translated on the 6 November 1724, and the testament of Judith Daniel, widow of the Hoffaktor Lazarus Joseph Levi, from 3 Juni 1810, reproduced in Burmeister, *Dokumente*, 93-4, 181-2.

<sup>293</sup> The Kahal-Buch from Heidingsfeld near Würzburg (preserved is a manuscript with entries from 1653 to 1774) contains detailed information on the tasks of the community officials. Dayyan and Khazzan, among others, worked as community scribes. Alfred Wolf, 'The first Pinkes of Heidingsfeld', in *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Vol. 18 (1943/44), 256, 258.

non-Jewish citizens of Hohenems.<sup>294</sup> There is also evidence that Christian lawyers were employed for Jewish affairs in the early eighteenth century in Sulz, a community founded by Hohenems Jews on Austrian territory, which only existed for a few years.<sup>295</sup>

In terms of oral communication, we can assume that quite a large portion of the community had comprehensive language competence in the non-Jewish languages in the Early Modern Era. The majority had constant contact with non-Jews through their business activities. They had to understand the local German language and actively master it to a certain degree. Without at least rudimentary language competence in the non-Jewish local languages, Jews would not have been able to carry out their diverse economic functions for the Christian society. There is a great deal of evidence of the language competence of the Hohenems Jews in non-Jewish languages. Particularly interesting evidence attests to the ability to switch from one language to another according to the conversational partner. In a witness interrogation from the year 1660, Abraham Isaak was asked what he had said to Abraham Haimb in "*hebreischer sprach*" (the Hebrew language), when Haimb encountered Isaak in conversation with the Christian, Michael Fussenegger.<sup>296</sup> Abraham Isaak is capable of adjusting to the language of his conversation partner, which requires competence in both. It is almost certain that *die hebreische sprach* refers to Yiddish, as it was the language used in daily life. Yiddish could contain a significant *loshn koydesh* component which, together with its adaptation of elements from German, gave it a certain strangeness, mutating it for the non-Jewish population into the *Hebrew language*. The switch to the Jewish language, which Christians experienced as an exclusion from communication and which they interpreted as an intended deceptive manoeuvre, is a constantly recurring motif in the sources.<sup>297</sup> It can also be found in many of the numerous language guides for Judeo-German languages of the eighteenth and

---

<sup>294</sup> Albrich, 'Bildung zwischen Aufklärung und Tradition', 7. Albrich, 'Zweierlei "Klassen"', passim. Birgit Klein in her contribution to the discussion in the mailing list *geschichte-juden* on the theme of *Deutsche Sprache* (note 27) refers to the example of the academically trained Jewish physician, Wolf (deceased 1610 in Koblenz), who composed petitions to the authorities for Christians and Jews.

<sup>295</sup> Bernhard Purin, *Die Juden von Sulz: Eine jüdische Landgemeinde in Vorarlberg 1676-1744*, Studien zur Geschichte und Gesellschaft Vorarlbergs, no. 9 (Bregenz: Vorarlberger Autoren Gesellschaft, 1991), 68.

<sup>296</sup> Burmeister, *Dokumente*, 66.

<sup>297</sup> Another example of the language competence of Jews in the German and "Judeo-German" colloquial languages is the announcement from a Hohenems landlord from 1727. He overheard a conversation between a Hohenems Jew and a baptised Jew from Vaduz, which was about an agreement between the two in which *Hebrew (was) spoken*. Quoted from Burmeister, *Dokumente*, 106.

nineteenth centuries compiled by (often converted) Christians for a Christian audience. Many of these texts were tendentious and indicate that they were published as a language aid for dealing with Jewish traders at the markets and to protect the Christians from deception.<sup>298</sup> An example of the Christian competence in the language of the Jews are the farmers whom the Laupheimer cattle dealer Jakob and Isaak Weyl 1764 took along on the way to the market in Oberstaufen *als Dollmetschen* (as interpreters). The permeability of the two language systems can also be seen through the complaint in a 1685 document, that the Christian children in Sulz learned *Jüdisch reddem* (Jewish talk) from the Jews resident there for several decades after being expelled from Hohenems in the seventeenth century.<sup>299</sup>

In a rural Jewish community such as Hohenems, Jews had to master the German language for their relations with the authorities and their non-Jewish neighbours. This is generally true of the situation of the Jews in the German speaking areas, although the situation could become

---

<sup>298</sup> See also Israëla Klayman-Cohen, *Die hebräische Komponente im Westjiddischen am Beispiel der Memoiren der Glückel von Hameln*, *Jidische Studies*, no. 4 (Hamburg: Buske-Verlag, 1994), 18-30. She categorises the instructional texts to learn “Judeo- German” for a Christian audience, which appeared in ever-greater numbers at the beginning of the eighteenth century, into three groups according to motifs from the time they appeared. Practical dictionaries for Christian traders (among them many strongly tendentious, written to *protect* Christians from Jewish merchants), text books for missionary use and *neutral text books*. Werner Weinberg, for the time between 1730 and 1830 alone, presents seventeen different learning books: ‘A Plagiarism of an Eighteenth-Century Judeo-German Dictionary’, *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 6 (1962/64), 109. Also the bibliography of the Jewish literature by Helmut Dinse in the appendix of his work confirms this tendency. Helmut Dinse, *Die Entwicklung des jiddischen Schrifttums im deutschen Sprachgebiet* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1974). The folklorist Daxelmüller emphasises the existence of this type of literature until the early twentieth century. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries they appeared as inexpensive editions with large circulations. He sees the reasons for the persistent interest in this literature in their anti-Jewish tendencies and the entertainment value based on that. However, he also considered them an expression of the Christian-Jewish cultural exchange, mainly in the economic realm. Christoph Daxelmüller, ‘Kulturvermittlung und Gütermobilität. Anmerkungen zur Bedeutung des jüdischen Handels für die ländliche und kleinstädtische Kultur’, in Nils-Avrid Bringéus et al, ed., *Wandel der Volkskultur in Europa. Festschrift für Günter Wiegelmann zum 60. Geburtstag*, *Beiträge zur Volkskultur in Nordwestdeutschland*, no. 60, (Münster, 1988), 243. Unfortunately in the literature presented there is no thorough analysis of the interesting phenomenon of Christian-Jewish language encounters. Possibly of interest: Stephen G. Burnett, *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies: Johannes Buxtorf (1564-1629) and Hebrew Learning in the Seventeenth Century*, *Studies in the History of Christian Thought*, no. 68 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996). Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, ‘Christian ethnographies of Jews in early modern Germany’, in *The Expulsion of the Jews*, ed. Raymond B. Waddington and Arthur H. Williamson ( New York: Garland, 1994).

<sup>299</sup> Both examples are given by Burmeister, ‘Jiddisch’, 34.

more complex. In Poland and the Ukraine, for example, many Jews had command of not only Yiddish (and Hebrew), but also Polish and Ukrainian. They needed competence in these languages in order to fulfil economic functions in these areas. Until the middle of the seventeenth century, the Polish aristocrats leased their Ukrainian properties to mainly Jewish tenants. These tenants must have been capable of communicating with both the Polish aristocrats and the Ukrainian farmers.<sup>300</sup>

The research considers the multilingual language structure a decisive characteristic of the Jewish language situation of the premodern era. It speaks of an internal bilingualism, in which Hebrew and Yiddish (or another internal communal Jewish language) structured the inner-Jewish linguistic space and an external bi- or multilingualism, which refers to that competence in the respective local languages which was necessary for Jewish existence. Yiddish, in its structure and historical development since its emergence in the Middle Ages, was a visible and audible expression of this multilingual Jewish language situation. In the body of the language, taken to a considerable extent from the German speaking environment, Romance and Slavic elements of earlier Jewish languages remained active; Hebrew and Aramaic elements were integrated from the religious-cultural high-language used daily (for example in individual and collective prayer language). Also the local Slavic languages, which the Yiddish speaking Jews encountered through their emigration to Eastern Europe as of the late Middle Ages, left behind traces. The Yiddish that arose from this is therefore described as a fusion and component language. Through integration, elements of diverse languages important for the Jews over the course of their history became components of a new language system of an independent Jewish language.<sup>301</sup>

---

<sup>300</sup> Eckhard Eggers, *Sprachwandel und Sprachmischung im Jiddischen* (Frankfurt/Main, et al: Peter Lang, 1998), 212-3. An extremely negative comment on this work from Marion Aptroot appeared in *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 8, No. 2 (1998): 553-4. She refused to review it as the author did not work based on original language texts.

<sup>301</sup> For more on the internal and external polylingualism of the Jewish language situation, see Harshav, *The Meaning of Yiddish*, 8-26. Weinreich speaks of Yiddish as a “fusion language”, made up of determinants from four stock-languages: Hebrew-Aramaic, Loetz, German and Slavic. Through the entry into a new system, the determinants thus become components of a new independent language. Weinreich, *Yiddish language*, 28. One notices the order in which Weinreich lists the stock-languages. He brings them in according to their age as Jewish languages. Thus German, although quantitatively by far the most important component, is listed in the third place. This relativising of the Germanic components in Yiddish and the relevance which Weinreich attributes the Loetz-components was also criticised by (among others) Josef Weissberg, ‘Sprachentfaltung: Zu M. Weinreichs “Geschichte der jiddischen Sprache”’, *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 99 (1980). Paul Wexler

Available sources on the history of the Hohenems Jews offer clear evidence of the multilingual language situation of these rural Jewish communities in the premodern era. Yiddish, Hebrew-Aramaic and German documents have all been handed down. The distribution of the individual languages among the social and cultural areas of activity corresponds to the general language situation of the Jews in the German speaking areas. Beginning with Hebrew and Aramaic, the elements of the *loshn koydesh*: as in the entire Diaspora, the *loshn koydesh* fulfilled in Hohenems the function of a cultural high-language and was used in the religious-cultural, scientific-theological and administrative-jurisdictional areas. Common in the premodern Jewish communities, and therefore also in Hohenems, it was also the language of the communal prayer and religious service, religious instruction, and scholarly discourse. Rabbis' letters from the early nineteenth century, for example, provide evidence of the latter. These letters were preserved as originals and there are also printed examples of such letters in Tänzer.<sup>302</sup> In the official archives of Hohenems Jewish history, there are testaments, marriage contracts, and also inner-Jewish signed sales contracts translated from Hebrew or Aramaic which provide concrete evidence of the use of these

---

criticised Weinreich's under-valuation of the Slavic components in Yiddish. The value of the quantitatively less substantial component *Loez* (elements of Jewish romance languages) and Slavic, are, however, given an important role in the theory of the origins of Yiddish. Weinreich is a proponent of the "Rhine-Valley" Theory. He sees the origins of Yiddish in the Jewish communities of the medieval cities on the Rhine founded by immigrants from the romance language area. Yiddish scholars such as Dovid Katz, Hugh Denman and Paul Wexler see the origins of the language further eastward in the Donau area near Regensburg. Katz in particular supports the theory of the "two Yiddish languages", the version that arose in the Donau area having become established. Hugh Denman argues the Donau area theory based on the romance components in Yiddish, whereas Paul Wexler argues for the genesis of this language in the German-Slavic border areas based primarily on the old Slavic components in Yiddish. Weinreich, *Yiddish language*. Dovid Katz, 'East and West: Khes and Shin and the Origin of Yiddish', in *Keminchag Ashkenas u-Polin: Sefer Jovel le Chone Shmeruk*, ed. Israel Bartal, Ezra Mendelsohn, and Chava Turniansky (Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 1993). Hugh Denman, 'Die Bedeutung des Rätaromanischen für die Entstehung der jiddischen Sprache', in *Akten des VIII. Kongresses der Internationalen Vereinigung für Germanistik (Tokyo 1990)*, Vol. 11, *Begegnung mit dem "Fremden": Grenzen - Traditionen - Vergleiche*, ed. Eijiro Iwasaki and Yoshinori Shichiji (Munich: iudicum, 1991). Paul Wexler, 'Reconceptualizing the Genesis of Yiddish in the Light of its Non-native Components', in *Origins of the Yiddish Language*, ed. Dovid Katz, Winterstudies in Yiddish, no. 1 (Oxford et al: Pergamon Press, 1987), 135-42.

<sup>302</sup> Documents 71 and 145 of the Löwenberg Collection are Hebrew letters from a Sofer from Ansbach to the Hohenems Rabbi Samuel Löb from the year 1805. Further letters from rabbis can be found in the Tänzer collection and the Hutterer collection in the archive JMH.

languages in the legal realm.<sup>303</sup> Unfortunately there is not much concrete knowledge about the reading material and book collections of the Hohenems Jews in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It can be assumed, however, that the results of the Genizah-research on southern German rural Jewish communities can also be applied to Hohenems. Roughly one-third of the printed material, which emerged in the Genizah from Veitshöchheim (Franconia/Bavaria), was in Hebrew and was made up of prayer books, and editions of the bible and Talmud.<sup>304</sup> From the Hohenems community, prayer books (bilingual: Hebrew – “lashon-ashkenaz”), a Rödelheimer printing of the Talmudic work “Pirkey Avot” and Hebrew bible editions (property of the Jewish school) have been preserved.<sup>305</sup>

In terms of Jewish printed works, we have no available material (with the exception of the previously mentioned bilingual prayerbooks) from Hohenems and can only make conclusions about the local situations of other sites with comparable historical conditions. One-third of the material found at the Genizah in Veitshöchheim, which came mainly from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was bilingual (Loshn Koydesh and Yiddish/late German written in Hebrew characters); the remaining third was made up of works in Yiddish. Both the bilingual and the Yiddish works encompass all types of religious literature. Diverse textbooks (i.e. letter writing guides) can also be found among the bilingual works. In the group of Yiddish

---

<sup>303</sup> Evaluation of the sources on the history of the Jews in Hohenems from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries published in Burmeister, *Dokumente*, and samples from the collections of the JMH.

<sup>304</sup> Erika Timm and Hermann Süß (Cooperation), *Yiddish Literature in a Franconian Genizah: A Contribution to the Printing and Social History of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Jerusalem: Akademon Press, 1988), 18.

<sup>305</sup> *Sefati rananit hi tefila miqol hashanah ashkenazim*. (Prayerbook for the whole year according to German tradition with a German translation in Hebrew letters), Fürth (Josef Petschau) (5)529 (= 1768/69). With approval of the Fürth rabbi and Talmud scholar Josef Steinhardt, by Juda Emmerich-Schnaittach from Fürth and David ben Löb from Berlin. A series of ownership certificates in Latin and Hebrew characters, among them, several from the Hohenems Hoffaktor Lazarus Joseph Levi (1743-1806).

*Makhsor khelek rishon keminhag q`q`ashkenazim*. (Holiday prayerbook according to German tradition for the new year and day of atonement with German translation in Hebrew letters), Pseudo-Sulzbach, Fürth (Itzig ben Löb Buchbinder) (5)528 (= 1767/68). With approval of the Talmud scholar, Rabbi Josef Steinhardt from Fürth and Rabbi Nethanel Weil from Karlsruhe. On the title page: hand-written mark of ownership *Schwarz*. (I thank Bernhard Purin, Jewish Museum Franken, for the description of the title). *The last prophets with the book of psalms and Daniel*, London 1829. The book contains a hand-written list of students, written in Hebrew. An inventory of damages on the expulsion of the Jews from Sulz in 1744 lists a great number of “prayer books” owned by the Jews from Sulz. Whether these lists included Hebrew prayer books, cannot be determined based on this source but from knowledge of the general situation it can be assumed. Purin, *Die Juden von Sulz*, 62.

literature, narrative works for educating and entertaining occupy an important position.<sup>306</sup> In light of the use of Hebrew and Yiddish in the religious-cultural realm, the question arises of what it is that differentiates the fields of activity of these two languages. In the premodern period, Yiddish was primarily the internal everyday language of the Jews. In this cultural system, Hebrew took on the role of the cultural high-language, ideally assigned to the religious-cultural realm. In practice, however, Yiddish penetrated this area of language activity early on, although this did not lead to an actual improvement in the status of the language. Within the hierarchical value-scale of Jewish languages, it was consistently ranked lower than Hebrew. Its use in the areas where Hebrew was employed can be attributed to pragmatic reasons. There were always people who did not fulfil the egalitarian but nonetheless very demanding Jewish educational and religious ideals: women, for example, for whom the religious educational ideal was not prescribed as mandatory, or “men, who were like women” – educated in only rudimentary Hebrew and therefore reliant on translations of prayers and biblical literature.

To return to the micro-historical level: Yiddish is well documented as an inner-Jewish everyday and business language in the sources recovered in Hohenems. Both private and business correspondence are preserved, adding to older documents from the Hohenems royal archive, especially the inner-Jewish business letters in the Löwenberg collection from the eighteenth century, including account books, business notices, invoices, receipts, payment slips, requests for purchase or credit letters, court decisions and the like.<sup>307</sup> The preserved parts of the Kahal-books of the Hohenems community from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries provide evidence of Yiddish as the language of the Jewish communal-administration. At the same time, these documents also provide evidence of the change from Yiddish to German as the daily language of the Jews in the German speaking areas during these decades. The entries from 1792 to 1825 are written in Western Yiddish with strong influences of *loshn koydesh*-components. The entries from 1825 to 1845 are missing; after that point, the community book is written in German in Latin writing.<sup>308</sup>

---

<sup>306</sup> Timm, *Yiddish Literature*, chapters 3-7.

<sup>307</sup> For more evidence of the Yiddish language in Hohenems, see Burmeister, ‘Jiddisch’.

<sup>308</sup> The original preserved part of the Kahal books of the Jewish community in Hohenems can be found in the Central Archives of the History of the Jewish People (Jerusalem). A copy can be found in the archive of the JM Hohenems. Also the “Pinkes” from Heidingsfeld proves that Western Yiddish was the dominant language of communal administration. Only one fourth of this Kahal book was written in Hebrew; three quarters was written



There is evidence of German as an active and passive language of the Hohenems Jews since the beginning of their history in the early seventeenth century. The source material in the official archives shows that they used this linguistic instrument for communication with rulers as well as Christian neighbours and business partners. Inner-Jewish sources from the early nineteenth century provide evidence of the advance of German into the inner-Jewish area as well. Joseph II's Tolerance Patent legislation forbade the use of the "Jewish national language" for all legally binding negotiations. With an increasing dissolution of the Jewish community's autonomy in internal affairs, this applied to more and more negotiations. The Hohenems kahal-book was carried out – as previously mentioned – in German, as is documented from 1845 onward. The Löwenberg collection (representative for the Jewish upper class) provides evidence of inner-Jewish private correspondence in German with Latin writing as of 1819 and an inventory of a library containing mainly German literature.<sup>309</sup>

A micro-historical investigation based on the historical records of the rural Jewish community of Hohenems shows the general structures of the Jewish language situation in the premodern era and the period of transition to the Modern Era. It shows the inner as well as outer multilingual language structure of the Ashkenazi Jews in the premodern era, explains the organisation of writing competence within such a community and offers evidence of the language and writing transition carried out in the framework of the general acculturation process of the decades of emancipation. Based on the documents of the Löwenberg-collection, the next chapter will describe and micro-historically analyse this comprehensive language and writing transformation in the Jewish communities of Western and Central Europe as well as the cultural and social dynamics inherent in this process. Here I will once again summarise, as briefly as possible, a picture of the Jewish linguistic situation of the premodern era, keeping in mind the general social and political contexts of Jewish existence in these centuries.

---

in Western Yiddish. Several official German documents were copied into the communal book in Hebrew characters. Only one side is in German written in Latin letters. Wolf, 'The first Pinkes of Heidingsfeld', 248.

<sup>309</sup> JMH LB B 84 (Wilhelmine Löwenberg, Munich, to her parents Moritz and Klara Löwenberg, Hohenems, 1819). Business correspondence with non-Jewish partners in German and Latin cursive is evident in the Löwenberg collection as of the 1760s. For the inventory of the library, see chapter ?.

## **The Language Situation in Ashkenaz**

The Jewish language situation before the onset of the Modern Era showed very specific characteristics resulting from inner-Jewish factors and the underlying outer-Jewish political, social and cultural basic conditions. Clear parallels to the linguistic situation of the non-Jewish society are also evident, as shown by the bilingual structure of the inner-Jewish language realm and the coexistence of *loshn koydesh* and Yiddish. *Loshn koydesh* functioned as a religious-cultural high language for culture, jurisdiction and erudition. It linked the Jewish present with the source of its origins, was an important common point of reference for the diverse forms of life of Jewish existence and an important instrument of communication for the scattered communities (especially for the contacts between Sephardic and Ashkenazi communities which had different standard languages). Yiddish, on the contrary, functioned as an everyday language, and served as a language of religious instruction, a language of religious literature for the less educated and a literary language for entertainment and general instruction. The non-Jewish language situation was structured quite similarly. Latin was the cultural high language and assigned to the spheres of religion, law and science. In the cultural areas influenced by Latin, it functioned as the universal language of the European “*Res publica literaria*”. Through its use, it also provided permanent contemporary reference to the origins of a Latin Europe; Rome, as the former political and spiritual centre of the Roman empire, which would see European successor empires for a long time thereafter, and the Roman-Catholic Church as a current capitol of the central spiritual power of Western Europe. In the non-Jewish society, religious instruction of laypersons was also carried out in the “colloquial languages” and literature had also been written in these languages since the Middle Ages. An important difference between Jewish and non-Jewish society, however, lies in the religious educational ideal of the two cultural systems and the resulting consequences for the education system. The religious ideal of Judaism is egalitarian and knows no division between laypersons and priests like the elitist organised Roman-Catholic church. Every male member must therefore be equipped to carry out his religious duties, which required at least a rudimentary competence in Hebrew. In contrast, the Roman-Catholic church separated their community into priests and laypersons. No religious ideal of the community called for an educational system that should offer all members at least rudimentary competence in the high language. As a cultural high language for the areas of religion and scholarly reflection, Latin had such an eminent status-forming function that it divided the social space and resulted in the exclusion of the “common man” from the knowledge and discourse of the scholarly world.

Not until Luther and the ecclesiastical tradition he founded did a viable opposition develop, which led to the elimination of the division between laypersons and priests and the propagation of the colloquial language for the religious realm. Although Luther and his successor churches were ambivalent on the issue of language, the strong layperson orientation of the Lutheran successor churches and the resulting educational measures nonetheless supported the penetration of German into those areas previously reserved for Latin, and an increase in the population's literacy rate.<sup>310</sup>

This penetration of German into the areas formerly reserved for Latin in the Early Modern Era also had parallels in Jewish society. In the eighteenth century, as a colloquial language, Yiddish not only continually penetrated into the realm of the *loshn koydesh* and took over certain types of texts such as the Musar-Literature (in the Middle Ages still strictly written in Hebrew), but in the eighteenth century it was also explicitly and offensively propagated as the language to be used in the religious realm.<sup>311</sup> It could, however, never really compete solidly with Hebrew, which remained at the top of the inner-Jewish language hierarchy.

An investigation of the literacy of both societies in the premodern era leads to a determination of the various structures. As previously mentioned, at least a rudimentary literacy in Hebrew can be expected of the male members in the Jewish society. The large amount of Yiddish prayer literature that was produced especially for women and well-documented evidence of

---

<sup>310</sup> On Luther's ambivalence on the question of the colloquial language, see Konrad Ehlich, 'Rom - Reformation - Restauration: Transformationen von Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit', in Baurmann, Günther, and Knoop, eds. (1993), 198-200. In the important role that the evangelical reformers reserve for the bible lecture, Paul Münch sees a significant factor in the unfolding of educational activities, especially in rural areas. In contrast, the high regard for the Latin education which was offered at high schools and Jesuit colleges, hindered the thorough education in the use of the German language in some Catholic states up to the eighteenth century: *Lebensformen der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt/Main and Berlin: Propyläen, 1992), 507. For more on the issue of the laypersons in the Lutheran Church, see also the Austrian daily newspaper DER STANDARD (8 November 1999), 2: According to Paul Weiland, Superintendent from Lower Austria, major differences between the Protestant and Catholic Churches still exist today. *The Roman-Catholic priest, due to his ordination has a special mediating position between the believers and God. For Protestants on the other hand, every person has equal rights and is equally qualified in his or her relationship to Jesus and God. Therefore, more responsibility is given to the individual believers. This results in greater value being placed in education.*

<sup>311</sup> Isaac Wetzlar makes a plea for Yiddish as a language for religious and moral literature and even calls for women to convince their husbands and sons of this. Faierstein, *The 'Libes Briv'*, Chapter 2b. For more on the advance of "Judeo-German" into the religious realm, see also Römer: *Akkulturation*, 31-3, 34-40.

the professional activities of Jewish women in trade and money lending allows researchers to assume a very high literacy rate among the female members. Also the professional structure of Jewish society in the German speaking areas shows the necessity of at least a rudimentary knowledge of writing. There were, for example, no farmers and only very few craftsmen, but many merchants and moneylenders. It is not possible to assume such comprehensive literacy for the Christian society until the nineteenth century. For one, the professional structure was much more diverse and writing and reading ability was not as necessary in other areas of the economy as in trade and money lending. For another, the various confessional orientations of the regions affected the literacy rates.

Therefore, for the eighteenth century there were such varied results as an almost 100 percent literacy rate in the Protestant Oldenburg Küstenmarsch (including the rural population); however, of the farmers in the west Hungarian area of Komitat Vas only 2 percent had writing skills. Among the petty nobility of the same Komitat, the literacy rate grew in the same century from 13.8 to 45.9 percent.<sup>312</sup> One should bear in mind, however, that for the literacy programs of the Jewish society, the generally widespread writing knowledge was limited to the Hebrew alphabet and the Jewish languages and knowledge of the non-Jewish languages was reserved for better-educated individuals and specialists. In the premodern era, Jewish as well as Christian societies relied heavily on professional scribes, as writing skills in the sense of penmanship, by no means indicated an ability to compose texts. It was first the “mass literacy programme”, brought in with the general mandatory schooling of the nineteenth century that led to a writing and composition ability encompassing all social classes; a literacy program in the non-Jewish languages which also increasingly included the Jewish subjects.

The creation of mass literacy and more comprehensive communication areas corresponding with the borders of their dominions were the goals of absolutist state policies concerned with the productive power of their subjects, a power to which they wanted central access. As a

---

<sup>312</sup> Jörg Requate, ‘Kommunikation: Neuzeit’, in *Europäische Mentalitätsgeschichte: Hauptthemen in Einzeldarstellungen*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher, Stuttgart: Kröner, 1993. Details on the literacy rates of the Oldenburg Küstenmarsch in the eighteenth century and on further examples of higher literacy rates in rural areas can be found in Münch, *Lebensformen der Frühen Neuzeit*, 508-10. István György Tóth, ‘Literate Obrigkeit und illiterates Volk: Beobachtungen zum Leben der Bauern und Adligen in Westungarn im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert’, in *Symbolische Formen, Medien, Identität. Jahrbuch 1989/90 des Sonderforschungsbereichs “Übergänge und Spannungsfelder zwischen Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit”*, ed. Wolfgang Raible, Script Oralia, no. 37 (Tübingen: Gunter Narr-Verlag).

prerequisite for the creation of large-scale economic and administrative areas, absolutist politics supported the elimination of intermediary powers, which included the corporate and small-territory structure of society. These policies formed the background for comprehensive social and cultural transformation processes, which also permanently changed communication conditions and structures. An increasing uniformity of national languages and the creation of a homogeneous communication area also affected the language situation. Barriers of language and dialect, for example, gradually eroded from within; but arising nation-state and language borders separating nations were reinforced. Languages such as Latin (the scholarly language), which functioned across national borders as a sociolect, and French (the language of the court) were increasingly suppressed. A written language that crossed dialect borders was established and from this basis, a standard spoken language was able to develop.<sup>313</sup>

The particularity of Jewish society in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era, also in terms of language, was consistent with the generally small and corporate composition of horizontally subordinate groups which had very few alliances among themselves. Christians not only had difficulty understanding the inner colloquial language of their Jewish neighbours, but also those who spoke high German dialects had corresponding communication problems with speakers of low German dialects. The linguistic integration of the Jews into the existing national German language community can therefore not be understood as a one-sided assimilation process of the one group into the culture and way of living of the other. These processes were part of a comprehensive social transformation process, from which something essentially new was to arise: From the viewpoint of absolutist principality, this constituted a homogeneous body of subjects. From the viewpoint of proponents of the Enlightenment and political emancipation it constituted a society in which religious differences would be confined to the private sphere – a bourgeois society based on the freedom and equality of individuals.

The linguistic integration of the Jews into the national language communities taking shape also had far-reaching inner-Jewish consequences. The greater Jewish cultural realm encompassing the Ashkenaz I, including the German speaking areas of Western, Central, and Eastern Europe and Ashkenaz II, from the Slavic speaking cultural areas, was decisively

---

<sup>313</sup> Jörg Requate, 'Kommunikation. Neuzeit', 391. Münch, *Lebensformen der Frühen Neuzeit*, 488. For more on the formation of the standard spoken form of German based on the standard written language, see: Ludwig, 'Alphabetisierung', 162.

based on the common linguistic instrument of Yiddish (based on Western Yiddish in publications until the nineteenth century). The disappearance of this common instrument led to the disintegration of a common communication space that had overcome the authoritarian control. It increased the distance between the Jewry of the East and West, a distance already prevalent in the eighteenth century, which found its expression particularly in the writings of the maskilim. It was a new – this time inner-Jewish – division of space, which had its effects well into the twentieth century, permanently marking Jewish culture and politics.

## 7) *vos vir fir bikher hoben vi folgt!* On a Bourgeois Library and the Question of the Actors in Jewish Modernism

Among the documents found in the attic of the former Löwenberg house in Hohenems was also the inventory list for a library: a “bourgeois library” with mainly German works, not a “Jewish library” in a pre-modern sense. Before the transformations which emancipation and acculturation brought for the Jewish community, “Jewish” libraries did not generally contain any works from non-Jewish authors. At least within the Ashkenaz community, the reading of works from non-Jews was controversial during the entire eighteenth century, not to mention the limited number of Jews who were able to understand texts written in German before the educational reforms of emancipation.<sup>314</sup> Even in 1810, the maskil, Peter Beer, described *the Orthodox* (Peter Beer), the ideological opponent of the Jews’ entry into modernity, as “book vultures” (Eva Grabherr): as people, who *upon sighting a German book or one written in a language other than a Jewish language (sensed) nothing other than heterodoxy and temptation to sway from the paternal teachings.*<sup>315</sup> Peter Beer was probably exaggerating. As a member of the maskilim, in the end he is actually also a party in the central inner-Jewish debate of these decades about the extent to which Jews should give up their particularities (language, hairstyle, clothing, etc.) and integrate into the existing bourgeois society. The fact is, however, that language and reading habits did count among the ideologically occupied fields of activity (Handlungsfelder) during these years. Behaviour in these fields was likened to professing a belief. To support German as the language of the Jews and to support their entry into bourgeois culture, e.g., through propagating the reading of literature useful for general education and the reading of belletristic literature (regardless of the religious background of the author), was equal to taking sides in this debate. In 1993, Shulamith Volkov, speaking about the cultural transformation of the Jewish community in the German

---

<sup>314</sup> On the critical remarks made by rabbis in the eighteenth century about the Jewish upper class’ preference for literature from non-Jewish sources and in non-Jewish languages, see Asriel Schochat, *Der Ursprung der jüdischen Aufklärung in Deutschland*, Campus Judaica, no. 14 (Frankfurt/Main and New York: Campus Verlag, 2000; 1st edit., Hebrew, Jerusalem 1960), 104-13. On the Jewish educational reform in the Emancipation, see chapter 5+6 in this work.

<sup>315</sup> Quote from Peter Beer, ‘Über die Notwendigkeit einer Sammlung von Lebensbeschreibungen gelehrter und sonst rühmlich sich auszeichnender Männer in Israel: Nebst biographischer Skizzen einiger gelehrter Israeliten in den österreichischen Staaten’, *Sulamith: Eine Zeitschrift zur Beförderung der Kultur und Humanität unter den Israeliten* 1, no. 4 (1810).

speaking areas in the decades of emancipation, explains: *Using Hochdeutsch in writing and speech was first of all a statement about membership in a social stratum, the "Bildungsbürgertum", and then about belonging to a nation, the emerging German Kulturnation. ... participation in the discourse about science, art and public affairs, all carried on in a common language was at that time made the highest expression of belonging.*<sup>316</sup>

This inner-Jewish debate about the question of if and how to integrate touched upon a prominent border shift of the transition period to the Modern Era: the separation of culture and religion. The central paradigm of pre-modernism was religion. Whether a matter of ruling power, knowledge or culture, legitimacy in all areas was based on religion. The decisive political, social and cultural borders of the pre-modern era ran between religions. During the nineteenth century, the leading concepts of modernism, universalism and secularism, pushed through into ever more areas. The nation became the dominant paradigm of modernism and from this time onward social inclusion and exclusion was determined by the demarcation of national borders. The central issue of Jewish life in Germany in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the community's national affiliation. The language issue was thus endowed with great significance, and religiously based anti-Judaism correspondingly yielded to those forms of anti-Semitism arguing on a nationalist, and increasingly on a racist base.

*This general development did not mean that religion no longer received any social or political significance in the nineteenth century's enlightened states of Western and Central Europe. The social basis of the bourgeois societies of these countries had been and remained, Christian. There was, however, a radical change in the position of religion in the "superstructure" of these societies. In the nineteenth century, this "superstructure" defined itself as universal, secular and even national. Religion lost the hegemonic position that it had held here for centuries. The critique of modernism, mainly that of post-modernism, points out the repressed, never admitted basis of the Modern Era that preaches universalism yet nonetheless puts forth a particularistic position in its ideology and behaviour; based on and to the advantage of "western (Christian-occidental) white men". I agree with this critique in principle, however I do not want to lose sight of the potential for a society founded on equal*

---

<sup>316</sup> Shulamith Volkov, 'The "Verbürgerlichung" of the Jews as a Paradigm', in Kocka and Mitchell, eds (1993), 374.



*opportunity which is contained in the Enlightenment and bourgeois design of an individual who is not entirely determined by religion and social origins.*

## **A Library as Evidence of Acculturation**

For Michael Meyer, Moses Mendelssohn was a prominent representative of this disintegration of the former border between culture and religion. Mendelssohn was highly respected by the non-Jewish society for his contribution to German literature and philosophy, yet nonetheless remained an active member of the Jewish community who openly defended his Judaism. For non-Jews he was a living example of a no longer religiously determined world of science, erudition and culture. For the Jews he was a model case, able to show that acculturation was possible without having to relinquish the Jewish religion.<sup>317</sup> Moses Mendelssohn's works are therefore a must in a bourgeois, yet nonetheless Jewish, library. Thus, it is no surprise that his works can be found listed in the inventory found among the Löwenberg documents. The *Ritualgesetze der Juden ...* which Mendelssohn wrote together with Hirschel Lewin and a *taytsh-yitish gebetbuckh* which is not given any further description, are, however, the only works which show an explicitly Jewish reference.<sup>318</sup> Whereas the prayer book refers to the (pre-modern) era of the Jewish particular language, Yiddish, Moses Mendelssohn's comprehensive translation of the legal regulations in matters of inheritance, guardianship, testaments and marital affairs was already a project of Jewish modernism. It was an undertaking in direct collaboration with the Prussian authorities, who - corresponding to emancipation policies of the enlightened monarchies of these decades - worked towards the state judicial system's take over of the former agenda of the inner-Jewish rabbinical court. The title therefore represents both an Emancipation project and Moses Mendelssohn as a Jewish Enlightenment philosopher in a function typical of the maskilim: mediator and translator between Jewish and non-Jewish worlds and thus an actor in the new definition of the borders between these worlds. The "maskilic" element represented in Mendelssohn/Lewin's *Ritualgesetze ...* sharpens the profile of this library as a specifically Jewish collection of its

---

<sup>317</sup> Michael A. Meyer, 'The Problematic Acquisition of German Culture', in Meyer, ed. (1997), 199.

<sup>318</sup> In the attic of the Elkan house in the Jewish quarter of Hohenems, which was probably built at the end of the eighteenth century by Josef Wolf Löwengard, a nephew of Lazarus Josef Levi, emerged a Hebrew prayer book with Jewish-German translation with several stamps of ownership from Lazarus Josef Levi: *Sefati rananit hi tefila mikol haschanah aschkenasim*. Gebetbuch für das ganze Jahr nach deutschem Ritus mit deutscher Übersetzung, Fürth (Josef Petschau) (5)529 (= 1768/69). (I thank Bernhard Purin for the bibliographical description of this title.)

time in which the central issue was whether or not it was possible to be a Jew and simultaneously a member of the bourgeois society.

In addition to these two works, the inventory list records primarily German literature, among which are classical Enlightenment authors such as Immanuel Kant, Joachim Heinrich Campe and Adolf Freiherr von Knigge. It comprises forty-six titles with identified first publication dates from 1762 to 1820. A large portion of the recorded titles refer to belletristic works; mainly entertaining and frequently published plays from well-known playwrights of these decades (Christian Felix Weisse, Johann Heinrich Zschokke, Johann Friedrich Jünger, but also *Wilhelm Tell* by Friedrich Schiller), as well as travel descriptions, narratives, collections of anecdotes and novels. Also a must in this type of collection, corresponding with the bourgeois and enlightened atmosphere of these decades, is the practical literature: reference books in education and health matters (Joachim Heinrich Campe, Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland), a geographical work and a travel guide, the classic book of manners (Adolf Freiherr von Knigge), a cookbook and French textbooks. Important contemporary philosophical works are also represented: two books from Immanuel Kant and a text from Wilhelm Jerusalem, published by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. Also present is a *book for the young reader*, a text sort typical for the epoch.<sup>319</sup>

The context of the finding and the analysis of the publication dates of the listed works point to the Hoffaktor Lazarus Josef Levi as the first owner of this library,<sup>320</sup> which is supported by Aron Tänzer. Tänzer describes Lazarus Levi as a Talmud expert as well as the owner of an eminent library, in which *no great minds of his era are missing*. Tänzer, scholarly Doctor-

---

<sup>319</sup> JMH LB So 99; a transcription of the list can be found in the appendix.

<sup>320</sup> Thirty-four of the 46 titles on the list could be identified based on the *Gesamtverzeichnis deutschsprachiger Schriften 1700-1900* (Munich et al.: K. G. Saur, 1982) and the collection catalogue of the Austrian National Library (ÖNB). The first publication dates contain the years from 1762 to 1820, but nonetheless show an especially high concentration for the 1780s and 1790s. If all of the editions recorded in the *Gesamtverzeichnis* and ÖNB for these titles are listed, there is still a high concentration in these two decades. That points to Lazarus Levi (1743-1806) or another family member of his generation as the founder of the library, which was then expanded by his descendents. Providing evidence for Lazarus Josef Levi and against all other family members of his generation is the context of the finding, letters from the Löwenberg family, and the remarks made by Aron Tänzer about his library. The first forty titles on the list are written in Hebrew letters, the last twelve titles are in Latin cursive or Gothic writing. The leads us to conclude that these were recorded later or by a different hand. The works recorded in gothic writing, however, are not necessarily later publications than those recorded in Hebrew.

Rabbi of a liberal persuasion and historian of the Hohenems community, inspected this library around 1900 when it was still in the house of Lazarus Levi's grandson. There is no definitive proof that identifies this collection in the Löwenberg house in 1900 as the library whose inventory list emerged in the Löwenberg collection. A connection, however, seems reasonable and the authors and works which this list records are certainly the sort which Tänzer would have classified as the works *of all great minds* of Lazarus Levi's era; the late eighteenth century.<sup>321</sup>

The reconstruction of the library based on the found inventory underlines findings yielded by the documents of the Löwenberg collection up to this point. It is likewise proof of the high level of embourgeoisement, which characterises the daily life and practices of these upper-class Jewish families from Augsburg and Hohenems as early as the first decades of the nineteenth century. "Bildung" (literally "formation") was a central value of bourgeois culture. It stood for the belief in the possibility of individual self-formation, which was no longer necessarily designed with social and religious origins as the determining factor. The central demand placed on the bourgeois person was the development of an individual character, which included the cultivation of taste, e.g., through the consumption of literature and music, and the formation of moral sensibility. Whereas in the late eighteenth century the Enlightenment attracted Moses Mendelssohn and his followers to philosophy, in the early nineteenth century the bourgeois ideal of "Bildung" led the Jews to become enthusiastic consumers of German literature and performing arts. During these decades the urban Jews in particular became passionate theatre-goers and readers of German literature. The fields of literature and the arts, primarily the performing arts, were crucial for the formation of the bourgeois public realm beyond their symbolic character pertaining to the individual's degree of and desire for "Bildung". This specific public realm, especially in its early phase, was created through literary and art criticism and less so through debates on political themes in a narrower sense.<sup>322</sup> And similar to the non-Jewish society, inspired by the spirit of assembling "voluntary associations", the Jews also formed those social structures which corresponded with a passion for reading; reading societies. With the increase in Jewish readership of

---

<sup>321</sup> Aron Tänzer, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems* (Meran, 1905; repr., Bregenz: Verlagsbuchhandlung H. Lingenhölle & Co., 1982).

326.

<sup>322</sup> Wolfgang Kaschuba, 'German "Bürgerlichkeit" after 1800: Culture as a Symbolic Practice', in Kocka and Mitchell, eds (1993), 399.

German literature, came also the increase in the number of Jews as producers (publishers and authors) in this realm.<sup>323</sup>

The findings yielded from the analysis of the documents of the Löwenberg collection are not representative for the majority of the Jewish community in Germany and the German speaking areas of the Habsburg Monarchy. As a source collection it represents upper-class Jewish families of the late eighteenth and first decades of the nineteenth centuries. Indeed, in the correspondence within this collection, there are statements about well-known and related Jewish families, but as far as can be reconstructed, these families also numbered among the upper-class. That appears consistent for the Ullman's situation in Augsburg as in the first decades of this community only wealthy families were granted admission. In Hohenems, on the contrary, a community that grew over the period of two centuries, the social structure was more differentiated. But this social differentiation is not really visible in the correspondence. Although Shulamit Volkov determines that the majority of the Jews in Germany in 1871 number among the bourgeoisie in legal, social and cultural terms, this does not at all apply for the decades covered by this collection. Not even for the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the years that this library represents. Families such as the Ullmanns and the Löwenbergs, Court Jew families of the eighteenth century and their predecessors in the early nineteenth century, can be seen as forerunners of an embourgeoisement process whose social basis spread with every decade – among Jews as well as non-Jews. For the little market town of Hohenems, which neither at the beginning of the nineteenth century nor today displays a pulsating urban life, this early Jewish bourgeoisie also formed an exception within the society as a whole. There was no non-Jewish bourgeoisie on which they could have oriented themselves. Although the Jewish reading society arose in Hohenems in 1813, nearly the same time as the founding of the non-Jewish reading societies in the most important towns in the region, when the correspondence mentions theatre visits of the Hohenems Löwenbergs, then these took place in Augsburg, Munich and Vienna. The Löwenbergs from Hohenems lived in the countryside but their “minds” were nonetheless in the city. They oriented themselves on the bourgeois life in Augsburg and Munich, where their families lived, and Vienna where they often resided for business purposes; not on the way of life of the local elite.

The clear evidence for the greatly advanced embourgeoisement of these upper-class Jewish families in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries leads us to almost ignore the fact

---

<sup>323</sup> Meyer, 'Problematic Acquisition', 201.

that in the nineteenth century, although they may have written in a language which was very similar to high German, they continued to write it in Hebrew characters. In addition, nearly three-quarters of the inventory of this “bourgeois” library of works of mainly German literature was recorded in Hebrew characters. The maskilim supported the Jew's adoption of the German language and alphabet, and even Schalom haKohen, who was considered a moderate on the language issue, made no secret of the fact that the German language should be written in the German alphabet. He made clear that he was only conceding to the desires of the readers when he wrote German texts in Hebrew characters.<sup>324</sup> Neither the Ullmans, nor the Löwenbergs (nor the Rothschilds in Frankfurt, Paris or London) conformed to the demands of the maskilim on this point. I will evaluate this cultural phenomena in the next chapter. However, how well suited is this collection to take up the issue of these families as actors in this transformation process which grasped the entire Jewish community? Are they an avant-garde in the sense of actively and publicly engaged champions, as the maskilim were? Or did they carry out this digression from “Jewish” (in a pre-modern sense) ways of life self-confidently, based on their extraordinary social position within the community and without any great pressure of having to argue this in a public Jewish realm?

### **The Jewish Elite as Actors in the Modern Era**

For the discussion of this issue, it seems to make sense to include the succession of generations as a criterion in the analysis. With respect to the Hohenems Court Jews, a micro-historical investigation of Jewish upper-class families' positions on the developments of modernism reveal a trend, which, however, must be confirmed with a broader empirical base, in order to arrive at a stronger general statement. We will begin with Lazarus Josef Levi, Hoffaktor of the Austrian Emperor and from 1785 to 1806 Parnass of the Hohenems Jewish community, as a representative of the first generation found in the sources of the Löwenberg finding. We assume, with some justification, that he was the first owner of the previously described bourgeois, spirit of the Enlightenment library, which provides clear proof of his progressive nineteenth century modern attitude. In addition, a portrait has been preserved which shows him cleanly shaven and in the bourgeois clothing of his time. On the other hand,

---

<sup>324</sup> For the assessment of Schalom haKohen as a conservative maskil, see Nils Römer, *Tradition und Akkulturation: Zum Sprachwandel der Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit der Haskalah* (Münster and New York: Waxmann, 1995), 107. For more on his unwilling use of the German in Hebrew letters variant, see chapter 5 in this text, note 34.

the fact that we also encounter him as a donator to the synagogue and the traditional associations (Chewra Kaddischa and other charitable organisations) shows a way of life in unison with the “old handed-down” Jewish tradition. This is further strengthened through a piece of evidence that allows us to make conclusions about the attitude of his wife, Judith, (maiden name, Daniel) to modern developments. A testament from her from the year 1809 has been preserved in which she not only sponsors the Hebrew and Talmud instruction for her grandchildren, and thus for their education in a classical Jewish sense, but also urges her children to be as upright as their recently deceased father and *not to become new-fangled*.<sup>325</sup>

If one draws a strict dividing line, for example between Jewish pre-modernism and modernism, and arranges elements of cultural practice neatly on the one or the other side of this line, then the behaviour of the Levis appears contradictory. Owning a bourgeois library primarily containing works of non-Jewish origin and existing as a cleanly shaven Jew, thus relinquishing the outer signs of Jewish particularity, are elements of a cultural practice which established itself in the Modern Era. These elements, however, did not correspond with the general form of Jewish life in the pre-modern era. Conversely, Judith Levi-Daniel's trepidation that her children might become *new-fangled* shows a clear positioning in favour of traditional Jewish life. We often encounter this picture of Court Jews, which from a current perspective seems contradictory. For the entire eighteenth century there is evidence of members of the Jewish upper class' adoption of cultural practices (such as clothing, hairstyle, and language and reading habits) of the non-Jewish world. A relatively large number of preserved portraits provide evidence of this, as do many – usually critical – remarks in the rabbinical literature.<sup>326</sup> In the current academic debates about the Court Jews in Germany, this

---

<sup>325</sup> Reproductions of the portraits in Eva Grabherr, ed., “... eine ganz kleine jüdische Gemeinde, die nur von den Erinnerungen lebt!": Juden in Hohenems (Hohenems: Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 1996), cat. no. 2/45 and 2/46. The will of Judith Levi-Daniel, in Karl Heinz Burmeister and Alois Niederstätter, eds, *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Juden in Vorarlberg vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Forschungen zur Geschichte Vorarlbergs, no. 9 (Dornbirn: Vorarlberger Verlagsanstalt, 1988), 178. “New-fangled” as a contemporary pejorative description of the representatives of the maskilic position, can be found, e.g., in the satire “Leichtsinn und Frömmelei” by the maskil Aaron Halle-Wolfssohn (1796). For another testament of “old Jewish-conservative” content of a southern German Court Jew, who on the other hand has a portrait made of himself in the manner of a high-ranking courtier of the late Absolutist era, see the contribution of Arkadij Resnik in the list “Geschichte und Kultur der Juden” from 27 September 1998, saved under <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/geschichte-juden/messages/31>.

<sup>326</sup> Numerous micro-historical descriptions of Court Jews of the eighteenth century can soon be found in Friedrich Battenberg and Rotraud Ries, ed., *Ökonomische Potenz und Interkulturalität. Bedeutungen und*

has brought in the issue of if these Court Jew families of the eighteenth century should be considered as active champions of modernism and its transformations for the Jewish community, and if this role could even be described as part of Court Jew mentality.<sup>327</sup> I feel that it would be too hasty to answer this question positively based merely on our knowledge of those cultural practices of the eighteenth century that then became general phenomena in the Modern Era. The meaning of cultural behaviour can only be reconstructed when the respective general context in which the behaviour occurred is taken into consideration.

If we view the previously described cultural practices of the pre-modern era Jewish upper class in the context of the paradigm of the societies of these centuries as a whole, then they must be evaluated with greater differentiation. The legal and cultural paradigm of the pre-modern era was the segregation of the communities that found themselves under the blanket control of a common political ruling authority. The externally imposed borders also led to internal stability of the communities. The readiness of members to accept the hegemonic culture's cultural practices was clearly restricted by externally set borders, which alleviated the work of setting borders from within. Steven Lowenstein also confirms this context referring to the example of the Parnassim in the Jewish pre-modern era who were allowed, even by the Rabbis, to remain without a beard. The relationship of these functionaries to the non-Jewish surroundings had such great significance for their communities, that an instrumentally founded deviation from the Halacha, the religious-law regulations, could be justified. As long as the paradigm of segregation was intact, the proximity of individual members of the Jewish community to the world of the non-Jewish surroundings did not damage the inner cohesion of the community. The fact that Chattam Sofer, the leading personality of Central European Orthodoxy of the first decades of the nineteenth century, and his student Hillel ben Baruch Lichtenstein, found it necessary to stand up explicitly for the maintenance of Jewish particularities in appearance (clothing and beard) and language, and that the issue of language played such a significant role in the controversy between the Orthodox and their religion-political opponents, had to do with changes in the social realm in general.<sup>328</sup> The paradigm of modernism was the integration of the communities and the

---

*Wandlungen der mitteleuropäischen Hofjudenschaft auf dem Weg in die Moderne* (Vienna, Weimar and Cologne: Böhlau-Verlag, 2001), (in press).

<sup>327</sup> See the issues which were at the base of the project on Court Jews in the acculturation process carried out by the German research society (DFG), *ibid.*

<sup>328</sup> For more on Chattam Sofer and Hillel ben Baruch Lichtenstein, see chapter 6 in this text.

relinquishment of particularity. That also massively touched upon the cohesion, the inner coherence, of these communities and awakened the inner border guards.

In considering how Lazarus Josef Levi might have felt towards Jewish modernism, in my opinion, his behaviour in “public” affairs of the community appears relevant. And there he showed that his involvement ran clearly along traditional lines. He donated to the classical institutions and organisations of the traditional community such as the synagogue and the Chewra Kaddischa. And also his wife left money in her will for the “Jewish” education of her grandchildren, for their Talmud and Hebrew instruction and not for their education in the sense of the maskilim and modernism. In precisely those matters that apply to education and “public” involvement within the community, the difference between the generation of Lazarus Josef and Judith and the generation of their sons and grandchildren is obvious. The latter were already involved in founding a reading society, one of the most typical institutions of the early bourgeois society and a clear expression of the educational ideals that they represented. The founding of a voluntary association, a reading society, was not only an expression of agreement with the values and practices of bourgeois culture, but also an active and public involvement in the re-designing of the traditional Jewish public realm.<sup>329</sup>

### **The Jewish Reading Society in Hohenems in 1813**

The reading society of the Hohenems Jewish community was founded in 1813. The first reading society in Vorarlberg had been established in Feldkirch in 1812. The proximity of the dates and a comparison of the statutes of the two associations show that the Hohenems Jews established their reading society as a reaction to the institution in Feldkirch. That alone makes clear that the founding of this Jewish organisation resulted from attentive observation of the non-Jewish surroundings.<sup>330</sup> When the Jewish reading society, established in 1813, made reference in the preamble to its statutes to the *brotherly harmony, the love of truth and the sciences*, and also the *goodwill to all men* as the *main characteristics* of this establishment, they clearly show from whence they were born. Egalitarianism (keyword “brotherly harmony”), universalism (keyword “goodwill to all men”) and scientism were leitmotifs of the new cultural (and later political) bourgeois movement. Likewise, the formation of Jewish

---

<sup>329</sup> A controversial picture is also drawn for the second generation, with respect to their activities promoting ideas of the “new” social order: see e.g. their reservations against the “German Normalsschule” in Hohenems in the early phases, an important institution for the emancipating and integrating policy of the enlightened states.



reading societies parallel to the non-Jewish ones is also an expression that egalitarianism and universalism were indeed often implored ideals of the bourgeois movement, but in no way were they always translated into reality. Prosperity and gender remained decisive distinguishing criteria; and also the example of Ludwig Börne illustrates that Jews still had a lengthy struggle before being accepted as “equals” in many enlightened societies. Börne was denied admission to a reading society in Frankfurt in 1818 due to his Jewish background.<sup>331</sup>

The founding of reading societies at the close of the eighteenth century – either in the form of reading circles or even cabinets with their own rooms for assembly – was a reaction to the unfolding bourgeois society's growing need for information. Along with the multitude of other societies sprawled in a thick net over Europe in the eighteenth century, they counted among the important social transporters of Enlightenment ideas. These societies and organisations broke through the traditional social borders of a society organised along corporatist ideals in that they aimed to bring together into one organisation people of different classes and social groups. A great amount of tribute was paid to this political and social ideal, however its implementation was often quite a different story. The Jewish reading societies for one, tell us of this. In Frankfurt, four associations of this type formed between 1801 and 1804. The oldest known Jewish reading society in a rural context arose ca. 1805 in the Franconian Altenkunststadt.<sup>332</sup>

---

<sup>330</sup> Karl Heinz Burmeister, ‘Die Hohenemser Lesegesellschaft von 1813’, *Alemannia Studens* 4 (1994), 48.

<sup>331</sup> Gunnar Och, ‘Jüdische Leser und jüdisches Leseublikum im 18. Jahrhundert: Ein Beitrag zur Akkulturationsgeschichte des deutschen Judentums’, in *Menora* 2 (1991), 323.

<sup>332</sup> For more on Altenkunststadt, see *Sulamith*, III. ed., I. Vol., 1. H. (1810), 31-7. The Jewish reading societies can also be interpreted as paradigmatic institutions of the German-Jewish subculture, which David Sorkin discusses. David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry. 1780-1840* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 7-8. According to Sorkin, the Jews reacted to the Emancipation and the challenges made of them for integration in the national bourgeois society in terms of legal equality with the formation of this subculture. This subculture was created from elements from the majority culture, but nonetheless is different and worked as a closed system of ideas and symbols and formed parallel institutions. Although the border between Jews and non-Jews became more permeable and shifted, it still existed. The German Jews maintained multiple connections to the majority society, the primary community, however, remained Jewish. The foundation of Jewish reading societies parallel to the founding of non-Jewish ones has its base in the rejection of Jewish members by the non-Jews (see the case of Börne), but it may have also corresponded with the Jewish need to maintain its community as the primary social realm for its members: whose preservation seemed to be ensured only through the transformation of this social realm and the integration of elements from the majority culture.

Also relevant for the issue of the upper class Jewish families as actors in Jewish modernism, is the social milieu in which the Hohenems reading society was founded. The origins of its members in the founding year, 1813, places it clearly in the Court Jew milieu for two reasons: not only were the majority among the self employed (Selbständige) members – the landlords and merchants – sons and grandchildren of Court Jew families (among others, the sons of Lazarus Josef and his brother, the Hoffaktor Wolf Levi), but also among the employed (Unselbständige) – cantors, teachers, private tutors, commis, and scribes – involved were mainly employees of the wealthy Hohenems families (the majority of whom were of Court Jewish background); a. o. Leopold Weil, scribe in the house of Moritz Löwenberg and brother of Zirle Weil from the Ullmann-household in Augsburg, from whom numerous letters to Klara Löwenberg have been preserved in the Löwenberg finding. Worthy of note is the young age of the members (45 percent of the founding members were under the age of thirty), and also the dominance of those who were not self-employed. That also corresponds with the high “share of foreigners” among the members, as the servants of the elite families (private tutors, commis, scribes) in these years seldom came from the same community.<sup>333</sup>

Traditional Jewish organisations such as the Chewra Kaddischa, in which Lazarus Josef was involved, display a completely different sociogram. In these, the old elite dominated; the long established wealthy Jewish merchants and the rabbi.<sup>334</sup> It fits into the picture that the teachers (the communal and also the private tutor) and the cantor but not the rabbi were members of this new type of voluntary association, the Hohenems reading society. With the dissolution of the autonomous Jewish community, in which the rabbi played a central role as legal scholar and judge, also the rabbinical dominance of the Jewish scholarly class dissolved. For Judaism, the nineteenth century – corresponding with the great importance attributed to ‘Bildung’ in general – was also the century of the teacher, as well as the singers and cantors who had taken a position on the social periphery in the traditional Jewish community of the pre-modern era. The activities in the areas of culture and instruction also increasingly dominated the rabbi’s occupational profile in the nineteenth century. The sociogram of the Hohenems reading society clearly reflected these general transformations. Although it only existed for a few years, it nonetheless embodied developments that would later be established in a more general sense.

---

<sup>333</sup> The membership list from 1813, see Burmeister, *Lesegesellschaft*, 50-1.

<sup>334</sup> Tänzer, *Juden in Hohenems*, 650.

The high presence of those who were not self-employed and not heads of households and the active role which they were nonetheless able to play in the founding of these organisations, also reflected general social changes. Employed as scribes, commis, clerks, private tutors, etc., in the households of wealthy families, they owed their occupational function to their education; not necessarily their Jewish education, but, rather, their general education, useful knowledge and the command of non-Jewish languages and writing. They can be seen as the Jewish counterpart to the “Gebildeten” of the non-Jewish world, one of the most dynamic social groups of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, decisively brought forth by the growing significance of the mercantilist public administration and the decades of the formation of the modern central states. These ‘Gebildeten’ owed their social position not only to birth, but also to ‘Bildung’ and individual achievement. They were ideologists and important carriers of bourgeois society, to which they in turn owed their legal-political emancipation and increasing social significance.

I thank David Sorkin for his attentiveness to this social segment of the non self-employed involved in the educational professions in the Jewish communities of these central decades of acculturation.<sup>335</sup> In my opinion, those who were not self-employed and their relation to the Jewish upper class, offers an important clue to evaluating the function of the wealthy Jewish families in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as actors in modernism.

Although these families were open to bringing their way of life more in line with the non-Jewish world at a relatively early stage, the explicit propagandists of the movement, the maskilim, were rarely recruited from their group. These wealthy families nonetheless formed the social and economic “biotope” of the maskilim, and not only in the centres of Jewish Enlightenment such as Berlin and other northern cities, but also in the rural areas as the example of Hohenems will show.

An outstanding example of the “typical” socialisation of a maskil is “the” Jewish Enlightenment philosopher par excellence: Moses Mendelssohn. Born into a poor Jewish family in Dessau, he moved to Berlin where he was first a private tutor and later a clerk for the wealthy silk producer, Bernhard. His biographer, Isaak Abraham Euchel was a private tutor in the wealthy Friedländer family in Königsberg. David Friedländer, as a member of this family, is an exception among the maskilim. Halle-Wolfssohn, author of the maskilic journal “Ha-Meassef” and co-worker on Mendelssohn's bible translation, came to Berlin in 1785,

---

<sup>335</sup> Sorkin, *Transformation*, 59.

because the large Jewish families offered good employment opportunities there. Peter Beer, a Bohemian spokesman for the Haskala employed in the Habsburg monarchy, was a private tutor in Prague and Vienna. Herz Homberg became a private tutor at Moses Mendelssohn's house in Berlin: a position which he held for six years before he became Joseph II's expert for the reform of the Jewish educational system in the eastern parts of the monarchy.<sup>336</sup>

In Hohenems there is hardly any evidence of explicit maskilic activity for this early period. The little available, however, refers to those employed in the houses of the wealthy families and confirms the picture sketched above. In this context, it is possible to mention, i.e., Mayer Bretzfeld from Bayreuth, private tutor at the house of Joseph Wolf Levi (1773-1840), son of the Hoffaktor Wolf Josef Levi (as of 1813, Benjamin Löwengard) and founding member of the reading society. In 1813, the text written by Bretzfeld together with Joseph von Obernberg, entitled *Der Kultus der Juden*, was published. The text reveals an Enlightenment claim, although there are not many traces of “reform” in the sense of the progressing nineteenth century. In Hohenems, Bretzfeld was perceived as intellectually positioned, although not always with positive connotations. Thus on the one hand the yearly report of the educational authorities from 1810, in which also the private tutors were judged, remarks that Bretzfeld distinguishes himself from all other teachers, yet on the other hand, the teacher from the communal school, who had massive confrontations with the wealthy community members and their private tutors during these years, complains in detail about the *great poet, riddle writer and philosopher Bretzfeld*, who will not let himself descend to the level of *common school service* and beyond that thinks himself *to know more than the titl. Herr Landrichter himself*.<sup>337</sup>

In Hohenems, the scant evidence of maskilic activity and an explicit reception of Enlightenment ideas at the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries clearly reflect the Court Jew milieu of wealthy families of this community. For one, it is possible to see their function as an economic base for the Jewish “Gebildeten”, the maskilim. The situation in other cities and communities confirms the Hohenems evidence on this point. A library of

---

<sup>336</sup> I do not know of any comprehensive socio-historical collective biography of the maskilim in Germany, but I use numerous individual pieces of evidence I found in various sources and the general remarks made by David Sorkin to support my thesis.

<sup>337</sup> Thomas Albrich, ‘Zweierlei "Klassen"?: Öffentliche Schule und Privatunterricht in der jüdischen Gemeinde Hohenems während der bayerischen Herrschaft (1806-1814)’, *Alemannia Studens* 4 (1994), 21.

German literature of *all great minds* of this era, as set up by Lazarus Josef, and the founding of a reading society, co-founded by his sons and grandsons, are also representative of the program carried out in these years by the powers which supported the emancipation and integration of the Jews in the bourgeois society. The difference between the generations with respect to their explicit positioning on content and ideas of the Modern Era, however, must be drawn clearly. Lazarus Josef Levi, whom we have looked at here, as a representative of the first generation, was still thoroughly traditional in his public communal activity. His sons and grandsons, however, were already publicly involved in models and ideas of the “new” bourgeois era. This line can be followed even further: in 1839, as *progressive powers* (in the words of Aron Tänzer) stood up for a liturgical reform against *some influential conservatives*, the former community leader, Josef Löwenberg, the oldest son of Lazarus Josef Levi, and the Dienstherr of Rafael Josef Lemberger, one of the founding members of the reading society of 1813, went forth with a *good example* and made provisions in his will for the donation of 100 Gulden for the *construction and establishment of a decent pulpit in the local synagogue*.

The comparison “Court Jew family/Jewish upper class” = “maskilic and reform oriented”, however, does not account for the complexity of the situation and the social dynamics of this acculturation process, as shown in the Hohenems situation by one of the few confrontations between “traditionalists” and “progressive powers” which Tänzer describes concretely, in this case in the early decades of Emancipation. This situation is also played out in the Court Jew milieu. Josef Levi-Hirschfeld (1779-1851) from the Court Jew family Levi and the same generation as the pulpit supporter, Josef Levi-Löwenberg, is described by Tänzer as *still thoroughly saturated with the Orthodox spirit of the old times*. He not only fell out with the liberal oriented Rabbi Abraham Kohn (Rabbi in Hohenems from 1833 to 1844) for religion-political reasons, but also with his sons. A detailed explanation of the fascinating question of the correlation between the religion-political orientation of a Jewish community in the nineteenth century and the positioning towards the issues of Jewish modernism of its social and cultural elite in the early stages of emancipation, must, however, be reserved for a detailed investigation.

## 8) The Letters of the Löwenberg Collection

### Jewish Writing and Language Transformation “en détail”

In the Löwenberg collection, the oldest and youngest dated letters are business letters written in Gothic cursive script from the years 1760 and 1865. The greatest concentration of documents is recorded for the years 1760 to 1785 and 1800 to 1833. Roughly 60 percent of the documents are written in Latin letters, the rest in the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The business correspondence with non-Jewish partners is consistently written in German with German writing, (something that is not surprising in light of German’s status as the language of the social majority). More than thirty inner-family business letters in Hebrew writing from the eighteenth century also contain distinctive *loshn koydesh* components<sup>338</sup> and are very similar to Western Yiddish. The nineteenth century letters written in Hebrew, including those with more or less distinctive *loshn koydesh* components, are linguistically very similar to German. Hebrew, the cultural high-language of Judaism, and French, a high social language of the non-Jewish society of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are also documented as active languages of the Jewish families which the collection represents.<sup>339</sup> The approximately 230 letters and documents of the collection provide a kaleidoscopic view of Jewish language praxis and its transformations in the decades of emancipation. They provide evidence of the multilingual situation of the Jews in the German speaking areas, the slow disappearance of Yiddish as an everyday and colloquial language, and the increasing usage of German for this function.<sup>340</sup>

---

<sup>338</sup> For stylistic reasons I use the term “*loshn koydesh* component” in this text synonymously with the terms “Hebraism” or “Hebraisms”. These terms describe those linguistic elements of the Jewish languages, in our case, Yiddish, which stem from Hebrew and Aramaic. I follow with this terminology the concept from Israella Klayman-Cohen, *Die hebräische Komponente im Westjiddischen am Beispiel der Memoiren der Glückel von Hameln*, *Jidische Studies*, no. 4 (Hamburg: Buske-Verlag, 1994), 1, note 2. The transliteration of the *loshn koydesh* words and phrases follows the system as laid out in *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1972).

<sup>339</sup> The Hebrew letters are JMH LB B 71/1805 and B 145/1805 (Rav ? Sofer stam/Ansbach to Obberrabbiner Samuel Löb/Hohenems). The letters are dated according to Parashot. In French (JMH A 7: 1 hand-written exercise book; JMH Löwenberg-Vitrine: *Cacographie Methodique*, par F. Munier, Instituteur, Metz 1820; *Faculté de Droit de Paris, Thèse pour La Licence L’acte public, sur les matières ci-après, sera seutenu*, par Joseph-Eugene Catabelle né à Badouville (Mourthe), Paris 1830).

<sup>340</sup> On internal and external Jewish multilingualism, see chapter 6.

## **The Results of Cultural Homogenisation for the “Particular” Languages**

The political context for the Jewish language transformation from Yiddish to the national language, German, was formed by the development of the nation state and its social counterpart, the bourgeois society, in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Both phenomena were the result of a legal, economic and cultural integration. Subjects, solidly embedded in diverse communities (like the Jewish community) and corporative societies, became established citizens under the control of a centrally managed state that was increasingly defined along national lines rather than religious ones. The establishment of the nation state ran parallel to the legal, commercial, and cultural homogenisation of its territory. The people within this area were no longer the subjects of diverse bodies of authoritative power as they had been in the Early Modern Era, but, rather, were under the control of the administration and law that emanated from the central state. Uniform currencies were established, customs limitations disappeared from within the borders of the German Empire set in the nineteenth century (German Customs Union, 1834), and also the emerging post and communication system became increasingly oriented on these borders, densely covering the demarcated area with logistical and technical infrastructure. The German written language based on High German established itself as opposed to other variants in the eighteenth century, downgrading the local dialects, (which were rehabilitated in the Romantic era), and ousting the earlier high and elite languages of Latin and French from their traditional realms. Speaking the German literary language increasingly became the sign of social (bourgeois) and national affiliation.

The devaluation of the “other” languages affected not only dialects, the local variants of German, but also to a large extent the older languages that had arisen on German-speaking territory, including Yiddish, the common and colloquial language particular to the Jews. Although in the Middle Ages Yiddish was already more than just a spoken language for the Jews and in the centuries of its use in Ashkenaz it captured an increasing number of social realms (also in the religious and legal areas), at the end of the eighteenth century in Central and Western Europe it nonetheless lacked adequate institutionalisation to counter its own dissolution. In the religious realm, Yiddish had become increasingly important over the course of the centuries, since not every man and certainly not every woman was given a Hebrew education as the religious ideal propagated; yet it could never compete with Hebrew

as a cultural high-language. This also applies to traditional Jewish instruction where Yiddish was the language of instruction but was never taught as a subject. Thus Yiddish became an institution only in Eastern Europe, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in a “modern”, so to speak, secularised context. There, Yiddish was elevated to the “national” literary language of Eastern European Judaism.<sup>341</sup>

An important moment of the transition from the premodern to the Modern Era is the repression of religion, which until that time had encompassed the entire social space of a society with the exception of very few social realms. For the premodern era it was unthinkable that a secular public realm could develop beyond the borders of the religious (and other) communities, creating a “general” public, allowing those located within the national borders to become a political community. The weakening and curtailment of religious influence created the necessary prerequisites for the integration of various religious communities in a “modern“ bourgeois society and thereby for a trans-religiously defined public realm. The linguistic instrument of this newly created social realm was the national language, which had neither religious connotations (such as Latin) nor class (such as French outside of France), but simply was national.<sup>342</sup> Thus in the early phases of the creation of a bourgeois public realm, it was primarily constituted by involvement and participation in debate about the literature and art produced in the national language.<sup>343</sup> This general political and social process sealed the fate of Yiddish, which had been the language of a largely autonomous Jewish community in the premodern era. Prior to these radical changes to the relations of the languages, Yiddish had been the language of an extensive, although exclusively Jewish (in the religious sense) public realm. The reduction of this language to a few social fields in the decades of emancipation followed the general pattern of the repression of religion (understood in the comprehensive sense of the premodern era) to the religious sphere, (understood in the limited sense of the Modern Era). For both, mere enclaves remained: at most, an extremely narrowly defined sphere of religious instruction, prayer literature, etc. and the private sphere of the family. This development can be followed through the production of published and also non-published Yiddish texts and through the variant “German in Hebrew letters”, which accompanied the demise of Yiddish in the German-speaking areas.

---

<sup>341</sup> See chapter 5, p. 134 f.

<sup>342</sup> On German as a colloquial language, see chapter 5 and 6.

<sup>343</sup> See chapter 7, p. 170.



Community protocols, account books, and all that was publicly or legally relevant, was steadily converted from Yiddish to German in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries under intense pressure from the enlightened states. The breadth of Yiddish literature which had grown over centuries to also encompass secular and practical literature, etc., increasingly narrowed in the nineteenth century to works of a religious nature;<sup>344</sup> a fate which also overtook the variant “German in Hebrew letters” or “Ashkenazic German” (Paul Wexler). This variant, used by the maskilim in the second half of the eighteenth century to mediate their works to a broad Jewish audience, initially brought forth an entire range of literature. Even “secular” works were written in this variant before it became increasingly limited to religious literature (of a traditional, orthodox nature) in the nineteenth century.<sup>345</sup>

### **The Retreat of the Jewish Languages**

Also the retreat of these “Jewish languages” to the private sphere, the inner-familial realm, is well documented. German in Hebrew letters or Ashkenazic German can still be found in the second half of the nineteenth century as the preferred variant for inner-Jewish, mainly inner-family correspondence. According to my research, there is evidence of German in Hebrew letters in this usage up to the 1860s, and not by religiously conservative, orthodox or Jewish families living in an antiquated way out in the countryside as one might suspect, but, instead, for example, in the extensively preserved inner-family correspondence of the Rothschild family and their agents, living widely scattered in the most diverse European cities, or in the correspondence of the Ullmann family from Augsburg, previously a Court Jew family, who in the early nineteenth century already maintained quite a bourgeois lifestyle or the Levi-Löwenbergs from Hohenems.<sup>346</sup> And for the beginning of the twentieth century there is

---

<sup>344</sup> See Steven M. Lowenstein, ‘The Yiddish Written Word in Nineteenth-Century Germany’, in *24. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1979), 191.

<sup>345</sup> This parallel development of Yiddish and Ashkenazic German is noted by Paul Wexler, ‘Ashkenazic German. 1760-1895’, *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 30 (1981): 125, and Lowenstein, cf. note 7, 188-9.

<sup>346</sup> For more on the Rothschild letters, see Niall Ferguson, *The World’s Banker: The History of the House of Rothschild* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1998), 29-31. Within the family, the Rothschilds corresponded in German in Hebrew letters until the late 1860s. Also the Yiddish scholar, Marion Aptroot, had a look at the letters in this particular collection. She describes them as German letters that contain none of the specific characteristics of Western Yiddish. (I thank Marion Aptroot for this remark.) Letters in this variant are evident in the

evidence of a spoken Western Yiddish, usually as spoken linguistic remnants (single words, phrases or key words, often derived from the *loshn koydesh* component) in inner-Jewish communication, primarily within the family.<sup>347</sup>

There is evidence that the Levi-Löwenbergs already read German literature in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and a reading society committed to the spread of German literature arose in their surroundings in 1813. Moritz Löwenberg visited the German speaking theatre in Augsburg and the Burgtheater in Vienna, however, the Löwenbergs still wrote their family correspondence in Hebrew letters for decades. This “German in Hebrew characters” can be described as a variant of the transition from Yiddish to German. Corresponding with Wexler’s bibliography, works were published in this variant between 1760 (Berlin) and 1895 (Rödelheim).<sup>348</sup> From the Yiddish remained the Hebrew letters, and according to the type of text and the writer, one or two other Hebraisms.<sup>349</sup> The morphology, syntax and the lexicology (apart from the Hebraisms), all stem from German. Depending on

---

Löwenberg collection until 1833. The collection as a whole, however, contains only the occasional document from the years after 1833. Nonetheless, it can be assumed that the Ullmanns and the Löwenbergs still corresponded in this variant after 1833. There is no reason, for example, why Klara, who died in 1854, would adjust her private correspondence in the last years of her life.

<sup>347</sup> For more details, see chapter 5, 136 f.

<sup>348</sup> Wexler, ‘Ashkenazic German’, 128-30. See also the chapter ‘Der Beginn der Sprachakkulturation: Publikationen in deutscher Sprache und hebräischen Buchstaben’ in Nils Römer, *Tradition und Akkulturation: Zum Sprachwandel der Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit der Haskalah*, (Münster/New York: Waxmann, 1995), 51-4. The most recent work recorded in Wexler’s bibliography is the dictionary *Sefer milim leEloha* from Yehuda ben Yoel Minden, printed in 1760 in Berlin. Römer on the contrary includes for 1752, the journal which appeared in Neuwied am Rhein from the doctor Benjamin Croneburg *Der kuriöse Antiquarius das ist allerhand auserlesene geographische und historische Merkwürdigkeiten so in denen Europäischen Ländern zu finden aus berühmter Männer Reisen zusammen getragen aus bewährte Autores von Wort zu Wort auf jüdisch zum ersten Mal über setzt* (The curious antiquarius: that is a collection of all kinds of selected geographical and historical curiosities that have been found in the European countries during the journeys of famous men, translated word for word into Yiddish for the first time). Other examples of *written schizoglossia accompanying language death* (Paul Wexler) were discussed by the Yiddish scholar, Marion Aptroot, in an audience discussion at the workshop *Jewish Multi-Lingualism in nineteenth-century Germany and the Netherlands*, organised by the Menasseh ben Israel Institute in cooperation with the Committee for the History and Culture of the Jews in the Netherlands of the Royal Academy of Sciences and the Salomon Ludwig Steinheim-Institute for German-Jewish History on 3 Dezember 1998. Here, she referred to evidence of Dutch in Hebrew Letters during these decades of the Jews’ change to the national language. A classical scholar from the audience referred to three Jewish gravestone findings from the catacombs of Rome with Greek inscriptions in Hebrew letters.

the competence of the author, Ashkenazic German could be very close to the written German language.<sup>350</sup>

The retreat of Yiddish and Ashkenazic German to the narrowly defined religious realm and the private sphere of the Jewish family, was a slow, highly complex process that encompassed a time span of several generations. Steven Lowenstein coined the image of a rainbow for the linguistic situation in Germany in the decades of emancipation. According to Lowenstein, when describing the linguistic situation of this era, we cannot count on linguistic units that are precisely differentiated from one another. In the majority of cases we are dealing with documents that provide evidence of an interim linguistic situation.<sup>351</sup> This situation is further complicated by the fact that the standardisation of written German had not yet been fully established in these decades. Therefore, we do not exactly know which variant of German to compare to the variants of Jewish-German. Geographical and social relations and also the age, education, and relationship of the conversation or correspondence partner to a person could effect their language. For these decades, we encounter evidence of a Yiddish which is very similar to German, a German written in Hebrew letters, a German with Yiddish errors, a German with a Yiddish pronunciation, etc.<sup>352</sup>

Speakers and writers could change the variant according to the conversation or correspondence partner. Moses Mendelssohn, who represents a somewhat earlier phase of this language transformation than the Löwenberg-letters of the nineteenth century, was said to have varied his Jewish-German according to whether his conversation partner originated from the Eastern or Western Jewish language area.<sup>353</sup> His Pentateuch translation, although it is

---

<sup>349</sup> On the Hebrew-Aramaic-component in Ashkenazic German, see Wexler, 'Ashkenazic German', 124.

<sup>350</sup> See, for example, the children's letters in the Löwenberg collection.

<sup>351</sup> Lowenstein, 'The Yiddish Written Word', 180, speaks, e.g. in reference to printed literature, of four types of Yiddish or transitional writing styles found in nineteenth century Germany. Old literary Yiddish, High German in Hebrew Script, Yiddish Dialect in Hebrew Script and Yiddish Dialect in German Script. Each served different audiences, flourished in different periods and tended to concentrate in different genres.

<sup>352</sup> From the lecture by Steven Lowenstein at the workshop of the Menasse ben Israel Institute, see note 11. The publication of the contributions will appear in spring of 2002.

<sup>353</sup> Haim Borodianski cites a remark of Salomon Maimon. In conversations with newly arrived Polish Jews, Mendelssohn was able to use their *expressions* and *sayings*. Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften. Jubiläumsausgabe*, Vol. 19, *Hebräische Schriften III: Briefwechsel*,

written in Hebrew letters, is considered the first German language, Jewish bible. Nonetheless, in a linguistic examination of this work, Werner Weinberg records numerous forms which deviate from the current language of Mendelssohn's era and which also cannot be traced back to the author's language environs in Berlin. The German in this bible translation deviates from the author's German texts in Latin writing as well. Weinberg attributes this to Mendelssohn's desire to concede to the Jewish fellows for whom he was writing. A "Christian high-German" would have intimidated them even more than most already were.<sup>354</sup> Mendelssohn's private letters written in the Jewish-German era of his time also testify to his ability to adjust to the linguistic level of his partner by fluidly changing his level of language. Thus it is noticeable that he addresses and greets men much more often than women with emphatically Hebrew titles. Worthy of particular notice is Mendelssohn's language usage when he writes letters to his bride, Fromet, and within them, relays greetings to men. He changes to using titles and salutations with *loshn koydesh* components, even when he addresses Fromet in the same letter with a German greeting. When negotiating the details of the marriage contract with his future mother-in-law, Vogel Guggenheim, the letter contains many more sections with *loshn koydesh* components than other letters to the same person, and many more than the letters to his bride, Fromet.<sup>355</sup>

The structure of Mendelssohn's movement between the variants of the Jewish languages of his decades reveals itself through the criteria of "gender" and "social status", among others.

---

edited by Haim Borodianski (Bar-Dayan) (Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1974), 24.

<sup>354</sup> *The masses of the Jews still spoke a 'low' High German at that time in which, e.g. prepositions were used with reversed cases and case endings were slightly changed or left out.* Mendelssohn instinctively included these deviations from the standard which had not yet been recorded up to that point, because he constantly kept in mind for whom he was writing the translation. He seemed to fear that the Jews might reject a "Christian" High German. Werner Weinberg, 'Einleitung', in Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften. Jubiläumsausgabe*, Vols. 9/1 and 9/2, *Schriften zum Judentum III/1 und III/2: Pentateuchübersetzung in deutscher Umschrift*, edited by Werner Weinberg (Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1993), 27.

<sup>355</sup> This statement rests on the evaluation of forty of Mendelssohn's "Jewish-German" letters from 1761 to 1762, the majority of which are to his bride Fromet Guggenheim, found in: Moses Mendelssohn: *Gesammelte Schriften*, see note 16. See in particular letter no. 1 to Naphtali Herz (1761) and letter no. 6 to Vogel Guggenheim (1761). See also Haim Borodianski in his 'introduction', 24: *According to the class and education of the addressee, sometimes the Hebrew element, sometimes the High German element of these letters is more important. His philosophical letter to 'an unknown person', which is written almost entirely in High German, differs greatly from his strongly Hebrew letters to Elkan Herz.*

Male correspondence partners, but also his mother-in-law as an elder person of respect, are addressed with titles containing *loshn koydesh* components, whereas his beloved bride is addressed with simple German greetings. The letters to her also contain fewer Hebraisms. The *loshn koydesh*, which Mendelssohn employed to a greater or lesser degree, can be a very expressive element of linguistic concession to his partner in communication. This type of code-switching, can be seen in another succinct example from an historical period which is closer to our text documents' era than Mendelssohn's letters. This example is the text of the reform-oriented preacher and later rabbi in Vienna, Adolf Jellinek, and his wife Rosalie, from August 1852 from Karlsbad to Jellinek's father in Vienna. Jellinek's writing system is a flexible element whose help he employs to communicate beyond the content of the sentence, for example, to display a certain attitude towards his correspondence partner. On the front side of the letter Adolf Jellinek wrote in German, although in an extremely neat Hebrew cursive; on the backside of the letter his wife wrote her text to her father-in-law in Latin-German cursive.<sup>356</sup> The father must have been competent in both variants of the Jewish-German of this era; otherwise he would have been unable to understand the writing of his daughter-in-law. Furthermore, we know that a reform-oriented rabbi such as Adolf Jellinek was capable of writing German in Latin cursive in the mid-nineteenth century. Yet what inspired him to write to his father in Hebrew letters, considering his strong opposition to "jargon" and his support of the Jews' entry into the German language community, for which we have a great deal of evidence?<sup>357</sup> For one, Jellinek did not write this letter in "jargon", but, rather, in clear German. The use of Hebrew characters did not render his language as something which Jellinek and his predecessors, the *maskilim*, considered "jargon". The use of the Hebrew writing system in this context can possibly be interpreted here as a son wanting to show respect to his father. The Jewish tradition, in the older traditional belief not yet challenged by feminism, was passed on from father to son. The "shalshet haKabbala"/ "the chain of handing over the tradition" had male "links". If a Jewish son wanted to show his father a sign of respect, it was thus logical for him to refer to the religious "tradition of the father".<sup>358</sup> The Hebrew writing system was (and for many devout Jews still is) highly

---

<sup>356</sup> Jewish Museum Vienna, Archive, Inv. No. 3528.

<sup>357</sup> Klaus Kempter, 'Adolf Jellinek und die jüdische Emanzipation: Der Prediger der Leipziger jüdischen Gemeinde in der Revolution 1848/49', *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 8, no. 1 (1998).

<sup>358</sup> On Sigmund Freud's father conflict, which is certainly the prime example of a Jewish agnostic of the Modern Era, see the chapter 'Vaterreligion, Sohnesreligion und "jüdisch nationale Angelegenheit"', in Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses: Endliches und unendliches Judentum* (Berlin: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, 1991).

religious. People were probably most aware of this level of significance of Hebrew writing in the nineteenth century, when its increasing repression set off controversial religious political debates.

The language testimonies in the Löwenberg collection also give us proof of a linguistic behaviour that expresses an attitude of respect towards the addressed person through the choice of components. As I have already explained, in some of the letters, the title for male persons appears in certain cases with the *loshn koydesh* “Reb” (“Herr” or Mr.) although other persons appear with the German title “Herr”. The use of “Reb” occurs when older highly respected family members are addressed, or when they are described in the writing, or – as in the case of “R’ Mathiath” Frei – when they are the future husband of the writer.<sup>359</sup>

### **The Two Axes of Culture**

These examples point out that the Hebrew writing system and the *loshn koydesh* component, as elements of Jewish languages, have great symbolic power. Their function cannot be reduced to the pragmatic level alone. This implies that the Hebrew alphabet not only offers characters for putting concepts and their meaning in writing, as alphabets do, but in addition transmits still another message. The Hebraisms in Yiddish, like in the Ashkenazic German, are not merely lexemes from another language as is common in all languages. As I have pointed out and would like to elaborate on, the language actors used these elements knowingly and with great precision to communicate attitudes such as respect or to make other distinctions that were important for them. Let us take the example of the letter from Josef Henle Ullmann from 15 January 1809 from Augsburg to his sister Klara in Hohenems.<sup>360</sup> One matter between the two had to do with the memorial “*yohrtsayt*” of their father, Henle Efraim Ullmann, who died in 1807. In an aside to the main text, written perpendicular to it on the right edge of the letter, Josef Henle informs his sister that the memorial for our dear father (*yohrtsayt unsres libn faters*) will be on the third of Adar (3. Adar) (written with Hebrew numerals). In not one other place in the letter is any event dated according to the Jewish calendar. The date of the letter in the heading (15 Jan. 1809) and also the other indications of time mentioned in the body of the letter (*donrstags shraybn, sonntag*) are indicated with general bourgeois chronology. The *loshn koydesh* components emerge precisely where

---

<sup>359</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>360</sup> JMH LB B 122/15.1.1809 (Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi/Hohenems)

something is “Jewish” in a religious sense, in this case, the religious institute of the “yohrtsait” memorial for the deceased father.

All Jewish languages share the use of loshn koydesh components, and also writing the language in Hebrew characters.<sup>361</sup> Something very definitive about Jewish language culture is represented, for example, by the fact that the Yiddish word “goles” (borrowed from Hebrew) and the Judezmo word “galut” on the one hand have entirely different pronunciations, yet both mean “exile” and are written identically.<sup>362</sup> The etymological writing of Hebraisms in a Yiddish or Judezmo text mediates this deeper structure of the Jewish languages, even at a visual level. These two linguistic elements display the roots of Jewish tradition: a “common library” of texts that are holy or at least centrally recognised by the group, and passed down in the “holy languages” of Hebrew and Aramaic. They form the material as well as spiritual core of this tradition. In addition to its usage in a certain ritual context, it is the Hebrew inscription that turns a candlestick into a Sabbath candlestick and a silver drinking-vessel into a Kiddush cup. And it is likewise the Hebrew writing and the loshn koydesh components, however marginally represented, which make a language variant a Jewish language, although when read out loud it might be mistaken for German. Linguists who deem a language to be independent on the basis of the “hard core” of its grammar, i.e. its phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicology, cannot relate to this type of thesis. In their eyes, writing as a recording system of a language, and a quantitatively minimal stock of borrowed elements from another language may not be attributed great linguistic significance.<sup>363</sup> I am not concerned with debating the question of the stage in its development at which Yiddish can be considered its own language and how a linguistic outshoot, such as German in Hebrew characters can at all be linguistically evaluated.<sup>364</sup> Seen in terms of cultural history – and that is my perspective here – the latter phenomenon is also testimony of Jewish language behaviour. By preserving

---

<sup>361</sup> See chapter 5.

<sup>362</sup> Andrew Lloyd Sunshine, *Opening the Mail: Interpersonal Aspects of Discourse and Grammar in Middle Yiddish Letters*, Ph.D. diss., Columbia University New York, 1991, 10-11.

<sup>363</sup> Sunshine, *Opening the Mail*, 355-379, criticises linguistic positions that do not accept the writing system as a criteria for the independence of a language. Writing is for him – and also for Salomon Birnbaum and Max Weinreich – an index of the cultural framework of a language and important for the definition of the Jewish languages as independent languages.

<sup>364</sup> These debates accompanied Yiddish studies since its beginnings in the last century. See in addition, chapter 5 and also note 32 in this chapter.

the Hebrew writing and maintaining the integration of Hebraisms, it refers to a central dynamic of Jewish culture.

Attempting to describe culture (and language is merely one manifestation of culture) is at heart a problematic venture. Any description of culture must capture in writing something that is permanently changing, something that knows no permanently fixed borders. The matter is further complicated when the object to be described is a diaspora culture: a cultural system cultivated and supported by a group of people, such as the Jewish people (as an imaginary whole), who live in exile not only forcibly, but also out of necessity. This type of group is, more noticeably than others, at the mercy of the hegemonic culture, in this case, the culture of the majority society in which they live. Among the particular endeavours of this type of diaspora culture is the preservation of that which refers to the common origins, the “own”, and also coping with the integration of elements of the respective “others”. It is this achievement of preserving and selectively integrating that enables a scattered group to outlive and survive as a traditional community. Preserving the “particular” and selective integration of the “other”, can also be described in the image of two axes which appear in every cultural manifestation of Jewish life. These cultural manifestations, which include the Jewish languages, can be described as “products” on the respective interfaces of these two axes.<sup>365</sup> The Yiddish scholar, Max Weinreich, speaks of the vertical and horizontal dimensions that appear in Jewish cultural production, and Andrew Lloyd Sunshine formulates something similar with reference to the ethnologist and cultural theorist, Claude Levi-Strauss, when he refers to the tendency for cultural systems to continue to exist as diachronic relations within a synchronic system of relations.<sup>366</sup> In terms of the Jewish languages, the vertical dimension corresponds with both the use of the Hebrew writing system for all of these languages, regardless of what their vocabulary and grammatical system is based on, as well as the inclusion of elements from Hebrew and Aramaic (the *loshn koydesh* component), which are also found in all of these languages. Throughout the millennium of the diaspora and varying linguistic settings, the Jews’ literacy in Hebrew enabled communication with the ancient sources of the traditional community. Inner-Jewish communication was thus able to overcome

---

<sup>365</sup> On the interpretation of Judaica objects with the help of this model, see Eva Grabherr, ‘Objects of Diaspora’, in *Journey to no End of the World: Judaica of the Gross Family Collection*, ed. Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek (Tel Aviv and Vienna: Jewish Museum Vienna, 2001).

<sup>366</sup> Max Weinreich, *History of the Yiddish Language* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980; 1st ed., Yiddish, 1973), 205-7. Sunshine: *Opening the Mail*, 10-1.



all language borders. The obligatory occupation with the body of texts that founded the community, anchored in the traditional educational system, likewise leaves behind traces in the form of the *loshn koydesh* component of the Jewish common and colloquial languages.<sup>367</sup> Sunshine speaks about the *loshn koydesh* component of the preambles in the Yiddish letters of the premodern era as an aid to identify both correspondents as members of a certain community. This community represents a type of *third unit* in the communication, corresponding with the vertical dimension represented by the Hebrew-Aramaic components of the Jewish languages.<sup>368</sup> The horizontal dimension of the Jewish languages corresponds with the adoption of a great part of the vocabulary and the grammatical and phonological structure of the respective linguistic surroundings. This appropriation involved integrating elements from the majority society and helped develop an understanding of the cultural system of those whom it represented. In addition, this appropriation, however limited by the differing writing systems, created channels of communication for exchange with the non-Jewish surroundings.

Jewish languages are fusion languages, and the decisive cultural moment at which the specific Jewishness can be demonstrated in these languages, according to Max Weinreich, lies in the immense achievement of integration to which these languages attested for centuries.<sup>369</sup> The variant “German in Hebrew letters” maintains precisely those linguistic elements that represent the vertical axis in the Jewish languages, the dimension that reaches deep into the traditional community. Pragmatic explanations can hardly account for this linguistic

---

<sup>367</sup> On the issue of the channels through which the Hebraisms made their way into Yiddish, see Klayman-Cohen, *Hebräische Komponente*, 1-4.

<sup>368</sup> Sunshine: *Opening the Mail*, 202.

<sup>369</sup> Weinreich, *Yiddish*. The background of Weinreich’s thesis is the decade-long debate on the independence of Yiddish with respect to German, mainly in the initial and end stages of this language. This debate refers, among other things, to the general dilemma of attempting to write Jewish history within the paradigm of the nation. Jewish cultural history of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stood under extreme pressure; to free the Jewish culture, marked by its diaspora existence, from the accusation of being a “mixed culture”. With the triumphant progress of cultural studies since the 1960s, the realisation became established: cultures permanently develop hybrid forms and definitions and the drawing of borders – in the area of science as well – must be considered fundamentally biased, and representative of power relations. Andrew Lloyd Sunshine’s work can be located in this epistemological framework. See, among others, his interesting confrontation with those who oppose recognising Hebrew writing as criteria for the independence of the Jewish languages. Sunshine: *Opening the Mail*, 357-377.

phenomenon.<sup>370</sup> Adjusting to a different writing system by a social group requires at least a generation; yet this fact still provides no explanation for why the Rothschilds, the Ullmanns and the Löwenbergs (like many others) – bourgeois families with demonstrable knowledge of German – still corresponded in this linguistic variant well into the mid-nineteenth century. And it cannot even begin to explain why a reform-oriented rabbi and scholar such as Adolf Jellinek still wrote to his father using the Hebrew alphabet in 1852. The linguistic variant which accompanied the “death of Yiddish” confirms in a fascinating way the statements from Florian Coulmas about writing systems as a whole: much more than any other sub-system of the language, writing systems are cultural products, says Coulmas, and thereby less than optimal in terms of the economics of communication. Culture not only does not necessarily economise social behaviour, but it even partially resists this economisation.<sup>371</sup> In this sense, the persistence in the use of Hebrew writing for the German language which is described here and is so clearly comprehensible in the Löwenberg letters from the nineteenth century, can be read as an act of (at least partial) resistance which may have decisively helped the actors, the Jews of Central and Western Europe, to manage the grave cultural transformations of these decades. It is fascinating how Ashkenazic German so persistently preserves precisely those elements of Yiddish that represent the vertical dimension of this Jewish cultural product which possess a particular “Jewishness”. This evidence of the disappearance of a Jewish language once again makes reference to precisely that particular dynamic of Jewish cultural production. It is as though the depths of the structure of a cultural phenomenon shine through in the process of its disappearance.

### **Jewish Writing Transformation “en détail”<sup>372</sup>**

The letters of the Löwenberg collection enable a reconstruction of the writing transformation that occurred in the decisive decades of Jewish acculturation during the transition to the Modern Era based on the linguistic behaviour of three generations of writers, who composed them. In the letters of the first generation of actors from the eighteenth century, the border

---

<sup>370</sup> A pragmatic explanation, for example, is that a community needed at least one generation to change from one writing system to another. This variant, however, is used in the private correspondence much longer than the time it took for the educational system to adjust.

<sup>371</sup> Florian Coulmas, ‘Zur Ökonomie der Schrift’, in Baurmann, Günther, and Knoop, eds. (1993), 110.

<sup>372</sup> The databank for the summary of the material written in Hebrew characters within the Löwenberg collection compiles the documents according to a variety of criteria, among others: writing, date, address, salutation and *loshn koydesh* components. See the printed excerpts from the data in the appendix.

between the Hebrew and the Latin alphabet still runs without exception along the dividing line between Jews and non-Jews. Letters from non-Jewish business partners to the brothers Hirsch and Lezer or Lazarus Levi are German written in German cursive. The entire inner-Jewish correspondence within the collection for this century, apart from the addresses on the outside of the letters, is carried out completely in Hebrew writing.<sup>373</sup> The language is indeed close to German, for example in the syntax, but it contains such emphatic Hebrew-Aramaic components, sometimes dominating entire sentences, that I would like to describe it here as Western Yiddish.<sup>374</sup> The letters are dated based on the Jewish calendar; two letters are – corresponding directly with the model of the classical Hebrew and Yiddish letter – dated by giving the weekly Torah-section, the “parashah”, rather than a date.<sup>375</sup> In twenty-one of the thirty-three letters, preceding the date is the abbreviation “b`h” which stands for “barukh

---

<sup>373</sup> Merely two of the thirty-three inner-Jewish letters from the eighteenth century had Hebrew-character address labels. JMH LB B 143/28.1.1784 (Josef bar Jehuda/Gailingen to Lazarus Josef Levi/Hohenems) has a Hebrew addressee stamp with the elements of the address of the classical Yiddish and Hebrew letter form (*lemaqom leyad.../to the site and for the attention of...*) including detailed Hebrew titles for the recipient. JMH LB B 128/13.10.1804 (Schwager Bal Josef ?/Hohenems to his sister in law Hana/?) indicated in Hebrew characters who should receive the letter.

<sup>374</sup> A further distinctive linguistic element that appears in the letters is the Yiddish pronoun “mir” in place of the German “wir”. On the other hand, this phenomenon is also found until today in local Alemmanic dialects. In this work, I cannot significantly contribute to the debates that have been carried out for years about the proximity or distance of Western Yiddish variants in the decades of the transition to German, particularly in the eighteenth century. Steven Lowenstein, in his lecture at the workshop of the Menasse ben Israel Institutes in Amsterdam in Dezember 1998, delivered a vivid description of the difficulties of categorising the languages of the Jews in Germany in the decades of emancipation, see notes 11 and 15. Based on extensive empirical material, he demonstrates how close, for example, the Hessian and Franconian Western Yiddish were to the dialect of the non-Jewish population. The Western Yiddish in Hessen was in part closer to the standard German written language in the eighteenth century than were the non-Jewish Hessian dialects. Lowenstein reported that he presented the two texts to experts on the Franconian dialects: one in Franconian Yiddish (in transcription) and one in a non-Jewish Franconian dialect. Both agreed that a Franconian dialect was recognisable in the text of Jewish origin, as it was spoken in Fürth although there were a few contradictory elements. Lowenstein’s text along with the empirical material will be published in a seminar volume in the autumn of 2001. Considering the complexity of the Jewish and non-Jewish linguistic situations of these decades, I will therefore avoid this debate.

<sup>375</sup> Both of the letters dated according to Parashot were written by Henle bar Nachum (Elchanan or Heinrich Henle) from Bozen to his brother-in-laws Lazarus and Hirsch Levi in Hohenems. For more on Henle bar Nachum, see chapter 3, p. 65. JMH LB B 77/1774/75, JMH LB B 35/1774/75. Efraim bar Teweli dated his letter from 22 July 1774 to Lazarus Levi with the name “Menachem” for the Jewish month Av. That is also common from Yiddish and Hebrew letters of the premodern era, for example, as shown in the letters of the Tychsen collection from Rostock. JMH LB B 69/22.7.1174.

hashem” (blessed be to God). That also corresponds with the traditional model of the Hebrew and Yiddish letters of the premodern era.<sup>376</sup> The opening of the communication in the letters through a salutary form in *loshn koydesh* and then rather extensively addressing the persons also correspond with this model. For the signature, the brothers Hirsch, Lezer and Michael usually simply signed with their first names. The letters from their brother-in-laws contained a fully extended signature with *loshn koydesh* components that even included the father’s name complete with his honorary titles.<sup>377</sup>

In the letters from the nineteenth century, the Latin writing, starting from the margins, seeped into the body of the letters: the dates in these letters, with the exception of a few examples which I will come back to, are written in Latin cursive and also already correspond with the general bourgeois calendar. Latin writing also emerges periodically when addressing the correspondence partners. The address, in keeping with the bourgeois letter-writing norm of these decades, is kept simple and no longer contains honorary titles.<sup>378</sup> Quite often the letter writers sign in Latin writing. Josef Henle Ullmann, for example, does it almost consistently, whereas Zirle Weil, from whom a substantial collection of documents has also been preserved, signs more than half in Hebrew writing. Also the greetings at the end of the letters are kept simple and only in very few cases contain Hebrew formulae – exceptions to which I will return. It is clear in the documents of the Löwenberg collection that the Latin writing

---

<sup>376</sup> Models for the “classical” Jewish letter type often cited here (Hebrew or Yiddish) include the Prague letters from 1619 and the Tychsen collection, available from the University library in Rostock. Alfred Landau and Bernhard Wachstein, eds., *Jüdische Privatbriefe aus dem Jahre 1619* (Vienna and Leipzig: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1911). Lisa Goldstein, *Jewish Communal Life in the Duchy of Mecklenburg as Reflected in Correspondence. 1760-1769*, Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for Ordination, Hebrew Union College New York, 1993. (For the reference to the contents of the Tychsen collection, I thank Hermann Süß, Fürstfeldbruck. For the uncomplicated access to the work of Lisa Goldstein, I thank Heike Tröger from the university library in Rostock.) The Hebrew and Yiddish letters in the Tychsen collection from the years 1760-1769, which Lisa Goldstein worked on, encompass mainly correspondence in which the correspondence partners exchange information about community affairs. One business letter is also included in her work. The letters in this collection are especially interesting as comparative material for the letters from the Löwenberg collection from the eighteenth century. Formulas, addresses, etc. are in complete accord with one another. The Hebrew address of the Hohenems business letters is somewhat less elaborate than those between rabbis, community officials, etc. from the letters in the Tychsen collection. This phenomenon is, however, also shown in the business letter that Lisa Goldstein included in her edition.

<sup>377</sup> One exception to this is the letters of the son-in-law “faifer nb” from Buchau to Federnsee, see chapter 3, note 65.

seeps into the Jewish letter writing culture in those parts that are generally strictly standardised: the date, the address and the signature.<sup>379</sup> The content of the letter, which begins after the address and greeting and in which the individual linguistic ability of the writer comes into play, is still written almost exclusively in Hebrew writing in the letters from the nineteenth century.<sup>380</sup> If the goal of my examination of these texts were more oriented on the history of language and concerned with historical reconstruction of the written language in everyday Jewish life in these decades, then the letters' content would be of much greater interest than the standardised parts, e.g.: date, address and greeting, which outlived many changes in everyday language. However, for a comprehensive, cultural and historical investigation of these letters, concerned mainly with the mutual relationship between the individual actors and their social situations, it is precisely these standardised, strict and socially prescribed segments of the letter that are of particular interest,<sup>381</sup> indicating where general conditions in which individuals and groups live become registered as culturally transformed. The appearance of the Latin cursive and the norms of the general bourgeois German letter writing culture appearing in Jewish letters at precisely this context-sensitive location in the text is, quite visually, an expression of the "great theme" of Jewish life in Germany in these decades: the opening of Jewish life and Jewish culture to the hegemonic bourgeois culture of its surroundings and the resulting integration of the Jews in the emerging and increasingly homogenising national society.

---

<sup>378</sup> See chapter 3, p. 75 f.

<sup>379</sup> On the dominance of the Latin alphabet addresses also in the letters of the eighteenth century, which can be attributed to the technical logistical conditions of communication, see chapter 3, 70 ff. The Jewish letters of the Tychsen collection from the eighteenth century published by Goldstein also contain addresses written mostly in Latin writing.

<sup>380</sup> Exceptions are the individual appearance of names in Latin letters or abbreviations for currencies in Latin letters. In her letter from 1829, Nina lists in Latin letters the names of the places she visited during her long journey. JMH LB B/9.8.1829 (Nina Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems). An interesting phenomenon is shown in the letter from Ber Ullmo, Klara's uncle, one of the few people in the nineteenth century who still wrote the date according to the Jewish calendar and used additional elements from the Jewish letters of the premodern era. In a letter to Klara and Moritz on the occasion of his great nephews' Bar Mitsvah, he dedicates a religious epithet to him, which he writes in Latin letters as an aside: *Pray and work, God will make it good*. JMH LB B 38/7.11.1826 (Ber Ulmo/Kriegshaber to Moshe and Kile Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>381</sup> For precisely the same reasons, Erika Timm was also interested in the *less formalised body/core* of these letters when investigating two Yiddish letters from 1602. This part of the text had greater cultural and linguistic historical value due to its *lack of aesthetic drive and heightened spontaneity*. Erika Timm, 'Zwei neu aufgefundene jiddische Briefe von 1602 und ihre Bedeutung für die Sozial- und Sprachgeschichte', *Aschkenas*:

The dividing line between the recording systems of the Hebrew and the Latin alphabet no longer run entirely along the dividing line between the Jewish and non-Jewish language actors in the letters from the nineteenth century. It is obvious that the non-Jewish business correspondence would also still be written in Latin cursive in the nineteenth century. But also the 1826 letter of the Jewish commis, Josef Thannhauser, to his “Herrn Prinzipal”, Moritz Löwenberg, who was in Munich and Augsburg, is written in Latin-German cursive. And Moritz Löwengard wrote a German business letter in 1827 to “Laz. Jos. Levi sel. Sohn”, the firm of his cousin Moritz Löwenberg.<sup>382</sup> Here a border can be traced around social fields. Even in the early nineteenth century, business, as often demanded by the emancipation laws of the enlightened states, is in the domain of German with non-Jewish writing. Thus, the state regulation was effective in this area. In the family correspondence between the Ullmanns and Löwenbergs, the Hebrew alphabet remained dominant until the middle of the nineteenth century. But also in these linguistic areas, the first breaks are already recorded in the early nineteenth century. The generation of the language actor also seems decisive for the change in writing from the Hebrew to the Latin-German alphabet. Wilhelmine (or Mina or Miriam) Löwenberg, who is among the youngest generation represented in our letters, writes to her parents in both variants. She writes German in Latin cursive in 1819 from Munich in an addition to the German letter of her (Jewish) commis, Josef Thannhausen, to her father and in 1833 from Blamont, where she lived with her husband, Abraham Lehmann. However, in a separate letter to her mother from Munich in 1819, she writes in German in Hebrew characters.<sup>383</sup> Mina’s adaptation of her texts to the respective linguistic surroundings is apparent here. Four letters preserved from one person, however, are naturally not sufficient to create representative statements about these connections. Also Isidor, Klara’s younger

---

*Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 4, no. 2 (1994): 449.

<sup>382</sup> JMH A 12: Jos. Thannhauser/Hohenems to Laz. Jos. Levy seel. son in Munich, 1826; Josef Thannhauser/Hohenems to Moritz Löwenberg in Augsburg, 1826. JMH A 10: Moritz Löwengard/Hohenems, to Laz. Jos. Levi’s. Son/Hohenems, 1827.

<sup>383</sup> JMH A 11: Wilhelmine Löwenberg to her parents in a letter from Theres Rothschild from Munich to Klara Löwenberg in Hohenems, 1819. JMH A 12: Mina Löwenberg to the dear father in a letter from Josef Thannhausen from Hohenems to Moritz Löwenberg in Munich, 1826. JMH LB B 78/2.7.1833 (Mina Lemand/Blamont, to Moritz and Klara Löwenberg/Hohenems): Date and address are written in French in Latin writing, the body of the letter (unfortunately only preserved as fragments) is in Hebrew characters. The postscript with greetings on the back of the letter and the signature are written in German in Latin-German cursive. JMH LB B 154/13.3.1819 (Wilhelmine Löwenberg/Munich to her mother Klara

brother, writes in ‘kurrent’ German in an undated letter delivered to his sister from Frankfurt. Since he passes on greetings from his wife, the letter could not have been written before the 1830s. In any case, Isidor wrote as an adult. In contrast, in his childhood and youth in Augsburg he wrote to his older sister in Hohenems in a refined German that was still written in Hebrew characters.<sup>384</sup> The Jewish language transformation is already clearly emerging in the letters within the Löwenberg collection in the decades of emancipation. Nonetheless, these documents for the most part confirm the thesis formulated above, that Ashkenazic German, the writing of the German language in the Hebrew alphabet, was still a widespread bourgeois Jewish phenomenon and cannot be limited to the field of the religiously traditional or “backwards” Jewry.

*The Transformation in the Loshn Koydesh Component of the Jewish Languages*

The Jewish languages’ use of the loshn koydesh component in the letters records a change that occurs from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries and also within the language testimonials of individual actors in the nineteenth century. The letters of the eighteenth century contain, as previously mentioned, a very pronounced loshn koydesh component extending into the text itself, beyond the date, the address and the greeting. Entire sentences are dominated by Hebraisms, which are, however, integrated into Yiddish sentences (see JMH LB B 12/1775, lines 2-3). Often found in Western Yiddish are the common participle and noun constructions (see JMH LB B 12/1775, lines 3, 8), but also nouns, Hebrew proclitica (functioning as prepositions) in connection with town and proper names, enclitica (functioning as possessive pronouns), numerals (although alternately with Arabic numbers) and adverbs. Also the formulaic blessings, so important in Yiddish in the form of abbreviations after the person’s name (bono-petitive psycho-ostensive expressions), are present, although they are not dominant among the loshn koydesh component of these texts as is the case in the letters of the nineteenth century (see JMH LB B 12/1775, lines 2, 14, 15, 21).<sup>385</sup>

---

Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>384</sup> JMH A 11: Isidor Ullmann, undated, from Frankfurt, to Klara Löwenberg in Hohenems. JMH LB B/141: children’s letter, undated. JMH LB B 44/31.3.1824 (Isidor Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara and Moritz Löwenberg/Hohenems).

<sup>385</sup> On the strong presence of psycho-ostensive formulae in the Yiddish letter and the significance of this phenomenon, see Sunshine, *Opening the Mail*, 184-186.

In the letters of the nineteenth century, the Hebrew-Aramaic components are present in varying degrees depending on the respective writer. In no document of the nineteenth century, however, does this presence even come close to that of the letters in the eighteenth century. Hebraisms are no longer dominant in the German sentences. The *loshn koydesh* components surface only in the form of individual words or as abbreviations, which can also summarise a row of words. In chapter 3, I have already mentioned those few cases in which Klara is not addressed in the simple egalitarian salutation of the German bourgeois family letter, but rather, in the forms of the classical Yiddish and Hebrew letter with its Hebrew-component formulae. The letters in the 1820s that still reveal this element from the previous letter writing culture, are all written to Klara by older persons, for example, by Minkle Obermayer from Kriegshaber. In a letter from 1808, Minkle first appears in the preserved correspondence in a letter to Klara, whom she addresses with her Yiddish name, Kile or Kila. Klara is apparently looking for an au-pair and has asked Minkle for help. Additional letters from Minkle are preserved from the years 1820 and 1829.<sup>386</sup> Mainly the content of the last letter allows us to conclude that we are dealing with someone much older than Klara (health complaints, etc.). All three letters contain honourable titles in the address with *loshn koydesh* components, which was typical for the eighteenth century but only appeared as an exception in the Löwenberg letters from the nineteenth century. The address itself, however, is German (*tayerste frayndin, hokh gishetste madam*). (This is largely consistent with the practices of the Jewish letter writing culture of the premodern tradition. Women's letters contained clearly less Hebrew introductory and closing formulae.)<sup>387</sup> All three letters – also those from 1820 and 1829 – are dated according to the Jewish calendar, address Klara with her Yiddish name, and are signed with signatory formulae from the classic Yiddish and Hebrew letters (*minqle ishat yitsiq om`*), which cites a person's father or in the case of a female writer, her husband. The letters from 1820 and 1829 also bear detailed *loshn koydesh* component addresses (*lq`q hoiknems .../to the holy community Hohenems ...*), which in our collection only emerged in individual cases for the letters of the eighteenth century. Mainly, however, the body of the texts contain a large amount of psycho-ostensive expressions: thoroughly bono-petitive

---

<sup>386</sup> JMH LB B 138/13.7.1808 (Minkle Obermayer/Kriegshaber to Kile Levi/Hohenems), JMH LB 30/6.3.1820 (Minkle Obermayer/Kriegshaber to Kile Löwenberg/Hohenems), JMH LB 19/?1829 (Minkle Obermayer/Kriegshaber to Kile Löwenberg/Hohenems)

<sup>387</sup> Alfred Landau and Bernhard Wachstein already refer to this with the publication of the Prague letters from 1619. Landau/Wachstein, *Jüdische Privatbriefe*, 19. Letters from women, and also letters from men to women



abbreviated standardised blessings after people's names or the standardised plea for God's help abbreviated parenthetically and integrated into the sentence. In these letters from Minkle Obermayer, the general bourgeois standard letter has not yet extended from the margins into her Jewish letter, even if the language of the content of the body of the text clearly differentiates from the letter writing language of the eighteenth century. In our collection, they form together with the letters from Reb Ber Ulmo, which I will go into in a moment, an "island" of premodern Jewish letters in the "sea" of nineteenth century Jewish letters influenced by the general bourgeois culture. Also Reb Ber Ullmann, Klara's uncle, who can thereby be ascribed to an older generation like Minkle, used an address that contained extensive *loshn koydesh* components in both letters preserved from him from 1826. In contrast to the letters from Minkle, however, that does not only apply to the title. His letters contain the classical Hebrew address of the Yiddish and Hebrew letters of the premodern era, which even seem graphically clearly distanced from the content of the body of the letter. He signs with the formalism *h`q* (humble) and the family name *Ulmo*, which corresponds with the pre-nineteenth century spelling of this name, but was not used in the nineteenth century by any of the other Ullmanns represented in the correspondence, who all belonged to a younger generation. One letter from Ber Ulmo is dated according to the Jewish calendar, the other according to the bourgeois calendar. In the content of the main part of the letters, however, no Hebraisms emerge. Ber Ulmo also addressed Klara in his elaborate salutation with the honorary title of *marat kile*. Neither her siblings, nor Zirle, nor her husband, ever address Klara with her Yiddish name in the correspondence which we have available.<sup>388</sup> This phenomenon can only be found for these two older persons, and here it still persists in the 1820s. It can also be found in a few letters from before 1810 that Klara received from women whom she seems to have known from her childhood and youth: from a Faile from Munich, who Klara asked for help in finding an au-pair, and in the letters from a Zartle (without date or location) and a Nene (1808 from Zindorf), whom we can conclude from the letters must have been very close to Klara.<sup>389</sup> For Faile and Nene, the Yiddish name for Klara

---

contain few or no honorary titles, but often addresses with German components.

<sup>388</sup> JMH LB 127/23.5.18? (Kile Levi/Hohenems to Moshe Levi). The letter can be dated as prior to 1813 because German family names were introduced with the Bavarian Edict of 1813. This clear break runs throughout the entire collection of documents.

<sup>389</sup> JMH LB B 53/19.8.1809 (Faile/no location sited, to Kile Levi/Hohenems), JMH LB B 157/13.12.1809 (Faile/Munich to Kile Levi/Hohenems), JMH LB B 133/undated (prior to 1813) (Kile Levi/Hohenems to Faile/Munich), JMH LB B 5/12.8.1808 (Nene Ishat Ber from Zirndorf/Zirndorf to Kile Levi/Hohenems), JMH LB B 72/undated (prior to 1813) (Zartle Lehrern/location unknown to Kile Levi/Hohenems).

corresponded with the dating of the letter according to the Jewish calendar. Address and signature are, however, simple and correspond with the general standard for letters. The finding thus shows that the orientation on the classical Yiddish letter with its address, signature, and the date with *loshn koydesh* components appears in conjunction with the phenomenon of the Yiddish name for Klara. Among older letter writers, this letter model still appeared at the end of the 1820s. The other letters of the nineteenth century that correspond more strongly with the Jewish letter of the premodern era, are all dated prior to 1810. Individual elements such as a signature with Hebrew components no longer appear for Josef Henle and Efraim Ullmann or for Moritz Löwenberg after 1816.

The children's letters appear with almost no *loshn koydesh* components: whether the letters of the younger siblings to their older sister in Hohenems, or the letters from Miriam/Mina/Wilhelmine to her parents. Also the letters that Isidor and Nina, Klara's younger siblings write as adults contain merely a few *loshn koydesh*, psycho-ostensive expressions in abbreviation. The letters from Efraim, who was born before 1800, contain hardly any Hebraisms. Again, it is the standard abbreviated blessing formulae that have been preserved. In 1808 and 1811, Efraim still signs with the postscript *ha qatan* in abbreviated form. Also Josef Henle Ullmann continued to sign with the postscript *ha katan* until 1811. He combined this formal element, however, with his signature in Latin characters. In the letters of the Ullmann siblings, the greatest number of *loshn koydesh* components by far can be found in Josef Henle's letters. The most numerous are again those in abbreviated form, usually after the person's name (such as *tihyeh/and may you live*, *l'arokh yamim tovim/and may you have a long life*, etc.), but also praising God (*barukh ha shem/praise be to God*) or submitting to his will (*im yirtseh ha shem/as God wants*). The next most frequent are the yearly religious and life cycle festivals. Also nouns such as, *hodoshim* (news), *rofe* (physician), *shevrlev* (annoyance), *tshuve* (answer), as well as others, appear repeatedly. Among the Yiddish adjectives, the word *gebensht* (blessed) appeared, which represents a Roman component of Yiddish. Also Zirle's letter to Klara contained a considerable amount of Hebraisms. They arise in the lexeme areas that we have already described in reference to Josef Henle's letters. For Zirle, in addition, Hebrew proclitica can be found functioning as prepositions and also adverbs. Moshe/Moses/Moritz Levi-Löwenberg's letters for the most part contain few Hebraisms. Once again, the abbreviated blessing formulae are preserved. Until 1816,

however, he signed his letters with the signatory wording of the classic Yiddish letter *h`q moshe ben k`h eliezer z`l*. After this time, we only find letters signed with *Moritz*.<sup>390</sup>

To briefly summarise this finding: the use of the *loshn koydesh* component in the letters of the nineteenth century is not comparable with their occurrence in the letters of the eighteenth century. In the letter language of the eighteenth century numerous Hebraisms can be found and in part they dominate entire sentences. In the nineteenth century on the contrary, they appear only as individual words (often from the religious realm) or abbreviated formulaic (religious) blessings. The letters from Josef Henle Ullmann, Zirle and also Klara and Moses, as testimonials of the second generation represented in the collection, still show numerous Hebraisms for the nineteenth century. For the younger siblings of these actors, but mainly among their children, they are used sparsely or are completely absent. The Jewish letter type of the premodern era is only shown among the older persons; a minimal echo is also found prior to 1816 for Josef Henle and Efraim Ullmann and also Moritz Löwenberg.

Nonetheless, the (thoroughly bono-petitively used) blessings are worthy of a second look. On the one hand, they dominate the *loshn koydesh* component of the letters of the nineteenth century to a great extent, and on the other, they act as the last offshoot – there where this component is in the process of disappearing altogether.<sup>391</sup> This phenomenon of the language of the Löwenberg letters of the nineteenth century brings to mind the findings of Andrew Lloyd Sunshine, drawn up on the basis of Yiddish letters from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although these psycho-ostensive formulas do not quantitatively dominate the *loshn koydesh* component, for Sunshine they nonetheless clearly identify themselves as a central pattern of spoken and written communication in Yiddish. *Yiddish language pragmatics*, says Sunshine, summarising his findings, *make the use of these [psycho-ostensive] resources virtually obligatory in many types of communication situations, especially those in which the focus on the relationship of the interlocutors is relatively high*.<sup>392</sup> With this strong presence of psycho-ostensive formulae of religious blessings in the letters of the nineteenth century, we are most likely witnessing the continued effects of a central pattern of Jewish communication

---

<sup>390</sup> This evaluation is based on a detailed list of the *loshn koydesh* components of each letter in a separate field within the databank.

<sup>391</sup> Psycho-ostensive formulae (blessings, curses, or expressions of hope and fear) are salient among the elements of phatic communion in Yiddish. They are typically inserted parenthetically into larger sentences to vent the speaker's emotions about what he or she is talking about. Sunshine, *Opening the Mail*, 184-185.

of the premodern Yiddish language in the bourgeois letter writing culture of the early decades of emancipation. This finding is clearly highlighted in the comparison with non-Jewish family correspondence from these years. A similar type of communication pattern does not appear in any non-Jewish family letter that I have had a chance to look at, and in the academic literature on these letters there is also no mention of the occurrence of this type of linguistic element.<sup>393</sup> Additionally, the fact that the children's letters are completely free of these blessing formulae and other Hebraisms is illuminating. These children's letters read like model German letters, but in Hebrew characters. That would support the conclusion that the *loshn koydesh* component, including its wealth of psycho-ostensive expressions, in the nineteenth century was no longer among the material that the Jewish writing and language instruction (through private tutors, schools or letter writers) wanted to pass on. These elements of linguistic expressive ability are first shown in the testimonies of more mature and sovereign writers, both male and female, who are capable of freeing themselves of models and writing "naturally", and in congruence with their own thoughts and feelings. That corresponds completely with the ideal of the general bourgeois letter writing culture of the early nineteenth century, although in these decades Jewish and non-Jewish writers expressed this ideal in different forms.

The letters of the Löwenberg collection are an exciting testimony to the Jewish language culture in transition. Which elements from a previous era are maintained and therefore continue to be effective in new surroundings? What is relinquished, when and how and at what point can the 'new' first break in? All of these surface phenomena of a culture simultaneously translate its deeper structure. The glance at this deeper structure, however, is

---

<sup>392</sup> Sunshine, *Opening the mail*, 185.

<sup>393</sup> Comparable non-Jewish bourgeois private letters of the era to which I refer were, among others, the eighteen letters of Johann Georg Wilam to his wife Anna Katherina Natherin in Egg (Vorarlberg), dated 1799 to 1808. Anna Katharina Natter was an innkeeper's daughter from Egg, Johann Georg Wilam was a cotton manufacturer from Au (Vorarlberg). Wilam also had business contacts with Josef Lazarus Levi (son of Lazarus Levi, brother of Moritz Levi-Löwenberg), Nathan Elias, Herz Löb Lämmle-Brettaufer and Moses Wolf Levi-Löwengard from Hohenems. Although these letters between husband and wife have much stronger business-based content than the family letters of the Ullmanns and Löwenbergs, they are nonetheless clearly classifiable as private letters and are therefore suitable for a comparison with the letters of the Löwenberg collection. The advantage of this comparative material is the local proximity to the documents of the Löwenberg finding. The Willam letters are not yet published. I thank Marianne Bereuter, who is working on the edition of these documents, for sending me those letters which she has worked on.

only available for those who are not transfixed on the results of a transformation and are able to take into view the process, the path leading to the results.

## 9) Conclusion

This micro historical study of the Levi-Löwenberg family in Hohenems and the Ullmanns in Augsburg in the early years of Emancipation offers a “close-up” of one specific segment of the history of Jewish acculturation during the transition to the Modern era. The tension between richness of detail and lack of clarity that distinguishes the close-up in photography also characterizes the historical work with private correspondence. The density of the letters of the Löwenberg collection offers a wealth of detailed information on the one hand, yet on the other, necessitates increased concentration on how the phenomenon and events are organized and how representative they are. Do phenomenon represent behavioural modes, actions, etc. of merely a single individual – or of a family perhaps – or do trends emerge which allow us to draw conclusions about more general political and social conditions and how these change? To present and use the specific potential of historical source material such as private letters and other ego documents and to then arrive at representative statements (in this case about the social, political, and cultural transformation of the early decades of the Modern Jewish era), requires that the insights gained from these sources must be accurately and densely contextualized. I confronted this challenge by weaving together richly detailed statements from personal sources close to the individuals, and a “framework knowledge” gained from other types of sources and secondary literature. This has been the actual challenge of this work in addition to the attempts to uncover the meaning of the archived texts that have not yet been studied.

What specific source value do these private letters of an inter-regionally anchored, upper class Jewish family from the southern German realm hold for example, for the language transformation that was a central process for Jewish modernism? How does the work with this source material cause a shift in the historical picture of this process, which we also know from other sources of these decades, such as the state emancipation legislation or the ideological writings of the maskilim? The Löwenberg letters cover a time span of several decades. They bring the historical focus on the event – the end result of a development – back to the process and let us recognise, for example, the differentiations and also the creativity in the language transformation in the daily language behaviour of the actors. They communicate the parallel existence of language and literature and the multilingual language abilities of this community even towards the end of the particular language situation of the Jews in Germany; and they

show that the actors could choose from a reservoir of linguistic means; that elements from more than one language were available for their individual language behaviour. In the eighteenth century we find German business letters in Latin writing for non-Jewish business partners side by side with Western Yiddish inner-Jewish business correspondence and Hebrew correspondence within a religious context (e.g, the letters from a Sofer Stam to the Rabbi in Hohenems). After the early nineteenth century, the business correspondence is (in the direct implementation of the state emancipation legislation, which prescribed the use of German for legally binding documents) already entirely in German language and writing, regardless of the community to which the correspondence partners belonged. In private correspondence, however, Hebrew writing remained dominant for decades, although used for a language very similar to German, which can mostly be described as German. The writers of these letters, both men and women, older people more often than younger, in most cases had a good command of both writing systems, which they also used in their correspondence, and in addition to German, they also had a reservoir of *loshn koydesh* elements available from Western Yiddish that they used. This selection possibility from a reservoir of linguistic elements provided the means for the writers to equip their statements with meaning well beyond the narrow informational content of the words and phrases. This is shown – to name just one of many examples – by the common use of the *loshn koydesh* salutation “Reb,” which expressed a special respect, in addition to the German salutation “Herr,” especially for elderly family members.

This source material brings to the foreground the creative act of implementing a general cultural transformation within daily practice. The actors appear as cultural beings par excellence; as beings which produce meaning at every level of their actions. They all have available a reservoir of differentiating and meaningful (able to be decoded by the group) elements (writing, words, and phrases in the diverse components of Yiddish, etc.). From these, they could create the specific language situation either gracefully or a bit awkwardly according to individual ability. Furthermore, these letters also push the central meaning of writing for linguistic transformation into the foreground, an aspect that has been accorded little respect in the research until now.<sup>394</sup> This significance of the language, which, among

---

<sup>394</sup> Nils Römer’s study is an exception. He nonetheless concentrates exclusively on the language and writing transformation in printed works. Nils Römer, *Tradition und Akkulturation: Zum Sprachwandel der Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit der Haskalah* (Münster and New York: Waxmann, 1995). The Simon Dubnow-Institute in Leipzig, is preparing a symposium that will concentrate on the Jewish writing transformation in the transition

other factors, finds expression in the consistent maintenance of Hebrew writing for a language variant which could already be described as German, is not at all surprising if we keep in mind the extreme religious connotation of writing in the pre-modern era. But even for this phenomenon, a purely pragmatic explanation is insufficient. The transformation from one writing system to another required at least one generation; which is nonetheless no explanation for why the bourgeois acculturated Rothschilds corresponded in Hebrew writing well into the second half of the nineteenth century. The framework of a pragmatic explanatory model also does not encompass the phenomenon of the letter written in two languages by the emancipated Viennese Rabbi Adolf Jelinek to his father. The Hebrew alphabet was consciously chosen as the writing for the Jewish realm; and this was – after the dissolution of the pre-modern autonomy of the Jewish community – steadily reduced to the areas of the synagogue and above all the family.

An important approach to this work is therefore the concentration on the actors and their cultural production, which should prevent the cultural transformation from appearing as a process void of humans. However, without an understanding of the “general history”<sup>395</sup> of these decades of the formation of the nation-state organised bourgeois society, the specific dynamics of the social and cultural transformation within the Jewish community would also remain hidden. The Jewish language transformation in Germany, from the particular Yiddish language to the national German language, is, namely, based on the process of general cultural homogenisation demanded by Industrial society and thus created by the nation state.

---

from the pre-modern to the modern.

<sup>395</sup> The demands of the Israeli historians Shulamit Volkov and Moshe Zimmermann, to arrange Jewish history into the “general history” of the nations in which they lived, is based – discourse analytically – on the confrontation between national Jewish references and a universal reference in terms of historical writing. See Shulamit Volkov, *Die Juden in Deutschland 1780-1918*, Enzyklopaedie Deutscher Geschichte, 16 (Munich, 1994), 72, and Moshe Zimmermann, *Die deutschen Juden: 1914-1945*, Enzyklopaedie Deutscher Geschichte, 43, (Munich, 1997), 12. In the latter, he says: *The tendency to ghettoise not only the Jews, but, rather, Jewish history as a whole, must finally be overcome. Therefore, it is entirely necessary to pay attention to following the general context and the constant interrelations between Jews and non-Jews as a segment of one and the same society.*



## Bibliography

- Albrich, Thomas, 'Zweierlei "Klassen"?: Öffentliche Schule und Privatunterricht in der jüdischen Gemeinde Hohenems während der bayerischen Herrschaft (1806-1814)', *Alemannia Studens* 4 (1994): 7-44.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 'Bildung zwischen Aufklärung und Tradition: Lazar Levi Wälsch und die Anfänge der deutschen Schule "bey der Judenschaft in Hohenems"', *Alemannia Studens* 3 (1993): 5-19.
- Alt, A. Tilo, 'Die ideologische Komponente der jiddischen Literatur und die Frage der Modernität', in Röhl and Bayerdörfer, eds. (1986), 72-80.
- Baasner, Rainer, *Briefkultur im 19. Jahrhundert*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer-Verlag, 1999.
- Battenberg, Friedrich, 'Zur Vertreibung und Neuansiedlung der Juden im Heiligen Römischen Reich', in Richarz and Rürup, eds. (1997), 9-35.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 'Zwischen Integration und Segregation: Zu den Bedingungen jüdischen Lebens in der vormodernen christlichen Gesellschaft', *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 6, no. 2 (1996): 421-54.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Das europäische Zeitalter der Juden: Zur Entwicklung einer Minderheit in der nichtjüdischen Umwelt Europas*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990.
- Baurmann, Jürgen, Hartmut Günther, and Ulrich Knoop, eds., *Homo Scribens: Perspektiven der Schriftlichkeitsforschung*, Reihe Germanistische Linguistik 134, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer-Verlag, 1993.
- Beer, Peter, 'Über die Notwendigkeit einer Sammlung von Lebensbeschreibungen gelehrter und sonst rühmlich sich auszeichnender Männer in Israel: Nebst biographischer Skizzen einiger gelehrter Israeliten in den österreichischen Staaten', *Sulamith: Eine Zeitschrift zur Beförderung der Kultur und Humanität unter den Israeliten* 1, no. 4 (1810): 234-66.
- Berthold-Hilpert, Monika, 'Emanzipation', in *Jüdisches Museum Franken (Fürth & Schmaittach)*, ed. Bernhard Purin, 33, Munich, London, and New York: Prestel, 1999.
- Birnbaum, Salomo A., *Die jiddische Sprache*, 3d ed. Hamburg: Helmut Buske-Verlag, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Yiddish: A Survey and a Grammar*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1979.
- Blackall, Eric A., *The Emergence of German as a Literary Language. 1700-1775*, 2d enl. ed., Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978.
- Brenner, Michael, 'Geschichte als Politik - Politik als Geschichte: Drei Wege jüdischer Geschichtsauffassung in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts', in *Erinnerung als Gegenwart: Jüdische Gedenkkulturen*, ed. Sabine Hödl and Eleonore Lappin, Berlin and Vienna: Philo Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000, 55-78.

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996.

Burmeister, Karl Heinz, 'Jiddisch in Hohenems', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 29-35.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Die Juden in der Vorarlberger Landesgeschichtsschreibung', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 125-32.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Die jüdische Gemeinde in Hohenems im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 15-22.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Die Hohenemser Lesegesellschaft von 1813', *Alemannia Studens* 4 (1994): 45-54.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Der Hohenemser Pferdehändler Mayer Moos Jäcklis (ca. 1715-1779)', in *Jahrbuch des Jüdischen Museums Hohenems*, Hohenems: Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 1989, 14-8.

\_\_\_\_\_, and Alois Niederstätter, eds., *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Juden in Vorarlberg vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Forschungen zur Geschichte Vorarlbergs, no. 9, Dornbirn: Vorarlberger Verlagsanstalt, 1988.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed., *Rabbiner Dr. Aron Tänzer: Gelehrter und Menschenfreund. 1871-1937*, Schriften des Vorarlberger Landesarchivs, no. 3, Bregenz: fink`s Verlag, 1987.

Burnett, Stephen G., *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies: Johannes Buxtorf (1564-1629) and Hebrew Learning in the Seventeenth Century*, Studies in the History of Christian Thought, no. 68, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996.

Chartier, Roger, Alain Boureau, and Cécile Dauphin, *Correspondence: Models of Letter-Writing from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, Princeton and New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'An Ordinary Kind of Writing: Model Letters and Letter-Writing in Ancien Régime France', in Chartier, Boureau, and Dauphin (1997), 1-23.

Cherubim, Dieter, Siegfried Grosse, and Klaus J. Mattheier, eds., *Sprache und bürgerliche Nation: Beiträge zur deutschen und europäischen Sprachgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998.

Claasen, Albrecht, 'Kommunikation: Mittelalter', in *Europäische Mentalitätengeschichte*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher, Stuttgart: Kröner, 370-90.

Coulmas, Florian, 'Zur Ökonomie der Schrift', in Baumann, Günther, and Knoop, eds. (1993), 95-112.

Dauphin, Cécile, 'Letter-Writing Manuals in the Nineteenth Century', in Chartier, Boureau, and Dauphin (1997), 112-157.

Denman, Hugh, 'Die Bedeutung des Rätaromanischen für die Entstehung der jiddischen Sprache', in *Akten des VIII. Kongresses der Internationalen Vereinigung für Germanistik (Tokyo 1990)*, Vol. 11, *Begegnung mit dem "Fremden": Grenzen - Traditionen - Vergleiche*, ed. Eijiro Iwasaki and Yoshinori Shichiji, Munich: iudicum, 1991, 520-9.

Diner, Dan, 'Cumulative Contingency: Historicizing Legitimacy in Israeli Discourse', *History and Memory: Studies in Representation of the Past* 7, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 1995): 147-67.

Dinse, Helmut, *Die Entwicklung des jiddischen Schrifttums im deutschen Sprachgebiet*, Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1974.

Döcker, Ulrike, *Die Ordnung der bürgerlichen Welt: Verhaltensideale und soziale Praktiken im 19. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt/Main: Campus Verlag, 1994.

Dotterweich, Volker, and Beate Reißner, 'Finanznot und Domizilrecht: Zur Aufnahme jüdischer Wechselhäuser in Augsburg 1803', in Kießling, ed. (1995), 282-305.

Eggers, Eckhard, *Sprachwandel und Sprachmischung im Jiddischen*, Frankfurt/Main, et al: Peter Lang, 1998.

Ehlich, Konrad, 'Rom - Reformation - Restauration: Transformationen von Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit', in Baurmann, Günther, and Knoop, eds. (1993), 177-215.

Eliav, Mordechai, 'Die Mädchenerziehung im Zeitalter der Aufklärung und der Emanzipation', in *Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Frau in Deutschland*, ed. Julius Carlebach, Berlin: Metropol-Verlag, 1993, 97-111.

Faierstein, Morris M., ed., *The "Libes Briv" of Isaac Wetzlar*, Atlanta and Georgia: Scholars Press, 1996.

Fassl, Peter, 'Die wirtschaftliche und soziale Stellung der Juden in Augsburg im 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert', in *Geschichte und Kultur der Juden in Schwaben: Wissenschaftliche Tagung der Heimatpflege des Bezirks Schwaben in Zusammenarbeit mit der Schwabenakademie Irsee*, ed. Peter Fassl, Irseer Schriften, no. 2 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1994), 129-46.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Konfession, Wirtschaft und Politik: Von der Reichsstadt zur Industriestadt. Augsburg 1750-1850*, Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der Stadt Augsburg, no. 32, Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke-Verlag, 1988.

Ferguson, Niall, *The World's Banker: The History of the House of Rothschild*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1998.

Fraenkel, Louis, and Henry Fraenkel, *Genealogical Tables of Jewish Families. 14th-20th Centuries: Forgotten Fragments of the History of the Fraenkel Family*, Vol. 2, *Genealogical Tables*, edited by Georg Simon, 2d rev. and enl. ed. Munich: K. G. Saur, 1999.

Frei, Wilhelm, *Das bunte Haus: Jüdische Erzählungen aus Hohenems*, edited by Bernhard Purin, Hard: Hecht-Verlag, 1996; repr. from *Erzählungen für die reifere Jugend und ihre Kreise*, Leipzig, 1857.

Freimark, Peter, 'Language Behaviour and Assimilation: The Situation of the Jews in Northern Germany in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century', in *24. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1979, 277-93.

Fuchs, Sabine, 'Der Aufstieg ins Bürgertum: Die wirtschaftliche und soziale Dynamik der Hohenemser Judengemeinde im 19. Jahrhundert', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 67-77.

Giesinger, Josef, 'Hohenems in der Statistik', in *Gedenkschrift Stadterhebung: Hohenems 1333-1983*, ed. Marktgemeinde Hohenems, Hohenems, 1983, 276-97.

Glanz, Rudolf, *Geschichte des niederen jüdischen Volkes in Deutschland: Eine Studie über historisches Gaunertum, Bettelwesen und Vagantentum*, New York, 1968.

Goldstein, Lisa, *Jewish Communal Life in the Duchy of Mecklenburg as Reflected in Correspondence. 1760-1769*, Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for Ordination, Hebrew Union College New York, 1993.

Gotzmann, Andreas, Rainer Liedtke, and Till van Rahden, eds., *Juden, Bürger, Deutsche: Zur Geschichte von Vielfalt und Differenz. 1800-1933*, Schriftenreihe wissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen des Leo Baeck Instituts, no. 63, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.

Graetz, Michael, 'Von einer Ideen- zu einer Sozialgeschichte der jüdischen Aufklärung', in Schochat (2000), 7-14.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'From Corporate Community to Ethnic-Religious Minority. 1750-1830', in *37. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1992, 71-82.

Grabherr, Eva, 'Objects of Diaspora', in *Journey to no End of the World: Judaica of the Gross Family Collection*, ed. Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek, Tel Aviv and Vienna: Jewish Museum Vienna, 2001, 17-25.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Ivan Landauer - Aufenthalt auf Widerruf: Die Schweizer Flüchtlingspolitik im Spiegel eines persönlichen Nachlasses', in *"Wir lebten wie sie": Jüdische Lebensgeschichten aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*, ed. Thomas Albrich, Innsbruck: Haymon-Verlag, 1999, 181-98.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed., *"... eine ganz kleine jüdische Gemeinde, die nur von den Erinnerungen lebt!"*: *Juden in Hohenems*, Hohenems: Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Die bürgerliche Gleichstellung der Juden im 19. Jahrhundert am Beispiel der Jüdischen Gemeinde Hohenems', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 36-44.

\_\_\_\_\_, Johannes Inama, and Bernhard Purin, 'Auswahlbibliographie zur Geschichte der Juden in Vorarlberg', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 169-97.

\_\_\_\_\_, '"Erinnerung ist Erinnerung an etwas Vergessenes": Die Wiederentdeckung der jüdischen Geschichte in einer Kleinstadt der österreichischen Provinz', in *2. Wiener Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte, Kultur und Museumswesen*, Vienna: Verlag Christian Brandstätter, 1995-96/5756, 57-77.

Graupe, H. M., *Die Statuten der drei Gemeinden Altona, Hamburg und Wandsbeck*, Hamburg, 1973.

Greussing, Kurt, 'Ein Jüdisches Museum in Hohenems: Das Konzept der Ausstellung und die Geschichte des Projektes', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 138-45.

Grözinger, Karl E., ed., *Sprache und Identität im Judentum*, Jüdische Kultur, no. 4, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998.

Grossmann, Jeffrey A., *The Discourse on Yiddish in Germany: From the Enlightenment to the Second Empire*, Rochester and Suffolk: Camden House, 2000.

Gruber, Hans, *Kollektivbiographische Datenbank zur Bevölkerung der Jüdischen Gemeinde Hohenems 1780-1900*, Unpublished Report, Feldkirch, 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Von Häusern und Menschen: Zur Sozial- und Besitzgeschichte des Jüdischen Viertels in Hohenems im 19. Jahrhundert*, unpublished Report, Hohenems, 1994.

Güdemann, Moritz, *Geschichte des Erziehungswesens und der Cultur der abendländischen Juden während des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit*, Vol. 1, *Geschichte des Erziehungswesens und der Cultur der Juden in Frankreich und Deutschland von der Begründung der jüdischen Wissenschaft in diesen Ländern bis zur Vertreibung der Juden aus Frankreich (X.-XIV. Jahrhundert)*, Amsterdam, 1966; repr. Wien, 1880.

Guggenheim-Grünberg, Florence, 'Die Surbtaler Pferdehändlersprache', *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 100 (1981): 43-55.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'The Horse Dealers Language of the Swiss Jews in Eendingen and Lengnau', in *The Field of Yiddish: Studies in Yiddish Language, Folklore, and Literature*, ed. Uriel Weinreich, New York: Linguistic Circle of New York, 1954, 48-62.

Habermas, Jürgen, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1996; 1st ed., 1962.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Der deutsche Idealismus der jüdischen Philosophie', in *Philosophisch-politische Profile*, ed. Jürgen Habermas, 2d enl. ed. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1991, 39-64.

Habermas, Rebekka, *Frauen und Männer des Bürgertums: Eine Familiengeschichte (1750-1850)*, Bürgertum. Beiträge zur europäischen Gesellschaftsgeschichte, no. 14, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000.

Harburger, Theodor, *Die Inventarisierung der jüdischen Kunst- und Kulturdenkmäler in Bayern*, 3 Vols., Fürth and Jerusalem: Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People Jerusalem and Jüdisches Museum Franken-Fürth & Schnaittach, 1998.

Harshav, Benjamin, *Language in Time of Revolution*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_, *The meaning of Yiddish*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990.

- Hirsch, Hans K., 'Zur Situation der Juden in Augsburg während der Emanzipation', in Kießling, ed. (1995), 306-23.
- Hoffmann, Christhard, 'Jüdische Geschichtswissenschaft in Deutschland 1918-1938: Konzepte - Schwerpunkte - Ergebnisse', in *Wissenschaft des Judentums. Anfänge der Judaistik in Europa*, ed. Julius Carlebach, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992, 132-52.
- Jeggle, Utz, 'Nachrede: Erinnerungen an die Dorfjuden heute', in Richarz and Rürup, eds. (1997), 399-411.
- Jelavich, Peter, 'Methode? Welche Methode?', in *Kultur & Geschichte: Neue Einblicke in eine alte Beziehung*, ed. Christoph Conrad and Martina Kessel, Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 1998, 141-59.
- Jersch-Wenzel, Stefi, 'Legal Status and Emancipation', in Meyer, ed. (1997), 7-15.
- Jersch-Wenzel, Stefi, 'Population Shifts and Occupational Structure', in Meyer, ed. (1997), 50-89.
- Kaplan, Marion A., 'Freizeit - Arbeit: Geschlechterräume im deutsch-jüdischen Bürgertum 1870-1914', in *Bürgerinnen und Bürger*, ed. Ute Frevert, Göttingen, 1988, 157-74.
- Kaschuba, Wolfgang, 'German "Bürgerlichkeit" after 1800: Culture as a Symbolic Practice', in Kocka and Mitchell, eds. (1993), 392-422.
- Katz, Dovid, 'East and West: Khes and Shin and the Origin of Yiddish', in *Keminchag Ashkenas u-Polin: Sefer Jovel le Chone Shmeruk*, ed. Israel Bartal, Ezra Mendelsohn, and Chava Turniansky, Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 1993, 9-37.
- Kaufmann, Uri R., 'Das jüdische Schulwesen auf dem Lande: Baden und Elsaß im Vergleich. 1770-1848', in Richarz and Rürup, eds. (1997), 293-326.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 'Die Hohenemser Rabbiner Abraham Kohn und Aron Tänzer und die jüdischen Bestrebungen ihrer Zeit', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 45-57.
- Kempter, Klaus, 'Adolf Jellinek und die jüdische Emanzipation: Der Prediger der Leipziger jüdischen Gemeinde in der Revolution 1848/49', *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 8, no. 1 (1998): 179-91.
- Kießling, Rolf, ed., *Judengemeinden in Schwaben im Kontext des Alten Reiches*, Colloquia Augustana, no. 2, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1995.
- Klayman-Cohen, Israela, *Die hebräische Komponente im Westjiddischen am Beispiel der Memoiren der Glückel von Hameln*, Jidische Shtudies, no. 4, Hamburg: Buske-Verlag, 1994.
- Knoop, Ulrich, 'Zum Verhältnis von geschriebener und gesprochener Sprache: Anmerkungen aus historischer Sicht', in Baurmann, Günther, and Knoop, eds. (1993), 217-29.
- Kobler, Franz, ed., *Letters of Jews through the Ages: From Biblical Times to the Middle of the Eighteenth Century*, 2 Vols, Ararat Publishing Society, East and West Library, 1952.

Kocka, Jürgen, and Allan Mitchell, eds., *Bourgeois Society in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1993.

Landau, Alfred, and Bernhard Wachstein, eds., *Jüdische Privatbriefe aus dem Jahre 1619*, Wien and Leipzig: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1911.

*Landjudentum im Süddeutschen- und Bodenseeraum: Wissenschaftliche Tagung zur Eröffnung des Jüdischen Museums Hohenems*, Forschungen zur Geschichte Vorarlbergs, no. 11, Dornbirn: Vorarlberger Verlagsanstalt, 1992.

Lowenstein, Steven M., 'Suggestions for Study of the Mediene based on German, French and English Models', *Studia Rosenthaliana: Journal for Jewish Literature and History in the Netherlands and related Subjects* 19, no. 1 (May 1985): 342-54.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'The readership of Mendelssohn's Bible translation', in *53. Hebrew Union College Annual*, Cincinnati/OH: Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion, 1982, 197-213.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'The Yiddish Written Word in Nineteenth-Century Germany', in *24. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1979, 179-92.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'The Pace of Modernisation of German Jewry in the Nineteenth Century', in *21. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1976, 41-56.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Results of Atlas Investigations among Jews of Germany', in *The Field of Yiddish: Studies in Language, Folklore, and Literature*, Vol. 3, ed. Marvin I. Herzog, Wita Ravid, and Uriel Weinreich, London, The Hague and Paris: Mouton & Co., 1969, 16-35.

*Ludwig, Otto, 'Alphabetisierung und Volksschulunterricht im 19. Jahrhundert: Der Beitrag der Schreib- und Stilübungen'*, in *Cherubim, Grosse, and Mattheier, eds. (1998), 55-70.*

Marramao, Giacomo, *Die Säkularisierung der westlichen Welt*, Frankfurt/Main: Insel Verlag, 1999; 1st ed., Italian, Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1994.

Mendelssohn, Moses, *Gesammelte Schriften. Jubiläumsausgabe*, Vol. 23, *Dokumente II: Die frühen Mendelssohn-Biographien*, edited by Michael Albrecht, Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1998.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Gesammelte Schriften. Jubiläumsausgabe*, Vols. 9/1 and 9/2, *Schriften zum Judentum III/1 und III/2: Pentateuchübersetzung in deutscher Umschrift*, edited by Werner Weinberg, Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Gesammelte Schriften. Jubiläumsausgabe*, Vol. 19, *Hebräische Schriften III: Briefwechsel*, edited by Haim Borodianski (Bar-Dayan), Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1974.

Meyer, Michael A., ed., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, Vol. 2, *Emancipation and Acculturation. 1780-1871*, by Michael Brenner, Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, and Michael A. Meyer, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

Meyer, Michael A., 'The Problematic Acquisition of German Culture', in Meyer, ed. (1997), 199-208.

Meyer, Michael A., ed., *Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit*, Vol. 1, *Tradition und Aufklärung. 1600-1780*, by Mordechai Breuer and Michael Graetz. München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1996.

Münch, Paul, *Lebensformen der Frühen Neuzeit*, Frankfurt/Main and Berlin: Propyläen, 1992.

Nickisch, Reinhard M. G., *Brief*, Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1991.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Die Stilprinzipien in den deutschen Briefstellern des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts. Mit einer Bibliographie zur Briefschreiblehre (1474-1800)*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969.

Novershtern, Abraham, 'From the Folk to the Academics: Study and Research of Yiddish after the Holocaust', in *Encyclopedia Judaica Yearbook 1988/89*, Jerusalem: Keter Publishing, 1989, 14-24.

Och, Gunnar, 'Jüdische Leser und jüdisches Lesepublikum im 18. Jahrhundert: Ein Beitrag zur Akkulturationsgeschichte des deutschen Judentums', in *Menora* 2 (1991), 298-336.

Offe, Sabine, *Ausstellungen, Einstellungen, Entstellungen: Jüdische Museen in Deutschland und Österreich*, Berlin and Vienna: Philo Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Verbaute Erinnerung: Orte jüdischer Geschichte nach 1945', in *Museum im Kopf*, ed. Roswitha Muttenthaler, Herbert Posch, and Eva S.-Sturm, *Museum zum Quadrat*, no. 7, Vienna: Turia und Kant, 1997, 11-31.

Peter, Norbert, 'Zeittafel zur Geschichte von Hohenems', *Gedenkschrift Stadterhebung. Hohenems 1333-1983*, ed. Marktgemeinde Hohenems, Hohenems, 1983, 25-35.

Pludwinski, Izzy, 'The experience of the Hebrew scribe', *The Scribe: Journal of the Society of Scribes and Illuminators* 46 (Summer 1989): 8-11.

Pollack, Hermann, *Jewish Folkways in Germanic Lands. 1648-1806*, Cambridge/MA and London: M. I. T. Press, 1971.

Purin, Bernhard, *Die Juden von Sulz: Eine jüdische Landgemeinde in Vorarlberg 1676-1744*, *Studien zur Geschichte und Gesellschaft Vorarlbergs*, no. 9, Bregenz: Vorarlberger Autoren Gesellschaft, 1991.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Der Hohenemser Judenfriedhof im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', *Montfort: Vierteljahresschrift für Geschichte und Gegenwart Vorarlbergs* 41, no. 3/4 (1989): 232-8.

\_\_\_\_\_, '"Der Teufel hat die Juden ins Land getragen": Juden und Judenfeindschaft in Hohenems 1617-1647', in *Antisemitismus in Vorarlberg: Regionalstudie zur Geschichte einer Weltanschauung*, ed. Werner Dreier, *Studien zur Geschichte und Gesellschaft Vorarlbergs*, no. 4, Bregenz: Vorarlberger Autoren-gesellschaft, 1988, 65-83.



Requate, Jörg, 'Kommunikation: Neuzeit', in *Europäische Mentalitätsgeschichte: Hauptthemen in Einzeldarstellungen*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher, Stuttgart: Kröner, 1993, 390-9.

Richarz, Monika, and Reinhard Rürup, eds., *Jüdisches Leben auf dem Lande: Studien zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte*, Schriftenreihe wissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen des Leo Baeck Instituts, no. 56, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Ländliches Judentum als Problem der Forschung', in Richarz and Rürup, eds. (1997), 1-8.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Die Entdeckung der Landjuden', in *Landjudentum* (1992), 11-21.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Emancipation and Continuity: German Jews in the Rural Economy', in *Revolution and Evolution: 1848 in German-Jewish History*, ed. Werner E. Mosse, Arnold Paucker, and Reinhard Rürup, Schriftenreihe wissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen des Leo Baeck Instituts, no. 39, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981, 95-115.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed, *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland*, Vol. 1, *Selbstzeugnisse zur Sozialgeschichte 1780-1871*, Nördlingen: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed, *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland*, Vol. 2, *Selbstzeugnisse zur Sozialgeschichte des Kaiserreiches*, Nördlingen: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1976.

Ries, Rotraud, 'Hofjuden als Vorreiter?: Bedingungen und Kommunikationen. Gewinn und Verlust auf dem Weg in die Moderne', in *Ökonomische Potenz und Interkulturalität: Bedeutungen und Wandlungen der mitteleuropäischen Hofjudenschaft auf dem Weg in die Moderne*, ed. Friedrich Battenberg and Rotraud Ries, Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau-Verlag, 2001 (in press).

Röll, Walter, and Hans-Peter Bayerdörfer, eds., *Akten des VII. Internationalen Germanisten-Kongresses (Göttingen 1985)*, Vol. 5, *Auseinandersetzungen um jiddische Sprache und Literatur*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer-Verlag, 1986.

Römer, Nils, *Tradition und Akkulturation: Zum Sprachwandel der Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit der Haskalah*, Münster and New York: Waxmann, 1995.

Rohrbacher, Stefan, 'Die Entstehung der jüdischen Landgemeinden in der Frühneuzeit', in *Mappot ... gesegnet, der da kommt: Das Band der jüdischen Tradition/Mappot ... blessed be who comes: The Band of Jewish Tradition*, ed. Annette Weber, Evelyn Friedlander, and Fritz Armbruster, Osnabrück: Secolo-Verlag, 1997, 35-41.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Stadt und Land: Zur "inneren" Situation der süd- und westdeutschen Juden in der Frühneuzeit', in Richarz and Rürup, eds. (1997), 37-58.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Medinat Schwaben: Jüdisches Leben in einer süddeutschen Landschaft in der Frühneuzeit', in Kießling, ed. (1995), 80-109.

Ruppin, Arthur, *Die Juden in der Gegenwart: Eine sozialwissenschaftliche Studie*, Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1904.

Rürup, Reinhard, 'The Torturous and Thorny Path to Legal Equality: „Jews Laws,, and Emancipatory Legislation in Germany from the Late Eighteenth Century', in *31. Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1986, 3-34.

Scheffknecht, Werner, 'Entwicklung des Siedlungsbildes', in *Hohenems: Natur und Wirtschaft*, ed. Marktgemeinde Hohenems, Hohenems, 1983, 51-61.

Schikorsky, Isa, 'Vom Dienstmädchen zur Professorengattin: Probleme bei der Aneignung bürgerlichen Sprachverhaltens und Sprachbewusstseins', in Cherubim, Grosse, and Mattheier, eds. (1998), 234-58.

Schmelzer, Menahem, 'Hebrew Printing and Publishing in Germany. 1650-1750', *33. Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1988, 369-83.

Schochat, Asriel, *Der Ursprung der jüdischen Aufklärung in Deutschland*, Campus Judaica, no. 14, Frankfurt/Main and New York: Campus Verlag, 2000; 1st ed., Hebrew, Jerusalem 1960.

Schulze, Winfried, 'Schlußbemerkungen zur Konferenz über "Ego-Dokumente"', in *Ego-Dokumente: Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte*, ed. Winfried Schulze, Selbstzeugnisse der Neuzeit, no. 2, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1996, 343-5.

Simon, Bettina, *Jiddische Sprachgeschichte: Versuch einer neuen Grundlegung*, rev. ed. Frankfurt/Main: Jüdischer Verlag, 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Judendeutsch und Jiddisch', in *Die Juden in ihrer mittelalterlichen Umgebung*, ed. Alfred Ebenbauer and Klaus Zatloukal, Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau-Verlag, 1991, 251-60.

Sirat, Colette, 'Hebraic Signs: Calligraphies and typographies', in *Hebraic Signs - Signes Hébraïques: Calligraphies & Typographies*, ed. Jacques Damase, 6-7, Paris, 1990.

Sorkin, David, *Moses Mendelssohn and the Religious Enlightenment*, London: Peter Halban, 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Transformation of German Jewry. 1780-1840*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Sunshine, Andrew Lloyd, *Opening the Mail: Interpersonal Aspects of Discourse and Grammar in Middle Yiddish Letters*, Ph.D. diss., Columbia University New York, 1991.

Tänzer, Aron, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems*, Meran, 1905; repr., Bregenz: Verlagsbuchhandlung H. Lingenhölle & Co., 1982.

Timm, Erika, 'Wörtlichkeit als Quelle sprachlicher Kreativität', in *Westjiddisch: Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit*, ed. Astrid Starck, Aarau: Verlag Sauerländer, 1994, 70-7.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Zwei neu aufgefundene jiddische Briefe von 1602 und ihre Bedeutung für die Sozial- und Sprachgeschichte', *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 4, no. 2 (1994): 449-68.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Graphische und phonische Struktur des Westjiddischen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Zeit um 1600*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer-Verlag, 1987.

\_\_\_\_\_, and Hermann Süß (Cooperation), *Yiddish Literature in a Franconian Genizah: A Contribution to the Printing and Social History of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Jerusalem: Akademon Press, 1988.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Der "Knick" in der Entwicklung des Frühneuhochdeutschen aus jiddistischer Sicht', in Röhl and Bayerdörfer, eds. (1986), 20-7.

Toch, Michael, 'Die ländliche Wirtschaftstätigkeit der Juden im frühmodernen Deutschland', in Richarz and Rürup, eds. (1997), 59-67.

Tóth, István György, 'Literate Obrigkeit und illiterates Volk: Beobachtungen zum Leben der Bauern und Adligen in Westungarn im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', in *Symbolische Formen, Medien, Identität. Jahrbuch 1989/90 des Sonderforschungsbereichs "Übergänge und Spannungsfelder zwischen Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit"*, ed. Wolfgang Raible, Script Oralia, no. 37, Tübingen: Gunter Narr-Verlag, 131-46.

Toury, Jacob, 'Neue hebräische Veröffentlichungen zur Geschichte der Juden im deutschen Lebenskreise', *Leo Baeck Institut Bulletin* 4, no. 13-16 (1961): 55-73.

Ullmann, Sabine, *Nachbarschaft und Konkurrenz: Juden und Christen in Dörfern der Markgrafschaft Burgau 1650 bis 1750*, Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, no. 151, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Zwischen Fürstehöfen und Gemeinde: Die jüdische Hoffaktorenfamilie Ulman in Pfersee während des 18. Jahrhunderts', *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben* 90 (1998): 159-85.

Volkov, Shulamith, 'The "Verbürgerlichung" of the Jews as a Paradigm', in Kocka and Mitchell, eds. (1993), 367-91.

Walser, Harry, "'Erhebend für den Freund des Fortschritts'", in *Landjudentum* (1992), 124-38.

Wegscheider, Ilse, 'Leben und Werk von Dr. Aron Tänzer', in Burmeister, ed., (1987), 42-71.

Weinberg, Werner, 'Language Questions Relating to Moses Mendelssohn's Pentateuch Translation', in *105. Hebrew Union College Annual*, 197-242, Cincinnati/OH: Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion, 1984.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Die Bezeichnung Jüdischdeutsch: Eine Neubewertung', *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 100 (1981), *Sonderheft Jiddisch*: 253-90.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Die Reste des Jüdischdeutschen*, Stuttgart et al: Kohlhammer-Verlag, 1969.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'A Plagiarism of an Eighteenth-Century Judeo-German Dictionary', *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 6 (1962/64): 103-10.

Weinreich, Max, *History of the Yiddish Language*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980; 1st ed., Yiddish, 1973.

Weissberg, Josef, 'Sprachentfaltung: Zu M. Weinreichs „Geschichte der jiddischen Sprache"', *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 99 (1980): 100-10.

Welti, Ludwig, 'Die Entwicklung von Hohenems zum reichsfreien Residenzort', in *Hohenems: Geschichte*, ed. Marktgemeinde Hohenems, Hohenems, 1975, 17-170.

Weltsch, Erik, 'Die Geschichte des Vereins "Jüdisches Museum Hohenems"', in Grabherr, ed. (1996), 133-37.

Wexler, Paul, 'Reconceptualizing the Genesis of Yiddish in the Light of its Non-native Components', in *Origins of the Yiddish Language*, ed. Dovid Katz, Winter Studies in Yiddish, no. 1, Oxford et al: Pergamon Press, 1987, 135-42.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Ashkenazic German. 1760-1895', *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 30 (1981): 119-30.

Wiesemann, Falk, ed., *Genizah: Hidden Legacies of the German Village Jews/Genisa: Verborgenes Erbe der deutschen Landjuden*, Wien: Bertelsmann, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Zum Religionswesen der Landjuden in Bayern im 19. Jahrhundert', in *Landjudentum* (1992), 114-22.

Zafren, Herbert C., 'Early Yiddish Typography', *Jewish Book Annual* 44 (1986/87/5747): 106-17.

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Variety in the Typography of Yiddish. 1535-1635', in 53. *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Cincinnati/OH: Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion, 1982, 137-63.

**Appendix**

## Document 1) Inventory of a Library<sup>396</sup>

vos vir fir bikher hoben, vi folgt!

[1] rikhart der 3te<sup>397</sup> eyn drourshbil in 5. agten

[2] der revers, eyn lushtshbil in 5. -

[3] der rudolf fon mohelli odr leydenshaft und tayshung. Trouurshbil 3. -

[4] giannetta zan fiorentsa / shaushbil in 5. -

tsuzamen die 4 shtik in eyn bukh

[5] der familien tsvist durkh falshe varnungen und argvohn in 5. -

[6] ver ist nun bedrogn? odr der shbanishe braytigam / lushtshbil 5. -

[7] monteskie: odr di unbekande vohhtaht shaushbil 3. -

[8] bedrug ous laykhtzin eyn lushtshbil in 1. -

tsuzamen aukh in 1 bukh.

[9] der ga:sterdrug! odr ritter fon elzenburg und zaynh shehne ma[-]te. grayltaten des 18ten<sup>398</sup> yarhundert 3. -

[10] koztis rayse fon morgen gegn mitag. eyne raysebshraybung f/ekarthousn

[11] misfershtendnis / shaushbil in 4. agtn

[12] vilhelm tell eyn shaushbil fun shillr

[13] der boltres = abend, eyn shvank 2. -

[14] luize fon h\*\*\* odr der driumpf der unshuld eyne rirende geshikhte fon dem ferfasr des a:genzin des gliks 2 ta:l

[15] ibr eyne endtekung nakh der alle neye kritik der ra:nen fernunft [-] eyne eltere endberlikh gemakht verdn sol fun kant

[16] gema:nmitsge oufzetse tsur beferterung der gezuntha:t und des vohlzayns

[17] zemtlikhe boetishe verke fun *F. B.* aukh in 2 band

---

<sup>396</sup> JMH LB, So 99: Titles 1-35 transliterated from Hebrew script; titles 36-46 in Latin cursive script; numbering in square brackets inserted by me. The Yiddish transliteration follows the YIVO system as laid out inter alia in Uriel Weinreich, *Modern English-Yiddish Yiddish-English Dictionary* (New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research & McGraw-Hill, 1968), xxi. The vocalic values are those of Western Yiddish as described in Erika Timm, *Graphische und phonische Struktur des Westjiddischen* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1987) and Vera Baviskar, Marvin Herzog et al., *The Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry*, Vol. 1, Historical and Theoretical Foundations (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992).

<sup>397</sup> Latin cursive script.

<sup>398</sup> Latin cursive script.

- [18] das shiksal der frau yustitia bay allen hefen eurobens / roman
- [19] ka:sr albrekhts dot / trourshbil
- [20] kants kleyne shriften
- [21] izrael! odr der edli yude / vahre geshikhte f. vitte
- [22] gevalt der libe! in ertselungen in 1 felt 2 ta:l
- [23] ibr den umgang mit menshen fun knige der 1te<sup>399</sup> felt in 3 ta:l
- [24] haynrikh der levi in geshikhte 2 tha:l
- [25] fetrlukher raht fir mayneh tokhter / gegnshtik tsu tehobron der ervakzenen vayblikhen yugend gevitmet fun kambe
- [26] ztsenen und ertselungen ous der nayen menshenvelt fir kindr fun 12 bis 14 yahrn fon [-genau
- [27] menshenhas und raye. ayn shaushbil in 5. agten
- [28] philozofishe oufsetse fun vilhelm yeruzalem geshribne
- [29] ritualgezetse der yuden bedrefnd erbshaften fun mozes mendlzon und hirshl levin obrabinr ous barlin
- [30] rabeners brifen fon im zelbst gezamlt.
- [31] 2 frantsezishe gramer
- [32] 1 braktishe frantseshe grammatik fir shulen und brifatuntrrikht
- [33] 1 frantsezissh bukh
- [34] 1 vinerish kokh-bukh felt
- [35] 1 taytshe [-]yitish gebetbukh
- [36] Angelika v. W. 2 Bücher
- [37] Englmans Jahrbuch 1 Buch
- [38] Vetter Michels Launen 1 deto
- [39] Anekdoten u Erzählungen 1 deto
- [40] Der Kern der Weißheit 1 deto
- [41] Briefe einer reisenden Dame
- [42] Hufelands Beförderung der Gesundheit 1 Buch
- [43] Geographisch-statistische Beschreibung aller Staaten u Nationen hat 2 theile 1 fundbuch
- [44] Die stecken gebliebene Kutsche. Eine Geschichte
- [45] München u seine Umgebungen 1 buch
- [46] Züge teutschen Muthes u Hoffens nebst einigen Gedichten v. Sommerlatt

---

<sup>399</sup> Latin cursive script.

- [1] Christian Felix Weiße, *Richard der Dritte. Ein Trauerspiel in 5 Akten* (Leipzig: Dyck, 1765).<sup>400</sup>
- [2] Johann Friedrich Jünger, *Der Revers. Ein Lustspiel* (Leipzig: Dyck, 1788).
- [3] *Rudolph von Mohelli oder Leidenschaft und Täuschung. Ein Trauerspiel in 3 Akten* (Breslau, 1789).
- [4] *Gianetta San Fiorenzo. Ein Schauspiel in 5 Akten* (Altona: Hammerich, 1789).
- [5] *Familienzwist durch falsche Warnung und Argwohn. Ein Lustspiel* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1789).
- [6] Johann Christoph Kaffka (J. Ch. Engelmann), *Wer ist nun betrogen? Oder der spanische Bräutigam. Lustspiel* (Breslau: Gutsch, 1789).
- [7] Wolfgang Heribert Reichsfreiherr von Dalberg, *Montesquieu oder die unbekannte Wohltat. Ein Schauspiel in 3 Handlungen* (Mannheim, 1787).
- [8] *Betrug aus Leichtsinne. Ein Lustspiel in einem Aufzuge. Nach dem Französischen, in Deutsche Schaubühne*, Vol. 12, 1788.
- [9] [Presumably] K. H. Spieß, *Des Ritters Benno von Elsenburg Reisen und Abentheuer im Jahr 1225. Eine höchst wunderbare und doch keine Geistergeschichte*, 3 Vols. (Leipzig: Voß, 1795/96).
- [10] Karl von Eckartshausen, *Kostiz Reise von Morgen gegen Mittag mit wichtigen Bruchstücken der Wahrheit belegt, und anwendbar für die Gegenwart und die Zukunft* (Donauwörth: Brunner, 1795).
- [11] Johann Heinrich Zschokke, *Mißverständnis. Ein Schauspiel in 4 Aufzügen* (Augsburg: Jenisch u. St., 1798).
- [12] Friedrich Schiller, *Wilhelm Tell. Trauerspiel* (Tübingen: Cotta, 1804).
- [13] Karl Gottlob Cramer, *Der Polterabend. Ein Schwank*, 2 Vols. (Arnstadt and Rudolfstadt: Langbein and Krüger, 1800).
- [14] Adam Beuvis, *Louise von H\*\*\* oder der Triumph der Unschuld. Eine rührende Geschichte von dem Verfasser des Eigensinns des Glücks*, 2 Vols. (Berlin and Leipzig: Decker, 1775).
- [15] Immanuel Kant, *Über eine Entdeckung, nach der alle neue Kritik der reinen Vernunft entbehrlich gemacht werden soll* (Königsberg, 1790).

---

<sup>400</sup> As far as it has been possible to identify the titles of the inventory they correspond to the following titles. The bibliographical information is taken from *Gesamtverzeichnis deutschsprachiger Schriften 1700-1900* (München et al.: K. G. Saur, 1982), *British Museum. General Catalogue of Printed Books* (London, 1965), and the catalogue of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (Vienna).



- [16] Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland, *Gemeinnützige Aufsätze zur Beförderung der Gesundheit und des Wohlseins und vernünftige medizinische Aufklärung* (Leipzig, 1762).
- [18] Friedrich von der Trenck, *Das Schicksal der Frau Justitia bei allen Höfen Europens. Roman und Gedichte* (Berlin: Vierweg, 1787).
- [19] Franz Regis Crauer, *Kaiser Albrechts Tod. Trauerspiel* (Basel, 1780).
- [20] *Kant`s kleine Schriften*, ohne K. Vorwissen gedruckt (Neuwied, 1793).
- [21] Karl Heinrich Gottfried Witte, *Israel oder der edle Jude. Erzählungen* (o. O., 1804).
- [22] August Lafontaine, *Die Gewalt der Liebe in Erzählungen*, 4 Vols. (Berlin: Hitzig, 1797).
- [23] Adolf Freiherr von Knigge, *Über den Umgang mit Menschen*, 3d ed. in 3 Vols. (Hannover: Ritscher, 1790).
- [24] Wilhelm Finck, *Heinrich der Löwe. Eine dramatisirte Geschichte*, 2 Vols. (Leipzig: Hamann, 1791).
- [25] Joachim Heinrich Campe, *Väterlicher Rat für meine Tochter. Ein Gegenstück zum Theophron. Der erwachsenen weiblichen Jugend gewidmet* (Braunschweig: Schulbuchhandlung, 1789).
- [27] August von Kotzebue: *Menschenhaß und Reue. Schauspiel in 5 Aufzügen* (Leipzig: Kummer, 1797).
- [28] *Karl Wilhelm Jerusalem's philosophische Aufsätze*, edited by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (Braunschweig, 1776).
- [29] Moses Mendelssohn, ed., *Ritualgesetze der Juden. Betreffend Erbschaften, Vormundschaftssachen, Testamente und Ehesachen, in so weit sie das Mein u. Dein angehen. Entworfen von dem Verfasser der philosophischen Schriften, auf Veranlassung und unter Aufsicht R. Hirschel-Lewin, Oberrabbiner zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1778).
- [30] *Gottlieb Wilhelm Rabeners freundschaftliche Briefe. Von ihm selbst gesammelt und nach seinem Tode nebst einer Nachricht von seinem Leben und Schriften*, edited by Christian Felix Weiße (Leipzig: Dyck, 1772).
- [40] Joseph Richter, *Kern menschlicher Weisheit und Klugheit nebst einem Anhang von nöthigen Gesundheitsregeln. Ein Handbuch für alle Menschen* (Wien, 1800).
- [41] Anna Helene von Krolk, *Briefe einer reisenden Dame aus der Schweiz* (Straßburg, 1786).
- [42] Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland, cf. [16].
- [44] *Die steckengebliebene Kutsche. Eine Geschichte nach Marivaux* (Wien, 1794).
- [46] Christoph Vollrath von Sommerlatt, *Züge teutschen Muthes und Hochsinns*, 2 Vols. (Basel: Schweighäuser, 1820).

## Document 2) Letter

**Wilhelmine Levi-Löwenberg/München to her mother Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems, 13. März 1819<sup>401</sup>**

Madam

Klara Löwenberg

Hohenems

München den 13. März 1819<sup>402</sup>

liebe mutter lay`t<sup>403</sup>!

der liebe foter iberraykhte mir bay zayner ankunft hier ihr shätsbares<sup>404</sup> briefkhen fon 6. d. m. dos mikh iber ihr vohlzayn beruhigt. eyn glaykhes hobe ikh die ehre ihnen fon mir ferzikhern tsu können<sup>405</sup>. dos kla:d, velkhes zie mir tsu shiken die gite hatten, izt zehr schön und ikh danke ihnen dafir ferbindlikhst. der purim izt mir hier tsvar shtill, ohne ball, ober dokh rekht angenehm fershtrikhen. mir vohren bay den herren gebrider verthaym bis shpät in die nakht rekht fergnigt bayzammen. liebe mutter ihr vunsh mikh bald tsu zehen izt zehr shma:khelhaft fir mikh, ober ikh ferzikhere sie, dos aukh ikh mir nikhts enttsikkender denken kan, als ven mir die freyde gegönt väre, zie beste mutter umormen tsu können. indes izt mir hieziger oufenthalt fon maynen thayern eltern tsu maynem vohle<sup>406</sup> angeviesen, und in der erfiling ihres guten villens beshteht das glick und die freyde ihrer dankbaren trayen tokhter

---

<sup>401</sup> JMH LB, B 154: Letter in Hebrew script; Date, signature, and address in Latin cursive script. For the Yiddish transliteration, see document 1. The transliteration of the loshn koydesh words and phrases follows the system as laid out in the Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, 1972).

<sup>402</sup> Latin cursive script.

<sup>403</sup> *learekh yomim tauvim* (may s/he live long and well).

<sup>404</sup> ä = *alef* with *tseyre*.

<sup>405</sup> ö = *alef* with *tseyre*.

<sup>406</sup> o = *alef* with *komets*.

Wilhelmine Löwenberg

liebe geshvister! ikh grise eykh mit aller hertslikhkayt eyner trayen shvester und den ha:sesten  
vinshen fir ayer vohlzayn. dir lieber eduart bekenne ikh den oufrikhtigsten dank fir dos  
ibershikte kla:nod. o, du hertsensguter bruder! du trennest dikh fon daynem  
lieblingsshpieltsayg um mir bevayse dayner tsärtlikhkayt tsu geben. ikh vays es tsu shätsen  
und ferblaybe mit ra:nster liebe ayre traye shvester.

## Document 3) Letter

**Ber Ulmo/Pfersee an seine Nichte Kileh und deren Mann Moritz Levi-  
Löwenberg/Hohenems, 24. September 1826<sup>407</sup>**

Herrn Moritz Löwenberg  
Hohenems

hokhems! b`h, pfersee y`t l` [---]<sup>408</sup> 586 l`q; 24te 7br. 1826<sup>409</sup>

shl`sh [---] lm`t (?) yedidi haqatsin [---] k`h moshe levinberg [---] e`z sh`b i`kh hayakrah  
haqatsinah maraṭ qileh ti` vebn[-] shi`veti`!<sup>410</sup>

ob zie shohn shetsbahre fraynde uns shohn zehr lang nikht beehrt hoben mit ihre uns shtets  
angnehms shraybn, zo zind vir yedokh nikht vinigr in shtendigr nakhfrag ihres zemtikher  
vohlbfindn und mit filn fergnign fernemin vir derin guti gezondha:t, und vohl er gihn, velkh  
got loyb bay uns und unzre libeh kindr aukh nikht manglt, got b`h<sup>411</sup> shenkti uns nur besri  
guti tsaytn in gesheft gang der leydr zehr empfindlikh izt bay unzri tsahlraykkeh familien  
hsh`y (?) mir vollin tsu dem nayan yahr ds besti hofin, dize tsaylin kauzihren virklikh des  
halb, ihnen libe fer ehrungs virdigeh fraynd lay`t<sup>412</sup> tsu dem bevor shtehndin yohrs veksil tsu  
gratulihrn. Der almekhtgi b`h gebi ihnn ksivah vekhsimah tauve<sup>413</sup> und shenki ihnn mit dern

---

<sup>407</sup> JMH LB, B 61: Letter in Hebrew script; Jewish date in Hebrew; Common date and address in Latin-cursive script. For the Yiddish transliteration, see document 1. The transliteration of the loshn koydesh words and phrases follows the system as laid out in the Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, 1972).

<sup>408</sup> [---] indicates indecipherable.

<sup>409</sup> Jewish date in Hebrew: *Hohenems! Blessed be God, Pfersee, 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month [---] in the year 586 minor era.* Common date in Latin-cursive script and Arabic numbers.

<sup>410</sup> *Peace to you, peace [---], my friend and relative, the noble honourable Herr Moshe Löwenberg, moreover, my competent noble relation Frau Kileh, and the sons, long may they live.*

<sup>411</sup> *barukh ha shem* (Blessed be God).

<sup>412</sup> *leaukeh yomim tauvim* (may s/he live long and well).

<sup>413</sup> *And may your name be sealed in the book of life.* (Blessing for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur).

hertsigeh libeh kindr em`sh file frayde und vohlergehin nakh dem vunsh ihres immr hin  
blaybnden oufrikhtign fetr und er gebnr dinr h`k ber ulmo<sup>414</sup>

mayneh libeh frau und kindr lay`t grism fil mahl und bshtetign dos nehmlikheh, agati izt yust  
nikht tsu houze sonshtn worde zie zelshtin gshribn haben, unzirn f`g<sup>415</sup> an derin libeh kindr  
[---].

---

<sup>414</sup> *Hakatan* (the humble)

<sup>415</sup> *Freundschaftliche GrüÙe* (warmest greetings).

Document 4) Letter

**Peppi and Josef Henle Ullmann/Augsburg to Klara Levi-Löwenberg/Hohenems, 30.  
Oktober 1816<sup>416</sup>**

An Madame Klara Lebenberg

Augsburg d. 30: 8ber 1816

hertsngelibte shvegrin [---]<sup>417</sup>. mayne brife hobn shohn 1mahl dos loos zie fangin immr mit entshuldigungen on. nur bedayre ikh [---] zie diesmahl zo gre[-] zind. ikh shrieb dir lange nikht liebste klara [---] vayl y``t vohr, vayl vir mit dem ayntsiehen besheftigt vohrn. dos shlimmste fon alln mayn hertsnglibtr yosef [---] vohr nokh immr bizher nikht maynn vunsh gmes vohlbefindnz. dos baad hot nikht ouf dos beste gevirkt. damit vollte ikh dikh beste shvegrin nikht untrhaltn, aukh vohr ikh tsu mismuthig; ouf andrn shtof tsu zinin. nun abr geht es g``l<sup>418</sup> ouf bezrrung, und zo izt aukh mayne 1te<sup>419</sup> erhohlung mikh mit dir mayne gelibte klara [---] tsu untrhaltn. fon daynin liebn mane frnahm ikh tsu maynin inign frgnign dayn und daynin liebn kindr [emsh``a!] zemtlikhs vohlbfindn. vir zind nun in unzrin nayen houz zo tsimlikh ayngevehnt. unzrh vohnung izt shehn und bekvehm. hshy``b<sup>420</sup> gebe nur gezond und mazl vbrikhah<sup>421</sup> datsu: amn. vir hattn bay unzrn ayntsug fiel bezukh und vurdn aukh zo tsimlikh mit zisigka:tn beshenkt. die alte obrmayer vohr nokh nikht bay uns. zelbe vohr bedaydnt krank. dokh izt zie gestrn tsum 1ten<sup>422</sup> mahl ouzgfarn. ibrigns gibt es hier ka:ne andre nayigka:tn alz dem anshayn nakh bekommn vir gar ka:n theatr dies yohr, ven uns andrs der liebe got himl nikht nokh a:ns beshehrt, ouz irgnd aynn velthha:l, den die alte gz``sh [?] vill ihr ha:l ouzr augsburg zukhn. die forige vokhe hat es hier in aynn nayin kafe houz, tsvishn

---

<sup>416</sup> JMH LB, B 85: Letter in Hebrew cursive script; Greetings and date in Latin cursive script. For the Yiddish transliteration, see document 1. The transliteration of the loshn koydesh words and phrases follows the system as laid out in the Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, 1972).

<sup>417</sup> [---] indicates indecipherable.

<sup>418</sup> *Gott lob* (thank god)

<sup>419</sup> Latin cursive script.

<sup>420</sup> *Hashem yisborekh* (blessed be god)

<sup>421</sup> Happiness and mercy

<sup>422</sup> Latin cursive script

aynige offitsirn und komie tikhtige shlegrayen abegebn; zo abr dos aynn der letstrn die naze abgehauen vurde. ayn paar andre zind ohne kopf ha:mgelaufn um zikh tsu rettn, und nokh ayn paar andre hobn den fayerlikhn a:d obgelegt um ihre naze tsu sikhrn, volln zie bay ka:nr g`h<sup>423</sup> ershaynn vo offitser hinkomn. die 1tn<sup>424</sup> kasino alzo bay die [---] tsum mohrn vohr gants Lehr, den untr die frshvornn kommi vahr dokh zo mankhr dienstbahrr ga:st, a:nn valtser tsu shtolprn. mz``t a`ay`h<sup>425</sup> izt die 2te<sup>426</sup> kasino vos alzo bay diezr fir shtimn ershaynn izt nokh unentshiedn. ikh verde dir obtsvahr ikh nokh ka:ne kasino bezukhe, dokh alles tsimlikh vos ikh here mittha:ln, bis dahin adie lebe vohl und frgnigt alz es vinsht dayne dikh liebnde shvegrn Peppi Ulman<sup>427</sup>

1000 shehns unzrn liebn eduart und liebe mina [---]

liebe klara! du derfst virklikh nikht behse zayn, dos ikh dikh zo lang ohne n`r<sup>428</sup> fun mikh lihs, es izt virklikh mayne shuld nikht. ikh hatte mir es eftrs forgenommin. immr vurde ikh verhindert, mehrsten tha:ls obr durkh maynr immr vehrende uhnpeslikhka:t velkhe mir file tsayt raubt und an allem untrnehmungen hindrtn, da ikh zayther gar file mittl broukhin muste und nokh nehmin mus. es geht obr nikht zo geshvind vie man es vinsht. und mus gedultig abgeartet verdin. es vird zikh ay`h<sup>429</sup> oukh bald vidrum gants gebn. ikh und mayne liebe pepi hobn filen shevrlev<sup>430</sup> fun dizer zakhe. dos kanst dir vohl forshtellin. ikh hatte forige dem kenig fun virtemberg zayn laybartn der vos fun hir vor tsu mir kommin lassin und mit tsutsihung rofeh<sup>431</sup> bishe [?] kontsilium haltin lassin. velkhe dos resultat vor, etlikhe mahl die vokhe shvefl bedr mit nokh a:nge meditsinin. ikh hofe dos dizes alles fun gutem erfolg zayn mekhte. virklikh geht es b`h tsur merklikhe bessrung. obr fraylikh langsam. fun allem dizem vollte ikh dir bisher nikhts shrayben, vayl ikh fun daynr shvestrlikhin liebe ibrtsaygt bin dos dir a:ne zolkhe n`r nikht vilkommin zayn kann. fir dayne mir yungst ibrshribneh hodoshim<sup>432</sup> bin ikh dir dankbahr. mayne libe pepi izt mir mit derglaykhin tsuforgekommin. dos vir bera:ts

---

<sup>423</sup> *Gasthaus* (Inn).

<sup>424</sup> Latin cursive script.

<sup>425</sup> *Mazl tov im yirtseh hashem* (mercifully, it is god`s will).

<sup>426</sup> Latin cursive script.

<sup>427</sup> Latin cursive script.

<sup>428</sup> *Nachricht* (message).

<sup>429</sup> *Im yirtseh hashem* (if it is the will of god).

<sup>430</sup> discontentment

<sup>431</sup> Doctor

<sup>432</sup> News

in unsrm nayan hous Imazl Ibrokkeh<sup>433</sup> ayngetsogin zind. vayst du vohrshaynlikh shon. es vird dir gevis unsr hous rekht gut gefallin, den es izt gar hipsh und frayndlikh. dizen shabat hattin vir nikht dos fergnigen fun daynem libn mozes, in dem zikh zelbr in minkhin befindet. dize vokhe hofe ikh zelbn vidrum bay uns tsu zehn. lebe rekht vohl und shraybe bald vidrum dayn dikh libendin brudr Joseph H. Ulmann<sup>434</sup>. an daynr hertsigin minah und etuart file hertslikhe kisse fun mir tsu geben.

---

<sup>433</sup> Fortunately and mercifully.

<sup>434</sup> Latin cursive script.