JEWISH POLITICAL IDENTITY IN INTERWAR YUGOSLAVIA:
Whose Flag to Hoist?

By
Petra Jurlina

Submitted to
Central European University
Nationalism Studies Program

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Advisor: Professor Michael L. Miller

Budapest, Hungary

2008

Table of Contents

We're the ones getting richer by taking the advantage of the common folk; the non-national elements working only for our own interest; servants to powers from abroad; who always sympathize with the enemies of the state; who are making fun of everything that's holy to the people whose anger will eventually catch up with us.

For some we're capitalists, for others Bolsheviks; some see our centralist position as a sin; for others we're republicans and separatists; the third party is holding our withdrawal against us; that we posses no feeling nor sense when it comes to national interest. For some we are spreaders of German culture, advocates of destructive tendencies, while others see us as wanting to sneak into the national lines.

Židov,

Zagreb, May 20 1919

Acknowledgements

Because this thesis is in a lot of ways a story of circles of friends, I dedicate it to *my* friends and colleagues without whom the past year in Budapest would be worth very little.

Many thanks to my thesis advisor, Professor Michael L. Miller, for helping me gather my thoughts.

I am grateful to Mrs. Julija Koš at the Jewish Council's library in Zagreb who has kindly provided me with not only a place to work, numerous advice and guidance through my research, but also explained the difference between a Sephardic and an Ashkenazic *sholet*.

And last, thanks to Professor Ivo Goldstein from Zagreb for finding the time to meet me up for coffee, and Professor Emil Kerenji at the University of Michigan for sharing a chapter of his doctoral dissertation. The realization that one can write about history and not be tedious I owe to Professor Andrea Feldman.

Being a Jew had become my own problem,
and my own problem was political. Purely political!
Hannah Arendt, *The Jewish Writings*

1. Introduction

> The unification of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes united Jews living among them as well. A new kind of Jewry came into existence, one that had never existed before 1918, although long before the war the Jews of Yugoslavia felt themselves to be a special unit among world Jewry, connected by the fact they all come from the same, South Slav lands[1].

In 1919 The Federation of Jewish Religious Communities of Yugoslavia started its work, led by the representatives who, if they had not met as students in Vienna, would probably not have met at all. The most distinctive difference that marked most of the Jewish political life in the region during the period in between the wars were the two opposing camps, that seemed to some like two opposing Jewish worlds, the "old" Spanish-Portuguese, left behind after the end of the Ottoman Empire, and the Central European one, rooted in German or Hungarian culture. What united the two in the end was not Zionism or assimilation, but the rising anti-Semitism of the 1930s when all of the Jewish newspapers of the time focused on what was happening in Germany, Russia and elsewhere, regardless of whether the paper was read by Zagreb's, Sarajevo's or Belgrade's Jewish audience.

Since this thesis examines Jewish political identity, it seems fair to try and define what should it be. With a certainty we can say be sure about some "Jewish political identities" of the time: a Zionist (Ashkenazi or Sephardic) who devoted his or her free time or

[1] *Židov*, Zagreb's Zionist weekly (1917-1941)

an entire career (in which case it was a he; there were prominent women in both Jewish and non-Jewish Yugoslav political life in the interwar period, but none as actual politicians) to work for the Jewish national/ist cause; people who turned away from Jewish nationalism and embraced socialism (also an alternative political lifestyle); or indeed those who found in Zionism what their non-Jewish co-nationals found in Yugoslavism (or Serbian or Croatian nationalism), but who had no real interest in moving to the Levant and who were called by the more ardent Zionists as 'the non-Zionist Zionists'.

However, is it fair to tag somebody as Jewish who did not thought of him/herself as such, although his political opponents found it convenient to use his "origin" against him, when it was handy? Should people like this be treated as representatives of a certain Jewish identity too (since they were attacked as Jews)? As some of them converted and made it clear they would like to think they had no Jewish identity (anymore), the only thing that seems fair is to respect this choice and present their cases as examples of what were the results of the cross over into mainstream, strictly non-Jewish political life.

The story of Jewish identity in inter-war years is also very much characterized by which part of Yugoslavia one came from, i.e. which of the three capitals shaped its identity. Maybe not a crucial difference, but it still mattered whether somebody came from a traditional Sephardic community as in Split, Sarajevo, Belgrade or South Serbia (Macedonia) or a modern, (semi)assimilated Ashkenazi from a town like Zagreb or Osijek in Slavonia. The former were self-perceived as already well-rooted into the South Slav lands and in good relations with the surrounding population in spite of maintaining a strong Jewish identity through their language, Ladino (*Đudezmo*) and religious piety while the latter were in 1918 all of fairly recent origin – until the end of the eighteenth century, Jews had been banned from residence in Slavonia, Croatia and the Military Frontier. During the nineteenth century a large number of Jews from all over the Empire migrated to these parts.

"Jewish historians know very little about Yugoslavia, and Yugoslav scholars have paid scant attention to the Jews of their country" - this is how Harriet Freidenreich opens her book on the Jews of Yugoslavia for which she conducted research in the late 1970s. Today, almost thirty years later, things are somewhat more diverse when it comes to interest scholars and laymen have held for the Jewish histories of their respective ex-Yugoslav countries. Still, all of these titles put together would not exceed a page in bibliographical sections. Most contributions to the Jewish past of the South Slav lands have come from Jews (or people 'of Jewish origin') and non-Jews alike, who have rediscovered the Jewish imprint on particular towns, villages and regions across the country.[2]

Since both the experience of post-WWII attempts at Yugoslav nation-building followed by the break-up and nationalist discourse have in their own different ways put aside stories that were either uninteresting or did not fit into mainstream historiography there is very little or no knowledge of the Jewish history of ex-Yugoslavia in the collective memory of its people. For the most part this knowledge of generations born after the Second World War ends at the awareness there once was a Jewish minority larger than the little number that remains today, and that most of these people perished in the Holocaust (even if textbooks or historiography in general sometimes refrain from using the term, preferring to believe that the Holocaust was something that happened in Germany or Poland)[3].

[2] Alen Budaj, *Vallis Judaea : povijest požeške židovske zajednice* [Vallis Judaea: History of Jewish Požega], Bernard Stulli, *Židovi u Dubrovniku*, Melita Švob, *Židovi u Hrvatskoj- migracije i promjene u židovskoj populaciji* [Jews in Croatia: Migrations and Changes in Jewish Population], Zvonko Maričić, *Luka spasa, Židovi u Veloj Luci od 1937. do 1943.* [Harbour of Rescue – Jews in Vela Luka 1937-1943], Tomo Šalić, *Židovi u Vinkovcima i okolici* [Jews of Vinkovci and Its Surrounding], and many other, including a book by Nikola Radić on Jewish history of Bihać, a town in Western Bosnia, still in making.

[3] For the most part of 2007/2008 literary book-market season, Slavko Goldstein's autobiographical reminiscence of the Second World War, "1941- A Year to Remember" was among the top five purchased and/or read books in Croatia.

As I myself belong(ed) to the majority of people with no knowledge of histories outside the one provided by public education in the 1990s, the interest and motivation for this topic were sparked by curiosity not only to learn something more, but something that is at the same time related to the same region (sometimes to the public spaces of my home town, Croatia's capital) and yet what was hitherto completely strange and inaccessible.

Works that have remained at my side entirely throughout the writing of this thesis were the already mentioned *Jews of Yugoslavia: A Quest for Community* by Harriet Pass Freidenreich which follows an outline of Jewish presence in three biggest capitals of what became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the inter-war period that my thesis looks at exclusively and thus helps to understand the specifics of Jewish politics in relations to the environment they evolved in, be it the Ottoman Bosnia, independent Serbia or the South Slav parts under the Austro-Hungarian rule (Croatia, Slavonia). In a concise paragraph somewhere in the middle of her book, the author nicely describes what it all was about for Jews in the new Slavic State/s:

> In the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Jews had been tempted to affiliate themselves with the German or Magyar nationalities, but in the successor states, such as Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, this course of action was neither advisable nor desirable. The Jew who retained Hungarian or German loyalties might be regarded as foreign and hence suspect. The trend to identify themselves with the Slavic nationalities developed primarily in the twentieth century. It never succeeded in establishing very deep roots among the Jewish population at large and thus allowed for the growth of Jewish nationalism. Zionism provided an alternative for Jews who realized they could never integrate themselves fully into the surrounding culture. In Yugoslavia this applied more to the Ashkenazim who tried to become Croats and generally failed to be accepted as such, than to the Sephardim, who had carved for themselves a special niche in Serbian or Bosnian society[4].

[4] Harriet Pass Freidenreich, *The Jews of Yugoslavia – A Quest for Community* (Philadephia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979), 169 -170.

Another book that proved essential was Ivo Goldstein's *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918-1941* [Jews in Zagreb, 1918-1941] which gives a detailed overview of the entire network of Jewish organizations and politics of the time, as well as an introduction to the reasons behind the rise of anti-Semitism in the country. I want to mention here that my work does not go further than the mid 1930s when most of the issues Jews of Yugoslavia were faced with in the inter-war period become overshadowed with the threat of anti-Semitism[5]. In the post-war (WWII) period the Federation of Jewish Communities restarted with the publications of its yearbooks, and from the 1970s Jewish Historical Museum began editing a regular Review, each of which covers a specific topic related to the Yugoslav Jewry.

Although the inter-war period is well-documented and written about, at this point there are no studies, articles, nor texts that would look into possible debates between Zionists and "integrationists", nor into such possible differences as between the Ashkenazim of Croatia and Serbia or the Sephardim of Belgrade and Sarajevo. The only source that remains are the debates between these groups that occasionally arose in Yugoslav Zionist journals (Zagreb's *Židov* from Zagreb; Sarajevo's *Jevrejski glas* and *Jevrejska tribuna*), which proved to be of most help in trying to understand the network of Jewish political activities in the inter-war years. Conclusions on what were the prevailing factors in shaping of Jewish identities in country as diverse as Yugoslavia can thus only be analyzed through a careful research of broader sources like press, personal correspondence, and possible non-Jewish sources that commented on it. That is why the personal papers of Zagreb's Zionist lawyer and author Lavoslav Schick, in the form of personal correspondence, talks and articles, today in the National and University Library in Zagreb, is of great value. Unfortunately, due to its overwhelming quantity and little time I have been able to go through just a handful of items.

[5] Emil Kerenji (PhD, University of Michigan) deals with this period.

I can think of few possible reasons for an absence of studies looking into the distinctions within the term "Jewish identity". For one, due to the fact that all of the Jews of Yugoslavia were equal victims of the Holocaust regardless of their pre-war differences, the study of these very differences became irrelevant or even a matter of bad taste. Secondly, the post WWII insistence on an unquestionable Yugoslav identity made all of the pre-war political identities appear only as pro-Yugoslav and anti-Yugoslav, without taking into consideration particular histories of the peoples of Yugoslavia, Jews included.

For the most part the Jews of Yugoslavia indeed did want to be seen as "obedient citizens" of the country, but I argue their local backgrounds (Sephardic or Ashkenazic included, but not necessarily), and the dominant nationalisms that surrounded them (as was the case with Serbia or Croatia) shaped their identity and their relationships just as well.

An example of this can be seen in the way Zagreb and Belgrade looked down on Zionist work in Bosnia, something that reminds of the general treatment of the "Austro-Hungarian" Croatian capital and Belgrade, the kingdom's capital towards the "backward" Ottoman Bosnia.

Overall, this thesis will analyze the spectrum of choices Jews of inter-war Yugoslavia were faced with and try to reach conclusions about whether it was Zionism or indeed assimilation that helped to overcome the differences of Yugoslavia's Jewry, who are always presented in historiography as one that was not only geographically disconnected from each-other but neither did it share some a common Jewish mentality of some sort. Although there was an obsession among some of some of the community's leaders to bring together this half percent of the country's population into a single unified national body so as to be more successful in gaining national recognition and all of the rights promised to national minorities

in peace treaties that followed WWI, it turned out more difficult than planned to try and convince a Sephardic Jew from central Macedonia that s/he has more in common with a strange urban Ashkenazic Jew from northern Croatia, and vice versa.

However, and more importantly, political disputes did not prevent most of the Yugoslav Jewry to lead happy and fulfilling lives in the period that was, according to many authors and surviving family members, the time of prosperity and a definite inclusion into the middle class society[6]. Remnants of Jewish imprint in arts, sciences or architecture from that period seem to suggest the same.

1.1 Setting the scene

The number of Jews in inter-war Yugoslavia[7] never exceeded the number of 70 000 people, thus compromising 0.5 % of the country's entire population, slightly rising in the 1930s after the arrival of couple of thousand Jewish refugees, mostly from Germany.

Since most of the Jewish population lived in urban areas, their presence was somewhat more significant in the South Slav capitals. In Belgrade they made up 4, 2% of the population; 5, 8 % in Zagreb; Sarajevo and Bitola (Macedonia) 9, 1 %. Although explaining differences in Jewish identity in Yugoslavia between the wars cannot be reduced to its three or four biggest cities, most of the time they are representative for the situation Jews found themselves in after December 1 1918 when king Alexander of the Serbian Karađorđević dynasty formally proclaimed the existence of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes

[6] *Obitelj-Mišpaha* [Family], ed. Jasminka Domaš Nalbantić (Zagreb: Kulturno društvo Miroslav Šalom Freiberger, Novi Liber Zagreb, 1996).
[7] This was only those people who declared themselves to be of Jewish faith in the censuses.

after the delegation consisting of South Slav leaders signed the act of unification with the kingdom of Serbia.[8]

Sarajevo

The Jewish community of Sarajevo dates back more than four hundred years to the settlement of a group of Sephardic merchants from Salonika. The legal and social position of the Jews in Bosnia did not differ from that of other non-Muslims: because the empire was organized by religious lines the Jews formed a separate millet. The turning point for the Jewish community was the Austro-Hungarian occupation in 1878. The rule of Vienna did not only bring full civil rights but the arrival of "western culture" and a number of Ashkenazim who set up their own religious community since there was resentment from the local Jewish population. Only with the creation of the Slavic Kingdom did the two groups start to cooperate more on everyday basis and inter-marry, albeit for most part of the 1920s Zionist activities remained divided between the Sephardim and Ashkenazim leadership. During the inter-war period Jews constituted 11% of the city's population[9].

Belgrade

Similar to Sarajevo, a small Sephardic community established itself in Belgrade by the mid-sixteenth century and their social status same as in other parts of the Ottoman Empire. According to sources Jews did not take an active part in the first Serbian uprising (1804-1813) and for the first part of the 19th century, regardless of that the new Serbian rule was independent from the Ottoman rule, Jews were prohibited from engaging in commerce or

[8] Ivo Goldstein, *Croatia: A History* (London: Hurst&Co, 1999).
[9] Freidenreich, 12-25.

owning real estate outside the city. In 1866 the Sephardic community was formally recognized, and around the same time first Ashkenazim started moving across from the river Sava, which separated Serbia from the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the mostly Hungarian speaking Ashkenazim of Vojvodina. Only in 1892 did the Serbian government formally grant religious autonomy to the Ashkenazic community as well. Also similar to Sarajevo, the Sephardim lived closer together (in Belgrade mostly in the neighbourhood of Dorćol) while the Ashkenazim dispersed all over the town. According to the censuses, Belgrade Jews began to claim Serbian as their native tongue much sooner than the Sarajevo Sephardim, which indicates a faster integration of Jews in an overwhelmingly homogeneous Serbian Orthodox environment than was the case in the multiethnic Sarajevo with no single prevailing religious majority[10]. Even though the capital of the new Kingdom doubled in size between 1921 and 1931 its population remained predominantly homogenous. Approximately 85% people were Serbian Orthodox with around 9% Catholics (Croats, Slovenes, Hungarians and Germans) and 4 % Jews. In 1939 there were 8500 Sephardim and 1888 Ashkenazim.[11]

Zagreb

First Jewish settlers to Croatia were Ashkenazim coming from other parts of the Habsburg Empire, around the end of the eighteenth century, making Zagreb the most recently established of the three major Yugoslav Jewish communities After much lobbying from the Jewish side, and after the *Ausgleich* (Austro-Hungarian Compromise) which called for unconditional political and civil equality of Jews with non-Jewish subjects, the Croatian parliament (which had autonomy over some issues, religious included) adopted a law on civil

[10] Ibid., 29-39.
[11] Dr Harriet Pass Freidenreich, *Jevreji Beograda između ratova* [The Jews of Belgrade in between Wars], Zbornik 6, Jevrejski istorijski muzej – Beograd, Studije, arhivska i memoarska građa o istoriji Jevreja u Beogradu, Beograd, 1992, [Jewish Historical Museum – Belgrade, Jewish Studies VI, Studies, archival and memorial materials about the history of the Jews in Belgrade], 365.

equality for the Jews of Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia (the latter two although inhabited mostly by Croats-Catholics became "Croatia" only later). In 1906 the parliament issued a Law on the Organization of the Israelite Religious Community which did not resolve the clash between the Neologue majority and the "Old Believers" (the Orthodox) which in the end formed their own community although continuing to pay taxes to the central Israelite organization.

What Zagreb and Belgrade had in common was that they were both areas with a homogeneous majority; in Zagreb's case a Catholic one, which made up more than 90% of city's population. The difference between the two towns with regard to their Ashkenazic population was that due to the proximity of Zagreb to Vienna, and the fact it stayed under the rule of the Empire until 1918 (with some autonomy) Zagreb's Jews remained closer to the German or Hungarian speaking world (the first Zionist monthly used German as its principal language) than the Ashkenazim of the rest of the Empire. This brought a Zionist lawyer from Zagreb, Lavoslav Schick to develop an approach to Zionism as a way of de-Germanizing through accepting the concept of Jewish nationality and thus becoming a "better" Croatian patriot, once all the ties with one's German or Hungarian background have been broken. This did not mean Jews of Zagreb did not slavicize as much as they did elsewhere in the country. On the contrary, adopting names to fit the Slavic pronunciation was more of a case here then elsewhere in the Kingdom.[12]

[12] Freidenreich, *The Jews of Yugoslavia*, 42-54.

2. Keeping up with Herzl – Zionism of the South Slav Lands

It is worth drawing a parallel between the organization of Jewish and women's political life (both for different reasons off the main stage of politics of the time), so I will paraphrase Croatian historian Andrea Feldman[13] and say that regardless of their national (Sephardim, Ashkenazim, Serbian, Bosnian, Croatian), religious (Neologue, Sephardic, Orthodox) or class differences, Jews of the South Slav lands sought to define common bonds among themselves after the unification of the country in 1918. For the Jews in Yugoslavia, very much like in the rest of East Central Europe during the interwar period the experience of Zionism was very important. Yugoslav Jews established links with Jews in the west. Sephardim of Bosnia and Serbia took part in international Sephardic congresses, and the Zionist organizational elites tried to get as many Zionist celebrities to tour the country and boost the enthusiasm for the cause.

Or as Jakov Maestro of Sarajevo exclaimed for the local Zionist journal *Jevrejski Glas* [Jewish Voice] in April 1929: "Being Jewish is about being a Zionist or not being Jewish at all"[14]. In a lengthy article he explains he cannot but quote Max Nordau to express his fear that after centuries of success in keeping a separate Jewish identity, the Sephardim of Bosnia were certainly on a path towards assimilation. How are a handful of scattered Jews, drowned among millions of nationalistically driven peoples to maintain their identity, the author wonders. "We the Sephardim have lost that certain something that brings us together. Spanish? The young don't use it anymore. Religion? In the best case we have kept some

[13] Andrea Feldman, *Yugoslavia Imagined. Women and the Ideology of Yugoslavism (1918-1939)* in Zwischen Kriegen: Nationen, Nationalismen und Geschlechterverhältnisse in Mittel- und Osteuropa, 1918-1939, ed. Johanna Gehmacher, Elizabeth Harvey and Sophia Kemlein, (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2004), p. 25-42
[14] *Jevrejski Glas*, Sarajevo, April 12 1929, Jakov Maestro, *Mi i cionizam.*

routine procedures. Patriarchy? An essence only talk about and which we yearn for. Only Zionism is left."[15]

The few historians who looked into the subject conclude Zionism was something of a third way for the women and men who pursued it in inter-war Yugoslavia, or as Andrea Feldman puts it, "it was mostly a reaction to the conflicted national ideologies of the South Slavs."[16] Although for the most part Jews indeed refrained from participation in "national" politics, i.e. if they were inclined towards Zionism it was their official stand not to meddle into the daily drama of Serbo-Croatian relations and if they were non-Zionists they were still aware where the line was that divided them from possible ridicule if they were suspected of wanting to be (wanting to pretend!) as South Slav as Yugoslavs, this still did not mean Zionism was only a "reaction" to conflicted Yugoslav conflicts. This would have to mean there were Zionists, for whom it was a second pick, after they had tried to pursue "real" domestic politics and were rejected from it, thus looking for comfort in participating in the cause that most certainly would not reject them. But for the most, and especially for the most ardent ones, Zionism was definitely a first choice. There were representatives from South Eastern Europe already at the first Zionist Congress, and Jewish students of Zagreb, Sarajevo and Belgrade very early formed Jewish national student clubs in cities like Vienna. Although Zionism did not succeed in neither of the "Zionist" goals at home: little number of people left for Palestine and even fewer stayed[17], and there is the fact Jews were never officially recognized as a national minority, it realized the goals of Zionist supporters from the South Slav lands by giving Yugoslav Jews a political cause to pursue, if they chose to pursue one in

[15] Ibid.
[16] Andrea Feldman, *Gospođica Ashkenazy žali. Intelektualni život Židova u međuratnoj Hrvatskoj* [Mrs Ashkenazy Regrets: Jewish Intellectual Life in Interwar Croatia] in *Zbornik Mirjane Gross* [Mirjana Gross Almanac], (Zagreb: Zavod za hrvatsku povijest, Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 1999), 353-359.
[17] See Ivo Goldstein – Slavko Goldstein, *Farma jugoslavenskih židovskih naseljenika u Palestini 1926-1928* [The Farm of Jewish settlers from Yugoslavia in Palestine], in *Zbornik Mirjane Gross*, 371.

the first place. It also brought the Ashkenazim and Sephardim involved in the work of Zionist organizations as close as they would get when it came to cooperation, regardless of the fact their work was organized in parallel organizations. To emphasize the sense of brotherhood between the Sephardim and the Ashkenazim, Lavoslav Schick of Zagreb reminiscing his student days in Vienna claims that "even then we have been united in the same idea of Yugoslavia, regardless of where we came from in the South"[18]. He talks about his friendship with Isak Alkalaj (a Sephardic) when "no differences were made between the two Jewish groups". Here he decided not to mention that although Jewish students from the South Slav lands had a common link in the fact where they came from, they never merged their two organizations into a single one that might have been called "All Jewish students from the South Slav lands", and though there were some Sephardim in mostly Ashkenazi *Bar Giora,* these were probably Sephardim from either Zagreb or downtown Belgrade who joined one of the two student organizations by default of where they had friends, and not which Jewish tradition they came from.

During the course of the first three decades of the twentieth century Zionism eventually won over other political persuasions of the Jewish Councils in the whole of Yugoslavia, although somewhere this process took a longer than elsewhere[19].
However, not until 1933[20] (shortly after Hitler's rise to power) did most of the delegates of the Federation of Jewish Religious Communities of Yugoslavia give their vote to a Zionist candidate, thus expressing their agreement with the view of Jewishness as a nationality, the lobbying for Palestine and an official statement on solidarity with the Jewish community in the world.

[18] The National and University Library in Zagreb, Trezor Lavoslava Schicka, R 6965
[19] On the eve of WWII in Yugoslavia, one in seven Yugoslav Jews were shekel-paying members of Zionist organizations.
[20] The congress took place in Belgrade, April 1933.

In Croatia ("the Zionist capital of Yugoslavia", Harriet Freidenreich), similar to the Czech lands, the movement was at first most popular with university and high school students, but created tension among many already established Jews who openly feared advocating the idea of the Jewish state and separate nationality will serve as a reminder that Jews are not "nationally" Croatian and thus create more anti-Semitism, even in places it never existed before. The Zionist response was that the only criteria "Croats of Mosaic faith" take into account is "how will the anti Semites react". Zionist supporters believe in distinguishing terms of nationhood from citizenship and emphasize they are Croats in issues of domestic politics and culture but want to remain Jews in questions exclusively related to Jewish people and its future. Zionism would never interfere with internal politics nor tell its followers which party to vote for. "It is a private matter of every individual Jew which politics he will pursue. The only important thing is to be a Jew without a mask so that he can prove he is a distinguished Croatian patriot but also a courageous and proud Jew."[21]

Some authors (Hillel Kievel), writing about the same subject in Czechoslovakia concluded Zionism became necessary only after the First World War to serve as a social glue which would then serve as something common to hitherto the diverse Jewry of the new state[22]. Same can be said for Yugoslavia, considering the similarities between two countries following WWI. Years after the war and the years leading to another one is exactly when Zionism was accepted the most in Yugoslavia (according to the number of shekel payers)[23]. Zionism was seen as resting on the principle of "equal worthiness", and assimilation only on equality of individuals (although equal by law, some of these equal citizens still felt less *worthy* than other equal citizens), or to put it in the words of the historian Mirjana Gross when describing the politics of the first Zionist journal that was published in Serbo-Croat,

[21] *Židovska smotra*, 5, 6/1909 (authors Spitzer and Jehuda), Zagreb
[22] Hillel J. Kieval, The Making of Czech Jewry: National Conflict and Jewish Society in Bohemia 1870-1918 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).
[23] The League of Yugoslav Zionists was founded in 1919.

"the fight for moral and human worthiness of the Jews becomes central theme of the ideology of young Croatian Zionist intellectuals as was witnessed in the writings of *Židovska smotra*, from 1906 [until the beginning of the First World War]. The newspaper completely captures the principles of political Zionism and expresses the mentality of mostly third generation Jews whose mother tongue was predominantly Croatian and who wanted to make sure they were seen as different from their assimilationist fathers."[24] (Ironically the newspaper was started with financial help of one of the editor's, Aleksandar Licht's, father Hermann).

The question is in what way was Zionism of the South Slav lands different to, say, Zionism in other comparable countries (the most relevant comparison one might draw being Austria, Germany or Czechoslovakia)? For one, the process of building a Zionist South Slav identity which for some time found support in the culture south Slavs rebelled against and eventually parted from (not because of their own political accomplishments but because of the inevitable consequences of the aftermath of the Big War) took place at the same time as the construction of a specific Yugo-Slav (*yug/o* coming from the word for south, *jug*) nation or identity. Could you build your pan-Slavic and pan-Jewish identity at the same time from scratch or does this imply necessary collision or, to use a more clichéd term, an identity crisis? If the identity building process evolves through being or becoming something *against* something else (or somebody you are *not)* then the Yugoslav case indeed is special in the sense that the Jewishness of its diverse Jewry was particular to the historical background of the country's respective parts[25]. As one can see in the case of Sephardic Diaspora nationalism, not all of them thought Zionism was *a priori* necessary to maintaining your

[24] Mirjana Gross, *Ravnopravnost bez jednakovrijednosti* [Equality without worthiness], in *Dva stoljeća povijesti i kulture Židova u Hrvatskoj* [Two Centuries of Jewish History and Culture in Croatia], (Zagreb: Židovska općina Zagreb, 1998), 107.

[25] Most similar case is the one of Czechoslovakia but there the differences within Jewish population iteself were not Ashkenazim vs. Sephardim but Central European *Hochkultur* Jews vs. Jews in the Slovak lands, especially in most rural parts of it who were seen as *Ostjuden*.

Jewish identity (this, and not a definite decision to move to Palestine was the reason one should embrace Zionist views as was considered by the most of the first Zionist enthusiasts.

The issues Croatian Jewry faced after 1918 were different to the reality of the Bosnian Sephardim. The Sephardim managed to maintain a specific identity in a multicultural environment of four religions (even if technically Bosnia was a part of the Ottoman Empire) for centuries before the word Zionism was even coined. Does the explanation for this (maintaining an identity through centuries, without any sense of threat) lie in the fact there was no dominant culture, or a single overpowering religion? If so, one could expect that Zionism would not fall on fertile grounds among the Sephardim of Yugoslavia. However, circumstances changed drastically in only few decades starting from the turn of the century. Days of the Ottoman Empire were long gone, and the process that begun with the annexation of Bosnia by the Viennese administration finished with the fact that this community was now a member of a state that defined itself through three of its constituent peoples in its title (Slovenes, Croats and Serbs). As more and more children went to state schools that taught in Serbo-Croat (in the past Ladino schools were predominantly for religious studies and for boys[26]), and with many Ashkenazim moving in perhaps the threat of assimilation looked more real in 1920 than it was in 1890. Since many Sephardic Sarajevans pursued their higher education in Vienna, it was easy to stay up to date with the movement and eventually bring it back home. Maybe only a less relevant detail, but the idea of returning to Palestine never disappeared from the Sephardic tradition be it in prayer, songs, or examples of rabbis who considered leaving for Palestine to die there or having done so (Sarajevo not being far away from the port of Dubrovnik, after all).

[26] As Freidreich writes in *The Jews of Yugoslavia*, the only official instruction received by the Sephardim in the Ottoman period was strictly religious because few Jews wanted to send their children to a public school. So all Jewish boys attended meldar (Talmud Torah) while girls stayed at home and married early. In 1894 Serbo Croatian was introduced into the curriculum of the Jewish school so that Jewish children could now study secular subjects within their own educational framework. In 1910 Talmud Torah ceased to exist. Freidenreich does not explain why.

Since the first ones to introduce Zionist ideology first to Croatia, and then beyond – Bosnia and Serbia, were students of universities in Vienna, but also Graz, Berlin, Breslau, Würzburg and Prague, studying there in 1890s and 1900s, this brought the author Lador-Lederer to say that it was these "children" that infected their fathers with the Zionist bug.[27] Jewish students from Slav lands in Vienna were gathered in two different student organizations, one predominantly Ashkenazim (*Bar Giora*, set up in 1901) and the other predominantly Sephardim (*Esperanza – Sociedad de los Judios Sefaradim en Viena*, starting with work in 1896). The latter was not explicitly Zionist, however, but stated as its motto that it aims to "uplift culturally and emotionally the Sephardic life in the Diaspora". Some time later, however, one of its resolutions included "working on helping the immigration of Jews into Palestine" (perhaps, as Zionism as a dominant trend among Jewish organizations, not to fall out of fashion or appear backward? Then again, Palestine was always present in the Sephardic tradition, and had nothing to do with political Zionism).

The members of *Bar Giora*, on the other hand, from the very beginning excitedly made clear that what they wanted to achieve was for the Jews of the South provinces to keep up with the new turn in Central European Jewish politics. *Bar Giora* reports were so the first readings on Zionism in what was technically Croatian (dialect, if not language) but understandable to everybody living from Ljubljana to Bitola or Skopje in Macedonia. The Zionist pioneers in the Bar Giora circle all eventually became prominent intellectuals in their respective countries (some even from Bulgaria). Among the most prominent names were Aleksandar Licht, *spiritus movens* of Croatian Zionism, Alfred Singer, the first editor of the post World War I Zagreb Zionist weekly, *Židov*, Johan Thau, the first (official) Zionist from Bosnia, etc. What these clubs and subsequently newspapers (that were a result of their work once they returned home) aimed at was forming closer connections between the dispersed

[27] Lador-Lederer Željko-Josef, *Tri fragmenta o cionizmu* [Three fragments on Zionism], in *Dva stoljeća Židova u Hrvatskoj* [Two Centuries of Jews in Croatia], (Zagreb: Židovska općina Zagreb, 1998), 179.

Jewry of Yugoslavia, just as some South Slavs thought out their attempts to create links that led to Illyrian or Yugoslav cultural and political movements while studying abroad.

3. Assimilation is for actors, not Jews[28] – debates on the assimilationist lifestyles

Freidenreich argues that in the early 20th century both Croatian nationalism and Jewish nationalism lacked support from moderate liberals who dominated Zagreb's Jewish scene. Not only it lacked support but, she claims, Zionism was "an anathema to the influential group of wealthy integrationists who controlled Jewish communal politics in Zagreb prior to the creation of the Yugoslav state. In 1918 the executive board of the Zagreb Jewish community, headed by Dr. Robert Siebenschein, refused to approve any action on the part of the community in support of Palestine."[29]

In 1910 Vladimir Sachs, a native of Zagreb delivered a lecture entitled "Israelites and the Christian-Socialist Cultural Program" in which he stated the following:

> We are Croats of the Jewish faith. In Croatia there are many faiths, but all adherents of these faiths may be and must be only Croats. Today no longer is a Jewish nation. That which existed several thousand years ago has ceased to exist. A nation without a language is not a nation. Jews are members of different nations like Catholics, and just as there is no separate Catholic nation, there is also no Jewish nation. Believe me, we Jews are by and large loyal Croats.[30]

When Sachs wrote this a Zagreb Zionist newspaper had already been regularly published for four years, not to mention the activities of the Zionist students' clubs have been active for a number of years and at least one regular Zionist newspaper published weekly in a language South Slavs would understand (this was *Židovska smotra* from Zagreb).

[28] As one of the Zionist commentators stated in the Zionist vs. assimilationist debate, *Židov*, April 1918.
[29] Freidenreich, 141.
[30] Ibid., 142.

The conflict between the Zionist and "integrations" circles of the Yugoslav Jewry (especially in the case of Zagreb) can be easily summed up into following. The former did not necessarily believe in actual transfer of themselves or the surrounding Jewish population, well assimilated into either the Austro-Hungarian culture or Bosnian version of multiculturalism, to Palestine as much as they found the idea of national Jewishness appealing. People like Licht spoke of bringing around the national element among Jews as the only thing that will prevent those Jews of Europe who never lived separately from assimilating completely until they are totally undistinguishable from the rest. The latter thought all political practice that would be specifically Jewish can bring no good to their welfare.

Cvi Rothmüller, one of the first Croatian Zionists who eventually moved to Palestine and unlike many other from Yugoslavia actually stayed there, said in 1930 that Zionism was an unavoidable necessity because assimilation was in fact a cover-up for a psychopathic hatred towards anything Jewish. That Zionism became popular among semi-assimilated or assimilated Jewry of Zagreb, Sarajevo or Belgrade who had no intention in moving anywhere, let alone Middle East, was nothing strange, as argues Ivo Goldstein[31]. Namely, it presented a way of staying Jewish by supporting the cause morally and financially but at the same time not having to move from the place one is accustomed to. Also, after the end of the First World War and creation of ethnic based (or at least, more ethnic based) states, the idea of having a Jewish nation-based state did not seem so unbelievable.

Assimilationists on the other hand perceived these new notions of what does it mean to be Jewish as creating unnecessary attention. Being "of the Mosaic faith" or "of Jewish religion" seemed just enough and anything more might "bring Kishinev to Croatia" as a

[31] Goldstein Ivo, *Židovi u Zagrebu 1918-1941* [Jews in Zagreb 1918-1941], (Zagreb: Novi Liber, Zagreb, 2005), 96.

group of assimilationist students from Osijek warned during the first Zionist conference in Croatia[32].

Early twentieth century saw anti-regime sentiment reaching its peak among the South Slavs, who were for some time now (starting with the Illyrian cultural movement in 1830s and 1840s) building their identity as something opposite from what was considered to be German or Hungarian culture (this process involved romanticizing Slavic past, changing names so they sound more Slavic[33]). Bearing this in mind, if Jews in these areas were targeted, it was because they were seen as no more different than the Magyars or the "Germans", i.e., Austrians (and in Austria or Hungary Jews were often not Austrian/Hungarian enough).

By 1903, anti-Hungarian and anti-Austrian demonstrations followed by physical violence were a common occurrence. State symbols were torn down from railway stations, post offices, and windows of private property which was somehow connected with "the foreign oppressor" smashed (bearing signs in German or Hungarian or owned by people believed to be too close to the authorities) - the easiest way of demonstrating national sentiment and disagreement with Vienna and Pest. As most of the Jewish shop owners bore German names, or, in the eastern parts of Croatia (Slavonia) spoke Hungarian, they were easy to target as well. Some authors point out that anti-Semitism was not what drove these attacks on Jewish property, but rather that some of the targeted "Germans" or "Hungarians" happened to be Jewish. This does not mean the attacks did not sometimes take on anti-Semitism if it was the case these Jewish individuals were supporters of the party which called for closer ties with Hungary.

[32] Ljiljana Dobrovšak, *Prvi cionistički kongres u Osijeku 1904. godine* [First Zionist Congress in Osijek, 1904] in *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* [Journal for Contemporary History], 37 (2005), 2, 479-495.

Secondly, prior to dismantle of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, perhaps it was easy enough to fit into the identity provided by the universal access to citizenship rights. What was there only in traces, was not a general trend before 1918 – a year that brought an unavoidable question of how to declare oneself in the new census. The previously mentioned executive board of the Zagreb Jewish community in 1918 presented a resolution to the governor of Croatia ("ban") *opposing* a petition by the Zionist Federation for the recognition of the Jews as a national minority in the new Kingdom, highlighting that "Yugoslav Jewry is an organic part of this [Yugoslav] nation as a whole"[34].

3.1 The Zionism of Lavoslav Schick and the First Zionist Congress in Croatia (Osijek, 1904)

In an article for *The Report of the Jewish Academics Club Bar Giora* from 1904 Lavoslav Schick (Šik), at the time still a law student in Zagreb writes about some comments he has been getting from "honest and virtuous Jews" who inform him they do take to Zionism because it will provide for millions of unfortunate Jews whose only homeland was the *shtetl* and enable them to finally grow as "free cultured people" but if he himself, a Jew from Zagreb and Vienna (i.e. somebody with a homeland, author's note) roots for Palestine then they cannot join him in his efforts because, as these critics put it: "your agenda is not patriotic, it is in fact full of betrayal for your country which you cannot really love, and that is not nice nor polite and it does not suit Judaism nor its customs"[35]. Šik replies in form of an article *Zionism and patriotism* (borrowing the title from Max Nordau's *"Le sionisme c'est le patriotisme!"*). The text is to prove that Jewish nationalism is not at odds with patriotism for

[34] Freidenreich, 141. In 1920 the integrationist line was defetead by the Zionists in Jewish community elections.
[35] Lavoslav Schick, *Cijonizam i patriotizam*, in *Izvještaj društva Židova akademičara iz jugoslavenskih zemalja Bar Giora*, Vienna, 1903-4.

the host-land, evidence for which is that the Jews of Spain and Portugal have kept alive the love for these parts, through customs and language, for all these centuries.

> If this is how Jews who have been through so much behave, isn't it easy to expect that the ones who have enjoyed all these rights as free citizens will pay their country back? Don't we as well have a duty to make this country (Croatia, author's note) rich and happy, to fight and work for it, like all her other sons? This homeland has given so much to us and therefore there is no sacrifice we should withhold from it. However, this is not the reason to hide our Jewish nationality… Croatian people would have nothing from assimilating the Jews of Croatia, because people who leave their nationality behind are worthless, and both Croats and any other people should beware of the ones who are ready to do this… If Zionism was to take over the Jews of these parts then this will be the place of firm, proud Jews who are strong supporters of the Croatian people as the same time. Sure, many Croats will say: That's all nice, but it's not close to the truth. True, because most Jews are still not Zionist [he goes to explain how a true Croatian Zionist has no reason to declare German or Hungarian as his/her native language, but only Croatian and Hebrew, author's note] … so let us be Jews, but Croatian Jews, valuable citizens of our homeland.[36]

Since Schick was in his early twenties when he wrote this, one could ascribe the optimism to his age, but for the best part, here was the ideal version for somebody who felt his/her Jewish identity was something with no reason to hide, especially if the person thought it was effortless to try and prove Croatian nationality. Schick's winning formula believed in a civic nationality, where one could be "politically Croatian" and an equal citizen regardless of one's national sentiment. More importantly, his view on Zionism as a way of becoming a better Croatian patriot should be viewed through the prism of the often burdensome relationship Jews of Croatia and Slavonia had with the parts of Empire their parents or grandparents came from. In an article for Sarajevo's *Jevrejski Glas*[37], writing an obituary for a deceased friend, a Catholic priest from Dalmatia who shared his views that it is possible to be a "good Jew" and a "good Yugoslav" at the same time, Schick remembers how conflicted

[36] Ibid. 8-11.
[37] August 17 1934

the Jews of Vojvodina and Baranja (Slavonia) felt during the peace treaties that followed WWI.

While the Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest asked the Jews of these "allegedly occupied Hungarian territories" [Schick's remark] to declare themselves as Hungarian, we [the Zionist leadership, author's note] insisted they should declare as Jewish, and certainly not German or Hungarian, and that they should in every way feel as "sons of the young and free Kingdom of Yugoslavia!". In a way, Zionism was to replace any possible sentiment some of Croatia's Jewry felt for (or what non-Jews thought they felt for) the much despised foreign power. If these people came out as proud Jews who feel they have nothing to hide, and still at the same time proclaim their love for the homeland, its language and customs, they would avoid the trap of trying to become Croats/Yugoslavs only to be cast off later. This way Croats knew their fellow countrymen Jews have nothing to hide, especially if they show that in spite of their different nationality they are politically dedicated to their host-country's cause, whatever it may be. Hence, a good Zionist (not German, Hungarian) equals a good Croat. Unfortunately, his fate proved his enthusiasm wrong.

A trace that something like this will not eventually be accepted by the nationalist regime can be seen in Croatian press of the 1930s which saw any Zionist activities as a constant reminder that some of these Jews were "only passing through". Journals like *Zagrebačka smotra*, although guarding Hitler's rise to power with unease, still considered Croatia's Jews should not complain when they are being criticized or treated as second-class citizens, because they somehow asked for it by "sitting on two chairs"[38].

The author Ljiljana Dobrovšak thinks Zionism did not take on with Croatian Jews as much as it did in Austria or elsewhere, primarily because Jews tried to assimilate and they

[38] *Zagrebačka smotra*/24/1934

had enough problems already with learning Croatian (around 1900s) so an attempt at Hebrew looked like self imposed ghettoisation (in Osijek, for example, the community insisted on being awarded a rabbi who could speak good Croatian)[39].

At the beginning of 1904 Schick writes an article[40] in the widely popular Croatian newspaper *Obzor* about the upcoming first Zionist congress in Croatia that was to be held in August that year. As Schick was somebody who strongly believed Zionism was a kind of *cultural* Judaism that in no way should be in contradiction with Croatian patriotism (but will make Croatian Jews better Croatian patriots because they have something to be proud of: their Jewish origin *and* Croatian homeland) this article was to show (albeit of course Schick never says this) to the mainstream Croatian reading public that Zionism should be seen as no threat to the people among whom Jews have been living. He attacks Croatian Jews for being "assimilationists with a shady personality" because of declaring themselves as Croats when this is convenient for them while in fact their Croatian language skills are insufficient or non existent. He hopes this will come to an end after they accept Zionism which as the "Zionists among whom he belongs" saw it calls for a revival of the Jewish culture through Croatian language (did he want to be quicker then any potential anti-Semitism or whether it was something he truly believed in is hard to tell)[41]. Possibly this was a compromise he was willing to offer in return for acceptance and sympathy of the Croatian intellectual elites? As the symbolical pre-state unification of South Slavs ran along the language line it made sense

[39] Ljiljana Dobrovšak, *Prvi cionistički kongres u Osijeku 1904. godine* [First Zionist Congress in Osijek, 1904] in *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* [Journal for Contemporary History], 37 (2005), 2, 487.

[40] The piece was a shorter translation of an article *Kehilla Kadoscha Zagreb* for the Viennese newspaper *Judisches Volksblatt*.

[41] To try to prove Schick lived what he wrote about, that Jewish pride and (Croatian) patriotism could go hand in hand, a reminder of how he died. He had two chances of avoiding death in the Croatian concentration camp Jasenovac but did not use them. Some time after the first rounding up of prominent Zagreb Jews who were taken to Graz to be questioned about the Jewish community affairs in Croatia, Schick returned to Croatia and was eventually taken into "work camp" Jasenovac from which he was released after an intervention on behalf of a controversial figure of the Catholic archbishop Stepinac. Although he returned depressed and his faith broken, he decided not to leave Zagreb. Second time he was arrested on no grounds and send to Jasenovac again where he was killed (shot or beaten to death) shortly after being imprisoned.

to replace German or Hungarian with the dialects of Serbo-Croatian (at this time still called Serbian in Serbia and Croatian in Croatia).

First of all, German/Hungarian brought back "bad" memories, and the insistence on using the South Slavic vernacular on a daily basis marked a fresh start, just as Zionism was a fresh start. It also made the ideas of Zionism more approachable to the assimilated Jewry and cleared the Zionist name of a possible suspicion of anti-Slavic sentiment. And since nobody read or wrote Hebrew it did not make much sense to make it a ground for the new movement building (at the same time the decision of the European Zionists to revive Hebrew could not be ignored so one of the lecturers addressed the audience in Hebrew. Also, it was concluded it was to make sure Hebrew was taught to Jewish children in the region).

As soon as the news of the Congress broke out, a number of "Croatian academics of the Mosaic faith from Osijek" signed a resolution which stated they identify themselves with political and cultural aspirations of the Croatian people, and strongly judge advocacy of some of their colleagues who share their religion and who under the mask of Zionism and Jewish nationalism actually promote politics that goes against the interests of the Croatian spirit and so keep the Mosaics of our homeland alienated from the Croatian cause[42].

A few days later (meaning only a couple of days before the congress took place) there was a meeting of Croatian academics of different "religious persuasions" to show support for their Croatian colleagues of the Mosaic faith and strongly accuse this "activism of several Zionists" which will eventually go to the detriment of the Croatian cause. A Zagreb journalist Oton Kraus (Krausz) tries to explain in his pamphlet that comes out immediately after this why he thinks they are wrong. No matter how much they would like to be Croats, you never will, he says, but you will always remain Jews. If it will become possible to declare oneself as Jewish people would be more motivated to invest into the welfare of the common homeland –

[42] Dobrovšak, p 486.

Croatia. Croatia's economical and political strength is what we all share. Zionism is nothing but a movement that will prevent complete assimilation – and yet it is opposed by Jewish assimilationists who say they are Croatian but not only that they cannot write in Croatian - nobody actually believes them (or only pretends to).

The conference itself was marked by harsh disagreements between opponents and supporters of Zionism, both thinking their side will prevent any possible outbursts of anti-Semitism in the future. The only thing they seem to have in common is the belief that from (now on) one should use only Croatian (both having motives to disclaim German or Hungarian; one wanting to assimilate as Croats, the other as "acceptable Zionists", acceptable because they show effort to fit in).

3.2 Ashkenazic Zionism vs. Sephardic Diaspora Nationalism

Although Jewish students of the South Slav lands embraced both the term and the ideas it promoted, in years to follow certain differences arose in what they thought Zionism should be about. What it came down to was that the Sephardic Zionists believed one should invest as much in the *galut* (Diaspora) as in the work in Palestine (after all, the *galut*, i.e. Bosnia and Serbia never mistreated its Jews, they thought). This resulted in perpetual accusations from the both Serbo-Croatian, but also local Bosnian side, that Zionist work in Bosnia was unsatisfactory in its results and on the whole too passive (i.e. little number of people willing to pay the shekel). To quote Jakov Maestro of Sarajevo's Zionist paper *Jevrejski glas*, "from the experience we (Sephardim) know that the shirt is closer to the body than the coat"[43], meaning the daily difficulties of the *galut* is closer to the life of an average Jew than what is going on in *Eretz Israel*. However, because Maestro writes for a journal that

[43] *Jevrejski Glas*, Sarajevo, April 12 1929, Jakov Maestro, *Mi i cionizam.*

aimed at bringing the two Jewish communities of Sarajevo together he immediately corrects himself and claims "we accept the *galut* and its needs but we would never prioritize the work we do in the Diaspora, and we know a man is judged by his coat. One barn in Palestine makes us look way better in the eyes of the world than Rothschild's hospital in Vienna."[44]

> For the majority of the Sephardim the concept that Jews constituted a separate nationality was not alien to their way of thinking. It would be difficult to conceive of the Sephardim of Sarajevo, for example, as belonging to the integrationist camp. Retaining the heritage of the Ottoman millet system and growing up in a multiethnic society among Muslim Bosniaks, Catholic Croats, and Eastern Orthodox Serbs, they have always considered themselves, consciously or unconsciously, Jews by nationality. Nevertheless, having lived in the city for over three centuries, these Sephardim felt themselves to be an integral part of Sarajevo society. Immediately after the establishment of the Yugoslav state, the Political Committee of Jews of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a predominantly Sephardic body, issued the following declaration:
> As conscious and nationalist Jews, who always value highly the great idea of self-determination of nations and democracy, we join the program of the National Council of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes… and as sons of this land we see guaranteed in this proclamation the free development of the Jews of Bosnia and Herzegovina.[45]

The difference between Zagreb's and Belgrade's views on what it meant to be Jewish can be looked through the prism of the Ashkenazic-Sephardic discrepancy too. After 1918, the Sephardim of Bosnia and Serbia (Macedonia at that time still called South Serbia) did not have to face the same identity issues the Ashkenazim have. Although their Jewish identity was strong (Jewish schools, clubs, no marriage outside the creed, Ladino), because their Jewishness had nothing to do with the culture of the despised governance of Vienna or Budapest it was perceived as non-threatening, or less threatening, in any case. Commonly mentioned example of a Sephardic-Zionist (in this case Serbian-Sephardic) was David Albala, MD, the president of the Belgrade Sephardic Community before the war, and a

[44] Ibid.
[45] Freidenreich, 146.

lieutenant-colonel in the Serbian army. Albala is never failed to be mentioned as both a proud Serb (during WWI he was raising money in the US for war bonds and to gain support for Serbia at the Peace Conference) and a proud Jew.

As Freidenreich explains in her book, the choice between Zionism and assimilation was not the only one for Jews in Yugoslavia. The distinction she does not explain more however is the one between Bosnian and Serbian Sephardim, resulting from different political systems of the two. Serbian political tradition was one of either a level of independence or complete independence from the Ottoman rule. In Bosnian multi-cultural society without "actual" Bosnians, only Catholics, Christian Orthodox, Muslims and Sephardim Jews, identity-wise you were only your religion, which directly translated into some sort of nationality. So from the sixteenth century onwards the Sephardim of Bosnia lived their fixed Jewish identity and spoke their own language, whose usage was gradually being replaced with the South Slavic vernacular beginning of the twentieth century. Perhaps because they felt the word and the idea of Zionism was for the Ashkenazim, especially the Ashkenazim of Western and Central Europe, who had to "get back to Jewishness" (unlike them who never left it), they preferred to call their Jewish *political* persuasion "Diaspora nationalism". The Diaspora nationalism of the Sephardim rested on an idea that Jews indeed are a separate nationality, however not excluding the notion that one needs to be a "good patriot" and participate in the politics of the country you live in – the conflict arising in the early 1920s between the two communities evolved around a special Sephardic representation which they felt was not being taken into consideration.

This concept definitely presupposed recognition of Jews as separate national identity, but which would not threaten their new Yugoslav nationality. Here finally was a group that most comfortably used the term *Yugoslav* meaning a belonging to a civic Yugoslav nationality. In a 1920 brochure a Sarajevo Sephardic lawyer Sumbul Atijas writes: "To be a

Jew does not mean to withdraw oneself from the nation of which one has grown to be an organic part after a long period of joint activity. We are Jews, but we are at the same time also Yugoslavs."[46] Difference between Zionism and Diaspora nationalism was that the latter opposed preferring the work and life in Palestine over life in the Diaspora. What was also problematic for the Yugoslav Zionist leadership (especially the Sarajevo Zionist branch) was that the Sephardim wanted to maintain a separate Jewish identity as much as possible and did not wish to work together with the often patronizing Ashkenazi Zionist leadership who somewhat regarded the Sephardim as noble savages of Jews (the term which was often used was 'Sephardic *masses'*). The result was two Jewish newspapers in the town and a standstill in Zionist activities during the period of total polarization from 1924 to 1929.

> Most of us (Sephardim) think differently not only about the methods of Zionist work but, if you will, about Zionism itself. We conceive of Zionism very broadly. Our life differs from Jewish life in other countries. We do not see in Jewry only two poles, nor do we recognize on the one side Zionism and on the other side assimilation. Our life is full-blooded. For us, the centre and pivot of Jewish life is not to be found within the Zionist organization. Also outside of it there is a Jewish nationalist life…[47]

However, as the younger generations, growing up in the 1930s tended to favour Zionist (modern) over exclusive Sephardic (traditional) organizations, Zionism on the whole was not without success in Bosnia.

In Serbia, both integrationism and Zionism were apparently different to Croatia, partly due to a strong Sephardic presence in Belgrade (Austro-Hungarian Zemun, on the other side of the river, staying dominated by the Ashkenazim). Identity-wise, Serbian Ashkenazim are more interesting to look at. Freidenreich says integrationism was never as strong as in Croatia but gives no reasons. One might be that Jews in Croatia had to pay special attention (when the time came) to distance themselves from German or Hungarian culture due to Croatia's

[46] Freidenreich, 147.
[47] Dr Vita Kajon, 1924 meeting of the Federation Executive, in *Jews of Yugoslavia*, Harriet Freidenreich, 148.

issues with these. The majority of Jews in Serbia was in favour of Zionism and did not see it conflicted with local patriotism. Serbian integrationism came in the form of Serbian patriotism of the Serbs or Yugoslavs of the Mosaic faith. Avram Lević, a Belgrade Sephardic integrationist, published a statement in 1934 (wanting to set up a committee to spread Yugoslav ideology among Serbian Jewry) condemning "those Jews across the Sava" (Ashkenazim) who were bad patriots because they raised their children to become Zionists. "One may sympathize with Palestine but one must love Yugoslavia. I doubt one can love one and the other country with equal love. A son has only one mother."[48]

As already mentioned, the central idea of the kind of Zionism propagated in Yugoslavia was not return to Zion but a way of providing Jews with moral support and a sense of belonging. Naturally a connection to the Holy land was an important part of the Zionist thought, but with an undertone that it does not have to occur anytime soon. This, and the fact that almost nobody had any Hebrew language skills, drove Leo Stern, a Zionist from Karlovac in Croatia to say the political activism of the Croatian Ashkenazim bourgeoisie was a kind of non-Zionist Zionism. Aleksandar Licht defined it in *Židov*: "nationalizing our [Jewish] communities is a bare necessity for all those who do not want to see the continuation of the process of weakening of Jewish culture until its complete eradication."[49] To people like Cvi Rothmüller, Zionism is the only solution to the Jewish question, the only way to stand in the way of anti-Semitism. Šime Spitzer, head of the Jewish Communities Association in the 1930s was more practical when he said "we got to know something about Judaism only through Zionism. Its ideals did bring us closer to Judaism, but they could not disconnect us from the reality of the *galut*."[50]

[48] Freidenreich, 145.
[49] Židov, 24-25/1919.
[50] Freidenreich, 340.

According to Goldstein, in 1920s recruitment for Palestine was a commonly debated and mentioned topic, but by the 1930s it has worn off. However, in 1932 around two hundred Zagreb Jews had confirmed their Zionist persuasion and moved to Palestine, a kibbutz close to Haifa. Although by 1935 this number doubled, it was still a surprise if somebody decided to leave.

Zionism was introduced to the Jewish-papers reading population of Zagreb, Sarajevo, and Belgrade at the turn of the century by enthusiastic Ashkenazic and Sephardic South Slav students, studying abroad, and mostly in Vienna. The debates that followed (both within the Jewish community and reactions of the non-Jewish world) were not specific only to this part of Europe and dealt with questions of what kind of a change should Zionism bring about. According to many South Slav Zionist pioneers (Aleksandar Licht, Lavoslav Šik/Schick, etc.) it was to instill a sense of pride in one own's national origin, or a Jewish nationality because that way Jews will surely be better Croats or Serbs. The term Yugoslavs came into usage only after the creation of the new state, less so in a sense of "proud Yugoslavs" – among other reasons because it eventually became equated with supporting the royal dictatorship (in Belgrade) in 1929. So if one was a proud Yugoslav it would be in ideological collision with being a proud Croat which would result in somebody not only being branded as a dishonest Croat (as a Jew) but also in favour of a tendencies that were perceived by political cliques outside Serbia as pro-centralized hegemonic government.

What *was* specific to the makings of Jewish identity in the changed circumstances of the new Slavic state (that was creating its own Yugoslav identity at the same time) was how Zionist activism throughout Yugoslavia took on the specifics of the local political heritage and political jargon. There was Serbia which was outside the ruling Empires, multi-cultural Bosnia with its "living side by side" philosophy, and Croatia whose political elites developed under Vienna or Pest. So even when the idea of common Jewishness was present in the work

of Yugoslav Zionists there was still enough to divide them and from time to time cause conflict within the representatives of these respective countries. In this sense we can even talk about a kind of an integrated or assimilated Zionism that did not want to risk falling out with the Yugoslav (goy) political leaders, especially in Zagreb and Belgrade.

Writing about how and why Zionism ever got to Croatia (the essay is from mid 1950s so the author refers to it as the Zionism of Yugoslavia) Jakir Eventov of Haifa (formerly Drago Steiner of Zagreb) unintentionally shows how both the ideas of assimilation and Zionism were brought home from the universities of Vienna, Prague and Pest by "these tradesmen's sons"[51] who were either the first generation to attend universities after Jews had gained full citizenship rights where they "were introduced to ideas of the assimilation of members of the Mosaic faith but who were not of Jewish nationality"[52] (unlike the *Ostjuden* or the Sephardim who were perceived as being so outside the national body of the "host nation" they had an exclusive Jewish nationality? Author's remark) or whose sons, generation later were introduced to Zionism, some of whom accepted it with great enthusiasm at the same time when their peers of Slavic "nationalities" were becoming actively engaged in the nationalist activities of their respective countries.[53]

However, one does not need an academic degree to learn how to assimilate, Eventov observes: it came "naturally". After the emancipation, he says, everybody's intention was to be Jewish at home and in the temples, and to be the national of one's country of residence outside the private sphere. Assimilation could not have worked out become it soon became obvious that there was little difference between completely deserting one's Jewish faith and

[51] Eventov, Jakir, *Omladina iz 1918* [The Youth of 1918], in *Jevrejski Almanah 1955/56* (Beograd: Savez jevrejskih opština Jugoslavije), 98.
[52] Ibid.
[53] In the Croatian part of the Monarchy this meant anti-Austro-Hunagarian revolt. Mirjana Gross was the first to divert attention to a simultaneous youth movements of Croatian and Serbian nationalists and Zionists.

"only" assimilating. For him, Zagreb's Jewish community was assimilationist to begin with (since the Orthodox part of it was so insignificant). It was a sheer miracle then that somebody like the charismatic rabbi Hosea Jacobi was able to serve for more than half a decade; coming from Berlin in the second half of the 19th century, he helped to unveil "Jewishness long forgotten in the hearts of these Jewish ignoramuses". Later he became the patron of the first series of meetings in town that could be branded "Jewish" – Jewish high school students' literary meetings. The final blow to the assimilationist line was that they lost all of the youth to the Zionist cause, he concludes, who not only rebelled against assimilation as such but against their petite bourgeoisie fathers whose only wish was to blend in and "carry on with their lives".

Although it might seem that the choices of assimilationist lifestyles were somewhat more complex for the Jewry of Yugoslavia than for those living in places where there was "only" one national ideology to immerse oneself into, apart from the ongoing dilemma of Yugoslav vs. local identity[54] which confused some Croats or Serbs in the same amount as Jews or "South Slavs of the Mosaic faith", in reality the assimilationist option in Zagreb or Belgrade really was not far greater than for somebody in Vienna. Apart from some of the Jewry in Vojvodina where this process was mostly directed at assimilating into a Hungarian or German culture, in the rest of the country it meant slavicizing. Aleksandar Licht dedicated one of his columns entitled "Political sidings" (*Političko opredjeljivanje*) to the *horror vacui* Vojvodina Jews experienced after the Unification. He writes that "Hungary has done everything to break up the relations with the Jews of Vojvodina, who were until only yesterday Hungarian Jews, and left them to their unknown destiny…faced with the

[54] This is only a personal remark and should not be taken as a fact, but it seems it was easier for the Jewish editorialship of Sarajevo Zionist papers to boast Yugoslavism and being Yugoslavs then those from Serbia/Croatia who were surrounded by a stronger local nationalism that was interchangeable with the love for the King and/or Kingdom.

uncertainty of a life in the new Yugoslavia. But they knew that the Piedmont (Italy, author's note) of Yugoslavia is the little Kingdom of Serbia, truly democratic and truly tolerant. They saw the Serbian soldier, a winner after the heroic sufferings, as the protector of law and order in now much bigger Kingdom, watching day and night that law and order so that anarchy does not spoil the result of his victory… [the ideal picture of Serbian-Jewish relations are over-emphasized in this paragraph only because the end concludes how unfortunate it is that many of them are experiencing anti-Semitism on everyday basis, author's remark]"[55]. Real reason for Licht's text was because government denied vote to those citizens who "by virtue of their nationality had a right to opt for foreign citizenship."[56] This provision excluded most Germans, Jews and Hungarians from voting in the Assembly elections in November 1920 even though this practice went strictly against the directive of the Saint-Germain Treaty on the Defense of National Minorities, so to ensure Radical Party wins in the northern part of the Serbia or Srijem (Slavonia), where Serbs did not constitute a majority[57] (strange, because other sources claim Jews in Serbia – not Vojvodina though – voted for the Radicals, author's remark).

As for the rest of the Ashkenazic population who were not this geographically close to Austria/Hungary assimilation still did not mean they were trying to be "more Catholic than the Pope", as the saying goes – and the line of when these assimilationist efforts would turn somebody into a laughing stock were well known. For the most part then, Jews did not hold high places in any of the mainstream political parties, especially in Croatia[58]. Although the

[55] *Židov*, February 9, 1923
[56] Ivo Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia: origins, history, politics*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 389.
[57] Andrea Feldman, *Gospođica Ashkenazy žali: Intelektualni život Židova u međuratnoj Hrvatskoj* [Ms Ashkenazy is Sorry to Say: Jewish Intellectual Life in Inter War Croatia] in: Zbornik Mirjane Gross, Zagreb, 1999, p. 356. The author quotes Ivo Banac, National Question in Yugoslavia: origins, history, politics, Cornell University Press, 1988.
[58] They were however motivated to take part in the Socialist Youth circles and later anti-fascist movement, or even as Croatian nationalist emigres, like Vlado Singer who was killed in the concentration camp Jasenovac

Croatian Rights Party leader Josip Frank died before WWI, the memory of somebody who converted and went all the way in proving his Croatian patriotism (i.e. with strong anti-Serbian sentiment) and was still at times attacked by political enemies not for being a chauvinist but a Jew was still present, and, at least for the Croatian inter war Jewry, if you were not an advocate of Zionism, you had nothing to do with politics at all (and this is what the Zionist leadership advised).

Question that arises here is whether Zionism was the only way for Jews of Yugoslavia of entering the public sphere, especially after the experience of some converted and completely assimilated Jews in, say, Croatian politics who although never thought of themselves as Jews, neither in religious nor national terms, when attacked as bad or unworthy politicians or simply bad people were sooner or later attacked as Jews. Example that comes to mind is Stjepan Radić's pamphlet on the Croatian Rights Party politician Josip Frank[59], reminding the reader (the booklet self-published by Radić and entirely about his political opponent) of a law suit in which Frank sued a Croatian newspaper for calling him a traitor – the accusations had more to do with his willingness to side with Vienna - his Jewishness served as a convenient detail to add. Radić, later to become the most popular politician in Croatia, writes to explain why he thinks Frank is wrong. He reminds Frank did not sue for the part of the quote that he is not a Slav, but only for what was said about him not being a Croat, neither "by tribe, nor by education". How can one be a Croat and not a Slav, Radić wonders, although knowing well Frank's refusal to be seen as a Slav originates in his pro-Vienna and

after the Croatian pro-Nazi regime decided it would not turn a blind eye on even a highly ranked *Ustaša* who happened to be "of Jewish origin". Since the Communist Party was outlawed in the inter-war period and nationalists outside the country, all of these positions were outside the political party system.

[59] Stjepan Radić, *Frankova politička smrt* [Frank's Political Death], Tiskom Hrvatske Pučke Seljačke Tiskare d.d. u Zagrebu, 1908.

anti-Serbian stand which sees Croats so different from their Orthodox neighbours that it pretends they are not Slavs at all.

Although Radić never states he is attacking Frank or another Croatian Rights Party politician, Hinko Hinković (born Heinrich Moses, changed into Heinrich Mose*r* when at school in Vienna, finally to adopt the name he is known under today) just for being Jews, they are quick to use this fact when the chance to insult is hard to resist. Even more, the two "Croats of Jewish origin", belonging to two opposing lines of the Party of Rights often refer to the other in public writings by his "Jewish" name, aiming to insult by revoking the "non-Croatian" origin of the other. Ironically, both ideologically belonged to the "most Croatian" spectrum of internal politics. Since these were the only (known) cases of Jews participating in mainstream Croatian party work one can only imagine how these efforts to blend in, ending in petty insults, appeared to the Jewish audience of the country. It would be a grotesque picture if it was not so tragic, Lavoslav Schick says, two men who tried to shape the mainstream of Croatian politics were converts who referred to each other as Moses and Josef to undermine the (Croatian) patriotism of the other. When Hinković made a political *faux pas* (voted for the indictment of another Rights party member and thus sided with Budapest), the public did not attack him on the grounds of him being a bad Croat but for being a Jews, which for at least a while resulted in an increase in anti-Semitic remarks in public discourse. And that is the reason why it is not honorable to desert faith of one's fathers, Schick concludes.

The Jews of Bosnia and Serbia, especially the Sephardim, seemed to have fewer problems with bringing together their Jewish and Bosnian/Yugoslav identity. The Sephardic majority established itself as a constituent factor in the internal affairs of these countries

(although it was still harder for the Ashkenazi). The Bosnian author Avram Pinto briefly mentions the names of Jews in inter-war Bosnian politics and claims Jews were highly motivated to become involved in politics, although this last remark should be taken *cum granum salis* because the rest of his book gives a somewhat rosy and idealistic picture of Jewish life in Bosnia. He writes that Jews "politically sided with political parties that were in power"[60] and goes to list Jewish members of People's Radical Party (*Narodna radikalna stranka*), Democrats, Yugoslav Muslim Organization and the Socialist Labour Party or the Social-Democrats. "It was only in Bosnia that Jews were appointed and elected to office specifically as Jews"[61] Freidenreich points out, reminding Bosnian Jewry had representatives in the Turkish parliament, shortly before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The reason for this was that nowhere except in Sarajevo was the Jewish vote crucial due to their little number, so Yugoslav political parties (this was before 1929 when one could still talk of a semi-parliamental system which was replaced by a single regime party and the inefficient opposition bloc) had no interest in lobbying for attention and vote specially for their possible Jewish voters[62]. This work is in no way aimed at trying to explain the reasons behind people's political behavior but it seems reasonable to believe motivation to participate in the work of a specific party or politics in general comes from a belief this work can contribute to an issue important to the person involved, or that it can contribute to a positive change. Since in inter-war Yugoslavia, most of its Jewish citizens (unlike in the Czech lands) did not feel they should come out into the political sphere primarily as Jews, this says enough. It goes without saying there could not have been a Zionist party that fought for power in any of the elections for the Assembly. As in Bosnia, a couple of prominent members of Belgrade's

[60] Avram Pinto, *Jevreji Sarajeva i Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1987), 157.
[61] Freidenreich, 174.
[62] As Freidenreich explains, considering the nature of Yugoslav voting system with its proportional representation and the diverse character of the Jewish population, both geographically and ideologically, the concept of a separate Jewish list was highly impractical, except on the municipal level. So a Jewish candidate could be nominated only on the basis of his merits as a party loyalist, not primarily as a Jew.

Sephardic community stood out in Serbia's political life, mainly in the regime parties such as Radicals or Democrats or Socialists. Interestingly, although most Jews involved pursuing politics as a career were non-Zionist, like Šemaja Demajo, active member of the Sephardic community and a Radical deputy in the Constituent Assembly in 1927, some managed to reconcile Zionist activities and "mainstream" politics like David Albala who was the only one among leading Jewish figures not to be elected for the Belgrade municipal council for which he ran (I was unable to find out whether this had anything to do with the fact he was an ardent Zionist).

For the Sephardim in Bosnia, the option of becoming Bosnians of the Mosaic faith was out of the question as a social category due to the fact there was no civic or nation-state identity one could take on as a primary one. Yugoslav identity was thus the first one that could play that kind of a role in Bosnia, which would then suggest a strictly Yugoslav national identity was convenient to proclaim, in absence of other national categories, at least for the Jews and the Muslims of Bosnia (but the latter were easy to claim by Serbs and Croats). However, the only "assimilation" that the Bosnian Sephardim underwent (for the Serbian Sephardim it can be argued otherwise) was the linguistic one and the threat of (or the wish for, depending on the person) real assimilation could only be applied to the Ashkenazim, after the process of adopting the south Slavic vernacular ended. If they did not happen to believe in a Jewish nationality, and since it was not clear who was Bosnian, they were perfect candidates for Yugoslavs, the way the concept was imagined. Memories of Bosnia[63] before and after WWI of an occasional contributor to *Židov* and *Jevrejski glas*, Gustav Seidmann of Vienna (formerly from Prijedor, northern Bosnia) prove that unlike him, who was the first one in Bosnia to put out a Jewish flag for a public holiday, Jews from his

[63] See appendix.

home town were most comfortable with letting know they supported the current administration, which ever it was:

> At the time [Bosnia around WWI], it was a common thing to put out flags, sometimes because you wanted to and other times because you felt you had to. At the beginning one could see the black and yellow Austrian flag, even sometimes the red white and green Hungarian one. Later, you could see the Croatian, Serbian and the Ottoman flag, depending whether the family living in the house was Serbian, Croatian or Muslim. Jews would put up only the official state flag, or the Croatian/Serbian one, depending on the political orientation of the Jew in question[64].

Although the last sentence reminds of the argument that those Bosnian Muslims who studied in Zagreb inclined towards Croatian national identity, the same applying for Belgrade and a Serbian identity[65], they are only rare examples when, for instance, the Croatian Rights Party leader, Josip Frank, a "Croat of Jewish origin" attacked Serbs as a Croatian chauvinist. Even if there was a response from Serbian Jewry, a Serbian Jew or a "Serb of Jewish origin" would not resist the opportunity to discredit his nationalism by alluding to his "tribe", as was the case with the Croatian Peasant Party leader, Stjepan Radić. For a similar reason, there is no polemic [known to the author] of Serbs and Croats "of the Mosaic faith", *as* Serbian/Croatian nationalists.

What comes to light when "reading between the lines" of the Zionist press like *Židov* or rare assimilationist publications and pamphlets is that both had reasons to be seen as "good Yugoslavs". So what makes a citizen of Yugoslavia a "good Yugoslav" in the inter-war period? For one, it means praising the King – and the Zionist press never fails to inform about his majesty's goodness, or be devastated after his assassination (sentiment in other parts of the country was quite the opposite; Serbia lost "its" King so it was expected it was seen as a

[64] Gustav Seidmann, *Jevrejska zastava* [The Jewish Flag], *Jevrejski glas*, 1933/14-15
[65] See Jovana Mihajlović Trbovc, Forging Identity through Negotiation: The Case of the Contemporary Bosniak Nation, MA Thesis, Central European University, Nationalism Studies, 2008.

great loss, but the nationalisms of non-Serbian parts of the Kingdom were in mid-1930s already well in progress. After all, the King was assassinated by the Macedonian and Croatian nationalist émigrés. Interestingly, one of the minds of the attack was a "Croat of Jewish origin", Vlado Singer). Historian Andrea Feldman believes supporting the King with ceremonial phrases was to insure possible censorship inconveniences and was a common practice not only with Jewish press.[66] Ivo Goldstein also states that even though Serbia came into the Kingdom of Yugoslavia with a belief that the royal dynasty of the Karađorđević family developed the most liberal system in Europe in between 1903 and 1914, its liberal laws were only of decorative nature – courts did rule against censorship but nobody could stop mobster mobs to come and destroy printing machines every now and then[67].

On a similar note, even though there was public outrage after the abolition of parliamental activities and the constitution, an article from the cover of *Židov* in 1931 comments on the new King's constitution as "being built on principles of complete unity and a guarantee for a full equality of all of its people regardless of which religion or tribe (sic) they belonged and forbids the people to group in separate groups for political purposes… we truly applaud this King's act and emphasize that we shall put all of our efforts into working on King's and people's welfare."[68] Psychologically, this makes sure everything has been done to be seen as supportive and loyal citizens. Politically, it makes perfect sense to want to have the political leadership of the country rooting for your cause, and it would not be smart not to try and do everything possible to stay on the King's good side. Not only does *Židov* write in a way to remain seen as a good citizen of the whole Kingdom, but, because it is based in Zagreb and people who are writing and editing it Croatian Zionists, it does not want to be seen as anti-Croatian (which it might because it praises the King so frowned upon or

[66] Feldman, *Gospođica Ashkenazy*, 356.
[67] Ivo Goldstein, *Hrvatska u Kraljevstvu SHS i NDH (1918-1945)* [Croatia in the Kingdom of Serbs, Slovenes and Croats and the Independent State of Croatia], in: Historijski Zbornik, God. LVI-LVII (2003-2004), 158.
[68] *Židov*, September 4, 1931

despised in Croatia itself). So after the shooting in the Parliament until the death of the Croatian Peasant Party leader, Stjepan Radić, *Židov* is as shocked and grief stricken as any other Croatian weekly at the time. The obituary for Radić is especially interesting – it admits he used anti-Semitic remarks from time to time but the editorship just knows it was only for political purposes momentarily and does not reflect his real nature and that Croatia has indeed lost a great son. The only ideological enemies of *Židov* thus remains the anti-Semitic press (often the attack is made easier by emphasizing it most probably comes from those converted Jews, or ones of the Mosaic faith, who inform the local press a Purim party took place somewhere and German was heard).

Interestingly enough, Aleksandar Licht, *spiritus movens* of the Croatian Zionists (his obituary talks about him as the light ("Licht") of South Slavic Zionism) is not ready to fully disregard local patriotism even though entirely dedicated to Zionism and goes to say that Croatian Jews are mainly attacked by the anti-Semitic Serbian press in Croatia, and that "anti-Semitism stems right from their [Serbian] souls"[69] although he admits some respected Serbs are friends with the Zionist Jews. This seems odd since at the same time some Serbian and Serbian-Zionist elites would swear on the friendship between the two. Why did Licht highlight Serbs as main anti-Semites and not the anti-Semites from his own surrounding? As Licht sees it, while in Croatia before the first Zionist journal, *Židovska smotra*, started coming out, there was only one minor anti-Semitic paper while Serbs' main newspapers outside Serbia itself (so in Vojvodina, Sarajevo and Zagreb) were all openly anti-Semitic. That is why there are no Jewish assimilants who want to be Serbs but only those who want to be Croatian nationalists and deny Serbs as a separate nation (this would mean Croatia was considerably philosemitic, and yet, there is no real evidence for this). What he probably

[69] Gross, *Ravnopravnost bez jedankovrijednosti*, 123.

meant was that there were no Jews *in Croatia* who wanted to become Serbs (and this identity would include Orthodoxy, possibly the preference of Cyrillic script, supporting Serbian political parties). Since the idea of assimilation is to have less drama in one's life (one hoped), it stays unclear why would he even introduce this idea, since it would be counter-productive to assimilate into a member of the political "Other".

Was Licht then siding with the "natural political enemy" of the country he "belonged" to, and making the Serbian side appear more anti-Semitic so that the Croatian side would start believing they are nowhere near anti-Semitism since the Serbs are? Drawing these kinds of strong conclusions would be wrong because we might not know today whether he said something considerably different on other occasions. He was no fool, knowing he lived in a country where most of the voting body supported the Croatian Peasant Party, led by the Radić brothers, one of whom was probably the most popular politician in Croatia and turned a martyr after he was shot in the Belgrade parliament. Both were anti-Semitic, although in the version of agrarian revolutionaries (and not on racial or religious basis) that never saw the Jew as one of the honest, hard-working, but as possible "enemy of the little man". Although the majority of their supporters were illiterate so there was no danger they would read the following lines: *It's no use even if a Jew converts: to the people a Jew is always a Jew*[70], this was still his public opinion, no matter how benign somebody thought it was.

[70] Antun Radić, Croatian Peasant Party, *Collected Works*, 1937 in *Ravnopravnost bez jednakovrijednosti*, Mirjana Gross.

3.3 Narodni rad

Not everybody who was active in their local Jewish circles shared the enthusiasm for *Eretz Israel* of their Jewish council's Zionist members. Some refrained from Zionist activities while still taking part in community life, although after the non-Zionist line starting losing out in the Jewish councils' representative elections from early 1920s onwards, the non-Zionist or even anti-Zionist supporters were not able to compete with the Zionist leadership on any of the issues the communities or councils faced and had to lobby for their cause outside the actual physical space of the local Jewish council.

This was the case with a well-known and (supposedly) respected author and bookseller Mirko Breyer from Varaždin in north Croatia who founded an assimilationist circle *Narodni rad* ("People's Work"). Nothing in the name reveals what the group actually stands for so perhaps that is why "association of Jewish assimilants and anti-Zionists in Croatia" was added). "Convinced that ideas and methods of Zionism lead to isolation, into new types of 'spiritual ghettos' and that in the last stages, Zionism is counter-productive, Breyer establishes *Narodni rad* as an organization of Croats and Yugoslavs (he was kind enough to leave the members with choice of whether they were one or the other, author's note) of Jewish faith who want to prove their loyalty to the new state."[71] Similar organizations existed in Serbia (Serbian-Jewish Youth Group), the Czech lands (*Svaz Čehu-žid*) or the Alliance of German-national Jews which was led by Max Naumann, but whose main goal was to warn German Jewry and German public of dangers from *Ostjuden* (Eastern European Jews).[72]

Names involved in the work of *Narodni rad* mostly included already well-established individuals from Zagreb area who did not want to stand out as Jews in their world of business

[71] Andrea Feldman, *Gospođica Ashkenazy žali* in *Zbornik Mirjane Gross*, 355.
[72] Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu*, 173.

(trade, commerce, etc). This did not mean they necessarily hid their Jewish origin, but they felt making such "strong statements" would do them no good. Such was the case with Zagreb's *Hevra Kadisha* president, Šandor D. Alexander, whom the historian Ivo Banac calls "the archetypal representative of Croatia-Slavonia's Jewish elite"[73]. Together with his brother Šandor A. pl. Alexander Sesvetski, he managed to keep up his father's business success. Šandor D. took over two breweries in Croatia, founded Zagreb's oil factory, and had interest in coal, cement, chemical industry, and Zagreb's German language press (Agramer Tagblatt, Morgenblatt). He was the honorary president of Zagreb's Association of Industrialists, and the vice-president of the Zagreb Trade Fair. Šandor A. was the honorary president of the Zagreb Chamber of Commerce, president for life of a commercial association, and also of the Alliance of Merchants for Croatia and Slavonia, and the founder of a charitable society that ran soup kitchens for Zagreb's down and out. "And though the brothers surely had reason to resent any number of politically motivated fiscal measures promulgated by the Belgrade governments, they were certainly not known for promotion of Croat nationalism with the aim of putting pressure on their Serbian competitors. In fact, both Alexanders had a fair collection of Aleksandrine medals (King's medals, author's note) on their chests."[74]

This comment from Banac reminds of reasons often cited as to why Jews avoided having to deal with politics – if they side with Zagreb they are regarded as Croatian nationalists in Belgrade, and if they ardently support Belgrade (especially if they are coming from outside Serbia) Zagreb looks at them as supporters of centralized unitarism of the King and his entourage. It seems that having one's name connected with any kind of politics that could be seen as radical would potentially be "bad for business". As much as Croatian nationalism would look bad to business associates in other parts of the Kingdom, so would the support for Jewish nationalism at home. Zagreb's group around *Židov* exclaimed on the

[73] Banac, 409.
[74] Ibid.

first page of their first issue that everybody should at every given opportunity exclaim "*Ivri onochi!*", "I am a Jew!". One can imagine that charitable work for the city community, Jewish included, kept you on the good side of a reasonable amount of people, but the above stated exclamation to probably seemed to Alexander brothers like it might carry too much of a stigma, especially bearing in mind the list of business positions they held (on the other hand, financing the German-cultured side of their identity did not seem to present them with this issue).

> We have risen against the systematic propaganda of these Jewish nationalists who have transformed their wisdom after having acquired it in other lands and trying to prove to our youth that it is impossible for them to belong to the Croatian and Serbian people. These spreaders of Zionism, feeling they have nothing in common with our people are aiming at culturally detaching us from our surroundings… Our organization wants to believe that the Croatian and Serbian people are equally our people, as is the case with members of other faiths. We refuse to accept the Zionist theory that there can be Croats and Serbs of the Orthodox, Mohammedan or Protestant faith but not of the Mosaic faith.
>
> We want to work for *common* goals with Croatian and Serbian co-patriots of other faiths on every *aspect* of our national interests. We decline the Zionist theory that we are some sort of a national minority led by a few Zionists. We feel that the destiny of the Croatian and Serbian people is our own destiny as well.
>
> We do not want to separate [from our people] just to please a few individuals who want to pursue their own personal ambitions and who are kicking hard to impose themselves as our leaders.
>
> The first conference of the *Narodni rad* organization defined our goal as follows: to gather all Croatian and other Yugoslav citizens of the Jewish faith regardless of their political or party tendencies who are by their conscience and beliefs an inseparable part of this *people* to use their strength to work on the national welfare and to promote it… We do not want to make a fence around ourselves as a special *nation,* pursuing only our interests and calling a place outside these borders our homeland.[75]

The circle around *Narodni rad* published just the one publication and never tried to start something like a regular newspaper for all those who wanted their non-Zionist voice to be

[75] Udruženje „*Narodni rad*", Zagreb, 1922-23., no page number.

heard. After all, if there was an assimilationist paper of similar kind, it would turn into a weekly bickering with the "progressive nationalists" who appeared to the Croats or Yugoslavs (which ever term they preferred) as traitors not because they have let down their country (Yugoslavia) but who have let *them* down and stripped them naked again, after having worked so hard to prove their belonging. All they wished to ever say was laid out in the twenty or so pages in clear short sentences which were to prove their determination and show where their attachment and loyalty lie: "We are members of the Croatian (Yugoslav) people; This country is our homeland; when we contribute to a culture, it is the Croatian (Yugoslav) culture; Zionists are taking great sums of money, earned here in our homeland and take it all abroad; we believe anti-Semitism will diminish as our people [Croatian/Yugoslav, author's note] realize their national goals are our national goals as well; … "[76]

One of the battlefields for the assimilationist vs. Zionist debate in Zagreb was the Jewish school (or the question whether there should be one at all). That Eventov was right when he said it was something that really bothered the assimilationist group is clear from the *Narodni rad* pamphlet where they state:

> Jewish school is a non-modern remnant of times past. During times when we lived separated from the rest of the population such schools was necessary. Today we have public state schools, and the law guarantees that every child can attend them regardless of his citizenship or religion. Religious education is guaranteed to children of all faiths, Jewish children too. Why have special Jewish schools then?! Do we want to cut them off from this culture, and create a rift between them and other children? Do we want to create a new ghetto? Today when the entire enlightened world wants to bring people together and create a sense of solidarity and equality?! Zagreb's Jewish school is creating this rift. It is run by people who consider themselves foreigners in our homeland, who preach detachment from all, no matter how important issues of our people… and see as enemies everybody who is not a national Jew[77].

[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.

It is often brought to attention integrationism of Serbia's Jews generally did not imply the kind of "with us or against us" atmosphere that troubled the Jews of Croatia. Even more, they lived under the rule of the Karađorđević dynasty, as a rule depicted as a great friend of the Jewish people (power of suggestion?), with the likes of King Peter I who bespoke to his Jewish citizens: "work on staying faithful to your religion, your traditions and your patriarchal life".[78] On a similar note, Lavoslav Schick reports how in December 1917 Serbian minister of Foreign Affairs, Milenko Vesnić, says to David Alkalaj while touring the States: "We shall be sorry if a single one of our Jewish compatriots leaves us to return to their promised land but we shall find comfort in a hope that they will leave behind a great part of their hearts and thus become the strongest link between free Israel and Serbia."[79] Can one find anything similar to this at the same time in Croatia? No. While Serbs and Serbian Jews were fighting side by side in Serbian uprisings, Slavs within the Empire, fighting in WWI, were experiencing an identity crisis of sort. Patriotism-wise they might not have seen their Jewish compatriots as brethren in the way Serbian did, since for most of the South Slavs the otherness of Jews was equated with the otherness of Austrians and Magyars (maybe the resentment that arose from having to defend the oppressing Habsburg Monarchy[80] was felt towards their Jewish co-fighters too, if there were any, and who by 1914 still have not de-Germanised or de-Magyarised enough to be perceived as "one of us").

Early after the proclamation of the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, an article in *Židov* deals with "the relations of Croatian Jews towards Croatian patriotism"[81]. The author of the piece states that:

[78] *Jevrejski glas*, May 13 1932
[79] Nacionalna i sveučilišna knjižnica u Zagrebu (NSK; National University Library in Zagreb), Trezor R6965, Correspondence of Lavoslav Schick.
[80] As portrayed in the novels of the Yugoslav writer Miroslav Krleža.
[81] *Židov*, April 16, 1918.

> There is not a single Croat today who would seriously and systematically deal with winning Jews over. *Au contraire!* Not a single grain of liking is to be found. Our Jews have always come across anti-Semitism. Personally, I have never read that a Croatian writer has ever described a Jew as a kind person; I do not know of a great Croatian man who would be a philo-Semite. There are anti-Semites in every nation, but also people who knew how to stand up for Jews. Look at Zola, Nietzsche, Lessing, Gorki, etc. Not many names, but enough to encourage patriotism of the Jews for their respective host-nations. Jews did not work for these peoples only economically, but also with their pen and sword… One cannot even think of German or Hungarian cultures without their Jews. What about over here in Croatia? Have you ever heard of a Jewish writer? Visit the offices around the country – you are most unlikely to find a Jew there; even if you do they are converted. This has caused our Jews to lack in patriotic sentiment, and was the reason for ate-arrival of the Croatian word into Jewish families. Only public education could do something about this, and that is exactly how most Jews gained an ability to pamper Croatian patriotism. There is no doubt patriotic sentiment would be more present was it not for anti-Semitism… Only self-aware Jews [Zionist, author's note] understand the pain of other suppressed peoples. Our Jews too are leaning towards Croatian sentiment, although they are still being tuned down all over the place. But when they sense the rift created by the anti-Semitic public and one that divides them from love for the country, they realize their patria is not their mother but only a step-mother which treats them not as her own children but only step-children."[82]

To give another example of how the different starting positions of Croatia's and Serbia's Jews resulted in different processes of getting closer to the "native" population, there is the observance made by Freidenreich that "the Ashkenazim of Zagreb were more likely than their fellow Jews elsewhere in the South Slav lands to change their family names radically and slavicize their first names. Hence such surnames as Brajković (formerly Breyer), Mačelski, or Rodanić, which are not very readily identifiable as Jewish would occasionally occur in Zagreb, but were much less frequent in either Belgrade or Sarajevo… the Jews, especially in the twentieth century seemed to be trying hard to gain acceptance on the Zagreb scene; hence there was a tendency to adopt Croatian names as well as the Croatian language, so as not to be viewed as aliens."[83] She does not emphasize at this point of the book that Ashkenazim were more likely to slavicize their names in the first place, since they

[82] Ibid.
[83] Freidenreich, 53.

"Austro-Hungarian sounding" which might have been seen as "inconvenient" due to Croatia's issues with the Empire. Many South Slavs who were active in the Illyrian movement did the same, albeit few leading Croatian politicians or intellectuals (like bishop Strossmeyer or the writer Ksaver Šandor Gjalski) never did, something *Židov* was happy to remind of. It was different with Sephardic names because for one they did not remind of the "evil Empire" so the Sephardim did not feel this kind of social pressure. Secondly, their names were one of the ways of retaining their special identity, especially after language assimilation, and they had been living with this relatively small name-pool for centuries anyhow.

Primarily Ashkenazic assimilationists carried out organized work in Serbia too. Because of the specific relationship the Sephardim of Serbia established over the course of their presence, especially during the rise of Serbian nationalism at the turn of the century and during WWI, social circumstances were quite different to Croatia, both when it came to the debate on assimilation vs. Jewish nationalism and Jewish nation building as opposed to the nation building of their Slavic "brethren"[84]. Freidenreich draws attention to how even such general tendencies like assimilation/integration meant different things in Serbia and Croatia. In 1897 one of the spokesmen of the Serbian-Jewish Youth Group published an "Address to Serbian Youth of the Mosaic Faith":

> Yes, I feel, I am, and indeed I want to and I must be a true Serb, a Serb Mosaic. Because I am confident in my soul that my dear and fully tolerant fatherland Serbia will not, or even cannot, interfere in the least with … the practice of that holy faith of my ancestors… we must openly state our patriotism and all our coreligionists who are in this land must solemnly declare themselves Serbs of the Mosaic faith, Mosaic Serbs, and as such they must belong to the Serbian nation[85].

[84] Freidenreich, 144.
[85] Ibid.

Although in this paragraph the author, Leon Koen, mentions only the Serbian nation, Freidenreich tends to believe that although Serbian Jews or Serbs of the Mosaic faith emphasized their love for the Serbian homeland, this concept did not exclude the existence of a Jewish nation. She writes that "most Serbian Jews tended to disagree with the contention that one could not be a loyal Serb and a Jewish nationalist, or even a Zionist, simultaneously."[86]

An article written by "Serbs of the Mosaic faith" from Niš in southern Serbia[87] proves otherwise. It seems it was written as a reply to accusations that Jews were not patriotic enough (it reads as if some anonymous "Serbs" wanted to clear the name of their Mosaic brethren), so it indirectly states that these accusers should realize some citizens of the Mosaic faith have never felt as being of any other nationality but Serbian, and were "born as Serbs, and will die as Serbs"[88]. There was never any hatred in their part of the homeland (unlike in other parts, they state) for those who were able to assimilate (the author/s use it exclusively as a positive term) and "honestly embrace this country as their own. There is no place for any kind of separation here, and there was never any reason for it… Here in our close environment there is no 'Jewish question', because there are no Jews. There are only Mosaic Serbs."[89] Because it mentions "our fathers" who moved here a hundred years ago, the article is most probably coming from the Ashkenazi side. If anti-Semitic press was not referring to Zionists, it usually called on them, openly or indirectly questioning their patriotism by questioning their commitment to the homeland.

[86] Freidenreich, 145.
[87] *Srbi-Mojsijevci* (Mosaic Serbs), *Jevrejski glas*, Sarajevo.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.

Assimilation proved to be a different experience for the Jews of Yugoslavia depending on which part of the country they had been living in and sometimes which of the two Jewish groups they belonged to. The latter was not because there was something so radically different in the way Sephardic or Ashkenazi traditions saw the world but because of how the surrounding society perceived them. In Croatia (with the exception of small Sephardic communities in Split and Dubrovnik), for example, the Sephardic-Ashkenazi difference meant nothing, both were "equally Jewish", equally "strange" that is. This was because unlike in Serbia and Bosnia, neither of the groups developed "historical bonds" with the country's population or were a "natural element" that authors talk about when referring to the Sephardim of Bosnia and Serbia. In Serbia Sephardic Jews took part in the process of nation-building which evolved through revolt against the Ottoman Empire (although not during the First Serbian Uprising) while in Bosnia they reflected the heritage of the Ottoman Empire, which primarily meant they stayed a close-knit introvert community whose religious identity eventually became equated with a national one, which happened at the same time other religious groups in Bosnia were going through the process of "nationalizing" (for Catholics and Orthodox it meant being claimed by the competing Croatian and Serbian nationalisms). Because of this process of "nationalizing", there indeed was a difference between Serbian and Bosnian Sephardim: the former witnessed and identified with the making of the Serbian nation, hence allowing for the concept of Serbs of Mosaic faith to develop. Since Bosnia was until 1918 a place that was always under somebody's administration and there was no overwhelming majority one should tie oneself to, they remained known as Bosnian Jews.

For the secular Ashkenazi (i.e. not the Orthodox) assimilation meant that efforts have been made to keep up with the South Slavic nation building which for some political lines within the South Slav land meant the opposition to Austrians and Magyars while for other it

included resentment towards other South Slavs, which maybe added to the confusion of some but generally Jews from Croatia and Serbia refrained from strong Croatian/Serbian nationalist sentiment (naturally, with exceptions to the rule). This did not mean this keeping up with the developments in the South Slavic program did not apply for the Sephardim, but the pressure was not as felt, as the example with the name changing show. Because of all this the sentiment towards Zionism from the Ashkenazi side was ambivalent: older generations viewed it as something that will undo the spoils of assimilation while for the others it was to provide the Jews with a cause of their own. Although according to this equation most shekel-payers should have come from the Bosnian Ashkenazim, since they are neither the aboriginal Sephardim, neither in a place where they could embrace a dominant nationalist ideology, the Zionists of Sarajevo, (from both groups actually), proved no more ardent than those from other parts of the country, if not even less so.

Since the Sephardim had no reason to have to prove to their surrounding that their patriotism is now entirely devoted to the local cause, and not Vienna or Pest, the writings such as the publications by *Narodni rad* seem downright ridiculous to them. Who were you to become if you were an assimilated Sephardic Jew? In Serbia or Croatia (Split, Dubrovnik) one might argue that you then became a Serb or a Croat of the Mosaic faith, but in Bosnia? Yugoslav indeed was a term that went around, but not an identity choice that was of any particular meaning in everyday life. That is why the only assimilation was the one out of purely practical reasons, like enrolling your children into schools that taught in Serbo-Croatian and not Ladino so that one day they would have better job options.

Reactions to anti-Zionists by Zagreb's Aleksandar Licht or anybody writing for *Židov* were harsh and blunt: "it is of no use to take off the Jewish suit… whatever you decide to wear they will undress you, and we (Zionists) should help them do so. They refuse to have

anything to do with you, regardless of whether you are well fed, or Bolsheviks or university professors… for nothing you betray your heritage which should make you proud, your present which calls for dignity and the future which is a worthy ideal of a people who have a right to live – you are our endless shame."[90] Throughout the 1920s[91] Zionist reactions to assimilation or conversion that might follow are the same: they openly warn their brethren, "these pathetic Jews who are Jews only by denial"[92] that assimilating will not result in disappearance of anti-Semitic sentiment, no matter how much they pretend it is only rain when spat at, and open their umbrellas. Only one article in *Židov* ever comes close to tolerating the appeal of assimilation[93], and strangely for the journal, it comes from a non-Zionist standpoint – maybe because it was one of the first issues because one does not come across similar non-Zionist supporters (or merely ones not won over by Zionism). Its conclusion that Jews of "double nationality" can benefit both themselves (keeping their pride, contributing to the Zionist cause for all those Jews who are not safe in their places) and their host-nation (participating in community's welfare as any other citizen) reminds of Lavoslav Schick who thought any Jew can bring together (Slavic) patriotism and Zionism.

Already the next issue of *Židov* brings a "harsh Zionist response". Unlike the non-Zionist opinion, this one is signed, maybe a coincidence but because the paper does not usually bother letting on the authors of most articles, perhaps a strong symbol that a Zionist Jew has nothing to hide, not even his name (unlike the former!). The reply is simple: Zionism is a radical, life-changing notion, and it does not benefit from Jews who are "sitting on two

[90] Židov, 24-25/1919; quoted in Goldstein, *Židovi u Zagrebu*, 175.
[91] Neither Goldstein nor Freidenreich make the connection between the disappearance of assimilationist groups like *Narodni rad* and the rise of anti-Semitism (or the rise of the talk of anti-Semitism) that mostly preoccupied the Zionist press. Assimilationist advocates probably thought better than try to prove a "lower profile" leads to less anti-Semitism.
[92] *Židov*, 1924.
[93] That is known to the author. It is titled *Dvostruka narodnost (Double nationality*) and signed by a "non-Zionist voice", April 1918.

chairs", as another Zagreb newspaper calls it[94], because the cause needs them completely or not at all; nor do these Jews benefit from being treated by both sides (the Jewish-nationalist and local) as hypocrites because one can never tell which "nationalism" or "patriotism" he is really rooting for. "National Jews", the Zionist author claims, "are more aware of the fact they have to respect their host-nation because they hold respect for their own nation, unlike the assimilationist whose patriotism for the host nation easily turns into snobbism while the patriotism of the Zionist Jew for his/her host-nation is less loud and thus more honest".[95] In an article titled "Croats of the Jewish faith disapprove" the editorship of *Židov* somewhat cynically reports the effort of people around *Narodni rad* who wanted to alert the public by sending the same statement to various Zagreb newspapers that "they are not represented by the city councilors who are Jewish nationalists – Zionists"[96]. At their meeting in the Café City the twenty of them who showed up reached some harmless conclusions, and did not bother with calling the press, maybe not to destroy the illusion about the number of Croats of the Jewish faith. Since they firmly reject the statements of the Zionist city councilors *Židov* is wondering whether this firm stand is dictated by a kind of an angst-psychosis.

Reading the reminiscences[97] of Jakir Eventov, the picture of the relations between Zionist and anti-Zionist supporters in Zagreb or Croatia (although he refers to it as "memories from Yugoslavia" he does not talk about Serbia or Bosnia) seems more serious than one could assume from reading *Židov*, perhaps because giving attention to the anti-Zionists (or simply non-Zionist, that is those who refrained from actively supporting either of the camps

[94] This time it was a mainstream, non-Jewish newspaper, *Zagrebačka smotra*/24/1934. They call for non-Zionist Jews, whom they believe to be the majority, to declare their Yugoslav nationality openly and maybe even organize politically. If they confronted those Jews who do not think of themselves as a part of the Yugoslav nationality so that there would be no excuse for anti-Semitism *if* these Jews (who feel Yugoslav) show they are truly Yugoslav). The article concludes Jews have to make this choice, not because it would make their life easier but because then everybody would finally know who was really a true Yugoslav patriot and who was not.
[95] *Židov*, 3/ April 1918, Kraus Mirko, „Dvostruka narodnost".
[96] *Židov*/49, 1928.
[97] Jakir Eventov, *Omladina iz 1918* (The Youth of 1918), in: *Jevrejski Almanah 1955/56*, Savez jevrejskih opština Jugoslavije

but were still active in community life, like the Alexander brothers) would add to their significance.

Since after 1923 the Zionist line won over the Jewish council's leadership and decision making body, it was easy to diminish the work of such people like the ones involved around *Narodni rad*. Despite its efforts, Freidenreich thinks, "this organization never attracted the support of any significant number of Zagreb Jews. It consisted of a small circle of affluent and successful entrepreneurs and professionals, generally from well-established Zagreb Jewish families, who despised the mere idea of Jewish nationalism and felt personally threatened by it… This organization seems to have disappeared by the 1930s and ceased to have any effect on Jewish communal life in Zagreb. Unlike the Zionists, the integrationist youth did not tend to form and official groups and did not publish journals and propaganda for their cause."[98] Naturally, if one wishes to blend in, drawing attention by forming clubs or newspapers that would be dedicated to the "integrationist cause" is out of the question. Freidenreich thinks these non-Zionist "Jewish kids" were more attracted to causes like socialism, if they were politically active at all. The conclusion we can draw from this is that although older well-established Jews who liked to think of themselves as Yugoslavs or Croats of the Mosaic faith, or the non-Zionist Jewish youth were either without interest for "Jewish-nationalist" cause or thought only bad can come out of that, but were still not participating as Croatian or Yugoslav party members in numbers that would exceed few individuals (some, in Bosnia, were to be found in the Yugoslav Muslim Organization of Mehmed Spaho which participated in nearly all interwar governments and whose party-leader identified himself as a Yugoslav). This might indicate that on some level they felt that sooner or later they might be discredited as Jews, as the already mentioned example of Josip Frank.

[98] Freidenreich, 143.

An article published in *Židov* in the summer of 1918 comments on possible standpoints of "us *national* Jews of Yugoslavia" when it came to participating in politics of the new country.

> We have been asked how can our Jewish-national aspirations come to harmony with our Croatian patriotism and just how do we think we will actively participate in politics because our Zionist program does not encourage us to take part in national politics of our surrounding. Because our program concentrates only on issues related to Jews, and those issue that have nothing to do with Jews we deal with only indirectly, it is necessary for us to analyze this question...The older generations of Jews [footnote explains they are referring to Jews living in Croatia and Slavonia and not those in Split or Bosnia, i.e., the Sephardim, author's note] are still partially under the influence of German or Hungarian culture. Can this be held against them? [99]

Židov wants to show why have Jews been discouraged to participate in Yugoslav political life: "if a Jew would join a political party suddenly everybody would stop referring to the real name of the party but would instead call it the Jewish party" [although this was not the case with the Croatian Rights party, with one of its fractions led by Josip Frank, a converted Jew]. The younger generation, according to them has not really been welcomed into the Yugoslav circles and this has put them off trying to prove themselves as true Yugoslavs. Jews, who think of themselves exclusively as Yugoslavs, are so much more virulent; *Židov* shares its opinion openly, and cannot be discouraged from their efforts that easily. So the real problem for the author of the text is that Jews can never fully assimilate [and stay Jews, so without converting] and yet, since they are not treated as a separate people they cannot really develop their separate national sentiment. The only way out of this, coming as an expected conclusion from a Zionist paper is to establish a Jewish state so that the Jews of Eastern Europe can live in a safe environment and for Jews of Central/Western Europe a country they can refer to with pride.

[99] *Nekoliko riječi k jugoslavenskom problemu* (Few Words on the Yugoslav Problem), *Židov*, August 16 1918.

By embracing a distinctly Jewish culture the Hungarian-German speaking and acting Jews would give up on these habits of acting as strangers and because there is no threat for Yugoslavia from these "Jewish tendencies" they would thus be better Slavic local-patriots than before they were Jewish nationalists. "This sort of Jewish emancipation actually calls for an active role of Jews in local politics, because national-aware Jews have to prove to the world they think highly of nationalism of the country they live in, and that they support it with a sense of political and economical cooperation between Jewish nationalism and the local [Slavic] nationalism."[100]

The latter indeed reminds of Schick's 'Croatian-patriotic Zionism' (perhaps the article was written by Schick himself, it is unsigned), but seems to had failed in trying to persuade "real Croats" or win over those Jews who were eventually laid to rest in the main, non-Jewish, part of Zagreb's cemetery *Mirogoj* ("Peaceful Grove"), some, like the Alexanders or the Deutsch-Maceljski family, next to the Croatian political or cultural elite, Stjepan Radić included.

4 On the Question of Jewish nationality

In September 1930 Zagreb's Zionist Lavoslav Schick gave a speech at the unveiling of the grave for the Jews of Yugoslavia who died as soldiers in WWI and said: "They tried to convince us to bury our dear brothers together with all the other Croatian soldiers who died in the war. The Jewish Community has thankfully declined this offer because we wanted our sons to be buried in the Jewish cemetery, together with the Jews of the Russian army who

[100] Ibid.

have to be laid to rest in the Jewish part of the cemetery as well, next to their brothers."[101] Although the representatives of the Jewish Community at the time felt a Croatian Jew is closer to any Russian Jew than another Croatian when it came to where they should be put to rest, Schick is quick to say that if anybody would raise against Yugoslavia, the Jews of Zagreb will defend their country (as much as they would defend Jewish Palestine) because it is their duty, or as Schick puts it, "*dina da malhusa dina*, the law of the King is the law, and that law applies to us Jews too."[102]

For the Zionists of Yugoslavia, there was never any question over the idea of Jewish nationality in terms of belonging to a people who share a common "past and future" as they liked to put it, and they believed it was just a matter of time before the Jewish people reunite in the place their ancestors left from. Although throughout the entire inter-war period it remained impossible to opt for the Jewish nationality in the census (thus making it easier for those having doubts over their own national identity) one could "live" this identity as if s/he did belong to an official national minority. Although Yugoslavia's internal political situation eventually made it impossible for any kinds of "national" organizations to carry on with their work, Jewish organizations could always claim they were only exercising the rights of a religious minority.

At several places in this thesis explanations are given as to why Jews remained (only) a religious minority in inter-war Yugoslavia. Because attempts to be recognized as a national minority were never fully accomplished, many believed Zionism was the only way of preventing Jews, especially the Ashkenazim, from complete assimilation.

[101] The National and University Library in Zagreb, Trezor Lavoslava Schicka, R6965
[102] Ibid.

Harriet Freidenreich distinguishes the choices Jews of Yugoslavia made when it came to national identity in the inter-war period depending on the age group. The generation born before 1880, especially in Croatia, with a lesser extent in Belgrade was predominantly integrationist – they were Croats/Serbs of the Mosaic faith; the ones born before WWI were largely Zionist or Socialist-Zionist; ones born after the war were revolutionary, either when it came to causes at home, Zionist or not, or was considerably more motivated to try their luck in Palestine. Age was not the only category that proved crucial when it came to the debate over national identity of Yugoslavia's Jewry – for one, because of the long tradition of their separateness from the (pan)Slavic nationality, the Sephardim of Yugoslavia were always treated (and self-perceived) as being nationally Jewish. The Ashkenazim on the other hand, coming from the Central European milieu assimilated or acculturated into their surrounding much faster.

Only with the formation of the new state did the Jewish Religious Councils of Croatia, Slavonia, and other South Slav territories, now all joined under the same flag, form a common association. The councils of Croatia and Slavonia (today the eastern part of Croatia, author's remark) were hitherto unable to form a common representational body that would gather all of the "adherents of the Jewish faith" because of the fear they will lose out on their autonomy.[103] The disagreements that later arose due to different concepts of what the nature of the Yugoslav Jewish community became apparent at the very beginning when deciding upon the name of the Association. The assimilationist circles advocated that the councils should go under the name "Israelite Religious" and not "Jewish", because the latter bears a connotation of a separate nationality. In the end, the compromise overwhelmingly accepted was the Association of Jewish (Israelite) Religious Communities (councils) in the Kingdom

[103] As stated in *Spomenica 1919 1969, Savez Jevrejskih Opština Jugoslavije, Beograd: II osnivanje saveza.*

of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Since at the time the representatives of Zagreb's Jewish Council were more inclined toward assimilationist principles, they declined the offer to attend the Belgrade Conference of the Jewish Councils in April 1919 and sent a note which stated:

> The representatives [of Zagreb's Jewish council] are strongly against any effort that would make the Jewry of Yugoslavia a separate nation or a separate nationality. The Jewry of Yugoslavia is an organic part of the Yugoslav people... the representatives think it is their holy duty to maintain and strengthen an unshakeable devotion towards the Croatian national ideals, i.e., towards our young Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes... The representatives condemn the standpoint of the Zionist organization on the question of Jewish nationality and which has been delivered to the National Council of the Kingdom... The representatives **consistently disapprove of the Zionist organization's intention which advocates the recognition of Jews in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes as a national minority** [author's emphasis]... that is why we refuse to take part in the meeting set up for April 6 1919 and protests against a possibility that this meeting reaches conclusions for the entire Jewry of the Kingdom[104].

During the next several years council members elected into the representative bodies of their respective communities were mostly Zionist, and convincingly so, but still they were not able to bring about a change regarding the status of Jews. The only nationality that was technically acknowledged by the censuses was the Yugoslav one, and the only way members of the population were distinguished from each other was by religion (and in the case of nationality, it would be even harder to argue what to do with the Muslim population whose intellectual elite at this point would regard themselves "nationally" as Serbs, Croats, Yugoslavs – but still not as Bosnian/Bosniak[105]).

Few days before the 1931 census David Alkalaj, a Zionist lawyer from Belgrade writes for Zagreb's *Židov* to advise the Jews of Yugoslavia (*Židov*-reading Jews of

[104] Ibid., 28.
[105] See Jovana Mihajlović Trbovc, Forging Identity through Negotiation: The Case of the Contemporary Bosniak Nation, MA Thesis, Central European University, Nationalism Studies, 2008; Bringa Tone, Being Muslim the Bosnian Way: Identity and Community in a Central Bosnian Village, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

Yugoslavia) to be honest and confirm their belonging to the Jewish people, not only by declaring themselves as Jewish by religion but nationally as well. "Jews are not only a religious group, connected through their faith – their connection is also historical, emotional; a spiritual bond of habits and customs"[106]. Since there was no option of declaring oneself on a national basis (as I have been informed at the time of writing this, author's remark), what Alkalaj probably had in mind was specially pointing out one's Jewish nationhood even though there was no way of publishing these results, or any other that had to do with expressing national sentiment, as one of the categories in the census itself. In spite of all the lobbying of the Zionist circles of Yugoslavia to have Jews recognized by the Constitution as a separate nation, this only became possible after WWII. It was not that the inter-war Yugoslavia had anything particular against the idea that Jews were a special nation, but because it was at the same time trying to suppress nationalist tendencies all over the country this kind of political decision, albeit a symbolic one since it concerned only half a percent of the population who had no political agenda regarding the control of power in the country, it might be seen as adding oil to the fire. Namely, the process of restriction of national-ist "tendencies" began at the tenth anniversary of the proclamation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1 December 1928) when clashes with the police claimed new casualties. Because of this King abolished the Constitution (sixth-of-January dictatorship), dissolved the National Assembly, banned all political parties whose name had a national, religious or regional meaning, and founded the regime-supported Yugoslav National Party. The Law on Royal Rule and Supreme State Administration legalized the King's absolute authority as the supreme organ of state rule.

It seems that the proponents of the idea of Yugoslavia had more on their hands in terms of nation-building than those in Czechoslovakia, where one could identify him/herself

[106] *Židov*/12, March 20 1931, front page.

in national categories, Jewish included. At the earliest stages of the Kingdom of Serbs, Slovenes and Croats (1917-1918) there was talk among Jews of lobbying for the status of a national minority because "Jews are generally considered to be a nation and because there are 130.000[107] of us in this country we should have a right to three minority representatives in the State Council, and yet we have none. Minister Pribičević[108] replied to this issue [raised by The Jewish Political Board in Sarajevo, author's remark] saying that it is guaranteed Jews will be recognized as a national minority in the first test-Constitution. And when the Constitution is finally approved their rights will be fully acknowledged, as the rights of any other national minorities."[109] Although at one point Freidenreich concludes "for the most part Jews did not demand recognition as a national minority"[110] it seems they indeed did, but because of the inability to reach a consensus among the community representatives themselves the lobbying to be recognized as a national minority at the earliest stages of the new country failed (or the people in power already knew there will be no mention of the word "national" in the Constitution). By the time consensus was reached and the Zionist line won in most of the Jewish community councils, internal political crisis was already broke out.

Since the only real domestic political issue was acknowledging nationalisms that would actually threaten the stability of the unitary centralized Kingdom, i.e. Croat and Serbian, one has to wonder what kind of a liability would arise from approving the right to be recognized as a national minority. Even if granting this right to some "adherents of the Mosaic faith" would not bring the house down, Yugoslavia would then have to become the Kingdom of Yugoslavs and Jews. Although some of the leading men in Yugoslav politics, the king included, liked to remind they were "friends of the Jewish people" (like Nikola Pašić,

[107] The number was actually a lot smaller.
[108] Svetozar Pribičević, Minister of the Interior, and according to some historians, the most powerful person in the country at the time, exceeding the power of the King.
[109] Židov, 9/1918
[110] Freidenreich, p. 58

the leader of the Radical Party in Serbia, or the above mentioned minister, who perpetuated the idea of the Jew who undertook great sacrifice in wars Serbia was a part of[111], thus confirming the fact the only reason for this kind of acceptance by the power elites was because of the militaristic part of the nation-building story which is suppose to emphasize such virtues as patriotism, courage, etc.) nothing as such happened.

Although institutions like the Association (*Savez*) organized Jewish life in the country as if it was *de iure* a *religious* community, in fact it made sure the Jewry of Yugoslavia who was in this way or another involved in one of the numerous Jewish organizations knew they were on some practical, every day level, considered by their (Jewish) representatives as a *national* community. This was in spite of the fact that the law saw them strictly as a confessional group (all of the rights and duties of the Jewish community were specified in the Law on the Jewish Religious Community, like the one from December 1929), and despite the fact that some of the people involved in the work of the Association saw it as a organization that should really worry only about the religious affairs. (Zagreb's local rabbinate was accused of using a place of worship for political purposes by allowing the Zionist advocator touring the region, Menahem Usishkin to give a speech in the synagogue). Against all of these odds, *Savez*, whose leading men were members of the "progressive-nationalist" line, as Zionists were sometimes referred to, thought of its work as missionary in terms of maintaining the level of awareness of Jewish issues worldwide (mainly through newspapers) and emphasizing that work of the community should stress the "cultural" aspect of the Jewish people, not only religious (so, by saying cultural actually meaning maintaining the national awareness of the community).

[111] Around six hundred Jews fought together with Serbs as officers or soldiers in the Balkan Wars and WWI; Freidenreich, *Jevreji Beograda između ratova (The Jews of Belgrade Between the Wars)*, 367.

The debate around the time of making the Law on the Religious Community of Jews in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1929 revolved around nature of the Jewish council. The meeting of the main board of the Association (Savez) concluded that one's local Jewish council *must not be seen only as an administrative institution which should take care of its religious life – its mission is much broader because it really should be a* national *council* [national emphasis in the original], *the council should only reflect the way people actually live; Jewishness is a religious and an ethnic totality.*[112]

Ironically, the only Jewish Councils that asked for exception from the Association of Jewish Religious Councils were the Orthodox communities, wanting to maintain full autonomy in decisions on religious education, etc.

Yugoslav Jews were never clear about what to do about their minority rights, *Židov* writes much later, in early 1930s[113] because they were "afraid that they will harm the good relationship between the Yugoslav and the Jewish community… it is still an open question whether it was right to voluntarily give up on minority rights which have been guaranteed to us too, by the Peace Treaty and which are used by other national minorities in Yugoslavia. Only once did we Jews try to declare ourselves as a national category, during the last census in 1931. It is not known to us whether the officials took into consideration this declaration of nationality of Yugoslav Jews because until this day there is no official data on the population numbers in Yugoslavia according to their nationalities (the word used is actually *narodnosti*, meaning peoplehood, thus avoiding the term nation, author's remark)… We Yugoslav Jews should ask ourselves openly once and for all, are we a national minority and do we think of ourselves as part of the Jewish people? One cannot just ignore national rights that had been

[112] Spomenica 1919-1969 Saveza jevrejskih opština, 47.
[113] *Židov*, July 1932 (front page; author of the article Drago Steiner/Jakir Eventov)

promised to him without saying a word and then suddenly, at the time of a census say empty words about belonging to a Jewish nationality. This declaration of nationality cannot be something to declare just so, but it should be pursued seriously- for instance there is no reason to work on keeping the Jewish school running when it is clear to everybody it is not only a religious school but that it should be guaranteed to teach Jewish culture as well, just as other minorities do. We cannot stand by silently while Jewish schools are being closed down in Vojvodina and South Serbia and only because it is unclear to the authorities and to ourselves what kind of a principle we hold towards our own minority rights. So we turn attention to all of our Zionist colleagues…because of the assimilation we have to fight and because we have the responsibility towards future development… to bear this issue in mind. There is no reason for us to give up voluntarily on the rights which was not easy to acquire in the peace treaties and which guarantee a non-disrupted Jewish national-cultural development.[114]

But was there a specific reason interwar Yugoslavia was so different from a country like Czechoslovakia where Jewish identity could be understood as a belonging to a nationality? Authors like Freidenreich believe it was exclusively the fact of the small number of Jews in the South Slav lands after WWI (in 1921 less than 1% of the total population[115]). However what she does not mention is that the idea of Yugoslavia relied heavily on the efforts of creating a common identity, more complex than the Czecho-Slovak one; an identity that would just have to be the right way of making sure the new country, gathering up so many different identities would not fail (the ones more evident like Serbian or Croatian or the local ones, Dalmatian, Istrian, Monte Negrian – and, one would not be wrong to say it was maybe as problematic for somebody from the Istrian peninsula to declare oneself Croatian as

[114] Ibid.
[115] *Jevrejski Almanah 1954* [Jewish Almanac 1954], Savez jevrejskih opština Jugoslavije, Prosveta, Beograd, 22.

it was for some Serbs or Croats to accept the concept of becoming Yugoslavs). Censuses in interwar Yugoslavia only differentiated between Catholic, Orthodox, Muslim and Jewish Yugoslavs. So the Kingdom of *Serbs, Croats and Slovenes* was made up of Yugoslavs with only a religious identity. Even though it was left unsaid, on an everyday basis one did live a "national" Serb or Croat identity, at least until 1929. Looking at the example of Hungarian-speaking Ashkenazim from Vojvodina (who could not be recognized as a part of the Hungarian minority, and since they lived in a multicultural province mostly speaking a non-Slavic language in early 1920s) one could draw a conclusion the only real Yugoslavs would have to be the Jews of Yugoslavia, to paraphrase the Czechoslovak case, even more so because they were so dispersed across the country and due to the Sephardic-Ashkenazi rift without a sense of a "single Jewish identity".

So were the Jews of Yugoslavia more Yugoslav oriented than Serbs, Slovenes, and Croats? For the Sephardim of Bosnia the new concept of Yugoslavism did not represent some groundbreaking novelty when it came to identity and they had no sudden reason to emphasize it. "In Bosnia, all the Jews are nationally Jews, even though they might not be Zionists, unlike in Croatia where if you thought of yourself nationally as Jewish you definitely were a Zionist… it will be easier for Bosnian Jews to 'nationalize' their local councils because there are not as many disputes in Bosnia as there are in Croatia."[116] They were Spaniards for the people they lived among and Jews for each other and to function like this was just enough – what was more important to them, at least what one can gather from reading the Sarajevo Zionist journal *Jevrejski Glas*, was maintaining a sense of Sephardic identity, and not wanting to become those kind of Jews that with such ease blended in the surrounding (meaning the Ashkenazim who from the Sephardic perspective did not even know who they

[116] *Židov*, March 15 1918, *Sefardi na raskršću* [The Sephardim at Crossroads].

were and where did they belong). For the Ashkenazim anywhere around the country identity was always a more complex issue- indeed, after 1918 some had problems of acquiring new residence permits because the new state saw some of them simply as ”foreign citizens” (especially if their Serbo-Croatian was bad) and although they had no wish to move many left for Hungary and Austria.

> The problem of deporting Jews already appeared in the first months of the Kingdom. The government considered deportation necessary because the Ashkenazim were seen as foreign since they had come to the area of the new states from other parts of Austria-Hungary. Although some of them had been living in Croatia, Voivodina or Bosnia for several decades, the Yugoslav authorities felt that they had not gained the right to acquire citizenship. Thus, deportation began, although various Yugoslav and international Jewish organizations were engaged in preventing it at the Paris Peace Conference… the first to suffer were the Bosnian Ashkenazim, a small number of whom were banished never to return to Yugoslavia… publicly this problem was not treated as if it concerned Jews, people spoke about ‘the expulsion of foreigners’… ‘In these times of unrest it would be possible to justify certain measures of security against anti-state disorder’. These were the words of *Obzor*, a Zagreb paper of liberal outlook …[117]

Unlike in 1941 when all of Yugoslav Jewry was equally affected by Race Laws, the anti-Semitic measures of 1918 differed between Jews seen as the “foreign element”, the German/Hungarian speaking Ashkenazim and Jews those who required what it takes to be seen as an inseparable part of the national body: centuries of presence, that is. The fact that not before that time did the Sephardim of Yugoslavia started their “actual” assimilation by replacing Ladino with Serbo-Croat more so than ever did not bother the authorities – unlike the former, the Sephardim were perceived as rooted enough to be considered “one of us”.

In a letter to a minister in Belgrade (unclear which one, but most surely Svetozar Pribičević) Schick writes to express his hope how the unification of South-Slavic countries

[117] Ivo Goldstein, *The Jews in Yugoslavia 1918-1941: Antisemitism and the Struggle for Equality*, http://web.ceu.hu/jewishstudies/pdf/02_goldstein.pdf, page 2. Goldstein does not mention part of Sarajevo's Sephardic Community also called for expelling the Bosnian Ashkenazim out of the country.

presents a new era for all of its nationals because the kind of freedom enjoyed by Jews in "old Serbia" (pre-WWI), i.e. freedom that the Jewish representatives talked about in rallies around the US (he refers to the visit of David Alkalaj to try and raise funds for the Serbian army, author's remark) is now expanded to include the Jews of the entire country.[118]

He seems to think Belgrade Jews have always seen their Jewishness as a national characteristic, (he does not say this but probably opposes Serbian Jews to Croatian Jews who were more "integrationist" as Freidenreich puts it) raising an interesting question – were there Zionists who even though still "contributed to the cause", were more comfortable with being Jewish Croats and not Croatian Jews? If so, what would be the reasons for Croatia's Jews to follow a more assimilated lifestyle – was it because Jews in Croatia were more "foreign" to Croatia than Jews were to Serbia, and because in Serbia the otherness of the Ashkenazim minority was not a direct threat (not that it was in Croatian part of the Monarchy) – and because the Austro-Hungarian element was not an internal issue - and hence were more eager to fit in?

[118] *Međutim je narodnim oslobođenjem i ujedinjenjem nastupilo novo doba za sve državljane, ma kojoj vjeri oni pripadali. Ona sloboda koju su uživali Jevreji u staroj Srbiji, o kojoj su njihovi izaslanici pričali na velikim mitinzima u Americi, proširena je sada na Jevreje cijele naše države.* The National and University Library Zagreb, Trezor Lavoslava Schicka, R6965

5. Our Jews and Other Jews

In an article Schick wrote for the Viennese Jewish journal *Wiener Judische* ... [handwriting unreadable] he comments on a protest from a Yugoslav member of parliament Ivan Majstorović in November 1933 who called against granting asylum to Jewish immigrants from Germany and Austria. The aim of this article, and quoting the member of parliament at the beginning of it, was for Schick to explain the difference Slavs make between the two Jewish groups in the country and how it come to that the Sephardim came to be perceived as more of a "part of the national body".

To back up his claims that Yugoslavia is not an anti-Semitic country if it decides to refuse entrance to all of these new Jews, Majstorović reminds that it is a country with an "inbred Jewish element in it - the Sephardic one", and even though they have not managed to assimilate to resemble the surrounding Slavic population more and have kept its language for four centuries "they have never been disturbed". This was his proof that Yugoslavia was never anti-Semitic but he still finds an increase in the number of Jews problematic (the country eventually granted all of the asylums to German/Austrian refugees). The Ashkenazim, as Majstorović sees it in his exposition do not share this element of "original ingredient" since they had moved to these parts "without anybody wanting it". Not only did they fail to assimilate but "remained foreign to the national element, by language, mentality and aspirations. We cannot forget that until our national unification and unfortunately after it as well these Germanic Jews have been the most virulent bearers of pan-German *Kulturträger* mission, that they were the support of anti-national (i.e. anti-Slavic) regimes and that they never, with rare exceptions, showed any affection towards the people amongst they live and people they live off."[119]

[119] National University Library Zagreb, Trezor Lavoslava Schicka, R6965

Schick goes to quote a minister who eventually decided on the issue, Živojin Lasić, and who has explained the refugees have been granted asylum because Yugoslavia has no reason to deviate from the principles of "our inbred tolerance for all faiths… our Jews (he refers to both the Sephardim and the Ashkenazim) have always lived in unity with our people and contributed to the creation of Yugoslavia both in battle and when helping to build its material and spiritual culture."[120]

In cases when Jews are *nationally oriented* [Schick's emphasis] there is no difference between the Sephardim and the Ashkenazi, Schick says. One should bear in mind that when he uses the term "national" he thinks of somebody who favors the idea of the Jewish state, but is for now perhaps content with being just a Jewish-Yugoslav, and not necessarily on a mission of lobbying for national acknowledgment.

5.1 Origin of differences

After the Austrian occupation of Bosnia in 1878 a number of people went to this new fringe of the Empire in pursue of job opportunities which were far greater in these underdeveloped parts with a lot of potential[121]. Among them were many Ashkenazim, mostly from other Slavic parts of the Empire (Czech and Slovak lands, Croatia, Slavonia, Vojvodina) because knowledge of at least some level of a Slavic language guaranteed faster connections with the locals. Some sources state that a very small percent of the newcomers were actually from German or Hungarian-speaking parts[122], with no Slavic background (at the same time a considerable number of Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians moved into Slavonia). Although there were little Ashkenazim in numbers, not even three thousand in the entire of Bosnia and

[120] Ibid.

[122] Julije Hahamović, *Aškenazi u Bosni i Hercegovini* [Ashkenazim in Bosnia and Herzegovina], in: Spomenica 400 godina od dolaska Jevreja u BiH 1566-1966, p. 142.

Herzegovina[123] they were successful and left a remarkable economic imprint where ever they lived.

By this time the Sephardim of Bosnia (as well as those living in Serbia and Macedonia, at the time going under the name of South Serbia) had been living there some three hundred years. During this time little has changed when it came to how daily life looked like. The status quo was maintained for so long, and not only for the Sephardim, due to the isolation of this part of the Ottoman Empire from the outside world. In fact, *fin de siecle* Bosnia appeared so exotic to the nearby "West" that when Erich Alexander, member of the famous Alexander clan from Zagreb failed to get a place as a teacher in the Belgium Congo, he satisfied his adventurous spirit by moving to Bosnia in 1892 where he taught everything from gymnastics to science[124]. That Sephardim of Bosnia might have been even more isolated than the rest of the population suggests the fact that they lived in small communities, even sometimes isolated from each other, never married outside the creed and mostly spend their entire lives in the same neighbourhood.

> Jewish society was patriarchal, based on an extended family circle, with several generations sharing the same household. Furnishings were Eastern style, a carpet with cushions upon which one sat Turkish fashion [in Samokovlija's stories this settee is referred to as *minder*, author's note]… Ladino constituted the dominant language of the Sephardic community of Sarajevo until the beginning of the 20th century. It was spoken at home, school, and the marketplace. Commercial records were kept in that language; in fact one source claims the existence of business correspondence between Jews and Muslims written in Ladino. According to the Austro-Hungarian census of 1910, 98 percent Sephardim of Sarajevo declared Ladino as their mother tongue.[125]

[123] Ibid.
[124] *Obitelj-Mišpaha*, 48.
[125] Freidenreich, 22.

Strange, but the same edition published in 1966 to honour the four hundred years of Jewish presence in Bosnia, brings two completely different views on how the Ashkenazi/Sephardic coexistence really looked like. For another author the differences between the two groups were never resolved "nor could it be solved by the newly constructed notion of national (Jewish) oneness, not a shared religion which had in the past (before Austrian occupation, among the Sephardim and the few Ashkenazim, author's note) erased all differences and held the religious community closely bound. Like two separate worlds, primarily because of their different cultural orientation they saw the Austrian era completely different"[126]. The author explains what he means under this term:

> The relations of the Bosnian Spaniards (with the outside world) did not exceed the basic business connections, so they could not really have an affect on the tight community which was always defensive when it came to ethnic-cultural individuality. This kind of behaviour had to lead to some unwanted consequences because this Jewish world was unable, to quote the novelist Isak Samokovlija, to develop normally (by "normal" they probably have in mind keeping up with the processes modernization, author's note). Territorially broken into tiny groups, the best every community could come up with when it came to organization of community life was setting up a local council and a religious school. This kind of life led to developing people who depended on religious leaders and where trade was the only activity that could develop a person's intellectual skills.[127]

The author goes to describe the process the above mentioned novelist Samokovlija calls "regressive evolution" and tries to explain how come Sephardic communities in other parts of the world produced artists and thinkers, something that never happened in Bosnia. He gives an example that Sephardic manufacturers produce only simple and rough products, and show no interest in artistic expression, neither in architecture, nor applied arts. The novelist Samokovlija and a certain Moric Levi, rabbi who wrote about Bosnian Spanish Jews under the Ottoman governance are quick to blame it all on the apolitical system of the Ottoman era

[126] Todor Kruševac, *Društvene promene kod bosanskih Jevreja za austrijskog vremena* [Changes within Bosnian Jewish Community during the Austrian Period] in: Spomenica 400 godina od dolaska Jevreja u BiH., p. 74-75.
[127] Ibid.

which left its population unmotivated and which created "a new type of the Bosnian man who is apathetic and not really industrious, slow-witted and slow-moving, uninterested in new trends and progress as such. The community found further support for this kind of stagnation in its conservative leadership which was very convenient for guarding the Jewry against novelties and assimilation. The Sephardim who moved into the Netherlands and England gave the world such names as Uriel Acosta, Spinoza, Luzatto, Disraeli, Gambetta, while the ones living in the Turkish Empire assimilated to fit into their ways of life, and after only a century adopted their characteristics"[128]. So what these authors conclude is that at the time of escaping the Iberian peninsula all of these people had some potential, only to come under the influence of the backward Ottoman reign (interestingly, they claim they at the same time assimilated to the Ottoman state of mind but never assimilated when it came to copying the surrounding population, both to explain this perceived backwardness).

Similar stereotyping was used for the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia who were constantly demeaned as unstable and perverted. "Muslims were parasitical, prone to business failures, and found the highest ideal in the cult of *rahatluk* (Turkish, pleasure). A necessary aspect of their rehabilitation was 'social deislamization' "[129]. So, rejection of honest and hard work was the character flaw Sephardim and Muslims were most often accused of - a supposed remnant of the Ottoman era.[130] This "deislamization" that was suppose to improve the life of a Bosnian Muslim from his/her destiny was in most cases intermarriage, i.e., conversion to either Croatian or Serbian nation, while for the Sephardim it

[128] Ibid.
[129] Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia. Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), 372.
[130] Something that is best seen in Samokovlija's stories, who exclusively wrote about the Bosnian Sephardim. The characters he created were fatalistic, scared of change, dependent on the advice of spiritual leaders, thus inevitably poor, and even reluctant to ask for medical treatment in hospitals that came with the Austrian rule.

was to be catching up with modernity, through pursuing education and leaving the safe but backward ways of communal life (adopting what was perceived as Ashkenazi virtues)[131].

Further on, the author believes this "oriental mentality" kept the Jews from fighting for the Serbian cause at the beginning of 19th century, obedient as ever to the Ottoman authorities, because as a people they could think of no causes to politically fight for. He does not back up this patronising tone with a reason why would the Ottoman Jews risk the administration's trust and fight for anybody's cause.

Sources on the subject claim it was only with the beginning of Zionism that some of the representatives of the two groups found ground for common action, although community and religious life remained separate. The first public event that introduced Zionism into the terminology of Sarajevo Jews was in November 1904 when *B'ne Zion* society printed a pamphlet (in German) on what was Zionism about. It was the first time Sephardim and Ashkenazim of Sarajevo worked together on anything. Having a common cause for some meant that "things started changing from the ground. Younger generations of Jews, especially intellectuals brought together in schools found a common language to start working on issues that had something to do with both of these groups… what especially brought to this were student organizations like *Bar Giora* and *Esperanza* in Vienna, and *Judeja* in Zagreb… approximately at the same time a students club was set up in Sarajevo under the name *Jehuda Makabi*. Virtually whoever was Jewish and went to school was a member of this organization which ceased to exist with the beginning of WWI."

[131] This reminds of the process some of the commentators of Israeli society call *Hishtakenezut*, remaking the Sephardim and Mizrahim to fit the (Ashkenazi) picture of the 'new Israeli man/woman'.

5.2 The Sarajevo dispute

After the end WWI, some Bosnian Ashkenazim became *persona non grata* due to the decree issued by the Minister of the Interior at the time, Svetozar Pribičević, ordering all of the non-Slavs living in the new Slavic Monarchy to leave the country because their requests for gaining citizenship statuses would not be approved. That sparked first conflicts between Sarajevo's two Jewish communities because a group of local Sephardim used the sent a memorandum to Vienna calling for an interdiction of Sarajevo's Ashkenazi council, which was seen as supporting the new measures against the "foreigners", although the makers of the note primarily had in mind the Ashkenazim of Bosnia. It came to light one of the signatories was the secretary of the Sephardic Council of Sarajevo, Samuel Pinto. However, the reaction from some of the local Sephardim, especially those who had bonded with their Ashkenazi colleagues through Zionist work abroad (or simply played sports with).

In the early 1920s, during the so-called "Sarajevo dispute" (*Sarajevski spor*) polarization of the two Jewish communities in Bosnia was at its peak. Inconveniently, because Zionism is always emphasized as what brought the two together it occurred through work within the local Zionist organization. At first the leaders of the Jewish National Society were "mixed" – the Ashkenazi members had Zagreb's support while the Sephardic was supported by local Sephardic council. The Ashkenazim formed around the organization Jewish National Society (*Židovsko nacionalno društvo*) and the magazine Jewish conscience (*Narodna židovska svijest*). Sephardim grouped around the journal Jewish life (*Jevrejski život*)[132].

[132] Although terms *Židov* and *Jevrej*, both meaning Jewish, can be used interchangeably, in parts which were more under the Hungarian influence, like Croatia, the former is used more, and today

The "ideological" (as it was referred to) dispute between Sephardic and Ashkenazi representatives in Sarajevo of the early 1920s was in fact an unwillingness of the two to work together on how to divide political power within city politics, backed up by old accusations of being "patronising newcomers" and "backward aboriginals". Problems arose around who will be in charge of the shekel payments, and went as far as getting police support when the Sephardic members decided to overtake the leadership of the Local Zionist Organization, formerly under the name of the Jewish National Society. As we can read from the detailed description of the Sephardic movement that arose from the dispute, "the confronting group advocated a Sephardic view out of which was formulated a wish for the affirmation of Sephardim"[133]. The confronting group in question also represented Bosnian Jews at the first World Sephardic Congress in Vienna in 1925. Sarajevo's official Zionist representatives were now only its Sephardic members until the ongoing fights and polemic, which later on included both Zagreb and Belgrade (who chose their sides) ended in 1928 when both lines managed to gather around a common newspaper *Jevrejski glas* (Jewish Voice).

The reasons for the dispute were tried to be shown as a part of a greater issue, one of the supposed clash between the two traditions that cannot be overcome, on the border of becoming a clash between two world-views, or as Dr. Samuel Kamhi wrote in his publication "Sephardim and the Sephardic Movement": "methods used by Zionism in the West cannot be applied to the Sephardim, and the issue of national liberation of the Sephardim can only by taught and preached by the Sephardim themselves."[134] Why does Kamhi say "only by the Sephardim themselves"? Because he (as most of the Sephardim of Bosnia saw it) thought that

remains the official term. Interestingly, the two groups differed in which word for "Jewish" they used as well.

[133] For example, Cvi Loker, *Sarejevski spor i sefardski pokret u Jugoslaviji* [Sarajevo dispute and the Sephardic Movement in Yugoslavia] Jevrejski istorijski muzej, Zbornik 7, Beograd 1997.

[134] National and University Library in Zagreb, Trezor Lavoslava Schicka

the assimilated westernised Ashkenazim, almost indistinguishable from any other German or Englishmen, should not be "preaching" Zionism to those Jews who have managed to keep their Jewish identity in a non-Jewish environment for such a long time.

What is then at the bottom of the Sephardic-Ashkenazic dispute? Categories such as different statuses Jews had under the Central European or the Ottoman reign certainly had something to do with it. After all, the direct consequence of this was that the Sephardim were almost by default "awarded" a nationality since they never assimilated into some sort of a nation, like the Austrian or Hungarian Ashkenazim that ended up in Bosnia. However, these concepts were of no use in everyday quarrels. What happened was a clash of the ones who were "first there" and those "who brought in civilization" (railways, public administration reform, etc.).

6. Conclusion

Although one could seriously doubt the amount of options that would fit into a half percent, diversity is exactly what Jews of Yugoslavia managed to do when it came to lifestyles they chose for themselves. Some differences were striking: Ashkenazim of Croatia and Slavonia represented the German or Hungarian cultured Jewry of the Habsburg Empire most of whom have had a good grasp of Croatian, or Serbo-Croatian by the time the South Slav state was created; Yugoslav Sephardim on the other hand stood for the other pole of the Yugoslav Jewish world. Most occupied the parts of Kingdom which used to be the far border of the Ottoman Empire where they preserved their separateness for centuries, mostly through *đudezmo* as they called it, known as Ladino elsewhere, with the exception of Dalmatian Sephardim who were well integrated into the hub of their respective towns. The biggest difference between the two was that by the nineteenth century the Ashkenazim had already gone through a degree of assimilation, while Sephardim operated within a predominantly Jewish framework.

How their specifically Jewish identity was shaped, as well as the relationship with the surrounding population, depended on what kind of a political system was dominant in the area they inhabited, or as Freidenreich put it which "sphere of influence"[135] they belonged to: the Ottoman, the Habsburg or the one in between, which was Serbian. However, these spheres of influence lost on their significance once the political reality changed with the unification of South Slavs united into a common state. Ideologically, this brought a whole new set of issues for the Jewish minority in how they were treated by the new state, how they fit into the Serbo-Croat discrepancy, and what did the new Yugoslav ideology mean to them (especially whether they copied the attitude towards it, depending on whether they lived

[135] Freidenreich, page 3.

among Croats, Serbs or in Bosnia). For one, on the formal level, they greeted the creation of the new State, and Zionist papers such as *Židov* called the Jews of Yugoslavia to continue working for the welfare of the people they lived among and to morally and financially support every patriotic work."[136] For the most part, because the acquisition of freshly formed national identities and national ideologies means having to pick sides, they refrained from making a public stand in the debate on the new national oneness of the South Slavs which at least for the Croat component of it "represented a radical breach with political traditions and a definite anti-historicism".[137] The idea was to try and stay on the good side of everybody, as much as possible – there were neither Jewish "progressive nationalists" (Zionist) nor Croats or Serbs of the Mosaic faith who were ardent Croatian or Serbian nationalists. For one, it would without doubt create even more problems for the person in question and secondly the nationalism in question would sooner or later distrust them. That is why Zagreb's assimilationist publication ("Narodni rad"), although making a clear point on discarding the idea of a separate Jewish nationality and confirming its belonging to the Croatian (Yugoslav) people (always frazed like this, Croat/Yugoslav) never mentions anything similar to only belonging to the Croatian people, and not South Slavs as a whole.

When it came to the official views of Jewish community's representatives, people of Yugoslavia constituted a single nation.

What can be debated on is whether the fact somebody was a Jew from Serbia or a Jew from Croatia meant more than their Sephardic or Ashkenazic background? If one led a secular integrated lifestyle (and one mostly did), both meant very little. In the inter war period characterized by a more or less sense of economic stability, prosperity and peace, Jews

[136] Židov/21/1918
[137] Feldman, *Yugoslavia Imagined*, 28.

of Yugoslavia, Zionist or not, Neologue or Sephardic, contributed like any other equal members of the society, if not a lot more, due to the stress they placed on education, not forgetting the fact most were bilingual and had, at least for the Ashkenazic part, had friends or family abroad, making them more in touch with worldly affairs and thus bringing the worldly affairs home. In Bosnia belonging to one of the two Jewish traditions certainly meant more.

Why did the Sephardim of Bosnia see themselves as "more Jewish"? Because categories such as a national identity (in terms of modern nations) were not applicable to the millet system of the Ottoman Empire, once it collapsed this group existed without a civic identity, like all of the other groups in Bosnia. Come *fin de siecle*, Catholics became claimed by Croats, Orthodox by Serbs, Muslim by both, and, *once the idea of Jewish nationality came about at all,* with Herzl and the first Zionist congress, the identity that was lived as a religious and ethnic ("Spaniards") translated into hitherto unknown concept of a Jewish nationality. The problem "Sephardism" had with this was that this version of Zionism (unlike their apolitical spiritual bond with Palestine) was a construct of westernized Jewry ("dreamed up in the cafes of Europe") who although assimilated, for the most part could not be seen as an equal participant in the process of nationalizing that their respective surrounding nations went through. Sephardim on the other hand never assimilated into some "nation" from which they would have to be de-assimilated and made distinctly Jewish again.

Although both the Sephardic and Ashkenazim students of the South Slav lands embraced the trend of youth activism in nationalist movements, and joined their own, lobbying for a Jewish state would never had come from the Sephardic initiative. They did embrace the idea very soon, because it was a thing to do, but the organization of the

Sephardic students in Vienna and Zagreb, both under the name of "Esperanza" (hope) was not set up to serve a political goal i.e. as an organization whose members would upon coming home continue working on the Zionist cause from the grassroots. Esperanzas were set up only as cultural organizations imagined as a place where students (at different universities and all around the town) would meet, converse in their language, organize cultural events, etc. Bar Giora on the other hand was set up exclusively as a Zionist club, to keep the Jewry from back home up to date with the excitement of the early years of Zionism (hence one of the first things they did was translate Herzl into Serbo-Croatian). One could argue Esperanza was not originally Zionist because they were a couple of years older than Bar Giora and these few years at the end of the 19th century were exactly when Zionism formed as an ideology. Once they embraced the work on the Zionist cause, the Sephardim viewed in the context of their homeland, which held life and work in the Diaspora (in this case, Bosnia and Serbia) should be invested into equally as into Palestine, if not more ("because the shirt is closer to the body than the coat"). This version of Zionism was to be called Diaspora nationalism.

Conclusion to the story of the identity of Yugoslavia's inter war Jewry would before anything have to emphasize the discrepancy between the little number of Jews and the huge imprint they have left behind. Although their own history in these parts of Europe, prior to the Holocaust, has never been considered important enough to make it into either such works as "The Jews of East Central Europe Between the World Wars", by Ezra Mendelsohn, and in the histories of their own country only a footnote (Andrea Feldman reminds their story was pushed aside by post WWII socialist Yugoslavia because they were considered to be bourgeoisie, i.e. the class enemy) they led lives that can only be generalized as diverse, sometimes even fascinating. Both represented traditions managed to be completely integrated into society and yet maintained a world of their own (sports clubs, women's associations,

nursery schools, journals, newspapers, etc.) and irrespective of the fact whether they had been politically active *as Jews*, most were active members of their Jewish Communities.

Contrary to the belief of some historians, like Freidenreich, they have played a significant part in the intellectual or cultural life of inter war Yugoslavia. "If somebody was to remove the entire down town buildings designed by Zagreb's Jewish architects, the town would resemble a desert."[138]

Since both post WWII and the new post-Yugoslav historiographies reduced the story of Yugoslav's Jewry to the Holocaust, the legacy of once rich and fulfilling lives of so many intriguing individuals and organizations is in the collective memory of people who inhabit these spaces now next to nothing. If there is no discomfort around this fact, there should be one, and it can be eliminated only through (re)writing the Jewish history of ex Yugoslavia.

[138] Feldman, *Mrs. Ashkenazy Regrets*, 356.

Appendix

The Jewish Flag

I spent the most of my life in Bosnia. I always fondly remember (with a sense of joy, pensiveness, and pleasure) the time when I was able to live freely as a Jew and when I was able to acquire real friends not only among Jews but among Serbs, Croats, and Muslims as well. At the time, it was a common thing to hoist flags, sometimes because you wanted to and other times because you felt you had to. At the beginning one could see the black and yellow Austrian flag, even sometimes the red white and green Hungarian one. Later, you could see the Croatian, Serbian and the Ottoman flag, depending whether the family living in the house was Serbian, Croatian or Muslim. Jews would hoist only the official state flag, or the Croatian/Serbian one, depending on the political orientation of the Jew in question. Personally, I am no chauvinist but a sense of belonging to the Jewish people has been inbred in me since my childhood. So when it came to the flag issue, there was only one solution. One day, during an official event that required putting out flags, I asked my wife who was very understanding although she was brought up in an assimilationist home, to put up the Jewish flag. So come August 18, birthday of our Emperor at the time, and next to the official state flag everybody could see "the blue and white" with the Star of David in the middle. As far as I know, it was the first time the Jewish flag was hoist on a private house during a national holiday. There was some admiration – the township of Prijedor has never seen this flag before, as well as some criticism. The only person who was actually able to forbid me from having the flag on my house, the local high commissioner, was satisfied with my reasons of having it there, after I was asked to provide an explanation.

So the flag stayed there for years. I had an honor that my example was followed by Jews not only in Prijedor but throughout Bosnia. The non Jewish population had a full understanding for Jewish national self-respect and dignity. One day the local commissioner asked me why I always and straight away let people know I was Jewish. I told him because I want to be respected as a Jew, and I want to spare myself of a possible insult if somebody were to tell me: "Oh, I had no idea you were a Jew!" I won't come off as immodest when I'll say there was no public occasion in town that went without my wife and me: once a charity occasion was moved a week later because of our Yom Kippur… During the times of turbulence when the Austrian army fled the town a Serbian soldier came to threaten that this time I wouldn't be able to hoist my Jewish flag. I went to the local authorities to say that if I have to hoist *some* flag, and now that we do not use the Austrian one anymore, the only flag I accept to use is the Jewish one. I was told that, because they know me, I am allowed to do so, and if that soldier returns, "I'll slap him so hard on his face he'll remember me forever", the [Serbian] commissioner said. So the Serbian army rolled into town and couple of days ago an army captain came into my store. After buying something he asked me what kind of a flag was up there on my house. When I told him he shook hands with me and said: You are completely right to do so – we [Serbs] fought for our people, and now you have to fight for your own people. Years passed, and I left Bosnia to live in German towns. And there, where people from the Balkans are looked down on, I *wasn't* able to hoist my flag. So it will be in my closet until it covers my coffin. These days we Jews are observing with fear how a cultured nation of poets wants to destroy our own brothers, and how these people [Germans, own remark] are sinking into the darkest Middle Ages. But in spite of all this darkness there is a light too, shining from a small land of *Eretz Israel*, the land of our fathers, our children and their children.

Gustav Seidemann, Vienna, in *Jevrejski glas* (Sarajevo), 1933

Bibliography

Archives and Archival Collections

The National and University Library in Zagreb, Trezor R6965, Correspondence and Speeches of Lavoslav Schick (1881-1941)

Newspapers and periodicals

Časopis za suvremenu povijest [Journal for Contemporary History], 37 (2005), 2, 479-495.

Izvještaj društva Židova akademičara iz jugoslavenskih zemalja „Bar Giora“ u Beču [Reports of the Academic Society of Jews from the Yugoslav Lands], 1904-1904; 1911-1912.

Jevrejski istorijski muzej – Beograd, Zbornik 6, Studije, arhivska i memoarska građa o istoriji Jevreja u Beogradu, Beograd, [Jewish Historical Museum – Belgrade, Jewish Studies VI, Studies, archival and memorial materials about the history of the Jews in Belgrade], 1992.

Historijski zbornik [History Almanac], godina LVI-LVII, 2003-2004., Zagreb, izdavač: Društvo za hrvatsku povjesnicu, Ivo Goldstein: Hrvatska u kraljevstvu SHS i i NDH (1918-1945)

Jevrejski glas [Jewish Voice], Weekly: Sarajevo, 1928-1941.

Židov-Hajehudi [The Jew], Weekly: Zagreb, 1917-1941.

Brochures, Pamphlets, Publications

Udruženje „*Narodni rad“*, Zagreb, 1922-23.

Zbornik Mirjane Gross: u povodu 75. rođendana [Mirjana Gross Almanac: In the Honor of Her 75th Birthday], Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb, 1999.

Stjepan Radić, Frankova politička smrt (Izvješće o glavnoj raspravi u tiskovnoj parnici proti uredniku „Doma“) [Frank's Political Death], Tiskom Hrvatske Pučke Seljačke Tiskare d.d., Zagreb, 1908.

Jevrejski almanah [Jewish Almanac Belgrade] 1954; 1955/6; 1957/8; Savez jevrejskih opština Jugoslavije.

Spomenica 1919 1969, Savez Jevrejskih Opština Jugoslavije, Beograd: II osnivanje saveza.

Jevrejski istorijski muzej, Zbornik 7, Beograd 1997, Cvi Loker, Sarajevski spor i sefardski pokret u Jugoslaviji

Books

Banac Ivo, *National Question in Yugoslavia: origins, history, politics*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 389.

Freidenreich Harriet Pass, *The Jews of Yugoslavia: A Quest for Community*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979).

Goldstein Ivo, *Židovi u Zagrebu, 1918-1941*,[Jews in Zagreb 1918-1941] (Zagreb: Novi Liber, 2004).

Goldstein Ivo, *Croatia: A History*, (London: Hurst&Co., 1999).

Dva stoljeća povijesti i kulture Židova u Zagrebu i Hrvatskoj [Two centuries of Jewish history and culture in Zagreb and Croatia] (Zagreb, Židovska općina, 1998).

Obitelj-Mišpaha [Family] ed. Jasminka Domaš Nalbantić (Zagreb: Kulturno društvo Miroslav Šalom Freiberger, Novi Liber Zagreb, 1996).

Pinto Avram *Jevreji Sarajeva i Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1987)

Spomenica 400 godina od dolaska Jevreja u Bosnu i Hercegovinu 1566-1966 [Memorial to four hundred years of Jewish Presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1566-1966]

Zbornik Mirjane Gross: u povodu 75. rođendana [Mirjana Gross Almanac: In the Honor of Her 75th Birthday], Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb, 1999.

Andrea Feldman, *Yugoslavia Imagined. Women and the Ideology of Yugoslavism (1918-1939)* in Zwischen Kriegen: Nationen, Nationalismen und Geschlechterverhältnisse in Mittel- und Osteuropa, 1918-1939, ed. Johanna Gehmacher, Elizabeth Harvey and Sophia Kemlein, (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2004).

Hillel J. Kieval, The Making of Czech Jewry: National Conflict and Jewish Society in Bohemia 1870-1918 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

Electronic sources

Goldstein Ivo, *The Jews in Yugoslavia 1918-1941: Antisemitism and the Struggle for Equality*, http://online.ceu.hu/jewishstudies/pdf/02_goldstein.pdf