

# **JEWISH POLITICS IN AUSTRIAN BUKOVINA: CZERNOWITZ YIDDISH CONFERENCE OF 1908**

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## Abstract

*Austrian Bukovina was known as a tolerant, multiethnic crownland where at the beginning of the twentieth century Jews constituted one-third of the total population. In addition, this crownland represented political cooperation of different nations' political movements, where one of the most successful cooperation took part between Ruthenians (i.e. Ukrainians) and Jews in the context of the discussion of electoral reforms of the local diet (1903-1910).*

*The study focuses on Czernowitz Yiddish Conference of 1908, which nowadays is considered to be the watershed moment in the development of Yiddish language and culture, and the analysis of the discussion of the event in the local Ukrainian and Jewish periodicals of 1908. The analysis of the local press has demonstrated that, despite political importance of Yiddish promotion in Bukovina, the local Jewish periodicals did not actively discuss the Czernowitz Yiddish Conference of 1908; despite Jewish-Ukrainian political cooperation, there was no discussion of the Conference in the local Ukrainian press. This could be explained by the fact that the local Jewish elite did not take part in the organization of the conference, and did not appreciate it a lot. However, the research focuses only on the local press published in 1908 which could be non-representative for the general evaluation of the Conference in Austrian press.*

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# Introduction

During the nineteenth century, together with the rise of industrialization, secularization, imperialism, and dissemination of print, the rise in use of vernacular languages took place in Eastern Europe. All of these factors led to the rise of national identification which superseded local, religious and other kinds of identities.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, starting from 1880s political anti-Semitism became a significant political feature of Austria and Russian.

All over Europe, the growing anti-Semitism and flourishing national movements of the surrounding nations influenced the formation of Jewish Diaspora nationalism. Thus, under all these conditions Jewish national movements appears, where the main trends were Zionism and Socialism, mainly represented by *The Bund*. Both movements rejected assimilation and struggled for modernization and secularization of European Jewry, aiming at the creation of modern Jewish culture. Similar to other national movements, Jewish national revival was based on the idea of national language, history, and group unity.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 1991), p.82.

<sup>2</sup> Mostly each person has a feeling of belonging to family, friends, relatives, etc. The feeling could be transmitted to a bigger 'imagined' number of people, namely *nation* (See Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.140, 160-162; see also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991), p.6.). The unity has some attributes which are shared—culture, language, history, possibly religion etc. The definition of a nation I refer to is also mentioned by Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson; according to them, a nation is an 'imagined community'. The main argument why nation is imagined is that a person can not know face-to-face everyone from the nation; the person can not make the transfer of devotion feeling from the family to the entire nation without imagining it. A nation is a 'community' of people, a unit of people within which individuals imagine themselves as a big family.

Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities* defines the term *nation* as: "...a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members." (Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991), p. 14) Anderson's definition of a nation has a 'territory obsession' that does not always take place in national movements. For example, in the case of Diaspora Jewish Nationalism in Austro-Hungary, Nationalism was non-state seeking; the movement was deprived of 'territory obsession.' Jewish Diaspora National Movement in Bukovina in beginning of twentieth century was not strongly attached to one particular land with could be their native land.

*Ethnic group* differs from nation because it lacks the political self-consciousness of a united group and certain view on group-interests. If ethnic group becomes politically self-conscious with its own politic agenda (autonomy, independence, struggle for own interests and needs), it becomes a nation. The ethnic group is

The issue of Jewish national language<sup>3</sup> played a significant role for Jewish Diaspora nationalism.<sup>4</sup> Jewish national movements were different in their tools, thus, for the majority of European Zionists Hebrew language and Palestine were the most central principles, whereas Diaspora-oriented nationalists, represented by Bundists (who were joined by Jewish workers' movements), saw Yiddish and Europe as the important components of Jewish life.

At an early stage there were Yiddish-writing Zionists,<sup>5</sup> in the beginning of the twentieth century the issue of the use of Jewish language became crucial for both national movements. Thus, the language of political program became very much politicized – the majority of Zionist movement insisted on the use of Hebrew language, which was traditionally the language of religious practice, classical religious texts, and *Responsa* (correspondence between Jewish religious authorities). At the same time, Jewish socialist movements protected the cultural and political rights of Yiddish<sup>6</sup> as the language of the

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a socially constructed formation by inside- and outside-perception. Miroslav Hroch argues that “the ‘missing attributes’ of full national existence consisted of three features: a national literary language and culture, political autonomy (or in some cases, independence), and a social position equal with the ruling nation in terms of social structure and the division of wealth.” (Miroslav Hroch, *The Social Interpretation of Linguistic Demands in European National Movements*. EUI Working Paper EUI No.94/1 (Florence: European University Institute, 1994), p. 4). Self-perception and self-understanding as a different group which is united by ‘sameness,’ makes from an ethnic group a nation.

<sup>3</sup> ‘National language’ is usually defined as an important marker of national belonging that creates an attachment to a national culture. But sometimes scholars overestimate the role of language for national movements and in some cases the issue of language is not crucial for national movement; language is not necessarily (at least, not in every single case) a strong marker of national belonging, but is one of the attributes and symbols of nation.

In the case of Jewish Diaspora Nationalism, oftentimes, language was a marker of political persuasions, where language was a consequence of such persuasions. Strong tensions between political ideologies of socialists and Zionists led to strong tension between groups using Yiddish and Hebrew. Traditional Jewish European situation of bilingualism (Yiddish-Hebrew) started to change to monolingual in the late Austro-Hungarian Empire whereas the process was hastened by the First Yiddish Language Conference.

<sup>4</sup> The term ‘nationalism’ signifies certain political and/or ideological national movement which struggles for its own interests, goals, tries to gain or maintain independence, and to unite in national unity those who share ‘sameness’. With the term *nationalism* I refer to Ernest Gellner’s definition where nationalism is a political principle which maintains that similarity of culture is the basic social bond. These similarities of culture could be based on similarities in religion, language, political views, etc. (Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Cornell: University Press, 1983), pp.43-44). Very often the term ‘nationalism’ can be replaced by the term ‘national movement’; I prefer the second one because the second term is less fluid and more concrete.

<sup>5</sup> David Shneer, *Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture, 1918-1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> The word Yiddish (ייִדיש) *yidish* literally means ‘Jewish.’ Thus, ‘Yiddish language’ means ‘Jewish language’ because beginning from the tenth century till the Second World War Yiddish was one of the most spoken Jewish languages among Ashkenazim (Central and Eastern European Jewry).



Jewish masses in Eastern Europe. In the situation of political tension and the importance of Jewish language, Hebrew was in a better situation than Yiddish because the latter was not standardized; there was no dictionary, no clear rules, and no mass recognition even among the Jewish population. Thus, the First Yiddish Language Conference in Czernowitz was used by some politicians as a basis for the future political and cultural life of Jewish Diaspora-oriented national movements.

The Conference was the first international, interparty conference to deal with the role of the Yiddish language in Jewish life. It was held from August 30th to September 4th, 1908, in the biggest Jewish centre of Austria-Hungary, Czernowitz. All together, from seventy to one hundred delegates were present at the Conference, among which there were politicians and cultural activists such as Nathan Brinbaum, dramatists Jacob Gordin and David Pinski, publishers A.M.Evalenko, Haim Zhitlovskiy and Yiddish writers such as I.L. Peretz, A.Reizen, Sholem Ash, and many others (see fig. 1 below).



Fig. 1. Photo of the Conference participants with members of organization *Jüdische Kultur*

For the Conference, representatives of different Jewish national movements were invited: representatives of Zionists pro-Hebrew, pro-Yiddish Bundists, more liberal in the

question of language, Poale Zionists, and pro-Yiddish representatives of religious organizations. The Conference was an attempt to gather “all who [were] involved with the language, writers, poets, linguists, and those who simply loved it...”<sup>7</sup> in order to discuss: Yiddish orthography, Yiddish grammar, foreign and new words, the Yiddish dictionary, Jewish youth and Yiddish language, the Yiddish press, the Yiddish stage and actors, the economic situation of the Yiddish writer, the recognition of Yiddish language.<sup>8</sup> After long debates, a compromise-resolution was adopted proclaiming Yiddish as a Jewish national language and demanding its political, cultural, and civil equality with other languages. As Sol Liptzin argues, by using “a national language” rather than “the national language,” the Conference aimed at leaving participants free of taking any stand on Hebrew that corresponded to their personal convictions.<sup>9</sup>

Taking into consideration the context of strong tensions not only in the cultural dimension, but also in the context of tensions between different Jewish political trends, the Conference was perceived differently by different Jewish activists: for linguists and writers, it was an appropriate place for discussion of various linguistic issues, while for politicians, it was a place for a ‘battle’ of paradigms and programs of national Jewish revival.

While some of modern scholars see the Conference as a purely cultural and linguistic event, as a stage of organic development of Yiddish culture in Eastern Europe (Sol Liptzin, David Weinberg, Max Weinreich, Joshua Zimmer). Others perceive it as a political act (Joshua Fishman, Emanuel Goldsmith), while scholars like David Shneer and Kalman Weiser, for instance, discuss it in a context of Yiddish-Hebrew ‘battles’.

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<sup>7</sup> Emanuel Goldsmith, “The Czernowitz Conference,” in *Modern Yiddish Culture: the Story of the Yiddish Language Movement* (New York: Shapolsky Publishers, 1997), p. 184.

<sup>8</sup> Max Weinreich, ed., *Di ershte yidishe shprah-konferents* (Vilna: YIVO, 1931), p. 3, cited in Emanuel Goldsmith, “The Czernowitz Conference”. *Modern Yiddish Culture: The Story of the Yiddish Language Movement* (New York: Shapolsky Publishers, 1997), p.184.

<sup>9</sup> Sol Liptzin, *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Second edition. Vol. 5, p.372.

Perception of the event as a cultural and linguistic event is depicted by David Weinberg who describes the Conference as non-pragmatic and non-politicized one, “in contrast to the pragmatic and politicized Yiddishism of Jewish socialists and then later Bundists,”<sup>10</sup> and more as a purely cultural event which was a result of the organic development of the language all over Eastern Europe:

Such notions of the use of language and literature as a tool for enlightenment and progress quickly took root among a small circle of Yiddish writers that began to emerge during last three decades of the century.... In 1903, in response to growing interest, a group of young writers of St.Petersburg managed to issue the first daily Yiddish newspaper in Russia, *Der Fraynd* (The Friend)....As we have seen, by 1908 supporters of Yiddish in central and Eastern Europe felt confident enough to organize an international conference in the city of Chernovits to define the future of the language in Jewish life.<sup>11</sup>

According to Weinberg, the most fundamental questions of the Conference were those of the role of the Yiddish language in Jewish life.<sup>12</sup> In addition, he mentions that some leaders of the Conference participated due to various reasons. Thus, for Zhitlowski, the Conference was “the first salvo in the battle against Zionism.”<sup>13</sup> As for the most famous Yiddish linguist, Max Weinreich, the conference was mostly a cultural event that played a significant role in Jewish cultural development.<sup>14</sup>

The perception of the Conference as an organic development of the language, also, is characteristic for Joshua Zimmer. According to his opinion, the Czernowitz Conference was a consequence of the development of Yiddish press, and culture:

The emergence of a daily Yiddish press and the concomitant Yiddish cultural revival led to a general shift in an attitude of the Jewish intelligentsia toward

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<sup>10</sup> David Weinberg, *Between Tradition and Modernity: Haim Zhitlowski, Simon Dubnow, Ahad Ha-Am, and the Shaping of Modern Jewish Identity* (New York: Holms & Meier, 1996), p. 137.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.105.

<sup>14</sup> Max Weinreich, “Einführung,” in *Die Erste Jüdische Sprachkonferenz. Berichte, Documente und Stimmen zur Czernowitzer Konferenz 1908* (Vilna: Bibliotek des Jiwo Institut für Jüdische Wissenschaften, Philologische Section, 1931), p. VII.

Yiddish. These developments culminated in the historic language conference that took place between August 30 and September 4, 1908 in Czernowitz.<sup>15</sup>

David Shneer discusses the rise of the Yiddish language in the context of Anderson's theory, according to which during the nineteenth century, together with the rise of industrialization, secularization, imperialism, and dissemination of print, the rise in use of vernacular languages took place in Eastern Europe.<sup>16</sup> Thus, he discusses the Conference in the context of Hebrew-Yiddish tensions. In his book *Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture, 1918-1930*, Shneer demonstrates that, traditional Jewish the situation of bilingualism (Hebrew-Yiddish) was changed to monolingualism, and that since the Russian Revolution of 1905, Jewish politics became more polarized, as well as Jewish language politics.<sup>17</sup> He also claims that the Conference was a crucial event in the traditional bilingualism situation: after the conference, the use of language became a clear marker of group-belonging:

...Yiddishism, the movement to make Yiddish the central definer of modern Jewish culture and identity, crystallized as an ideology in 1908, at the Czernowitz Language Conference. Czernowitz in Bukovina, Austro-Hungary, was a turning point of internal Jewish bilingualism, because for the first time, an organized group of Jewish intellectuals has declared that Yiddish had to become a high-status language.<sup>18</sup>

He makes an assumption that the Conference had a clear goal of changing the situation of bilingualism to mono-lingualism. Shneer shows that the Conference had the aim to revise the status of the Yiddish language, and to elevate it:

The desire to codify and standardize Yiddish was needed for both ideological and practical reasons. The Czernowitz organizers recognized the weakness of a multi-dialect, multi-orthographic Yiddish and wanted to remedy the situation....These intellectuals wanted to elevate the status of Yiddish, which they did..."<sup>19</sup>

According to Shneer, one of the biggest issues discussed during the Conference and which had to be solved, was the question of Yiddish being the national language, or it being the

<sup>15</sup> Joshua Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews, and the Politics of Nationality: the Bund and the Polish Socialist Party in Late Tsarist Russia 1892-1914* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), p. 232.

<sup>16</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 1991), p.82.

<sup>17</sup> David Shneer, *Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture, 1918-1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 37.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 38.

national language of the Jewish people. In other words, the question of traditional situation of bilingualism was raised together with the question of language hierarchy. In the same context, Kalman Weiser sees the Conference as the “[contributor] to an infamous “language war” that divided Jewish society for decades to come.”<sup>20</sup>

The perception of the Conference as a political event is shared by For Joshua Fishman, who sees the Czernowitz Conference as a political event and a historical moment. In his article “The Tshernovits Conference Revised: the First World Conference for Yiddish, 85 Years Later,” Fishman argues that the clearest aim of the Conference was recognition of Yiddish language and granting the Jews all the rights which were enjoyed by other nationalities in the Habsburg Monarchy. Fishman sees the Conference in the context of the Jewish struggle for national rights. Thus, when he discusses the activity of Nathan Birnbaum, he places his participation at the Conference in the context of the later “huge protest march in 1910 against the government’s adamant refusal to admit Yiddish into the 1911 census.”<sup>21</sup>

The perception of the Conference in the context of Jewish politics in Bukovina is inherent also to Emanuel Goldsmith, who demonstrates the role that the event in the Jewish life of Bukovina in the beginning of the twentieth century. He researches the Conference in the context of late Austrian politics, according to him, one of the main aims of the Conference was cultural recognition of the Yiddish language, and getting political rights (especially electoral rights) for Jews as a nationality. He notes:

At the time of the Czernowitz Conference, Nathan Birnbaum settled in Czernowitz with the hope of shaping a vibrant Jewish cultural life there. He felt that conditions in Austria were ripe for the recognition of Yiddish as the basis and recognizable sign of Jewish national autonomy.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Kalman Weiser, “Introduction,” in *Czernowitz at 100: The First Yiddish Language Conference in Historical Perspective*, eds. Kalman Weiser and Joshua A. Fogel (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2010), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> Joshua Fishman, *The Earliest Stage of Language Planning: The ‘First Congress’ Phenomenon* (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1993), p.328.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

Goldsmith sees cultural pro-Yiddish activity of Birnbaum in the context of a larger political realm of the late Habsburg monarchy. He sees the main actors of the Conference as the main promoters of nationality recognition of the basis of language recognition. Thus, Goldsmith argues that in 1910 Birnbaum was active in the movement to have Yiddish included in the Austrian census as one of the official languages of the Austria. His activity was therefore the important part of the struggle of Bukovinian Jewry for national rights.

As we can see, some authors perceive the event of the Conference as an organic development of Yiddish culture in the late Habsburg monarchy; some of them see it in the context of Yiddish-Hebrew ‘battles,’ and some perceive the Czernowitz Conference as a tool of political achievements. However, the diversity of the aims of the Conference, and the historical and political situation in the late Habsburg monarchy have both to be taken into consideration.

Bukovina, being a region with the bigger proportion of the Jewish population in Austria, and not having a dominant nation, is an interesting example of comparatively peaceful co-existence of different ethnic groups (Ruthenians, Romanians, Germans, Poles, and Jews).<sup>23</sup> That is why, in the research, the main focus is on finding discussion of Czernowitz Language Conference, which is seen as a “watershed moment”<sup>24</sup> of Jewish culture, in Ukrainian periodicals, which is one focus of my research. However, the research also focuses on German and Yiddish language local periodicals. The main aim of the analysis is to find out how the Conference was perceived by the local population, and what attitude towards the event caused.

The First Yiddish Language Conference was aiming to reach different political and cultural results, and the multiplicity of the goals, disregarding hidden or explicit aims of the

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<sup>23</sup> For more information about nationality proportion in Bukovina and Austrian censuses’ data see chapter 1, section 1.2.

<sup>24</sup> Kalman Weiser, “Introduction,” in *Czernowitz at 100: The First Yiddish Language Conference in Historical Perspective*, eds. Kalman Weiser and Joshua A. Fogel (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2010), p. 4.

Conference. The Conference itself signified a change in Jewish Diaspora national movements, articulated new demands, and gave a new breath to Yiddish movement in Bukovina. The Czernowitz Conference was a new stage of Jewish struggle for nationality recognition. It helped to unite Yiddish speaking masses, and engage them into politics which could be demonstrated by mass participation in the Conference and later Jewish marches of protest for recognition of the Yiddish language (1911). In my thesis the event is researched in the context of the Austrian politics of nationality recognition and political activity of the local Jewish national movements.

The first chapter of the thesis deals with the general position of the Jewish population in Austria, and in Bukovina in particular; the chapter discusses the legal and political situation of Jews under Habsburg rule over Bukovina. Also, the chapter deals with statistical data on the Jewish population of the crownland of Bukovina and its capital Czernowitz (based on Austrian censuses of 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910).

The second chapter of the thesis focuses on the factors which influenced the formation of Diaspora Jewish nationalism, political movements and the role of languages (Yiddish, Hebrew, German, etc.) in different Jewish national movements in Bukovina at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The third and the most important chapter of my thesis is based on the research of Bukovina periodicals (in Ukrainian, Russian, German, and Yiddish). This chapter discusses the earliest perception of the First Yiddish Language Conference, its first evaluations, and the role of the Conference for the Jewish national political movements in Bukovina. In addition, I analyze some latter articles devoted to the 50<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup> and the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the Conference, and some recent articles on the issue of Czernowitz Conference.

The discussion of the First Yiddish Language Conference involves research of participants' speeches which were published by YIVO in 1931. The thesis and the last chapter

in particular, mainly deal with the primarily sources, namely the Jewish (in German and Yiddish languages) and the non-Jewish (in German, Russian, and Ukrainian languages) periodicals.

In my thesis, the Conference is presented in the context of both political and ideological changes within the Habsburg Monarchy, and Jewish political activity. The Czernowitz Conference is discussed both in the historical and the political context, in particular, in the context of reforms of 1905, 1909 and the census of 1911 and all the events correlated with these reforms.



# Chapter 1. Political Context of Jewish National Movements in the Late Habsburg Monarchy

History knows several multi-national Empires: Ottoman, Habsburg, Russian and later the Soviet Union. In all the empires the unsolved national problems, to a certain extent, caused the falls of these great political and military powers.

Recognition of nations or ethnic groups has always been a crucial issue for multinational empires such as Austro-Hungary, as far as national recognition presupposes special treatment of the recognized group; moreover, demands for recognition are the driving force behind nationalist movements in politics. The criteria for division of nations or ethnic groups could be separate language, religion, territory, etc. Thus, in the Ottoman Empire national belonging was unofficially identified by attachment to one of the religious communities (Islam, Christianity or Judaism); whereas, in the Habsburg Monarchy it was identified *de facto* by language (*Umgangssprache*); and the Soviet Union was a successor of the Habsburg Monarchy in nationality determination criteria.

In this chapter I investigate Austrian politics of nationality recognition with the main focus on the Jewish recognition issue in Bukovina. The main aim of the chapter is to analyze social, political and demographic dynamics of the Jewish population in Bukovina within the larger Austrian context.

## 1.1. Politics of Nationality Recognition in Habsburg Monarchy

The multi-national Austrian state was a supranational power over different ethnic groups - nationalities. The term ‘nationality’ (‘Volksstamm’) should be defined before we describe the Habsburg politics of recognition. As Robert Kann argues, the term *nationality* (‘Volksstamm’) was employed to indicate the collective status of a group, the term indicates

that a group of people has certain attributes of a nation or a people, and potentially could become it, but actually are not a nation.

No other term expresses or circumscribes so well the peculiar status of the Austrian people, who, by some limited degree of state recognition, were something more than mere ethnic groups and considerably less than real nation.<sup>25</sup>

There is a difference between the term *nationality* and *national minority*. First of all, before 1918 and the Versailles treaty there was no established definition of the term *national minority*. Generally, a national minority was perceived as an ethnic group conscious of their national and cultural differences, however, living in a state inhabited by a majority of different national character,<sup>26</sup> while a group constituting a nationality, during Habsburg Monarchy rule, usually, lived on territories which were inhabited by their direct ancestors for a long time and where they constituted the majority.

The discussion on the nationality question in Austria was strongly connected with historical legitimacy of national groups who inhabited a certain territory. Thus, with the rise of national movements, which is usually associated with the eighteenth century, national political claims started to emerge all over Europe, and Austria was not an exception. In the nineteenth century, Austrian historical nationalism, according to Kann, developed a “serious concern with upholding, regaining, and adjusting the rights, the privileges, and the social structure of the historical entities.”<sup>27</sup> In other words, the historical nationalism of Austria had a clear instrumental aim (it frequently shared or organized programs of political parties), which not necessarily formed a basis for ethnic nationalist movements. The issue of historical territorial legitimacy was a crucial point for the process of nationality recognition which started after the chain of national revolutions.

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<sup>25</sup> Robert, A. Kann, *The Multinational Empire. Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848-1918*. Volume I Empire and Nationalities (New York, 1983), p. 31.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p.34.

After the revolution of 1848-1849, Hungarian national claims were recognized officially by Vienna with the signing of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise in 1867. The new-formed Austro-Hungary also recognized smaller ethnic minorities living across the territory, altogether there were eleven nationalities officially recognized by the Nationalities Law of 1867,<sup>28</sup> the two largest of them were Austro-Germans and Hungarians which formed together about 60 percent of the total number of citizens of the Empire<sup>29</sup>. The heterogeneity of the Empire was a cause for many ethnic tensions and national problems; thus, there were many plans to reform and solve the problem of ethnic tension, however, no comprehensive program was ever implemented.

Austrian politics of nationality differentiation was based on language of daily use or *Umgangssprache*.<sup>30</sup> Thus, in the empire the following national groups were recognized: Croat, Czech, German, Italian, Magyar, Pole, Rumanian, Ruthenian, Serb, Slovak, and Slovene, where Germans and Magyars were politically leading, privileged, and semiautonomous nationalities. Jews, Szeklers, and Saxons in Transylvania who settled in Austria centuries before, were not universally recognized nationalities in Austro-Hungary on the basis that they had no historically legitimate territory there.

The principles of national distinctions were widely discussed in Austria. Thus, in the context of the wave of national revolutionary movements all over Europe in 1848-1849, Marx denied the rights to an independent national existence to all nationalities of Austria except the Germans. His view was based on the cultural backwardness and political weakness of the rest

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<sup>28</sup> Eric James Hobsbawm. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 1-14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>29</sup> Alon Rachamimov, "Diaspora Nationalism's Pyrrhic Victory: The Controversy Regarding the Electoral Reform of 1909 in Bukovina," in John S. Micgiel, ed., *State and Nation Building in East Central Europe: Contemporary Perspectives* (New York, 1996), p. 3.

<sup>30</sup> Austrian language censuses (from 1880 to 1910) were designed to calculate people who spoke different languages. However, the language censuses – since no additional ethnic census was taken – were used as evidence for the ethnic description of Austrian population, for the measuring of nationality or 'Volksstamm.' (For more details see Gerald Stourzh, "Ethnic Attributes in Late Imperial Austria: Good Intentions, Evil Consequences," in *The Habsburg Legacy: National Identity in Historical Perspective*. Austrian Studies V, eds. Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms. (Edinburgh University Press, 1994), p.67-68).

of the nations. However, Engels, argued that additionally to Germans, Poles, and Magyars were ones among Austrian nationalities who were the bearers of progress<sup>31</sup> and, based on this, deserved national privileges.

A few decades later, Otto Bauer based his elaboration on Austrian nationality politics on Marx's earlier proposed principles of cultural development and "nations without history."<sup>32</sup> Only Germans, Magyars, Czechs, Italians, Poles and Croats were seen by Bauer as nationalities with history in the frames of the monarchy. In his opinion, only these six nationalities were formed and developed before incorporation into the empire and remained on their territory; and the rest were perceived by him as nationalities without independent national political history, which were in the earliest stage of development; and these nationalities were: Ruthenians, Rumanians, Slovaks, and Slovenes. Bauer saw the core of ethnic tension in the struggle for national territory. As a solution to this problem, he proposed an idea of a cultural non-territorial autonomy, based on the personal principle, referring to the personal choice of its members which could exclude national struggles for territory.<sup>33</sup> However, we can see a kind of misperception of the nature of national movements in Austria.

It is possible to argue that national movements do not necessarily struggle for a territory, or at least, it is not a core of all national movements; thus, for Jewish nationalism the idea of nationality rights and political representation (which was represented by the Bund movement) was more central than territorial autonomous existence within Austria. However, the idea of national territory can appear in the process of development of a national movement. Thus, Rogers Brubaker argues that:

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<sup>31</sup> Robert, A. Kann, *The Multinational Empire. Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848-1918*. Volume I Empire and Nationalities (New York, 1983), p.43.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>33</sup> Ephraim J. Nimni, "Introduction for the English-Reading Audience," in Bauer Otto, *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1907/2000), p.xxvi.

In the first place, nationalism is not always, or essentially, state-seeking. To focus narrowly on state-seeking nationalist movement is to ignore the infinitely protean nature of nationalist politics; it is to ignore the manner in which the interest of a putative 'nation' can be seen as requiring many kinds of actions other than, or in addition to, formal independence; it is to be unprepared for the kinds of nationalist politics that can flourish after the reorganization of political space along national lines...<sup>34</sup>

The solution which was proposed by Bauer could be called innovative and even if we use modern criteria, this proposition was more liberal and democratic with respect to the territorial principle (which characterized the nation-state – if you live on my territory you are a subject of my domination, my law and my language). We could find an echo of Bauer's non-territorial cultural autonomy based on individual choice implemented in the Bukovina Compromise of 1910 which could be called the most successful minority-problem solution for Austria.

The principle of national compromises (*Ausgleich*) from 1867 was the main form of Austrian solutions to ethnic problems within the Empire – the first was with the Hungarian national movement, according to which the state was divided into two parts – Austria and Hungary. This compromise drove a hope for a certain type of territorial and political autonomy for other nations who inhabited Austria. Later compromises took place in Moravia (1905), in Bukovina (1910), and in Galicia (1914); the first two compromises were implemented, while the Galician Compromise was not, due to the beginning of the First World War and the dissolution of Austria-Hungary.

## **1.2. The Jewish Population of Bukovina in the Turn of the Twentieth Century**

Before we discuss the solution to ethnic problems in Bukovina, known as the Bukovina Compromise, we should describe the general position of the Jewish population in Bukovina within the historical frames of Austria.

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<sup>34</sup> Rogers Brubaker, "Myths and Misconceptions in the Study of Nationalism," in *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*, ed. John Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 276.

Bukovina (German name Buchenland) was known as the most multinational and multiethnic crownland of Austria. The multiethnic character of the capital of this region could be clearly seen in the diversity of names: Tzernivtsi, Chernovtsy, Czernowitz, Cernauti, Chernivtsi. The history of Czernowitz is partly Bukovinian, partly Galician, partly Austrian, partly Romanian, partly Ukrainian and partly Soviet. During the Habsburg rule over the territory, it was a region where there was no one dominated ethnic majority (see Tab. 1 below); which was one of the reasons of the comparatively peaceful co-existence of the different communities.

Year	Rumanians	Ukrainians	Germans	Jews	Poles	Old Believers	Armenians	Hungarians	Others
1869	207,000	186,000	47,000	47,700	500	300	2,000	9,500	4,800
1871	209,000	191,195	41,065	41,065	-	3,043	-	8,586	9,908
1875	221,726	202,700	43,374	51,617	-	3,260	-	9,238	10,307

Table 1. Population of Bukovina in 1869-1875 (in absolute numbers)<sup>35</sup>

Thus, David Rechter argues that “... the Czernowitz myth, [is] part of a larger Bukovina myth of considerable longevity, wherein both the city and the region stand as examples of national and inter-ethnic co-operation, political moderation, and cultural efflorescence.”<sup>36</sup> The city was perceived as a melting pot for dozens of ethnic and religious groups, languages and religions, it was called ‘Babylon on the river Pruth’, Otto von

<sup>35</sup> Material for table 1 is taken from Ivan Monolatiy. “Avstriiska Bukovyna: Osoblyvosti Natsionalnykh, Profesiynykh i Movnykh Podiliv” [Austrian Bukovina: Peculiarities of National, Professional and Linguistic Deviation], in *Ī: Independent Cultural Science Journal* (Lviv, No.56, 2009), p.11; see also Petraru M. Polacy na Bukowinie w latach 1775-1918. Z dziejów osadnictwa polskiego (Kraków, 2004), p. 184.

<sup>36</sup> David Rechter, “A Jewish el Dorado? Myth and Politics in Habsburg Czernowitz” In *Insiders and Outsiders. Dilemmas of East European Jewry*, eds. Richard I.Cohen, Jonathan Frankel and Stefani Hoffman (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010), p. 208.

Habsburg called Czernowitz, “a synthesis of national consciousness with a higher... European outlook.”<sup>37</sup>

Thus, Fred Stambrook noticed that “Czernowitz and Bukovina were “different” from neighboring regions, and called the local Jewish the ‘most fortunate Jews in Eastern and Central Europe.’”<sup>38</sup> There is no doubt that in many memoirs, testimonies of local population and even some historical works there is an exaggeration to a certain extent. Thus, in the local Czernowitz Ruthenian newspaper *Bukovyna*, in an article “Bukovyns’ki zhydy” (Bukovinian Jews), which was published in 1897 on the cover of the newspaper, we find a not so peaceful attitude towards neighbors:

...Jews were never friends of Rus’ people, they robbed and destroyed by tricking almost all Rus’ villages – and it is nothing odd that no one kisses the robber’s hand... and if Jews by themselves will not improve (and there is no hope for that) anti-Semitism will be spread among Ruthenians like a fire. And it will not be a fault of good-hearted Ruthenians, but Jewish who are like parasites nourishing from our bread...<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, the article gives a quote from *Gazeta polska*, where it described anti-Jewish sentiments because of Jewish political activity in that region. However, overall it is possible to speak about politics as being relatively peaceful with a loyal co-existence imposed by the Habsburg Empire.

The population of Bukovina was ethnically and linguistically diverse and the Jewish population was diverse as well in its political and social views. Even inside the national groups there was no homogeneity of political ideas and the Jewish population was not an exception. Thus, it is difficult to speak about one Jewish community of Czernowitz, because there was no homogeneity of the community, it is better to speak about Jewish communities, or, as David Rechter proposes, not Jewry, but Jewries.<sup>40</sup> If we take the Jewish population in

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

<sup>38</sup> Fred Stambrook, *The Golden Age of the Jews of Bukovina, 1880-1914*, Working paper 03-2, Center for Austrian Studies at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, 2003), p.14, cited in Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>39</sup> “Bukovyns’ki zhydy” [Bukovinian Jews], *Bukovyna*, 20 July, 1897, No. XIII-125, pp. 1-2.

<sup>40</sup> David Rechter, “A Jewish el Dorado?” p. 206.

Czernowitz (which during this period consisted of the biggest national minority) we have nationalists of all stripes who belonged to different political and social organizations – some were socialists, some Zionists, some Orthodox Jews, some belonged to Reform Judaism, etc. In Bukovina among the Jewish population the biggest movements were “integrationists, who from the 1890s overlapped with autonomous ethnic politics more than was the case elsewhere; and a powerful Orthodoxy in the form of the Hasidic movement.”<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, Jews actively participated in the local political and social life, Czernowitz was a city where Jewish presence was quite visible and significant, Jewish national politicians took an active part in the local administration and the larger region life. Thus, Czernowitz was the only big city in Austria that elected a Jewish nationalist, Dr. Eduard Reiss, as a mayor; Bukovina has the only regional parliament in the empire with a Jewish Club (block); and the only regional executive with Jewish nationalist representation.<sup>42</sup> Which is not surprising because at this time in Czernowitz the Jewish population reached 30 percent<sup>43</sup> and Jewish university students were about 22 percent<sup>44</sup> of the total number of students (this demonstrates not the mere multiplicity of the Jewish population, but also the level of education and social status). Furthermore, Czernowitz was also the fourth largest Jewish city, and had the highest proportion of Jewish population in Austria in the beginning of the twentieth century, as shown in table 2:

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> According to statistics data (from 1910) Jews in Czernowitz constituted 32.8 percent (28,613 in absolute numbers). For comparison, in Vienna they constituted 8.6 percent (175,294 in ab.num.) and in Prague 8.1 percent (18,041 in ab.num.). [Cited from Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Oxford University press, 1988), p. 335].

<sup>44</sup> According to statistics data (from 1890) Jewish students in Czernowitz constituted 22.3 percent from the total number of students [cited in Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Oxford University press, 1988), p.12].



	1857		1890		1900	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Prague	7,706	10.71	17,635	9.67	18,986	9.42
Krakow	12,937	37.82	20,939	28.07	25,670	28.11
Lemberg	22,586	40.58	36,130	28.24	44,258	27.68
Czernowitz	4,678	21.67	17,359	32.04	21,587	31.92

Table 2. Percentage of Jews in the largest cities in Austria <sup>45</sup>

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Jewish population in Bukovina grew very rapidly, mainly due to emigration from Galicia and Hungary. Thus, in 1850 in Bukovina lived 14,580 Jews (3.82% from the total population), in 1900 there were 96,150 that made 13.2 %, and in 1910 Jews constituted 102,919. Thus, we can see that during sixty years the Jewish population of Bukovina grew by more than six times.<sup>46</sup>

However, the Jewish population of Austria and the whole Empire was neither seen as a separate nation nor a nationality, the same as their mother tongue (Yiddish) was not recognized or even conceived of as a separate language.<sup>47</sup> According to all Austrian censuses (of 1880, 1890, 1900, and 1910), only the following nationalities were present in the Monarchy: Germans, Czechs, Poles, Ruthenians, Slovenes, Serbo-Croats, Italians and Rumanians (where Austrians were the dominating nation)<sup>48</sup>. In the Austrian censuses the Jewish population was not seen as a separate nationality, but for us it is possible to know some statistics data based on the censuses of religious affiliations in Austria. Thus, according

<sup>45</sup> The table is taken from Wolfdieter Bihl, "Die Jüden," in *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918, Die Völker des Reiches*. Band III, 2 Teilband., eds. Adam Wandruszka und Peter Urbanitsch (Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien 1980), p. 885.

<sup>46</sup> The statistic data is based on *Ievreis'ke Naseleennia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni v Ostannii Chetverti XVIII – na pochatku XX st.* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina in the Last Quarter of XVIII-at the beginning of XX centuries: Collection of Documents and Materials. ], ed. Oleksandr Dorrzhanskyi, Mykola Kushnir, and Maria Nykyrsa (Chernivtsi: Nashi Knygy, 2007), p.25-26.

<sup>47</sup> See Austrian and Hungarian censuses in Robert A.Kann, *The Multinational Empire. Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848-1918*. Volume 2. Empire Reform. (New York, 1983), p.302-303.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p.302.

to the census of 1910, Jews consisted of 4.7 percent of the population of Austria, and in Bukovina Jews consisted of 12.9 percent of the total population.<sup>49</sup> According to the census of 1910, in the whole Austro-Hungarian Empire, Jews, as a religious affiliation, constituted about 3.9 percent of the whole population and were the smallest religious group.<sup>50</sup>

Based on the statistical data it is obvious that even if in the whole Empire it was possible to ignore the Jewish minority; in Bukovina it was much more difficult due to the numbers and political activity of Jews there. Jewish national political movements' activity, their numerosity, and the growing tension between different nationalities in Bukovina, led in 1910 to the Austrian government making an attempt to solve all the ethnicity based problems together with the Bukovina compromise, which was based on the principle of personal autonomy and equal political representation of nationalities.

### ***1.3. Jewish Nationality Politics of Austria in Bukovina and the Bukovina Compromise of 1910***

Following the first partition of Poland in 1772, Bukovina joined Austria in 1775 with the official name *die Bukowina*. Before 1849 Bukovina was a part of the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, and in 1849 it became a separate crownland. Poles, Germans, Ruthenians and Rumanians were recognized as nationalities in 1849, whereas the Jewish population was not. Jews were granted equal civil individual rights in 1848 (however, not universally) and after several reverses were almost generally given equal individual rights after 1861, however, not recognized as a nationality. Starting from the 1880s, Jewish political movements demanded the recognition of a Jewish nationality status 'Volksstamm.'

The Austrian censuses were designed to estimate languages of daily use (*Umgangssprache*) in the frames of the monarchy; they were used for measuring nationality

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p.305.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p.306.

as far as no other ethnic-based census was designed. However, the verdict of the Austrian Administrative Court, as early as January 3, 1881 supported by a series of later decisions by the same court of highest authority, made the recognition of nationality status only partly dependent on the use of a national language. The Jewish Yiddish-speaking population formed a majority of the Jewish population in Bukovina and demanded recognition on the basis of their linguistic peculiarities, but were not recognized as a separate ethnic group; in censuses they were listed as Poles (in Galicia before 1900), Germans (in Bukovina), or Ruthenians (in Galicia after 1900) <sup>51</sup>. According to all Austrian censuses (of 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910) Yiddish, as the language of predominant Jewish communication, was never listed. Moreover, it was not officially recognized as a national language according to Article XIX of the Constitutional Law No. 142 of 1867, <sup>52</sup> nor did Hungary recognize any special Yiddish language rights.

The question of Jewish nationality recognition was raised again after in 1903 by local Jewish politicians. The leader of Bukovinian *Jüdische Volkspartei* (The Jewish People's Association), Benno Straucher, concluded a political alliance with a young Ruthenian leader, Mykola Vasil'ko<sup>53</sup>, and a leader of the Romanian youth Aurel Onciul. The main aim of the alliance, known as the *Freisinniger Verband* (Progressive Union), was to obtain a majority in the *Landtag* elections of 1904 and to initiate reforms of *Landtag* on the basis of equal national

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<sup>51</sup> The shift of registration preferences of Jewish population from Polish to Ruthenian was voluntary. Thus, in the nineteenth century in Galicia, not being recognized as a separate nationality, Jews usually declared themselves in the official censuses as Poles and voted for Polish parliamentary candidates. With the rise of political consciousness among the Jewish population, their claims for national recognition grew as well, but were opposed by Poles who needed Jewish votes for Polish political participation on the parliament.

However, Jewish national claims were strongly supported by Ruthenians due to similarities of interests of non-privileged groups among these two nations. This fact made Jewish population of Galicia shift their political affiliations from Polish to Ruthenian and thus, in Austrian censuses Jews marked themselves as Ruthenians, but not Poles any more.

<sup>52</sup> Robert, A. Kann, *The Multinational Empire. Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848-1918*. Volume 2: Empire Reform (New York, 1983), p. 299; also see Tomasz Kamusella, *The politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), p. 313.

<sup>53</sup> Mykola Vasil'ko (or Mykola von Vasyenko) was well known and respected by the all national communities in Bukovina for his tolerance and calls for national cooperation in Bukovina. After the First World War he supported to return captured Bukovinian soldiers from Russia (*Die Volkswehr*, 15 January 1910, No. 16, pp. 1-2.; see also *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 17 November 1915, No. 3757, p. 3.)

representation of Germans, Poles, Romanians, Ruthenians (i.e. Ukrainians) and Jews, according to national proportion in Bukovina.<sup>54</sup> This newly created political power, *Freisinniger Verband*, won the elections in 1904. The local Jewish journalist described mass celebration of the victory as following:

On the streets of Bukovina people were celebrating. In all cities, people celebrated fraternity of nations—the phenomenon previously unknown in Austria. It seemed that a new spring of nations has arrived... On the national house of Christian Germans, an advertisement in Jewish language was glued; and in the local periodical, which used to be anti-Semitic, it was published that the Jews also will drink free beer in German House, and will drink with their compatriots for health of “Semites” and “anti-Semites”...

In city Suchav...Jews and Rumanians...were dancing *Hora* together. However, the happiest were Ruthenians and Jews; for the former, because the land-holders, together with Poles, have lost the elections, and they [Ruthenians]...with young Rumanians gained their representation in the *Landtag*. For the latter, the Jews, celebration was held because of their fair help, and because they expected to receive a fair support from the fraternal people [Ukrainians] in their struggle for a national recognition...<sup>55</sup>

This article of a Jewish journalist had not only a nostalgic mood, but also agitated for the future cooperation of Jews and Ruthenians in the context of planning of electoral reform, and new elections to the *Landtag*.

Thus, in 1909 the *Freisinniger Verband* formulated a reform proposal where the starting point was “...the assertion that five primary nationalities lived in Bukovina...entitled to representation in the local *Landtg* proportional to its share in the general population,”<sup>56</sup> and taxes paid. The proposal called for the division of the electorate into five national curias based on five national *cadastres* (voting lists); where each voting list was supposed to be complied according to *Umgangssprache* mentioned in the census, except in the Jewish case where the confessional clause was supposed to be used. According to the proposal, Jews were supposed

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<sup>54</sup> Alon Rachamimov, “Diaspora Nationalism's Pyrrhic Victory: The Controversy Regarding the Electoral Reform of 1909 in Bukovina,” in John S. Micgiel, ed., *State and Nation Building in East Central Europe: Contemporary Perspectives* (New York, 1996), pp. 7-8; see also Gerald Stourzh, “Ethnic Attributes in Late Imperial Austria: Good Intentions, Evil Consequences,” in *The Habsburg Legacy: National Identity in Historical Perspective*. Austrian Studies V, eds. Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms (Edinburgh University Press, 1994), p. 73.

<sup>55</sup> *Die Volkswehr*, 15 January 1910, No. 16, pp. 1-2.

<sup>56</sup> Alon Rachamimov, “Diaspora Nationalism's Pyrrhic,” p. 7.

to hold 10 seats in Bukovina *Landtag*, corresponding to the 13 percent share of the Jewish population in Bukovina.<sup>57</sup>

In fact, this also meant that the Jewish population was recognized as a nationality by other nationalities in Bukovina, as Stourzh notes "... for the first time in the history of Austria-Cisleithania, a compactly settled Jewish population – chiefly using Yiddish as their language of communication among themselves – gained recognition as one of the 'nationalities' or 'Volksstämme'..."<sup>58</sup> However, their proposal was vetoed on the basis that Jewish population of Bukovina constitute not a nation, but a religious affiliation and that is why they could not have a separate voting curia. A new electoral reform, which was a part of so-called Bukovina Compromise, was signed in 1910 without a separate Jewish curia.<sup>59</sup> In the table below the main criteria for Austrian compromises are listed.

Criteria	Austro-Hungary Compromise of 1867	Moravian Compromise of 1905	Bukovina Compromise of 1910
Integrative ethno-political behavior	+	+	+
Separatist ethno-political behavior	+	-	-
Cooperation in the development of the state	+	+	+
Resistance to "other" state	-	-	-
Consciousness about the reason of problematic relationships with "others"	+	+	-
Level of shared political ideas with "others"	+	+	+
Level of ability to act like "others"	+	+	+
Level of preparation to protect interests of "others"	+	+	+
Rejection of cooperation with the enemy of the state	+	+	+
Absence of national movements	-	-	+
Presence of ethno-nationalism	+	-	-
Tolerance to the state	+ -	+ -	+

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Gerald Stourzh, "Ethnic Attributes in Late Imperial Austria: Good Intentions, Evil Consequences," p. 73.

<sup>59</sup> *Ievreis'ke Naseleinnia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni v Ostannii Chetverti XVIII – na pochatku XX st.* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina in the Last Quarter of XVIII-at the beginning of XX centuries: Collection of Documents and Materials. ], ed. Oleksandr Dorrzhanskyi, Mykola Kushnir, and Maria Nykyrsa. Chernivtsi: Nashi Knygy, 2007, pp. 33-34; see also Alon Rachamimov, "Diaspora Nationalism's Pyrrhic Victory: The Controversy Regarding the Electoral Reform of 1909 in Bukovina," pp. 14-15.

Table 3. Criteria for Austrian Compromises in 1867-1910 (in the table are listed the main criteria for Austrian Compromises where + means presence of the criteria, - absence of the criteria, + - some variations)<sup>60</sup>.

Thus, according to the Bukovina Compromise, five national voting curias were established in order to create the national representation body for each nationality to the diet. The first two curias elected their representatives of the Greek Orthodox church and the great landowners of all nationalities and were joined by the Polish representation.<sup>61</sup> The third and the fourth curias elected Ruthenian and Rumanian representatives to the diet on the basis of equal franchise. The fifth curia was German, and contained German and Jewish representatives. Despite the fact that the Jews were deprived of having their own curia, the electoral districts within the German curia were carved in such a way as to provide at least eight Jewish deputies in the *Landtag*.<sup>62</sup>

The participation in elections according to the new law was based on the principle of personal autonomy, which was not based on the principles of used language. The first elections under the new regulations took place in April 1911, and according to the results, eight Jewish candidates were elected.<sup>63</sup> However, the situation of Jewish language discrimination remained. According to Austrian legal interpretation, Kann argues, violation of Jewish rights and thereby of statistical accuracy did not consist of the non-recognition of the

<sup>60</sup> Material for the table is taken from Ivan Monolatiy. "Bukovynska Zgoda: u Konteksti Istorii Mizhetnichnykh Kompromisiv u Dunaitskiy Monarchii" [Bukovina Compromise: in the Context of History of Ethnic Compromises in the Duna Monarchy], in *Ī: Independent Cultural Science Journal* (Lviv, No.56, 2009), p.65.

<sup>61</sup> Robert, A. Kann, *The Multinational Empire. Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848-1918*. Volume 1: Empire and Nationalities (New York, 1983), p. 331.

<sup>62</sup> *Ievreis'ke Naselelnia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni v Ostannii Chetverti XVIII – na pochatku XX st.* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina in the Last Quarter of XVIII-at the beginning of XX centuries: Collection of Documents and Materials. ],p. 34; see also Alon Rachamimov, "Diaspora Nationalism's Pyrrhic Victory: The Controversy Regarding the Electoral Reform of 1909 in Bukovina," p. 16.

<sup>63</sup> According to the elections of 1911 the following Jewish deputies were elected: I.Blum, Y.Fisher, B.Straucher, S.Weisselberger, N.Wender, L.Kellner, I.Katz, S.Rudich, who organized a Jewish Club in Czernowitz.

(*Ievreis'ke Naselelnia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni v Ostannii Chetverti XVIII – na pochatku XX st.* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina in the Last Quarter of XVIII-at the beginning of XX centuries: Collection of Documents and Materials. ],p. 34).

Jewish national status, but in the arbitrary assignment of a Polish or a Ruthenian national status to them.<sup>64</sup> The problem was still of limited statistical significance, and as a reaction to this a demonstration was organized, in 1911 in Czernowitz, which was led by Nathan Birnbaum, a Yiddish political activist and one of the organizers of the Czernowitz Conference of 1908.

The problem of recognition of the Jewish nationality in Austria was not connected with the mere civic equality of Jews as individuals, as far as it was first granted in some provinces in 1848 and after several reverses almost universally in 1867. The struggle for national recognition was based on the perception of the Jewish population as a unity; it was a struggle for group-differentiated rights and political representation. Compared to the Moravian Compromise of 1905 (which was designed to solve the ethnic tensions between Czechs and Germans, but factually excluded the Jewish minority from political representation),<sup>65</sup> the Bukovina Compromise was one of the few satisfactory solutions to the national problems in Austria.

Summing up, it is necessary to note that during the late Habsburg rule over Bukovina, it was the most heterogeneous area of Austria; the territory was inhabited by Germans, Rumanians, Ruthenians, Poles, and Jews. Due to this heterogeneity there was no major ethnic domination of one group and suppression of another, no force for assimilation and acculturation. A comparatively peaceful co-existence of the representatives of the national groups was a characteristic of Bukovina. Jewish life in that region was quite flourishing and calm, the territorial conditions close to the Russian Empire allowed them to be aware of the

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., Volume 2: Empire Reform, p. 300.

<sup>65</sup> According to the Moravian Compromise of 1905, Jewish population in Moravia was deprived from their political rights as far as registration for a voting list (cadastre) was organized in a basis of two languages – Czech and German. The same, nationality status of the voters was determined on the basis of colloquial language (*Umgangssprache*), as it was established by the official census; and as far as Yiddish was not recognized, Jewish population was not listed in cadastre.

More detailed see in Michael L. Miller, “Reluctant Kingmakers: Moravian Jewish Politics in Late Imperial Austria,” *Jewish Studies at the Central European University III*, ed. Andras Kovacs and Ester Andor (Budapest, 2002-2003), p.118.

main political events in the neighboring Empire, also Jewish numerosity and active political and social life made it possible to convene the First International Yiddish Language Conference in Czernowitz in 1908. This cultural and political event should be discussed in the context of democratic trends all over the Monarchy and the (re)birth of Jewish political activity, which slowly but confidently led to nationality and recognition demands and more active struggle for political representation of the Jewish population.



## Chapter 2. Jewish National Political Movements in Bukovina during the Late Habsburg Monarchy

In this chapter I deal with Jewish Diaspora nationalism (national movements which appeared in *Galuth*<sup>66</sup> (the Jewish Diaspora)) in the times of the late Habsburg monarchy in the territory of Bukovina focusing on the role of language in their political, social and cultural trends. The main argument of the chapter is that Jewish national movements in Bukovina were formed in the general context of other nations' nationalisms; and, the same as other nationalisms, Jewish Diaspora national political movements were, to a certain extent, based on the idea of national language development (or national revival in the case of Hebrew).

Before I start the discussion of the main trends in Diaspora Jewish movements in Bukovina, it is necessary to define the main concepts and terms which I use in this chapter. In modern scholarly articles on Diaspora politics the term Diasporas are defined as "...groups who maintained ties to a homeland while living abroad..."<sup>67</sup> Thus, Anupam Chander argues that there was no Diaspora before the nation-state, and that dispersed compatriots retain a connection with their homeland. At the time when Jewish national movements appeared, there was no Jewish nation-state. That is why the example of Jewish Diaspora national political movements is a unique situation where there was Diaspora nationalism without a homeland; however, the historical memory of the Temple and the land of Israel was always a significant part of national narrative, religion, and ceremonies.

In Jewish tradition the life in Diaspora is considered as a negative temporary life outside "the land" (*ha-arets*). In traditional Jewish theology, exile (*Galuth*) is seen as a punishment for a failure to fulfill God's commandments properly; and all Diaspora history is

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<sup>66</sup> *Galuth* or *Goles* (גלות literally means exile) the term for defining Jewish Diaspora after the destruction of the second Temple.

<sup>67</sup> Anupam Chander, "Diaspora Bonds," New York University Law Review, Vol. 76, October 2001, p.2.

represented in terms of the punishment for sins. The emergence of the Jewish Diaspora could be seen in three stages: it started its formation with the destruction of the first Temple in 586 BC and the following Babylonian exile, continued in Hellenistic times when Jews joined Greeks in settling all over the Mediterranean, and finished with the destruction of the second Temple and the mass scattering of Jews all over the Roman Empire.

Therefore when I use the term ‘Jewish Diaspora’ I mean Jewish life outside the land of Palestine. And by the term ‘Diaspora nationalism’, I mean national Jewish political movements which were founded and developed outside the land of Israel; and which were not aimed at restoring the Jewish state, the return to the land of fathers or having their own territory, in general.

In Nationalism Studies there is a widespread view that nationalism is necessarily state/autonomy-seeking. However, national movements do not necessarily struggle for a territory, or at least, it is not the core of all national movements. Thus, Rogers Brubaker argues that nationalism can not be understood exclusively as state-seeking political activity. In his article, Brubaker defines different forms of nationalism, and one of these forms is nationalism of national minorities which perfectly suits the situation with the Jewish national minorities in the Hapsburg Empire. Brubaker successfully notices that: “nationalism was not only a cause but also a consequence of the breaking-up of old empires and the criterion of new nation-states.”<sup>68</sup> Ernest Gellner, in his *Nations and Nationalism* describes Habsburg nationalisms where

...power-holders have privileged access to the central high culture, which indeed is their own, and to the whole bag of ticks which makes you do well under modern conditions. The powerless are also the education-deprived. They share, or groups of them share, folk cultures which, with the good deal of effort and standardized and sustained propaganda, can be turned into a rival new high culture, whether or not sustained by the memory, real or invented, of a historical political unity allegedly once build around that same culture or one of its variants. The required effort is, however, very energetically put into this task by the intellectuals-awakeners of this ethnic group, and eventually, if and when circumstances are

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<sup>68</sup> Rogers Brubaker, “Myths and Misconceptions in the Study of Nationalism,” in *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*, ed. John Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 276.

propitious, this group sets up a state of its own, which sustains and protects the newly born, or re-born as the case might be, culture.<sup>69</sup>

Also Gellner deals with the problems which Diaspora nationalism could face: “The problems of social transformation, cultural revivification, acquisition of territory, and coping with the natural enemy of those with previous claims to the territory in question, illustrate the quite special and acute problems faced by Diaspora nationalisms.”<sup>70</sup> Moreover, he notes that those national movements which retain some residue of an ancient territory may face problems which are correspondingly less acute. Thus, the Jewish Diaspora in Bukovina was not rooted there in centuries and that is why even the recognition of their entity as a *nationality* was quite problematic in the Habsburg Monarchy.

The Jewish population of Bukovina was quite prominent economically and much better off than in other areas, but it still was in a position of disadvantaged minority (even if not in numerical terms) – they were in a position of not economic, but cultural and political deprivation. Thus, Gellner correctly describes the position of many national minorities in the Habsburg Monarchy at the end of the nineteenth century when they found themselves in an

...intolerable position, once the process of industrialization begins, of culturally distinguishable population which are not at an economic disadvantage (quite the reverse), only at a political disadvantage which is inherent in their minority status, follows from the same general premises, and points to the same conclusion, though naturally by its own specific path.<sup>71</sup>

This disadvantaged position could be seen as a turning point at the beginning of national movement formation, and the struggle for national rights. Jewish national movements were formed in the context of the larger population’s national movements. In this chapter I adapt an approach by Shlomo Avineri to understanding the emergence of Jewish Diaspora national movements in Eastern Europe, where Jewish nationalism is seen in the context of a national awakening of other nations. Moreover, I analyze the development of Jewish National political

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<sup>69</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993), p.97.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 109.

movements in the context of larger European democratic changes at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century – the first free male democratic elections to the Austrian parliament of 1907, the first three elections in Warsaw to the Russian State Dumas of 1906, 1907, etc.

Jewish Diaspora nationalism in Bukovina is a diverse and complicated issue, so the discussion should be about Diaspora nationalisms, as far as Jewish national movements were quite numerous, different in aims and sometimes even contradictory in the tools they used. However, all Jewish national movements were based on national identity and the idea of Jewish nation (community), necessity to have collective rights, and arguing for their own national political and cultural interests.

## **2.1. The Context of the Emergence of Jewish National Politics in Bukovina**

Jewish national movements were formed and developed in the context of the national movement of other East European nations, and all of them could be seen as a result of the development of principles that proclaim *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, promoted by the French Revolution, which led to emancipation, and following modernity, which included industrialization and secularization.

Every national movement in Europe was accompanied – or even preceded – by the emergence of a new and revolutionary historical consciousness, through which the new or renascent nation expressed its self-awareness and its new image. A call for national future was always voiced in the context of the discovery of a historical past or its reinterpretation. Hence the emergence of historical writings in the post-1789 era was a constant accompaniment to the rising nationalism.<sup>72</sup>

Moreover, Jewish communities actively participated in political life and struggled for their national interests, which could be seen a necessity of those times for mere survival. Eli Lederhendler argues that the political activity of Jewish communities was always alive; that

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<sup>72</sup> Sholomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York, 1981), p 23.

“Jewish communities in the Diaspora have always engaged in political activity and have always sought substitutes for sovereign power in order to guarantee their continued welfare and existence.”<sup>73</sup>

The political activities of Jewish communities were not usually organized into official political organizations such as political parties on the basis of national, religious or other principles, which would struggle for Jewish national rights. Jewish national political organizations appear in the context of political activity of surrounding nations’ national organizations protecting the political and cultural interests of their nations. The Jewish population became well-aware of national movements which rose up all over Europe (where it was also conditioned by the decline of religious influence and the increase in circulation and spread of publications, which developed usage of local vernaculars, and allowed the transfer of information from all over the world). Being influenced by the surrounding situation, they start to search for their own national ideology and practical representation of Jewish political interests.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Eli Lederhendler, *The Road to Modern Jewish Politics: Political Tradition and Political Reconstruction in the Jewish Community of Tsarist Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.154.

<sup>74</sup> A good example of Jewish national ideas being influenced by non-Jewish ideas is the book *Derishat Zion* (1862) of Zwi Hirsh Kalischer, where the author draws a conclusion about the necessity of Jewish nationalism because the gentile population has it:

“Why do the people of Italy and of other countries sacrifice their lives for the land of their fathers, while we, like men bereft of strength and courage, do nothing? Are we inferior to all other peoples, who have no regard for life and fortune as compared with the love of their land and nation? Let us take to heart the example of the Italians, Poles, and Hungarians, who laid down their lives and possessions in the struggle for national independence, while we, the children of Israel, who have the most glorious and holiest of lands as our inheritance, are spiritless and silent. We should be ashamed of ourselves!” (Zwi Hirsh Kalischer, *Derishat Zion* (Questfor Zion, Jerusalem, 1964), pp. 211-212. (cited from Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York, 1981), p.52).

Also, Shlomo Avineri noticed that Jewish nationalism – with no regards whether it is Diaspora-oriented national movements or Zionist nationalism – appears in the context of local nationalisms of surrounding people. Thus, the origin of Zionism takes place in: “...ethnically mixed Lithuania and later in Galicia where the German Kultursprache of the Austrian rulers contended with both Polish and Ukrainian (Ruthenian) nationalisms. Secularized, modern Jews began to ask for origins of their culture, for the roots of their history; to extol the glories of Jerusalem; to ask whether they should not take into their own past just as members of the other groups were doing. Thus both liberalism and nationalism created in these Jews the beginning of a new self-awareness, no longer determined by any religious terms, but coeval to the emergence of modern, secular nationalisms in Europe.” (Sholomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York, 1981), p.12)

Additionally, it was only in the nineteenth century that Jews began to experience the feeling of explicit political (not physical) enmity from the communities surrounding them, that made the Jewish population unite into political active organizations in order to protect its members. Furthermore, Jewish national movements were formed in the context of the struggle against assimilation. Thus, discussing the Moravian Compromise of 1905, *Die Welt*, the official organ of the World Zionist Organization, declared that Jewish curia would be “a most effective weapon in the fight against assimilation.”<sup>75</sup> Moreover, only in the nineteenth century, which brought industrialization and certain secularization, did Jews move to the big cities, and start to study at universities and interact with the larger population.

Bukovinian Jewish national movements were influenced by all these factors, but also had some peculiarities. Thus, the pre-conditions for urbanization and education of the Jewish population in Bukovina were unconsciously created by Austria by the so-called “Jewish patent” of Kaiser Joseph II from May 7, 1789. This document, which is also known as the “Edict of toleration” or the “Jewish order” (*Judenordnung*), was issued in order to cancel rabbinical courts and autonomy of *kahals*,<sup>76</sup> to make the Jewish population of Galicia (Bukovina was a part of Galicia at this time) equal to others in their rights and duties. One of the main aims of the “Patent” was “to make from Jews “useful citizens” of the state.”<sup>77</sup> Together with community-organization laws, it also prescribed for the Jewish population professions to be occupied; thus, Joseph II wanted to accustom Jews to agriculture, but due to the unprofitability of the field and absence of agricultural skills, a large part of Jews from

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<sup>75</sup> *Die Welt*, 8 December 1905, p. 1.

<sup>76</sup> Jewish life in the Diaspora had a form of self-governmental *kahals* or *kehilot* (communities). However, the process of emancipation, social and political changes broke the traditional way of Jewish life in communities. In Bukovina communal life of the Jewish population lost its form in 1789 with the new “Jewish order” (*Judenordnung*).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid* p.15.

villages moved to cities.<sup>78</sup> As far as Bukovina was a part of Galicia since 1786, the “Patent”<sup>79</sup> caused the largest urbanization of the Jewish population in these areas, comparing to others in the empire, as shown in table 3 below.

City	1869		1910	
	Abs.numb.	Percentage	Abs.numb.	Percentage
Vienna	40,277	6.1	175,294	8.6
<b>Czernowitz</b>	<b>9,552</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>28,613</b>	<b>32.8</b>
Budapest	44,890	16,6	203,687	23.1
Bratislava	4,552	9.8	8,207	10.5
Prague	13,056	8.2	18,041	8.1
Brno	4,505	6.1	8,947	7.1
<b>Lvov</b>	<b>26,694</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>57,387</b>	<b>27,8</b>
Cracow	17,670	35.5	32,321	21.3
<b>Tarnopol</b>	<b>10,808</b>	<b>53.9</b>	<b>13,997</b>	<b>41.3</b>
<b>Kolomea</b>	<b>9,119</b>	<b>53.2</b>	<b>18,930</b>	<b>44.4</b>
<b>Brody</b>	<b>15,138</b>	<b>80.9</b>	<b>12,150</b>	<b>67.5</b>

Table 4. Urbanization of Central European Jews<sup>80</sup>

Due to the amount of the Jews in Bukovina, caused by the “Patent”, the Jewish population in Bukovina formed some long-established political tradition since 50s-60s of the nineteenth century. This was also supported by the fact that the majority of Bukovinian bourgeoisie consisted primarily of Jews.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>78</sup> This led to the situation when till 1910 in Sadagura (or Gartenberg) 3,437 Jews lived (76% from the total population), in Vyzhnytsi 3,997 (89%), in Storozhyntsi 2,430 (36%), in Seret 3,093 (46.6%), in Guragumora 1,457 (35,9 %) (Ibid., p.18, 27).

<sup>79</sup> The Austrian attitude started to change only in 1859 when the Austrian government allowed Jews to own unmovable property; in 1863 they were allowed to study and practice law, and in 1867 Jews were granted rights and duties the same as other citizens of Austria.

<sup>80</sup> The table is made based on statistic data in Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Oxford University press, 1988), p. 335.

<sup>81</sup> Ruthenians (i.e. Ukrainians), Rumanians usually occupied agricultural professions; Germans usually were employed in industry and crafts. For more information see: *Ievreis'ke Naselechia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo*

Whereas in the whole Austria the ideas of Enlightenment played a significant role in the emergence of Jewish Nationalism,<sup>82</sup> in Bukovina the movement was not prominent at all. In Austria *Haskala* promoted a certain type of linguistic acculturation (adopting the languages of the countries where they lived), and total integration in the hosting society. In Austria Jews needed to “prove” that they desired to be like other citizens and to have a right to study in German lyceums and universities, whereas in Bukovina, according to the “Patent” from 1789, the Jewish population was forced to visit German language schools, not to wear traditional Jewish clothes, and to adopt German surnames. They were allowed to study in traditional Jewish schools (*heders*) only after they graduated from German schools. In addition, without a diploma from a German school it was impossible to get married, to become a *rabbi*, a *dayan*, or to occupy a high-level position in a Jewish community.

All these reforms which were aimed to Germanize the Jewish population of the region were negatively perceived by the local Jews. The same, *Haskala* movement was not very successful in Bukovina where the majority of the Jewish population spoke East Yiddish as their mother tongue, and where there was no national majority so it was not clear which language to adopt and to which society to integrate. Moreover, in Bukovina there was a strongly religious component represented by the Hasidic movement of Baal Shem Tov (Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, 1698-1760), which opposed profanation in daily life of the Hebrew language (*loshen koydesh*) and promoted the use of vernacular for everyday communication.<sup>83</sup>

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*Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina], pp. 27-30; see also Alon Rachamimov, “Diaspora Nationalism's Pyrrhic Victory” pp. 5-6; see also Ivan Monolatiy. “Avstriiska Bukovyna: Osoblyvosti Natsionalnykh, Profesiynykh i Movnykh Podiliv” [Austrian Bukovina: Peculiarities of National, Professional and Linguistic Deviation], in *Ī: Independent Cultural Science Journal* (Lviv, No.56, 2009), p.10-35.

<sup>82</sup> With *Haskala* (Jewish Enlightenment) starting from Moses Mendelssohn, people started to read Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and others. Hegel, in particular, played a significant role. His theory of the “World spirit” (*Weltgeist*) and the role of the nation in a historical process gave new breath to the development of a Jewish national theory and the search for their own place in the history of mankind.

(Sholomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York, 1981), p. 6. )

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.



Indeed, the representatives of the Hasidic Sadigura (Sadhora) Dynasty played a significant role in opposing Haskala, secularization and integration. Furthermore, in Bukovina there were no significant local intellectuals who would promote the Jewish movement of Enlightenment (the main promoters of Haskala in Bukovina were Jews from Galicia).

On the other hand, emancipation (and even integration) did not seem to Bukovinian Jews to be the right way due to neighboring Russian anti-Jewish social dynamics and mass pogroms starting from 1881, and following the May Laws in the Russian Empire which were provoked by the assassination of the Russian Tsar Alexander II. Moreover, Bukovina was on the Eastern border of Austria and was not in the mainstream of assimilation trends of the capital. All these factors created the context in which emancipation as such (since 1881) was no longer seen as a promising way.



There also was a third way – emigration, which many Russian Jews successfully used and emigrated in large numbers to America, and some to Western Europe, Palestine and South Africa. However, in Bukovina among the local Jewish population emigration was not a widespread phenomenon. Despite many advertisement in Bukovina Jewish periodicals (see Fig. 2 ), emigration was not an inherent feature of the Jewish population there; however, it became very popular among the Ruthenian population. Thus, in the local Ukrainophile newspaper *Bukovyna* many articles on the level of emigration were published (especially the number of such articles increased since 1895-1896).

Fig. 2. Advertisement of trips to America and Canada in the local Jewish (Yiddish) newspaper *Yidishes vokhenblat* (May, 1905).

From the nineteenth century it became clear that neither temporary local philanthropy, nor even civic equality would change the circumstances in Austria – it was necessary to restore a national Jewish community and a leadership on a national basis (whether Marxist or Zionist)<sup>84</sup>.

## **2.2. Diversity of Political Parties and Their Political Orientations in Bukovina**

The leading political positions among the Bukovinian Jews since the 50s of the nineteenth century were occupied by the finance-merchant elite represented by Isak Rubenshtein, Mendel Amster, Yoahim Tittinger, Abraham Lüttinger, etc. But from the second half of the nineteenth century the Jewish elite occupied governmental and administrative places both in urban and rural areas of Bukovina. Thus, in 1892 sixty candidates applied for the position of clerk, and there were twenty Jewish among them.<sup>85</sup>

The rapid upward social mobility, the high level of education and a high percentage of the Jewish population in Bukovina caused an active political and social activity. Thus, at the turn of the twentieth century in Bukovina Jewish cultural, educational and charity organizations emerge: *Society of the Temple* (1872), *Mashike Shabat*, women's society, society of building craft, charity foundations etc. Together with Zionism, Marxism was also widely spread among the Jewish population in Bukovina. These two movements constituted the core of the Jewish Diaspora national political movements in Bukovina at the end of the

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<sup>84</sup> It is necessary to point to significant differences between socialists – some of them were members of the Bolshevik and Menshevik communist parties, but some formed Jewish socialist parties such as the Bund or Poale Zion. Henry Abramson makes an important distinction between them, he argues that Jews who were members of general socialist parties “often jettisoned their Jewish identity completely, essentially substituting any specifically Jewish aspects of their political views with the overall platform of their party.” But those who were members of Jewish socialist parties usually tried to reconcile at least some aspects of Jewish identity with socialism, usually irreparably compromising one or the other.

(Henry Abramson, “Two Jews, Three Opinions: Politics on the Shtetl at the Turn of Twentieth Century,” in *The Shtetl: New Evaluations*, ed. Steven T. Katz (New York University Press, 2007), p. 94).

<sup>85</sup> *Ievreis'ke Naseleunia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina], p.30.

nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, 1897 was a significant year for both political ideologies, as the Bund was formed in that year and in the same year the first Zionist congress took place in Basel.

In Czernowitz, as in every Austrian big city, the rich layers of the Jewish population willingly associated themselves with the German language and culture. However, it is not possible to say that it was a common trend among Czernowitz Jewish population. In general, it is not easy to distinguish different political trends in Bukovina, as far as political leaders of Jewish parties very often changed programs, courses and orientations. For example, one of the most popular Bukovinian politicians, Benno Straucher was a Zionist promoting Yiddish recognition, and nationality rights for the Jewish population in Bukovina. The fact of such a “fluid politics” could be explained by the general political situation of ethnic minorities in the most Eastern crownland of the empire.

Overall, the Jewish population was politically and socially active in Bukovina, we can measure it by the amount of charity organizations. Before the First World War, the amount of Jewish charity foundations was more than the total amount of other nationalities’ charity foundations. Thus, based on the archive documents, in 1903 in Czernowitz there were 46 Jewish charity organizations, whereas only 7 Rumanian, 5 German, 5 Polish and 4 Ukrainian.<sup>86</sup>

Despite there was not strict differences of political courses of Jewish political movements in Bukovina, we can differentiate the main three trends of Bukovinian Jewry: Zionism, Diaspora-oriented nationalism and Socialism represented by the *Algemeyner Yidisher Arbeter Bund in Lite, Poyln un Rusland* (The General Jewish Labor Federation of Lithuania, Poland and Russia) known as *the Bund*.

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<sup>86</sup> *Ievreis'ke Naselelnia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina], p. 35.

### 2.2.1. Zionism

The return to the land of Israel and the restoration of the Jewish political state has always been a part of messianic expectation explicitly pronounced, for example, in the books of Daniel and Isaiah. Waiting for the Messiah who would bring Jews back to their land and restore the political power of the state was at all times a part of Judaism.<sup>87</sup>

One of the first and more active Zionists in Bukovina were two journalists and politicians, Philip Menczel and Mayer Ebner; they were leaders of the Bukovinian branch of the World Zionist Organization. In 1899 Benno Straucher approached these local Zionists to create a Jewish national party in Bukovina, and in 1901 they founded *Jüdischer Volkverein* (The Jewish National Association) which actively cooperated with Straucher's party *Jüdische Volkspartei* (Jewish National Party). Another prominent Zionist of Bukovina was Löbl Taubes who struggled against assimilation, and promoted Jewish education in Yiddish, and national Jewish ideology by two periodicals: *Die Jüdische Volkzeitung* and *Volksfreund*, which were published in Kolomyia.

Additionally, many Jewish youth pro-Zionism societies appear in this region. In June of 1891 the first students' academic society *Hasmonea* was founded by Czernowitzer rabbi Dr. Lazar Elias Igel, who was a Hebrew teacher, theologian, and an initiator of the local branch of the Viennese society *Israelitische Allianz* (focused on financial support for Jews

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<sup>87</sup> This is why the majority of religious authorities saw the Zionist movement as pushing the end, hastening the messiah to come, and by that distancing the day of redemption. Thus, in a letter written by Lubavicher Rebbe Sholem Dov ber Schneerson stated: "...we are ...not permitted to join them [Zionists] in bringing our redemption with our own strength. We are not even permitted to force a premature redemption by showering the Almighty with insistent entreaties... The Zionist notion contradicts our hope and yearning that G-d himself will not bring about our Redemption... we must hope and wait for a deliverance by the Almighty Himself, and not through the hands of one of flesh and blood." Moreover, he even calls for opposition to Zionists as much as one can; and accept the yoke of exile upon themselves until the Messiah comes, since the exile expiates Jewish sins. (A letter written by Rebbe Sholem Dov ber Schneerson, [http://www.jewsagainstzionism.com/rabbi\\_quotes/schneersonLetter.cfm](http://www.jewsagainstzionism.com/rabbi_quotes/schneersonLetter.cfm)).

However, sometimes "Jewish religious thought even evolved a theoretical construct aimed at legitimizing this passivity by a very strong skepticism about any active intervention in the divine scheme of things. Divine Providence, not human intervention, should determine when and how Jews will be redeemed from exile and return to Zion." (Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism. The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York, 1981), p. 4.)

from different countries and colonization of Palestine). In addition, in 1897 a Zionist society *Zefira* was founded, in 1899 *Hebronia*, in 1900 *Humanitas*, and in 1903 *Emuna*, and later *Tikva* and *Betzalel*.<sup>88</sup> In the beginning of the twentieth century Jewish students' organizations were the most prominent in Czernowitz University.<sup>89</sup>

Zionist ideas were promoted by the Jewish political and students' organizations and political movements, in order to resist to the process of assimilation through German language and culture. At the beginning of the twentieth century in Bukovina a local *Zionist Committee* was created, which mainly focused its activity on publishing and promoting Zionist literature, gathering money for the Bukovinian colony in Palestine, and organization seminars for the youth.<sup>90</sup>

The *Jüdische Volkspartei*, led by Straucher, aimed to occupy as many posts as possible both, within and outside the Jewish community that caused many critique from the side of other politicians.<sup>91</sup> That led to a split of the Zionist movement into two parts at the beginning of the twentieth century: a party of Benno Straucher and his supporters who struggled for the nationality recognition of the Jewish population, and gaining cultural and political rights. In 1900 Straucher created the Jewish political club. He was one of the most successful politicians in Bukovina, who represented "the embodiment of Czernowitz's unique form of

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<sup>88</sup> *Ievreis'ke Naseleennia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina], p.31.

<sup>89</sup> However, in the anthem of the University (written in 1975 by Joseph Viktor von Scheffel) no Jews are mentioned:

Schau auf, schon zieht und braust einher,  
Bei dir zu lernen und zu wohnen,  
In vollem Wuchs mein flottes Heer  
Mit Koller und Kanonen:  
Ruthenisch, deutsch, rumänisch Blut  
Vielzungig mit einander,  
Und staunend hört der Vater Pruth

([http://www.deutsche-schutzgebiete.de/kuk\\_bukowina.htm](http://www.deutsche-schutzgebiete.de/kuk_bukowina.htm))

<sup>90</sup> *Ievreis'ke Naseleennia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina], p.31.

<sup>91</sup> Alon Rachamimov, "Diaspora Nationalism's Pyrrhic Victory: The Controversy Regarding the Electoral Reform of 1909 in Bukovina," p. 6-8.

ethnic politics.”<sup>92</sup> He was a city councilor who stood on the principles of populism and nationalism of a liberal-democratic bent. He was a president of the *Kultusgemeinde* for many years, also he was a member of the regional parliament; and, moreover, he was a representative and an executive member. And overall from 1897 to 1918 he was a representative of Czernowitz in the imperial parliament in Vienna, where he actively protected the ideas of Autonomism and defended Jewish collective rights as *Volk Rechts*.<sup>93</sup>

The second part after the split was a less numerical and prominent part; it consisted of Jews who supported the ideas of Leon Kellner, who arrived in Bukovina in 1904 and was a friend of T. Herzl. Kellner together with his follower Maer Ebner in 1907 create the *Jewish Political Society*, and a newspaper *Bukowiner Volks-Zeitung* becomes an official organ of the society. This political group paid more attention to the Jewish religious orthodox interests. In 1910 Kellner founded a new Jewish political party *Volksrat der Bukowiner Jüden* and a Jewish newspaper in German language *Volksrat*. These were the main tools in a long-term political battle with Straucher. For the same reason in 1911 Kellner creates a new Jewish society *Toynbeehalle*.

The new stage of Jewish politics in Bukovina emerged in time of the discussion of the new electoral reform to *Landtag*. Thus, in 1903 a new alliance of the local deputies emerged which was named *Freisinniger Verband* (for more information see 1.3). Straucher played a significant role in the functioning of the alliance and preparation of the reform, thus, in May 13, 1903 he gathered many local Jews for propaganda of his ideas. The struggle for new electoral reform, took place in the context of the first Austrian parliamentary free democratic elections of 1907. Thus, in Czernowitz in February of 1907 a new *Jewish National Society* (which later became *Jewish National Party* or *Jüdische Volkspartei*) was formed, where

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<sup>92</sup> David Rechter, “A Jewish el Dorado? Myth and Politics in Habsburg Czernowitz” In *Insiders and Outsiders. Dilemmas of East European Jewry*, eds. Richard I. Cohen, Jonathan Frankel and Stefani Hoffman (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010), p. 207.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

Straucher possessed the role of head, Dr.Zalter as a deputy head, and Dr.Diamant as a secretary; while the official organs of the newly formed political movement were daily newspapers *Jüdische Volksrat*, and *Die Volkswehr*.

The main aim of the newly-formed organization was the struggle to provide two places for Jewish representatives in *Landtag*.<sup>94</sup> Based on the local periodicals, we can see that these demands of the Jewish National Party were supported by the National Council of Ruthenians in the Bukovina. Thus, in Ukrainian weekly newspaper *Bukovyna* we read:

Ruthenian society has a positive attitude towards Zionism. That is not only because of political reasons, because Jewish separation from Poles and Germans could improve our chances in the struggle for political liberation of our people, but also because we and they have the same goal: national emancipation of masses, and in Galicia we have a common enemy – the Poles.<sup>95</sup>

In another article published in the same periodical *Bukovyna* we can read about the perception of Jews nationality recognition demands by Ruthenians:

Ukrainians should also support the Jews in the struggle for recognition of all national rights. Jews, as a people without their own land, can not have demands for territorial autonomy, but they can have a right for some cultural national autonomy, and their representation in the parliament, local representation, the same as recognition of their national language.<sup>96</sup>

Despite, the local support for Jewish nationality recognition, and establishing of a separate curia, according to the Bukovina Compromise of 1909, Jews were not recognized as a nationality and were attached to the German curia (for more information see 1.3). Non-recognition of the Jewish population led to mass protests in Bukovina, thus, on September 26, 1909 in Czernowitz and about twenty other places national strikes took place.<sup>97</sup> However, these mass demands in Bukovina were not satisfied and in 1910 the Bukovina Compromise was signed by the emperor without a Jewish national curia.

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<sup>94</sup> However, according to the results of the elections of 1907, Jews got only one place in *Landtag*. (Ibid., p.33).

<sup>95</sup> “My i Zhydy” [We and the Jews], *Bukovyna*, 5 (18) September, 1908, p. 1.

<sup>96</sup> “Shche Raz: My i Zhydy [Once Again: We and the Jews], *Bukovyna*, 12 (25) September, 1908, p. 2.

<sup>97</sup> *Ievreis'ke Naseleennia ta Rozvytok Ievreis'kogo Natsionalnogo Ruhu na Bukovyni* [The Jewish Population and the Development of Jewish National Movement in Bukovina], p.33.

However, in 1911 elections to the local provincial diet (*Landtag*) were held in Bukovina, and according to its results, eight Jewish deputies were elected from the German curia, where the main two positions were occupied by two Zionists B.Straucher and L.Kellner.

### 2.2.2. Jewish Socialism and Diaspora Nationalism

Jewish socialists wanted to reconcile the Marxist vision of a secular future of egalitarianism by detaching from religion, but at the same time remaining Jewish. Their interpretation of Marx's views was based on their idea that he opposed Jewish religion, not culture or nation as such. They believed that "Jews, like all other fraternal peoples of the Russian Empire, could march together in socialist unity towards a society free of class and national conflict."<sup>98</sup>

The most numerous Jewish socialist group was *The General Jewish Worker's League*, known commonly as *the Bund* which was founded in 1897; and originally stood for arguing for Jewish proletarian interests, mobilizing Jewish Yiddish-speaking working masses, or simply translating Russian-language programs into Yiddish. One of the most central ideologies of Bundists was *Autonomism*. The idea was first developed by the Austrian parliament members Otto von Bauer and Karl Renner, independently also by the Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Drahomanov, as an attempt to deal with national minorities in Austria and the Russian Empire.

The main representatives of Jewish socialist trends in Bukovina were the local branch of *The Bund* led by Y.Pistner; whereas newspapers *Volkspreste* and *Vorwärts* promoted its ideas; and Jewish National Worker's Party *Poale Zion*, which promoted principles of socialism combined with Zionism in the local Yiddish periodical *Arbeter Tsaitung*

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<sup>98</sup> Henry Abramson, "Two Jews, Three Opinions: Politics on the Shtetl at the Turn of Twentieth Century," in *The Shtetl: New Evaluations*, ed. Steven T.Katz (New York University Press, 2007), p. 95.



Jewish Diaspora-oriented nationalism in Bukovina was not represented by a political party, but a Jewish movement and several organizations. The main personality of this course was Nathan (Nosn) Birnbaum, who started his career as a Zionist; however, he later refused the principles of Zionism on the basis of appreciation of culture developed in so-called *Galuth*. Thus, the period from 1903 to 1911 could be seen as the most active years for Jewish Diaspora-oriented nationalism in Bukovina. Mainly the promotion of Galuth nationalism in Bukovina was associated with the promotion of Yiddish language, culture, literature and educational programs; where the main official organs were local weekly and monthly periodicals *Dr. Birnboims Wochenblatt* (1908) and *Dos Volk* (1910-1911).

The first mention of Nathan Birnbaum in Bukovinian periodicals was in 1884 in the context of the celebration of *Hanukah*; he is mentioned in the article as one of the founders of the Viennese Society *Kadima*.<sup>99</sup> Later notes about Birnbaum, in the local periodicals, appear in the context of Czernowitz Yiddish Conference of 1908 where he played a significant role (see chapter 3). The Conference was a start of his political activity in Bukovina. Thus, after the event he stayed in Bukovina and gave a great input into the development of the Yiddish national movement: he founded a society *Jewish Theatre*,<sup>100</sup> and struggled for Jewish national rights and Yiddish language recognition in Bukovina.<sup>101</sup>

### **2.3. Differences and Commonalities between Jewish National Political Movements in Bukovina**

The very essence of the new search for political ways meant a search for recovery of access to power on behalf of the newly reconstituted Jewish national political community. Lederhendler demonstrates that two solutions were possible in this situation and both were implemented –

<sup>99</sup> Samuelson, “Hanuka,” *Allgemeine Israelitische Allianz*, 11 January 1884, No.1.

<sup>100</sup> See “Jüdisches Theater,” *Die Volkswehr*, 7 February 1910, p. 3.

<sup>101</sup> DAChO, Fail 3, Fold.10954, pp.3-4.

the first one is a radical solution of social revolution and reordering of the social and political environment on behalf of people; the second – through self-determination creating an environment in which Jews might constitute a majority and possibly a state.<sup>102</sup> Both of the solutions were adopted in Bukovina. Thus, in Diaspora-oriented nationalism represented by Bund politics there was a trend for liberal constitutionalism searching for a way to effectively share power with the state through an electoral and parliamentary system, when autonomists searched for a way when the state would return a certain level of autonomy and self-government to the Jewish population.

In addition, there was a third solution, which was assimilation. However, the idea of assimilation was not popular in Bukovina where:

From the 1880s, much of Jewish support for liberalism, like that of other groups, was redirected into a more particularist assertion of ethnic and national rights. This autonomist, or nationalist, share gathered strength from the early 1890s, making the city and the region appear, in the words of a sympathetic Galician observer, as a kind of ‘Piedmont of the Jewish national movement in Austria,’ where assimilation rapidly become an ‘obsolete farce.’<sup>103</sup>

Overall, with no regard to political program, whether Zionist or Autonomist, Jewish national movements were based on democratic principles, the struggle for nationality recognition and rights, and the belief that sovereignty and power was based on the people.

Summing up, it is necessary to note that the experience of Jewish political national movements in Bukovina was significantly influenced by the rise of surrounding nations’ national revival, Austrian nationality politics, Russian and Austrian anti-Semitic experience, but it was also influenced by the inner political and social atmosphere. Thus, Jewish national movements in this region were formed and developed in the context of inter-national political

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> David Rechter, “A Jewish el Dorado? Myth and Politics in Habsburg Czernowitz” In *Insiders and Outsiders. Dilemmas of East European Jewry*, eds. Richard I. Cohen, Jonathan Frankel and Stefani Hoffman (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010), p. 216.

alliances, cooperation with other nationalities in Bukovina, and competition between different Jewish national movements.

## Chapter 3. The First Yiddish Language Conference in Czernowitz (1908)

This chapter of the thesis discusses the general issues connected with the Conference based on periodicals published in Czernowitz; also it deals with the political aspects of the Conference and the first reaction on the event (based on Czernowitz German language Jewish newspapers). The main aim of the chapter is to investigate evaluations of the Conference and its role for political organizations in Bukovina based on local periodicals. The main hypothesis of the chapter is that at the times of planning and having the Conference it was not seen the same important as modern scholars see it; and that is why this event was not actively discussed in the local Jewish and non-Jewish press.

During the research in the archive of Yuriy Fedkovich National University of Chernivtsi, one of focuses was on the local Bukovinian press, and the following Ukrainian-language newspapers were available: *Bukovyna*, *Rus'ka Rada*, *Selyanyn*, *Narodna Rada*, *Narodna Sprava*, *Gromadianyk*, *Narodnyi Golos*, *Nowa Bukovyna*, *Rus'ka Pravda*, *Russkiy Vestnik*. Also, for my research, the following local Jewish periodicals in German were available: *Das Volk*, *Der Jüdische Volksrat*, *Der Bund*, *Die Volkswehr*, *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*; moreover, the following Yiddish language periodicals were also taken into consideration: *Allgemeine Israelitische Allianz*, *Neue Israelitische Allianz*, *Dos folk*, *Yidishes Vochenblat*, *Arbeter Zaitung*. Furthermore, German language Christian periodicals *Bukowiner Vollksblatt*, *Bukowiner Post*, and *Bukowiner Nachrichten* were found.

Yiddish language<sup>104</sup>, which started its formation in the territory of modern Germany in the tenth century, till the twentieth century formed independent culture and literature of millions of European Jews. However, the situation of Yiddish language not only in Czernowitz, but in the whole of Europe, was very complicated. It was often called ‘jargon,’ ‘corrupted German,’ etc. Thus, in a Czernowitz German language newspaper *Bukowiner Post*<sup>105</sup> from August 18, 1908 the situation of Yiddish was described as the following: “...despite ... [the] development of Yiddish literature, Yiddish orthography still remains undefined, till now there is no clear approach how to adopt foreign words, one of the most crucial issues is a Yiddish dictionary, Yiddish theater also should be discussed, just as the situation of Yiddish actors and journalists.”<sup>106</sup>

The First Yiddish Language Conference *Die Jüdische Sprachkonferenz* (in German) or *di konferents far der yudisher shprakh* (in Yiddish) (see fig. 3 and 4 below) could be literally translated as *The Conference for the Jewish Language* where ‘the Jewish language’ means ‘Yiddish.’ That is why both titles *The Conference for the Jewish Language* and *The Conference for Yiddish Language* equally used by modern scholars. However, the last title is more appropriate as far as by its content the Conference was a pure Yiddish language event, moreover, it even was not aimed to discuss Hebrew or hierarchy of Jewish languages.

The Conference was the first (and the last) international Conference aimed at dealing with the role of Yiddish language in Jewish life. The Conference mainly took place mainly due to the Jewish Viennese organization *Jüdische Kultur*<sup>107</sup> and the “talent of organization ...

<sup>104</sup> The word Yiddish (ייִדיש) *yidish* or (אידיש) *idish*) literally means ‘Jewish.’ Thus, ‘Yiddish language’ means ‘the Jewish language’ because during many centuries it was only one language used for communication among Ashkenazim (Central and Eastern European Jewry).

<sup>105</sup> “Bukowiner Post” appeared three times weekly in Czernowitz. It was edited by Moritz Steckler. The tone of this paper was set by the leader of the Bukovinian Ruthenians, Mykola Vasil’ko, who worked for political cooperation between the Ukrainians and the Jews.

<sup>106</sup> “Die Jüdische Sprachkonferenz,” *Bukowiner Post*, 18 August 1908.

<sup>107</sup> The youth organization which was founded by Nathan Birnbaum in Vienna in 1905, the main aim of it was to promote Yiddish language and culture among European Jewry.

and personal ambitions of Nathan Birnbaum,”<sup>108</sup> who, paradoxically, was not fluent in Yiddish and delivered his speech in German.<sup>109</sup>



Fig.2. Mandate of the Conference participant

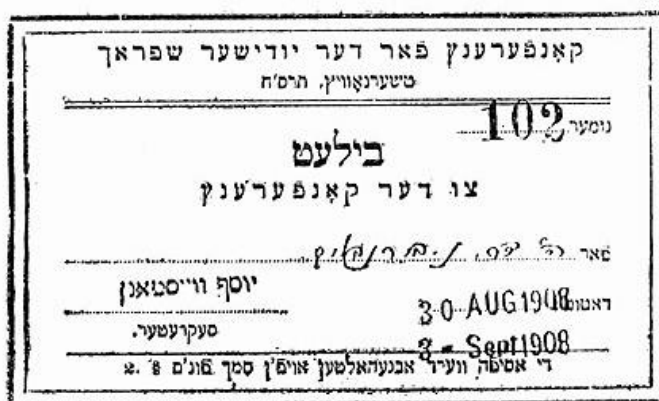


Fig.3. Card of the Conference visitor

The Conference was held from August 30 to September 4, 1908 in one of the biggest Jewish centers in Eastern Austria – in Czernowitz<sup>110</sup>. This could raise a question *Why the Conference took place in this city?* Several explanations for this could be given. First of all, territorially the location of Czernowitz was almost on the border between Austria and Russia which made it easier to visit the Conference for people from both Austria, and Russia. The second reason was the ethnic situation in Czernowitz where there was no dominating nation, where comparatively peacefully all five ethnic groups lived (Ukrainians, Rumanians, Jews, Germans, and Poles). Thus, in his speech given at the Conference I.L. Peretz on explaining the location of the Conference noted: "...Bukovina, where from each window it is possible to hear different languages sounding, where the ear is used to the multilingual situation, is the best place for having the Jewish Language Conference."<sup>111</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Mykola Kushnir. "Ievreiska Movna Konferentzia u Chernivtziah 1908 Roku" [Jewish Language Conference in Chernivtsi of 1908], Ī: Independent Cultural Science Journal. Lviv, No. 56, 2009, p. 72.

<sup>109</sup> Beth Kaplan, *Finding the Jewish Shakespeare* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2007), p. 206.

<sup>110</sup> See chapter 1, section 1.2 Table 1: Percentage of Jews in the largest cities in Austria.

<sup>111</sup> "Die Jüdische Sprachconferenz," *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 September 1908, № 1391, p. 1.

The last, and probably, the most important reason to have the Conference in Czernowitz was the numerosity of the Jewish population and their prominent position in Bukovina. At the time of the Conference in Czernowitz up to 30%<sup>112</sup> of Jews lived and Jewish university students consisted about 22%<sup>113</sup> of the total number of students (this demonstrates not mere Jewish multiplicity, but also their representation in the city)<sup>114</sup>.

The Conference was organized to gather “all who are involved with the language, writers, poets, linguists, and those who simply love it...”<sup>115</sup> in order to discuss: Yiddish orthography, grammar, foreign and new words, a Yiddish dictionary, Jewish youth and the Yiddish language, the Yiddish press and the Yiddish language, the Yiddish stage and Yiddish actors, the economic situation of the Yiddish writer, and the recognition of the Yiddish language.

Altogether, at the Conference from seventy to one hundred delegates from different parts of Austria, Russia, Rumania, and the US were present. Many significant Jewish activists, journalists, writers, poets, artists, representatives of different Jewish movements: representatives of Zionists pro-Hebrew, pro-Yiddish Bundists, and representatives of religious organizations were invited. Among them were political and cultural activists such as A. Almi, Sholem Asch, Gershom Bader, Nathan Birnbaum, Samuel Eisenstadt, Ester Frumkin, Moyshe-Leyb Halpern, Abraham Heisler, Lazar Kahn, Leon Khasanovitsh, Joseph Kissman, Anselm (Moshe) Klaynman, Yona Krepl, Mates Mizes, H. D. Nomberg, I. L. Peretz, Noah Prilutsky, Avram Reyzen, N. Sotek, Leybl Tobiash, Michael Vaykhert, and Chaim Zhitlovsky.

<sup>112</sup> According to statistics data (from 1910) cited in Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Oxford University press, 1988), p. 335.

<sup>113</sup> According to statistics data (from 1890) cited in Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Oxford University press, 1988), p. 12.

<sup>114</sup> More detailed in Chapter 1, section 1.2.

<sup>115</sup> Emanuel Goldsmith, “The Czernowitz Conference.” In *Modern Yiddish Culture: the Story of the Yiddish Language Movement* (New York: Shapolsky Publishers, 1997), p. 184.

Moreover, at the Conference were present representatives of the following local and foreign newspapers: *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, *Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Bukowinaer Post*, *Die Zeit* (Vienna), *Die Welt* (Köln), *Jüdisches Tagblatt*, *Jüdischer Arbeiter*, *Sozialdemokrat* (Lemberg), *Jüdische Zeitung* (Vienna), *Unser Leben* (Warsaw), *Hed Hasman* (Vilnius), *Der Fraind* (Petersburg), *New-Yorker Tagblatt* (New-York).<sup>116</sup>



Fig. 4. Photo of L-R: H.D. Nomberg, Haim Zhitlovsky, Shalom Ash, I.L. Peretz, A. Reisen at the Czernowitz Conference (1908)

The agenda included problems of orthography, grammar, literature, theater, press, translation of the Bible into Yiddish, but above all, improving the status of the language among Jewish masses and recognition of it. At the end of the Conference after long debates, a compromise resolution was adopted. “The first Jewish Language Conference recognizes the Yiddish language as a language of Jewish people and demands its political, social and cultural equality. Together with this it is necessary to note that the Conference argues for the freedom of attitude towards the Hebrew language...”<sup>117</sup> By defining Yiddish as “a national language”<sup>118</sup> rather than “the national language,” the Conference wished to leave participants free to take any stand on Jewish languages.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup> “Die Jüdische Sprachconferenz in Czernowitz,” *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, 1 September 1908, № 1667, p. 3.

<sup>117</sup> “Die Jüdische Sprachconferenz in Czernowitz,” *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, 6 September 1908, No. 1672, p. 4.

<sup>118</sup> The following consensus was accepted by the majority of participants, according to which: “The first Jewish Language Conference recognizes Yiddish language as a language of Jewish people and demands its political,



### 3.1. Czernowitz Conference: Politics at the Language Conference

At the end of the nineteenth century the main two Jewish political movements appear – Zionism and Diaspora-oriented nationalism. Both movements rejected assimilation and made an emphasis on the equality of the Jewish people with other nations. Both movements had a clear cultural image and struggled for modernization and secularization of Jewry, and wanted to create a modern Jewish culture.<sup>120</sup> Zionists saw the nation and its culture based on the Hebrew language territorially in Palestine, whereas, Diaspora nationalists (which were joined later by Jewish workers' movements) saw Yiddish and Europe as important attributes of the Jewish nation. The issue of Jewish language in the twentieth century was very much politicized, it was perceived mainly as a political issue – Zionist movement insisted on the use of Hebrew language, while socialist movements protected cultural and political rights of Yiddish as the language of the Jewish masses in Eastern Europe.

The Czernowitz language Conference was organized in times of strong tensions not only in the cultural dimension, but also in the context of tensions between different Jewish political trends. Thus, the Conference was perceived by different Jewish activists differently: for linguists and writers it was an appropriate place to discuss linguistic issues of Yiddish language, while for politicians it was a "...crucial 'battle' of paradigms and programs of nation Jewish revival."<sup>121</sup>

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social and cultural equality. Together with this, the conference considers it important to claim that each participant of the conference, the same as each member of the newly created organization, has a right for free, according to his personal persuasions, attitude towards Hebrew."

(*Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, 6 September 1908, No. 1672, p. 4; see also *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 September 1908, No. 1396, p. 6.).

<sup>119</sup> Sol Liptzin, *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Second edition. Vol. 5, p.372.

<sup>120</sup> Eleonora Lappin, "Chernivetska Movna Konferentzia (1908) ta Superechka pro Ievreisku Natzionalnu Movu," [Czernowitz Language Conference (1908) and a Quarrel about Jewish National Language] in *Mini-Kosmos Bukovyny: Kulturni Zdobutky Regionu. Materialy Mizhnarodnoi Konferentsii*. Chernivtsi: Zelena Bukovyna, 2006,, p. 102.

<sup>121</sup> Mykola Kushnir. "Ievreiska Movna Konferentzia u Chernivtziah 1908 Roku" [Jewish Language Conference in Chernivtsi of 1908], *І: Independent Cultural Science Journal*. Lviv, №56, 2009, p. 71.

In the context of Zionist-Diaspora nationalism's battle the situation of Hebrew was quite clear, whereas Yiddish was in a very uncertain situation: there was no dictionary, clear defined grammar, rules of spelling and recognition as a language. The Czernowitz language Conference was called to solve these and many others questions<sup>122</sup> and was used by some politicians as a basis for the future political and cultural life of Jewish Diaspora-oriented national movements.

Because of all these factors, Czernowitz's upper-level (usually German-speaking) Jews saw the Conference as a "gathering of left revolutionists who speak Yiddish."<sup>123</sup> Eleonora Lappin argues that due to the obvious polarization of the Conference, Benno Schtraucher, a leader of the Jewish religious community and an important politician in Bukovina, did not allow to use the Jewish House in Czernowitz for the Conference.<sup>124</sup>



The official version why the Conference took place in the city Music Society (and partly in the Ukrainian House), instead of the Jewish House, was that the Jewish House was not ready to be opened. Thus, Eleonor Lappin argues that rejection asking to have the Conference in the Jewish House was pure politics, and, moreover, it was addressed to an opponent of Schtraucher – a Zionist, Löbl Taubes.

Fig. 5. Jewish National House (1910)

<sup>122</sup> An official agenda of the conference was supposed to deal with the following issues: 1) Yiddish spelling; 2) Yiddish grammar; 3) Foreign words and new words; 4) a Yiddish dictionary; 5) Jewish youth and the Yiddish language; 6) the Yiddish press; 7) the Yiddish theater and Yiddish actors; 8) the economic status of Yiddish writers; 9) the economic status of Yiddish actors; 10) recognition for the Yiddish language. ("Die Jüdische Sprachkonferenz," Czernowitzer Tagblatt, 30 August 1908, No. 1666, p. 5.)

<sup>123</sup> Eleonora Lappin, "Chernivetska Movna Konferentsia (1908) ta Superechka pro Ievreisku Natzionalnu Movu," [Czernowitz Language Conference (1908) and a Quarrel about Jewish National Language] in *Mini-Kosmos Bukoviny: Kulturni Zdobutky Regionu. Materialy Mizhnarodnoi Konferentsii*. Chernivtsi: Zelena Bukovyna, 2006, p. 101.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.



Fig. 6. Czernowitz Music Society (Postcard, 1908)

Also the Conference was used for some personal interests: some Russian Jewish politicians used it as an occasion to emigrate from Russia (where after the unsuccessful revolutionary activity there were restrictions on political and social activity). Thus, the leader of Poale Zion, Leon Hasanovich, together with Ber Borohov moved to L'viv (in 1908) and then to Vienna (between 1913 and 1919).<sup>125</sup> Another person who used the Conference in order to escape from Russia was one of the few famous female Jewish political leader's, Ester Frumkin. After several times being imprisoned in Russia, she left Russia and in Czernowitz organized a "Jewish Social-Democratic Party."

### **3.2. Ideology of Yiddish as a/the National Jewish Language**

In the previous section we saw what kind of cultural and political intentions different Jewish political movements followed. In this section I analyze an attitude towards the Yiddish language based on participant's speeches and Czernowitz periodicals. As I mentioned already

<sup>125</sup> Eleonora Lappin, "Chernivetska Movna Konferentsia (1908) ta Superechka pro Ievreisku Natzionalnu Movu," [Czernowitz Language Conference (1908) and a Quarrel about Jewish National Language] in *Mini-Kosmos Bukoviny: Kulturni Zdobutky Regionu. Materialy Mizhnarodnoi Konferentsii*. Chernivtsi: Zelena Bukovyna, 2006, p. 100.

in the previous section, there were mainly two trends represented at the Conference – socialist pro-Yiddishists and Zionist pro-Hebraists. In this section I focus on Yiddishists, their speeches during the Conference and their reaction to the Conference resolution (which surprisingly was not satisfactory for Yiddishists either).

One of the most important persons at the Conference, probably, was the journalist, writer, and political activist Nathan Birnbaum (1864-1937), who moved to Czernowitz in order to start his new political activity after the failure of his attempts in Galicia. Birnbaum grounded his politics on the Jewish masses, protection of their language and culture, and enthusiastically agreed to prepare the Jewish Language Conference in 1908. In his opening speech he pointed to several very important issues which were actively discussed. Thus, he argued for Yiddish as a language, but not a dialect, he stated that “...a decade ago many of us asked: if other nations mix different languages whether it causes the emergence of something new that has its own soul, whether a new language appears?”<sup>126</sup> Further, during the speech he also mentioned that there is a distance between the Jewish elite and masses:

...when Jewish intelligentsia attached to the national idea, it had no love to the Jewish nation. It [intelligentsia] even does not understand that national intelligence should be connected with its people by the soul and the heart, but, first of all, it should live among the people, breath the same cultural atmosphere, while its spiritual life should grow from the language of the people. ...not to speak the same language with the people means renouncing it.<sup>127</sup>

Birnbaum continued his speech with an emphasis on the connection between the nation and the role of the language of masses, and argued that the negative feeling of some Jews towards Yiddish is their attitude towards themselves.

During the Conference reports were presented, speeches and discussions of the role of Yiddish in daily Jewish life, high culture, literature, etc. By the content of participants' speeches it is possible to divide them into three groups: radical pro-Yiddishists which insisted on recognition of the language as the only one Jewish language, mild Yiddishists who saw

<sup>126</sup> “Die Jüdische Sprachconferenz,” *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 September 1908, No. 1391, p. 1.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

Yiddish as one of the Jewish languages, saw it as equal to Hebrew, and the last group which, despite belonging to *Yiddishkait*, saw Yiddish as a popular language of masses but not even a national language.

Thus, Ester Frumkin was one of the most radical participants of the Language Conference, she saw Yiddish as the only Jewish language,<sup>128</sup> she was one of the most dissatisfied by the resolution of the Conference. The same a young Hebrew writer Mate Mizes from Peremishl was very radically oriented; thus, he spoke at the Conference about Yiddish and other so-called “mixed-languages.” His speech was seen as the first speech in Yiddish about Yiddish.<sup>129</sup> Also during his speech he called Hebrew a dead language, and a culture based on it as choky and tainted.<sup>130</sup> The majority of the participants belonged to the group of people which acknowledged Yiddish as being equal to Hebrew, and agreed that it should be recognized as a Jewish language (leaving a room for Hebrew).<sup>131</sup>

An interesting case happened with the participation of I.L.Peretz. In his speech, which he gave during the first day of the Conference after Birnbaum’s speech, the Yiddish writer spoke about “democratization of the Jewish people,”<sup>132</sup> the role of Hasidism in the development of Yiddish, the role of women’s literature, and the crucial role of the Jewish proletariat; also he spoke about Yiddish and culture based on the language and other inspiring issues which caused the applause from Yiddishists and the strong resistance of Hebraists.

<sup>128</sup> Eleonora Lappin, “Chernivetska Movna Konferentsia (1908) ta Superechka pro Ievreisku Natzionalnu Movu,” [Czernowitz Language Conference (1908) and a Quarrel about Jewish National Language] in *Mini-Kosmos Bukoviny: Kulturni Zdobutky Regionu. Materialy Mizhnarodnoi Konferentsii*. Chernivtsi: Zelena Bukovyna, 2006., p. 100.

<sup>129</sup> *Afn Shvel*, No.271, 1988.

<sup>130</sup> Joshua A. Fishman, *Ideology, Society and Language: The Odyssey of Nathan Birnbaum*, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1987 (cited in Eleonora Lappin, “Chernivetska Movna Konferentsia (1908) ta Superechka pro Ievreisku Natzionalnu Movu,” [Czernowitz Language Conference (1908) and a Quarrel about Jewish National Language] in *Mini-Kosmos Bukoviny: Kulturni Zdobutky Regionu. Materialy Mizhnarodnoi Konferentsii*. Chernivtsi: Zelena Bukovyna, 2006., p. 103.)

<sup>131</sup> “Die Jüdische Sprachkonferenz in Czernowitz,” *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, 6 September 1908, No. 1672, p.4; see also “Die Jüdische Sprachkonferenz,” *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 September 1908, No.1396, p.6.

<sup>132</sup> “Die Jüdische Sprachkonferenz,” *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 September 1908, No.1391, p. 1.

Peretz called Hebrew a language of Torah, Talmud, and Jewish scholars, whereas Yiddish was a language of masses, wives and workers who are the only ones who create the modern culture of Yiddish.<sup>133</sup> Peretz demanded equality of Yiddish, translation of the classic texts of Judaism in Yiddish.<sup>134</sup> However, at the end of the Conference after the resolution, according to which the Yiddish language was proclaimed a Jewish national language, Peretz claimed that "...there is no such majority that can convince him that our national language is Yiddish. According to him, Yiddish is a popular Jewish language, which has some prerequisites to become a national language."<sup>135</sup>

The reaction of Hebraists to the resolution was overall positive. Thus, according to the article in *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, a Zionist group argued that "the resolution will not change the role and value of Hebrew, and they [Zionists] will remain in the organization in order to cooperate for the future development of Yiddish."<sup>136</sup> However, the reaction of Zionists in general in Czernowitz was not so positive, thus, for example in article published in *Czernowitzer Tagblatt* from September 6, 1908, stated that Yiddish was a jargon, not a language, but a "conglomerate of absurdities and distortions that have been taken during the long journey from various places."<sup>137</sup> Further, the author argues that "even a wish to create a "culture" of its [Yiddish] basis should be protested"; that it will cause more problems because "[t]he Jewish question is complicated enough; no one needs more problems."<sup>138</sup> Moreover, Kassner argues that Yiddish is only one Jewish language which also turns Jews from the Jewish religion, and which brings confusion into Jewish society. But the most characteristic

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Eleonora Lappin, "Chernivetska Movna Konferentzia (1908) ta Superechka pro Ievreisku Natzionalnu Movu," p. 103.

<sup>135</sup> "Die Jüdische Sprachkonferenz," *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 September 1908, No.1396, p. 6.

<sup>136</sup> "Die Jüdische Sprachkonferenz in Czernowitz," *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, 6 September 1908, No. 1672, p. 4.

<sup>137</sup> Solomon Kassner, "Die Jüdische Sprachkonferenz", *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, 5 September 1908, No. 1672, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

feature of Yiddish, according to this German speaking Jewish intellectual, is ghetto existence: “Enough of this cruel game, we want out of the ghetto!”<sup>139</sup>

### **3.3. Review of Evaluation of the Results of the Conference in the Press**

One of the earliest books which dealt with Czernowitz Jewish Language Conference is a book published by YIVO in 1931. In the introduction to the book a famous Yiddish linguist, Max Weinreich (1894 - 1969), notes that “The Czernowitz Conference was one of the most important milestones in Jewish cultural development.”<sup>140</sup> Also in a book devoted to one hundred years since the Conference *Czernowitz at 100: The First Yiddish Language Conference in Historical Perspective* it is stated:

... the Czernowitz Conference presents a watershed moment: not only did it publicly proclaim a movement to transform the religiocentric Jewish people into a Yiddish-speaking nation; the promotion of “upstart” Yiddish put champions of Hebrew on the defensive, contributing to an infamous “language war” that divided Jewish society for decades to come.<sup>141</sup>

In the book the Conference was seen as a historical event and inspiration for the further development of the language. However, all these statements were made some decades after the Conference took place. This section is mostly focused on more early evaluations of the Conference. The main aim is to research what was the attitude towards the event and whether the Conference was seen with the same importance, “a watershed moment” as it is seen today.

Despite the fact that “During the time of the Conference Czernowitz become a center of language dispute”<sup>142</sup> there was no expectation that the Conference would cause a big

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p.2.

<sup>140</sup> Max Weinreich, “Einführung,” in *Die Erste Jüdische Sprachkonferenz. Berichte, Dokumente und Stimmen zur Czernowitzer Konferenz 1908* (Vilna: Bibliotek des Jiwo Institut für Jüdische Wissenschaften, Philologische Section, 1931), p. VII.

<sup>141</sup> Kalman Weiser, “Introduction,” in *Czernowitz at 100: The First Yiddish Language Conference in Historical Perspective*, eds. Kalman Weiser and Joshua A. Fogel (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2010), p. 4.

<sup>142</sup> Eleonora Lappin, “Chernivetska Movna Konferentsia (1908) ta Superechka pro Ievreisku Natzionalnu Movu,” [Czernowitz Language Conference (1908) and a Quarrel about Jewish National Language] in *Mini-*

interest from the perspective of every cultural person in Czernowitz.<sup>143</sup> Thus, for example, local lawyer Max Diamant noted that issues that were raised during the Conference were not appreciated by the local Jewish population.<sup>144</sup> Some other participants and guests of the Conference had also doubts in the success of the Conference.

In an article in the local newspaper *Czernowitzer Tagblatt* from September 6, 1908 Solomon Kassner, who belonged to the Zionist movement, a German speaking upper-level of the Jewish population in Bukovina, notes that the Conference makes already existing tension between Hebrew and Yiddish stronger. He worried that the Conference and following activities of Yiddishists would make a gap between Jewish masses (supporting Yiddish) and the elite (promoting Hebrew) bigger.<sup>145</sup> In his article he evaluates the Conference as a very dangerous event, which could bring more inconvenience for the Jewish population of Bukovina.

It is necessary to note that despite the numerosity of people who arrived at Czernowitz in order to take part at the Conference, the event was not perceived as very important and as an event that should be fully followed. Thus, Czernowitz paid little attention to this event. Overall, the conference was not followed by the local Ukrainian press at all. Despite the fact, that some Ukrainian and Jewish political movements promoted political cooperating with the Jewish political movements, Ukrainian interest was limited, thus, no articles were found in Ukrainian periodicals which discuss the Conference. In German and Jewish periodicals only a dozen of articles were found that also demonstrated a lack of interest from the side of the local Jews themselves.

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*Kosmos Bukoviny: Kulturni Zdobutky Regionu. Materialy Mizhnarodnoi Konferentsii.* Chernivtsi: Zelena Bukovyna, 2006, p. 100.

<sup>143</sup> Mykola Kushnir. "Ievreiska Movna Konferentsia u Chernivtziah 1908 Roku" [Jewish Language Conference in Chernivtsi of 1908], *İ: Independent Cultural Science Journal*. Lviv, №56, 2009, p. 72.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Solomon Kassner, "Die Jüdische Sprachconferenz," *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, 6 September 1908, No. 1672, pp. 1-2.



Possible explanation of the fact that Jews were not interested in the event by themselves is that the event was not planned and coordinated by the local politicians, the main actors of the Conference were a Viennese Jewish organization *Jüdische Kultur*, a leader of the conference Natan Birnbaum, and mainly non-local Jews. Moreover, Czernowitz seems to have been involved more in the preparation for the celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the city. All these influenced the local periodicals in which the majority of the articles were devoted to discussion of ethnic co-existence, European news, local and imperial political events, and elections.

However, the limited discussion of the event in Jewish periodicals can be explained taking into consideration that the local Jewish population did not believe in success of political orientations of Yiddish, due to a gap between German speaking intelligentsia and Yiddish speaking Jewish masses. Moreover, in my research I analyze only local press; it is possible that evaluations of the conference were different in foreign press.

Also the Jewish Language Conference is criticized by some modern scholars and its results are not evaluated as a success because of several reasons. At the Conference future plans to make the Conference in the following year were proclaimed (which did not happen), the protocols and all the speeches of participants were not published (however, then were planned to be published), the majority of documents were lost (only some of them were saved and published by YIVO in Vilnius in 1931). The reason why all these plans were not realized was the diversity of political and cultural activity of Nathan Birnbaum who was elected as a chairman of the Conference and was supposed to coordinate future activities, but he did not; and was not able to combine his duties after the Conference with his political ambitions.

However, after the Conference there was a new enthusiastic stage in the development of Yiddish culture and language; it influenced on Yiddishists, which, after the Conference, created different cultural organizations and events. Thus, in the couple of days after the

Conference, in Petersburg a *Jewish Historical and Ethnographic Society* was founded, in November of 1908 was opened *Society of Jewish National Music*. These two organizations made a very significant impact on the development and research of Yiddish language and culture.

Overall, the Conference contributed to Bukovinian Yiddish culture. Of course, it is not possible to find a strict line that connects the Conference with the later development of Yiddish which took place in Czernowitz, or with new Yiddish organizations, political parties, or new periodicals. However, activity of people who were engaged in organization of the Conference made a big contribution into development of the language, and culture in Bukovina.

I suggest research the Czernowitz Yiddish conference in the context of the later development of the language in Bukovina. This development was significantly influenced by some Yiddishists which stayed in Czernowitz after the Conference and continue to promote language and culture created in *Goles*. Thus, after the Conference, Nathan Birnbaum stayed in Czernowitz where he continued Yiddish propaganda among the local population. With the help of a Zionist, Löbl Taubes, Birnbaum published two Jewish periodicals: in 1908 *Dr. Birnbaums Wochenblatt* and in 1910 *Das Volk*, created a Singers' Society *Hasomir* and founded a branch of Viennese society in Bukovina of *Jüdische Kultur*. The last society organized in Czernowitz a big Yiddish library where time to time Yiddish literary events, language classes took place.

Also in 1909 a new society *Jewish Theater* was created which played a significant role in the process of Jewish nation recognition in Bukovina. Thus, the Czernowitz lawyer, Max Diamant,<sup>146</sup> submitted charters of the society in Yiddish. These charters were denied by the

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<sup>146</sup> The same as for Birnbaum, for Diamant Yiddish was not only a language of Jewish communication, but also a political program. Diamant was one of the protectors of Yiddish as the national Jewish language. In 1906 in Czernowitz he created an academic society "Zefira" which represented interests of "Jewish National Party.

Ministry of Interior Affairs because they were not written in one of the recognized languages (German, Polish, Romanian, Ruthenian). As a response to it, Diamant applied to the court with a accusation that his right “to save and support his Jewish nationality”<sup>147</sup> was violated. However, the Viennese State Court rejected the appeal on the basis that “Although Yiddish is a language of communication in Galicia and Bukovina, it is not spoken in the Western parts of Austria. That is why it is not a language of the Jewish people, but just a local dialect.”<sup>148</sup> The statement also meant that the Jewish nation was denied recognition by the Habsburg monarchy.

Also the Conference was a new stage in the process of Yiddish and popular culture promotion among Jewish masses. Thus, when in a census of 1910 it was forbidden to note Yiddish as *Umgangsprache* (moreover, there were even some punishments for those who did not obey the rule). Despite it, in the article published in October 1, 1909 in the local newspaper *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung* states that Jewish students of the Czernowitz University should protect their nationality and language rights and in the census of 1910 they are expected “..freely and consciously to declare their Jewish nationality.”<sup>149</sup>

However, Yiddishists who stayed after the Conference in Czernowitz were not the only ones who promoted Yiddish and demanded Jewish nationality recognition on the basis of Yiddish recognition in Austria. Despite the widespread division of Jewish national political movements on pro-Hebraists Zionists and pro-Yiddishists Diaspora-nationalists, in Bukovina the clear cut was not as visible as in the rest of European Jewish communities. Thus, among activists, promoting Yiddish language and culture, there were several important Bukovinian Zionism-oriented politician such as Benno Straucher, Max Diamant, and Löbl Taubes, etc. who promoted, for example, a Bukovinian colony in Palestine, and at the same time,

<sup>147</sup> Eleonora Lappin, “Chernivetska Movna Konferentzia (1908) ta Superechka pro Ievreisku Natzionalnu Movu,” p. 108.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 October 1909, No. 1714, p. 4.

promoted Yiddish recognition in Austria, supported Yiddish cultural organizations, etc. Such Zionists' struggle for Yiddish in Bukovina could be explained not only by mere sympathy to Yiddish or some nostalgic mood, but also by the Austrian politics where language was one of the main determine factors of nationality recognition, although, language censuses were not designed to define nationality of Austrian population.

Thus, according to the local newspaper, during one of Zionist sessions in Czernowitz, a local follower of this movement, Taubes argued for issuing of brochures in Yiddish, however, the idea was not supported by one of Viennese representatives of Zionist movement. Whereas during this session, a local lawyer Kremer proposed to create a burro for Palestine issues.<sup>150</sup> The same, a local Zionist, Max Diamant, during Jewish national session devoted to Austrian refuse to recognize Yiddish, critiqued the emperor's decision, and called the Jews to struggle for their national language and schools. In addition he argued that "Jews are a nation that has their language, and any decision can not cancel it."<sup>151</sup>

The promotion of the Yiddish culture by all kinds of political movements in Bukovina, which was hastened by the Czernowitz Conference of 1908, could be seen as not only a part of national identity building process, but, also, as perusing a clear political goal – nationality recognition and gaining of more political power in Austria.<sup>152</sup> Also, this could be explained as following interests of the local Jewish populating, especially taking into consideration numbers of Jews in Czernowitz and that the main language of their communication was Yiddish.

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<sup>150</sup> *Die Volkswehr*, 28 February 1910, No.35, p. 2.

<sup>151</sup> Samuel Gammer, DACHO, Folder 3, Record 10958, p. 12-13.

<sup>152</sup> Thus, in Zionist Straucher's newspaper *Die Volkswehr*, after nationality non-recognition, and in the context of forthcoming census, we read: "By the declaration of Jewish nationality, during the forthcoming census, ... we will deliver recognition. That is why we should promote marking of the nationality in the census. On the basis of this we will get an opportunity ... to show to the whole world our progress in social and cultural spheres. That is why our call is following: Jews, join your nation!" (*Die Volkswehr*, 18 June 1910, No.79, p. 1).

## Conclusions

A lot of research on the importance of the Conference for the future development of Yiddish, and culture, based on the language have been made. One of focuses of my research was the investigation of Bukovinian Ukrainian language periodicals with the aim of finding any discourse on the First Jewish Language Conference. During the research, in the archive of Yuriy Fed'kovich National University of Chernivtsi (Chernivtsi, Ukraine), I have found and processed the following Ukrainian newspapers (which functioned in 1908): *Bukovyna*, *Rus'ka Rada*, *Selyanyn*, *Narodna Rada*, *Narodna Sprava*. Also, later periodicals were found: *Gromadianyk* (1909), *Narodnyi Golos* (1909), *Nowa Bukovyna* (1912), *Rus'ka Pravda* (1910), *Russkiy Vestnik* (1917). However, in Ukrainian language periodicals, no articles were found which discuss the Conference. Although, in German language newspaper *Bukowiner Post*, which partly followed the course of Ukrainian-Jewish cooperation promoted by Ukrainian leader, Mykola Vasyl'ko, a small descriptive note on the Conference was published.<sup>153</sup>

Czernowitz Yiddish Conference of 1908 was one of cultural and political events which hastened the process of the formation of Jewish national political demands; however, despite the political cooperation between Jews and Ukrainians, the late did not pay much attention to other than explicitly political Jewish activities. Their cooperation was framed by political categories. However, in the times of the Habsburg monarchy, only 30% of Ukrainian language periodicals were published in Bukovina. The other 70% were published in Galicia.

<sup>154</sup> Thus, it is possible to search for the information about the Conference in Galician

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<sup>153</sup> "Nach der Sprachkonferenz," *Bukowiner Post*, 1 September, 1908, No. 2272, p. 1.

<sup>154</sup> Between 1848 and 1900 there were 190 periodicals in Ruthenian (Ukrainian) language, when 70% were published in Galicia. ("Die Ruthenen," in *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918, Die Völker des Reiches*. Band III, Teilband 1., eds. Adam Wandruszka und Peter Urbanitsch (Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien 1980), p. 577).

Ukrainian periodicals. Though, I presuppose that due to the permanent tensions between Ukrainian and Polish population in Galicia, the Jewish event in another crownland was not actively discussed.

Despite a lot of Jewish periodicals being researched, only a dozen articles in the local (German language) newspapers were found; moreover, all of the articles are of a descriptive but not analytical character. Therefore, I conclude that, in the times of the Conference, the event was not much appreciated by the local Jewish politicians. I make this conclusion on the basis that all Jewish periodicals in Bukovina belong to political or religious organization (leaders of these organizations allowed to publish articles which they considered important).

Moreover, the Czernowitz Yiddish Language Conference was ‘imposed’ on Czernowitz; in other words, it was not organized by the local Jewish community and that is why neither local Ukrainians, nor Germans or Jews fully followed the Conference. Based on discussions in the local Jewish and Ukrainian periodicals, the city seems to have been more involved in the preparation for the celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Czernowitz, which also took place in 1908. The main discussions in Ukrainian, German, and Jewish periodicals was devoted to Austrian politics, European news, and local elections to the provincial diet (*Landtag*).

According to an article published in the local newspaper *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*,<sup>155</sup> different representatives of foreign Jewish newspapers have arrived to the Conference: *Die Zeit* (Vienna), *Die Welt* (Köln), *Sozialdemokrat* (Lemberg), *Jüdische Zeitung* (Vienna), *Unser Leben* (Warsaw), *Hed Hasman* (Vilnius), *Der Fraind* (Petersburg), *New-Yorker Tagblatt*. For the future research, it would be interesting to analyze the articles which were published in these newspapers *after* their representatives have visited the event, and to make a comparative analysis of their reaction to the First Yiddish Language Conference.

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<sup>155</sup> *Czernowitzer Tagblatt*, 1 September, 1908, No.1666, p. 3.

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