Interethnic Relations, National Identifications, and 'Bystanders' to the Holocaust in the Northeastern Hungarian borderlands

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ABSTRACT

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Sean Remz

This thesis addresses the conceptually ambiguous matter of the bystander during the Holocaust in the borderlands of 'Greater Hungary,' tracing the longer-term historical trajectory that led to a variety of responses to the ghettoization, plunder, and genocidal deportation of the Jews of Subcarpathia, (Southern) Maramuresh, and Northern Transylvania. It uses dozens of memoirs of Holocaust survivors from irredentist Hungary in order to explore this topic, while also taking note of the self-identification of these survivors.

This primary source evidence suggests that non-perpetrator ethnic Magyars who were neither peasant nor aristocratic tended to participate in the plundering of Hungarian Jewry. Conversely, it reveals that ethnic Romanians of Maramuresh provided support for ghettoized Jews, while Ruthenians often displayed an emotional distance from them. The specific history of these emotions requires analysis of language and education politics in interwar Czechoslovakia, and of the Hungarian invasion of autonomous Subcarpathian Ruthenia in 1939.

The causal factors explaining this ethnic difference in the behaviour of Holocaust bystanders arise from the relationship between a given ethnonational group and statehood. The Hungarian state explicitly privileged Magyars in the distribution of the plunder it allotted in 1944. Romanians in Southern Maramuresh and the northern partition of Transylvania awaited the return of the Romanian state, and perceived Hungarian authorities' anti-Jewish persecution and genocidal opportunism as imbricated with the xenophobia against themselves. The Ruthenians' national ambiguity and interethnic relations forces us to focus the conceptual debates around the viability of the term 'bystander' primarily on them.

Keywords: Holocaust, East-Central Europe (Hungary, Romania, First Czechoslovak Republic), borderlands (Transylvania, Subcarpathia), interethnic relations, nationalism, bystanders

Dedications

To all those who perished in the Holocaust, and to all survivors, particularly those residing or who have ever resided in Montreal, Toronto, and Cleveland. To all those survivors who engaged in the emotional labour of giving testimonies, voicing their trauma and wisdom, and writing memoirs. *To Srulik, Sarah / Szeréna, Chaim Menachem Katz and Malca Nussen, és az Első Martha, Pesach and Esther (Sarah), Mania Gonshor, and the clever fifteen-year old (at the beginning of World War II, presumably) that Grandma once told me about.*

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Please read:
http://www.concordia.ca/cunews/offices/vpaer/aar/2019/06/18/remembering-the-holocaust-can-help-prevent-genocide.html?c=/artsci/religions-cultures

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[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4w6owMw5EB4
(3:03ff) "Auschwitz-Birkenauban nincsenek sirok, megis ez a hely törtenelmunk, legnagyobb magyar temetője."

historiography and the contemporary battles of public memory, especially regarding the controversies over the commemorations of the 70th anniversary of the Holocaust in Hungary, in 2014. Nagyon köszönöm to Glaser-Hille Ildikó for elucidating what it means to be a self-reflexive, patriotic Hungarian worthy / in the legacy of István király, Bertalan Szemere, and István Bibó. I also appreciate these scholars' insights on Hungarian anthems and other cultural formulations.

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May we all be like András Koerner and his late mother and remember how they, Hungarian Jews of the old country, lived.

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Introduction

Munci Adler (Katz) grew up in Czechoslovak-ruled Rachov in Subcarpathian Rus' and was still living there under Hungarian occupation (as Rahó). She enthusiastically articulated that she had multiethnic friendships and was fluent in the regional plenitude of languages.[2] They knew she was religious and did not mind.[3] But, "one day [in April 1944] when the Germans came in; then was the biggest problem.[4] Right away we saw everybody, all our neighbours [with whom they were very good neighbours...] become absolutely not human beings.[5] [...] I cannot understand, never, how they could change [...] so quick. They changed in seconds. They became antisemites...I didn't know from antisemites [...] until the Germans came in.[6] [...] Right away they changed, in seconds."[7]

The intensity of betrayal that was felt by Munci and many other Hungarian borderland Jews during Passover of 1944 and the ensuing weeks was not only a crucial moment of the Holocaust for them; it also represented a sudden reversal of interfaith friendships, and a most heartbreaking large-scale case of social death.[8] Munci's emphasis on this phenomenon, a pivotal

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[2] Rachov is called Rakhiv in Ukraine today. RG-50.091.0029. Oral history interview with Munci Katz, 5 September 1984, The Jeff and Toby Herr Oral History Collection, Gift of the National Council of Jewish Women Cleveland Section to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C. <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn504970> Tape 1, 8:05-8:20, 9:30-9:45.

[3] Munci Katz interview, Tape 1, 10:30.

[4] Munci Katz interview, Tape 1, 9:50-9:56.

[5] Munci Katz interview, Tape 1, 9:56-10:07.

[6] Munci Katz interview, Tape 1, 10:12-10:25.

[7] Munci Katz interview, Tape 1, 10:45.

[8] Cf. Professor Max Bergholz's idea of "sudden nationhood," and see in the similarly titled article "Sudden Nationhood: The Microdynamics of Intercommunal Relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina After World War II" *American Historical Review* 118, no. 3 (June 2013), 679-707,

segment in her interview that continues to narrate the indignities foisted upon the community by Nazis and the zealous gendarmerie of the Hungarian state, reveals the essential reality of the German occupation, especially the fast succession of genocidal steps.[9] It also addresses ethical and ethnic dimensions of the friend-turning-into-bad bystander problem in the hidden, but already frayed social fabric of these borderlands. Too often the bystander is clichéd in one dimension, without appraisal of their ethnic, denominational, class, generational, and gendered realities among other social variations, nor their relative positionality, especially vis-à-vis violent state power and propaganda, in a situation of mass violence.[10]

Just prior to and during the presentation of sudden betrayal, Munci lists the different ethnic backgrounds of her non-Jewish, erstwhile friends. Her nominally Hungarian friends tended to speak Ruthenian and Czech in her home. There is the possibility that these friends would have identified as "Magyaron"[11] or Magyarized Slav. She also had Romanian-speaking neighbours.[12] With a nationalist presupposition between language use and the ethnic sense of self in mind, certain research questions can be posed: What were the salient intersections between class and ethnicity in the relationships between the various identity groups in Subcarpathia and in Hungarian-annexed borderlands further south and west? What were the national / cultural self-

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(https://www-jstor-org.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/stable/23426239); and Chapter 7 of his book, *Violence as a Generative Force: Identity, Nationalism, and Memory in a Balkan Community* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2016).

[9] See Zoltán Vági, László Csősz, and Gábor Kádár, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2013), Chapter 3.

[10] Raz Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians: War, Social Breakdown, and Mass Violence, 1914-1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016) Chapter 5, pp. 106-107.

[11] i.e. assimilated into the Magyar language and cultural norms.

[12] Munci Katz interview, Tape 1, 8:14-8:18, 9:30-9:45. <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn504970>

identifications and patterns of othering in these regions? How did these notions impact interethnic relations up until 1944, and how did they affect the response to ethnically differentiated 'bystanding' during the genocidal rupture of the Holocaust? What was the role of imported violence as opposed to the past record of limited endogenous strife in these regions?

The primary sources that I will make reference to in answering these questions are mostly published memoirs by Holocaust survivors of these borderlands and postmemoirs by their children.[13] These memoirs indicate the variable and regionally specific dynamics between Jews and their Carpatho-Ruthenian, Romanian, ethnic Magyar (and sometimes ethnic German) neighbours throughout the northern and eastern borderlands of 'Greater Hungary.' They also feature poignant accounts of betrayal, as in Munci's testimony, that describe bystanders by behaviour and sometimes by ethnicity and other pertinent categories, such as class or communal status. Furthermore, the national self-identification of the Jewish subjects of these memoirs tend to vary by generation, with survivors expressing loyalty to the interwar Czechoslovak and Romanian regimes, and their parents having a largely fixed nostalgia for pre-1919 Hungarian rule. Most of these sources were recorded or written decades after the Holocaust, with exceptions such as *As The Lilacs Bloomed* (*Miért?* in the original Hungarian) and *Nine Suitcases* (*Kilenc Koffer* in the original Hungarian), which feature a similar unmediated starkness to the

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[13] And available at the Concordia Webster Library, or purchasable via Chapters / Indigo or Amazon. See Mervin Butovsky and Kurt Jonassohn, "An Exploratory Study of Unpublished Holocaust Survivors Memoirs." MIGS Occasional Paper, February 1997. http://www.concordia.ca/research/migs/projects/holocaust-memoirs.html

Cf. Ferenc Laczó, ed. *Confronting Devastation: Memoirs of Holocaust Survivors from Hungary* (Toronto, ON: The Azrieli Foundation, 2019).

understudied DEGOB (National Relief Committee for Deportees; *Deportáltakat Gondozó Országos Bizottság*) interviews.[14]

Evgeny Finkel in *Ordinary Jews*, and Raz Segal in *Genocide in the Carpathians* reflect upon the memory and narrative implications of interviews and memoir-writing taking place decades after the Holocaust. As Na'ama Shik explains about *As The Lilacs Bloomed* regarding the lack of intervening discourses[15] in Molnár Hegedűs' writing so soon after the war, Holocaust survivors' communities of memory involve convergent narrative forms.[16] Finkel, citing Henry Greenspan, Christopher Browning, and Jan Grabowski, asserts that survivors' testimonies feature a very high, historiographically compelling degree of consistency across the decades, in line with empirical research on the clear remembrance of emotionally charged trauma.[17] Raz Segal

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[14] See Anna Molnár Hegedűs, *As The Lilacs Bloomed*, transl. Marietta Morry and Lynda Muir (Montreal, Azrieli Foundation, 2014), xix-xxi; Béla Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, transl. Ladislaus Löb (Pantheon Books, 2004), x. These were all written / documented prior to the 1948 Communist takeover of Hungary, which severely limited the historiographical scope of the analysis of World War II and the Holocaust. (e.g. the ideological discourse of fascism versus the working class). While *As The Lilacs Bloomed* is unmediated by certain tropes and is still fraught by immediate post-genocidal terrors and traumatic uncertainties, *Nine Suitcases* is replete with Zsolt's philosophical and cultural presuppositions, and the epistemic weight (for better or for worse) of his cynicism, biases, historically transparent knowledge of social norms, and literary expertise. And see Ferenc Laczó, *Hungarian Jews in the Age of Genocide: An Intellectual History, 1929-1948* (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2016), 99-104.

[15] Molnár Hegedűs, *As The Lilacs Bloomed*, Introduction, xx. Also see Ferenc Laczó, *Hungarian Jews in the Age of Genocide,* Chapter 5.

[16] Also see Evgeny Finkel, *Ordinary Jews: Choice and Survival during the Holocaust* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), 204.

[17] Finkel, Ibid; Raz Segal, *Days of Ruin: The Jews of Munkács During the Holocaust. (*Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2013), 15-19. Also, in reading Holocaust survivors' memoirs, I have sometimes come across survivors' sentiments that it was best to wait until retirement, until their grandchildren reached school age, etc. After having rebuilt their lives and their children grown, they felt they could narrate their story with a lower emotional cost. (N.B. There are many exceptions to the temporality of this pattern.) And equally importantly, testimonies were much more prioritized in Western academia and memory culture starting about forty years ago, to combat Holocaust denial, and later on with Spielberg's Shoah Foundation. See Chapter 1

emphasizes the value of survivor accounts to describe and explain change in social relations and antisemitic contexts over time.[18] Despite these important dissimilarities between different eras of testimony-giving and memoir-writing, I have not noticed temporal variation either in survivors articulating national-cultural identifications or in bystanders doing so.[19]

With a sustained analysis of the aforementioned memoirs about interethnic relations on the ground level (taking into consideration the additional facet of class complexity and a spectrum of rural-urban and public-private divides) as perceived by Holocaust survivors, and the application of some secondary sources on the Holocaust as both a region-specific and a continent-wide genocide, some contributions to the historiography are possible. I will attempt to chart the behaviours of bystanders to the Holocaust in Hungarian borderlands primarily on an ethnic basis (secondarily by class) and to understand this in light of long term interethnic relations. Likewise, I shall also tentatively explain minoritized bystanders' attitudes in terms of their relationship with majoritarian statehood. The conclusion of this thesis will correlate state authority and the degree of racialized oppression and privilege vis-à-vis the ethnic categorization of Holocaust bystanders and associated historical actors in Axis Europe. Raz Segal's charting of the historical evolution of interethnic relations and interdenominational polarization in Subcarpathia provides a model for borderlands to the south and west.

"Mutual Sightings," 38, 51, Chapter 3, Bearing Witness," 111 in *Oral History at the Crossroads: Sharing Life Stories of Survival and Displacement* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2014). Cf. *Shoshanna's Story: A Mother, A Daughter, and the Shadows of History* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, Ltd., 2003), 253-262; Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," *Poetics Today* 29 no. 1 (2008): 103-128.

[18] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, Introduction, 8-9.

[19] But see Steven High, ed. *Beyond Testimony and Trauma* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2015), 14-18, Chapter 5 (Henry Greenspan, "From Testimony to Recounting: Reflections from Forty Years of Listening to Holocaust Survivors"), 141-169.

Genocide in the Carpathians and Tim Cole's work have lucidly suggested new paths in considering the role of the bystander in the Holocaust in the irredentist Hungarian state, with Segal exhorting researchers to examine interethnic relations in Northern Transylvania as well as in Maramureş / Máramaros on both sides of the Tisza River, among other borderlands.[20] Along with their forebearers in social psychology, sociology, and political science, they have deconstructed Raul Hilberg's captivating but uni-dimensional triad of perpetrator, victim, and bystander.[21] Segal's recent book and articles have interrogated the nature of these potentially misleading categories, especially given Ruthenians' status as both victims (especially with the Hungarian invasion of Subcarpathia in March 1939) and bystanders, with a comparatively brief historical evolution from victim to bystander in the World War II era.[22] With more attention to regionally varied primary source accounts than to secondary material, I intend to broaden the ambit of understanding of Ruthenian-Jewish and Romanian-Jewish interactions in Subcarpathia, Maramureş, and Transylvania. This is to deconstruct static terms such as 'bystander,' and to further comprehend the agency of non-Magyar Christians (and of ethnic Magyars themselves) under xenophobic 'Greater Hungarian' rule.

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[20] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, Chapter 5 notes 115, 116, p. 184. --- "Becoming Bystanders: Carpatho-Ruthenians, Jews, and the Politics of Narcissism in Subcarpathian Rus," *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* (2010), 16:1-2, 129-156; Tim Cole, "Writing 'Bystanders' into Holocaust History in More Active Ways: 'Non-Jewish' Engagement with Ghettoisation, Hungary 1944" *Holocaust Studies* (2005), 11:1, 55-74.

[21] Raul Hilberg, *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders: The Jewish Catastrophe, 1933-1945* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992); see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 11, 134-135n38-41; Hana Kubátová and Michal Kubát, "Were There Bystanders in Topol'čany? On Concept Formation and the 'Ladder of Abstraction.'" *Contemporary European History* 27, 4 (2018): 563-564, 578-581.

[22] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 16-18, 58-63, 70-77, 84-87, 104-107, 111, 115-119; "Becoming Bystanders," passim, especially 138-140.

The works of Rogers Brubaker and of his colleagues are meaningful in the appraisal of Holocaust survivors' articulations of the national identities of themselves, their neighbours, and the state under which they lived (Czechoslovakia or Romania and then 'Greater Hungary') during the respective interwar and World War II periods.[23] These identifications and loyalties fluctuated or stabilized based on changes of state control and 'Jewish policy,' education, economic matters, and foreign policy. Given the ambiguities of the affective relationships between Jews and the state, especially over the decades of regime change in Hungarian borderlands and East-Central Europe more broadly, the cognitive framework of ethnonational identity proposed by Brubaker makes historical sense.[24] From the beginning of the Compromise that made the Habsburg Monarchy into a Dual (Austro-Hungarian) Monarchy, most Jews of the Hungarian territory of the polity consciously chose to assimilate into Hungarian culture, language, and society. The identification of Jews with Hungarian ethnicity was extremely strong for secular and observant Jews in Budapest, but was also very strong elsewhere in Hungary, including in borderlands such as Transylvania.[25] Rebekah Klein-Pejšová argues that loyalty has been a major factor in the shifts of post-emancipation Jewish history – the key basis for Jewish security, social stability, and constitutive of national identity.[26] The understudied memoirs that I have examined[27] shed light on these matters, and address the historical evolution of these

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[23] Rogers Brubaker, Margit Feischmidt, Jon Fox, Liana Grancea. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 68-80, 97-105; Brubaker, et al. *Ethnicity without Groups*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[24] See Holly Case, *Between States: The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea during World War II* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 176.

[25] See Case, *Between States*, 175-176, 194-195.

[26] Rebekah Klein-Pejšová, *Mapping Jewish Loyalties in Interwar Slovakia* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2015), 3.

[27] Although it should be noted that Raz Segal, for *Genocide in the Carpathians*, has made use of Aranka Siegal's *Upon the Head of the Goat: A Childhood in Hungary, 1939-1944*

ingredients on a micro-level. I also take note of Jewish self-defence, mainly at times when there was no central state authority which to convey one's loyalty.

While there is a wide variety of identity reflections in national, cultural, and religious terms in the memoirs of the Holocaust survivors which I have studied, one can tentatively discern some broad patterns. Upper-middle class and upper-class Jews of Southern Slovakia, Subcarpathian Ruthenia, Southern Maramureş / Satu Mare County, and Northern Transylvania, like in Trianon Hungary, identified with Hungarian culture (and nationality), and tended to speak Magyar.[28] This heightened their perceptions of betrayal as the brunt of Hungarian state violence

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(New York, NY: Square Fish, 2003 edition); Naftali Deutsch's *A Holocaust Survivor in The Footsteps of His Past: A Fascinating Chronicle Of A Jewish Boy's Miraculous Survival From Five Concentration Camps*; (Jerusalem, Israel: Mazo Publishers, 2007), Susan Papp's *Outcasts: A Love Story* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2009), and Gabriel Mermall's *Seeds of Grace* in Gabriel Mermall and Norbert J. Yasharoff, *By the Grace of Strangers: Two Boys' Rescue During the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem; New York: Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project, 2006).

[28] See Elaine Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story,* whose eponymous protagonist grew up in Beregszász / Berehovo, Subcarpathia, and *Journey to Vaja* (being set in the Nyírség near the northeastern borders of Trianon Hungary); Susan Papp, *Outcasts: A Love Story*, centred in Nagyszőllős / Sevljuš, Subcarpathia (Ugocsa County); Julie Salamon, *The Net of Dreams* (New York: Random House, 1996) mostly in Chust / Huszt; Helena Jockel, *We Sang in Hushed Voices* (Azrieli Memoir, 2014) in Mukačevo / Munkács; Michael (Moskovits) Mason, *A Name Unbroken* (Toronto, ON: Azrieli Memoir, 2015), in the border town of Sátoraljaújhely and its environs; Ronit Lowenstein-Malz, *Escape in Time* (MB Publishing, 2015) in Munkács; Suzanne (Katz) Reich, "Sometimes I Can Dream Again" (Greater Kisvárda in Northeast Trianon Hungary) in the anthology *Before All Memory Is Lost* (Toronto, ON: Azrieli Foundation, 2017); Magda Herzberger, *Survival* (Austin, TX: 1st World Library, 2005), from Cluj; Martha Salcudean, *In Search of Light* (Toronto, ON: Azrieli Memoir, 2019), born in Cluj; Ladislaus Löb, *The Daring Rescue of Hungarian Jews: A Survivor's Account* (London, UK: Pimlico, 2008); Teréz Mózes, *Staying Human Through the Holocaust* (Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2005), grew up in Nagyvárad, northwestern Transylvania proper; Zsuzsanna Fischer Spiro / Eva Shainblum, *In Fragile Moments* / *The Last Time* (Montreal / Toronto: Azrieli Memoir, 2016), Kisvárda and its environs / Nagyvárad, respectively; Paul Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed* (Hadad and environs, Transylvania); Anna Molnar Hegedűs transl. Marietta Morry and Lynda Muir, *As The Lilacs Bloomed* (Szatmár and environs); Hindi (Friedman) Rothbart (with P'nenah Goldstein), *The Girl From Sighet* (Xlibris, 2009); Danny Naten and R.J. Gifford (with Beverly Naten), *Auschwitz Escape – The Klara Wizel Story* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014), featuring intergenerational difference of identifications in Sighet; Yossi Indig, *A Promise to my Mother: Memories of a Life Shaped by*

(and the plundering of citizens) fell upon them. Relatively poor Jews of the northeastern borderlands, while still affiliated with Hungarianness through memories of ancestors having served in the Austro-Hungarian military in World War I, tended to have more local and religious associations.[29] I shall proceed to analyze these variables on a historically contextualized regional basis, linking these Holocaust survivors' conceptions of self with the attitudes of their neighbours towards them.

To understand the affectively dynamic relationships between Jews and many Carpatho-Ruthenians and northwestern Romanians in the World War II era, we must look at the longer trajectory of their interwar history, characterized by nationalistically exclusive configurations of statehood and borders in East-Central Europe, with the corollary of new demands of loyalty.[30] As demonstrated in Max Bergholz's *Violence as a Generative Force* and "Sudden Nationhood" article, latent resentments, indifference, or hatreds (a relevant distinction in contrasting attitudes between Carpatho-Ruthenians and Jews versus Hungarians and Jews) that suddenly explode in wartime have roots in their respective emotional histories that can reveal the latency of such

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the Holocaust (Montreal, 2007/2009), from Sighet and whose parents patriotically identified with pre-irredentist Hungarian nostalgia; Dr. Edith Eger (with Esmé Schwall Weigand), *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* (New York: Scribner, 2017), whose childhood was centred in Košice / Kassa, Southern Slovakia; Leslie and Eva Meisels, *Suddenly the Shadow Fell* (Toronto, ON: Azrieli Memoir, 2014) which takes place primarily in East-Central Trianon Hungary, and Budapest, respectively; George Reinitz (with Richard King), *Wrestling with Life: From Hungary to Auschwitz to Montreal* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), who was born in Szikszó in Abaúj-Torna County; Leslie Mezei (with Magda Mezei Schwarz, Klari Mezei Noy, and Annie Wasserman Mezei), *A Tapestry of Survival* (Toronto, ON: Azrieli Memoir, 2019), from Gödöllő.

[29] Ben & Gary Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz* (Unpublished Memoir, 4th Draft, 2013), 30, passim.

[30] See Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, Chapter 3 and p. 68.

dispositions.[31] The older sense of loyalty and national identification between Jews and industrializing Hungary reveals the inverse – gradual nationhood.

Conceptualizing bystanders

The contested term 'bystander,' the fulcrum of this thesis, is a category of historical actor deeply in need of critical examination, both on the semantic and historiographical levels. Raul Hilberg also conceptualized a tripartite division among bystanders: helpers, gainers, and onlookers -- with the latter being the largest category. Tim Cole writes that while these distinctions do go beyond a stereotype of passivity, the multiplicity of attitudes and actions as articulated in Holocaust survivors' memoirs still needs more nuanced analytical treatment.[32] This imperative of historical nuance for Carpatho-Ruthenian bystanders has been actualized by Raz Segal in *Genocide in the Carpathians* and his earlier articles and later accomplishments, as he explains the resentful but non-violent deterioration of relations between Ruthenians and Jews under the 'colonially benevolent' rule of the First Czechoslovak Republic, and further under the violently irredentist rule of the Hungarian state.[33]

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[31] See Bergholz, *Violence as a Generative Force*, 19, 36-40, 45-46, 53-57, 271-273, 307-321, "Sudden Nationhood"; *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 12-13, 48-50, 84-85, 104-107. Raz Segal draws on several social psychologists, philosophers / critical theorists, and historians of the emotions (e.g. Sara Ahmed) to better historicize these interethnic relations.

[32] Cole, "Writing Bystanders into Holocaust History," 59, 73 fn20-21 (citing Hilberg, *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders*, Chapter 19) and passim. Also see Amos N. Guiora, *The Crime of Complicity: The Bystander in the Holocaust* (Chicago, IL: Ankerwycke, 2017), 130.

[33] See Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 11-18, 45-63, 84-85; "Becoming Bystanders: Carpatho-Ruthenians, Jews, and the Politics of Narcissism in Subcarpathian Rus'," *Holocaust Studies* 16, No. 1-2 (2010): 129-156; Lecture at Sonoma State University, CA, 12 February 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJH4NDfINE8 (uploaded 5 June 2019); as well as the lecture's textualization in "Making Hungary Great Again: Mass Violence, State Building, and the Ironies of Global Holocaust Memory" in Thomas Kühne, Mary Jane Rein, eds.

The highly subordinate position of non-Magyar ethnic groups such as Roma, Romanians, and Ruthenians in irredentist Hungary, who themselves were affected by their own layer of violence (most intensely the Roma, but all were looked at askance and oppressed by the Hungarian military and police), requires the consideration of an additional historical dimension of nuance.[34] The situation in the early 1940s in Hungarian borderlands adds a number of variables, especially the unravelling of their multiethnic fabric by the xenophobic ethnonational drive of 'Greater Hungary.'[35] Moreover, testimonies and memoirs from these regions reveal that the vast spectrum of bystanding emerged from erstwhile acquaintances, friends, and other relations. Their relationship with, or fear of Hungarian state authorities (and their Nazi advisors as of 1944), was a factor in how they would respond to the local Jews' ghettoization and deportation.

The empirical vagueness of the popularly understood term 'bystander' can be best addressed with Giovanni Sartori's 'ladder of abstraction,' as applied by Hana Kubátová and Michal Kubát to the post-Holocaust pogrom and its genocidal antecedents in Topol'čany, Slovakia.[36] As used by Hilberg, the more abstract conception of 'bystander' in its narrower conception does not fully apply to the case of Slovaks present in Topol'čany at the time, given

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Agency and the Holocaust: Essays in Honor of Debórah Dwork (Worcester, MA: Clark University, Palgrave Studies in the History of Genocide, 2020), 183-191.

[34] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 5, 17, 54, 57-59, 63, 65-78, 84-87, 106, 116-120, 169n61,184n116, 189.

[35] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 6, 70, 106.

[36] Hana Kubátová and Michal Kubát, "Were There Bystanders in Topol'čany? On Concept Formation and the 'Ladder of Abstraction.'" *Contemporary European History* 27, No. 4 (2018), 564-571, 579.

their complicity in anti-Jewish laws and especially in the plunder of Jewish property.[37] Rather, the bystander can be understood on a vertical continuum from concreteness (as a concept with many specific attributes, that may work best with distinctive denominational and regional minorities) to more abstract (as a high-level concept with wider applicability).[38] Up to a point, a more broad and abstract notion of bystander can be applied to many middle-class ethnic Hungarians during and immediately after World War II, who were often infused with state propaganda and imbricated in the dejewification process of provincial Hungary. But for particular Protestant minorities in and around Debrecen, and for Sabbatarians of Transylvania's Székely Land, the unique dynamics of bystanding (as well as rescue, and martyrdom in the case of a few Sabbatarians) necessitate very concrete and empirically granular conceptualizations.[39] The conclusion of the article points to the primacy of a micro-historical viewpoint, to reveal the free will of the onlooker in cases of mass violence.[40] This parallels Raz Segal's critique of the ready-made use of the term 'bystanders,' inviting historians to contextualize attitudes and behaviours of Jews' neighbours during key junctures in the Holocaust. This critique enjoins one to study, through primary sources, the longer-term texture of everyday life and social developments that affected interethnic relations leading up to such turning points.[41]

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[37] Kubátová and Kubát, "Were There Bystanders in Topol'čany?" 579-580.

[38] Ibid, 569.

[39] Charles Fenyvesi, *When Angels Fooled the World* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 149-158; Judy Weissenberg Cohen, *A Cry in Unison: Sistering for Survival* (Montreal / Toronto, Azrieli Memoir, 2020; introduction by Professor Karin Doerr), 31; Gábor Győrffy, Zoltán Tibori-Szabó, Júlia-Réka Vallasek, "Back to the Origins: The Tragic History of the Szekler Sabbatarians," in *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* 32, No. 3 (2017): 580-583.

[40] Kubátová and Kubát, 580.

[41] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 16-17 (here he builds on the work of Israel Bartal and Scott Ury), 23, 104-105.

This manifests for the Holocaust in Subcarpathia, for example, in the ways that Carpatho-Ruthenians aligned on the spectrum of case-specific responses to the deportation and the ghettoization of their Jewish acquaintances and friends. For Hungarians there, class seems to have been the main variable that determined 'bystander' response, according to primary sources I have examined. Aristocratic notables often did what they could or offered plausible schemes of hiding and rescue, whereas petty bourgeois Hungarians, steeped in the jealous propaganda of the wartime years, often made a complete volte-face and turned on the Jews they knew. These individuals did not resist the temptation of plunder, which by and large became their primary motivation. Even if their attempts were fruitless, select Magyar notables and ordinary working-class Magyars resisted intimidation by Imrédyist ranks,[42] as did many Carpatho-Ruthenians.[43]

In Southern Máramaros (Romanian Maramureş' violent Hungarian interlude of 1940-44) and its surrounding area to the west, Romanian subjects, particularly ordinary peasants, tended to actively help Jews or were at least sympathetic. This was a solidarity cemented out of shared experience of wartime oppression by cruel Magyar gendarmes and mean-spirited citizens, and had several antecedents. As a longer-term trend, violence on a nationalistic axis was imported there (with exceptions on the micro-level), much akin to Subcarpathia.[44]

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[42] Imrédyists, named after far-right Hungarian Prime Minister Béla Imrédy, also known as 'March Men,' were purveyors of the initially nebulous 'Szeged Idea' which congealed into genocidal zeal with the Nazi invasion of 19 March 1944. See Nicholas Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1970), Chapters III and VII.

[43] See the Subcarpathian memoirs of Susan Papp, *Outcasts* (Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, 2009); Eleanor Perényi, *More Was Lost* (New York Review Books, 2016 [1946]); *Shoshanna's Story*, 271; and see the monograph by Yeshayahu Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora: The Jews of Subcarpathian Rus' and Mukachevo, 1848-1948* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 55.

[44] Cf. Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 62-63.

Northern Transylvania (the Hungarian partition of Transylvania proper) directly to the south of this region presents a more complex picture. While facing similar threats by Hungarian gendarmes during the post-Second Vienna Award World War II era,[45] the Jewish population had a historic connection to Hungarian culture and language that obscured their perception of their subject position alignment with Roma and Romanians until their world collapsed in May 1944. Transylvanian Holocaust survivors' memoirs emphasize jealousy (e.g. *Survival*) and hypocrisy (e.g. *A Sun and a Shield*) among ethnic Magyars, with very important exceptions.[46] Most notably in Transylvania proper, the use of the Greek Catholic Church as a political football between the demographic concerns of the Hungarian and Romanian states further fragmented the mapping of Christian denominations onto ethnicity, the main variable that determined 'bystander' behaviour.[47]

Many of the Azrieli Foundation-published and other Holocaust memoirs use the language of 'bystanders' or 'onlookers' coveting property of Jews in the midst of being

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[45] The Second Vienna Award (30 August 1940), intended to make Hungary and Romania beholden to Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy and thus make gains in natural resources critical for warfare, granted northern Transylvania and its environs to irredentist Hungary. This allowed Hungary to further sharpen its discourse of Magyar supremacy and the Hungarian-Romanian grudge through advantage reversal, while also being limited in its anti-Romanian actions due to some genuine interest in Romanian (but not Jewish) Magyarization, and Axis military priorities. See Case, *Between States*, 97, 153, 344, (128-129, 141-142, 161-172 on advantage reversal and Magyarization of Romanians); Randolph L. Braham, *Genocide and Retribution: The Holocaust in Hungarian-Ruled Northern Transylvania* (Boston / The Hague: Kluwer-Nijhoff Publishing, 1983), 7-10; László Kürti, *The Remote Borderland: Transylvania in the Hungarian Imagination* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2001), 33-34.

[46] e.g. Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 41, 56 regarding Hungarian workers in Nagyvárad during the ghettoization of the Jews. Also see Paul Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed*, 35, 37-39, 56-57 that attest to the Bánfi Magyar aristocratic couple and the peasants in their orbit being well-disposed towards the Frenkels, including in the fateful season of ghettoization in 1944.

[47] Case, *Between States*, 130-131, 140-144.

ghettoized and deported. As such, this vocabulary is deployed in describing the eventful junctures of "sudden nationalism" and change of affective dispositions towards the appurtenant Jewish population. These are accompanied by earlier descriptions of Jewish-Christian relations in various locales, snapshots that at times foreshadow the fateful crossroads to come.

"In Defence of Jewish Hungary"[48]: The Historiography of Jews in Modern Hungary, and of Their 'Last-minute' Destruction

Jews developed a symbiotic relationship with the Hungarian economy and state in the preceding generations. What mattered was their fit with the demographic and economic needs of the Magyar ruling class in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In the wake of the *Ausgleich* (Compromise) which birthed the Dual Monarchy, the Magyar aristocracy, in line with their desire for Magyar linguistic hegemony, wished to include Jews in the census count of Hungarians so that they would be able to attain fifty percent of the population of the Crown Lands of St. Stephen.[49] There was already the precedent of Hungarian-Jewish solidarity with the liberal and romantic nationalist Revolution of 1848-1849, and the Habsburg Emperor had allowed Jews to own land (and therefore engage in or supervise agriculture) as of 1860.[50] Jews

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[48] This subtitle is based on the title of Paul Hanebrink's historiographically important book *In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism, and Antisemitism, 1890-1944*. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006).

[49] See Vági, Csősz, Kadar, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide*, xxxi, xxxii; Mary Gluck*, The Invisible Jewish Budapest* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press), 56; Randolph L. Braham and Brewster S. Chamberlin, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Sixty Years Later* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 186-187, cf. 169; Victor Karády, "The Ashkenaz of the South: Hungarian Jewry in the Long Nineteenth Century, " in *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* vol. 31, *Poland and Hungary: Jewish Realities Compared*, eds. François Guesnet, Howard Lupovitch, and Antony Polonsky: 111, passim.

[50] For example, András Koerner, *How They Lived: The Everyday Lives of Hungarian Jews 1867-1940*, Volume 1. (New York, Budapest: Central European Press, 2015) Historical Overview, 34.

were expected to fill in for the absent middle class and to assimilate to Hungarian language and culture,[51] which they accomplished with flying colours.[52] In conversations that I have had with Hungarian Holocaust survivors and their children, they have mentioned the common Jewish family occupation of owning a general store (or a wholesale business), particularly in the larger towns, and similar to the department stores of Budapest.[53] In the borderlands, Jews were also featured in these middle-class strata. In Transylvania and Maramureş, they formed a very large percentage of doctors and other professionals, whereas in Subcarpathia there was a larger contingent of itinerant workers, peddlers, and Jews engaged in agricultural and forestry labour. This had implications for Magyar-Jewish, Romanian-Jewish, and Ruthenian-Jewish relations, often depending on the class and occupational proportions of each ethnic group in each appurtenant territory. The psychological dynamics of competing for an occupational stratum, especially in the lower middle-class, often resulted in temporally specific relations of resentment that led to both long-term antisemitism and situational bitterness that activated at key junctures, such as during regime change (e.g. November 1938 and March 1939 for Subcarpathia, and

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[51] Michael K. Silber, ed. *Jews in the Hungarian Economy 1760-1945: Studies Dedicated to Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger on his Eightieth Birthday*, (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1992), 9.

[52] See Koerner, *How They Lived* Volume 1, 35, 94-96; *How They Lived* Volume 2 (CEU Press, 2016), 20-22; *A Taste of the Past: The Daily Life and Cooking of a 19th-Century Hungarian Jewish Homemaker* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2004), 18-20.

[53] Conversations with Violet of Székesfehérvár in Transdanubia (her father owned a general store in Kisláng), and with Etelka Siklós (July 2018); *Babby's Transcript*, 1-3, regarding this economic role in the highlands (Ökörmező) of Subcarpathia. For similar observations in the appurtenant historiography, see Yehuda Don and Victor Karády, *A Social & Economic History of Central European Jewry*, especially Chapter 5: "Patterns of Jewish Economic Behavior in Central Europe in the Twentieth Century." And see Péter Hanák, "Jews and the Modernization of Commerce in Hungary, 1760-1848," in Michael K. Silber, ed. *Jews in the Hungarian Economy 1760-1945,* 24. Also see Koerner, *How They Lived*, Volume 1, Part 3 "Where They Worked" 176-179.

September 1940 for Southern Maramureş and Transylvania) and amidst the Holocaust ghettoization and deportations of 1944.[54]

The expectations of Jewish assimilation to Hungarian life were often rife with unstated, paradoxical presuppositions of political subordination.[55] This is largely because the Hungarian form of liberalism was above all nationalistic, and implicitly assumed superiority of Western Christian denominations and of the Magyar language.[56] Moreover, the historical place of Jews in Hungarian industrialization and patriotism has been in many ways the 'extreme normal' case of Jewish assimilation in modern Europe.[57] Proportionally speaking, however, Hungary (and especially its borderlands) had some of the greatest Jewish denominational diversity in Europe.[58] Furthermore, while the continual large-scale Jewish presence in Hungary was brief compared to Poland and elsewhere, it stands out as a macro-level patriotic love story with a discriminatory obverse.[59] The underside of Hungarian antisemitic agitation was manifest only rarely before the middle of World War I, most notably with the Tiszaeszlár blood libel in 1882-1883.[60] The 'invention of tradition' that characterized romantic nationalism in much of the 19th century and the Industrial Revolution allows us to appraise generational layers of national self-

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[54] See Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 9-13, 46-50.

[55] Gluck, *The Invisible Jewish Budapest*, 58-60.

[56] Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, passim and Chapter 1: "The Origins of Christian Nationalism, 1890-1914," 10-46.

[57] Centropa Cinema, Introduction on Hungarian Jewish History (Hungarian Audio / English Subtitles) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLwe6ARfGi4 22 October 2012.

[58] András Koerner, *How They Lived* Volume 1, 31-35; Theodore R. Weeks, "Jews and Poles, 1860-1914: Assimilation, Emancipation, Antisemitism," in *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* vol. 31, *Poland and Hungary: Jewish Realities Compared*, eds. François Guesnet, Howard Lupovitch, and Anthony Polonsky: 121.

[59] András Koerner, *How They Lived* Volume 2, 21-22.

[60] Gluck, *The Invisible Jewish Budapest,* 40-53. This constituted a hysteria among ordinary rural Hungarians that required state intervention to prevent violence against their Jewish co-nationals.

identification.[61] This nationalism became much more xenophobic in the post-Treaty of Trianon era, and exploded into mass violence during World War II and the Holocaust.

One of the central emphases in the writing on the Holocaust in irredentist Hungary is its seemingly counter-intuitive proximity to the end of the war, and the corresponding swiftness of this veritable blitzkrieg against the Jews.[62] Although the newer generation of scholars such as Raz Segal and Kinga Frojimovics have highlighted proto-fascist Hungary's profound interest in ethnic cleansing and occupational expropriation of Jews well before 1944, and its deportations and massacres of 1941 and 1942,[63] the focus in both academic and non-academic circles still often gravitates toward the relative lateness of full-blown genocide throughout Hungary. Likewise, unrequited hopes of many Jews that they would avoid the worst of the continent-wide genocide (due to the closeness of the Soviet advance and the possibility of Hungarian defection to the Allies) have been strongly noted.[64] This reveals another layer of Jewish expectations of the conservative-aristocratic faction in power, if not of their Magyar neighbours and Magyar middle-

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[61] See Eric. J. Hobsbawm, and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[62] See Zoltán Vági, László Csősz, Gábor Kádár, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide*, Chapter 3, 71-102; Randolph L. Braham and Béla Vago, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Forty Years Later* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 77-127, 187-190; Randolph L. Braham and András Kovács, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Seventy Years Later* (Budapest and New York: CEU Press, 2016) Forward, Introduction, Krisztián Ungváry's "Master Plan?" Chapter (105-146), Back Cover; and Tim Cole, *Traces of the Holocaust* (London, UK: Continuum Books, 2011), 105.

[63] e.g. Max Eisen, *By Chance Alone* (Toronto, ON: HarperCollins, 2016), 41-49. Jack Weiss, *Memories, Dreams, Nightmares* (Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2005) 36-64.

[64] Given this timing when the tides of war had turned decisively toward the Allies, it was particularly self-destructive to Hungarian ethical standing in the eyes of the world. Perhaps Ferenc Laczó said it best or most concisely when he describes the Holocaust in Hungary as "an act of national [moral] suicide," in his *Hungarian Jews in the Age of Genocide: An Intellectual History, 1929-1948* (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2016), 9. Also see Laczó, *Hungarian Jews in the Age of Genocide*, 176.

class (or déclassé noble) politicians.[65] The depth of their Hungarian national identification, or the "social sound of silence" and visceral disbelief[66] in the plausibility of being deceived by their co-nationals meant that Judeocide[67] was not in the realm of their conscious thought.[68] The result was a heightened sense of betrayal when their communities were destroyed.[69]

This betrayal pertained mainly to ethnic Magyars of the borderlands and in Trianon Hungary. In the aforementioned conceptualization of bystanders, I generally emphasized the role of the lower (and aspiring) middle-class and some déclassé Magyar aristocrats in plundering and verbally attacking their Jewish neighbours in 1944. Meanwhile, Subcarpathian Ruthenians tended to sit on the fence (due to the legacy of Hungarian violence against them in the spring of 1939 and on a lesser scale later, and resentments against Jewish support of previous Czechoslovak rule and its Czech schools, on the other hand).[70] Romanians of Maramureş and Transylvania leaned more towards provision of food or expression of solidarity. The question of

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[65] Randolph Braham, *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary* – Condensed edition (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, Published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2000), 29-32. And see Braham and Kovács, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Seventy Years Later*, 14, 139.

[66] *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 83-84 – Raz Segal quoting Eviatar Zerubavel and Helen Fein.

[67] A term used prominently by Debórah Dwork, in parallel with the Armenian Genocide. See Raz Segal, "The Modern State, the Question of Genocide, and Holocaust Scholarship" in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 20, No. 1, (2018), 118.

[68] As opposed to their subconscious – see (Esteemed Rabbi and Dr.) David Weiss Halivni, *The Book and the Sword* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1996), 52-58 (esp. 58); Dr. Rabbi Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, *The Road to Life: The Rescue Operation of Jewish Refugees on the Hungarian-Romanian Border in Transylvania, 1936-1944* (New York, NY: Shengold Publishers, 1994), 37; Raz Segal, *Days of Ruin*, 68-71, 115-116.

[69] Somewhat like German Jewry in its identification and assimilation, but at a rather different tempo, and unlike that of Polish and Romanian Jewry, whose state authorities had a more explicit history of antisemitic enmity (which is not to say that those Jews did not feel betrayed, to an extent). See Ferenc Laczó, ed. *Confronting Devastation*, 6fn4.

[70] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 12-13, 48-50, 57-63, 70, 84-85, 104-107, 114-116; "Becoming Bystanders," 139. Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 151, 152, 216-217.

the intersection of ethnicity and class is also salient in the appraisal of betrayal, due to the different social bonds that had previously existed between Jews of different status and Christians of different classes.

I. "Genesis in the Carpathians": A History of Interethnic and State-Jewish relations in Subcarpathian Ruthenia[71]

Ethnocultural consciousness was historically fluid among Ruthenians in large part due to their marginal political power under both Hungarian and Czech rule, and because their language was being pulled in different directions of standardization.[72] They have been defined more precisely as primarily Greek Catholic West Ukrainians.[73]

Raz Segal explains the reality that Jews lived similarly and alongside Ruthenians, but did not assimilate into them (unlike in Hungary proper and in German-speaking lands) as a factor that limited resentment and suspicion on the part of the Ruthenians.[74] Segal notes the deep respect that Carpatho-Ruthenians had for 'miracle-working rabbis' and the Yiddish language.[75] There was also a partial occupational overlap between Carpatho-Ruthenians (especially Hutsuls)

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[71] This phrasing is based on the title of Raz Segal's magnum opus *Genocide in the Carpathians*.

[72] Paul Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), passim.

[73] According to a Concordia History MA alumnus and high school history teacher, John Commins, History 534 (pre-MELS pedagogical reform) lecture on the causes of World War I (including the Austro-Hungarian Empire), 20 September 2006. This includes both Transcarpathia and Galicia, north of the Carpathians. In my thesis I generally address Carpatho-Ruthenians as 'Ruthenians,' unless otherwise noted. Also see Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2001), 225.

[74] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 26; "Becoming Bystanders," 150n14. See Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 198-199.

[75] Segal, 23-25, 114. Regarding largely shared superstitious tendencies amongst both Carpatho-Ruthenians (especially Hutsuls) and Jews, see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 24. Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 199; Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me* (Halm Style LLC, 2016), 110-112, 130, etc.

and Jews for certain 'natural' jobs in the southern Verkhovyna highlands and the mountainous parts of Máramaros county, notably in lumber.[76] Class stratification was not on an ethnic basis – poorer Jews worked on the agricultural plots of slightly less poor Ruthenians, and vice versa.[77] Feelings of competitive envy were much more likely among the Hungarians and Germans of the region, as elsewhere in Greater Hungary. This was particularly the case when Magyars were the majority of a given region in Subcarpathian Rus' and further south and west, and was a suppressed tendency (with feelings of common Hungarian patriotism instead) when Magyars were the minority in a given locale.[78] The territorial-demographic distinctions of Hungarian-Jewish interethnic relations chronologically map onto modern Hungarian history writ large -- the difference between Hungary in the age of the Dual Monarchy and post-Trianon rump Hungary. This manifested as the encouragement of Magyarization as the key to civic equality in the putative golden age, and laws of exclusion once Jews were no longer needed for a demographic majority.[79]

The short-term aftermath of World War I was a trying time for Jews of former Austro-Hungarian borderlands, and for their neighbours.[80] The urban, Magyar-speaking southwest Subcarpathia and the other end of the region are salient to analyze in terms of rapidly changing allegiances and regime change that signalled future developments in interethnic relations. The Hungarian Soviet Republic, whose Budapest-based power briefly radiated to Beregszász and its

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[76] Jelinek, 39-41. Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 61-65.

[77] Jelinek, 24, 37.

[78] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 94; Case, *Between States*, 179.

[79] Vági, Csősz, Kádár, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide*, xxxi-xxxii.

[80] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 109-110, and Chapter 8, passim.

environs in April 1919,[81] and whose spectre of "Bolshevism in the heart of Europe"[82] incited Romanian invasion further east and south, presented a conflictual reconfiguration of loyalties for all parties. As in post-World War II Stalinist Hungary, Jews were perceived to be overrepresented among its revolutionaries, 'bourgeois' victims, and beneficiaries.[83] This discourse was nearly as relevant in heavily Magyarized Beregszász as in Budapest, where rigidly defined class consciousness and national patriotism merged even as these elements spoke past each other.[84] The "Magyaron"[85] Ruthenian intelligentsia in the lowlands of this region were pleased with the idea of "Uhro-Rusyn" autonomy that was propounded since the Aster Revolution.[86] Further north and east in Máramaros, the Hutsul Ruthenians were less assimilated to Hungarianness. They set up a transient and non-antisemitic Hutsul Republic in Yasinia, Rakhiv, and their environs in January 1919.[87]

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[81] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 28.

[82] See Paul Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe: The Idea of Judeo-Bolshevism in Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Belknap University Press, 2018), Chapter 1; Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World*, 128, 268.

[83] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 118, 185; cf. Paul Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, Chapters 2 and 3; Ferenc Laczó, *Hungarian Jews in the Age of Genocide*, 4.

[84] This is illustrated by Baron Perényi's preference of Hungarian-patriotic Communism over Romanian occupation, fleeing Nagyszőllős for Budapest. See Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 28.

[85] See footnote 11.

[86] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 115. The Aster (or Chrysanthemum Revolution) was the politically liberal first phase of post-Habsburg rule in Hungary and the borderlands which it was starting to lose. See Kalman Naves, *Journey to Vaja: Reconstructing the World of a Hungarian-Jewish Family* (Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 96; Judith Szapor, *Hungarian Women's Activism in the Wake of the First World War: From Rights to Revanche* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic Publishing, 2018), 55-85, 107, 111, 131, 136; Pieter Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2016) 438-439; Paul Lendvai, transl. Ann Major, *The Hungarians: A Thousand Years of Victory in Defeat* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 363-368; MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, 258-262.

[87] Paul Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity*, 91, 93-94; Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 115, 119; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 28-29, cf. 60-61; Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 84-85. Segal points out that most Ukrainian nationalists were not

While Jews were soon after tarred with the stereotypical brush of the Judeo-Bolshevik myth, during the White Terror and after,[88] quite a few well-to-do Jews of southwest Subcarpathia were accused of being 'capitalist exploiters.' Shoshanna's parents were victims of the latter dogmatic thinking in Beregszász.[89] Vengefully conceived class-based reversals of fortune characterized Mamuka (Mother) Ilona's and Apuka (Father) Sámuel's ordeal. Kalman Naves writes about her maternal grandparents with Dickensian lyricism: "Sámuel...was taken hostage by the local dictatorship of the proletariat, accused of being a capitalist exploiter of the one assistant he employed. [...] Mamuka was [...] cursed by the 'Madame Defarges' of [...] the courthouse."[90] Jews were victims of both the Hungarian Red and White Terrors, all the more notable in Transcarpathia due its proximity to the White Terror of the Russian Civil War.[91]

The beginnings of the First Czechoslovak Republic ushered in the reduction of state-sponsored antisemitism in Podkarpatská Rus',[92] though the new state oftentimes did not address antisemitism on the ground, which largely emerged from the aggrieved Magyar minority. The realpolitik of the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party was responsible for the colonial state of deprivation and economic imbalance in Subcarpathian Ruthenia, as its high tariffs on agricultural

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particularly interested in the Hutsul Republic, which boded well for the Jews of this miniature state; see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 61. Also see Vladimir Solonari, *Purifying the Nation* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010) xxix (map of 'Greater Romania' including its Subcarpathian irredenta).

88 By both Hungarians and Romanians; see Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 119.

89 Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 262-63.

90 Ibid, 262; cf. Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 118.

91 Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 122 (Chapter 8); Also see Jelinek, 117-119; Dicker, *Piety and Perseverance: Jews from the Carpathian Mountains* (New York: Sepher-Hermon Press, 1981), 32-33.

92 Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 131-132. But see Ibid, 128.

imports favoured non-native Czech farmers over local smallholders.[93] Despite the scarcity of Subcarpathian resources in the 1920s, there was still economic cooperation between Carpatho-Ruthenians and Jews, particularly in the smaller towns.[94] There was a sense of mutual need, since Ruthenians grew much of the produce and Jews sold it.[95] This was also often the case with regards to the larger urban areas of Podkarpatská Rus'.[96]

In the eyes of some Ruthenians, the decision of many Jews to send their children to Czech schools typified the Jews' real views about civic loyalty, acculturation, and interethnic relations.[97] Many Ruthenians felt offended that Jews had missed an opportunity to show solidarity with them as in the pre-nationalistic times.[98] Aside from the prospects of professional advancement, Jelinek thinks that Czech schools actually provided more leeway for observance by the ultra-Orthodox than secular Jewish or Zionist schools.[99] Some traditionalist Jewish parents thought that the Ruthenian schools (which were less predictable, given the fact that their ethnicity was being pulled in different linguistic and nationalist directions)[100] implicitly proselytized, or had an overly essentialist view of identity.[101] The Czech schools, which were organized by secular authorities, seemingly provided freedom of worship in the late modern

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[93] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 149-150; also see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 35-36.

[94] Herman Dicker, *Piety and Perseverance*, 47-48, citing Aryeh Sole; Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 198-199.

[95] Dicker, *Piety and Perseverance*, 47.

[96] Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 268-269.

[97] Czech authorities were particularly interested in raising the literacy rate of their easternmost province, but on their own terms, which meant that Czech-language schools were favoured. See Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity*, 169-171.

[98] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 115; "Becoming Bystanders," 136.

[99] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 151, 200.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Dicker, *Piety and Perseverance*, 42-43, quoting Aryeh Sole; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 48, 156fn131; "Becoming Bystanders," 136.

sense. Given that this was a new era of national loyalties, and that educational choices were seen as comingling with these exclusive expectations,[102] Ruthenian resentment of Jewish choices of secular schooling was thus linked to the Czech authorities' paternalistic failure to make good on promises of Ruthenian autonomy.

The Munich diktat of 30 September 1938 granted autonomy to Slovakia and Subcarpathia in a strategically fragile Second Czecho-Slovak Republic.[103] The First Vienna Award brought about the Hungarian annexation of the southwestern third of Subcarpathia.[104] Both Yeshayahu Jelinek and Raz Segal have lamented the historiographical lacunae in the study of the autonomous few months of Carpatho-Ukraine, and the study of its Jewish population during this brief, but eventful period.[105] This is also mirrored by the relative paucity of consideration of Carpatho-Ruthenian agency[106] in this era and others, overshadowed by the larger scale of fast-paced geopolitical developments. Segal, applying the ideas of Brubaker, and of Bergholz's 2013 "Sudden Nationhood" article in the American Historical Review, shows that understanding the crystallization of Ukrainian national sentiment requires analysis of its emotional motivations and content, and of its implications on interethnic relations.[107]

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[102] i.e. I have not found any sources that indicate that there were schools that taught both Czech and Ruthenian. Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity*, 223 indicates that Czech authorities thought of the prospect of Czech schools for Ruthenians as merely a flight of the imagination.

[103] Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity*, 234, 237.

[104] Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity*, 239; Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 227; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 52-53. Also see Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 223.

[105] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 363n1. Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 157-158n5.

[106] Which has been addressed by Magocsi, Jelinek, Segal, and others.

[107] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 55, 61-63, 159-163 (esp. n17,18).

One of Segal's emphases is that of Jews being unwilling bystanders to Hungarian violence against the Carpathian Sich and Ukrainophile Ruthenian civilians, in mid-to-late March 1939, as Hungary took over the whole of Subcarpathia.[108] The fact that a plurality of Jews welcomed Hungarian occupying forces due to the prospect of order after a chaotic period, or misplaced nostalgia based on Dual Monarchy patriotism, further damaged the emotional tenor of relationships between Jews and Carpatho-Ruthenians.[109] The resentment that the latter felt towards their Jewish neighbours, combined with their initial experience of violence at the hands of Hungarian authorities and ongoing marginalization (1939-1944) from Budapest, led to a general indifference (with fear based on self-preservation that significantly worse-behaved Magyar and German bystanders were not subject to) at the time of the ghettoization and deportation of Jews in April-May 1944.[110]

Particularly in the southwestern slice of Subcarpathia given to Hungary with the First Vienna Award, there was a generational difference in Jews' reaction to the arrival of irredentist Magyar forces, and to the preceding nationalistic clashes of discourse between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Furthermore, key scholars have noted that the relatively benign relationship between Orthodox Ruthenians and Subcarpathian Jews compared to their Greek Catholic

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[108] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 52-54, 58-61, 161-162. Also see Aranka Siegal, *Upon the Head of the Goat: A Childhood in Hungary, 1939-1944* (New York, NY: Square Fish, 2003 edition), 5-6, and her interview conducted with Leslie Fass (Tape 2, 22:35-23:10) on the *Visual History Archive* (8423), USC Shoah Foundation, 7 November 1995, Tarrytown, New York.

[109] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 56-59, 116; "Becoming Bystanders," 144, 154n83; *Days of Ruin*, 31-32, 121; cf. Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 232-233, 242-243, cf. 235.

[110] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 104-107.

counterparts was still operative at this time.[111] This was largely due to the fact that the Russophile Orthodox Ruthenians were a marginalized minority in both eras of Hungarian rule. By contrast, the regional Greek Catholic hierarchy had a Magyarophile orientation (imbibing their prejudices), and some Greek Catholic Ruthenian commoners were more susceptible to antisemitic discourses given their Ukrainophile links with Galician nationalists.[112]

The 1941-42 deportations, which were largely at the behest of zealous local functionaries,[113] greatly impacted Máramaros county (in its Subcarpathian part, and in the normally Romanian part, Maramureş, south of the Tisza), eliminating about one-fifth of this region's Jewish population, and about 50-65% of the Jewish populace of certain towns.[114] Accounts by Subcarpathian Holocaust survivors corroborate Raz Segal's argument on the Hungarian nation-state's violent drive for ethnic purity in the region. In 1941, most of Margit Saffar's family from Chumalyev was fatally deported to Galicia.[115] This was despite her father's sterling record of World War I service and his status as the town sheriff in Koločava / Kolochava / Alsókalocsa.[116] Segal's argument is further buttressed by Babby's articulation of Hungarian economic warfare against the Jews starting in 1939, and violent deportations starting in 1941.

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[111] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 228.

[112] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 228-229.

[113] And those with control of anti-refugee institutions (the KEOKH: *Külföldieket Ellenőrző Országos Központi Hatóság*) and regional governance, Sándor Siménfalvy and Miklós Kozma, respectively. Árkád Kiss and Ödön Martinedesz, according to Randolph Braham (see *The Politics of Genocide*, Condensed Edition, 32), were the most fanatic proponents of these deportations. Also see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 70.

[114] Frojimovics, *I Have Been a Stranger*, Chapter VI, esp. 104-135 (and 118-122 in particular); Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 74, 86, 117.

[115] *Babby's Transcript*, 3. Also see Munci Katz interview, Tape 2, 50:40-52:05.

[116] *Babby's Transcript*, 1-2. See Randolph L. Braham, Zoltán Tibori Szabó, and Kinga Frojimovics, *The Geographic Encyclopedia of the Holocaust in Hungary*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, 2013) Volume I, 553-555.

She tells her family that "in 1939 they came, they took away everything that we got. And my mother was a widow. They took our fields away, they took our store away [...] Everything."[117] Emphasizing Hungarian independence in ethnic cleansing and murder, she says: "So in the middle of the night, he [her uncle] came, through those mountains, to our house. And we was scared to let him into the house, because we would be killed right away from the Hungarian people. [...] They were doing such terrible things. If I would tell you what nights we went through, you would need five tape recorders. So my uncle came back to us, and he wasn't able to come in our house. Because those Hungarian gendarmes was all the time by us." The uncle's family trauma was in 1941, but the gendarmes' vicious encroachments began in 1939.[118] By 1941 most Jewish families in the Verkhovyna / Ökörmező region were affected by mass categorical violence[119] by Hungarian gendarmes and other official forces, as indicated by Saffar: "...this was in 1941, they take together all the towns, and they was hitting everybody and they took everything away. Then, some lucky people, a couple of families they let out," including her family.[120]

Carpatho-Ruthenians, though resentful of Jews for earlier Hungarian and Czech loyalties, recognized that Magyar xenophobia in a Nazi-dominated continental context was the root of their woes. They rarely turned to violence, which was imported by the Hungarian state,

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[117] *Babby's Transcript*, 6. Cf. Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 253-263, esp. 257.

[118] *Babby's Transcript*, 6.

[119] This is a term used (and plausibly pioneered) by Scott Straus in his book *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership, and Genocide in Modern Africa* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 17-18, 26. It indicates mass violence of near-genocidal proportions. See Frojimovics, *I Have Been a Stranger*, 113; Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 266; Braham, *The Politics of Genocide* (Condensed Edition), 32-34.

[120] *Babby's Transcript*, 4.

and then by the Nazis.[121] This contrasts with Hungary's southern neighbour and fellow Axis state, the 'Independent' State of Croatia (Nezavsina Država Hrvatska). Though the state's authorities often turned to genocidal violence to address their ethnonational obsessions, the chain of command was fragmented such that forces on the ground not so beholden to the state were the ones that actually initiated indiscriminate violence against civilians of the 'other' ('Serbian') ethnicity, reconfiguring people's ethnic identifications across the region.[122] With the exception of Carpatho-Ruthenians who were encouraged to adopt a Magyar-inclined (and presumably Greek Catholic) 'Uhro-Rusyn' identity, ethnic identities were more or less set in Subcarpathia during World War II, though their affective content may have varied.[123]

With the Nazi invasion of 19 March 1944 that distorted the sovereignty of the Hungarian state,[124] Kárpátalja's Jews were in the crosshairs of both Eichmann and the Hungarian gendarmes. The former marked them for genocidal death and the latter implemented the ghettoization and deportation process, beginning April 16, with maximum deception and

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[121] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 56-59, 84-85, 89-91.

[122] See Max Bergholz, *Violence as a Generative Force*, 6-7, 10, 67, 70, 104-113, 138-14, 144. It seems that in Bergholz's magnum opus, while the category of ethnicity in the NDH is historically contingent on the mass violence of 1941, the identity category of religion is significantly more stable. As we will see in Transylvania partitioned between Axis Hungary and Axis Romania, the reverse seems to be the case there, regarding religious conversions for the sake of individuals' and families' ethnic reification. See Case, *Between States*, 131, 140-144, 287; Solonari, *Purifying the Nation*, 31, 75; Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 28; cf. Paul Lendvai, *The Hungarians: A Thousand Years of Victory in Defeat*, 413-415.

[123] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 67-78ff. (especially 77) (Transylvania, as we shall see upon appraisal of *Between States*, is a different case largely for reasons of World War II-era Hungary's and Romania's ambiguous correlations of religion with national and ethnic allegiance.) Cf. Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), Chapter 8, viz. the Polish-Ukrainian Civil War during World War II.

[124] Timothy Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning* (New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2015), 236-237; Krisztián Ungváry, "Master Plan? The Decision-Making Process behind the Deportations" in Braham and Kovács, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Seventy Years Later*, 128-138.

cruelty.[125] It was a convergence of interests in genocide and in ethnic cleansing / plunder, respectively – a conjuncture[126] that first bore terror in western Subcarpathia, then in Kassa (Košice) to the west in November 1938-annexed Southern Slovakia. Deportations to Auschwitz-Birkenau began on May 11 in Munkács,[127] and by June 6 in Huszt, the Jewish communities of Subcarpathia north of the Tisza River had been fully liquidated.[128] What do Holocaust survivors' memoirs say about the responses of Carpatho-Ruthenians and non-ideological ethnic Hungarians to the multifaceted attacks against the Jews? And what about the long historical trajectory leading up to resentful indifference or rescue of Holocaust survivors of the region?

Reflections on Interethnic Relations and Identities through Memoirs of Subcarpathian Holocaust Survivors

As we seek explanation of the fraught 'bystander' dynamic in the season of ruin among Jews in Subcarpathia, we turn to pre-Holocaust 'ethnic' identifications and interethnic relationships. Shoshanna's self-identification, as a Hungarian-speaking Israelite proud of Czechoslovak democracy,[129] reveals the importance of considering divergences between cultural and national identity in historical analysis.

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125 Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 271-277.

126 See Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 90, 101.

127 Segal, *Days of Ruin*, 92-93.

128 Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 101.

129 Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 222. Czechoslovak democracy also gave the periodic opportunity for different self-identifications for a citizen, as on the yearly school registration Shoshanna articulated her nationality as Jewish and her religion as Hebrew. See Ibid, 266.

Shoshanna's mother (Mamuka) was particularly friendly with her genteel Hungarian clientele at the family textile shop; their life-cycle events were woven into the fabric of everyday consciousness of Mamuka and her social and professional circles. Kalman Naves elucidates their sociability: "Mamuka was on such good terms with her Hungarian customers that they were [...] dropping by the store [...] just for chit-chat."[130] In addition to attesting to the authenticity of her family's Magyarization, this also reveals a sense of urban dignity specific to southwestern Subcarpathia and its environs (Hungarian-annexed territory of the First Vienna Award), and a vague sense of class solidarity. A cordial *noblesse oblige* also seemed to be manifest in Mamuka's charitable patience with clientele, particularly in her openness to delayed payments – "Mamuka would gaze soulfully into her [the customer's] eyes and say "You'll pay for it when you can.""[131] Shanyi, her assistant at Sámuel Schwartz Textiles, and Mari Néni the family housekeeper, were both presumably of Hungarian ethno-linguistic identification, as one can infer from their names. Shanyi was a loyal employee,[132] and Mari Néni even more so, with a wholehearted allegiance towards the family, with a chirpy demeanour in her service.[133] The aforementioned ethnic Magyars, with the particular sense of reciprocity of the wife of the post-reannexation mayor, showed solidarity with the family at the time of the implementation of the economic anti-Jewish laws.[134] During her narration of the joint German-Hungarian drive for the ghettoization and fatal deportation of the Jews of Beregszász and its environs, accounts of

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130 Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 267.

131 Ibid, 268.

132 Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 170, 268.

133 Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 208.

134 "Sámuel Schwartz Textiles was among the very last [Jewish-owned] stores to be shut. One of Mamuka's best customers in the "casino" days was the wife of the new Hungarian mayor of the city, a woman who hadn't forgotten the generous offers of credit in earlier times." Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 271. "But Mari Néni, the family's faithful housekeeper, was let go, much against her will. Gentiles were now forbidden to work as domestics in Jewish homes." Ibid.

interethnic relations become more sparse in *Shoshanna's Story*.[135] When fleeing from Mezővári, Shoshanna and her sister Magda asked farmers nearby for a place to hide, but "no one dared take them in."[136] After the war was over, Mari Néni waited near the Schwartz family home in Berehovo for survivors – she accompanied Shoshanna back there.[137] Her loyalty endured the massive rupture roughly a year earlier that brought out the worst in some other ethnic Magyars and Germans.

As Jelinek and Segal have shown, ethnic Magyars were often unsympathetic to the Jews throughout World War II, all the more so during the Holocaust in Greater Hungary.[138] But one must take into consideration multiple examples to the contrary in the context of Kalman Naves' evocative postmemoir on her mother. Social connections with both notables and less well-to-do (middling class in wealth but aristocratic in thought or lineage) Magyars of urban southwest Subcarpathia seemed to have played an extenuating role. As we will soon see, poorer Jews and those who resided in more rural locales often had a rather different account of their Magyar neighbours.

Aranka Siegal's renowned *Upon the Head of the Goat* includes snippets illustrating interethnic relations and emphasizes the difference between living in urban Beregszász and rural Komjáty from 1939 to 1944. The axis of different interethnic perceptions between her family members is generational. Piri (Aranka Siegal), her mother (Rise Davidowitz) and her sisters feel

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135 Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 272-279.
136 Ibid, 273-274.
137 Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 290.
138 Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 231-236, 313, 320-321; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 68, 85-87, 91-98.

a sense of familiarity and shared loyalty with their Magyar neighbours, which is closely tied to their residential patterns.[139] The family matriarch, 'Babi' Fage Rosner, was ensconced in self-reliant rural life, with a sense of religious difference and (otherwise) lifestyle similarity to local Ruthenians. Raz Segal in *Genocide in the Carpathians* points out that these identity perceptions in Subcarpathian Rus' were common prior to World War I,[140] and primary sources like this one indicate that a limited Jewish-Ruthenian rural solidarity of sorts continued until the genocidal end in 1944. Much aligned with other primary source evidence used by Raz Segal, 'Babi' also expresses distrust of Magyar authorities, and of Rise's friendly Magyar neighbours. In that train of thought, Siegal also articulates the ethnic and especially confessional diversity of her friends in her public school in Beregszász. Her friend Ica Molnar was Protestant (thus presumably of Magyar self-identification), and her friends Vali and Milush Veligan belonged to the Orthodox Church.[141] Siegal wondered then if the war would attenuate her interethnic friendships; indeed this was borne out over time.[142] Starting in the spring of 1941 (when Hungary, with other Axis powers, invaded Yugoslavia to take the Délvidék / Vojvodina), her school day became more 'paramilitary,' in a sense, and her friendship with Ica Molnar started revealing its limitations. After Piri's trip to Komjáty to visit her grandmother, interfaith engagement in the December holiday season with Vali and Milush became less plausible,[143] and there was no longer the mutual confiding of secrets between Piri and Ica as there had been before.[144] Around this time,

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[139] Siegal, *Upon the Head of the Goat: A Childhood in Hungary, 1939-1944*, 12-14, 30-31. In her Shoah Foundation interview on the *Visual History Archive* (Tape 2, 3:25-3:50), she clearly indicates her Hungarian linguistic and cultural identification.

[140] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 24-26, cf. 45-46.

[141] Siegal, *Upon the Head of the Goat*, 14. And see Doris Bergen, *War & Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*, 3rd edition. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 24.

[142] Siegal, *Upon the Head of the Goat*, 27.

[143] Ibid, 50.

[144] Siegal, *Upon the Head of the Goat*, 56.

Piri and her sister Iboya encountered young, presumably Magyar bullies on Tinodi Street.[145] Interethnic relationships, especially of the Magyar-and-Jewish variety, declined in part due to indifference. But this seems to be more gradual than the remarkably sudden collapse of interfaith dignity in Rahó further east. As Piri remembers her Babi's statement on empathy being compartmentalized in accordance with one's own in-group of religious affiliation, her mother chides neighbours, and particularly the Magyar mailman Mr. Lakatos, for not doing anything to help Lilli, Lajos, and Manci, who had been deported to German-occupied Poland.[146] As the procession toward the ghetto begins years later, her mother comments on the general interethnic silence and bystander indifference.[147]

In his memoir, *A Holocaust Survivor In The Footsteps Of His Past*, Naftali Deutsch, who was also from Komjáty (Kimyat), emphasized its rurality, and its distance from Hungarian acculturation for much of the population, both Jewish and Carpatho-Ruthenian.[148] While Deutsch does not often indicate the ethnicity of his non-Jewish neighbours in Kimyat, it can be presumed that a majority of the townsfolk are Ruthenian, which is also accounted by *Upon the Head of the Goat*. Unlike Segal's observations for Subcarpathian Ruthenia as a whole, Deutsch emphasizes tolerance between Jews and their neighbours even during the interwar period of rising national consciousness.[149] The populace of the town may have been less politically engaged, as indicated by Piri's sister Rozsi.[150] Even in this rural locale, Czech schools were established (as in

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145 Ibid, 52-53.
146 Siegal, *Upon the Head of the Goat*, 86. (cf. 30-31)
147 Siegal, *Upon the Head of the Goat*, 144.
148 Naftali Deutsch, *A Holocaust Survivor In The Footsteps of His Past*, 27, 36, 47.
149 Ibid, 34; cf. Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, Chapter 2 (and see Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 198)
150 Siegal, *Upon the Head of the Goat*, 11; cf. Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 62.

Koločava[151]); this comprised Deutsch's secular education until the attendance of Ruthenian schools by default during the Hungarian occupation.[152] While ordinary Jews felt respected or at least safe with regards to their Ruthenian neighbours, Jewish *shochetim* (who engage in the kosher slaughter of animals, and also substituted for rabbis in small, poor towns like Komjáty) were looked at more askance, especially post-1939.[153] The teasing that consisted of "zhidi do Palestina" ("Jews go to Palestine") may have reflected the presupposition of exclusive national categories that was not operative in the region prior to the 1920s.[154] Segal emphasizes Hungarians' violent disapproval of the Jews of Komjáty and elsewhere in rural Subcarpathia, largely on the basis of the mimicry of Magyarization which the new irredentist authorities rejected, portending murderous violence throughout World War II.[155]

Komjáty Jews were transferred either to the Nagyszőllős ghetto (Fage Rosner) or to the Munkács ghetto (Naftali Deutsch). Multiple Nagyszőllős sources (*More Was Lost*, *Outcasts*) attest to the symbiotic and philosemitic relationships between the Magyar aristocratic Perényi and Aykler-Schroeder families and the staunchly Magyarized Jewish Ilkovics and Weisz / Leizerovics families, which were fully operative until they were enveloped by the uncompromising genocidal process of 1944.[156] This broadly indicates that there was Magyar aristocratic tolerance of, and in some select cases true and enduring friendship with the local

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[151] As told to me by Sandra Moskovitz Robinson. Also see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 156n130.

[152] Deutsch, *A Holocaust Survivor in The Footsteps of His Past*, 6, 38-39. And see Julie Salamon, *The Net of Dreams*, 82.

[153] Deutsch, *A Holocaust Survivor in The Footsteps of His Past*, 35.

[154] Ibid, 34.

[155] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 74-75.

[156] Perényi, *More Was Lost*, 93-98; Papp, *Outcasts*, 32, 36, 49, 74, 98, 102, 113, 127-128, cf. 132-133.

Jews, even in the northeastern borderlands. There was also the case of one of Sándor (Suti) Weisz's favourite teachers, Victor Ortutay, becoming one of three stenographers for the deportation registry of Nagyszőllős Jews. Suti took particular note of his all-encompassing absorption in his task, ignoring his former pupil. Here we see neither hatred (e.g. by the gendarmes) nor resentment (felt by certain townsfolk), but simply bureaucratic indifference.[157] This fits the sociological and Arendtian conceptualizations of a genocidally complicit bureaucracy as discussed by Raul Hilberg and Zygmunt Bauman.

Albert Halm, from Csorna Tisza, commented on the pro-Nazi alignment of many 1938-1939 Ukrainophile authorities. He emphasized the sudden change of the local Hutsuls' attitude – from economic appreciation of the Jews in an isolated rural setting to an exclusionary Ukrainian nationalism in alignment with the Nazis' geopolitical ascendance.[158] This resonates with Raz Segal's findings (corroborating Brubaker) of 'suddenly crystallized' nationalism in eventful times,[159] and with Jelinek's research observations on the pronounced tendency of Carpathian Sich and their Ukrainophile supporters to rob and semi-randomly attack Jews during the autonomous period.[160] Halm stated that "after 'more civilised' Ukrainians took over Carpathia,"[161] notions of increased autonomy took priority over the rule of law. The phrasing 'more civilised' Ukrainians is probably a reference to more *nationally conscious* Ukrainians

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[157] Papp, *Outcasts*, 69, 145. Note that the name 'Ortutay' is Hungarian.

[158] Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me* (Halm Style LLC, 2016), 141-142. Cf. Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity*, 242.

[159] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 55, 159-160n17-18; Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 237.

[160] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 236-238, esp. 237. This largely explains some Jews' sense of relief with the arrival of the Hungarians in mid-March 1939, especially knowing of the Carpathian Sich's blacklist.

[161] Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 141-142.

arriving from neighbouring regions such as Galicia, where antisemitism was more prevalent. This is in keeping with one of Raz Segal's most important arguments, that violence in Subcarpathia was imported – not only by the Hungarian and German occupiers, but also into the psyches and the social psychology of the autochthonous population.[162] Magocsi does take note of the Khust leadership's exasperation with the arrival of Ukrainian militiamen from Galicia, whose either/or thinking vis-à-vis national identity and loyalty was at odds with the Carpatho-Ruthenian leadership (even though they were relatively nationalistic), who were used to some kind of negotiation with the central Czechoslovak government – an opportunity their (Galician) Ukrainian compatriots did not take in Poland. The Ruthenian leadership of Khust saw themselves as the more politically mature 'Ukrainians,'[163] which makes Halm's aforementioned statement particularly ironic, rendering it a useful critique of exclusionary nationalism in Ruthenian lands.

In the comparatively isolated Csorna Tisza / Yasinia area, Hutsul attitudes towards their Jewish neighbours correlated with the tenor of priests' speeches and Orthodox holidays (i.e. Christmas versus Easter). During the former, Hutsuls were generous and hospitable towards the Jews, as they emphasized the Jewishness of Jesus.[164] During the latter and on Sundays, Hutsuls tended to be riled up by priests' age-old mythic assertions of purported deicide.[165] The timing contrasts with the account of Cantor Moshe Kraus of Užhorod, who noted the Christmas Eve routine of having their windows boarded up due to the threat of antisemitic vandalism, similar to

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[162] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 56-57. Also see Perényi, *More Was Lost*, 204-205. There was also significant tension between Uhro-Rusyn / Rusynophile and Ukrainophile Ruthenians – see Perényi, *More Was Lost*, 197-198; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 161n31.

[163] Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity*, 241.

[164] Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 108.

[165] Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 107; cf. Michael Mason, *A Name Unbroken*, 10.

Easter elsewhere. This threat could be largely attributed to the local priest's deicidal speech for the occasion.[166] This attests to the variability of Orthodox Ruthenian - Jewish relations in easternmost Subcarpathia, depending on the season or time of the week. Therefore, the antisemitism in this local and regional context was of a situational character. Such stark variation was also manifest in the incomplete antagonism between Ukrainophile Hutsuls and Jews in the autonomous period – Halm articulates the inconsistency of Carpathian Sich militiamen rambling on about anti-Jewish street violence in a *Jewish-owned* pub.[167] Halm also provides a counterpoint to the norm vis-à-vis the "social sound of silence," a term of Eviatar Zerubavel borrowed by Raz Segal at the end of Chapter 4 of *Genocide in the Carpathians*, noting his family's help to refugees and his taking at face value their testimonies of wholesale slaughter on the other side of the Carpathians.[168] Echoing Chapter 6 of Kinga Frojimovics' monograph, Halm emphasizes the danger that Jewish Subcarpathian citizens faced in helping their beleaguered, stateless co-religionists.[169]

In Gabriel Mermall's published diary and memoir *Seeds of Grace*, curated by his son Thomas, the local peasants who figure in the story (Ruthenian, and presumably Romanian as well) tended not to be passive, but were either slightly helpful, substantively helpful, or provided

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[166] (Esteemed Cantor) Moshe S. Kraus, *The Life of Moshele der Zinger: How Singing Saved My Life* (Baico Publishing Inc., 2017), 2.

[167] Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 138. Emphasis mine. Cf. Frojimovics, *I Have Been A Stranger*, 124.

[168] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 83, 84, 175n138 (cf. 100); Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 145. I often paraphrase the term "social sound of silence" as "a wall of silence" based on Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 224; cf. Segal, *Days of Ruin*, 68-71, 115-116. In *The Life of Moshele der Zinger*, (17, 18, 62, 71, passim.) Cantor Kraus articulates that his family and communities both helped refugees from Poland, but were instinctively disinclined to believe their narrations of recent horrors they witnessed.

[169] Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 145; and see Frojimovics, *I Have Been A Stranger*, 139, 159-164, 170.

help *and yet* reported Gabriel and Tommy to the authorities. The first Carpatho-Ruthenian friend, Marya, whom Mermall approached was particularly sympathetic, but was too close as a family friend to plausibly evade suspicion by Hungarian authorities.[170] Her sister Hanya initially aroused less suspicion than herself, but then Hanya noted that the Mermalls had been sighted by peasants, especially given that they were on Easter holiday.[171] In a subsequent hideout in which they were reported to the police, a previous helper (Mrs. Petrusak) gave them a heads up, thus allowing them to flee to the forest in time.[172] Gartner, who was formerly the mayor of Polyana, rose to the occasion by hiding them and providing them with some food on a weekly basis.[173] Towards the end of the ordeal, the Mermalls' former neighbour, Mr. Astalos, endeavoured to catch hidden Jews and partisans, and even beat the Petrusaks' daughter in frustration.[174] He was later detained by Russian soldiers, who also went on an expedition to return the Mermalls' property.[175]

After reading *Seeds of Grace*, one can surmise that the villagers of Poroskő (Poroshkovo) seemed generally sympathetic to local Jews who faced impending ghettoization and deportation. Mermall summarizes the attitudes of the majority ethnicity (with emphasis on

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[170] Gabriel Mermall, *Seeds of Grace* in *By the Grace of Strangers*, 95-96. "Marya came running into the barn [...] crying and she was trembling. [...] she started to tell me how every Jew in town had been rounded up [...] Some of the police had been brutal, she said. [...] Marya had been like a member of our family; she had spent almost all her life caring for us. The poor woman was confounded and pained, wishing to help, yet terrified." (95) This is an example of sympathy with fear as per *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 185n130.

[171] *Seeds of Grace* in *By the Grace of Strangers*, 96-97, cf. 151.

[172] *Seeds of Grace* in *By the Grace of Strangers*, 102-103, cf. 142.

[173] Ibid, 104, 109, 113ff.

[174] *Seeds of Grace* in *By the Grace of Strangers*, 142-143.

[175] *Seeds of Grace* in *By the Grace of Strangers*, 158. "All the soldier had to do was stand next to Father, who would knock on a number of doors to claim our goods. The very sight of the soldier made our neighbors remarkably cooperative, and in this way we recovered some of our property."

class and an assumption of their Russophilia) of peasants of the region as follows: "But the Russian (Carpathian) peasants were not so gullible as their Polish counterparts, and were not so ready to blame the Jews for their misfortunes. On the contrary, they had shown a courage and dignity that was seldom found in higher social ranks around here. [...] They were wise to these Hungarian beasts."[176] They were often willing to hide or help Jews who came their way, to the extent that they could evade or attenuate harsh punishments from the authorities.[177] Given that the town has a significant Romanian population, one wonders if the threats to the villagers if they were to help Jews were so severe in part because of the stubborn Hungarian enmity against Romanians (and to a lesser extent Ruthenians) more generally.[178] It can be surmised that even outside of formerly (interwar) and future (postwar) Romanian territory that had been annexed by irredentist Hungary, Romanians (especially peasants) tended to act as 'good bystanders.'[179] In any case, they were treated by Hungarians as a minority whether they were the majority population (e.g. in much of non-Székely Transylvania) or the minority population, say in Subcarpathia.

Overall, the relationship between Hungarian 'bystanders' and Jews during outbursts of state mass violence in 1941 and especially 1944 is quite mediated by the class positions of the former. Certain civilized Hungarian aristocrats of Nagyszőllős and Beregszász did what they

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[176] *Seeds of Grace* in *By the Grace of Strangers*, 143.

[177] See *Seeds of Grace* in *By the Grace of Strangers*, 105, 142-143, 151; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 107, and especially 185n130 as a Subcarpathian generality in the spring of 1944. It must be noted that the risk of imprisonment and death was significantly less than in Poland. This may be in part due to Poles being considered lower than Romanians and Ruthenians in the Nazis' racial hierarchy.

[178] Mermall, *Seeds of Grace*, 94-102, 151. See Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 169n61 (viz. Chapter 4, 74) and 184n116 (viz. Chapter 5, 104), respectively; and Case, *Between States*, passim.

[179] See Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 313.

could to help Jews in their neighbourhood, whereas petit bourgeois Magyars succumbed to propaganda-activated envy and often reversed their attitudes towards Jewish acquaintances and friends. Carpatho-Ruthenians sometimes displayed restraint and apparent passivity, given their oppression by the Magyar gendarme and police presence, but also often helped local Jews when they felt it was safe to do so. They did not fully fall prey to wartime antisemitic propaganda, although it (as well as any welcoming sentiments to Hungarian authorities in 1939) may have contributed to decisions not to help Jews.[180] In rural areas, Subcarpathian Hutsuls demonstrated considerable variation in behaviour towards Jews since the end of the First Czechoslovak Republic.[181]

II. Historical Background on Southern Maramureş[182] / Máramaros and Its Environs, especially Szatmár / Satu Mare – with an Analytical Angle on Interethnic Relations of 'Greater Subcarpathia'

Given that this region was united with its larger (Subcarpathian) northern counterpart in the formative age of the Dual Monarchy, and that it can be characterized by various similarities of outlook and demographics in its Jewish population,[183] I have decided to have Southern

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[180] See Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 11, (16-17, 58-59), 104-107, 111, 118.

[181] Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 106-109, 138-139.

[182] I use the Romanian name of the region with "Southern" for historical precision, since Máramaros was only formally divided on a North-South basis (with the Tisza River and its tributaries as the main basis for the border) after World War I under Czech and Romanian rule, respectively.

[183] Author's Interview with a Holocaust survivor from Szatmár, 24 December 2018, Côte-St. Luc, QC, Canada.

Máramaros directly follow the analysis of adjacent Subcarpathia, addressing the difference between Ruthenian and Romanian bystanders to the Holocaust in the larger Carpathian region.

A Holocaust survivor from Szatmár emphasizes the variability of religious background and acculturation in Southern Maramureş and its environs slightly to the west, which correlated with urban-rural differences. Her mother from Szatmár was raised with Magyar and German culture, whereas her father and his parents from Felsővisó (Vişeu de Sus) were regarded as being more religious and less Magyarized.[184] In this discourse, Sapinka (Săpânţa / Szaplonca) was categorized with Visó. It bears re-iterating that such tendencies mirror the Subcarpathian difference between urban areas such as Beregszász (as per *Shoshanna's Story* and Aranka Siegal's mother, stepfather, and brother-in-law) and Ungvár on the one hand, and 'semi-rural' smaller towns in the Ökörmező / Mižhirja region (e.g. Alsókalocsa / Kolochava) on the other, as well as mid-size towns such as Huszt (Chust) and Rahó (Rakhiv / Rahău) in the southeastern portion of Northern Máramaros. Menachem Keren-Kratz notes that in Máramaros, there is only a substantial (i.e. urban) population density in this county's areas close to the riverbanks (the tributaries of the Tisza), where agriculture is more viable.[185] The influence of Hasidism, as in its northern area, was crucial for the social development of the majority of the Jewish population of historic urban Máramaros. Elie Wiesel of Sighet nostalgically remembered the opportunities for

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[184] Author's Interview with a Holocaust survivor from Szatmár, 24 December 2018, Côte St. Luc, QC, Canada.

[185] Menachem Keren-Kratz, "Máramaros, Hungary: The Cradle of Extreme Orthodoxy," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, 35 No. 2 (2015): 152; "The Social and Cultural Role of Small Literary Centres: the Case of Sighet, Romania," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, 16 No. 2 (2017): 181.

solitude and prayer in its landscape.[186] As with its northern counterpart, the imbrication of Jews in the perceptions of the landscape of Southern Maramureş helped generate a sense of parity, acceptance, or at least commensurateness with the majority (usually Romanian) local population.

While some observers may think that the predominantly Haredi composition of Sighet's Jewish population implied uniformity among all of its Jews, this was not the case. Likewise, Keren-Kratz asserts that the *maskilim* (comparatively secular intellectuals) were marginalized but not banned, often due to their tax-paying and philanthropy, and due to their civic leadership tendencies vis-à-vis the exigencies of the outside world.[187] Rabbi Dr. Danzig gave the Sighet Jewish population a moderate and diplomatic Orthodoxy, and interceded well with both the pre-World War I Hungarian authorities and the interwar Romanian authorities.[188] It is historiographically important to note these unifying threads in Jewish communal life of Sighet and nearby, as much of the cutting-edge scholarship[189] focuses on the intra-ethnic (and interethnic) polarization of Greater Subcarpathia and Máramaros. The degree of intra-religious polarization tended to inversely correlate with the ability to liaise with major state actors.

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[186] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, page of photographs of notables, next to p. 219 (adj.).

[187] Keren-Kratz, "The Social and Cultural role of Small Literary Centres: the Case of Sighet, Romania," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, 183-184; cf. "Máramaros, Hungary: The Cradle of Extreme Orthodoxy," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, 152-153.

[188] Dicker, *Piety and Perseverance*, 22-24; Yitzchak Alfasi, Eli Netser, Anna Szalai, *The Heart Remembers: Jewish Sziget*, 28.

[189] e.g. Raz Segal's *Genocide in the Carpathians*; Yeshayahu Jelinek's *The Carpathian Diaspora*.

As in adjacent borderlands, the end of World War I brought further upheaval, and responses of Jewish self-organization and external intervention.[190] During the Chrysanthemum Revolution, whose diminution of Budapest's centralizing force correlated with a chaotic interregnum between Hungarian and Romanian authority in Southern Maramureş, there was a well-founded fear of looting by discharged soldiers.[191] In response, the Jews of Sziget founded self-defence groups, with the organization of the committee by Dr. Eliyahu Blank.[192]

With the new Romanian and Czechoslovak borders bisecting Máramaros around the Tisza river, the usual territorial logistics for economic routines were disrupted on a long-term basis. As many communities were split, so was the regional trade.[193] For many places such as Sighet, there was economic dislocation as in Subcarpathian Ruthenia, compounded by the earlier wartime disruption.[194] As before, the problems encountered by local and refugee Jews in Southern Maramureş were mainly instigated by the central state authority in Bucharest – or new state borders, and generally not from the micro-level. With the enlarged Romanian state slow to settle on the question of minority civil rights, Jews of Maramureş and their co-religionists further south lacked recognition for their educational programs.[195] And not long after minority constitutional rights were formally granted in 1923 and properly amended for Romania's borderlands the following year, these Jews faced bureaucratic red tape applying them.[196] By

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190 Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 109, 118.

191 Also see footnote 86 for more on the Chrysanthemum / Aster Revolution.

192 Alfasi, Netser, Szalai, *The Heart Remembers: Jewish Sziget*, 57, 59.

193 Ibid, 116.

194 Alfasi, Netser, Szalai, *The Heart Remembers: Jewish Sziget*, 57.

195 Dicker, *Piety and Perseverance*, 60; Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 69.

196 Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania: The Destruction of Jews and Gypsies Under the Antonescu Regime, 1940-1944* (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, Published in Association

contrast, relationships between Jews and their fellow locals of Maramureş remained stable and even cordial.

However, sometimes interfaith tensions did flare up, although this was when the underlying violent discourses were not really rooted in Maramureş and their manifestations were largely imported. The attempts to foment anti-Jewish violence in Sighet in the mid-1920s was by an "antisemitic congress" of ethnic Romanian students, who were presumably urban and from elsewhere. (Rural peasants had practically nothing to do with it. The beneficence of these peasants of Maramureş will be discussed later.) In any case, these ventures were unsuccessful due to Jewish self-defence, organized by the Shimshon sports league, which focused on soccer for young Jews.[197] At other moments of antisemitic agitation, the Jews of Sighet were able to counter such terror with physical force, or psychologically deter them.[198] This resembles the case of the Munkács Jewish civilian guard (with a helpful pep talk from the otherwise controversial Rabbi Chaim Elazar Shapira) deterring the Petliura-affiliated pogromists in 1919.[199]

There was a general demographic decline among Jews of the region throughout the interwar period, with exceptions such as Vişeu de Sus until the economically difficult 1930s.[200] In the latter part of the 1930s the ethnocentric Romanian state applied a heavy hand to Jews

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with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2000), 12; Dicker, *Piety and Perseverance*, 61.

197 Alfasi, Netser, Szalai. *The Heart Remembers: Jewish Sziget*, 69.

198 Ibid, 32.

199 Dicker, *Piety and Perseverance*, 32-33; Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 118.

200 Raphael Vago, "Romanian Jewry during the Interwar Period," in Randolph Braham, ed. *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 36-37; Alfasi, Netser, Szalai. *The Heart Remembers: Jewish Sziget*, 57; Randolph Braham, Zoltán Tibori Szabó, Kinga Frojimovics, eds. *The Geographic Encyclopedia of the Holocaust in Hungary*, 574-577.

throughout Romania, including Maramureş.[201] The Goga-Cuza cabinet of December 1937 abrogated Jewish civil rights, and introduced a *numerus clausus*.[202] This also constituted a significant economic blow to the Jewish communities in Greater Romania.[203] Budești (Budfalva) was an important counter-example on the micro-level, where the ethnic Romanian neighbours of the local Jews resisted externally-led incitement directed against them.[204]

Unlike the northern part of Máramaros, which was annexed in mid-March 1939 by the irredentist Hungarian state's paramilitary action, the southern part of Maramureş was annexed along with southern Ugocea / Ugocsa and Satu Mare / Szatmár counties, the northeastern part and more of the historic Crişana region, and the northern portion of Transylvania proper (up until the outskirts of Cluj / Kolozsvár). This Hungarian military incursion southward and eastward was almost a year-and-a-half after the annexation of eastern Subcarpathia. The partition of Transylvania would lead to a layer of violence between Hungarians and Romanians, and against Jews.[205]

From April to May 1944, Jews on both sides of Máramaros were part of the first deportation zone, due to its proximity to the Soviet front and its dense Jewish population. Jews

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[201] See Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 30-31.

[202] Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania*, 13, 16, 18-19. Also see Braham, ed. *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry*, 20-21. For more on the Goga-Cuza government with reference to Maramureş, see Yossi Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 73-75.

[203] Raphael Vago, "Romanian Jewry during the Interwar Period," in Randolph Braham, ed., *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry*, 38-40.

[204] R.L. Braham, Z.T. Szabó, and K. Frojimovics, *The Geographical Encyclopedia of the Holocaust in Hungary*, 563. For a Southern Maramureş Holocaust survivor's account of Budești, see Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 26.

[205] As a Concordia MA History alumnus and history teacher, John Commins, has said [paraphrase]: "Anytime you hear the term partition, it means (mass) violence will result." (30 August 2006) And see Case, *Between States*, Chapters 3 and 4.

deported slightly later, such as those from the Szatmárnémeti and Nagybánya ghettos, faced similar chaos and oppression.[206] Leading into the primary source analysis, it should be noted that despite the general 'bystander problem' of apathy and greed ("get-rich-quick on plunder"),[207] there were cases in Southern Maramureş where the local non-Jewish population resisted the blitzkrieg against the Jews. This resistance will be addressed through primary sources from Máramaros-Sziget (Sighet) and Szaplonca (Săpânţa / Sapinka).

Reflections on Holocaust-era Interfaith Relations, and Identifications through Primary Source Accounts of Survivors from Southern Maramureş and Satu Mare County

It seems that the preponderance of memoirs of the Holocaust in Greater Hungary available from the far northwest area of Romania are by survivors who grew up in Sighet. This makes sense given Elie Wiesel's (who put Sighet on the map for public consciousness in *Night*, and probably the most renowned person from Maramureş) empowerment of his fellow *landsmen*.[208]

Given that the overarching oppositional set of presuppositions in many of these Maramureş memoirs is between Jews and non-Jews, the relative dearth of ethnic specification of non-Jewish neighbours in this borderland was not necessarily seen as a lacuna. But given the movement of Hungarian, Romanian, Ukrainian, and Slovak borderland historiographies towards

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[206] See R.L. Braham, *Genocide and Retribution: The Holocaust in Hungarian-Ruled Northern Transylvania (*The Hague / Boston: Kluwer, 1983), 31-33. Nagybánya = Baia Mare in Romanian.

[207] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 256, and elsewhere.

[208] In his memoir, *A Promise to my Mother*, Yossi Indig writes "He is the most famous man from our town. I know that he has an extraordinary memory." (91)

a multiethnic and micro-historical / case study approach, it is necessary to make inferences between name and ethnicity to get a sense of interethnic relationships in Southern Maramureş / Máramaros and its environs (including Transylvania proper), and the correlation between ethnicity of a Holocaust bystander, positionality within irredentist Hungary (especially in 1944), a long term history of the appurtenant interactions, and other variables.[209] And in some important cases, memoirists do explicitly indicate the ethnicity of their non-Jewish friends, and of bystanders to their ghettoization and deportation in the spring of 1944. The reader must also keep in mind that states and ethnicities do not behave as monoliths, but just as a state alters its perception of a borderland minority of which it was previously accepting (i.e. Jews in Trianon Hungary), ethnic minorities of borderlands (i.e. aggrieved Magyars) behaved like unaccountable and belligerent majorities as their appurtenant irredentist state (World War II-era Greater Hungary) re-annexed the territory in question. Máramaros (especially its southern portion) is a case in point for this ethno-political phenomenon. A long-term approach through primary sources (partially organized on a thematic basis), with attention to the interwar period of Southern Maramureş under Romanian rule and sub-regional variations, will provide insight into the intersection of the category of bystander with that of ethnicity during the Holocaust.[210]

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[209] e.g. Mordechai Judovits' *Holocaust and Rebirth*, Elaine Kalman Naves' *Journey to Vaja*; Raz Segal's *Days of Ruin*; Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz, eds. *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013). (cf. Leslie M. Waters' work on the Felvidék)

[210] This contrasts with some spots in Holocaust historiography, where bystanders appear in a decontextualized manner, in deference to a pre-ordained binary of antisemitic opposition on the neighbourly level, rather than making reference to empirical primary source evidence on the complex interplay between state, Jewish person, and her or his neighbours in the Holocaust. See Raz Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 104, 184n117, parsing Timothy Snyder's insight. Also see Ibid, 116-119.

In her memoir *Not A Kitchen Table Conversation*, Sighet Holocaust survivor Joan Ferencz describes a sense of reticence in Jews' interethnic interactions with the majority native population in a relatively positive light, with ethnic precision rather than the overly generalized 'Christian' category. She remarks that her family "got along with the Romanians – they mostly left us alone,"[211] hinting at the Sighet Romanians' acceptance of Jews' national (in)difference in a 'Maramuresher' context. Not only does Ferencz specify the ethnicity of Christian neighbours with whom her family had interacted, she also indicates religious denomination to the reader at important junctures of her text. While her schooling at a Roman Catholic Magyar-language institution was fine, her dialogue with a Hungarian Catholic boy at Christmas 1927 was most decidedly not.[212] That holiday season, preceding the Great Depression and the protracted crisis of the 1930s, gives a different salience to the antisemitism of this Hungarian resident of Sighet, compared to antisemitism of a similar nature ten to twelve years later.[213] This hateful outburst happened well before the reclaiming of northwest Romanian territory by Hungary was to be geopolitically plausible. When the irredentist Hungarian state did arrive to greedily reclaim 'its Sziget,' it did so obsessed by a discourse of ethno-religious exclusivity and surveillance – Ferencz remarks that all local Jews had to carry an identification card on their person, to help the Hungarian authorities weed out those without citizenship. She notes that not only Jews, but any 'foreigner' (xenophobically defined as anyone non-Magyar, presumably) could be kicked out of

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[211] Joan Ferencz, *Not A Kitchen Table Conversation* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016), 13.

[212] Ferencz, *Not A Kitchen Table Conversation*, 4, 13.

[213] Cf. Hindi (Friedman) Rothbart, *The Girl From Sighet*, 27, who was taunted by the antisemitic Novak sisters about the ripe prospect of Hungary reclaiming Máramaros county. This took place in June 1939, only fifteen months before the Second Vienna Diktat which made that prospect come true.

Sziget.[214] Ethnic non-elite Romanians[215] were the Magyar state's potential targets. Ferencz's observant father was forced to open his textile store on the Sabbath, and ethnic Magyar citizens and officers used that as an opportunity to shoplift.[216] As was common elsewhere under 1939-1944 ethnonational Hungarian rule, an ethnic Magyar couple in 1942 took advantage of the "straw man" clause, and took over Ferencz's father's store.[217] With the direct assistance of Sighet's Jewish police chief in the context of renewed Romanian rule after the war, Ferencz and her brother successfully reclaimed her father's store.[218] Elsewhere in Sziget this unfolded differently, as in the case of Klara Wizel's religious father, who was also forced to open his store on the Sabbath, with the satisfaction of no customers and no ethnic Magyar shoplifters.[219] Eventually though, in 1943, he too faced brazen confiscation, even more violently than in the previous case, for this was a time when "violence became the new form of communication."[220]

Verbal communication itself became laced with epistemic violence, through the uninhibited lies and racist hysteria of the Third Reich and Magyar ultra-nationalism. Here I have in mind the "Captain" of the Hungarian gendarmerie who boarded with Hindi Friedman's family from 1942 until the ghettoization, as described in her artfully narrated memoir *The Girl From*

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214 Ferencz, *Not A Kitchen Table Conversation*, 13-14.

215 Elite / intelligentsia Romanians tended to leave for Southern Transylvania, the Regat, or the re-annexed territories further northeast. See Holly Case, *Between States*, 98, 115-123, 164-165, (342).

216 Ferencz, *Not A Kitchen Table Conversation*, 2, 14.

217 Ferencz, *Not A Kitchen Table Conversation*, 15.

218 Ibid, 35-36.

219 Danny Naten and R.J. Gifford, *Auschwitz Escape: The Klara Wizel Story*, 41.

220 Ibid, 42. This brings to mind Timothy Snyder's anecdote about the Galician Ukrainian policeman buying into the Judeobolshevik myth – in his dialogue with a Jew, "the beating was the answer." See Snyder, *Black Earth*, 181.

Sighet.[221] He intrusively took a 'mental inventory' of the family home, surveying it as if it was his, somewhat foreshadowing the plunder that was to come two years later.[222] The boorish Captain confiscated food, and accused Hindi's sister Relu and the rest of the household of shopping on the black market, which he hypocritically had done anyway.[223] In Hindi's prewar social context, she faced a jumble of friendship and surliness in her interfaith relationships, producing a high level of variation. The Novak sisters were particularly self-absorbed and standoffish, and had been explicit about their adulation of the prospect of the Hungarian state reaching Sighet.[224] It seems that these irredentist leanings were one contributor to the narcissism of the Novak sisters, for whom Magyar national selfishness mirrored their individual selfishness.[225] This selfishness was cloaked in their bourgeois respectability, which sharply contrasted with Hindi's family, for whom such success and respectability was a vessel for compassion and gratitude.[226] Hindi's mother took careful measures to avoid negative inter-religious speech, let alone violent communication. She exhorts her daughters Relu and Hindi not to refer to any non-Jew, including the annoying Novak sisters, as *goyim*.[227] This was part of their economic symbiosis, as the Friedmans bought milk from the Novaks, having chosen them as an act of conciliation.[228] They also perceived it a matter of principle and common humanity.[229] With potential reference to the antisemitic (and presumably non-local) student unrest in Sighet in the mid-1920s, Friedman writes, "Sighet's Jews have been spared pogroms. This is due to our

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221 Rothbart, *The Girl From Sighet*, 38.
222 Ibid.
223 Rothbart, *The Girl From Sighet*, 42-43.
224 See footnote 213.
225 See Rothbart, *The Girl From Sighet*, 27.
226 Rothbart, *The Girl From Sighet*, 26-27.
227 Ibid, 27.
228 Ibid, 20, 27.
229 Rothbart, *The Girl From Sighet*, 27.

Jewish community leaders who fill the gentiles' pockets with our hard-earned money for protection."[230] This brings to mind observations on the propensity of Romanian soldiers to accept bribes so that Jews would be spared harassment, most notably in the case of Ben Younger in nearby Săpânţa / Sapinka.[231] This is also articulated in *A Sun and a Shield* (as we will see with the upcoming section on Transylvania proper), broadly contrasting bribery as one component of a barrier against Romanian participation in the Final Solution, and Hungarian gendarmes' and Imrédyists' ideological loyalty to antisemitic delusions which went far beyond simple selfishness and corruption.[232]

Given the economic restraints and motivations for antisemitism that animated interethnic relations in East-Central Europe in the interwar period, this dimension of analysis deserves more treatment through Maramureş / Sighet Holocaust survivors' primary source accounts. In Sigeter Yossi Indig's memoir, *A Promise to My Mother*, two of the most notorious antisemites in his pre-Holocaust experience, one Hungarian and one Romanian, were tavern owners.[233] Jews were also tavern owners in the town and throughout the region (e.g. in Săpânţa);[234] thus one can infer that jealousy was a key motivation for outbursts of rudeness and hatred. The sons of the antisemitic Hungarian tavern owner, presumably university-educated,

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[230] Ibid.

[231] Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 33-34.

[232] See Gliksman, *A Sun and a Shield* (Preface), 3-4; Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania*, 224, 294-295, citing Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of European Jewry*; Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and Others*, 33, 331-332, 358, passim.

[233] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 74-75, 86.

[234] See Hedi Fried, *The Road to Auschwitz: Fragments of a Life* (transl. / ed. by Michael Meyer), 24-25, regarding Jewish ownership of a tavern and store in Lăpuşel (Hagymáslápos); and Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 25, 33, 39, 122, regarding his Jewish friends' parents owning a tavern in Săpânţa (Szaplonca).

broke local synagogue windows at one point.[235] This variant of antisemitism is partially generalizable to the non-Jewish, aspiring urban middle class in Greater Hungary, particularly among ethnic Magyars in the broader Carpathian-Transylvanian area, in which Southern Maramureş is centred. During the Goga-Cuza government and its aftermath, and with the Second Vienna-arbitrated Hungarian occupation in the following years, this economic antisemitism was legitimized in these lands.[236]

As for Sighet Jews' economic life, *A Promise to my Mother* also sheds light on divergent trends on the micro-level. While Yossi's father's yeast distribution service was most probably disrupted by the Second Vienna Award since the brewery was south of the Transylvanian partition line, in Arad, these same territorial changes also allowed his older brother Avrum Alter to visit Budapest for the purchase of textiles to carry home to the business.[237] This brings to mind the Huszt-dwelling Rapaports of *The Net of Dreams*, minus the insulation from local antisemitism.[238] In his writing about his family's business, Indig paints a picture rich in examples of ethno-linguistic relations.[239] Among the members of his multilingual family, the Hungarian language was considered the most sophisticated,[240] although it was also the language of the street, as in Szaplonca / Săpânţa.[241] Business required basic communication

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[235] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 86.

[236] Ibid, 73, 85-86.

[237] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 4-5, 108.

[238] See Salomon, *The Net of Dreams*, 93-103; cf. Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 271; and Shoah Foundation VHA interview of a Szatmár Holocaust survivor, 17 October 1996, Côte-St. Luc, QC, Canada.

[239] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 9-10, 107-110.

[240] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 9; cf. Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 96.

[241] (Regarding Sapinka and the use of language therein) According to Nathan Katz, as per a conversation of ours in June 2017.

in Romanian and Slovak, to accommodate the Romanian majority population and also Slovak-speaking peasants of the area.[242]

Indeed, language use in Southern Maramureş was politicized and threaded through matters of economy and occupation. The region's Jews were central to these issues; they reflect on this with complexity and hindsight in their memoirs and other primary source accounts.[243] The changes in schools' national orientation and patriotic forms of expression in the wake of the Second Vienna Award were seen as an exasperating volte-face particularly by the school-attending generation, who grew up with Romanian instruction.[244] It was neither quick nor particularly straightforward for Romanian educational authorities to instill a sense of a new national orientation, but they had enough success for it to register in students' minds.[245] Despite the paucity of ethnic Romanian students even prior to the 1940-1941 school year,[246] Jewish students of Hedi Fried's school and possibly ethnic Magyar ones as well faced fines for slips of the tongue revealing Hungarian speech.[247] Jews' national loyalties and their cultural complexion demonstrate generational difference among them in Southern Maramureş just as in Transylvania

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[242] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 9-10, 46.

[243] e.g. regarding the Hungarians' betrayal of the Jews loyal to Hungarian patriotism and nostalgia, and divergent outcomes viz. the Holocaust in Hungary and Romania, particularly the differences between Northern and Southern Transylvania.

[244] Hedi Fried, *The Road to Auschwitz*, 35.

[245] See Rothbart (Friedman), *The Girl From Sighet*, 18 – Hindi Friedman states that in the pre- Second Vienna Arbitration days, all subjects are taught in Romanian, and that her favourite subject is history, as well as literature. Given that these courses would be inevitably taught with the intention of instilling Romanian national and civic consciousness, it may be presumed that Hindi appreciated the Romanian interpretation of recent historical events / historiography. And meanwhile, Hungarian was the main language spoken between her and her mother and sister at home. Cf, 37.

[246] Cf. the relative lack of ethnic Czech students (and relative preponderance of Jews) in Czech-language schools in much of Subcarpathia north of the Tisza. See Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 216-217.

[247] Hedi Fried, *The Road to Auschwitz*, 35.

proper and westernmost Transylvania (e.g. Oradea / Nagyvárad). Indig describes the occupational stratification of Sighet based on ethno-linguistic identity. He emphasizes that ethnic Magyar speakers comprised the majority of government workers, with the younger echelon being comprised of ethnic Romanian and Romanian-educated civil servants. Members of the middle class and the professional vocations came from a variety of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. The pharmacists were mainly non-Jews, but included an important Jewish minority.[248] Some of the Jewish pharmacies in Sighet and Szatmár were also sites of informal sociability and familial solidarity.[249]

These realities of different orientations of language and culture between generations, and of multiethnic / interfaith sociability were flattened in the quasi-colonial gaze of the officials promulgating 'Greater Hungary.' This facilitated their sustained assault on the social fabric of Southern Maramureş.[250]

Ghettoization and Deportation of the Jews of Southern Máramaros and Its Environs in View of Interethnic Relations and Non-Jews' Bystanding

With the tremendous betrayals and deceptions inflicted on Máramaros Jews in the spring of 1944, the significance of previous interfaith relationships can be further revealed. Máramaros Holocaust survivors' reflections on their non-Jewish bystanders of different ethnicities during this time retrospectively reveal intentions and psychological depth, particularly

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[248] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 47. Also see Rothbart, *The Girl From Sighet*, 27.

[249] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 47-48; Molnár Hegedűs, *As The Lilacs Bloomed*, 12; cf. Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 267, 292.

[250] Cf. Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 70.

in the sense of Raz Segal's emotion-based analysis, in these acquaintanceships, friendships, and employment relationships. Sometimes survivors have provided a coda to the bystanding issue in their emotional insights on the postwar search for property plundered by the appurtenant bystanders.

For Sighet and elsewhere in the southern portion of Máramaros, primary sources indicate that the social pressure arising from propaganda and the three-and-a-half year history of harsh irredentist occupation by the Hungarian state had different effects on non-Jews' reactions as onlookers to the oppressed parade of Jews that was hastily concentrated in towns and then brutally removed.[251] It can be argued that this difference was primarily on an ethnic basis, which survivor memoirs mention often enough to construe a historically significant pattern. The Magyars' venom towards often Magyarized Jews in Máramaros, which was not only at the level of the authorities, but also of neighbours, reflected the racialized xenophobia and the exclusivist approach to 'Greater Hungary' whose propaganda was absorbed by most classes of ethnic Magyar society.[252] Imrédyist state authorities encouraged plundering Jews for themselves and implicitly for other classes of Hungarians.[253] As another layer of the ethnocentric 'Greater Hungary' plan, Romanians meanwhile had to deal with nationalistic provocations and on occasion violence, especially closer to the pre-1940 Hungarian-Romanian border.[254]

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[251] In *Auschwitz Escape*, 55, Klara Wizel emphasizes both the micro-scale and the continental scope of the Holocaust rather than the national level with regards to bystanders.

[252] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 66-67, 74-75; "The Modern State, the Question of Genocide, and Holocaust Scholarship," 111, 116.

[253] Vági, Csősz, Kádár, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide*, Chapter 6, especially 198-205; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians,* 102.

[254] Case, *Between States*, 98-103, 185-186; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 3, 66-67, 74, 120, 169n61, 184n116, 189.

While Klara Wizel initially describes the hateful onlookers without ethnic qualifiers, emphasizing those who were visible to the Jews in the 'horrible parade,' she details a childhood Hungarian friend, whom she saw on a daily basis at elementary school. At the time of the deportation procession, Wizel "spotted her standing together with a hateful crowd. [most likely of ethnic Magyars...] When she saw me, I knew she knew who I was. How could she forget what we shared? [...] All I could see was her newfound hatred."[255] With the link between state propaganda, ethnic Magyardom, and plunder made clear to biopolitically Magyar bystanders, the temptation for betrayal – and to sacrifice wholesome social bonds for shrill state propaganda and epic "Judeobolshevik" delusions, was present and led to a profound moral depravity for someone of her Magyar subject position, as a member of the privileged group, but not a gendarme.

It should also be noted that Greater Máramaros Holocaust survivors appraise bystander behaviour, and their expectations thereof, in a variable way. The ethical scale and spectrum of plausible responses is not necessarily a given, demonstrating the importance of the micro-level analysis of the bystander as per Kubát and Kubátová.[256] In contrast to the dedication of *As The Lilacs Bloomed*, where Molnár Hegedűs writes "the eternal shame of those [...] but also those who, whether with glee or pity, tolerated it,"[257] Indig quotes a little girl named Miriam who makes a clear distinction between "[...] these people [who are] having fun watching us in this

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255 Naten and Gifford, *Auschwitz Escape*, 55.
256 Kubátová and Kubát, "Were There Bystanders in Topol'čany?" 566, 580-581.
257 Molnár Hegedűs, *As The Lilacs Bloomed*, xxxi.

terrible situation" and "people behind those blinds, who have sympathy for us."[258] The Magyar tavern owner and his sons fit into the former category.[259] Hedi Fried chronicles: "Curious neighbours peeped from behind their curtains, not daring to come out. Not a single person registered sympathy. Yet we had lived side by side for all these years, shared our joys and sorrows."[260] Also in this vein, Klara Wizel writes: "Some poked fun at us and scornfully smiled. Some looked away. Bless those who did."[261]

In nearby Szaplonca (Săpânţa / Sapinka), the intergenerational memoir of Ben and Gary Younger, and the Shoah Foundation interview of Bluma Priesler provide a clearer picture of Jewish-Magyar and Jewish-Romanian relationships, with particular reference to the wartime period and the bystanding question during the Holocaust. Ben Younger emphasizes the friendly disposition of the majority of the native population (ethnic Romanian peasants) of his hometown and its immediate surroundings, which correlated with economic reciprocity and occupational symbiosis between Săpânţa, Câmpulung la Tisa / Hosszúmező, Sighet, and their rural hinterland.[262]

Younger also gives the sense that Hungarian authorities turned Magyar-speaking ethnic Romanians against ethnic Romanians who did not speak Magyar. He narrates that the Magyar-speaking ethnic Romanian, Vasile, was a vicious antisemite who helped the Hungarian

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[258] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 136-137. Cf. Papp, *Outcasts*, 132; Randolph Braham's Interview (Part II) with Dan Danieli, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 30 May 1997, available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2jfrKYJyKs>

[259] Indig, *A Promise to My Mother*, 86.

[260] Hedi Fried, *The Road to Auschwitz*, 54.

[261] Naten and Gifford, *Auschwitz Escape*, 54.

[262] Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 15-17, 19, 22.

gendarmes in promulgating their lies and greed.[263] The few ethnic Magyars in Szaplonca were very antisemitic, to the point that Tibi the local barber (and the brother of an abusive, antisemitic primary school teacher), alerted his co-ethnic gendarmes to prevent a relief caravan from reaching the ghetto.[264] Some Romanians were able, and not stymied in giving food to the ghettoized Jews of Szaplonca. Bluma Priesler recalls that "when the [Germans / Hungarians] took us out, the Romanians were running after us, give[ing] us bread and jam. A lot of them were crying."[265] She also said that "[she] cannot complain about the Romanians; they were very nice to us."[266] These are some of the best, most upright 'bystanders' ('upstanders')[267] that I have come across in my research on the Holocaust in Hungarian-annexed borderlands.

To the northwest, just outside of Maramureş and very near the northwesternmost part of Romania (Oaş Country),[268] Anna Molnár Hegedűs also repeatedly noted the reliable friendliness of Romanian townsfolk, including under Romanian rule but with an emphasis during the

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263 Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 42.

264 Ibid, 27, 52.

265 Bluma Priesler. Interview (28556) with Rachel Alkallay. Tape 2. 7:48-8:18. *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 30 April 1997; cf. Ben Younger's description of the help provided by the Holdish family, in Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 50-52.

266 Ibid.

267 See Amos Guiora, *The Crime of Complicity*, 107, 124. Also see esteemed Azrieli memoirist Nate Leipciger's speech to University of Toronto graduates of 2019, with regards to the 'bystander' versus 'upstander' dynamic: "'Advise your own prejudices with insight and truth': Holocaust survivor Nathan Leipciger receives U of T honorary degree" *University of Toronto News*, 20 June 2019 https://www.utoronto.ca/news/advise-your-own-prejudices-insight-and-truth-holocaust-survivor-nathan-leipciger-receives-u-t?fbclid=IwAR0yMa6i41JsG79_VR4e6Z5Qqqtl5COumZojtdPwo9gbSSpGMcYMx-cV7I8 Also see Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 122-129, regarding the mercurial hospitality and implicit wartime memory of the Romanian townsfolk as they return to Săpânţa / Sapinka fifty years after the Holocaust.

268 Molnár Hegedűs, *As The Lilacs Bloomed*, xxix (map pertaining to the memoir)

Hungarian-German occupation.[269] As part of her thought process to devise escape plans after the Nazi invasion, Molnár Hegedűs thought of fleeing to the mountainous forests to hide, where "[their] Romanian farmer friends were willing to take care of providing [them] with food."[270] Soon after in her memoir she nostalgically emphasizes "the gentle valley of Avas, [...] this little enclave of simple, honest Romanian people."[271]

This section on Southern Maramureş and the most northwestern corner of Romania presents the clearest preponderance of examples of Romanian onlookers who provided material assistance and active sympathy to their Jewish neighbours as the Hungarian regime and Nazis applied full pressure on them.[272] Having lived under the Magyar gendarme jackboot, and awaiting the return of the Romanian state, it is logical that Romanian Maramureş-dwellers would help their Jewish neighbours who were even more oppressed by Magyar authorities -- and who were loyal to the interwar Romanian state.[273] As for the ordinary Magyar citizens, having less of the history of Hungarian high culture as in cosmopolitan Transylvania of an earlier generation, and having had the opportunity to feed on interwar resentments and propaganda over the long term, they were more likely to collaborate with their co-ethnic authorities in inflicting violence upon Jews and stymieing Romanian peasants from helping them. The Hungarian-Romanian enmity in the southern sector of Máramaros was a corollary of their relationship with the Jews of the region in multiple ways. In addition to the earlier adducing, this is demonstrated by the fact that Romanian customers of Chaim Mendel Katz's blacksmith in Săpânţa no longer wanted to

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269 Ibid, 8-10.
270 Molnár Hegedűs, *As The Lilacs Bloomed*, 8.
271 Ibid, 10.
272 Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 40-41.
273 Ibid, 27.

frequent it once the Hungarians came into Szaplonca and had Katz install a Magyar straw man in his business.[274] Jews trapped between their allegiance to the Romanian state and the resurgence of the nationalistic Hungarian presence are all the more prominent in the Transylvanian context.

III. Contextualizing Transylvania, Its Ethno-religious History, and its Geopolitical Significance

Transylvania proper (directly south of Southern Maramureş and Satu Mare county), including Székely Land in its eastern boundaries and much of the historic Crişana (Körösvidék) region to the west, was the territory of Hungarian politicians' greatest longing during the post-Trianon period.[275] The northern two-fifths of Transylvania (including very nearly all of Székely Land)[276] was granted on August 30, 1940 by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy for irredentist Hungary to invade from west to east from September 5 to 13, 1940[277] – Hungary occupied it until October 1944.[278]

The memoirs of Holocaust survivors from Transylvania and its western environs starkly range from identities of the assimilated (a category which encompassed different worldviews) to

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[274] Interview between Nathan Katz and Brad Zarlin, 9 August 2007, Toronto, ON, Canada.

[275] See Holly Case, *Between States: The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea during World War II*, 66, 180-181.

[276] Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World*, 270; Brubaker, Feischmidt, et al. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, 69, 77.

[277] Randolph L. Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 8; see Case, *Between States*, 72, 98-100.

[278] Case, *Between States*, 200; Brubaker, Feischmidt, et al. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity*, 105.

the Ultra-Orthodox, which reflects reactions to the inroads of both the Neolog movement (especially in Nagyvárad / Oradea, Kolozsvár / Cluj, and Arad) and Hasidism in the region. Secondary sources and primary source accounts abound in their emphasis on the multi-confessional nature of Transylvanian society since the early modern period. Not only does Transylvania have vast mythic significance for the national historiographies of both Romania and Hungary,[279] it has played a substantial role in the evolution of certain religious denominations for all of the Hungarian Kingdom and further afield.

Hungarian-Romanian interethnic relations in the latter part of the long nineteenth century were foremost predicated on the autonomous Hungarian state's centralizing nationalities policy. The 1867 Compromise formally brought Transylvania back into the fold of Hungarian nationalist rule, meaning that the educational and cultural policy of Magyarization would be particularly coveted for that region by the Hungarian political class.[280] Furthermore, among Hungarian nationalist politicians there was a paternalistic discourse towards Romanians, with the narrow assumption that most in Transylvania were peasants.[281]

Transylvania's transition from Hungarian to Romanian rule was geopolitically convoluted and bitter, due to the chaos at the end of World War I and the multistage Hungarian-Romanian war. In the post-Paris Peace Treaties world, exclusionary nationalism was an

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[279] See László Kürti, *The Remote Borderland*, Preface, Chapters 1 and 2. Regarding the mythic and ethnogenesis aspects, see 40-48.

[280] See Case, *Between States*, 20-21. Also see Lendvai, *The Hungarians: A Thousand Years of Victory in Defeat*, Chapters 25-26; Brubaker, Feischmidt, et al. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, 63-65, 95.

[281] Margaret MacMillan, *The War that Ended Peace: The Road to 1914* (New York: Penguin Books, 2013), 226; cf. Solonari, *Purifying the Nation*, 13, 82.

inflammatory constant throughout Europe.[282] This was a particularly powerful resentment for the Hungarian state and its new refugees from the borderlands, especially Transylvania. Holly Case demonstrates that Transylvania during the interwar and World War II period was an exemplary territory in terms of the weaponization of historiography for irredentist discourses of national identification, modern social scientific methodologies of the nation-state (demographic statistics, biopolitical eugenics), and nationalistic populism (with a 'peasant' flavour, but not implying giving them voice) wielded by the aristocracy and disaffected, unemployed Magyar refugees.[283]

The zero-sum game of Romanian ethnonational ascendancy was indicative of a pervasive contempt for Jewish civic equality throughout Romania, which for Transylvanian Jewry was compounded by their double minority status.[284] While not having their socioeconomic status fundamentally changed, the Jews of Transylvania often faced a conflict of loyalties between their Hungarian cultural substrate and the exigency of civic alignment with the Romanian state that had recently encompassed them.[285] Holly Case writes that much of the Hungarian-assimilated Jewish leadership in newly Romanian Transylvania showed support for the case of their supposed co-nationals' revisionist claims, in line with the near-universal

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[282] See Pieter Judson, *The Habsburg Empire*, Epilogue; Raz Segal, "The Modern State, the Question of Genocide, and Holocaust Scholarship," 111.

[283] See Case, *Between States*, 13, 27, 39-66, 114, 125-127; cf. Vladimir Solonari, *Purifying the Nation*, Chapters 4 and 5; László Kürti, *The Remote Borderland*, Chapter 2. Also see Paul Lendvai, *The Hungarians*, 366.

[284] Győrffy, Tibori-Szabó, Vallasek, "Back to the Origins," 575; Tibori Szabó, "The Holocaust in Transylvania," in *The Holocaust in Hungary: Seventy Years Later*, 148; Judson, *The Habsburg Empire*, 448-451.

[285] Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 5; Brubaker, Feischmidt, et al. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, 75.

consensus of Hungarian interwar politics.[286] Apparently during this pre-Nazi era, Hungarian politicians had such a strong tendency to see (Magyarized) Jews formerly under Hungarian rule as supporters of revisionism, that they were given prominent positions in the State Hungarian Party of Transylvania. This was a marked contrast from the exclusionary Trianon Hungary, as the Hungarian political class sought to demonstrate the demographic significance of enduring Magyar-identifying communities in the borderlands severed from rump Hungary.[287]

However temporary and instrumental this sense of solidarity between Magyars and Jews was in Transylvania under the new regime, it confirmed suspicions by Romanian authorities, who saw both as urban-based obstacles to Romania's independent, 'ethnically pure' modernization.[288] The Romanian intelligentsia often saw rural peasants as more 'true' Romanians, given the pre-existing demographic tilt to ethnic diversity in major cities (for example, Cluj) in Greater Transylvania.[289] It can be partially inferred that Greek Catholicism, one of the main denominations thus marginalized, would be correlated with the Hungarian population and the legacy of Magyardom in Transylvania. But the Magyarophobe Valer Pop, who had a Greek Catholic ecclesiastical background, saw it as a fault line in (nominally Orthodox) Romanian nationalism.[290] When Transylvania was partitioned between the

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[286] Case, *Between States*, 66, 180-181. Also see Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 67-69; cf. Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 66-67.

[287] Case, *Between States*, 180-181; cf. Klein-Pejšová, *Mapping Jewish Loyalties*, 115-116.

[288] Solonari, *Purifying the Nation*, 15. Regarding the considerable limits of Magyar notables' convenient use and purported appreciation of Magyarized Jews, see Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 5-6, also quoted in Győrffy, Tibori-Szabó, and Vallasek, "Back to the Origins," 576, and see *Between States*, 182. Also see Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 289.

[289] Solonari, *Purifying the Nation*, 14, 82, 89.

[290] Solonari, *Purifying the Nation*, 31-32, 56.

territorially covetous Hungarian state and the ethnically paranoid Romanian state, this mattered even more. Until after the Second Vienna Award (and even until the abyss of 1944 itself), Transylvanian Jewry felt a particularly strong loyalty to Magyardom, possibly even more so than in other borderlands of Magyardom, and more so than in Hungary proper. The Romanian state tried to drive a wedge between Hungarians and Magyarized Jews, most notably in the realm of education.[291]

With the civil conflict between King Carol's circle and the Iron Guard raging at full blast during the late 1930s, minorities had reason to be anxious.[292] Such feelings were intensified with the convulsive set of geopolitical realignments of the Carolist Romanian state with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the early phase of World War II, particularly the Fall of France.[293] In Romania's season of territorial loss (Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, and then Southern Dobruja, in addition to the glaring loss of Northern Transylvania) in the summer of 1940, King Carol's Gigurtu cabinet promulgated laws of racial antisemitism, annulling the citizenship of hundreds of thousands of Jews.[294] This set of discriminatory measures went a long way to explain the initial celebration by North-Transylvanian Jews of the Second Vienna Award, in addition to the nostalgia of the long-defunct Golden Age.[295] This proved to be a tremendous

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[291] Brubaker, Feischmidt, et al. *National Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, 104.

[292] Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, Chapter X, 295-304.

[293] Cecil D. Eby, *Hungary at War: Civilians and Soldiers in World War II* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 1998), 14.

[294] Randolph L. Braham, ed. *The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry*, vi. Cf. the antisemitic legislation and actions of the earlier Goga-Cuza government, see Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 295; Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 6.

[295] Zoltán Tibori Szabó, "The Holocaust in Transylvania," in Braham, Kovács, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Seventy Years Later*, 148-149.

irony, given that the survival rates of Jews in Southern Transylvania were much greater than those of their northern co-religionists.[296]

With the arrival of Hungarian soldiers in early-to-mid-September 1940, and of Magyar civilians from Romanian-ruled Southern Transylvania in the ensuing months, the relations between Magyars and Romanians became more tense.[297] This would have implications for 'bystanding' when it came to the ghettoization and deportation of the Jews of Northern Transylvania three-and-a-half years later. Almost as Hungarian forces arrived, there was an outbreak of violence, largely instigated by trigger-happy Hungarian soldiers, and exacerbated by the locals.[298] This layer of interethnic violence and broader social and diplomatic discord, while on a relatively small scale compared to other interethnic conflicts in the World War II era, similarly reflected xenophobic ultra-nationalism and a drive for ethnonational mastery in an

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[296] Tibori Szabó, "The Holocaust in Transylvania," 149; Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 309; Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 8-10; Laczó, *Hungarian Jews in the Age of Genocide*, 6n21.

[297] Case, *Between States*, Chapter 3; Kürti, *The Remote Borderland*, 35. See Paul Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed*, 16-17, for an account of the Hungarian-Romanian enmity that the Second Vienna Award allowed to rise to the surface, even in the small rural town of Hadad.

[298] Case, *Between States*, 98-103; Brubaker, Feischmidt, et al. *Nationalist Policies and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, 76, 78 viz. the massacres in Bánffyhunyad, Treznea, Ip, and Diószeg, and the general atmosphere of arrests and intimidation against ethnic Romanians as well as Jews. See Raz Segal lecture at University of Sonoma State University, 12 February 2019 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJH4NDfINE8 (c. 40:00-53:00; includes Hungarian violence against Carpatho-Ruthenians as well), and "Making Hungary Great Again: Mass Violence, State Building, and the Ironies of Global Holocaust Memory" in Thomas Kühne, Mary Jane Rein, eds. *Agency and the Holocaust: Essays in Honor of Debórah Dwork* (Worcester, MA: Clark University, Palgrave Studies in the History of Genocide, 2020), 187-190.

irredentist context.[299] The incredible paradox was that it was actually Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy which adjudicated minority rights disputes between Hungary and Romania.[300]

With the partitioning of Transylvania that, for some, seemed roughly equal in terms of ethnic demographics, there were continual quarrels that were deemed serious enough to require Axis intervention.[301] The principle of reciprocity, originally intended to protect Romanians in Northern Transylvania and Hungarians in Southern Transylvania, sometimes resulted in an escalation of measures against these respective minorities.[302] But only so much discrimination or violence could be inflicted before the opposing regime would lash out at their appurtenant minority, or at least complain to the Axis arbitrating committee whom they trusted regarding powers of territorial adjudication.[303] Whatever the national identification of Jews, they obviously

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[299] Brubaker, Feischmidt, et al. *Nationalist Policies*, 80; Case, *Between States*, Chapter 4, also see 185-186, 190 for the imbrications of Romanian anxiety towards Hungarian authorities into the latter's genocidal drive against their Jews.

[300] Case, *Between States*, Chapter 4, especially 152-153, 155, 164, 171, 185-186, and also 224-225. Behind this here was most notably, Hitler's ulterior motive of stability in the Sudostraum (i.e. Southeastern Europe's Axis satellites), due to the petroleum of Ploieşti and other natural resources in the region. See Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 102-103, 156, 167-168; Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 7.

[301] Case, Ibid, and 71-72, 155, 162, 169-170, 259n32, 260n41. It must be noted that not only were both Hungary and Romania dissatisfied, but Hitler and his circle specifically wanted a halving of Transylvania that left both sides not only beholden to the Third Reich, but with the goal that they would both be incited to participate in the Soviet-German war by subordinating their economies and militaries to Nazi Germany. See Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 7-8; Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others,* 162-163; Case, *Between States*, 75; Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, 166.

[302] Case, *Between States*, 121-123ff, 128-129, (cf.) 141, 161-164 (especially 162-163), 171-172 (regarding Axis mediation); cf. Solonari, *Purifying the Nation*, 139; Brubaker, et al. *Nationalist Policies and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, 76, 78, 101-103.

[303] See Case, *Between States*, 70-87 (Chapter 2), and Chapter 4.

did not have this; their national loyalty often bred suspicion in the tug-of-war between the ethnocentric states of Hungary and Romania.[304]

The very definition of who was Hungarian and who was Romanian was also contested, especially for those who underwent name changes for purposes of ethno-linguistic identification, and for those who identified as Greek Catholic.[305] Greek Catholics in Transylvania were often Romanian-speaking, but were noted by historians and clerical-educational authorities as originally Hungarian, or Magyarizable.[306] At times, Hungarian authorities had the long-term goal of their assimilation in mind to live up to that discourse, and at other times they applied a more exclusivist set of presuppositions between ethnicity and religion in ascertaining who was Hungarian and who was Romanian.[307] In this narrow framework, the alternative was for Magyarophile Greek Catholics to convert ('back,' and Magyarize their name) to the Hungarian-coded denominations of Roman Catholicism or Calvinism.

The new legislative reality also brought home the irony of Jewish identification with, and loyalty to Magyardom in its new incarnation. Even though under the World War II Hungarian regime, Magyar-identifying Jews could apply for compensation from their Romanian townsfolk when warranted, and were encouraged to declare themselves Hungarian on the 1941 census, they were barred from many forms of employment and public life.[308] This kind of paradox largely permeated Jewish-Hungarian relations in Northern Transylvania until 1944.

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[304] Case, *Between States*, 182-186.

[305] Case, *Between States*, 130-131, 140-144, cf. 127.

[306] Case, *Between States*, 140-143. See Solonari, *Purifying the Nation*, 31, 75; Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 28.

[307] Case, *Between States*, 141-143, 163-164.

[308] Case, *Between States*, 175-176. (especially the Jenő Janovics story)

Some Hungarian officials were even self-conscious about this legislative ingratitude for Jews' sympathetic loyalty to Magyardom, especially relative to Romanians and Germans whose assimilation was encouraged.[309] Even if Jews converted to a 'Hungarian' denomination of Christianity, they were still considered 'racially' Jewish, especially by the Nazi-beholden gendarmes who would bring heinous indignities to them in 1944.

The Jews of Northern Transylvania were affected by small-scale deportations even before the June 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union.[310] 678 Jews and ethnic Romanians from Maros-Torda county were chased to the new Romanian border, thus demonstrating the convergence of two layers of anti-minority violence. Small-scale expulsions continued for the Jews of Székely Land and elsewhere in the Hungarian partition of Transylvania until 1942.[311]

In May 1944 this most loyal borderland of Jews' Magyar self-identification was brutally ghettoized, revealing the racist essence of the Imrédyists' paranoid and ultra-violent xenophobia. Ghettoization began on May 3, and Jews faced purposely terrible living conditions, and body searches, violations and tortures due to the gendarmes' lust for plunder, and their wish to

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[309] Ibid, 176. And see Case, "The Holocaust and the Transylvanian Question in the Twentieth Century," 25-26, in Randolph L. Braham and Brewster S. Chamberlin, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Sixty Years Later*.

[310] Zoltán Tibori Szabó, "The Holocaust in Transylvania," 151-154, in Braham and Kovács, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Seventy Years Later*. This was protested by Catholic Sister Margit Slachta, who also interceded with the Pope to prevent further deportations from Slovakia in the spring of 1943. In 1944 she sheltered and saved 2,000 refugees. And see Tamás Majsai, "The Deportation of Jews from Csíkszereda," 114-118(ff.) in Braham, ed. *Studies on the Holocaust in Hungary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). Csíkszereda = Miercurea Ciuc in Romanian.

[311] Zoltán Tibori Szabó, "The Holocaust in Transylvania," 155, 157; Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 14. Also see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 80-81, emphasizing common oppressions with Subcarpathian Jewry, and that different levels of Hungarian government and society were complicit.

facilitate the extermination of this minority onto whom they projected delusions and slander.[312] In Nagyvárad, a city of especially Magyarized and affluent Jews relative to cities to the northeast, gendarme-initiated torture was particularly pervasive.[313] Randolph Braham and Tim Cole note a tendency of solidarity of Romanian nationals with the Jewish deportees, reflecting sympathy based on their oppression starting with the Second Vienna Award.[314] Sabbatarians helped Jews facing the onslaught, and shared their compatriots' fate if they formally identified as Jewish.[315]

The number of Jews deported from Northern Transylvania to Auschwitz (including Southern Máramaros and Körösvidék) is estimated to be between 131,639 and 135,000.[316] From Transylvania proper (not including Máramaros; including Körösvidék) the figure is about 75,589. Approximately 4,000 Jews of Northern Transylvania escaped via the Romanian border (often with the help of ethnic Romanians and/or diplomats), which ran near Nagyvárad and Kolozsvár.[317] Despite the general Jewish loyalty to Hungarianness in the tangled triangle of Jewish-Hungarian-Romanian relations, most of the lives of the Jews of the region ended soon

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[312] Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 83, 85, 90.

[313] See Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 207 – the historian was a Holocaust survivor from Oradea / Nagyvárad, and profoundly attests to the Jewish contribution to the city keeping its character Hungarian during the interwar Romanian period. (cf. 59-60 in Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*) So too writes Teréz Mózes; see *Staying Human Through the Holocaust,* 374. Also see Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 33-36, 79-101; Mózes, *Staying Human Through the Holocaust*, 72-77; Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, Chapters (4), 6 and 7.

[314] Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 24; Tim Cole, *Traces of The Holocaust*, 115 (cf. Vági, Csősz, Kádár, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide*, 199).

[315] Győrffy, Tibori-Szabó, Vallasek, "Back to the Origins," 577ff.

[316] Tibori-Szabó, "The Holocaust in Transylvania," 170, 176-182; Győrffy, Tibori-Szabó, Vallasek, "Back to the Origins," 577. And see Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 233 (Appendix 2); Case, *Between States*, 189, 195.

[317] Tibori-Szabó, "The Holocaust in Transylvania," 170-171.

after the ethnic Magyars' betrayal of them. But as we will shortly see, neighbouring villagers' self-interest and local contingency were a complicating factor.

Patterns of Interethnic Relations, National Identifications and/or perceptions, (and the Holocaust Bystander Problem) as Articulated in North-Transylvanian Holocaust Memoirs

Transylvania arguably featured the most notable Jewish-Magyar symbiosis, as well as an extra measure of denominational diversity[318] and the precedent of religious freedom in early modern times. We thus turn to an appraisal of the perceptions of Magyardom and interethnic relationships among the appurtenant generations in the Transylvanian Holocaust survivors' sources, on a memoir-by-memoir basis. There are many twists and turns in national identification elucidated by the survivors, given the interwar contrasts with the Dual Monarchy, the false hopes and brief jubilation engendered by the return of Hungarian state authority, and the ultimate betrayals of 1944. The question of the ethnicity of the bystanders is once again of historiographical importance. This follows the logic of Chapter 5 of *Between States*, and of Raz Segal's clarion call for scholars to integrate the study of the Holocaust into the broader context of interethnic relations during World War II in Danubian and Southeastern Europe.[319]

Featuring both an ethnographic style and personal detail, Mordechai ('Mati') Judovits' autobiographical *Holocaust and Rebirth* portrays Hasidic life in Dej / Dés, and the rising

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[318] For both Christianity and Judaism, and for the Unitarians and Sabbatarians in between.

[319] Case, *Between States*, especially 182-186, 190-191, 194-198, cf. 214-217; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 7-11, 120, 184n116, 189; "The Modern State, the Question of Genocide, and Holocaust Scholarship," 108-119.

crescendo of struggles as conditions worsened, in a dignified and factual way. Judovits characterizes interwar Romanian rule in Dej and its environs (including the more rural Náprád / Năpradea) as tolerable, punctuated by incitements of 'old-fashioned' (presumably religious) antisemitism – most notably during the Christmas and Easter holidays, by churchgoing youth against Jews of their age or younger.[320] The Jewish schoolchildren were at times able to dissuade attacks through self-defence, especially on Kodor Street.[321]

Interfaith relations did have their positive moments, including with state authorities, or at least their adjuncts. Mati's resourceful brother Moishe successfully befriended a Romanian army captain and band conductor; around the same time, one of his soldiers purposely tripped him, with an antisemitic utterance.[322] The annual Romanian military parade for May 10 was a show of patriotism in which interfaith relations seemed to be smooth, as one might infer from Mati's observation of a familiar Greek Catholic priest on a platform with the illustrious Rabbi Paneth.[323] With his work with the Fonciera Insurance Company, Mati's father developed a sense of trust with urban and rural populations in Năpradea and its environs, including with more well-off Romanian farmers.[324] Hungarian-speaking Moishe also improved the relations between Jews, Romanians, and Hungarians by providing secretarial help in the distribution of ration cards to Náprád's local Romanian population.[325] This was despite the fact that by this time, Jews in

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[320] Mordechai Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth: A Survivor's Memories of Life in Europe Before, During, and After the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Urim Publications, 2016), 62, cf. 146.

[321] Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, 62-63.

[322] Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, 127.

[323] Ibid, 145.

[324] Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, 46-47, cf. 112, and cf. Mózes, *Staying Human Through the Holocaust*, 354.

[325] Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, Chapter Thirty-Eight (149-151).

Hungarian-occupied Northern Transylvania were no longer allowed to have such jobs – but his work was so meticulous that the supervisor from Zilah (Zalău) allowed him to stay on.[326]

Mordechai's father had professional or otherwise helpful relationships with Romanian townsfolk after his work with Fonciera, which ended with the onset of Hungarian rule. Remus (a plausibly Romanian name)[327] helped Mordechai with the transport of kosher cheese to Nagybánya.[328] During the ghettoization period, Mordechai's father conceived of an unactualized plan to hide on his Dumbreniţa estate with Dragos, a cultivated Romanian gentleman who was his good friend and occasional colleague. After Mordechai's father was beaten by the plunder-loving Hungarian military officer Farkas Árpád Cserefalvi, a Romanian resident of Náprád brought him home.[329] The enmity between Hungarians and Romanians and its pre-Holocaust legalistic difference with Hungarian discrimination against Jews can be illustrated through Mati not being drafted into the Náprád Levente Youth Group (unlike in Dés earlier) : "[...] I was dismissed because I was Jewish. The Hungarian policy was to segregate the Jewish boys from the Hungarians and I was the only Jewish boy in the group; they could not form a Jewish group with only one Jewish boy. The irony of the situation was that there were no Hungarian youths in the group, there were only Romanian boys present in the group, and furthermore the Hungarians did not like the Romanian[s]. But it didn't matter. Since I was Jewish, I was out."[330]

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326 Ibid, 151.

327 For the material informing this inference, see Brubaker, et al. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*, 99-100.

328 Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, 158-159. Nagybánya = Baia Mare in Romanian.

329 Ibid, 184-185.

330 Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, 157 (cf. 154-156)

Holocaust and Rebirth seems to feature a decline of Hungarian-Jewish relations (which can be construed as Habsburg-Jewish relations at the beginning) as time passes, with important exceptions. In the aftermath of 1848, not only did Dés receive the distinction of imperial permission for Jewish settlement, but Mordechai's ancestor Rabbi Moshe Paneth was also invited to the Dual Monarchy coronation of Franz Josef.[331] As Judovits points out, it is understandable that the older generation in Dés was nostalgic for the Dual Monarchy, but when the irredentist Hungarian forces invaded Transylvania, they realized that antisemitism would become more consistent, as opposed to its variability under an unpredictable succession of Romanian governments.[332]

Although the antisemitism was consistent, and then fatally so after the Nazi occupation, there was variability in the phenomenon of Hungarian bystanders to the anti-Jewish violence of the World War II and Holocaust period. While Mati was on the train from Nagybánya to Náprád, he was assaulted by a pack of Hungarian soldiers, with most passengers not speaking up for fear of being charged with threatening them.[333] The non-Jewish wife of a Hungarian colonel shamed the soldiers, and said she would report them to their commanding officer. Mati thought she may have been a cloaked incarnation of Elijah the Prophet.[334] Mordechai did not encounter that degree of courage in bystanders later on during the time of ghettoization and deportation, but he clearly recalls the division between good and bad bystanders. As the cavalcade of deportees made its way to the Zilah brick factory, the townsfolk were close by the road. Some were visibly pained, and some provided phrases of support and blessing, while others jeered with antisemitic

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331 Ibid, 24-25, 29-31.
332 Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, 146; cf. Gliksman, *A Sun and a Shield*, 4.
333 Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, 159-161.
334 Ibid, 161.

remarks.[335] But on the whole, the villagers were in fact more concerned with the substantial rupture in the town's welfare and economy. Now they were deprived of a doctor, and of the general store. Though the government was rumoured to attempt to take over the store, local competence was lacking.[336] In any case, self-interest trumped jealous hatred for most of the inhabitants except for the gendarmerie and other Imrédyist officials of Náprád and Dés.

Dej, and also Ileanda (Nagyilonda) were the hometowns of the illustrious Paneth family, addressed in *Holocaust and Rebirth* and more so in *A Sun and a Shield*. In the latter, Dej is renowned among the Hasidim, and is described as cosmopolitan relative to a mostly rural Transylvania.[337] The saga of the daughter Brandele being trapped in Poland and then escaping to Budapest and then home illustrates the protective status of her Hungarian passport prior to 1944, and also the Hungarian authorities' tremendous suspicion of refugees.[338] With the exception of Brandele's immediate family, the "wall of silence" and disbelief of the extent and geographic scale of atrocities reigned among the Jewish population of this area, including the Hasidic population.[339] They had trusted in the former liberal or patriotic discourses of Magyardom, despite the fact they only acculturated partially and did not assimilate, and that their relationships with Romanian peasants and villagers were overall better those than with their Hungarian townspeople and officials.[340] It becomes clear as the narrative progresses that Romanian peasants

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[335] Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, 15, 188.

[336] Judovits, *Holocaust and Rebirth*, 14, 187. Cf. Szatmár – see Shoah Foundation Interview of Samuel Newman (Neuman), Visual History Archive, 17 October 1996, Côte-St. Luc, QC, Canada.

[337] Gliksman, *A Sun and a Shield*, 15, 46-49.

[338] Gliksman, *A Sun and a Shield*, 89, 95, 101, 106, 112-114. Cf. Snyder, *Black Earth*, 247, 255-256.

[339] Ibid, 3, 144, 172, 176-177.

[340] Gliksman, *A Sun and a Shield*, 181.

(and their Jewish interlocutors) tended to be of most help in terms of escape (towards the Romanian border in central Transylvania) and rescue. Similar to Ben Younger's and Bluma Priesler's accounts of nearby Romanian villagers bringing, or at least attempting to bring food to them in the ghetto, the narrator of *A Sun and a Shield* reminds the reader of ordinary Romanians' help. She writes: "Many Rumanian peasants brought food to their Jewish friends in the ghetto. Rarely did a Hungarian gentile deign to associate with a Jew."[341] Raveka and Vasile Roman, and their daughters, were the most helpful of the Romanian peasants, providing shelter and food in addition to moral support.[342]

Survival, by the Cluj-born Magda Herzberger, features autobiographical narration interspersed with her poetry, and relevant background on Romanian and Hungarian history. Her narrative also prominently features those who helped her family during the ghettoization process and before. Their Hungarian maid Anikó, like Mari Néni of *Shoshanna's Story*, helped Magda's family even though there were punitive restrictions on Jews having non-Jewish Hungarian household help.[343] Mr. Rimotzi, a Hungarian friend of Magda's father, was successfully entrusted to safekeep heirloom jewelry and family photos.[344] Much earlier on, Magda and her parents lived in an apartment owned by Hungarians, Kirkocsa and his wife, who were nice to them.[345] During the World War II and Holocaust period, Magda emphasizes the Hungarians'

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[341] Ibid, 181, 213.

[342] Gliksman, *A Sun and a Shield*, 220-232 (Part III, Chapter 7), 229, 232, 247-249. Also see Appendix IV, 364-371, regarding appreciative correspondence well after the war.

[343] Magda Herzberger, *Survival*, 73. And see / cf. Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 208, 271, 290; András Koerner, *How They Lived: The Everyday Lives of Hungarian Jews, 1867-1940* Volume 2, 62.

[344] Herzberger, *Survival*, 85-86.

[345] Ibid, 25.

envy that played a large role in the anti-Jewish measures.[346] She notes officials and gendarmes plundering the family economy, "stealing in grand style."[347] However, they still had Hungarian friends who would provide an occupational and financial lifeline to her father even after the anti-Jewish laws.[348]

Ladislaus Löb also lived in Kolozsvár right before the Holocaust, attending its Jewish gymnasium under the shadow of growing antisemitism.[349] Early on in his narrative, contra *Between States*, he postulates that antisemitism proved to be the only common link preventing Hungarians and Romanians from slandering or fighting one another.[350] Despite Jews' fervent Magyarization there and in his birthplace of Margitta, they had little social contact with the "vaguely hostile" Hungarian population.[351] With the wide spectrum of Jewish observance and denominations in Margitta, Neolog Jews considered themselves especially Magyarized and also as somewhat traditional (relative to Reform elsewhere) in their Judaism.[352] On 'Muddy Street,' a Hungarian civil servant and his family claimed the Löb family's belongings during the deportation.[353]

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346 Herzberger, *Survival*, 79-80.
347 Herzberger, *Survival*, 79 (also see 80, 90-91).
348 Ibid, 78.
349 Ladislaus Löb, *Rezső Kasztner, The Daring Rescue of Hungarian Jews: A Survivor's Account*, 20.
350 Löb, *The Daring Rescue of Hungarian Jews*, 6.
351 Löb, *The Daring Rescue of Hungarian Jews*, 9.
352 Ibid.
353 Löb, *The Daring Rescue of Hungarian Jews*, 19-20.

Löb is also the English translator of Nagyvárad ghetto survivor Béla Zsolt's *Nine Suitcases* (*Kilenc Koffer*), and they were on the Kasztner Train together.[354] *Nine Suitcases* contextualizes his Holocaust reflections with the mass violence of the modern / colonial world and its ancient antecedents, with an exceptionally biting and cynical wit, and imbued with eloquent melancholy. Questions of identity and the psychological underpinnings of assimilation are highly significant in the narration. Early on in his memoir, Zsolt laments the loss of his Hungarian homeland, through a gut-wrenching description of the depredations suffered by the victims of the Nagyvárad ghetto, by the despicable gendarmes.[355] His simultaneous spiritual exhaustion and sense of detachment, inter alia, bring him to certain conclusions about ostensibly antagonistic social groups, most notably between different Jewish denominations and classes in Nagyvárad.[356] He racializes the ghettoized Hasidim (e.g. from Máramaros, followers of the Vizsnitz Rebbe, et al.) as being differently affected than the secular-bourgeois, Magyarized Jews of Nagyvárad.[357] (Inferring through Zsolt's descriptive and essentializing categorizations, he might say that they were considered beyond assimilation and quintessentially other, not unlike the alterity ascribed to the Roma.) He historicizes the Holocaust in a manner somewhat similar to Raz Segal, and provides a critique of colonial mimicry and violence somewhat in the manner of Aimé Césaire.[358]

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354 See Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, transl. Ladislaus Löb (Pantheon Books, 2004), x.

355 Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 4,7, 49, 240, 275.

356 Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 18, 23, 28, 31-32, 40-41, 44-45, 131, 229, 237, 249, 261.

357 Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 14-16, 44-47.

358 Ibid, 73-75, 77-78, 92-94. See Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 5, 130-131n10 (on colonial mimicry, see 74-75, 84, 86, 233-236), and see Segal, "The Modern State, the Question of Genocide, and Holocaust Scholarship," passim. I owe the analogy by Aimé Césaire -- "Fascism is colonialism applied to Europe" (in *Discourse on Colonialism*) to Jon Soske. Also see Snyder, *Black Earth*, 18, 20, 199, 329.

Zsolt addresses the matter of bystanding, ghetto escape, and rescue in an evocative and poignant way. As he details a long list of ghetto bystanders, the presence of the Catholic priest and bishop (who were most probably ethnically Magyar) as antisemitic onlookers is particularly noteworthy. Zsolt elaborates on the bishop's hate here and elsewhere in the serialized memoir, whose views on the fascistic exclusivity of Nagyvárad mirror that of Andor Jaross as proclaimed in his May 16, 1944 speeches.[359] Many middle-class Magyar professionals revealed their hypocrisy when watching the ghetto procession with glee, having earlier indicated solidarity, but stating that the risk from the authorities was too great.[360] By and large, only the workers complained and showed support for the Jews.[361] And during this time, as per an argument in *Between States*, artisans and petit bourgeois who may have identified as Romanian under the previous regime mindfully declared themselves as Hungarian, recognizing the situational political salience of national identification.[362] One of the protagonists who brings provisions to the ghetto, and helps Zsolt and his wife escape the ghetto (along with the reliable Szabós from Budapest) is of both Hungarian and Romanian ancestry, and is overall a lifeline for help and rescue, delivering Zsolt's wife's message for help to the Szabós.[363] The safe houses for Galician and Bukovinian refugees, which that protagonist led them to, were more likely to belong to Romanians than Hungarians.[364]

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[359] Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 40, cf. 119. Also see Vági, Csősz, Kádár, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide*, 202-204 (Document 6-11); and Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 207 for Jaross' speeches of May 16.

[360] Ibid, cf. 229 regarding state-directed plunder towards the Christian Magyar middle class; 295 regarding mean-spirited peasant indifference.

[361] Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 41, 56.

[362] Case, *Between States*, 123-128, 130-131; Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 253. This is in reference to a (potentially bi-national) 'good bystander,' a thoughtful ghetto passer-by.

[363] Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 251-252, 254-255, 257-258, 262-263, 267-268ff.

[364] Ibid, 258.

Staying Human Through the Holocaust (after *Nine Suitcases*) is one of the most detailed primary sources available on the Nagyvárad Ghetto, with more narrative clarity and logical exposition of analytical categories than *Nine Suitcases*.[365] Aside from her focus on resilience and humanity, Teréz Mózes repeatedly notifies the reader of 'Jewish optimism' at many turns of the war and during the crushingly restrictive vise of ghettoization – this brings to mind Zerubavel's notion of the "social sound of silence."[366] The extent to which the non-Jews of Nagyvárad were enmeshed in this discursive structure is not clear, and the general sense of bystanders is blurry to Mózes during the carting off of her co-religionists to the ghetto: "I could not say if we were followed by looks full of pity or by gloating faces."[367] On the other hand, she points out that a hundred commissions relating to plunder were operating in Nagyvárad, with three hundred (previously respectable) people directly implicated in the roundup.[368] After the war, Teréz's sister Erzsi encountered a significant contrast between greed and solidarity when meeting two different Christian Hungarian families who were entrusted with the Mózes' valuables.[369] Here I have not seen variation in 'bystanders' on an ethnic basis, but on the basis of networks of plunder or, conversely, original sympathy.[370] In the epilogue, Mózes lists a number of rescuers, many with Hungarian names, and clergy of both Hungarian-coded and Romanian-coded denominations who helped Jews hide or pass as Christian through pre-dated baptismal certificates.[371] The local Romanian Consul and her deputy are also acknowledged for having brought the dismal situation

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365 Teréz Mózes, *Staying Human Through the Holocaust*, xv, xvi, xxiii.
366 Mózes, *Staying Human Through the Holocaust*, 13, 36-37, 39, 47, 63.
367 Ibid, 56.
368 Mózes, *Staying Human Through the Holocaust*, 54-55.
369 Ibid, 355-357, 363-364.
370 Mózes, *Staying Human Through the Holocaust*, passim.
371 Ibid, 375.

of the Nagyvárad ghetto to the attention of the Swiss Red Cross, and their chauffeur for having helped with several escapes.[372]

Eva Shainblum (Steinberger)'s memoir, *The Last Time*, effectively conveys a sense of her local urban landscape and currents of national identification among Jews in Oradea during the interwar period. Her family largely identified with the Hungarian-Jewish symbiosis until the ultimate and catastrophic betrayal, and were observant.[373] They lived in a multilingual (and presumably multi-denominational) Jewish neighbourhood. As in Satu Mare, Romanian teachers had to be brought in to the originally Hungarian-speaking educational system.[374] A notion of shelteredness, corollary to the "social sound of silence," pervaded Oradea at the end of its Romanian rule and as Nagyvárad at the beginning of its Hungarian rule, and to an extent even until ghettoization.[375] The next-door refugee neighbours were slated for deportation in the summer of 1941, and Eva's father helped them escape.[376] Eva had little interaction with non-Jews during the uncertain war years, except for her Hungarian maid and her colleagues.[377] After the war, the Magyar housekeeper took over the Steinberger family home.[378]

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[372] Mózes, *Staying Human Through the Holocaust*, 375-376; cf. Case, *Between States*, 191-192, and Dániel A. Lőwy, "Christian Help Provided to Jews of Northern Transylvania during World War II," in Randolph L. Braham and Brewster S. Chamberlin, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Sixty Years Later*, 113.

[373] Eva Shainblum, *The Last Time* in *In Fragile Moments / The Last Time* (The Azrieli Foundation, 2016; general introduction by Louise Vasvári and Shainblum memoir edited by Joyce Rappaport, respectively), 62-68.

[374] Shainblum, *The Last Time*, 62-63. Cf. Author's Interview with Szatmár Holocaust survivor, 24 December 2018, Côte-St. Luc, QC, Canada.

[375] Shainblum, *The Last Time*, 67-68, 70.

[376] Ibid, 68-69.

[377] Shainblum, *The Last Time*, 61, 67-68.

[378] Ibid, 83.

Hodod / Hadad, in Sălaj / Szilágy county, featured a splendid rural isolation and lack of interwar population movement similar to places in highland Maramureş and Subcarpathia. Paul Frenkel, in his memoir *Life Reclaimed*, describes and explains the fraught yet friendly interethnic relations in this small town and its pastoral setting. The introductory emphasis is on Hungarian-Romanian enmity throughout Transylvania (which Frenkel personally remembers, especially during the changeover of sovereignty in September 1940), explaining the different positionalities of Jews and Roma.[379] The lack of a state of the latter is posited as one explanation for their distance from the 'ethnic feud.'[380] And this ethnic dynamic was cross-cut by the large class divide, with the two resident Magyar aristocrats as the locus of power in Hadad – and friendly to the Frenkels.[381] The town seemingly had a Protestant majority, given many Hungarians' affiliation with the Reformed / Calvinist Church and the Germans with the Lutheran one, and Romanians attended a small Catholic chapel.[382] The Frenkels had ethnic German friends, including the Lutheran minister.[383] In Hadad, Roma did masonry and construction work (in addition to playing music and housework), but were not exactly appreciated given their 'outsider' status.[384]

Life Reclaimed features a narrative hinge of the shocking turn from an idyllic rural existence to the deceptive blitzkrieg against the Jews, also emphasizing the bystander problem

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379 Paul Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed: Rural Transylvania, Nazi Camps, and the American Dream* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2013), 16-17.

380 Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed*, 17; cf. Case, *Between States*, 184.

381 Ibid, 17, 31-43.

382 Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed*, 9, 14, 17, 20, 47.

383 Ibid, 20, 25, 26, 40.

384 Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed*, 1, 17-18, 34. Cf. Interview with Szatmár Holocaust survivor, 24 December 2018, Côte-St. Luc, QC, Canada; also see Kürti, *The Remote Borderland*, 73.

with ethnic distinctions. Frenkel's feeling of drastic rupture was accentuated by the lack of discrimination prior to 1944.[385] Frenkel was often invited to participate in the choirs of the Protestant and Armenian Churches, and was a Hungarian nationalist hymn-singing senior Boy Scout.[386] Despite such gestures, Frenkel's Hungarian and ethnic German friends were mostly passive in the wake of the Nazi and gendarmerie invasion of Hadad, playing along with their fear and deception.[387] The previously friendly Hungarian town barber became a zealous enforcer of the new oppressive decrees.[388] After the war, a sense of denial and indifference remained in the town, and the Swabian family (the Richters) with whom Frenkel was friendly gave him a cold greeting, and showed no interest in the fate of his parents. Frenkel eventually discovered that the Richters had plundered the family home.[389] Only the Frenkels' Roma maid provided unqualified sympathy during their ghettoization and deportation.[390] She had previously been loyal and hardworking for the family, and unlike their Hungarian and German friends, was not beset by propagandistic state pressures or overweening political loyalties that contributed to personal betrayals.[391]

These memoirs portray the ironic dual reality of Transylvanian Jews' identification with Hungarian language and culture along with their betrayal at the hands of the irredentist host nation. While the major cities of Transylvania were marked by Hungarians' jealousy of Jews, who quite often thought nothing of Jews' profound loyalty or perceived it as a mere cover for

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385 Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed*, 1, 42 (viz. "the social sound of silence"), 49, 54-58.

386 Ibid, 46-48. See Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, 110-112; Koerner, *How They Lived*, Volume 2, 21-22.

387 Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed*, 53-56, 66, 71, 164.

388 Ibid, 44, 54.

389 Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed*, 122-123, 146, 153, cf. 151-152.

390 Ibid, 56.

391 Ibid, 24, 32.

their 'Romanian corruption,'[392] these historically cosmopolitan places also occasionally featured social bonds of sympathy that translated into material support or rescue for their Jewish populations. This included ethnic Magyars who had long-standing relationships with Jews, the former who were often aristocratic or working-class. In rural and semi-rural locales (e.g. Margitta, Hadad, Nagyilonda, Dés), ethnic Germans and Magyars harshly abandoned Jews to their genocidal fate, or were alternatively caught up in their own self-interest and wartime economic concerns. Romanians had a tendency to provide some kind of help or moral support to Jews, which can be explained by their comparable subject position (aside from Romania's periodic intercession and the Magyars' occasional encouragement of Romanians to convert to 'Hungarian' denominations or change their name)[393] in World War II prior to March 1944, with especially the former under attack in the immediate aftermath of the Second Vienna Award and the latter under attack particularly in the wake of the invasion of the Soviet Union.[394]

Moreover, the correlation of Transylvanian Christian Hungarians' and Romanians' religious denominations with attitudes towards their Jewish neighbours and the region's Jewish population is a question that needs to be addressed with future research. Roma relationships with the various ethnicities in the cosmopolitan cauldron of partitioned Transylvania bear on their victimization and bystanding in 1944, and call for digging through more memoirs and oral historical sources. Another query to be further explored is of the particular causality of the eventual betrayal of North-Transylvanian Magyarized Jews by ethnic Magyars despite their continual allegiance to Hungarian political interests during the various Romanian regimes. This contrasts with minority-resenting Trianon Hungary (soon to be addressed in terms of bystanders

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392 Case, *Between States*, 177; cf. Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 7-8.
393 Case, *Between States*, 130-131, 176.
394 Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, ix, 14-15.

and the Holocaust legacy of their Jewish Question), given the initial common alienation of ethnic Magyars and many Magyarized Jews in the interwar period. This also contrasts with Subcarpathia in the First Czechoslovak Republic, where both Magyars and Ruthenians developed resentments against the Jewish population, largely due to their allegiance to the central Czech government and their attendance of Czech schools. In any case, Magyars of most classes behaved much worse towards the Jews for the entirety of the World War II period.

Memoirs of Holocaust survivors tend to provide information on interethnic and class relations in their hometowns, and the ones I have selected provide these in an analytically significant measure.[395] Transitioning to the conclusion, one can note that survivors' commitment to reconstruct the social portraiture of their respective towns from their mind's eyes to the public audience dovetails with the contemporary scholarly interest in figuring out the positionality of bystanders to the Holocaust, particularly in the Hungarian context of betrayal and plunder. It can be tentatively claimed that North Transylvanian Holocaust memoirs were most representative of suffering from the specific phenomenon of treachery, torture, and ethnic Magyar greed, especially in Nagyvárad.[396]

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[395] The memoirs / chronicles authored by Transylvanian Hasidic Holocaust survivors and fellow community members / interlocutors (i.e. *Holocaust and Rebirth*, and *A Sun and a Shield*) feature notably rich description on interfaith relations that also shed light on interethnic difference.

[396] This is partly inferred from the gruesomeness of description in significant passages in R.L. Braham's *Genocide and Retribution* and Béla Zsolt's *Nine Suitcases*, as well as in all the relevant memoirs. Also see Case, *Between States*, 190.

A Comparative Conclusion[397]

Based on a broad sense of the aforementioned memoirs and secondary sources to which they speak, I will compare the behaviour of ethnically differentiated bystanders to the Holocaust in northeastern Hungarian borderlands to bystanders in Trianon Hungary. This is analytically sensible given the homogeneity of the non-Jewish Magyar population in Hungary proper, with the exception of Germans, and Roma who were victims themselves.[398]

Comparisons are notably relevant for Hungarian-occupied Southern Slovakia (the largest part of the Felvidék / Upper Hungary), directly adjacent to Subcarpathia, where Slovaks, a few Carpatho-Ruthenians, and Roma were the 'other' ethnicities. The latter were particularly vulnerable to victimization themselves, largely due to their racialized statelessness. This contrasts with Romanian peasants and their co-ethnics of other classes in Southern Maramureş and Transylvania, who had a state of ethnic kin waiting to reclaim their territory and have them rejoin the Regat,[399] and a Danubian state deemed geopolitically equal by Axis interstate relations, which could retaliate when the Magyars committed violence or discriminated against them.[400] Carpatho-Ruthenians had an ambiguous and germinating, yet incomplete relationship with statehood (i.e. autonomy during the ephemeral Second Czecho-Slovak Republic), and hence Magyars could make further plans to marginalize them that were more plausible than those for

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[397] My approach here is inspired by the historiographically profound conclusion in Raz Segal's *Genocide in the Carpathians* ("Conclusions, Comparisons, Implications"), but with more ethnic and regional comparisons in addition to national ones.

[398] Regarding resident ethnic Germans (mainly Swabians) vis-à-vis the Hungarian state and the dynamics of assimilation thereof, see Lendvai, *The Hungarians*, 4-5, and Chapter 29.

[399] For use of this term denoting the core territories of the Kingdom of Romania, see Case, *Between States*, xix.

[400] Case, *Between States*, 115-123, Chapter 4 (150-174), and 224-225. Also see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 77.

Slovaks and Romanians -- who had a state in the Axis orbit.[401] The Hungarian annexation of the Bačka / Bácska (part of the Délvidék, coterminous with Vojvodina) region also provides contrast to the previous ethnic cases, since the destruction of the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav state and its association with partisans meant that the military and associated far-right forces could wreak havoc on their civilian population, as they did in January 1942 with the Újvidék / Novi Sad massacre, and with forced population transfers.[402]

Given that ethnicity per se was not the factor influencing real-time responses to the Holocaust,[403] but rather that minority (or 'minoritized') status in the irredentist Hungarian state in a tense dialogue with neighbouring kin states played the most important role, Holocaust scholars should research the 'reverse' cases. What 'bystanding' role did Hungarian minorities of rump Slovakia, for example in Bratislava / Pozsony and Nitra have during the Holocaust there?[404] How did regional Magyars react during the Romanian state's small-scale deportations to Transnistria of targeted Jews in Southern Transylvania? And in the NDH, what was the positionality of ethnic Hungarians vis-à-vis the vicious genocidal violence against Jews and Roma, and regarding the large-scale reciprocal massacres between 'Croats' and 'Bosniaks' on one side, and 'Serbs' on the other?

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[401] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 67; cf. Case, *Between States*, 186; Judit Molnár, ed. *The Holocaust in Hungary: A European Perspective* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2005), 95-97.

[402] Braham, *The Politics of Genocide* (Condensed Edition), 34-37; Molnár, ed. *The Holocaust in Hungary: A European Perspective*, 97-100; Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 74, 120, 169n61.

[403] See Snyder, *Black Earth*, 344. Cf. Segal, "The Modern State, the Question of Genocide, and Holocaust Scholarship," 132.

[404] Cf. Eby, *Hungary at War*, 111.

In her memoir *We Lived in Historical Times* / *Shattered Dreams*, Holocaust survivor Dolly Tiger refers to the Újvidék massacre through the lens of Serbian solidarity towards Jews in mortal danger, such that Serbian 'good bystanders' became victims as well.[405] With Serbians minoritized in both the Bácska and the NDH, and having become a major component of the Partisans, they were more inclined to help a relatively small minority not seeking state dominance during this era.[406]

In Max Eisen's famous memoir, *By Chance Alone*, he describes Holocaust-bystanding reactions of villagers of his native Moldava nad Bodvou / Szepsi, in Hungarian-annexed Southern Slovakia during the 1944 ghettoization process. His family and neighbours were spat on and jeered by the locals, in the presence of gendarmes.[407] The motivation was in part economic: "Many townsfolk who bought goods on credit from Jews like my grandfather were happy they wouldn't have to pay the money back." Among the few who cared about them was their non-Jewish maid Anna, whose dedication to the Eisens was no less than Mari Néni's to the Beregszász Schwartzes and Anikó's to the Clujeni Mózes family.[408] In August-September 1942,

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[405] Dolly Tiger, *We Lived in Historical Times* (Memoirs of Holocaust Survivors in Canada Volume 9e, Mervin Butovsky, Kurt Jonassohn, and Karin Björnson eds.), Part 2 Chapter II, "All Jewish males of Novi Sad were lined up at the bank of the Danube. To show their sympathy and their outrage, the Serbian men came and stood with them. Every tenth male was shot and thrown into the Danube. This was called "decimation."" http://migs.concordia.ca/memoirs/d_tiger/tiger_2.html Also see Dolly Tiger-Chinitz, *Shattered Dreams*, in Ferenc Laczó, ed. *Confronting Devastation: Memoirs of Holocaust Survivors from Hungary* (The Azrieli Foundation, 2019), 13.

[406] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 74, 120, 184n116.

[407] Max Eisen, *By Chance Alone: A Remarkable True Story of Courage and Survival at Auschwitz* (Toronto, ON: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 2016), 60-61.

[408] Eisen, *By Chance Alone*, 40, 61.

the Eisens, deported to Havasalya, were able to buy bread from the local, politically neutral Ruthenians.[409]

Humenné-born Zuzana Sermer, in her memoir, *Survival Kit*, provides the reader with a sense of the sometimes constructive attitudes of religious minorities towards the initial wave of deportations to Auschwitz from rump Slovakia. Considering that the clerical fascist Slovak state was politically and economically dominated by Slovak Catholics, the Protestant and Orthodox were marginalized, and thus had silent sympathy for the Jewish population. Conversion certificates constituted the primary mode of help.[410] An apolitical, well-off Catholic family gave her a place to hide for a while, at risk to themselves (more so than equivalent cases in Hungary).[411] A Roma acquaintance alerted Zuzana to her father's encounter with deportation authorities, thereby dodging that mortal threat.[412] This memoir speaks to the fact that minoritized groups in Slovakia were much more likely to help Jews confronted by the fate of deportations to Auschwitz than was the majority ethno-religious group when politically interested and covetous of property.

These examples of bystander solidarity with Jews from various borderlands of 'Greater Hungary' and its northern neighbour speak to the partial reality of minorities seeing eye to eye with Jews regarding the vast xenophobic and religiously narrow purview of Hungarian and Slovak authorities, and acting accordingly. With resemblance to the case of some Greek Catholic

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409 Ibid, 45.

410 Zuzana Sermer, *Survival Kit* (Toronto, ON: The Azrieli Foundation, 2012), 43ff. And see Snyder, *Black Earth*, 228-229.

411 Sermer, *Survival Kit*, 38-40.

412 Ibid, 44-47.

priests in Galicia, many of these minoritized people could influence their co-ethnics and resist majoritarian domination by separating themselves from the genocidal project of plundering Jews.[413]

Ethnic Magyar Bystanders / Hungary Proper

Ethnicity was not a salient marker of bystander difference in Trianon Hungary. In Kisvárda, Hungarians expressed their betrayal of their Jewish co-nationals through their body language, as observed by Isabella Katz Leitner: "They stood lining the streets, many of them smiling, some hiding their smiles. Not a tear. Not a good-bye. They were the good people, the happy people."[414] She also sheds light on opaque yet intense aspects of Magyar-Jewish relations earlier on: "Anti-Semitism [...] was the crude reality... always present in the fabric of life. [...] They really hate us, I would think. It certainly felt that way."[415] This is in a context of a provincial town which Katz Leitner recalls as sophisticated (relative to rural Northeastern Hungary and Subcarpathia), where one could try to be 'cosmopolitan.'[416] Zsuzsanna Fischer Spiro notes in the interwar period that in nearby Tornyospálca, the Catholic school was more antisemitic than the Protestant school, and in Kisvárda and its environs there was a group of Hungarian men stealing from Jews and also scapegoating them.[417] Upon return to Kisvárda after

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413 Snyder, *Black Earth*, 287-291.

414 Isabella Leitner, *Fragments of Isabella: A Memoir of Auschwitz* (New York: Open Road, 1978 [2018]), 18. This concise masterpiece features a lyrical, visceral horror and soulful poignancy much akin to Elie Wiesel's *Night*.

415 Leitner, *Fragments of Isabella*, 17.

416 Leitner, *Fragments of Isabella*, 15.

417 Zsuzsanna Fischer Spiro, *In Fragile Moments* in *In Fragile Moments / The Last Time*, 4,6.

the war, all of their property was gone, their empty house presumably looted by insensitive neighbours.[418]

In Vaja and other villages in the region, peasants were not particularly impacted in their mentalities by the torrent of antisemitic propaganda from the Hungarian press and media in the latter part of the 1930s up until the Holocaust. And their seeming indifference as onlookers to the Holocaust[419] may have reflected a resignation to fate as per their political quietism, given that virtually any activist endeavour on the part of the peasants (in their living memory and much further back) was quashed by their powerful lords, and by the gendarmerie of a previous generation.[420]

East-Central Hungary provides some interesting cases which both confirm previous findings and also encompass exceptional turns of events. In both Nádudvar and Balkány (both more or less in the vicinity of Debrecen, but the latter in Szabolcs County), Leslie Meisels' family was particularly well-integrated into Magyardom, and had generally positive relationships with Magyar Christian townsfolk. However, there was the occasional "dirty Jew" remark in both places.[421] The Meisels' patrilineal reputation and their deep-seated, professional ties did provide the family with some barriers against the rise of legislative and popular antisemitism.[422] Meisels

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[418] Fischer Spiro, *In Fragile Moments*, 32-33.

[419] Kalman Naves, *Journey to Vaja*, 175-177.

[420] Nagy-Talavera, *The Green Shirts and the Others*, 23, 59-61. Also see Eby, *Hungary at War*, 8.

[421] Leslie Meisels, *Suddenly the Shadow Fell*, 7-8; cf. Fischer Spiro, *In Fragile Moments*, 6; Leitner, *Fragments of Isabella*, 17; Reinitz, *Wrestling with Life*, 15; Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 27, 35; Author's Interview with Szatmár Holocaust survivor, 24 December 2018, Côte-St. Luc, QC, Canada.

[422] Meisels, *Suddenly the Shadow Fell*, 11-15.

distinguishes between categories of Hungarian bystander to antisemitism in his classroom, a microcosm of Hungarian society at large: "divided [...] between verbal antisemites, sympathizers who didn't act on their beliefs, and the majority, who just remained silent. People let Jews be antagonized as long as they themselves were left alone."[423] This has parallels with the family's deportation march: [after describing the plunder-happy Arrow Cross] "Hundreds of people stood silently, which was painfully disturbing. Up until then, I had thought better of most people in my hometown."[424] This contrasts with earlier in the ghetto itself, where Jews did occasionally receive care packages from their Christian acquaintances.[425]

The contrast in the gendarmes' behaviour between the Nádudvar Ghetto and the Debrecen Ghetto is both logical and remarkable. In the former the gendarmes were local, and therefore comparatively lenient (as with policemen in Debrecen),[426] whereas in Debrecen they were foreign to the city and region, and having no loyalties there, were mercilessly cruel.[427] This relates to Raz Segal's argument about imported violence in Subcarpathia, and extends its purview.[428] Given that the Meisels were deported to Strasshof instead of to Auschwitz, it can be surmised that the brutality of the gendarmes inversely correlated with their knowledge of the

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423 Ibid, 16.

424 Meisels, *Suddenly the Shadow Fell*, 23.

425 Ibid, 22.

426 See Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 246-248; and Cole, *Traces of the Holocaust*, 107-113. For primary source evidence of policemen resisting the KEOKH by helping Jewish refugees, see Judy Weissenberg Cohen, *A Cry in Unison: Sistering for Survival* (Toronto, ON: Azrieli Memoir, 2020), 21-22.

427 Meisels, *Suddenly the Shadow Fell*, 22, 24.

428 Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 56-57, 62-63; and see Braham, *The Politics of Genocide* (Condensed Edition), 70; Vági, Csősz, Kádár, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide*, 104.

probability of the Jews' return.[429] Meanwhile, bystanders to the Debrecen Jews' procession to the ghetto tended to be non-supportive and unhelpful.[430]

Debrecen is famed for its religious diversity, akin to Transylvania. It was known as the 'Calvinist Rome' back in the day.[431] Considering that ethnic difference was not salient here among Christians, a foray into its denominational diversity could help future researchers parse the varied behaviours and types of Holocaust bystander in Debrecen and its rural hinterland. The denominational aspect of ethnic Magyar attitudes towards ghettoized Jews here is slightly clarified through "The Mother Book" interventions of Protestant civil servant Erzsébet Dávid, who gave Christian birth certificates to Debrecen Jews in 1944.[432] Moreover, Judy Weissenberg Cohen inferred that her family's providers of food in the Debrecen Ghetto were Seventh-day Adventists (a Protestant Sabbatarian group), demonstrating that Trianon-area citizens on the margins of normative Hungarian Christian denominations were less prone to give into hateful peer pressure and more likely to substantively help.[433]

West of Budapest, the particularity of 'majority' bystanders becomes clearer. In Székesfehérvár as Jews were being ghettoized / deported, the surrounding population was

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429 See Zsolt, *Nine Suitcases*, 37.

430 See Leah Waller (Bissi Edith), *Holocaust Memories 1944-1945: The Story of a Survivor from Debrecen, Hungary*. (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018), 4; Judy Weissenberg Cohen, *A Cry in Unison: Sistering for Survival*, 29, 32. But also see Vági, Csősz, Kádár, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide,* 299, regarding Debrecen clerks who tried to save Jews by falsifying their ancestry documents.

431 Kalman Naves, *Journey to Vaja*, 128-129.

432 Charles Fenyvesi, *When Angels Fooled the World*, 149-158.

433 Judy Weissenberg Cohen, *A Cry in Unison*, 31.

clapping.[434] They were infected by greed and envy promulgated by wartime antisemitic propaganda. During the interwar period, however, it has been noted in nearby Kisláng that the familiarity and understanding between Jewish and Christian Magyars was such that Jewish storeowners could trust their Christian customers to leave money they owed in the cashiers' bin on the Sabbath, rather than handing it to them.[435]

Further west in Transdanubia, in Sárvár, the barrier of silence and shelteredness was particularly intense, more so than further east in Greater Hungary. Jews in this area saw Hungary as civilized and incapable of systematic brutality and betrayal. This made it all the more shocking when the catastrophe arrived.[436] Alice Lok Cahana said regarding the deportation from the local brickyard and the onlookers: "Marching through our town was like a scene out of the Bible. From ancient time. I could not tell you the humiliation I felt; carrying our baggage, passing our house, looking into our window, *seeing the people who occupied our house looking at us, and nobody stopping*. They marched us to a railroad. Nobody says, "Come on. You cannot do it." On a June day, 1944, 20th century men cannot be just taken from their homes, from their town, from their house, from their belonging, marched into a cattle train, seventy people."[437] Lok Cahana's use of the phrasing "a scene out of the Bible" denotes the historic gravitas of this

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[434] Conversation with Székesfehérvár Holocaust survivor, 24 June 2017.

[435] Conversation with Székesfehérvár Holocaust survivor, 6 May 2017; cf. Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 268-269.

[436] RG-50.030.0051, Oral History Interview with Alice Lok Cahana, 4 December 1990, The Jeff and Toby Herr Oral History Archive, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C.https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn504445 https://collections.ushmm.org/oh_findingaids/RG-50.030.0051_trs_en.pdf Transcript, pp. 3-10.

[437] Alice Lok Cahana interview (Transcript), 9. Emphasis mine.

process of dehumanization, accentuating the betrayal by and indifference of the ethnic Magyar population.

The selected accounts, in their eventful vignettes and general interfaith observations, provide insight into both contingent and longer-term social relations before and during World War II throughout lands under Hungarian rule. Given ground-level and personal observations of the psychological texture of relationships between different faiths and ethnicities in the shadow of the Holocaust, these survivor-memoirists expand the ambit of the "history of emotions" paradigm that Raz Segal has recommended to use for writing about mass violence and its specific social positionalities in multiethnic borderlands.[438] Resentment (and not hatred) in light of the majority native population being ruled by ethnic others (to whom Jews transferred their loyalties) in the interwar era can in part explain the tendency of Carpatho-Ruthenians to be more reluctant to help Jews in the spring in 1944 than Romanians in Southern Máramaros. Hateful jealousy and the drive for plunder, affectively enhanced by ethnically specific propaganda, was much more common among ethnic Hungarian bystanders. This nuanced overall spectrum of emotions is generally evidenced in the memoirs. On another note, given the petty fractiousness of the politics of language in the Montreal setting, it is possible to conjecture that Holocaust survivors living in that city reflect in their 'old country' accounts the emotional importance of language use in ethnonational identification there.[439]

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[438] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 12-13, 45-50, 56-63, 104-108, 114-119; "Becoming Bystanders," 129-156.

[439] Cf. Author's Interview with Szatmár Holocaust survivor, 24 December 2018, Côte St. Luc, QC, Canada; and see Case, *Between States*.

Given the details of "the old country" in the kind of primary sources I have used, possibilities abound for their future use by scholars in discerning patterns of social and economic interaction on a regional basis, on both the everyday and the more macro scales. The study of tense and assimilationist ethnic triads in historical context can also be enriched through the use of memoirs and oral histories as sources – I have in mind the study of Jews vis-à-vis the two Hungarian-Romanian Wars of 1918-1919 and 1944-1945, respectively. The main limitation I can think of is that ethnic identities may be recorded as a given, when there is room for them to be problematized (whether between Carpatho-Ruthenian and Hutsul or even between Magyar and Romanian)[440] given nationalist educational policies, and networks of interethnic interaction both contingent and self-conscious. As stated in the Introduction, the use of Brubaker's cognitive lens on ethnicity can be of help here. Some of the sources I used do not assume correspondence between language use, ethnic tropes, and national identifications, notably *Nine Suitcases* in its critical problematizing of very many social identities and phenomena.[441] Béla Zsolt's noting of helpers with dual Romanian-Hungarian identity can speak to Chapter 3 ("People Between States") of *Between States*. Ben Younger's account of the ethnic Romanian who liaised with Magyar gendarmes in their language, imbibed their antisemitism, and wrought cleavages among fellow Romanians also productively complicates ethnonational group identity on the individual scale.[442] Furthermore, Munci Katz's nuanced account of her Christian friends does not take the link between chosen language in social interactions and national identity for granted, and plausibly indicates pressure by the aggressive Magyarizing regime of 1939-1944 on her Slavic

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[440] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 114-115; Case, *Between States*, 123-128, 140-144.
[441] See especially footnotes 362-363.
[442] Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 42.

and Romanian friends, especially outside of private spaces such as her Rahó home.[443] (cf. the phenomenon of national indifference in face of nationalistic regimes)[444]

A lacuna crying out for future inquiry is that of the relationships between Roma and the various ethnic groups in Hungarian borderlands and of adjacent historically multiethnic places, taking into account regional variation and the occupational differences between Roma. Oral historical and memoir sources by Roma should be included in future appraisals of the dynamic interethnic relationships between Hungarian borderland Jews and their Christian neighbours.[445] Using primary sources by Roma and Jewish survivors[446] will help salient audiences perceive the multidimensional agency of Roma, in light of them being frequently sympathetic bystanders to

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[443] See Paragraph 3 of this thesis.

[444] For a taste of the dynamic scholarship on national indifference in multiethnic lands, see Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900-1948* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008); Theodora Dragostinova, *Between Two Motherlands: Nationality and Emigration Among the Greeks of Bulgaria, 1900-1949* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011). Also see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 23, 62, 140-141n23-25. Joan Ferencz in *Not A Kitchen Table Conversation*, 13, gestures towards Sighet Jews' national indifference and local Romanians' acceptance of this, which is relevant to historiographical remarks in Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 23.

[445] Although Roma have had very different class positions, social contracts, and relationship with state authorities than from Jews during 20th century Hungarian history, and notably during the age of the Dual Monarchy (as well as much earlier), their use of the Magyar language mirrors that of Jews and their Magyarization. This is evident in their Hungarian names. [e.g. 2016-2020 Roma Genocide Memorials at the Montreal Holocaust Museum] See János Bársony and Ágnes Daróczi, eds. *Pharrajimos: The Fate of the Roma during the Holocaust* (Budapest, New York: Romedia Foundation and IDEBATE Press, 2008), passim.

[446] For memoirs of Hungarian and borderland Jewish survivors that substantially mention Roma aside from those explicitly addressed in this thesis, see George Reinitz, *Wrestling with Life: From Hungary to Auschwitz to Montreal*, 6, 15-17. Reinitz notes the subaltern status of the local Roma, who were unjustly shunned by both the Jewish and ethnic Magyar communities (who themselves did not mingle with each other) of Szikszó unless they were hired for music-playing, woodcutting and other physical tasks. And see Younger & Younger, *The Last Train to Auschwitz*, 129-133 (addressing their desire to have their history recorded, with emphasis on surviving the Pharrajimos, see 132); Michael Mason, *A Name Unbroken*, 5-6; Albert Halm, *My Handwriting Saved Me*, 71-73, 239. Also see Charles Fenyvesi, *When Angels Fooled the World*, Chapter 3, 106-110, 117-127.

the Jews during the Hungarians' genocidal turn against them in 1944, and as victims of the Pharrajimos by the same Hungarian state authorities and gendarmerie. Doing so would address a relatively neglected corner of the academic historiography, and play a role in sensitizing publics to the systematic physical and epistemic violence that Roma face from various state institutions and historical narratives.

Demonstrating the importance of a transnational approach, we should turn further afield to comparisons on bystanders and the dynamics of risk and state sovereignty that underpin the bystanders' political, material, and social realities. A logical first choice is Romania, the rival of Hungary for Axis favour. The jockeying between the two states to flatter the Nazis for the purposes of (re)claiming Transylvania influenced much of their World War II-era history, including deportations and other genocidal outbursts against the Jews.[447] While Romania of the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century was known for its xenophobia towards its Jewish population, disbelief in the warning signs of the colossal antisemitic wave of violence was not uncommon. They, too, were boxed into a wall of silence vis-à-vis the vast anti-Jewish depredations of Nazi settler-colonized Poland.[448]

Political scientists Diana Dumitru and Carter Johnson have empirically discovered the difference in bystander reactions between the deportation policies in Bessarabia versus those in Transnistria.[449] This is primarily on the basis of interwar state policy, with the distinguishing

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[447] See Case, *Between States*, passim, esp. 182-198.

[448] See Felicia (Steigman) Carmelly, *Across the Rivers of Memory* (Toronto, ON: Azrieli Memoir, 2015), 22.

[449] Diana Dumitru and Carter Johnson, "Constructing Interethnic Conflict and Cooperation: Why Some People Harmed Jews and Others Helped Them during the Holocaust in

mark of Romanian antisemitism in the former and formal Soviet secular inclusiveness in the latter. In both regions Romanian (para)military forces encouraged locals to join in the victimizing of Jews.[450] While the authors address the alternative explanation of marginalized Ukrainians in Transnistria wanting to help Jews as a fellow minority, they consider the counter-evidence of their popular antisemitism and pogrom participation.[451] Furthermore, the variable in question here is that of the state's long-term relationship with minorities, eliciting differential responses which may or may not be on an ethnic basis (not merely ethnicity itself, which was often taken for granted).[452] Romanian and Nazi forces tried to provoke pogroms, and were generally not successful relative to their genocidal goals, although some Romanians took advantage of Jews' precarity of life and zero legal protection to plunder from them. Timothy Snyder thus ascribes a more positive sense to the passive bystander here. To this dynamic of local responses to the Transnistrian deportations Snyder adds the observation that women were more likely to help the Jewish victims.[453] Vladimir Solonari has attributed this to the gendered parameters of 'traditional' peasant norms, for the Ukrainian women of Transnistria.[454]

In France, whose fall enabled the Soviet Union to demand northeastern borderlands from Romania, civil society, rural communities, and minority religious groups resisted the Vichy

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Romania," *World Politics* 63 no. 1 (January 2011), 2-5. And see Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 135n42.

[450] Dumitru and Carter, 4.

[451] Ibid, 31-32.

[452] Cf. Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, Chapter 3 "Ethnicity as Cognition" (with Mara Loveman and Peter Stamatov) and Ch. 4 "Ethnic and Nationalist Violence" (with David Laitin).

[453] Snyder, *Black Earth*, 232.

[454] "On the Persistence of Moral Judgment: Local Perpetrators in Transnistria as Seen by Survivors and Their Christian Neighbors," in Claire Zalc and Tal Bruttmann, eds. *Microhistories of the Holocaust* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2017), 196-202, esp. 198.

state's antisemitic agenda, and likewise sheltered Jews.[455] One could draw parallels between Protestant reverends of France and distinguished Greek Catholic priests of Galicia in terms of their minority status and tendency towards empathetic conviction to help Jews during the Holocaust.[456] Such an assessment would be decidedly more complicated for Hungary and Transylvania, in particular, where Christian denominations (especially Greek Catholics) were ethnicized in historically contingent ways (given Hungary's centuries-long balance of power between Catholics and Calvinists, much unlike France and Poland), all the more so after the Second Vienna Award.[457]

For the variegated national and regional units in Nazi-occupied Europe, it is plausible to postulate an inverse relationship between statelessness, oppressive racialization by the Nazis, and the prospects of helping Jews in dire straits. Conversely, one can articulate an empirical relationship between state sovereignty in the shadow of German hegemony, comparative racial privilege in Nazi eyes, and possibilities of rescuing Jews. We should begin comparative illustrations with the destruction of the Polish state. Nazi officials, particularly Hitler's inner circle and the SS, saw Poland as a *terra nullius* whose existence as a modern polity they retroactively annulled.[458] This was both the consequence and the cause of their placing of Poles

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[455] Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001), 248-249, etc; Snyder, *Black Earth*, 229-231; Braham, *Genocide and Retribution*, 7-8 (Regarding Hungary's opportunistic demands for Romania to give up Transylvania to them in wake of the Soviet ultimatum); Eby, *Hungary at War*, 14.

[456] Michael R. Marrus, "French Protestant Churches and the Persecution of the Jews in France," in Carol Rittner, Stephen D. Smith, Irena Steinfeldt, eds. *The Holocaust and the Christian World* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2000), 88-91. Snyder, *Black Earth*, 287-291.

[457] See Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*; Case, *Between States*, 131, 140-144, 287; Victor Karády, "The Ashkenaz of the South: Hungarian Jewry in the Long Nineteenth Century" in Guesnet, Lupovitch, and Polonsky, eds. *Polin* vol. 31: 108,112.

[458] Snyder, *Black Earth*, 16-19, 105-112, also see 285.

as relatively low in the European racial hierarchy.[459] One contextualizing point to keep in mind is that Poles were more plundered and oppressed by Nazis than virtually all able-bodied European non-Jews and non-Roma, including Hungarian and Romanian Christians. Furthermore, Poles (whether policeman or peasant) were explicitly threatened with the death penalty if caught sheltering or otherwise assisting a Jew,[460] whereas in the SS-occupied Netherlands, their rescuing counterparts were, comparatively speaking, mildly punished.[461] This was in large part because of the Nazi view that the Dutch were racial kin of Germans.[462] There was a sort of race-based lenience in play for them, given the contrast that in the General Government and occupied Soviet Union (which epitomized statelessness in the Nazi colonial form) the punishment for hiding or harbouring a Jew was death.[463] This also meant an incredible endurance necessary for Polish, Ukrainian, and Baltic rescuers to keep their families and refugees fed and out of the realm of suspicion for the lengthy Nazi occupation of Poland (relative to Hungary).[464] This meant that rescuers lost their 'status' and turned into bystanders, but not necessarily for a lack of effort for

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[459] Bergen, *War & Genocide*, 4, 39-40, 129-145. Snyder, *Black Earth*, 16-17, 106-107, 125, cf. Chapters 2-4 (29-33, 44ff, 55, 70-76, 86-99, esp. 94-96 regarding the contingency of the geopolitical and diplomatic status of Poland and by extension the racial-legal status of ethnic Poles); Jan Grabowski, *Hunt for the Jews*, 23, 24. Compare with Slovakia's nominal independence, where the Slovaks' complaints against interwar Czech rule were used as a foil for the Nazis' destruction of the Czechoslovak state. (Snyder, *Black Earth*, 228) Also cf. the NDH, whose Croat authorities had aggressively opposed interwar Yugoslavia. (Snyder, *Black Earth*, 227-228) And cf. Ukraine, where groups agitating for independence were manipulated as a political resource by Nazi entrepreneurs of violence. (Snyder, *Black Earth*, 131-136, 155-156) This shows that Nazis' racial perceptions of various Slavic peoples were not set in stone, but directly correlated with their geopolitical and genocidal goals, and could ebb and flow based on pragmatic needs, especially in the case of the Nazi-occupied lands that were previously subjected to the Molotov-von Ribbentrop Pact.

[460] Snyder, *Black Earth*, 205-206, 220; Jan Grabowski, *Hunt for the Jews*, 46, 55-58, 257n20; Jan. T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*, 87-90.

[461] Snyder, *Black Earth*, 243-244.

[462] Snyder, *Black Earth*, 243.

[463] Snyder, *Black Earth*, 220-221; cf. Grabowski, *Hunt for the Jews*, 66.

[464] Grabowski, *Hunt for the Jews*, 130, 154-155; Snyder, *Black Earth*, 316-317.

their wards. In some cases, they turned into perpetrators, murdering the Jews they previously sheltered and fed.[465]

However, in Greater Hungary, while there was a torrent of threats and peer pressure threatening those who tried to help or hide Jews, the punishment was rarely death, and there were limits in enforcing these decrees given that the Nazis were seriously understaffed.[466] With the remainder of distorted sovereignty that Hungary had in the spring of 1944, even though Jews were in imminent genocidal danger, their neighbours were not in any danger beyond the wartime situation coming closer to home. This contrasts with the Poles' oppressions as context for their socioeconomic relations and enmities with Jews, and means (with some nuance) that the judgement of history can fall more heavily on Hungarian bystanders than on Polish ones.[467] On the other hand, 1945-1948 pogroms in Poland (Kielce) were more intense than the equivalent in Hungary (e.g. Kunmadaras, Miskolc, Ózd), and represented an important postwar continuity of slandering and othering.[468] The contrast is even more stark vis-à-vis Subcarpathian Ruthenia, where there were no postwar pogroms.[469] This can be explained knowing the Ruthenians' and

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[465] Grabowski, *Hunt for the Jews*, 152-153; Snyder, *Black Earth*, 313. Regarding Poles perpetration of pogroms and the link with double collaboration, see Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors*, passim, esp. 75, 87-90, 95-112. Also see Raz Segal, "The Modern State, the Question of Genocide, and Holocaust Scholarship," 130.

[466] This may also relate to the discourse of 'racial lenience' for non-Slavic bystanders.

[467] See Amos N. Guiora, *The Crime of Complicity*, (Netherlands) 26-28, 42, 51, 76-80, 96-100, 124-128, 142-161, (Hungary) 35, 43-51, 60, 115-117, 165-180, 203.

[468] See Zsuzsanna Agora, "Holocaust Remembrance in Hungary after the Fall of Communism," and Victor Karády, "The Ashkenaz of the South," 111, both in eds. François Guesnet, Howard Lupovitch and Antony Polonsky, eds. *Polin* vol. 31: 111 and 431, respectively; *Hunt for the Jews*, 163, 172 (on Jan Gross' *Fear: Antisemitism in Poland after Auschwitz*); Gross, *Neighbors*, 80, 95-101ff. Also see Mónika Kovács, "Global and Local Holocaust Remembrance" in *The Holocaust in Hungary: Seventy Years Later*, 239-242.

[469] Segal, *Genocide in the Carpathians*, 18, 118, 187-188n143; "Becoming Bystanders," 154n80.

regional Romanians' clear awareness of *Hungarians and Germans* (and not their fellow oppressed minorities) being the perpetrators of genocidal actions against the Jews of these regions, and of infrequently taking benefit from Jewish property that was plundered by the Hungarian gendarmerie and civil service.

As Professor Bergholz asserts throughout *Violence as a Generative Force* regarding the considerable potential of violence on an ethnic axis to reconfigure social relations and the dynamics of group memory, so too with bystanders to such mass violence.[470] This often varied on a rural-urban basis *intersecting with ethnicity and class*, meaning that a rural Romanian peasant of Maramureş was more likely to rise to the occasion in the spring of 1944 than a middle-class Hungarian in rural or urban Transylvania, generally speaking. Aristocratic Magyars of Beregszász, Nagyszőllős[471], or Hadad[472] tended to have more sympathy for their Jewish neighbours than their counterparts elsewhere in the northeastern Hungarian borderlands, but in the case of Beregszász perhaps not as much as the Romanian peasants of Maramureş. It should also be clear that throughout the northeastern Hungarian borderlands, it had generally been déclassé middle-class Magyar nationalists who were the primary 'bad bystanders' and perpetrators, while ordinary people (particularly of the Ruthenian and Romanian ethnic minorities) not only shunned violence during the Holocaust period, but did so earlier, and at times offered assistance, ranging from moral support to material aid.

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[470] Bergholz, *Violence as a Generative Force*, Epilogue, especially 315.

[471] Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 55; Papp, *Outcasts*, 127-128; Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 271.

[472] Frenkel, *Life Reclaimed*, 56-57.

Though the sovereignty of the Hungarian state in the spring of 1944 was somewhat compromised and distorted by the Imrédyists, and others who were loyal to the directives of the deportation masterminds, ordinary Hungarians had a sort of leeway that those in Nazi-created zones of statelessness did not have.[473] Furthermore, Magyars generally failed to use the Nazis' relative leniency towards them as leverage to attenuate torturous plundering against their co-national Jews.[474] Rather, they tended to use this privilege to get a substantial cut of the plunder. This opportunism proved soon to be a *generative force* of antisemitism (and not only its consequence) even among those who were greedy in a non-ideological way. When survivors of the Holocaust in Greater Hungary returned from their colossal ordeals of slavery and vast surroundings of death, the Magyars they encountered were often recalcitrant, and frequently

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[473] Snyder, *Black Earth*, 237, also see Michael Mason, Tim Cole ed. *A Name Unbroken*, xvii, 13. Comparisons can also be made in the East-Central European Axis context, most notably of the non-Serbs in the Kulen Vakuf, Lika, and Donji Lapac areas in face of Ustaša-perpetrated mass killings against Orthodox villagers / "Serbs." In these locales in July 1941, the legitimacy of authority of the Ustašas were limited, and thus villagers had the freedom to help / rescue those coded as "Serbs" at that time. See Bergholz, *Violence as a Generative Force*, 134-139. Bergholz then contrasts this specific regional leeway for "co-ethnics" of Ustašas with other areas of the NDH at the time where there were real fears of reprisal among the non-Serb populace, which then spread to the Kulen Vakuf region, see ibid, 139-144. And cf. fears of reprisal among moderate Hutu during the Rwandan Genocide, see ibid, 134-135, 362n159 (cf. 364), and Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2006), Chapter 5.

[474] While it is true that prison sentences were a distinct possibility among those Magyars (and more so regarding the minoritized ethnicities of Romanians and Ruthenians), and even among midwives entrusted to conduct the deplorable body searches of ghettoized Jews, (see Vági, Csősz, Kádár, *The Holocaust in Hungary: Evolution of a Genocide*, 194) death was rarely the result of disobedience. This also compares in a sense with the even more intense case of ethnic German Order Police and Einsatzgruppen not being punished for refusing to participate in mass shooting of Jews and others, and yet they almost always still did it. (Snyder, *Black Earth*, 178, 190-191, cf. 147-148) But as Jan Grabowski and Timothy Snyder demonstrate in the General Government and in the territories of the occupied Western Soviet Union (i.e. zones of consecutive state destruction and radical statelessness), the penalty for many Slavic peoples for not partaking in anti-Jewish actions was death or at least the pronounced, plausible threat of it that was actualized on many occasions. (Snyder, *Black Earth*, 195, 198)

refused to return property that they had stolen.[475] To illustrate, there was even the accursed blood libel in Budapest, and the common issue of ordinary Magyars' hostile refusal to accept Jews reclaiming their property in Kunmadaras and Győr.[476] László Csősz has accounted for a minimum of 250 antisemitic outbreaks in Hungary in the three years after World War II, thus showing the prevalence of the denial of plunder and a Hungarian inability to come to terms with their moral losses and overwhelming, repressed guilt.[477] This was primarily a rural phenomenon due to the thoroughness of plunder and genocidal deportations that affected the Jews of provincial Hungary, although Budapest was not spared. It also explains the further flight of Jews from rural Hungary post-October 1956, due to antisemitic incidents even then.[478]

What would later be termed "collective narcissism" in the post-1989 Hungarian memory culture, along with the wartime reality of plunder, were a generative force for ethnic Hungarians to justify their generally problematic place on the spectrum of bystanding.[479] That has been a nationalistic 'tunnel vision' which can be corrected, in part, through the appraisal of Hungarian

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[475] Zsuzsanna Agora, "Holocaust Remembrance in Hungary after the Fall of Communism," in eds. François Guesnet, Howard Lupovitch and Antony Polonsky, *Polin* vol. 31: *Poland and Hungary: Jewish Realities Compared*, 430-431. See also the film by Ferenc Török, "1945," on a provincial Hungarian village's collective hysteria and mutual recriminations upon hearing news of the return of two Holocaust-surviving Jews from the town.

[476] Agora in *Polin* vol. 31, 431.

[477] Ibid, 431, passim, and 447-448ff regarding the complex dynamics of historical memory and 'competing victimhood.' See Iván T. Berend, "The Revival of Anti-Semitism in Post-Communist Hungary: The Early 1990s," 167; Alice Freifeld, "Identity on the Move: Hungarian Jewry between Budapest and the DP Camps," 189-190, both in Braham and Chamberlin, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Sixty Years Later*, and see Laczó, *Hungarian Jews in the Age of Genocide*, 9.

[478] Agora in *Polin*, vol. 31, 432. Also see Kalman Naves, *Shoshanna's Story*, 115-119; Ibolya Szalai Grossman and Andy Réti, *Stronger Together* (Toronto, ON: Azrieli Memoir), 75.

[479] Agora in *Polin*. vol. 31, 449-452. Also see Andrea Pető, "'Non-Remembering' the Holocaust in Hungary and Poland," in the same volume. And see Freifeld, "Identity on the Move," in Braham and Chamberlin, eds. *The Holocaust in Hungary: Sixty Years Later*, 177-181, 184-185.

Holocaust survivors' memoirs (especially on the 'bystander problem') and their visions regarding ethnic and national identification.

Jan Gross argued in 2015 that post-Soviet Eastern European countries have not been addressing the refugee crisis in a dignified way due to their inability to come to terms with their role in the Holocaust.[480] Hungary's error here is all the more egregious, given its relative privilege vis-à-vis the Nazis until the very end of the war, its pioneering embrace of the mafia state with its narrow nationalist mythology, and its mistreatment of Roma and refugees. The dynamic of the 'bad bystander' thus continues.

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[480] Jan Grabowski brought this article to my attention, during his presentation on national memory and the Holocaust in Poland, at Dawson College (29 October 2018). (https://museeholocauste.ca/en/news-and-events/jan-grabowski/) Jan Gross, "*Die Osteuropäer haben kein Schamgefühl"* Die Welt, September 13, 2015. https://www.welt.de/debatte/kommentare/article146355392/Die-Osteuropaeer-haben-kein-Schamgefuehl.html

Heather Horn, "Is Eastern Europe Any More Xenophobic Than Western Europe? Investigating a stereotype of the refugee crisis" The Atlantic, October 16, 2015. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/10/xenophobia-eastern-europe-refugees/410800/ (And see the 'Hungarian Spectrum' blog, by Éva S. Balogh, which eloquently critiques historically distorted polemics on Hungarian othering)

Guesnet, Lupovitch, and Polonsky, eds. Introduction to *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* vol. 31, *Poland and Hungary: Jewish Realities Compared*, 25-26.

Also see Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe*, Epilogue.

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