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Building the Past: Historical Writing on the Jews of the Bohemian Crown Lands in the Early Modern Period

Abstract: Scholarship on the history of Jews in the early modern period, especially European Jewry, has flourished in recent years, clearly demonstrating that the period from c.1500 to c.1750 should be seen as distinct from both medieval and modern Jewish history. Mobility of people and information, changing relationships among rabbinic leaders and communal organizations, and the evolving nature of Jewish identity are among the characteristics that have been noted as unique to this period. This article surveys how historical scholarship related to Bohemian Jewry fits in that context, and suggests directions for moving that scholarship forward. Today's historiography has grown from foundations laid in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century *Wissenschaft des Judentums* framework, by way of the establishment of the Jewish Museum in Prague and scholarly activities undertaken there, through the difficult years of World War II and Communist rule. Building on that tradition, the strengths of current historical writing on early modern Bohemian Jewry include material and print culture. Room remains for the development of broader, more synthetic analyses that link this regional history more closely with its central European and Jewish early modern surroundings. More research on specific areas such as Bohemian Jewish history through the lens of gender analysis, wide-ranging social history, and more, together with improved integration with broader historiographical trends, would both shed light on historical processes in the Bohemian Lands and improve understanding of early modern Jewish history as a whole.

Keywords: Bohemia, Moravia, Prague, Bohemian Crown Lands, Jewish history, Czech history, historical writing, historiography, early modern period, material culture, gender.

Among the Prague Jewish Quarter's grand monuments, the venerable Pinkas Synagogue is a particularly impressive presence. When built in the sixteenth century, it would have been even more impressive, standing higher above eye level than it does today—the street level has risen up around it. Bearing certain similarities to the magnificent Vladislav Hall at Prague Castle, which was built about thirty years earlier, the Pinkas Synagogue manifests a mix of late Gothic and Renaissance features.[1] A Torah ark of late Gothic style was uncovered during excavations in the 1950s; the *almemor* (elevated central platform for Torah reading) features stonework belonging to the transitional period between Gothic and Renaissance; a Renaissance portal frames the entrance.[2]

This synagogue, then, in its very architecture, may symbolize the onset, for Prague's Jews, of the early modern period (from c.1500 to c.1750); it is part medieval, part early modern, and, in that design, well integrated with its non-Jewish architectural surroundings. It was built by what one could reasonably call, in this particular context, the parvenu Horowitz family, who had migrated, apparently from the town of Hořovice (Horschowitz or Horowitz in German), and established itself in Prague within the past generation, vying for control of its Jewish leadership.[3] As part of a new Ashkenazi *élite* emerging at this time, the Horowitz family and the establishment of its own, ornate "private" synagogue in Prague may also stand for social, economic, and political shifts that characterized northern European Jewry's transition from the Middle Ages to the early modern period.

In this essay, the transitional nature of the Pinkas Synagogue as representative of a particular historical period serves as an introduction to the main topic of discussion: a review of the scholarly literature about the history of the Jews of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown (that is, of Bohemia, Moravia, and Austrian Silesia) in the early modern period. As it happens, the most recent period in the historiography of Jews of this region, from the Velvet Revolution of late 1989 until today, corresponds closely with a period of intense examination and redefinition of "early modernity" as it applies to Jewish history. It is appropriate, then, to view current historical writing on Bohemian Jews particularly in relation to the way the general category of Jewish European "early modernity" applies to that historiography, and to ask what this slice of Jewish history in particular could add to our understanding of early modern Jewry as a whole. What follows, therefore, opens with a historical overview of early scholarship on Bohemian Jewish history, with an emphasis on studies of the early modern period, then looks at the development of the category "early modern Jewish history," leading to a more detailed—though still, by its very nature, selective and incomplete—discussion of current trends and desirable directions in the study of Bohemian Jewry in the early modern period.

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[1] Karl Schwarzenberg, Miroslav Hucek, Barabara Hucková, *The Prague Castle and Its Treasures*, trans. John Gilbert (New York, 1994), 74–76.

[2] Milada Vilímková, *The Prague Ghetto*, trans. Iris Urwin (Prague, 1990), 115; Hana Volavková, *The Pinkas Synagogue: A Memorial of the Past and of Our Days* (Prague, 1955).

[3] Chava Fraenkel-Goldschmidt (ed.), *Historical Writings of Joseph of Rosheim: Leader of Jewry in Early Modern Germany*, trans. Naomi Schendowich (Leiden, 2006), 219–230 and further references there.

Historical Overview

As late as the early 1990s, one wishing to study the history of the Jews of Bohemia and Moravia, especially outside the former Czechoslovakia, needed to build for himself or herself a foundation based on pre-World War II scholarship.[4] Nineteenth-century contributions to the field, especially as pertain to the early modern period, include a concerted effort, beginning mid-century, to document the gravestones standing in the Old Jewish Cemetery—spearheaded by, among others, the Chief Rabbi of Prague and early *Wissenschaft des Judentums* scholar Solomon Judah Leib Rapoport (1790–1867, also known by the Hebrew acrostic formed by his name as "the Shir") and the burial society secretary, Koppelman (Kalman) Lieben (1812–1892), who also documented additional types of records to which he had access.[5] Local Jewish folk tales and legends were collected as well.[6] Articles on the community's political structure, its rabbinic writings, and more also appeared in the new journals devoted to the critical study of Judaism and Jewish history, such as the *Monatsschrift*

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[4] For an additional survey of the state of the literature regarding Czech Jewish history that shows its heavy reliance on pre-World War II scholarship, see Marie Buňatová, "Projekt 'Bohemia, Moravia et Silesia Judaica': Konzeption – Ziele – Ergebnisse 1999–2003," *Judaica Bohemiae* 39 (2003), 239–309, see esp. 240–244.

[5] An overview of the history of documentation of the cemetery appears in Otto Muneles, *Ketavim mi-beit-ha-'almin ha-yehudi ha-'atik be-Frag* (Jerusalem, 1988), 38–42. The first major work was Koppelman (Kalman) Lieben, *Sefer Gal-Ed* (Prague, 1856) (Hebrew and German).

[6] Hillel J. Kieval, "Pursuing the Golem of Prague: Jewish Culture and the Invention of a Tradition," in id., *Languages of Community: The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands* (Berkeley, 2000), 95–113.

für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums, the *Révue des études juives*, and the *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland*, and, later on, also in the *Jahrbuch der Jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft*.[7]

An even greater impetus for the study of local history came from the destruction of most of the Jewish Quarter of Prague due to the implementation of a radical plan for urban renewal during which, starting in 1896, most of the Jewish Quarter was leveled and entirely rebuilt, leaving just six of the original synagogues standing. At least three officially recognized synagogues were destroyed, and probably several "private" prayer rooms were as well.[8] Today's surviving historical record has much to do with decisions made in those years, including the 1906 opening, thanks to the efforts of Salomon Hugo Lieben (1881–1942), Koppelman's nephew, of the city's Jewish Museum, among the earliest of a wave of such institutions in Europe.[9] The museum—in the different forms it was impelled to adopt during World War II and under the Communist regime, and then following its return to the Jewish Community in 1994— has remained the central institution for the study of local Jewish history, a rather anomalous situation.[10] Whether or not the ghetto clearance was its original inspiration, the same year saw the landmark publication of Gottlieb Bondy and Franz Dvorský's two-volume collection of primary sources related to the history of Jews and Jewish communities in the Bohemian Lands.[11] Additional documentation produced at the time of the ghetto clearance included the impressive *Das Prager Ghetto*, whose coffee-table book appearance belies the value of its essays.[12] In 1927, the historian Samuel Steinherz (1857–1942) edited a volume of essays: *Die Juden in Prag: Bilder aus ihrer tausendjährigen Geschichte* [The Jews of Prague: Portraits from Their Thousand-Year History].[13] The following year, he helped found a society for the history of Bohemian Jews, whose yearbook became a central platform for the publication of research in this field.[14] Concerning the early modern period, Tobias Jakobovits (1887–1944) contributed articles based on archival work, particularly about Jewish communal political organization and the rabbinate, and also dealing with guilds, modes of dress, and more; Salomon Hugo Lieben wrote on the community's cultural and religious history.[15] Hugo Gold (1895–1974) led similar efforts focused on the history of Jewish life in Moravia.[16] The work did not cease even in the wake of the sudden stop put to this flowering publication enterprise in 1938. Led by Josef Polák (1886–1945), Jakobovits, Lieben, Alfred Engel (1881–1944) of Moravia, and others, scholars in the Jewish Museum worked until each was deported, continuing to collect and document materials gathered from destroyed communities.[17]

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[7] Many of these journals are now accessible online at the Compact Memory project, http://sammlungen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/cm/nav/index/title/ [retrieved: 3 July 2015].

[8] See Magda Veselská, *Defying the Beast: The Jewish Museum in Prague 1906–1940* (Prague, 2006); Aladár Deutsch, *Die Zigeiner-, Grossenhof- und Neusynagoge in Prag: Denkschrift* (Prague, 1907). Cathleen M. Giustino, *Tearing Down Prague's Jewish Town: Ghetto Clearance and the Legacy of Middle-Class Ethnic Politics around 1900* (Boulder–New York, 2003) provides a detailed rendition of the course of events, although her analysis of them and of the motivations of their central actors leaves much room for debate.

[9] Veselská, *Defying the Beast*; Magda Veselská, Daniel Polakovič, "The Jewish Museum in Prague: A Selective Bibliography, 1911–1996," *Judaica Bohemiae* 32 (1997), 164–181; Magda Veselská, "Jewish and Related Museums in Czechoslovakia in the First Republic," *Judaica Bohemiae* 40 (2004), 78–92; Hana Volavková, *A Story of the Jewish Museum in Prague*, trans. Karl Erwin Lichtenecker (Prague, 1968); Richard I. Cohen, *Jewish Icons: Art and Society in Modern Europe* (Berkeley–Los Angeles, 1998), 198–203. Salomon Hugo Lieben remarked on his relationship to Kalman Lieben in a note on the "Memorbuch" of the Altneuschul, which he worked to preserve, Ms. JMP (Jewish Museum in Prague) 113. On the synagogues, see Vilímková, *The Prague Ghetto*, 132–137.

[10] Leo Pavlát, "The Jewish Museum Once Again," *Judaica Bohemiae* 30–31 (1994–1995), 4–6.

[11] Gottlieb Bondy, Franz Dvorský, *Zur Geschichte der Juden in Böhmen, Mähren und Schlesien von 906 bis 1620* / Bohumil Bondy, František Dvorský, *K historii Židů v Čechách, na Moravě a v Slezsky, 906–1620*, 2 vols. (Prague, 1906).

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[12] Ignát Herrmann, Josef Teige, Zikmund Winter, *Das Prager Ghetto* (Prague, 1903).

[13] *Die Juden in Prag: Bilder aus ihrer tausendjährigen Geschichte* (Prague, 1927).

[14] *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft der Geschichte der Juden in der Čechoslovakischen Republik* (*JGGJČR*) and in a Czech version as *Ročenka Společnosti pro dějiny Židů v Československé republice*.

[15] Among the most significant are Tobias Jakobovits, "Das prager und böhmische Landesrabbinat Ende des siebzehnten und Anfang des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts," *JGGJČR* 5 (1933), 79–136; id., "Die Judenabzeichen in Böhmen," *JGGJČR* 3 (1931), 145–184; id., "Die jüdischen Zünfte in Prag," *JGGJČR* 8 (1936), 57–145; Salomon Hugo Lieben, "Megillath Samuel," *JGGJČR* 9 (1938), 307–342.

[16] Hugo Gold, *Židé a židovské obce v Čechách v minulosti a v přítomnosti / Die Juden und Judengemeinden Böhmens in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, vol. I (Brno–Prague, 1934); many articles in *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Juden in der Tschechoslowakei* (published in Brno, 1930–1938). And on Jewish history of medieval Moravia, see the works of Berthold Bretholz, for example, *Geschichte der Juden in Mähren im Mittelalter* (Brno, 1934); id. (ed.), *Quellen zur Geschichte der Juden in Mähren: Vom XI. bis zum XV. Jahrhundert (1067–1411)* (Prague, 1935).

[17] Veselská, *Defying the Beast*; ead., "Who Saved the Scrolls: Prague," http://www.memorialscrollstrust.org/about-memorial-scrolls-trust/what-was-saved/who-saved-the-scrolls-prague/ [retrieved: 5 July 2015]; the more detailed accounting in ead., *Archa paměti. Cesta pražského židovského muzea pohnutým 20. stoletím* (Prague, 2012), and a synopsis of Veselská's findings in reviews of that book by Benjamin Frommer in *Judaica Bohemiae* 48 (2013), 149–152, and by Cathleen M. Giustino in *East European Jewish Affairs* 45 (2015), 330–354. As regards preservation of objects, see Magda Veselská, "The Problem of Identifying 'Collection Points' in the German Catalogue of the Jewish Museum in Prague,"

After the war, with the separation of local scholars, scholarship, and source materials from the international scholarly community following the establishment of the Communist government in Czechoslovakia in early 1948, we can view continued research and publication on Jewish history of the region as having taken, to a substantial degree, two separate paths. In Prague, where the Jewish Museum became the State Jewish Museum, 1965 saw the publication of the first issue of that body's new periodical *Judaica Bohemiae*; here Jan Heřman, Hana Volavková, Otto Muneles, Milada Vilímková, and, later, Bedřich Nosek, Vladimír Sadek, Jiřina Šedinová, among others, published articles based on locally available materials. Building on pre-war foundations, their work added to understanding of phenomena critical to the early modern period, including the Hebrew printing, publication, and cataloging of various manuscripts, and continued documentation of Jewish cemeteries throughout the Bohemian Lands. The documentation of the Old Jewish Cemetery in Prague was updated with the publication of Otto Muneles and Milada Vilímková's *Starý židovský hřbitov v Praze* [The Old Jewish Cemetery in Prague] which later appeared in Hebrew, published by the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, edited by a team including Shlomo Schmidt, son of the Altneuschul's last pre-war cantor.[18] Nosek added to earlier lists of Hebrew books from Prague publishing houses.[19]

Other important source material was published outside Czechoslovakia during this period. And, microfilmed copies of manuscripts from the Jewish Museum in Prague along with extensive records from the communal archives reached Jerusalem in the 1960s.[20] Nevertheless, most studies written outside Czechoslovakia made little use of sources located in the country. Perhaps most notably, the Israeli scholar Mordecai Breuer

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and appendices to that article, in Ludmila Kybalová, Eva Kosáková, Alexandr Putík (eds.), *Textiles from Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues from the Collections of the Jewish Museum in Prague*, trans. Derek and Marzia Paton (Prague, 2003), 121–131; Leo Pavlát, "The Jewish Museum in Prague during the Second World War," *European Judaism* 41 (2008), 124–130.

[18] Otto Muneles, Milada Vilímková, *Starý židovský hřbitov v Praze* (Prague, 1955); Muneles, *Ketavim*.

[19] See Bedřich Nosek, "Katalog mit der Auswahl hebräischer Drucke Prager Provenienz. I. Teil: 'Drucke der Gersoniden im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert,'" *Judaica Bohemiae* 10 (1974), 13–41; id., "II. Teil: 'Die Buchdruckerei der Familie Bak,'" *Judaica Bohemiae* 11 (1975), 29–53; id., "III. Teil: '1700–1799,'" *Judaica Bohemiae* 13 (1977), 96–120; 14 (1978), 35–58.

[20] We owe a great debt of gratitude to the late Jan Heřman, who, at great personal cost, brought microfilms of manuscripts and archival documents out of Czechoslovakia, as confirmed in personal email correspondence with Professor Otto Dov Kulka of Jerusalem, 20 March 2016.

published a new edition of David Gans's historical chronicle *Tsemaḥ David* (1592), among the most important intellectual products of early modern Bohemian Jewry.[21] Jiřina Šedinová of the Jewish Museum in Prague wrote extensively on Gans and other Hebrew literature from the region, in her doctoral dissertation and in a series of articles published in English in *Judaica Bohemiae*.[22] Breuer was aware of Šedinová's work, but otherwise lacked access to Czech records or scholarship. An additional Hebrew chronicle of that period, this one in manuscript and held in New York, appeared as well.[23] Intellectual history, particularly as regards Prague's renowned rabbis, such as Judah Loew ben Bezalel (d. 1609), known as "Maharal of Prague" (for ***Moreinu harav loew*** [Our teacher Rabbi Loew]), Yom Tov Lipmann Heller (1578–1654), and Isaiah Horowitz (1565–1630), appeared as well, although many key figures—such as Mordechai Jaffe (d. 1612), Ephraim Luntschitz (1550–1619), Aaron Simon Spira Wedeles (1599–1679), and Moravia's Menachem Mendel Krochmal (1600–1661), among others—received little if any attention.[24] Few of these works of intellectual history dealt extensively with the particular local and regional historical context of the Bohemian Crown Lands. The notable exception to this rule is Otto Dov Kulka's Hebrew-language article on the Moravian religious context of Maharal's writings, which proposes possible lines of transmission between the circles later associated with the seminal Czech thinker Comenius (Jan Amos Komenský, 1592–1670) and Maharal.[25] Unfortunately, its later English translation was actually a summary only, lacking so much of the detail and documentation of the original that its usefulness is greatly diminished.[26] In Europe, a conference at the Collegium Carolinum—a center for the study of the History of the Bohemian Lands and Slovakia established after the expulsion of scholars of German origin from Czechoslovakia and the closure of German-language institutions there—resulted in a multi-authored volume on the history of the Jews of the Bohemian Lands, including a limited number of articles on the medieval and early modern periods.[27]

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[21] David Gans, *Tsemaḥ David*, ed. Mordecai Breuer (Jerusalem, 1983); For an English version of Breuer's introduction to his edition of *Tsemaḥ David*, surveying Gans' intellectual circles, see Mordechai Breuer, "Modernism and Traditionalism in Sixteenth-Century Jewish Historiography: A Study of David Gans' *Tsemaḥ David*," *Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Bernard Dov Cooperman (Cambridge, 1983), 49–88. See also Mordechai Breuer, "Vikuḥo shel maharal me-Frag im ha-notsrim: mabat ḥadash al sefer be'er ha-golah," *Tarbiz* 55 (1986), 253–260.

[22] Jiřina Šedinová, "Czech History as Reflected in the Historical Work by David Gans," *Judaica Bohemiae* 8 (1972), 74–83; ead., "Hebrew Literature as a Source of Information on the Czech History of the First Half of the 17th Century: The Reflection of the Events in Contemporary Hebrew Poetry," *Judaica Bohemiae* 20 (1984), 3–30; ead., "Hebrew Literary Sources to the Czech History of the First Half of the 17th Century: End of the Thirty Years' War in the Testimonies of Contemporaries," *Judaica Bohemiae* 23 (1987), 38–57; ead., "Literary Structure of the 17th Century Hebrew Lyrico-Epic Poetry," *Judaica Bohemiae* 25 (1989), 82–106; ead., "Hebrew Lyrico-Epic Poetry of the 17th Century in Literary Context of Bohemia and Moravia," *Judaica Bohemiae* 26 (1990), 84–101; ead., "Non-Jewish Sources in the Chronicle by David Gans, 'Tsemaḥ David,'" *Judaica Bohemiae* 8 (1972), 3–15; ead., "Old Czech Legends in the Work of David Gans (1592)," *Judaica Bohemiae* 14 (1978), 89–112.

[23] Abraham David (ed.), *Khronikah ivrit me-Frag me-reishit ha-me'ah ha-sheva-esreh* (Jerusalem, 1985); published in English as Abraham David (ed.), *A Hebrew Chronicle from Prague, c.1615*, trans. Leon J. Weinberger with Dena Ordan (Tuscaloosa, 1993), and in Czech as Abraham David (ed.), *Anonymní hebrejská kronika z raně novověké Prahy*, trans. and notes by Markéta Pnina Rubešová (Prague, 2013).

[24] See Ben Zion Bokser, *From the World of the Cabbalah: The Philosophy of Rabbi Judah Loew of Prague* (New York, 1954), reprinted as *The Maharal: The Mystical Philosophy of Rabbi Judah Loew of Prague* (Northvale, 1994); Aharon F. Kleinberger, *Ha-maḥshavah ha-pedogogit shel ha-maharal me-Frag* (Jerusalem, 1962); Byron L. Sherwin, *Mystical Theology and Social Dissent: The Life and Works of Judah Loew of Prague* (Rutherford, 1982);

Appropriately, material culture, the traditional strength of the Jewish Museum in Prague, became the first area where major international collaboration re-emerged. Of particular note is a largely neglected article by the Israeli art historian Isaiah Shachar, on burial society glasses from the Bohemian Lands, based on objects held in Israel, New York, and Prague.[28] The most spectacular instance, however, representing a turning point in opening Bohemian Jewish history to the world beyond the Iron Curtain, was The Precious Legacy, a traveling exhibition made up of objects from the State Jewish Museum, collaboratively organized by

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Abraham M. Haberman, "Ha-piyutim ve-ha-shirim shel ha-rav Yom Tov Lipmann Heller," in Y. L. Hacohen Maimon (ed.), *Le-khvod Yom Tov* (Jerusalem, 1955/56), 129–133. For the late medieval period, see Ephraim Kupfer, "Le-demutah ha-tarbutit shel yahdut ashkenaz ve-ḥakhamehah be-me'ot ha-'arba esrei ve-ha-ḥamesh esrei," *Tarbiz* 42 (1972/73), 113–147.

[25] Otto Dov Kulka, "Ha-reka ha-histori shel mishnato ha-le'umit ve-ha-ḥinukhit shel ha-maharal me-Frag," *Zion* 50 (1985), 277–320.

[26] Otto Dov Kulka, "Comenius and Maharal: The Historical Background of the Parallels in Their Teachings," *Judaica Bohemiae* 27 (1991), 17–30.

[27] Ferdinand Seibt (ed.), *Die Juden in den böhmischen Ländern* (Munich, 1983). For an additional work on Prague composed in Europe during this period, see Agnes Vince, "Makom, essai sur la forme urbaine des quartiers juifs: Prague, Venise, Paris" (Travail personnel de fin d'études, École d'Architecture Paris-la Villette, 1985). For the period of the Enlightenment, which arguably constitutes the end of the early modern period, the classic work has long been Ruth Kestenberg-Gladstein, *Neuere Geschichte der Juden in den böhmischen Ländern* (Tübingen, 1969).

[28] Isaiah Shachar, "'Feast and Rejoice in Brotherly Love': Burial Society Glasses and Jugs from Bohemia and Moravia," *The Israel Museum News* 9 (1972), 22–51.

scholars from Czechoslovakia and the United States. The exhibition was held in Dallas, Detroit, Washington, D.C., and Toronto, attracting enormous excitement.[29]

By the late 1980s, then, there was very good foundation for documentation of the cemetery, ritual objects, and Hebrew-type printed books physically located in the Jewish Museum in Prague, all critical to early modern cultural history of the region at large. Some work had continued on major rabbinic figures, although most of that had taken place outside Czechoslovakia. More extensive scholarship on David Gans, a scholar associated with rabbinic circles but excelling in other areas, had expanded understanding of his source base, and various other texts had been published in *Judaica Bohemiae*. Understanding of the political structures of the early modern Jewish community, however, still rested on pre-World War II foundations. There was virtually no scholarship on family life, gender roles, diachronic developments in Christian-Jewish relations, or business networks throughout Bohemia and Moravia, and beyond. Then, in November 1989, student demonstrations set off a series of events leading to the end, that same month, of Communist rule in Czechoslovakia. The implications for the study of the region's Jewish history were vast, but it would still take some time for real change to take place.

Historiography of Early Modern Jewry: The Broader Context

Just a few years before Czechs gathered on Wenceslas Square, the historian Jonathan Israel had published *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550–1750*, which came to be seen by many as the first work to clearly identify the early modern as a distinct period in Jewish history.[30] The category "early modern" had long existed in "general" history;

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[29] See David Altschuler (ed.), *The Precious Legacy: Judaic Treasures from the Czechoslovak State Collection*, exh. cat. (New York, 1983); and reviews of the exhibition from, among other platforms, *The New York Times*: Michael Brenson, "Art: 'Judaic Treasures' Opens in Washington," *New York Times* (9 Nov. 1983), C21; Rita Reif, "From Prague, a Wealth of Judaica," *New York Times* (15 Apr. 1984). See also Natalia Berger (ed.), *Where Cultures Meet: The Story of the Jews of Czechoslovakia* (Tel Aviv, 1990). A dissertation written in Israel also provides a valuable catalog and analysis of a portion of the collections: Bracha Yaniv, "Parokhot ba'alot motiv arkhitektoni me-Bohemiah u-Moraviah be-me'ot ha-16-18," 4 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1987); ead., "The Origins of the 'Two-Column Motif' in European Parokhot," *Jewish Art* 15 (1989), 26–43.

[30] Jonathan Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550–1750* (Oxford, 1985).

Randolph Starn, in a defining article, places the firm establishment of the term at about 1970.[31] It originated in large part as a way to place a variety of curricular and research categories, particularly Renaissance and Reformation studies, under a "broad tent." The period was characterized by, among other trends, the break-up of unified Christendom in western Europe, scientific discovery, explorations in the New World, the development of print, and ensuing transformations in reading cultures. Generally speaking, older Jewish historiography held that Jews, secluded in their ghettos, and separate from society at large, did not truly participate in these trends prior to their political emancipation, and therefore remained "medieval" well into the eighteenth century. There were, of course, exceptions. Jacob Katz's influential *Tradition and Crisis* (first published in Hebrew in 1958), whose subtitle is *Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages*, while referring to "late medieval" Jewish history, implicitly treats the period from about the sixteenth through the early eighteenth centuries as a unique chapter in Jewish history, particularly in Ashkenazi lands.[32]

In recent decades, early modern Jewish history has come into its own as an independent period of study with its own unique characteristics distinguishable from both medieval and later modern history. A generation after Israel's *European Jewry*, David Ruderman published the first book-length endeavor to synthesize published material, assess the state of the field, and, most significantly, ascertain its key historical meanings. In contrast to Israel, who places Jewish society in a European framework defined by the historical trends and documents of Christian European majority society, Ruderman seeks to identify the period's markers based on "internal" trends, characteristics of Jewish society when read from the Jews' points of view. He found five key characteristics of the period: its demographic shifts, referred to as "mobility"—whether by force, that is, the expulsions of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, or by choice—, simultaneous growth in lay-led (oligarchic) "communal cohesion" and "crisis of rabbinic authority," a "knowledge explosion" growing largely, but not solely, from the spread of print technology and

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[31] Randolph Starn, "The Early Modern Muddle," *Journal of Early Modern History* 6 (2002), 296–307.

[32] The latest edition and best English translation is Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis: Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages*, trans. Bernard Dov Cooperman (New York, 1993), reprinted (Syracuse, 2000).

"mingled identities," especially of the Iberian *conversos* in their travels in and out of Jewish identities.[33]

If this move in Jewish historiography appears to be a late development, then scholars of Jewish history are in some sense in lockstep with "general" historians—where most syntheses of "early modern history" are overly weighted towards western Europe. Starn has correctly noted that the early modern rubric "is hard to detach from a particularly insidious 'Occidentalism' that not only leaves out much of the world but much of Europe besides."[34] While the situation has changed somewhat in the years since he wrote, as a statement of basic trends, Starn's observation retains much of its force.[35] It is therefore not coincidental, I think, that among the critics of Ruderman's *Early Modern Jewry* are scholars of Bohemian and Polish Jewish history. Reviews of the book by Moshe Rosman, a historian of Polish Jewry, and Pavel Sládek, a Prague-based scholar, for example, note the dissonance of the work's Italian-Western focus, even as the majority of the world's Jews lived in central and eastern Europe. As Sládek points out, "Ruderman tries to extract the history of *all* the early modern Jews (cf. the ambitious title of the book) based on the existing accounts that in their totality cover only *some* of them."[36] Underlying their criticisms is the lack of attention paid to central and eastern Europe (and also Jews outside Europe), which echoes Starn's observation about histories of Christian Europe's early modernity.

At a deeper level, however, these two reviews reflect an even more fundamental tension in the recent literature and discourse on early modern Jewish history: between carefully documented, highly particular local histories on the one hand and some larger synthesis of early modern Jewish history overall on the other. To my mind, this relates not only to thematic questions, but also to a methodological challenge both in training historians and in historical practice, the integration of deep local knowledge with a broad grasp of international themes and developments. The goals, in essence, are outlined in Rosman's review of Ruderman's book. He writes:

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[33] David B. Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History* (Princeton, 2010). See also Gershon D. Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century: A Genealogy of Modernity* (Berkeley, 2004), where "modern" is assigned a solely chronological meaning, see p. 3.

[34] Starn, "The Early Modern Muddle," 303.

[35] Recent works in English on the early modern period in eastern and east-central Europe include Howard Louthan, *Converting Bohemia: Force and Persuasion in the Catholic Reformation* (Cambridge, 2011); David Frick, *Kith, Kin and Neighbors: Communities and Confessions in Seventeenth-Century Wilno* (Ithaca, 2013); Jaroslav Miller, *Urban Societies in East-Central Europe: 1500–1700* (Aldershot–Burlington, 2008). Regarding western European constructions of eastern Europe, see Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, 1994).

[36] Pavel Sládek, "Book Reviews: David B. Ruderman, 'Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History,'" *Judaica Bohemiae* 47 (2012), 119.

> In *Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History*, a book dealing with the period from the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492 to the advent of Jewish emancipation in Central Europe in 1782, [Ruderman] aims to uncover "not merely a Jewish history specific to a Polish context or an Italian or an Ottoman, but a history of the Jews and their cultural legacy as a whole." In order to do so, he employs the idea of "connected histories." Other historians have taken this approach both to highlight the political, economic, social, and cultural diversity of different peoples, and to identify a characteristic cluster of big historical "processes" or "experiences" that nonetheless connect them. Such an approach can show that each Jewish community of the period was indeed distinctly Polish, or Italian, or Ottoman (or whatever), but also categorically Jewish. We are in Ruderman's debt for introducing this useful—and currently contrarian—concept into Jewish historical discourse.[37]

While the goal may be unattainable in practice, it is a worthy aspiration. It is therefore the background against which I set a sketch of current trends in research on the early modern history of Jews in the Bohemian Lands, the ultimate goal, in some sense, I envision for that scholarship.

Scholarship on the History of Jews in the Early Modern Bohemian Lands, c.1990–2015

In the current state of scholarship related to early modern Jewish history in the Bohemian Lands, we are seeing the development of research on multiple individual points. The connective tissue, however, is still in need of strengthening.[38] In other words, while many recent studies shed light on important aspects of early modern Bohemian Jewish history, other aspects are still missing, and much remains to be done to integrate their findings into the larger picture of early modern Jewish history in Europe, all the more so beyond Europe. There is, to date, no comprehensive, synthetic history of Bohemian Jewry in the early modern period in a widely used scholarly language, or, for that matter, of the Jewish histories of most of its major centers.[39]

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[37] Moshe Rosman, "Early Modern Mingling" (a review of David B. Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History*), *Jewish Review of Books* (Autumn 2010), 29–32.

[38] For another survey of research in the Czech Republic, see Marie Crhová, "Jewish Studies in the Czech Republic," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 10 (2011), 1: 135–143.

The Lands of the Bohemian Crown straddle the major Ashkenazi regions centered in Germany and Poland-Lithuania. Increasing the presence of Bohemian Jewry in general surveys of Jewish history in this period could therefore shed important light on these other two major regions, on the relationships between them, and on the overall nature of early modern Ashkenaz. The following, thematically organized survey therefore begins with the Bohemian Lands' position between west and east as the cultural center of gravity of Ashkenazi Jewry moved eastwards in the sixteenth century. It ends in the early eighteenth century, one possible end point for the "early modern" in this context, and then treats the later eighteenth century as a somewhat separate category. This survey is by no means complete, but assumes that the interested reader will rely on works mentioned to begin a search, rather than view their listing as comprehensive. For the purposes of introducing this field to those not conversant in Czech/Bohemian history, it focuses on scholarship in English and, to a lesser extent, in German.

Political Situation and Communal Organization

One marker of the onset of Jewish early modernity can be found in the vast demographic shifts of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, encompassed in Ruderman's category of "accelerated mobility." The expulsion from Spain in 1492 and from towns and regions throughout German lands in the following years and decades spurred massive migration, principally to the rapidly developing regions of the Ottoman Empire on the one hand and Poland and Lithuania on the other. In some respects, the experiences of Jewish communities in the Bohemian Lands resembled those to their west. Like many German Jewish communities, Moravia experienced expulsions, particularly from the royal boroughs, throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Bohemia's turn came later, with an expulsion from royal boroughs excluding Prague that lasted from 1541 to 1545 and another, including the capital, in 1557.[40] At the same time, the Horowitz family's establishment of its leadership in Prague in the early sixteenth century can reasonably be viewed as constituting the common denominator with Jewish communities to the east, in Poland; both, it seems, were destinations for exiles and migrants. As Matt Goldish has outlined, building on Volavková's work, the design of the sixteenth-century Pinkas Synagogue was also meant to replicate that of a synagogue in Regensburg, destroyed following the Jews' 1519 expulsion from that city. Goldish writes that in this symbolic replacement of a lost Jewish center to the west, the Horowitzes, even as they sought to affirm their leading status within Prague's Jewish community, also worked to symbolically transfer Regensburg's then leading position in Ashkenazi Jewry eastwards to Prague.[41]

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[39] Helpful surveys include Hillel J. Kieval, "Bohemia and Moravia," *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, http://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Bohemia_and_Moravia [retrieved: 30 Dec. 2015]; Vilímková, *The Prague Ghetto*. See also Kieval, *Languages of Community*, 10–26; and the guide to the Jewish Museum of Prague's historical exhibition in the Maisel Synagogue, Olga Sixtová et al. (eds.), *Exhibition Guide: History of the Jews in Bohemia and Moravia from the First Settlements until Emancipation* (Prague, 2002). For a later period, see Wilma Iggers (ed.), *The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia: A Historical Reader* (Detroit, 1992). For a Czech-language survey of Czech Jewish history, see Tomáš Pěkný, *Historie Židů v Čechách a na Moravě* (Prague, 2001). On the Jewish community of early modern Prague through the lens of communal memory, see Rachel L. Greenblatt, *To Tell Their Children: Jewish Communal Memory in Early Modern Prague* (Stanford, 2014).

The Horowitz family's claims to leadership in the community naturally sparked opposition from older Jewish *élites*.[42] In 1534, Joseph (Jossel) of Rosheim (d. 1554), a leading intercessor (*shtadlan*) of German Jewry, was called in to negotiate a settlement of the various parties. Jossel's own short account survives, but there is much room for historians to flesh out the story and the wider context of the community's internal and external political battles in the sixteenth century.[43] It is clear, nevertheless, that the shifting demographics and leadership indicate a series of developments, which, together with the cultural developments mentioned at the outset, constitute a transition to the "early modern." Although expulsions followed, by 1564, under Maximilian II, and even more so under his son Rudolph II (Holy Roman Emperor, 1576–1612, moved his imperial seat to Prague in 1584), Prague's Jewish community was becoming firmly re-established. Hillel J. Kieval, in part building on analyses by Jaroslav Miller, highlights the growing diversity of east-central European urban populations in this period. Kieval details ways in which tensions between sovereigns on the one hand and burghers on the other— particularly the leaders of Prague's Old Town, which encompassed the Jewish Town both physically and administratively—played out in terms of the Jewish community's relative security in the late sixteenth century and subsequent growth during the Rudolphine period.[44] The commercial relations so vital to supporting that Jewish communal political organization have recently been analyzed by Marie Buňatová.[45] Still, there is almost no sustained work on any of the key individuals, such as the Rudolphine financier and Primas (mayor) of the Jewish Town, Mordecai Meisel (1528–1601), or Jacob Bassevi (1570–1634), who performed similar functions for General Albrecht Wallenstein (1583–1634) during the Thirty Years' War while building up Prague's Jewish Quarter substantially and maintaining close ties with eventual Chief Rabbi, Yom Tov Lipmann Heller.[46] This "Golden Age" of Prague Jewry stands ripe for more systematic scholarship, and for a more thorough synthesis of the work already done with the broader picture of Rudolphine Prague on the one hand and European Jewry at the turn of the seventeenth century on the other. The period of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) that followed, and the then increasingly tight Catholic, Habsburg control of Bohemian affairs, together with instances of disease and fire, has traditionally been seen in Czech historiography as unremittingly bleak, although recent work seeks to revise that picture to some degree.[47] Our understanding of Jewish communities in Bohemia and Moravia through much of this period, especially the earlier part, relies on pre-war scholarship, and its integration in the broader tapestry of Bohemian and Habsburg history therefore also awaits its interpreters.

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[40] Kieval, "Bohemia and Moravia."

[41] Matt Goldish, "Jews and Habsburgs in Prague and Regensburg: On the Political and Cultural Significance of Solomon Molkho's Relics," in Richard I. Cohen et al. (eds.), *Jewish Culture in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of David B. Ruderman* (Pittsburgh, 2014), 28–38.

[42] Reiner has described similar tensions in Poland during this period; it remains to be seen to what degree Prague was similar to what he portrays in regard to Jewish settlements in Poland in this period. Elchanan Reiner, "Yiḥus ve-hotsa'at shem ra: Maharal, mishpaḥat Betsalel u-farashat ha-nadler," in id. (ed.), *Maharal: Akdamot* (Jerusalem, 2014), 121–125.

[43] Fraenkel-Goldschmidt (ed.), *Historical Writings of Joseph of Rosheim*, 219–230, 326–327.

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[44] Hillel J. Kieval, "Jewish Prague, Christian Prague, and the Castle in the City's 'Golden Age,'" *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 18 (2011), 202–215; Miller, *Urban Societies.* For ways in which the Jewish community considered itself a separate town, on par with Prague's three official autonomous towns, see Rachel L. Greenblatt, "On Jewish Prague in the Age of Schudt's Frankfurt: Two Jewish Towns in Celebration on the Birth of an Heir to the Habsburg Throne (1716)," *Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge* 40 (2015), 239–257.

[45] Marie Buňatová, *Die Prager Juden in der Zeit vor der Schlacht am Weißen Berg: Handel und Wirtschaftsgebaren der Prager Juden im Spiegel des Liber albus Judeorum 1577–1601* (Kiel, 2011); ead., "Commercial Relations between the Jews of Prague and Krakow in the Period before the Battle of White Mountain," *Judaica Bohemiae* 47 (2012), 5–33.

[46] Giuseppe Veltri, "'Ohne Recht und Gerechtigkeit': Kaiser Rudolf II. und sein Bankier Markus Meyzl," in Giuseppe Veltri, Annette Winkelmann (eds.), *An der Schwelle zur Moderne: Juden in der Renaissance* (Leiden, 2003), 233–255. For an example of Meisel's involvement in court life, see Richard I. Cohen, Vivian B. Mann, "Melding Worlds: Court Jews and the Arts of the Baroque," in eid. (eds.), *From Court Jews to the Rothschilds: Art, Patronage, and Power 1600–1800* (New York, 1996), 110–111, and cat. no. 115, p. 181.

More recent scholarship informs our understanding of the internal organization of early modern Bohemian Jewry, particularly that of Prague, for the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Alexandr Putík of the Jewish Museum in Prague—whose work constitutes, in many regards, a continuation of the pre-war scholarship of Tobias Jakobovits—has focused most of his attentions on this period. In addition to his other archival-based studies, he has been engaged, to some degree, in a twenty-first century version of the distinctly early modern phenomenon of iconoclasm; Putík's version involves searching out archival confirmation of long-accepted truths, or adjusting them should the archival record not match the myth, as with the origins of the *kadosh kadosh kadosh* ("Holy, Holy, Holy" written in Hebrew letters) atop a crucifix on the Charles Bridge and the meaning of the "Swedish hat" on the Prague Jewish Town's official seal.[48] In a community as large as Prague's, institutions and organizations that operated alongside the official communal leadership played vital social and religious functions; in Prague in particular, the burial society—its full official name translates as "holy society for acts of loving-kindness"—stood at the top of the pyramid of social prestige; Sylvie-Anne Goldberg has detailed its political workings and spiritual dimensions.[49]

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[47] See Louthan, *Converting Bohemia.*

[48] See Alexandr Putík, "Fight for a Conversion in Kolín nad Labem, Bohemia, in the Year 5426/1666: A Contribution on the Subject of Reverberations in Bohemia of Shabbatai Zevi's Messianic Appearance," *Judaica Bohemiae* 33 (1997), 4–32; id., "The Hebrew Inscription on the Crucifix at the Charles Bridge in Prague: The Case of Elias Backoffen and Berl Tabor in the Appellation Court," *Judaica Bohemiae* 32 (1997), 26–103; id., "On the Topography and Demography of the Prague Jewish Town Prior to the Pogrom of 1389," *Judaica Bohemiae* 30–31 (1994–1995), 7–46; id., "The Origin of the Symbols of the Prague Jewish Town: The Banner of the Old-New Synagogue, David's Shield and the Swedish 'Hat,'" *Judaica Bohemiae* 29 (1993), 4–37; id., "The Prague Jewish Community in the Late 17th and Early 18th Centuries," *Judaica Bohemiae* 35 (1999), 4–140; id., "Prague Jews and Judah Hasid: A Study on the Social, Political and Religious History of the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries," *Judaica Bohemiae* 38 (2002), 72–105; id., "Prague Jews and Judah Hasid: Studies on Social, Political and Religious History in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries. Part Three," *Judaica Bohemiae* 46 (2011), 33–72.

[49] Sylvie-Anne Goldberg, *Crossing the Jabbok: Illness and Death in Ashkenazi Judaism in Sixteenth- through Nineteenth-Century Prague*, trans. Carol Cosman (Berkeley–Los Angeles, 1996).

Jewish life in towns outside Prague—also addressed by Jakobovits—differed in numerous ways from that of the capital's, and Bohemia differed from Moravia in political status and internal organization. The late Jiří Fiedler's life's work, charting out and documenting Jewish settlements throughout Bohemia and Moravia, provides a basic map of the territory, literally and figuratively.[50] Scholars such as Helmut Teufel, Pavel Kocman, and Lenka Matušíková have continued the more historically focused aspects of Fiedler's work, shedding light on settlement patterns, among other aspects of Jewish life.[51] The long-term project, "Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia Judaica," has likewise continued this work, as does Verena Kasper-Marienberg's article in this volume.[52]

Rabbinic Thought and Leadership, Cultural and Intellectual History

One could reasonably question whether early modern rabbinic literature can properly be associated with a particular locale, as the mobility and professional networking of the rabbinic intellectual class in this period might be seen to preclude deep local connections. Ideas, books, letters, and rabbis travelled extensively throughout Europe, from Italy to Poland, from the Low Countries to the Ottoman Empire. In some senses, however, this is too simple a picture. Rabbis often had family roots in a particular place; they served as communal leaders, responding to particular conditions; they helped construct communal memories, and, when they attained renown, spurred the pride of the communities they served. Nevertheless, much scholarship has focused on the intellectual aspects of the writings of the greatest scholars among this class, paying less attention to local context.

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[50] Fiedler's work is too extensive to enumerate in this context. See Arno Pařík, "Jiří Fiedler and the Documentation of Jewish Sites," *Judaica Bohemiae* 50 (2015), 61–82, and the bibliography by Daniel Polakovič, "Bibliography of Jiří Fiedler (1935–2014)," *Judaica Bohemiae* 50 (2015), 83–90.

[51] See Pavel Kocman, "Die älteste bekannte Abbildung der Judenstadt und der Synagoge in Nikolsburg (Mikulov) aus dem Jahr 1711," *Judaica Bohemiae* 49 (2014), 115–124; id., "Die jüdische Besiedlung Mährens an der Wende des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts nach den Steuererklärungen der mährischen Stände," *Judaica Bohemiae* 41 (2005), 160–260; Lenka Matušíková, "Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Judensiedlungen in Böhmen in den Jahren 1650 und 1674: Ergänzungen zur gleichnamigen Studie von J. Hráský," *Judaica Bohemiae* 35 (1999), 141–157; ead., "Zu den Obliegenheiten der Prager Juden am Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts," *Judaica Bohemiae* 33 (1997), 33–43; Petr Kopička, Hana Legnerová, "Jews, Burghers and Lords: Social and Economic Relations in the Town of Roudnice nad Labem (Raudnitz), 1592–1619," *Judaica Bohemiae* 41 (2005), 5–43.

[52] Buňatová, "Projekt 'Bohemia, Moravia et Silesia Judaica'"; see also Lena Arava-Novotná, "Quelques images de la Bohême au XVIIIe siècle: Les Juifs en milieu rural," *Theatrum historiae* 2 (2007), 217–274.

A turning point came with the 400th anniversary, in 2009, of the death of Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel, known as "Maharal of Prague" (despite having spent the better part of his professional life in Moravia). The date sparked a number of publications, exhibitions, and conferences around the world. Maharal has taken on mythic proportions in modern times, his image and works adopted by Hasidic circles, Jewish nationalists, and lovers of legend, among others, to suit their particular needs. The works of interest here are those for whom the historical figure is of central concern. The Prague Jewish Museum exhibition and major catalog, *Path of Life: Rabbi Judah Loew Ben Bezalel*, is the first among a long line of fine catalogs from this institution to incorporate articles by international scholars together with local work based on museum holdings, providing an additional layer of historical context.[53] An impressive Hebrew volume covering many aspects of Maharal's life and legend followed a conference in Jerusalem.[54] Yet current scholarship on Maharal's most important colleagues and successors concentrates primarily on their intellectual and religious contexts.[55] One exception is Joseph M. Davis's *Yom Tov Lipmann Heller: Portrait of a Seventeenth-Century Rabbi*, aimed at a broader audience than the doctoral dissertation from which it grew.[56] Nonetheless, to test the applicability of Ruderman's model to the Bohemian Lands, we would need to ask a question no historian, to the best of my knowledge, has so far asked: Did these and other apparently strong rabbinic figures—such as Mordechai Jaffe, Ephraim Luntschitz, and Isaiah Horowitz—

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[53] Alexandr Putík (ed.), *Path of Life: Rabbi Judah Loew Ben Bezalel, ca. 1525–1609* (Prague, 2009).

[54] Reiner (ed.), *Maharal*. See also Julianne Unterberger, Claude Secroun, *Colloque "Le Maharal de Prague"* (Reims, 2008). An additional conference took place in Princeton, NJ, 6–7 Dec. 2009.

[55] See Leonard S. Levin, *Seeing with Both Eyes: Ephraim Luntshitz and the Polish-Jewish Renaissance* (Leiden, 2008).

[56] Joseph M. Davis, *Yom Tov Lipmann Heller: Portrait of a Seventeenth-Century Rabbi* (Oxford–Portland, 2004); id., "R. Yom Tov Lipmann Heller, Joseph b. Isaac ha-Levi, and Rationalism in Ashkenazic Jewish Culture, 1550–1650" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1990); Pavel Sládek, "A Sixteenth-Century Rabbi as a Published Author: The Early Editions of Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe's *Levushim*," in David B. Ruderman, Francesca Bregoli (eds.), *Connecting Histories: Jews and Their Others in the Early Modern Period*, forthcoming.

truly defy the growing centralization of Jewish communal power in the hands of the laity, as suggested by Ruderman, or have their literary legacies perhaps masked a lack (or diminishment) of true rabbinic authority at the local level?

For the later part of the early modern period, Joshua Z. Teplitsky's recent work on David Oppenheim, the Chief Rabbi of Prague (served 1703–1736) and major book collector, which places its protagonist and his intellectual achievements in the context of his wide-ranging financial and intellectual networks and his collecting activities, does more than any work on the earlier part of the century to place a rabbinic figure in a broader context.[57] Still missing entirely from the scholarship is any sustained attempt to search out particular Bohemian traditions of rabbinic scholarship, learning, or pedagogy. I suspect, for example, that there might have been a sustained tradition, in Prague, of the study of *mishnayot* (sayings gathered in a rabbinic corpus known as the Mishnah, redacted c.200 CE) as a genre independent of the Talmud, redacted c.500 CE (into which the Mishnah is incorporated in its entirety), in contrast to the way these materials were usually studied in Ashkenazi academies.

Scholarship on intellectual history beyond rabbinics in the period just preceding that of primary concern here has recently been revived, in large part by Tamás Visi.[58] The greatest interest, naturally enough, has centered on the Rudolphine period, when Emperor Rudolph II gathered around his court artists, scholars, mystics, alchemists, intellectuals of every sort. The Prague Jewish figure who most identified himself with these circles was David Gans, a historian, astronomer, and mathematician. Breuer's annotated edition of Gans's historical work *Tsemaḥ David* (1592) has recently been translated into Czech.[59] In a special volume of *Judaica Bohemiae*, based on a 2013 conference in Prague, scholars from the Czech Republic, elsewhere in Europe, North America, and Israel bring together some of the various aspects of his work.[60]

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[57] Joshua Z. Teplitsky, "Jewish Money, Jesuit Censors, and the Habsburg Monarchy: Politics and Polemics in Early Modern Prague," *Jewish Social Studies* 19 (2013), 3: 109–138; id., "Between Court Jew and Jewish Court: David Oppenheim, the Prague Rabbinate, and Eighteenth-Century Jewish Political Culture" (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 2012).

[58] Tamás Visi, "The Emergence of Philosophy in Ashkenazic Context: The Case of Czech Lands in the Early Fifteenth Century", *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts / Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook* 8 (2009), 213–243.

[59] Gans, *Tsemaḥ David*; Noah J. Efron, "Irenism and Natural Philosophy in Rudolfine Prague: The Case of David Gans," *Science in Context* 10 (1994), 627–649; David B. Ruderman, *Jewish Thought and Scientific Discovery in Early Modern Europe* (New Haven, 1995), 82–87. Speculation about further links is raised by R. J. W. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World: A Study in Intellectual History 1576–1612* (Oxford, 1973), and corrected paperback edition: (London, 1997), 209, 236–242; see also Vladimir Sadek, "Die Prager Judenstadt

Though rabbinic and scholarly works (like those by Gans) were written in Hebrew, Jewish life in the Bohemian Lands in early modern times took place overwhelmingly in Yiddish.[61] Jews spoke "Western Yiddish" or "Altyiddish," the basis of the modern language, but lacking its Slavic element. Jews not only spoke the language but wrote, read, and performed in it as well. As it happens, the overwhelming majority of early Yiddish publications known to us are preserved in Oppenheim's collection, which eventually made its way to the Bodleian Library in Oxford.[62] A great proportion of surviving Yiddish literature from the early modern period is therefore products of Prague presses. Only smatterings have been published or used as the basis for historical studies.[63]

Still another point that could be used to mark the onset of early modernity for Jews in the Bohemian Lands would be the establishment of a Hebrew press in Prague in 1512. Collaborative work on Hebrew print in this region has recently resulted in specific answers to long-asked questions, best represented in Olga Sixtová's Jewish Museum catalog, *Hebrew Printing in Bohemia and Moravia*.[64] Modern scholarship

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zur Zeit der rudolfinischen Renaissance," in Jurgen Schultze et al. (eds.), *Prag um 1600: Kunst und Kultur am Hofe Rudolfs II. Ausstellung Kulturstiftung Ruhr, Villa Hügel, Essen, 10.6.–30.10.1988* (Freren, 1988), 1: 597–598; Jiřina Šedinová, "The Jewish Town in Prague," in Eliška Fučíková et al. (eds.), *Rudolf II and Prague: The Court and the City* (Prague–London, 1997), 302–309. A side note to the activity of Jews at Rudolf's court is the journey of a Joachim (Haim) Gans, apparently a relative of David's, to the New World as a metallurgist on Sir Walter Raleigh's expedition, see Gary C. Grassl, "Joachim Gans of Prague: The First Jew in English America," *American Jewish History* 86 (1998), 2: 195–217.

[60] *Judaica Bohemiae* 51 (2016).

[61] In medieval times, Jews also spoke Slavic dialects. See Ondřej Bláha, Robert Dittmann, Lenka Uličná (eds.), Knaanic Language: Structure and Historical Background (Prague, 2012).

[62] Shlomo Berger, "The Oppenheim Collection and Early Modern Yiddish Books: Prague Yiddish 1550–1750," *Bodleian Library Record* 25 (2012), 1: 37–51.

[63] See Simon Neuberg (ed.), *Das* Schwedesch lid: *ein westjiddischer Bericht über Ereignisse in Prag im Jahre 1648* (in Yiddish, German transcription) (Hamburg, 2000); Chava Turniansky, "The Events in Frankfurt am Main (1612–1616) in *Megillas Vints* and in an Unknown Yiddish 'Historical' Song," in Michael Graetz (ed.), *Schöpferische Momente des europäischen Judentums in der frühen Neuzeit* (Heidelberg, 2000), 121–137; ead., "Yiddish Song as Historical Source Material: Plague in the Judenstadt of Prague in 1713," in Ada Rapoport-Albert, Steven J. Zipperstein (eds.), *Jewish History: Essays in Honour of Chimen Abramsky* (London, 1988), 189–198.

[64] Olga Sixtová (ed.), *Hebrew Printing in Bohemia and Moravia*, trans. Pavel Sládek et al. (Prague, 2012).

on Prague's Hebrew press, which began with Leopold Zunz and continued with, among others, Salomon Hugo Lieben, was carried on throughout the Communist period by Bedřich Nosek at the Jewish Museum. Sixtová's catalog builds on both of these earlier scholars' efforts towards creating a bibliography of Hebrew works printed at Prague presses and elsewhere in Bohemia and Moravia. It is the first to be based, as well, on original research in libraries worldwide that own such early prints. (The earlier scholarship relied almost entirely on books extant in Prague, at times referring to catalogs of the Bodleian holdings.) Especially significant is the precision with which Sixtová and Petr Voit, one of the authors in the catalog, pin down specific collaborations among early sixteenth-century Prague printing houses producing works in Hebrew, Czech, Latin, German, and Old Church Slavonic.[65] This is the kind of work that is vital in building an understanding of Jewish culture in its wider environment. Yiddish book printing in earnest began to flourish by the end of the sixteenth century, although one page in Yiddish had appeared in the remarkable 1526 *Haggadah* in Hebrew.[66] The volume also includes important pieces by Pavel Sládek, Iveta Cermanová, and others. The cultural significance of print for Jewish culture in this period has also been taken up by several other scholars, with some works by Elchanan Reiner having direct connections to the Bohemian Lands.[67] We know therefore that Prague was a central hub in early modern Jewry's "knowledge explosion"; much remains to be learned about its connections with these wider networks.[68]

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[65] Petr Voit, "Ornamentation of Prague Hebrew Books during the First Half of the 16th Century as a Part of Bohemian Book Design," in Sixtová (ed.), *Hebrew Printing*, 165–176, especially when read with Olga Sixtová, "Jewish Printers and Printing Presses in Prague, 1512–1670 (1672)," in ead. (ed.), *Hebrew Printing*, 33–74; ead., "The Beginnings of Prague Hebrew Typography 1512–1569," in ead. (ed.), *Hebrew Printing*, 75–122. Earlier works showed movements of illustrations among Jewish books and between Jewish and Christian presses (for a later period), but with less specificity as to the precise networks, e.g., Chone Shmeruk, "Ha-'iyurim min ha-minhagim be-yidish, Venezia shin-nun-gimmel/1593, be-hadpasot ḥozrot be-defusei Prag be-me'ah ha-sheva esreh," *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 15 (1984), 31–52.

[66] Shlomo Z. Berger, "Yiddish Books in Early Modern Prague, 1550–1750," in Sixtová (ed.), *Hebrew Printing*, 177–185.

[67] Elchanan Reiner, "The Ashkenazi Élite at the Beginning of the Modern Era: Manuscript versus Printed Book," *Polin* 10 (1997): 85–98; id., "A Biography of an Agent of Culture: Eleazar Altschul of Prague and His Literary Activity," in Graetz (ed.), *Schöpferische Momente*, 229–247.

[68] A digital infrastructure for understanding such networks has recently been established by Marjorie Lehman, Michelle Chesner, Adam Shear, and Joshua Teplitsky, with

The central role the Jewish Museum has played in housing and promoting scholarship about the local communities and its uniquely rich holdings—including, for example, more than 10,000 textile items—make material culture, particularly that related to ceremonial objects originally from the synagogues, a naturally strong point of scholarship. The fundamental work of cataloging and describing its vast collections has continued until today, as numerous articles in *Judaica Bohemiae* attest. The Jewish Museum catalog *Textiles from Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues from the Collections of the Jewish Museum in Prague* updates, in a more comprehensive manner than ever before, the inventory of synagogue textiles held by the museum in a beautiful album format, while also including articles that place the textiles in a wider religious and social context.[69]

Especially in regard to Prague, myths and legends describing supposed events of the past are more strongly engrained in many people's minds than is the city's actual history. While such myths and legends bear a wide variety of relationships with historical fact, understanding the ways in which they emerged and were disseminated, and the roles they played in locals' self-understandings over time is itself an important historical pursuit. Legends regarding Maharal began to grow already the beginning of the eighteenth century, as Hillel J. Kieval has detailed, and date from even earlier, as Joseph M. Davis has suggested.[70] For the English-language reader, the literary scholar Peter Demetz has provided a lyrical overview of such tales by period concerned.[71] My own work seeks to draw together various strands of cultural history broadly conceived to reconstruct a picture of the ways in which Jews of early modern Prague viewed their own past as a community and sought to preserve that legacy for future generations, using both written and material records.[72]

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the website *Footprints*, which aims to follow individual books as they physically travelled throughout Europe: https://footprints.ccnmtl.columbia.edu [retrieved: 4 Jan. 2016]. Information from Prague has yet to be systematically added.

[69] Kybalová, Kosáková, Putík (eds.), *Textiles from Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues*.

[70] Kieval, *Languages of Community*, 95–113; Joseph M. Davis, "The Legend of the Maharal before the Golem," *Judaica Bohemiae* 44 (2009), 41–59.

[71] Peter Demetz, *Prague in Black and Gold: Scenes from the Life of a European City* (New York, 1997).

[72] Greenblatt, *To Tell Their Children*.

Social History

Ultimately, Jews in the Bohemian Lands of course lived amidst a much larger Christian population. The ways in which these groups interacted with each other—beyond the political sphere—played a critical role in the nature of Jewish life. Some Czech chroniclers noted the presence of Jews, as has been outlined, for example, by Zdeněk V. David.[73] The Rudolphine period in particular was one in which the city's Jewish community, including its synagogues, were relatively open to observation by "outsiders," evident even in one article about court artists' depictions of Jews.[74] More detailed pictures of Jewish-Christian exchange are emerging in works in progress, by Joanna Weinberg, on Maharal's encounters with Christian scholars, and Pavel Sládek, on a rural Czech priest who was a Hebraist.[75] Conversion to Christianity represents the extreme instance of Jewish-Christian boundary crossing in this period, and has been documented to some extent, particularly in regard to the cause *célèbre* of Simon Abeles, an adolescent whose father was accused of killing him to prevent his baptism.[76] David Frick's *Kith, Kin, and Neighbors: Communities and Confessions in Seventeenth-Century Wilno*, on Wilno's multiconfessional social and cultural life in our period, could prove a useful model for building a more over-arching framework in which to understand Jewish-Christian relations in the multi-confessional Bohemian Lands. Frick views moments of tension and violent outbursts as part of a much larger picture of daily coexistence of multiple religious and ethnic groups in a single urban setting; he describes a type of everyday tolerance that neither idealizes nor undervalues inter-denominational relationships.[77]

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[73] Zdeněk V. David, "Hájek, Dubravius and the Jews: A Contrast in Sixteenth-Century Czech Historiography," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 27 (1996), 997–1013; id., "Jews in Sixteenth-Century Czech Historiography: The 'Czech Chronicle' of Václav Hájek of Libočany," *East European Jewish Affairs* 25 (1995), 1: 25–42; Lenka Veselá, "Die Juden in der böhmischen Literatur des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts," *Bohemia* 44 (2003), 1: 67–100.

[74] Joaneath Spicer, "The Star of David and Jewish Culture in Prague around 1600: Reflected in Drawings of Roelandt Savery and Paulus van Vianen," *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 54 (1996), 203–224; Kieval, "Jewish Prague."

[75] Joanna Weinberg, "Jacques Bongars in der Akademie des Rabbi Loew, des Maharal von Prag," in Gerlinde Huber-Rebenich (ed.), *Jacques Bongars (1554–1612): Gelehrter und Diplomat im Zeitalter des Konfessionalismus* (Tübingen, 2015), 97–109.

[76] Elisheva Carlebach, *Divided Souls: Converts from Judaism in Germany, 1500–1750* (New Haven, 2001); ead., "The Death of Simon Abeles: Jewish-Christian Tension in Seventeenth-Century Prague, November 7, 2001," Presentation at the Third Annual Herbert Berman Memorial Lecture, Queens College Center for Jewish Studies (Queens, 2003); Marie Vachenauer, *Der Fall Simon Abeles: Eine kritische Anfrage an die zugänglichen Quellen* (Berlin, 2011); Daniel Soukup, "Šimon Abeles: Zrození barokní legendy," *Česká literatura* 57 (2009), 346–371; Greenblatt, *To Tell Their Children*, 161–165; ead., "Saint and Countersaint: Catholic Triumphalism and Jewish Resistance in Baroque Prague's Abeles Affair," *Jewish History* 30 (2016, forthcoming), see http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10835-016-9255-8?view=classic. On views of Simon as a Bohemian saint (albeit never canonized), see Louthan, *Converting Bohemia,* 300–316. On the broader phenomenon of conversions, including adolescent conversions, see Putík, "Fight for Conversions," and id., "The Prague Jewish Community," 37–63.

Probably the most gaping lacuna in the scholarship on early modern Bohemian Jewish history is in gender analysis, family life, and women's lives in general.[78] Plenty of source material exists. For example, in 1911, Alfred Landau and Bernhard Wachstein published a collection of some fifty letters sent by Jews from Prague to Vienna on a single Friday afternoon in November 1619.[79] Joseph M. Davis has published an article about family relationships based on this collection; much more can be done, and many, many more sources remain to be mined.[80] Surviving documents from the Pinkas Synagogue and the Prague Burial Society, for example, include indications of women in leadership roles—most likely *vis-à-vis* other women exclusively —the nature of which we do not yet understand, but whose existence speaks volumes about the active role women played in some sphere of women's communal ritual and political life.[81] A posthumously published ethical treatise by Rivkah bat Meir Tiktiner (d. 1605), who spent part of her life in Prague, exists in English translation; its relation to its local and regional context has yet to be fully examined.[82] In my own work on Jewish communal memory in Prague, I have sought to take care always to consider women's constructions of memories, women's ways of remembering, and the memory of women together with those of men.[83] Yet these efforts are preliminary. Works shedding light on gender roles in early modern Ashkenaz in general provide some framework for further work on Prague, particularly in the ritual and domestic spheres, but here, too, much remains to be done.[84] In that sense, more studies analyzing the history of Prague's Jewish community through the lens of gender could contribute greatly to the field as a whole.

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[77] Frick, *Kith, Kin, and Neighbors*. For a practical introduction to the Bohemian historical context in this period, see the introduction in James R. Palmitessa (ed.), *Between Lipany and White Mountain: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Modern Bohemian History in Modern Czech Scholarship* (Leiden, 2014), 329–357.

[78] A rare exception, with a slightly earlier focus, is Martha Keil (ed.), *Besitz, Geschäft und Frauenrechte: Jüdische und christliche Frauen in Dalmatien und Prag 1300–1600* (Kiel, 2008).

[79] Alfred Landau, Bernhard Wachstein (eds.), *Jüdische Privatbriefe aus dem Jahre 1619* (Vienna–Leipzig, 1911).

[80] Joseph M. Davis, "Concepts of Family and Friendship in the 1619 Yiddish Letters of Prague Jews," *Judaica Bohemiae* 49 (2014), 27–58.

[81] Jewish Museum in Prague (JMP) Inv. 3210, "Pinkas Synagogue Pinkas Book," c.1601–1845; Ms. JMP 422, and on these regulations in general and for a translation of parts in particular: Goldberg, *Crossing the Jabbok*, translation in the Appendix, "Rules of the Hevra Kaddisha of Prague, 1692–1702," pp. 219–225.

[82] Frauke von Rohden (ed.), *Mineket Rivkah: A Manual of Wisdom and Piety for Jewish Women by Rivkah bat Meir*, trans. Samuel Spinner, Maurice Tszorf (Philadelphia, 2009).

The Later Eighteenth Century

If early modernity for Bohemian Jewry began with an influx of migrants following expulsions elsewhere in medieval Ashkenaz, the establishment of a Hebrew press in Prague, or with the building of the hybrid Renaissance-style Pinkas Synagogue, when did the period end? What marks the transition point from this period to one we would recognize as distinctly "modern"? In contrast to some of his predecessors, Ruderman has described many later eighteenth-century *maskilim* (thinkers of the Jewish Enlightenment) as fundamentally "early modern" in their outlooks.[85] For the Bohemian Lands, nevertheless, additional possibilities suggest themselves. One major change came as early as 1726–1727, with the initial passage of the *Familiantengesetze*, laws that restricted the number of Jews who could legally marry and establish families—yet another topic ripe for further research.[86] It is even more logical, I believe, to look at the expulsion of the Jews from Prague, originally declared by

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[83] Greenblatt, *To Tell Their Children.*

[84] Moshe Rosman has been engaged in related questions for some time, and I hope he will soon publish more on the topic; see Moshe Rosman, "The History of Jewish Women in Early Modern Poland: An Assessment," *Polin* 18 (2005), 25–56. Also important: Edward Fram, *My Dear Daughter: Rabbi Benjamin Slonik and the Education of Jewish Women in Sixteenth-Century Poland* (Cincinnati, 2007), which includes a full transcription and translation of Slonik's *Seder mitzvoth ha-nashim* [Order of Women's Commandments] and an introduction by Fram. Additional work has appeared in Hebrew, for example, Yemima Chovav, *Alamot aheivukha: ḥayei ha-dat ve-ha-ru'aḥ shel nashim be-ḥevrah ha-'ashkenazit be-reishit ha-'et ha-ḥadashah* (Jerusalem, 2009). For German-speaking lands, see Monika Richarz (ed.), *Die Hamburger Kauffrau Glikl: Jüdische Existenz in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Hamburg, 2001).

[85] Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry*, 193–206; id., "Why Periodization Matters: On Early Modern Jewish Culture and Haskalah," *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts / Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook* 6 (2007), 23–32.

[86] Ruth Kestenberg-Gladstein, "Familiants Laws," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 2nd edn. (2007), 9: 644–645; Ivo Cerman, "Familiants Laws," *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Familiants_Laws [retrieved: 30 Dec. 2015].

Empress Maria Theresa in December 1744, as a transition point. As the political scientist Shlomo Avineri has shown, this final “medieval”-type action in central Europe was met by Jews with a swift, highly coordinated international campaign to organize widespread diplomatic pressure against the action, which can be seen, nearly a century before the Damascus Affair of 1840, as exhibiting many traits of what would become distinctly modern Jewish modes of diplomacy and political action.[87] The second half of the eighteenth century, after the Jews’ return to Prague in 1748, saw a series of developments and personalities that would ultimately transform the nature of Bohemian Jewry into something recognizable as “modern,” with no modifier.

Whether these developments themselves belong to the “early modern” period or the “modern” is open to debate. In one regard, life in the public sphere, outside the Jewish Town, opened to Jews as it had not done since the reign of Rudolph II.[88] In other regards, Jewish life retained its traditional shape until reforms undertaken by Emperor Joseph II during the 1780s, a period during which the figure of Ezekiel Landau, Chief Rabbi of Prague from 1754 until his death 1793, towers over the Jewish communal life of Prague.[89] Landau’s relationship to Jewish mysticism (*kabbalah*) has been reevaluted by Sharon Flatto, whose book spurred a lively debate; Maoz Kahana’s assessment of Landau has just recently appeared (in Hebrew).[90] Landau was deeply involved in developing responses to the policies that gradually admitted Jews to citizenship and required they take various steps towards integration in return, and in debating *maskilim*, including the Bohemian historian and educator Peter Beer (c.1758–1838).[91] The role of print—including what was not printed and the negotiations involved in censoring Jewish books—continued to be of utmost importance in this period.[92] For Moravia, we can turn to some background provided by Michael Miller in his *Rabbis and Revolution*, although its main focus is a bit later.[93]

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[87] Shlomo Avineri, “Statecraft without a State: A Jewish Contribution to Political History?” *Kontexte der Schrift* 1 (2005), 403–419; Francois Geusnet, “Textures of Intercession: Rescue Efforts for the Jews of Prague, 1744/1748,” *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts / Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook* 4 (2005), 355–375. Both build on the still standard account of the expulsion, Baruch Mevorach, “Ma’asei ha-hishtadlut be-Eiropah lemeniyat gerusham shel Yehudei Bohemiah u-Moraviah, 1744–45,” *Zion* 18 (1963), 125–164; later it appeared in a German version, id., “Die Interventionsbestrebungen in Europa zur Verhinderung der Vertreibung der Juden aus Böhmen und Mähren 1744–1745,” *Jahrbuch des Instituts für deutsche Geschichte* 9 (1980), 15–81.

[88] Maoz Kahana, “Shabat be-bet ha-kafeh shel k”k Prag,” *Zion* 78 (2013), 5.

[89] Kieval, *Languages of Community*, 37–64.

[90] Sharon Flatto, *The Kabbalistic Culture of Eighteenth-Century Prague: Ezekiel Landau (the ‘Noda Biyehudah’) and His Contemporaries* (Oxford–Portland, 2010); Allan Nadler, “The Great Non-Miracle Rabbi of Prague,” *Jewish Review of Books* (Summer 2011), 36–38; Sharon Flatto, Allan Nadler, “Exchange,” *Jewish Review of Books* (Fall 2011), 43–46; Maoz Kahana, Michael K. Silber, “Dei’istim shabta’im u-mekubalim be-kehillat Prag: derashah metsuntseret shel harav Yeḥezke’el Landau, tav-kuf-lamend,” *Kabbalah* 21 (2010), 349–384; Sharon Flatto, “Believing the Censor? A Response to ‘Diests, Sabbatians, and Kabbalists in Prague: A Censored Sermon of R. Ezekiel Landau, 1770,’” *Kabbalah* 24 (2011), 123–146; Rachel Manekin, “Derashot rabaniyot ve-ha-daḥlil ha-me’ayeim shel ha-dei’izm”: ha-mikreh shel harav Yeḥeze’el Landau,” *Zion* 78 (2013), 51–71. For additional assess-

Conclusions

Despite the size and centrality of Prague's Jewish community in the early modern period, despite the rabbinic center in Moravia with its qualities that, in some respects, more closely resembled those of Polish Jewish life, despite the long histories of Jewish settlement in various Bohemian towns, and despite the Czech language being no more simple or difficult than Polish for scholars who are not native speakers of Slavic tongues, scholarship has lagged behind that on Polish Jewish history in the same period. More recently, publications focused on the Bohemian Lands in

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ments of Landau, see Maoz Kahana, *Me-ha-noda be-yehudah la-ḥatam sofer: halakhah ve-hagut le-nokhaḥ etgarei ha-zeman* (Jerusalem, 2015); David Katz, "A Case Study in the Formation of a Super-Rabbi: The Early Years of Rabbi Ezekiel Landau, 1713–1754" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park, 2004).

[91] Marc Saperstein, "Sermons and Jewish Society: The Case of Prague," in id., "*Your Voice Like a Ram's Horn": Themes and Texts in Traditional Jewish Preaching* (Cincinnati, 1996), 127–146; id., "In Praise of an anti-Jewish Empress," *Shofar* 6 (1987), 1: 20–25; Louise Hecht, *Ein jüdischer Aufklärer in Böhmen: Der Pädagoge und Reformer Peter Beer (1758–1838)* (Cologne, 2008).

[92] Iveta Cermanová, "Karl Fischer (1757–1844). I: The Life and Intellectual World of a Hebrew Censor," *Judaica Bohemiae* 42 (2006), 125–178; ead., "Karl Fischer (1757–1844). II: The Work of a Hebrew Censor," *Judaica Bohemiae* 43 (2007), 5–63; ead., "Samuel Landau versus Karl Fischer und Eleasar Fleckeles: Der Streit um Priorität und Rabbinertitulaturen in der Prager jüdischen Gemeinde nach dem Tod Ezechiel Landaus," *Judaica Bohemiae* 45 (2010), 73–103; ead., "Zwischen Aufklärern, Rabbinern und Staat: Die Zensur hebräischer Bücher in Böhmen 1781–1848," *Judaica Bohemiae* 46 (2011), Suppl.; ead., "The Fall and Rise of Hebrew Book Printing in Bohemia, 1780–1850," in Sixtová (ed.), *Hebrew Printing*, 215–237; Pawel Maciejko, "The Rabbi and the Jesuit: On Rabbi Jonathan Eibeschütz and Father Franciscus Haselbauer Editing the Talmud," *Jewish Social Studies* 20 (2014), 147–184; Sharon Flatto, "A Tale of Three Generations: Shifting Attitudes towards Haskalah, Mendelssohn, and Acculturation," in Cohen et al. (eds.), *Jewish Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 294–306.

[93] Michael Laurence Miller, *Rabbis and Revolution: The Jews of Moravia in the Age of Emancipation* (Stanford, 2011).

this period are proliferating. In terms of subject matter, works on settlement patterns, some work on trade, and the long-standing strength of material culture have received attention. Still glaringly absent are attention to gender and synthetic overviews.[94]

For the region to take its proper place in an overall view of early modern Jewish history, more connective work needs to be done. This is true both in terms of the subject matter—historians (including myself) working on the region making a more concerted effort to link their studies to international trends and phenomena—and in terms of international cooperation, historians in the Czech Republic and elsewhere working together—if not on specific publications, then in conferences like the one this collection of essays represents. The three major catalogs published by the Jewish Museum in Prague since the Velvet Revolution—*Textiles from Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues*, *Path of Life*, and *Hebrew Printing*—likewise reflect a trend of growing integration of the museum and its scholars with historians of other communities in Prague and the Czech Republic and with scholars of Jewish history in Israel, North America, and elsewhere in Europe. The best model we have to date for describing early modern Jewry as a whole is that provided by Ruderman: how might better integration of the Jewish experience in the Bohemian Lands, its current and desired historiography, modify his five-point paradigm? First, it would add material culture. As I have argued elsewhere, the growing elaboration of texts and graphics associated with the material culture of Prague Jewry in the early modern period, and their simplification towards its later years, likely dictated in large part by aesthetic concerns, simultaneously reflect significant mental shifts associated with different historical periods.[95] Second, despite some instances of conversion and the subterranean life of Sabbatianism and Frankism in the Bohemian Lands, the "mingled identities" highlighted by Ruderman constitute a less critical, less weighty aspect of Jewish life in this region in this period than that suggested by his analysis. Aside from those specific suggestions, I have no doubt that further scholarship will suggest more specific points, and, more critically, overarching trends. The most obvious starting point, as I have argued, would be better gender analysis. More new fields of research await our discovery.

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[94] With the support of the Thyssen Foundation, a team of historians from the Czech Republic, the USA, and Germany is now working on a synthetic monograph of the history of Jews in the Bohemian Lands which should appear in 2019.

[95] Greenblatt, *To Tell Their Children*, esp. 68–82.

Coda: History and Memory in the Post-Holocaust Age

Today, the Pinkas Synagogue is one of several former synagogue buildings that house and display the collections of the Jewish Museum in Prague. Its Renaissance architecture and the onset of Jewish early modernity are not its primary messages to visitors. Instead, the recent past has, quite literally, covered over that more distant history. In one of the oldest and most quietly stunning Holocaust memorials in Europe, the synagogue's interior walls were, between 1955 and 1960, painted with the names of Jews from Czechoslovakia murdered during the Holocaust, arranged according to locations in the former Czechoslovakia.[96]

Given the heroism displayed by the curators and historians of the Jewish Museum in Prague under the Nazi regime, it is appropriate that the early modern Pinkas Synagogue, which now forms a part of that museum, serves as a memorial to Bohemian and Moravian Jews killed in the Holocaust. And yet, the sacred nature of the current Pinkas Synagogue memorial that so honors the dead simultaneously obfuscates signs of its earlier vibrancy and precludes discussion of those features that might spur discussions about Jewish life in the early modern Bohemian Lands, as visitors maintain the hushed tones appropriate for a site of mourning. Indeed, between the lines of this survey is the immeasurable negative impact of the Holocaust on the development of the historiography of Bohemian Jewry. And *The Precious Legacy* and its catalog, such an important marker of the beginning of integration of local Czech with international Jewish Studies, was itself unmistakably framed as a story of rescue from the flames of the Holocaust. And so, to see the early modern age as best we can, perhaps at this moment, about three generations after those horrific events, we can, at times, pause to look beyond them. Perhaps we can, for a stolen moment, engage in a thought experiment, in which we see beyond the names covering the walls of the Pinkas Synagogue to the walls themselves, to the spaces between them, to imagine the women, men, and children who filled these spaces and the objects they used there, the liturgies they recited, the business transactions that allowed them to build and maintain this spectacular edifice and the political alliances that governed it.[97] How would history look if, alongside the sense of loss that remains with us today, we could see the early modern period in the history of the Jews of the Bohemian Lands as it fits, on the one hand, synchronically in the history of Jews in early modern Europe, and, on the other, diachronically in the arc of central European history? It is a question whose answer is worthy of pursuit.

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[96] The memorial was closed after the Soviet-led invasion in 1968; the names were restored after the fall of the Communist regime and again following major flooding in 2002: Arno Pařík, *Pražské synagogy = Prague Synagogues = Prager Synagogen* (Prague, 2000), 39–51; World Monuments Fund, "Pinkas Synagogue," https://www.wmf.org/project/pinkas-synagogue [retrieved: 22 May 2016].

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[97] The page "Pinkas Synagogue" on the website of the Jewish Museum in Prague has basic information about the memorial, as well as video clips displaying both the restored painted names and the Renaissance architecture: http://www.jewishmuseum.cz/en/explore/sites/pinkas-synagogue/ [retrieved: 22 May 2016].