

Ottoman-Jewish *Maskilim* (Enlighteners) and their Austro-Hungarian Counterparts: A Case Study

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### 1. Subject Presentation

This paper deals with the inter-relations between Ottoman-Jewish *Maskilim* (enlighteners) and their Austro-Hungarian counterparts during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and especially in the 1880s and the 1890s. Discussion in this issue will be demonstrated using the unique case study of an Ottoman *Maskil* (Jewish enlightener), Judah ben Jacob Nehama (1826-1899) from Salonica, and his Austro-Hungarian counterpart, Chaim David Lippe (1823-1900), who was born in Galicia and lived in Vienna.

The long, intensive relationship between the two is documented in-depth in the second volume of the collection of Nehama's letters, *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin*, printed in the late 1930s. This documentation enables us to learn of the depth of relationship between two European Jews – who, although belonging to two sides of

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the colonial barricade, 'Oriental' vs. 'Occidental', have maintained between them a tight relationship, both personal and commercial. The nature of this relationship undercuts diverse aspects of the postcolonial dichotomy.

## 2. The Ottoman-Jewish *Haskalah*

The Jews living in the cities of Western Anatolia and the Southern Balkans were mostly descendants of Jews who immigrated to the Ottoman Empire in 1492, immediately soon after their expulsion from Spain, with the blessing of Sultan Bayezid II (1447-1512). The Spanish expellees intermarried with the native Romaniote and Ashkenazi Jews who were living in the area. Within several decades, the imported Sephardic culture took over on the Jewish communities in the area. The Ottoman sphere enabled Jewish communities to preserve, with a changing degree of autonomy (which was very high, compared to most Jewish communities worldwide), their unique culture, including the vernacular imported from their homeland, Ladino (Judeo-Spanish). Over the years, this language has absorbed broad influences from Turkish and languages of the Balkans, both in syntax and vocabulary.<sup>2</sup>

After about 350 years during which diverse cultural and intellectual trends operated among the Ottoman Jews (and this is not the place to elaborate in this matter),<sup>3</sup> the *Haskalah* (Jewish enlightenment) movement has developed among the descendants of

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<sup>2</sup> Concerning the formulation of the Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire, see: Yaron Ben-Naeh, *Jews in the Realm of the Sultans: Ottoman Jewish Society in the Seventeenth Century*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008, pp. 54-98.

<sup>3</sup> On these trends see, for example: Joseph Hacker, "The Intellectual Activity of the Jews of the Ottoman Empire during the 16th and 17th Centuries", in: Isadore Twersky and Bernard Septimus (eds.), *Jewish Thought in the Seventeenth Century*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987, pp. 95-135.

these Jews. The Ottoman-Jewish Haskalah had developed and grown during the Tanzimat period (1839-1876)<sup>4</sup> and the Hamidian period (1876-1908).<sup>5</sup> Dozens of Maskilim had operated in the Ottoman Empire, some 30 of them on the four central urban Jewish communities in Western Anatolia, the Southern Balkans: Salonica, Istanbul, Izmir, and Edirne.

The Haskalah movement appeared in Berlin in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This movement was a unique Jewish enterprise of modernity that included, among others, a distribution of broad general knowledge of the world of nature and human being, and an education of the young generations for their integration in life as productive citizens that have access to the European society and culture.<sup>6</sup> The Haskalah first spread all across German-speaking areas, including Austria. During the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Haskalah centers have moved to Galicia (in the periphery of the Austro-Hungarian Empire), the Russian Empire, and Italy.<sup>7</sup>

Actual documentation on the appearance of the Haskalah in the Ottoman Empire only exists since 1850, but we can probably date it about a decade or more back, around

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<sup>4</sup> The Tanzimat (Turkish: ordering, regulating) was a period of legal and administrative reforms, between 1839 and the First Constitutional Era in 1876. It was characterized by various attempts to modernize the Ottoman Empire, and to secure its territorial integrity and its prosperity. During this period, the use of new transportation and communication means gradually expanded, and fortified the connections with Western Europe, enabling rapid spread of ideas, knowledge and lifestyles.

<sup>5</sup> The period of sultan Abdul Hamid II. During the Hamidian period, technological developments have continued, and more and more citizens, including non-Muslim minorities, have started to identify themselves as 'Ottomans'.

<sup>6</sup> See: Shmuel Feiner, *The Jewish Enlightenment in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, Jerusalem: Carmel, 2010, pp. 29-30 [in Hebrew].

<sup>7</sup> About the history of the Haskalah movement, see: Shmuel Feiner, "Towards a Historical Definition of the Haskalah", in: Shmuel Feiner and David Sorkin (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Haskalah*, London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2001, pp. 184-219; idem, *The Jewish Enlightenment*; Mordechai Zalkin, *A New Dawn*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2000 [in Hebrew].

the beginning of the Tanzimat Period. The main cultural and intellectual links of Ottoman-Jewish Maskilim was to their counterparts in Central and Eastern Europe, mostly in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.<sup>8</sup> The Ottoman-Jewish Maskilim, most of whom had acquired some rabbinic education, wrote mainly in two languages: Hebrew, the *Lingua Franca* of Haskalah movement, and the Sephardic-Ottoman vernacular – Ladino. A few of them also wrote in other languages, especially French and Turkish.

During the second half of the 1890s, the scope of activity of the Ottoman-Jewish Haskalah has decreased. Until the end of the 1900s, most Maskilim born in the 1820s and 1830s had passed away. Others, born between the 1830s and 1850s, became older, and some of them suffered from deteriorating health. After the 'Young Turks' revolution (July 1908) we can no longer refer to 'Ottoman-Jewish Haskalah', but to other movements, such as Ottomanism and Zionism.

### **3. Judah ben Jacob Nehama and *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin***

Among the circle of Ottoman-Jewish Maskilim, three native Maskilim were distinct: (1) Judah ben Jacob Nehama from Salonica; (2) Barukh ben Isaac Mitrani (1847-1919), travelling all across Europe and Asia; (3) and Abraham Danon (1857-1925), working mostly in Edirne, Istanbul and Paris. They published hundreds of Haskalah texts – for example, in educational, historiography, and ethnography themes – in the European and Palestinian Jewish press, in periodicals they founded, and in books printed in the Ottoman Empire and other countries.

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<sup>8</sup> Up to 1867 – the 'Austrian Empire' (or the 'Habsburg Empire').

The focus of this paper will be, as noted above, the relationship of one of the main Ottoman-Jewish Maskilim, Nehama, with one of his prominent Viennese addressees, Chaim David Lippe. Therefore, we shall now begin with a short introduction concerning Nehama's life and activities.

Nehama was born in Salonica in 1826. His city of birth was one of the most important Ottoman port cities, and one of the financial capitals of the entire Ottoman Balkan. In 1862, 38,000 Jews were living in the city, and in 1904, this number has reached to 75,000. During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Jews has turned to a majority among the city's residents, at least until the city was taken over by the Greek regime (1912).<sup>9</sup> Major sections of Salonica of the late Ottoman Period had an appearance of a 'Jewish city'. For instance, the city port was closed on Saturdays, and Ladino was the common language in the city streets.<sup>10</sup>

Many of the Salonican Jews were traders, and Nehama was a member of one of the more affluent merchant families. He married a daughter of the Modiano family – an even wealthier Salonican merchant family, of Italian-Jewish origin. In the second half of the 1840s, at most, Nehama was exposed to the Haskalah literature, and found great interest in it. He served as the agent of European economic companies in his city, and dealt also with book trade – an occupation he combined with his hobby as book collector, even with a tendency to collect books more than trade in them. At the same time, he was publicly active in the Salonican Jewish community. As we shall see below, in the 1880s Nehama has strengthened his position in the realm of Haskalah. He grew ill in his last years and passed away on 1899.

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<sup>9</sup> Bracha Rivlin (ed.), *Pinkas Kehilot: Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities from their Foundation till after the Holocaust, Greece*, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1998, p. 194. In 1912, the Salonican Jews, about 80,000 in total, were about 50-57% of the city's population. See: *ibid*.

<sup>10</sup> On the Salonican Jewry see the recent book: Devin E. Naar, *Jewish Salonica: Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016.

Among else, Nehama published an important scientific-literary journal in Ladino, *El lunar* (The Moonlight, Salonica 1864-1865); a Ladino nonfiction book, *Istoria univesral* (Universal History, Salonica 1861), about history and geography, which he adapted from an English original book; and books of sermons, given in different communal events.

Nehama maintained extensive correspondences with Maskilim, Rabbinic scholars, Christian clerics, and merchants, both across the Ottoman Empire and outside of it, especially in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Many of these letters, dated between 1850 and 1895, were preserved in two volumes of his printed letters collection – *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin*.<sup>11</sup> The first volume was published in Salonica on 1893, with Nehama's initiative; the second volume, partly edited, was published in the late 1930s, and only a single copy survived.

It appears that after decades of comprehensive and constant activity, Nehama was hoping to publish his letters, and display his Maskilic enterprise to his counterparts – mostly the European ones. Publishing the letters might have helped him accrue great symbolic fortune and establish his sense of honor,<sup>12</sup> as an Ottoman Jew connected to European Haskalah. We can assume that his visit in Vienna in 1889, when he held personal meetings with Austro-Hungarian Maskilim, also influenced his decision to

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<sup>11</sup> Judah [ben] Jacob Nehama, *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin: Eize Miktavim Shonim Asher Hehlafti Ben Ohavay ve-Doday, Mahberet Rishona*, Salonica, 5653 (1893) [Following: Nehama, *Miktevei*, 1]; Idem, *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin: Hibur Kolel Hakirov Al Inyanim Shonim, Mahberet Shniya*, Salonica: Bezes, (Late 1930s) [Following: Nehama, *Miktevei*, 2]. The title's meaning in Hebrew is 'Letters More Delightful than Wine'. For this free translation, see: Shmuel Feiner, "Towards a Historical Definition of the Haskalah", in: Shmuel Feiner and David Sorkin (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Haskalah*, London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2001, p. 213, note 102. The literally meaning of the title is: *Miktevei* = letters; *Dodim* (in this flowery context, following the biblical meaning) = love, amorous; *mi* = from; *Yayin* (literally: wine) = an Hebrew initials of Yehuda [ben] Yaacov Nehama.

<sup>12</sup> On the importance of honor in the Ottoman Jewry, see: Yaron Ben-Naeh, "*El onor no se merka kon paras*": Honor and its meaning among Ottoman Jews", *Jewish Social Studies*, 11, 2 (2005), pp. 19-50.

publish his letters. Either way, at the beginning of 1890 Nehama started collecting from his counterparts several important letters, ones he remembered their content but he lost;<sup>13</sup> this illustrates his intention to publish at least some of his letters.

However, the main trigger for publishing the letters was a fire spreading in Salonica on September 4, 1890,<sup>14</sup> consuming the majority of Nehama's library, including his letters. In the introduction to the first volume, Nehama wrote that great sadness filled him when he thought of his lost letters: 'Oh! When I lie down and recall those pleasant moments I enjoyed when receiving my excellent letters [...], in my heart I am disturbed. And I grieve this loss which will never return. I asked myself, therefore, why me?'<sup>15</sup>

By his testimony, the great sadness filling Nehama has led him to action – to gather his remaining saved letters and print them: 'And while understanding this is sadness and grief, my heart spoke to me [...]. Let me stand up and bring to the printing press those saved from the fire [...] so that they may remain for days to come [...]. I have made up my mind and did so'.<sup>16</sup> As a result of Nehama's decision to publish his remaining letters, and from the later publication of his additional letters, an extensive corpus, nearly unstudied so far, has survived, and is available to us. This corpus sheds a new light on the Ottoman-Jewish Haskalah, as branched network of internal connections, alongside external connections that included long and lasting inter-relations between Ottoman Maskilim and their European counterparts, mostly Austro-Hungarian ones.

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<sup>13</sup> See, for example: Nehama, *Miktevei*, 1:29 (no. XIII).

<sup>14</sup> Fires were frequent, causing much damage, because most of the houses in Western Anatolia and the Southern Balkans were wooden; in addition, they were exposed to strong winds coming in from the Black Sea.

<sup>15</sup> Nehama, *Miktevei*, 1:III.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 1:IV.

The two volumes of *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin* contain 310 letters, about one third of them in Volume I, and two-thirds in Volume II. The letters in the corpus have 89 different senders and 66 recipients, many of them well-known. Among them, for example, three for the greatest Judaic studies scholars: Yom-Tov (Leopold) Lipman Zunz (1794-1886) of Berlin, Shadal (Samuel David Luzzatto, 1800-1865) of Padua, and Meyer Kayserling (1829-1905) of Budapest.

According to a survey I have recently conducted, tracking all of Nehama's known correspondences, nearly two-thirds of the surviving letters in both volumes of *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin* were sent from the Ottoman Empire (most of them letters sent by Nehama himself, to addressees in the Ottoman Empire and outside of it). It is worth mentioning that 28% of the letters were sent from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, from nearly every district of it: Austria, Galicia and Bukovina, Hungary, Moravia, and the Italian districts. Most letters sent from the Empire were sent from its capital, Vienne (17% of the letters in the book). This is important testimony of the direct link, so far unknown in research, between the Ottoman-Jewish Haskalah (and specifically, the Salonican Haskalah), and the Haskalah in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.



*The geographical distribution of Nehama's letters (tentative), by Google Maps*

#### **4. Nehama, Viennese Bookkeepers, and Chaim David Lippe**

Vienna was one of the most prominent cultural and literary centers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Its relative proximity to the Ottoman Empire,<sup>17</sup> and the old Sephardic Jewish community residing there,<sup>18</sup> have turned it into an influencing cultural and trade

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<sup>17</sup> Vienna is located less than 1,300km as the crow flies from the Istanbul, and less than 1,000km from Salonica.

<sup>18</sup> On this community, see: Mordechai Arbel, "The Sephardi Community in Vienna", *Pe'amim*, 69 (1996), pp. 95-114 [in Hebrew]; Martin Stechauner, "Imagining the Sephardic Community of Vienna:

center for Ottoman Jews, including in the field of print and literature. Dozens of letters preserved in both *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin* volumes shed light on Vienna's crucial place in distributing Haskalah literature to Salonica, mostly through Nehama's branched connections with different activists in the Viennese book industry.

In the early 1850s, Nehama started working with the Viennese-Jewish bookseller Israel Knoepflmacher. The latter served, among else, as agent for the important (non-Jewish) Viennese printer, Anton Edler von Schmid (1765-1855), broadly approaching Jewish audience since the 1800s.<sup>19</sup> Knoepflmacher acquired Hebrew nonfiction books for Nehama, and had sent them to him, several at a time. For that, he had received payment, also for several books each time. Knoepflmacher also mediated between Nehama and Judaic studies scholars, which were able to procure for him Haskalah books (such as Shadal). In the late 1850s or early 1860s, Nehama stopped working with Knoepflmacher,<sup>20</sup> and until the mid-1880s worked with other Viennese-Jewish booksellers, among them R. Shlomo Netter,<sup>21</sup> Jacob Kam,<sup>22</sup> Jacob Picker,<sup>23</sup> and Winter brothers.<sup>24</sup> Evidently, the connection between Nehama and these personas was incidental and irregular, and he did not seem to formulate a close business, let alone personal, relationship with any of them.

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A Discourse-Analytical Approach", in: Hans Gerald Hödl and Lukas Pokorny (eds.), *Religion in Austria, Volume 2*, Vienna: Praesens Verlag, 2014, pp. 49-91.

<sup>19</sup> About von Schmid, See: Moshe Pelli, *Haskalah and Beyond: The Reception of the Hebrew Enlightenment and the Emergence of Haskalah Judaism*, Lanham: University Press of America, 2010, pp. 63-65.

<sup>20</sup> Business disputes between the two have occurred already in 1852. See: Nehama, *Miktevei*, 1:40 (no. XIX). However, Nehama continued to work with Knoepflmacher later on.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 1:146 (no. LXXXVI).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 1:149 (no. XC).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 2:27-29.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 2:23.

However, at least since 1882, Nehama started working mostly with the Viennese-Jewish bookseller, Haim David Lippe.<sup>25</sup> The connection between the two was documented in 21 surviving letters, written between 1888 and 1895, which was printed in Volume II of *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin*. These are of course just a portion of the letters the two have exchanged, and in any case, we can assume the connection between them was more intensive than those Nehama held with booksellers across Europe, since from each bookseller only a handful of letters, usually just one, have survived.

Chaim David ben Barukh Moshe Lippe was a Jewish Austro-Hungarian Maskil, bibliographer and bookseller who travelled for years within his Empire. He was born in 1823, in the City of Stanisławów (today Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine), and at the age of 26 moved to Tschernowitz (today Chernivtsi, Ukraine), the capital of Bukovina district, where he served as teacher and cantor (1852-1849). He later moved to Epries (today Prešov, Slovakia), which was under the Hungarian area of influence in the Empire, where he continued to serve as teacher and cantor (1873-1852). When residing in Epries, he wrote a booklet on the social tension in the communities of Hungary and its surroundings,<sup>26</sup> and started dealing with bibliography. In 1873 Lippe moved to Vienne, where he started to sell books, and devote himself to his bibliographic occupation.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> This can be learnt from a letter sent by the *ha-Magid* journal publisher, David Gordon (1831-1886), to Nehama, on December 1882. See: Nehama, *Miktevei*, 2:185. Possibly the relationship between Nehama and Lippe has started earlier – anyhow, after Lippe's move to Vienna (1873).

<sup>26</sup> See: Chaim David Lippe, *Sechs Briefe zur Beleuchtung der religiösen Wirren in Ober-Ungarn, von einem Beamten der israelitischen Kultus-Gemeinde zu Epries*, Kaschau: C. Werfer, 1866.

<sup>27</sup> Gershom Bader, *Galician Jewish Celebrities: An Illustrated Cyclopaedia of Noted Jewish Personalities, Who Contributed to Galicia's Progress during its Existence*, Vienna: Appel & Co., 1934, pp. 131-132 [in Hebrew].

Lippe published his first bibliographic book in 1874, and co-authored another one in 1882. Three years earlier, he published the first volume of his comprehensive bibliography of Haskalah and Judaic studies books and periodicals; a new edition of the bibliography, which included a second volume and updates to the first one, appeared in 1899. Scholars use this bibliography up to this day, as evident from its reprint just 15 years ago.<sup>28</sup>

### 5. The Commercial and Personal Connections between Nehama and Lippe

The correspondence between Nehama and Lippe reveals the regular pattern of their commercial relation: Nehama would order different books from Lippe, usually Hebrew books concerning Haskalah and Judaic studies. Lippe, residing in glorified Vienna with relatively easy access to books from the different Haskalah centers, would collect orders from Nehama, for whom he maintained an ongoing bill. Every time the bill would reach a certain amount, Lippe would write to Nehama the amount he should receive, and the latter paid him. For example, Nehama wrote to Lippe on November 1891: 'I hereby send you today directly from the post office the total of 11.64 frs [=Gulden (*florint*)] that you say in your account I owe you'.<sup>29</sup> The money was transferred, and Lippe received it directly from the post office.

In the first instance, we can assume Lippe would only send Nehama books after receiving payment. However, after a while, as the trust between the two grew, surely sometimes books would be sent to Nehama in advance. This is hinted in a testimony of November 1889: Nehama thanks Lippe for three book deliveries he provided in the

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<sup>28</sup> Chaim David Lippe, *Bibliographisches Lexicon der gesammten jüdischen Literatur der Gegenwart und Adress-Anzeiger*, Hildesheim: G. Olms, 2003.

<sup>29</sup> Nehama, *Miktevei*, 2:105.

previous months, 'with all the books to which my soul desired and yearned, that you have sent me and I have received on time'. We can infer from this document that Lippe has sent his friend the books without any advance payment requirement, which testifies of the great trust between them; this, since at the end of a long letter, filled with personal details, Nehama writes: 'send me your bill that I owe you, and I shall pay'.<sup>30</sup>

The relationship between the two did not sum up to the commercial aspect. The two have exchanged, in nearly every letter, quite a few greetings, way beyond the average in the rest of Nehama's letters. Their tone was usually positive and very close. From time to time, they updated themselves with each other's personal medical information,<sup>31</sup> and exchanged gifts; for instance, Nehama sent Lippe, as a gift for his seventieth birthday, a golden silver goblet.<sup>32</sup>

Even before the two have met, the correspondence reveals longing for a personal meeting between two old pen-pals, who were yet unable to meet due to the physical distance and daily hassles. For example, in autumn of 1888, Lippe heard that Nehama intends to arrive in Vienna for medical purposes. He later wrote to him: 'I was so pleased to hear that you intend to come to Vienne [...], and I shall be lucky to see your figure (*demutkha*) – the image (*temunat*) of a mighty wise man!'<sup>33</sup>

In the summer of 1889, Nehama went to Vienne and stayed there for about two months. His visit was intended primarily for medical purposes, but he utilized it also for his Maskilic affairs. During this period, he would often meet his old pen-pal, Lippe, and this intensified the relationship between them – as happens to many of the

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 2:125-126.

<sup>31</sup> See, for example: *ibid.* 2:61, 92-95.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:62.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:15.

close relationships beginning in the postal sphere (or, especially in later generations, in the phone and cyber spheres), when moving to the personal dimension.<sup>34</sup> Some of the meetings even included their families.<sup>35</sup>

Of course, the personal dimension affected the commercial relations between them. Lippe gave Nehama, as a friend who was also a devoted customer of his bookshop, special services, that doubtful whether he provided most of his customers. For instance, Lippe would notify Nehama in detail the publication status of titles he desired, such as journals that were not yet published.<sup>36</sup> In addition, from time to time, Lippe would offer Nehama special deals he came across: for example, in January 1893 he offered him a golden opportunity to purchase a volume of a prestigious Hebrew book he saw at a Viennese priest, for the price of 20 gulden (*florint*) only – less than one-quarter of its original price, 90 gulden.<sup>37</sup> 20 gulden was in itself a considerable amount (a monthly salary for a Galician agrarian worker in the peak season),<sup>38</sup> which testifies – just as similar amounts mentioned in Nehama's letters – of the latter's great financial abilities.

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<sup>34</sup> Compare, for example, to the following example, from New York of the 1880s: Carolyn Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 73.

<sup>35</sup> Nehama, *Miktevei*, 2:16, 126, 146-147. See also: *ibid*, 2:15, 45.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 2:16.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 2:44.

<sup>38</sup> Between 1857 and 1892, 1 gulden was divided into 100 kreuzer. According to a Jewish memoir on this period, in the peak season, 'the spring, the wages rose suddenly [from 12 to 16.5 kreuzer a day] and peaked during the harvest, when even the Women were paid 60 kreuzer a day'. See: Joseph Margoshes, *A World Apart: A Memoir of Jewish Life in Nineteenth Century Galicia*, translated from Yiddish by Rebecca Margolis and Ira Robinson, Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2008, p. 70.

## 6. Lippe and the distribution of *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin*

Another prominent aspect of the personal relations between Nehama and Lippe is the remarkable involvement of the latter in distributing Volume I of *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin* in the Viennese Haskalah center in particular, and in the world of Haskalah in general. When Nehama published Volume I of the book, in the spring of 1893, Lippe became its main distributor. Soon after printing, Nehama sent a copy of the book, printed in Salonica, to Lippe. The latter was happy to receive it, and on May 26 asked Nehama: 'Perhaps you would like to send me several additional copies to distribute here [=Vienna] among scholars – not free of charge, but for a price you will set for your book [...]'.<sup>39</sup>

Three days later – evidence of the postal service swiftness between Vienna and Salonica at the time – Nehama replied: 'I hereby send you additional five copies of *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin*. Give them to whoever you wish, free of charge, and for no price. But let me know the names of the scholars to which you gave [the book] on my behalf'. Nehama only asked that 'you give [one copy] to our friend Dr. Shlomo Rubin', together with a letter he asked him to forward to him.<sup>40</sup> Rubin (1823-1910), a key figure in the Galician Haskalah, lived in Vienna at the time.

Already on June 5 Lippe replied, together with the requested detail of those receiving copies of the book, among them some of the most prominent Maskilim and Judaic studies scholars in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, all of Nehama and Lippe's cohort:

I have received his gift together with five copies of his precious book – and I did what I had to do, and gave [the book] to R. Dr. [Moritz] Gudemann [1835-1918], [Adolf] Jellinek [1821-1893], Rubin, and the Vienna community

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 2:46.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 2:171.

library (*beit eked sefarim*). One copy remains with me, and I shall give it to R. Isaac Hirsch Weis [1815-1908] [...] – and the book that you have sent me as a gift I shall give the scholar [...] Meir Ish Shalom [Friedmann, 1831-1908]. And you will be so kind as to send me another book [for Lippe himself] [...].<sup>41</sup>

On June 11 Nehama has sent Lippe two additional copies, 'to replace the one [copy] you asked for'.<sup>42</sup> Lippe started therefore to distribute Nehama's book – in which he found 'Torah words of the highest importance'<sup>43</sup> – among Viennese Maskilim he personally chose.

Four years earlier, during his visit to Vienna, Nehama already made a name for himself among many of these persons. On November 1889, after returning to Salonica, Lippe wrote him that 'not a few here (Vienne) who are Torah-loving outstanding personas, are eager to know how you are doing'. Lippe continued:

[...] Judah! *Now* your brethren thank you. Your name is known in Judah (*noda bi-Yehuda*) for honor and glory of Israel, and here [=Vienna] all lovers of their people and [its] Torah (*hovevei amam ve-tora*) are honor and dignify your name. All as one are praise, glorify, and exalt the name of the wise, generous one, R. Judah Nehama, the one and only among our Sephardic brethren! *The one* who will not discriminate between his Sephardic and Ashkenazi brethren – all loved [...] to his pure soul!<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 2:46.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 2:187.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 2:46. In origin: '*devarim ha-omdim be-ruma shel tora*'.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 2:147 (emphasis in the original).

The great respect Nehama had from these honorable European Jews, and the tremendous joy of the unmediated connection with them, surely motivated him to continue distributing copies of his book among them. Furthermore, Nehama performed the entire distribution enterprise, which included substantial printing and postage costs, on his expense. He refused to take any payment for the book's distribution – at least in Vienna. The amounts he spent on it were surely high even for an affluent person like Nehama, but he aspired to perpetuate his work and letters – survivors of the Salonica fire – thereby to constitute his legacy in the realm of Haskalah.

Anyhow, copies were sent from Nehama to Lippe, and distributed in Vienna by the latter, also during the months following the book's publication. In the summer of 1893, Lippe wrote to Nehama: 'Many and whole among the wisest of our people who heard the glory of your book [...] yearn to purchase it for the price you will determine, and I have received letters from different Rabbis about your book'. Therefore, Lippe asked him: 'And so I shall dare to ask you to send me some editions for sale, for the price you will determine'.<sup>45</sup> Nehama instantly sent additional copies, without any payment demand. In August, Lippe notified him that 'I have received his [=Nehama's] gift'.<sup>46</sup> Nehama continued sending additional copies to Lippe. On October 1893, Lippe thanked him for another shipment: 'Your books I have received and I shall give them to the scholars'.<sup>47</sup>

The distribution initiated by Nehama and managed by Lippe aroused great interest among the Austro-Hungarian Maskilic world – in the capital Vienna and beyond it. For example, Nehama has earned many thank-you letters from personas receiving the

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 2:170.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 2:171.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 2:49.

book through Lippe.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, commentaries about the book were published, between 1893 and 1894, in German in journals of Judaic studies.<sup>49</sup> This would have been inconceivable without Lippe's diverse network.<sup>50</sup>

## 7. Methodological Discussion and Preliminary Conclusions

Now, we shall discuss the findings of the study and come to preliminary conclusions, on which I intend to elaborate and build on in the workshop itself. Before reaching the conclusions, a methodological discussion is required, since the warm relationship between Nehama and Lippe exposes profound layers of the connection between two Jews supposedly belonging on two different sides of the colonial dichotomy.

In 1978, the literary theoretician Edward Said has formulated his postcolonial theory, in its purified version.<sup>51</sup> Since then, the cultural studies academic Ella Shohat<sup>52</sup> and the sociologist Yehouda Shenhav<sup>53</sup> have attempted to convert and adjust it to the studies of the Jewish world in the colonial era, and later in the independent State of Israel. The outbreak of the postcolonial approach, and to a no lesser extent, the broad

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<sup>48</sup> See, for example: *ibid*, 2:60, 64.

<sup>49</sup> See, for example: *ibid*, 2:66-68.

<sup>50</sup> I currently expand the discussion in my dissertation about the acceptance of Volume I of the book, and I may discuss this issue in length in the workshop itself.

<sup>51</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Pantheon, 1978.

<sup>52</sup> Ella Shohat, *Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of Representation*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989.

<sup>53</sup> Yehouda Shenhav, *The Arab Jews: A Postcolonial Reading of Nationalism, Religion, and Ethnicity*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006.

criticism it was subject to, have led in the past two decades to the growth of a parallel study discourse in Jewish historiography.<sup>54</sup>

Many historical studies have found that the fact the Jewish people lived in a Diaspora, both in the West and the East, has led to the development of a 'Jewish Orientalism' phenomena, common both in Europe and in different Islamic countries. As the historian Yaron Tsur has demonstrated, this unique split between 'East' and 'West' has turned the national Jewish movement, as of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, to one-of-a-kind, for combining nationalism and colonialism at the same time.<sup>55</sup> This phenomenon can be placed earlier by several decades, in previous appearances of inter-Jewish solidarity – for instance, in the Haskalah movement,<sup>56</sup> as Nehama and Lippe's case also proves.

The studies of different historians on 'Jewish Orientalism' are linked to the 'hybridity' approach, established by the literary theoretician Homi K. Bhabha. This approach has appeared and blossomed in the 1990s, but is still cherished among historians of the modern Jewish world. Bhabha has demonstrated that the colonial inter-relations between conqueror and conquered are 'hybrid', rather than the 'dichotomist' relations that Said described in his book; this, since the meeting point between the two cultures creates bilateral and complex cultural exchanges. According to Bhabha, the colonial

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<sup>54</sup> For a description of the postcolonial approach and its influences on Israeli historiography up to the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, see: Yaron Tsur, "The Israeli Historiography and the Ethnic Problem", in: Benny Morris (ed.), *Making Israel*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007, pp. 257-260.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, pp. 231-233; idem, "Carnival Fears: Moroccan Immigrants and the Ethnic Problem in the Young State of Israel", *The Journal of Israeli History*, 18, 1 (1997) pp. 73-76. For a classic discussion in colonialism and the colonial contexts of Zionism, see: Gershon Shafir, *Land, Labor, and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882-1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 1-21.

<sup>56</sup> See: Yaron Tsur, "Outside of Europe: The Origins of Moroccan Zionism and its Evolution", in: Allon Gal (ed.), *World Regional Zionism: Geo-Cultural Dimensions, Volume 2*, Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 2010, p. 221 [in Hebrew].

system itself acts out of deep ambivalence and insecurity, and therefore does not create a situation of simple 'oppression'.<sup>57</sup>

The use of all these concepts when discussing Jews in the Ottoman Empire must be careful. The Ottoman Empire is usually considered an 'Oriental' empire, despite the current attempts in research to consider it a European in its basis and essence.<sup>58</sup> However, in the boundaries of time and space, the Ottoman Jews – like other Ottomans – were not subject to direct Western colonialism, but were in an economic and social status that was relatively subjected to the West and its culture, mostly the French one. The historian Sarah Abrevaya Stein has referred to this state as 'semi-colonial'.<sup>59</sup> Despite that, the postcolonial methodology is still highly valuable in our case – both when discussing Nehama and Lippe, and when discussing issues in *Miktevei Dodim mi-Yayin* not mentioned in this paper, which I may bring up in the workshop.<sup>60</sup>

The inter-relations between Nehama and Lippe challenges the postcolonial dichotomy between 'orient' and 'occident', even when considering inherent hesitations in this issue.<sup>61</sup> Currently, I will suggest several reasons why the relationship between

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<sup>57</sup> See in detail: Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London and New York: Routledge, 1994.

<sup>58</sup> See: Brian Siverstein, *Islam and Modernity in Turkey*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 8 (and additional references in p. 222, note 13).

<sup>59</sup> Sarah Abrevaya Stein, "Creating a Taste for News: Historicizing Judeo-Spanish Periodicals of the Ottoman Empire", *Jewish History*, 14, 1 (2000), pp. 9.

<sup>60</sup> Such as theft and appropriating of the Ottoman Jewry's cultural treasures by Maskilim and Judaic studies scholars, mostly from Berlin, Budapest and Padua.

<sup>61</sup> As noted above, this is not a direct colonial situation, but relationship between members of two minorities in different multi-national empires. In addition, the both empires that did not spearhead, to say the least, the colonial effort in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe – although they have exercised actual colonial practices over certain nations in broad areas under their control. On this practices see, for example: Eugene L. Rogan, "*Asiret Mektebi*: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes (1892-1907)", *International*

Nehama and Lippe was able to develop in a manner not corresponding with the colonial dichotomy.

First, to a great extent, 'money answereth all things' (Ecclesiastes 10:19). Nehama's strong financial status, as well as the fact he was a customer well providing for Lippe for over a decade, surely made it hard for the latter to consider him an 'Oriental', 'inferior' Jew, and improved his prestige.

Second, Lippe and Nehama – two Maskilim who did not share a mother tongue (Ladino in the case of Nehama, Yiddish in the case of Lippe) – wrote to each other in Hebrew, the Lingua Franca of Haskalah movement. Their control of the secrets of Hebrew and its Rabbinic and Maskilic levels, and the fact that it was not the mother tongue of neither, put them largely on the same level. Had the correspondence between the two taken place, for example, in German, the language of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (which Lippe spoke well, and in which Nehama had an imperfect control), the situation might have been different.

Third, Nehama was indeed an 'Oriental' Jew, living in the Ottoman Balkans, but he was, after all, a European Jew – just like Lippe. Salonica, like the entire Balkans, is located in Europe. Therefore, it might have been more accurate to speak – in the spirit of historian Maria Todorova's constituting book, coining the term 'Balkanism' (1997)<sup>62</sup> – of a certain approach of 'Jewish Balkanism' on behalf of Lippe towards Nehama. I doubt to what extent we can find traces of this approach also in the inter-relations between the two; perhaps a testimony of this approach is found in Lippe's words of the manner in which Nehama was praised in Vienna, for being 'the one of

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*Journal of Middle East Studies*, 28, 1 (1996), pp. 83-107 (on the Ottoman Empire); Robert J. Donia, *Islam under the Double Eagle: The Muslims of Bosnia and Hercegovina*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1981 (on the Austro-Hungarian Empire).

<sup>62</sup> Maria Todorova. *Imagining the Balkans*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

only among our Sephardic brethren' (see above). I will elaborate a bit in this matter in the workshop, and would greatly appreciate comments and ideas concerning it, based on your impression.

Forth, Nehama had a solid status in Salonica: he was a privileged, affluent and well-married man. In this sense, he was sort of a 'big fish in a small pond', with the self-awareness of 'big fish in a big pond' – a derivative of the Sephardic honor and dignity, *el onor*. As for Lippe: Although he lived in an 'Occidental' empire and city, he was not originally from Vienna, as most Viennese Jews in his time; he was born in peripheral Galicia and travelled across no less peripheral areas – including what is now known as the Slovak Republic – and only then arrived at the glorified capital.

In this sense, Lippe was – despite his commercial success and established status as worthwhile Maskil, bibliographer and bookseller – a 'small fish in a big pond'. Therefore, even in the colonial age, the status of the 'Oriental' respected Salonican Maskil, and his 'Occidental' counterpart, a Galician Jew who became Viennese, grew closer. If so, it seems that in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the borders between 'East' and 'West' were not as stringent as it sometimes appears.

And last and fifth reason: possibly, we cannot underestimate the prosaic importance of personal friendship between two human beings, relying on 'chemistry' alone. The personal connection between the two has made them close friends, way beyond trade partners, or bookseller and his client. Not every friendship can cross every border, and if the two were, for example, a Frenchman and a Sub-Saharan African in the colonial era, the case probably would have been different. Nevertheless, it appears that the borders of the type that existed between Nehama and Lippe were certainly crossable. It seems that the strong friendship between the two, ending apparently only with

Nehama's death – just one year before Lippe – has certainly crossed this type of borders.