

Jewish Life in Austria and Germany since 1945

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Identity and Communal Reconstruction

SUSANNE COHEN-WEISZ



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*To the memory of my grandparents
Ella and Ludwig Weisz,
who were part of the Vienna Jewish community
before and after the Shoah*

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Preface

Since World War II, the Jewish communities in Austria and Germany have undergone unique social and political developments. Despite coming close to annihilation, they have regained a religious, cultural, and economic strength unimaginable in 1945. From being considered *Liquidationsgemeinden* (communities to be liquidated) without any future, whose members even tried to conceal their Jewishness from their gentile neighbors, they have become, especially since the mid-1980s, thriving religious, cultural, and economic entities that act self-confidently and forthrightly in the political and cultural arenas, are firmly ensconced in the surrounding society, and are actively involved in the affairs of European and world Jewry. Moreover, in both countries the communities also engaged in a massive drive to expand Jewish infrastructure. Nevertheless, in Vienna, although its Jewish community is one-fifteenth the size of Germany's, Jewish infrastructure is manifestly more developed, and religious life is more vital.

The opening-up to the surrounding society, marked changes in individual and communal self-perceptions, and the final “unpacking of the suitcases” in both communities happened simultaneously although government policies toward the Jewish minority in the two countries differed markedly. They were significantly more favorable in Germany than in Austria, especially concerning the countries' dealing with their role in the Shoah, their financial support of the communities, and their policies toward the immigration of Jews. Despite less support from the local authorities, the Vienna community experienced even a disproportionately higher institutional development. Thus national politics and government policies, although they undoubtedly influenced Jewish communal reconstruction, were not the decisive factors in it.

The purpose of the book is to shed light on how these developments came about and why—what factors actually shaped community reconstruction. Based on published primary and secondary materials and oral interviews with some 80 communal and organizational leaders, experts, and scholars, this book provides a comparative systematic

account of the reconstruction of Jewish communal life in Germany and Vienna (representing 98 percent of Austrian Jewry) after 1945 as it developed over the next six decades. It also explains the process of communal reconstruction and its outcomes in the two countries. In particular, it focuses on the similarities and differences between the communities in regard to their political, social, institutional, and identity developments, and their members' changing attitudes toward and relationship with the surrounding societies. It seeks to show how these developed in diverse national political circumstances and varying government policies. It will prove that more influential than national politics were domestic Jewish development processes—especially changes in Jewish group identity, which shaped not only the Jewish community itself but also its view of the gentile world and its interaction with it at the national level.

By contrasting the Viennese and German cases of communal reconstruction, the book aims to enhance the understanding of the process as a whole and of the various factors involved in it. It identifies common factors and common patterns on the one hand, and those that are present only in particular cases on the other. In so doing, it highlights elements that would otherwise remain hidden. Such a comparative study has not been undertaken before in the existing literature.

The book distinguishes a number of key variables—particularly Jewish identity changes, denominational differences, the degree of religiosity of different groups within the community, and generational changes—and determines the relative impact of each of these factors on the various aspects of Jewish communal reconstruction, organization, and representation in different periods since 1945. It also examines the impact of the immigration of Jews from the former Soviet Union on the communities—especially in the realms of community organization, decision-making and unity, and religious life and cultural expression—and compares the processes of integration in the two countries.

In Chapter 5, the scope of comparative research is then broadened to reveal the key variables and their pattern of influence responsible for the developments of and within the European Jewry and European Jewish organizations. Its purpose is to reveal the state of European Jewish unity and cooperation, detect the factors that variously promote and

obstruct the latter, and show how they affect the role of Germany's and Austria's communities at the European Jewish level.

This book focuses on the largely unexplored niche of contemporary European Jewish communities. There are several studies dealing with post-1945 German Jewry; however, books examining and comparing the German and the Austrian/Vienna Jewries are lacking. The available literature neither examines in-depth the influence of Jewish identity changes on communal reconstruction nor identifies the important role of Jewish identity on development processes at the national-Jewish and European Jewish levels. It also does not shed light on how these developments came about and why, and thus on what factors shape(d) community reconstruction.

The book deals with a number of issues, each of which taken individually is important and which together present a comprehensive picture of social and political developments within the Vienna and German Jewries from 1945 until today. As these issues are universal to Jewish communities in Europe and abroad, lessons from this book could also be applied to communities beyond those in Austria and Germany. The major issues identified are changes in the role of the Shoah, of the State of Israel, and of the country of residence in Jewish group identity; the influence of these Jewish identity elements, as well as of religious and cultural orientations and levels of religiosity, on community reconstruction; the integration of Jewish immigrants into communities; and the influence of national social and political developments related to Jewish matters on communal development.

The aim of this book, which is the culmination of a decade of study and observation of the Jewish communities in Vienna and Germany, is to become a useful tool for leaders of Jewish communities and organizations in Europe and beyond, leaders of European Jewish organizations, diplomats, and politicians wanting to understand the Jewish (or, more generally, ethnic minority community) revival in Central Europe, and decision-makers interested in immigration and integration policies. At the same time, it can provide important insights, data, and ideas to scholars (and others) interested in fields such as identity, Jewish identity, and European-Jewish identity, the politics and history of the Jewish communities in Austria and Germany after 1945,

the countries' post-1945 dealing with their roles in the Shoah, Jewish community-building, immigration and integration, ethnic minorities, and European Jewish organization.

I want to thank those who helped and supported this research. First and foremost, I want to thank Prof. Peter Medding. It is impossible to overstate my gratitude for his continuous guidance, understanding, and encouragement throughout the research and writing process, and for his many valuable remarks. His wide knowledge, logical way of thinking, and detailed and constructive comments have been of great value for me. Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Sergio DellaPergola and Prof. Anton Pelinka for reviewing the manuscript to this book, and Prof. Angelika Timm for reviewing the PhD thesis on which this book is based; they provided valuable remarks and ideas. I would also like to thank my father, Dr. Willy Weisz, who is very active in the Vienna Jewish community and engaged in the dialogue with the non-Jewish environment, for providing me with a broad insight into Vienna Jewish community political, religious, and social issues, and into Austrian politics on Jewish and other issues, and for helping me make connections with many of my interviewees. This work could not have been done without my interviewees; thank you for having shared your knowledge, perceptions, and insights with me.

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Glossary

AL—*Die Alternative*, IKG fraction.

Alt-Deutsche—“Old-German Jews”: Jews who had been German by culture, identity, and citizenship even before the war.

Alt-Wiener—“Old-Viennese Jews”: Jews who had been Viennese by culture, identity, and citizenship even before the war.

Alteingesessene—Jews from the established postwar Jewish community: former DPs and refugees from Central and Eastern Europe who immigrated to Germany and Austria before 1989 and their descendants.

Ashkenazi Jews—Descendants of the medieval Jewish communities of the Rhineland.

Aryanization—The forced transfer of Jewish-owned property to German “Aryan” ownership.

Austrittsgemeinde—Secession community.

Bar mitzvah—Literally, “son of commandments”: At the age of 13, a Jewish boy becomes Halakhically obligated to observe the commandments and religiously, morally, and ethically responsible for his decisions and actions. The bar mitzvah ceremony, at which the boy gets called up for the first time in his life to read the weekly Torah and/or Haftarah portions, formally marks the assumption of that obligation and responsibility, and the right to take part in all areas of Jewish community life.

BB—B’nai B’rith.

BBE—B’nai B’rith Europe.

BJSD—*Bundesverband Jüdischer Studenten in Deutschland* (Union of Jewish Students in Germany).

BJVN—*Bund Jüdischer Verfolgter des Naziregimes* (Union of Jewish Victims of the Nazi Regime), IKG fraction.

Bricha—(Hebrew for “escape”) Organized illegal immigration movement of Shoah survivors across the occupied zones into the British Mandate for Palestine in violation of the White Paper of 1939, which severely restricted Jewish immigration. *Bricha* was founded

by former resistance fighters and ended after Israel declared independence and annulled the White Paper.

Bundesverband—*Bundesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden in Österreich* (Federal Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Austria).

BWJ—*Bund Werktätiger Juden* (Union of Working Jews), IKG fraction.

BZÖ—*Bündnis Zukunft Österreich* (Alliance for the Future of Austria).

CDU—*Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* (Christian Democratic Union of Germany).

CER—Conference of European Rabbis.

Heder—Elementary Orthodox religious education classes.

CSU—*Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern* (Christian Social Union of Bavaria).

Diaspora—(Greek for “dispersion”) Jewish communities that exercise their free choice to reside outside of the State of Israel but have the option of moving there whenever they choose.

DPs—Displaced Persons.

DÖW—*Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes* (Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance).

ECJC—European Council of Jewish Communities.

Einheitsgemeinde—“Unity community”: centralized community structure regrouping all streams in Judaism from Orthodox to Liberal (or Progressive) under one roof.

EJC—European Jewish Congress.

Eruv—A symbolic fencing of parts of a city that allows observant Jews to carry things (e.g., babies in a baby carriage) on *Shabbat* within its limits.

Exile—A situation of forced expulsion in which the Jewish nation no longer possesses any self-rule in its territorial home. Before 1948, Jews could not move to a Jewish land because there was none. Nor were they able to move freely to Palestine because of the quota imposed by the British Mandate.

FDP—*Freie Demokratische Partei* (Free Democratic Party).

FPÖ—*Freiheitliche Partei Österreich* (Austrian Freedom Party).

FRG—*Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Federal Republic of Germany).

FSU—Former Soviet Union.

GDR—*Deutsche Demokratische Republik* (German Democratic Republic).

Halakha—Jewish law.

Haredi—Haredi Judaism is the most theologically conservative form of Orthodox Judaism. It is often referred to by outsiders as “ultra-Orthodox Judaism.” Since the Haredi Jews (Haredim) and many others object to that term, “Haredi” is used in this book instead.

Hasidic Judaism—A subset of Haredi Judaism. Hasidim differ from other Haredi Jews by their devotion to a dynastic leader (referred to as a rebbe).

Heimat—Homeland.

IKG—*Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien* (Israelite [Jewish] Religious Community Vienna).

IRG—*Israelitische Religionsgesellschaft* (Jewish Religion Corporation).

Israelitengesetz—Abbreviated form of the *Gesetz betreffend die Regelung der äußeren Rechtsverhältnisse der israelitischen Religionsgesellschaft* (legislation regulating the relations between the state and the Israelite Community) from March 1890. 2012 *Israelitengesetz* refers to the version of the law amended in May 2012.

JDC—American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

JG—*Junge Generation*, IKG fraction.

JF—Zionist *Jüdische Föderation* (Jewish Federation), IKG fraction.

Kashrut—The set of Jewish dietary laws dealing with what foods Jews can and cannot eat and how those foods must be prepared and eaten.

Kindertransport—Children’s Transport: the informal name of a series of rescue efforts that brought thousands of refugee Jewish children from Nazi Germany to Great Britain between 1938 and 1940.

Klezmer—(Hebrew for “instruments of music”) a musical tradition of the Ashkenazi Jews that developed in pre-World War II Central and Eastern Europe.

KPÖ—*Kommunistische Partei Österreichs* (Austrian Communist Party).

Landesverband—Regional association.

Leitkultur—Guiding national culture.

Midrasha—An institute of Jewish studies for women.

Minyan—In Judaism, the term *minyan* refers to the quorum of 10 male Jewish adults required for certain religious obligations, the most common being public prayer. Accordingly, in modern Judaism, *minyan* also refers to a prayer service, or as in the case of the Egalitarian *minyans* in Germany, to a congregation.

Mohalim—Men qualified to perform circumcisions.

NPD—*Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (National Democratic Party of Germany).

Ostjuden—Jews in Eastern Europe, typically Yiddish speaking. Before World War II they emigrated to Austria and Germany in great numbers. The term was introduced by Nathan Birnbaum around 1900 to describe the cultural differences between the Jews in Western and Eastern Europe. Thereafter, and until World War II, Austrian and German Jews used it pejoratively when referring to the traditional (in terms of their behavior and garments) Eastern European Jews in their respective countries. In this book *Ostjuden* is used in the geographical sense only, without any biased connotation.

ÖVP—*Österreichische Volkspartei* (Austrian People's Party).

Pesach Seder—A Jewish ritual feast that marks the beginning of the Jewish holiday of Passover.

Sephardi Jews—A subgroup of Jews whose origins are in the post-Babylonian exile Iberian Peninsula.

Shehita—Ritual kosher animal slaughtering.

Shoah—The Hebrew term for the Holocaust, the systematic state-sponsored genocide of six million Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II. The term “Shoah,” meaning catastrophe, calamity, disaster, and destruction, is used in this book rather than the term “Holocaust,” as the latter derives from the Greek word *holókauston* and refers to animal sacrifice offered to a god, in which the whole (holos) animal is completely burned (kaustos). However, as Laqueur wrote, “it was not the intention of the Nazis to make a sacrifice of this kind and the position of the Jews was not that of a ritual victim” (Evans 1989, 142).

Shtetl—A small town in pre-World War II Central and Eastern Europe in which most or all of the inhabitants were Jews and where the culture of the Ashkenazim flourished. The shtetls were the bastions of Ashkenazi culture until they were destroyed during the Shoah.

Shulhan Arukh—(literally: set table) A compendium of the *Halakha* composed by Rabbi Yosef Caro of Safed (Israel) in the mid-16th century. Together with its commentaries, it has become generally accepted as the authoritative code of Jewish law.

“Sitting on packed suitcases”—A notion among Austrian and German Jews that suggested that they saw Austria and Germany, respectively, as a temporary place of residence.

SPÖ—*Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs* (Social Democratic Party of Austria).

SS—*Schutzstaffel* (Protection Squadron), paramilitary organization under Hitler.

Synagogengemeinschaft—Synagogue community.

Talmud-Torah schools—Primary schools whose curricula incorporate Jewish and secular material in order to prepare the children, usually only boys, for their Jewish education in a yeshiva.

Tashlikh—(Hebrew for “casting off”) A custom according to which Jews walk on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, to flowing water, say a prayer, and symbolically throw their sins into the water.

Verfassungspatriotismus—Patriotism toward the constitution.

WJC—World Jewish Congress.

Yiddishkeit—Refers to the “Jewishness” or “Jewish way of life” of the traditional Yiddish-speaking Jews of Eastern and Central Europe.

Zentralrat—*Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland* (Central Council of the Jews in Germany).

ZPC School—Vienna Jewish community school named after Zwi Perez Chajes, chief rabbi in Vienna in 1918–1927.

ZWST—*Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle* (Central Welfare Office).

The names of organizations were written according to their official spelling in the relevant country. Thus, for example, the Misrachi organization in Vienna will be written with an “s,” whereas the World Mizrachi Movement will be written with a “z.”

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Before the Shoah, the Austrian and German Jewish communities were among the most dynamic in Europe. Their many synagogues and prayer houses represented various religious streams of Judaism ranging from Orthodox to Reform. Their rich infrastructure also included schools, Zionist organizations, Jewish museums and libraries, hospitals and medical clinics, orphanages, sports clubs, Yiddish theaters, kosher kitchens, political associations, newspapers and journals, and many charitable foundations. The teachings of their rabbinical seminaries and world-renowned rabbis, as well as other personalities, influenced all of European Jewry and continue to influence Jewish teaching and life to this day. They include Rabbi Raphael Samson Hirsch (Frankfurt am Main), the founding father of Modern Orthodox Judaism; and Moses Mendelssohn (Berlin), considered the father of the Jewish Enlightenment movement, the *Haskalah*, and creator of the first German translation of the Pentateuch with Hebrew commentary. They also include Rabbi Isaac Noah Mannheimer (Vienna), who translated the prayer book and the fast-day prayers into German and who, together with cantor Salomon Sulzer, introduced liturgical music into the services, which subsequently became known as the *Wiener Nussach* (Viennese rite) and constituted the model for all Central European countries.

In the 19th and early 20th century, Jews were also active in all spheres of public life and influenced their countries' economies, politics, academia, culture, and societies. In Austria, they included Sigmund Freud (founder of psychoanalysis), Arthur Schnitzler (writer), Victor Adler (founder and first leader of the Austrian Social Democratic Party), and Otto Bauer (Adler's successor and leading thinker of Austro-Marxism). In Germany, they included Heinrich Heine (writer), Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdi (composer), and Walther Rathenau (German foreign minister during the Weimar Republic).

In the course of the 19th century, the Jews in Austria and Germany were granted civil equality, and their Jewish communities gained state recognition, granting them autonomy to manage internal and religious concerns, and the right to communal representation vis-à-vis the state. In Austria, Emperor Franz Joseph I recognized the Jewish population's equal rights. In 1849, he canceled the prohibition against the Jewish population to organize itself within a community. In 1852, he officially sanctioned the establishment of an autonomous Jewish religious community in Vienna, the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien* (Israelite [Jewish] Religious Community Vienna, IKG). In Germany, the *Gesetz über Verhältnisse der Juden im Königreich Preußen* (Law on Conditions of the Jews in the Kingdom of Prussia, Gesetz Nr. 2871), dated July 23, 1847, extended civil equality to all Jews of Prussia and gave them certain political rights and community recognition.

Thereafter, the size of the Jewish population in both countries rose dramatically. Austria's official census of March 22, 1934, registered 191,481 Jews (3 percent of the total Austrian population), with 176,034 Jews in Vienna alone (10 percent of the city's population) (Gilbert 1993, 22), and the balance in 770 communities. On March 13, 1938, the Jewish communities in Austria numbered 181,882 members (167,249 in Vienna) out of a total of some 206,000 Austrian Jews (DÖW 2006). In Germany, the official census of June 16, 1933, registered 499,682 Jews (plus 5,000 in the Saarland, which at that time was still administered by the League of Nations), almost 0.75 percent of the total German population, 80 percent of them holding German citizenship. The rest were *Ostjuden*, mostly of Polish origin, many of whom had been born in Germany and had permanent-resident status in that country. Some 385,456 Jews were officially registered as members of the Jewish communities. However, many *Ostjuden* were unable to register in the various local Jewish communities because of discriminatory community decisions.¹ About 70 percent of the Jews lived in urban areas, with 50 percent of the total located in the 10 largest German cities, including Berlin (approximately 160,000), Frankfurt am Main (approximately 26,000), Breslau (today's Wrocław, approximately 20,000), Hamburg (approximately 17,000), Cologne (around 15,000), Hanover (around 13,000), and Leipzig (around 12,000) (United States Holocaust Memorial

Museum n.d.). The other 50 percent of the Jewish population was dispersed over more than 1,000 smaller cities, towns, and villages.

The Nazi regime brutally ended the thriving Jewish communal life in Austria and Germany. All Jewish communities in the *Ostmark* (the name for Austria under the Nazi regime) were disbanded after the *Anschluss* (the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany on March 13, 1938). The sole exception was the Vienna Jewish community, which was dissolved in November 1942 and replaced by the *Ältestenrat der Juden* (Council of Elders of the Jews). The *Ältestenrat*, headed by Josef Löwenherz, represented Austrian Jewry in dealing with the authorities (including, among other things, handing them lists of Jews to be deported to the ghettos and concentration camps) and was responsible for running the Jewish hospital, the home for the aged, the soup kitchen, and burying the dead.

In Germany, soon after the Nazis seized power in 1933, the Jewish communities established the *Zentralausschuss der Deutschen Juden für Hilfe und Aufbau* (Central Committee of German Jews for Assistance and Construction) to support education, vocational training, economic assistance, and emigration, and the *Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden* (Reich Representation of German Jews) to represent them vis-à-vis both the German authorities and overseas Jewish organizations. In 1939, in accordance with the Nuremberg Race Laws, the *Reichsvertretung* was instructed by the Nazi regime to change its name to *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland* (Reich Association of Jews in Germany) and was placed under direct Gestapo supervision. Membership in the *Reichsvereinigung* was compulsory for all communities, associations, and individuals. All persons identified as Jews under the Nuremberg Laws were compulsorily enlisted as members. After 1939, Germany's Jewish communities and organizations were gradually dissolved, and their functions partially incorporated into the *Reichsvereinigung*, which itself was eventually dissolved in 1943, and its senior officials Paul Eppstein, Philip Kotzover, and Rabbi Leo Baeck were deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto. By that time, all of Germany's Jewish communities had already been dissolved; Berlin's community was liquidated on January 28, 1943.

Thus, during the Nazi regime all the Jewish communities in Germany and Austria, with a combined population of over 700,000 in 1933, were

wiped out. In all, between 1933 and 1945, some 300,000 of Germany's Jews emigrated, 170,000 were murdered, and at the end of the war only about 20,000 remained. Similarly, in Austria, about 130,000 Jews left the country after the *Anschluss*, 65,000 perished during the war, and at the war's end, fewer than 5,000 Jews were to be found there.

After the Shoah, this remnant immediately took steps to set up Jewish communities on the basis of prewar legislation and communal practice. In Germany, the first community was established in Cologne even before the end of the war—in April 1945. Nevertheless, at the time there was a broad consensus among Jews and non-Jews alike that Jewish communal life in Austria and Germany could not and should not be revived. On May 15, 1948, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA) issued a special report that began: "For Jews there is no life in Austria, no future." After his liberation from the Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1945, Rabbi Leo Baeck, the last public representative of the Jewish community in Nazi Germany, declared: "For us Jews from Germany, a historic era has come to an end.... It was our belief that German and Jewish spirit would meet on German soil and would bring blessing through their marriage. This was an illusion—the era of Jews in Germany is over once and for all" (Gidal 1997, 426).

The few Austrian and German Jews who had remained or returned felt betrayed by the wartime behavior of the politicians and surrounding society. Their trust in their *Heimat* (homeland) was undermined. While they stayed on and immediately set up Jewish communities, which were soon joined by displaced persons (DPs) and immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe, the possibility of reestablishing flourishing new German and Austrian Jewish communities was beyond their imagination. For most of them the fact that they were living in these countries was an "accident of the war," which had left them, against their will, in the "land of the perpetrators." Although they stayed on in these countries for various personal reasons, it was always their intention to leave (in most cases for Israel), and they never consciously decided to settle there permanently. Instead, they saw themselves as "sitting on packed suitcases." Visiting the Berlin community again in 1951, Baeck struck a more optimistic note than six years earlier: "Whoever sees the Jewish communities in Germany again after several years is impressed

by the work that has been accomplished under incomparable difficulties. Everyone must recognize and appreciate this work of reconstruction" (*Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland*, August 24, 1951).

Although at the time, as we shall see, the facts on the ground belied his optimism, more than half a century later, his statement more accurately describes the actual state of Jewish communal life in Germany² and Austria. Vienna's Jewish community (which accounts for about 98 percent of Austria's Jewish population) and Germany's Jewish communities have regained a religious, cultural, and economic strength unimaginable in 1945. Originally perceived as *Liquidationsgemeinden* (communities destined to be liquidated), whose members saw no local future and even tried to conceal their Jewishness from their gentile neighbors, they have become, since the mid-1980s, thriving communities that act self-confidently in the political and cultural arenas, are firmly ensconced in the surrounding society, and are actively involved in the affairs of European and world Jewry.

Moreover, the Austrian and German Jews' attitudes toward and relationships with these countries have developed along similar lines. Until the 1980s, the Jews in these countries, except for the community leaders, were still more or less "sitting on packed suitcases." Germany's Jews were even uncomfortable about revealing their nationality to Jews abroad. But during that decade, both Germany's and Vienna's Jews opened themselves up toward the surrounding gentile society and developed a "feeling of belonging to their environment" that enabled them to come out proudly as Jews and become an integral—though not assimilated—part of the local society, in which they not only do not feel threatened but believe that they have a future.

Nevertheless, at the same time, there are some noticeable differences in communal structure, organization, and functioning. In Vienna, the Jewish infrastructure is manifestly more developed, religious Jewish life more vital, and the Jewish community more united than in Germany. Despite serious challenges, Vienna's community managed to maintain "unity in diversity," and the legislative statute underpinning it is still largely intact. By contrast, Germany's Jewish community is unable to bridge its internal differences and is undergoing a group-identity crisis.

Together these have undermined and led to the partial abandonment of the *Einheitsgemeinde* principle, on the basis of which German Jewish communities were structured and operated for more than a century.

Government policies toward the Jewish minority in the two countries also differed significantly. Whereas the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) saw itself as the successor of the Third Reich and assumed responsibility toward its victims, Austria defined itself as the “first victim” of Nazi Germany and hence refused to admit guilt and accept responsibility for the Shoah. Moreover, the German government provided considerable financial support for German Jewry in the 1950s; officially invited émigrés to return and take part in postwar social reconstruction; and in the 1990s facilitated the mass immigration of Jews from the former Soviet Union (FSU), which resulted in a tremendous increase in the number of Jews in Germany, much larger Jewish communities, and the emergence of new communities. In Austria, government policies encouraging Jewish population growth were nonexistent. On the contrary, Austrian Jews who had fled the Nazi onslaught were explicitly discouraged from returning.

In the mid-1980s, public and official attitudes in both countries began to reverse. In Germany, the *Historikerstreit* (historians’ dispute) brought about a relativization of German guilt feelings and raised the issue of Germans as victims, as well as questions about the role of the Shoah in postwar German identity. The Waldheim affair triggered a new public discourse on the Austrians’ role in the Shoah, and in 1991 Chancellor Vranitzky openly challenged the “first victim” myth, admitting publicly that many Austrians had been part of the Nazi murder machinery. In short, as the Austrian population began to face up to the Shoah, Germans sought to get away from or close the issue. These changing attitudes seem to have had little effect on German state and regional governments, which continued to provide far more financial support for their Jewish communities than the Austrian authorities did for theirs.

This study has two main aims. One is to provide a systematic account of the reconstruction of Jewish communal life in Germany and Austria after 1945 as it developed over the next six decades. The other is to explain the process of communal reconstruction and its

outcomes in the two countries. In particular, the study focuses on the similarities and differences between the communities in the two countries—their simultaneous opening-up to the surrounding society, the marked changes in individual and communal self-perceptions, the final “unpacking of the suitcases,” and the differences with regard to institutional infrastructure, religious vitality, and internal unity—and seeks to show how these developed in diverse national political circumstances and varying government policies.

This study will examine the processes of Jewish communal reconstruction and the formation of Austrian and German identities in light of both Jewish group-identity changes and relevant national political developments in the two countries. For this, the postwar years will be divided into three distinct periods, which can be characterized broadly as: the period of the two parallel “communities” and the short-lived revitalization of Jewish life thanks to the DPs (1945–1953); the period of the “packed suitcases,” political non-confrontationalism, and social closeness (1953–1980); and the period of social and cultural opening, institutional expansion, heightened self-confidence, and outspokenness (1980 to the present), in which the communities’ “rising from the ashes” became visible.

During this last period, an entirely new issue of identity arose: that of European-Jewish identity. This identity is at the base of European Jewish cooperation, which is necessary to reach goals important for Europe’s Jews but beyond the reach of any single community. This study examines the state of European Jewish unity and cooperation and seeks to detect the factors that variously promote and obstruct the latter, and to show how these affect the role of Germany’s and Austria’s communities at the European Jewish level.

1.2 Identity, Group Identity, and Jewish Group Identity Theory

The use of the term “identity”, introduced in the social sciences by Eric Ericson in the 1950s, has been largely criticized for conceptual confusion and empirical overuse (e.g., Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 2001). A more helpful approach is to better define rather than abandon the concept; doing so will contribute to, rather than obstruct, empirical research. The most important step is to separately examine personal identity and group identity, which are analytically distinct concepts.

Personal identity was defined by Herbert Kelman (1998, 3) as “the enduring aspects of a person’s definition of her- or him-self, the conception of who one is and what one is over time and across situations.” This personal identity reveals both likenesses and uniqueness, as reflected in Clyde Kluckhohn and Henry Murray’s much-quoted phrasing that “every man is in certain respects like all other men, like some other men, and like no other man” (1948, 35). Every personal identity has a core that is unique to the person and makes him/her like no one else. This core is shaped by a person’s innate characteristics, environment, and cultural and ethnic heritage conveyed to him/her during childhood (Kelman 1998, 4–5), and “the number, kinds, and temporal order of critically determining situations encountered in the course of life” (Murray and Kluckhohn 1948, 37). Personal identity then develops around this core and is influenced by the social interactions—familial, communal, and national—to which a person is exposed during his/her life. Out of these influences, the person draws beliefs, attitudes, values and expectations that, when added to his/her personal core, make up his/her emerging identity (Kelman 1998, 5). This identity will include elements that are universal to mankind and thus make the person “like all other men,” as well as elements that are specific to various social, cultural, ethnic, or religious groups and thus make the person “like some other men.” A personal identity is built up over time and is the outcome of continuous interaction of political and social forces. The degree to which a group shapes his/her identity depends on the centrality of the role of group membership in his/her life.

The term “group identity” has two meanings (and each will be used depending on the context). It refers to the perception of the group as a distinct unit by its members and non-members. The members of this group feel that “they have important things in common and that they differ so much from other large groups that they constitute a distinctive and self-contained society” (de Beus 2001, 292). Thus, according to Simon Herman, group identity implies “alignment, a shared belonging with members of a specific group,” and “a differentiation, marking off, from members of certain other groups” (1977, 40). At the same time, group identity—in the sense of the “identity of the group”—refers to the distinctive content, or set of meanings, norms, values, characteristics, and goals of the group that separate it from the surrounding society.

Group identity is not static but varies over time and according to circumstances, depending on the development processes within the group, including leadership change, as well as developments within the group identity components of its members’ personal identities. In turn, it influences the personal identity of its members. It shapes the member’s beliefs, values, and goals in accordance with the norms of the group and other contents of the group identity. What individuals choose to emphasize from among the elements of group identity, what elements of it they incorporate, how they as individuals see the place of their group in the universe—whether in the past, present, or future—becomes part of the core of their personal identity. In other words, this is the group-identity component of their personal identity.

Judaism is not a “religion” analogous to Christianity, but, as Herman described it, “a religious civilization of one particular nation, it resides in the Jewish people and reflects its history. And the Jewish people is what it is because of this religious civilization” (1977, 36). Hence the content of the identity of the Jewish group includes not only religious but also cultural, ethnic, and historical elements. The Jewish group identity is based both on religion and ethnicity. Most significantly, the religion of Judaism makes ethnicity the basic criterion. It is birth—not faith—that grants group membership. Those not born to a Jewish mother may, however, access it via a formal process of conversion. In both cases simultaneous membership of the ethnic group and the religious community is attained automatically. Therefore, political

scientist Peter Medding explains, “according to the group’s conception of itself, one does not cease to be a Jew by failing to uphold the religion” (1996, 3).

“The Jews constitute a mono-religious ethnic group. This means that no system of religious belief and practice other than Judaism has legitimate standing within that group” (Medding 1996, 3). Judaism sees no possibility to be a Christian or a Muslim or a Buddhist and a Jew at the same time. The differences to the other religions set the external boundary, however, internally there are different religious streams. Jews may believe in, practice, or be affiliated to Orthodox Judaism (of which there are many variants), Conservative Judaism, Reform (Progressive or Liberal) Judaism, Reconstructionist Judaism, or Humanist Judaism; some Jews are not affiliated with any of those streams nor share their beliefs or practices, and some are even atheists. Nevertheless they all are equally Jewish by virtue of their common ethnicity.

Moreover, the content of Jewish identity has changed significantly over the last centuries and differs from one Jewish sub-group to the other. Before the modern era, Jewish communities operated under Halakhic rules, and the content of Jewish group identity was clear, including religious and national elements. According to Medding, in the traditional communities of the past “Judaism as a religion and the Jewish group were coterminous” (1996, 6). “Moreover, the essence of Judaism was clearly defined and widely understood, and its authority virtually unchallenged. In this situation, there was no perceived distinction between Judaism, Jewishness or Jewish identity” (1996, 4).

Since the 18th century, however, the religious and the ethnic elements became independent from each other and differentiated, and their relative weight and the nature of the relationship between them became dependent on the individual choices and definitions of each Jew and Jewish community. The ethnic element in Jewish identity gained in autonomy and strength, and the religious element is no longer necessarily the central component of an individual’s or a community’s Jewish group identity. The latter now consists of national, ethnic, and religious elements, as well as a number of sub-elements, such as Jewish history and culture (see Goldberg and Krausz 1993; Gitelman et al. 2003), which can be independently adopted into an

individual's personal identity. According to Medding, "it became possible and common to distinguish between Judaism, the religious component, and Jewishness, the ethnic component, giving rise to a series of fundamental internal ideological, religious and political differences and conflicts (in which Zionism played a cardinal role) over their meaning, validity, authority and relative significance ... [But] at the core, the religious and ethnic components of Jewish identity remained essentially and inseparably connected" (1996, 4). Moreover, since it is "variable rather than fixed in meaning" (Kelman 1998, 19), Jewish group identity is in an ongoing formation process that permits adaptation to changing realities. It may have both permanent, or fixed, elements and elements that develop and change over time—or new ones that arise in particular circumstances (e.g., memories from the Shoah and the establishment of the State of Israel, which did not exist before 1945 and 1948, respectively). It is "differentiated rather than monolithic" (Kelman 1998, 19), enabling the individual to choose from its various elements. Thus group values, beliefs, roles and rituals have all become matters of individual choice and personal definition.

This pluralism has given rise to considerable diversity among Jewish communities, and great variation in the emphases they give to the different elements of Jewish group identity. The elements of Jewish group identity emphasized by the leaders and incorporated into their personal identities and their view of the place of the Jewish group identity within its environment are likely to play a major role in shaping Jewish group identity in their particular community. The influence of the leaders of the various sub-groups within the Jewish community in defining the Jewish group identity of their own group is likely to be especially great. Furthermore, the strength of the relationship with the Jewish group will vary from community to community. This is an issue that many policy-makers struggle with, as the strength of the members' Jewish identity affects all aspects of collective Jewish life: a weak or nonexistent Jewish group identity is commonly perceived as a real threat to its continuation.

Finally, the development of a European-Jewish identity would contribute to the strengthening of European Jewry. The term "European-Jewish identity" relates to a distinct identity pattern in which European

and Jewish components are combined and to the feeling of belonging together as European Jews. It is distinct from European Jewish identity, which relates to the Jewish identity of Jews in Europe, which may or may not have a European component, and from European identity,³ consisting only of European elements. The presence of such a common European-Jewish identity implies that European Jewry constitutes a discrete group possessing distinctive characteristics, values, and goals, maintaining its own institutions and pursuing agreed policies. This identity provides the basis for European Jewish cooperation, insofar as it would help to overcome personal, regional, or national interests and increase willingness to pool resources for establishing a joint entity to represent them at key European institutions (the European Parliament, Commission, and Council) and promote collective goals that are beyond the reach of any single Jewish community. Underlying such efforts is the belief that a united European Jewry would be stronger than all the national Jewries operating separately. The creation of a supra-national Jewish entity at the EU level would, in turn, foster unity and contribute to the strengthening of Jewry in each of the participating countries.

Jewish group identity, however, is not only crucial for the strengthening of the Jewish group but also significantly influences group behavior and actions in various ways. Based on identity literature, Abdelal et al. (2001) pointed out some of these. First, “[group] identity affects the way actors understand the world, and therefore the material and social incentives for particular action will take on different values according to one’s identity.” Second, according to the theory of action of social identity theory, “behavior derives from in-group and out-group differentiation.” Thus “action is in some sense a reaction to, and conditioned by the existence of, those who are different”—that is, those who are not members of the group. Third, according to “role theory,” “identity provides socially appropriate roles that actors perform and that are ‘taken for granted’” (p. 8). There are, however, further ways in which identity, or certain aspects of it, influence group behavior. Thus, for example, the degree of self-confidence of a person as a member of a group affects his/her actions and behavior. A higher self-confidence of the group members leads to a more outspoken stance toward the non-members

and influences the actions taken by the members to secure their interests and rights.

Moreover, group identity also shapes communal development. Thus, for example, the degree of agreement within a group over the content of group identity—which elements to include and how to interpret them—influences its unity, and the nature of the group identity content that is chosen will have a major influence on the group's organizational framework, including its leadership and membership. Furthermore, changes within group identity will lead automatically to changes in the group's behavior, actions, and development. Changes in the meaning, salience, and role of one element central to group identity may influence one or more spheres of group development, which, in the case of the Jewish communities, include community organization, institution-building, the strengthening of Jewish life, community unity, and external communal representation.

In view of the importance of group identity in the development, functioning, and strengthening of Jewish communities and Jewish life, a comprehensive study of Jewish group identity is necessary if we are to reveal and understand processes of communal social and political developments and reconstruction. We need to examine group identity *per se*, its development process, the reasons behind the process and the specific outcomes of group-identity changes, and the way in which the group-identity formation process influenced communal development over time. The questions examined in this context relate to the development of Jewish group identity, German and Austrian identities, European identity and European-Jewish identity among German and Austrian Jews, and the roles played by each of these identities, and the interactions between them, in the process of Jewish communal reconstruction and its outcomes in postwar Austria and Germany.

1.3 On Anti-Semitism

Authors such as Jean-Paul Sartre (1946) suggest that anti-Semitism, or rather the perception of the Jews by the anti-Semites, is a major, if not the defining, factor forming the Jewish identity. This idea has been refuted by Jewish and non-Jewish writers (e.g., Emmanuel Levinas [1947] and Maurice Blanchot [1962]). The research described in this book also shows that Jewish identity and Jewish group identity depend on inner Jewish values and developments, corroborating the statement of Claude Lanzmann, the maker of the documentary film *Shoah*, that “the Jews didn’t wait for the anti-Semites in order to exist, they have been a distinct subject of history despite persecution and Holocaust, and Israel was not just the teleological final destination of the Jewish suffering” (Leick 2010).

The only aspect of anti-Semitism relevant for this research was its ways of expression in the period of reconstruction of the Jewish communities in Austria and Germany. Three essential motivations for anti-Semitic speeches and actions can be identified. The oldest root was the century-old anti-Judaism professed by the churches. It was directed against the minority that stubbornly refused to merge into the Christian majority, thus preventing a uniformly Christian Europe. The same idea of religious uniformity is the theoretical foundation of the Muslim enmity to the idea of the Jewish State of Israel in the Islamic environment of the Middle East. Even though the churches denied that the Shoah was a direct consequence of this “teaching of contempt” (Isaac 1962), some of them acknowledged that it provided fertile soil for the horrors of the Nazi ideology. With time and especially as a result of the Enlightenment, the religious connotation faded and the abstract image of “the Jew” as the scapegoat for all social problems became commonplace for the middle class and those marginalized by social developments. In order to replace the religious origins of anti-Judaism, biologicistic approaches using pseudo-scientific biological bases started in the second half of the 19th century, leading to the coining of the term “anti-Semitism” (probably in the 1865 edition of the *Rotteck-Welckersches Staatslexikon*).

Another reason for post-World War II anti-Semitism was the horrors of the Nazi era that tarnished the national self-esteem in all the countries where there was collaboration with the Nazi regime. There are two ways to deal with the recent past. One would be to acknowledge the crimes and start the work of mourning. The other one is to bluntly deny the atrocity or to blame the prewar Jews for having caused the national reaction, and the postwar Jews for abusing the memory of the Shoah for their own advantage. This “secondary anti-Semitism” or “guilt-defensiveness anti-Semitism” blames the Jews for the consequences of the Shoah and for disturbing the desire for an untroubled national identity, since their sheer existence calls to mind the crimes of Germans, Austrians, and other allies of Nazi Germany. To exonerate themselves, those who engage in this kind of anti-Semitism compare Jewish actions, especially those of the Israeli army and politicians, with those of the Nazis. Borrowing from the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, they imagine a Jewish superpower attempting to subdue the world.

Finally, there is anti-Semitism from the political Left. It seems to be rooted in the Left’s search for underdogs and the corresponding denunciation of the oppressors. As long as the Jews were persecuted and, after the Shoah, were refugees in DP camps, the Left cherished them. This was even true for Israel as long as it was under constant threat of invasion by its Arab neighbors. Once the Jews secured true emancipation in Europe and Israel proved powerful enough to repel the Arab armies’ threat, the love for the oppressed turned into hatred of the strong by borrowing arguments from the “secondary anti-Semitism.”

Of course, anti-Semitic speeches and actions influence how Jewish individuals and communities react to their environment, but they do not impact the Jewish identity and group identity as well as their development. The impact of the Shoah on the Jewish identity was not so much due to the perception of the Jews by their fellow citizens, but rather to the brutality that manifested itself in the mid-20th century in the middle of Europe, which prided itself in the Enlightenment and all those writers promoting human values and rights, and the awareness that even embracing the surrounding society did not win them acceptance.

1.4 Methodology

Comparative Analysis

The present study is not a historical account of the German and Viennese Jewries but a comparative analysis of the developments of and within the Jewish communities. Its aim is to describe and explain the differences and similarities in their processes of communal reconstruction and to reveal the key variables and their pattern of influence responsible for these developments, analyze the processes of development of these variables, and examine how the processes and their outcomes influenced communal development over time. Contrasting different cases of communal reconstruction serves to enhance understanding of the process as a whole and of the various factors involved in it. Thus, for example, it makes it possible to identify common factors and common patterns on the one hand, and those that are present only in particular cases on the other, and in so doing, to highlight elements that would otherwise remain hidden.

In pursuit of a coherent comparative research design, the following steps were taken. First, the research question was elaborated—how and to what extent was Jewish community reconstruction after the Shoah shaped by which internal and external factors? How and to what extent were Jewish communities influenced by political and social developments in their countries and by internal Jewish factors and developments? Moreover, what roles were played by which specific factors in the process of Jewish communal reconstruction, and in the reviving and strengthening of Jewish life in its various manifestations after the Shoah, which resulted in these communities becoming what they are now? Put more broadly, what changes took place in these communities after 1945, how did they occur, and how can they be explained?

To address these questions and the various sub-questions that follow, the Most-Similar System Design approach was adopted, and within it, the Jewish communities in Vienna and (West) Germany were selected. These communities are especially well-suited for such comparative

analysis, as they shared the same point of departure in 1945. The period between March 1938 (the Anschluss) and the end of World War II was an important benchmark in the history of Austria, as well as for the Jews living within its boundaries. The same was the case for the period between 1933 (Adolf Hitler's appointment as chancellor of Germany) and 1945 for Germany and the Jews within its borders. For both these countries the postwar period was characterized by the need for political, economic, and social reconstruction, and for the Jews by the need for community reconstruction.

The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was chosen as representative of German Jewry because, in terms of population size, the Jewish presence in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was almost negligible. Many Jews, including most of the community leaders, left the GDR in 1952–1953 in the wake of the blatant anti-Semitism of the late Stalinist era. In all, there were only about 350 Jews in East Germany in 1990 at the time of the integration of the GDR into the FRG (the so-called German reunification). Moreover, the former GDR Jews had no real influence on post-reunification German Jewry, as none of them became part of its leadership, nor had they—for obvious political reasons—developed a distinctive Jewish tradition or group identity that could influence the reunited Jewry. (The term “German” in this book thus refers to the pre- and post-reunification FRG.)

Vienna's Jewish community was chosen as representative of Austrian Jewry since it is by far the largest Jewish community in Austria—accounting for about 98 percent of Austria's Jewish population. Furthermore, its leaders constitute the leadership of the *Israelitische Religionsgesellschaft* (Jewish religion association, IRG), the legal entity representing the Austrian Jews to the Republic of Austria.

Individual case studies of each community over time were undertaken, providing the deep knowledge of the cases to be compared that is essential for effective comparative analysis. In studying developments within these communities in their particular political and social environments and historical contexts, close attention was also given to the comparative analysis of policies, social attitudes and behavior toward the Jews and their communities in both countries.

The developments of and within the two communities were compared using equivalent organizational units. Since the same individuals led the IKG and the *Religionsgesellschaft* in both the political and religious spheres, the IKG was compared with the *Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland* (Central Council of the Jews in Germany, Zentralrat), the umbrella organization representing all German Jewish communities, on the matter of external communal representation, and with individual Jewish communities—especially the Berlin Jewish community, which is the largest in Germany—with regard to internal communal developments.

The findings of this comparative analysis are presented in this book, both as they developed over time and thematically. Thus the time frame is divided into three distinct periods, each of which is covered in a separate chapter, and within the latter, the discussion focuses on communal organization (as it determines the boundaries and limitations upon any development) and demographic characteristics (as they are the basis for communal developments) and then on the variables, factors, and themes previously identified. In this way, the major similarities and differences in the political and social communal reconstruction processes in the two communities, over time and currently, are highlighted, described, and explained, and the role and influence of the key group-identity elements in these processes and on their outcomes are revealed.

Sources

The research is based on published material and oral interviews. The former includes periodicals and publications published by the official Jewish community bodies, organizations within them, publications by political groups contesting community elections; statutes, treaties between government authorities and Jewish community bodies, court decisions and legal rulings; statistical materials; and newspapers, periodicals, and news agency reports and releases (Austrian, German, European, and Jewish). It also includes scholarly books and articles, as well as publications of a more popular nature.

The oral interviews were conducted with some 80 informants—communal and organizational leaders, religious leaders, experts, scholars, and other influential or knowledgeable individuals—some of whom were interviewed more than once. Gathering data via such structured interviews is an accepted methodological tool used widely in research in political science, sociology, anthropology (and other social sciences), and contemporary history. Structured interviews are a particularly well-suited tool for comparative studies, as they enable the researcher to be as systematic as possible in collecting information on the same subject or issue in different environments, especially where existing research has not focused on these topics at all, has not done so in all cases, or has viewed them from different perspectives. Thus, for example, works dealing with a certain issue in the German context often lack Austrian counterparts, and vice versa. This problem is compounded by the fact that literature on the contemporary Jewish community in Vienna is extremely sparse. Interviews also facilitate the gathering of rich detail about the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the interviewees. While other sources may provide such information, the interview method enables the researcher to directly address key issues relevant to the study. Furthermore, such interviews provide those interviewed with an opportunity to express their own views on the addressed issues, as well as to raise others that they believe to be important and decisive in the development of these communities and to explain how they perceive various issues, events, and developments.

Case studies are heavily evidence-oriented and require a broad and flexible approach to the gathering of evidence, especially when they are analyzed comparatively. Structured interviews facilitate such breadth and flexibility by enabling those interviewed to present data and describe situations as they see them, thus potentially providing the researcher with new perspectives on the group or issues being examined that may challenge the researcher's prior biases and interpretations. Moreover, elite interviews, as undertaken here, allow one to make inferences about a larger population's characteristics and decisions and to examine the decisions and actions behind an event, series of events, or development process.

Notes

¹ In some parts of Germany, *Ostjuden* routinely faced a 10-year waiting period before they were eligible for legal membership in the community.

² The term “Germany” in this book refers to the Federal Republic of Germany—see 1.4 Methodology.

³ European identity (although “EU identity” would be more accurate) is shaped by an individual’s relationship to his/her country of abode and his/her demographic, cultural, and religious characteristics, language, and acquaintance with people in other EU countries. This identity should not be confused with a generalized European identity based on an abstract notion of Europe that is manifested in European values and culture and a cosmopolitan outlook and not connected to geography.

CHAPTER 2

1945–1953

**Two Parallel “Communities”
and the Short-Lived
Revitalization of Jewish Life**

In 1945, both Austria and Germany were partitioned into four zones of occupation—American, British, French, and Soviet—and governed by the Allied commissions. After the liberation of Vienna in early April 1945, Karl Renner, an Austrian elder statesman, set up a provisional government including socialists, conservatives, and communists; declared **Austria's** independence from Germany; and proclaimed the Second Republic on April 27. On May 9, 1945, the country was occupied by the Allies. Under the Allied Commission for Austria, established by the agreement of July 4, 1945, it was divided into zones. Its capital city, Vienna, was similarly divided into four sectors, plus, at its center, an international zone. Control over this zone rotated monthly among each of the four powers. Austria was treated as a single state and administered jointly by the four Allied powers. On October 20, 1945, they recognized the Provisional Government, and in accordance with the pre-Third Reich *Bundesverfassung* (Federal Constitution), which was readopted, they authorized it to administer its own affairs, subject to the unanimous approval of its measures by the Allied Commission for Austria. Federal elections for the reestablished Austrian state took place the same year. The political leaders and the population saw themselves and were regarded by the Allied Powers both as a defeated nation and as the very first victim of Nazi aggression. This dual image eventually came to play a significant role in Austria's political culture and in its international stance.

Germany, following its unconditional surrender on May 8, 1945, was divided into four Allied occupation zones at the Potsdam Conference (July 16 to August 2, 1945). Berlin was divided into four Allied sectors, and, like Vienna, it was entirely surrounded by the Soviet-occupied zone. The original Allied plan was to govern Germany as a single entity through the Allied Control Council. However, this concept collapsed in 1946–1947 due to the growing tension between the West and the Soviet Union. Thereafter, each Allied power wielded government authority in its own administrative zone and independently made and implemented

policies for the population in the area under its control. In 1947, the American and British zones merged to form the Bizone, which merged with the French zone in 1949 to become the Trizone; in May of that year, this territory became the Federal Republic of Germany. On May 23 of that year, the *Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, Grundgesetz [BGBl. I I S. 1]), the constitution of the FRG, was promulgated. The first elections were held in August, and the first federal government was formed on September 20, 1949, by Konrad Adenauer. The next day, the Occupation Statute for Germany came into force, stating that “the Federal State and the participating Laender shall have, subject only to the limitations in this Instrument, full legislative, executive and judicial powers in accordance with the Basic Law and with their respective constitutions” (Paragraph 1) “in order to ensure the accomplishment of the basic purpose of the occupation” (Paragraph 2) (Department of State Bulletin 1949).

In these politically turbulent initial postwar years, and despite their almost complete annihilation during the Shoah, Jewish life and Jewish communities reemerged in all Allied occupation zones of Austria and Germany. Two groups were responsible for this revitalization of Jewish life. The first was local Jews who had remained in, or returned to, Vienna or Germany and wanted to settle and rebuild Jewish communities. The second was DPs from Central and Eastern Europe, who wanted to leave the countries as fast as possible. Thus the immediate postwar years witnessed the development of parallel Jewish “communities”: thriving yet temporary “communities” with a wide array of religious, social, educational, and political institutions that sprang up in the transitory environments of the DP camps; and the reestablishment in cities of official communities with skeletal institutions catering to the basic needs of a small remnant Jewish population, run mainly by secular and highly assimilated Jews. This Jewish renaissance, the first stage of communal reconstruction, ended in 1953, when the last DP camps closed down,² most DPs emigrated, and the official communities became the sole centers of Jewish life.

The latter were established by local survivors immediately after the end of World War II—and even before it—because the Jews were alienated from the gentiles they rightfully distrusted after the Shoah. The

communities’ purpose was to provide political representation and to cater to the Jews’ psychological, social, and economic needs. The Jews required an official community that would be their coordinated voice to advocate their interests to the Allied powers that occupied Austria and Germany during the last weeks of World War II and now govern them through their respective Allied commissions, as well as to Jewish groups around the world, which provided the Jews with much-needed financial help and food packages.

The Jews also needed a social home. This home had to deal with administrative issues, such as distributing food and other relief packages and funds, but also to confer on the individual Jews an inner strength, both psychological and economic. Survivors established Jewish communities immediately after their liberation from the Nazis, because they felt that a united Jewish group was stronger than individual Jews (who, as they had learned during the Shoah, were completely powerless) and that a Jew who was part of a larger Jewish group had better chances to rehabilitate socially and economically. Moreover, many Jews assimilated before the Shoah longed for Jewish self-determination due to their sufferings during the Shoah and the anti-Semitic incidents of the first postwar months. This longing implied the wish to return to Judaism and its spiritual sources, and the need to be part of a Jewish group (Maor 1961, 10). By 1953, most Jews remaining in Austria and Germany had joined the official Jewish communities.

2.1 Communal organization

Organizational framework

All official communities reinstituted their prewar political *Einheitsgemeinde* model, which foresaw one single community that united all streams of Judaism, from Orthodox to Reform, in each locality. The principle of the Jewish *Einheitsgemeinde* was enforced by the state, which recognized only one Jewish community in each city. By virtue of the Austrian *Gesetz betreffend die Regelung der äußeren Rechtsverhältnisse der israelitischen Religionsgesellschaft* (legislation regulating the relations between the state and the Israelite Religion Corporation, RGBL. Nr. 57/1890), the so-called *Israelitengesetz*, of March 21, 1890, and the German Law on Conditions of the Jews in the Kingdom of Prussia mentioned above, the different streams of Judaism were forced to assemble under one roof. The Orthodox *Austrittsgemeinde* (secession community) *Adass Yisroel* Community, which the German state in the last third of the 19th century recognized as the second community, was the only exception.

These laws provided the legal basis for the Jewish communities. Among other things, they recognized the Jews as “Austrians/Germans of Jewish faith” (not as a nationality), permitted the existence of only one *Einheitsgemeinde* in each locality, and granted the communities the right to collect the compulsory *Kultussteuer* (religious tax) levied on the community’s members. As far as the state was concerned, the *Einheitsgemeinde* offered a single address for all matters relating to local Jewry. The law did not further define the term “Jewish faith,” although only Jews recognized as such according to the *Halakha* (Jewish law) were eligible for membership, this being the broadest definition acceptable to all community members.

The prewar political models readopted by the Jewish communities in post-World War II Austria and Germany were similar on most significant points. Their main characteristics were a) eligibility for membership determined according to the *Halakha*, b) democratic elections

for the community board, c) sole responsibility for the external representation of the entire Jewish community, and d) a variety of communal institutions financed by the official communities. The models, however, also differed in a major aspect: in the IKG, these institutions were autonomous in making internal political and religious decisions, whereas in each German community, one board made all decisions on all aspects of Jewish life, including the appointment of all functionaries for all the religious streams.

After the establishment of the FRG, the Jewish communities in Germany based their legal structure on the *Grundgesetz*. According to article 140, only Jewish communities that were granted the state's official recognition as a *Körperschaft öffentlichen Rechts* (public corporation) are officially recognized by the German state. Based on article 137 of the Weimar Republic legislation (1919), this legislation deals with the status of public corporations and to this day serves as the basis for Germany's Jewish communities' legal rights. Among other things, their status as public corporations entitles the communities to employ civil servants and nominate chaplains for hospitals, jails, and the army, as well as to levy a religious tax (today, 8 or 9 percent of one's income, depending on the Land) from each member.

The division of Austria and Germany after 1945 formed the basis for the Jewish communities' political structure. Thus in **Austria**, where the country was, as mentioned above, co-governed by the Allies, the communities organized themselves within the framework of the Austrian *Bundesländer* (Austrian states; Austria is divided into nine states, including the capital city of Vienna). Since few Jews lived outside Vienna, only five *Kultusgemeinden* existed in Austria by 1952. They served as regional associations,³ and some catered to a number of *Bundesländer*. Each *Kultusgemeinde* was solely responsible for the religious and social issues in its *Bundesland* (or several *Bundesländer*) and served as the political representative vis-à-vis the occupying authorities and federal government (or the relevant governments in those communities covering more than one *Bundesland*). The Jewish communities, similar to the Catholic and Protestant churches, had the status of public corporations.

In **Germany**, Jewish political structure was more complex. The status of public corporation was granted to one specific community in a city and one regional association in a *Land* (a German state). (In 1945 Germany was divided into 11 states; these were reduced to nine in 1952, when three southwestern states merged to form Baden-Württemberg.⁴) The Jewish communities also united on a zonal basis to create representative bodies at the level of their individual Allied authorities, and in 1950 on an inter-zonal basis to form the *Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland* (Central Council of the Jews in Germany), the umbrella organization representing all German Jewish communities in the U.S., British, French, and Soviet zones.

The *Zentralrat* was established by delegates from the newly founded Jewish communities, who felt that the Jewish Agency no longer represented them politically and that they needed their own political body (see Benz 2000, 57; Bloch 2000, 177). According to Hendrik van Dam, the *Zentralrat*'s first secretary general (1950–1973), its pivotal tasks were to strive for West German government legislation to provide reparation for the victims of Nazism (van Dam 1970, 14) and to monitor negative developments in the political culture, especially the rise of neo-Nazism (van Dam 1960, 13). In 1953, after the ratification of the Reparations Agreement between Israel and West Germany known as the *Luxemburger Abkommen* (Luxembourg Agreement), the *Zentralrat* reorganized and extended the scope of its activities beyond politics, becoming the principal coordinator of the German Jewish communities' religious, social, and cultural life.

The German *Grundgesetz* established a clear hierarchy, which is still in place today, with the *Zentralrat* at the top and with the regional associations and individual communities subordinate to it. The *Zentralrat* and the Jewish regional associations are the sole arbiters of official recognition as a Jewish community. A community that was not recognized by these two bodies or a regional association not recognized by the *Zentralrat* could not be granted public-corporation status by the German state as a Jewish community and hence would not receive financial support from the state or the *Zentralrat*. Conversely, the individual communities have the power to admit or reject individuals who apply for membership. This power was used, for example, in the case

of Jews who had converted to Christianity before the war. They were still Jewish according to the *Halakha*, but the community leaders considered them *Packetjuden* (“package Jews,” individuals who claimed to be Jews in order to be eligible for aid packages distributed by the JDC), not individuals who sincerely sought to rejoin German Jewry, and thus rejected them (see below).

The *Zentralrat* consists of three internal bodies: the Council Assembly (*Ratsversammlung*), which represents the communities; the Directorate (*Direktorium*), which represents the regional associations and large communities; and the Executive Committee (*Präsidium*) (see also the diagram in the Appendix).

The Council Assembly is composed of delegates (one for every 1,000 members) from all the regional associations and the three larger individual communities of Munich, Frankfurt, and Cologne. The Assembly is the supreme decision-making body within the *Zentralrat*, with powers to issue policy guidelines, adopt the budget, and oversee the work of the Executive Committee. It determines any fundamental issues concerning the Jewish community. It meets at least once a year.

The Directorate, composed of representatives chosen by the affiliated organizations and regional associations (one for every 5,000 members), oversees the work of the Executive Committee and elects the secretary general to manage day-to-day business.

The nine-member Executive Committee (three from the Council Assembly and six from the Directorate) is elected for a four-year term and manages the *Zentralrat*'s affairs. It elects its own board, which consists of the president and two vice-presidents, who are the *Zentralrat*'s public representatives. The secretary general is elected for a period of five years.

In 1951, the *Zentralrat* set up the supra-regional *Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle* (Central Welfare Office, ZWST), which provides the regional associations and individual communities with social welfare services.

The Jewish regional associations (*Landesverbände*) serve as the representative bodies of the Jewish communities of a particular *Land* vis-à-vis the regional authorities and also take whatever action is necessary to promote and strengthen Jewish life. Once granted the status of regional associations, they receive funding from the *Zentralrat*

and its relevant *Land* authorities, although they need to apply for and negotiate this financial support annually. Each regional association (Landesverband) has its own statutes; however, in general, each individual member community appoints representatives to the various regional association committees. The representatives on the regional association's executive committee choose one delegate as the association's chairman. Delegates are appointed every three to four years, depending on the committee and the individual associations' statutes.

Since the individual Jewish communities represented in the *Zentralrat* are also public corporations, they are supported financially by the regional associations and their municipalities, the latter following annual negotiations. The communities' leadership is elected by the eligible community members. The community's political structure is prescribed by each community's individual statutes. In general, the community members elect delegates to the *Repräsentantenversammlung* (Representative Assembly), and they in turn elect their delegates to the *Vorstand* (Executive Board), which, again, chooses one delegate as its chairman through a secret ballot. (The number of delegates in the Assembly and the Board may vary across communities and elections—in Berlin's Jewish community, for example, 20 delegates were elected in 1948, and 26 in 1952.)

Membership in the official community is subject to the community's consent and requires the citizen to declare his/her religious affiliation to the state authorities and pay the religious tax. An individual not declaring his/her Jewish faith is not recognized as a Jew by the local Jewish community and is thus *de jure* not entitled to its various services, such as social welfare, education, or burial in a Jewish cemetery. (In practice, though, the social welfare and burial services are usually provided to all Jews, but non-members pay higher fees.)

Communal leadership

Each Jewish community in Austria and Germany elects its leadership in democratic elections, usually at four-year intervals. Nevertheless, the immediate postwar years witnessed frequent leadership changes.

In the first eight years after World War II, the IKG leadership changed eight times, with six leaders who represented three ideologically diverse political lists (communist, Zionist, and socialist) (see Table 6.1 in the Appendix).⁵ After the end of the war, the members of the *Ältestenrat* reestablished the IKG and ran it in the initial postwar weeks until Löwenherz was imprisoned by the Russians. From then on, Ernst Schur was installed as head of the IKG by the provisional Austrian government. Vienna’s Jewish community held its first elections on April 7, 1946. Two lists contested the election: the *Jüdische Einheit* (Jewish Unity), which claimed to represent all trends and movements but in reality consisted mainly of Jewish communists; and the Association of Jewish War Victims (*Verband der jüdischen Kriegsoffer*), which was made up of World War I Jewish veteran soldiers. 2,643 valid ballots (74.5 percent of the eligible voters) were cast, resulting in 92 percent for the *Jüdische Einheit* and 33 out of the 36 mandates. The IKG board elected David Brill as president.

The rise of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union and its satellites, the negative impact of the Soviet occupation of Austria, and pressure from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)—on which the IKG initially relied for more than half of its budget—quickly brought communist control of the IKG to an end. Before the 1948 elections, the Social Democrats seceded from the *Jüdische Einheit* to form the *Bund Werktätiger Juden* (Union of Working Jews, BWJ), which was closely associated with the *Sozialistische Partei Österreichs* (Socialist Party of Austria, SPÖ). Five lists contested these elections, in which some 75 percent (5,287 valid ballots) of the eligible voters participated—the highest turnout ever. The communist list *Jüdische Einigkeit* (Jewish Unity; formerly *Jüdische Einheit*) again emerged as the largest party, with 43 percent of the votes and 11 out of the 24 mandates. However, after extremely lengthy negotiations, a coalition of the Zionist *Jüdische Föderation* (Jewish Federation, JF), the second-largest party (eight mandates), and the BWJ (five mandates) took control of the IKG leadership and excluded the communists from it. The ousted communists attacked the coalition leadership, calling the ouster an undemocratic coup that “is not only unjust and immoral but un-Jewish in the truest sense of the word” (*Der Neue Weg*, May 1948).

However, this coalition, under the presidency of David Schapira from the JF, turned out to be short-lived because of internal disagreements over the IKG's response to an article in the official periodical of the *Österreichische Volkspartei* (Austrian People's Party, ÖVP) criticizing the third Austrian Restitution Law. While the BWJ wanted to issue a clear statement opposing the ÖVP's stance, Schapira advocated only a general protest without specifying names, on the grounds that the IKG should not criticize a particular political party (see Adunka 2000, 108–109). New IKG elections were scheduled for December 11, 1949. In view of mounting anti-Semitism and neo-Nazism from the *Verband der Unabhängigen* (Union of the Independent, VdU), the precursor of the *Freiheitliche Partei Österreich* (the nationalistic right-wing Austrian Freedom Party, FPÖ), the lists contesting the IKG elections sought to increase internal communal unity by forming a *Gesamtjüdische Liste* (joint Jewish list) made up of the *Jüdische Einigkeit*, the BWJ, the JF (or Zionistische Föderation [Zionist federation], as the fraction called itself at that time), and the *Verband Österreichischer Juden* (Union of Austrian Jews). This list won 29 of the 30 mandates, while the *Verband jüdischer Kaufmannschaft* (Union of Jewish Merchants) got one seat—there was a one-time increase of mandates from 24 to 30 to accommodate all candidates in the joint list. According to the terms of the pre-election coalition agreement, the presidency was to rotate every eight months. It was to be held first by Emil Maurer of the BWJ, followed by Kurt Heitler (an avowed and outspoken communist seeking close relations with the KPÖ, and the last communist president of the IKG), and then by Wolf Herzberg of the JF.

The years 1950–1952 witnessed ongoing political controversies within the IKG between the communists and Social Democrats that intensified prior to the 1952 elections, as the BWJ highlighted accounts of anti-Semitic behavior and hatred in communist regimes. In these elections, the BWJ won 12 out of the 24 seats, while the *Jüdische Einigkeit* won only five mandates. These elections heralded a long period of BWJ domination in the IKG lasting through 1981. They also marked the declining strength of the communist list (by the 1964 elections, the *Jüdische Einigkeit* won only one seat, and in the 1968 elections—the last in which a communist list ran for office—it won none).

In contrast to the IKG, **Germany's** postwar communities were neither ideologically, nor religiously differentiated (Brenner 1997, 137). They also tried to maintain political neutrality, as reflected in an article by Heinz Galinski, subsequently the chairman of the Berlin Jewish community, in *Der Weg* on December 3, 1948, expressing the view that the Berlin community was a non-political body and above political party struggles (Sapir 1950, 328). Thus in Berlin's Jewish community, unlike in Vienna, no significant leadership struggles occurred, and the leaders' terms in office ended for personal reasons, not as a result of ideological or political disputes. German-born Erich Nelhans, who served as president of the community immediately after the liberation, was arrested by the Soviet secret service in 1948, allegedly for helping Jewish Red Army soldiers escape to Palestine. Consequently, on February 1, 1948, the Berlin community held its first democratic elections.⁶ At these elections, in which some 77 percent of the eligible voters participated (the highest turnout ever), the *Jüdische liberale Liste* under the leadership of Hans-Erich Fabian won 10 out of 20 seats. However, Fabian regarded the community as a *Liquidationsgemeinde* and emigrated to the United States the following year, at which point Heinz Galinski took over the chairmanship. At the 1952 Berlin communal elections, the Jewish Liberals won 14 of the 26 seats, and Galinski was reelected chairman (a position to which he was continually reelected until his death in 19927).

The *Zentralrat* was led by Secretary General Hendrik George van Dam, and the first elections for the presidency took place only in 1954.

2.2 Demography

As can be deduced from the size of the electorate in both communities, the postwar Jewish community membership was very small.

At the end of the war, only about 15,000 **German** Jews remained on German soil (Maor 1961, 1). Most of them survived because they had non-Jewish spouses, while a few had been hidden. Thus at the beginning of 1946, 7,070 members were registered in the Berlin Jewish community (about half of them Alt-Deutsche Jews). Of them, 58 percent (4,121) were partners in a *Mischehe* (mixed marriage), including 1,995 persons in a *privilegierte Mischehe* ("privileged mixed marriage" or marriage to a non-Jewish spouse, where the children were brought up as Christians) and 2,126 in a "non-privileged mixed marriage" (a childless marriage where the husband was "German" and the wife Jewish⁸). The rest consisted of 1,628 returnees from the concentration camps and 1,321 *Untergrundler* (in hiding) survivors (Sapir 1947–1948, 366).

The Jews who had survived on German soil were joined in the immediate postwar months by concentration camp returnees, Jewish returnees from abroad, and Jews expelled from the Sudetenland in mid-1945 by the Czechoslovak authorities who classified them as German if they had answered "German" for nationality or mother tongue on the 1930 census forms. In all, by the end of 1945, some 21,454 Jews were registered in Jewish communities in Germany (Maor 1961, 236), about 4 percent of the total number of Jews in Germany pre-1933.

In **Austria**, only 3,955 Jews, about 2 percent of the prewar Jewish population, remained by the end of the war. Of these 1,977 had survived because they received special protection (including 200 members of the Ältestenrat, and 1,178 Jews in privileged mixed marriages), and 619 (Weinzierl 1997, 90) who had been in hiding. An additional 1,727 returned from concentration camps and 251 from abroad (Oertel 1999, 118–119). Also remaining were several hundred Hungarian Jewish survivors of the forced marches to the West who had been liberated on Austrian soil.

Demographically, as evidenced in the skewed age pyramid shown in Table 2.1, the newly established Jewish communities in both **Germany and Austria** contained a disproportionately large elderly population, resulting primarily from deportation and emigration. Children and individuals of child-bearing age were hardest hit by Nazi deportation policies. Furthermore, younger and more active middle-aged Jews were the first to leave Germany after 1933, and Austria before or after the *Anschluss* in 1938. They were also the first to leave both countries after the war. Thus in 1946–1947, 60 percent of the IKG members were over 46 years old, and in Berlin, 57.3 percent of the community was aged above 45, with an average age of 55 (Maor 1961, 3).

TABLE 2.1 · Age Pyramid in the IKG and the Berlin Community in 1946/1947

Age	0–17	18–44 (Berlin) 18–45 (IKG)	Over 45 (Berlin) Over 46 (IKG)
Percentage of Berlin community members N=7,807	9	33.7	57.3
Percentage of IKG community members N=4,418	5.9	34.1	60

Source: Sapir 1947–1948, 377; Vyssoki et al. 2008, 51

Emigration, low birth rates, and high mortality rates notwithstanding, the Jewish population in both countries grew after 1945, due primarily to the influx of Jewish DPs from Central and Eastern Europe. Some DPs (also known as the *She'erit Hapleitah*, the “surviving remnants”) were Jews who found themselves in concentration camps in Germany or Austria, or on German/Austrian soil, at the time of liberation but did not want to return to the countries from which they had been uprooted and on whose soil their families had been exterminated.⁹ Other DPs were Jews who initially returned to their home country (in most cases, Poland) but left again in the wake of postwar anti-Semitic outbreaks and pogroms, such as that in Kielce, where 42 Jewish Shoah survivors, including women and children, were murdered on July 4, 1946. Between 1945 and 1953, approximately 170,000 DPs in all were located in Austria and a further 250,000 in Germany, primarily in DP camps run by the Western Allies. Most DP camps were established in the U.S.

zone.¹⁰ None were set up in the Soviet zone, as the Soviet Union's policy was to resettle all the refugees in their countries of origin. Ironically, some areas of Germany that did not need to be made *judenrein* because Jews never lived there, exhibit now a population of several hundreds or thousands of Jews. The majority of the DPs did not intend to stay in Germany or Austria. By and large, they proceeded to other countries, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, or Israel, and did not register with the official German or Austrian local Jewish communities.

Some DPs, however, stayed in Germany and Austria for a variety of reasons, often after engaging in business outside the camps and attaining a degree of financial stability and economic success. In Vienna, by 1950, when the mass migration of DPs out of Austria and Germany finally slowed down, about 3,000 DPs were registered with the IKG (Hyman 1951, 310), constituting about 30 percent of the members of the Jewish community.¹¹ In 1949, nearly 50 percent of the 21,645 members of the 110 Jewish communities in Germany (Maor 1961, 18) were DPs, mostly from Poland. In some regions, such as Bavaria, the vast majority of community members were DPs, while in others, such as Berlin, the majority were *Alt-Deutsche*. In the Soviet zone, 100 percent were *Alt-Deutsche* (see Table 2.2). In all, by 1952, approximately 12,000 DPs were registered with the German Jewish communities.

The impact of the influx of DPs on the IKG and the German Jewish communities was not only quantitative; it was also qualitative. The DPs brought with them a Jewish group identity very different from that most commonly found among Jews who already before the war had been Viennese or German by culture, identity, and citizenship (the *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews, respectively). That, along with their relatively large numbers, was instrumental in transforming their host communities. As will be shown below, their influence in the Jewish communal realm was both immediate and long-term, affecting religious, social, institutional, and political development within both Austrian and German Jewry, and what is more, largely causing their dissimilar patterns of communal reconstruction.

Another influential, although relatively small, group arriving in Austria and Germany immediately after the Shoah were the *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* returnees. These Jews, who mainly headed for the

TABLE 2.2 · *Alt-Deutsche* and DPs within the Jewish Communities, March 1949

Communities (Landesverbände)	Members	<i>Alt-Deutsche</i>	Percentage	DPs	Percentage
Berlin	7,000	5,000	71.4	2,000	28.6
Bavaria	4,800	300	6.3	4,500	93.7
Hessen	2,005	526	26.2	1,479	73.8
Nordrhein-Westfalen	1,907	1,454	86.2	453	23.8
Württemberg	1,441	265	18.4	1,176	81.6
Hamburg	1,300	910	70.0	390	30.0
Niedersachsen	775	594	76.6	181	23.4
Baden	600	300	50.0	300	50.0
Pfalz	373	323	87.0	50	13.0
Schleswig-Holstein	295	173	58.0	122	42.0
Soviet zone*	1,149	1,149	100.0	—	—
Total	21,645	10,994	50.7	10,651	49.3

*This number does not include the 2,535 Jews who lived in the Soviet zone of Berlin, who accounted for about one-third of the general Jewish population of Berlin (Mertens 1997, 28). Source: Maor 1961, 19.

larger cities, returned for several reasons that historian Erica Burgauer (1992, 10) placed into four categories: linguistic-cultural, political, and economic reasons and a strong bond with the old *Heimat*. Many came back due to difficulties of linguistic or cultural adaptation in their new countries. (Some writers, journalists, and theater people returned in order to be reimmersed in the German language.) Politically engaged emigrants wanted to return to participate in the reconstruction of Germany and Austria. Some individuals or families returned in an attempt to reestablish their economic existence, because abroad, they did not succeed in integrating into local social and professional networks, or they did not overcome linguistic difficulties, legal barriers, or bureaucratic hurdles. In general, the more inhospitable or hostile the country of refuge, the more Jews who had fled Germany or Austria wanted to return there. Among the countries where such hostility was prevalent were Turkey and China (Shanghai), as well as other Asian and South American countries (see Krauss 2004, 111; Krohn et al. 1998, 129–466).

Other economic reasons for remigration were claims for the return of stolen property among businesspeople, or the reinstatement of forfeited pensions among former civil servants (Krauss 2004, 107). Jews often returned to make such claims personally, as their presence could shorten the bureaucratic process significantly; they planned to stay only temporarily but ended up remaining in Germany or Austria permanently. Finally, some Jews were motivated to return by their strong ties to their old *Heimat*.

Some of these *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews returned from Israel both before and after the establishment of the state. These returnees attributed their decision to health factors relating to the climate and to the difficult living conditions there: particularly in the years after the Independence War and the ensuing mass immigration, Israel experienced high inflation and unemployment, a housing shortage, and severe government austerity measures and rationing. Others returned for the economic reasons noted above. This remigration took place despite its explicit condemnation by Israel and international Jewish organizations abroad (see below). Israeli authorities imposed a number of specific restrictions aimed at deterring Jews from returning to Germany. Thus, for instance, Israeli passports were stamped with the words “valid for all countries except Germany,” and official publications in the press informed the public that Israeli citizens who applied for travel permits in order to settle permanently in Germany would not be allowed to re-enter Israel (Mendel 2004, 122).

Some of the returnees to Austria and Germany eventually helped shape the countries’ political, cultural, and intellectual lives. Among them were, in Vienna, Bruno Kreisky (chancellor of Austria), Arik (Erich) Brauer (co-founder of the Vienna School of Fantastic Realism), Hermann Leopoldi and Karl Farkas (composers and cabaretists), and in Germany, Karl Herbert Weichmann (mayor of Hamburg), Ludwig Rosenberg (chairman of the German Federation of Trade Unions), Joseph Neuberger and Rudolf Katz (ministers of justice in Nordrhein-Westfalen and in Schleswig-Holstein, respectively), Hans Habe (journalist), Richard Löwenthal and Ernst Fränkel (political scientists), and Max Horkheimer (philosopher and sociologist). A few of the returnees also took up prominent positions in the Jewish communities: in Vienna,

Emil Maurer, Anton Pick and Paul Grosz (IKG presidents), and in Germany, Hendrik van Dam (Zentralrat general secretary), David Schuster (chairman of the Würzburg Jewish community and president of the Bavarian Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde), Hans Lamm (president of the Munich Jewish community), Arno Hamburger (president of the Nuremberg Jewish community), and Karl Marx (not the eponym of Marxism), who, together with his wife Lilly, left a decisive mark on the Jewish press in Germany through his weekly newspaper *Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland*.

While the reasons for the return of *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews to Austria and Germany were similar, their numbers were not. This was primarily due to the two countries' national politics and attitudes toward Jews. As noted above, the Allied powers approved democratic constitutions in Austria (1945) and in Germany (1949). These laid the foundation for their emergence as democratic states and accorded the national governments the right to administer their own affairs subject to Allied approval. This administrative freedom had a direct impact on their past and present Jewish populations, but the impact was different between the two countries. While Germany officially invited émigrés to return and take part in its postwar social reconstruction, Austria actively discouraged such a return.

In **Germany**, the Allies initially developed a very restrictive policy toward the returnees. The American, British, and French authorities restricted the “right of return” to those whom they perceived as valuable. They required returnees to prove they had sufficient funds, a permanent job, and housing arrangements (Lorenz 2002, 37). Consequently, only a few hundred persons were admitted to the Western zones (Mendel 2004, 122). After the founding of the FRG, the right of German Jews to regain their citizenship was established in the *Grundgesetz* under clause 116, paragraph 2, which reads as follows: “Former German citizens who, between January 30, 1933, and May 8, 1945, were deprived of their citizenship on political, racial, or religious grounds, and their descendants are to have their citizenship restored on application. They are considered as never having been deprived of their citizenship, so long as they have established their domicile in Germany after May 8, 1945, and have not expressed a contrary intention.” This

clause, however, distinguishes between those who returned to Germany and those who remained in the countries to which they had emigrated. While the former had their citizenship restored automatically, as persons who were “deemed never to have been denaturalized,” the latter had to apply to the German authorities to become German citizens again. Yet in contrast to the *Alt-Wiener* in Austria (see below), both *Alt-Deutsche* groups had the legal right to regain their citizenships.

In addition to the favorable legislation, Jewish remigration was further facilitated by the German political elite’s positive attitude toward it. Thus, for example, in a speech in the Bundestag in 1949, Kurt Schumacher, chairman of the Social Democratic Party, called upon German Jews to return, stating that the German people would benefit from their intellectual and economic potential (Herf 1997, 273). In all, some 12,000–15,000 *Alt-Deutsche* Jewish emigrants who left Germany in the 1930s returned there between 1945 and 1959, and of these, about half arrived before 1955 (see Brenner 1997, 138).

By contrast, not only did **Austria’s** government not invite the Austrian Jewish emigrants to return, from the outset it urged them time and again to stay away. In October 1945, for instance, Austrian president Karl Renner addressed the shortage of physicians and called for a relaxation of the denazification regulations (see below) rather than for the repatriation of exiled Jewish doctors. In 1946, he also publicly objected to the resettlement of Jewish refugees in the country. “I don’t think that Austria in its current atmosphere can permit itself to build up this family monopoly again. We will definitely not allow a new Jewish community from Eastern Europe to come and reestablish itself here while our own people need work” (Knight 1988, 52). Not surprisingly, only a handful of Austrian Jews who had fled the Nazis returned. According to historian Evelyn Adunka, by April 1947, they numbered just over 2,000: 700 from England (mostly those who were sent out before the war in the Kindertransports), 800 from Shanghai, 200 from Palestine, and 350 from Karaganda in Soviet Kazakhstan (2000, 56).¹²

On arrival, these Jewish returnees were discouraged from settling by such government measures as denial of their right to restitution, especially of apartments (see Bailer-Galanda et al. 2000), and by the lengthy legal battles that ensued concerning the return of their aryanized assets,

reflecting the Austrian government’s determination “to drag it out” (Knight 1988). Bureaucratic harassment intensified when Jewish emigrants, such as those from Shanghai, returned in large groups. Neither the Austrian populace nor the politicians concealed their anti-Semitic attitudes, which were reinforced by the fear of having to give up their “legally acquired” (aryanized) property. Jewish emigrants returning from their countries of exile encountered the slogan “*Rückkehr unerwünscht*—no place for emigrants,” and newspapers termed emigrants an “evil” (Reinprecht 2000, 206). Furthermore, the conservative foreign minister Leopold Figl, who tried to justify the refusal to permit and support the return of Austrian Jews, expressed in public that it had been “more comfortable for the emigrants to sit in their ‘cosy’ leather seats than to fight for the country” (Reinprecht 2000, 206), suggesting that they had shirked their national duty and now after their return had little moral right to restitution. Further obstructing the return of Jews was legislation related to the regaining of Austrian citizenship. Although the German Denaturalization and Expatriation Law of July 14, 1933, adopted in Austria after the Anschluss, was rescinded in 1945, the 1925 Citizenship Law, which automatically revoked the Austrian citizenship of those adopting a foreign citizenship, was reinstated. As a result, only those expellees who were Austrian citizens on March 13, 1938, and did not hold foreign citizenship between 1938 and 1945 remained Austrian citizens on April 27, 1945. Austrian Jews who had been expatriated and accepted foreign citizenships were now prevented by law from regaining the Austrian citizenship taken from them under duress. (The 1925 legislation was not annulled until 1993.¹³)

2.3 Jewish Group Identity

Variations of Jewish group identity

As a consequence of the post-1945 demographic developments, in the immediate postwar years, the Jewish communities in both countries came to be composed of two distinct groups: first, the *Alt-Wiener* or *Alt-Deutsche*, and second, the DPs from Central and Eastern Europe, composed of Jews of diverse Jewish identities, national origins, and religious denominations, each group exhibiting its own particular group identity and perception of Judaism and Jewishness. Interestingly, although the newly established communities contained only a small proportion of the prewar Jewish population, some traits that had been characteristic of the prewar communities' Jewish group-identities were once again manifest. First, Germany's *Einheitsgemeinden* were reestablished as Liberal-oriented communities, conforming to the tradition of pre-1933 German Jewry, and the IKG was reestablished as an Orthodox-oriented community, conforming to the tradition of the pre-1938 Viennese rite. Second, while the vast majority of the *Alt-Deutsche* were assimilated Jews, only a minority, albeit an influential minority, of the *Alt-Wiener* Jews were assimilated.

Jewish Identities in the Pre-Shoah Communities

In the 18th century, under the leadership of Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), **Berlin** became the focal point of the *Haskalah*, the movement toward secular enlightenment aiming for Jewish emancipation and social integration into the local and European societies. This was supposed to be achieved by no longer concentrating only on religious studies but also incorporating secular studies. The *maskilim* (adherents of the *Haskalah*) encouraged Jews to acquire general knowledge, learn both European and Hebrew languages, adopt Western culture and way of life, and get practical job training in order to help the Jews become integrated into the local society. The *maskilim* felt that Judaism should be limited to the realm of religion only, eliminating any national

dimension. This idea is reflected in the typical *Haskalah* distinction between “the law of man” and the “law of God.” The former refers to Western patterns of life and secular learning, while the latter denotes the traditional Jewish way of religious life and study.¹⁴ Integration was to be achieved by embracing a confessional definition of Judaism and seeking assimilation, not in the modern meaning of complete abandonment of Judaism to the point of religious conversion, but in the sense of acculturation without abrogating one’s Jewish identity.¹⁵

The focus of the *Haskalah* movement was on educational reform. Thus, in the first *Haskalah* school founded in Berlin in 1778 (the *Freischule* [Free School]), emphasis was placed on practical, secular subjects. By 1782, the *maskil* Naphtali Herz Wessely (1725–1805), an associate of Mendelssohn, even declared that secular studies were to be given precedence over religious ones (Poppel 1977, 10). The educational program sought to revive the Hebrew language and literature and to substitute the German language and literature for the commonly spoken Yiddish, with the aim of giving the students access to German literature and thus opening their minds to new ideas. Moreover, important changes were also made to the traditional religious curriculum: the study of the Talmud was almost completely abandoned and replaced by the study of the Bible, concentrating on its universalist message. The leaders of the German *Haskalah*, such as Mendelssohn and Wessely, did not challenge the authority and the sanctity of the Oral Law. However, they sought to downgrade the study of the Talmud from its supreme position in Jewish education.

In the early 19th century, a new intellectual movement arose in Germany from the *Haskalah* movement: the scholarly enterprise called *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (science of Judaism). The *Wissenschaft* is based on the critical investigation of Jewish literature and culture, including rabbinic literature, using the tools of modern scholarship to analyze the origins of Jewish traditions. They analyzed them linguistically and compared them to texts from other civilizations to determine how the Jewish religion, literature, and philosophy had developed in response to the different civilizations with which Jews had come into contact through the ages. They thus sought to show that Jewish history formed part of world historical trends, that Jews had been central actors

in human history, and that Judaism had an intellectually rich history like other religious groups. In this aim the Jewish scholars desired, among other things, to battle anti-Semitism by creating German-language scholarship on Jewish beliefs, customs and achievements to correct Christian misperceptions and biases (Endelman 2000, 5–6).

The *Wissenschaft* also served as a tool to modernize Jewish worship and belief. Studying the Torah and the Talmud critically and from a historical point of view, examining evolution and development, led its adherents to the conclusion that, just as Judaism had adapted to earlier historical contexts, it should now be adapted to the modern context of emancipation and social integration. They used historical research to find precedents for reforms they wanted to introduce. Thus, for instance, Rabbi Leopold Zunz (Yom-Tov Lippmann) (1794–1886) showed in his 1832 book *Die Gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden, Historisch Entwickelt* (The Worship Sermons of the Jews, Historically Developed), which is a historical analysis of Jewish homiletical literature and its evolutionary development up to the modern-day sermon, that the synagogue had functioned in the past as a forum for exegesis (midrash). In this way, he attempted to legitimize the introduction of German-language preaching in the face of opposition from traditionalists, who perceived it as assimilation to Christian practice.

The ensuing Reform movement had conservative, moderate, and radical wings. The conservative wing—the adherents of what Rabbi Zaharia Frankl (1801–1875), head of the *Jüdisch-Theologische Seminar* (Jewish Theological Seminary) in Breslau, termed “positive-historical Judaism”—believed in a faithful adherence to the practical ritual laws of Judaism, while adapting Jewish law to modern times and permitting academic inquiry into the Jewish past, including even Bible criticism, though not criticism of the Pentateuch. The moderate reform wing, represented by Rabbi Abraham Geiger (1810–1874), head of the *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Academy for the Science of Judaism) in Berlin, permitted certain liberalizations of religious practice. Its adherents relaxed some Sabbath restrictions and allowed organ music in the synagogue. They shortened and changed some prayer services but opposed the abolition of circumcision and shifting Sabbath observance to Sundays. Thus, for example, Zunz, one of the founders

of the *Wissenschaft*, began to make changes to religious practices, often leading services accompanied by an organ and held in the German language rather than Hebrew (Elon 2003, 112). Abraham Geiger undertook changes in synagogue liturgy, such as abolishing the prayers of mourning for the temple, believing that since Jews were German citizens, such prayers would appear disloyal to Germany and could spark anti-Semitism. Finally, the radical Reform movement, led by Rabbi Samuel Holdheim (1806–1860), moved the Sabbath to Sunday, removed all mention of the final redemption from the prayers, called for the abandonment of circumcision, denied the divine authorship of the Torah, declared only those biblical laws concerning ethics to be binding, and stated that the rest of Jewish law no longer needed to be viewed as normative.

The *Wissenschaft* and Reform movements drew criticism from the traditional German Orthodox community, who regarded it as a danger to the religious community. A key opposition leader was Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–1888), who, together with Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer (1820–1899), is considered the founder of Modern Orthodoxy as taught in the *Rabbiner Seminar für das Orthodoxe Judenthum* (Rabbinical Seminar for Orthodox Judaism). He condemned the Reform movement for legitimizing the abandonment of Orthodoxy and was afraid that practicing Judaism would become secondary to the study *about* Judaism through a scientific, non-religious endeavor (Meyer 2001, 131). However, Hirsch and his adherents were also influenced by the *Haskalah*. They believed in full engagement with Western culture and in changes regarding non-Halakhic externalities and style. Hirsch, for instance, delivered sermons in German, accepted a choir (male-only), wore clerical robes, and encouraged study of the Bible. At the same time, they also believed in the observance of Jewish law and the prohibition against changing the essence of Jewish law and belief. Modern Orthodox Jews had no tolerance for the *Wissenschaft* and its historical approach to Judaism, as they felt it produced a relativistic attitude toward the Torah. They fully believed in the total divinity of the Torah and rejected the idea that Jewish law could be changed as a conscious process of historic development.

However, by the 1920s, most synagogues and educational institutions belonged to the majority Liberal (Reform) stream. Most of Germany's

Jews—though not the so-called *Ostjuden*—were either Jews who had dropped the basic tenets of traditional Judaism, or “enlightened” secular Jews, who had forsaken Judaism altogether. Pre-1933 German Jewry was divided into the Reform communities, the rather small Orthodox *Austrittsgemeinde Adass Yisroel*, and the moderate *Gemeindeorthodoxie* (community Orthodoxy).

Vienna also became a center of the *Haskalah*, and the Reform movement was likewise strong there, but it was less radical. Rabbi Isaac Mannheimer (1793–1865), IKG’s first spiritual leader in 1824–1865, was closer to positive historical Judaism than to the more radical Reform Judaism. He fostered a “middle-of-the-road” tradition between Orthodoxy and Reform. He favored moderate changes (e.g., introducing a male choir, delivering sermons in German, downplaying references to animal sacrifices). However, he demanded that Hebrew and the traditional liturgy (including prayers for Israel’s national restoration) be retained, criticized the decline of religious observance, opposed the use of an organ in synagogues, and defended circumcision against attempts by some Reform circles to have it banned by the rabbis. His conservative form of public worship, known as the *Wiener Nussach* or *Mannheimer Nussach* (Viennese or Mannheimer rite), with its carefully implemented reforms, successfully prevented the breakup of the single religious *Einheitsgemeinde* in Vienna, whereas many other European Jewish communities of the 19th century, including Berlin, had fallen victim to internal dissension between Orthodox and Reformers. Mannheimer adapted traditional Judaism to the requirements of the acculturated and strictly Reform-oriented wealthy lay elite of notables who formed the community board, without sacrificing either religious content or the unity of the congregation (Allerhand 1978, 10–11).

This middle-of-the-road tradition was likewise kept by Mannheimer’s successors, irrespective of their personal beliefs and attitudes toward *Wissenschaft* and Reform. They strove above all to preserve unity in the community and to prevent the secession of the Orthodox faction by finding compromises acceptable to the two—small but influential—groups representing the two extremes on the Jewish religious-denomination spectrum: the acculturated Viennese elite who wanted radical reforms of the synagogue services—including the use of an organ and

the elimination of all references in the prayer books to an ultimate return to Zion, to belief in the Messiah, and to the reinstitution of sacrifices—and the *Altgläubige* (Old Believers; Haredim), who regarded any deviation from the *Shulkhan Arukh* as a travesty (Wistrich 1996, 99).¹⁶

The majority of Viennese Jewry was more traditional than the German, and the more traditionalist Jewish immigration from Hungary and Galicia further increased the Orthodox character and structure of Viennese Jewry (Wistrich 1989, 122). It is estimated that by 1848, Orthodox Jews already comprised some 25 percent of the dues-paying community members (Tietze 1933, 222), and their numbers were rising constantly. By the early 20th century, Vienna's Jewish community consisted of a majority of Jews who followed a Judaism that by today's standards would be considered Modern Orthodox. This development is reflected in the community's appointment of its rabbis. Rabbi Adolf Jellinek (1821–1893), Preacher in Vienna during the years 1865–1893, was closer than Mannheimer to the tradition of the *Wissenschaft* and identified with the cause of Reform Judaism. He had adopted an approach close to Zunz and Geiger, and was thus Vienna's most radical Reform-oriented religious leader. To offset Jellinek's Reform-oriented influence, the community eventually appointed Rabbi Moritz Güdemann (1835–1918), an adherent of the positive historical wing of Reform Judaism, to be the community's rabbi following Jellinek's death in 1893. Güdemann was much stricter than Jellinek concerning matters of Jewish law, but was liberal in his approach to scholarly research (Wistrich 1989, 123). He was followed by Zwi Perez Chajes (1876–1927), chief rabbi in Vienna in the years 1918–1927; David Feuchtwanger (1864–1936), chief rabbi in the years 1933–1936; and Israel Taglicht (1862–1943), chief rabbi between 1936 and 1939, when he fled to Britain. All three chief rabbis were academically trained yet deeply rooted in Orthodox tradition.

The fact that Viennese Jewry was more traditional Orthodox-oriented, in contrast to the Reform-oriented German Jewry, was due in large part to the greater influx of *Ostjuden* into Vienna. The Austrian capital absorbed a huge migration of Jews from the eastern provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, mainly from Galicia. Each decade, an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 Galician Jews settled in Vienna's Second District, Leopoldstadt. This had a profound impact on the social,

cultural, and political life of the Jewish population, which grew between 1857 and 1900 from 6,000 to more than 146,000—or from 1.3 percent of Vienna's population in 1857 to 12 percent by 1890 (Rabinbach 1975, 48). Also during the First Austrian Republic (1918–1938), Jews from the East continued to migrate—now, to immigrate—to Vienna. As in Germany and other European countries, hatred toward the Jewish refugees increased significantly after World War I, when large numbers of Jewish refugees moved westwards. However, expulsions, which were common in other European countries,¹⁷ were not carried out in Austria. The hate campaigns against the *Ostjuden* in Vienna in particular, and Austria in general, were launched by university and parliamentary bodies, and the newspapers, among others. They all called for the expulsion or even internment of the Jewish refugees, who, with the breakup of the Empire, were no longer Austrian citizens and thus had lost their right to reside in Vienna or other Austrian cities. Politicians now made all sorts of proposals to force, or at least encourage, the departure of the *Ostjuden*—for example, depriving these Jews of ration cards and the freedom to choose their occupation and run their own business, or deporting Jews who had contracted infectious diseases or committed economic crimes. However, none of these proposals was implemented by the Austrian government (Bruce 1998, 83–85). Consequently, the number and influence of Orthodox-oriented observant Jews, including many Haredi Jews, in the local Jewish community continued to increase in the interwar years.

Germany, too, experienced the immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe, but their numbers—and hence their influence on the local Jewish population—were significantly lower. The German ruling elite and population adopted a negative attitude toward Eastern European Jewish immigrants. Minister President of Prussia Otto von Bismarck called them “unwanted elements,” military strategists claimed that they were sent by the czar to destabilize Germany, and the public blamed them for, among other things, the breakout of the cholera epidemic in Hamburg. Most of them either were deported to the East en masse or moved on to the United States. After World War I, when large numbers of Jewish refugees arrived in Germany, they were expelled or put in internment camps for *Ostjuden*. Raids were organized throughout Germany.

On November 5, 1923, there was a pogrom in Berlin’s Scheunenviertel “ghetto,” during which anyone who “looked Jewish” was beaten up (Fox 2000, 129). As a result, the number of *Ostjuden* in Germany remained relatively low. By 1910 only 70,000 (11.4 percent) of the 615,000 Jews were *Ostjuden*, and even during the immigration peak in 1925, their number rose to no more than 90,000 (15 percent).

Jewish Identities in the Post-Shoah Communities

As a consequence of these prewar Jewish identity developments, very few of the **Alt-Deutsche** Shoah survivors and returnees in the immediate postwar years were observant. Many of them were virtually assimilated even before the Shoah and disassociated themselves from Judaism and Jewry by formally exiting from the Jewish community, marrying a non-Jew, or converting to Christianity. The majority of the postwar *Alt-Deutsche* community leaders identified strongly with German culture and lifestyle and had little or no knowledge of the Jewish culture, traditions and practice since very often their parents had already left the Jewish religion behind.¹⁸

Vienna’s postwar Jewish population similarly included many highly assimilated *Alt-Wiener* survivors and returnees who, before the Shoah, lived on the margins of Jewish life but subsequently moved to its center following their traumatic historic experience. Many of the returning Jewish exiles were Marxists, who felt Jewish not out of religious sentiment but more out of a sense of heredity or because others classified them as such.

However, whereas the *Alt-Deutsche* population consisted mainly of assimilated Jews, the proportion of assimilated Jews in the postwar *Alt-Wiener* population was significantly smaller.¹⁹ Most *Alt-Wiener* survivors and returnees were Orthodox Jews. Some were observant, and even Haredi, while others were non-observant. Virtually all, however, maintained a strong Jewish identity. The *Alt-Wiener* consequently had a much stronger Jewish identity and connection to religion and were more knowledgeable about Judaism, demonstrating greater involvement in Jewish communal organization than the *Alt-Deutsche*.

The DPs who arrived in Austria and Germany immediately after the end of World War II resembled the pre-Shoah *Ostjuden* of the two

countries. They were, by and large, observant and traditional Orthodox-oriented Central and Eastern European Jews. Many of them were Haredim, whose Jewish identity, behavior, language, and clothing were significantly influenced by their prewar communities of origin. In the DP camps, they established prayer houses as well as an array of religious, educational, and cultural institutions that helped preserve their brand of Eastern European *Yiddishkeit*, which differed significantly not only from the Jewish identity pattern of the *Alt-Deutsche* but also of most of the *Alt-Wiener* Jews, whether secular or non-Haredi observant.

The differences between the religious attitudes of the *Alt-Wiener* and the *Alt-Deutsche*, as well as the religious impact of the DPs, became evident by the early 1950s, when the DPs' mass emigration had come to an end and those Jews who had decided not to leave Austria and Germany for the time being had joined the official Jewish communities. In Germany, upon entering the Jewish communities, the Orthodox-oriented traditional DPs gradually introduced Orthodox rituals, practices, traditions, and institutions into the newly reestablished Liberal-oriented communities. In Vienna, the DPs now strengthened and diversified the Orthodox orientation of the IKG that had been reestablished in its "middle-of-the-road" tradition. Religious community life was henceforth influenced by both (unassimilated) *Alt-Wiener* and DPs. The term "Orthodox" now included various streams: Haredi, Modern Orthodox, and the "Wiener Nussach" (followed to this day by the congregation of the Stadttempel, Vienna's main synagogue).

While the communities' religious life was greatly influenced by the DPs, the communities' political leadership was not. For the community members, electing *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews as community chairmen was the natural choice, because a good command of the German language was necessary for communication with the local authorities. Consequently, the local Jews in both communities continued to hold the leading positions also after the DPs remaining in the country joined the communities. Most of these *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews who led the newly established communities were secular. Before the Shoah, some of them had only loose connections with the Jewish communities; consequently, they were barely familiar with Jewish religious and organizational life. Nevertheless, they perceived their respective

communities as the reincarnation of the prewar German and Vienna Jewish communities and their Jewish life as starting over following a temporary hiatus brought about by Hitler and the Jewish exile. Ironically, though, in Germany, those German Jews whose attitudes and behavior had earlier prompted some historians and sociologists to predict that Germany’s Jewry would disappear within a few decades (e.g., Theilhaber 1921) now viewed themselves as responsible for reestablishing Jewish communities and sustaining Jewish life in that country.

Austria’s and Germany’s Jewish communities were reestablished as *Religionsgemeinschaften* (religious associations). According to former IKG Secretary General Avshalom Hodik (2007), at least in Austria, this was the result of the fact that belonging to the Jewish faith was the broadest common denominator among the local Jews. All Jews identified themselves as individuals belonging to the Jewish faith. Not all of them, however, saw themselves as members of an ethnic group or of a larger worldwide Jewish people. Most of the DPs and non-assimilated Jews had not only a strong religious, but also an ethnic, Jewish identity in terms of identification with the Jewish people, their culture, traditional family life, and religion. Many assimilated German and Viennese Jews perceived Judaism differently. For them, Jewish identity was very much a feeling of belonging to a community of religious faith as well as a “community of fate”²⁰ imposed upon them by the Shoah and a source of social support in the face of their rejection by the gentile society at large. Even Jews who did break the social barrier, such as Bruno Kreisky—an assimilated Jew who survived the Shoah in Swedish exile and was chancellor of Austria from 1970 to 1983—also perceived themselves as belonging to that community of fate.

Kreisky, who had distanced himself from the Jewish community even before the war, declared in the late 1980s: “Without much hesitation, I would say that the knowledge of Auschwitz is the only thing that unconditionally links me to my Jewish origin.... Auschwitz is the Jews’ destiny, inescapable even to those Jews for whom their Jewish ancestry is less or more significant. We were all thrown into one pot through peculiar circumstances in history” (Koebl 1989, 142). For him, Judaism was a matter of ancestry, but he did not have “any special sense of belonging” (Kreisky 1981, 50) to the Jewish people. Moreover,

he asserted that “my [Jewish] origin, which I never concealed, does not give any Zionist the right to seek my solidarity with another Jew merely by virtue of his being a Jew” (Kreisky 1985, 26). With Israel he identified even less. Kreisky argued that Zionism was a form of nationalism based upon a lie, since the Jews were “neither a race nor a people” but “a religious association that became a community of fate” because of the Shoah (Kreisky 1985, 25). Kreisky’s approach toward Jewish group identity, possibly fueled by pragmatic political considerations, made him more radical than most assimilated Jews. He sought to prove himself more Austrian than the Austrians by demonstrating his complete disassociation from the local Jewish community and Jewish life, world Jewry, the State of Israel, and Zionism (see below). This perception of Judaism as nothing more than a religious matter, and the Shoah as “the” binding link to other Jews, was a sentiment shared by most assimilated Jews in both Austria and Germany.

The Shoah in Jewish group identity

The Shoah had a major influence on both the local Jews and the DPs. As mentioned above, National Socialism almost destroyed the prewar Jewish communities physically and intellectually; virtually extinguished the religious, cultural, and artistic culture of Judaism in Germany and Vienna; and almost completely eradicated the distinctive patterns of the German *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. The prewar religious and intellectual elite, leaders, and rank-and-file members, who had a strong Jewish identity and knowledge of Judaism and community organization, were either murdered or remained abroad. The Shoah also changed the communities’ demographic structure, reducing the local population to a small share of its prewar size and bringing a large number of Central and Eastern European Jews into the communities. Its biggest impact, however, was in the realm of Jewish group-identification.

The Shoah created and reinforced the sense of Jewish-group belonging. Already during the Nazi regime, assimilated Jews, who had been living on the periphery of Jewish communal life, moved to the center and developed a closer sense of belonging with other Jews. Nazism

made them become “an almost closed group of persecuted and ostracized people, who were banned from the social, cultural, and political affairs of the country they called their home” (Maor 1961, 5). After World War II, the Shoah memories also bound the *Alt-Deutsche* and the *Alt-Wiener* survivors at large: the assimilated Jews now shared a common recent past with fellow Jews who had always felt more intensely Jewish.

This feeling of belonging together was further enhanced by the survivors’ daily hardships and the hunger they suffered (Jüdisches Gemeindeblatt 1946). The general employment crunch affected the Jews in particular, as German and Austrian employers were often reluctant to employ them. In immediate postwar Vienna and Germany, the Jews were largely preoccupied with the same issues: how to cope with the loss of their relatives and friends; how to come to terms with the destruction of their once-glorious prewar communities; how to deal with their need to share their Shoah experiences and memories; and perhaps above all, how to ensure their own physical and material survival and security. These concerns are manifest in the early issues of the IKG magazine, *Die Gemeinde*, which appeared as a monthly from September 1948 to December 1949, and then again after February 1953. They reveal a broken Jewish community focusing on trying to find ways for their members to repair their lives and ensure their survival after the Shoah. Thus the early issues devoted considerable attention to information about destroyed and looted Jewish property in Austria, the availability of facilities for sick children, lists of returnees to Vienna, and obituaries of the recently deceased within the community.

Significantly, the various national and religious groups within the DP population, which before the Shoah often stayed apart because of cultural differences and religious disagreements, also began to feel they belonged to one group. They began to cooperate in the establishment of joint religious and educational institutions in the DP camps.

Personal Shoah experience thus became a major link connecting all the survivors and constituted a central element in their Jewish group identity. For some, the memories of the Shoah and its apotheosis as a singular event in world history were elevated to the level of a surrogate religion. This was particularly evident among Jews who had lost their

religious faith (since they could not understand and accept how God, if he existed, could have let the Shoah happen), as well as among Jews whose Jewish identity before the war had been weak or nonexistent and who had been “made to feel Jewish” by the Nazis. Jewishness, which had been imposed upon them as a stigma by the hostile outside world, was now incorporated into their own personal identity, often becoming an intrinsic and salient element and a source of pride.

Furthermore, while the memories of the Shoah bound the Jews together, its lessons also simultaneously distanced them from the surrounding gentile society. The fact that the Shoah loomed large in the formation of Jewish group identity drew an unbridgeable gap between the Jewish and gentile populations in both countries. In Austria, the Jews saw themselves as the victims in a country that not only disowned responsibility for the Shoah but also founded the Second Republic (in 1945) on the myth of its being the “first victim” of Nazi Germany, and as will be shown later, quickly reintegrated former Nazis (including confirmed murderers) and denied the need for denazification. In Germany, which did acknowledge its responsibility for the Shoah, the line it drew was doubly impossible to cross: the German and Jewish identities are both largely defined by their relation to the Shoah and the naturally contrasting traumas it imprinted on the “perpetrators” and the “victims.” This has led to interdependence and, at the same time, to an unbridgeable divide between the Jews and the Germans, creating a coexistence that historian Dan Diner termed “negative German-Jewish symbiosis.” This negative symbiosis is a systematic reversal of the “German-Jewish symbiosis” that was so optimistically hailed by the Age of Enlightenment. Diner argues that “it is a kind of contradictory mutuality—whether they want it or not. Germans as well as Jews have once again become interlinked through this event [the Shoah]. Such negative symbiosis, brought about by the Nazis, will shape the relationship both feel toward themselves and, above all, toward each other for generations to come” (1986, 9).

Moreover, knowledge of the Austrians’ and the Germans’ role in the Shoah also set Jews in those two countries apart from Jews abroad. The Jewish world largely opposed the continuing presence of Jews in “the lands of the murderers”—especially in Germany. In July 1948, the World

Jewish Congress (WJC)²¹ admonished Jews worldwide never again to settle on “blood-soaked German soil” (WJC 1948). Those Jews who nevertheless decided to stay there were subjected to the contempt and disdain of the majority of world Jewry. In the eyes of world Jewry, there was a clear hierarchy: at its top stood the Israelis, who fearlessly defended their land and people, while the Jewish survivors who remained in Germany occupied the bottom rung as the Jewish traitors or “scum,” as they were often called (Schneider 2000, 18–19). The establishment of Jewish life in Germany was perceived as “senseless or as sacrilege” (Maor 1961, iii). A rabbinical ban against the resettlement of Jews in Germany was never issued; nevertheless, it was usually seen as a moral stigma (Brenner 1997, 66). Israel’s first consul in Munich,²² Chaim Yahil (Hoffmann), demanded that “all Jews leave Germany,” since those who stayed there were “a source of danger for the entire Jewish people.... Those who are tempted by the fleshpots of Germany must not expect that Israel or the Jewish people should provide them with services for their convenience” (1951, 20).

As a result, Germany’s Jewry was isolated from the Jewish world. The Jewish Agency closed its offices in Germany in 1951, and such international organizations as the WJC and the World Union of Jewish students (WUJS) did not allow for the representation of German Jewry. According to Heinz Galinski, “in the early days, we were relatively cut off here. We weren’t invited to the meetings of international Jewish organizations” (Brenner 1997, 101). The *Zentralrat* eventually became affiliated with the WJC in 1954. However, the students’ rejection prevailed. Even as late as 1963, the majority of delegates to the WUJS congress condemned the presence of Jewish communities in Germany and refused to recognize the German Jewish students’ organizations. (The WUJS did not accept the German Jewish student umbrella organization, the Bundesverband Jüdischer Studenten in Deutschland [Union of Jewish Students in Germany, BJSD], into its ranks until 1968.)

Vienna’s Jewry, by contrast, was not ostracized by international Jewish organizations. Although the date when the IKG officially joined the WJC is not known by either the WJC or the IKG, according to WJC’s veteran historian Sydney Gruber, IKG president Emil Maurer participated in a European WJC meeting in Prague in 1947. This suggests that

Vienna's Jewish community was already an affiliate of the WJC then (although the WJC met for the first time in Vienna only in 1985 and in Berlin only in 1990).

The State of Israel in Jewish group identity

The memory of the Shoah also altered the Jews' attitude toward Zionism. At the turn of the 20th century, the majority of Vienna's and Germany's Jews, and Jews in Europe at large, fiercely condemned the development of Jewish nationalism in groups such as *Kadimah*, the first Jewish nationalist student fraternity established in Vienna in 1883, and the ideas and activities of Theodor (Binyamin Zeev) Herzl, the founder of modern political Zionism. This happened despite the fact that Vienna had become the center of Zionism, as Herzl established the Zionist movement's headquarters and published its first official Zionist newspaper, *Die Welt*, there. Acculturated Jews felt that Zionism threatened to undermine their recently gained (or at least perceived) emancipation and civil equality, undesirably emphasized their differences from the surrounding society, and exposed them to accusations of dual loyalty. The Haredi Jews opposed Zionism and its organizations, perceiving their supporters as heretics in revolt against the divinely decreed exile of the Jewish people by taking actions to redeem it instead of waiting for the Messiah. This negative assessment of political Zionism persisted right up until the Shoah, although it had become somewhat weaker in Vienna after the end of the Habsburg Empire, when the Zionist movement became stronger, and Zionism more widespread, in Vienna than in Germany.

Between World War I and 1933, there were just 33,000 members in Zionist organizations in **Germany** (some 6.6 percent of the entire Jewish population) (Poppel 1977, 33). By contrast, in 1924, between 85 and 90 percent of German Jewry were members of the assimilationist *Centralverein Deutscher Staatsbürger Jüdischen Glaubens* (Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith, abbreviated to *Central Verein*, CV) and its associated groups (Poppel 1977, 34). The CV was founded in 1893 in Berlin with the goal of fighting for the Jews' rights

and combating anti-Semitism in Germany. It was committed to the German nation and rejected Zionism. In general, all religious denominations, from Reform to Orthodox, openly opposed the Jewish-national idea before 1933, sought integration into German society, and identified with German values, heritage, culture, and literature. They were patriots and Germany was their *Heimat* (homeland). The *Israelit*, the Orthodox community's weekly, which was published between 1860 and 1938, and regularly stressed the differences between the various groups of German Jewry, declared in 1898: “On the issues of love for the Kaiser and the Reich, for the state and the fatherland, all parties of Jewry are of one mind, Orthodox as well as Reform, the most devout as the most liberal” (Zur 1998, 107). Germany's Jews felt they were part of the German nation and tried hard not to be perceived by the Germans as a separate nation. After Hitler's accession to power in 1933, membership in German Zionist organizations rose dramatically (Poppel 1977, 33), demonstrating that the growth in Zionist identity was directly linked to anti-Semitism. This was also reflected in the high support for Zionism among the *Ostjuden*, whose economic situation was worse and who suffered more from anti-Semitism than the established German Jews.

In **Vienna**, anti-Semitism was more prominent and widespread among Vienna's middle-class as early as the late 19th century. According to historian Léon Poliakov, “in Vienna any political group that wanted to appeal to the artisans had no chance of success without an anti-Semitic platform” (2003, 24). Indeed, in 1897 Karl Lueger, who fomented anti-Semitism in the public arena (privately he had good contacts with a number of Jews), campaigned for and won the mayoralty of Vienna on an anti-Semitic platform. He blamed the Jews for Vienna's financial problems and roused the crowds with anti-Semitic fervor. Hitler would later state that he became an anti-Semite during his years in Vienna. Nevertheless, Zionism did not attract many followers. Vienna's Jews felt strong loyalty to Emperor Franz Joseph and trusted that the paternalistic character of the multi-national Habsburg Empire would protect its Jewish community as long as it was a religious group only. Moreover, Vienna's rabbis fervently criticized Herzl's ideas in their writings and oratorically gifted, and thus influential, sermons.

The year 1918, however, was a watershed in the attitude of Vienna's Jews toward Zionism. In this year, the Monarchy came to an end, Rabbi Güdemann passed away, and Rabbi Zwi Perez Chajes—who was an ardent Zionist from his youth—was installed as his successor. At the same time, anti-Semitism continued to intensify. Many national and international anti-Semitic rallies were organized in Vienna. Some of the rallies even ended with young people breaking the windows of Jewish stores and attacking Jews in streetcars—such as the international congress held on March 11, 1921, organized by the *Antisemitenbund* (Union of Anti-Semites) and attended by members of anti-Semitic organizations from Austria, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary (Austria alone was represented by some 40,000 members). In January 1923, the newly founded *Völkischer Antisemitischer Kampfausschuss* (Racial Anti-Semitic Fighting Committee) organized a rally near the City Hall attended by anywhere from 20,000 (the estimate of the *Wiener Morgenzeitung*) to 100,000 people (the *Reichspost* calculation) (Bruce 1998, 82).

Chajes was installed as chief rabbi of Vienna despite his openly Zionist stance. This stance was very unpopular with the wealthy and comfortable assimilationists, the Haredim and the community leaders. Nevertheless, Chajes succeeded in establishing himself in the 1920s as the undisputed leader of Austrian Jewry and considerably influenced the younger generation (Wistrich 1996, 107). Between 1918 and 1938, the Zionists—among them Rabbi Chajes—founded several educational institutions and gained significant influence in community politics. During that period, the Zionist Movement and the Union, a liberal group with strong assimilationist tendencies similar to the CV, were the two main contenders for IKG leadership. For Chajes and his co-Zionists, the major task of world Jewry in the 20th century was to build up Palestine and turn it into the national and religious center of Jewish life (Wistrich 1996, 108). Nevertheless, for most Zionists, Jewish nationalism was more of an idea. They did not really plan to move to Palestine. They remained in Austria and Germany partly out of inertia, and partly because of the practical obstacles involved in settling in Palestine (Poppel 1977, 20).

After the Shoah, however, Zionism had become the only viable mode of cultural and national identification for all Jews—including former

anti-Zionists—who were disappointed by their fellow countrymen, the local political leadership and postwar anti-Semitism. Survivors from all religious streams and at all levels of Jewish identity—with the exception of the few Jews who still sought complete assimilation, such as Kreisky—shifted from ideological opposition to pragmatic support for the Zionist State of Israel. Its establishment was welcomed enthusiastically by the IKG and the German Jewish communities’ leaders, and all of Vienna’s and Germany’s Jewish groups. All official ceremonies now ended with the singing of the “Ha’tikvah” (Israel’s national anthem) as well as the Austrian or German anthems and featured the Israeli flag alongside the relevant national banner. All groups regarded Israel as the self-evident site of Jewry’s future. The State of Israel became the central building block of any future-oriented life project (Bunzl 2003, 156).

This was also true for the Haredim in Austria and elsewhere. In 1948, for example, *Agudas Israel*’s Rabbi Ehrmann stated that “political sovereignty, sovereign nationalism, and its state were the first steps on the way to the actual goal, a state governed according to the Torah” (Adunka 2000, 222). This was in line with the fact that after 1945, *Agudas Israel* in Israel had come around to a position of pragmatic support for the State of Israel and later saw its establishment as a divine miracle.

This change in the approach to Zionism, together with the establishment of the State of Israel, seriously affected the Jewish community reconstruction in Austria and Germany. Right after the end of World War II, considerable Zionist activity took place in the DP camps. Underground organizations trained and organized DPs for (mostly illegal) immigration to Palestine. The proclamation of the State of Israel in 1948 intensified these activities and eventually put an end to the vital religious and cultural Jewish life conducted by the DPs in Germany and Austria in the immediate postwar years. Moreover, in Germany, this virtually put an end to Orthodox religious observance in general. With the closing of the DP camps across the country, the educational, religious, and cultural institutions and facilities necessary for Orthodox religious observance and its transmission to the next generation by and large disappeared. Thus, for the most part, only those who attached little importance to a Jewish religious life stayed on in Germany while the others left, mainly for Israel or America. In Vienna, by contrast,

some observant, and even Haredi, DPs remained in the city, and by the early 1950s the institutions necessary for Orthodox religious observance and education had been set up (see below). Missing, however, were the masses required to establish and maintain Jewish religious life to the full.

While the establishment of the State of Israel had many negative demographic and religious effects on these communities, psychologically it strengthened the survivors who did not move to Israel. For the war generation, Israel's establishment was a miracle. The existence of Israel as a potential haven gave them the sense of security essential for rebuilding their lives. Now the Jews could no longer be branded as the "*vaterlandslose Geselle*" (literally, a rootless individual without a homeland), a view often expressed by anti-Semites. Henceforth, like members of other national groups, the Jews could point to a real national homeland. The existence of a state that would always take in Jews and the fact that it maintained an autonomous and viable Jewish existence played an important role in the formation of postwar Jewish group identity in Austria and Germany, as elsewhere. Israel became synonymous with a guaranteed Jewish future, and Austria's and Germany's Jews gradually began to feel that they were now living in a voluntary Diaspora rather than in an externally imposed exile; they had the option of moving whenever they chose to a spiritual homeland that was now a reality. The era of being at the mercy of others and unable to find refuge was over.

Finally, especially for the survivors, the State of Israel offered a safe haven. It was their "homeland to be" "in the future; not today, but tomorrow" (Schneider 2000, 19). The possibility that they might one day emigrate there helped make life in Germany and Austria more bearable. The Jews in those countries saw their life there as temporary, a preparation for their *aliyah* (immigration to Israel). The April 1949 issue of *Die Gemeinde* featured a letter from Albert Einstein in which he thanked the community for congratulating him on his 70th birthday. The letter stated: "I thank you for your congratulations from the land of severe persecution. May the younger generation soon be able to take part in the development of Israel and find a happier existence there." The fact that this greeting was published without comment or criticism,

illustrates that for the Vienna Jewish community (and Einstein) it was obvious that there is no future for Jews in Vienna, and that the young generation should and will eventually emigrate to Israel.

Austrian, respectively German, elements in Jewish group identity

The Shoah also clearly terminated the Austrian and German Jews' pre-war complete identification with their respective countries. Before the Shoah, they had considered themselves part of their respective national societies, felt a deep connection to and responsibility for their countries, and emphasized Jewish devotion to the fatherland. In an article in *Die Neuzeit* from 1893 (p.1), Adolf Jellinek expressed this idea as follows: “There is no Jewish nation. The Jews form, it is true, a separate stock [*Stamm*], a special religious community. They should cultivate the ancient Hebrew language, study their rich literature, know their history, cherish their faith, and make the greatest sacrifices for it; they should hope and trust in the wisdom of Divine Providence, the promises of their prophets, and the development of mankind, so that the sublime ideas and truths of Judaism may gain the day. But for the rest, they should amalgamate with the nations whose citizens they are, fight in their battles and promote their institutions for the welfare of the whole.” In this sense, Jellinek expressed the belief of many Jews in Europe that the return to Zion and the formation of a Jewish national entity and identity was not a goal Jews should pursue, and that they should instead be loyal to their nation-states. (This loyalty has often led to situations in which Jews from different nationalities found themselves fighting one another on the battlefield.)

They were deeply devoted German/Austrian patriots. This patriotism was aptly expressed in their self-definition as “Germans of the Jewish faith” or “Austrians of the Jewish faith” respectively, and in their great loyalty to the country. Patriotism was at its height during the Weimar Republic in Germany and during the Habsburg Monarchy in Austria. Recent studies describe the Austrian Jews as the most patriotic element in the Habsburg Monarchy (see Wistrich 1989; Rozenblit 1984, 2001). According to historian Robert Wistrich, after having been granted equal

rights in 1867, the Jews' reverence toward the imperial family developed into "a veritable cult. Religion, Fatherland and the Kaiser became sacred values for the Austrian Jews" (1989, 175). Writer and Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal recounts: "We revered the emperor and perceived him as our protector. We were fervent Habsburg-Austrian patriots" (Embacher 2004, 227). Indeed, both Austrian and German Jews expressed their patriotism frequently in publications and through their actions, as in their enthusiastic enlistment into their respective armies during World War I (approximately 300,000 Jews fought in the Imperial and Royal Army, and 100,000 served the German Empire).

The *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews' manifest love for their country, as well as their vision of assimilation within their national societies, died with the Shoah. Their wartime experience taught them that their country had betrayed them. They realized that patriotism and assimilation did not make them "Austrian" or "German" and that, in the eyes of their fellow countrymen, most of whom did nothing to protect them, they remained "Jews." Only a small minority of *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews remained patriots after the Shoah. In Austria, for example, some inveterate politically active communists and socialists—including IKG's first president, David Brill—defined themselves primarily as "Austrian patriots" whose return was "not motivated by feelings of hatred or revenge, but who were ready to cooperate in the reconstruction of a new Austria" (IKG 1955, 27). Although those *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews retained their prewar patriotism, it was devoid of trust and identification with the population. They still supported the Austrian/German state, but they were disappointed with what it had become. They dreamed of a new Austria/Germany and wanted to reestablish the country in that spirit, not only for their own sakes but also for the sake of the Austrian/German population at large and their *Heimat*. According to historian Marita Krauss, "at stake was one's former homeland, its loss and possible reappropriation, and with this a search for lost identities and new orientations. Trust in this homeland had for the most part been lost, but not the basic human desire for a better future" (2004, 110). They believed that the Enlightenment ideals, which to them had seemed close to being realized in their pre-Shoah

homelands, and were then betrayed in the most radical way possible, again had a future there.

Yet most of the *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews who remained in or returned to their countries after the Shoah did not do so out of love of the homeland. For them, living there “involved confronting a profound, often irresolvable conflict between Jewishness and Germanness, or at least between knowledge of Germany’s terrible recent reality and love of one’s native language, culture, and surroundings” (Krauss 2004, 110). The same was also true of Vienna’s Jews and their emotional relationship toward Austria. Some Jews also remained in Austria and Germany because they wanted to show that Hitler did not succeed in making the country *judenrein* (clean of Jews). They believed, like Heinz Galinski, “that the Wannsee Conference [at which the extermination of the Jews was planned] cannot be the last word in the life of the Jewish community in Germany” (Brenner 1997, 101) and that Jewish life needed to be reestablished on German soil.

By contrast, the DPs in the two countries wanted to leave the country as quickly as possible and believed that the Jewish presence in Germany and Austria should end. Thus, for example, while the *Alt-Deutsche* Jews immediately engaged in talks with German administrators and local government officials about providing the basis for the Jews’ future in Germany, the DPs had little or no communication with the local German authorities, focusing instead on cooperating with the Allied forces to speed up the process of obtaining visas for Palestine, the United States, or other destinations, as well as to strengthen Jewish life in Germany for as long as they were still on its soil. The disagreements preceding the Luxembourg Agreement on German reparations illustrate these differing approaches toward future Jewish life in Germany. The *Alt-Deutsche* Jews claimed that they were the true successors of prewar German Jewry and sought to invest the moneys received as reparations in reestablishing Jewish communities in Germany. The DPs opposed this and favored the transfer of these funds to the Jewish State of Israel, the rightful heir of the millions of Jewish victims.

2.4 Communal Reconstruction

Institutional developments

Although the *Alt-Deutsche* and *Alt-Wiener* leaders sought to reestablish the Jewish communities in German cities and Vienna respectively, they still regarded them as *Liquidationsgemeinden*. While personally they intended to stay in Germany and Vienna and personally considered the existence of the community imperative, these leaders believed that the communities would sooner or later cease to exist, since their populations would either leave the country or die. These reestablished official communities thus set up only the minimum of social and religious institutions required to cater to basic physical and spiritual needs.

They neither established Jewish schools nor planned to do so. In 1952, the IKG discovered a hidden collection of teaching aids from its pre-war community school. Rather than use it or keep it for later, the IKG shipped all the equipment to Israel as a gift for the Israeli Education Ministry. In fact, a Jewish school did exist in Vienna. It was the *Hebräische Schule* (Hebrew School), established in 1946 through the financial assistance of the JDC. However, the school was not run by the IKG, and the DP students' preference for the day school was noticeable. Between 1946 and 1949, 30 teachers gave classes to 838 DP children, while many more students could not be admitted²³ because of the building's poor condition. On the other hand, according to the school's first director, Ilja Rojtenberg, very few children of *Alt-Wiener* parents attended (*Die Stimme*, February 15, 1948). The IKG's political and religious leaders likewise did not send their children to the Hebrew school. According to Alfred Reischer, until 1965 president of the Association *Jüdisches Schulwesen* (Jewish Schools), especially the BWJ leaders constantly opposed the school, claiming, "we do not need a new ghetto" (Central Zionist Archives: No. 12468, 5). After the mass emigration of the DPs, the number of Jewish students shrank significantly, and the school was eventually closed down in 1967.

Communist journalist David Brill, and his predominantly communist IKG board (1946–1948), which was made up of highly assimilated, secular left-wing Jews, in particular showed little interest in the religious needs of the community. The IKG even initially opposed the restoration of Vienna’s central synagogue, the *Stadttempel*, which was the only one that remained intact after the *Reichskristallnacht*, although its interior was vandalized. As revealed in a letter sent by Bernhard Braver, the first acting director of the IKG until 1947, to Wilhelm Krell, secretary general of the International Committee of Former Jewish Concentration Camp Inmates and Refugees in Transit through Austria, Brill was explicitly against the restoration of the *Stadttempel*, and the board supported him. In 1946, however, Braver unilaterally initiated the temple’s reconstruction with financial help from the JDC and an Austrian government loan. The board never issued any statement of approval or a *a posteriori* agreement to the work (IKG Archive 1967). Furthermore, for three years, the position of Vienna’s chief rabbi remained vacant while Isidor Oehler, who had been a religion teacher in Vienna since 1901, served as acting rabbi. Only in 1948 did the IKG board appoint Rabbi Akiva (Béla) Eisenberg from Hungary as the community’s chief rabbi.

In contrast to the official communities, the DP camps in Germany and Austria were loci of vibrant Jewish cultural and religious life, where Zionism thrived. With the help of such Jewish organizations as the JDC, the Jewish Agency for Palestine (known after 1948 as the Jewish Agency for Israel), the Central Committee of Liberated Jews, the Jewish education and vocational training organization ORT, and the Jewish Brigade, the DPs established their own religious, educational, and social infrastructures; organized political, cultural, and religious activities; and set up committees to represent them vis-à-vis their respective zonal authorities. The camps were sites of an astounding rebirth of family life—for instance, in Bergen-Belsen there was an average of 20 weddings per day (Holocaust Encyclopedia n.d.); a 1946 JDC survey recorded 750 babies born every month just in the official DP camps in the U.S. zone (Grossmann 2002, 307). The DP camps thus became the fastest-growing Jewish communities in the world. In general, for the DPs, children were the symbol of survival. Therefore care for them and

their education got special attention. By 1948, a significant educational infrastructure was established in the DP camps. In Austria alone, there were 16 kindergartens, 38 schools (14 secular and 24 religious), and 17 language courses within the camps, a teachers' pedagogical school in Hallein,²⁴ where all teachers had to take a two-week course, and what was known as the "Hallein University," which offered various courses for students. The DP institutions in the camps in Austria and Germany ceased to exist by the early 1950s, after most DPs had left those countries, bringing about the closure of the camps.

With the dissolution of the institutions in the DP camps and in view of the official communities' minimal interest in reestablishing vital Jewish life, community development was now dependent on the initiative of the Jewish population itself. Consequently, the institutional development in both countries was totally different, mainly as a consequence of the aforementioned differences in the postwar Jewish populations and the prewar communities' legacies.

In the immediate postwar years, two separate groups in Germany reestablished Jewish life: the official secular *Alt-Deutsche* communities and the DPs' communities. In Vienna, however, three groups were active in establishing Jewish institutions: the secular *Alt-Wiener* IKG, the DPs, and a joint group comprising DPs living outside the camps and observant *Alt-Wiener* Jews, who felt the IKG was neglecting religious matters. **Vienna's** local Jews and the DPs who had come to the city and settled outside the DP camps (re)-established Jewish organizations in the years 1945 to 1949 (e.g., the Hakoah sports club, which had been world-famous before the war; the Austrian Zionist Association; and the Zionist youth organizations Bnei Akiva and Hashomer Hatzair). DPs who did not want to live in DP camps preferred Vienna to other cities in Austria because the metropolis offered the anonymity that enabled Shoah survivors to feel safe in Austria (Zelman 1995, 129). Jewish students with neither roots nor parents in Vienna founded the *Vereinigung jüdischer Hochschüler Österreichs* (Union of Jewish Students in Austria, VJHÖ), which became their surrogate home and helped them establish contact with Vienna's Jewry.

Furthermore, local Haredi survivors and DPs also established several congregations, each with their own prayer rooms. The Haredi circles organized themselves separately from the IKG but were nevertheless involved in IKG politics. Most religious institutions in Vienna were created by these groups, sometimes in spite of IKG leadership opposition; some were established on the remains of prewar Orthodox Jewish infrastructure; and others were established anew. By 1949, the Haredi groups had established prayer and study rooms, ritual baths, *kashrut* supervision, a Talmud-Torah school, the Yeshiva Chafez Chaim, the Beth Jakob girls' boarding school, women and youth organizations, as well as restaurants, a guesthouse, and a free kosher-meal service for needy Jews (see Adunka 2000, 220). These institutions eventually became the cornerstones for today's Orthodox infrastructure in Vienna.

In **Germany**, the situation was different. Indeed, local Jews and DPs established several Jewish student, sports, religious, and cultural associations outside the camps. However, these associations were closed down along with those in the DP camps due to the mass emigration wave of the early 1950s. The few non-assimilated *Alt-Deutsche* Jews and the relatively small number of DPs who had remained in the different locations in Germany could not maintain the associations. Certainly, in Germany, too, many DPs who did not want to live in DP camps settled outside them. However, they spread to a number of major German cities, and thus their number in each location was smaller than in Vienna.

Furthermore, the DPs had no local religious or Haredi survivors with whom they could join or prewar Orthodox institutions on whose remains a religious and Haredi life could be established. The prewar *Ostjuden* community institutions were largely located in the *Scheunenviertel* in Berlin, which was now included in the Soviet zone, where religion was anathema to the state ideology, and were thus cut off from the West Berlin Jewish community. Furthermore, many of *Adass Yisroel's* institutions were located in East Berlin and were reestablished only in the 1990s, when the fall of communism enabled it to reclaim its former real estate. Thus the Jews who remained in Germany were left with only the basic institutions established by the official communities.

Communal unity

The fact that the Jewish population in postwar **Germany** was divided into two distinct groups also influenced relations within the Jewish population, especially in the Allied occupation zones, where the DPs outnumbered the local Jewish population.

In the British zone, where the number of *Alt-Deutsche* Jews and DPs was roughly equal, the two groups interacted and cooperated harmoniously and established joint committees to represent and fight for Jewish interests—apart from Hanover, where the *Alt-Deutsche* established the Jewish Community while the DPs established the Jewish Committee. In the elections for the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in the British Zone in 1945, Josef Rosensaft, a Polish Jew, was elected chairman, and Norbert Wollheim, a native Berlin Jew, was elected vice-chairman. Years later, Wollheim recounted that “our origin—German Jews or East European Jews—played no role, not even in the election; we were all Jews and considered ourselves Jews. In the American occupation zone, however, the situation was completely different” (Wollheim 1997, 97).

In the American zone, the DPs were the overwhelming majority. Thus the *Alt-Deutsche* Jews felt threatened both socially (since the DPs represented a religiously and culturally very different Judaism) and politically (since the DPs’ determination to leave the country and liquidate Germany’s Jewish community undermined the local Jews’ desire and efforts to reconstruct it). The two groups had little contact with each other. The DPs established committees to fight for permission to immigrate to Palestine and for more extensive civil rights. These committees, however, only represented the interests of the DPs and not of the *Alt-Deutsche* Jews. The latter, for their part, established Jewish communities and formed an association uniting the Jewish communities in all the zones. Some local groups had ties to the DP committees, however, their inter-zonal union did not (Geller 2005, 18).

Moreover, within the reestablished Jewish communities, there was a clear division between *Alt-Deutsche* Jews and the DPs, and the leadership was solely composed of *Alt-Deutsche*. Some communities (e.g., in Munich) even adopted a formal rule stipulating that only a German citizen or a person who had lived in Germany before 1938 could be elected

to the community board (Pitum 2008). This rule was abolished in the early 1950s.

In general, the stalemate was broken after most DPs left the country. The stabilization of the population's size and the need for a united representation vis-à-vis the new German government induced the remaining Jews to overcome their differences and cooperate. As mentioned above, this united representation was established in 1950 in the form of the *Zentralrat*.

In **Vienna**, which was, as mentioned above, divided into three groups, the situation was different. There, the immediate postwar period was characterized by the IKG's cooperation with DP associations, on the one hand, and a power struggle with the observant groups outside the DP camps aiming at reestablishing Jewish infrastructure outside the IKG framework, on the other hand.

In order to fight for the DPs' interests, the International Committee for Transient Jewish Ex-Internees and Refugees (known as the International Committee, IC) was established with the consent of the Austrian authorities and the endorsement of the Allied Military Authorities. Immediately after its establishment, administrative disagreements arose, as well as disagreements over influence on the IKG. The latter, fearing that the IC might turn into a rival organization, eventually consented to its establishment under the condition that it refrains from interfering in IKG affairs and restricts its activities so as not to present any obstacle to Austrian Jews. At the constituent meeting members of the IKG were elected on the board (Oertel 1998, 3). The IC whose official status allowed it to cooperate with the Austrian and Allied authorities, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRAA), and foreign consulates supported the work of the *Bricha*. It also cooperated with the IKG, the JDC and other relief organizations. Despite the many disagreements among its member organizations—caused by the groups' desire to pursue their own separate goals—the IC made remarkable achievements (see Oertel 1998).

By contrast, the IKG was in constant contention with Jewish groups, Haredi and Modern Orthodox, which attempted to (re)create Jewish associations. According to the *Israelitengesetz*, whenever new religiously motivated Jewish associations were involved, the IKG was

authorized to give its opinion and agreement on them, draft the new association's statutes, and convey them to the Federal Ministry of Education, which was also responsible for religious affairs. The IKG used this means to prevent the establishment of certain Jewish associations. In particular, efforts to obtain approval for the reestablishment of associations that were dissolved by the Nazis met with fierce opposition from the IKG, which feared (rightly) that they might seek to recover the property of dissolved prewar associations confiscated by the Nazis, which was given to the IKG after 1945. All kinds of arguments were put forward to convince the Austrian authorities not to approve the new associations' applications. The IKG opposed these requests primarily on the grounds that the new association would injure the IKG's already precarious financial situation, but also on grounds that it meant an unnecessary duplication of functions already performed by the IKG. Nevertheless, these objections were frequently dismissed, and the authorities approved the applications.

The following examples illustrate the IKG's attempts to maintain its claim to sole representation and also reflect the fundamental religious and political conflicts within the Jewish community. In 1946, the IKG tried to prevent the reestablishment of the Haredi *Agudas Israel*, arguing that the foreign relief organizations, on which the Jews depended, "would never understand that, apart from the IKG, a second institution also pursues the same goals ... The community's social work should not be hampered by the establishment of another Jewish association, which, acting schismatically, seeks to establish special institutions of a social nature" (IKG Archive 1946). Later that same year, the IKG asked the Federal Ministry of Education to reject the application for the establishment of the Modern Orthodox and Zionist *Misrachi*, arguing that "the approval of the founding of the *Agudas Israel* association had already caused [the IKG] heavy losses" (WrStLA Mag. 1946).

Haredi DPs and refugees set up various religious associations in Vienna, mainly prayer-house organizations (Bethausvereine) and interest groups (Interessensgemeinschaften) for the observance of religious laws. This invariably led to conflict with the IKG, which perceived them as competitors and sought to prevent their incorporation. In 1950, for example, the IKG opposed the formation of a rabbinical association in

Austria and lodged a complaint against it with the Federal Ministry for Interior Affairs for conducting the ritual kosher animal slaughtering (shehita) without its permission (IKG Archive 1950a; IKG Archive 1950b). However, the most serious conflicts, which even reached the federal courts, were over properties restored by the state to the reestablished associations but claimed by the IKG (see Duizend Jensen 2002, 166–167).

The IKG itself was also significantly affected by internal conflicts between the Communist, Socialist, and Zionist parties. The many changes in the IKG leadership between 1946 and 1952, described above, reflect these conflicts, which subsided only following the BWJ victory in 1952, when many communists left the IKG. These leadership struggles and the struggle between the IKG and Jewish groups that wanted to establish their institutions alongside the IKG were especially salient in Vienna, as its Jewish community is an *Einheitsgemeinde*.

2.5 External Communal Representation

While in the Jewish communities of Vienna and Germany, developments in institutional reconstruction and communal unity were dissimilar, those in external representation manifested many common traits. Broadly speaking, following a short period of active and public representation, during which they were disappointed by their country's politicians, the community leaders adopted a low profile.

Between 1945 and 1953, community representation in **Vienna** went through three stages: party loyalty—to the *Kommunistische Partei Österreichs* (Austrian Communist Party, KPÖ)—at the expense of the IKG (1945); Jewish activism (1946–1952); and party loyalty—to the SPÖ—and the maintenance of a low public profile (after 1952). After the end of the war, the members of the *Ältestenrat*, who ran the Jewish community during the Nazi occupation and in the first postwar weeks, became the target of persecution. Regardless of whether they had used their clout to save their own skin or to help other Jews, they were now accused by their fellow Jews of collaboration with the Nazis. Their imprisonment on these grounds by the Russian occupiers deprived the community of those best equipped to reorganize and rebuild the communities from scratch. In their stead, Ernst Fischer, an ardent communist and Stalinist loyalist responsible for religious affairs in the provisional Austrian government, named Heinrich Schur the new IKG head. The new IKG leadership's main qualification was not so much the ability to cope with the Jews' needs, fight for restitution, or effectively manage Jewish community assets, but loyalty to the KPÖ. In turn the KPÖ wholly accepted and implicitly followed the line set by the Soviet Union under Stalin.

JDC representative Emil Tuchmann described the IKG in 1945 as a “ship without a helm” (JDC Archive 1945) and the members of the Anglo-American Commission for Palestine, who met with the representatives of the Vienna Jewish community in 1946, described them as “shrill and pathetic, assertive yet broken.” This was the background for their impression that the “Jewish community of Vienna would not flourish again” and that “in Europe the Jewish communities have been

so thoroughly destroyed that it is impossible anyway to rebuild them” (Crossman 1947, 103–104).

David Brill, who, at the beginning of 1946, was appointed by the provisional Austrian government as head of the IKG, was elected its chairman in April of that year, following the community’s first elections. In contrast with his predecessor, he sought to play an active role in Austrian politics and be directly involved in the country’s reconstruction. Yet in return, he required that the state grant the Jews full equality, give them appropriate restitution, and take measures against neofascism and anti-Semitism (Embacher 1995, 75). Under the leadership of Brill, the IKG saw its role as fighting for the rights of the Jews in Vienna—which sometimes meant acting in opposition to international Jewish organizations, as in the case of the “heirless” assets in Austria that were claimed both by the IKG for the benefit of Austria’s Jewry, and by the JDC and the Jewish Agency on behalf of Jewish survivors in general—and as the custodian of democracy in Austria. However, as will be shown later, Austria’s government—which, in contrast to Germany’s, neither accepted responsibility for the Shoah nor had to demonstrate good relations with its Jews as proof of its commitment to democracy—did not adopt policies to fight anti-Semitism and did not accord the Jewish community’s official representatives any political importance (as Germany conspicuously did in the postwar era). Moreover, the SPÖ even “used” Jews to increase its influence in the IKG (see Embacher 1995, 175). Feeling politically weak, the socialist IKG leadership of the BWJ, which assumed power in 1952, took the view that maintaining a low political profile was the best way to promote the interests of Austrian Jewry, and did so throughout the entire era of BWJ domination (1952–1981).

The development of the **German** Jewish leadership in those immediate post-World War II years has some similar traits. Until the early 1950s, the German Jewish leadership was open and active, but because disappointment with the state left it feeling weak, it reverted to keeping a low profile. Sociologist Michal Bodemann described the years preceding the establishment of the *Zentralrat* as an open and militant phase, a “phase of charismatic mediators” (1986, 54) who stood up publicly for the Jews’ interests. When Jewish rights or matters important to them were not dealt with satisfactorily, the DP representatives

in the camps and the founders of the first Jewish communities openly took up the issue with emerging German institutions and the Allied military authorities. The disbanding of the camps and the emigration of their leaders contributed greatly to the ending of this open and militant phase, but the Auerbach case, described below, marked the end of this phase, and its aftermath profoundly influenced the *Zentralrat's* policies in subsequent decades.

Philip Auerbach, chairman of the Association of Jewish Communities in Bavaria, was a leader of German Jewry in the early postwar years. He was well known not only among Jews but also among the general German population, by virtue of his frequent appearances in the German media. He loudly warned of Nazi resurgence and expressed his firm conviction that Jewish communities must resume their position in the new Germany (Brenner 1997, 135). In 1946, Auerbach was appointed state commissioner for victims of racial, religious, or political persecution in the Bavarian Regional Indemnity Office. He thus became one of the first Jews to play a role in postwar Germany's political life and was among the earliest to press for financial compensation for victims of the Nazis. In 1951, he was appointed to the *Zentralrat* board. But in the same year, he was also investigated on charges of falsifying reparations claims. His supporters insisted that he never benefited personally from the fraud, that all moneys received went to the victims, and that he broke the law only to accelerate the handling of applications for financial support in order to assist the needy survivors, as the German government delayed reparations payments. In 1952, Auerbach was found guilty by the First District Court of Munich of blackmail, forging documents, and misappropriating funds, and was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison. Two days after his sentencing, he committed suicide.

The Auerbach affair opened a Pandora's box of anti-Semitism and accusations. Some of the prosecutors and three of the five judges involved in the case were former members of the Nazi Party or Nazi organizations, and rumors of bribery and missing evidence circulated widely, culminating in the resignation of the Bavarian justice minister (see Geller 2005, 208–210). Four years later, Auerbach was posthumously cleared of all charges.

This case demonstrated the fragility of the Jewish situation in post-war Germany; the trial and conviction of a well-known Jew in a German court led to an immediate rise in anti-Semitism and the temporary suspension of reparations. For the first week after the trial, the *Zentralrat* kept a low profile and took no public position, and only after the outbreak of anti-Semitism did it finally issue a statement. This, however, was directed primarily against the reemergence of anti-Semitism and against the use of the Auerbach case as a pretext for crippling the work of the reparation officials. With Auerbach's death, the public promotion of Jewish political interests by the high-profile Jewish leadership of the early postwar years came to an end.

Thereafter, and until the 1990s, as in Vienna, Jewry's external representation and politics were characterized by the leadership's cautious approach to German politicians and its policy of settling Jewish matters, including reparations, in close agreement with the Federal German authorities “without the democratic rights of co-determination at the grassroots level of the Jewish communities” (Brumlik 1996, 9). The *Zentralrat* leaders, especially Galinski, whose particularly vociferous warnings against anti-Semitism annoyed many Germans, regularly publicized anti-Jewish developments and incidents. Yet only rarely was the *Zentralrat* openly critical of the government. It believed that diplomacy behind closed doors and friendly relations with German government officials, political leaders, and the parties were the best means of promoting Jewish interests and attaining communal goals.

2.6 Austrian and German Politics and Attitudes toward Jewry

The Jewish communities' move from an external representation stance of political activism to one of maintaining a low profile on Jewish matters was directly linked to national political developments. In both countries they felt the hostility of a major part of the local population and politicians; in Germany it was covert, while in Austria it was quite open. In both countries, anti-Semitism and Nazi ideology did not disappear at "hour zero," the capitulation of the Nazi government on May 8, 1945, at midnight, marking the end of World War II in Germany. Significant parts of the population and politicians sought to minimize their countrymen's guilt and whitewash their own behavior during the Shoah. They wished "*Vergangenes vergangen sein lassen*" (to leave the past behind) and to reintegrate former Nazis through amnesty rather than seeking justice through trials and punishment.

The respective political elites' dealings with their countries' pasts differed markedly. The Federal Republic of Germany acknowledged its responsibility for the Shoah immediately after the end of World War II; it declared itself the successor of the Third Reich and was ready to assume all related financial, political, and moral duties. Austria, by contrast, which perceived and presented itself as the "first victim" of Nazi Germany, cleared itself and its population of any responsibility. However, the countries' politics concerning restitution and denazification were similarly dismissive.

The **Austrian** postwar identity was based on the so-called "victim clause" of the 1943 Declaration on Austria signed during the Moscow Conference on October 30, 1943,²⁵ which stated that "the Governments of the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and the United States of America agreed that Austria, the first free country to fall a victim to Hitlerite aggression, shall be liberated from German domination." In 1945, this declaration eventually became the "Magna Carta" of the Second Republic, and the "first victim" theory became the basis of Austria's postwar identity and its national and international politics.

The “responsibility clause” in the declaration, stating that “Austria is reminded, however, that she has a responsibility, which she cannot evade, for participation in the war at the side of Hitlerite Germany, and that in the final settlement account will inevitably be taken of her own contribution to her liberation,” was largely ignored.

In addition, the provisional government, which was established immediately after the end of the war by the representatives of the three major political parties (SPÖ, ÖVP, and KPÖ), also based the Austrian victim theory on the *Mythos der Lagerstraße* (myth of the camp street), the alleged common concentration-camp-imprisonment experiences shared by politicians from all parties. Indeed, some Austrian politicians were imprisoned by the Nazis, but the new government now stressed their Austrian anti-fascist consensus and resistance against the Nazi regime, seeking to create the impression among the local population—and abroad—that this approach was common to all Austrians. The Austrian government published the official *Rot-Weiß-Rot Buch* (red-white-red [the colors of the Austrian flag] book) in 1946, which dealt with the Austrian resistance movement. The government also created a new Austrian coat of arms depicting the same eagle that had been on its prewar coat of arms, but now showing it breaking a chain holding its feet. These two acts were to corroborate the feeling that Austria was Germany’s victim, fought it, and was now free again. In 1947, during negotiations toward the State Treaty, the Allies adopted Austria’s victim theory. In short: fundamentally, Austria perceived the German Reich, and later on the FRG, as the bearer of responsibility for the Nazi crimes, and itself as a victim that could not be held responsible—a position the Austrian government retained until 1992.

The “first victim” myth in Austria quickly became an integral part of the Austrians’ national identity. The atmosphere encountered by Jews in postwar Vienna is described in the memoirs of George Clare, a Viennese Jew who fled Austria in 1938 and in 1947 was a British officer stationed in Berlin. Returning to Vienna that year for a visit, he wrote: “Everywhere I found that same kind of self-pity in Vienna which was so familiar to me from Germany, but with the added dimension of lamb-like Austrian innocence.” He argued that both the Austrians and Germans found all kinds of excuses for their involvement in the Nazi

regime; however, the Germans were nevertheless slowly becoming aware of their responsibility for their national past. “Not so the Austrians. They had mislaid the Hitler years somewhere in the most distant recesses of their minds, and Austrian patriotism—so rare a commodity in March 1938 when they welcomed the ‘Führer’ and ‘Anschluss’ so jubilantly—was now much in fashion. Its visible symbol was the ubiquitous Tyrolean and Styrian peasant hats one saw everywhere in Vienna, sprouting on many a head which, not all that long ago, had been adorned either by the brown cap of the SA or the black cap of the SS.” Moreover, the Austrians, Clare noted, had also changed the very way they spoke: “*Weg vom Reich*” (Away from the Reich!) had replaced the old Nazi cry of “*Heim ins Reich*,” so popular at the time of the *Anschluss*; and instead of *Hochdeutsch* one heard only the inimitable Viennese dialect, in an attempt to make their German sound less like German (Clare 1987, 235–236). The Austrians were determined to differentiate themselves from the Germans at all costs.

For the Austrian government and the population, the victim concept served to clear them of any guilt or responsibility. Consequently, there was no “hour zero” for anti-Semitism in Austria. The Shoah did not put an end to anti-Semitism, since the population was not called upon to deal with Austria’s role in it. Prejudice, the previous pattern of anti-Semitism, and contempt for Jews in the public and political environment continued to prevail even after the Shoah. An American survey of opinion in Austria in 1946 indicated that about 50 percent of the population believed that although “Nazis had gone too far in the way they dealt with the Jews, something had to be done to place limits on them” (Weiss 1984, 127), and that 46 percent opposed the return of Jews to Austria, as against only 28 percent who favored it (Wyman and Rosenzweig 1996, 493). Another such survey in 1947–1948 found that “nearly a quarter of the Viennese thought that Jews had got what they deserved under the Nazis; about 40 percent of the population in all three cities [Vienna, Salzburg and Linz] thought the Jewish character was responsible for anti-Semitism; and 43 percent of the Salzburger, 34 percent of the Viennese, and 47 percent of the Linzers believed Jews had it too good in the DP camps and that they were ‘profiteers’ (Nutzniesser) living at the expense of the indigenous population” (Wistrich 1999, 10).

According to historian Wolfgang Neugebauer, “the Nazis and anti-Semites did not just disappear, and the willingness of the authorities and the administration to help the Jews who had survived or returned from concentration camps was likewise extremely negligible.”²⁶ A 1945 State Secretary memorandum reveals the government’s strategy toward Jewish survivors: “The persecution of the Jews occurred during the period of Austria’s occupation by the German army. The persecution was ordered by the German Reich authorities and carried out with their help. Austria, which did not have its own government due to its occupation by a foreign army, did not order these measures and likewise could not prevent them. According to international law, the Austrian Jews’ claim for compensation should therefore be made to the German Reich, not to Austria” (Albrich 1994, 150). A 1947 survey showed that the majority of the Austrian population held the same view: 71 percent stated that Austria did not have any share of the guilt for World War II, 15 percent believed that Austria was only partially responsible, and only 4 percent maintained that Austria was just as guilty as Germany (Albrich 1994, 148).

Moreover, due to the Allies’ acknowledgement of Austria as Nazi Germany’s first victim, the Austrian government was also able to officially refuse to negotiate *Wiedergutmachung* (compensation; literally “doing good again”). During the 1953 negotiations with the Claims Conference²⁷, Austria thus claimed that it had done everything it could to save its Jewish citizens from persecution but that the aggressor enjoyed superiority and that Austria’s calls for help were unheeded by the Allied powers. Actually, by the early 1950s, the Western Allies even considered it counterproductive to focus on Austria’s Nazi past, at a time when communism had spread across East and Central Europe, thus enabling Austria to use its geopolitical position as a bulwark against the Soviet Union to bolster its rejection of claims stemming from its role in the Shoah. Three main political arguments underlay Austria’s compensation denial. First, due to the Allies’ acknowledgement that Austria was not responsible for Nazi Germany’s actions on its soil after the *Anschluss*, Austria was absolved of any moral obligation for *Wiedergutmachung*. Second, reparation payments had to be avoided, as they could be interpreted as acceptance of Austrian responsibility and thus

jeopardize Austria's chances of negotiating a favorable State Treaty. Third, refusal to pay reparations would win the political parties the votes of former National Socialists, their family members, friends and sympathizers. The votes of the victims of National Socialism were too few to influence any elections; there were only around 7,000 to 10,000 Jews, and about 1,000 people persecuted for political, ethnic, or other reasons (Bailer-Galanda 2009, 2).

The situation was somewhat different with respect to restitution. As the return of aryanized property was a high priority for the Allies, Austria needed to take their concerns and demands into consideration in order to conclude a favorable State Treaty. However, even that issue was not handled satisfactorily, mainly due to Austria's self-image as a victim, which falsely proclaimed Austria's innocence and exaggerated the country's role in fighting Nazi Germany, and to the widespread anti-Semitism, both social and political. Thus the 1945 *Opferfürsorgegesetz* (Victims Welfare Law) (StGBI. Nr. 90/1945) initially acknowledged and supported only persons who had actively resisted the Nazis. Those who had been "only" persecuted on account of their race, religion, or nationality were excluded from the benefits of that act. Jewish victims received legal recognition and the right to be financially supported only in the second *Opferfürsorgegesetz* (BGBl. Nr. 183/1947), which was enacted in 1947 under the pressure of the Allied powers. Even then, they however, were relegated, along with all other victims of persecution, to a second-class category, with lesser possible financial claims. Thus, for instance, they were not eligible to receive pensions, which were reserved for formerly active fighters against Nazism. Moreover, the act applied only to Austrian citizens; this effectively excluded most Austrian émigrés, who, as noted above, had become citizens of their adopted countries and thus were not eligible to regain Austrian citizenship.

Between 1947 and 1949 the Austrian parliament passed seven restitution acts, each one applying to special cases of expropriated property (see Bailer-Galanda 2003, 47–200). All these acts, however, restricted restitution to still-existing and traceable property. There was no restitution for property that had been aryanized and later destroyed (for example, about three-quarters of all aryanized shops no longer existed as such in 1945), and no compensation for expropriated tenancy and

leasehold rights. According to Brigitte Bailer-Galanda, director of the *Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes* (Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance, DÖW) and member of the Historians’ Commission,²⁸ although the acts, by and large, provided for their intended objective—the restitution of expropriated property—the Restitution Commissions often ruled differently. As Bailer-Galanda stated, “in the early phase of restitution proceedings (late 1947 to early 1948) rulings tended to interpret the legal provisions in favor of the applicant for restitution but by the early 1950s an increasingly restrictive attitude towards the victims of Nazism had become evident...Connected to this were efforts of the parliamentary parties to amend the Third restitution law [the law dealing with aryanized property currently in the hands of individuals, firms and institutions] in favor of the ‘aryanizers’” (2009, 6). These efforts were stopped by the Western Allies, especially the United States, which alluded to the drafting of the Austrian State Treaty and pointed out that any undermining of the restitution law would violate the principles of the London Declaration of 1943. Nevertheless, terms left undefined in the law were interpreted to the disadvantage of the applicants for restitution, thus leading to decisions not intended by legislature (Bailer-Galanda 2009, 6).

Germany’s policy regarding its role in the Shoah and concerning compensation was significantly different from Austria’s. In contrast to Austria, Germany’s first president, Theodor Heuss, stated in his 1949 inaugural address: “We should not make it so easy for ourselves to forget what the Hitler era brought upon us” (Baumgartner 1999, 154), and he coined the phrase “collective shame” in a speech before the Wiesbaden Society for German-Jewish cooperation that same year (Kansteiner 2006, 207). Germany’s foreign policy was also influenced by the belief that the legitimacy of the young state depended largely on its willingness to atone for Nazi atrocities. Federal Chancellor Konrad Adenauer’s policies were therefore motivated by a desire to appease the Jewish people, and the recognition of a moral obligation to support the State of Israel. In 1951, Adenauer made a historic speech in the Bundestag on guilt and responsibility and the German government’s obligation to make compensation for the Shoah to Israel as the main representative of the Jewish people. This eventually led the Bundestag to approve the

Luxembourg Agreement,²⁹ the reparations agreement that Germany made with Israel and the Jewish Claims Conference. The agreement outlines payments by Germany to Israel to help it pay for resettling and integrating Jewish refugees, and to the Claims Conference to support needy victims outside of Israel.³⁰ This accord must be seen as a moral act taken at a time when the Shoah, and consequently, reparations to the Jews, had declined in importance as the Cold War became the major foreign policy concern of America and its European allies. Moreover, the agreement even conflicted with the economic interests of the Allied powers, which needed a financially strong Germany, both to settle its debts from the interwar period in accord with the London Agreement on German External Debts signed by Germany in 1953, and in order to effectively fulfill the role of buffer between the East and the West.

The Luxembourg Agreement had a major impact on German-Israeli relations. Shortly after it was signed, the restriction stamped on Israeli passports—"valid for all countries except Germany"—was removed. Eventually Germany's and Adenauer's international and moral standing also rose, not least because this restitution was pledged voluntarily and without pressure from the United States. According to historian Michael Wolffsohn, "the admittance of the FRG into the fine club of Western nations in the 1950s was a consequence of the Cold War—not a result of West German restitution to Israel and the Jews. Although its restitution payments cannot be regarded as a price of admission, West Germany's willingness to atone for the past certainly eased the atmosphere" (1993, 13). Eventually, in the coming decades, it would also influence Germany's national politics and its relations with Jews both in the country and abroad.

At the outset, however, Adenauer's reparation policy was highly controversial. The negotiations on, and the actual signing of, the Luxembourg Agreement evoked much criticism from Adenauer's fellow politicians, including many from within his own party (the Christian Democratic Union, CDU). Many of the critics questioned Germany's ability to finance and implement the agreement and argued that the *Tagespolitik* (day-to-day politics) should be put before the *Geschichtspolitik* (the politics of history) (see Wolffsohn 1993, 15–20). One-third of the CDU Bundestag deputies opposed the reparations to Israel. One

of them even argued that paying them would awaken resentment that would revive anti-Semitism (ACDP 1952). In general, only the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) politicians linked support for Jews with democracy and asserted the connection between opposing anti-Semitism and democracy. SPD leader Kurt Schumacher also spoke far more clearly than Adenauer about the Shoah and the postwar Germans' moral obligations, including restitution (Herf 1997, 273–274). Thus, in 1949, he criticized Adenauer's first Government Statement declaring that the “statement about the Jews and the frightful tragedy of the Jews in the Third Reich was too feeble and too weak.” Schumacher insisted that “in Germany, no political stream should forget that every form of nationalism has anti-Semitic effects, and that every form of anti-Semitism fosters nationalism” (Schumacher 1985, 699–700). By contrast, the other parties and the Catholic and Protestant Churches upheld the old anti-Semitic stereotypes. The political parties tended to blame anti-Semitism on the DPs' black market economic activities, while the churches attributed the Jews' suffering to their failure to accept Jesus as their savior. Moreover, the parties and the churches sought to enhance Germany's reputation by relativizing the Nazi crimes by comparing them to the “crimes” of the Allies.

Among the population, too, anti-Semitism and opposition to compensating and otherwise supporting Jewish Nazi victims were strong. Similarly to the Austrian population, the majority of Germans not only had no empathy with the Jewish victims of Nazism, they also developed strong self-pity over their own suffering during the war and the post-war period—the deaths of their soldiers, the Allied bombings, expulsion, economic losses, hunger, and Allied occupation. They requested a “normalization” of relations from the Jewish Shoah victims and an end to the victim/perpetrator dichotomy initiated by the Allies. The Austrians and Germans desired “*Ruhe zum Wiederaufbau*” (to be left in peace to reconstruct their countries). But the local Jews' restitution, compensation, and denazification demands, and even their sheer presence in these countries that constantly reminded the Austrians and Germans of their Nazi past, stood in the way of these desires. Most Germans were not willing to self-critically deal with their own complicity in the aryanization, nor were they concerned with the social

rehabilitation of the Jewish owners whose property had been stolen (Bajohr 2007, 46). Moreover, persons who had profited from aryani-
zation were now afraid of claims for the restitution of what they had
come to regard as their property, and of calls for revenge. This fear of
revenge led many Germans to claim that they knew nothing about what
was happening to the Jews at the time of the Shoah and to twist reality:
the Allied bombings came to be portrayed as the result of Jewish power
against the respectable, struggling population (Stern 1992, 36), and
World War II was turned into “the Jewish war” or the war against “the
Bolshevik-Jewish conspiracy” (Stern 1992, 10). In 11 nationwide surveys
conducted between November 1945 and December 1946 by the Office
of Military Government, United States (OMGUS) for Germany, an aver-
age of 47 percent expressed the view that Nazism was a good idea but
was badly executed. By August 1947, this figure had risen to 55 percent,
while the share of respondents who believed it was a bad idea dropped
from 41 percent to about 30 percent (Merrit and Merrit 1970, 33). OMGUS
surveys conducted in the 1950s showed that only 4 percent believed
that all Germans bore “a certain guilt for Germany’s actions during the
Third Reich,” while 59 percent saw no need for guilt or responsibility
except for “those who really committed something” (Merrit and Merrit
1980, 7). Some 21 percent even agreed that “the Jews themselves were
partly responsible for what happened to them during the Third Reich”;
the main reasons given were that the Jews had pursued unfair business
practices, pushed themselves into positions of power and influence, or
agitated against the Third Reich (Merrit and Merrit 1980, 146).

Like the Austrians, many Germans opposed the return of Jews to their
country. Rabbi Philip Bernstein, Jewish adviser to the United States
military government in Germany, stated in May 1947 that if the Ameri-
cans were to withdraw, there would be a pogrom. Both in Austria and
Germany there was deep resentment among the populations against
the “*Überfremdung*” (“over-foreignization”)³¹ (Wistrich 1999, 10). In
Germany, however, in contrast to Austria, the media and political elite
sought to reduce anti-Semitism against the German Jews—although
not hatred against the DPs. These elites distinguished between the Ger-
man Jew—who was rooted in the common homeland—and the Eastern
European DP, as is reflected clearly in German immigration policy in

the early 1950s. On the one hand, Germany’s political elite welcomed German Jews, presenting them as potential contributors to the nation’s reconstruction and Western integration (as shown below). On the other hand, it made great efforts to shut down the DP camps and force their inhabitants to leave the country.³² The media gave added weight to this distinction, spreading the idealized image of the enlightened Jew along the lines of *Nathan der Weise*. According to historian Frank Stern, “whatever was not compatible with this exaggerated image of the Jew, the Jewish special character and the Jewish contribution, was conveniently submerged in a kind of amnesia” (1992, xviii). At the same time, “DPs constituted the major object in the continuity of antisemitic stereotypes in the postwar years. They conformed with the traditional notion of the ‘Eastern Jew,’ who remained the ‘stranger,’ the ‘foreigner’ in public consciousness” (1992, 390).

Unlike the German compensation policy, which the political elite established despite open criticism from other national political actors and the general population, restitution policies were highly affected by the prevailing social climate, which was influenced by the previous widespread participation in Aryanization (Bajohr 2007, 45–46) and the aforementioned unwillingness of much of the population to address self-critically the question of their own complicity in the looting of Jewish property. The explosive nature of the situation—where the decision-makers were trapped between Allied demands that Germany promote restitution and compensation to the Jewish victims, and the population’s objection to it—eventually led to successive German governments adopting policies of “wait and see” and of “relying on the Allies.” Immediately in 1945, the administrations of the German states laid down plans for restitution. These plans, however, related only to Jewish property that had been confiscated by the German Reich. Consequently, Jewish property that had come into the hands of non-Jewish owners without the direct intervention of the state or Nazi organizations was excluded from restitution, thus no consideration was given to the widespread participation of German society in the process of expropriation (Goschler 2007, 117). However, these plans were never implemented, as in the prevailing political atmosphere, the German authorities were reluctant to get involved in the problem of restitution.

They preferred to let the Allies take the initiative, which soon occurred with the decision of the U.S. military government in 1945 to start collecting restitution claims. In 1947, the prime ministers of the German states and OMGUS worked together in drafting U.S. Military Law No. 59, The Restitution of Identifiable Assets, which stated that “all those who were in the possession of assets that had been surrendered under the pressure and threat of persecution or had been taken by force from their owner, were now obliged to return them, or in specific cases to compensate the owner” (Hockerts 2007, 326). In the end, however, this law was promulgated solely by the Military Government, as parts of it, particularly the paragraph on “assets without heirs,” generated considerable dissent both among the German governments and the other Allies. In the case of the Germans, the fear was that sizable assets, which were needed urgently for reconstruction, would be transferred abroad. (In general, German governments tried to limit the scope of restitution payments and opposed restitution proposals that went beyond what was acceptable to German society—as this law did.) The British, for their part, were worried that the returned assets would be used to finance the Jewish community’s movement against the British Mandate in Palestine. The French and Russians took the view that heirless assets should be left in the hands of the German states. As a result, each of the Western Allies enacted its own restitution legislation for its occupation zone. Moreover, France and Britain took the position that the Germans should settle the restitution issue directly with the Jewish victims, and exerted less pressure on the German governments. This left the United States as the main engine behind the restitution process, much to the relief of the German governments, for whom the restitution issue was “a veritable social time bomb” (Hockerts 2007, 327).

After the establishment of the FRG, public opinion turned against the restitution of identifiable Jewish property. This issue, which related directly to private individuals (the current owners of former Jewish property), was more potentially explosive than the compensation issue, which was a matter for the German state. Owners of former Jewish property now joined forces and in 1950 established the Federal Association for Fair Restitution. It criticized the U.S. restitution law as too draconian and sought changes in the legislation. But its efforts did not

bear fruit and probably even caused the Allies to speed up restitution procedures in order to get rid of this source of conflict as soon as possible (Goschler 2007, 121). By 1957, the restitution of identifiable property was largely completed.

Thus both Austria and Germany moved forward with restitution policies for primarily political reasons—the former to reach a favorable State Treaty, and the latter to demonstrate to the world that it was a democratic country and willing to atone for its past. But it was only due to pressure from the United States that the campaign for restitution gathered speed and was translated into policy and actually implemented. Moreover, in Germany, where U.S. pressure was stronger, restitution advanced further. Without Allied pressure, restitution measures would probably have been adopted in both countries, but their scope would have been more limited—as had been the case with denazification.

Initially, as was the case with restitution, denazification was largely pushed by the Allies, especially the Americans.³³ However, unlike with restitution, in 1946 Allied pressure toward denazification diminished, and so, too, did denazification efforts in both countries. Already in 1948, international relations scholar John Herz observed that “denazification, which began with a bang, has since died with a whimper, that it opened the way toward renewed control of German public, social, economic, and cultural life by forces which only partially and temporarily had been deprived of the influence they had exerted under the Nazi regime” (1948, 569). As shown by the analyses of the phases of denazification—by historian Dieter Stiefel (2004) for Austria and John Herz (1948) for Germany (see Table 2.3)—this process occurred almost simultaneously in both countries.

In **Austria**, the Allied administration engaged immediately in the mass imprisonment and internment of middle- and upper-echelon Nazi functionaries in the respective occupation zones. Allied denazification was quickly joined by the Renner government. On May 8, 1945, it enacted the *Verbotsgesetz* (Prohibition Act) (BGBl. Nr. 13/1945), and on June 26, the *Kriegsverbrechergesetz* (War Criminal Act) (StGBL. Nr. 32/1945). That outlawed the Nazi Party, obliged all former members of the party or its affiliated organizations to register on a list of Nazi members, and more generally provided the legal framework for

TABLE 2.3 • Denazification phases in Austria and Germany

Austria	Germany
1. Military Security Phase (April–June 1945) (Characterized by arrests made by the Allied military authorities)	1. Direct Military Government control
2. Autonomous denazification by Allies and Austrian government (June 1945–February 1946)	2. Transfer of denazification to German authorities—The Law of Liberation (March 1946)
3. Austrian denazification based on the denazification laws of 1945 (February 1946–February 1947) (Allies retain supervisory functions)	3. Amnesties to certain groups of incriminated persons (August 1946–October 1947)
4. Denazification based on the denazification law of 1947 (February 1947–May 1948) (Categorization of Nazi criminals into “incriminated” and “less incriminated”)	4. Amendment of October 1947 (reclassification of the “hardcore” Nazis and downgrading of “offenders” (who had not been members in Nazi organizations) to “followers”—result: amnesty or fine
5. Amnesties (1948–1957) (ending with a general amnesty for all Nazi Party members—with the exception of the “major offenders”)	5. Further Relaxations and Amendment of March 1948 (downgrading of all but the “major offenders” to “followers”)
	6. Liquidation of denazification program (amnesty of all but the “major offenders”)

the process of denazification and the suppression of the potential for any future revival of Nazism in Austria. On the basis of these legislations, *Volksgerichte* (People’s Courts) were set up specifically to try and sentence individuals who had committed “Nazi crimes.” The Austrian government also removed former Nazis from official positions and professions. According to the DÖW, “these efforts should be seen in the context of the general desire to speed up the withdrawal of the Allied troops from Austria and to reach a comprehensive settlement, a state

treaty, with the Allied powers” (DÖW n.d./1), and they decreased once the Allied powers shifted their focus from denazification to the Cold War. As the Allied emphasis on denazification lessened in 1946, the Austrian political parties competed for the votes of former Nazis, and the process was further attenuated by successive amnesties. According to a 1946 Military Government report, by April 1946, responsibility for denazification had been passed to the *Länder* governments, while the Allies retained only a supervisory role in the process (OMGUS 1946, 148). With the intensification of the Cold War, Allied involvement and pressure decreased further, and so, too, did Austrian denazification efforts.

In the 1947 *Nationalistengesetz* (Nationalists Law) (BGBl. Nr. 25/1947), those registered on the Nazi membership list were divided into three groups, in accordance with their role in the NSDAP: the *Kriegsverbrecher* (war criminals), the *Belastete* (incriminated), and the *Minderbelastete* (less-incriminated). By 1948, the People’s Courts had sentenced 43 war criminals to death, of whom 30 were actually executed (Bundesministerium für Justiz 1987). The “less-incriminated”—about 90 percent of all registered Nazis—were mainly sentenced to “atonement fines,” dismissal, disfranchisement, and a ban on employment in the civil service. However, since many in this group of “less-incriminated” individuals were experts in various fields, the major Austrian parties sought the Allied authorities’ approval for a relaxation of the rules, arguing that the “less-incriminated” had often turned to National Socialism out of fear for their lives or because they were misled, and that their expertise was now essential for Austria’s economic recovery.

In April 1948, the Austrian Parliament passed a youth amnesty and then a general amnesty for the “less-incriminated,” thereby enabling them to participate in the 1949 elections to the *Nationalrat*. With this, active and passive political rights were returned to all but the core of the Austrian Nazi elite. Over the following years, many of the “incriminated” were pardoned by the federal president. Finally, in May 1957, the government enacted a general amnesty for all NSDAP members, thus lifting the last political and social restrictions on the remaining Nazi functionaries.

In **Germany**, the denazification process was very similar. Throughout the first postwar year, the Allies handled denazification directly.

Nazis who had occupied high ranks or positions in the NSDAP or its affiliated organizations were arrested and interned. Others (including individuals who had been prominent in fields such as the economy and culture) were dismissed from office. Military Government Law No. 8, for example, provided for employment prohibitions and the blocking of assets of top-level industrialists and managers (Herz 1948, 571).

Early in 1946, in the face of strong criticism against its too “mechanical” denazification policy, OMGUS transferred responsibility for this policy to the German authorities. Denazification was now undertaken by the Germans on the basis of their own legislation and with their own judicial and administrative staffs. On March 5, 1946, they enacted the *Gesetz No. 104 zur Befreiung von Nationalsozialismus und Militarismus* (Law of Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism (RegBl. S. 71), Liberation Law), which divided the former Nazis into five categories—*Hauptschuldige* (“major offenders”), *Belastete* (“incriminated”), *Minderbelastete* (“less-incriminated”), *Mitläufer* (“followers”), and *Entlastete* (“exonerated”)—and foresaw varied sanctions for each category. Denazification under this law, however, soon proved to be rather weak. Due to the large number of persons to be tried, and since proceedings took place in local communities, the hearings and trials were frequently characterized by intimidation on the part of Nazis and Nazi sympathizers (Herz 1948, 572). By the end of November 1946, according to the OMGUS report of that year, more than 80 percent of the Nazis that OMGUS had previously found “not employable” as major Nazis had now been reclassified as “followers” or been exonerated. Consequently, the Military Government gave the German authorities an ultimatum—they had two months to pursue denazification more rigorously.

The Allied threat that the OMGUS “would resume denazification responsibilities if there was no improvement in German proceedings” (Herz 1948, 573), however, was not implemented at the end of the period, thus encouraging the German authorities to move on to their next “denazification” step: declaring amnesties. In August 1946, the authorities proclaimed a youth amnesty for those born after January 1, 1919, and on Christmas of that year, an amnesty for persons with low income, little property, or disabilities. Only those in the “offender” or “major offender” categories were not included in the amnesty. But even these

categories were porous, as, overwhelmed by the mass of cases, prosecutors ruled automatically that “no sufficient reasons existed” to suspect that persons not indicting themselves on the basis of their questionnaire,³⁴ were “major offenders” or “offenders.” There is reason to believe that this way many prominent Nazis have escaped prosecution (Herz 1948, 573). Denazification was further relaxed with the amendment of October 23, 1947, to the Liberation Law (Gesetz Nr. 902 vom 23. October 1947 (RegBl. S.119). This amendment allowed reclassification as “less-incriminated” or “follower” of any person previously classified as “incriminated,” provided that he had not been a member of a criminal organization according to the terms of the Nuremberg Military Tribunal. Consequently, according to the OMGUS *Monthly Denazification Report* of January 31, 1948, the number of “incriminated” had dropped by some 65 percent, from an estimated 640,000 to about 230,000 (p. 2). Not all “incriminated” could be fully acquitted, as downgrading them to “follower” still required the Military Government’s consent.

This would finally change in August 1948, when the Military Government’s Special Branches, reviewing German tribunal findings, were abolished in Germany, and Allied control of denazification was terminated. Its approval for downgrading was now no longer required, which opened the way for the comprehensive downgrading of “incriminated” to “followers.” Moreover, a *Beschleunigungsverfahren* (acceleration procedure) was introduced under which the prosecutor prepared lists of those to be downgraded to “followers” and displayed them publicly. If no objection to the classification was raised within 14 days, the “follower” classification became valid. Persons placed in the “follower” category then received a card in the mail specifying fines (if any) and payment deadlines. Ironically, these cards were officially called *Sühnebescheid* (notifications of atonement).

Finally, the amendment of March 29, 1948 (Gesetz Nr. 922 vom 29. März 1948 [RegBl. S. 58]), which removed the provision excluding Nazis who had been members of criminal organizations, cleared the last obstacles to the acquittal of all remaining incriminated persons. Consequently, all those not classified as “major offenders” (Class I) could be downgraded to “followers,” after which they would receive an amnesty or be subject to a fine. Since even hardcore Nazis were now

given amnesty, demands for retroactive amnesty grew from minor Nazis who had been tried earlier and fined or imprisoned. Thus this last stage of “denazification” also saw the reopening of earlier cases. By the end of the three-year denazification process, all but “major offenders” were free to reintegrate into German society and take up office in all public fields.³⁵

In sum: historian Norbert Frei (1996) has argued that German national politics in the immediate postwar years were characterized by three elements: amnesty, integration, and disassociation from Nazism. The same can also be said of Austrian politics—although the latter element was put into practice in different ways. Politics in both countries addressed the public sentiments rejecting denazification and restitution and were guided by the conviction that in order to establish a functioning democracy, those who had gone astray had to be socially reintegrated. At the same time, however, disassociation from Nazism was necessary for acceptance by the Western nations and a timely end to Allied occupation. In Germany, the political elite expressed this disassociation by explicitly acknowledging responsibility, and by promoting a policy of reconciliation vis-à-vis the Jewish people, in the form of the compensation agreement with Israel. Austria, on the other hand, disassociated itself from Nazism through a double-grounded opportunism that emphasized the country’s fate as Hitler’s first victim and pointed to its resistance to Nazism both before and after the *Anschluss*. These differing approaches had a direct financial impact on the Jewish populations in the two countries in the immediate postwar years, as well as a strong political influence on the local Jewish communities in the years to come.

Notes

¹ BGBl. is the abbreviation for *Bundesgesetzblatt* (Federal Law Gazette).

² The Föhrenwald DP camp remained open until 1957, providing a home for Jews who had nowhere else to go. In 1953, it was inhabited by almost 2,000 DPs, most of them sick and invalids.

³ The *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Linz* practically served the whole of Upper Austria. Additional communities were the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Graz*, which served Styria, Carinthia and the Burgenland’s political regions of Oberwart, Güssing and Jennersdorf, the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde für Tirol und Vorarlberg*, the *Israelitische Kul-*

tusgemeinde Salzburg, and the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien* (Salzburg and Vienna are both cities as well as Länder). The latter’s judicial district encompassed Vienna, Lower Austria, and most of the Burgenland. In 2013 the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Graz* was dissolved (and became an association named the *Israelitische Bundesverein Graz*), and the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien* took over to serve its judicial district. Thus the judicial district of the IKG Vienna today encompasses five of the nine Austrian states.

⁴ Although West Berlin was largely treated as a state of West Germany, it was under the sovereignty of the Western Allies and was not a state or part of one.

⁵ All details of the various elections in the IKG, Berlin community, and the *Zentralrat* are listed in the tables in the Appendix. Information about the IKG election outcomes were taken from the list of election outcomes set up by the IKG archive in 2010 (IKG 2010), publications in the various relevant issues of the community journal *Die Gemeinde*, and Adunka (2000).

⁶ In contrast to the IKG, in Berlin’s community neither the names of the lists nor the grouping of candidates remained constant from one election to the other. Thus only the winning lists and their chairmen will be mentioned throughout the book.

⁷ Up to 1953, Galinski’s official title was chairman of the Greater Berlin community; between 1953 and 1989, it was chairman of the West Berlin Jewish community; and following the 1990 reunification of Germany and the integration of the Jewish community of East Berlin in the West Berlin community, his title again changed to chairman of the United Berlin community.

⁸ Where the husband was “Jewish” and the wife “German,” the couple was defined as *reine* (“pure”) Jews.

⁹ Interestingly, in contrast to the Jewish DPs from other Eastern European countries, the Hungarian Jews—of whom some 16,000 found themselves at the end of the war in Vienna, having been deported there as forced labor in 1944—tried to return home as soon as they were in a position to do so.

¹⁰ The vast majority of the DPs lived in the American occupation zone, since the survivors saw it as a stepping stone for emigration to Palestine or the United States. Furthermore, the Jews fared better in this zone than in the other zones, because special camps offering improved conditions were set up for the Jews following the August 1945 Harrison Committee report. (That committee was appointed by President Truman to investigate the plight of the DPs.) The British, however, continued to place DPs in camps based on their nationalities and refused to recognize Jews as a separate nationality, as such a step would have helped justify the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, which was then (and until 1948) still under British rule. This led to dreadful situations in which Jewish DPs were placed in camps together with non-Jewish DPs of the same nationality who, only a few months earlier, collaborated with the Nazis. Furthermore, the British, who wanted to limit unauthorized Jewish settlement in Palestine, refused to allow any DP who entered their zone to leave it. The French zone housed only 1 percent of the Jewish DPs in Germany.

¹¹ Figures obtained from the IKG member service recorded 11,224 community members in 1951. However, the member service noted that it could not corroborate this number and believes it was lower.

¹² According to Reinprecht (2000, 207), some 5,000 Jews returned to Austria after 1945. However, inquiries at the IKG, the Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance (DÖW), and the Historikerkommission (undertaken to verify this number, as no source was stated) have shown that there is a lack of data on the Austrian Jewish remigration scale between 1945 and 1959.

¹³ The 1993 *Staatsbürgerschaftsgesetz-Novelle* (BGBl Nr. 521/1993), paragraph 58c, stated that former Austrian citizens could regain their citizenship by applying for it and stating that they had left Austria out of fear of persecution by the Nazi Party or the Third Reich. Thus those who had lost their Austrian citizenship as a result of persecution could now, for the first time, retrieve their lost citizenship by means of a simple declaration, without having to give up the citizenship of their country of emigration.

¹⁴ Naphtali Herz Wessely (1782), *Divrei Shalom Ve'emet* (Words of Peace and Truth)—this publication is often described as the manifesto of the *Haskalah*.

¹⁵ Indeed, conversion contradicted the idea of assimilation, which “sought the integration of Jews as Jews and held that acculturation short of abrogation of Jewish identity would be sufficient for this end” (Poppel 1977, 12).

¹⁶ The typical middle-of-the-road, or compromise-searching, attitude of the Vienna Jewry is clearly reflected in the resolution of the 1872 communal crisis. In 1869, the communal board decided to eliminate from the Vienna Rite prayers for the return of the Jews to Zion and the restoration of the ancient sacrificial system of worship, and to introduce an organ into services. Consequently, Haredi Jews from Hungary, whose numbers were already quite substantial, and other Jews who preferred traditional worship, including some wealthy Jewish financiers, protested these radical reforms and threatened secession. A compromise was found in 1872: “henceforth, during the *amidah*, the cantor would recite aloud only the first three blessings and, similarly, would not sing aloud sections of other prayers that mentioned Zion. In so doing, communal leaders relegated virtually all prayers for Zion to silent devotion, at the discretion of the individual worshipper” (Rozenblit 1990, 113).

¹⁷ In Bavaria, for example, *Ostjuden* were expelled in 1923 on several grounds that seemed to have been made up for that purpose. They were, for instance, blamed for impoverishing others; the fact that they had immigrated as poor refugees, that they were now rich, supposedly showed that they made money at the expense of the German people, who, for their part, lived in great hardship. Others were expelled as punishment for past (even 20-to-30-year-old) “crimes,” such as omitting one’s clearly Jewish-sounding first name on a shop sign (Pommerin 1986, 323–324). Other European cities also expelled their *Ostjuden*, such as in Amsterdam, where in 1923, the police gave *Ostjuden*, who had arrived after the outbreak of World War I, only eight days to leave.

¹⁸ Interestingly, however, these assimilated Jewish leaders did not recognize as Jews individuals who had been baptized before 1933 and denied them communal membership. Gershom Scholem, who visited Germany for a few months in 1945 on behalf of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, described this situation: “A number of baptized Jews wish to return to Judaism. The Jews don’t trust them because they are ‘package

Jews,’ meaning that they wish to become Jews only to claim the (JDC) aid packages. There are 2,000 membership applications in Berlin alone.... It can be assumed that the majority of them will be rejected” (Scholem 1946). This decision on who had the legal right to decide who was to be regarded as a Jew for the sake of obtaining community membership was under the jurisdiction of the community leaders.

¹⁹ As mentioned above, at the end of the war, 58 percent of Berlin’s community members survived through privileged mixed marriages, while in Vienna their proportion was less than 30 percent.

²⁰ “Community of fate” (Schicksalsgemeinschaft), a term borrowed from Otto Bauer (who, together with Victor Adler, led the prewar Austrian socialist movement), was also widely used by the Nazis (Wistrich 2007, 13). In terms of Jewish identity, the most famous and highly significant use of that term in the 1930s was by Kurt Lewin.

²¹ The World Jewish Congress was founded in Geneva in 1936 to unite the Jewish people and mobilize the world against the Nazi onslaught. According to its mission statement, its main purpose is to act as the diplomatic arm of the Jewish people.

²² The Israeli Consulate in Munich was established in 1948 and was accredited to the Allied High Commission, not to the German state.

²³ For instance, after the large wave of refugees from Romania in 1947, the school could only absorb a third of the newcomers’ 1,000 school-age children.

²⁴ Hallein is the second largest town in the province of Salzburg. At that time, it was situated in the American Allied sector.

²⁵ The Declaration on Austria is one of the four declarations constituting the Moscow Declarations signed on October 30, 1943, by the foreign secretaries of the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China. For the full text of the declarations see, e.g., Yale Law School (2008).

²⁶ Interview with Neugebauer in Gross (2005).

²⁷ The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, or Claims Conference, is a body formed especially for the purpose of negotiating with the German government on indemnification for the material damages to Jewish individuals and to the Jewish people caused by the Nazi regime.

²⁸ The Historians’ Commission was established in 1998 to investigate and report on the confiscation of Jewish property between 1938 and 1945 within the current borders of Austria, as well as on what Austria had done since 1945 with respect to restitution and compensation.

²⁹ Negotiations began in March 1952, and were conducted between representatives of the government of the Federal Republic, the government of the State of Israel, and representatives of the Claims Conference. The ensuing Luxembourg Agreement was signed on September 10, 1952, by West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett and World Jewish Congress President and chairman of the Claims Conference Nahum Goldmann. It was ratified by the Bundestag on March 18, 1953, as German Federal Law BGBl. II S. 35.

³⁰ It is explicitly not a reparations agreement, since the value of human lives cannot be converted into money.

³¹ “*Überfremdung*,” literally “over-foreignization,” is a German-language term used in politics to suggest an excess of immigration.

³² This comes out clearly from the protocol of a meeting in the German Foreign Ministry concerning displaced persons: Israel State Archive in Jerusalem (ISA): 2525/8 (May 9, 1955).

³³ In the other Western occupation zones, denazification was much more superficial and disorganized.

³⁴ These questionnaires (Fragebögen) contained 131 questions relating to an individual’s political party membership and social and economic circumstances since 1933. These forms had to be completed by all Austrian and German candidates for public or semi-public office, and by all those wishing to form political parties in Austria or Germany, respectively.

³⁵ For a detailed study of the “liquidation” of denazification in Germany, see Frei (1996b).

CHAPTER 3

1953–1980

“Sitting on Packed Suitcases”

With the end of the immediate postwar Jewish renaissance, communal organization, politics, and Jewish life in Austria and Germany changed markedly. Overall, the years 1953–1980 may be viewed as a second reconstruction phase for the Jewish communities in Vienna and Germany. It began with the closing down of the DP organizations that left Jewish religious, social, and political life to be conducted solely by the official community and organizations within its framework, and ended in the late 1970s, when the communities started to undergo significant social and political change.

Jewish life during this second phase was characterized by a lack of vitality. Jewish community activities took place mainly behind closed doors, out of the sight of the surrounding non-Jewish society. The Jews in these countries had never consciously settled and always perceived themselves as “sitting on packed suitcases,” planning to leave as soon as the time was ripe.

During the 1950s, the demographic structure of Vienna’s and Germany’s Jewish communities changed markedly. The former DPs from Central and Eastern Europe who remained in those communities now constituted the majority. Moreover, as time went on, they increasingly began to think of themselves as Viennese and German Jews—indeed, as possibly the *real* Viennese and German Jews. However, this demographic superiority was not translated into political power, and communal leadership remained in the hands of the *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews throughout the entire period. Furthermore, communal external representation continued to keep a low public profile, and institutional development remained at a very basic level. On the surface, there seemed to be inertia in communal reconstruction and management. However, a closer look reveals that major group-identity changes took place throughout this period, intensifying as the postwar generation came of age.¹ These eventually begin to express themselves in communal changes from about the late 1970s and have influenced communal developments since then.

The 1950s were also an important benchmark in Austrian and German political history. Both countries' governments attained full independence following the official ending of occupation with the signing of state treaties in 1955—the *Deutschlandvertrag* (German Treaty) in May and Austria's *Staatsvertrag* (State Treaty) in October. Thereafter, Austrian and German national politics regarding the local Jews and coming to terms with the past diverged markedly, and the national political and social atmosphere toward the Jews became clearly less favorable in Austria than in Germany. Nevertheless, toward the late 1970s, Jewish members of the postwar generation in both countries began to envisage a possible future for Jews in them. Moreover, institutional expansion was more advanced in the IKG than the Jewish communities in Germany. This raises questions about the identity formation and communal reconstruction processes and the role of national politics within them.

3.1 Communal Organization

Organizational framework

Following the ending of Allied occupation in Austria and Germany, the Jewish communities underwent significant structural changes. In **Germany**, the zonal associations that had been established to promote Jewish interests vis-à-vis the Allied authorities were dissolved. This left a hierarchical German-Jewish communal structure with three levels: a nationwide *Zentralrat*, regional organizations, and the communities. Moreover, with the intensification of the Cold War, the existing Berlin Jewish community was split into separate West and East Berlin communities. Thus during the Slansky trial in Czechoslovakia in November 1952, in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) the authorities cast suspicion upon and interrogated Jews and conducted searches in Jewish community offices throughout the country. As a result of this repression, many Jews left for West Germany. Not long after, after the Kremlin launched a witch hunt against Jewish doctors in the Soviet Union on January 13, 1953 (based on the fabricated “Doctors’ Plot”), Julius Meyer, president of the Jewish Communities in the GDR and a *Volkskammer* deputy, and five other Berlin Jewish community board members also fled to West Berlin. Consequently, on January 19, hoping to head off further repressive measures, members of the *Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin* in East Berlin formed a provisional new executive board that was responsible solely for the eastern sector. This new board, which was closely linked to the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the SED), declared the independence of the new *Jüdische Gemeinde von Gross-Berlin* (Jewish Community of Greater Berlin) from the *Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin*. The latter’s chairman, Galinski, was now chairman solely of the Jewish community of West Berlin. Although the majority of Berlin’s Jews lived in the western part of the city, most of the Jewish communal infrastructure was in the eastern part and, thus, new communal institutions had to be established in the western sectors; for example, all the Jewish cemeteries

were in the eastern sector, which compelled the West Berlin Jewish community to establish a new burial ground. Finally, in the early 1960s, the Jewish communities in the Soviet-occupied zone left the *Zentralrat*.

The **Austrian** Jewish communities experienced two significant developments: the establishment of an umbrella organization, the *Bundesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden in Österreich* (Federal Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Austria, Bundesverband), and its entering into a formal financial relationship with the Austrian state. The *Bundesverband* was established in 1958 to represent all of the country's Jewish communities vis-à-vis the Austrian authorities and international Jewish organizations. In contrast to the *Zentralrat*, however, it was an association (Verein) and thus a private, and not a statutory (public), corporation. Because Viennese Jewry was overwhelmingly larger than other communities, its leadership was practically identical to that of the IKG. The *Bundesverband* has succeeded in maintaining unity among its members and is accepted by the Austrian authorities as the sole representative body of the country's Jewish population.

However, as the *Bundesverband* was not a corporate body under public law, the Vienna IKG became the body in charge of fulfilling statutory duties. In contrast to the German situation, the IKG also became the only Jewish partner to engage in financial negotiations with the government. Discussions about the distribution of state funds to all five Austrian Jewish communities were conducted solely with the Vienna Jewish community, which thus in practice² attained the same status as the two other major religious organizations, the Catholic and the Protestant churches, whose receipt of an annual state subsidy was set down by law, rather than having to be decided anew each year, as was the case in Germany. Moreover, the terms and scope of its funding were linked to those allotted to the other faiths.

Initially, and in accordance with the Austrian State Treaty of May 15, 1955, these financial arrangements were intended to compensate for the National Socialist regime's confiscation of assets. Article 26 of the Austrian State Treaty (BGBl. Nr. 152/1955), one of the main founding documents of the Second Austrian Republic, lays out Austria's commitment to the restitution of all traceable confiscated private and community

property. Unclaimed property was to be collected and used for the welfare of victims of National Socialism. In 1960, the Catholic Church cited this article when raising its own compensation claims, which resulted in the signing of an agreement between the Holy See and the Austrian Republic setting out the terms of their financial relations (BGBl. Nr. 195/1960). Article II, paragraph 1 of this treaty states that annual state support for the church will be divided into two parts: a fixed lump sum of 50 million Austrian schillings (approximately 3,634,000 euros), plus state payment of the salary for 1,250 employees according to a specific average salary baseline. Paragraph 2 states that these funds would be transferred to the Vienna archdiocese, and paragraph 3 that they would be administered by the church (without state intervention).

In keeping with this treaty, the *Bundesgesetz über finanzielle Leistungen und die israelitische Religionsgesellschaft* (Federal Law relating to the Financial Benefits due to the Jewish Religion Corporation, BGBl. Nr. 222/1960) stipulated that the Austrian state was to make to the Austrian Jewish communities a one-time payment of 30 million schillings (roughly 2,181,000 euros) to compensate for the destruction of religious items, as well as annual payments of both a fixed lump sum of 900,000 schillings (roughly 65,400 euros), and the cost of the salaries of 23 employees, which the IKG was to disburse among all Jewish communities and religious institutions in Austria. Thus although the communities no longer needed to reapply annually for state support, the latter fell far short of covering the total expenses of their services, which included social welfare, education, security guards, and the upkeep of cemeteries.

Whereas the Austrian and German Jewish communities underwent these structural changes, their legal framework remained unchanged. The *Einheitsgemeinde* principle was strictly observed in both countries throughout this entire period. As will be shown in detail later in this chapter, although constantly challenged, it was sustained in Vienna by the willingness of both the Haredi and the IKG leaders to engage in negotiations and to compromise. In Germany, the *Einheitsgemeinde* principle was uncontested and did not engender significant community struggles.

Communal leadership

In general, the period between 1953 and 1980 witnessed remarkable leadership stability in both the Vienna and Berlin communities as well as in the *Zentralrat*.

In **Vienna**, between 1952 and 1981, the BWJ was in power in the IKG under the presidencies of Emil Maurer (1952–1963), Ernst Feldsberg (1963–1970), and Anton Pick (1970–1982). In 1962 Simon Wiesenthal established the opposition group *Bund Jüdischer Verfolgter des Naziregimes* (Union of Jewish Victims of the Nazi Regime, BJVN), which campaigned vigorously against the BWJ. At the first elections that the BJVN contested in 1964, it won six mandates, as against the BWJ's 13 mandates (out of 24). In 1975, Paul Grosz, who in the previous elections had been elected an IKG board member on behalf of the BJVN, and Alexander Friedmann established a new opposition group, the *Vereinigter Jüdischer Wahlblock—Unabhängige, Zionisten und Religiöse* (United Jewish Party—Independents, Zionists and Religious), later known as *Die Alternative* (The Alternative, AL). Its members included Simon Wiesenthal and three future IKG presidents: Ivan Hacker, Paul Grosz, and Ariel Muzicant. The AL's goals were to reorganize and rejuvenate the IKG and ensure its independence from Austria's political parties—a goal previously promoted by Hacker when he was a BJVN board member. Although in the 1976 elections the BWJ lost its absolute majority, winning only 11 out of the 24 seats on the IKG board, it remained in power.

In **Berlin**, as mentioned above, Heinz Galinski led the community between 1949 and 1992. According to his long-time rival, Moishe Waks, Galinski was “the most prominent figure in the postwar community and thus established himself a strong political position within the community and was hard to beat. Of the 21 deputies on the community's representative assembly, generally three or four were members of the opposition”³ (after Galinski's death in 1992, their number immediately rose to 10).

The ***Zentralrat*** chairmen were Heinz Galinski (1954–1963), Herbert Lewin (1963–1969), and Werner Nachmann (1969–1988).

Although a majority of members of these communities were Jews from Central and Eastern Europe, throughout this period, all leaders of the IKG were *Alt-Wiener*, and all leaders of the *Zentralrat* and the Berlin Jewish community were *Alt-Deutsche* Jews.

3.2 Demography

Between 1953 and 1960, there were few Jewish returnees to Vienna, as Austria's national politics had not changed. *Alt-Deutsche Jews*, however, continued to return to Germany. This return was largely encouraged psychologically and economically by Germany's *Wiedergutmachung* policy. For some survivors, it was only the *Wiedergutmachung's* symbolic dimension that enabled them to (re)settle in Germany. For many Jews, application for compensation was the first contact with Germany since their escape (Winstel 2006, 290–291). The financial impetus lay in the two reparation laws (the 1953 *Bundesergänzungsgesetz* [BGBl. I S.1387] and the 1956 *Bundesentschädigungsgesetz* [BGBl. I S.562]) and a restitution law (the 1957 *Bundesrückerstattungsgesetz* [BGBl. I S.734]) passed by the Bundestag, which granted direct and indirect advantages to returnees. These laws encouraged resettlement, as it was easier for those residing in Germany to have their property returned, and they could obtain higher compensation. According to paragraph 4 of the *Bundesentschädigungsgesetz*, only a persecuted person with permanent residence in the FRG was eligible for full indemnification. Moreover, returnees were offered additional financial support from the German government. According to paragraph 141, every returnee who had emigrated between 1933 and 1945 and returned after May 1, 1945, was eligible for “emergency aid” (*Soforthilfe*) of 6,000 German marks on arrival. Other reasons for returning were Germany's “economic miracle,” better job opportunities, and high rates of Israeli taxation on the slowly arriving compensation payments, as well as health problems and homesickness (see Webster 1993, 35). 63 percent of the returnees between 1955 and 1959 had come from Israel (Maor 1961, 46). The flow of the return wave more or less dried up in 1959 after the vandalizing of the Cologne synagogue, which had increased the fear of anti-Semitic attacks among Jewish returnees. In the early 1960s, only about 250 Jews immigrated to Germany per year (Krauss 2004, 114).

Despite this remigration wave, however, only about 50 percent of the members of the Austria and German Jewish communities were *Alt-Wiener* or *Alt-Deutsche* by 1953. This proportion decreased as a result of several immigration waves from Eastern and Central Europe, and by the 1980s, they constituted only a small minority in these communities.

The aborted 1956 Hungarian Uprising, the virulent anti-Jewish campaigns in Poland in 1957 and 1968, the Warsaw Pact armies' intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the communist Romanian government's limited independence from the Soviet Union in the 1960s, and the slightly more relaxed emigration regulations of the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s all brought significant influxes of Jewish refugees from these countries into Vienna and the German communities.

The pattern of immigration into the two countries differed. Most of the immigrants to **Germany** came from Poland, and together with the many former Polish DPs still there, they formed the largest group in German Jewry. Alongside them were Jews from the Soviet Union who came primarily from Russia and Ukraine. In **Vienna**, the most significant immigration waves came from Hungary and later from Eurasian regions of the Soviet Union—mainly Bukhara and Georgia. In the 1970s and 1980s, with the easing of the emigration regulations, around 300,000 Soviet Jews transited via Austria. In all, 95 percent of them went to Israel, the others mostly to the United States. Three thousand former Soviet Jews remained in Austria or came back from Israel (Friedmann 2007, 88).⁴ The same number of Soviet Jews also moved to Germany.

Despite these waves of immigration, the communities experienced only a small growth. By the end of the 1960s, the Jewish population in Germany had stabilized at around 25,000 to 30,000 and remained at that level for the next two decades. In Vienna, the IKG membership has remained steady at approximately 6,000 to 8,000 from 1960 until today. The reasons for the slow demographic growth in both communities include low birth and high death rates and the emigration of mainly younger Jews in search of a more vibrant Jewish life or a Jewish spouse. In Germany, each year an average of more than 1,000 Jews immigrated, while some 400 Jews emigrated (Richarz 1988, 22), and the death rate was seven times higher than the birth rate (Schoeps 2007). Official

statistics for Vienna are not available;⁵ however, according to the IKG member service, there too, death and emigration rates were high. Even though the immigrants from the Soviet Union were on average significantly younger than the rest of the community, the community's mean age in the 1980s was still over 50. The Jewish communities in Vienna and Germany faced the prospect of an increasingly aging population and dwindling numbers.

3.3 Jewish Group Identity

Variations in Jewish group identity

The influx of immigrants had a significant influence on the religious character of the communities. It not only caused changes within the communities but was also responsible for the increasingly different religious group identities of the communities in Vienna and Germany. Whereas the German Jewish communities were homogenous and non-observant Orthodox, the IKG became increasingly heterogeneous and observant Orthodox.

Like the DPs who remained in **Germany**, the refugees were Orthodox-oriented and traditional, but not observant, Jews. Generally, observant Jews, especially Haredim, did not come to Germany, because there was not enough Jewish infrastructure to sustain their religious way of life. As Abi Pitum (2008), member of the Executive Committee of the Zentralrat and vice-president of the Jewish community of Munich and Upper Bavaria, put it, “there were the scarce lighthouses, some known rabbis, but they were too few to keep the educational system alive in the long term. They were too few to enable the functioning of a yeshiva or at least a Jewish primary school to make an observant Jew feel confident that he could pass his Jewish identity and the knowledge about Judaism and its practices on to the next generation.” Yitzhak Ahren, member of the Cologne Jewish community, described the situation in Germany even more sharply, saying that “from a religious perspective, Germany after 1945 is a desert... Most Jews only have kindergarten-level Jewish education.”⁶ As a result, observant Jews moved to Germany only to serve as rabbis or cantors, or to perform the kosher animal slaughter. The Jewish population was thus rather homogenous in terms of Jewish group identity and religious orientation: most of the Jews in Germany between the 1950s and the early 1990s can be characterized as “liberal Orthodox”⁷—non-observant Orthodox Jews of Eastern European descent who strongly identified with the Jewish people, tradition, and culture.

Henceforth, the religious identity of the communities—initially reestablished as Liberal-oriented—changed to a basically Orthodox orientation. Both the communities’ and the *Zentralrat*’s institutions upheld Orthodox rules and practices and generally rejected the Liberal approach. This was particularly evident in communities with a high percentage of Central and Eastern European survivors. Having lost their culture, language, and families, they sought to uphold the religion as they remembered it and repelled any Liberal influence (Weiss 2007). Thus the *Einheitsgemeinde* did not officially recognize Liberal Jewish organizations. Berlin, which had the biggest *Alt-Deutsche* population, was the only community to have a functioning Liberal synagogue, the Pestalozzi Synagogue, where services resumed in the summer of 1945.

In other cities, the Liberal Jewish tradition was practiced solely within the framework of the American military communities that catered to Jewish soldiers stationed in Germany and their families. The Reform and Conservative congregations established under military auspices in various cities existed separately from the *Einheitsgemeinden* in these localities. They and their chapels were largely shunned by the Central and Eastern European survivors. However, some *Alt-Deutsche* Jews and later their descendants, who generally saw themselves as Liberal Jews in the tradition of pre-1933 Jewry, also attended these chapels. So, too, did some of the former DPs and refugees’ descendants who had grown up in Germany and identified with Liberal Judaism. Additionally, the chapel in Berlin attracted some members of the young generation, especially those for whom even the Pestalozzi Synagogue was not sufficiently Liberal.⁸

As opposed to Germany, religious life in **Vienna** was boosted by a significant influx of observant Jews, mainly immigrants from Hungary, who identified with various Orthodox streams, ranging from the Modern Orthodox and Zionist *Mizrachi* to that of the Haredi and fervently anti-Zionist Satmar Hasidim. On arrival, they sought to express their particular religious ideology by either joining existing congregations or else establishing new ones.

The religious life of the Jewish community in Vienna became further diversified in the 1970s and 1980s with the immigration of Sephardi Jews from the Soviet Union. New elements of Sephardi Jewish identity

and tradition were now introduced into Vienna's postwar Jewish community, which for three decades had remained almost exclusively Ashkenazi. They were felt primarily in the demographic, religious, and cultural spheres. The majority of Sephardi immigrants were traditional Jews with strong religious and ethnic Jewish identities. Even its non-observant members tended to maintain traditional religious practices and rituals, such as the dietary laws and *Shabbat* candle lighting. (These Jews became significant players in the Jewish arena only in the late 1980s, thus their influence on the community will be examined in the next chapter.)

Moreover, the two Zionist youth organizations, *Hashomer Hatzair* and *Bnei Akiva*, had an important impact on Jewish life. The organizations, which were established by their respective international organizations, also sent *Shlichim* to run the Vienna branch and, financially supported by the IKG, provided young Jews with stronger self-confidence and knowledge about Israel, Jewish history, and Judaism. In addition, *Bnei Akiva* also taught them Jewish religious laws and traditions and how to lead observant lives. Although *Bnei Akiva* is a religious youth organization, in Vienna, many non-observant parents sent their children there because they preferred its religious-Zionist approach toward Israel to the left-wing ideology of *Hashomer*. Thus many children of non-observant families also received a religious education.

In **Germany**, no such organizations existed, since the principle of unity among the Jews in Germany did not permit the establishment of ideology-oriented youth movements (Heuberger 2008). Youth activities were conducted merely in *Jugendzentren* (youth centers) established by the ZWST, with the exception of the *Zionistische Jugend in Deutschland* (Zionist Youth in Germany), a branch of the *Zionistische Organisation in Deutschland* (Zionist Organization of Germany), which was established in 1951. These youth centers also gave their young members information about Israel, Jewish history, and Judaism. However, since the leaders of the ZWST and the centers were themselves non-observant, they could not give the youth much religious education.

The Shoah in Jewish group identity

While the Jewish communities in Vienna and Germany differed markedly in their religious group identities, they nevertheless evinced considerable similarities in their group-identity formation with regard to the Shoah, the State of Israel, and their countries of residence.

Because of the strong connection between the Shoah and both Austria and Germany—and by extension, also their respective societies—the DPs, refugees, and most *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews lived in two worlds: the outside world, which included the workplace, where they were obliged to maintain contact with people whom they either feared, despised, or did not trust; and the internal Jewish world, the world of family and friends. They tried not to attract attention to themselves and hid their Jewishness for fear of arousing anti-Semitism. The memory of the Shoah remained the central element in the survivors' Jewish group identity even decades afterward. It bound these Jews together and constituted a virtual wall that separated them from the surrounding gentile population. The Shoah was commemorated three times a year in communal ceremonies.⁹

Likewise, in both countries, the postwar generation was shaped significantly by the Shoah. Its members were greatly burdened by their parents' Shoah memory, fears, pain, and suffering, and this influenced their identity. Whether their parents discussed their experiences freely or remained silent, the past was always present. While this burden was universal among the children of Shoah survivors all over the world, it was felt most intensely in Germany and Austria. Cantor Jalda Rebling (2007) recounts that “to live in Germany as a Jew was a great challenge. Life in Germany forced us to confront the history of the Shoah daily. It was therefore very hard for children of Shoah survivors to lead a ‘normal’ life. In America, for instance, people could lock their Shoah memories inside a box, but we had to deal with them, since they are attached to every stone in this country.”¹⁰ Moreover, the past was also attached to the gentile Germans and Austrians. Anyone in their parents' age cohort could have been a Nazi. As author Lea Fleischmann puts it, “every anti-Semitic utterance, every verbal attack upon Jews, takes on historical dimensions and is instantly interpreted in the context of the ‘Final Solution’” (1994, 311).

Furthermore, this younger generation's identity was also shaped by the moral stigma that the Jews in other countries imposed on Austria's and Germany's Jews. Thus even young Jews who grew up in Austria or Germany felt uncomfortable about living there, as expressed, for example, in how they introduced themselves to Jews elsewhere. Abi Pitum (2008) recalls that, "when Jews from Germany went abroad, they always pretended to be from the Netherlands or Switzerland. Only very few of them—merely a handful—openly said that they were from Germany. They were descendants of German [*Alt-Deutsche*] Jews." Vienna's Jews did not lie about their nationality, but they presented themselves as Viennese rather than Austrians; for Jews in Austria and abroad, Vienna, a symbol of culture and beauty, had a much more positive connotation than Austria, which was commonly associated with the Shoah (and later also with Waldheim and Haider). In general, they forged a new Jewish discourse with specifically Viennese characteristics (Lorenz 1999, xiii) that was built to a great extent on Vienna's pre-World War II Jewish past and the role of Jews in Viennese culture, politics, academia, and medicine.

The Shoah played a particularly central and salient role in Germany's postwar generation, which itself was undergoing an identity crisis. Unlike in Vienna, only a few young Jews in Germany had received religious education, and hence religion was not a major element of identification. In addition, they could not identify with prewar German-Jewish history and tradition—as they did not have roots in pre-1933 German Jewry—or with Germany, due to the negative coexistence with Germans and the reproaches of Jews abroad. Consequently, their group identity was based largely on the Shoah and Israel. According to *Zentralrat*, ZWST, and Frankfurt Jewish Community board member Rachel Heuberger (2008), the negative identification as victims of the Shoah was significant not only for the survivors but also for the postwar and even the second postwar generations. The identification with the Shoah and the fixation on Israel even became a substitute religion (Heuberger 2000, 207). This stands in stark contrast to Vienna Jewry's group identity, which, while also based on Israel and the Shoah, was in addition shaped significantly by religion. The latter, as we shall see, subsequently had a strong effect on communal reconstruction and unity.

The State of Israel in Jewish group identity

While the Shoah memories encumbered Austria and Germany's Jews' lives, the existence of the State of Israel had a positive effect on their group identity. Israel's victory in the 1967 Six-Day War was particularly significant for Jews all over the world, especially where anti-Semitism was still rampant. It ended the image of the “passively suffering” Jews. More importantly, in countries outside Israel, it strengthened Jewish self-confidence, especially among the postwar generations. The Israeli soldier became the embodiment of the strong and courageous Jew, whom the German Jews referred to as “the new Maccabean” and whom the Vienna Jews proudly saw as “David defeating Goliath.” Germany's and Austria's Jews perceived the Israeli soldiers as “our boys” who had proved to the Germans and Austrians that the Jews were not an inferior people. During and shortly after the Six-Day War, even neo-Nazis—despite their anti-Semitism—referred to the Israeli soldier as the ideal German warrior (Weisz 2009). This image affected all Jews and animated the postwar generation, especially the Jewish students who began to fight publicly against the anti-Israeli tendencies in their countries. Thus, for example, in Germany, the BJSD engaged in activities to disseminate knowledge and information about Israeli politics and society and the Middle East conflict (Kashi 2005, 40). BJSD member Peter Leikes recounts “in discussions and seminars, we delved deeply into the Middle East conflict to try to impart the knowledge to the Germans and to represent Israel's position in public debates” (Leikes 1969, 5).

The postwar generation felt that it was now made up of “little Davids” who fought anti-Semitism and became more outspoken in conflicts with their national government. Israel's victory also gave rise to a new self-confidence in the postwar generation's ability to physically safeguard their fellow Jews as part of the global battle against terrorism. Many young postwar generation members subsequently volunteered to train and serve as security guards in front of synagogues during services. The solidarity and the conviction that “we protect the Jewish people” (Eisenberg 2005) generated a significant degree of group pride and greatly strengthened their Jewish identity.

In both countries, the Six-Day War also gave rise to new feelings of solidarity with Israel. Many young Jews heeded calls to volunteer in kibbutzim and elsewhere in Israel. Often they went against their parents' wishes (S. Feiger 2007). Israel's importance to Vienna's Jewish life was clearly manifested in various issues of *Die Gemeinde*. Through the mid-1960s, about one-third of the articles dealt with Israeli matters. By the late 1960s, the average was well above 50 percent, and in the 1970s and 1980s their share was usually above 60 percent (Bunzl 2003, 157). These articles dealt with the security situation as well as with daily life and scientific, technological, social, and cultural developments, enabling the Jews to identify with, follow the achievements of, and be proud of a new and modern Jewish state. Thus the postwar generation grew up as Israel was built up. For its members, Israel's military successes were a source of inner strength, and they were ready to fight for its right to exist. According to *Die Gemeinde* editor Sonja Feiger (2007), "in the 1970s, our emotional perception of Israel was different than it is for today's youth. Today Israel is a secured entity, but we still saw its survival as a bit of a miracle. The victories in the 1967 and 1973 wars, which saved Israel from existential danger and showed the world its strength, gave us incredible inner support, and we really went to the barricades [against any criticism of Israel and its politics]. Unlike today, at that time it was easy to get young Jews to publicly demonstrate for Israel. We often sat on the phone for days to inform people of a demonstration, and people indeed came. It was also a time when parents confined their children to home to prevent them from going to Israel."

In addition to increased self-confidence, the State of Israel provided the Jews abroad with a sense of national belonging. While they lived physically in Austria or Germany, they felt that their real *Heimat* was Israel. Few Jews believed that their country of residence either constituted an emotional *Heimat* or provided them with a sense of security. Thus Israel became their primary source of identity or, as Dan Diner put it, an *Identitätsersatz* (identity substitute) (1986, 13).

For the survivors, in particular, Israel was an utopia. For the postwar generation, Israel was a reality and a symbol of Jewish revival and strength. The Jews in both countries had an idealized picture of a Jewish state, generated by books and films—such as Leon Uris's *Exodus*—as

well as by *shlichim* (emissaries, Israel community representatives) and promoted by the organized Jewish communities. According to historian and Munich community member Michael Brenner (2007), “until the 1970s, the communities looked like travel agencies advertising Israel, with Israeli flags, posters of the Israeli landscape, and portraits of the Israeli politicians—Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan were all over.”

Members of both generations generally supported Israel’s policies without question. In Germany, a small group of left-wing Jewish students were openly critical of Israeli policies, but in Austria, there was no criticism of Israel whatsoever. The German students—who included Dan Diner,¹¹ Micha Brumlik, and Cilly Kugelman—were mainly concentrated in Frankfurt am Main (most had also spent a few years in Israel and returned, disappointed by Israeli policies). They saw Israel as an important component of their identity, and they publicly defended its right to exist. Yet at the same time, they called for a critical and distanced approach to Israel’s policies and did not simply idealize them. This approach set them on a collision course with the Jewish establishment. Thus Kugelman described the atmosphere in the Jewish community in the early 1970s as panicky and paranoid, where all those who criticized Israel’s Mideast policies were called traitors.¹² According to Rachel Heuberger (2008), “each Jewish community abroad identifies with Israel, and to this day, the official Jewish community in Germany is probably the least critical of Israel.” In 1982, Julius Schoeps was even asked to resign from the board of the Düsseldorf Jewish community and thus also give up his membership of the *Zentralrat*’s congress for having supported and signed the *Libanon-Erklärung von Juden aus NRW* (Lebanon Declaration by Jews from North Rhine-Westphalia), which stated: “We are shocked by the invasion of the Israeli Army into Lebanon.... Many of our members’ emotional bonds to Israel have been seriously upset” (Der Spiegel 1985, 107).

In both countries, Zionism played an important role in the survivors’ lives and group identity, expressed in the giving of charity, the nurturing of dreams of moving to Israel, and directing children toward making *aliyah*. Many of the communities’ youth activities inculcated in the children the idea that their place was in Israel. Furthermore, according to vice-president of B’nai B’rith Europe Georg Grünberg (2004), it

was common for parents to send their children to Israel in the summer, winter, Easter and fall vacations to have them spend time in a Jewish environment and become Israel-oriented. *Aliyah* was also a goal for the postwar generation youth. In a 1964 survey, 73 percent of the Jewish youth in Germany indicated that they saw their future in Israel, and only 8 percent planned to remain in Germany (Oppenheimer 1967, 148).

Communal life in general was highly focused on Israel. Cultural events included mainly Israeli folklore evenings and Israel bazaars (Schoeps 1989, 76). Israel was a central theme in all Jewish events: each Jewish event ended with the singing of the Israeli national anthem, and donations were collected for Israel. Michael Brenner (2007) recounts that “at every bar mitzvah or any other event, people went around collecting money for Israel. In Germany, charity (magbit) was even something of a tax that everyone paid. Those who did not donate were ostracized, expelled from Jewish society, and even barred from getting a call up to the Torah. The refusal to donate was published within the community.”

It was especially important for the official German Jewish communities that its members donate generously, as this served to justify their presence in Germany and to improve their image abroad. Consequently, pressure was exerted in two steps. First, communal functionaries and Zionist activists appealed to the “Jewish conscience” and urged individual community members to donate—at least as much as the collectors judged appropriate. Second, when individuals did not comply, communal officials informed the Jewish public of this “intolerable behavior” and called on community members to shun the offender(s) (Kauders 2010). In 1969, the Munich and Frankfurt Jewish communities even passed the following resolution: “All donors to the Solidarity Fund should a) not accept any invitation to social events (organized) by persons who did not participate in the Solidarity Action of 1968 and who thus abandoned the Jewish people and the State of Israel in times of need, b) not request these people’s company, c) not attend gatherings to which these persons have been invited. d) This resolution also pertains to social functions ... taking place in Israel and abroad” (Zentralarchiv... 1969a; Zentralarchiv... 1969b). Although for the Vienna community, collecting charity for Israel was also an important goal, no evidence could be found of the use of such pressure on IKG members.

In general, for the survivor generation, giving charity to Israel provided a justification for living in the ostracized country. The money earned in Germany or Austria enabled the members of that generation to support the Jewish state. For members of the postwar generation who, like their parents, never deliberately decided to settle in Germany or Austria but who nonetheless did not leave these countries once they were old enough to do so, financial support for Israel served to rationalize not their remaining in Germany or Austria, but their decision not to move to Israel. It was thus an expression of a strong Israel-oriented identity.

Austrian, respectively German, elements in Jewish group identity

The State of Israel thus provided the survivor generation in Austria and Germany with an object of identification at a time when they felt they were “sitting on packed suitcases” and that they did not belong in their countries of residence. Ironically, the DPs and the refugees, who fled postwar anti-Semitism and pogroms in their home countries, came to Germany and Austria because they perceived them to be safe havens. They saw their sojourn in these countries as a “happenstance of war,” not as an intentional act. Indeed, they did not envision their future there but simply stayed for the duration for a variety of personal reasons: infirmity, elderly parents, business opportunities, the lack of the requisite physical and psychological strength to emigrate, and last but not least, the booming local economies. The Austrian and German *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic miracle) enabled them to lead comfortable lives. But all Jewish life and celebrations took place behind closed doors. The Jews did not want to attract attention; they wanted to remain invisible. They felt like strangers in these countries yet nonetheless stayed and went on with their daily lives.

Community life played a major role. Jews went to the synagogue and to as many social events as possible so as to be in Jewish surroundings and pass Judaism on to the next generation. The communities organized various events, from Purim and Chanukah balls to Zionist lectures and coffee afternoons. For the Jews it was important to stick together in order to feel like an extended family and create a sense of home in “hostile” German and Austrian environments. Their hatred for and ire

against the local societies were still too strong to permit them to form relations with, and integrate into, them.

Even though many Jews did well financially and had no concrete plans to emigrate, they still regarded their stay in Germany and Austria as temporary and viewed themselves as “sitting on packed suitcases.” According to author and filmmaker Ruth Beckermann, “no one took the decision to stay, but postponed the departure. From time to time one promised himself and his friends to leave in next to no time... A personal decision for, a clear yes to, staying was never taken” (2005, 102–103). In other words, their suitcases remained packed and eventually grew too heavy to be carried elsewhere. Yet their sense of living in a temporary abode and, not infrequently, feelings of guilt for having stayed in Germany and Austria never dissipated but were passed on to the next generation. Indicative of their attitude toward Jewish life in Germany and Vienna was their general unwillingness to donate funds for the reestablishment of local Jewish community institutions, while contributing generously to the Jewish homeland in the State of Israel. Similarly, many Jews preferred to rent rather than to buy real estate and to work in import-export businesses rather than in the civil service sector. They favored professions that could also be pursued elsewhere over occupations that would hamper emigration. They sought job qualifications that were easily transferable—i.e., not bound to a specific country or a language. In general, most Jews in Vienna and Germany sought to avoid occupations and lifestyles that entailed a long-term commitment to their countries of residence.

The community leaders in both countries felt more at home in Germany and Austria than the Jewish population at large. The *Alt-Deutsche* and *Alt-Wiener* Jews in general, and the community leadership in particular, adopted a more conciliatory attitude toward their countries than did the DPs and refugees and tended toward greater social integration. Thus in the 1950s, when Heinz Galinski spoke of Berlin as a community that needed to be reconstructed, most Jews living there continued to relate to it as a community that ought to be liquidated. This schism was manifest in the debate over the opening of the Community Center in West Berlin’s Fasanen Street in 1959. Galinski’s maxim was “full integration [into German society] but no assimilation.”

He perceived the reestablishment of the community as the beginning of a new era (Nachama 2007) and the center as the symbol of a new beginning of Jewish life in Germany and the means by which Judaism would become more visible and transparent to the non-Jewish society. For him, the center was a way to overcome prejudices, thereby enabling Jews to integrate. Berlin's Jews, however, found it difficult to accept the center for precisely the same reasons. To them it was far too grand and imposing, exposing them to the gentile population at a time when they wanted to avoid drawing attention to themselves as Jews. Another problematic aspect for them was that the erection of the center provided concrete proof of their intent to stay in Germany and conveyed an impression to Jews abroad that they sought to avoid. Indeed, the Community Center eventually became identified with its locked doors, behind which all communal activities took place, hidden from the gentile gaze.

By and large, the members of the war generation sequestered themselves from their surroundings, could not bring themselves to see Germany or Austria as their home, and rarely maintained friendships with local gentiles. The leaders, by contrast, cultivated contacts with local politicians and insisted that they were in Austria or Germany, respectively, to stay. The leaders of the *Zentralrat* regularly joined German politicians on state visits abroad to help the German leadership in its quest to gain acceptance by other nations as a democratic country that had learned from the past. The leaders did this not only to support Germany but also because they wished to show the Jewish world that the *raison d'être* for Jews in the Federal Republic was not only to help Israel and to champion its cause vis-à-vis German officials, but also to oversee West Germany's democratization (Kauders 2010). Nevertheless, some Jews criticized them for this, calling them “alibi Jews” and “court Jews” for the German authorities.

The *IKG* leaders also supported and defended their country. Moreover, *IKG* president Ernst Feldsberg's statement that he “could not imagine any other country as his homeland even after 1945” (Embacher 1995, 169) was typical of the *Alt-Wiener* Jews, but it was not shared by the general Jewish population.

The IKG leaders were loyal to the Austrian Socialist Party. The IKG's BWJ members, who had been socialists even before the Shoah, strongly believed that the reconstruction of Austria along socialist lines could promise the Jews in the country a good life. They therefore publicly supported the SPÖ even abroad, although they disagreed with many of its decisions. Such party loyalty was common among *Alt-Wiener* Jews as well as gentiles. Both perceived their political party as their *Heimat*, as reflected in former federal chancellor (1983–1986) Fred Sinowatz's frequently cited comment "without the party, I am nothing." No Jew, however, was an Austrian patriot or shared the national group identity, as Austrian patriotism entailed acceptance, among other things, of the "first victim" theory. Yet despite their connection to Austria and their belief that the SPÖ would offer the Jews a better future, the IKG leaders continued to perceive the Jewish community in Vienna as a *Liquidationsgemeinde*. They expected the Jewish population would sooner or later disappear due to its small size and the average age of the community members.

By the late 1970s, the BWJ's influence and power in Vienna's community had declined. Its members had grown old and had not attracted new blood, as belief in and commitment to the ideals of social democracy, upon which much of the BWJ's support rested, had waned. Most BWJ members had been connected before World War II to the Social Democratic Party, then led by two Jewish politicians, Victor Adler and Otto Bauer. But given the decline of strong bonds to party ideologies in postwar Austria, and the Middle East policies and controversial stances on Jewish matters of SPÖ leader Bruno Kreisky (which will be discussed below), the descendants of BWJ members no longer developed such identification. As a result, support for the SPÖ and BWJ among Vienna's Jews declined. The descendants of the *Alt-Wiener* Jews were no longer party loyalists and became openly critical of Austria's politicians and politics.

Moreover, like the other members of the **Austrian and German** postwar generation, they, too, began to believe that Jewish life in their countries could have a future. These Jews—who experienced the Shoah both in close proximity, as children of survivors, and as once-removed observers with the emotional distance to deal with the past—already felt the need to leave their parent's self-constructed "ghetto of fear and

isolation” (Seligman 2007) and lead an independent existence that was not permanently saturated with Shoah memories. Thus in the 1970s, the postwar generation continued to live “in an ever-present past” yet was able to look ahead toward a possible future for Jews in the country.

In **Germany**, this issue arose mainly in intellectual discussions dealing with the question of how one could live in Germany and Austria as a young Jew. For example, BJSD held seminars on such subjects as “The Situation of the French and the German Jewries—a Comparison from the Students’ Viewpoint” (a 1978 seminar in Munich) and “On the Situation of the Jews in Germany” (a 1980 seminar in Berlin). Literary works also addressed the topic. In 1979, a collection of essays was published under the title *Fremd im eigenen Land* (Strangers in Their Own Country) (Broder and Lang 1979), in which Jews described their difficulties in living in Germany. The title and the content suggest that, although the Jews still felt like strangers, they were beginning to look upon Germany as their “own country” and their permanent home.

In **Vienna**, these sentiments were expressed in the growing demand for a broader Jewish infrastructure to make Jewish life in the city more viable. This postwar generation, which first entered IKG politics in the 1970s, was committed to reversing the Vienna community’s self-perception as a *Liquidationsgemeinde*. In its view, this necessitated the strengthening of the community infrastructure, in particular, the establishment of educational institutions. According to Hodik (2007), a proposal that the IKG itself set up a community Jewish day school (private Haredi schools already existed since 1946) prompted a major dispute between the older and the younger leadership generations. The latter, whose members had grown up in Vienna, had chosen to live there, and whose parents had already succeeded in ensuring their physical and economic survival, saw the establishment of a Jewish school as “an axiom for Jewish thinking” (Hodik 2007) and as a critical step in forming a Jewish identity and securing the future of Jewish life in Vienna. Those who now pushed for the establishment of a kindergarten (1973) and a Jewish day school under the IKG’s auspices (1980) were mainly young adults with a firm Jewish identity and leadership skills who had been members of Jewish youth and student organizations in the 1960s and 1970s.

This postwar generation, however, was not only interested in building a better future for itself as Jews, but also sought professional, social, economic, and sometimes political integration. Nevertheless, many within it maintained an ambiguous relationship with their respective countries. They identified themselves culturally as Germans and Austrians but for historical reasons could not share the national identity of their fellow nationals. They wanted to be accepted within the non-Jewish environment as Jews and feel at home there, but did not feel comfortable displaying their Jewishness publicly. As Ruth Beckermann put it, “we did not conceal that we are Jews, we just never spoke about it” (2005, 122).

Put metaphorically, before the 1970s, the majority of the Jews in Germany and Austria were sitting on packed suitcases and talked about leaving the country “tomorrow.” By the late 1970s, the suitcases had been put aside, even though they were still packed. The Jews still envisaged emigrating “soon,” or “after their children finished school,” but had also started to countenance the possibility of staying.

3.4 Communal Reconstruction

Institutional developments

Nevertheless, during this entire period, the IKG and the German community leaders focused mainly on the physical survival of their community members, establishing only a minimal community infrastructure—not satisfying the requirements for practicing the Jewish religion. Before the 1980s, the official communities performed their basic duties, but no significant religious, intellectual, social, or cultural impulses emerged (Schneider 2000, 33). In this sense, both communities developed in similar ways, but for different reasons. One might well argue that this was because the Jewish populations in both communities were both largely preoccupied with making a living and building their lives and that establishing Jewish institutions was not a high priority. But there was also an underlying reason in each case, and these differed. In Vienna, that reason was the IKG leadership's perception of the community as a *Liquidationsgemeinde*, while in Germany, it was the perception that there was no need for additional religious institutions.

Closely connected to the SPÖ, and believing that the Jewish community would soon disappear, the IKG leadership sold or leased out for a pittance much of the community's real estate—170 of 230 IKG properties—before 1981 to finance immediate needs. In some cases, despite their religious and symbolic significance, it also gave away the remnants of destroyed synagogues and cemeteries (see Embacher 1995, 182–184). Communal records and libraries were transferred to Israel.

The Haredim continued to establish and run most Jewish institutions, offering religious education, providing kosher food, and building and maintaining ritual baths—all of which they viewed as being neglected by the IKG. Yet they, too, invested only in an infrastructure for the bare religious necessities. There was, for instance, only one kosher butcher, one supermarket, and one bakery in Vienna. Religious life took place in the various Haredi and the Modern Orthodox Zionist *Misrachi* synagogues. The IKG-run *Stadttempel* was rather empty throughout

most of the year, but needed a second place of worship for the High Holidays (i.e., the two-day festival of Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur) to accommodate its high share of *Dreitagejuden* (“three-day Jews,” who attended prayers only these days).

In **Germany**, the community leaders did not perceive their communities as *Liquidationsgemeinden*. As far back as the early 1950s, Heinz Galinski, for example, spoke of Berlin as an *Aufbaugemeinde*, a community that would be reconstructed. However, since the vast majority of German Jewry were *Dreitagejuden* and demand for religious institutions was very low, the Jewish communities in Germany established only a minimal infrastructure. Furthermore, as mentioned above, institutional expansion was hampered even further by psychological factors, since the establishment of more than the minimal institutions could signal a conscious decision to settle in the country, and the Jews did not want to send such a message.

Under these circumstances, Jewish life was not vibrant or attractive enough, especially for young adults, many of whom left the country. According to IKG board member Alexander Friedmann, “until the mid-1980s, the community [IKG] was doomed to just fade away.”¹³ The same also held true for German Jewish communities. Both communities were running on low throttle.

Communal unity

Religious life and institution-building in the IKG were more advanced due to the initiatives of its Haredi and observant population. Yet both the IKG’s heterogeneity and the identity gap between its membership and leadership generated communal disunity. The analysis of the Jewish communities in Vienna and Germany clearly shows that communal unity depends on the cohesiveness of the leadership, the degree of similarity between the various groups within the community, and between the leadership and the Jewish population at large. Different political and religious attitudes and demands, religiosity levels, and visions of the future of Jews in the country are all conducive to clashes between the various players. The greater the similarities between the various groups within the community, the greater the likelihood of communal unity.

In **Germany**, the 1960s and 1970s (and, in fact, for a further decade) passed without any major communal conflicts and disagreements. The *Alt-Deutsche* and the Central and Eastern European Jews reached a *modus vivendi* thanks largely to the authoritarian management of the *Zentralrat* and the communities, and the similar sense of Jewish identity shared by a majority of the Jewish population. As both the Jewish population and the community leaders were non-observant Orthodox-oriented, religion-based struggles did not arise.

For several decades following the war, the local communities were generally led by strong personalities who governed in a “dictatorial manner” (Pitum 2008). These leaders were “usually re-elected in democratic elections out of honest respect and recognition of their administrative achievements, as well as for the lack of any alternative” (Brenner 1997, 137). The election of an *Alt-Deutsche* Jew as community chairman remained the obvious choice throughout the entire period. (The Berlin community actually remained in *Alt-Deutsche* hands until 1992, and the composition of the *Zentralrat* was almost entirely *Alt-Deutsch* until November 2010.)

Community debates revealed that the Jewish population in Germany was divided ethnically into two groups: the *Alt-Deutsche* and their descendants, who called themselves and were referred to by other Jews in the country as “German Jews”; and Jews who had come from Central and Eastern Europe, and their descendants. The former perceived themselves as the “real” German Jews, and some even boasted publicly of their prewar German Jewish ancestry, such as the historian and former Berlin community vice-president Julius Schoeps, who highlighted his relationship to Moses Mendelssohn. Such ethnic differences, however, did not lead to social or political conflicts.

In **Vienna**, the situation was clearly different. The IKG was afflicted by social, religious, and political conflicts. Each successive Jewish immigrant group initially met with rejection and exclusion from the city’s Jewish community. For instance, following the Hungarian refugee wave in 1956, the IKG leadership sought to reduce the newcomers’ social and political influence by making eligibility to vote in IKG elections conditional upon payment of IKG taxes, knowing that only a few immigrants could meet this requirement. Only in 1983 was this requirement revoked.

The immigrants from the Soviet Union were also initially ignored by the IKG. According to Alexander Friedmann, “its attention was drawn to the problem only as the first Soviet-Jewish criminal cases were dealt with by Austrian courts and by Austrian media” (2007, 89). Originally helpless and concerned about its image (as the Austrians lumped all Jews together), the IKG consulted with Jewish social psychiatrists and in 1980 decided, among other measures, to invite the newcomers to join the community and to grant them active and passive voting rights, thus enabling them to profit from the community infrastructure (Friedmann 2007, 92). These newcomers were hence given the right to vote earlier and faster than the immigrants who had come before them, as the local Jews and community leaders feared that the growing incidence of criminal behavior, drug abuse, and mental problems among these immigrants might lead to an increase in anti-Semitism and undermine the IKG’s status.

In contrast to the German community, which was comprised mainly of *Alt-Deutsche* and former Polish Jews, Vienna’s Jewish community consisted of several more or less cohesive national groups, in which the first generation of immigrants generally felt a strong national attachment to its country of origin. Concurrently, however, these new members of the Vienna community developed a sense of being “Viennese,” especially when followed by subsequent waves of Jewish immigration. The Hungarian immigrants who arrived in 1956 are a good case in point. They maintained strong national and social ties among themselves within Vienna’s Jewish community. This “Hungarian clique,” as outsiders dubbed it, continued to speak Hungarian and actively encouraged marriages within their group. Nevertheless, the influx of Jews from the Soviet Union brought their Viennese consciousness to the fore. In general, like the *Alt-Wiener* Jews, each immigrant group tended to distinguish itself from the newcomers. This was related to the Jewish community’s proprietary sense in viewing itself as the bearer of the pre-1938 community’s legacy, and the feeling that Vienna’s Jewish culture and identity, which they embodied, was threatened by the influence of the new immigrants.

The Soviet immigration also presented a new and different challenge: the integration into the community of ethnic Sephardi groups. In the

1970s and 1980s, the split between Vienna’s Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews (the latter from Bukhara, Georgia, and other areas of the Caucasus) was palpable. According to IKG secretary general for Jewish affairs Raimund Fastenbauer, the IKG initially disdained the “Russian” Jews, holding that “we do not need them, they should go to Israel.” Thus it was not eager to invest in these Jews. Furthermore, the IKG was initially oblivious to the fact that these immigrants, although Russian, were Sephardi, not Ashkenazi, Jews, and it was unaware that their religious practices and customs differed. This further hindered their integration and alienated many of them. Even Vienna’s rabbis were not familiar with the Bukhara and the Georgia Jews’ Sephardi prayer rites and requirements. According to Austria and Vienna Chief Rabbi Paul Chaim Eisenberg (2005), “at first we invited them to come and join us in the *Stadttempel*; only later did we realize that they were not Ashkenazi Russian but Sephardi Russian Jews.” (This turning point, which took place only in the late 1980s, will be dealt with in the next chapter.)

Vienna’s Jewish community was also shaken by conflicts over religious issues. Under the BWJ leadership, the IKG was shaken by three major internal disputes, two of which arose against a background of religious differences—one within the Haredi group, and the other between the Haredi congregation and the IKG leadership. The third conflict—between the BWJ leaders of the IKG and Simon Wiesenthal—was related to IKG politics, although the differences relating to their varying perceptions of Jewish identity undoubtedly played a role in it as well. Although not always evident during those conflicts, the IKG’s political unity was nevertheless maintained, primarily because its various constituents and leaders regarded it as mandatory for strengthening Jewish life in an already small Jewish community and for attaining political and social influence in Austria. A divided IKG would be a weak IKG, which would permit the Austrian authorities to play one side against the other.

Between the late 1960s and the 1980s, Vienna’s Haredi community experienced a series of struggles and conflicts. Throughout history, many shifts, changes, and rifts had occurred within and between Orthodoxy’s sub-communities—Hasidim, Neo-Orthodox, Modern Orthodox, Religious Zionists, and others. In recent decades, such

conflicts surfaced mainly due to the development, usually among the younger adults, of more radical ideas and lifestyles, and stricter religious requirements of their spiritual leaders than was the case in their parents' generation. This was true for Vienna as well.

In the 1950s, the various Haredi congregations and the Modern Orthodox *Misrachi* joined forces to establish an Orthodox bloc called *Khal Israel*. This cooperation was necessary for the establishment and maintenance of the essential institutions and the provision of the religious leadership required to facilitate a Halakhically observant pattern of life serving all Orthodox Jews. In Vienna, some of its constituent groups did not have a rabbi, but by joining *Khal Israel* they could adopt its rabbi as their religious leader. Furthermore, the merger was aimed at maximizing the Haredi community's strength within Vienna's Jewish political landscape. In general, *Khal Israel* maintained its unity through 1969, when Rabbi Chaim Grünfeld was appointed its chief rabbi. Some of its constituent groups would not accept him as their rabbi, arguing that he lacked the requisite religious stature and authority, and pointed to the fact that 10 years earlier he neither sported a beard nor wore the traditional Orthodox garb. This soon led to the dissolution of the Orthodox merger. *Misrachi* and the *Haredi Agudas Israel* remained united under *Khal Israel*, but the rest of the Haredi population founded the *Machsike Hadass* and appointed Rabbi Bezalel Stern from Melbourne as its chief rabbi. The growing rift in Vienna's Haredi community became visible when, for the first time in the IKG's history, two competing Haredi lists appeared in its 1972 elections.¹⁴ This chasm intensified when the two groups stopped talking to each other and refused to acknowledge each other's ritually slaughtered meat, calling it non-kosher. This situation continued well into the 1990s.

Meanwhile, *Machsike Hadass* itself split in 1981. Before retiring and moving to Israel, Rabbi Stern sought to have his son, Rabbi Chaim Stern, appointed in his place. Some younger members of *Machsike Hadass* opposed this and founded a new congregation, *Ohel Moshe*, under the leadership of Rabbi Yona Schwartz. *Ohel Moshe* was somewhat Satmar-oriented, but some of its members were not. Eventually, a dispute broke out within it, and Rabbi Schwartz seceded to establish *Khal Chasidim*, while Rabbi Margulies assumed the leadership of *Ohel Moshe*.

Meanwhile, *Misrachi* also quit *Khal Israel*, which thus became identical with *Agudas Israel* and used both appellations alternately.¹⁵ By the 1980s, a total of four organized Haredi groups coexisted in Vienna.

Although these rifts within the Haredi community left their mark on the development of Jewish politics and life in Vienna, they did not directly jeopardize the existence of the *Einheitsgemeinde*, as did the conflicts between the Haredi groups and the IKG’s BWJ leadership—which was made up primarily of secular *Alt-Wiener* Jews, with the exception of Ernst Feldsberg (IKG president between 1963 and 1970), who was an observant Jew.

In 1954, *Khal Israel* requested that the IKG transfer supervision of the ritual bath and ritual slaughtering to it, finance *Talmud Torah* classes, and subsidize its institutions. The IKG agreed to negotiate and suggested employing a *Khal Israel*-appointed rabbi as supervisor while leaving religious issues in its own hands. However, fearing that it might be shunned by the Haredi world for working for the “non-observant” IKG, *Khal Israel* turned the offer down and finally applied to the Ministry of Education for recognition as a separate Jewish *Kultusgemeinde*, arguing that the IKG had neglected it and had not granted it sufficient financial support for its religious needs (Embacher 1995, 241). In response, the IKG complained to the Federal Police that *Khal Israel* was dealing with agendas that, according to the *Israelitengesetz*, were reserved exclusively for the IKG (Adunka 2000, 227). Eventually the two parties launched new negotiations, but *Khal Israel* nevertheless continued threatening to establish an independent *Austrittsgemeinde*.

After the 1955 IKG elections, *Khal Israel* dropped its threat to quit and entered the IKG board (*Die Stimme Israels*, November 20, 1955). The conflict was finally resolved in 1958 with an agreement that committed the IKG to increase subsidies for the Haredi communities, especially via a kosher meat subsidy, and cede to *Khal Israel* the IKG religious activities that were also relevant to the Haredi population, such as responsibility for the communal ritual bath (IKG Archive 1958; *Die Gemeinde* 1958). After the election of its new leader, Rabbi Grünfeld, in 1969, *Khal Israel* became closely connected with the IKG and even formed a coalition with BWJ after the latter lost its absolute majority in the 1976 IKG elections.

Machsike Hadass now contested *Khal Israel*'s control of community religious affairs and more than once took legal action against the IKG. In 1977, it filed a discrimination complaint with Austria's Supreme Constitutional Court. In response, the Ministry of Education instructed the IKG to settle the differences between the two Haredi groups. In 1981, *Machsike Hadass* again went to court seeking exemption from the payment of the religious tax on the grounds that the IKG did not represent it, but this effort was not successful.

In 1977–1978, further conflict erupted between the IKG and *Agudas Israel* (*Khal Israel*) following the latter's complaint to various Austrian politicians, including Kreisky, that the IKG had failed to reestablish even a single prewar Haredi synagogue. Between 1979 and 1981, Benjamin Schreiber from *Agudas Israel* held several press conferences in which he accused the IKG of not fulfilling its religious duties. He also filed a lawsuit with the Austrian Constitutional Court petitioning the abolition of the second part of paragraph 2 (1) of the *Israelitengesetz* ("Each Kultusgemeinde covers an endemic territory; in this territory only one Kultusgemeinde can exist"), and paragraph 2 (2) ("Each Israelite belongs to the Kultusgemeinde in whose judicial district he has his normal residence"). Schreiber, who termed himself an "Orthodox Jew" in the lawsuit, argued that the territorial protection, or *Einheitsgemeinde* principle, was unconstitutional since it denied a religious minority the right to establish its own *Kultusgemeinde* and that "the Orthodox Jews' full freedom of religion and conscience is being impaired by the contested statutory provisions. Through the regulations in paragraph 2 (1) of the *Israelitengesetz* ... an imposed community was established, to which also persons of Jewish faith for whom it was against their religious belief were forced to belong, and even so, when a community establishes no ritual institutions at all or these institutions do not correspond to the Orthodox Jews' religious conviction" (Verfassungsgerichtshof 1981). In response, the Constitutional Court eventually invalidated the *Einheitsgemeinde* regulation in 1981, sanctioning the establishment of a separate Orthodox *Kultusgemeinde*. Nevertheless, such a separate entity was never established. Instead, priority was given to upholding the prerequisite of maintaining political unity, as mentioned above.

The 1960s and 1970s also saw significant political conflicts within the IKG, sparked largely by Simon Wiesenthal’s fierce opposition to its leadership, amid mutual accusations that were widely reported in both the Jewish and the Austrian media (see Adunka 2000, 269–286). Simon Wiesenthal was born in 1908 in Galicia, which was then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As a concentration camp survivor, he dedicated his life to tracking down and gathering information on Nazi criminals in order to have them brought to trial. He became involved in Austria’s politics in 1961 after the arrest of Adolf Eichmann. Wiesenthal then closed his Documentation Center in Linz, which had mainly been preoccupied with the hunt for Eichmann, and moved it to Vienna, where he began to focus on other Nazis and on tracking down mass murderers in Europe and elsewhere. In the course of his activities, he publicly disclosed the Nazi past of several ministers in Kreisky’s newly formed government. In the eyes of the IKG, Wiesenthal, the *Ostjude*, challenged the traditional political relationship between Vienna’s Jewish community and the SPÖ. For the IKG leadership and many assimilated *Alt-Wiener* Jews, Wiesenthal was a provocateur. In 1964, the BWJ even sent a letter to SPÖ secretary general Willi Liwanec¹⁶ complaining about the “positive Wiesenthal reports in our *Arbeiter-Zeitung*”¹⁷ (Lackner 2010).

For his part, Wiesenthal opposed the BWJ’s party solidarity and close connections with the SPÖ and attacked the IKG leadership on these grounds. He also criticized it for failing to build up a Jewish infrastructure and for selling IKG property to the Austrian state for a pittance. In this context, Wiesenthal accused the IKG of engaging in a “second aryanization,” established the BJVN to oppose it, and later helped to found the AL. As noted above, this opposition gradually grew stronger, and by 1981 it succeeded in ousting the BWJ from the leadership and ending its domination of the IKG.

3.5 External Communal Representation

The leaders of the communities, in both Germany and Vienna, kept a low profile on Jewish matters such as restitution and financial support for the communities and sought to deal with them via “behind-the-scenes diplomacy.” However, when a non-Jewish or international Jewish matter or the issue of the relationship between the Jewish and the local populations was at stake, German-Jewish leaders tended to become active and outspoken players on the German and international political arena, whereas the IKG leaders did not.

For the Austrian population, which clung to its firmly established self-image as Germany’s first victim and its resistance to Nazi Germany, the subject of the Shoah was taboo. The population was not interested in the suffering of the Jews—in fact, many Austrians, as noted, were far from enthusiastic about a Jewish presence in Austria in general—and it certainly did not want to hear lectures or have its self-image challenged by Jews. The IKG thus focused exclusively on the administration of internal religious affairs and was intent on remaining publicly “invisible.” Moreover, it adopted a non-confrontational approach in the hope of ensuring tolerance for the Jews in Austria and gaining state support. Under all three presidencies—that of Emil Maurer, Ernst Feldsberg, and Anton Pick—the BWJ’s compliance with the policies and wishes of the federal and local authorities often left the impression that it was more the advocate of the national party in the Jewish community than the Jewish community’s representative to the Austrian authorities.

The *Zentralrat*’s leaders in Germany, by contrast, tried to play a political role. Before 1969, the *Zentralrat* leadership—Secretary General van Dam (1950–1973) and presidents Heinz Galinski and Herbert Lewin—primarily assumed the role of the Germans’ “moral guide.” The German population viewed them as persons of high integrity, who, because of Auschwitz, became “untouchable.” As “moral guides,” they reminded the Germans of the Shoah, carefully monitoring Nazi trials and watching for instances of neo-Nazism. At the same time, however, they helped to present Germany in a positive light abroad. This period

was characterized by a rising wave of philo-Semitism and a significant—mostly favorable—German interest in the State of Israel. But there was also anti-Semitism and the desire to leave the past behind, as reflected, for instance, by the repeated demands for the release of Rudolf Hess, Adolf Hitler’s deputy in the Nazi Party, and by the debates over the statute of limitations on Nazi crimes.¹⁸

During Werner Nachmann’s presidency (1969–1988), the *Zentralrat* also tried to play an autonomous role on the international scene. By that time, the Jews’ self-confidence had been significantly strengthened following Israel’s victory in the Six-Day War, while Germany’s international political status improved after Willy Brandt initiated his *Ostpolitik* in 1969. Under these circumstances, as Shoah survivors living in Germany, Nachmann, and later also Galinski, took up the role of the moral voice within this new Germany. In doing so, they assumed, what sociologist Michal Bodemann called, a “quasi-pontifical authority, making general moral pronouncements and sweeping evaluations of world affairs” (1996, 35). They voiced their views on a wide range of international issues, including Soviet Jewry, the Helsinki Charter, global terrorism, and peace and disarmament.

In contrast to Galinski—his predecessor and successor—Nachmann similarly tried to normalize the relationship between Germans and Jews, advocating *Verständigung* (understanding) with the Germans in place of *Wachsamkeit* (vigilance). “We should simply live completely normally side by side” was his slogan even in the 1970s, when the Jewish community was still “sitting on its suitcases” and avoiding unnecessary contact with German society. Nachmann made peace with the Germans in the name of German Jewry (Bodemann 1996, 34), and Germans considered him an important pioneer of renewed cooperation between the German authorities and the *Zentralrat*. In that capacity, he received numerous awards, such as the Theodor Heuss Prize, in recognition of his efforts toward improving Jewish-Christian relations. At the same time, parts of the Jewish community sharply criticized him, as they felt his efforts to bring about Jewish-German reconciliation meant that a proper distance from the Germans could not be maintained. They also criticized him for being a “court and alibi Jew” who danced to the German government’s tune to help rehabilitate it,

and for being too lenient toward former Nazis. They denounced, for instance, his defense of Baden-Württemberg president Hans Filbinger, who was accused of serving as a judge during World War II and as a result became the focus of considerable protest both within the Jewish community and beyond. Nachmann's reconciliatory approach to Germany was, however, the exception and was not representative of the views of German Jewish leaders. In fact, when Galinski succeeded Nachmann, the *Zentralrat* again underlined the importance of vigilance and remembrance.

Indeed, Nachmann's attitude might have been related to a change in his political agenda in response to national developments. Nachmann became *Zentralrat* president after the 1968 student revolt, during which the students assumed the role of anti-Nazi watchdog, something that, until then, the *Zentralrat* considered its main task. Nachmann supposedly thought it best not to appear to take the students' side against the German government and instead to emphasize the Jewish community's loyalty to the country. In addition, signals from the German government, such as Chancellor Brandt's *Warschauer Kniefall* (Warsaw Genuflection) described below, may have convinced Nachmann that the time had come for vigilance against German neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic attitudes to give way to cooperation between Germany and its Jews. It is also possible that his call for normalization and reconciliation reflected his personal beliefs: as a German politician, a member of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union of Germany), and *Zentralrat* president, he maintained close personal relations with Germany's conservative establishment. However, after his death in 1988, it transpired that he had embezzled about 33 million deutschemarks of restitution money. This gave rise to questions about his personal and political integrity and his private interests, and casts a very different light on his policies, activities, and priorities as a *Zentralrat* and community leader.

In contrast to the IKG leadership, which did not want to stand out and whose national government definitely did not perceive it as a player in the national and international arena, *Zentralrat* leaders also wanted to serve as a bridge between Germany and the world, and between Germany and Israel, while avoiding a one-sided pro-Israeli or pro-German position so as to avoid being accused of dual loyalties.¹⁹ Such an

intermediary role between the national and Israeli governments was clearly unthinkable in Kreisky's Austria, with his anti-Zionist approach and ambition to become a key political player in the Middle East.

As early as 1951, Karl Marx, editor of the *Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland*, argued that the Jews in Germany should assume the role of an “outpost” (Vorposten) or “of a mediator between the Germans ... and the Jews of the world, particularly in Israel” (Kauders 2010, 9). Subsequently, German community officials repeatedly emphasized that they were needed in their country as mediators between Germany and Israel. Thus, in Nachmann's view, “the Jewish community made a major contribution to the Federal Republic's relatively quick return to the family of democratic countries. During the first postwar years, Jews in Germany facilitated the re-establishment of the country's economic contacts and political acceptance abroad.” He also stressed the *Zentralrat's* role in pushing for the fulfillment of the “Federal Republic's obligation toward Israel” (Sachser 1977, 446).

Whether this view was also shared by leading German politicians is a matter of speculation. There is no question, however, that Israel's leaders showed no interest in either the *Zentralrat* or the Jews in Germany. In fact, Israel openly opposed the existence of an institutionalized Diaspora on German soil, and, according to former Israeli ambassador to Germany Yochanan Meroz (1974–1981), rejected “this Diaspora's pretensions of playing the role of mediator between Germany and Israel.”²⁰ Israel's attitude toward the Jews in Germany was one of contempt (Korn 2005). Nevertheless, in the decades that followed, the *Zentralrat* leaders, especially Galinski, tried to change this attitude (which international Jewish organizations shared). He argued that the Jews living in Germany were equal to Jews living elsewhere, in that they, too, were victims of the Shoah and no less a part of the Jewish nation. He also criticized Israel and the international Jewish organizations' double standard, in which they engaged in close negotiations with the German government yet treated Germany's Jews with disrespect. His efforts did not bear fruit, however. Only in the 1990s, when the German Jewish population grew dramatically into the third-largest Jewish community in Europe, did it earn greater respect from Israel and world Jewry.

In a nutshell: while both communities' external representation adopted a very low public profile on domestic Jewish issues, the German Jewish community, in contrast to the IKG, also manifested a strong desire to act as guardians of German democracy and as a bridge between Germany and Israel. Historian Anthony Kauders (2010) claims that this activism was largely caused and shaped by the German Jewish leaders' bad conscience for remaining in Germany. This bad conscience, however, was not the only or even the most important factor. While it, indeed, played a major role in communal representation, so, too, did national politics and the attitudes of the surrounding society toward the Jews, which allowed them to take up these roles. By contrast, developments in national politics and the attitudes of the surrounding society toward the Jews in Austria strongly discouraged, if not ruled out, the possibility of such Jewish activism.

3.6 Austrian and German Politics and Attitudes toward Jewry

This section offers an overview of the main differences between Austria's and Germany's national politics and social attitudes toward the Jews in those countries. This will shed light on the political and social environment within which the latter's external communal representation was conducted, and by which it was shaped. Up until the 1960s, relations between the Jews and their respective national governments and populations were ambivalent. Thereafter, however, the mainstream German politicians and policies adopted more pro-Israel positions, were more amenable to confronting their past than were the Austrians, and accorded the German Jews a place in German public discourse. In Austria, however, the "first victim" myth did not allow the Jews to take a prominent role in Austrian public discourse. Indeed, there was no place for the Jews in the Austrian myth, which focused on what "the others (the Germans, the Allies, world Jewry) did to us," and put a taboo on dealing with what "we (the Austrians) have done" to the Jews and others.

In **Germany**, the 1950s saw a great ambivalence in the national authorities' and society's relations with the Jews in the country. On the one hand, German politics continued to be shaped by a desire to rejoin the Western community of nations and by the political elite's recognition that a moral commitment to, and good relations with, their "victims" were important in attaining that goal. As *Zentralrat* president Ignatz Bubis (1992–1999) put it, the politicians were aware that "abroad, democracy in Germany was to a significant extent judged from the point of view of its treatment of its Jews" (Bubis and Kohn 1993). As a sign of good will, federal and regional politicians regularly sent greetings to the Jewish communities on the occasion of religious holidays and established Christian-Jewish associations. Adenauer and Schumacher repeatedly praised the contributions German Jews had made to the German economy, culture, intellectual life, and democracy. And the German government undertook to make restitution and

compensation payments to Jews in Germany and in Israel. As a result of the Luxembourg Agreement, Germany delivered to the State of Israel goods crucial for the reconstruction of infrastructure; these amounted to 10 to 15 percent of annual Israeli imports. Moreover, as a result of the restitution and compensation laws enacted in 1953, 1956, 1957, and 1965, payments to individual survivors of Nazi persecution, most of whom were Jewish, amounted to 40.4 billion marks by 1971 (Herf 1997, 288).

On the other hand, Adenauer pursued democratization by integrating officials who had compromised themselves by their actions during the Nazi era. He even appointed Hans Globke, the author of the commentary on the Nuremberg Race Laws and ministerial counselor for the Third Reich, as director of the Federal Chancellery between 1953 and 1963, thus making him one of his closest aides. Furthermore, trials held in German courts in the 1950s relating to participation in the November 1938 pogroms, responsibility for the deportation of Jews to the death camps, and involvement in concentration camp atrocities usually resulted in moderate prison terms, if not acquittals.²¹ In general, popular sympathy was rife in Germany for war criminals who were sentenced to jail by the Allied military courts immediately after World War II. When Konstantin von Neurath, minister of foreign affairs and later “protector” of Bohemia under Hitler, was released from prison in 1954 on grounds of his advanced age and poor health, even Germany’s first president, Theodor Heuss, congratulated him for having survived and addressed him in an open letter, in which he expressed his satisfaction that “the martyrdom (Martyrium) of these years has come to an end for you” (Goda 2006, 131). In a nutshell, German postwar policy demonstrated a great inconsistency between the German discourse of repentance and acceptance of compensation and restitution obligations on one hand and the lack of justice on the other.

This changed in the 1960s. Discussion of the Nazi past expanded in German politics and society, and politicians on the Right and Left argued that more memory and justice were required to achieve more democracy. This change was largely influenced by the Eichmann trial in 1961, which received extensive media coverage in Germany. The evidence presented before the court brought home to the Germans that not only for the perpetrators but also for Germany as a whole, there was no

escaping the past. Many articles about the Shoah began to appear in the press. Furthermore, the population’s empathy for and understanding of the Jewish state was enhanced since, during the two-year trial, many German journalists toured Israel and reported on various aspects of life in it. The Eichmann trial, along with the inquiries of the Central Office for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes established in 1958, led to extensive debates over extending the statute of limitations (*Verjährungsdebatten*). According to political scientist Jeffrey Herf, “these *Verjährungsdebatten* brought the crimes of the Nazi past as well as the magnitude of judicial failure of the 1950s to center stage in West German politics” (1997, 335).

The Eichmann trial was followed by the *Auschwitzprozesse* (Auschwitz trials)—a series of trials of officials from the Auschwitz-Birkenau death and concentration camp, held before a Frankfurt am Main jury over about a decade, including 1963–1965 (the first process), 1965–1966 (the second process), 1967–1968 (the third process), and follow-up processes in the 1970s. The first was the biggest trial of war criminals in Germany’s postwar history.²² Among the 20 defendants, six received life sentences, three were released for “insufficient evidence,” and 11 got jail terms ranging between three-and-a-half and 14 years, for complicity in murder. However, more important than the individual sentences themselves were the immense impact these trials had on the German population. Many historians and political scientists see this process as a turning point in Germany’s collective memory concerning its people’s own crimes (Ebner 2005). Historian Irmtraud Wojak explains: “Never before have 211 survivors of the central extermination camp testified so extensively on the truth and reality in Auschwitz. Never before was such an authentic picture of the Jews’ National Socialist persecution presented before the whole world” (Frankfurt Rundschau 2004).

The trials and the victims’ accounts were covered extensively in the media. Auschwitz became the symbol of Nazi Germany. However, the process also shed light on the general attitude in Germany toward these issues. First, Hessen District Attorney Fritz Bauer had to fight for his class action lawsuit to be certified. By consolidating numerous individual claims, he wanted to set out the structure of the extermination machine and to portray the extent of the crime. However, higher

judicial bodies sought to prevent this and try each defendant separately. Furthermore, the process itself reflected the German population's continuing sympathy for the defendants and tendency to exonerate the perpetrators based on the (wishful) belief that just a few main perpetrators were actually responsible for the crimes and that the majority of the Nazis had only assisted them. The witnesses, who were already extremely distraught after recounting their camp experiences, were pressured by lawyers who questioned the veracity of their accounts. Policemen saluted the accused SS officers.

At the same time, the Auschwitz trials created a rift between the war generation and the postwar generation in Germany. The former wanted to hear no more about the past, to draw a line between it and the present, and to end the Shoah reappraisal. They argued that they knew nothing about the persecution and the mass murder of the Jews and that they, too, had suffered immeasurably during World War II. The members of the postwar generation, who were deeply shocked by the victims' accounts, condemned their parents' attitudes. In 1967, they went out onto the streets in what would later be called the "1968 student revolt."²³ The postwar generation rebelled against the "Auschwitz generation," accusing it, among other things, of keeping silent about its role in the crimes and suppressing knowledge of the Shoah. In rising up against the perpetrator generation—that of their parents—the students wanted to end the "archaic system" that had "adopted the martial German values in an unchanged manner into the new social order" (Schneider 2000, 29).

Precisely because Germany's political left wing was preoccupied with the past, a small but conspicuous group of politically active local Jews who had joined the German left wing took part in the revolt, seeing it as their opportunity to integrate in society. They no longer wanted to feel like strangers, as their parents did. They believed in comradeship with their fellow German students since "their socio-political goals were the same: to come to terms with the past, overcome the rest of the Nazi heritage, 'kill' the fathers, and make society fairer." In short, these Jewish students felt that they had become part of society and saw in these protests a chance for "Germany to soon become their *Heimat*, their physical, as well as spiritual, home" (Schneider 2000, 29). But their

positive response to the revolt was just as total as their disappointment and disillusionment with the changes within the political Left and its response to Israel's victory in the Six-Day War.

Israel's past military victories in 1948 and 1956 were viewed sympathetically by German politicians and the population. Shimon Peres, who as director general of the Israeli Defense Ministry was involved in building relations with Germany in the 1950s, described German defense minister Franz Joseph Strauss's attitude following the 1956 war thus: “As far as Israel was concerned, he was brimming with warmth and awe. He really admired the outcome of the Sinai campaign.”²⁴ Similarly, after the Six-Day War, the German population, even including former members of the SS (Schneider 2000, 25), were amazed by Israel's victory and held Israel in higher esteem as a result.

Yet the atmosphere in Germany changed, especially on the political Left. Before 1967, it held the staunchest pro-Israel attitude among all European left-wing parties. Subsequently, it adopted the most radical anti-Israel stance in Europe. Despite its anti-Nazi stance, the left wing's anti-Zionist arguments employed the same anti-Semitic images, myths, and symbols as the Nazis. Moreover, the Israeli Army was compared to the SS and Israeli prisons to concentration camps. The German Left denied that Israel had a right to exist. In 1970, the Socialist German Student Organization (SDS) even described Israel as its main enemy and shouted “down with the chauvinistic and racist State of Israel” (Kashi 2005, 37). Likewise, it turned against the Jews in Germany by praising an attempted arson attack on the Jewish community building in Berlin in November 1969 as a “clear and unmistakable show of solidarity with the fighting Feddayin” (Kashi 2005, 38).

Some left-wing activists even sympathized with Arab terrorists. As a result, 30 years after the end of the Shoah, Germans were again engaged in “selections.” After hijacking an Air France plane to Entebbe in 1976, left-wing German terrorists separated the Jewish from the non-Jewish passengers, released the latter, and threatened to kill the Jewish hostages. According to historian and political scientist Micha Brumlik, “before the mid-1980s, the majority of the German left wing was anti-Zionist, and more than half of it was anti-Semitic, if only in terms of what historian Léon Poliakov described as Israel becoming the Jew

among the nations.”²⁵ The majority of the German political Left believed that solving the Jewish issue would resolve all other problems. It used anti-Zionism as a fig-leaf for its anti-Semitism, and took advantage of the UN’s “Zionism is racism” resolution.

In the 1970s, the political Left also began to openly turn against Jews in Germany. Anti-Semitic stereotypes surfaced in abundance during the debate over the reconstruction of the Westend district of Frankfurt am Main. Real estate traders and private developers had bought and demolished the small houses and villas in Westend and built high-rise buildings in their place. Ignatz Bubis and some other Jews were among the developers, but the majority were gentiles. This did not prevent the Left from blaming “the Jew” Bubis for destroying the district or from rekindling the old stereotypical anti-Semitic depictions of the rich and devious Jewish developer who ignores everyone else in his pursuit of greater wealth. The fact that many of those houses had belonged to Jews but were aryanized in 1938 did not seem to affect anti-Jewish attitudes. This position was given prominence in some important literary works that portrayed the Germans as the victims and the Jews as the perpetrators of evil.²⁶

Left-wing Jewish students were deeply distressed by the shift in their German counterparts’ attitudes in the 1960s and 1970s, which left them feeling betrayed and rejected by German society. Journalist and author Richard Schneider alleges that “this shock was deeper, more demoralizing, and more unsettling than the strangeness their parents felt from the Germans” (2000, 30). The students, after all, grew up in Germany, went to school and university with these Germans, spent leisure time, discussed politics and demonstrated with them, but now felt that they were seen as strangers and kept at a distance. As a result, some Jewish students left Germany, others kept silent, while still others again engaged in political debate. The Jewish left-wing group in Frankfurt began to publish a journal whose title, *Babylon*, alluded to exile. According to Bodemann (2007), who also co-edited thematic issues of *Babylon*, “it evolved out of the experience of the 1960s, out of the disappointment from the German Left. There was a great distancing from the German society and its politicians.” Jewish students in Germany realized that “the supposedly politically correct international anti-Zionism of the

German Left had serious anti-Semitic undertones.”²⁷ The majority of the BJSD perceived the new Left anti-fascism as an attempt to morally exculpate Germany from its history (Kashi 2005, 44). Dan Diner, at that time BJSD chairman, wrote in 1969: “The dealing with the alleged ‘crimes’ of the ‘Zionists’ (Jews) offers ... a relieving denial and purging of their own past.”²⁸ The increasing use of the Shoah as a metaphor for Israel’s policies entrenched this view among the postwar generation. In 1981 journalist and author Henryk Broder published an article in *Die Zeit* entitled “Ihr seid die Kinder eurer Eltern” (You Are the Children of Your Parents), in which he accused the German postwar generation of continuing its parents’ anti-Semitism—albeit with different means. He was the first German Jew to publicly equate the German anti-Zionist critique with an anti-Semitic attitude. The article attracted much public attention.

At the same time, however—and this played a critical role in shaping the external representation of the German Jewish communal leadership—Germany’s mainstream politicians increasingly engaged in self-critical discussions of their Nazi past. Symbolic of this facing up to the past was Federal Chancellor (1969–1974) Willy Brandt’s *Warschauer Kniefall* on December 7, 1970. Brandt, who had come to Warsaw to sign the Treaty of Warsaw, dropped, apparently spontaneously, to his knees when laying a wreath at the Warsaw Ghetto memorial and maintained that position for some time. This act of apology and repentance signaled an acknowledgment of the past and the expression of hope for rapprochement embodied in the government’s new *Ostpolitik*—the policy of seeking reconciliation between Eastern and Western Europe (which was Germany’s official position between 1969 and 1989). Brandt, who followed Adenauer, Ludwig Erhard, and Kurt Georg Kiesinger in office, was the first chancellor to argue that “public memory [of Nazi crimes] should be part of a program of daring more democracy”²⁹ (Herf 1997, 344).

His successor, Helmut Schmidt, chancellor from 1974 to 1981, further influenced German political memory, becoming in November 1977 the first German chancellor to address a public gathering at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Furthermore, on November 9, 1978, the 40th anniversary of the *Reichskristallnacht*, Schmidt made the most forthright speech of

any previous German chancellor about the Nazi persecution of German Jewry and the German populace's failure to protest it. For him, November 9, 1938, "remains a cause of bitterness and shame," since most Germans kept their silence in the face of the violence, arson, and arrests of that day (Schmidt 1979, 21). He blamed the scapegoating of the Jews on the weakness of the German middle classes' democratic convictions, and he emphasized that it was important to reflect on these events "to learn how people ought to behave toward one another, and how they ought not to behave." Even though, in his view, most Germans living in 1978 were "individually free from blame," nevertheless young Germans "can become guilty, too, if they fail to recognize the responsibility for what happens today and tomorrow deriving from what happened then" (pp. 28–29). Thus, according to Herf (1997, 347), Schmidt "sought political explanations for the Nazi persecution of the Jews in order to prevent its recurrence and to foster a peaceful, liberal, democratic Germany and Europe."

This atmosphere of dealing with the past more fully and openly allowed the German Jewish community leaders to play a larger part in German public discourse. With the political elite stressing Jewish suffering; the rejection of scapegoating, extremism, and violence; and the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions, the community leaders could assume a more prominent role as moral guides and guardians of German democracy. They were able to speak out as Jews and as Nazi victims and as such be politically active—as long as their activism contributed to Germany's image as "a new Germany." This was not the case, however, with regard to Jewish demands from the government, which still had to be worked out behind closed doors.

This did not occur in **Austria**. Although it was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Israel—in 1952³⁰—and its officials regularly sent Jewish holiday greetings to the IKG, Austria's attitude toward its Nazi past and to Jews did not change. It remained reluctant to assume responsibility for the Shoah and unwilling to offer compensation to its Jewish survivors or the IKG. Austrians' involvement in Nazi crimes was hidden under a cloak of silence. In 1955, Austria persuaded the Allied powers to drop the "responsibility clause," which was part of the Moscow Declaration, and not to include it in the

introduction to the State Treaty, where it was supposed to reappear. The “first victim” theory, however, was included there and acknowledged by the Allied powers. The Austrian government and population saw this as a general absolution. Consequently, they persisted in claiming that Austria had not committed any crimes during the Nazi era and was thus absolved of responsibility for, and not obliged to pay compensation to, Nazi victims. Austrian authorities also continued to evade the restitution issue. It restricted the rights of Jews to “heirless property” (most of which had belonged to them before the Shoah) but used it to compensate non-Jewish victims of National Socialism. Furthermore, the authorities were lax about ensuring the return of aryanized buildings, apartments, businesses, and valuables to their original Jewish owners, or requiring former aryanizers to restore property to its Jewish owners. Wistrich asserted that “in the 1960s there were some further modest payments and settlement of claims, mainly over real estate. But, in contrast to Germany, the haggling had been drawn out so long and the final results were so meager that there was little cathartic or educational value to the exercise” (1999, 23).

At the same time, Austria also pushed ahead with the reintegration of Nazi criminals. In December 1955, shortly after the Allied withdrawal, the People’s Courts were closed down. A general amnesty proclaimed in 1957 completed the full reintegration of former Nazis, including major offenders, into Austrian society. The same year, the *Nationalrat* enacted the *Bundesverfassungsgesetz NS-Amnestie* (Federal Constitution Law NS-Amnesty) (BGBl. Nr. 82/1957), paragraph 13 (2) of which abolished the War Criminal Act, and the Federal Law granting amnesty for political crimes (BGBl. Nr. 83/1957). Moreover, by the mid-1960s, in keeping with the Austrian Criminal Code statute of limitations,³¹ only individuals suspected of direct involvement in Nazi murders could be brought to court. With the issuing of the court’s last judgment on December 2, 1975, prosecution of Nazi crimes in Austria came to a halt (DÖW n.d./2).

These policies of non-compensation and inadequate restitution of Jews and the reintegration of Nazis into the political, social, and economic arena were closely associated with the increasing salience and centrality of the “first victim” myth in Austrian postwar identity and memory. National identity and memory became characterized by

what Ruth Beckermann termed the “irrealization of Nazism” (2000, 183); the Austrians now justified their behavior and actions during the Shoah by arguing that these had been the direct result of the special circumstances of World War II. They thus disavowed any need for personal consequences—as in a normal state of affairs, they would have acted or behaved differently. National memory now focused on Austria’s achievements before 1938 and after 1945. The crimes committed during the Shoah were perceived as having been committed in a “different world”—a world to be removed from Austrian collective memory and attributed solely to the German collective memory of guilt and responsibility. Blurring the Shoah out of national memory led the Austrian politicians and population to ignore the suffering of the Jews during the Shoah, thus putting an additional psychological burden on the Jewish survivors by forcing upon them “an unrelenting pattern of defensive identification as the Third Reich’s genuine victims” (Bunzl 2000, 165). What is more, Austrians perceived the Jews and themselves as Nazi victims. The memory of the resistance and the victims of the Nazi regime was increasingly marginalized, while the remembrance of soldiers who had died in World War II “faithfully performing their duty” (see Uhl 2000, 317–341) came increasingly into focus.

Over the next two decades, Austria consistently adhered to its “first victim” theory and to the position that Germany alone was responsible for the Shoah. If Austrians had participated at all in the crimes, it was only because they were forced to comply with the occupying power’s orders. In 1966, Wiesenthal published the *Memorandum über die Beteiligung von Österreichern an NS-Verbrechen* (Memorandum on the Participation of Austrians in Nazi Crimes) and submitted it to Federal Chancellor Josef Klaus. It provided a detailed breakdown of Austrian participation in the extermination operations in the ghettos as well as in the concentration and extermination camps. His conclusion was that Austrian perpetrators were responsible for about half of the total of the six million Jews murdered. He also criticized “the current common tendency to close proceedings against Nazi criminals citing the fact that the ‘jurors were anyway expected to acquit them’” (Kurier, November 4, 1966). This memorandum did not trigger any official response, however, and the Austrians’ active role in the Shoah continued to be denied or ignored.

The manifestations of the 1968 student revolt in Austria were muted in comparison with those in Germany and other Western countries. The revolt did not produce the same rift over the Shoah as had occurred in Germany. While students at the University of Vienna attacked Professor Taras Borodajkewycz, who was known for publicly glorifying National Socialism and making anti-Semitic comments in his class, there were no protests against the Austrian universities' rehiring, early in the Cold War, of professors who had been active Nazis. There certainly was no desire to investigate the role of the older generation in the Shoah, and no rebellion against the war generation. Raising and examining the issue of Austria's Nazi crimes remained taboo.

Furthermore, unlike Germany, in Austria there were no broadcast trials of Nazi criminals, such as the Auschwitz trials. Those trials that were held generally ended in the acquittal of the offenders, as in the case of the 1972 trial against the builders of the Auschwitz crematoria and gas chambers Fritz Ertl and Walter Dejaco. This trial was held following the lodging of an official complaint by Herman Langbein, an Auschwitz survivor, who had observed and transcribed the first German Auschwitz trial. Langbein subsequently highlighted the difference between the Austrian and German approaches to their pasts. What distressed him most was not the acquittals of the defendants, but the votes of the jurors: more jurors accepted Dejaco's plea of not guilty than that of Ertl, even though Ertl had asked to be transferred to the battlefield after discovering that there was to be an oversized gas chamber in each of the four crematoria. Dejaco, by contrast, had not only built but had also regularly maintained the gas chambers and crematoria, yet claimed he did not know what the chambers were for. Nor did this trial have the same public echo as the Nazi trials in Germany: no school classes were present at it, and leaflets were distributed in the auditorium likening Langbein to Judas for having initiated the trial (see Langbein 1997, 10).

Both Austrian politicians and the public at large continued to regard the IKG's requests for restitution, and Simon Wiesenthal's campaigns against Nazis holding significant political positions, as disrupting social order and threatening to undermine society's positive self-image. The IKG, for its part, maintained its non-confrontational approach, while constantly criticizing Wiesenthal's Nazi-hunting campaigns for

harming its relations with the SPÖ, which, unlike the German political elite, was not willing to deal with the war generation's past.

Moreover, the ruling SPÖ had also adopted an anti-Zionist approach and an active radical pro-Palestinian policy. This stood in sharp contrast to the German political landscape, where, as shown above, the political left wing had become anti-Zionist and partly even anti-Semitic, but the mainstream political players had not. Indeed, all German chancellors since World War II, including those from SPD, have been committed to dealing with Germany's past in the Shoah and to combating anti-Semitism and were strong supporters of the State of Israel. Yet Kreisky, who was elected SPÖ chairman in 1967 and after the 1970 national elections was appointed federal chancellor, was an unwavering anti-Zionist. Influenced by the United Nations resolution equating Zionism and racism, he launched some initiatives to end the Middle East conflict, in which he openly sided with the Palestinians, even though the PLO was at that time engaged in terrorism. Kreisky played a crucial role in making Yasser Arafat and the PLO acceptable and respectable in the West. He insisted on presenting leaders supporting terrorism, like Arafat and Gaddafi, as "patriots" and "freedom-fighters" (Wistrich 2007, 14) and at the same time called Israel a semi-fascist state, but never challenged the Israelis' right to their own independent state. Propagated by a mainstream leading political party, which, moreover, was led by a Jew, these anti-Zionist and pro-Palestinian attitudes deeply influenced the Austrian population's view of Israel and the Middle East conflict.

Kreisky's toleration of the appointment of proven, though generally not convicted, former Nazis to prominent public positions,³² and his attacks on Wiesenthal's public accusations that certain SPÖ members and ministers had been actively involved in the Shoah, helped trivialize the latter in Austrian consciousness.

The 1970s were marked by a number of public disputes involving Kreisky and Wiesenthal, such as the Kreisky-Peter-Wiesenthal affair. On the eve of the 1975 general elections, Wiesenthal published a document showing that Friedrich Peter, chairman of the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and a key Kreisky ally, had been a sergeant in the First SS Infantry Brigade—a unit that systematically massacred Jews in the Soviet Union. Kreisky supported Peter publicly and attacked Wiesenthal on television, castigating him for using "mafia-like methods" and

suggesting that Wiesenthal himself had collaborated with the Gestapo. Wistrich recorded that “Kreisky, unlike Brandt, had acted as if the Holocaust was a mere side issue, and that his duty as chancellor was to exculpate Austrians from the burden of their past. The fact that a Jew who himself had fled from the Germans was now providing absolution and alibi for the great mass of Austrians to ignore the Nazi legacy no doubt contributed to Kreisky’s growing popularity” (1999, 30). Furthermore, under Kreisky’s leadership, in 1972, all Austrian judicial processes against Nazi criminals were suspended, since “the SPÖ wanted to prevent acquittals of defendants charged with mass murder from tarnishing Austria’s reputation” (Pelinka 1998, 3).

The IKG was disturbed greatly by Austrian attitudes toward Israel and the Shoah, and by the fact that these were held and disseminated by the SPÖ and its Jewish leader. Nevertheless, it kept its silence out of party solidarity and fears that public criticism of the popular chancellor might heighten anti-Semitism.

A change took place after 1979, triggered largely by the American TV miniseries *Holocaust*. Watched by millions of Austrians and Germans, this series, which brought viewers face to face with their countries’ dark past, had a strong effect in both. People reacted with shock to scenes showing the fate of the Weiss family during the Shoah. The term “Holocaust” was adopted into the German language overnight. In Austria, 11 years after the 1968 revolution, this series finally initiated a public discourse on Austria’s past and the Austrians’ role in the Nazi atrocities that peaked in the mid-1980s in the Waldheim affair. In Germany, the young generation of Germans, in particular, confronted their parents and grandparents with tough questions about their past. Public initiatives, school competitions, and local stories reconstructed the Jewish past in many places. Expatriate Jewish citizens were invited to visit and memorials for the murdered Jews were held (Brenner 2007). Similar initiatives and actions also began in Austria, but only after 1986.

Sociologist Rainer Lepsius has proposed a kind of typology of memory that summarizes well the contrast described above between Austria’s and Germany’s strategies to dealing with the past. In Austria, he argues, the preconditions, content, and consequences of National Socialism were conveniently externalized: they had only secondary relevance in Austria and were attributed to Germany’s history, and not Austria’s past.

Nazism, in this reading of the past, had been imposed from outside. In Germany, which understood itself to be the successor state of the Third Reich, the Nazi past was normatively internalized. Yet the term “internalization” does not necessarily mean a successful internal and moral processing of the past. Instead, internalization denotes the recognition of the liability of Germany for the consequences of the Third Reich and the acceptance of a normative element in German political culture in reference to National Socialism and its crimes (Lepsius 1989, 250–251).

Notes

¹ In this study, “postwar generation” refers to Jews born to Shoah survivors after the end of World War II; “second postwar generation” refers to Jews born to parents from the postwar generation; and so on.

² Officially this role was played by the Israelite Religious Corporation, however, it was not an active body at that time, as it did not have any organs and constitution, as will be described later.

³ Interview with Waks in Schneider (2000, 424).

⁴ Estimated numbers for the other immigration waves are not available.

⁵ No official IKG statistics for the period between 1945 and 1988 exist. According to the member service of the IKG, various historians presented different numbers, and IKG statistics, as well as information published by the IKG in the past, are not accurate. Membership data from that period exist only in the form of index cards. Often only births and deaths were registered, but not emigration. Only at the beginning of 2000 did the IKG retroactively reconstruct new statistics; official IKG statistics are available only for the period after 1988.

⁶ Yitzhak Ahren quoted in Navè-Levinson (1986, 141).

⁷ Although they are merely non-practicing Jews, unlike the Liberals, they believe that the *Halakha* as a whole is right and valid and prefer an Orthodox rabbi as their leader.

⁸ This Liberal synagogue (the only Liberal synagogue in Berlin at that time) follows what is known as the “old-German rite” (*altdeutscher Ritus*), with an organ and a mixed choir in the synagogue, although men and women sit separately during services and women are not called up to read portions of the Torah. Girls are allowed to celebrate their bat mitzvah in the synagogue, meaning that they can light the *Shabbat* candles on Friday evening and hold a sermon on Saturday morning but not read the Torah.

⁹ To this day, both communities commemorate the Shoah on November 9, the anniversary of *Reichskristallnacht*, and on 27 Nissan, *Yom HaShoah* (Holocaust Day, which was instituted by the State of Israel). The IKG also commemorates it on May 5, the day the Mauthausen concentration camp near Vienna was liberated, while Germany's communities commemorate it on May 8, the day of Nazi Germany's capitulation. (In addition, the German state holds a commemoration ceremony at the Bundestag each year on January 27, the Auschwitz liberation day and the international Holocaust Memorial Day. That ceremony is attended by members of the Zentralrat.)

- ¹⁰ Jalda Rebling grew up in the GDR. This description nevertheless reflects the feelings of Jews in both Germanys and also in Austria, as was revealed in various interviews and literature (e.g., Beckermann 2005).
- ¹¹ Dan Diner currently lives in both Germany and Israel, teaching at the Leipzig University and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.
- ¹² Interview with Kugelman in Kashi (2005, 47).
- ¹³ Interview with Friedmann in Gross (2005).
- ¹⁴ Since 1955, when the Haredi community took part for the first time in IKG elections, it was always represented by *one* united party, *Khal Israel*.
- ¹⁵ Information about the development of the Haredi community was received from Mandl (2007) and Eisenberg (2009).
- ¹⁶ This letter was among the documents of the Kreisky archive, which opened for some researchers in 2010.
- ¹⁷ The *Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Workers' Newspaper) was started as a socialist newspaper in 1889 by Victor Adler. It was banned in 1934 but reappeared in 1945 as the main organ of the SPÖ.
- ¹⁸ According to German law, the last trials concerning crimes committed during the Holocaust were to occur in 1965, 20 years after the surrender. The statute of limitations for homicide was 20 years. This limitation raised an intense public debate, in which many Germans expressed support for this law. One month before the statute of limitations expired, the government decided to extend it by four years (the years 1945–1949, when Germany was occupied, were deducted). In 1969, after renewed debates, the government extended it by further 10 years. Only in 1979 did it finally suspend the statute of limitations for prosecuting genocide. For a detailed discussion of the 1960, 1965, 1969, and 1975 debates concerning the statute of limitations, see Herf (1997, 334–342).
- ¹⁹ Throughout their bridging efforts, the Jewish officials strove to side with both countries. This, at times, led to paradoxical outcomes, for instance, concerning communal policies toward returnees from Israel. On the one hand, in order to reduce Israeli criticism and establish better ties with Israel, the leadership tried to dissociate itself from returnees and potential returnees from Israel. In December 1953, the *Zentralrat* published the following: “The Directorate, the highest body of the *Zentralrat*, declared that it will in no way offer further support to emigrants and even to sojourners from Israel” (“*Zentralrat der Juden warnt vor Einwanderung*,” *Münchener Merkur*, December 15, 1953, p. 2). On the other hand, the *Zentralrat* actually strongly supported the *Bundesentschädigungsgesetz* granting the returnees the 6,000 deutschmarks as emergency financial aid.
- ²⁰ Meroz quoted in Korn (2005).
- ²¹ To give only a few examples: Munich's Gestapo chief Oswald Schäfer, who admitted taking part in the killing of slave laborers from Eastern Europe in dozens of instances, was set free. Gerhard Peters, a German insecticide expert and chemical manufacturer who had sold his potassium cyanide to Auschwitz with the full knowledge that it would be used to asphyxiate human beings, was acquitted—see Poliakov (1954, 307–308). The “beast of Buchenwald” Martin Sommer, who, while in charge of the Buchenwald guardhouse, had beaten to death hundreds of sick prisoners, was released from pre-trial custody in 1955, after German physicians pronounced him

“unfit to stand trial.” August Kolb, former sub-commandant of Sachsenhausen concentration camp, who had been charged with 180 deliberate killings, was given four years and three months of hard labor, with one year and 10 months deducted because of pre-trial custody; for more cases and details, see Sapir (1956, 377–381).

²² The Nuremberg trials were undertaken by an Allied military court, not by a German court.

²³ The so-called “1968 student revolt” actually broke out in Germany on June 2, 1967, when student Benno Ohnesorg was shot and killed by a policeman during a student demonstration in Berlin. Distorted and false accounts of Ohnesorg’s death by police, political figures, and journalists that portrayed the students as the perpetrators triggered heated debates between the war and postwar generations in Germany. See Mohr (2008).

²⁴ Interview with Peres in Schneider (2000, 197).

²⁵ Interview with Brumlik in Schneider (2000, 255).

²⁶ E.g., Fassbinder’s play *Der Müll, die Stadt und der Tod* (1975) and his movies *In einem Jahr mit dreizehn Monden* (In a Year of 13 Moons) (1978), *Lili Marlene* (1980) and *Die Sehnsucht der Veronika Voss* (1982). They all turn around the untouchable and cold rich Jew, who is willing to do anything (even murder) to increase his wealth, and to take revenge on Germans for their crimes during the Holocaust.

²⁷ Interview with Brumlik in Schneider (2000, 255).

²⁸ Diner quoted in Kraushaar (2005, 86).

²⁹ In his government policy statement of October 28, 1969, Chancellor Willy Brandt coined the expression “mehr Demokratie wagen” (daring more democracy).

³⁰ The FRG and Israel established diplomatic relations only in May 1965. Previously these relations had encountered resistance in both countries. First, in the 1950s the political atmosphere in Israel made it impossible to establish official relations with the successor of the Third Reich. Then, in the late 1950s and 1960s, the FRG was prevented from doing so because of the Hallstein Doctrine, a key doctrine in its foreign policy after 1955. It stated that the FRG would not establish or maintain diplomatic relations with any state (other than the Soviet Union) that recognized the GDR. The FRG feared that diplomatic relations with Israel would incite (some of) the Arab states to recognize the GDR, thus forcing the FRG to sever ties with them, which would seriously harm the FRG’s economy. Finally, the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel was triggered by pressures from American politicians and Jews, as well as changes in the attitudes of the German population toward the Jews and Israel following the Eichmann trial in 1961.

³¹ According to the Austrian Criminal Code (Strafgesetzbuch) (the Code, which dates back to 1852, was reenacted in 1945 and replaced by the Strafgesetzbuch in 1974), the statute of limitations for arrest, prosecution, and punishment for capital crimes amounted to 20 years (Paragraph 228); only prosecution for crimes subject to death penalty had no statute of limitations (Paragraph 231). In 1965, the *Strafrechtsänderungsgesetz* (BGBl Nr.79/1965), paragraph 1, abolished the statute of limitations for capital crimes (“crimes subject to life imprisonment”) as well, though not for lesser crimes committed by former Nazis.

³² E.g., Otto Rösch (minister of the interior), Erwin Frühbauer (transportation minister), Hans Öllinger (agriculture minister), and Josef Moser (building minister).

CHAPTER 4

1980–2015

**Settled and Flourishing
Jewish Communities**

The 1980s were a major turning point for the Jewish communities in Germany and Austria. Their representative bodies opened up considerably to the surrounding societies, and their leaders began to take an active role in national politics in those countries as well as in international Jewish arenas. Expressions of feeling of being at home in Germany and Austria became increasingly common among their Jewish populations.

Political changes also took place in the national arenas, the most dramatic being the collapse of communism in 1989 and German reunification on October 3, 1990. Although these changes and the subsequent mass immigration of FSU Jews significantly affected the German Jewish community, they were not the decisive factor in Jewish communal reconstruction. Similarly important but not decisive were the 1985 Waldheim affair in Austria and the new national identity discourse in Germany that began in the mid-1980s, both of which were associated with major turnabouts in German-Jewish, and Austrian-Jewish, relations. In Germany, the turnabout was exemplified by calls to lessen the importance accorded to the Shoah in German identity and discourse and to put an end to Germany's guilt feelings. In Austria, the opposite was the case. Austrians began to come to terms with their past, although, to be sure, a not-inconsiderable segment of the political elite and of the public still sought to downplay Austria's role in the Shoah.

No exact date can be set for the onset of the new Jewish communal development processes, as these were the outcome of interrelated demographic, identity, and leadership changes within the Jewish communities. What is sure, however, is that these communal processes that have been underway since the late 1970s, and increasingly visible since the early 1980s, preceded the national political changes.

Over the ensuing decades, in both countries both the Jewish population as a whole and its leadership became younger, more heterogeneous, and more integrated into society. The Shoah and the State of Israel became less salient elements in Jewish group identity, while

Austrian and German identities, hitherto nonexistent, if not consciously rejected by the Jews in Vienna and Germany, took root and strengthened. The latter, together with the Jews' growing recognition and psychological acceptance that "we are here to stay," in turn gave rise to greater commitment to the need for institution-building that was in fact realized. They also generated a new sense of self-confidence and outspokenness on Jewish matters that was manifested in many spheres, not least the political and the social. Finally, the settlement in Vienna of traditionally oriented FSU immigrants and the mass immigration to Germany of FSU Jews boosted this development. Significantly, however, after 1980, despite the fact that Germany's Jewish population was many times larger than that of Vienna, Jewish infrastructure and the pattern of Jewish life were more developed in Vienna than in any German city.

Here, too, as in the previous chapters, I shall examine the role played in both countries by both internal Jewish and national factors in the process of Jewish communal reconstruction, the strengthening of Jewish group identity, and the heightening of Jewish self-confidence.

4.1 Communal Organization

Organizational framework

First, however, we need to look at the changes in the communal organization and leadership, which not only present the framework within which all communal developments took place, but also were the base of and the trigger for many of the social, cultural, and political developments that occurred since the 1980s.

In both Vienna and Germany, national court decisions invalidated the communities' *Einheitsgemeinde* principles after local Jewish groups filed lawsuits alleging discrimination. These decisions eventually shaped and changed the communities' organization: in Austria, the leadership of the Jewish communities made changes to secure the *de facto* maintenance of the *Einheitsgemeinde* principle, whereas in Germany, it was actually abolished. In the German Jewish landscape, it was now possible to have two communities in a single city, or two regional organizations in one *Land*. Only at the nationwide level was there still a single representative body—the *Zentralrat*.

In Austria, the *Einheitsgemeinde* principle was officially invalidated in 1981 after *Agudas Israel*, pursuing its aforementioned struggles against the IKG, filed a lawsuit in the Austrian Constitutional Court accusing the IKG of not taking into account the needs of Haredi Jews. In its response the court repealed the aforementioned sentences in the *Israelitengesetz* and thus invalidated the *Einheitsgemeinde* regulation. It further defined the term “Israelite” (which was not defined in the *Israelitengesetz*) as “a person who declares himself to be an Israelite (Jew) according to his self-conception” (Verfassungsgerichtshof 1981). The court thus ruled that membership in the Jewish community was voluntary, that any group of Jews could constitute a Jewish community, and hence, that the establishment of a separate Orthodox *Kultusgemeinde* was permitted.

Since this part of the *Israelitengesetz* was now no longer binding, and in direct response to the ever-present threat of secession inherent in the court's ruling, the five Austrian *Kultusgemeinden*, fearful that some

member group might one day exploit this ruling, took action in 2007 to change the legal status of their umbrella organization. In 2008, they abolished the *Bundesverband* and set up a constitution for the IRG. The latter was established by the 1890 *Israelitengesetz* as an umbrella organization for all Jewish communities in the Habsburg Monarchy but has never been an active legal entity, since it did not have any organs or contact persons. It was instead a generic term to define the status of Jewish communities within and vis-à-vis the state. Since the law did not foresee organs who act on behalf of this implicit public corporation, it immediately defined the Jewish communities as acting agents and contact points for the state. The new constitution, which was immediately submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval, now sets down, for the first time, an organizational scheme relying on the *Kultusgemeinden*, delineating its organs, the form and period of appointment and the dismissal of organs, and the right and duties of its members (the *Kultusgemeinden*), and the creation of a new, as well as the disbanding of an existing *Kultusgemeinde*. Its regulations are now binding upon all member communities. Since Jewish communities seeking official public recognition as Jewish are required to belong to this body, dissident groups are effectively prevented from breaking away to form new rival communities under the IRG roof. The constitution now also explicitly defines the IRG's membership criteria, stating that its members must be a) residents in Austria, b) Jews in accordance with the "traditional Halakha," and c) members in a *Kultusgemeinde*. The constitution defines the term "traditional Halakha" as an "entity of the laws of Judaism ... based on the written and oral Torah (the latter written down in the Mishna and Talmud), later codified (Mishne Torah, Shulkhan Arukh) and applied according to the ongoing rabbinical interpretation" (article 1, paragraph 1 [2]). It thus made void the Constitutional Court's understanding of a Jew.

Based on the constitution, the IRG and the Department for Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Education worked on amendments to the 120-year-old *Israelitengesetz*. On May 19, 2012, they were accepted by the lower house of the Austrian Parliament, the National Council, with the adoption of the Federal Law amending the Legislation Regulating the Relations between the State and the Israelite Religion Corporation

(Bundesgesetz, mit dem das Gesetz betreffend die Regelung der äußeren Rechtsverhältnisse der israelitischen Religionsgesellschaft geändert wird, BGBl. I Nr. 48/2012, 2012 Israelitengesetz). The new law states explicitly that the IRG is a public corporation, and thus a legal person, that “organizes and administers its inner matters on its own” (paragraph 1). It grants the IRG, among other things, legal autonomy in decisions related to its membership (paragraph 3 [3]), granting it the exclusive right to decide whether and which new Jewish communities can be established (which until now was the decision of the Ministry of Education), and, through the definition within its constitution, to acknowledge who is recognized as a Jew—by the IRG and the Republic of Austria. The latter is of great importance, as the 2012 *Israelitengesetz* has a serious impact on Jews as individuals. Among other things, it names the *Shabbat* and all Jewish holidays with prohibition to work and defines their extent, and puts them under protection of the state (paragraph 10), defines the right to receive religious care and kosher food in public institutions, such as the army, prison, and hospitals (paragraph 8 and 12 [2]), and to receive Jewish religion lessons in public schools (paragraph 9). The law further made contractual several of the Jewish community’s competencies and rights, such as full autonomy in the curricula of the religious lessons at schools, the right to build and operate ritual baths, and full control over Jewish cemeteries (including the right to decide who can be buried there and the prohibition to dissolve cemeteries, as they are “forever”) (paragraph 19). The 2012 *Israelitengesetz* also makes Austria the first European country to legally safeguard the Jews’ right to kosher slaughtering (paragraph 12 [1]) and circumcision—the latter is not explicitly written but is derived from paragraph 9 (4), stating that “the IRG and its members are authorized to lead children and youth ... through all traditional rites and educate them according to religious commandments.”

At last, the 2012 *Israelitengesetz* also included a section on the state’s yearly financial benefits to the IRG. As mentioned above, a federal law on the financial benefits for the IRG had since 1960 regulated the formal legal financial relationship with the state. This law was amended six times (in 1969/70, 1976, 1981, 1989, 1996, and 2009) to raise the lump sum in step with the increases in the Catholic Church’s subsidy—the

increase did not occur automatically but was negotiated every few years by the Catholic Church and then adapted to the share of the other religious communities. The 2009 amendment (BGBl. Nr. 92/2009), signed “with regard to the post-1996 monetary value changes,” raised the sum paid to the IKG to 308,000 euros a year. This federal law was now abolished and replaced by paragraph 14 of the 2012 *Israelitengesetz*, which adopted the same conditions (308,000 euros a year and the salary for 23 employees) but now stated that the IRG, and no longer the IKG, received the benefits and was responsible for distributing them.

In sum, the 2012 *Israelitengesetz* strengthened the position of the IRG and the official Jewish communities within Austrian Jewry and vis-à-vis the state of Austria and once again safeguarded their *Einheitsgemeinde* structure. Prior to the amendment of the new *Israelitengesetz*, the Liberal Jewish association *Or Chadasch*, with the support of the World Union of Progressive Jews (WUPJ), applied to the Austrian Education Ministry for the establishment of a new Jewish community in Vienna within the IRG, which would have granted its members IRG membership—including those who are currently not accepted by any existing IKG as they are not Jewish according to the Orthodox perception of the *Halakha*. Since this would have been in contradiction to the IRG constitution that the IKGs have agreed on, the ministry rejected the application. The amendment of the law now explicitly rules that only the IRG can accept the establishment of a new IKG in the framework of the IRG.

In Germany, the *Einheitsgemeinde* principle was initially retained after 1989, when many Jewish communities and regional organizations were reestablished in places within the former GDR. There was one exception: the Berlin *Austrittsgemeinde Israelitische Synagogen-Gemeinde Adass Yisroel*, set up in East Berlin in December 1989. It was granted public corporation status in October 1997, after having proved to the Federal Administration Court that it was the successor of the pre-1933 *Adass Yisroel*, first established in 1869 in response to the rise of Reform Judaism, and granted public corporation status in 1885 (Bundesverfassungsgericht 1997). *Adass Yisroel* is the only Jewish community outside the *Zentralrat* framework with this status that entitles it to collect its members' religious tax and to receive direct state funding. As an independent community, it enjoys the same rights as the *Zentralrat*.

However, in 2004, more than two decades after its abolition in Austria, the *Einheitsgemeinde* principle was annulled in Germany, following a lawsuit filed by the *Synagogengemeinschaft zu Halle*—a Liberal Jewish community. It claimed that since the *Zentralrat* and Jewish regional associations were Orthodox-oriented and did not recognize a Liberal community as a Jewish community, it was precluded from receiving financial support from the government. The *Synagogengemeinschaft* also asked the court to revoke the *Zentralrat*'s exclusive authority to decide which Jewish streams would be recognized and subsidized by the state. In November of that year, the Sachsen-Anhalt Supreme Court invalidated the *Einheitsgemeinde* regulation (Oberverwaltungsgericht des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt 2004), determining that any association that regards itself as a Jewish community and is accepted and acknowledged as such within Jewish society qualifies as a Jewish community, irrespective of whether it was recognized by the Jewish regional association. The court based its decision on a clause in article 13, paragraph 1 of the 1994 treaty between the Sachsen-Anhalt Jewish regional association and the Sachsen-Anhalt *Land* (GVBl. LSA S. 795), which facilitates the distribution of state resources among Jewish communities that have not been admitted as members of the Jewish regional association. It further ruled that the *Synagogengemeinde zu Halle* was recognized as a Jewish community by Jewish society thanks to its 1999 admission into the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland (UPJ), which was established in 1997. This court decision opened the door for the establishment and official recognition of additional Jewish communities in locations where an *Einheitsgemeinde* already existed. In November 2005, the *Zentralrat* voted to admit the first Liberal regional associations into its ranks—the *Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden von Schleswig-Holstein* and the *Landesverband der Israelitischen Kulturgemeinden von Niedersachsen* (both members of the UPJ).

The competition for financial resources and religious struggles between members of the Liberal and the Orthodox streams of Judaism that were at the root of the establishment of the Liberal community in Halle were replicated in many other Jewish communities and regional associations that sprang up since the late 1990s. In most locations, Liberal communities were established alongside existing Orthodox

congregations by founders who raised the issue of financial discrimination. In Schleswig-Holstein, however, the reverse occurred: in 2005 a group of traditional communities formed a regional association, the *Jüdische Gemeinschaft Schleswig-Holstein*, following internal and financial struggles with the existing Liberal *Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden von Schleswig-Holstein*, which had been in existence since 2002. Both were admitted into the *Zentralrat* in 2005. As a result of these developments, by 2012, the *Zentralrat* included 23 Jewish regional organizations in the 16 German Länder, and 108 individual communities (see 6.3 in the Appendix).

Two additional lawsuits in 2009 led to further restrictions on the powers of the *Zentralrat* and the regional associations. In March, the Liberal *Synagogengemeinschaft zu Halle* filed a lawsuit against the *Zentralrat*, claiming that it had not received its full entitlement. The Halle Administrative Court ruled that the *Zentralrat* indeed had illegally deprived the *Synagogengemeinde* of state funding and instructed it to correct its allocation retroactively. This was a precedent: for the first time, a court directly interfered in the *Zentralrat*'s decision-making regarding the apportionment of state funding.

Also in that year, the Orthodox regional community *Gesetzestreue Jüdische Landesgemeinde Brandenburg* filed a lawsuit against the local regional association (the *Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden in Brandenburg*—a member of the *Zentralrat*). The community that was founded in Potsdam in 1999 and is a member in the Orthodox *Bund Gesetzestreuer Jüdischer Gemeinden in Deutschland*¹—a union not recognized by the *Zentralrat* or the German authorities—complained that the regional association was in breach of article 8.1 of its 2005 agreement with the State of Brandenburg (GVBl. I S.158), which obliges it to allocate a reasonable share of its state funding to all local Jewish communities, regardless of whether or not they belong to it. The Federal Constitutional Court decided that “the Brandenburg region must allocate funds to the *Gesetzestreue Jüdische Landesgemeinde Brandenburg*” (Bundesverfassungsgericht 2009). This decision deprived the *Zentralrat* and the regional organization of both the sole authority to decide which Jewish community would receive state funding and the power to determine the amount of its allocation.

In a letter to Brandenburg culture minister Martina Münch, Semen Gorelik, chairman of the *Gesetzestreue Jüdische Landesgemeinde Brandenburg*, argued that, according to this court ruling, the *Einheitsgemeinde* principle was incompatible with the German Basic Law (Gorelik 2009) and immediately called on her to negotiate a regional agreement with his community. For its part, the *Zentralrat* publicly denounced the court ruling, claiming that it “interfered in the autonomy and organization of the regional associations, which will eventually split and weaken the Jewish community” (Matern 2009). The *Zentralrat*’s reaction is indicative of its efforts to preserve structural unity.

In addition to the communities’ organizational changes, 43 years after the IRG, the *Zentralrat* also engaged in a formal legal financial relationship with the German government. On Shoah Commemoration Day, January 27, 2003, Germany’s federal chancellor Gerhard Schröder and *Zentralrat* president Paul Spiegel signed a State-Church Treaty (*Staat-skirchenvertrag*) (which was eventually enacted as Law BGBl. I S. 1598 on August 14, 2003), the first national agreement between the German government and the Jewish umbrella organization in the history of post-war Germany, that cemented the relationship between the German government and the *Zentralrat* by placing it on a firm legal basis intended to guarantee “continuous cooperation founded on partnership” (article 1 of the Agreement). Heretofore, financial aid and cooperation was subject to yearly negotiation. The government furthermore committed to an annual payment of a fixed sum to be negotiated every five years (set at three million euros in 2003, five million in 2008, and 10 million in 2012—more than 31 times the amount allocated to the IRG in Austria²) for the preservation and maintenance of the German-Jewish cultural heritage, the development of the Jewish community, the conduct of the *Zentralrat*’s social tasks, and the integration of the immigrants from the FSU (articles 1 and 2). Prior to this agreement, only the Protestant and Catholic churches had national agreements with the state.

Likewise, the regional associations and individual communities now also signed official agreements with their respective German *Land* or city authorities (in states with two regional associations, or in cities with two Jewish communities, each association and community negotiates a separate agreement). Individually negotiated, these

agreements vary from association to association and community to community; however, they all include a guarantee of religious freedom, a regulation on cooperation between the *Land* or city government and the Jewish regional association or community, and a statement about the amount of financial support given to it. Some agreements (e.g., in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern³) also include a clause on the time frame after which the sum has to be revised and renegotiated.

Communal leadership

Similar to the developments in the communal organization framework, significant differences between the communities in the two countries appear also at the level of the Jewish communities' leaderships. Whereas the IKG leadership became highly stable, that of the Berlin community was shaken by internal struggles. At the same time, however, both leaderships were similar in their development toward greater heterogeneity and generational change—which was not the case in the *Zentralrat*, which remained in *Alt-Deutsche* hands until 2010.

The 1981 IKG elections were the turning point in Vienna's Jewish leadership. They marked the end of the era of socialist control of the IKG and the first time that members of the post-Shoah generation joined the IKG leadership.

A year before those elections, postwar generation members of the AL list established the list *Junge Generation* (Young Generation, JG), led by Ariel Muzicant. JG stood for a more self-confident Jewish policy stance, emphasizing physical self-defense, the public promotion of Jewish values and interests, intensified Jewish education, and direct involvement in Austrian politics—a position that sometimes annoyed the surrounding society and heightened tensions with it. In these elections, the BWJ lost more than half of its support, and although it still topped the voting (with eight mandates), IKG governance shifted to the allied parties—the AL (seven mandates) and the JG (four mandates). Ivan Hacker, the AL leader who was elected president of the IKG, was the first non-socialist since 1952 to hold that office, and as a Hungarian Shoah survivor, he was also the first non-*Alt-Wiener* community leader. Ariel Muzicant was elected vice-president.

The 1985 elections were a second turning point. They witnessed the appearance of a Sephardi Bukharan list (one mandate) and marked the entry of Sephardi Jews into the IKG leadership. In these elections, the AL again led with eight mandates. In 1987, however, Hacker resigned after the IKG board criticized him for his weak stand in the Waldheim affair. He was succeeded by Paul Grosz. The AL remained the leading party after the 1989 IKG elections (eight mandates). In the 1993 IKG elections, it merged with the JG to form *Jachad-Jüdische Einheit* (Jewish Unity), which won 12 mandates, and Paul Grosz remained IKG president until 1998.

The 1998 elections marked a further transition. For the first time, a person born after 1945—Ariel Muzicant—became president of the IKG. Prior to that year's elections, Muzicant left *Jachad* and established *Atid* (future). The AL and *Atid* each won five mandates (*Atid* received only 16 votes more than the AL), and after three ballots, the new IKG board narrowly elected Muzicant as president 13–11. This transfer of IKG leadership and control to members of the post-Shoah generation of Austrian Jews exemplified the profound changes in Jewish identity that evolved in that country over the previous decades. Also in these elections, a second Sephardi list, the *Georgische Juden* (Georgian Jews), contested for the first time.

Atid retained its leadership after the elections in 2002 (11 mandates) and 2007⁴ (10 mandates). However, the latter election may be indicative of future changes at the IKG helm: the Sephardic-Bukhara party came second with five mandates, and a new party, *Gesher* (two mandates), founded by second-generation post-Shoah activists, entered IKG politics. In February 2012, nine months before the next elections, Muzicant resigned and suggested Oskar Deutsch as his successor. Deutsch was born in 1963 in Vienna and thus is the first IKG president born in post-Shoah Vienna and a young member of the postwar generation. Moreover, he is an observant Jew and the first postwar president always wearing a *kippa* when representing the Jewish community.

At the 2012 elections, *Atid* again came first with seven mandates, and Deutsch was elected president by all but three of the 24 board members. The Sephardic-Bukhara party came second again, but this time with only one mandate less than *Atid*. In all, the Sephardic lists significantly gained in strength, and, for the first time in IKG history, two Sephardic

Jews, one Bukharan and one Georgian, were elected vice-presidents. The younger generation did not run on a separate list as in the previous election. Nevertheless, its level of involvement was notable: many second-postwar-generation Jews were prominent members in the various competing lists, and were very active in the election campaigns—including using electronic social networks.

The Berlin community's leadership experienced two turning points. First, the 1992 communal elections, which took place following Heinz Galinski's death, marked the end of a 43-year-long period in which the community was headed by the same person, as well as the end of the era of *Alt-Deutsche* leadership. At these elections, Jerzy Kanak (1992–1997) became the first Berlin community chairman since 1945 whose roots were not in prewar Germany. Galinski's death also created a leadership vacuum that was never filled. During the twenty years after his death, there were six different community presidents, some of whom resigned due to frustration or were voted out of office, but all suffered from the internal conflicts and power struggles of their representative-assembly and executive boards. The struggles occurred on two fronts: between members of the Liberal and Orthodox streams, and between the "Russian" and the "German" Jews.

The 1997 elections were a second turning point, manifesting three major changes that had a profound impact on the future shape of community politics. First, FSU immigrants ran in them as candidates for the first time (12 years after they did so in Vienna). Second, a person born after 1945—Andreas Nachama—became president of the Berlin community (one year before the generational change in Vienna). Third, a Liberal Jew—once again, Nachama—became president (this never happened in Vienna).

Andreas Nachama was elected chairman in 1997 following a change in the voting system made just prior to these elections, from choosing one of a number of multi-candidate party lists to choosing representatives by voting for individuals who may be on separate lists. As Berlin community's first chairman who was Liberal-oriented, he was committed to fostering official acceptance of Liberal Judaism. Nachama, who was also a UPJ board member, was involved in the battle to break down the *Zentralrat's* resistance to the participation of non-Orthodox

groups in community life. Among his accomplishments as chairman was securing the contracts for Berlin's first two female cantors and the official support for an Egalitarian⁵ congregation in the city (Axelrod 2002, 424).

Nachama topped the polls again in the 2001 elections, receiving 1,602 out of 3,560 votes (only 34 percent of eligible voters) (haGalil onLine 2001), but did not have sufficient support in the Representative Assembly to be re-elected chairman. Thus, Orthodox-oriented Alexander Brenner (1,401 votes), who was born in Poland and was in Siberia during the Shoah, was elected chairman. His term lasted only two years, until the representative assembly's members resigned en masse due to internal struggles. These were mainly personal disputes over financial and management issues, disagreements between Liberal and Orthodox and between "Russian" and "German" assembly members, and the community's financial problems. The atmosphere within the community leadership was described as "completely shattered," where "insults and door-slaming are regular scenes in assembly sessions" (Emmerich 2003, 18).

New elections were held in 2003, and again voter turnout was low (35 percent). Liberal-oriented Albert Meyer, whose family was rooted in prewar Germany, was elected chairman of the community. His term was marked by a series of no-confidence motions and lawsuits, many of them filed by Arkadi Schneiderman, the community's vice-chairman and a former close Meyer ally. Schneiderman had actively promoted Meyer in the election campaign preceding these elections, but within a few months, board meetings saw ongoing struggles between Meyer and Schneiderman, an FSU immigrant who moved to Berlin in 1976. Meyer resigned as chairman, declaring his opponents "a bunch of members of Russian descent, who do not represent the majority of the new immigrants, but were mainly interested in taking over the leadership of the community" (Associated Press 2005).

In November 2005, without new communal or representative assembly elections, the board replaced Meyer with Gideon Joffe, the FSU immigrants' favored candidate (Axelrod 2007). Schneiderman remained vice-chairman. Joffe's term was similarly characterized by many communal disputes. Most of the battles within the community's

leadership were over power and the question of how to deal with the Russian community members. But it was not wholly about communal leadership; it was also about the nature of German-Jewish identity. Broadly, while German Jews identified themselves as Jews first and German second, many Russian immigrants saw themselves foremost as Russian.

The conflict between the German- and the Russian-speaking board members was clearly reflected in Meyer's widely reported statement on the eve of the 2007 elections: "We are not prepared to accept that the current leadership wants to turn the old, deeply traditional Berlin community into a Russian-speaking culture club. We will no longer accept a clique of egoistic, power-oriented people sometimes employing Stalinist methods driving away and incapacitating all the others, who stand for the German-Jewish tradition and the role of the community as a religious community." He also proposed establishing a new Jewish community that would not include "the pseudo-Bolsheviks, who want to turn the community into a Russian club" (Connolly 2007, 23). This proposal did not get very far, however, effectively collapsing after the 2007 elections.

During the election campaign, the candidates expressed their indignance over the internal conflicts and called for community unity. However, their mutual distrust was so deep that the casting of lots was necessary to determine the order in which the candidates would introduce themselves at an official pre-election event (Gessler 2007).

In those elections, Alexander Brenner came first with 1,628 out of 3,297 votes (a 34.5 percent turnout). However, Frida (Lala) Süsskind, who came second with 1,569 votes, was elected community chairman by the community board. Her *Atid* list's election campaign focused primarily on two issues: covering the financial deficit and preserving community unity by overcoming the split between the established postwar community and the new immigrants, and between the various religious denominations. Interestingly, *Atid* included many former immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe and the FSU, but significantly, only those who had come to Germany before 1989 (Alteingesessenen⁶ and "old FSU immigrants").

The 2011–2012 elections once again revealed the mutual distrust between the various communal actors: even after two election rounds, the election outcomes were contested. At the first elections on December 4, 2011, which had a turnout of only 27 percent, Alexander Brenner came first with 1,078 votes, followed by Gideon Joffe (1,043) and Sergey Lagodinsky (1,034), a member of the second postwar generation and an FSU immigrant. This round of voting was, however, disqualified because of irregularities. At the second election round on January 22, 2012, the turnout was once again only 27 percent. This time Joffe came first with 1,276 votes, Lagodinsky came fifth (1,001), and Brenner 17th (885). This vote was once again contested. The contestants claimed that the voting by mail had been manipulated, since its results differed markedly from those of the votes in the polling stations. After an extended meeting, however, the communal arbitration committee decided not to repeat the elections a third time. Consequently, Joffe was elected community chairman.

The *Zentralrat*, in contrast to the Berlin community, did not witness struggles for leadership. Moreover, despite the fact that only a small minority of Germany's Jewish population was *Alt-Deutsch* and that the leadership in Germany's Jewish communities had already passed into the hands of postwar generation members, until the 2010 elections the presidency of the *Zentralrat* remained under the control of *Alt-Deutsche* members of the war generation: Werner Nachmann (1969–1988), Heinz Galinski (1988–1992), Ignatz Bubis (1992–1999), Paul Spiegel (1999–2006), and Charlotte Knobloch (2006–2010).

On November 28, 2010, Dieter Graumann, a member of the postwar generation, was elected *Zentralrat* president. He was followed on November 30, 2014, by Josef Schuster. Graumann and Schuster, as well as their Viennese counterpart Muzicant were born in Israel to Shoah survivors who returned with their families to Europe in the 1950s, thus presenting a different socialization background than their predecessors as presidents.

4.2 Demography

The developments in the communities' leadership frameworks were directly influenced by the communities' demographic developments. The decline in the populations of the IKG and the German Jewish communities that threatened the Jewish future in both countries after the DP's mass emigration of the early 1950s was halted in the 1990s, due to the influx of immigrants from the FSU. Membership in Germany's Jewish communities even quadrupled after the fall of the communist regimes in 1989, thanks to Germany's liberal immigration policy toward Jews from the FSU. This made Germany's Jewish population the third largest in Europe, after Great Britain and France, and the fastest-growing in the world.

Immigration of FSU Jews to Germany was initiated by the last GDR government in 1990 and extended to the united Germany in 1991. In April 1990, GDR prime minister Lothar de Maizière declared that "for humanitarian reasons and for the first time in its history, the GDR government is offering domicile for a limited number of foreign Jewish citizens threatened by persecution or discrimination" (Spülbeck 1997, 15). His statement was a gesture of goodwill in response to a sudden upsurge in racist persecution in the Soviet Union (Dennis and Kolinsky 2004, 177). By October 3, 1990, however, the GDR ceased to exist following the formal reunification of the two Germanys. On January 9, 1991, the FRG and the *Länder* decided to officially base Jewish immigration on the *Kontingentflüchtlingsgesetz* (Refugee Quota Law). Jewish immigrants who had come to Germany between June 1, 1990, and February 15, 1991, were retroactively accepted as quota refugees. This was largely a symbolic moral and political act by the FRG, which had heretofore defined itself as a "non-immigration country." According to social historian Robin Ostow, "the press referred to those who were to be admitted as the *Glaubensbrüder* (brothers in faith) and/or descendants of Nazi victims. By taking them in, Germany could perform an act of restitution, which would implicitly lead to moral purification and lend the newly unified state legitimacy" (2003, 111–112). According to this law, any person of "Jewish nationality" or someone with at least one Jewish parent,

together with his/her spouse and children, was eligible for inclusion in this quota and was granted an unlimited residence permit (in the Soviet Union, Jewish nationality was officially recognized and recorded in the passport, and Jewish nationality did not depend on the person having a Jewish mother, as in the case of the Jewish Halakha).⁷ Thus, interestingly, German law is more restrictive concerning immigration because of Jewish descent than the Israeli Law of Return, which grants unchallenged immigration for persons having at least one Jewish grandparent, and their spouses and children.

The state decided where to settle the immigrants according to the *Königsteiner Schlüssel* (Königstein key), a key to the distribution of “burdens” among the different *Länder*, according to an annual state and *Länder* commission calculation. The Jews who settled in the cities to which they were assigned were eligible for state financial aid⁸—a right they would forfeit once they left those assigned domiciles. Consequently, some Jewish communities remained primarily German-speaking, while others became predominantly Russian-speaking. Moreover, many new Jewish communities were established where Jews had hitherto hardly settled. In all, between 1989 and 2004, when the immigration restrictions were introduced, 219,604 individuals entered Germany under the Refugee Quota Law (Haug 2005, 6). Thus, in the early 1990s, Germany became the third major receiving country for FSU emigrants alongside Israel and the United States. Indeed, from 2002 to 2004, it temporarily became the top receiving country, as more emigrants went to Germany than to Israel (see Tolts 2011, 3).

Yet only about 80,000 Jewish refugees (approximately 40 percent of the total) registered in the Jewish communities. Many refugees were ineligible for membership, since they were not Jewish according to Halakhic criteria, while others, especially members of the younger generation, preferred not to join a Jewish community. The FSU population thus consisted of relatively high numbers of middle-aged and elderly people (Doomerick 1997, 74; Schoeps et al. 1999, 41). Nevertheless, in the early 1990s, the Jewish community age pyramid indicated a process of community rejuvenation and a strengthening of the young and middle-age cohorts in the over-aged German Jewish population. Although net immigration stayed constant, this process reversed at the end of the 1990s, due largely to the FSU Jews’ low birth rates (Dietz et al. 2002,

44). In all, between 1989 and 2014, the number of Jews registered in the various communities in Germany increased by 262.4 percent—from 27,711 to 100,437. However, the 0–40 age group grew by only 145.7 percent, while the 41-and-above age group grew by 353.2 percent. While immigration from the FSU thus halted the community’s numerical decline, the number of community members not originating in the FSU continued to shrink—from 28,081 in 1990 to 6,363 in 2007⁹ (ZWST 2007, 2). The skewing of the members’ age pyramid was particularly dramatic: In 1989, 44 percent of the members were over the age of 51, in 2008 their share increased to 55 and in 2014 to 59 percent (see Table 4.1).

This inverted age pyramid of the German Jewish community is directly linked to the FSU immigrants’ geographic origin. The majority of the FSU immigrants came from Ukraine and the Russian Federation, and only a small percentage from Central Asia and the Trans-Caucasus (according to Tolts [2009, 5], the numbers from these places reached 92,700, 45,000, 5,000, and 2,200 respectively, out of 166,300 arriving between 1989 and 2001). Over 95 percent of the Jews in the European parts of the Soviet Union lived in cities, mostly the capitals and other

TABLE 4.1 · Age Distribution of the Population in the Jewish Communities which are Members of the *Zentralrat*—Comparison of Growth 1989–2014

Age group	Members			Growth 1989–2014		Percentage (%)		
	1989	2008	2014	total	%	1989	2008	2014
0–11	2,758	5,933	4,765	2,238	72.8	10.0	5.6	4.7
12–21	2,339	9,616	7,088	5,326	203.0	8.4	9.0	7.1
22–30	2,692	9,175	8,617	6,336	220.1	9.7	8.6	8.6
31–40	4,335	10,356	9,323	5,079	115.1	15.6	9.7	9.3
41–50	3,588	12,810	10,869	7,634	202.9	13.0	12.0	10.8
51–60	3,108	16,620	14,087	11,496	353.2	11.2	15.6	14.0
61–70	4,044	18,398	18,275	13,229	351.9	14.6	17.3	18.2
71–80	2,968	15,769	17,396	15,334	486.1	10.7	14.8	17.3
81<	1,879	7,758	10,017	7,752	433.1	6.8	7.3	10.0

Source: ZWST 2013; 2015

major urban centers (with 54 percent in Moscow and St. Petersburg [Leningrad]) (Remennick 2007, 17). These Jews typically had fewer children than the Jews in the Asian parts of the Soviet Union—until the late 1980s the fertility rate was 1.5, and by 1994 it had dropped even further, to 0.8 (Remennick 2007, 16). Contributing to this low fertility rate were low fertility norms in Russia, modest living standards, and most importantly, a strong emphasis on guaranteeing their offspring a good upbringing that involved great parental investment in each child.

On January 1, 2005, the Refugee Quota Law was replaced by the new, more restrictive rules of the *Zuwanderungsgesetz* (Immigration Act). Jewish immigrants are now required to apply to enter Germany based on the *Aufenthaltsgesetz* (Residence Act). With this change Jewish immigrants lost their privileged quota status and need to fulfill special acceptance criteria in order to obtain a residence permit. Jewish applicants are permitted to immigrate to Germany only if they have German-language skills that satisfy at least the A1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, can prove that they will be accepted in a Jewish community in Germany, and can prove that they will not be dependent on social welfare support.

This virtually halted Jewish immigration and put a stop to Jewish population growth at a time when the communities were already struggling with the significant emigration of young people and low birthrates. According to statistics published by the ZWST, the number of FSU Jews registering as new members of German Jewish communities decreased from 6,597 in 2002 to 1,971 in 2006 and 704 in 2009. The statistics also show a continuous decrease from its peak of 107,794 community members in December 2006 to 102,135 in December 2012 and 100,437 in December 2014 (ZWST 2015, 1) (see Table 4.2).

TABLE 4.2 · Population in the Jewish Communities which
are Members of the *Zentralrat*

Year	1989	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2009	2012	2014
Members	27,711	29,089	53,797	87,756	107,677	107,794	107,330	104,241	102,135	100,437

Source: ZWST 2013; 2015

According to Heuberger (2008), in addition to the registered community members, an estimated 90,000 non-affiliated Jews live in Germany. This accords with the estimated total of 200,000 Jews published in the 2007 *American Jewish Yearbook* by the Germany-based journalist Toby Axelrod (2007b, 461), who specializes in German Jewish life. In the same publication, the leading Jewish demographer Sergio DellaPergola (2007, 596) presents his estimate of only 120,000 Jews in Germany. In a discussion with the author, he explained that he takes the official numbers from the *Zentralrat* and adds a certain surplus. His estimates for 2013 were 118,000 Jews in Germany (DellaPergola 2013, 25).

The non-affiliated include Jews who are recognized according to the *Halakha*, as well as those who are not. Some non-affiliated Halakhically-recognized Jews are FSU immigrants unfamiliar with Jewish religious practice and community life. Others are *Alteingesessene* and FSU Jews, who are either afraid to identify as Jews (many of whom are elderly), persons who feel that the official communities do not represent them, or those who do not wish to pay the religious tax. In addition, the Jews among the quite important international community (e.g., Israelis, members of international companies) are also often not affiliated with any Jewish community represented in the *Zentralrat*. In view of the diversity of the non-affiliated Jews, the estimates of Heuberger and Axelrod, who are both active in and actively monitor the Jewish communities in Germany, seem more plausible than DellaPergola's lower figures.

In Vienna, the situation was different. Jewish population growth was far lower than in Germany, as immigration was significantly less. Nevertheless, the number of community members has remained relatively stable since the 1980s, with a slight increase since 1988 (see Table 4.3). Most importantly, the average age dropped to below 50.

The immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union, which began in the 1970s, continued in the 1980s and, in smaller numbers, thereafter as

TABLE 4.3 · IKG Membership after 1980

1981	1988	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2015
6,527	6,069	6,730	6,841	6,594	6,845	7,182	7,548	7,680	7,787

Source: IKG Mitgliederservice 2009; 2012; 2012(b); 2015.

well. Jews who settled in Vienna in the 1970s now brought family members and friends, who likewise dropped out in Vienna en route to Israel or else came back to Vienna after a brief stay in Israel. By 2006, 3,000 Jews from the Soviet Union had settled in Vienna, including about 2,000 from Central Asia (mainly from Bukhara), 750 from Georgia, 150 from the western Soviet Union, and 100 from the Caucasus. This immigration significantly impacted the age pyramid in the IKG. According to Friedmann, these mainly Sephardi immigrants “came as whole families, showing mostly three generations, and had at least three, and in some cases even more than five children” (2007, 89). Moreover, Benni Gilkarov (2007), who is responsible for youth matters in the IKG, reports that, for instance, among the Bukharan community, there are 10–12 births every month. At last, even the ethnic barriers within the Jewish community began to crumble, resulting in broader marriage prospects. The increasingly more commonly accepted Ashkenazi-Sephardi “mixed marriages” helped reduce the emigration of younger Jews.

These changes in age and family structure contributed to a natural increase. In 1990, for the first time since 1945, the IKG registered more births than deaths, and most of its members were under the age of 50. Statistics from 2015 show that of the 7,787 IKG members, approximately 62.4 percent are under the age of 50 (see Table 4.4). This significantly contrasts with the average age in Germany, as shown in Table 4.1.

Estimates of the total Jewish population in Vienna (IKG members and Jews at large) vary greatly. DellaPergola (2006, 586), basing his data on the official membership and information from the official census, which included the question of religious affiliation, and an educated guess about non-disclosed Jewishness, calculates there are 9,000 Jews living in Austria as a whole. Other knowledgeable people estimate the Vienna Jewish population at 12,000–15,000 (Silberman 2006, 461; and outcome of several interviews undertaken for this study). Chief Rabbi Eisenberg (2005) estimates that a total of 15,000–20,000 Jews live in Vienna.

DellaPergola suspects that the high numbers stem from the political interests of the Jewish community. His low number, on the other hand, is partly based on the information extracted from the census, which is prone to give too-low values. Even so religious affiliation was a mandatory entry, untrue or missing data, or their explicit denial, were

TABLE 4.4 · Age Distribution of the IKG Members, 2006 and 2015

Age group	Members		Percentage	
	2006	2015	2006	2015
0-10	718	931	10.4	12.0
11-20	740	1,040	10.7	13.4
21-30	987	890	14.3	11.4
31-40	875	1,132	12.7	14.5
41-50	795	861	11.5	11.1
51-60	1,075	894	15.6	11.5
61-70	601	1,040	8.7	13.4
71-80	510	512	7.4	6.6
81<	602	487	8.7	6.3
Total	6,903	7,787		

Source: IKG Mitgliederservice 2006; 2015.

not penalized as the law would have required. Since all the recognized religious denominations had the legal right to this information at the personal level, people who wanted to avoid being asked for contributions denied their religious affiliation. For a number of Jews, the memory of the Nazi era led them to leave this entry unanswered or enter “no affiliation.” Moreover, the last census dates from 2001, and a legal change in 2006 abolished this method of information-gathering and replaced it with a regular statistical analysis of data already available in administrative registers. Religious affiliation is no longer recorded.

Besides those Jews who do not want to pay their contribution to the IKG and those wary of declaring their Jewishness through affiliation with the Jewish community, the non-affiliated include Jews who define themselves as secular and do not want to join the religiously oriented community; Haredi Jews who maintain their own separate institutions and hence do not see the need to belong to the IKG; assimilated Jews; and some who qualify as Jews according to the *Halakha* but are unaware of it.¹⁰ In addition, Jews in the international community in Vienna (e.g., Israelis and members of international organizations or companies) are also often not affiliated with the IKG.

Whichever estimate is correct, the size is small and is therefore problematic for the Vienna Jewish community. Moreover, there seems little prospect of future growth due to Austria's restrictive immigration policy. Consequently, IKG presidents Ariel Muzicant and Oskar Deutsch tried to persuade the Austrian government to ease that policy to facilitate the immigration of young educated Jews, but so far unsuccessfully. At the same time, they tried to convince such Jews to move to Vienna. After his election as interim IKG president, Deutsch stated: "We aim to organize a targeted immigration program. We want to bring people to Vienna who have a chance to work. For example, as nurses or in a kindergarten. We do not want new immigrants to depend on the Jewish community or social welfare for support. Recently, Dr. Muzicant was in Hungary. The situation is bad in Hungary because of the policies of Jobbik [the far-right party]. Some Jewish families have immigrated to Austria" (Weinthal and Laster 2012).

In Vienna and Germany, there are also groups of Israeli¹¹ and American Jews. They will, however, not be discussed here, since they are quite uninvolved in the local communities. The American Jews came to Germany or Austria for business or, in the case of Vienna, as representatives to one of its UN institutions; alternatively, they stayed on in Germany after the departure of the Allied troops. The Israeli Jews mainly came for economic reasons, security concerns, or career opportunities. Many of them are young artists, for whom cosmopolitan and affordable Berlin is particularly attractive. Moreover, for Israelis whose parents or grandparents were German citizens before 1933, Germany is especially appealing, because they are eligible for German citizenship and thus are entitled to German social services, including free studies. According to article 116 (2) of the 1949 German Basic Law, former German citizens who were stripped of their citizenship between January 30, 1933, and May 8, 1945, on political, racial, or religious grounds, and their descendants, have the right to renaturalization. According to the Federal Statistical Office of Germany, 4,313 Israelis were given German citizenship in 2006—3.5 percent of all naturalized individuals in that year (Genderbüro 2007). American and Israeli Jews are by and large not members of the official communities. Their Jewish social activities take place in Israeli or American settings, or among groups of friends, and

they are usually not involved in community life (with the exception of some professionals). The Israeli community in the two countries, in particular, keeps itself separated from the veteran Jewish communities—a phenomenon that in general characterizes Israeli communities abroad (see Rebhun and Lev Ari 2010, 120–130). This pattern of interaction is reflected in the reactions of two Israeli-German radio editors who broadcast weekly programs for Israelis on German radio. When asked about the Jewish-German Babel TV station, they replied that they did not know about it. They emphasized that they were Israelis and thus interested solely in reporting about their compatriots, not about the Jewish community in Germany (Jahn and Zimmermann 2008).

Many Israelis do not join the official Jewish communities, since they have no connection to Diaspora Judaism. Paradoxically, even Israelis who have chosen to leave Israel regard “Diaspora Jews” with reservations and sometimes even disdain (Ilani 2008). They are likewise oblivious to the definition of a Jew as a member of a Jewish community (Heuberger 2008). In contrast to the local Jews, Israelis do not see communal membership as an expression of belonging to the Jewish nation.¹² For the secular Israelis—who constitute the majority of expatriates in Germany and Vienna—identification with Israel is the key element in their identity. Thus they associate with other Israelis rather than with Jews from other nationalities. They engage in Israeli-Hebrew cultural activities and conduct their activities in Hebrew, attending only a few specific community activities that interest them. In Berlin, the Israelis have even established their own organizations (e.g., Kesher—Israelis in Berlin), run various websites offering news from Israel, help fellow Israelis in Germany, and operate weekly radio shows (Kol Berlin and Cactus TV) on a local public access channel whose goal is to provide information about activities held by and for Israelis in Berlin and cover significant issues in German-Israeli relations.

4.3 Jewish Group Identity

Variations in Jewish group identity

Both Vienna's and Germany's communities absorbed a large number of FSU Jews, yet the immigrants had fundamentally dissimilar profiles. Alexander Friedmann, who as head of the IKG social commission established in 1994 the psychosocial center ESRA,¹³ summarized the differences between the local and the FSU Jews, as well as those between the Jews from the European and the Asian FSU (see Table 4.5). Although this comparison relates to the IKG, it is equally applicable to German Jewry, with the only difference being the average religiosity, which is significantly lower among the local German Jewish population than among that in Vienna. Friedmann's summary sheds considerable light on the differences between Jewish populations in Vienna and Germany. In examining the table, it should be borne in mind that, as noted earlier, the number of FSU immigrants and their proportion of the total were much higher in Germany than in Vienna: whereas in the latter, the ratio of FSU (and their descendants) to local Jews is about equal, in Germany's Jewish communities the vast majority are FSU immigrants.¹⁴ It should also be noted that Vienna's FSU Jews originated mainly in Bukhara and Georgia, whereas those in Germany hailed from Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

Thus most immigrants to Vienna had a strong religious and ethnic Jewish identity, whereas those to Germany had primarily an ethnic identity. Moreover, many Jewish immigrants from the European Soviet Union expressed ambivalence about Jewish religious practice and cultural traditions (Dietz 2003, 13), as in the Soviet Union their identity had been defined mostly in terms of Soviet nationality policy and anti-Semitism (Tress 1995, 48).

The difference in Jewish identity perceptions is a result of the national politics in the various FSU regions. The Jews from Central Asia and the Caucasus lived in remote and less urbanized areas, where Soviet rule was weaker; they "had been spared to a very high extent

TABLE 4.5 • Comparing the Different Parts of Vienna's Jewish Community

	Local community	Immigrants from former USSR			
		European SU	Georgia	Caucasus region	Central Asia
Religious type	Ashkenazi	Ashkenazi	Georgian-Sephardi	Gorski-Sephardi	Bukhara-Sephardi
Average religiosity	+++	+	++++	++++	+++++
Traditionalism	+++	+	++++	+++	++++
Cultural background	European Urban Christian	Russian Urban Orthodox Communist	Georgian Urban Orthodox	Caucasus Partly urban Azeri Turkish Muslim	Asiatic Partly urban Farsi/Turk/Mongol Muslim
Average age	50.3	59.8	44.8	39.0	31.3
Avg. family size	3.8	3.2	7.2	5.1	10.3
Languages	German English Language of country of origin	Russian Some Yiddish	Russian Georgian Hebrew	Russian Chechen Some Hebrew	Russian Bukhara Some Hebrew

Source: Friedmann 2007, 89

from the Soviet assimilatory policy and never had a communist orientation.” By contrast, the Jews from the European Soviet Union “had been strongly subjected to the Soviet assimilatory policy and still have quite strong emotional ties to the communist system” (Friedmann 2007, 89). Thus during the communist regime, the former managed to keep many of their ethnic and religious (Orthodox) traditions and did not try to assimilate into the mainstream (Remennick 2007, 18), whereas the latter were in general stripped of knowledge of the Jewish religion and tradition.¹⁵

The governing communist elite perceived religion as “opium of the people,” as reflected in the educational system. The Jews from the European Soviet Union were denied religious education and access to Jewish and religious institutions. By the early 1950s, the system of Jewish

schools and cultural institutions, as well as synagogues and yeshivas, was almost completely destroyed (Remennick 2007b, 288). Moreover, state-sponsored anti-Semitism led Jews to seek ways to protect themselves, and one of the ways to do so was by hiding their Jewish identity as best they could. Nonetheless, official identification (through the “fifth point” on internal passports, and nationality statements in most other documents, such as medical records and library cards) marked every Jew as such, whether or not he perceived himself as one. Thus in the Soviet Union, as well as in the communist satellite states, Jews were seen as Jews by others, irrespective of how they regarded themselves, and were subjected to anti-Semitism. Jewish identity was kept alive in the Soviet period largely through this external pressure and marking. It was completely divorced from its historical and religious tradition (Deutsch-Kornblatt 2002, 175). The Jews had become an ethnic rather than a religious minority (for a more detailed study on Jewish identity in the Soviet Union, see Ro'i 2003; Friedgut 2003).

The mainly Central Asian and Trans-Caucasus Jews who moved to Vienna, by contrast, not only had a strong religious identity but were also Zionists with a strong Jewish identity. They had left the Soviet Union before the fall of communism to immigrate to Israel, at a time when moving to Israel still entailed a great hardship. These immigrants were generally traditional Jews, and even though many young Jews who grew up in Vienna became non-observant, they had started out in and experienced traditional Jewish homes. The importance of Jewish tradition for these youths is reflected in the relatively low percentage of interfaith marriages among the Sephardi community. According to Rabbi Nechemia Rotenberg (2008), religious principal of the Zvi Perez Chajes (ZPC) IKG school and director of the *Zehut* Center for Jewish Culture and Identity, “even if someone is completely non-observant, he will marry a Jewish partner; the Bukhara community and families do not tolerate mixed marriages.”

The immigrants to Germany, on the other hand, grew up in assimilated homes, where mixed marriages were and still are common. Those who maintained some Jewish identity found other outlets to express their Jewishness, such as speaking Yiddish, family histories, Jewish humor, and pride and interest in literature written by or about Jews

(Lagodinsky 2007, 6). Lagodinsky (2007) explains that they adopted an ethnic-Jewish self-identification, according to which the “Jewish people are first and foremost people, and people can maintain their identity also without religion.” For them, the Jewish religion is hardly a factor in Jewishness. Studies and surveys have shown that the FSU Jews in Germany perceived as irrelevant the components of the universal Jewish canon, such as belief in God, knowledge of Jewish history and holidays, circumcision, the imperative to marry a Jew, religious rites of passage, and Jewish education (for studies on Jewish identity of FSU Jews, see Brym and Ryvkina 1994; Gitelman 2003; Remennick 2007b). The major elements in their Jewish identity are knowledge of history and culture and, especially, feeling pride in one’s Jewishness (Chervyakov et al. 2003, 62).

This detaching of religion from Jewish identity stands in stark contrast to the views of the local German and Austrian Jews or the Jews from Bukhara and the Trans-Caucasus, where Jewish identity combines both religion and the feeling of belonging to the Jewish people.

The FSU Jews in both countries, however, also show a significant similarity: they more openly manifest pride in belonging to the Jewish people than the local Jews. According to Berlin’s Orthodox community rabbi Yitzhak Ehrenberg (2006), “in an event organized by Russian Jews, there are usually more Jewish symbols, such as the Star of David or a Torah scroll, than in an event organized by their German and Austrian counterparts.”

Strong ethnic-Jewish identification is also manifest in the younger generation of immigrants in Germany—those who were born in Germany or migrated as young children. Having received Jewish education in Jewish schools, Sunday schools, or Jewish youth centers in Germany, the Jewish religion and culture has been incorporated into their identities (Belkin 2008), but they remained secular.

The immigration of the FSU Jews brought about significant changes in the Vienna and German Jewish communities. In its political, cultural, and social community discourse, the post-1989 Jewish community in Germany was now divided into three groups: “German Jews” (Alt-Deutsche and their descendants), *Alteingesessene*, and the “new immigrants” or “Russian Jews” (immigrants from the FSU who moved

to Germany after 1989). Vienna's Jewry, in its community discourse, is divided into two groups only: "Viennese Jews" (all the Jews who are not members of the last FSU immigration wave, although when one speaks specifically of an *Alt-Wiener* Jew or his descendants, this fact is automatically underscored), and "Russian Jews."

This difference might be a result of the fact that both the non-FSU immigrants to Vienna and the *Alt-Wiener* were more similar in their Jewish identities than the *Alteingesessenen* and the *Alt-Deutsche*. In Vienna, both the non-FSU immigrants and most *Alt-Wiener* were Orthodox-oriented, whereas in Germany, the *Alteingesessene* were Orthodox, and the *Alt-Deutsche* were either Liberal-oriented or secular. Yet the Jewish identity of both Vienna's and Germany's local Jews varied significantly from that of the "Russian" Jews. In Vienna, although similarly Orthodox-oriented and traditional, the FSU immigrants shared a Sephardi identity and culture, as opposed to the Ashkenazi Viennese. By contrast, in Germany, the vast majority of the FSU Jews had a Jewish identity and culture significantly different from that of the local Jews. Thus once more the Jewish communities saw a division into "local Jews" and "Jews from Eastern Europe," as had been the case before World War II with the *Ostjuden*, and in the late 1940s–1960s with the DPs and immigrants.

The FSU immigration, like previous Jewish immigration waves from Eastern and Central Europe, also had a significant impact on the religious character of the communities. However, as must be highlighted, their influence was not always the main driving force behind communal changes. Intra-communal developments prior to the immigration waves initiated many of the changes, and the FSU immigration boosted them. Vienna's community became more religiously oriented and ethnically heterogeneous with the influx of the Sephardi Jews, while maintaining its Orthodox orientation. Germany's community maintained its relatively ethnically homogenous character—remaining almost entirely Ashkenazi—but became more secular as well as more religiously heterogeneous, with the rise of the Liberal congregations alongside the Orthodox communities.

With the immigration of the FSU Jews, who had little or no knowledge of Jewish religion and tradition, the Jewish community in Germany

became in the 1990s almost completely secular. At the same time, the community also saw the rebirth of Liberal Judaism. As the Jewish chapels closed down with the 1994 withdrawal of the Allied troops, local Jews who had found their spiritual home in them united to hold Liberal or Reform services and study groups. These later developed into formal Liberal and Egalitarian congregations, such as *Kehila Chadascha* (later called the Egalitarian Minyan) in Frankfurt (1994), *Beth Shalom* in Munich (1995), *Liberale Jüdische Gemeinde Hannover* (1995), and *Gesher LaMassoret* in Cologne (1996). FSU immigrants, who hitherto had no religious affiliation, boosted the size and numbers of these congregations, as their relative openness attracted many secular Jews, especially Jews in mixed marriages.

The Liberal congregations later joined the UPJ, which, by 2005, represented 4,500 affiliated liberal Jews in 16 congregations in Germany. According to Daniel Kempin-Edelmann (2009), cantor at the Egalitarian Minyan in the Jewish community of Frankfurt am Main, “the number of ‘Egalitarian Jews’ is unknown, but there are already several male and female cantors and rabbis, graduates from Aleph/Jewish renewal,¹⁶ who were officially recognized by the General [Liberal] Rabbinical Conference, and are leading congregations and groups of prayer.”

The Liberal and Egalitarian congregations were established independently of the local *Einheitsgemeinden*, with the exception of the Egalitarian congregations in Frankfurt and Berlin that became part of their local communities. Moreover, the Frankfurt community is exceptional in that its three different religious streams’ prayer rooms—for the Orthodox, *Chabad*, and Egalitarian Minyan congregations—are literally located under one common roof (in the Westend Synagogue). This “Frankfurt model” is the result of Frankfurt community chairman Ignatz Bubis’s (1978–1981 and 1983–1999) decision and vision of religious plurality.

Orthodox Jewry also became more diversified once the Hasidic *Chabad* movement and the Lauder Foundation¹⁷ opened their offices in Germany in 1996, independently from the official communities. By engaging in or sponsoring activities, especially among the new immigrants, they aimed at bringing Jews back to their traditional way of life. They therefore also established synagogues, primary schools, yeshivas, and other educational and ritual institutions to teach Judaism and

strengthen Jewish identity. Nevertheless, those who lead such a life still constitute a small minority within German Jewry. In these two groups, it is mainly the religious leaders and a handful of families who came from abroad with the aim of strengthening the local Jews' Jewish identity who are Orthodox observant Jews. Also, in the official Orthodox communities, the religious leaders are generally foreign rabbis whose congregations are non-observant.

This stands in contrast to Vienna Jewry, where the Haredi and the Orthodox observant families and their leaders are mainly local Jews who were born and raised in their respective streams of Judaism, or who became observant and consequently joined one of the groups. It has been a common phenomenon in the past three decades, especially for young Jews who have become observant with the guidance of *Misrachi's* Rabbi Josef Pardes, to then proceed to join one of Vienna's Haredi groups. In Germany, this phenomenon does not exist.

In general, the Jewish community in Vienna became more religiously oriented since the late 1970s. Each consecutive generation accorded more importance to Jewish religion and traditions; this is true for the IKG leadership and the Jewish population at large. The importance attached by the postwar IKG leadership to religion and religious practice is clearly reflected in communal developments immediately following the 1981 elections. The first major pledge of the postwar generation board members was that the IKG's religious services should be open to all the Jews in Vienna. In doing so, they introduced a fundamental change in the IKG's self-perception: from a strictly religious community catering only to its members to a religious-ethnic community responsible for all (Halakhically accepted) Jews in Vienna. Among other things, this led to a reversal of the IKG's long-standing policy of denying religious rites, such as burial in the community cemetery, to Halakhic Jews who were not IKG members.¹⁸ This leadership also established schools and other education institutions to disseminate knowledge of Judaism. The demand for formal and informal education institutions and venues increased markedly with each generation.

Consequently, Orthodox religious life has been significantly strengthened, even if the majority is more traditional than strictly observant. The FSU Jews and their descendants have markedly boosted this tendency towards more religiosity. Their joining the Vienna Jewish

community raised the share of traditional and observant Jews. Religious cultural and educational institutions established by the FSU Jews or for them by the IKG further helped increase the dissemination of knowledge of Judaism. The many kosher facilities they established facilitated the observance of the Jewish dietary laws, making kosher food more available and attractive to the local Jewish population. Last but not least, the religious congregations and synagogues they established also contributed to increase the community's religious orientation and its ethnic heterogeneity. Today the Jewish landscape consists of 11 separate religious groups (out of which 10 are Orthodox): five Haredi congregations—*Agudas Israel* (Khal Israel), *Ohel Moshe*, *Machsike Hadass*, *Khal Chassidim* and *Chabad-Lubavitch*; two Modern Orthodox groups—the Zionist *Misrachi* and the community around the Modern Orthodox *Stadttempel*; Sephardi Bukhara and Georgian communities; a *Chabad*-linked Bukharan community; and the progressive or Reform *Or Chadasch*.

The founding of a Progressive Jewish community in 1990 was a new and significant element in Vienna, where no Liberal houses of prayer had existed before World War II. The growth of an international community in Vienna around its UN institutions had brought enough Conservative and Reform Jews from elsewhere to facilitate the creation of a congregation affiliated with the UPJ, *Or Chadasch*. The IKG, which is officially Orthodox, recognized *Or Chadasch* as an organization but not as a religious congregation, since it was not in conformance with its Orthodox orientation and since such recognition would have been unacceptable to the Haredi groups, and the IKG has a strong interest in maintaining its unity. Yet many *Or Chadasch* members who are Halakhically Jewish are IKG members. According to *Or Chadasch* Vice-president Eleonore Lappin (2007), in all there are only some 150 registered *Or Chadasch* members, not all of whom are Halakhically Jewish, and thus they constitute less than 2 percent of IKG members.

In May 1994, the journal *Jüdische Einheit* described the IKG as “probably the most heterogeneous [community] in the world: under a common roof one can find Ashkenazim and Sephardim, atheists and agnostics, *Chassidim* and *Mitnagdim*, Haredi and less Haredi, people upholding various rites and people without rites, reformists, liberals, conservatives, and Orthodox.” Indeed, the Vienna Jewry gained (mainly

Orthodox) religious diversity thanks to the immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe, cultural and ethnic diversity thanks to the Jews who immigrated from the FSU since the 1970s, and increased religiosity in each new generation.

The Shoah in Jewish group identity

Whereas the FSU Jews in Vienna and Germany differed significantly in their religious and cultural group identity, they showed a similar outlook on the Shoah that in turn differed from that of the local Jews. Rather than Shoah memories, World War II memories arousing feelings of pride and triumph had been central elements in the formation of the Soviet Jews' group identity in the past decades. The immigration of FSU Jews thus affected not only the religious and cultural identity of the Vienna and German Jewries but also the role of the Shoah in their group identities. The influence of the FSU immigrants was not, however, the sole cause for changes in the salience and centrality of the Shoah in the identities of both communities: significant psychological developments also occurred among the local postwar generations. As will be shown below, by the 1990s these processes had led to a heightening of the Jews' self-confidence and a decrease in the role of the Shoah as a connecting link. The latter was a consequence of the differing views of the local and the FSU Jews on the Shoah—which could be summarized as the “victor vs. victim feeling”—and the coming of age of the second and third postwar generations.

With the exception of a minority of victims of the Third Reich (only a relatively small fraction of the Soviet Union's overall territory was occupied by the Third Reich, and in those regions only very few Jews survived), the FSU immigrants had little or no Shoah component in their identity. They had not been personally affected and had little knowledge or consciousness of it. Moreover, the subject was taboo in the official Soviet discourse, historiography, and academic studies. It was not denied that six million Jews were killed or that Jews were singled out for annihilation, but the Shoah was seen as part of a larger phenomenon of the murder of civilians, whether Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Gypsies, or other nationalities (see Gitelman 1990).

The typical Soviet policy regarding the Shoah was not to emphasize the Jewish genocide but focus on Nazi Germany's atrocities against the Soviet citizens as a whole and, of course, highlight the Soviet victory over the Nazis. Even Soviet Yiddish publications that did pay attention to the Shoah emphasized non-Jewish Soviet citizens' aid to persecuted Jews and the leading roles that communists played in Jewish resistance (Gitelman 1990, 23). Influenced by this policy, the Jews' identity was also shaped by heroic recollections from World War II. This was especially true for the identity of the European Soviet Union Jews, as they had been more involved in the victory and lost more family members in the war than the Jews from Bukhara and the Trans-Caucasus.

Thus, whereas Austria and Germany's local Jews saw themselves after 1945 as the victims of Nazi Germany, the Soviet Jews perceived themselves as part of the nation that defeated the Nazis in the "Great Patriotic War" (the Soviet name for World War II). This association with the victor's role was passed on to the postwar generation and bolstered their self-confidence. This generation was shaped by the Russian spirit of victory and thus developed a self-image different from that of the *Alteingesessenen*:¹⁹ they "position themselves as World War II victors—and not as Shoah victims" (Lagodinsky 2007).

Moreover, for the FSU Jews, the Shoah was overshadowed by the more recent traumatic postwar experiences in their country. While the Jews in Germany and Austria were rebuilding their lives in the shadow of the Shoah, the Jews in the Soviet Union were suffering from Soviet anti-Semitism—particularly during the "black years" (1948–1953) of state-sponsored manifestations of this phenomenon, and the anti-religious campaign (1957–1964) during which hundreds of synagogues were closed under the pretext that they were financially criminal institutions spying for the State of Israel. Jews were frequently targets of anti-corruption campaigns and "anti-parasite" laws, and subjected to different legal standards and treatment than non-Jews.

These different Shoah perceptions created a significant distance between the *Alteingesessenen* Jews and the new immigrants. The Soviet Jews could not understand the local Jews' feelings of victimhood, while local Jews could not understand why the Shoah did not play a more central role in the Soviet Jews' lives. This difference is expressed clearly

in Germany in the manner in which the two groups commemorate this historic period: the *Alteingesessenen* commemorate the Shoah together with the rest of the non-Jewish population on May 8, remembering their murdered family members and fellow Jews, while the new immigrants do so on May 9 (Victory Day), when members of the older generation, wearing their uniforms adorned with their Soviet Army medals and decorations, meet at the community center to sing Russian and Yiddish partisan songs. Thus the Shoah does not serve as a binding link and may even have contributed to the dissociation of the local Jews from the “Russian Jews.”

This disconnection and separation were bridged somewhat when the second postwar generation of FSU Jews, who had been educated in Jewish or local schools (in the German and Austrian schools, Shoah classes are compulsory), related more easily to the Shoah than their parents. They learned about the Shoah and what it meant and means for Jews from Nazi ruled areas. This knowledge brought forth an empathic understanding. Thus, young FSU Jews realized the importance of remembering and not forgetting, but, like their parents, were reluctant to adopt the role of victims. Moreover, they also argued that the local Jewish group identity should no longer be based so much on the collective Shoah memory.

Meanwhile, the local Jewish population’s perception of the role of the Shoah in their group identity likewise underwent some changes. As mentioned above, in the 1970s, the local postwar generation in both countries began to break free of their parents’ generations’ self-constructed “ghettos” and their role as silent victims in a bid to cast off their self-image as “passively suffering” Jews. That they succeeded in doing so is attested to by their public outspokenness as Jews in the 1980s with the slogan “Never Again.”²⁰

In Vienna, for example, younger Jews were outraged at the ongoing injustice toward Austrian Jews since 1945 and the Austrians’ refusal to deal with their Shoah crimes. Since the 1970s and especially since the 1980s, younger Jews felt the need to fight publicly to secure a better Jewish future and to end “the many Nazi and anti-Semitic scandals” of the previous postwar years and “the personal mortifications, to which most Jews had remained silent” (Beckermann 2005, 109–110). In so doing,

they reversed the pattern of non-confrontational behavior vis-à-vis the Austrian state and society that Austria's Jewish community and its leadership had engaged in since 1945. The postwar generation in Germany likewise began to protest openly against anti-Semitic tendencies and the new trend of minimizing Germany's role in the Shoah, as shown in detail below. They expressed openly what their parents were thinking but did not state publicly for fear of fueling anti-Semitism.

Postwar-generation Jewish journalists and authors in both countries also began publishing articles and books (mainly essays and novels) in which the surrounding society is portrayed and examined in a critical light. Since Jews comprise only a minuscule percentage of the Austrian and German populations, these works were primarily addressed to and received by Austrians and Germans. In their works, these authors—such as (in Vienna) Ruth Beckermann, Doron Rabinovici, Robert Schindel, and Robert Menasse, and (in Germany) Rafael Seligmann, Esther Dischereit, Maxim Biller, Henryk Broder, and Lea Fleischmann—criticized the attitudes of the Austrians and Germans toward the Shoah and to the Jews in their countries, the latent anti-Semitism still widespread in them, and German philo-Semitism.²¹ The works also concern how these authors grew up with their parents' Shoah memories in countries where they could not express their feelings publicly, because the surrounding society preferred to remain silent about that period. The Austrian authors especially criticize their non-Jewish counterparts for putting the Shoah behind them and going on with their lives as if nothing had happened, for wanting to remain silent about the past, and for denying it (e.g., in Rabinovici 1997, Menasse 1992, and Beckermann 2005). The books of Broder and Lang (1979) and Fleischmann (1980) represented a kind of coming-out for the postwar generation. The books dealt with the alienation felt by numerous Jews in Germany and “hit a raw nerve in Germany because of their frontal assault on the German self-image” (Werres 1994, 313). Such a public criticism of the non-Jewish society in which they lived had not even been imaginable in the survivors' generation.

The second postwar generation no longer contented itself with reversing the victim role but wanted to decrease the Shoah's role in their identity as a whole. The Shoah was still very much present in that

generation's everyday life: on seeing an elderly local, they still automatically thought to themselves: "What did he/she do during the Shoah? Was he/she a Nazi?" They believed that it is important for the future of European Jews to remember the Shoah and to remind the gentiles of it. Yet at the same time, this generation emphasized that the Shoah should not continue to serve as a central identification point for the local Jews and that, as Michael Brenner put it, Jewish identity should not be defined "solely by a negative differentiation from the surrounding society but rather as the expression of the positive knowledge of Jewish culture, religious or secular" (1997, 156).

This approach was also expressed in the candidate lists for the Jewish community election in both countries. In Berlin, for example, Rüdiger Mahlo noted in his 1997 community elections pamphlet that "we must change the basis of our Jewish identity. We should distance ourselves from orienting our Jewishness entirely around the Holocaust and from a negative identity and shift toward a positive identity in Judaism" (Berger 1997). In Vienna, the IKG political party *Gesher* (Bridge), founded by second-postwar-generation activists, which ran for the first time in 2008, stated in its election platform that the community "must present itself as active and vital and draw on the positive picture of the flourishing Jewish life in Austria without defining itself solely through the horrors of the past" (Gesher.at 2008).

For the second postwar generation, in contrast with their parents, the Shoah was thus no longer a factor that distanced the local Jews from the "Russian" Jews. However, it was also no longer the strong binding element it had been before, since its centrality in the overall local Jewish group identity was significantly eroded.

This decrease in the Shoah's centrality left a vacuum in Jewish group identity in Vienna and Germany. This led to significant changes in and differences between the Viennese and German Jewish group identities. The centrality of religion gradually increased in Vienna's group identity, whereas in Germany, where most of the Jews were neither observant nor traditional and had only slim knowledge of Judaism, religion did not fill the vacuum, and "no other significant element has developed within Jewish identity in Germany" (Heuberger 2008). Israel now remained the "sole and most important emotional bedrock"

of Germany's Jews (Brumlik 1991, 16) and the source of their positive Jewish identity. Solidarity with Israel was now the broadest common denominator, and Israel the main unifying element between the two parts of the Jewish population. However, the centrality of Israel in the group identity of the Viennese and German Jews also decreased, and its role changed.

The State of Israel in Jewish group identity

In the aftermath of the 1982 First Lebanon War and especially after the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000, Israel was already significantly less central in the Jewish group identity of the second postwar generation (both in the established communities and among FSU Jews) than in their parents' and grandparents' identities. Israel was no longer facing existential danger and was thus largely taken for granted by this generation. Moreover, the media now portrayed Israel as the aggressor, although it should be noted that the German media was generally more pro-Israeli—or at least less pro-Palestinian—than its Austrian counterpart. This influenced the opinions and attitudes of both the gentiles and even the Jews. If in the past, Jews generally stood behind Israel unconditionally, irrespective of their objections to the Israeli government's policies, members of the second postwar generation, on occasion, openly criticized Israel's policies—though not the existence of the state.

The members of the second postwar generation definitely perceive Israel as the country of the Jews, although no longer as the “ideal country.” They see Israel as a “normal” country with social and political problems like any other. As Alfred Bodenheim (2007), pro-rector of the College for Jewish Studies at Heidelberg University, noted, “today, for many Jews, Israel is no longer what it used to be 30 or 40 years ago. By the same token, Zionism is also no longer what it once was. We no longer educate our children to be Zionists first, but to be good Jews in the country where they live.”

Vienna and Germany ceased to be regarded as the “waiting room” on the road to departure for Israel. Even the members of the postwar

generation no longer intended to make *aliyah*. By 1990, a survey showed that 56 percent of the Jews in Germany did not agree with the statement that Israel was their real homeland (Silbermann and Sallen 1992, 104–105). Clearly, Jews who lived in Germany for three or four decades and still talked about the need to emigrate to Israel did not sound credible. One can only assume that the percentage of people who had no intention of immigrating to Israel grew with the immigration of the FSU Jews, who consciously chose to settle in Germany rather than in Israel, and with the aging of the second postwar generation members. Interestingly, the second postwar generation also ceased to perceive Israel as the preferred tourist destination. According to Grünberg (2004), “we [the postwar generation] have family, friends and often also houses in Israel; we travel to Israel regularly, but for the younger Jews other countries are equally appealing as holiday destinations.”

The mere existence of the State of Israel, the safe haven to which every Jew can immigrate instantly, still strengthens the Jews’ self-confidence to stand up for their rights and fight expressions of local anti-Semitism and racism. Nevertheless, whereas Israel remained the spiritual homeland and the potential safe haven in case of emergency, Vienna or Germany became the physical home. The Jews, who no longer planned to move to Israel, committed themselves to strengthening their local Jewish life. Moreover, a paradigm change occurred in the Jewish community in both countries. The connection of Vienna and German Jewry to Israel changed from that of dependence (Israel was the Jews’ source of pride, power, security, and self-confidence, and charity for Israel was seen as atonement for not living in Israel) to a sense of independence and even equality. As soon as the Jews felt “at home” in Vienna and Germany, began to establish a viable communal life, and, most importantly, became self-confident as Jews in their countries of citizenship (to be discussed below), their support for Israel and its population transformed from a waiver for their bad conscience to the pure accomplishment of an (almost religious) *mitzvah* (good deed). As they saw it, Zionism was no longer connected exclusively to making *aliyah* but to providing any support for the State of Israel, whether economic, moral, or political. They started to not only send money but also to initiate and finance projects.

In sum, the State of Israel ceded its central role in Jewish group identity but remained an important aspect of it. The Jews no longer saw themselves as potential Israelis, yet the State of Israel kept pride of place in their hearts. This is reflected by the statement of Berlin Jewish community chairwoman Lala Süsskind after her election in 2008: "I am for a strong Israel, since this assures me a quiet life in Berlin. But I don't need to immigrate to Israel. There are good reasons for staying in Berlin, but in my heart, my country is Israel" (Schönfeld 2007).

Austrian, respectively German, elements in Jewish group identity

As the centrality of the Shoah (which had formed an unbridgeable gap between the Jewish and the local population) was diminishing and the State of Israel no longer served as a substitute for an Austrian or German identity, the psychological barriers preventing the Jews in both countries from developing such a national identity were now crumbling.

By the 1980s, the earlier feelings of transience and alienation from the local societies were clearly on the wane. They were replaced with a growing sense that "we are here, and we are here to stay." That sense is clearly manifest in the appearance of the Jewish communities' offices. Michael Brenner describes them as follows: "next to the Israeli flags and posters of Jerusalem" that decorated their walls in the 1970s, "documents about the local Jewish past and present were slowly making their way into the community halls"; the local Jewish heritage "took center stage" (1997, 144). Highlighting the history of the Jews in Germany and Austria was the first step in the process of dealing with the present needs of Jewish life in those countries, and eventually of acknowledging that Jewish life there had been established and was there to stay.

This gradual increase in the sense of having consciously settled in those countries is also reflected in the various name changes the Berlin community's journal underwent and the changes in the content of the IKG's journal. The Berlin community's journal was initially published in 1984 with the name *Kulturspiegel* (Cultural Mirror) and was subtitled "News from the Jewish Community," which gave the impression of a community that reflected only on itself and conceived of itself as a

closed entity set apart from the surrounding society. In 1989, the journal was renamed *Berlin-Umschau* (Berlin Lookout), now conveying the image of a community looking out and examining what was going on around it. In 1998, the name was changed once again, to *Jüdisches Berlin* (Jewish Berlin), suggesting that the Jewish community now saw itself as part of the surrounding society and as affirming its Jewish existence in the city (Bodemann 2007). The first issue of the newly renamed community magazine appeared in January 1998 in bilingual form (German and Russian), with a completely new format targeted at the younger generation of Jews in Berlin (Caplan 1998, 321). In 2011, a page in Hebrew was added, targeting the Israelis in Berlin.

In the IKG's *Die Gemeinde*, the number of articles about local Jewish matters and events gradually increased. The "Insider" section dealing with the Vienna community grew from a single page in the mid-1980s to four pages in 1995 and 18 in 2007. In July 2007 it became a separate 20-page publication, reflecting the increased number of institutions and activity level in Jewish Vienna. Finally, in 2012, the IKG journal also changed its name, to *Wina—das jüdische Stadtmagazin* (Wina—The Jewish City Magazine). It appears monthly alongside the journal *Insider*.

The Jewish communities in Austria and Germany now also acted publicly on their decision to consciously settle and become integrated in their countries of residence. They established community schools and constructed new and impressive synagogues and community centers in various cities in those countries: in Vienna (1980), Frankfurt am Main (1986), Graz (2000), and Munich (2006). At the inauguration ceremony of the Frankfurt community center, Salomon Korn (its designer, and later, community chairman) used the sentence "*Wer ein Haus baut, will bleiben*" (He who builds a house wants to stay). In that subsequently oft-cited sentence, he expressed openly, and for the first time, what had already become reality for the majority of the Jews: They had decided to stay in Germany and to stop declaring that they were sitting on packed suitcases. Clearly, the creation of this center (in sharp contrast to that in Berlin some three decades earlier) reflected the prevailing consensus within German Jewry.

The establishment of the Munich community center and synagogue and the Graz synagogue went a step further in projecting a public

Jewish presence. They were both impressive buildings located in the heart of the cities. At the inauguration of the Munich community center, Knobloch extended Korn's metaphor, declaring "*Wer ein Haus errichtet, schenkt künftigen Generationen eine Heimstatt*" (He who builds a house gives the next generations a home).

The most prominent sign of the local Jews' vision of having a future in their country of residence was demonstrated in Vienna with the 2008 establishment of the large project in the new community compound, the so-called "IKG campus," on a street named after Simon Wiesenthal the same year, which includes the *Hakoah* sports and leisure center, a new home for senior community members, and the community school, which, according to IKG president Muzicant, became "the biggest and most modern Jewish school in Europe" (ORF Online 2008).

The Jewish communities thus sent clear signs to the surrounding societies and to Jews abroad that they and their populations planned to stay. In addition, the populations gradually opened up and felt more comfortable in showing their Jewishness. The communities too began to open up to the surrounding societies. They now strove to bring themselves in the spotlight and make Jewish culture an integral part of the local cultural landscape. The IKG, for example, moved its administrative offices from a side street in the 19th District (Bauernfeld Street) to the city center building in Seitenstetten Street that it had occupied between 1926 and 1938. The Berlin community moved the Shoah memorial from the back of the community center building to the front, where it was visible from the street, and in 1987 added to it a sculpture showing a broken Torah scroll.

Furthermore, certain public Jewish events attested to the IKG's and the German communities' heightened self-confidence and public acceptance. In Vienna, these included, for example, annual *Jüdische Kulturwochen* (Jewish Culture Weeks) offering the general population a taste of Jewish culture and religion through music, films, lectures, open-house periods in the synagogues, and more. Its highlight is the *Jüdisches Straßenfest* (Jewish Street Festival), which presents the many facets of Jewish life in Vienna through information booths set up by the various local Jewish organizations, Jewish music, theater, literature, dances, and food. Furthermore, the Jewish community also

organizes an annual *Chanukka Markt* (Chanukah market) and a *Chazzanut* (Jewish cantorial) concert, all of which have become cultural highlights for Jews and non-Jews, as well as a public Chanukah candle-lighting ceremony in the heart of Vienna, close to St. Stephen's Cathedral. In many German cities, such events include the annual *Jüdische Kulturtage* (Jewish Culture Days), which are the German equivalent of the culture weeks in Vienna, and a public Chanukah candle-lighting ceremony in the center of several cities, for instance, at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. The communities in Austria and Germany also opened adult education institutes that cater mainly to non-Jewish students—the *Hochschule für Jüdische Studien* (College of Jewish Studies) in Heidelberg (1979) and the *Jüdisches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung* (Jewish Institute for Adult Education) in Vienna (1989). Underlying such activities was the leadership's new concept that openness and a self-confident public stance would enhance the non-Jewish public's respect for and acceptance of the Jews.

Interestingly, this approach proved accurate also with regard to the relationship between the communities and world Jewry. The IKG and the *Zentralrat's* more self-confident public positions made a significant impact on how other Jews in the world perceived them, as reflected in the WJC decisions to meet for the first time since 1945 in Vienna (1985) and in Berlin (1990). These meetings were of great importance to the Vienna and German Jewish communities, as they heralded the end of the communities' postwar isolation by world Jewry. The decision to meet in Vienna and Berlin signaled international Jewry's recognition that an ongoing Jewish presence in Austria and Germany was legitimate. It also set the stage for the normalization of relations between the Jews in these two countries and elsewhere.

Most of the public signs mentioned above were initiated by members of the postwar generation. Vienna and Germany's postwar-generation Jews, though still strongly influenced by their parents' clear division between a positive inner Jewish world and a negative external world, already felt increasingly comfortable in the latter. Having grown up in Germany and Austria exposed to local society and culture, they maintained friendly relations with gentiles. Statistics on Jewish-gentile mixed marriages in Germany even indicate that in 1985, 50 percent of

all married Jews had non-Jewish spouses. These numbers are especially high among men. From the 163 Jewish men who married in 1983, only 51 married Jewish women; more than two-thirds married out (Der Spiegel 1985, 104). Data on mixed marriages in Vienna were unavailable; however, according to Chief Rabbi Eisenberg (2005), there are significantly fewer of them. Vienna's Jews do occasionally have serious relationships with gentiles, but the gentiles often convert to Judaism before the wedding.

This generation also feels more secure and accepted as Jews by their surrounding societies, which further increases its self-confidence. Consequently, its members now display their Jewishness more, as reflected in their physical appearance. For instance, women no longer hide necklaces with Jewish motifs (the Star of David, the menorah, Chai in Hebrew letters) underneath their outer clothing. The most apparent change, however, was in Vienna's Haredi society. Haredi men, who in the 1960s and 1970s removed their head coverings upon entering government offices, today wear their complete traditional garb in public (Mandl 2007).

Moreover, members of the postwar generation in both countries adopted a much more outspoken public stance. They no longer restrict the expression of their views and discontent to meetings behind closed doors. They stand up publicly for their rights and the security of the State of Israel, and they are prepared to go out on the streets and to seek local media publicity. In Germany, for example, the BJSD publicly demonstrated against German political decisions which, in its view, endangered Israel, such as the planned sale of Leopard II tanks and other weapons to Saudi Arabia in 1981, at a time when Saudi Arabia was still formally at war with Israel (see Kashi 2005, 44–45). Furthermore, Frankfurt Jewish community members demonstrated on stage before the premiere of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's play *Der Müll, die Stadt und der Tod*²² in 1985. They were primarily members of the postwar generation, led by community chairman Ignatz Bubis. This protest is today regarded by many German Jews as the first public manifestation of the willingness to fight for a secure permanent residence in the country. The same year the Jewish community protested against the visit of German federal chancellor Helmut Kohl and U.S. president Ronald

Reagan to the military cemetery in Bitburg, where many SS soldiers are buried. In 1987, Jews occupied Börne Square in Frankfurt am Main to prevent the demolition of the ruins of the medieval ghetto walls to make way for a parking lot. They were mainly descendants of *Alt-Deutsche* Jews, who declared that *their* history took place in this place and that part of German-Jewish history should not be buried forever.²³

The emergence, mainly among the Jewish postwar generation, of the self-confidence that led to these potent public protests was influenced by political and social developments, but the very phenomenon itself generated considerable momentum of its own. Jewish intellectuals in particular now began to “go public” as Jews and take a stand on Jewish matters. Although politicians, scholars, writers, and journalists who were known to be Jewish had raised their voices in public in the 1960s and 1970s, they neither spoke out as Jews nor were addressed as such. Now, when addressed by Germans, they responded, “I, as a Jew, say,” thus strengthening their positive self-image and self-awareness. They began asserting themselves in public and raising questions about their identities as Jews and as Germans (see Zipes 1986). Writers and journalists—such as those mentioned above, as well as Katja Behrens, Dan Diner, and Michael Wolffsohn—began to discuss their feelings as Jews in Germany in various publications aimed at the non-Jewish population. Only a minority shared Wolffsohn’s self-description as “what since 1933 hardly exists anymore: a German-Jewish patriot” (1993, 12). Nevertheless, for literary scholar Jack Zipes their writings “represented a commitment to Germany—a declaration that there were live Jews in Germany who wanted to be known for who they were and what they were doing” (1994, 19). The authors dissect the mechanisms and attitudes that shape contemporary German-Jewish relations, describe their own difficult relationship with the Germans, and write of the strangeness of living in Germany. They seek to break down the monolithic image of “the Jew” as victim, but still address the continued sense of alienation felt by many Jews in Germany (Morris and Remmler 2002, 2).

From the mid-1980s, Vienna’s Jewish intellectuals also spoke out publicly as Jews on Jewish matters. However, no demonstrations like that at the Fassbinder play took place in Vienna before the late 1990s, not even during the 1986 Waldheim affair. At that time the community

was divided over the question of whether Waldheim was indeed a war criminal, and the IKG leaders, as will be shown later, still sought to avoid public attention. Only after the postwar generation took over the IKG leadership in 1998 did the Viennese Jewish community begin to hold demonstrations on issues in Austrian politics that could influence their future in the country—as in the mass protest against the formation of the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition government in 1999, which was held symbolically and defiantly at Helden Square, where Hitler first addressed the Austrian public after the *Anschluss* in 1938.²⁴

The growing sense of having a future in Austria and Germany expressed itself also in the emergence within the Jewish populations, for the first time since 1945, of a national identity discourse. The Jews began to discuss the adoption of an Austrian/German identity—an issue that had been unthinkable before. However, to avoid being accused by some Austrians and some Germans of being, respectively, “non-Austrian” and “non-German,” the Jews conducted their deliberations on their national identity largely internally.

In Vienna, the discourse on the Jews’ Austrian identity gathered considerable momentum following the Waldheim affair. Largely fueled by the conscious desire of many members of the postwar Jewish generation to build their future in Vienna as Viennese Jews, this debate was given additional impetus by the ongoing efforts within Austrian society to actively confront issues from its own history (including the Jews’ place within it). These discussions of Austrian identity reveal clearly the difficulties that Jews of all origins had in defining the Austrian component of their identity: They consider themselves loyal Austrian citizens, yet in intra-Jewish discourse they refer to the gentile population as “Austrian.” Irrespective of their country of origin, their self-definitions vary according to the context: they call themselves “Jews in Austria,” “Jews with Austrian citizenship,” or “Austrian Jews.” Of these, the last goes the furthest. It combines both the feeling of being part of the Jewish people and of sharing the interests of other groups in the Austrian society, as well as giving expression to the development of what can be termed Austrian-Jewish²⁵ identity. The overwhelming majority of Jews in Vienna do not possess an unambiguous Austrian identity.

The Viennese component in the Jews' identity, however, does not seem to be in question. Viennese Jews have developed a Viennese character and a "Viennese-identified Jewish self" (Bunzl 1996, 55). This Vienna orientation was clearly expressed by all interviewees, as well as by Austrian-Jewish writers. The Viennese Jews are fond of Vienna, regardless of their disappointment with their fellow Austrians.

In Germany, too, the Jews have had difficulties defining their German identity. Yet there, each definition, though vague and with blurred definitional boundaries, seems to apply to a specific part of the Jewish population. *Alt-Deutsche* Jews and their descendants, who have a strong German identity, usually define themselves as "German Jews." Scholars and writers like Julius Schoeps, Michael Wolffsohn, and Rafael Seligmann now declared publicly that they had long since unpacked their bags and even called for stronger identification with Germany as German Jews. Political scientist, historian, and writer Rafael Seligmann (2007) insists "We are 'German Jews,' whether or not the anti-Semites, the Israelis, or many Jews in Germany like it. We have lived in Germany for 50 or 60 years, we have our businesses, children, and spouses here, and we speak German. The country, its language, and culture shape the individual. The Jews here are German Jews and not Jews in Germany. They speak the language and behave as Germans. They are upset when a train has a two-minute delay, something that would never occur to an Israeli." Some *Alt-Deutsche* Jews, including *Zentralrat* president Charlotte Knobloch, even demanded that the *Zentralrat* be renamed *Zentralrat der Deutschen Juden* (Central Council of German Jews). However, most Jews in Germany still oppose such a change and have not developed a clear German identity.

Alteingesessene belonging to the postwar generations, who have already developed an identification with Germany but insist that they are first Jews and that they are different from the Germans, perceive themselves mainly as "Jews and German citizens." *Alteingesessene* from the war generation define themselves as "Jews with a German passport"; this concept conveys a greater distance from Germany, since it does not mention German citizenship except for the passport—a document that somehow connects them to Germany. Finally, "Jews in Germany" applies to *Alteingesessene* from the war generation, who do

not feel any connection to Germany or who consciously want to distance themselves from that country, as well as the FSU immigrants, who have not yet obtained German citizenship.

Interestingly, however, none of the Jews of Vienna or Germany interviewed for this research mentioned the term “Jewish-Germans” or “Jewish-Austrians,” along the lines of the “Jewish-American” definition common in the United States. The terms that they use show that although the Jews in both countries seek a satisfactory definition of their relationship to their countries, they still lack a clear Austrian-Jewish or German-Jewish group identity.

There are a number of reasons for the absence of clear national identities. In Germany, it is linked to the country’s role in the Shoah and to the fact that the Jews in Germany were, until the 1990s, strongly criticized by Israel for living in Germany, while simultaneously being perceived by the Germans as Israelis and not as Germans. Israel regarded them as outcasts, while Germans saw them as strangers. Bubis’s oft-quoted stories illustrate this German attitude. “As every year on the eve of our Jewish holiday, as head of the local Jewish community, I would receive a letter from the city councilor and the mayor of my home town of Frankfurt. At the end of their letter, they expressed the hope that the peace process ‘in *your* country’ would continue. The heads of my city thus perceive Israel as my country. That being the case, is Frankfurt am Main still my city? ... Another example: German federal president Roman Herzog held a reception for Israel’s president Ezer Weizman—an important social event and a political milestone—attended by Germany’s political and social elite. After the official part was over and the informal part—which often has greater political significance than the official part—began, the president of the Federal Agency for Civil Education approached me and said, ‘Your president delivered a really good speech.’ My reply was: ‘Of course, Roman Herzog always makes good speeches.’ Thereupon he insisted, ‘No, no, I mean *your* president, Mr. Weizman!’” (Bubis 1996, 19–20). According to writer Katja Behrens (1999), a survey conducted in the mid-1990s shows that this ostracism of the Jews from German society was widespread. In this survey 22 percent of the Germans stated that Bubis was Israeli, 32 percent did not know what citizenship he possessed, and less than half of the Germans

(43 percent) regarded him as German. The bitter irony was that in his function as the highest-ranking representative of the Jews in Germany, Bubis had earlier faced Weizman's gruff rejection on account of his loyalty to Germany. These examples are just two of many similar cases that Germany's Jewish leaders have had to deal with. This rejection by both Germans and Israelis significantly slowed down the creation of a German identity among the Jews.

The German attitude has not changed over the years, but Israel's and world Jewry's has. The WJC decision to meet in Germany in 1990 was the first major sign of recognition of the legitimacy of Jewish life in Germany and set the stage for the normalization of relations with Germany's Jewry. The State of Israel changed its attitude toward the Jews in Germany somewhat more slowly. In 1996, prior to his visit to Germany, Israeli president Ezer Weizman still criticized the existence of Jewish life and communities in Germany after the Shoah. Soon after his arrival, he continued in this vein, remarking that he could not "understand how 40,000 Jews could live in Germany." In an address before young German Jews, he said, "the only place where a Jew can be a Jew is Israel" (Widman 1996). By 2002, Israel's attitude toward Jews in Germany had apparently changed. During a state visit to Germany, Israel's president Moshe Katzav declared: "I do not want to question your life in Germany, but your homeland is Israel."²⁶ His attendance at the dedication of the synagogue in Wuppertal together with Paul Spiegel, Federal President Johannes Rau, and members of the local Jewish community during the same visit put an official seal on Israel's recognition of German Jewry. It was the first time that the State of Israel sent a representative to such a ceremony in Germany. As Paul Spiegel put it in his speech, at that event, "the fact that the [Israeli] president is celebrating with us is the affirmation that we as the Jewish community in Germany are finally respected and accepted also in Israel" (Jüdische Allgemeine 2003). On his second visit to Germany in May–June 2005, Katzav endorsed this new Israeli approach. The Israeli recognition permitted the Jews to overcome their feeling of guilt about living in Germany and allowed them to begin to form a bond with that country and strengthen their self-confidence as Jews in Germany.

In the Austrian public and political spheres, Vienna's Jews seldom face comments suggesting that they are Israelis rather than Austrians. According to Willy Weisz (2009), vice-president of the Coordinating Committee for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, "the FPÖ occasionally voiced comments concerning IKG president Muzicant, such as 'why does he get involved in domestic Austrian matters,' but in general, Austrian officials are aware of the fact that the Jewish community is an Austrian matter. They see the representatives of the IKG and individual Jews as Austrians." Moreover, Israel also voiced less open criticism toward the Jews in Austria.

Thus the lack of a clear Austrian identity was mainly the result of the Austrian population's role in the Shoah and the subsequent unwillingness of the state and the population to deal with the country's past. Austria began to deal with its role in the Nazi crimes only after the Waldheim affair, when politicians and representatives of the Catholic Church first acknowledged Austria's role in the Shoah, but even then Austria did not deal with its past in a satisfactory manner. Thus the IKG is still trying to get authorities to change street names commemorating Nazi personalities—for instance, in 2012, the Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Ring was renamed Universitätsring—and to devote more attention to public Shoah commemorations. As Muzicant (2005) put it, "Austria improved significantly in the past 15 years, but it still has a long way to go. Austria still perceives itself as a victim and does not want to acknowledge its moral and historic responsibility. This will still take decades." Moreover, dealing with the past has not become a general Austrian issue. Wolfgang Neugebauer (2000) even points out the missing sense for the guilt of lending the Nazi crimes a helping hand: "the comprehension of the country's shared guilt and responsibility in the Holocaust is confined to the political and intellectual elite, while the mentality of 'having done their duty' still prevails among the general population; those who died in action for Nazi Germany are still celebrated as heroes in memorials and during commemoration ceremonies." In general, the Austrians do not want to be reminded of their country's past, still preferring to see their country as the first victim. They insist that they "have heard enough" and are fed up with the issue and with the "Jews exploiting the Holocaust to promote their interests," while some still cling to anti-Jewish stereotypes²⁷ and are outright anti-Semites.

Although both Vienna and Germany's Jews have not yet worked out a clear national identity, they agree that it does not involve patriotism. They insist that they are loyal citizens and that they increasingly feel connected to Austria and Germany as democratic states but not to the Austrian or German nation and soil. According to Austria's Chief Rabbi Eisenberg (2005), "Austrian [and German] Jews are good citizens, as required by the *Halakha*, when they are permitted to be." They accept the prophet Jeremiah's injunction to the Jews who were exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon to "seek the peace and prosperity of the city... because if it prospers, you too will prosper" (Jeremiah 29:7). They regard themselves as citizens and fulfill their civil duties, showing loyalty—but not blind loyalty—to the country. Thus, in 2000, for example, despite their disapproval of the Austrian coalition government, Austria's Jews publicly opposed and criticized the undifferentiated and generalized international reactions toward their country—as in Israeli immigration absorption minister Yuli Tamir's call upon the "Austrian Jews living under persecution" to make *aliyah*.

Like the role of the Shoah and Israel, the role of the national element in the Jewish group identities of both communities varies along local/FSU and generational lines. From the outset, the Jews from the FSU maintained a more positive attitude toward Germany and Austria than did their fellow local Jews. Most of them did not bear direct scars from the Shoah and thus did not attach the same negative connotations to the countries themselves. On the contrary, they are grateful to the countries for having accepted them and given them the opportunity to build a new life (Gilkarov 2007). According to Lagodinsky (2007), they came with the clear intention of staying and "immediately unpacked their suitcases, having no desire to repack them again. And indeed, why should they? If that were the case, they wouldn't have come here to begin with. You don't want to pack your entire belongings twice in your life." The FSU Jews in Vienna, who had left their countries of origin for ideological reasons and whose descendants regard Austria as their homeland alongside Israel, felt this most strongly. The Soviet Union (especially Bukhara and Georgia) is no more than a source of fond memories and collective identity and is no longer considered home (Ascherov 2007).

Among the FSU Jews in Germany, who left the FSU for purely economic reasons, the connection to their country of origin is still stronger. The elderly immigrants view themselves as Russians and feel like strangers in their adopted country because of the barriers of language, culture, and mentality. The middle-aged immigrants experience an identity crisis, since, according to FSU immigrant Dmitrij Belkin (2008), the curator of the Frankfurt Jewish museum, they feel “neither Russian nor German. They are in a transition phase. The Soviet Union, their former country, exists no more, but it is nonetheless impossible to forge an identity in less than two decades. Thus many of them live in an identity limbo.”

The young “Russian Jews” in both countries—those who came as small children and the post-immigration generation—have mastered the language and studied German literature and culture. They already feel at home in German and Viennese society and are already largely integrated into it. However, this does not mean that they identify themselves as German or Austrian Jews. They do not identify with either the pre- or the postwar local Jewries, or with the German or Austrian people, and, according to Belkin (2008), “when asked abroad whether they are German Jews, only a minority would give an affirmative answer. They would say they are Jews who live in Germany. Being a Jew is the main component in their self-identification.”

The second postwar generation of local Jews, which grew up with the notion that Germany and Austria were their parents’ permanent residences, feels very much at home in those countries. Those of them who decided to stay in them did so intentionally and without guilt feelings. They are fully conversant with the language and the culture, are at ease in the society, and participate in public life.

The second and third postwar generations are far more likely to identify strongly with Germany and Austria than are the war- and postwar-generation local Jews. They wave German or Austrian flags during international sporting events and proudly cheer their local teams. Bubis, too, was an ardent fan of the German national soccer team, but he was an exception among the war and postwar generations. It was more common, though not widespread, among the second postwar generation. However, by the third postwar generation, it has become

the norm. This identification has also been noticeable at gatherings of Jewish youth from different countries, where, according to Brumlik, the German Jews, “sidelining their self-conscience as Jews, give the impression of being very German.”²⁸

In general, the Jews in Germany and Vienna desire both a stronger Jewish identity and a greater connection to local society. This new interest is reflected in pamphlets from Berlin community and IKG elections. For instance, in Berlin, the candidates at the 2007 communal elections, especially those from the second postwar generation, called upon the members of the community to open up and demonstrate greater involvement in the city’s social life, as well as to play a stronger and more public political role via its official bodies. In Vienna, *Gesher’s* 2008 IKG elections platform called for a stronger public expression of self-confidence as Jews and for highlighting the Jews’ Austrianness. The list called for renaming the IKG (standing for “Israelite Religious Community”) to “Jewish Community,” thus switching from *israelitisch* (Israelite) to *jüdisch* (Jewish). The former term was first introduced by Emperor Franz Joseph I in his speech on April 3, 1849, in his attempt to rename the Jewish faith and culture by addressing the *Israelitische Gemeinde von Wien* (Israelite Community of Vienna). It has been used ever since by the IKG. The word “Jewish” was erased from public usage both by non-Jews and Jews of the war generation and even of some sections of the postwar generation. Non-Jews felt uncomfortable using it because of the negative connotations it had assumed from the Middle Ages, which culminated in the Shoah. The Jews avoided that term because it was used to discriminate against them. Today, however, the second postwar generation of Jews largely identifies itself as “Jews” openly and proudly. These Jews believe that a Jewish community with a strong sense of self-confidence will increasingly be appreciated by the surrounding society and that relations between them will become normalized once Jewish matters can be discussed openly. In that sense, they also emphasize that the community members are Austrian Jews—not Israelis, as the word “Israelite” in the IKG’s name might imply (for non-Jews, the two terms are interchangeable, as they commonly and often consciously confuse them)—and thus a part of the Austrian society. Similarly, the local Jewish student organization’s name change, in 2004,

from *Vereinigung jüdischer Hochschüler Österreichs* (Union of Jewish Students in Austria, VJHÖ) to *Jüdische Österreichische HochschülerInnen* (Jewish Austrian Students, JÖH) is indicative of the young second and third postwar generations' heightened sense of Austrian identity.

The members of these generations now display their Jewishness even more openly than any previous generation. In Vienna, for example, they wear *kippot* (skullcaps) in public, in contrast to their parents, who prefer caps or hats. Similarly, the previous generation's habitual use of the Hebrew expression *mishelanu* (one of us), to refer publicly to Jews without drawing the attention of non-Jews, has largely given way to the open use of the word "Jew."

This suggests that they feel increasingly secure in the country, are comfortable with the local society, and are more widely accepted as Jews. The sense of well-being and the heightened and openly displayed Jewish identity have paved the way for the active involvement of Jews in Austria's and Germany's economic, scientific, and cultural worlds, as well as in their public sectors. According to the chairman of the IKG's youth commission Rafael Schwarz (2006), "young Jews are increasingly working in state-owned corporations, which was not so in the past." However, they seldom seek electoral office, which may indicate that the Jews in Austria and Germany do not yet feel completely at home.

In sum: Jews in Vienna and Germany may have definitely unpacked their suitcases, yet the empty suitcases are still close by in case of an emergency. Jews in Vienna and Germany have no doubts that if either Austria or Germany again ceases to be a democratic country, they would immediately pack their suitcases and leave. They constantly monitor anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi occurrences, but for now, they feel comfortable in their local Jewish communities and among the surrounding society, are actively involved in the development of local Jewish and general life, and believe that they are there to stay. They share Knobloch's opinion: "I unpacked my suitcase in this country, and I don't want to have to repack it" (Fischer and Malzahn 2006). However, it is not yet clear whether Salomon Korn's vision that "we are in the midst of a historic process, which will lead from the Jew in Germany via the German Jew to the Jewish German" (Lau 2000) will come true.

4.4 Communal Reconstruction

Institutional developments

As a result of their growing feeling of “we are here to stay” the community leaders and individual groups in both countries engaged in a massive drive to expand Jewish institutions beyond the basic community needs. The communities now became more interesting centers for Jews, offering the prospect of living in a vibrant Jewish environment. Jewish infrastructure in both countries was enriched by institutions that catered to the varied needs of increasingly heterogeneous populations. Institutional reconstruction in Germany was characterized by the establishment of new Liberal and Orthodox institutions, whereas Vienna’s Jewish community now saw a greater cultural heterogeneity in Orthodox institutions.

Reflecting the division in Germany’s communities into Orthodox, Liberal, and Russian, the local Jewish infrastructure now included Orthodox and Liberal institutions, as well as institutions that cater mainly to FSU Jews, such as the local branch of the ZWST, which provides vocational training and higher education to ease the immigrants’ integration into the German labor market; various entertainment and free-time programs; psycho-social help and crisis intervention; and social support for Shoah survivors and their descendants. The ZWST in Berlin offers the FSU Jews a library with Jewish and secular books in Russian and cultural and educational activities organized by ZWST employees.

Cultural life in Germany became markedly enriched and heterogeneous due to FSU immigration. Alongside the local Jewish culture, Russian culture became a prominent element in Jewish communal life. The overwhelming “Russian” majority in Germany is more a marker of discontinuity than of continuity with the German Jewish cultural past. In larger communities, such as Berlin, German Jewish cultural activities and groups exist alongside the ones promoting Russian culture. Yet in smaller communities, where the vast majority are FSU Jews

and their descendants, Russian culture and often also language prevails. However, one cannot speak of a single Russian culture or group, but rather of several cultural groups based on their members' area of origin. The significant number of Russian-speaking clubs in Germany and their names (e.g., Baku Club, Odessa Club, Kiev Club, Leningrad Club, Center of the Jews from Caucasus and Central Asia) show that the FSU Jews' identification with Jews from their area of origin is simply stronger than the identification with Jews from other FSU areas, and much stronger than with the local Jews.

Germany's Jewish religious plurality, in turn, is reflected in and supported by the newly established congregations and communities as well as the diverse newly established educational institutions, each following a curriculum that corresponds to its stream in Judaism, such as the Abraham Geiger College (the first Liberal rabbinical seminary established in continental Europe since the Holocaust) (1999), which trains Liberal rabbis and cantors; the reestablished Modern Orthodox Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary (the previous seminary was shut down by the Nazis in 1938), led by the former head of London's Orthodox rabbinical court (2005); the Zacharias Frankel College, which trains Masorti/Conservative Rabbis (2013); the Lauder Yeshivas Beis Zion–Center for Jewish Learning (Jüdisches Lehrhaus) (1999); and the *Chabad* Yeshiva (2007). In 2006, three Abraham Geiger College students became the first Liberal rabbis, and in 2009 two Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary students became the first Orthodox rabbis ordained in Germany since World War II. Both the Jewish community and the German leadership and media described these ordinations as a milestone in the rebirth of Jewish life in the country, decades after the Shoah.

Plurality is also reflected in the founding of local and supra-regional youth organizations associated with the various streams in Judaism independently of the *Zentralrat*, such as the Liberal-oriented *Jung und Jüdisch* (Young and Jewish) (2001), and supplemented by several cultural and educational activities organized mainly by the postwar and second postwar generations. The *Tarbut*²⁹ and *Limmud*³⁰ conferences in particular have become very popular since 2003 and 2006, respectively.

In Vienna, by contrast, the Progressive congregation *Or Chadash* remained very small, and there was no demand for further Progressive

or other non-Orthodox institutions. Reflecting Vienna Jewry's homogeneity regarding its population's religious orientation, on the one hand, and its cultural pluralism, on the other hand, its infrastructure saw a substantial expansion in Sephardi institutions. It now included Haredi, Modern Orthodox, Ashkenazi, and Sephardi religious cultural and educational institutions as well as kosher facilities.

Unlike in Berlin, most of the institutions catering to the FSU Jews were established at the initiative of the Bukhara and Georgia Jews themselves. Once settled in Vienna, they proceeded to establish separate institutions to provide for their specific cultural needs. Thus, within a decade, they established a religious cultural Sephardi center with two synagogues (one for the Jews from Bukhara and one for the Georgian Jews), several religious and cultural institutions, such as the Bukhara youth organization *Yad BeYad* and the Yehuda Halevi Center (a Jewish arts and cultural center plus a music school), and a wide array of kosher butcher shops, restaurants, and food stores owned by Sephardi Jews, which are under the Sephardi rabbinical supervision. The only institutions established at the IKG's initiative were the *Jüdisches Berufliches Bildungszentrum* (Jewish Vocational Training Center, JBBZ) (1998), which was established to facilitate the integration of young FSU Jews in the labor market, and the ESRA psychosocial center (1994).

The FSU immigration boosted institution-building, but the extent of the expansion was markedly disproportionate to the communities' population and immigration numbers: Vienna's Jewish community is one-fifteenth the size of Germany's yet Jewish infrastructure is significantly more developed. For example, Vienna has four kosher butchers; in Germany the last one closed recently. Similarly, Berlin's community has almost 3,800 more registered members than in Vienna, yet it has significantly fewer places of worship, fewer Jewish educational institutions, and fewer kosher facilities.

According to IKG president Ariel Muzicant (2008), Vienna's Jewish infrastructure is the most extensive in Europe. It includes eighteen synagogues and prayer rooms, five Jewish elementary and high schools (the community ZPC school, the Lauder-Chabad Campus, and the three Haredi schools belonging to Machsike Hadass and Adass Israel), Talmud-Torah schools, the *Wiener Jeschiwa* (Vienna Yeshiva), a Jewish

business school (the Lauder Business School is the first and only Jewish university in continental Europe), a Jewish teachers' training academy, and other educational institutions, two community centers, two ritual baths, the Ezra psycho-social center, a retirement home, an extensive kosher infrastructure, and five *kashrut* authorities.³¹

Berlin's Jewish infrastructure includes nine synagogues, three Jewish elementary schools—the community Heinz Galinski school and two small schools established by *Chabad* and the Lauder Foundation—and one community Jewish high school, a yeshiva and a *Midrasha* (both established by the Lauder Foundation), two community centers, an array of adult educational institutions, two ritual baths, two senior homes, and a kosher infrastructure that is markedly less extensive than in Vienna. In all of Germany, there are four *kashrut* authorities, one each in Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, and Hamburg.

In addition, it should be noted that much of Berlin's Jewish infrastructure was established and is currently run by the American Lauder and *Chabad* organizations, whereas most of Vienna's institutions were and remain homegrown.

Moreover, Jewish educational institutions are also significantly larger in Vienna than in Berlin. Whereas in the 2008/2009 school year, 670 children were enrolled in the Jewish elementary and high schools in Berlin,³² some 800 children attended Jewish schools in Vienna.³³ Moreover, not all children in the Berlin community-run schools, which are open to children of all religions,³⁴ are Jewish, whereas in Vienna only Jewish children are eligible for tuition in its Jewish schools. Indeed, as Schwarz (2007), put it, Vienna's Jewish school system is a model for other Jewish communities in Europe, as it caters to 80 to 90 percent of all its school-age Jewish children—the highest rate in Europe.

Finally, Vienna also seems to have a more vital and visible Jewish life. Here, not only the Jewish institutions but also the Jewish population itself makes Jewish life in all its heterogeneity visible in some parts of Vienna—especially in the Leopoldstadt (the Second District) and the inner city (the First District). Haredi Jews walking along the streets wearing their traditional garb and young Modern Orthodox Jews wearing *kippot* are part of the everyday landscape in Vienna. In Berlin and other cities in Germany, they are a rarity. Such common Vienna scenes

as the highly visible mass gathering of Haredi, Modern Orthodox, and traditional Jews in their traditional and festive garments on the banks of the *Donaukanal* (the Danube channel that intersects the city center) for *Tashlikh* have no parallel in Germany.

In Berlin, several synagogues have been reestablished, and its most prominent synagogue, on Oranienburger Street (1998), and its largest synagogue, on Ryke Street (2007), have been portrayed as symbols of a “renaissance”³⁵ of Jewish life in Germany. That term, however, is at the moment somewhat exaggerated. To be sure, the number of synagogues increased significantly, but many of them remain almost empty—except on the Jewish High Holidays. Put somewhat radically, in Berlin, it seems, “virtual” Judaism is more visible than “living” Judaism. The synagogue on Oranienburger Street, with its golden dome, has become a city landmark and a tourist attraction. But in fact only the façade and the dome, but not the interior of the synagogue—once Berlin’s largest—have been reconstructed. Within the walls there is a small prayer room, a museum that recounts the synagogue’s glorious past, and offices for the Berlin Jewish community.

The reasons for the disparity in the extent of institutional expansion and in the vitality of communal life are to be found in the communities’ institutional reconstruction processes. A synoptic overview of the IKG’s development reveals three phases: the liquidation policy’s phase between 1945 and 1980; the reconstruction phase in the 1980s and early 1990s; and a community-strengthening phase that is still continuing. The establishment of Jewish institutions that began in 1980 (the community center and the ZPC school) marks the decision to stay in Vienna. It was followed in the mid-1980s by a massive institutional expansion: the ZPC community kindergarten and primary school moved to a large new building, and its secondary school was opened in 1986. That year also witnessed the inauguration of a *Chabad* school funded by the Lauder Foundation; the renovation of the IKG’s senior home, the *Maimonides Zentrum* (Maimonides Center); and the establishment of a security department within the IKG administration (Muzicant 2007, 2). In the 1990s, the steps taken by the IKG to strengthen the structural basis of Vienna’s Jewish life and integrate the new immigrants followed with the establishment of ESRA and a Jewish residential home

on Tempel Street (1995) nearby, where apartments are rented out to Jews (mainly the elderly) and to non-Jews (primarily students), and the opening of the Sephardi Center (1992) and the JBBZ (1998). As a result of state compensation payments, the IKG enjoyed financial stability for the first time since 1945, enabling its leadership to undertake additional large-scale communal development. The establishment of the “IKG Campus” (2008), with its large and prominent buildings and state-of-the-art facilities, indicated that the Jews saw themselves as part of Vienna, intended to stay there, and wanted to build a flourishing Jewish life in the city. The new ZPC School, with its synagogue and library, serving both students and the elderly (the school and the retirement home are connected via covered and open passages to reinforce the connection between the two generations), has room for some 600 children from kindergarten age through high school. The *Hakoah* sports and recreation center was equipped with a gymnasium (with capacity for 260 spectators), a fitness center, outdoor tracks, field facilities, and a swimming pool. Moreover, this center and the Maimonides Center for the aged are open to Jews and non-Jews alike, further enhancing the visibility of the Jewish institutions among Vienna’s population.

The IKG’s initiation of the current *eruv* project in 2007 to facilitate observance of the *Shabbat* laws also heightened the community’s visibility. Previously, such a project would have been absolutely impossible, but it was facilitated by the community leaders’ increased self-confidence and the Jewish population’s greater interest in religion and commitment to Halakhic observance. To obtain the needed approval for erecting an *eruv*, the IKG launched a publicity campaign aimed at explaining its necessity to the relevant Austrian authorities and citizens of Vienna.³⁶ The IKG was no longer apprehensive about public visibility and in fact showed more daring than many other European Jewish communities in seeking to promote its religious way of life and communal projects. The construction of the *eruv* was eventually concluded in October 2012; it covers an area markedly larger than the one of the pre-Shoah *eruv*.

Several further initiatives to facilitate Jewish religious life in Vienna were undertaken with the approval and help of Austrian state institutions. Thus, for example, since January 2012, Jews hospitalized in the

Vienna General Hospital have been able to order kosher food through the hospital (it is prepared in the Maimonides Center's kitchen). All things considered, it seems that the period of communal institution expansion has come to an end, as the community now enjoys an extensive infrastructure, and that the IKG is now concentrating on strengthening Jewish life. As community member Willy Weisz (2012) put it, "One of Muzicant's main aims was to put the IKG back on its feet and to expand its infrastructure. Once he had succeeded in both, he believed that religious issues needed to be foregrounded, that Jewish life needed to be strengthened. That is why he resigned and suggested the IKG board appointed Oskar Deutsch as his successor"—as mentioned above, Deutsch is an observant Jew. "Filling the Jewish institutions with Jewish life" eventually became a prominent issue during the 2012 IKG election campaign.

The Berlin community's reconstruction phase started later than in Vienna and is not yet over. Community expansion began only in the 1990s (with the exception of the Heinz Galinski School, which was established in 1986). It was facilitated and boosted by the FSU immigration, the generational change in the community leadership, and the closure of the American military chapels, which "forced" the Liberal Jews to organize and establish their own institutions.

The dissimilarities in the communities' infrastructural development are partly attributed to differences in the time of arrival of the FSU immigrants (the main wave in Vienna was in the 1970s and 1980s, while in Germany it was in the 1990s) and in the time at which leadership change occurred (in Vienna, the postwar generation became active in communal leadership in 1981, but in Berlin this did not occur until the end of the Galinski era in 1992). These factors, however, do not account for the variations in the size and range of communal institutions and in the visibility of Jewish life over the last two decades. These seem instead to be linked more directly to the Jewish populations' group identity, religiosity, and attitude to Judaism.

In the Vienna Jewish community, the immediate postwar generation's contribution to the process of forming Jewish identity was both institutional and psychological—the promotion of their new-found personal and group self-confidence. The second postwar generation

is now infusing that process with renewed involvement in Judaism as a religion, a new and broader conception of Jewish identity, and the reinforcement and public expression of Jewish self-confidence. Having grown up in a secure economic environment and in a Jewish community with the required institutional infrastructure, the members of the second postwar generation began and have continued to examine their Jewish identity in depth, to promote the study of Judaism, and to encourage youth participation and commitment, as evidenced by the increased number of teaching venues and the tendency toward greater personal religiosity.

While this generation in Vienna was engaged in strengthening its Jewish identity by increasing knowledge of Judaism, its Berlin counterpart was in the midst of an identity crisis and a search for a new identity. What the content of this identity will be is still unclear. However, it seems that it will not be based on religion as in Vienna, since the vast majority of the Berlin (and Germany's) Jewish population is not even traditional, let alone observant, and is Judaism illiterate. The fact that religion plays only a minor role in the identity and day-to-day life of the Jews in Germany explains why Jewish life and infrastructure in it are less developed than in Vienna: there is less demand for a Jewish infrastructure.

Moreover, while the IKG leadership is composed mainly of Orthodox observant and traditional Jews, the Berlin community and the *Zentralrat's* leaderships are non-observant. The leadership in Vienna thus has a far greater incentive to establish and support religious infrastructure and enterprises than its German counterparts.

In sum, whereas religion has been the major factor in the reconstruction of Vienna's Jewish life and institutions, Germany's institutional expansion was promoted due to large population size. In small communities with a religious orientation, the faith serves to strengthen Jewish group identity, self-confidence, and active involvement in Jewish life, thereby ensuring the community's future. In communities where religion is not the prime factor, vital Jewish life might be maintained only if there is a large Jewish population. However—and this is the fear expressed by many German Jewish activists—such a community is also prone to shrinking, unless an alternative driving force is found.

Communal unity

Communal unity also has a significant influence on Jewish life and communal reconstruction. Whereas communal unity enables the leaders and populations to concentrate on community development, communal disunity stands in the way of, and undermines, community development. Communal tensions may make Jews feel estranged, potentially leading to their secession from the official community. Until the 1980s, the Vienna community suffered from serious communal disarray, while in Germany community affairs were conducted harmoniously. Subsequently, however, the situation changed radically. Since the late 1980s, Vienna's Jewry has been experiencing a strengthening of Jewish group identity and operated on the basis of "unity in diversity," while in Germany, since the mid-1990s, Jewry has been struggling to form a shared Jewish group identity that would underpin and safeguard community unity.

The 2007 community elections in Vienna and Berlin reflect the striking differences between them. Both held their elections on the same day, and in both communities the winning party was called *Atid*, or "Future." Yet these are the only similarities between them. Voter turnout was much lower in Berlin—34.51 percent of the 9,694 people eligible to vote did so, compared with 54.67 percent of 5,214 eligible voters in Vienna. In all, there were only 500 more votes in Berlin than in Vienna, although its electoral roll was almost twice as large as that in Vienna. The low turnout is particularly revealing, given that the Berlin community's future identity and development are in flux: the interviews for this study indicated that many Berlin Jews believe that their community leaders are corrupt and that community management is inefficient, and therefore they saw no point in casting their vote.

Since the 1990s, the German Jewish community experienced a strong group-identity crisis and social, religious, and political disunity. This disunity was triggered by two parallel struggles: local versus FSU Jews, and Orthodox-oriented versus Liberal-oriented Jews.

The DPs and immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe and their descendants had, over several decades, become acculturated—although they were still very different from the *Alt-Deutsche* Jews. By the late

1980s, they viewed themselves as representatives of (the new) “German Jewry.” With the arrival of four times as many FSU immigrants, this new German Jewry has found itself in the minority in its own communities. According to *Zentralrat* secretary general Stephan Kramer (2007), “this is a time of difficult transition for a community that was once tiny and insular but has suddenly grown large. There is friction, there is anger, there is distrust, and there is fear.” In the past two decades, the Jews in Germany witnessed a series of domestic Jewish conflicts, some of which became quite public as they reached the German courts and received extensive German media coverage. These conflicts basically involved fundamental differences and disagreements over the community’s character—whether it was primarily religious or ethnic—and over its leadership.

The problem evolved after the expectations and image the local Jews had of the FSU immigrants were shattered. They had regarded the FSU Jews as “brothers in faith” who would contribute to the revitalization of Jewish life and culture in Germany, greatly increase the membership of the Jewish community, and bring about its rejuvenation. A sort of ideal immigrant was expected:³⁷ highly educated and skilled; not religiously observant, but at least willing to maintain traditional religious rituals; poor and willing to integrate; modest and grateful for the assistance given by the new society; and above all someone who had emigrated because of anti-Semitic persecution and knew about the Shoah or had even experienced it personally (Becker 2003, 23). Most importantly, the local Jews expected the immigrants to join and strengthen the communities in their current form. They envisioned unchanged communities as far as religion and religiosity, Jewish identity, culture, and leadership were concerned, but with enhanced membership and a younger average age. Irene Runge, the founder and manager of the *Jüdischer Kulturverein* (Jewish Culture Club) (2007), recounts: “we thought here come all these wonderful people from Moscow and now everything will be exciting and interesting. But it ended up completely differently. Those people came here in search of a better life and financial situation, not to work with us on a voluntary basis to develop Jewish life.” The members of the established community were disappointed by the new arrivals’ tenuous Jewish identity and conspicuous disinterest in Jewish religious and

community life. For their part, the FSU Jews hoped to be accepted on their own terms as ambitious and hard-working individuals seeking a better life. These divergent expectations inevitably led to a conflict between the two groups. The hope for a cultural-religious renaissance of German Jewry turned into fear of the “prosperity immigrants.” Most of the FSU immigration had little to do with the presence of an existing Jewish community and very much reflected the perceived economic attractiveness of Germany. As a result, many *Alteingesessene* and German-born Jews became pessimistic (or realistic?), predicting that “in 15 or even 10 years, the community will again number only 20,000 Jews. It is like an ice block in the sun: Unless chilled, it melts” (Seligmann 2007). The problem seems to be that the further development of Jewish community life has been held up by the major disagreement between the members of the established community and the new immigrants on how to sustain unity and make the community attractive to its members and thus secure its size. This disagreement largely revolves around Jewish identity, community membership, and leadership.

As implied by the definition of the communities as *Religionsgemeinden* (religious communities), faith is central to Jewish identity. With the arrival of the Russian Jews, whose Jewish identity was primarily ethnic, the established communities and the global religious movements operating in Germany saw a need to strengthen the newcomers’ religious Jewish identity via knowledge of Jewish religion, traditions, culture, and history, and by making them aware of the Halakhic criteria for membership in the Jewish group. The new immigrants, for their part, argued that such an effort was superfluous, since they felt Jewish in any case and saw no need to strengthen their Jewish identity. According to Igor Chalmiev (2007), who is in charge of the integration programs of the Jewish Cultural Center, “the question is irrelevant for the Russian-speaking people who came from the FSU. We were Jews and remain Jews, no matter whether or not we believe in God. In the FSU we were the ‘Jews’ and had the designation *evrej* (Jew) stamped in our passports under Point Five, namely nationality. No one asked us whether we were Jewish by faith, identity, or belief. What counted was that we had Jewish parents. We were considered Jews and felt Jewish.”

Many FSU Jews were also ambivalent about the communities' acculturation programs. Tress (1997, 36) cites the view of a FSU Jewish activist in Berlin that "Judaism in Germany is not fun—it's a burden of the past" and argues that this way of thinking had become common among the immigrants. Indeed, most FSU Jews joined the communities to obtain additional refugee-specific services helping them to integrate socially and economically into the local society. According to one resettlement worker, only about 10 percent of the immigrants integrated themselves into the Jewish community (Tress 1997, 36).

The former FSU Jews stressed that they had no intention of adopting the German-Jewish perception of Jewish identity, and as a minority, the German Jews could not expect the majority to accept it. Rather, they emphasized that a new German-Jewish group identity would have to be created. Whether this identity will be "a mixture between the traditional ethnicity and an intellectual religiosity" (Lagodinsky 2007, 7), have a "more civic than ethnic, more Russian, cosmopolitan, and European" (Peck 2007) character, or will assume some other profile remains to be seen.

These differences in the perception and definition of Jewish identity are the basis for much of the community's disunity. This problem is not confined to German Jewry, and neither is it solely the result of the arrival of the "ethnic" Russians. But nowhere is it as pivotal as in Germany. Other Jewish communities, such as those in the United States, are associational, and Jews can choose the congregation they wish to belong to. These congregations are independent of each other, and thus, political and social clashes can more easily be avoided. But Jewish community life in Germany (as in Austria) is centralized, and thus, not only are internal tensions more likely to happen and to turn more serious, but they also have consequences for the entire local Jewry.

Since the 1990s political and social developments in Germany's Jewish community were heading toward a clash of identities and cultures. The *Zentralrat* and the *Einheitsgemeinden*, which are committed to Orthodox definitions (even though only a few of their members are observant), were faced with newcomers who viewed Jewishness through an ethnic (but not religious) prism, and not all of whom met the Halakhic criteria for Jewishness. What is more, these immigrants

quickly became the majority, turning the established community into the minority. Thus, although Jewish group identity is characterized by a pluralism of identity perceptions of individual members, when a large group of people with a strong specific group identity joins an already established group with a significantly different group identity, clashes are inevitable.

The recent debate about Jewish identity in Germany is not simply a theoretical debate about abstract principles. Many new immigrants also demand a change in community regulations, especially those governing membership. They argue that the acceptance of non-Halakhic Jews as members would markedly strengthen the communities quantitatively and qualitatively, as they possess a strong Jewish identity. For now, Jews married to non-Jewish wives, whose children are therefore non-Halakhic Jews, feel rejected, since their children are not entitled to attend all community activities.³⁸ Views on “who is a Jew” and who should be a community member are divided. This is a hot issue debated in Jewish circles around the world, but it is especially relevant to German Jewry, which is in a critical reconstruction phase. The question of membership is a frequently discussed topic in the Jewish media and Jewish circles, especially by new immigrants condemning the rule that Jewishness cannot be transmitted via one’s father (Schneiderman 1999, 22–24). Nevertheless the Halakhic criteria are maintained.

The immigration also led to a struggle over community leadership. The arrival of the large number of immigrants made the *Alteingesessenen* and German-born Jews feel that they had been overwhelmed and that they were “robbed” of communities they had built and managed for decades and which had played an important part in their personal lives. According to Düsseldorf community rabbi Avichai Appel (2006), they also felt that the communities were no longer intimate meetingplaces where Jews could be among their own, separated from the non-Jewish environment—as a kind of extended family. With the numerical growth, this “family” developed into a formal “community.” Moreover, in most of these communities, at least three-quarters (and often 90 or even 100 percent) of the members were new immigrants. Russian became the first language in many communities, further alienating the German-speaking members. According to Julius Schoeps (2007), in

the German-speaking Jews' view, "German should be the conventional language. It would be unthinkable in the United States for Russian to suddenly become the official language of the Jewish community."

What was created in Germany is a disparate collection of different Jewish types, united by a similar analysis of their costs and opportunities rather than a common sense of community. There are clear advantages for the FSU immigrants to being a member of the organized Jewish community. The public corporation status of the Jewish communities and the *Zentralrat* allows the Jewish minority to be an active player in the national arena and an acknowledged negotiant. Thus a leader of a Jewish community has a public status that allows him to make demands of the German authorities. German law does not anticipate the political involvement of new minority immigrants. The FSU Jewish immigrants—who are not necessarily German citizens yet—can, however, use the Jewish communities as publicly acknowledged agents. The Jewish communities are reference centers for the Russian-speaking Jews, since they provide them with the opportunity to legitimately form an ethnic collective, which, based on the affiliation with a Jewish community, can formulate demands (Körber 2009, 253–254), independently of whether they join an existing one or create one according to their liking.

During the first decade after their arrival, the new immigrants generally distanced themselves from community affairs and shunned leadership positions because of language problems. Subsequently, however, they began to play a more active and public role. Many new immigrants felt frustrated by the mainly "German-Jewish" leadership, arguing that it did not represent them or promote their interests. For their part, the established leadership argued that it was too early for a leadership change, since the new immigrants still had to master German, establish connections with the German authorities, and become familiar with the pattern of German-Jewish life and administration. The ongoing leadership struggles eventually exploded in the late 1990s in communities that had a high proportion of immigrants, as reflected in the frequent leadership changes in the Berlin community described above.

One might have hoped that such community disunity would disappear in the next generation, whose members were either already born

in Germany or arrived as young children and are therefore already well integrated into both the German and Jewish societies. Typically, they speak German, grew up in the German culture, and were often educated in Jewish schools and thus have been exposed to and gained knowledge of Jewish religious texts and traditions. To date, however, this hope has remained unfulfilled. During the first decade of the 21st century, the split in the Jewish community also manifested itself among the youth. Thus, whereas the new immigrant Jews would meet during activities at the ZWST youth centers in their communities, their German-speaking counterparts met in separate youth groups, such as the *Zionistische Jugend in Deutschland* or the *Liberal Jung und Jüdisch*. According to Appel (2006), in some cities there are even separate Jewish student organizations.

In addition to the Russian-German conflict, the German Jewish community is also affected by the conflict between the Orthodox-oriented *Zentralrat* leadership and Liberal-oriented communities and institutions. The UPJ was established in 1997, largely because of Liberal Jews' dissatisfaction with the *Zentralrat* and the organized Jewish communities in Germany. Many Liberal Jews felt that these Orthodox-oriented communities and the *Zentralrat* did not represent them and that they were discriminated against religiously, since their proposals for mixed seating in the synagogue, recognition of female rabbis, and services in German were rejected by the synagogues and communities. They were also not officially accepted as Jewish communities and were thus not granted public-corporation status.

The conflict assumed even greater dimensions after the signing of the *Staatskirchenvertrag* in 2003, in which the German government undertook to allocate three million euros a year to the *Zentralrat* to strengthen Jewish life and Jewish communities in Germany. The *Zentralrat* allocated the money mainly to Orthodox-oriented communities.

The Liberal communities argued that they were eligible for a share of that sum, since, according to the Treaty, the entire Jewish community—including the Liberal communities with their approximately 3,000 members, and not only those communities and associations assembled in the *Zentralrat*—was eligible to receive a share of the state funding (Informationsplattform Religion 2004). They based their argument on

article 1 of the Treaty, which defined the *Zentralrat* as a “public corporation open to all streams in Judaism on the basis of its self-conception.” The *Zentralrat* rejected this, arguing that Liberal Jews could enjoy state funding only if they organized themselves within the framework of the existing *Einheitsgemeinden*, and urged them to do so. The Liberal communities consequently engaged in a battle against the *Zentralrat* and its affiliated regional associations, demanding equal rights for all the streams of Judaism, full recognition of the Liberal communities by the *Zentralrat*, and adequate support from public sources.

This conflict extends beyond purely financial matters. It is an intra-Jewish power struggle. Both streams seek to win over additional members, mainly from among the new immigrants, to strengthen their position within German Jewry, and both seek to influence the ongoing process of defining German-Jewish identity. This struggle between the two religious denominations is waged simultaneously with the conflict between the established community and the Russian Jews over the question of who should be regarded as a Jew. Thus, according to Liberal rabbi Walter Homolka (2007), “competition between Jewish identity models has begun.” The Liberal and the Orthodox communities are not alone in this battle to gain members and promote their religious path, but the other religious movements and organizations engaged in it, whether Hasidic (Chabad and Lauder) or Egalitarian, are not at odds with the *Zentralrat* leadership, as they do not seek to join it or become involved in Jewish community politics.

In their struggle, the Liberal communities and the UPJ made use of intra-Jewish and national channels, including the German media, the courts, and the government. Immediately after the signing of the *Staat-skirchenvertrag*, WUPJ executive member Rabbi Uri Regev wrote a letter to Interior Minister Otto Schily, asking him for support. A year later, on March 19, 2004, the WUPJ sent a letter to Chancellor Schröder complaining about the discrimination against Liberal Judaism: “We have resolved to support the Union’s [UPJ] steps in confronting this unacceptable situation, and we will be joining with the Union in advocating its full equality and entitlement alongside with the Jewish organizations represented by the *Zentralrat*. This is not only the right and just thing, but it is also mandated under the German Basic Law and is in

keeping with the pluralistic and diversified Jewish reality worldwide” (Regev 2004). He contended that the Liberal communities needed financial support to integrate the new immigrants into the Jewish community: “The integration of the new immigrants should not be left exclusively in the hands of the (Orthodox) *Einheitsgemeinden*, because this ignores the pluralism in Jewish life in Germany” (Regev 2004). On April 20, 2004, one day before a scheduled meeting between Chancellor Schröder, Interior Minister Otto Schily, and the *Zentralrat* leadership, UPJ chairman Jan Mühlstein threatened to fight for the UPJ’s claims for direct funding with a constitutional lawsuit, if necessary, stating that “the German government, if it wishes to pursue the intent of Parliament and the principle of equality as stipulated in the Basic Law, will have no other choice but to comply” (Orf.religion 2004). During the meeting the following day, Chancellor Schröder called on the *Zentralrat* and the UPJ to reach an agreement (Liberales-juden.de 2004). On July 2, the *Zentralrat* announced it would embrace the Liberal communities, while the UPJ announced that it acknowledged the *Zentralrat*’s claim to serve as the sole political representative of Germany’s Jewry.

The pressure on the *Zentralrat* to grant membership to non-Orthodox communities further increased following the ruling of the Sachsen-Anhalt Supreme Court concerning the lawsuit filed by the Halle Liberal Jewish community. As mentioned above, the court invalidated the *Einheitsgemeinde* regulation and determined which association is to be acknowledged as “Jewish.” It based its definition on the association’s self-determination and its acceptance and acknowledgement as a Jewish community within Jewish society. But it left the term “Jewish society” undefined. Thus, to limit further state involvement and interference in the definition of “who is a Jew” by enacting a broad legal definition of “Jewish society,” and in response to the pressure exerted on it by the WUPJ and German politicians, the *Zentralrat* decided, in 2005, to open its gates and admit non-Orthodox communities as members.

In March 2005, the *Zentralrat* also reorganized the *Deutsche Rabbinerkonferenz* (German Conference of Rabbis, DRK) that till then had been Orthodox-dominated but now would contain two sections, one Orthodox and the other non-Orthodox, with equal rights: the *Orthodoxe Rabbinerkonferenz* (Orthodox Conference of Rabbis, ORD), established

in 2003, and the *Allgemeine Rabinerkonferenz* (General Conference of Rabbis, ARK), created in February 2005. The ARK does not represent a specific liberal denomination, but its members belong to various non-Orthodox religious streams (e.g., Progressive, Conservative, “non-Orthodox” or “Just Jewish”). The ORD and the ARK each have their own rabbinical court whose decisions are equally accepted by the *Zentralrat*, and they each send three representatives to form the DRK’s executive board.

While this integration marked the first step toward settling the internal dispute and safeguarding the overall structural framework of the Jewish communities united under one roof, it did not end the disagreements or settle the conflict between the Liberal and the still mainly Orthodox-oriented *Zentralrat* leadership—as attested to by subsequent lawsuits, mentioned above.

Furthermore, expressions of disapproval of the *Zentralrat* and its president over a variety of additional political, social, and religious issues also grew louder during the past decade. Some criticized the *Zentralrat* leadership for not demonstrating sufficient commitment to Jewish tradition (Pitum 2008), for not being sufficiently knowledgeable in Judaism, for divesting Jewish life of vitality (Nachama 2007), and for failing to meet religious needs. The *Zentralrat*’s acceptance of Germany’s new immigration law was also strongly criticized on the grounds that it was motivated by a desire to restrict the number of “Russian” community members and preserve the “German” leadership.

In the interviews conducted for this book, several interviewees claimed that Jews in Germany increasingly perceived the *Zentralrat*’s leadership as a group of “German” (as opposed to Russian) Orthodox-oriented secular Jews sitting in an ivory tower, who cared more for the Jewish community’s external representation than for the reinvigoration of Jewish life in Germany, and the strengthening of the communal infrastructure and services. The leaders’ decision-making techniques and leadership methods are seen as dissociated from the Jewish population and untransparent. Interestingly, such criticism came both from simple community members and official representatives³⁹ protesting the *Zentralrat*’s leadership and, in the case of Berlin interviewees, against their community leadership’s management of

communal affairs. Moreover, even some *Zentralrat* board members strongly criticized its leadership and mode of operation. According to Arkadi Schneiderman (2007), who was also a *Zentralrat* Directorate member,⁴⁰ “the *Zentralrat* is a public corporation, but it decided to withhold publication of the minutes from Council Assembly meetings and distribute them only among leadership ranks. It is like a Masonic lodge, like a secret organization. I am not allowed to publish in the open what I say in the meetings.”

Around the turn of the millennium, the *Zentralrat* has also been criticized for retaining a president from the war generation, when the postwar generations, who constitute the majority of German Jews, hold different views than him on how the community should be represented vis-à-vis the German government and population—especially with regard to reminding Germans of their past. Thus, for example, in 2006 Knobloch was widely taken to task after calling for “revamping history classes in schools because the subject of the Shoah was getting a raw deal” (Neuerer 2006). She proposed the introduction of a new subject called “National Socialism” that would deal exclusively with the Shoah, the study of which at the time was spread over a number of subjects, such as history and the German language. Such a change was necessary, in her view, because teachers, especially those in the former East Germany, knew little about the Nazi period. Her proposal was rejected by both non-Jews and Jews who warned that picking out the 12 years of National Socialism from the 1,200 years of German-Jewish history would generate negative reactions from the students. Even the *Zentralrat* openly distanced itself from Knobloch’s stance. Secretary General Stephan Kramer made it clear that the *Zentralrat* did not share Knobloch’s criticism and dismissed her proposal as “awkwardly formulated” (Der Spiegel 2006). He also advised not burdening young Germans with the Shoah, which he said was already “stuffed into your head until you cannot take it anymore” (Kramer 2007).

The divergent views of Knobloch and Kramer—who was supported by many other postwar-generation members, such as Broder⁴¹—reflect generational differences and varying perceptions of the role of Shoah memories in Jewish identity and life in Germany. As noted above, the members of the postwar generation born in Germany—especially those

of the second postwar generation—are less tormented by memories and pangs of conscience than their parents and feel more “at home” and “well-adjusted” in Germany. “At home” means that, as time goes by, they feel less ambivalent about living in Germany, better integrated into German society, and less driven to constantly remind the Germans of the Shoah than preceding generations. Because of their relative distance from the Shoah and the murdered Jewish millions, they already deal less with Shoah issues and thus do not expect young German non-Jews to show greater willingness to deal with these issues than they themselves do. Furthermore, since Germans increasingly declare that they have already dealt satisfactorily with their past and do not wish to be reminded of it further, the postwar generations are concerned that excessive preoccupation with these issues will delay the full integration of Jews into German society.

Following the postwar generations’ various criticisms, Knobloch decided not to run for a second presidential term. On February 7, 2010, the *Zentralrat* published a press release announcing, “Charlotte Knobloch declared to both boards [the Directorate and the Executive Committee] that she will no longer be available for a further term. With respect and praise, the two boards took note that the president wishes to consciously bring about a generation change, which she will actively support and accompany.” At the November 2010 elections, Dieter Graumann, a member of the postwar generation, was elected *Zentralrat* president.

The *Zentralrat* leadership underwent changes under the leaderships of Graumann and Schuster, but in view of the growing dissatisfaction with the Jewish leadership as a whole, and with the *Zentralrat* in particular, Jewish social and religious life already takes place to a considerable extent outside the framework of the official communities—for example, in coffee shops, restaurants, clubs, cultural societies, and religious organizations, such as the (Egalitarian) *Ohel Hachidush* and the (Haredi) Lauder Foundation. The ongoing leadership battles in the Berlin community have even prompted hundreds of members to break away from the community (121 members left in 2014; in 2010 the number of Austritte (secessions) reached even 140 [ZWST 2011, 2; ZWST 2015, 2]). Several German Jews, such as Julius Schoeps, view such

conflicts as signs that the current hierarchical *Einheitsgemeinde* model might eventually collapse, following which the community's structure and activities may well become decentralized and be reorganized in "milieus" (Schoeps 2007), devoted variously to literature, history, culture, religion, and so forth, in which Jews meet and interact without being involved in any official Jewish community.

By contrast, Vienna's Jewish community increasingly experienced a "unity in diversity." The 1981 elections ended almost three decades of BWJ dominance of the IKG and community disunity. Since the elections that followed in 1985, the IKG has been characterized by an orderly election process—in contrast to other Jewish communities, such as Berlin or Prague, where the 2005 elections were marred by physical violence. In 2013 a Berlin community board meeting escalated into a physical brawl. By the late 1980s, relations between the FSU Jews and the IKG, and between the IKG and the Haredi groups, had finally improved considerably. If in 1981, as noted above, *Machsike Hadass* and *Agudas Israel* were still battling the IKG in the courts, subsequently they pursued their demands via negotiations with the IKG leadership, and many issues were resolved in behind-the-scenes agreements. For instance, as IKG deputy rabbi Shlomo Hofmeister (2010) stated, *Khal Israel* was the only official *kashrut* authority being appointed and funded by the IKG to perform and supervise *shechita*—as had been initially set down in the 1958 IKG-*Khal Israel* agreement, in which the IKG ceded communal control of these religious matters to *Khal Israel*. Nevertheless, three additional *kashrut* authorities, each catering to a specific segment of Vienna's community, also engage in *shechita* with the silent and unofficial acquiescence of the IKG and *Khal Israel*—although according to the *Halakha*, the IKG had the right to prohibit all other authorities from engaging in ritual slaughter, as the city rabbi (in Vienna, IKG rabbi Eisenberg) had the sole right to engage in *shechita*, be it by appointing someone else to do so. The compromises between the IKG leadership and the various Haredi groups eventually provided each group with extensive autonomy. This helped maintain communal unity.

Also the integration of the FSU Jews, who, since the late 1980s constitute about half the Vienna Jewry, turned into a success story after the IKG acknowledged their special religious, cultural, and social needs,

and supported the establishment of various institutions run by the Bukharan and Georgian groups. With financial, social, and educational assistance from the *Chabad* organization after the arrival of Rabbi Biderman in 1980, and later from the IKG, the Jews from Bukhara, Georgia, and the Caucasus have, since the 1990s, successfully integrated into Vienna's Jewish community while preserving their unique cultural traditions. In 2005, the Vienna city hall was the venue for the ceremony marking 30 years of Bukhara Jews in Vienna, where the Bukhara Jewish leadership proudly presented its members' social, cultural, and scientific achievements to representatives and guests from various Jewish organizations, as well as to Austrian and Viennese officials. Over time, these ethnic and cultural differences have become less of an issue, especially among the second-generation immigrants and their counterparts from the older established Viennese Jews, who attended the same schools and went to the same youth organizations. According to Muzicant (2005), "mixed marriages" among Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews are no longer an exception.

Two more conflicts erupted in 2002, but this time not between congregations already under the umbrella of the IKG, but between the IKG leadership and two religious groups not belonging to the IKG or IRG frameworks, the progressive *Or Chadasch* and the Haredi *Chabad*. Both conflicts were short-lived and, in the case of the latter, eventually led to closer cooperation.

Or Chadasch was not recognized by the IKG as a Jewish group because of its Reform orientation and the fact that some of its members were not Halakhically Jewish. It therefore did not receive IKG or state subsidies⁴² and was not entitled to publish articles in the community monthly, *Die Gemeinde*, or in other community publications. Consequently, *Or Chadasch* contemplated establishing a separate Liberal Jewish *Kultus-gemeinde* (Adunka 2000, 468). However, after long negotiations with the IKG, an agreement was reached whereby the IKG would recognize *Or Chadasch* as a Jewish association—but not a religious congregation within the IKG—thus clearing the way for *Or Chadasch* and the IKG to settle the disputes related to finance and publishing rights, while leaving rulings concerning IKG membership and the orientation of the IKG in their status quo ante. Formal IKG acceptance of *Or Chadasch*

as a religious congregation would have led to a secession of all the Haredi, and possibly also some Modern Orthodox groups, and that was clearly not in the IKG's interest. *Or Chadasch* does not receive the same financial support that the IKG gives to its congregations. According to *Misrachi* rabbi Josef Pardes (2005), "every congregation receives an annual subsidy of 20,000 euros (as well as IKG support for obtaining direct state funding for specific projects), of which 10,000 euros is earmarked for the rabbi's salary." *Or Chadasch* is treated as an external organization that receives financial support in a lump sum (none of which is earmarked) and uses a building of the IKG for a reduced rental fee.

Ahead of the 2002 IKG elections, *Or Chadasch* contemplated running on its own list. In response, the Haredi groups threatened to walk out and establish their separate community. Once again, negotiation yielded an agreement, in which *Or Chadasch* dropped its plan to run in the election on its own list while the IKG agreed to allocate to it property for a synagogue⁴³—making it the first-ever Liberal synagogue in Vienna. Nevertheless, the IKG has never officially recognized its rabbi, and neither IKG president Muzicant nor Chief Rabbi Eisenberg attended the ceremonial induction of *Or Chadasch*'s first appointed rabbi, Eveline Goodman-Thau, in 2001, or the inauguration of the synagogue in 2004. Further conflicts arose, but they were all resolved in negotiations.⁴⁴

The conflict between the IKG leadership and *Chabad* erupted in 2002–2003 over financial matters. According to Vienna *Chabad* leader Rabbi Yakov Biderman (2007), "there is an agreement between the IKG, the government of Austria, and the city of Vienna to the effect that the establishment of every new Jewish institution is entitled to 33 percent state financing, 33 percent from the municipality, and the remaining 33 percent to be raised by private sources. To receive this financing, the IKG needs to submit a request to the relevant authorities. But when *Chabad* needed a new building for its school, the IKG refused to do so." In its quest for financial support, *Chabad* then directly contacted the Ministry for Education and Arts—an act that has traditionally been the sole prerogative of the IKG. Moreover, it also applied for the license to establish a separate Jewish community. This would have entitled *Chabad* to direct financial national and municipal support and independence of the IKG. The latter, which perceived *Chabad*'s direct

approach to Austrian authorities as a financial and political threat, reacted, according to Biderman (2007), by “withdrawing its financial support to *Chabad*, which accounted for approximately 11 percent of the renegade group’s budget. Moreover, when the ministry ultimately did provide the financial aid, the IKG overnight removed the security guards and discontinued the supply of meals to the *Chabad*-Lauder school.” It also threatened to ask the Ministry of Education to deny the *Chabad*-Lauder school its public legal status (*Öffentlichkeitsrecht*), meaning that the school’s exams would not be officially recognized and that its students would have to pass subsequent public-school examinations to test the quality of its classes and ensure that they were equivalent to the national standard.

The political conflict between the IKG and *Chabad* intensified in 2004 after *Chabad* organized an international rabbinical conference in Vienna celebrating the inauguration of its Pedagogic Academy on the same day the European Jewish Congress (EJC) met in Jerusalem to discuss global anti-Semitism. The *Chabad* conference’s opening ceremony was attended by Austrian politicians and dignitaries, Israeli political and religious leaders, and EU officials and became a major political event. The differences between the IKG and the *Chabad* leadership on the attitude toward the Austrian government were salient. IKG president Muzicant spoke at the ECJ meeting about the rise in anti-Semitism and acts of violence in Austria. The Austrian media quoted him as saying that his children left Austria because they could no longer cope with the daily stress of being Jews in Austria. Muzicant later claimed he was misquoted (Gruber 2004, 6). *Chabad*, by contrast, emphasized the Jews’ appreciation of Austria and the EU and gave this a symbolic expression: the *Chabad* Rabbinical Center awarded European Commission president Romano Prodi a human rights award, and Austrian federal president Thomas Klestil received a blessing from Israel’s Ashkenazi chief rabbi Yona Metzger. The photograph showing Rabbi Metzger placing his hands over President Klestil’s head as he blessed him was widely published in the Austrian media. This conference signified the emergence of *Chabad* and its charismatic leader Rabbi Yakov Biderman as a major political player alongside the IKG. For his part, Rabbi Biderman continually declared that he had no desire to play a political role

or maintain direct contact with the Austrian authorities, adding that he “would have preferred to work through the IKG, if circumstances had so permitted” (Biderman 2007).

In September 2005, this conflict ended with the signing of an agreement between the IKG and *Chabad*. The latter agreed to withdraw its application for the establishment of a separate Jewish community, consented to channel its request for new institutions and facilities only following IKG authorization, and agreed to adapt demands to the needs of the Vienna community, to be monitored by an arbitrator agreeable to both sides. The IKG, in return, undertook to promote, support, and represent *Chabad* vis-à-vis the Austrian government bodies, provide it with the requisite security services, restore the yearly subsidies it used to receive before the two years of conflict, and make retroactive payments for that period.

As mentioned above, in order to prevent further threats of secession and state interference in internal Jewish matters (following the court ruling of 1981), all the Austrian Jewish communities took action in 2007 to have the legal status of the IRG changed. They developed a new constitution and had the *Israelitengesetz* of 1890 amended by the Austrian Parliament. Thus, the IKG opted for, on one hand, a legal framework change to increase its power confronting the Austrian state and Jewish groups attempting to establish rival communities, and, on the other hand, for greater autonomy on internal affairs for groups united under the community’s roof, and support for Jewish groups outside the framework of the IKG, but ready to cooperate with it.

In general, today Jewish Vienna—long afflicted by disputes among its religious groups—demonstrates a strong sense of solidarity and heightened awareness of the importance of cooperation and cohesion both to promote Jewish life and to present the Jewish community to the public as a united and strong entity. Both registered and non-registered Jews accept the IKG as the sole representative of Vienna’s Jewry, and, in turn, the IKG executive bodies cooperate with all groups, care for their different needs, and support their educational institutions and organized social activities.

This feeling of solidarity and unity is manifest in the IKG’s well-organized election process as well as in the IKG leadership’s active

participation in public events organized by the various Orthodox groups in Vienna, such as the Chanukah candle lighting ceremony at the center of Vienna organized by *Chabad*. A strong sign for unity is also the habit of the IKG president Deutsch to attend prayer services not only in the IKG-run *Stadttempel*, but also in the various other Orthodox synagogues in order to further develop strong ties. It is also reflected in the broad consensus on the establishment of the *eruv* and the absence of public expressions of rabbinical opposition to it. Some Orthodox groups privately question the Halakhic validity of an *eruv* and refrain from using it, but they nonetheless did not try to prevent it. This sharply contrasts with the conflict over the London *eruv*. Also the unanimous sanctioning by the rabbis from all of the IKG's religious groups of the extraordinary step of declaring a *cherem* (the ban of excommunication) against self-proclaimed rabbi Moishe Friedman⁴⁵ proves the high level of community unity. Friedman was banned over "his affiliations with revisionist, anti-Semitic circles, as proved by his attendance and declarations" at the Holocaust-denial conference in Tehran and his participation in demonstrations against Jewish institutions and activities in Vienna (Die Gemeinde 2007). The fact that all the Orthodox rabbis in a city cooperate is already viewed as exceptional in the Jewish world, and that they agreed on unanimously declaring a *cherem* is seen as truly extraordinary.

Vienna's Jewish youth organizations similarly underwent a process of consolidation. Since their establishment in 1947 and 1949, respectively, the Zionist youth movements *Bnei Akiva* and *Hashomer Hatzair*—whose combined membership included a large majority of Vienna's young Jews (Bunzl 2003, 157)—have played a significant role in entrenching Jewish identity and integration. Over the years, relations between these two movements were characterized more by ideological conflicts and divisions than cooperation. At the beginning of the 21st century, however, the IKG realized that it was imperative to coordinate the community's youth organizations, which by then had mushroomed into five (*Bnei Akiva*, *Hashomer Hatzair*, *Yad BeYad*, the Jewish students' organization, and *Moadon*). It hired an executive officer for youth affairs (in 2005), whose function was to conduct activities to strengthen the youths' Jewish roots and identity and to improve

organizational cooperation. To date, these efforts have yielded positive results on the individual and collective levels alike. For example, leadership seminars have produced some local leaders and have fortified contacts between the leaders of the different groups; the groups hold joint activities, which have strengthened Jewish group identity.

According to Avshalom Hodik (2007), one of the IKG's most important tasks is to foster "unity in diversity," both to improve its performance and to contribute to the promotion of Jewish life and to interest the many unregistered Halakhically-recognized Jews in Vienna. The importance of preserving unity in the form of the *Einheitsgemeinde* and supporting cooperation within the IKG's various groups was a major issue in the platforms for the 2007 IKG elections. *Atid* stressed the need to keep "relative peace," even if this necessitated "strenuous internal discussions," and termed the *Einheitsgemeinde* "a treasure that needs to be protected" (ATID, April 2007, 2). *Gesher* likewise announced on its website that "in the spirit of the *Einheitsgemeinde*, we want to represent all the different groups while preserving the cultural and religious variety" (Gesher.at 2008). During the 2012 elections, "unity in diversity" and cooperation between the various groups within the IKG have once again become a prominent issue. In its press release after the elections, *Atid* states that "the important tasks in the next five years will be, among others, the safeguarding of the *Einheitsgemeinde*, the securing of a stable budget, and the thematic priorities education and social issues" (IKG 2012). The *Einheitsgemeinde* issue is mentioned first.

Organizational framework and communal unity

The examination of the community's organizational changes and developments relating to unity in Austria and Germany, particularly in Vienna and Berlin, has shown that community structure and community unity are closely interrelated and interdependent: they shape and influence each other.

On the one hand, the community conflicts discussed above generated significant changes in Austria's and Germany's Jewish community structure. The disputes between the Haredi groups and the IKG, and

between the Liberal congregations and the *Zentralrat*, have led in both countries to the invalidation of the *Einheitsgemeinde* principle. As mentioned above, in Vienna, the IKG responded to this threat by pursuing formal and legally-based organizational changes aimed at preventing a complete split. In Germany, that threat was not averted, and several splits occurred in regional associations and individual communities. Nevertheless, the *Zentralrat* still remained the only umbrella organization representing the whole of German Jewry.

On the other hand, community structure is the key to the varying developments in the sphere of community unity in Vienna and Germany. First, the discord between the Liberal community and the Orthodox-oriented established leadership runs deeper in Germany than in Vienna, because Germany's Liberal communities, which have been included formally, have more power within the community's general framework. Whereas Vienna's *Or Chadash* was never officially recognized by the IKG as a religious congregation and is not a faction within it, the German Liberal groups are officially part of the *Zentralrat*. Thus, while *Or Chadash* does not participate in IKG decision-making, both Orthodox and Liberal communities are incorporated within the *Zentralrat*, giving each the opportunity to promote and advance its own interest within it, although often these conflict.

Second, Germany's more centralized decision-making apparatus has heightened friction between the leadership and the various groups within a community. As mentioned above, the community boards make all decisions on all aspects of communal Jewish life, including the appointment of all functionaries for all the religious streams. In Germany, all rabbis are employed by the local communities, unlike Vienna, where each congregation employs its own rabbi, and the only connection with the IKG in this respect is through the payment of his salary. Thus in Vienna, disagreement over the appointment of a certain rabbi might lead to discord within a certain congregation but not to conflict within the IKG. In Germany, by contrast, such disputes threaten and undermine community unity.

In May 2007, for example, Berlin's chief Orthodox rabbi, Yitzchak Ehrenberg, angrily protested the appointment of female Liberal rabbi Gesa Ederberg to Berlin's Jewish community. In a May 25 letter

addressed to community chairman Gideon Joffe, copies of which were forwarded to all members of the Berlin community board, he made it clear that he was deeply disturbed that at a recent Jewish community event, Ederberg had referred to him as a “colleague.” He demanded that Joffe “show the female rabbi her proper place if he wants to prevent a split in the community” (Axelrod 2007). He also stated that Ederberg was not Jewish, since she had undergone a Conservative conversion to Judaism. His letter brought an avalanche of protests from Liberal Jews, who reminded Ehrenberg that he was paid to work for the Berlin *Einheitsgemeinde*, not the Orthodox community. In an open letter to the Berlin Jewish community board dated May 29, 2007, Liberal rabbi Walter Rothschild⁴⁶ even suggested that Ehrenberg should “withdraw from his community post and simply hold a position as ‘rabbi of the Orthodox synagogue,’” adding, “if Rabbi Ehrenberg cannot handle that remark [i.e., Ederberg calling him a colleague], he should also resign from the Central Council and all rabbinical conferences, rather than insult a colleague” (Axelrod 2007). Ederberg’s appointment eventually passed and the community maintained its unity, but this struggle illustrates the difficulties of doing so in the Berlin community’s delicate situation.

In general, many German Jews are critical of the centralized decision-making process, which, among other things, gives the community board the power to hire and fire synagogue rabbis, especially as this practice has already led to peculiar results, such as the 2001 nomination of Orthodox rabbi Chaim Rozwaski⁴⁷ for Berlin’s Liberal Pestalozzi Street Synagogue, and in 2008 the abrupt termination of his contract following disagreements with the Berlin community leadership (but not within his congregation). The reasons for his instant dismissal were not made public.

Third, the centralized distribution of state funding granted to the *Zentralrat* and the German Jewish communities was at the root of many internal struggles in German Jewry. As described above, the regulation that the *Zentralrat* is responsible for channeling state funding to the Jewish communities in Germany led to constant battles over these subsidies between the *Zentralrat* and Liberal regional and local Jewish communities and organizations. The IKG, by contrast, gets only relatively

small state funding compared to the *Zentralrat* but is also entitled, along with various Jewish organizations, to apply for financial aid from the Austrian government and the city of Vienna for specific projects, regardless of whether other groups applied for state and municipal funding or of the amount they received. Hence competition for a share of the resources involves less conflict in Austria than in Germany.

Fourth, the considerable amount of state funding granted to the *Zentralrat* and the German Jewish communities led to bad budget management in the various communities and thus to much dissatisfaction among the Jews. According to Schoeps (2007), “the communities receive excessive funding from the government, leading to greed and a self-serving mentality.” As a result of such bad budget management—including, among other things, employing a disproportionately large number of staff members and paying high pensions to former employees—the Berlin community, according to its treasurer Jochen Palenker, faced a deficit of some 11 million euros in 2011 (Palenker 2011, 6). Many interviewees were critical of the fact that the Berlin community had over 400 employees for fewer than 11,000 Jews, at a time when the community was suffering from a severe financial crisis. Some of the interviewees even cited communal corruption as the reason for not becoming members in, or for having left, the community. They demanded streamlining and restructuring. In Vienna, such criticisms were not voiced since the IKG launched its reform in 2005, which included the merging of community departments, the dismissal of staff members, or their rehiring on revised contracts that amounted to a form of outsourcing, as well as the revamping of IKG finances by generating profits from its properties.

4.5 External Communal Representation

Significant differences between the IKG and the *Zentralrat* can also be found in the field of communal representation toward the local non-Jewish society. Once the Jewish communities in Vienna and Germany opened up to their non-Jewish surroundings and became more self-confident as Jews in the external society, the IKG and *Zentralrat* leaders acted with greater self-confidence as Jews in the national political arena and sought to expand their role within it. Each community leader had his own way of representing his community. Interestingly, the leaders expressed this increased self-confidence in different ways: The most noticeable change in external community representation in Austria was the increased outspokenness and pride of IKG leaders in defending Jewish interests in public; in Germany, it was evident in the *Zentralrat* leaders' growing approval of German patriotism.

The new IKG leadership elected in 1981 publicly distanced itself from the SPÖ and the BWJ's non-confrontational and partisan positions, and each consecutive leadership showed greater outspokenness and readiness for public exposure. Nevertheless, IKG president Ivan Hacker still endorsed a deliberately cautious approach. During the 1986 Austrian presidential elections, IKG president Ivan Hacker preferred to maintain a low profile, hoping that this stance "would support the country's progressive forces" (Bunzl 2000, 166). As the May 9, 1986, issue of *Die Gemeinde* clearly demonstrates, the IKG wanted to avoid any action that might be construed as an electoral endorsement, restricting itself to issuing a general and mild public statement to the candidates not to allow their campaigns to fall into the trap of stirring up negative emotions. In Hacker's view, the battle against anti-Semitism and neo-Nazism had to be coordinated with and supported by the Austrian government. He believed that "neither the IKG nor Austria's Jews must take a position against anti-Semitism; it should be the non-Jews" (*Jüdische Rundschau*, July 10, 1986). Moreover, as he had repeatedly stated, Hacker perceived the restoration of Austria's reputation as a prime national, and important IKG, interest (Rabinovici 2007).

In reaction to this cautious policy, in 1987 the JG passed a no-confidence motion against Hacker. As a representative of the generation of Jews born after the Shoah, the JG was unwilling to pursue a strategy of appeasement, wishing instead to articulate a well-defined Jewish position independent of the country's political leaders' expectations. It refused to accept the victim role and suffer silently and also opposed policies that involved burying one's head in the sand and denying the facts. Instead, it was determined to stand up for the Jews' rights, even if this generated public criticism from Austrian politicians. In sum, the JG's goal was to offer a publicly outspoken Jewish community with "more Jewishness and more Jewish self-confidence" (Muzicant 2007, 1), which would deliver the clear message that "the era of the court Jew is over," to use the expression of the Jewish student journal (*Noodnik*, *Zeitschrift der Vereinigung jüdischer Hochschüler* 1 [1987], 3).

After the election of Paul Grosz as IKG president, the IKG became markedly more visible in the Austrian political and social arenas. Grosz did not shy from the public sphere, continuously took part in public debates, and, thus, reached an unprecedented extent of media coverage. He also was the first president to publically claim restitution. Already before becoming IKG president, Grosz had established good connections with the national and political elites. Back in 1984, as an IKG board member, he sent a memorandum to federal chancellor Fred Sinowatz, outlining his views for setting the relationship between the IKG and the Austrian government on new foundations. In that memorandum, he raised issues that had previously been hushed up: the country's need to face up to its past, restitution for stolen assets, and compensation for Austria's Jews. Once Grosz became chairman, the IKG's battle for restitution went public. Previous IKG leaders conducted restitution negotiations quietly so as not to arouse anti-Semitism. Yet Grosz believed that a public campaign for the rights of the robbed victims was needed if success was to be achieved. This open campaign eventually led to the Mauerbach Auction⁴⁸ as well as to further restitution under Muzicant's presidency (see below).

Grosz's political approach also included broader goals. In a retrospective article published in honor of his 80th birthday, *Die Gemeinde* noted that Grosz believed the IKG's interests were "not to gain privileges

for the Jewish community but to win recognition as partners in the fulfillment of Austrian society's moral, social, religious, and political missions" (Die Gemeinde 2005). He regarded the IKG's claim for restitution as a national moral obligation that needed to be recognized if Austria was to rise from the shadows of the past and move forward. He thus became the first IKG president to publicly demand that Austria come to terms with its history. In his speech at the public commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Anschluss on March 12, 1988, Grosz declared: "We must not let this stain on the history of this city be buried in oblivion if we do not want to be complicit in repression and concealment. For what had happened here between March 1938 and autumn 1939 had, sadly and appallingly, grown on this Viennese soil" (Gross 2005). The Waldheim affair, which so publicly forced Austria to deal with its past, apparently enabled—if not encouraged—the IKG to publicly assume the role of moral guide tragically bestowed upon it by the Shoah.

After Muzicant's election, the IKG's leadership style and public stance became even more self-confident and forthright. Unlike his predecessor Hacker during the Waldheim affair, Muzicant openly sought to influence national elections. He made frequent media appearances in which, among other things, he lashed out at FPÖ party leader Jörg Haider's assertions that the Third Reich's employment policy was "reasonable" (1991) and that the members of the Waffen-SS were "respectable persons with character" (1995), and Haider's reference to the concentration camps as "penal camps" (1995). At a March 1999 press conference before the election for governor of the province of Carinthia, where Haider was running, Muzicant announced that he rejected such declarations, stating, "I do not agree with this, and I am not going to keep my mouth shut about this, either." He invoked the situation in 1938 and asserted that in a democracy, all citizens have the right to self-protection (Die Gemeinde 1999). He again publicly campaigned against the FPÖ in the 2001 Vienna municipal council elections. As he wrote in an IKG publication, the party's policy of racism and anti-Semitism discredited Austria, and "only the voters can put an end to this horror scene" (Eder 2001).

Muzicant challenged Haider in court as well, suing him over his derogatory statements prior to the Vienna elections, one of which was

that he could not understand how anyone named Ariel—a tongue-in-cheek reference to Muzicant’s first name and to the detergent—could be smudged with so much “filth.” Muzicant’s determination to combat the FPÖ also made headlines in the case of Moishe Friedman vs. the *Machsike Hadass* school,⁴⁹ an institution supported by the IKG. Friedman’s lawyer was an FPÖ member, and the party announced that it would drop the case if Muzicant agreed to discuss the case with the party’s leadership. The FPÖ’s rationale was that Friedman’s chances of winning would be greatly diminished without an FPÖ-affiliated lawyer, since many judges were associated with that party (Mandl 2007). Muzicant declined and stated publicly that he was going to avoid official contact with the coalition government. Instead, he filed a complaint to the European Court on the matter.

Under Muzicant’s chairmanship, the restitution issue was also promoted more resolutely than in the previous decade. Thus, after 60 years of foot-dragging, the battle for restitution was able to near its end within only one decade. The course of the restitution negotiations reflected the IKG’s new militance in its fight for community interests.

In 1998, Muzicant asked the Austrian government to establish a commission of historians to investigate and report on the confiscation of Jewish property between 1938 and 1945 within the current boundaries of Austria, as well as on what Austria had done since 1945 with respect to restitution and compensation. The government acceded to the request. The commission began its work in October of the same year, and public institutions (museums and the like) were now, for the first time, instructed to conduct extensive provenance research. In addition, in 1999 the IKG established the Holocaust Victims’ Information and Support Center, where a team of historians are engaged in identifying and assessing the value of looted and/or destroyed Jewish community assets.

Between 1999 and 2001, “in its capacity as legal successor of Jewish communities, associations, and foundations that were looted and dissolved in the National Socialist era” (Holocaust Victims’ Information and Support Center 2005), the IKG held negotiations with the Austrian government over compensation for the plundered assets, which it valued at 58 million euros. Austrian chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel refused to reach an independent agreement with the IKG separate from any

agreement resulting from ongoing joint negotiations with representatives of Jewish claimants from many countries. In 2001, the IKG joined the Washington negotiations over a financial settlement for Shoah victims between the Claims Conference and representatives of former and current Austrian Jews on the one side, and the Austrian government on the other side, which was mediated by the United States and headed by Deputy Treasury Secretary Stuart Eizenstat. What became known as the “Washington Agreement” allocated a one-time sum of 210 million dollars for lost property claims to an *Entschädigungsfonds* (General Settlement Fund, GSF) to which all Austrian Jewish Shoah survivors, Jews residing in Austria prior to the *Anschluss*, and the heirs of Austrian Jewish victims of Nazism could apply.⁵⁰ However, at the last minute, Austria added a stipulation that the IKG, too, had to approach the GSF and that it had to renounce all its compensation claims against the state. Muzicant thereupon refused to sign the agreement, pronouncing it immoral since the “total amount should only be handed out to the individual victims of the National Socialist regime or their heirs” (IKG 2005). He continued to insist on direct state compensation and at the same time launched separate direct negotiations with the Austrian *Bundesländer* (provinces).⁵¹ By the end of the year, he succeeded in reaching an agreement with the latter for the payment of 18.2 million euros in compensation to the IKG.

Following the publication of the commission’s findings⁵² in 2001, Muzicant again intensified his efforts to reach an agreement with the Austrian government, using the Austrian and Jewish media to put public pressure on the government. He openly criticized the Austrian government and highlighted its highly disappointing handling of restitution matters, claiming that “at no time since 1945 did the Republic of Austria have any intention of rebuilding a flourishing Jewish community;⁵³ this did not change in 2003 either.” He emphasized that in contrast with the situation in Germany, the IKG was in serious financial difficulties because of Austria’s reluctance to pay restitution and compensation for the aryanized and destroyed pre-1938 community assets or to offer the IKG financial support (Muzicant 2003, 3). In calling a press conference, whose central theme was “The Existence of Jewish Communities in Austria Is in Jeopardy,” the IKG argued that “since

1945, the Jewish community has fought in vain for restitution and compensation for its pillaged and obliterated community assets. Its infrastructure consequently needed to be reestablished from scratch. For the operation and maintenance of the requisite social and ritual infrastructure alone, the IKG was forced to spend more than one billion schillings [roughly 72,673,000 euros]. The IKG had to sell 70 percent of its property, and now all the resources are depleted” (IKG 2003). To apply further pressure on the Austrian government, Muzicant even announced publicly that if the IKG was not granted the requested restitution, it would have to lay off a significant part of its staff—including Chief Cantor Shmuel Barzilai, who had become a well-known figure in Austria’s cultural milieu, having given many public concerts that were also attended by non-Jews.⁵⁴

In 2004 the government and the IKG finally reached an agreement concerning the pre-1938 *Hakoahplatz* (Hakoah Sports Field). Based on the Washington Agreement of 2001 (BGBl. Nr.121/2001) providing for the restitution of seized assets, the sports grounds were returned to the club. Paragraph 6 of the agreement stated that “the former Hakoah sports field was a leasehold property of the Hakoah Sports Club located in the Prater in Vienna. The City of Vienna is prepared to offer to lease to the IKG, on a reasonable and mutually acceptable long-term basis similar to that of the original lease, a similar piece of land in the vicinity of the former location. A contribution of eight million U.S. dollars will be made available for the construction of an appropriate sports facility” (p. 711). After the housing committee of the Vienna City Council agreed on the exchange of properties in February 2004 with the federal government, who had been the owner of the pre-1938 Hakoah premises, were the grounds returned to the sports club.

In 2005, at a meeting of the General Settlement Fund, the Austrian government announced a grant of 18.2 million euros in compensation to the IKG from unclaimed moneys in the Austrian Reconciliation Fund.⁵⁵ In return, the IKG withdrew some 1,200 claims it had filed with the GSF and declared its intention to recall all matters connected to the class action of “Whiteman, et al. vs. The Republic of Austria, et al.” as *amicus curiae*. The class action was launched in a U.S. court by a class of Austrian Jews seeking compensation for the real property and

other possessions seized while the Third Reich controlled Austria in 1938–1945. After the dismissal of the last class action lawsuit in the United States, the Austrian federal government announced that it transferred to the IKG funds amounting to 18.2 million euros in recognition of the losses and damages reported by the Jewish communities in Austria to the General Settlement Fund.⁵⁶ Finally, in December 2009, after years of acrimonious disagreements over who should provide the funding, the Austrian government undertook to allocate 20 million euros for the restoration of the country's Jewish cemeteries, many of which were in extremely poor condition.

Although the IKG had been awarded restitution for its own properties, it continued to publicly support individual Jews in their personal restitution claims, especially those involving the restitution of works of art. The “Leopold Causa” illustrates the IKG's assistance and skilled use of the media and demonstrations and its connections with Austrian politicians. Following the passing of the 1998 *Kunstrückgabegesetz* (Art Restitution Law, BGBl. Nr. 181/1998), which stipulated the return of stolen art objects located in federal museums or collections to their former owners or their heirs, the IKG acted on behalf of the rightful owners in seeking the retrieval of their artworks from the Leopold Collection. Because this is a private foundation, the legal situation with regard to its items is not clear. Owner Rudolf Leopold argues that the *Kunstrückgabegesetz* applies only to federal museums and collections but not to private foundations. The IKG contests this on the grounds that since the foundation receives government support, the law ought to apply to it as well.

Pressure from the IKG resulted in the state's 1998 nomination of an ad hoc working group. This body decided that a court ruling in this case was not necessary and appealed to the foundation's board to cooperate and voluntarily restitute the pieces of art. Leopold refused. Consequently, on November 9, 2008 (the anniversary of the Reichskristallnacht), the IKG launched a political campaign by demonstrating in front of the Leopold Museum with the aim of drawing public attention to the private foundation's collection of pilfered art. Barrier tapes with “art crime scene” labels printed on them temporarily obstructed access to the museum. Posters displaying the disputed artworks and

imitations of official “wanted” pictures with mug shots were intended to gain public support for restitution. In 2009, the *Kunstrückgabe-gesetz* (BGBl. 117/2009) was further revised to include all “mobile cultural assets,” whether or not they could be found in federal museums and collections or in other federal property. However, despite pressure from the IKG and the Austrian Green Party, the law did not specifically include private collections, such as the Leopold Foundation, even though they are subject to parliamentary control through the Audit Division. Leopold’s offer to reach a financial compromise with some of the heirs was categorically rejected by the IKG, which demanded restitution in kind and announced that it would continue its fight with all legal means (Der Standard Online 2009). Such demands and public battles were unimaginable only a decade earlier.

Also unimaginable under his predecessors was the way Muzicant stood up for the IKG’s right to greater autonomy in its internal affairs, for a redefinition of its relations with the state, and for getting the state’s recognition of the responsibilities of the authorities to protect Jewish religious life. The casting of these requirements into the aforementioned amendments to (almost a rewrite of) the 1890 *Israelitengesetz* was the result of an intensive cooperation between the IRG and the Department for Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Education on the content and wording of the legislation. In order to overcome outspoken critics of the new law, the IKG lobbied vigorously for support from the Austrian political parties. Eventually, after a minor rewording that pleased all the supporting groups, the 2012 *Israelitengesetz* was adopted in May of that year by a large majority in both chambers of the Austrian Parliament. Such comprehensive, high-profile public work was unimaginable under the previous IKG presidents—in fact, no former president engaged in any attempts to have the *Israelitengesetz* updated to fit contemporary requirements.

Oskar Deutsch continued Muzicant’s outspoken stance and highly visible external communal representation. Like Muzicant, he has played an active role in social and political discourses—especially, but not only, in those with a potential to influence Jewish life in Austria. Deutsch voiced the IKG’s standpoint on several national issues, such as growing anti-Semitism and the circumcision debate in Austria, which

was triggered by the Cologne State Court decision in June 2012 declaring religious circumcision punishable. He also did so for international issues, such as anti-Semitism in Hungary and Israel's right to self-defense. He issued numerous IKG press releases through the Austria Press Agency (APA), and gave many media interviews and public speeches.

Like Muzicant, Deutsch does not shy away from criticizing Austrian politicians and filing official complaints and lawsuits against individuals and groups in order to safeguard the Austrian Jews' safety, interests, and religious freedom. For instance, he criticized Austrian politicians for remaining silent in the face of recent anti-Semitic utterances in Vienna, such as activists protesting Operation Pillar of Defense calling for "freedom for Palestine," "the destruction of Israel," and "death to the Jews," or the verbal abuse ("Bugger off, fucking Jew! Jews out! Heil Hitler!") of a Greek soccer fan against a rabbi in the center of Vienna while the police stood by and did nothing to stop him. In the former case, the IKG also filed a complaint with the Public Prosecution Service against the demonstrators based on paragraphs 282 and 283 (incitement) of the Austrian penal code. In the latter case, it filed a complaint with the Vienna police against the policemen. Deutsch also contacted the Vienna police chief by telephone. In another case, after activists of the "initiative against Church privileges" filed a lawsuit to the Public Prosecution Service against IKG rabbi Hofmeister and a Muslim doctor for performing circumcision on religious grounds and thus causing physical injury, the IRG responded with a lawsuit against this group based on degradation of religious teachings (paragraph 188), incitement (paragraph 283), and defamation (paragraph 297).

Deutsch's external representation stance, however, differs from Muzicant's in two aspects—one is technical and the other one essential. The technical difference lies in Deutsch's technique of information dissemination. He is working to increase the outreach of the Jewish voice to the Austrian population. Thus alongside the traditional channels, Deutsch and his *Atid* team also make use of new media, such as Facebook, to present and represent the IKG and fight for the rights of the Jews both in Austria and abroad. Their site *Atid-Jüdische Zukunft* (Atid-Jewish Future), which is open to every Facebook user, was established in January 2012 and has been very active since.

The essential difference lies in Deutsch's efforts to open the community even more to the surrounding society than his predecessor had done. Deutsch believes communal representation should put additional weight on informing the Austrian population about Judaism, showing them Jewish life in Vienna, and stressing the role of Vienna's Jewish community in Austrian cultural life. In public statements he emphasizes repeatedly that the Jews are part of Austrian society, with only a different religious belief than the majority. At the press conference following his appointment as interim IKG president, he declared, "we want to open the doors" to show the Austrian non-Jewish population that there is an active and thriving Jewish life in Vienna.

Already during his vice-presidency, Deutsch had worked toward this aim. In 2008, he had applied and pushed for the 2011 European Maccabi Games (EMG) to take place in Vienna. Due to his efforts—including obtaining, with the help of Vienna mayor Michael Häupl, financial and logistic support from the municipality—the sports club Maccabi Wien was eventually chosen by the European Maccabi Federation (EMC) as the play host for the 13th European Maccabi Games. Deutsch, who is also president of the S.C. Maccabi Wien and one of its post-Shoah founding members, was elected chairman of the EMG 2011. He saw in these games a chance to present not only to the Austrian population, but also to the Jews abroad, "the young, dynamic, and self-confident Vienna Jewry" (Deutsch 2011). These games were the first to take place in a German-speaking country since 1945. They were also the first to hold the opening ceremony not in a stadium but in the open air in a central place: the athletes' delegations marched from the Judenplatz, the square on which the Shoah memorial stands, to City Hall Square. There, in front of the Vienna City Hall, the Olympic flame was lit and IKG officials, Jewish personalities, and Israeli and Austrian politicians (including Prime Minister Heinz Fischer, who formally inaugurated the games) held opening speeches. Over 2,000 Jewish athletes from 38 countries (including 185 from Austria) and some 4,000 spectators took part in the three-hour-long lavish ceremony. Deutsch and his organizational team concentrated the various competitions around the Hakoah sports facilities, and thus in the midst of daily Jewish life—adjacent to the IKG community school and senior home, and not far

from Vienna's synagogues and kosher facilities (only a few minutes away by metro). They perceived these games as an opportunity to show the many facets of Jewish life in Vienna—Orthodox, traditional, and secular—and the wide-ranging Jewish infrastructure that facilitates religious lifestyles, offers a rich cultural program, and enables the community to organize an event of that size mostly on its own premises (the EMG are the fifth-biggest sports events in the world).

Shortly after he was confirmed as interim president, Deutsch organized an open house day in the *Stadttempel* and the IKG offices under the title “Experience Jewish Life—We Invite You.” This event, attended by some 4,000 (mostly non-Jews), included, among other things, information about the IKG offices, entry to its archives, a *Chazzanut* concert, kosher food stands, and guided tours of the synagogue, during which community rabbi Shlomo Hofmeister explained Jewish religion and life. In an interview with the *Vienna Review*, Deutsch stated, “I would like to go out and show that we’re a part of Austrian society and not something mysterious; we have something to offer.” This effort to emphasize both that the community is a strong one that is willing and able to stand up for the Jews’ rights, and a vibrant community of Viennese Jews who feel Viennese and live their Judaism actively and proudly, reflects the self-perception of the younger generations, who, as mentioned above, are self-confident and largely interested in the Jewish religion (Deutsch is a member of the postwar generation, but he is among its younger members and is a father of young children). The fact that Deutsch is an observant Jew who grew up in an observant home and attended a *Heder* in his youth is surely a major reason why he considers it important to show off Jewish religious life in Vienna. In short, Deutsch’s external representation stance is active and outspoken, and he does not shy away from the limelight. Furthermore, he seeks to shed more light on the vibrant Jewish life in Vienna and its role in Austria’s cultural and social landscape.

Both Muzicant and Deutsch also take a self-confident stance toward world Jewry in general and Israel in particular, a stance that would have been unimaginable among their predecessors. The heightened self-confidence toward Israel is clearly reflected in the IKG’s fight against the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in

Jerusalem (CAHJP) for the return of the Vienna Jewish community's collection. Between 1952 and 1978, the IKG leaders had transferred the archives (which included 200 containers of documents on the Vienna community from the 17th century until 1945), the community library, and various other cultural possessions to the CAHJP, fearing that the collection would not be stored properly in the IKG premises. After establishing the necessary infrastructure, Muzicant engaged in talks for the return of the IKG property to Vienna. Muzicant claimed that the archives had only been on temporary loan to the CAHJP and that their return was essential for the IKG's plan to build an archive for Jewish history in Vienna. The CAHJP refused to hand them back. In May 2011, Muzicant filed a lawsuit with the Jerusalem District Court against the CAHJP. This was a legal precedent in Israel. The court thus deferred the legal authority of the case to State Archivist Yaacov Lozowick, as the official responsible for archival matters in Israel. Paragraph 14a of the Law of Archives (1955) states that archival material cannot be removed from a public archive unless it goes to another public archive, or it is done with the permission of the state archivist (the issue of ownership is, thus, not relevant). The latter ruled that the collection had been transferred to the CAHJP as a permanent loan. According to his ruling from October 15, 2012 (originating motion 35776-04-11), "a permanent loan is a kind of irreversible ownership transfer, in which the owner retains some connection to the collection also after its transfer" (p. 14). He also raised the importance of the collection's current location in Israel for the public and scientists, arguing that the CAHJP, in contrast to the IKG, had the knowledge and experience to offer the researchers adequate access, and that the State of Israel was the cultural center of the Jewish people "in which many of the scholars, many of the students, and many of the researchers are concentrated. There is no other place in the world that concentrates so much Jewish wisdom" (p. 14). The state archivist thus ruled that the collection would remain in Israel.

Muzicant, however, did not give up the IKG's fight and argued in several more newspaper interviews that the collection belonged to the Jewish community in Vienna. In January 2013, the IKG, now under Deutsch's leadership, appealed to Israel's Supreme Court against the decision of the Jerusalem District Court. In its appeal the IKG questioned

the authority of the state archivist in such matters and accused him of exceeding his authority in applying Israeli law to an archive belonging to a foreign body. It also warned that Israel might become a refuge for documents stolen overseas if Israeli law is universally applied to public archives in Israel (Aderet 2013).

This lawsuit was definitely rejected in 2015. However, the sheer fact that the IKG sued an Israeli institution has no precedent and reveals the rising self-confidence of the IKG leaders vis-à-vis the State of Israel. Moreover, the fact that the IKG is claiming the return of its collection shows that it believes Israel's archives should no longer be the center of Jewish history research but that European communities, too, are worthy and able to once again become centers of Jewish wisdom. In January 2013, *Atid* posted on its Facebook site that the IKG plans to establish “the biggest and most precious archive of Jewish history in Europe.”

Deutsch also proved he could stand up to threats to IKG communal interests posed by influential Jews from abroad interfering in internal communal affairs. Thus in the first board meeting after his election as IKG president, Deutsch called on the board to vote for sanctions against WJC president Ronald Lauder because of his attempts to interfere in the communal presidential elections by offering incentives for their parties to IKG board members to support rival candidate Martin Engelberg, whose party came third at the IKG elections. After three unsuccessful attempts to meet with Lauder, the IKG board blocked him from access to any property belonging to the IKG and instructed its security personnel to inform them if Lauder entered any other Jewish institution in Vienna. Deutsch then sent a letter to the leaders of Europe's Jewish communities expounding the decision. At the EJC Enlarged Executive meeting on January 22, 2013, Muzicant, who is also one of the EJC's vice presidents, explained that the IKG declared Lauder as a *persona non grata* because of “his direct interference in the electoral process of the national Jewish community.” According to the minutes of the meeting, he stated that “R.L. [Ronald Lauder] found a solution: to take over the community. A.M. [Ariel Muzicant] emphasizes that he cannot prove this, but he does have the document signed by R.L. promising money to various people in exchange for their support in the election of R.L.'s candidate.” A discussion followed dealing with the various interferences of Lauder in

European Jewish politics, and the question how “to stop [the WJC and Lauder] interfering in the affairs of the European Jewish communities, and to [make them] cooperate with the EJC.” The EJC executive board concluded that “EJC will draft a very strong message to the WJC Steering Committee and R.L.” (European Jewish Congress 2013).

Declaring Lauder *persona non grata* in the IKG institutions was a clear demonstration of strength by the IKG. The Lauder Foundation is an important financial supporter of several communal institutions and projects. Nevertheless, Deutsch and the IKG board decided not to keep quiet about his interference. The conflict was eventually resolved in January 2013. Deutsch and Lauder met at the Vienna airport (Lauder flew in especially for this meeting) to discuss what happened in 2012. According to a post on *Atid's* Facebook page, “President Lauder regretted the incidents and stressed he did not want to interfere in IKG internal matters, also in the future. Based on this meeting, President Deutsch petitioned the revocation of the ban of entering IKG premises. In the board meeting on January 23, 2013, the motion was accepted unanimously.”

The *Zentralrat* leadership, too, became more outspoken with every leadership change. However, the differences between the leaders were less conspicuous than in Vienna, as the individuals themselves were more alike: all, aside from Dieter Graumann and Josef Schuster, were *Alt-Deutsche* Shoah survivors. Besides, from the outset, Galinski himself had been more outspoken than his IKG counterparts. Finally, the war-generation *Zentralrat* and community leaders assumed the role of moral guide already in the immediate postwar years and thus could speak up as Jews more openly than the IKG leaders, whose role as moral guides was, as mentioned above, acknowledged only in the late 1980s. The most noticeable changes in the *Zentralrat* leaders were related to the way they expressed their relationship to the German state and perceived the place and the role of the Jews in Germany.

When Galinski began his second term as president of the *Zentralrat* (1988–1992), succeeding Nachmann, he emphasized anew the importance of vigilance and remembrance. This was in line with the agenda Galinski had pursued in his 43 years as chairman of the Berlin community (1949–1992), during which he positioned himself as the voice

of remembrance and became a symbolic figure in the fight against anti-Semitism. However, this position was also influenced by the *Historikerstreit* (historians' dispute [1986–1989]; to be discussed later) and the consequent outbreak of the public debate on the way the Shoah should be interpreted in history, coupled with the rise in anti-Semitism and racism following the country's reunification. The leader of German Jewry needed to act in response to these troubling developments. After Germany reunited, Galinski often warned that the wave of violence could mean the return of widespread persecution, insisting that Germany must never be allowed to forget its crimes against humanity.

By the time Bubis became *Zentralrat* president (1992–1999), most of the leaders of the Jewish communities in Germany were members of the postwar generation who had decided to stay in Germany and wanted to become part of German society. Moreover, the Jewish population was multiplying due to the influx of Jews from the FSU, increasing the pluralism of opinions voiced in public by Germany's Jews. Before Bubis, the *Zentralrat* presidents were considered *the* voice of the Jews in Germany due to the self-imposed "ghettoization" of the majority of the Jewish population. The Jews wanted only minimum contact with the German population and thus voluntarily gave the *Zentralrat* president the role of sole public representative vis-à-vis the Germans and Germany. As a result, only his opinions and attitudes were voiced publicly. Although this self-ghettoization ended in the 1980s, Galinski, due to his strong personality, continued to be regarded as "*the* voice of the Jewish population" until his death in 1992. Subsequently, the growing pluralism in the Jewish population left its mark on the *Zentralrat* leadership. Its president's statements no longer carried the same weight, as Jewish intellectuals, politicians, and communal and religious leaders also made their voices heard in public, as well as in internal Jewish, arenas.

Influenced by the social development of the community and led by the "wish to become a *zeitgeist* personality" (Pitum 2008), Bubis continued to play the guardian and voice of historic memory, but, as Lili Marx put it, "he did it in a more sympathetic manner than the stern Shoah survivor Galinski."⁵⁷ Bubis was an outspoken and tireless fighter for reconciliation between the Germans and the Jews, who believed that the Jews should stop isolating themselves from German society.

To this end, he emphasized the importance of engaging in conversations with non-Jews in order to overcome the artificiality and sensitivities of relations between Germans and Jews and to combat anti-Semitism.

Bubis made frequent public appearances, joining in panel discussions and TV talk shows; participating in political, religious, and social events; and speaking in schools,⁵⁸ where he dealt not only with Jewish issues and concerns but also with national and international affairs. He, for example, fought for the rights of minority groups, such as guest workers, Sinti and Roma, and the new refugees from Eastern Europe, and for the remuneration of former slave laborers in German factories during World War II, most of whom were non-Jews from Eastern and Central Europe. Bubis also publicly condemned attacks on any minority, such as the neo-Nazi arson attack on the house of a Turkish family in Solingen in 1993, in which five women and children were killed.

Bubis also wanted to build bridges between the Jews and the Germans and to increase mutual understanding. In his view, which also reflected the visions of both the *Alteingesessene* postwar generation and the FSU Jews, “Germans” and “Jews” were not “hypostatic entities locked in a victimizer/victim dichotomy, but dynamic partners in an evolving Europe” (Mittelman 1997). He presented high demands from the German government, but conversely also defended Germany—both outwardly and at home—when it was unjustly attacked for being an anti-Semitic country. Even in the years 1992–1994, when hostels for asylum-seekers were set ablaze daily and more than 150 people were murdered by radical right-wing gangs, Bubis defended Germany against critics in Israel and the United States.

In response to Israeli president Weizman’s aforementioned criticism of the Jewish presence in Germany, Bubis defended the Jews’ right to live there, declaring that “the Germany of today is not the Germany of the Nazi times” (Widman 1996). Bubis believed that good relations between Israel and Germany could not be built solely on the memory of the past but instead had to be based on personal contacts between Israelis, Jews in Germany, and non-Jewish Germans from the postwar generations. He believed, like many Jews in the Diaspora, that a Jewish presence outside of Israel was necessary to influence national politicians and the local populations through lobbying and public relations

work, and through personal contacts. So, too, inter-religious dialogue and relations on all levels contributed to establishing and maintaining good ties between Israel and Germany. It was important for Bubis to secure Israel's acceptance of the legitimacy of Jewish life in Germany. In his view, Israel was a significant identification element for the Jewish community, occupying a central place in Jewish group identity, and support for it was a major focus of organizational endeavor. Therefore, Bubis strove to maintain good relations with Israel and worked to change the hostile and skeptical attitudes of the Israeli political elite toward the German Jewish community and its continued presence in Germany.

He was also active on the international Jewish scene. As a result of Bubis's activities (and the dramatic Jewish population increase), German Jewry began to play a more prominent role in international Jewish organizations. He was the first German president of the European Jewish Congress (EJC) and vice-president of the WJC (1998–1999). Reaching these leadership positions reflected not only his personal qualities but also his ability to present himself and the *Zentralrat*, since the early 1990s, as the mouthpiece for the Central and Eastern European Jewish communities, which until then had no meaningful voice in the European Jewish organizations. According to Kramer (2007), "he managed to win their respect and trust and thus also their support, which turned the small Jewish community of Germany—even before it reached today's numbers—into a bridgehead to the much bigger Jewish assembly of Eastern and Central European communities." It should nevertheless be noted that although these countries have since begun to represent themselves in international Jewish forums and organizations, German Jewry still remains a major player on the international Jewish stage.

Bubis described himself as a "German citizen," and as such he was very popular within German society. At one point he was even tipped as a candidate for German president on behalf of the *Freie Demokratische Partei* (Free Democratic Party, FDP), but he did not pursue that nomination, arguing that the time was not yet ripe for a Jewish head of state. He was, however, active in Frankfurt municipal affairs and in Hessen state politics. Between 1987 and 1991, he served on the board of the Hessen state FDP, and in 1997 he led the party in its successful bid

to gain representation in the Frankfurt City Council. He was also the president of the Hessen Radio Broadcasting Authority throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Even though Bubis became *Zentralrat* president at a time when Jews could once again be found in the political, economic, and media elites, his particularly high-profile involvement in German politics was exceptional.

Bubis felt at home in the country and saw himself as a German. He therefore continuously stressed that he was no stranger in Germany but a “German citizen of Jewish faith.”⁵⁹ Nonetheless, it was apparently not Bubis’s intention to try to resuscitate the prewar German-Jewish identity of “German citizen of Mosaic faith,” an appellation that was intended to deny the national identity of the Jewish people and hence was avowedly anti-Zionist. As shown above, Bubis was, by contrast, deeply engaged in the international Jewish scene, was a strong defender of Israel’s policies, and worked toward improving relations between Israel and German Jewry. He did so in the belief that Jews were part of German society and should no longer be seen as Israelis, strangers, foreigners, or guests,⁶⁰ but as Germans. Bubis asserted a German-Jewish identity that corresponded with the mainstream conservative *Verfassungspatriotismus* (patriotism toward the constitution). In this view, a German is someone who speaks the German language, is part of German culture, and is a citizen of German political society as defined by the Basic Law. Patriotism, in this sense, thus means loyalty to the Basic Law and pride in society’s achievements in developing a democratic Germany that has once again become an important member of the family of nations. In this context, a German Jew is a Jewish citizen who shares Germany’s constitutional ideals and is an equal member, under law, of German society. Bubis announced that he was a “German citizen of the Jewish faith” at a time when, after reunification, Germans were looking for a national group identity and the Jews were working out a place for the German element within their group identity, trying to figure out what it meant to be a Jew in Germany. Bubis’s assertion can thus also be seen as the wish or even demand that the Jews be accepted by the Germans as equal partners in the post-reunification public debate on what it means to be a German, and on German group identity.

However, toward the end of his life, Bubis was disappointed by the Germans. Rising racism and anti-Semitism, as well as the Walser

speech that generated the “Walser-Bubis debate” (see below), led him to doubt both the readiness of the German population for complete normalization and the possibility that German Jewry would one day become an integral part of German society. In Bubis’s view, normalization could occur only when the majority of the German population accepted a Jewish German as a citizen of Germany with the same rights as a gentile German, when the Germans sensed and empathized with the sufferings of the survivors and their children and perceived Jewish culture as a contemporary living culture rather than as a culture connected solely to the pre-Shoah period, and when the majority of Germans stood up for the Jewish presence in Germany and protected it from danger (Bubis 1996, 77). The “Walser-Bubis debate” showed, however, that Jews were still viewed as the “Other.” When asked in a September 1998 interview whether he would still proclaim himself a “German citizen of Jewish faith” and whether he still believed that the Jews were part of the German population, Bubis answered: “I would at least not accentuate it as I did in the past, particularly since this did not help. I am not regarded as such, and I don’t want to impose myself [on the Germans].”⁶¹ Two weeks before his death, he even stated, “I accomplished nothing or almost nothing.... The majority [of Germans] did not even understand my point. We [the Jews] remained strangers.”⁶² Fearful that his grave would be vandalized as Galinski’s was, he expressed a wish to be buried in Israel.

After Bubis’s death, postwar-generation community members and leaders called for a generation change in the *Zentralrat*. However, this did not occur, because no postwar generation candidate ran in the next elections. Paul Spiegel (1999–2006) and Charlotte Knobloch (2006–2010) can be seen as members of an intermediate generation. Salomon Korn, chairman of the Frankfurt Jewish community (since 1999) and vice-president of the *Zentralrat* (since 2003), distinguishes between the “generation of pioneers,” who rebuilt the communities and Jewish life immediately after 1945, and the postwar generation, the “generation of administrators,” which is continuing to develop the communities further, building on their predecessors’ work while fostering new orientations (Korn 1999, 153). Both Spiegel and Knobloch survived the Shoah not as adolescents or adults (like their predecessors) but as children who were hidden by Christians. Thus they were not among

the pioneers, but neither are they members of the postwar generation. They rose to communal leadership during a period of flux for German Jewry, when the role of the Shoah in Jewish identity and the manner in which Jews perceived themselves in the context of Germany and German society were changing.

Spiegel and Knobloch maintained the *Zentralrat*'s high public profile and acted self-confidently in public debates, especially on matters relating to Shoah memory, German identity, and Israel. They, too, pursued a policy of open dialogue with German society that was aimed at securing democracy in Germany and involved taking a critical and morally based stance against the racist and anti-Semitic tendencies found among the German population and politicians. At the same time, they introduced a new German-Jewish discourse. During Spiegel's *Zentralrat* presidency (when Knobloch was vice-president) representatives of the *Zentralrat* spoke for the first time about permanently staying in Germany and revitalizing the local Jewish scene (Jungmann 2007, 122).

As president, Paul Spiegel set the *Zentralrat* three goals: make Jews again feel at home in Germany, integrate the Jewish FSU immigrants into German Jewish society, and bring about reconciliation between Germans and Jews (Spiegel 2001, 246). Like Bubis, Spiegel also called on non-Jews and Jews, both in Germany and abroad, not to reduce German-Jewish culture and history to the Shoah period, but rather to view it in the context of some 1,700 years of German-Jewish history.⁶³ Similarly, he called upon Germans to embrace the positive aspects of their pre-Shoah history in order to (re)gain a healthy national identity (Lubich 2005, 203). At the same time, Spiegel tirelessly condemned anti-Semitism. He was known for his frankness on Jewish issues. In 2000, for example, after a firebomb attack on a synagogue in Düsseldorf, he demanded better protection for Jews in Germany and called for "clear signals that the majority of the non-Jewish population wants us and our Jewish communities in this country" (Spiegel Online 2006).

Moreover, Spiegel also condemned hatred of minorities and of people from different cultural backgrounds: "We must not stop the fight against right-wing radicalism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia. Not only are we Jews at stake but so are Turks, blacks, homeless people, and gays. This country and the future of each person in this country are in

danger” (Dhm.de n.d.). In this vein, in 2000, he attacked Friedrich Merz, chairman of the majority center-right party *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* (Christian Democratic Union of Germany, CDU) in the Bundestag for introducing the term “German *Leitkultur*” (guiding national culture), which suggests the existence of a clearly identifiable spectrum of German cultural values, into political discourse and for demanding that immigrants adhere to these values. Merz had previously published an article in the journal *Die Welt* rejecting multiculturalism and advocating immigration controls and compulsory assimilation into the German core culture. Spiegel contended that although *Leitkultur* pretended to affirm inclusive liberal values, it was, in truth, a euphemism for old-fashioned *völkisch* (ethnic with an overtone of nation and race) ethnic nationalism. Spiegel’s public battle against any form of racism and xenophobia harmonized with the moral ideals shared by many members of the Jewish postwar generations inspired by the biblical commandment that the Jews should be a “light unto the nations” (Isaiah 42:6–7). This they interpreted as the obligation to speak out publicly for any minority or people in need and to be tolerant to all people.

In keeping with this approach and benefiting from Germany’s growing influence in the leadership of Europe, Spiegel became an avid supporter of inter-religious dialogue. He often appeared on public platforms with Nadeem Elyas, the Saudi-born head of the Muslim Central Council in Germany, promoted cooperation between the two minority groups—Jews and Muslims—and condemned Islamophobia. He also welcomed the visit of German-born Pope Benedict XVI to a Cologne synagogue in 2005.

When Spiegel became president of the *Zentralrat* in 1999, the Jewish population had quadrupled and decided to stay permanently in Germany, a position also publicly expressed by the *Zentralrat*. Spiegel declared obsolete the pronouncements that the Jewish presence in Germany was nothing but a happenstance of the war. In a 2001 interview, he stated, “I would not live in Germany if I did not like living here” (Spiegel Online 2002). At the *Reichskristallnacht* memorial ceremony in 2000, he said: “Following their horrible suffering, our parents decided to live here and establish their communities. We are firmly

convinced that this decision was right and important.” He also repeatedly expressed faith in the Germans: “I am convinced that the majority of people in this country condemn right-wing radicalism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia,” and in Germany: “Germany in 2000 is not the Germany of 1938. Jews in Germany have faith in this country, in its responsible politicians, and in the population.”⁶⁴ His good relations with leading politicians and his achievement in tightening relations between Germany and its Jews through the signing of the 2003 *Staatskirchenvertrag* further deepened his faith in the country.

However, Spiegel, too, became disillusioned toward the end of his life. In 2005, he noted in an interview: “You can do whatever you want and still achieve nothing. This is exactly where I am today. I admit that we are very sensitive. We yell when we’re kicked. On the other hand, should we just look on while things happen that are so reminiscent of the situation in Germany in 1933?” (Schmid and Dahlkamp 2005).

Charlotte Knobloch took Spiegel’s German-Jewish discourse one step further, calling Germany her *Heimat* and suggesting in 2009 that the *Zentralrat* should be renamed *Zentralrat der Deutschen Juden* (Central Council of German Jews) instead of *Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland* (Central Council of the Jews in Germany), which would imply a stronger association between the Jews and Germany. The term “German Jews” was rejected by the members of the *Zentralrat* board and the majority of the Jewish population, not only because of the Jews who had not yet received German citizenship, but primarily because the Jews were still struggling with the questions of “how German are we, and how German do we want to be?” Yet Knobloch went even further in criticizing “the enlightened, somewhat bloodless *Verfassungspatriotismus* of the [German] intellectuals” and calling for a new German patriotism among the Germans. “Germany needs a new kind of patriotism, since only a person who loves his country can feel responsible for social and political developments within it. Only a person who espouses his country and identifies with his nation and its history, has the right to intervene. This participation is necessary today more than ever before” (Knobloch 2006). Knobloch’s preoccupation with the concept of patriotism must be seen in the context of the patriotism debate among Germans, where discussion of the Shoah as one element in the new German identity

takes place simultaneously with the intra-Jewish process of identity formation, with its debate over the role of the Shoah and of Germany in Jewish group identity.

Knobloch's speech, entitled *Deutschland—Heimatland? Zur Frage des neuen Patriotismus* (Germany—A Homeland? The Question of New Patriotism), given at the annual reception of the Protestant Academy of Tutzing in 2007 (Knobloch 2007), presents her views on German patriotism. In it she stated that because of her experiences during the Shoah, she would never be able to call herself a German patriot. At the same time, she expressed her belief about the need for patriotism among the German population. "It is my deep conviction that it is futile, even counterproductive, to relegate the love toward one's own country to a *a priori* perception of nationalism and chauvinism.... I am therefore pleading for an intensive debate of a new type of patriotism, a debate which should not be restricted only to a select circle but must include all the people who shape our country's image at home and abroad" (p. 5). She urged a new, positive patriotism, different from the Nazis' martial chauvinism, and stated that her "bond to the German culture and the country's best values," as well as the "countless achievements and positive developments in postwar Germany, which are a source of self-confidence for us, making us proud and thankful" (p. 6), led her, a German Jew, to call upon other Germans to love their country. "I do not see any reason for citizens of this country—independently of their religious confessions—to not love it, since this love is anything but unmerited," she added (p. 8). To her, love for Germany was essential for the country's development, and thus she criticized the "tendency among large parts of the population to devalue and even stultify their own homeland I am especially appalled to hear young Germans tell me that, when abroad, they take pains not to let their origin be known because they feel uncomfortable being recognized as Germans" (p. 6). Knobloch finds the source for this feeling in "the association of guilt with which especially young people are time and again confronted in the context of the Shoah" (p. 7). She stated that it was the Jews' task to help them alter their self-image, especially at a time when the Jews no longer feel guilty for having remained in Germany and no longer veil their origin from the Jews abroad. She urged explaining to the second

postwar generation of Germans that while they were not responsible for their grandparents' actions, their national history obliged them to be aware of the past in taking responsibility for the future. Knobloch ended her speech by saying: "I am deeply convinced that the time has come to rethink our relations with our country and set them on a solid foundation" (p. 8).

Instead of focusing on past shame, Knobloch insisted on looking ahead while learning from history. As shown above, this was the prevailing attitude among the Jewish populations' second postwar generation, but it was not shared by the survivors' generation to which she belonged. She believed that emphasizing the construction of a common future will facilitate positive interaction between Germans and Jews. She continuously expressed the view that Germans and the Jews should "live together" instead of "next to each other." At the inauguration of the Munich community center in 2006, she declared that one of the building's main purposes was to enable Jewish and non-Jewish citizens of Munich to get to know each other better and thereby overcome prejudice. She added, "I would not speak of normalization but of positive coexistence, which has developed after decades of living next to each other. Normality has to grow; it cannot be implemented on orders, especially if people are still judged by their religion rather than their character" (Haben es mit Unbelehrbaren zu tun 2009). Like her predecessors, Knobloch believed that it is important to teach Germans about Judaism and Jews, since ignorance is the root of anti-Semitism and hinders progress toward normality. She attempted to do so via media interviews and regular Internet chats and appeared prominently in the German press.

At the same time, Knobloch also continued her predecessors' battle against anti-Semitism and xenophobia and their defense of Israel against attacks by politicians, the press, and members of the Left and the Right. She believed that the *Zentralrat* must combat anti-Semitism and Shoah denial not only in Germany but also globally. Thus after Pope Benedict XVI rehabilitated four bishops from the arch-conservative brotherhood called Pius X—the most outspoken being Bishop Williamson, who had long suggested that six million Jews could not have been murdered during the Shoah—Knobloch called off talks with the

Catholic Church and criticized the Vatican and its policies: “We have heard the pope’s speech about Muslims in Regensburg and his other statement about judging the Protestant Church, then about the conversion of the Jews through missionary work, and the Tridentine Mass—and recently the rehabilitation of a Holocaust denier [Bishop Williamson]. I do not think this is a coincidence. The pope is a highly educated man. He expresses the Church’s thoughts.” She also publicly called on the pope to suspend Bishop Williamson. For her part, the pope’s statement of “full solidarity” with the Jews could be accepted only “after the Holocaust denier is called to account” (interview in *Münchner Merkur*, January 30, 2009).

Knobloch also adopted a self-confident and open stance toward world Jewry in general and Israel in particular. Now that Jews no longer had a guilty conscience for living in Germany, the *Zentralrat* was ready to stand up against threats to communal interests posed by Israeli interference in their internal communal affairs. This heightened self-confidence is clearly reflected in the struggle between the *Zentralrat* and *Nativ*, an Israeli liaison organization that had maintained contact with Jews living in the Eastern bloc during the Cold War and encouraged immigration to Israel. In 2007, *Nativ* published plans to station two employees in Germany to work alongside existing Jewish Agency *shlichim* in running *ulpanim* (Hebrew-language schools) and other educational programs.

The *Zentralrat* and the Jewish Agency opposed this, arguing that it was superfluous since similar services were already provided by the *Zentralrat*, the ZWST, and the Jewish Agency. Moreover, the goals of *Nativ*’s activities had, in their view, not been sufficiently clarified. They suspected that *Nativ*’s goal was to increase immigration to Israel, although, according to the text of a 2007 Israeli Cabinet resolution, it was actually charged with strengthening the FSU Jews’ Jewish-Zionist identity to “counteract the dangerous assimilation of former Soviet Jews in Germany” (Connolly 2007). A power struggle erupted between the *Zentralrat* and *Nativ*. Strategic Affairs Minister Avigdor Lieberman accused the *Zentralrat* of representing its FSU members poorly and of favoring the veteran German Jews instead, declaring, “there is a huge potential here for expanding *aliyah*” (Connolly 2007). The *Zentralrat*

accused *Nativ* of political subversion by working directly with Jewish institutions outside the official recognized Jewish community framework, thereby further deepening the chasm between the *Alteingesessenen* and the immigrants from the FSU and of trying to persuade its members to move to Israel. It also criticized Israel for deciding to engage in activity within the Jewish population in Germany without previously consulting with its official representatives and for not informing it directly of *Nativ*'s plans to operate in Germany—the *Zentralrat* first learned about them from the Israeli media. In June 2007, ZWST executive director Benny Bloch and *Zentralrat* secretary general Stephan Kramer wrote a letter to Israeli premier Ehud Olmert accusing Israel of delivering a “sign of mistrust, which we personally find offensive” (Keller 2007). The *Zentralrat*'s offer for cooperation was rejected on the grounds that “*Nativ* is an independent Israeli government organization that wishes to employ its own diplomatic representatives and use its own infrastructure” (Kramer 2007). Consequently, the *Zentralrat* and the ZWST threatened to ask the German government to ban *Nativ*.

This was the first time that the Jewish communal bodies contemplated turning to the German authorities to block an Israeli government-backed organization and took issue with the Israeli leadership over the question of encouraging Jews in Germany to immigrate to Israel. This was a firm message to Israel that the Jews in Germany were well settled, that they were interested in strengthening their community and maintaining their numbers, and that they had gained sufficient self-confidence vis-à-vis Israel to fight to prevent it from “stealing” community members. Two years later, according to the *Zentralrat*'s monthly German-Russian information sheet from August 2009 (p. 1), *Nativ* decided to cooperate with the *Zentralrat*.

Interestingly, after many years in office and shortly after publishing her book *In Deutschland Angekommen: Erinnerungen* (Arrived in Germany: Memories), Knobloch, like Bubis and Spiegel, seemed to have become less optimistic about the place of the Jews in German society. In an interview with the German radio station *Deutschlandradio Kultur* on October 27, 2012, she stated, “Until recently, I was absolutely certain that I had finally arrived, since I worked toward this aim for decades. With the laying of the cornerstone and the opening of the new Jewish

center [in Munich in 2006], I was ready to say I unpacked my suitcases. Not all of my brothers and sisters in faith shared my opinion then. But I like living in this country. I have deep faith in our mature liberal democracy, in the politics, and also partly in the civil society. And yet, my very foundations were shaken. The hostilities that we experienced in the past weeks [Knobloch refers to the circumcision debate] have reached a dimension that I could not have imagined in my wildest dreams. Based on bloodcurdling tales, we were completely spuriously placed on the margins of society.”

With the election of Dieter Graumann as its president, the *Zentralrat* underwent a generation change. According to Bodemann (2007), unlike the war generation, the postwar-generation community leaders do not view the “ideological work” of serving as guardians of the new German democracy and continually issuing reminders of the German past as their primary responsibility. According to Korn, the members of the postwar generations no longer want to be the “yardstick for the democratic development in postwar Germany” (Krupp 2000). They want the *Zentralrat* president to concentrate more on internal Jewish matters, such as strengthening Jewish identity and uniting German Jewry. They wish to enhance Jewish life in Germany. This attitude also came to the fore with Graumann’s *Zentralrat* presidency.

Graumann maintained the *Zentralrat*’s high profile in public debates. However, his perception of the role of patriotism and Shoah memory in external communal representation differed from that of his predecessors. In contrast to Knobloch, Graumann perceived participation in the national patriotism discourse neither as the *Zentralrat*’s task nor as an effective representation tool. When asked about his approach to patriotism in an interview in *Die Welt*, he answered: “I can’t do much with the notion of ‘patriotism.’ For my whole life I’ve been in Germany. I chose to be here, and I like it very much. But in general I have trouble with the word ‘patriotism.’ I, however, don’t mind when someone is proud to be a German” (Herzinger 2012). He made clear he had no interest in pursuing Knobloch’s public patriotism discourse.

Furthermore, Graumann also repeatedly stressed the importance of reducing the salience and centrality of Shoah memory in communal external representation. In his speech at the Paulskirche in Frankfurt

during the commemoration ceremony on November 9, 2010, which was pointedly titled “Judentum hat Zukunft—Munter und Bunter” (Judaism Has a Future—Cheerful and Colorful), Graumann stated that communal representation should “always be Holocaust-conscious—and yet not always Holocaust-centered. And yes: we also need to find our way out of the Holocaust niche and into the thick of life.” He called for an end to the *Zentralrat*’s “role of chronic critics,” since “whoever defiantly cowers in the permanent-grumble corner has yet seldom cut a particularly happy figure. We thus do not need to endlessly extend the Jewish perennial subscription to cautioning and admonishing and rebuking and reprimanding and reprehending. More creativity, more imagination—instead of outrage rituals ... Jews are much too often perceived solely as sad victims from the past or as irritating permanent admonishers from today. This surely cannot be in our interest” (Graumann 2010). Graumann believed that the *Zentralrat* should emphasize the positive dimension of Judaism and present it in a positive light, highlighting Jewish wisdom, values, and traditions. In his speech at the Paulskirche during the commemoration ceremony on November 8, 2012, entitled “Jetzt erst Recht: Wir Träumen Nicht – Wir Trauen Uns” (Now more than Ever: We do not dream – we dare), he expressed his wish “for a Jewry which will surely never forget our catastrophies and our martyrs, but which will henceforth care more strongly for and will be more aware of the positive dimensions of Judaism and exhibit them with energy, enthusiasm and vigor. Only those who are enthusiastic will enthuse others.” He wished “for a Jewry which not only desperately, despondently, anxiously and tensely contemplates how German it may be, but how Jewish it wants to be” (Graumann 2012). He sought to present the Jewish community as a vital rather than a victim community—a position reflecting the attitude of the vast majority of Jews in Germany. His statements on Jewish identity were addressed to both the Jewish and non-Jewish population. He sought to influence Jewish group identity on the one side, and German society’s perception of Judaism and German Jewry on the other.

Graumann saw it as the *Zentralrat*’s task to play an active role in strengthening German Jewry and improving Jewish life in Germany. He repeatedly stressed the importance of intensifying the *Zentralrat*’s

dealing with intra-Jewish matters—such as further integrating the FSU Jews, preventing the fragmentation of the Jewish community, and enhancing Jewish identity, education, and knowledge. In the interests of the latter, for example, a new education department that is to provide the basis for a Jewish academy was set up within the *Zentralrat*. In a press statement from January 24, 2013, following its inauguration, Graumann stated: “I want to position the *Zentralrat* as the Jewish competence center in Germany. We want to impart more education and knowledge. This is a matter close to my heart.” In turn, in interviews and speeches, to influence the way German Jewry is viewed by its non-Jewish counterparts, Graumann drew attention to successful communal policies as potential models for national policies. Thus, for instance, he highlighted the Jewish community’s integration successes in an interview on *Deutschlandradio Kultur* on October 26, 2012, stating: “at the moment, the Jewish community consists up to 90 percent of people who joined us only in the last 20 years. In our community, 10 percent should integrate 90 percent; the word no longer fits, yet who can manage this in Germany? In Germany they lament over integration problems, and horrible books are being written on this issue. But we live integration in a very exemplary, effective manner with a very special culture of welcoming. I believe this is definitely an example of something others could learn from us.” In sum, Graumann sought to present German Jewry as a vital community that plays an active role in German society and discourse—this strongly recalls Deutsch’s external communal representation stance in Austria.

Graumann also stood up energetically for the rights of the Jews in Germany and the world and against any sort of anti-Semitism, whether it came from the extreme Right, the Left, or the Muslims. He warned tirelessly against anti-Semitism, calling it the “pestilence of humanity” that needs to be fought to prevent it from turning into an epidemic. He repeatedly called for the extreme right-wing *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (NPD) to be politically and legally banned and reproached politicians from all political parties for their failure to act. He did not shy away from criticizing the government and state bodies for not outlawing the NPD and doing enough to combat right-wing anti-Semitism. He called them to invest more efforts and means

to eliminate this anti-Semitism at its roots, such as in the extreme right-wing social networks, comrades associations, and music and hooligan scenes, and to be more alert and willing to take this danger more seriously.

Similarly, Graumann also publicly attacked the political Left for its anti-Semitic tendencies. Associating Jew-hatred with the right wing has become obvious; however, blaming the political Left for anti-Semitism is less common and thus caused a stir among its activists. Graumann publicly criticized the fact that part of the Left actively supports calls to boycott Israeli goods and unilateral denunciations of Israel. Rhetorically gifted, he used harsh words against these activists. For instance, he wrote in a newspaper article that “the old anti-Zionist spirit of the GDR still haunts the party. Paradoxically, today, mainly the representatives from the West play out their literally pathological, unrestrained Israel-hatred. And these reactionary die-hards, alas, demand to keep being responsible for the Israel-politics in the political Left... When Israel is being demonized, such as through Nazi equations, when its existence is being delegitimized—then anti-Semitism has long since begun” (Graumann 2011).

Another new phenomenon in the *Zentralrat*'s external representation was Graumann's criticism of Muslim anti-Semitism. To be sure, he continued to cooperate with Muslim leaders on common interests and even stood up for the Muslims' rights whenever they were endangered by national politics or social events, as his predecessors had done. Nevertheless, he also harshly criticized them in public for not doing enough to ensure the Jews' safety (the number of attacks on Jews by Muslims is increasing—such as the August 2012 attack on Rabbi Alter in Berlin, in which four young Muslims pummeled the rabbi and threatened to kill his six-year-old daughter). Graumann repeatedly called on the leaders to fight the growing anti-Semitism among young Muslims and to stop treating it as taboo. He pointed to the fact that the word “Jew” was increasingly becoming a common curse word in schoolyards and sports fields. At the same time, Graumann also presented German Jewry as a strong community, insisting that the Jews will not let anybody intimidate them, and will not hide their Jewish symbols, such as the *kippa*, when entering certain districts with a large Muslim population, as some non-Jews suggested.

Alongside his fight against anti-Semitism, Graumann also battled any attempt to restrict the Jews' religious freedom, such as was the case in the circumcision affair. He harshly criticized the Cologne Court ruling against circumcision and the subsequent public discourse, stating that the debate had quickly degenerated and turned into Jew-bashing. He stated in an interview that “nowhere in the world do critics use such sharp stridency, grim relentlessness, and accusatory tones as here in Germany... and when we Jews are accused of being notorious child abusers, this can no longer be tolerated. We need no private lessons concerning love of children.” He also blamed parts of the German public for “obsessive paternalism” and emphasized the anti-Semitic tendencies behind the public debate. Graumann, however, not only offered criticism but also worked to have circumcision—for Jews and Muslims—formally legalized. To that end he wrote letters to Germany's Chancellor Merkel, the ministers of interior affairs and justice, and the governors of the German states and other important politicians asking them to initiate a new law regulating circumcision in Germany. This new law was eventually passed by an overwhelming majority in the Bundestag lower house in December 2012. It grants parents the right to have their sons circumcised by a trained practitioner before they are six months of age, and thereafter by a doctor.

Finally, like Knobloch, Muzicant, and Deutsch, Graumann also demonstrated self-confidence when representing German Jewry toward Israeli public figures trying to intervene in internal communal matters. In August 2012, Israeli interior minister Eli Yishai called on Chancellor Merkel to champion the right to circumcision, and Chief Rabbi Jona Metzger insisted in his official visit to Berlin on the importance of circumcision and raised the idea that *mohalim* (men qualified to perform circumcisions) could receive medical training. Consequently, Graumann sent a letter to the Israeli Embassy in Berlin in which he criticized Yishai and Metzger for interceding in internal matters. He blamed Metzger for meeting with high-level government officials without notifying or even consulting with the local Jewish community or rabbinic institutions. Graumann called it “an unprecedented example of interference in religious and political issues in an independent Jewish community outside the State of Israel” (Krauss 2012). Graumann made it clear that Israeli officials, especially those

unfamiliar with the local rules of the game, should not interfere in German communal issues and external representation toward the German public and politicians.

In sum: since the late 1970s, self-confidence among both the Jewries and the leaders of both communities has risen, ending the previous approach of keeping a low profile on communal issues and interests. The leaders of both communities now stand up publicly for their communities' rights and no longer seek to keep Jewish issues out of the public eye, dealt with only behind closed doors. They now openly criticize both the local society and its politicians and are prepared to take to court whoever attempts to undermine Jews' religious freedom or makes anti-Semitic utterances.

The change is especially visible in the IKG. Muzicant markedly transformed the IKG's public appearance, discourse, and mode of action with the adoption of a particularly self-confident, if not militant, public stance when Jewish issues were at stake. This is in line with the postwar generation's *leitmotiv* of "never again." Muzicant no longer buries his head in the sand when faced with the anti-Semitic utterances of Austrian politicians or individuals, something that *Alt-Wiener* IKG leaders did until the 1980s, and which many postwar-generation Jews had criticized since the 1970s (e.g., Beckermann 2005).

While both the IKG and *Zentralrat* leaders adopted a more outspoken public stance on Jewish issues, they differ in their attitudes toward patriotism. According to Hodik (2008), calls by Jewish leaders for more patriotism among the general population, as had been voiced by Charlotte Knobloch, are unimaginable in Austria. This difference can be linked to the leaders' personal identities and characters and reflects the generational changes the Jewish communities in both countries underwent in the last decades. The more positive attitudes toward German patriotism of Knobloch and the *Zentralrat* leaders before her reflect the special historical relation to Germany that is characteristic of the *Alt-Deutsche* Jews (as well as of the *Alt-Wiener* Jews with regard to Austria), but not of the postwar generations. Although not comparable to the prewar patriotism, the relation to Germany is clearly stronger and more pivotal to the group identity of the *Alt-Deutsche* Jews than to that of the postwar generations.

4.6 Austrian and German Politics and Attitudes toward Jewry

The difference in the leaders' attitudes toward their fellow citizens' patriotism was, however, also an outcome of national attitudes toward patriotism itself. In Austria, patriotism was promoted less intensively among the political elite and the population than in Germany. After World War II, the two main political parties in Austria, the SPÖ and the ÖVP, strove to form an Austrian identity and promoted the idea that Austria could be an independent state. This was important because there was no such thing as an Austrian identity before. During the Habsburg Monarchy, the population's identities were instead ethnic-cultural or linked to the monarchy. After World War I, Austria, the German-speaking *Rumpfland* ("torso country"), was stripped of its national identity. The majority of the population did not believe in the viability of an independent Austria, felt part of a pan-German nation, and requested that Germany annex the country.⁶⁵ Even immediately after World War II, the majority of the Austrian population still thought that Austria should become part of the German state. The process of shaping Austrian identity began only in the 1950s and gained momentum after the signing of the State Treaty in 1955. According to political scientist Susanne Frölich-Steffen, until the 1980s, the formation of Austrian patriotism "regularly became a topic of discussion in political everyday life. The proclamation of faith in the Austrian nation and its uniqueness constituted an inexorable part of the SPÖ and ÖVP's canon and their domestic and foreign policies" (2004, 284). This Austrian patriotism was firmly based on strictly distinguishing Austria from Germany; the theory that Austria was the first victim of Nazi Germany; and, since the Kreisky era, the neutrality concept—viewing Austria as a neutral bridge between Eastern and Western Europe.

However, in the late 1980s, political developments brought about changes in the Austrian identity. The Waldheim affair led to serious discussions over the victim theory, while the fall of the Eastern bloc rendered Austria's function as an East-West bridge and *immerwährende*

*Neutralität*⁶⁶ (everlasting neutrality) obsolete. Moreover, the increasingly close contacts with the EU in the early 1990s required contractual ties to the West. By that time, Austria had become an economically, politically, and socially stable country, free of major internal or external conflicts. The ÖVP in particular, which had until then emphasized Austrian patriotism, now developed an increasingly deeper Europe orientation. The new identity concept was mainly based on Austria's affiliation with the EU (see Frölich-Steffen 2003, 209–211). The neutrality element nevertheless remained an important component, but it was reduced to the principle of keeping out of international conflicts and military obligations. This principle, which is an important element of Austria's foreign policy along with the Austrian *Gemütlichkeit* (atmosphere of comfort, peace and consent, but mostly conflict-avoidance), led the Austrian population to concentrate more on themselves and their individual interests. The issue of patriotism, which has stronger manifestations in times of internal crisis or external conflicts, thus no longer figures prominently on the public agenda and in social discourse.

This is not to say that Austrians are not patriots. A 2006 poll conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago showed that the Austrians are the most patriotic nation in Europe (Thielicke 2006). While this result might need to be taken with a grain of salt, Eurobarometer surveys have shown that national pride scores in Austria are among the highest in the EU. Yet the mainstream of Austrian society simply does not discuss this issue. Only the FPÖ and the *Bündnis Zukunft Österreich* (Alliance for the Future of Austria, BZÖ),⁶⁷ which still feel part of the German nation, occasionally raised the issue of patriotism to attract votes or support for their opposition to Austria's accession to the EU or to other EU initiatives. Prior to the June 12, 1994, referendum concerning EU membership for Austria,⁶⁸ the FPÖ presented itself as "EU-critical" and "Austria-patriotic." In 2007, led by Jörg Haider, the BZÖ ran a public campaign on the EU Reform Agreement with posters stating "we, the patriots, are against the EU hoodlums."

In Germany, by contrast, the legitimacy and importance of patriotism and its various components figure prominently in discussions among politicians, intellectuals, and the general population. In the aftermath

of the Nazi era, the Germans had to form a new national identity. In his first speech before the Bundestag after his election as federal president in 1949, Theodor Heuss declared that “we are standing before the great task of establishing new national feelings for our country. This is a very difficult educational and experiential task” (Deutscher Bundestag 2009, 98). However, the term “patriotism” conjured up negative sentiments among many Germans. In the decades after 1945, to be German largely meant to deal with the Nazi era. The question of whether Germans could or should once again be proud Germans is still openly discussed today. Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel stated in 2004: “We must not obliterate our dark sides. The inimitability of the Holocaust remains our German responsibility. But I entertain the hope that, thanks to the lessons we have learned from history, given our great achievements in the postwar era, and our responsible foreign policy ... we may, like other countries, commit ourselves to our country and to patriotism” (Graw 2004). A 2009 German national identity study showed that 74.6 percent of the Germans believed that Germans in general could once again be proud to be German. However, only 59.3 percent stated that they personally could be proud Germans (Identity Foundation 2009). According to the 2001 Eurobarometer study, from all the EU member states, the people in Germany are least likely to feel proud of their nationality (European Commission 2002, 15).

The public preoccupation with the legitimacy and components of German patriotism enabled the Jews in Germany to take part in the discussion about patriotism, whereas the absence of discussions about Austrian patriotism, and its problematic nature, militated against Jews expressing Austrian patriotism beyond that associated with citizenship loyalty.

Alongside the IKG and *Zentralrat* leaders’ personal characteristics and the Austrian and German non-Jewish populations’ attitudes toward patriotism, political and social developments in the two countries also affected the Jewish communities’ external representation. By 1986, a significant change was beginning to take shape within Austrian society, which would eventually benefit Jewish life in Vienna: the Austrian people openly began to discuss the National Socialist era. German society likewise underwent a significant change, but this would eventually

generate anguish and uncertainty among the Jewish population—namely, public discussion of whether Shoah memory should remain a significant element in German identity. *Zentralrat* leaders felt it necessary to take part in and channel this public discourse in a direction that was beneficial to the Jewish community. In the end, however, some of its presidents expressed disappointment with German society toward the end of their term of office, particularly because of its continued unwillingness to accept the full integration of the Jews and to regard them as “real” Germans.

In both countries, the 1980s can thus be viewed as a major turning point in the approach of the Austrian and German people to the Shoah and to its role in their collective identity and memory, and, by implication, in the Shoah’s impact on relations between the Jews and their environment. The Austrians underwent a process of opening up that involved dealing with their past and redefining their attitude toward their local Jews, while the Germans sought to close off and put a seal on this era in German history, and to begin to take a more critical view of the Jews and Jewish life in Germany.

In 1982, the Israeli incursion into Lebanon (the First Lebanon War) brought about a wave of anti-Israel protest in the Austrian public arena. This was particularly noticeable on the political Left, which resorted to anti-Semitic rhetoric, such as equating Israel with the Third Reich. This new political anti-Semitism was particularly shocking to Jews who were critical of Israel’s politics. They now felt under attack not only from their fellow Jews, who accused them of giving succor to Israel’s enemies, but also from non-Jewish anti-Israel protesters, who failed to differentiate between the Israeli government and the Jews in Austria or Germany (Frey 2008).

The domestic political scene in the early 1980s added fuel to the anti-Semitic fire. Following the 1983 elections to the Austrian Parliament in which the socialist SPÖ lost its absolute majority, Chancellor Kreisky opted to resign rather than form a minority government. The government, which had consisted solely of socialist ministers, was replaced by an SPÖ-FPÖ coalition government. The FPÖ was insensitive to Austria’s Nazi past, as reflected in the handshake Defense Minister Friedhelm Frischenschlager offered the returning convicted

war criminal Walter Reder in 1985.⁶⁹ This gesture, which highlighted the differences between the SPÖ and the FPÖ leaderships, irrevocably weakened the coalition and marked the beginning of Jörg Haider's rise. As political scientist David Art points out, "he used the Nazi past to rally the nationalists against the liberals. The Waldheim debate, which broke out a year later, brought anti-Semitic, nationalist, and apologist discourse into the political mainstream," making "the FPÖ ideally positioned to benefit from this shift in the discursive space" (2006, 178). Haider's electoral breakthrough took place in November 1986, in the midst of the Waldheim debate.

By the mid-1980s, according to Wolffsohn, "Austria appeared to have become overconfident in its belief that the Austrian past as part of the 'great-German Reich' no longer bothered or interested anyone in the present. That proved to be a political miscalculation ... [the Austrians'] nonchalance with regard to their nation's past was a tantamount to rattling the skeletons in the national closet" (1993, 70). During the 1986 Austrian presidential campaign, the seemingly rock-solid ice was finally broken. The WJC accused Kurt Waldheim, the ÖVP candidate, of not fully disclosing—if not downright concealing—his membership in the SA (Sturmabteilung, the Nazi Party's paramilitary wing) and the National Socialist Student Federation, as well as his role as liaison officer in the German *Wehrmacht* during World War II. Waldheim, the former UN secretary general, claimed that after more than 40 years, these events had slipped his mind, resulting in both his failure to disclose them and his denials when the issue was first raised. Concerning his activities, he explained, "I was just performing my duty." In addition, the WJC accused Waldheim of having committed war crimes when deployed as a German lieutenant in Greece and Yugoslavia during the brutal campaigns against Yugoslav partisans and the large-scale deportation of Jews to death camps, although it could not provide any hard supporting evidence.

These charges harmed Austria's international status. They were also highly problematic for Vienna's Jewry, involuntarily thrusting the IKG into the center of the Austrian political arena. Austria's Jews were taken aback, as IKG President Grosz stated in 1987: "We lived in symbiosis of mutual opportunism. Now, for the first time since 1945, anti-Semitism

is employed as a political weapon in Austria" (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*, October 17, 1987). This referred to Waldheim's election statements: he presented himself as the victim of an international defamation campaign influenced by "powerful East Coast circles" (implying the WJC), thus distinguishing between the patriotic "Austrians" and the disloyal "Jews," who were the "denigrators of their own country" (Frey 2008). While anti-Semitism may not have grown, it definitely became more manifest. Anti-Semitic speeches by politicians were followed by a rise in the number of anti-Semitic media statements—as in the following: "Formerly, Joseph Goebbels roused people against Austria; today it is [WJC President] Edgar Bronfman" (Nimmerrichter 1988). Street incidents also increased. Rabbi Biderman reported in 1987 that "previously I used to be verbally assaulted once or twice a month; now this happens two to three times a week" (*Der Spiegel* 1987). These anti-Semitic outbursts led to apprehension and panic among the Jews, and increasing thoughts of emigration. However, they also strengthened the community's resolve and ability to fight back more effectively, since open anti-Semitism is easier to combat than latent hate (Weisz 2004).

The IKG was uncomfortably sandwiched between the ÖVP's overtly anti-Jewish reaction and the WJC, which was blatantly inconsiderate of the IKG and refused any IKG attempt to contact it on that issue. In 1986, IKG president Ivan Hacker wrote in a letter to *Zentralrat* president Werner Nachmann that "the WJC circumvented us in the Waldheim affair, without asking us, without holding any prior consultation with us" (IKG Archive 1986). Nevertheless, due to the tight bond between the IKG leadership and the WJC, the IKG at first did not officially come out against any WJC statement (Weisz 2009), trying to placate it. In March 1986, Muzicant met with WJC representatives "to ask it to soften its stance out of concern for Austria's Jews" (*Der Ausweg*, June 1986). The WJC turned down the request, and Israel Singer (later WJC secretary general between 2001 and 2007) even called on Vienna's Jews to emigrate (Adunka 2000, 491). The WJC's charges against Waldheim resulted in Israel somewhat reluctantly downgrading the level of its diplomatic representation in Vienna to avoid the spectacle of an Israeli ambassador presenting his credentials to someone suspected of Nazi war crimes.

The Austrian government reacted to the affair by establishing a commission of historians to probe Waldheim's role as a *Wehrmacht* officer in the occupied Balkans. From the onset, its work gave rise to extensive public discussion over Waldheim's past, the validity of his self-exoneration, and the acceptability of placing people with Nazi backgrounds and war records in influential political positions. The Austrian populace was split into two camps: those who wished to maintain silence about the past and those who called for a critical examination of Austria's history. The Waldheim affair helped form protest groups made up of young Austrian intellectuals (Jewish and non-Jewish), such as *Neues Österreich* (New Austria), which hoped to change deeply ingrained attitudes in Austria. And, for the first time since World War II, the affair also occasioned widespread discussion and criticism within the Austrian public and political circles of the "first victim" theory and the problematic treatment of the country's Nazi role. This polarization in the Austrian population strengthened the Jewish community because, in contrast to the earlier postwar years, it was no longer alone in the fight against Austria's unwillingness to face up to its past and its attempts to whitewash the guilt of a significant part of its population.

To the Jewish community's dismay, in May 1986, Waldheim was nevertheless elected Austria's president. In retrospect, the Jews' apprehensions seem to have been unwarranted: Austrian Jewry in fact became stronger domestically and externally as a result of the Waldheim affair. The federal government and municipal authorities sought to improve relations with Austrian Jews, world Jewry, and Israel. They increasingly supported the construction and renovation of synagogues, Jewish cultural activities, scholarly conferences on Jewish topics, Shoah research, and commemoration projects. Further educational programs, which began back in the Kreisky era, were completed, and school textbooks were rewritten⁷⁰ to counteract anti-Semitism and deepen understanding and knowledge of the Shoah. Moreover, the Austrian government launched serious talks about restitution with the IKG. In 1986, Vienna mayor Helmut Zilk announced the establishment of a Jewish museum, and the 50th anniversary of the *Anschluss* in 1988 was marked by several high-profile public memorial ceremonies.

Moreover, for the first time, government leaders engaged in what Oliver Marchart (2005, 27) called a “discourse of confession” (*Bekenntnisdiskurs*). Thus, for example, President Waldheim stated in a television address on March 10, 1988: “We must never forget that many of the worst Nazi thugs were Austrians. There were Austrians who were victims and others who were perpetrators” (Uhl 1992, 103). Although Waldheim rejected collective guilt, he wished to “apologize as president of Austria for the crimes of National Socialism committed by Austrians” (Uhl 2007, 237). At the same time, however, the official position toward compensation and the “first victim” theory did not change. In 1988, the *Bundespressdienst* (Federal Press Service), a section of the Federal Chancellor Office, published a brochure titled *Measures by the Republic of Austria since 1945 for the Benefit of Certain Individuals Persecuted for Political, Religious, or Racial Reasons*. This brochure, which was translated and distributed by the government abroad, started, “Austria was invaded by heavily armed German troops on March 12, 1938, thus becoming the first victim of Hitler’s aggression” (p. 1). The brochure not only uses the old “first victim” myth as an “excuse” for the Nazi crimes committed on Austrian soil and to dismiss any material claims by Nazi victims but also gives the impression that Austria’s restitution to Jewish victims was much more generous than it actually was (Uhl 2007, 242).

That same year, the historic commission investigating Waldheim’s past published its findings. Although it found no concrete evidence that Waldheim was guilty of explicit war crimes, it established—contrary to his assertions—that his rank and job were sufficiently high to make him aware of the crimes committed by the Nazi occupiers in the Balkans. Moreover, it concluded, his law studies should have made him aware that some actions by the German Army and paramilitary groups were considered crimes even by the German military law of the time. The commission noted that there was no documentary evidence of him expressing opposition to such offenses or attempting to prevent them.⁷¹ As a result of the official findings and the ensuing public discussion, Waldheim became an international pariah. He was banned from entering the United States, Canada, and Israel, and many other countries made it clear that they did not want him on a state visit. Only in the Vatican and the Arab countries was his presence welcome.

It took until the 1990s for the “first victim” myth to recede, and for a new political approach to the past to emerge, with Austria’s admission of its *Mitschuld*, or complicity, in the Shoah. In a speech before Parliament in June 1991, Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky rebuffed the official “first victim” thesis, acknowledged the shared responsibility of the Austrian people for the suffering they inflicted, and apologized to the survivors and the victims’ descendants. In June 1993, Vranitzky, who more than compensated for Waldheim’s inability to represent Austria abroad, became the first Austrian chancellor to visit Israel. In a speech at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, he repeatedly stressed the Austrians’ role in the Nazi machinery and spoke about the responsibility of each and every Austrian to remember and seek justice.

In 1995, the first steps for compensation were taken: Austria created the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, which makes direct disbursements to Austrian victims of Nazism and supports Shoah research and remembrance projects. In November 1997—one year after Germany declared January 27, the day the Red Army liberated Auschwitz, as national Memorial Day for the victims of fascism—the Austrian Parliament set May 5, the day the Mauthausen concentration camp was liberated, as its national Memorial Day. Moreover, several monuments for destroyed synagogues and memorial plaques were established to commemorate the prewar Jewish communities and population. As mentioned above, in 1998—60 years after the *Anschluss*—the Austrian government formed an official commission of historians to research the issue of Jewish property confiscated during World War II. The *Kunstrückgabegesetz*, enacted in 1998 and amended in 2009, even “places Austria ahead of most other countries in this matter” (Wistrich 2000).

Following this radical turnabout in public attitudes and the Austrian government’s stance, the Jews began to anticipate greater social integration and foresaw a better future for themselves in Austria. Furthermore, the Jews now openly displayed Judaism and Jewish culture to the non-Jewish population and were more at ease in publicly expressing their Jewish identity and the conduct of Jewish life. In addition, the IKG’s status in Austrian society rose considerably, as shown at its 150-year jubilee in 1999, which was attended by all of the notables in

“official Austria”—the governing elite as well as leading figures from all walks of life.

This situation did not last long, however, as these developments were overtaken and set back by the formation in 2000 of the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition government. Compounding the Jews’ disappointment and concern over this turn of events was the government’s portrayal of Muzicant. It treated him as an enemy of the state for his opposition in the restitution negotiations, which drove relations between Austria and its Jews to a new low. As in the past, Austria’s policy was to stall and drag things out in the hope of reaching agreements on class-action suits in the United States, which would come at the expense of Austrian Jewry, thereby making all such deals totally unacceptable to the IKG. In addition, Jews were again subjected to increased anti-Semitic activities, such as graffiti saying “Jews out,” the desecration of Jewish tombstones, and verbal and physical assaults.⁷²

This anti-Semitic eruption was triggered by Haider and the FPÖ’s racist and pro-Nazi sentiments and statements, which brought to the fore and legitimized the deep-seated anti-Semitic prejudices of some sections of the Austrian population, as well as by some leading ÖVP politicians’ attempts to revive the “first victim” theory, which in previous years had been regarded as dead. In September 2000, Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner claimed at an international conference that Hitler’s Germany had militarily attacked and occupied Austria on March 13, 1938. Moreover, on November 9 of that year, Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel said in an interview with the *Jerusalem Post* that “sovereign Austria was literally the first victim of the Nazi regime ... It took Austria by force. Austria was the very first victim” (Barak 2000, 1).⁷³

IKG president Muzicant, as well as European and U.S. Jewish representatives and non-Jewish Austrian and European public figures, came out strongly against the new coalition in a mass protest demonstration entitled *Nein zur Koalition mit dem Rassismus* (No to the Coalition with Racism), held in Vienna in January 2000. This reversal of the advances of the 1990s had a sobering impact on Vienna’s Jews. According to *Misrachi* rabbi Josef Pardes (2005), Jews again began to fear that they might have to pack their suitcases, and some of them even purchased apartments in Israel. Feeling set apart, if not completely excluded

from Austrian society, the Jews sought social support within the group. According to Rabbi Pardes (2005), during that period, informal social interaction and collective community activities increased noticeably.

At the same time, however, the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition also provided a new framework for the ongoing negotiations on material compensation. Historian Heidmarie Uhl argued that the new government perceived these negotiations as an important political function for its rehabilitation in international public opinion (2007, 245). The coalition established the Law Concerning the Reconciliation Fund for the Compensation of Former Slaves and Forced Laborers of the Nazi Regime in July 2000 (*Versöhnungsfonds-Gesetz*, BGBl. Nr. 74/2000), the treaty on aryanized property in 2001, and the General Settlement Fund, mentioned above. These compensation agreements were to eliminate previous failings in compensation policy. At the same time, however, the question of compensation for Nazi victims was also connected with the Prisoners of War Compensation Law that came into effect on January 1, 2001 (*Kriegsgefangenenentschädigungsgesetz*, BGBl. Nr. 142/2000 article 70), which grants former Wehrmacht soldiers who had been taken prisoner in Central and Eastern European countries a monthly supplementary pension of up to 500 schillings (36.60 euros), depending on the length of imprisonment. According to Uhl, the timing of the compensations provided a symbolic equation of the victims of the Nazi regime with the German Wehrmacht soldiers, and “can be seen as a subtle signal sent to an electorate that rejects a self-critical exploration of the past” (2007, 247).

The tense situation lasted for close to seven years, easing only after the 2006 elections, which brought down the ÖVP-FPÖ (from 2005 ÖVP-BZÖ) coalition government. Relations between the IKG and the government recovered somewhat but did not return to their 1990s level. Public outbreaks of anti-Semitism subsided upon Haider’s departure from federal office but did not entirely disappear, because he was not the only figure to exploit anti-Semitism politically. Talk of emigration died down. Restitution negotiations between the IKG and the Austrian government and the individual provinces continued in a quarrelsome manner before reaching their successful conclusion.

Moreover, the Austrian government also financially supported the construction of the large IKG campus. The *Hakoah* recreation center, the first facility to be ready, was inaugurated by Austrian political and IKG leaders in March 2008 in public ceremonies commemorating the 70th anniversary of the *Anschluss* amid considerable media attention. Subsequent inaugurations—of the ZPC community school (in September 2008) and of the home for elderly (in December 2009)—were also widely reported public events attended by many national and international dignitaries, such as Israeli defense minister Ehud Barak. On the eve of the Parliament's session marking the 70th anniversary of the *Anschluss*, the IKG, the federal government, and Vienna's city hall furthermore reached an agreement on a location for the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies—home to Simon Wiesenthal's archives—and the means for financing it.

In sum, as a result of the Waldheim affair, Austrian policies have mutated. No longer are they based on a perception of the Jews as the eternal victims who remind Austrians of the past they want to put behind them. Now these policies treat the Jews as a vital group and an integral part of Austrian society. Until the mid-1980s, Austria's politicians showed no interest in enhancing Jewish life in the country and did not support such a development, regarding an excessive Jewish presence as a threat to the Austrian identity established by the political elite. Thereafter, however, Austria's policies were characterized by a willingness to deal with Austria's responsibility in the Shoah and by substantial financial support for IKG projects to enhance Jewish life and make it more visible.

In Germany, a somewhat opposite development took place. Earlier German policies typically placed great importance on dealing with the country's past and supporting Jewish life. Although this support is still a prominent agenda item, since the early 1980s, Germany's politicians and population have increasingly sought to put the past behind them. While the German population felt great sympathy for the murdered Jews, it criticized the living Jews for constantly reminding Germans of their role and guilt in the Shoah. Germany indeed gradually incorporated the Shoah into its official collective memory in an effort to shake off its image as a racist and prejudiced society.

In the 1980s, however, public discussion developed over the centrality of this memory in the German identity, generating calls for the normalization of Jewish-German relations, in which the past would no longer play a role, or at least play a less salient role. In 1980, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt introduced what Wolffsohn described as “a policy towards Israel without the symbolism of atonement” (1993, 31). The intended sale of the German Leopard 2 tank to Saudi Arabia became the symbol of this new policy of normalization. As revealed by the German-Israeli row that ensued, the aim of this sale was not only to secure oil imports and commodity exports but also to establish a new *geschichtspolitik* (politics of history). The wish for normalization was further reflected in certain statements and actions of Schmidt’s successor, Helmut Kohl (federal chancellor 1982–1998). Kohl frequently used the terms “people,” “homeland,” and “nation,” which his predecessors had avoided because they evoked the Nazi past. In his 1983 speech before the Israeli Knesset, he asserted that (having come of age after World War II), thanks to “the grace of a late birth” (*Gnade der späten Geburt*),⁷⁴ he could not bear guilt for the Nazis’ crimes. This term was not Kohl’s invention, but by uttering it at the Knesset, he gave the impression of wanting to evade responsibility for Germany’s past. During the same visit to Israel, he hurried through the Yad Vashem exhibition halls, commenting, “I know the German history.” Moreover, in 1985, he invited U.S. president Ronald Reagan to visit the military cemetery in Bitburg,⁷⁵ where many members of the Waffen-SS were buried. Despite protests by Israel, U.S. Jewish organizations, and the *Zentralrat* both before and during Reagan’s tour of Germany, Kohl did not change his plans to commemorate VE Day by paying homage to those whom he called the “victims of World War II” at the cemetery. Like Schmidt, Kohl also wanted to advance the sale of the tank to Saudi Arabia, but above all, his aim was to demonstrate a return to normality. As Wolffsohn put it, Kohl’s party, the CDU, and all German parties “shared a desire to close the books on the past and to begin a new chapter in the history of German-Jewish and German-Israeli relations” (1993, 36).

The German population also expressed this hope for normalization that would lessen their guilt feeling and rid them from the perception that they are expected to treat the Jews with kid gloves. They wanted to

end the dichotomy of victims (Jews) and perpetrators (Germans). The 1982 Lebanon War not only aroused anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiments in Germany but also turned the local Jews—"Israel's representatives" in Germany—from "victims" into "perpetrators." Parts of the population and media accused Israel of having committed genocide by not preventing the Christian militias from massacring Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps. Anti-Zionist metaphors comparing Israel to the Nazis resurfaced. Consequently, some Germans called for an end to the Jews' image as victims and the termination of the discourse about Germany's guilt, since "the Jews had lost their moral supremacy." This idea, which had been introduced in literary works almost a decade earlier, was now perceived as having been corroborated by the "actual" deeds of the Israelis.

The year 1985 marked a turning point in Jewish-German relations. The occupation of the theater stage by Frankfurt Jews just before the premiere of Fassbinder's drama *Der Müll, die Stadt und der Tod* not only had a significant effect on the German Jews but also affected the way in which Germans related to the Jews of Germany. Although praised by some, this play attracted considerable criticism from certain sections of the German population and the Jewish community in 1975 when it was first written, and it was not performed. When the Frankfurt *Schauspielhaus* (the Frankfurt Theater) in 1985 finally decided to stage this play, it triggered a major public debate about the limits of post-Shoah artistic license. The play was canceled, but for the first time since the Shoah, Germans publicly criticized "the Jews." Reflecting the public atmosphere after the stage sit-in, *Schauspielhaus* manager Günther Rühle was quoted as saying that the honeymoon with the Jews was over—but he later denied making such a statement. In the view of these critics, the Jews had crossed the line twice: first, in actually standing up for their interests in public (the critics preferred silent Shoah victims), and second, for jeopardizing the artistic freedom that was "sacrosanct" to the Germans. This was mirrored in the subsequent public discourse, which did not address whether the play was anti-Semitic but instead addressed whether the Jews had the right to interfere with its performance. Once again the population called for normalizing Jewish-German relations and lifting the taboo against criticism of the Jews. After

some four decades, the taboo against public condemnation of the Jews was broken.

According to Diner, the entire controversy surrounding the play needs to be interpreted “in the context of a newly awakened desire for normalization” (1985, 61). Political scientists Sigrid Meuschel and Benjamin Gregg even stated that “the theater did not claim merely that the Jews should tolerate the performance, but that they should accept it as a contribution to reconciliation: reconciliation should be forced, if need be” (1986, 48). Some sections of the population, the Social Democrats, the Greens, and the left-liberal press viewed performing Fassbinder’s play as a further step toward normality and as the precondition for including the Jewish community as partner in the city’s cultural life (Diner 1985, 62). By the same token, the opposition that the Christian Democrats, the Frankfurt Free Democrats, and the conservative press had to the play also can be understood in terms of normalization. For them, normalization means being silent on the subject of anti-Semitism (Meuschel and Gregg 1986, 50).

The Jews in Germany were disturbed by the Germans’ desire for normalization, fearing that it was an expression of a wish to forget the past and downplay the Nazi crimes. They began to ask where Germany was headed and were concerned that it portended a return to the Dark Ages.

These fears were heightened by the 1986 outbreak of the *Historikerstreit* (historians’ dispute), an intellectual and political controversy over the proper way to view the Shoah. This dispute linked the demand for normalization with the call for historicizing National Socialism and its crimes, thereby consigning the hatred and murder of the Jews to the past. The debate, which went on until 1989, attracted considerable media attention in Germany. It began with an article by philosopher and historian Ernst Nolte entitled “Die Vergangenheit, die nicht vergehen will” (The Past that Does Not Want to Go Away) in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on June 6, 1986. Nolte’s article argued that the “genocide” in the Nazi death camps was a defensive reaction to the “class murder” committed in the Stalinist gulags, which were the original horror. He said that it was reasonable for the German people, faced with the threat of Bolshevism, to turn to Nazi fascism. In response, philosopher Jürgen Habermas warned in his article “Eine Art Schadenabwicklung: Die

apologetischen Tendenzen in der deutschen Zeitgeschichtsschreibung" (A Measure of Compensation for Damages: The Apologetic Trends in German Accounts of Postwar History) in *Die Zeit* on July 18, 1986, that such comments could be seized upon as "a kind of evening-out of damages" for the Shoah.

The ensuing debate revolved around four questions. Were Nazi Germany's evil crimes unique in history? Did German history, which pursued its *Sonderweg*⁷⁶ (special path), lead inevitably to Nazism? Were other genocides, like the killing of the Armenians and the Khmer Rouge massacres in Cambodia, comparable to the Shoah? Finally, did the German people need to bear the special burden of guilt for the Nazi crimes, or could the new generations of Germans find some sources of pride in their history? In general, the *Historikerstreit* was the first attempt by a group of historians to whitewash the German past. (Further attempts have been made in public discourse since then.) But in particular, because of this dispute, the Shoah became a broader issue and the subject of exclusive public discussion. According to historian Angelika Timm (2006), "it became a frequent topic in the daily newspapers. The Shoah was no longer taboo."

Yet at the same time, the German population showed great interest in Shoah commemoration ceremonies. In 1988, more than 1,000 events were organized to commemorate the 1938 *Reichskristallnacht* (Timm 2006). Since the 1960s and 1970s, and especially in the 1980s and 1990s, German public discourse has been characterized by a culture of memory. This began with modest exhibits and local memorials and culminated in the 1990s with the vehement debate over the Berlin Holocaust Memorial near the Brandenburg Gate. However, as Bodemann asserted, in the 1990s "this culture of memory moves from the memory of history to the memory of commemoration of history ... In this new commemoration, Auschwitz and *Kristallnacht* turn into a romanticized horror suffered jointly by Germans and Jews; a commemoration of Jews and the decent new Germany against the evil forces in society" (1996, 42).

The political and social developments following the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and the GDR again raised the Jews' fears. The fall of the Berlin Wall, which started on November 9, 1989, when the East German government permitted gates along the Wall to be opened

and announced that all GDR citizens could visit West Germany and West Berlin,⁷⁷ “was not a happy day [for the Jews], but a day of horror and dull, irrational fears” (Schneider 2000, 39). As Jalda Rebling (2007) put it, “for us Jews the fall of the Wall and Germany’s reunification, which again made the country a Greater Germany, was a problematic event; it was accompanied by the bad feeling that the Allies, our protectors, have disengaged and left us Jews again alone with the Germans.” The Jews were concerned about the emergence of a new, strong Greater Germany that would readopt the fervent nationalism of the Third Reich, “forget” the Shoah, and once again turn against its Jews. The fact that November 9, the anniversary of the *Reichskristallnacht*, was discussed—although eventually not chosen—as a possible “Reunification Day” corroborated their apprehensions that Germany was trying to divert its people’s attention from commemorating the past to concentrating on and celebrating the present.

Indeed, the 1990s witnessed a new and intense public debate on the role of the Shoah in Germany’s collective memory and group identity that must be seen in the context of post-reunification Germany’s national identity-formation process. The Shoah was the last pan-German experience before the 40 years of separation that prevented the populations on both sides of the border from developing a common history, a collective memory, or a shared identity—that were necessary for the formation of their group identity as a nation. The German population consequently needed to redefine the salience of the Shoah in their new group identity. The shifting of power to the postwar generation, among both Germans and Jews,⁷⁸ and the publication of historical evidence concerning the German population’s involvement in the Shoah proved significant to this debate. As stated by philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy, “new evidence from Soviet archives, containing documents on the slaughter of the European Jewry, disproved the conventional claim of the inner battle that tore the German Wehrmacht soldier apart when, according to former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, he dreamed of defeat at night while working to prevent it during the day” (1999, 45). Daniel Goldhagen’s 1996 book *Hitler’s Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* revealed that ordinary Germans not only knew about but also supported the Shoah because of a unique

and virulent form of “eliminationist anti-Semitism” that developed in German identity over the preceding centuries. Furthermore, the *Wehrmachtsausstellung* (Wehrmacht Exhibition) at the *Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung* (Hamburg Institute for Social Research)—a photographic documentation of the *Wehrmacht*’s involvement in the Jewish genocide in Central and Eastern Europe—showed that thousands of ordinary Germans took part in planning and running the Shoah death machine. This new evidence shattered the prevailing belief that “the crimes were committed not by Germans but by them—Hitler and his henchmen—in the name of Germany.” This belief was a psychological mechanism contrived by the German population “to sterilize the festering past, to put a reassuring distance between the murderers and the masses, between Germany then and Germany now” (Joffe 2001, 223).

The German population was split in two. On one side, there were those, mainly young people, who were eager to know about the past, accept the obligations of history, and preserve the collective Shoah memory as a way to prevent its recurrence. On the other side, there were those who did not want to see the Shoah as impacting their collective memory and identity. Among the latter, some even regarded the Jews as “*Störenfriede*” (troublemakers) whose sheer existence serves as reminder of the crime which cannot be denied any longer, but which many Germans simply wish to forget. They also blamed the Jews for hindering the development of a proud national identity by insisting to keep alive the memory of the Shoah, especially the role that Germans played in the mass murder of the Jews. (This, too, was the common Austrian perception until the mid-1980s.)

This view was publicly expressed by writer Martin Walser in 1998. After receiving the most prestigious German literary award, the *Friedenspreis des deutschen Buchhandels* (the German Booksellers Association’s Peace Prize), Walser delivered an address in which he referred to the constant reminder of Germany’s Shoah crimes as a “permanent representation of our shame.” He opposed the use of the memory of Auschwitz as a “means of intimidation and moral cudgel [*Moralkeule*] deployable at any time” to hurt “all Germans.” Walser condemned the “instrumentalization of our shame for current purposes” and reprimanded “intellectuals” and “opinion yes-men” for disseminating

“negative nationalism.” These, he claimed, “coerce the writer, at moral gunpoint, into serving opinion-makers.” Walser was especially enraged at the mass media for constantly bringing up the Shoah and for turning National Socialism into what he called an “accusations routine. Instead of being grateful for the incessant finger-pointing at our disgrace, I began to look away.” He also criticized the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin for being a “nightmare the size of a football field” and “the monumentalization of disgrace,” arguing that Shoah remembrance must become an issue for individual soul-searching and must be expunged from public memory (Walser 1998). The audience of 1,200—including prominent figures in politics, culture, business, and the media—gave him a standing ovation. *Zentralrat* President Ignatz Bubis and his wife remained seated.

Walser’s address is indicative of a paradigm shift in German politics and its society. Even the political and cultural elites now felt resentment at having to be contrite and expressed the conviction that they had already paid their debt for the past. “Secondary” or “guilt-defensiveness” anti-Semitism had become socially acceptable. Immediately after the event, Bubis criticized Walser for promoting extreme right-wing views, and about a month later, on the 60th anniversary of *Reichskristallnacht*, accused him of spreading “spiritual arson.” Jewish intellectuals and community leaders lambasted Walser for opening the door to right-wing extremists and revisionists, lending them credibility (Korn 1998, 41). In reaction to Walser’s speech, and for several months thereafter, more than 1,000 articles were written on what became known as the Walser-Bubis debate. Comments came from many renowned personalities, among them Germany’s president Roman Herzog and Klaus von Dohnanyi, the former mayor of Hamburg and a descendant of anti-Hitler resistance fighters. Herzog referred to Bubis as a “German patriot” (Herzog 1999, 52), while von Dohnanyi criticized Bubis for his allegations against Walser, arguing that “the Jewish citizens of Germany must ask themselves if they would have behaved more bravely than most Germans, if, after 1933, ‘only’ invalids, homosexuals, and Gypsies had been deported to extermination camps” (von Dohnanyi 1998, 33). He thus suggested that Jews had not proved themselves better than the Germans, since they were inculpable for the Shoah not because

they had consciously acted to prevent it, but simply because they had become victims of external circumstances.

The Walser-Bubis debate was marked by a new openness toward anti-Semites and revisionists. During the debate, anti-Semitic tropes were openly revived and anti-Semites came out of the woodwork; they even bombed the grave of former *Zentralrat* president Galinski and carted a pig around the Alexanderplatz, a large public square in the center of Berlin, with the Star of David painted on one side and “Bubis” on the other. These actions cannot be judged in connection with Walser’s speech alone; since unification, in Germany—especially in eastern Germany—there had been a serious increase in overt anti-Semitism and racism. In the 1990s, radical right-wing parties were elected into several state parliaments for the first time since the late-1960s success of the *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (National Democratic Party of Germany, NPD). Between 1992 and 1994, asylum seekers and foreigners were attacked almost daily, Jewish cemeteries and Shoah memorials were vandalized, and in 1994 a synagogue in Lübeck was set on fire (the first time that this had happened since the 1938 Reichskristallnacht). Open anti-Semitic utterances in debates between members of the political and social elites, however, were an entirely new phenomenon.

At a “reconciliation discussion” with Bubis organized by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in December 1998, Walser again voiced his conviction that the Germans had dealt sufficiently with their past. He provoked Bubis stating: “I have already dealt with this field at a time when you were still dealing with other matters”, alluding to Bubis’s activities as a real estate developer in the 1960s and 1970s and reminiscing about the Fassbinder-affair. The debate between Walser and Bubis ended with the latter’s sudden death in 1999.

Public discussion of the role of the Shoah in the national memory continued, however, and some of the country’s top political leaders participated in it. In 2002, in the middle of his re-election campaign, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder (1998-2005) staged a debate with Walser on the “nation.” Consequently, *Zentralrat* vice-president Michel Friedman criticized the chancellor for inviting the novelist to share the podium, and the *Zentralrat* issued a statement recalling Walser’s 1998

speech. However, Friedman's criticism was ignored, and the debate finally took place. Moreover, during that event, former Culture Minister Julian Nida-Rümelin noted that Walser was a "key literary and intellectual figure in Germany," who had already dealt with the concept of "nation" at a time when it was still much-neglected. He stressed that inviting Walser was a brave act, which thus became a political statement indicating that not only the political Right, but also the top echelons of the political Left—Schröder was the leader of the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD)—now saw themselves as Germans who had already sufficiently confronted their past.

This attitude toward the past was also reflected in Schröder's handling of the controversy surrounding the 2004 exhibition of the "Flick collection" in the Berlin Museum for Contemporary Art. A number of Jewish and non-Jewish intellectuals openly accused him and the state of Berlin of contributing to "the erasure of the memory of the Holocaust" by sponsoring that exhibition, which was made possible by the wealth of Flick's grandfather, an arms manufacturer, who in 1944 employed 50,000 forced laborers and concentration camp inmates.⁷⁹ The protesters and the *Zentralrat* warned against the "normalization regime" and against "emptying remembrance of the Nazi crimes and shutting the door to learning the consequence thereof" (Spiegel Online 2005). Nevertheless, Schröder decided to allow the exhibition to run. He believed that the Germans had already dealt enough with their past, and had paid their debt for their crimes, and that the time had now come for them to forge a national identity free of guilt feelings. However, he also believed that continued commemoration of the Shoah and the Nazis' crimes was necessary in order to ensure that they did not recur. Moreover, like his predecessors, he maintained close contacts with the Jewish community and acted to combat anti-Semitism. During his chancellorship, the *Staatskirchenvertrag* between the State of Germany and the *Zentralrat* was concluded and signed in 2003.

The debate over the centrality of the Shoah in German collective memory went one step further with the extensive public discussion of the victim/perpetrator distinction. It revealed a clear tendency toward self-victimization: Germans began to perceive themselves not just as

perpetrators but also as victims—of Allied bombings, of the expulsion of the *Sudetendeutsche* from Czechoslovakia, and of the deportation of Germans from other countries. The bombing of German cities, the fleeing, expulsion, mass rape and captivity Germans had to endure increasingly became topical issues in the new German discourse. Several novellas, television series, and movies⁸⁰ portrayed the Germans as war victims, rather than as they had been portrayed previously: as perpetrators, as having benefited from the persecution of others, or as silent partners in and passive supporters of the atrocities. The German population now emphasized the “senseless and horrible suffering of the German war survivors” and no longer viewed the Jews as the main victims of National Socialism.

The desire to commemorate German and Jewish suffering in equal measure was already reflected in the 1993 rededication of the *Neue Wache*⁸¹ (New Guard House) in Berlin as the “Central FRG Memorial for the Victims of War and Tyranny”—which lumped together victims and perpetrators. In 2004, the CDU/CSU (the parliamentary faction comprising the CDU and the Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern [Christian Social Union of Bavaria, CSU], considered to be sister parties) went even further. They introduced a motion calling for a commemoration service that accorded equal weight not only to the victims of the East German communist dictatorship and of the Nazis, but also to the victims of the Allied bombings and the German expellees (*Förderung von Gedenkstätten...* 2004). Although this motion was rejected by a majority of the Bundestag, its very suggestion showed that these ideas were widespread among the German public. In 2005, the spokesperson of the far-right NPD from Schleswig-Holstein even stated: “We require a monument for the German people, the other side [the Jews] has enough” (Cziesche et al. 2005, 27).

That the Jews are no longer regarded as the only victims is the result not only of the intra-German debate and the nation’s shift toward self-victimization, but also of the spread of anti-Israel and anti-Zionist sentiments within the population in general, and the political Left in particular. As seen above, among those with these sentiments, Israel’s actions against its enemies fuel hatred of Jews because Jews are seen either as Israelis or as their representatives, whose loyalty to Germany

is thus called into question. This was the case during and after the Gaza War in December 2008 and January 2009. According to a 2009 survey by the Anti-Defamation League, 53 percent of Germans believed that Jews were more loyal to Israel than to their own countries. This survey also indicated that, by and large, Europeans tended to question the loyalty of their Jewish citizens: “Overall, nearly half of those surveyed in the seven countries, or 49 percent, believe that Jews are more loyal to Israel than to their own country”⁸² (p. 5). In addition, according to the Flash Barometer 151 (p. 79) commissioned by the European Commission in November 2003, the majority of Europeans believe Israel is the biggest threat to global stability. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents in the 15 EU countries stated that Israel presents a peril to world peace, preceding Iran and North Korea (53 percent).

The propagators of this new type of anti-Semitism are not only members of the pro-Palestinian or Islam camps but also of the radical Left and extreme Right. As psychologist Natan Kellermann (2005) stated, “radical leftist groups protesting U.S. colonialism, globalization, and the Western capitalist civilization in general joined up with extreme rightist groups of neo-Nazis, Shoah deniers, skinhead activists, racists, and xenophobes, all of whom share the common bond of Jew hatred.” According to Broder (2008), “the modern anti-Semite is not shaved bald, but is well-mannered, often also holds an academic title, and expresses grief about the Jews who died in the Shoah. But in the same breath, he questions why the survivors and their offspring have not learned anything from history and why today they torment another people the same way they were tortured before ... The modern anti-Semite condemns ordinary anti-Semitism, but unhesitatingly defines himself as anti-Zionist. He is grateful for having had the chance to show his resentments in a politically correct way.” This new anti-Semitism, which has been growing in Germany since the late 1960s, led to widespread anti-Israel demonstrations and media uproar, public events, and other manifestations during the Gaza War. Some prominent slogans included: “Israel = Child Murder,” “Israel = From Victim to Perpetrator,” “Zionists, Get out of Palestine,” and “Gaza Children and Women Gassed and Bombed by Israel.”

The Jewish community, the *Zentralrat* leaders, and well-known Jewish personalities came out against this anti-Israel propaganda, its accompanying accusations, and the general anti-Semitic mood. As a reaction, they were portrayed as “the Fifth Column”—they were accused of being subjective and their statements were dismissed as “biased.” The Jewish community in Germany was disturbed by such developments—the breaking of longstanding taboos, the emergence of latent anti-Semitism, the wish to stop confronting the past, and the revival of identification with the German nation all raised the level of concern. The Jews once again asked where Germany was headed but at the same time decided that they were not going anywhere.

Despite the rising anti-Semitism and threat from Islamists, the Jews in Germany decided to stay, mainly because of their good economic situation (as in the past); the significant development of Jewish community life since 1989; and in no small measure, because the governing political strata in Germany have to this day remained more pro-Israel and more supportive of the Jewish communities than those in many other European countries. Under Angela Merkel’s leadership, since 2005 that support has deepened significantly.

Merkel, who grew up in the GDR and joined the newly formed East German political opposition movement *Demokratischer Aufbruch* (Democratic Awakening) in 1989,⁸³ was even tougher and less compromising than all her predecessors in her fight against anti-Semitism and her support of the State of Israel. Merkel’s agenda reflects the conviction that Germans must never forget or downplay the Shoah, even when this involves political risks. According to the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, Merkel “has elevated the special solidarity with Israel to a foreign policy program, on a par with the new reawakened friendship with the United States, and the critical distancing from China and Russia” (Beste et al. 2008, 25).

On January 30, 2008, Merkel’s spokesman announced that the German and Israeli cabinets would meet in Israel in March 2008 in honor of Israel’s 60th anniversary. This meeting, which was planned as an annual occurrence, was the first time the German Cabinet has met with another cabinet outside Europe. Merkel stated that “by holding a first joint meeting with the Israeli government, the German government

underscores its commitment to preserving the memory of the Holocaust and its determination to shape a joint future (for both countries)” (Sela 2008). At a speech before the Israeli Knesset,⁸⁴ Chancellor Merkel declared, “the Shoah fills us Germans with shame. I am herewith showing my obeisance by bowing my head before the victims. I revere the survivors and all those who helped them survive” (Merkel 2008, 2). She thus once again spoke about Germany’s ignominy, a gesture and concept that had previously been criticized by Walser and others—and even by her predecessor Schröder, albeit not explicitly.

During the 2008/2009 Gaza War, when a substantial part of the German population voiced anti-Israel slogans, Merkel held Hamas responsible for the conflict with Israel, stated that “the terror perpetrated by Hamas is unacceptable,” and emphasized that Israel had the right to defend its territory and citizens (Gutova 2009). In 2009, she became the first world leader to condemn Pope Benedict XVI over his rehabilitation of Bishop Williamson. Despite the sharp criticism from many fellow party members and Catholic representatives in Germany, who claimed that a German chancellor (and a Protestant chancellor in particular) had no right to make any demands of the pope and could not interfere in intra-Catholic issues, Merkel called on the pope to publicly reject Bishop Williamson’s views, stating in a highly unusual rebuke of the pope that the rehabilitation “should not be allowed to pass without consequences; the pope and the Vatican should clarify in no uncertain terms that there can be no denial and that there must be positive relations with the Jewish community overall” (Owen 2009). The *Zentralrat* publicly declared its appreciation for Merkel’s actions in this case. In 2009, Merkel became the second German chancellor after Helmut Kohl (1997) to be awarded the Leo Baeck Prize, the *Zentralrat*’s highest prize, honoring individuals for outstanding promotion of the Jewish community in Germany.

Finally, the October 2009 coalition agreement between the CDU, the CSU, and the FDP also reflects Merkel’s pro-Israel stance and her efforts to fight anti-Semitism. Chapter 4, article 1 of the agreement (CDU.de. n.d.) states: “We do not accept violent and extremist forms of political controversies. We resolutely oppose extremism of any kind, whether it comes from the left or the right wing, anti-Semites, or Islamists.”

This point, which was bitterly criticized by the political Left in German media, reflects the government's public acknowledgement of such threats. Thus the Jews were no longer alone in confronting these manifestations. Moreover, Chapter 5, article 3 states: "We commit to Germany's special responsibility toward Israel as the Jewish state." This clear German recognition of Israel as the Jews' homeland according to international law is important, given the widespread anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian attitudes among the German and European populations. Merkel further emphasized her support for Israel in a November 2009 speech before the U.S. Congress, declaring that "for me, Israel's security is at no time negotiable." Moreover, in reference to Iran, she also stated clearly what many European politicians had ignored and many Jews had warned about, namely: "Not only is Israel in danger, but so is the whole free world. Whoever threatens Israel also threatens us" (Zukunft 2009).

In Germany after the 1980s, there was a notable development that was apparently unique to Germany. Alongside the moves to minimize, if not erase, the memory of the Shoah from German identity and cleanse Germany of the collective guilt it had imposed upon itself and which the Western world demanded of it, within the German population there simultaneously developed a strong interest in Jewish culture, lifestyle, and history.

Scientific research on German Jewry began somewhat hesitantly but boomed in the 1980s and 1990s. As Brenner remarked, "without any significant Jewish student population to speak of, Germany is becoming a major center of Jewish studies" (2002, 58). According to historian Reinhard Rürup (2007), Germany, which had assumed the leading role in the field of Judaic studies prior to 1933, found itself after 1945 in a state of a *tabula rasa*. German scholars realized that researching the extinguished pre-Shoah German Jewry was important if its memory and knowledge about it were to be secured for future generations. Stephanie Schüler-Springorum, director of the Institute for the History of German Jews in Hamburg (2007), makes sense of the interest in Jewish issues among German scholars as stemming from the interest in the "different" and "unfamiliar," as well as from the impetus felt by the German postwar generation to stand up against the people who still

wanted to keep Jewish history in Germany under wraps. These scholars wanted to distinguish themselves from their anti-Semitic fellow citizens. They felt an obligation to ensure that the local Jewish history was not forgotten in places in which no Jews remained to recount it. Thus the 1980s and 1990s witnessed the establishment of a series of research institutions and professorships, Jewish film festivals, and literary and television programs on Judaism, as well as the opening of Jewish museums all over Germany. In the universities, German-Jewish history became a sub-branch of German history with its own infrastructure and curriculum. Also the Jewish Museum in Berlin is, in the eyes of its director Cilly Kugelman (2007), a museum of German history in which Jewish history plays an important role.

In general, everything connected with the Jews became fascinating. The media presented stories about the Jews' past and present in Germany, Israel, and the United States, and featured documentaries on the rise of Nazism, World War II, and the Shoah. The public showed interest in anything perceived as Jewish, especially Yiddish culture: klezmer music in particular experienced a renaissance. Moreover, Israel became *the* place to visit, with young Germans rushing to volunteer in *kibbutzim*. Interestingly, this curiosity about Judaism also manifested itself in a substantial increase in the number of German conversions to Judaism (see Gruber 1996, 23–25), stemming from what Bodemann calls “an astonishing phenomenon entirely unique to Germany today,” a “Judaizing terrain made up of converts to Judaism, of members of joint Jewish-German or Israeli-German associations, and of many ‘professional almost-Jews’” (1994, 57).

Much of the non-Jewish interest in Jewish life, however, is focused more on the exotic klezmer and shtetl culture of Eastern Europe than on the present or the pre-1933 secular German-Jewish culture. A “virtually Jewish” (Gruber 2002) culture, a Jewish culture without Jews, has developed. Numerous non-Jewish klezmer bands, non-Jewish Yiddish theaters, and non-Jewish “Jewish” or “kosher” restaurants and cafés became part of the popular “Jewish Disneyland” (Weiss 2007) activities. The Jews in Germany are often compared to this Jewish image, although they definitely do not fit it. As journalist Iris Weiss (2007) put it, “the themes of Jewish Disneyland view everything Jewish as romanticized,

exotic, folkloristic and historicized. As a result, what is authentically Jewish becomes (or is rendered) invisible. The fictions of Jewish Disneyland increasingly become the reality yardstick for the media, which present them as 'Jewish culture.' The real Jews, wherever they are still around, cannot match the fictional image, and therefore become a disappointment." Moreover, Germans tend to impose their perception of Judaism and the Jewish lifestyle on the Jews. Gabriel Heimler (2007), artist and founder of the group of Jewish artists called *Meshulash* (Triangle), recounted that "during a public discussion organized by the Jewish Museum, four non-Jewish curators explained to us that 'Jewish art' is art depicting the Shoah and that it is even preferable for this art to be produced by non-Jews, because they are more distanced and thus hold a more objective view of it than the Jews." This German obsession with anything Jewish—real or virtual—was often criticized by the Jews in Germany. Thus Seligmann (1997), for example, criticized the German obsession with Jewish themes and Jewish personalities in his novel *Der Musterjude*; his protagonist, Moische Bernstein, states that "their journals are glutted with articles from Jewish authors. Jacobson, Schneeweiss, Broder, Wolffsohn, Brumlik, Biller, Seligmann, and the other idiots can scrawl whatever they want, the Germans are nutty on reading the trash [*Tinnef*]" (p. 45).

In Austria, such an interest in Jewish culture has not been detected. Although the Jewish Culture Weeks attract many non-Jews, this is more a matter of wanting to learn about a different culture than to adopt it or specialize in it.

In sum: the post-1980s era demonstrated parallel social and political developments in the Jewish communities of Austria and Germany that mirrored events in their respective countries. In Germany, both Jews and non-Jewish Germans increasingly attempted to reduce the centrality of the Shoah in their group identities. During the 1985 Fassbinder affair, Germans broke the post-1945 taboo on criticizing the Jews. Following that affair, a series of debates on the role and centrality of the Shoah and of guilt feelings in German identity developed: Germans first sought to establish whether the Shoah was worse than other genocides in history (the historians' dispute) and whether the Germans should bear a special burden because of it (the Walser debate).

After the country's reunification, they pondered whether the Shoah should remain a central element in the new collective German memory. Finally, they began to ask whether they themselves were no less victims of World War II than the Jews and sought ways to commemorate the German victims. Increasingly Germans from the postwar generations sought to lessen the centrality of the Shoah in their identity, if not remove it entirely.

At the same time, Germany's postwar Jews had developed self-confidence as Jews and were no longer content to play their parents' silent-victim role. The members of the postwar generations increasingly sought to establish an active, viable Jewish future in Germany rather than focus constantly on the past, which they believed inhibited the improvement of Jewish life in Germany.

This similarity raises the question of why the desire of Germans to lessen the centrality of the Shoah in their group identity disturbs the Jews, and why the latter anxiously keep asking where Germany is headed. The answer, it seems, is that the Jews perceive the memory of the Shoah as *the* element in German identity that helps maintain Germany as a democracy. Unlike many non-Jewish Germans, who increasingly demand that the Shoah be eliminated from German identity, the Jews insist that the Shoah not be erased either from Jewish group identity or German identity, since it is a part of the history of both the Jewish people and Germany, and its public commemoration serves to protect Germany's democracy.

The issue of the centrality of the Shoah became especially acute after 1990, and it is still intensively discussed today, as both Jews and non-Jewish Germans search for their group identity following the major changes in their population base that accompanied the fall of communism. Germany's reunification and the addition of large numbers of FSU Jews to Germany's Jewish communities created a need for new common group identities. Interestingly, these new united-German and Jewish group identities were formed, on the one hand, by a group that sought to decrease the centrality and the negative effect of the Shoah on its identity; and, on the other hand, by a group in whose identity the Shoah both was less central and played a rather positive role. The players involved in the process of united-German identity formation were

both the former West Germans, whose postwar generations wanted to form a positive group identity that took pride in Germany's postwar achievements and did not want to take responsibility for its past; and the former East Germans, for whom the Shoah was a non-issue⁸⁵ and who, during the 40 years since World War II, not only were convinced that they were innocent of committing the crime of the Shoah⁸⁶ but also viewed themselves as anti-Nazi resistance fighters.⁸⁷ The players in the Jewish group-identity formation process include, on the one hand, the postwar generations of *Alteingesessene*, who increasingly claimed that they no longer wanted to play the role of the weak Shoah victims but would rather be portrayed as active Jews, and insisted that they wanted to establish a positive Jewish group identity, and take pride in the community's achievements since the Shoah rather than constantly focus on the past. On the other hand, they also include the FSU Jews, for whom the Shoah had been taboo and who were shaped by the Russian spirit of victory over Nazi Germany.

In Austria, too, two parallel developments took place in the Jewish and the Austrian populations: both have increasingly discussed the Shoah in public, but they do not want it to be a central element in their respective group identities. After 40 years in which the Jews kept a low profile and the Austrians perpetuated denial, both groups now began to deal publicly with the Shoah, as evident in the 1986 Waldheim affair. The IKG leaders, and especially the postwar generation members, began to fight openly for restitution and for increased Austrian awareness of the country's role in the Nazi crimes. The Austrian people, mainly the postwar generation, began coming to terms with their parents' role in the Shoah at the social, cultural, and educational levels. Moreover, Austrian politicians officially acknowledged the role of an important share of the population in the Shoah and accepted the country's responsibility toward the Jews.

At the same time, however, both communities also prefer to deal with their present than with their past. Most non-Jewish Austrians, like their German counterparts, insist that they are different from their parents and that while they condemn the Nazi crimes, they do not want the Shoah to be part of their Austrian identity. The Jews strive to reduce the Shoah's centrality in their identity (but not to eliminate it, for the same

reasons as Germany's Jews) and to increase the centrality of the Jewish culture, tradition, and religion. They are proud of their Jewish institutions and of the flourishing life they have established despite the Shoah. Nevertheless, like the German Jews and for the same reasons, Vienna's Jews are troubled by the refusal of most Austrians to face up fully to the Shoah and their unwillingness to accept their share of responsibility.

Jews in both countries constantly monitor every political development, are outspoken in their criticism of the countries' leaderships for making statements and policies minimizing the Shoah or their responsibility toward the local Jewries, and, if needed, go out on the streets to fight for their rights. The Jews and their leaderships do so because they want to establish and maintain environments that will enable them and their descendants to have a future in Vienna and Germany's cities. The Jews feel increasingly at home in their countries of residence and believe that Jewish life has a potential there. They are, not, however, blinded by patriotism, as were pre-World War II Austrian and German Jews. Today the Jews in Vienna and Germany are loyal to their countries—but only so long as they remain democratic; and the Jews are ready to leave if this changes.

4.7 Conclusion

This simultaneous opening-up to the surrounding society, the marked changes in individual and communal self-perceptions, and the final “unpacking of the suitcases” in both communities, as well as their varying degrees of institutional development, occurred when government policies toward the Jewish minority in Germany were significantly more favorable than those in Austria. This was especially true with regard to these countries’ coming to terms with their role in the Shoah, Jewish immigration, and financial support for the Jewish communities. Thus although national politics, government policies, and social events were undoubtedly influential, they were not the decisive factors in Jewish communal reconstruction. The latter was influenced primarily by domestic Jewish development processes: Jewish group-identity changes were the key factors in community reconstruction, and generational change was the engine behind them.

Vienna’s and Germany’s Jews’ sense of feeling at home in their countries of residence developed after each succeeding generation accorded differing weights in its group identity to the lessons of the Shoah and the meaning of Israel. Each generation developed both a stronger relationship to Austria or Germany, and greater self-confidence as Jews, than the generation that preceded it.

Internal communal development, on the other hand, was affected mainly by changes in the religious characteristics of the Jewish population and leadership. The scope of Jewish institutional infrastructure was determined by the given Jewry’s level of religiosity. Jewish institutional reconstruction was always stronger in Vienna than in Berlin because Vienna’s Jewry was more religiously inclined and thus had greater demand for additional Jewish institutions than its Berlin counterpart. The infrastructure character was shaped by religious and cultural orientations—the IKG became more ethnically heterogeneous, hence the Jewish institutional landscape saw the establishment of Ashkenazi and Sephardi infrastructure that was almost exclusively Orthodox. Likewise, German Jewry became more religiously heterogeneous, hence Liberal and Orthodox institutions that were almost

exclusively Ashkenazi were established in Germany. Communal unity was influenced by developments in the Jewries' levels of observance or religious orientations. Unity in Vienna today is stronger, since its Jewish population is more religiously homogenous and the different IKG subgroups agree that religion is a central element in Jewish group identity. By contrast, community discord in Berlin in particular, and in Germany in general, runs deep and has led to the splitting of the *Einheitsgemeinden*, because these communities are religiously heterogeneous, and the FSU and local Jews' views on the centrality of religion in Jewish group identity diverge.

Only community representation, it seems, was directly shaped by national politics and social developments, especially where the country's dealing with its past is concerned; however, the leaders' Jewish group identities also played a distinctive role.

Notes

¹ The *Bund Gesetzestreuer Jüdischer Gemeinden in Deutschland* (Union of Law-Abiding Jewish Communities in Germany) was established in 1998 at the initiative of Rabbi Isaak Hachohen Halberstadt (who was born in Germany and emigrated to Israel in 1939) to foster Orthodox Jewish life in Germany, which, according to him and the Union's founders, was not being sufficiently cultivated by the *Zentralrat* and its institutions.

² The ratio of the populations and GDP between Austria and Germany is roughly 1:10, and the ratio of their respective Jewish populations is about 1:15.

³ Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is situated in northeastern Germany.

⁴ In accordance with the 2007 Austrian franchise reform, the legislature period of the IKG board was also extended from four years to five.

⁵ An Egalitarian congregation, in contrast to a Liberal congregation, is not affiliated with the UPJ and thus independent in its orientation. The Egalitarian and the Liberal congregations differ, among other things, in their membership. For the Liberal communities in Germany, a Jew is a person who was born to a Jewish mother or who converted to Judaism in an Orthodox or a Liberal religious court. The Egalitarian congregations are the only groups in Germany, even in the Liberal spectrum, accepting patrilineal descent, which is the policy of the Reform movement in the United States.

⁶ The term *Alteingesessene* refers to the Jews from the established postwar Jewish community—former DPs and refugees from Central and Eastern Europe who immigrated before 1989 and their descendants.

⁷ Once the “fifth point” was introduced on internal passports in 1932, every individual was required to state his nationality. An individual with one Jewish parent (father or mother) could choose whether to state “Jew” or choose the other parent's nationality.

⁸ The German aid package included permission to work, housing support, absorption assistance for six months, German-language courses, and welfare payments if no

job could be found by the time the absorption assistance had expired (Cohen and Kogan 2008, 254). According to the Jewish Agency for Israel (2003), calculated for the first five-year period after immigration, the value of this aid package was about three times higher than the aid granted by Israel to its FSU immigrants; and seven times higher, when calculated over a 10-year period.

⁹ After 2007, the ZWST no longer separated FSU and non-FSU Jews in its member statistics.

¹⁰ These people are not aware that, according to the *Halakha*, a person born to a Jewish mother is a Jew. Their lack of awareness is often expressed in sentences such as “I am not a Jew, but my mother’s mother was Jewish.”

¹¹ According to the Berlin-Brandenburg government office for statistics, for instance, 2,820 Israelis lived in Berlin in 2009 (Über 460,000 Ausländer aus 186 Staaten in Berlin gemeldet. Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg: Pressemitteilung vom 20.10.2009, no. 327, 2). The actual number of Israelis in Berlin is probably higher, because many Israelis have reclaimed the German nationality of their grandparents, who fled Nazi Germany and had their citizenship revoked. According to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, 10,000 Jews in Germany hold an Israeli passport.

¹² In a 2002 membership survey among members of the Berlin community, 66 percent claimed that they were members of the community “because for me as a Jew it is a matter of course” and 31 percent “because I want to demonstrate my belonging” (Kessler 2002).

¹³ ESRA is a multidisciplinary center providing social assistance with social psychiatric and psycho-traumatology outpatient clinics and general medical care, offering counseling and the treatment of problems and disorders arising from the Shoah, exile, or other reasons. ESRA also provides assistance to Jewish immigrants who wish to integrate into the Jewish community and Austrian society.

¹⁴ In 2003, the last time such a ratio appeared in the ZWST member statistics, the share of FSU Jews reached 88 percent.

¹⁵ Only a few small groups of Jews living in the major cities continued, in secret, to keep the Jewish laws; and some groups of Jews keeping a Jewish Ashkenazi lifestyle still remained in the provincial towns.

¹⁶ Jewish Renewal is a worldwide, trans-denominational movement grounded in Judaism’s prophetic and mystical traditions. ALEPH is a core institution in this Jewish Renewal movement.

¹⁷ The Lauder Foundation is a philanthropic organization dedicated to rebuilding Jewish communities in Central and Eastern Europe. It was established in 1987 by Ronald S. Lauder. Between 1996 and 2000, Germany’s branch was chaired by Joel Levy, an American diplomat, and thereafter by American Haredi rabbi Josh Spinner. It caters mainly to FSU Jews.

¹⁸ In Berlin, such changes did not occur, since as mentioned above, religious rites are available to all Halakhic Jews, whether they are community members or not; but the latter have to pay a higher price for the services.

¹⁹ Since the *Alteingesessenen* represent the vast majority of non-FSU German Jewry, the term *Alteingesessene* also includes the *Alt-Deutsche* Jews—that is, all the Jews who are not from the FSU. Where a difference between the *Alteingesessenen* and the *Alt-Deutsche* Jews exists, it will be mentioned explicitly.

- ²⁰ “Never again” is an international phenomenon that appeared simultaneously throughout the world.
- ²¹ Seligmann, for example, criticized the permutation of the institutionalized anti-Semitism of the Third Reich into philo-Semitism. In his novel *Der Musterjude* (1997, 75), he writes: “Every Germanic blockhead places a seven-branched candelabrum on the windowsill... and gives his children biblical names: David, Miriam, Sara.”
- ²² In this drama, the central character is a Jew and Shoah survivor named “rich Jew” (thought by many to represent Bubis), who exploits his Jewishness for business and political purposes, and is participating in real-estate racketeering. “Rich Jew” is willing to do anything—even murder—to increase his wealth and take revenge on Germans for their crimes during the Shoah.
- ²³ According to Heuberger (2008), it was noted that the descendants of the DPs and immigrants from Eastern Europe did not feel any connection to this place and did not take part in the demonstration.
- ²⁴ Vienna’s young postwar generation (then in their late teens and early 20s) had indeed demonstrated in Vienna’s streets in the late 1960s and 1970s. These demonstrations, however, were much smaller, and, most importantly, did not deal with national politics and policies but with international Jewish matters—e.g., a hunger strike in support of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union (1969), demonstrations against the public hanging of 14 Jews in Baghdad (1969) and after a PLO attack on a school bus in northern Israel (1970).
- ²⁵ “Austrian-Jewish” refers to a distinctive identity pattern in which both Austrian and Jewish components are present, as opposed to “Austrian Jewish” identity, which relates to the Jewish identity of Austrian Jews and which may or may not have an Austrian component, or “Austrian identity,” in which only Austrian elements are present.
- ²⁶ Katzav quoted in Hart (2002).
- ²⁷ These stereotypes are so strong and pervasive that some people still believe (as personally experienced by some of my interview partners) that Jews have horns (a perception fed by several portrayals of Moses based on a translation error in the Vulgata, the Latin Bible translation), that they want to rule the world, and even that the blood libels were real. The latter is illustrated by the case of Anderl from Rinn. In 1475 the bones of a child killed on July 12, 1462, allegedly by foreign Jews, were transferred to the Parish church in Rinn. In 1620 the legend of the ritual murder became popular, and the alleged crime site, the *Judenstein bei Rinn* (Jew stone near Rinn), became a place of pilgrimage and thus an example for the anti-Judaism of the Catholic Church. The bones were removed from the church only in 1985; and the cult around the Jew stone was officially banned by the local bishop in 1994. Nevertheless, private groups of extreme right-wing and fundamentalist Catholics still ascend the *Judenstein* every year.
- ²⁸ Interview with Brumlik in Schneider 2000, 268.
- ²⁹ Tarbut is a German-Jewish initiative that organizes conferences on Jewish issues for German-speaking Jews within and outside Germany (particularly from Austria and Switzerland). It is not affiliated with any one strand of Judaism. The workshops are held in German.

- ³⁰ Limmud, founded in 1980, is a British-Jewish educational charity that produces a large annual winter conference and several other events around the year on the theme of Jewish learning. It is not affiliated to any strand of Judaism. Its goal is to spread knowledge about Judaism to anyone interested in Jewish learning. The model has spread to several other countries, and there are now locally run Limmud events also in Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt am Main, and Munich. The workshops are held in the local language; in Germany they are held in German and Russian.
- ³¹ Kashrut certificates are issued by *Khal Israel*, *Machsike Hadass*, the *Bukhara* community, the Georgia community in cooperation with the *Chabad*-linked Bukharan community, and the IKG rabbinate. Besides these *kashrut* authorities, individual rabbis also issue *kashrut* certificates—such as Chief Rabbi Eisenberg, who issues certificates for products destined for export (Hofmeister, 2015).
- ³² According to the information received from the schools in 2009: 280 in the Heinz Galinski Elementary School; 70 in the *Chabad*-led Jüdische Traditionsschule; 18 in Beth-Zion, established by the Lauder Foundation; and about 70 percent of the 435 children at the high school *Jüdisches Gymnasium Moses Mendelssohn*.
- ³³ Data received from the Member Service of the IKG: the IKG-led Zwi Perez Chajes School has about 380 students, the Lauder-*Chabad* school 300 students and the two Haredi elementary schools about 100–120 students. Most of the Haredi children are sent to study abroad after finishing elementary school. The Vienna yeshiva is attended mainly by foreign students. In both Berlin and Vienna's schools, the Jewish students are not necessarily registered community members.
- ³⁴ According to information received from the schools, the percentage of Jews in the Heinz Gallinsky school is unknown, since religious denominations are not registered; and in the high school *Jüdisches Gymnasium Moses Mendelssohn* the percentage of non-Jewish students rose from 30 percent in 2009 to 40 percent in 2015.
- ³⁵ Here translated as “revitalization” of pre-1989 German Jewry, even though literally translated, the French term *renaissance* means rebirth. One cannot speak of a rebirth of pre-1933 or pre-1989 German Jewry, since the current population significantly differs from the two previous ones.
- ³⁶ All of Austria's broadcast channels and printed media dealt with the Eruv project. See, for instance, “‘Eruv’ soll Innenstadt symbolisch umzäunen,” *ORF Online* (website of the Austrian broadcasting corporation ORF) (December 14, 2007); Egerer (2007); “Orthodoxe Juden wollen City ‘umzäunen,’” *Kurier* (December 14, 2007).
- ³⁷ Interestingly, the German population and leaders shared the same ideal image. They too were disappointed; see Becker (2003).
- ³⁸ Communal activities are usually open also for non-members, but activities subsidized by the ZWST, such as summer camps, can be attended only by community members.
- ³⁹ They also voiced similar accusations toward the communities in their location.
- ⁴⁰ This interview was made before the Berlin community elections of 2007, in which Schneiderman was not re-elected to the community board, and thus also not to the *Zentralrat* Directorate.
- ⁴¹ In 2009, Henryk Broder, who is very outspoken and openly critical of the *Zentralrat* leadership, announced his intention to run for the next *Zentralrat* elections,

and reversed his decision 10 days later. According to him, he did this to shake the *Zentralrat* and to draw attention to his criticism of the *Zentralrat*'s role as "repentance-acceptance-instance" (Broder 2009) that constantly deals with the Shoah. It has to be stated, however, that Broder's approach, which includes personal attacks on Knobloch, is criticized by many postwar-generation Jews.

- ⁴² *Or Chadasch*'s establishment and development was made possible, to a great extent, by financial support from the World Union for Progressive Judaism.
- ⁴³ Until 2004, *Or Chadasch* organized prayers in various small premises, which it even had to share with other organizations. On the high holidays, it rented a hall in one of Vienna's big hotels. (The synagogue was established with financial help from the state of Austria and the city of Vienna.)
- ⁴⁴ For example, *Or Chadasch*'s request for the right to bury members in the Viennese Jewish cemetery posed a Halakhic problem, since only Halakhic Jews may be buried there. Also the Halakhic option of setting aside a separate part of the cemetery for the Halakhically non-Jewish *Or Chadasch* members was not a solution in this case, as it was not acceptable to the majority of Vienna's Jews. Consequently Rabbi Eisenberg allocated *Or Chadasch* a vacant area in a prewar cemetery outside of Vienna that was no longer in use, thereby enabling its members to be buried in a Jewish cemetery that was out of the way (Eisenberg 2005).
- ⁴⁵ Moishe Arye Friedman is the self-proclaimed "chief rabbi of the [nonexistent] Haredi anti-Zionist Jewish community of Vienna." On various occasions he was seen taking part in anti-Israeli demonstrations on *Shabbat*, speaking into a microphone and thus desecrating *Shabbat* (e.g., at the anti-Israeli Al-Quds rally in Berlin on October 21, 2006). Furthermore, in December 2006 he took part in the Holocaust conference in Teheran organized by the Iranian government, where he declared the Zionists to be among the planners and war criminals of the Shoah and disputed the number of murdered Jews.
- ⁴⁶ State rabbi of the regional association Schleswig-Holstein and rabbi of *Or Chadasch* Vienna.
- ⁴⁷ Rabbi Rozwaski moved to Berlin in 1998 to become dean of the Ronald S. Lauder Jewish Educational Institute. When asked about his religious denomination in an interview in 2001 after his nomination as Berlin's community rabbi and assumption of his pulpit at the Liberal synagogue, he answered "I am an Orthodox Jew" (Noah 2001).
- ⁴⁸ In the fall of 1996, the Mauerbach Auction took place in Vienna. Christie's, on behalf of the *Bundesverband*, auctioned off 8,000 heirless works of art and other objects confiscated from the homes of Austrian Jews by the Nazis between 1938 and 1945. The Mauerbach Auction raised 14.6 million dollars for the benefit of the now-elderly Shoah victims and their families.
- ⁴⁹ Friedman filed a lawsuit against the school for expelling his children and requested they be allowed to attend until the court case was decided. The school, which officially accepts only observant Jews, had barred them after Friedman publicly desecrated the *Shabbat* (see footnote 64). The judge found for the plaintiff and ordered the school to permit the children to attend school temporarily or otherwise to pay a steep fine for each day the children were not allowed back. The school remained steadfast. The case was eventually closed after the family left Austria in 2010.

- ⁵⁰ The relevant federal law (Entschädigungsfondsgesetz, BGBl 12/2001) went into force on May 28, 2001. By the May 28, 2003, deadline for applications, the GSF had received more than 20,000 applications.
- ⁵¹ Austria is divided into nine *Bundesländer*. Vienna is one of them.
- ⁵² In its 14,000-page report, it concluded that the methodical plundering of Jewish citizens by the Nazi state and by private individuals was the first step toward the Shoah. Moreover, according to the evidence it collected, the Republic of Austria acted only half-heartedly and hesitatingly when it came to compensating victims of Nazism. See Jabloner et al. (2003).
- ⁵³ He referred to the part of the report written by historian Helga Embacher.
- ⁵⁴ Barzilai was in fact not laid off.
- ⁵⁵ The Austrian Reconciliation Fund (full title: Austrian Fund for Reconciliation, Peace, and Cooperation) was approved by the Austrian Parliament in November 2000 and established in December of that year to administer payments to former slave and forced laborers who were deported to the territory of present-day Austria. Funding was provided by the Austrian government and Austria's industry.
- ⁵⁶ See the website of the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism; www.en.nationalfonds.org/.
- ⁵⁷ Interview with Lili Marx in Schneider (2000, 106).
- ⁵⁸ According to Abi Pitum, *Zentralrat* member since Galinski's second presidency, Bubis held 20 talks per day and even accepted invitations from schools 500 kilometers away. He also never missed any politically important events.
- ⁵⁹ This is also the title of one of his books.
- ⁶⁰ In a 1998 interview, when asked how he was perceived by Germans, Bubis answered: "Israeli, stranger, foreigner, guest." *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (September 21, 1998).
- ⁶¹ "Interview mit Ignatz Bubis, dem Vorsitzenden des Zentralrats der Juden in Deutschland: 'Der Antisemitismus braucht keine Juden,' *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (September 21, 1998).
- ⁶² Interview with Bubis in Stoessinger and Seligman (1999, 59).
- ⁶³ The first authentic document relating to a large and well-organized Jewish community in these regions dates from 321 and refers to Cologne on the Rhine. At the time the first Jews migrated to the "barbarian lands," Christianity had not yet arrived in Western Europe, and the Roman Empire was still the dominant power.
- ⁶⁴ Speech of Paul Spiegel at the memorial event for the *Reichskristallnacht*, November 10, 2000, in Berlin.
- ⁶⁵ The population of the Vorarlberg *Land* wanted to be annexed to Switzerland.
- ⁶⁶ Term from article 1 of the Declaration of Neutrality from October 26, 1955 (BGBl. Nr. 211/1955).
- ⁶⁷ Following a period of especially acrimonious fighting between moderate members and hardliners over the FPÖ's direction, the party splintered in 2005 as Haider and other leaders left to form a new party, the BZÖ. The BZÖ then replaced the FPÖ as the junior partner in the 1999–2006 coalition government with the ÖVP (1999–2005 ÖVP-FPÖ coalition, 2005–2006 ÖVP-BZÖ coalition).

- ⁶⁸ Participation in the referendum was 82.35 percent, which was considered very high; 66.58 percent supported membership in the EU.
- ⁶⁹ Walter Reder was sentenced to life imprisonment by the military court of Bologna in 1951 for the destruction of the city of Marzabotto and other villages near Bologna and for ordering the execution of 2,700 Italian civilians in the Toscana and Emilia Romagna in 1944. In 1985, the Italian government announced that it would release Reder to the Austrians on the condition that the handover be conducted discreetly. When Reder landed in Graz, Minister Frischenschlager met him personally. The two men shook hands, and Frischenschlager welcomed Reder home. The following day, several politicians—also from the SPÖ—criticized this official state reception of a convicted war criminal and demanded Frischenschlager's resignation. This affair took place while the executive committee of the WJC was meeting in Vienna. Its members, too, immediately demanded Frischenschlager's resignation. The SPÖ tried to deal sensitively with the domestic and the rising international criticism, while the national wing positively cheered Frischenschlager—the loudest voice came from a young politician named Jörg Haider.
- ⁷⁰ According to Friedmann, until then the textbook of history gave World War II a maximum of 20 lines and the Shoah two-and-a-half lines.
- ⁷¹ The official report was published in Collins et al. 1988.
- ⁷² These were detailed weekly in a special section of *Die Gemeinde*, “Rechte Ecke” (right corner).
- ⁷³ Schüssel did acknowledge, however, that Austrians have “a moral responsibility” for their past.
- ⁷⁴ “I speak to you as someone who could not get caught up in guilt during the Nazi period because he had the grace of a late birth...” (Köppke 2004).
- ⁷⁵ The cemetery was suggested by Kohl, as 11,000 Americans attached to a nearby air-base lived in harmony with the same number of Germans. Initially the White House declared that both American and German soldiers were buried there. However, reporters soon discovered that no American servicemen were in the cemetery (in fact, the remains of all U.S. soldiers had long since been removed from German soil). Nevertheless, the visit was not canceled. Reagan's national security adviser, Robert McFarlane, explained this decision: “Once Reagan learned that Kohl would really be badly damaged by a withdrawal, he said, ‘We can't do that; I owe him for the deployment of the Pershing II missile’” (Hilton 2009).
- ⁷⁶ The term *Sonderweg* relates to German foreign policy and ideology before and during World War I, which was characterized by a belief in a strong monarchy, army, and authoritarian structure, as well as in the importance of placing spiritual over material values (“Kultur over Zivilisation”). The critical *Sonderweg* thesis that developed after 1945 claimed that the social and political structures and processes that resulted from this *Sonderweg*, coupled with the influence of numerous political, social, and economic factors (from the consequences of defeat in World War I through the class conflicts of the 1920s to the specifics of Adolf Hitler's personality), contributed to the collapse of the Weimar Republic and the triumph of National Socialism.
- ⁷⁷ Technically, the Wall remained guarded for some time after November 9, though less thoroughly. The official dismantling of the Wall by the East German military began on June 13, 1990, and ended in November 1991.

- ⁷⁸ Most of the Jewish leadership no longer possessed the “aura of a concentration camp survivor,” and the German leaders no longer felt directly guilty for the Nazi crimes. This change was expressed in a German senate member’s comment to Nachama: “Your problem is that you don’t have a number on your arm” (Nachama 2007).
- ⁷⁹ The history of the Flick Company was in the headlines in 1986, after the Deutsche Bank paid about 3 million dollars in compensation to the surviving slave laborers during the 1986 takeover of the company. This action was followed by anti-Semitic reactions. For instance, the Christian-Social Union in Bavaria’s Bundestag deputy, Hermann Fellner, declared that “the Jews quickly come forward whenever money jingles in German cashboxes” (Brenner 1997, 146).
- ⁸⁰ For instance, Günter Grass’s novella *Im Krebsgang*, Guido Knopp’s TV series *History*, the Oscar-nominated Hitler epic *Der Untergang*, and Jörg Friedrich’s *Der Brand*.
- ⁸¹ The *Neue Wache* served as a royal guard house until the end of World War I. In 1931 it was redesigned as a memorial for the German war dead. After World War II, it was located within the Soviet zone of occupation of Berlin, and after 1949 in the GDR, and it reopened as the Memorial to the Victims of Fascism and Militarism.
- ⁸² This survey examined seven European countries. The statement “Jews are more loyal to Israel than to this country” was answered positively by 37 percent of the population in the United Kingdom, 38 percent in France, 40 percent in Hungary, 47 percent in Austria, 63 percent in Poland, and 64 percent in Spain. See Anti-Defamation League (2009).
- ⁸³ The movement *Demokratischer Aufbruch* officially transformed into a political party during the same year and merged with the CDU in 1990.
- ⁸⁴ Merkel was the second German chancellor to address the Knesset (after Helmut Kohl in 1984).
- ⁸⁵ Nazism was scarcely an issue on the domestic front, and the Shoah was even less so. The GDR, which had become the most reliable of the Soviet Union’s Central and Eastern European satellite states, mirrored much of Moscow’s attitudes on the Shoah: the Shoah was taboo. The official Soviet position was that all peoples suffered equally from the Nazis’ crimes, and it refused to acknowledge the Jews’ specific tragedy.
- ⁸⁶ In the simplistic view projected officially by the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Socialist Unity Party of Germany, SED), the GDR citizens were, after the immediate postwar period of denazification was over, collectively innocent. “Any evidence to the contrary was merely evidence of enemy activities and infiltration of ‘agents provocateurs’ and ‘saboteurs’ from the West” (Fulbrook 2002, 56).
- ⁸⁷ The anti-fascist myth was the *raison d’être* of the SED and the GDR. This myth “basically claimed that the GDR was the direct product of a popular anti-Nazi resistance struggle carried out with tragic loss of life under the leadership of the KPD” (the *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* [Communist Party of Germany] was a major political party in Germany between 1918 and 1933) (Nothnagle 1999, 93–94).

CHAPTER 5

European-Jewish Identity and Cooperation: The Future Direction of Austrian and German Jewries?

The previous chapters have demonstrated that, although Jewish communities are not closed entities, as they are in fact influenced both directly and indirectly by national politics, Jewish group-identity changes are the more decisive elements in shaping Vienna's and Germany's community reconstruction. These findings raise the question of what shapes developments at the European Jewish level, in which the Austrian and German communities are important players.

Starting in the 1950s, the Western European states—initially the non-communist European countries, and since 1989 also some of the former communist countries—gradually engaged in the process of *Europeanization*, the most important trend and development in the second half of the 20th century in Europe. “Europeanization” denotes the emergence and development of distinct structures of governance on the European level, with the goal of establishing effective cooperation among the member states and creating a body that is large and strong enough to rival great powers such as the United States, Russia, and China. It also denotes the diffusion of European pluralistic democratic norms and ideas, and the concept of Europe as a community of values, and aims at forming and heightening a sense of European identity among the various national populations.

As the European Union (EU) was becoming an arena for institutionalized international policy cooperation that required networking among various groups to set agendas and influence policy processes, various Jewish lobbying groups established their offices near European institutions, and European Jewish organizations tried to influence policy-making on the EU level. In the European Jewish organizations, community representatives from all the European communities (not only from the EU) cooperated to promote Jewish issues on both the national and EU levels, such as fighting anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiments. They also worked together to strengthen the Jewish populations in the various member countries, which, due to their size, could not be self-sufficient.

This chapter will examine whether, and to what extent, a European identity, a European-Jewish identity, and a cooperation network among the European Jewish institutions have developed in keeping with the broader processes of Europeanization within these countries. Furthermore, this chapter will focus on the factors that shaped their development.

5.1 European Identity

Jewish discourse in Germany and Austria on those countries' EU membership reveals the local Jewish populations' pro-EU attitudes. According to Heuberger (2008), "the Jews in Germany supported the EU¹ from the beginning. Germany is not a direct democracy, so no referendum was held on EU membership, but Jewish discourse of that time showed vast support for it. Moreover, it can be assumed that if Germany should withdraw its EU membership today, there would be a great outcry and protest from the Jews."

In Austria, the 1995 public debate over Austria's EU membership clearly manifested the attitudes of politically engaged Jews. According to historian and writer Doron Rabinovici (2007), "The percentage of Jews in the different Austrian political parties who responded to the question about joining the EU in the affirmative was significantly higher than among their gentile counterparts. Non-Jews in the Green Party [*Die Grünen*] were very EU-skeptical, while the Jews were not." The students likewise demonstrated this attitude. The journal *Das Jüdische Echo*, published annually by Austrian Jewish academics and the Jewish Students' Union, entitled its 1996 issue "Vision of Europe." The purpose of that issue was to foster European identity among Vienna's Jews. Leon Zelman, the journal's editor, emphasized that "the vision of Europe was formed in the Jews' minds long ago... in the humble rooms in the ghettos and in the glamorous salons in the big cities," adding that people today were duty-bound to honor these Jewish pioneers' mission (1996, 9).

The main reasons for Vienna and Germany's Jews' pro-EU attitude are related to their respective countries' national politics with respect to the Shoah, anti-Semitism, and Israel. The Jews perceived the EU as more trustworthy than their national governments, which could, as in the past, become less protective of them. Vienna's Jews saw the EU membership referendum as a vote against nationalistic and narrow provincial voices heard throughout the country and as a show of opposition to Haider's xenophobic agenda, which could "easily be

turned against the Jewish community” (Illustrierte Neue Welt 1994). Germany’s Jews strongly supported their country’s joining the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, to prevent it from looking for a German *Sonderweg* in the future.

In addition, Shoah memories played a significant role in the Jews’ European identity formation process. To most of Vienna’s and Germany’s Jews, European identity is more palatable than an Austrian or German identity—although this was not the case for the *Zentralrat* leaders and some descendants of *Alt-Deutsche* Jews, such as Michael Wolffsohn, who described himself as a German-Jewish patriot. European identity can thus be seen as an alternative to the identities that are stained by the events of the past, in the words of Andreas Nachama (2007): “Many Jews are happy to have a European passport. In the past, the green German [and Austrian] passport[s] were discernible from afar. These Jews now openly say that they can more easily identify with Europe than with Germany.” Bodemann (2007) corroborates this identity issue when stating that “the Germans have a problem with their German identity and present themselves abroad as Europeans; however, among the Jews, this problem with Germany is even deeper.” It seems that Germany and Vienna’s Jews feel European because this gives them a chance to get rid of the negative label attached to them by Jews and non-Jews from other countries. Although, as shown above, the Shoah is losing its central and salient role in Jewish group identity, it still affects the Jews’ local identity and with it, obviously, their European identity formation processes.

This European identity is also shaped by changes in the role of the State of Israel in Jewish identity. As noted above, in the postwar years, the Jews in Vienna and Germany forged an identity that was strongly connected to Israel. In the past decade, however, with the diminished centrality of Israel’s role in Jewish identity, a process of European identity development has taken place within these Jewries, especially among the young generation. Significantly, this European identity is perceived as linking them to European values and culture, giving rise to feelings of being Europeans as distinct from Americans or Israelis—as reflected in the oft-quoted feeling about the Israelis: “We are in Europe; they are in the Orient” (Bunzl 2003, 155).

As mentioned above, Israel's role became significantly less pivotal in Vienna but remained relatively central in Germany because of the lack of alternative binding Jewish group-identity elements. Accordingly, Vienna's young Jews, who decided to leave Austria, preferred to move to London² rather than to cities in the United States or Israel—London has a vital, thriving Jewish community and shares European values and culture (besides being geographically closer to these young Jews' parents). Similarly, Germany's young Jews were attracted to London, and, since the fall of the communist regimes, some also moved to Eastern Europe to pursue their studies, at such institutions as the German-Speaking University in Budapest or the Lithuania Medical School. However, they were also attracted by Israel. According to Heuberger (2008), the emphasis is on London *and* Israel.

Finally, the Jews' European identity is also shaped by their countries' attitudes toward Israel. Since Austria's attitude is more anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian than that of Germany or some other EU countries such as Czechoslovakia and other Central and Eastern European EU members, Vienna's Jews have put greater hope in the EU than in their countries in that regard.

However, whereas the Jews feel European, this European identity does not necessarily include the feeling of being part of the EU. The notion of the EU and of EU citizenship is still abstract. The individual Jew—like non-Jews in EU countries—generally does not feel that his daily life is influenced by his country's membership in the EU. Therefore, opinions about the EU are made mainly on the national level and depend on national factors. Three major obstacles hinder the formation of such an EU-oriented identity. First is the absence of unifying elements; culture, language and mentality differences; and distinct local identities. Second is the lack of knowledge of other countries and populations. Third is the lack of information about the agendas and decisions of the EU organizations. Given these obstacles, Jewish and non-Jewish EU citizens have a rather broad European identity based on European values and culture and on cosmopolitan thinking.

Indeed, Europe's Jews in general, and Vienna and Germany's Jews in particular, are more European-minded than the gentiles. This stems from the fact that the Jews are, and always have been, more

cosmopolitan and more attracted by universal values than the rest of the general population in their respective countries. As Schoeps (2007) put it, “the Jews are the European people *par excellence* thanks to their history and their migration.” German Jews often portray Glückel von Hameln³ (1646–1724) as the symbol of the German Jews’ cosmopolitan and European thinking. After her husband’s death, Glückel took over his business, traded with various European cities, and arranged marriages with spouses from all over Europe for all but one of her 12 children to establish and expand business contacts. Glückel’s importance for German Jewry and German-Jewish cosmopolitan thinking is also highlighted in the Berlin Jewish Museum, which dedicated an entire section to her life and philosophy.

Interestingly, Europe’s centrality holds a higher place in the identity of the FSU immigrants in Germany than in Austria. The FSU immigrants in Germany by and large already felt European back in the Soviet Union. For Kauders (2006), the Jews in the European part of the Soviet Union were more Westernized than Slavophile because being Slavophile in the Russian tradition usually also meant being anti-Semitic (Dostoevsky, who was a Slav nationalist and also highly anti-Semitic, is a good case in point); many Jews were members of the socialist movement because it was something Western, something based on the Enlightenment idea of equality and brotherhood. In the eyes of Chalmiev (2007), many of the immigrants came to Germany because it was more European than Israel or the United States; they felt European and wanted to live in Europe. They chose Germany over the other countries in Europe for economic reasons. Austria’s Jewish immigrants from Bukhara and Georgia, however, did not possess this Western orientation back in the Soviet Union. In contrast to their German counterparts, they initially had no intention of living in Europe; they only used Austria as a transit country on their way to Israel, subsequently returning in the wake of hardships in Israel. Their post-immigration generation, who already grew up in Vienna, developed a European identity similar to the young Vienna Jews.

In general, however, the Jewish element still seems to take precedence over the European element in Jewish group identity in Vienna and Germany. As Muzicant (2005) put it, “we are Europeans, but in Europe, we define ourselves first of all as Jews.”

5.2 European-Jewish Identity

Like Jews in other European countries, the majority of Germany's and Vienna's Jews have not developed a sense of European-Jewish identity. They do not perceive themselves as part of a European Jewry. Instead, they place their local communities and Israel at the center of their concerns and demonstrate little interest in other European Jewish communities—except when there are reports of anti-Semitic incidents or policies. This solidarity in times of crisis is a common Jewish phenomenon. It is generated by a certain feeling of group solidarity, coupled with the fear that such occurrences may very well lead to manifestations of anti-Semitism in their own countries. Often such concerns wane when the crisis begins to pass. Thus in the late 1970s and 1980s, many European and U.S. Jews held protest demonstrations supporting the Soviet Jews' right to leave the Soviet Union. According to Bodenheim (2007), "we were active licking envelopes and folding leaflets, saying 'let my people go'; but when their persecution decreased, our interest in them began to cool." Whether a real European Jewish solidarity exists, one that goes beyond such temporary crisis-solidarity, was something most interviewees doubted. Furthermore, anti-Semitic incidents in the United States also generated group concern among European Jews. It thus seems that this solidarity among Europe's Jews is based primarily on common membership of the Jewish group. It is thus more a reflection of global Jewish identity than of European-Jewish identity.

A European-Jewish group identity implies a shared belonging with European Jewry and a marking off from Jewries outside of Europe. Yet, while European Jews may feel European, which separates them from American or Israeli Jews, they do not regard the latter as "other," in sharp contrast with the salience in Jewish identity of the image of the non-Jew as "other." Without such a differentiation from other Jewries, for European-Jewish identity to arise it needs to be based primarily on unifying elements, such as shared values, interests, and solidarity.

However, European-Jewish identity formation has encountered the same major hurdles as the formation of an EU-oriented European identity. As is the case in most, if not all, European countries, differences

in culture, language, and identity are major obstacles to the formation of a single transnational identity. What is more, the post-World War II Jewish populations in Europe are diversified. Thus the French, Hungarian, German, FSU, and British Jews have little in common except for the fact that they are all Jews. Yet even this common Jewish element does not necessarily serve to unify, since the communities may be, and often are, divided on major issues in Jewish life, such as the question “who is a Jew?” For example, Vienna’s Jews are set apart from Jews in Eastern and Central European countries by differing approaches and attitudes to Judaism and Jewish identity: while Vienna’s Jewry is very traditional and Orthodox in orientation, in Central and Eastern Europe, Jewishness is based more on ethnicity and common history rather than on religion, and in some cases, patrilineality is accepted as a criterion for membership in the Jewish community. Yet this is not all: because of historical and cultural differences, their identification with other European Jews remains rather weak, even when they share common religious attitudes and a common language.

These differences, together with a paucity of information about what is happening in other European Jewish communities, hinder the development of a sense of a common European-Jewish identity. Some local efforts have been made to close the information gap. Thus, for example, a decade ago, the IKG’s journal, *Die Gemeinde*, began to publish articles about communities in other European countries. However, a proposal for a European Jewish association of journalists that would disseminate information about the various Jewish communities died even before a first planning meeting could be held, because it was not a high enough priority for the journalists (S. Feiger 2007). In the absence of significant unifying common denominators, some attempts to develop European-Jewish identity from the top down via common activities and decision-making at the European Jewish level are currently underway in certain European Jewish organizations, but so far, the Jewish population at large does not seem to be aware of them. Jews generally know very little about these organizations’ agendas or decisions, which involve only community leaders and a small number of activists, even when developments within their own communities result from such decisions and activities. This is so despite the publication of relevant information on the websites of the European Jewish organizations.

The notion of the existence of a European-Jewish identity is promoted mainly by Jews who are active in European Jewish organizations and by Jewish intellectuals. The most prominent of these is historian Diana Pinto. Since the early 1990s, she has organized think-tank meetings and written several articles seeking ways of bringing together Jews in Europe to form a significant “third pillar” in the postwar Jewish world, alongside Israel and the United States (see, e.g., Pinto 1996, 2000).

Within the Viennese and German Jewish communities, the sense of a common identity is most prevalent among young Jews involved in joint activities with their counterparts from other European countries, whether within youth and student organization frameworks or in Europe-wide singles activities. Organizations seeking to strengthen religious observance among Jews, such as the Lauder Foundation and *Chabad*, also created programs enabling newly observant Jews in Germany (and other countries) to experience *Shabbat* and the Jewish holidays in the Haredi communities in London, Vienna, or Antwerp. More broadly, such activities are aimed at intensifying individuals’ personal experience of Jewish life and connecting observant Jews in various cities across Europe that geographically are quite close to each other.

Meetings, cooperative activities, and the ensuing close interaction between Jews from different countries can become a significant catalyst for the formation of European-Jewish identity. Interviewees located at opposite poles of the Jewish political scene and spread across the spectrum of Jewish life were at one in emphasizing that European Jewish cooperation almost always involves personal interaction and that the latter plays a major role in the development of a shared sense of a European Jewry as a collective entity. Such individual cooperation and personal contacts can have a cyclical effect. European Jewish cooperation—of individuals, communities and organizations—contributes to the creation of a European-Jewish identity. It enables Jews from various European countries to deepen their knowledge of each other, recognize the similarities between them, and heighten their sense of group solidarity. This sense of common identity fosters further cooperation insofar as it contributes to overcoming personal, regional, or national interests, and increasing the willingness to pool resources on behalf of collective goals that are beyond the abilities of any single community.

5.3 European Jewish Cooperation

Cooperation in the European Jewish organizations

The first ones to realize the necessity of cooperation in order to salvage what remained of the European Jewry after the Shoah were European Orthodox rabbis. They acted by establishing the Conference of European Rabbis (CER) in 1956. It was the first pan-European non-governmental organization. Today the CER is one of four main pan-European Jewish organizations, the others being the European Jewish Congress (EJC), the European Council of Jewish Communities (ECJC), and B'nai B'rith Europe (BBE). With the establishment of the EU, “the most successful example of institutionalized international policy cooperation in the modern world” (Moravcsik 1993, 473), cooperation and networking became commonplace and mandatory for setting agendas and influencing political processes. In the European arena, therefore, these organizations serve as public policy networks that seek to influence the political, social, and economic decision-making in EU institutions on behalf of European Jewry. In the internal arena, they aim at supporting the European Jewish communities and enhancing Jewish life in Europe.

The CER brings together all of Europe’s Orthodox chief rabbis and senior rabbinical judges under one roof. It has a consultancy status at the Council of Europe and within EU institutions as an international non-governmental organization. Internally, the CER deals mainly with Jewish religious and educational issues, as well as with combating assimilation, fostering cooperation between the communities, gaining support for Israel, and fighting anti-Semitism.

The European Council of Jewish Community Services was established in 1968 as a bridge between Eastern and Western Europe, but following the political developments of the 1990s, which accelerated the process of European unification, it was reorganized in 1999 and renamed the ECJC. Its official mission is to strengthen Jewish life in Europe by planning and coordinating activities and enhancing the partnership between the communities in social welfare, formal and informal Jewish education, leadership training, and culture, employing community professionals in these fields.

The EJC was established in 1986 and serves as a platform for political cooperation between the presidents of the different Jewish communities. Its tasks are to represent the European Jewish communities at the EU and national levels. It focuses on combating manifestations of anti-Semitism and anti-Israeli attitudes, actions, and policies in the European public and political arenas. It also sponsors a Jewish-Christian dialogue.

The BBE is part of the worldwide B'nai B'rith International (BBI)⁴ and was established in 1999, when its District 19, Continental Europe, merged with District 15, the United Kingdom, to form B'nai B'rith Europe. It was created with the intention of strengthening the Jewish voice in Europe. BBE's goals are to fight racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism; support the State of Israel; help the needy; promote Jewish identity; strengthen knowledge of Judaism through culture and heritage; and encourage and train young Jewish adults to assume leadership roles in the Jewish communities.

Cooperation among Europe's Jewish communities takes place within these individual organizations; between them, if the issues cut across several spheres of activity (such as the struggle against the ban of kosher slaughtering, in which religious, social, and political issues are interwoven, as shown below); or between communities in certain countries within one of these organizations, for example, communities that share issues arising from a common language, which provides a broader basis for contact between them than is the case with other communities.

In these frameworks, the Jewish communities deal with a variety of international issues, such as the Iranian threat and Israel-bashing, which often is only a poor disguise for anti-Semitic stereotypes. Yet they also deal with goals and problems that are common to the Jews of Europe but distinctively different from those of Israeli and American Jews. Such issues include the large concentrations of Muslim immigrants, which are a new source of anti-Semitism (see Rauscher 2004); the attempts in some Scandinavian countries to ban the traditional method of circumcision; and efforts in some countries, and on the EU level, to ban kosher slaughtering.

The latter arose ostensibly out of animal-protection concerns, but for the European Jewish organizations, the political issues brought to

the fore by this attack on kosher slaughter were much broader. According to Stephan Kramer (2007), they represented “the attempt by the Christian-dominated society in the EU to change traditions, secularize lifestyles, and to subordinate other religions to their *Leitkultur*,” thereby contravening article 10, section 1 (Freedom of... religion) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Official Journal of the European Communities 2000). The CER and the EJC cooperated closely in mounting a lobbying campaign at the EU and national levels aimed at defeating the animal-rights groups’ efforts. The intense lobbying and the negotiations that ensued finally led in May 2009 to the European Union Parliament’s vote to legalize kosher slaughtering in six countries that had outlawed them: Latvia, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Estonia, and Lithuania. (Switzerland allows kosher slaughter for poultry, but not for other animals.) This was followed in June 2009, by the European Union Council of Agricultural Ministers’ official recognition of *shechita* as legitimate, and their exemption of the Jewish communities from the requirement to pre-stun⁵ and post-cut stun animals during the slaughter process (both of which contravene Halakhic *shechita* laws), and to label kosher meat as “meat from an animal killed without pre-stunning.” Furthermore, it also voted to allow kosher meat to be traded and sold freely in all EU member states (although, as a compromise, individual states retained the right to “invoke stricter guidelines” regarding *shechita*).

Other issues on the European Jewish organizations’ agendas are connected with the strengthening of Jewish life, such as the fight against assimilation, and the search for ways to promote inter-Jewish marriage, enhance Jewish education, provide financial support for European Jewish communities and to strengthen Jewish identity, for example, by organizing joint all-European projects among individual communities in different countries.

The German-speaking communities (Austria, Germany, and Switzerland) have cooperated in various educational, cultural, and political matters. For example, as Muzicant (2010) stated, the communities currently “cooperate in social activities, in writing schoolbooks and *Machzorim* [prayer books for the High Holidays and Festivals], and in organizing singles meetings. We exchange articles for our journals,

plan *hasbara*⁶ together; and now we are organizing the initiative ‘Stop the Bomb’—an Austrian initiative that is currently run in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland to raise the local populations’ awareness of Iran.” Furthermore, the communities organize joint seminars, conferences, and meetings involving experts in education. According to Kramer (2007), they are also considering the establishment of a common religion-teacher-training program, perhaps in the form of graduate studies at the University of Heidelberg with a curriculum that would entitle its graduates to rabbinic ordination. As Muzicant (2005) put it, the German-speaking countries have a similar history and a vision of Jewish education, which differs significantly from that of the Israeli teachers employed in those countries. They therefore wish to cooperate to eventually establish their own educational curricula and institutions, as was the case before the Shoah.

The memory of the Shoah holds a significant place in the organizations’ agendas, although, as noted above, not all European communities suffered from the Nazi regime, and some communities, mainly in the areas of the FSU, do not, as a result of the postwar communist ideology, attribute a central role to the Shoah. Thus, even though the EJC is led by Moshe Kantor from Russia, it organizes large-scale commemoration projects. Kantor founded the World Holocaust Forum Foundation in 2005 and has been its president ever since. He believes that keeping the Shoah memories and lessons alive and disseminating them are a key weapon in the fight against anti-Semitism. He repeatedly reminds of the Shoah at a time when the centrality of Shoah memory in the Jewish group identity in Vienna and Germany was eroding, and leaders, such as Graumann, repeatedly stressed the importance of reducing the salience and centrality of Shoah memory in communal external representation.

In sum, much of the European Jewish organizations’ cooperation revolves around national and EU policies on Jewish matters, discussions and activities in the national and European arenas, anti-Semitism in Europe, the attitudes of national governments and the EU toward Israel and the Shoah, the question of sustaining the Shoah as a living memory within the national populations, and steps to enhance Jewish life in Europe. Its objective is to create in Europe a Jewish space, one in

which the Jews can feel safe, practice their religion freely, strengthen their Jewish identity, and seek to influence national, European, and international policies related—directly or indirectly—to Jewish affairs or Israel.

In their desire to secure a space for Jews in Europe, and thanks to the latter's newly found self-confidence, European Jewish organizations have begun to foster and maintain a measure of independence from Israeli and American organizations. Unlike the CER and the ECJC, which from the outset were established by European Jews to serve European Jewry, the EJC was spun off from the European branch of the WJC as a new body with its own structure, while the BBE evolved as a new European BBI branch. Both did so to better promote the interests of European Jews. According to Georg Grünberg (2004), "the BBE believes that European Jewish organizations in general, and the BBE in particular, should be responsible for European matters, while the American-Jewish organizations should be responsible for UN matters. The BBE's office is appropriately located in Brussels and should be the only B'nai B'rith office there because its members are European citizens. The BBI headquarters should be only in Geneva, near the UN organizations. Yet this is a very delicate issue which still needs to be resolved." In addition, former EJC president Pierre Besnainou repeatedly stressed that European Jews, not Americans, should be talking to European politicians. While EJC and BBE members continue to view their organization as part of world Jewry's institutional network, they regard European Jews as more competent than American Jews to handle European matters because Europe's distinctive political culture and issues—as well as Europe-specific manifestations of universal problems, such as anti-Semitism—could best be dealt with in a European way.

The goal of a "European-Jewish way" or a single "European Jewish voice", however, seems still far away. Especially in the political field progress is slow, hitting many obstacles on the way—reminding the situation in the EU. Nevertheless, important building blocks for the establishment of a Jewish space in Europe have already been put in place, especially in the fields of culture, religion and lobbying. According to EJC vice-president and ECJC board member Tomas Kraus (2008), European Jewish cooperation functions best at the cultural level—as

exemplified by the European Day of Jewish Culture, which, since 1999, takes place annually in nearly 30 countries.⁷

On the religious level, cooperation between the Orthodox communities seems the most developed. The CER created or helped to create a few institutions to coordinate efforts for securing religious practices essential for the existence and viability of Jewish communities: 1) In order to serve European communities lacking a local Orthodox rabbinical court, the CER established the European Beth Din (EBD). The EBD, whose *Dayanim* (judges) are all members from established rabbinical courts across Europe, is based in Basle, Switzerland, but it meets regularly in various European cities to, among other things, supervise Jewish religious divorce and conversions, engage in dispute arbitration and mediation, and resolve communal disputes. 2) In order to facilitate the availability and affordability of kosher food in Europe, the CER initially created the European Central Kashruth (ECK), a central body certifying kashruth certificates issued by local rabbis in Europe. As a central authority the initiative was doomed to fail. Consequently, the organization concentrated on advising the local certifying rabbis on *kashrut* issues, before the idea of a central body dealing with *kashrut* in Europe was relaunched and implemented in a better accepted way. Renamed “Kashrut Europe” (KE) and based in Vienna, it now gathers information on products reliably certified by *kashrut* authorities in Europe and publishes a comprehensive list of kosher products. This list was first made available in 2013. 3) In order to face the challenge and threats from forces trying to restrict and forbid circumcision (Brit Mila), the CER established in 2013 the Union of Mohalim in Europe (UME). Its aims are to maintain high professional standards of circumcision in Europe from a medical, technical and Halakhic perspective (defining best practices), offer training, guidance and logistic support, and facilitate the placement of *mohalim* all over Europe. This institution, too, is based in Vienna.

Cooperation between the Progressive communities is enhanced by the European Union of Progressive Judaism (EUPJ)—until 2010, the European Region of the WUPJ. It aims at strengthening established congregations and supporting emerging groups financially and logistically in establishing communal infrastructure and training teachers and

rabbis. Together with the WUPJ, the EUPJ helps fight for recognition of Progressive communities within the Jewish community of their respective country and, increasingly, with the EU institutions in Brussels. To deal with the increasing number of candidates for conversion arising from the revival of religiosity in the wake of the fall of communism, the European Region of the WUPJ set up in 1994 the European Beit Din (EBD)—not to be confused with the (Orthodox) EBD of the CER. Today it serves all European communities lacking a Progressive rabbinical court. In addition to the Orthodox and the Progressive European rabbinical courts, the Conservative movement established the European Masorti Beth Din in 2005.

This religious cooperation evolved from an understanding between Jewish communities in Europe sharing the same religious denomination. In contrast to the local situation in Austria and Germany, at the European Jewish level, the Orthodox and the Progressive associations do not show open conflicts. They are not (yet?) competing with one another, as they are still preoccupied with preventing the EU or individual European countries to issue directives or laws that would impede Jewish life. Europe's Jews are still fighting jointly for the creation of a space in which they can practice religion without restrictions, and they are still preoccupied with rebuilding Jewish life in Europe. They have not yet reached the stage in which they have to actually design this space and decide on specific details where they could have different opinions.

The main obstacle to effective cooperation is the communities' excessive preoccupation with their own internal affairs. When there are no serious threats in the national, EU, or international arenas, European Jewish cooperation declines, as each community retreats and concentrates on its local environment. Community unity has a direct effect on European Jewish cooperation. A divided community, as in Germany, is too preoccupied with securing cooperation and unity within its leadership and among its members to be in a position to enhance or be involved in the promotion of organizational cooperation at the European Jewish level. By contrast, Muzicant, who is not preoccupied with internal struggles, is more active on this level. According to Kramer (2007), "European Jewish leaders are inherently aware of the fact that

cooperation is necessary. Readiness to establish coalitions and reach compromises has not yet developed, however. This can be gleaned in talks, negotiations, and discussions.” In this reality, cooperation within the organizations and among individual communities is, to a large extent, based on personal contacts and on the individual representative’s interest in a specific issue. If a representative’s priorities are similar to the organization’s, and if a group of representatives share common interests, effective cooperation may develop; but if not, individual communities concentrate on their internal affairs. Thus, European Jewish cooperation relies on Jewish identity within the European framework rather than on European-Jewish identity. While the EU’s institutional framework influences the structure and pattern of European Jewish organizations and activities, cooperation exists because the Jews in Europe have goals and encounter problems that are common to them but not shared by Israeli and American Jews. In this light, Muzicant stressed in 2005, “this is what holds us together—not the fact that we are Europeans.”

Currently, however, common goals and problems are not sufficient to secure cooperation among European Jews. Since 2006, struggles for power within the leaderships of European Jewish organizations that are fueled by East-West differences have presented new challenges to effective European Jewish cooperation. At the heart of this struggle is the question of whether the equation “money = power” is legitimate and appropriate. Behind that is the question of Europe’s boundaries, in other words, which countries should be represented in, and by, these European Jewish organizations (only EU members, or other European communities as well?) and “What is the European way?”—namely, which issues and goals should be on the organizations’ agenda, and how the organizations should go about pursuing and attaining them.

In 2006, a battle broke out in the EJC when the chairman of its board of governors, Moshe Kantor—who was also Russian Jewish Congress president and the leading EJC donor—demanded he be granted oversight over the moneys he brought in from donors, as a precondition for making a personal donation of 475,000 dollars. He justified his demand by asking: “Who is the largest donor to the World Jewish Congress? Edgar Bronfman. And he is the president, too, right? What do

you think would happen if the others at the World Jewish Congress told him to take his money and go to hell?" (Spritzer 2006). Muzicant accused Kantor of seeking to obtain the EJC presidency without elections. Eventually, the delegates from some 40 European Jewish member communities voted to reject a proposed set of new bylaws that would have granted Kantor such powers of oversight.

One year later, Kantor, running on a platform of supporting Jewish community activities and Jewish education in Europe, strengthening Jewish identity, and counteracting anti-Semitism and xenophobia, was elected EJC president. He defeated former president Pierre Besnainou from France, who emphasized the importance of fighting anti-Semitism, anti-Israeli propaganda in the EU, and the Iranian threat. This electoral contest ignited a battle over EJC leadership between some of the Western European communities involved in founding the Congress and its Russian president. During an extraordinary session in Paris on February 10, 2008, the EJC's General Assembly was called upon to vote on a new constitution—something that had been many years in the making—that extended the mandates of elected officers, established a working committee to re-assess the demographic figures for European Jewry, and granted Hungary a permanent seat on the EJC Executive. The draft constitution was adopted by a vote of 63–22 (European Jewish Congress 2008).

However, after the delegates voted 51–34 to extend the term of the current EJC executive board from two years to four, France, Germany, Austria and Portugal suspended their membership. Muzicant (2008) argued that a retroactive extension of EJC president Kantor's term of office was undemocratic and unacceptable. He also accused Kantor of seeking to downgrade the EJC's efforts to fight the Iranian threat (because of his close ties to Russian president Putin)—an issue, which in Muzicant's view, needed to be an EJC priority. The dissenting delegates subsequently unveiled a plan to establish a "European Union Jewish Congress" (EUJC), membership of which would be restricted to Jewish communities in EU countries (Muzicant 2008). Roger Cukierman, the former president of the *Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France* (Representative Council of the French Jewish Institutions, CRIF) (2001–2007), noted that "the voice of the Jews in Europe

cannot be heard if the EJC president is not a citizen of one of the 27 EU member states" (Lempkowicz 2008).

The delegates from these four countries eventually rejoined the EJC after a compromise was found within the framework of the EJC statutes, which stipulated that early elections would be held, after which the elected president would remain in office for a term of four years. In the December 2008 elections, Kantor defeated Cukierman 55 to 28,⁸ and the French, German, and Austrian representatives (Prasquier, Knobloch, and Muzicant) were elected vice-presidents (the EJC board has seven vice-presidents), but Muzicant declined the office. He explained his decision thus: "In my opinion, Jewry currently has one essential issue to deal with, and this is Iran. All other issues should be deferred. The EJC is organizing commemoration ceremonies in Auschwitz and other events, which are also important, but not at this point in time. I have different priorities, and I am therefore not joining the board." Instead, he declared that he would now be concentrating mainly on persuading Austria's political elite. "I have been in Israel recently as a member of various Austrian delegations; I have just returned from an Israel tour with the Austrian foreign minister; and in the summer I will be there again, accompanying the Austrian federal chancellor and later with the Austrian vice-chancellor. I will be trying to prove to them that what they hear in Europe is not true and that they have to form their own picture of Israel and the Middle East conflict. I am trying to bring the Austrian position nearer to ours, which is not easy, but it is progressing. Here I can make a change; in the EJC I cannot" (Muzicant 2010).

In November 2012, Kantor was re-elected after winning 73 percent of the votes, defeating CRIF president Richard Prasquier. Following the general assembly elections, Muzicant suggested the creation of a special portfolio aiming to establish an emergency task force and to develop emergency plans for all European Jewish communities in view of the Iran crisis and rising anti-Semitism. President Kantor supported the idea and designated Muzicant vice-president in charge of security and crisis management. Since this was a portfolio that involved real work, Muzicant agreed to join the board again (Muzicant 2013). The composition of the board was officially announced at the EJC Enlarged Executive meeting in Brussels on January 22, 2013 (European Jewish Congress 2013).

As in the EJC case, presidential change in the ECJC also caused great turmoil. On October 25, 2010, Igor Kolomoisky, a Ukrainian oligarch and the biggest ECJC donor, was nominated ECJC president by outgoing President Jonathan Joseph from Britain during an ECJC conference in Berlin, without an election or even consultation with the other ECJC board members. Kolomoisky was offered this position after committing to grant the organization an annual multi-million-euro gift for five years (Heilman 2010). Joseph justified his decision by noting that the organization needed the money, especially since donations from the United States had declined in the aftermath of the financial crisis. He emphasized the size of the gift—at least \$14 million—and the urgency to respond to Kolomoisky, since he might not be willing to wait for an official vote from the board of directors (Heilman 2010). He also stressed that this appointment brings together “East, Central, and Western Jewry as a united front for Israel, against anti-Semitism, and for a stronger European Jewish voice on several Jewish issues” (Euro-Asian Jewish Congress 2010). Several board members from Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic, and Switzerland (Austria does not have a delegate on the board) subsequently resigned, and the Italian Union of Jewish Communities withdrew from the organization in protest at the appointment. They said that they understood that the conference would be just a routine meeting and had no idea about Kolomoisky’s appointment. They regarded that appointment as “undemocratic,” “illegal,” and “a Soviet-style takeover” and feared that Kolomoisky would take the organization in a more political direction. The *Zentralrat* was the co-organizer of this “Conference of Presidents,” whose motto was “Leading Jewish Europe Together Now” and which included some 150 leaders and delegates from Jewish communities and organizations from 25 European countries. As the *Zentralrat*’s official publication, *Jüdische Allgemeine* (October 28, 2010), indicated, the appointment came as a surprise to Germany as well. The article states: “Surprisingly, on Monday, 48-year-old Ukrainian billionaire Igor Kolomoisky was named the ECJC’s ‘newly elected president’” (Kauschke 2010).

Following the resignation of the board members, Kolomoisky withdrew from the position and, together with fellow Ukrainian billionaire philanthropist and former ECJC vice-president Vadim Rabinovitch,

established in April 2011 a new European Jewish organization, the European Jewish Union (EJU). Its aim was to be a uniting structure for all Jewish communities and organizations throughout Europe. Its first major project was to establish a European Jewish Parliament (EJP) that “would serve to bring together and coordinate the voices of Jewish communities across the European continent (including Eastern, Central, and Western Europe)” (European Jewish Union 2011). The EJP was modeled after Israel’s 120-member Knesset, and its members were nominated and elected via the Internet: the EJU collected hundreds of names of people who had either registered or been nominated and then uploaded the names on their site and called on all Jews residing in Europe to vote. This model for recruitment of members of the EJP (MEJP), in which anyone could nominate anyone without prior consultation, stirred serious criticism. Many of the candidates for election had never expressed an interest in running nor even spoke to anybody in the organization; they only found out they had been nominated after receiving promotional material from the EJU (a number of those nominated demanded to have their name taken off the list). Moreover, the list of potential MEJPs included not only persons active in Jewish communities and politics but, more generally, famous and less-famous European Jews. Much criticism also came from the established European Jewish organizations and communal leaders, which saw the establishment of the EJU and the EJP as an attempt to take over their external representation of European Jewry. In their eyes, the political role belonged in the hands of community leaders and the EJC. Moreover, they feared that a multitude of Jewish voices would lead to a decline in European Jewry’s lobbying power at the EU. Nevertheless, the EJP was established in February 2012. Symbolically, its inauguration session took place in the EU Parliament’s main building. According to the EJU, more than 400,000 people from across Europe had voted online, and its MEJPs include well-known Jewish activists such as former EJC president Pierre Besnainou.

Meanwhile, an interim board was elected for the ECJC in January 2012 to discuss new structures for the organization, and on May 29 of that year representatives of Jewish communities and organizations from 21 European countries (not all former ECJC members had rejoined

the organization) approved new Articles of Association that formally replaced all prior articles of association, statutes, and other legal documents and set up the ECJC as a non-profit organization registered in Switzerland. Its aims were clearly set in the Articles' preamble as to "serve the Jewish communities of Europe as their official representative council, capable of coordinating cultural, educational, heritage, health and welfare activities and policies for all of the association's members and their constituents and to promote Jewish pluralism"—clearly stating that, in accordance with its original mandate, it aims at fostering Jewish communal development rather than lobbying on political issues. Evan Lazar, a founder of the Czech Jewish communal organization Bejt Praha and one of the board members who had resigned to protest Kolomoisky's nomination, was elected ECJC president—the newly elected vice-presidents were from France and Bulgaria. In view of the ECJC's financial situation after Kolomoisky's withdrawal of his gift, the JDC, which had co-founded and funded the organization since 1960, returned as a funder following a hiatus of a few years and was granted automatic associate-member status, with the right to attend and speak at all Board of Directors meetings, but without voting rights. Interestingly, the new Articles of Association state that "the Association shall consist of approved Jewish communities and/or organizations located anywhere in Europe" (article 6[1]), while the term "Europe" is to be "defined by the ECJC Board of Directors" (article 6[3]).

The leadership changes in the EJC and the ECJC showed several interesting similarities. Both Kantor and Kolomoisky were FSU billionaires ready to become the organizations' largest donors on condition that they were granted influential positions in the organizations. The board members were split over whether Kolomoisky's appointment and the extension of Kantor's tenure were legitimate or undemocratic. Likewise, they debated whether a FSU Jew should lead a European Jewish organization. The call for an "EU Jewish Congress," or the board members' remark that "we will not be colonized by a Ukrainian, that's for sure" (Heilman 2010), clearly showed that the presidents were controversial not because of who they were but because of where they came from. Furthermore, it indicated that some board members from Western European countries preferred an organization within the former narrower

EU framework—as is reflected in the EJC, ECJC, and BBE logos, all of which have golden stars on a blue background, representing the EU flag.

This protest, however, came only from some of the Western European board members, making it clear that they were not united in the struggle against the growing power of the FSU Jewish communities. The opponents stressed that the FSU communities had only recently been reestablished with the assistance of American, Israeli, and Western European Jews and had only now begun to be educated in Judaism, and therefore could not lead European Jewish organizations at this point. They emphasized that the new leaders of the FSU Jewry were not familiar with the etiquette required to approach EU politicians. This was demonstrated and widely publicized in 2008, when, at a meeting on Iran's nuclear program, Kantor presented German chancellor Angela Merkel with a bar of soap, which, he explained, was both a reminder of the Nazi treatment of the Jews on their way into the gas chambers and a symbol of the need for greater vigilance against anti-Semitism.⁹ (Merkel silently put the bar of soap aside.) The supporters of his leadership countered by explaining that the FSU Jews could inject new life into the organizations, both because they were willing to donate large sums of money to them and because they were more active and outspoken in promoting Jewish causes. As Joseph put it in his speech at the conference in reference to Kolomoisky: "We need fresh blood, a new momentum, and a new president with a vision of a united Jewish Europe—and with financial resources" (Lempkovicz 2010).

Following Kantor's election, EJC members were divided into groups: those who remained enthusiastic about it and those who were not. Indeed, in 2010, Muzicant, who for many years had been an active and prominent member of the European Jewish organizational scene and EJC vice-president, sounded conspicuously less optimistic and enthusiastic about European Jewish cooperation than he had only three years earlier—before Kantor's election. He now stated that he realized that a small community, whose opinion on the salience and centrality of the issues on the EJC's agenda differed from those of its president, stood no chance of influencing the EJC's decision-making process. He also called the EJC "a paper tiger," a term used frequently to criticize EU institutions.

Interestingly, however, even people critical of the EJC do not foresee any future threat to its existence. In their view, unity in the EJC is greater than in the EU, and despite its internal disagreements, the EJC can still manage to speak with one political voice in its dealings with the external world (Muzicant 2010). This probably stems from the fact that the EJC has been involved in issues critical to the Jewish communities in Europe at large. Thus even if a Jewish community in an EU member state is not openly active within the EJC, it may still seek to influence its government along the same lines as the EJC does vis-à-vis EU politicians and institutions, and it may cooperate with other individual Jewish communities in EU member states. Leaders of European Jewish communities are aware that more lobbying power is needed to enhance the chances of accessing the key European players.

Cooperation among the European Jewish populations

In addition to the cooperation of leaders and officials in the European Jewish organizations, a trend toward cooperation was also manifested within the Jewish population at large. This trend, which strengthened since the 1990s, is much more pronounced among young Jews than among older age cohorts, except in the case of those intellectuals and individuals active in the various European Jewish organizations mentioned above. In general, people busy tending to their professional and personal lives are less free and interested in maintaining connections with Jews in other countries and in engaging in communal projects in general. According to former director of the ZPC School and a member of one of Vienna's B'nai B'rith lodges Jacob Allerhand (2004), they are also exposed to fewer stimuli fostering European Jewish awareness; just a handful of influential individuals within the Vienna community are involved in promoting cooperation. Many of the German interviewees echoed similar views regarding the situation in the German Jewish community.

European Jewish cooperation at the youth level occurs usually within the framework of European or international youth and student organizations that have branches in the various European communities. In Vienna, these organizations include the JÖH, *Bnei Akiva*, and *Hashomer Hatzair* (Yad BeYad is only a local organization). In Germany,

local Jewish student organizations and the umbrella nationwide Jewish student organization BJSD—which, like the JÖH, is a member of the WUJS and the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS)—actively foster European Jewish cooperation. In the 1990s, the Viennese and German branches of European and international Jewish organizations made significant policy changes, which resulted in increased European Jewish interaction and cooperation at the youth level. For several decades, these organizations had been involved in occasional joint activities with their counterparts in other European countries; now, the frequency of these events was increased. For example, each year *Bnei Akiva* members aged 15 or 16 from different European countries used to meet for two weeks at the pan-European Camp Sayarim held at different European locations, while the 16- or 17-year-olds met for a few days as part of Camp Avoda¹⁰ in Israel, after which some of them spent a year of *Hachshara*.¹¹ Today, however, there are additional pan-European seminars and *Shabbatonim* (weekends) throughout the year, plus an annual European song contest.

The European Jewish youth organizations—in Vienna and Germany in particular, and in Europe in general—typically arrange regular events, conferences, and camps on cultural, educational, political, and religious topics, which also provide social, entertainment, and leisure activities. The idea is to offer a Jewish experience in a European Jewish setting that at once enhances knowledge of the Jewish religion, culture, and traditions; strengthens Jewish identity; intensifies Jewish life experience and feelings; and cements friendships with other Jewish youth and students. The hope is that this will increase the attractiveness of and interest in Jewish life in Europe and heighten the likelihood of in-marriages.

Based in Brussels, the European Center for Jewish Students (ECJS), for example, brings together many Jewish student unions and associations, organizes and subsidizes inter-European weekend retreats and seminars, and provides free trips to Israel. It emphasizes a blend of Jewish tradition and European culture and seeks to provide the students with opportunities to develop their awareness of Judaism and Jewish identity and to socialize with Jews from other European countries. It also helps empower Jewish students across Europe to combat

anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activities on their university campuses by supplying information and resources to be used during lectures and discussion panels to counter and rebut these negative and hostile attitudes and positions and to defend Israel.

Likewise, the JDC's Weinberg-Danube region project, of which Vienna and southern Germany are a part, organizes weekends for students and young adults in Central European countries and Danube regions. According to its coordinator, Jorge Diener (2006), their goal is to develop and empower future Jewish leadership in Central Europe by bringing together students and young adults from these countries and to link the various communities and cultivate a support system that will help them attain a critical mass. By exposing the students to the diversity of the Jewish experience and by providing them an opportunity to enrich their Jewish identity, the project hopes to strengthen Jewish group-identity and enhance political and cultural cooperation among these European Jews.

It thus seems that the idea behind the youth and student organizations' efforts to facilitate and nurture cooperation is to enable young people to learn about Judaism while socializing with other young Jews. Whether these efforts will eventually lead to closer and stronger European Jewish—or EU-Jewish—cooperation, and to the emergence of a distinct sense of common group identity that is both Jewish and European, remains to be seen.

Within the Jewish population at large, however, cooperation has still not progressed very far. The major obstacle is the still-prevailing view in Vienna, Germany, and other European Jewish communities that each community must first establish its own Jewish group identity, institutions and unity, and only then will it be in a position to open up to European Jewish cooperation. Heuberger (2008) stated that “especially Germany’s Jewish community is busy with itself and the integration of its immigrants”; hence pan-European activities and cooperation beyond the European Jewish leaders’ meetings are “not an issue at the moment.” According to this view, efforts to establish cooperation and the responses to them were not, or should not be, aimed at creating a new and distinctive European-Jewish identity but rather were, or should be, aimed specifically at strengthening Jewish identity in general.

5.4 Conclusion

Many obstacles must still be overcome if a “European Jewish Union” consisting of a European Jewish leadership and guided by a European-Jewish identity is to emerge. The stumbling blocks derive mainly from intra-Jewish issues and thus have to be cleared by the European Jews themselves. As was the case of the Jewish communal reconstruction and unity in Vienna and Germany, the obstacles are generally not caused by policies of the EU or the individual European countries. European Jewish cooperation is triggered and maintained mainly to confront national and European developments that could become problematic for Jewish life and hampered mainly by obstacles connected to the dissimilarity of the various communities in Europe, the lack of awareness for distinctiveness from non-European Jewries, and, most importantly, the communities’ and their leaders’ preoccupation with their own affairs.

European-Jewish identity will develop top-down as a byproduct of European Jewish organizational cooperation and this process will be accelerated by the establishment of effective collective institutions. First columns for this cooperation have already been erected, such as the EJC, the ECJC, the CER with its rabbinical court, the Kashrut Europe and the Union of Mohalim, and the EUPJ with its rabbinical court. However, what is missing is the entablature that connects the columns and provides a roof for the European Jews under which they can meet, communicate and get to know each other better. As Edward Serotta (2007), a specialist on Jewish life in Central and Eastern Europe, put it, the European Jews need a building—at least a virtual building—bearing the inscription “European Council of Jewish Communities,” which will provide separate departments for various communal spheres of activity, such as education, social issues, European Jewish culture, community administration and public relations (geared toward the Jewish communities and the non-Jews). Such a “community building,” it is hoped, might become the locus for cooperation and brainstorming, the hot-bed for shaping a common identity, and the catalyst for a critical mass

that will make it possible to realize the vision of European Jewry as the “third pillar” of world Jewry, alongside the Jewries of Israel and America, that was envisaged at the first ECJC general assembly in 1999.

Notes

¹ They already supported the EU's forerunner, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), of which Germany was one of the six founding members. The ECSC was Europe's first supranational community, established by the Treaty of Paris, ratified in 1952, and designed to integrate the coal and steel industries in Western Europe. It was first proposed by French foreign minister Robert Schuman as a way to prevent further war between France and Germany, by making war materially impossible. The ECSC subsequently expanded to include all members of the European Economic Community (later renamed the European Community and then the European Union). When the treaty expired in 2002, the ECSC was dissolved.

² There is no official data for this migration phenomenon, as statistics do not mention the emigrants' country of destination. However, community leaders and people acquainted with the issue confirmed these trends in interviews undertaken for this study.

³ Hameln (Hamelin in English) is situated about 50 km southwest of Hanover, the state capital of Lower Saxony in the north of the Federal Republic of Germany.

⁴ *B'nai B'rith* International was founded in New York City on October 13, 1843, by Henry Jones and 11 other German Jewish immigrants. It is the oldest continually operating Jewish service organization in the world.

⁵ The methods used for stunning animals before their slaughtering are contrary to Jewish law, because an animal intended for food must be healthy and uninjured at the time of *shechita*. The commonly applied stunning methods (for cattle and sheep, electrically shocking or shooting a steel bolt into the skull at the front of the animal's brain; for birds, gassing the bird or inverting it and dunking its head in an electrified water tank) injure the animal, making it non-kosher and thus prohibited.

⁶ *Hasbara* is the term used by the State of Israel and its supporters to describe their efforts to explain Israeli government policies and to promote Israel to the world at large.

⁷ The European Day of Jewish Culture is coordinated by the European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage, which was founded by three organizations: BBE, ECJC, and the *Red de Juderías de España—Caminos de Sefarad* (Network of Spanish Jewish Quarters). The aim of this day is to promote and raise awareness of Jewish religion, culture, tradition, and life to the wider society in the countries where this event takes place. Each year, a different theme for the event is selected, such as “Facing the Future” (2011), “Art and Judaism.”

⁸ Forty-four Jewish communities across Europe are members in the EJC. The number of votes for each community is proportional to its Jewish population. The largest communities are France (13 votes), Russia (seven), the United Kingdom (six), Ukraine (three), and Germany (three).

⁹In an interview with the *Washington Jewish Week* (December 19, 2007), Kantor explained: "My idea behind the soap is, are we going to let history repeat itself? Are we going to endanger the world with another Holocaust? I am fully aware that my way of presenting the point is not a gentle one, but I believe that if today we wish to influence world leaders, we must do it in a creative way, in a way that will leave them impressed or maybe shocked. But our message should come through."

¹⁰Camp Avoda is a camp that tours sites in Israel for a month and includes a week of paramilitary experience.

¹¹After graduating from high school, Bnei Akiva members from various countries meet in Israel for a year of *Hachshara* (preparation). The *Hachshara* program, which is also organized by other youth organizations in the Diaspora, aims for personal and ideological development, experience and training. The idea is that participants would either remain in Israel as a form of ideological fulfillment or return to their Diaspora communities and movements in a leadership capacity.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

The post-World War II Jewish communities in Vienna and Germany underwent a series of developments that transformed them from self-constructed “ghettos of fear and isolation” to thriving communities that opened up to their local populations, brought the Jewish communities into the spotlight, and made Jewish culture an integral part of Vienna and Germany’s cultural landscape. The Jews no longer hid their Jewishness but made their opinions heard in the national political and social arenas. Moreover, Austria and Germany’s Jewish communities also became active and influential players on the European Jewish scene.

The most important developments took place in five spheres: the relationship to Austria and Germany, institution-building, community unity, legal framework, and external representation.

The Transformation of the Relationship to Austria and Germany: Until the late 1970s, the majority of the Jewish population—excluding the *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews—perceived their stay in their respective countries of residence as “a war accident.” Most DPs indeed left for Israel after 1948. Those DPs who remained in Europe, usually for various personal reasons, as well as the immigrants who arrived between the 1950s and 1980s, were “sitting on packed suitcases,” waiting for the right moment to leave for Israel. In the meantime, they were living in two separate worlds: a positive inner Jewish world and a negative external world. They tried to keep contact with the non-Jewish population at a minimum and did not exhibit their Jewishness in public. Community activities were conducted behind closed doors so as not to attract non-Jewish attention.

The members of the postwar generation gradually felt more and more comfortable in their Viennese and German surroundings. Buoyed by Israel’s victory in the Six-Day War, they developed self-confidence as Jews significantly stronger than that of their parents. They felt more secure and more accepted by their environment and displayed their Jewishness more openly. Moreover, having grown up in Germany and Vienna and been exposed to the local society and culture, they

had formed friendly relations with gentiles and, after the 1970s, they also began to look ahead toward a possible future in their respective countries.

Since the 1980s, it has become clear that the postwar Jews have actually “unpacked their suitcases.” They increasingly felt that “we are here to stay” and actively participated in Germany’s and Vienna’s economic and social life. The postwar generation in both communities also adopted a much more outspoken public stance. They decided to vent their discontent openly rather than do so only behind closed doors, to stand up for their rights in public, to bring their issues and concerns out onto the streets, and to put their case in the public arena and give it media coverage. Moreover, although they had difficulties defining it, they also began to envisage and discuss the adoption of an Austrian/German identity, an issue that had earlier been taboo and unthinkable.

The second and third postwar generations have evinced even stronger Austrian and German identities and displayed their Jewishness more openly than their previous generations. In the 2007 elections for the IKG and in the Berlin community, the campaign pamphlets clearly showed that today’s young adults are interested in both a stronger Jewish identity and a closer connection to local life and that they want to stay and lead active lives in their countries of residence as Jews and as Austrian or German citizens.

From the onset, the FSU immigrants in both countries maintained a more positive attitude toward Germany and Austria than the local Jews. They came to stay. The young “Russian” Jews—those who arrived as small children and the post-immigration generation—mastered the language and were brought up on German-language literature and culture, which automatically made them feel at home in the German and Viennese societies.

Institutional Reconstruction: Bound together by the Shoah memory, in both countries, the DPs from various Eastern and Central European countries, as well as various streams within Judaism, established a wide array of religious, social, and political Jewish institutions that functioned alongside the already existing official community institutions. However, despite the new arrivals, it was not possible to speak of a Jewish renaissance, since most of the newly established institutions

were only temporary and closed down by 1953, when most DPs left those countries. Indeed, Germany's communities were consequently left with only the basic institutions, which had been established by the official communities. In Vienna, the situation was slightly better, as observant Jews—mainly Haredi—who had settled outside the DP camps established some additional institutions and maintained them even after the mass DP emigration. Before the 1980s, Vienna and Germany's official communities established only the most essential Jewish institutions—since the IKG leadership perceived the community as a *Liquidationsgemeinde*, and Germany's Jews did not demand additional religious institutions. In general, Jewish life in both countries was not attractive, especially not to young adults, many of whom left. The communities were doomed to simply fade away.

In Vienna, significant changes occurred in the 1980s, when the postwar generation's influence on the IKG decision-making process increased. After the 1981 IKG elections, when more observant members of the war generation and members of the postwar generation took over its leadership, the IKG founded an educational and social infrastructure to enhance Jewish life in Vienna and secure its future. Furthermore, the integration of the traditional Orthodox-oriented Jews from Bukhara and Georgia into Vienna's Jewish scene rejuvenated the Jewish population, further boosting and diversifying its communal infrastructure through the establishment of Sephardi institutions in a community that until then had only Ashkenazi infrastructure. This new shot of energy likewise brought about the addition of several cultural institutions aimed primarily, though not exclusively, at the young FSU Jews.

The 1998 leadership takeover by the postwar generation spurred the establishment of further institutions. The "IKG Campus" reflects the Jews' new self-confidence and their wish to be a visible part of Vienna's society and cultural landscape, and most importantly, to make Vienna an attractive city for Jews from all of Europe and beyond. The IKG seeks to attract young intellectual Jews to augment Vienna's small but active Jewish community.

The maturing of the second postwar generation may be indicative of a future institutional expansion. Feeling even more self-confident and at home in Vienna than its predecessors, this generation has begun

to incorporate more traditional and religious elements into its group identity. Its members reinvigorated Jewish life by establishing various social and religious Jewish groups meant to attract non-affiliated Jews, provide meetingplaces for Jews in a Jewish atmosphere, and teach Jews of all religious denominations about Judaism.

In Germany, only a few changes occurred prior to the mass FSU immigration in the 1990s, as there was little demand for more institutions from the Jewish population, which was small and dispersed over a number of cities. Thereafter, Jewish infrastructure expanded and diversified with the establishment of institutions that catered to the Russian Jews, and the new Liberal and Orthodox institutions created in a community that until then had only an Orthodox infrastructure. Nevertheless, this infrastructure was clearly less developed than in Vienna, once again because of the low demand by the mostly secular FSU Jews and the largely non-observant *Alteingesessenen*.

Community Unity: Before their mass emigration, the DPs were involved in significant struggles—in Vienna with the IKG, and in Germany with the local communities in the U.S. occupation zone, home to most of the DPs. Interestingly, though, the toughest battles in Germany involved the official community leaders and those DPs representatives who sought to facilitate the emigration of all DPs and temporarily strengthen Jewish life in their camps. In Vienna, by contrast, they involved the IKG leaders and those DPs who wanted to reestablish Jewish institutions outside the DP camps to enhance Jewish life in Vienna, not only for the immediate needs of the DPs but to provide a solid basis for Jewish life for as long as Jews lived in Vienna.

After 1953, for four decades, Germany's Jewish community possessed a high level of community unity, whereas the IKG was shaken by major disputes between its Haredi groups and IKG leaderships, and since the 1970s also between the IKG leaders and a new IKG political opposition group.

Starting in the 1980s in Vienna, and the 1990s in Germany, the situation with regard to community unity was reversed. In Vienna, following the 1981 IKG elections, when the opposition list came to power in the IKG, its now more religious-oriented leadership and the various Haredi groups agreed to cooperate and share community tasks. The

official community constitutional framework and agreements between the IKG leadership and various IKG subgroups provided each IKG group with relatively extensive autonomy and helped maintain community unity. Moreover, the integration of the FSU Jews, who since the late 1980s have constituted about half the Vienna Jewry, turned into a success story after the IKG acknowledged their special religious, cultural, and social needs and supported them in establishing the Sephardi Center and various other institutions without interfering in their management. It thus seems that IKG's formula of attaining unity by giving each group autonomy to run its internal affairs, even if it is above and beyond the call of duty, has proved effective.

Berlin's Jewish community did not adopt this formula. On the contrary, the community's legal framework even stipulates that the community's board makes all decisions on all aspects of communal Jewish life. Even after the mass FSU immigration in the 1990s, when "German Jewry" was almost completely replaced by FSU Jews, and Liberal Judaism gained membership and political power, the largely *Alteingesessene* and Orthodox-oriented Berlin community leadership continued to make the decisions for all its diverse groups and did not permit them to develop separately. Consequently, the community was torn apart by serious infighting between the Liberal and Orthodox, and between the "Russian" and the "German" Jews. Berlin's community is currently in the midst of struggles over community leadership and shaping a new Jewish group identity. This communal disunity, however, is not unique to the Berlin community. Due to clashes between the "German" and the "Russian" perceptions of Jewish identity, Jewry in the whole of Germany is struggling over redefining the nature of its group identity on religious and cultural grounds. Moreover, due to the conflicts over state funding and formal inclusion into the German Jewish organizational framework between, on one side, the Orthodox-oriented *Zentralrat* and official Jewish communities, and, on the other side, the newly established Liberal-oriented communities, German Jewry is also in the midst of struggles to preserve its unity. Much criticism is being expressed from all sides against the way the *Zentralrat* and the communities it represents act. As consequence, Jewish activities increasingly take place outside the communal framework.

Legal Framework: In 1945, the Jewish communities in Austria and Germany alike reinstituted their pre-World War II *Einheitsgemeinde* model, which envisioned in each location one community for all of Judaism's streams under one roof. This model was invalidated by the respective national courts—in Vienna in 1981 and in Germany in 2004—in response to lawsuits filed by a Haredi group in Vienna and a Liberal congregation in Germany, who both claimed discrimination.

However, after the courts' rulings, the IKG succeeded in maintaining *de facto* unity through negotiations and cooperation, and the IRG secured the practical continuity of the *Einheitsgemeinde* principle by getting the *Israelitengesetz* of 1890 amended by the Austrian parliament. In Germany's Jewish communities and regional associations, however, the division was so deep that in many of them it eventually led to splits. In 2005, the *Einheitsgemeinde* model was abolished *de facto*, when the *Zentralrat* officially acknowledged both Orthodox and Liberal communities in several regional associations and cities (Berlin is still an *Einheitsgemeinde*).

External Community Representation: Before the 1980s, the IKG and *Zentralrat* leaders kept a low profile on local Jewish matters, holding restitution negotiations with the national authorities behind closed doors. Moreover, believing that the Jewish community would soon disappear and through its close association with the ruling SPÖ, the IKG leadership sold much of the IKG's property for almost nothing, pursued a non-confrontational policy toward the Austrian government, and attempted to stay out of the political and social limelight. In Germany, by contrast, the *Zentralrat* leaders sought to become political players to be reckoned with, but only in matters not connected to the local Jewry. Throughout, both IKG and *Zentralrat* leaders expressed an allegiance to their respective countries of residence far stronger than that of the majority of Vienna and Germany's Jewish population, with the exception of other *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews and their descendants, who shared that allegiance.

The 1981 IKG leadership change markedly altered the IKG's external representation. The new leadership distanced itself from the Austrian political parties, stopped selling off its property, and began to stand up for the Jews' rights. It no longer followed the policy of burying one's head

in the sand on divisive national political matters (as during Kreisky's presidency), and even publicly criticized Austrian politicians when the local Jews' rights or local Jewish issues were at stake (for example, the restitution campaign or issues involving the Shoah). Each successive IKG leadership became more outspoken. The IKG also opened up to the surrounding society, proudly presenting Jewish culture, religion, and tradition to the non-Jewish population.

The IKG postwar generation's leadership's takeover heralded a new phase in the Jewish community's external representation. This leadership publicly promotes Jewish communal goals in an ever more self-confident, determined, and at times tough manner. This was instrumental in bringing the restitution issue almost to a close and in obtaining state subsidies to expand and renew the Jewish infrastructure. Today, Vienna's Jewish leaders and population are prepared to go out on the streets to demonstrate against the Austrian government (under the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition) and against Austrian institutions or foundations (such as the Leopold Collection) and are no longer afraid to occupy the limelight. The IKG seeks an influential role in the national arena.

The *Zentralrat* similarly heightened its profile on local Jewish matters, and individual communities opened up toward their non-Jewish environment in the 1980s. However, there were no turning points in the *Zentralrat*'s external representation until the end of 2010, as no significant leadership changes took place. The *Zentralrat* leadership was from the outset more outspoken than the IKG, because immediately after the end of the Shoah—or some 40 years before Austrian political and social developments triggered by the Waldheim affair paved the way for the IKG to assume a similar role—the German politicians and population permitted it to assume the role of moral guide. The most prominent changes among the *Zentralrat* leaders concerned the way they expressed their relationship to the German government and perceived the place and role of the Jews in Germany. Each *Zentralrat* president expressed a stronger affinity toward the state than his predecessor, until finally, Knobloch went so far as to urge the Germans to adopt strong patriotism. With the 2010 election of Graumann, a member of the postwar generation, external representation changed markedly. He maintained the *Zentralrat*'s high profile in public debates; however,

his perception of the role of patriotism and Shoah memory in external communal representation differed from that of his predecessors. He perceived participation in the national patriotism discourse neither as the *Zentralrat's* task nor as an effective representation tool, and repeatedly stressed the importance of reducing the salience and centrality of Shoah memory in communal external representation. He saw it as the *Zentralrat's* task to concentrate more on internal Jewish matters, such as strengthening Jewish identity and uniting German Jewry.

The reasons for the changes in the Viennese and German Jewish communities were found to be that in all areas apart from community representation, the communal developments were—and remain—influenced primarily by domestic Jewish development processes, and especially by changes in Jewish group identity, not by national political or social events.

Relationship to Austria and Germany: The unique development concerning the Jews' sense of belonging to their countries of abode that was taking place simultaneously in both communities despite significantly different national politics, has three explanations.

First, in both communities, the centrality of the Shoah in Jewish identity decreased with each generation, narrowing the separation between the Jewish and the non-Jewish populations and consequently allowing the Jews to open up toward the gentile environment and feel settled and “at home” in their countries of residence. The Shoah played a central role in the survivors' Jewish group identity. They adopted a strong Shoah-based victim identity. For the assimilated Jews (most *Alt-Deutsche* and many *Alt-Wiener*), the Shoah memories even turned into a substitute religion, and some even perceived the Jewish community purely as a community of fate. For postwar-generation Jews, the Shoah continued to play a central role, although, since the 1980s, it was in a manner that reversed their parents' victim role. They no longer wanted to be confined to the victim/perpetrator dichotomy and sought to break down the wall that separated the survivors from the surrounding gentiles. Among the Jews of the second postwar generation, the centrality of Shoah memory in their identity has declined even further, as they insist on forming a group identity that is based mainly

on positive elements and envisages a future for Jewish life in Germany and Vienna.

Second, among the second postwar generation, the role of the State of Israel in shaping Jewish group identity waned and increasingly gave way to heightened identification with the local Jewish community. For the survivors, Israel was a utopia. For the first postwar generation, it was a reality and the symbol for the Jewish survival, and many of those who remained behind in Europe continued to entertain dreams of making *aliyah*. While the Jewish state occupies an important place in the hearts of the second postwar generation, they are somewhat disillusioned by its government's policies. Their goal is to find their place and a good life within society in their respective countries. Israel's role has remained more central to Germany's Jews than to Vienna's, because no alternative binding link for the local Jews has been offered. However, in contrast to its position among Vienna and Germany's Jews prior to the 1980s, its main role now is to bind the community—not provide a substitute for the German identity.

The third factor contributing to the opening-up in both countries was the Jews' feeling of strength, although its origins differ. In Germany, Jewish population size plays a major role. In Vienna, the feeling of strength rests on a feeling of belonging together as a group united by a strong group identity shaped largely by attachment to religion. This newly acquired feeling is accompanied by group pride and increased self-confidence as Jews. Together these give them a sense of security that underpins this opening-up to the environment, as well as generating efforts to strengthen Jewish infrastructures to accommodate the demand for religious and educational institutions. Neither was done in the past, both for fear of being too visible and because of the sense of transience arising out of the feeling that their stay was only temporary. The fact that Vienna's Jewish infrastructure has been expanded—"from eating to learning"—to create a vibrant center of Jewish life has further contributed to the Jews' sense that "we are here, and we are here to stay."

Institutional Reconstruction: The key to the different institutional developments in the two countries is to be found in religion and culture. Culture and religious orientation determines the character of the infrastructure: Vienna's Jewry is more ethnically diverse (Ashkenazi/

Sephardi), while Germany's Jewry is divided by religious orientation (Orthodox/Liberal), and therefore the nature of the Jewish institutions in the two countries is very different. The level of religiosity and the needs arising from it determine the scope of the Jewish institutional infrastructure: because Vienna's Jewish population is more observant and traditional than Germany's, the demands for Jewish institutions are greater.

Vienna's Jewish population has been more religiously observant throughout the postwar period. In the immediate postwar years, Vienna had a significant proportion of strictly observant, including Haredi, circles (made up of the local Jews and the DPs who settled in the city). Between the 1950s and 1980s, Vienna's Jewish population was further strengthened by the immigration of Jews representing a wide spectrum of religiosity levels (from non-observant to Haredi) and a wide range of Orthodox religious orientations (from Modern Orthodox to Hasidic). Between the 1970s and 1990s, it was once again reinforced through the immigration of the traditional Jews from Bukhara and Georgia. Germany's Jewish population until the 1990s was overwhelmingly non-observant. In the immediate postwar years, most observant Jews left the country, as it lacked the Jewish infrastructure necessary to guarantee an observant lifestyle. Thereafter and until the 1990s, for the same reason, Jews who came to Germany were mainly non-observant. Finally, the FSU immigrants were to a great extent secular Jews.

Community Unity: Religion is also the background for the different degrees of community unity. A comparison between Vienna and Germany's Jewries clearly shows that religion is a strong bond uniting the various groups within a given Jewry. Vienna's Jews increasingly adopted religion as their central Jewish-identity element as the centrality of the Shoah and Israel in their identity diminished. Since the 1980s, both the Haredi and the less observant Jews were united in their desire to strengthen their Jewish identity and life in Vienna. Among Germany's Jews, the decline of the centrality of Shoah memories and the State of Israel in their group identity has resulted in an identity crisis. Israel still constitutes the binding link; however, it is not strong enough to unite the different groups of local Jews.

Religious ideology or orientation and levels of religiosity play important roles in communal unity. Communal disunity arose when the

Jewish communities suffered from great disparities in levels of observance or major divisions in religious orientation—whether between the various groups within the given Jewry (including the Haredi groups in Vienna before the 1980s) or between the leadership and a major group within the community (in Vienna, between IKG leadership and Haredi groups before 1981). In Germany, the disparities and divisions involved the Liberal and Orthodox-oriented Jews, and the *Alteingesessenen* and FSU Jews since the 1990s. Conversely, when community leaders and groups agreed on the place and role of religion in Jewish identity and shared a common religious ideology or orientation, community unity was attained and preserved (as in Germany prior to the 1990s, and in the IKG since the 1980s).

One could argue that communal unity was affected by the various struggling groups' national and cultural origins (in Vienna until the 1980s, the struggle between the *Alt-Wiener* Jews and the Jews from Central and Eastern Europe; in Germany since the 1990s, the struggle between the *Alteingesessenen* and the FSU Jews). However, a closer examination reveals that communal unity was primarily determined by religiosity and religious orientation. After World War II, Haredi Jews from different national and cultural origins in Vienna joined to form a single Haredi group that opposed the IKG leadership. The subsequent division into separate Haredi groups was based on the fact that their younger members' level of religiosity was more radical than that of the older members.

Furthermore, the integration of the FSU immigrants into Vienna's Jewish community was manifestly smoother than in Germany, since both the immigrants and the vast majority of Vienna's local Jews were Orthodox-oriented. In Germany, the "German" and "Russian" Jews had very different views on Jewish identity, which led to struggles over the future of Jewish life in Germany, German-Jewish group identity, and the individual communities' character. The immigrants expected changes in community proceedings (for example, regarding membership) and in the German-Jewish group identity to accord with their view of Judaism as an ethnic rather than religious entity. The *Alteingesessenen*, however, held on strongly to their views and existing patterns of community organization and tradition.

Legal Framework: Changes in the legal framework are closely linked to community unity. Thus they, too, are influenced by religious orientation, religiosity, and differences in Jewish group identity. The community's legal framework is also affected by national politics, albeit only indirectly, as the court rulings that led to the changes in the communities' legal frameworks arose out of the intra-Jewish struggles. Moreover, Germany's relatively large financial state support might have been the source of some battles between the various groups, although it did not create a schism in the German community.

External Community Representation: Only community representation, it seems, is directly shaped by national politics and social developments, especially where the country's handling of its past is concerned. In Austria, the "first victim" theory, the Kreisky era, and the Waldheim affair significantly influenced the IKG's external representation. In Germany, the immediate dealing with the Shoah, the Fassbinder affair, the historians' dispute, the Bubis-Walser affair, and German reunification significantly influenced the *Zentralrat's* external representation. However, the Jewish group-identity components of the IKG and the *Zentralrat* leaders' personal identities also played a distinctive role in their attitudes toward their respective countries. The pre-1980 IKG and pre-2010 *Zentralrat* leaders' outlooks reflect the *Alt-Wiener* and *Alt-Deutsche* Jews' special historic relationships to Austria and Germany respectively. Muzicant, Deutsch and Graumann's public stances and rhetorics reveal the heightened self-confidence and the militancy of the postwar generation whenever Jewish issues are at stake. Also characteristic of the postwar generation are Graumann's insistence in reducing the salience of the Shoah in communal representation as well as Deutsch and Graumann's efforts to increasingly open their respective communities to their surrounding society and to present them as vital communities that play active roles in the local political, cultural and social arenas.

In sum: Jewish group identity shapes the Jewish community itself, as well as its view of the gentile world and its interaction with it at the national level. Jewish group-identity changes are the key factors in community reconstruction, and generational change is the engine behind them.

At the European Jewish level: Fledgling European Jewish cooperation and unity rely largely on Europe's Jewish leaders and populations. In contrast to community reconstruction, however, the processes of cooperation and attaining unity on the European Jewish level are influenced by three factors: national and EU politics, European Jewish matters, and the individual European communities' development processes. European Jewish cooperation is based mainly on Europe's Jews' joint fight against national, EU, and international policies that threaten their individual security and religious freedom. However, in the absence of direct or immediate danger, European Jewish cooperation is impeded by communal interests, and the fact that the various communities are still primarily preoccupied with their own internal problems. Intra-communal divisions hamper the expansion of European Jewish cooperation and the development of a European-Jewish identity. Hence the individual communities will have to overcome internal disunity if they are to move toward European Jewish unity.

In the past decade, European Jewish cooperation has also been further hampered by East-West tensions in the European Jewish organizations' executive boards. Thanks to their recent prosperity and increasing political power on the national arena, FSU Jews have played an increasingly active role in the EJC and ECJC leaderships. Like Germany's Jewish leaders, who fear and fight an FSU takeover, European Jewish organizations' board members similarly fear and have criticized the current FSU leadership takeover. Thus the 2010 ECJC conference (during which Kolomoisky was proclaimed ECJC president), whose motto was "Leading Jewish Europe Together Now," ended in discord and the resignation of some longtime members from the ECJC executive board. These developments reveal that the European and German Jewries share a major similarity: both are currently in the midst of a group-identity transformation. The outcome of this process is still unclear, but it will surely shape the future of both groups' cooperation, unity, organizational structure, and leadership. It will determine German Jewry's place in the European Jewish arena and European Jewry's place in the national and European arenas, and within world Jewry.

Since these issues are still in flux, how they are resolved will be at the center of future research on these communities. Among them are

such questions as whether Germany's Jewry will achieve the kind of "unity in diversity" that Austria's Jewry seems to have already achieved; whether the *Zentralrat* will lose its power and Germany's Jewry will split along ethnic (Russian-German) and religious (Liberal-Orthodox) lines; whether European Jewish cooperation (or EU-Jewish cooperation) will grow and generate an integrated European Jewish (or EU-Jewish) identity; whether Jews in the European countries will continue to define themselves in terms of their country of citizenship; whether the FSU Jews will attain greater power in the individual communities in Germany and take over their leaderships; and whether they will further increase their influence over the European Jewish organizations and, in a sense, once more place the leadership of European Jewry in the hands of Eastern European Jews.

Appendix

TABLE 6.1 · IKG and Berlin Community Chairmen (1945–2015)

Years	IKG	Berlin Community
1945–1946	Heinrich Schur (not elected)	Erich Nelhans (not elected)
1946–1948	David Brill— communist <i>Einheit</i>	
1948–1949	David Schapira— Zionist <i>Jüdische Föderation</i> (JF)	Hans-Erich Fabian <i>Jüdische liberale Liste</i>
1949–1950	Emil Maurer—socialist <i>Bund Werktätiger Juden</i> (BWJ)	Heinz Galinski <i>Jüdische liberale Liste</i>
1950–1951	Kurt Heitler— <i>Einheit</i>	
1951–1952	Wolf Herzberg—JF	
1952–1963	Emil Maurer—BWJ	
1963–1970	Ernst Feldsberg—BWJ ⁽¹⁾	
1970–1981	Anton Pick—BWJ ⁽²⁾	
1981–1987	Ivan Hacker— <i>Die Alternative</i> (AL)	
1987–1992	Paul Grosz—AL	Jerzy Kanal— <i>Jüdische liberale Liste</i>
1992–1997		
1997–1998	Ariel Muzicant— <i>Atid</i>	Andreas Nachama— <i>Jüdische Einheit</i>
1998–2001		Alexander Brenner individual candidate
2001–2003		Albert Meyer— <i>Kadima</i>
2003–2005		Gideon Joffe (not elected)
2005–2007		Lala Süsskind— <i>Atid</i>
2007–2012		Gideon Joffe— <i>Koach</i>
Since 2012	Oskar Deutsch— <i>Atid</i> ⁽³⁾	Gideon Joffe— <i>Koach</i>

⁽¹⁾ Feldsberg was appointed IKG president in 1963 after Maurer resigned because of health reasons. He was formally elected at the 1964 IKG elections.

⁽²⁾ Pick was appointed IKG president in 1970 after Feldsberg died. He was formally elected at the 1972 IKG elections.

⁽³⁾ Deutsch was appointed IKG president in February 2012 after Muzicant resigned. He was formally elected at the IKG elections in November of that year.

TABLE 6.2 · IKG Election Outcomes 1946–2012

Year	Contesting Lists	Mandates	Voter Turnout
1946	<i>Jüdische Einheit</i>	33	74.5%
	<i>Verband der jüdischen Kriegsoffer</i>	3	
1948	<i>Jüdische Einigkeit</i> (formerly <i>Jüdische Einheit</i>)	11	75%
	JF	8	
	BWJ	5	
	<i>Verband der jüdischen Kaufmannschaft</i>	0	
	<i>Vereinte religiöse Liste</i>	0	
1949 ⁽¹⁾	<i>Gesamtjüdische Liste</i>	29	60%
	<i>Verband der jüdischen Kaufmannschaft</i>	1	
1952	BWJ	12	61.8%
	JF	6	
	<i>Jüdische Einigkeit</i>	5	
	<i>Block der religiösen Juden</i>	1	
	<i>Verband der jüdischen Kaufmannschaft</i>	0	
	<i>Unpolitische religiöse Juden</i>	0	
1955	BWJ	13	67.3%
	<i>National-jüdische Wahlgemeinschaft</i>	5	
	<i>Jüdische Einigkeit</i>	3	
	<i>Jüdische Interessengemeinschaft</i>	2	
	<i>Block der religiösen Juden</i>	1	
	<i>Verband der jüdischen Kaufmannschaft</i>	0	
	<i>Vereinigte religiöse Juden</i>	0	
1959	BWJ	13	47%
	<i>Zionistische Gruppen</i>	6	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	3	
	<i>Jüdische Einigkeit</i>	2	

TABLE 6.2 · IKG Election Outcomes 1946–2012 (continued)

Year	Contesting Lists	Mandates	Voter Turnout
1964	BWJ	13	66.4%
	BJVN	6	
	<i>Zionistischer Block</i>	3	
	<i>Nationaljüdische Liste</i>	1	
	<i>Jüdische Einigkeit</i>	1	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	0	
	<i>Jüdische Interessengemeinschaft</i>	0	
1968	BWJ	14	61.6%
	BJVN	5	
	JF	4	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	1	
	<i>Jüdische Einigkeit</i>	0	
1972	BWJ	14	55.5%
	BJVN	3	
	<i>Zionistischer Block</i>	4	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	2	
	<i>Machsike Hadass</i>	1	
1976	BWJ	11	57.9%
	<i>Die Alternative (AL)</i>	7	
	<i>Zionistischer Block</i>	2	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	3	
	<i>Machsike Hadass</i>	1	
1981	BWJ	8	57 %
	AL	7	
	<i>Junge Generation (JG)</i>	4	
	<i>Mizrachi</i>	2	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	1	
	<i>Machsike Hadass</i>	1	
	<i>Osse Chessed</i> ⁽²⁾	1	

TABLE 6.2 · IKG Election Outcomes 1946–2012 (continued)

Year	Contesting Lists	Mandates	Voter Turnout
1985	AL	8	51.4%
	BWJ	5	
	JG	4	
	<i>Mizrachi</i>	3	
	<i>Block der religiösen Juden (Machsike Hadass)</i>	2	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	1	
	<i>Sefardische Liste</i>	1	
1989	AL	8	53.3 %
	JG	4	
	BWJ	3	
	<i>Sefardische Liste</i>	2	
	<i>Mizrachi</i>	2	
	<i>Tikkun</i>	2	
	<i>Block der religiösen Juden</i>	2	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	1	
1993	<i>Jachad</i>	12	55.3%
	<i>Sefardische Liste</i>	3	
	BWJ	2	
	<i>Mizrachi</i>	2	
	<i>Tikkun</i>	2	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	2	
	<i>Block der religiösen Juden</i>	1	
1998	<i>Atid</i>	5	60.3%
	AL	5	
	<i>Sefardim-Bucharische Juden</i>	4	
	BWJ	2	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	2	
	<i>Mizrachi</i>	2	
	<i>Jüdische Allianz</i>	2	
	<i>Block der religiösen Juden</i>	1	
	<i>Georgische Juden</i>	1	
	<i>Anachnu-Bucharim</i>	0	

TABLE 6.2 · IKG Election Outcomes 1946–2012 (continued)

Year	Contesting Lists	Mandates	Voter Turnout
2002	<i>Atid</i>	11	62.6%
	<i>Sefardim-Bucharische Juden</i>	3	
	BWJ	3	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	3	
	AL	1	
	<i>Misrachi</i>	1	
	<i>Block der religiösen Juden</i>	1	
	<i>Georgische Juden</i>	1	
2007	<i>Atid</i>	10	54.7%
	<i>Sefardim-Bucharische Juden</i>	5	
	BWJ	2	
	<i>Gesher</i>	2	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	2	
	<i>Georgische Juden</i>	1	
	<i>Block der religiösen Juden</i>	1	
	<i>Misrachi</i>	1	
2012	<i>Atid</i>	7	62.4%
	<i>Sefardim-Bucharische Juden</i>	6	
	<i>Chaj</i>	3	
	<i>Georgische Juden</i>	2	
	<i>Respekt!</i>	2	
	<i>Block der religiösen Juden</i>	2	
	BWJ	1	
	<i>Khal Israel</i>	1	
	<i>Kaukasische Juden</i>	0	
	<i>Misrachi</i>	0	

⁽¹⁾ These elections do not appear in the summary of the IKG elections published by the IKG archive (IKG 2010). They are, however, described in Adunka 2000, 108–109.

Source: IKG 2010;
Die Gemeinde 1964; 1977.

⁽²⁾ Osse Chessed was a third Haredi list running (only) for the 1981 elections. It represented the congregation praying at the synagogue in Tempel Street 3.

TABLE 6.3 • Jewish Communities and Regional Associations Represented in the Zentralrat

Regions in Germany	Jewish Regional Associations	Jewish Communities
Baden-Württemberg	<i>Israelitische Religionsgemeinschaft Baden (Oberrat)</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Emmendingen</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Pforzheim</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Rottweil-Villingen-Schwennigen</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Baden-Baden</i>
		<i>Israelitische Gemeinde Freiburg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Heidelberg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Karlsruhe</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Lörrach</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Mannheim</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Konstanz</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Konstanz</i>
	<i>Israelitische Religionsgemeinschaft Württembergs (Stuttgart)</i>	<i>Israelitische Religionsgemeinschaft Württembergs</i>
Bavaria	<i>Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden in Bayern</i>	<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Amberg</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Bamberg</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Bayreuth</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Hof</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Nürnberg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Weiden</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Schwaben-Augsburg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Erlangen</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Fürth</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Regensburg</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Straubing</i>
		<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Würzburg und Unterfranken</i>
	<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde München und Oberbayern</i>	<i>Israelitische Kultusgemeinde München und Oberbayern</i>
Berlin	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin</i>
Brandenburg	<i>Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden Brandenburg</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Landkreis Barnim</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Stadt Brandenburg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Cottbus</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Frankfurt/Oder</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Königs Wusterhausen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Oranienburg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Stadt Potsdam</i>
		<i>Synagogengemeinde Potsdam</i>

	Members		Religious Denomination ¹
	2009	2013	
	306	328	Einheitsgemeinde
	421	386	EG with Orth. rabbi ²
	201	276	Orthodox
	617	736	EG with Orth. rabbi
	711	709	Orthodox
	543	473	Orthodox
	803	946	Orthodox
	411	469	EG with Orth. rabbi
	500	503	Einheitsgemeinde
	104		Liberal
	377	456	Orthodox
	3104	2939	Orthodox
	226	128	EG / Orthodox ³
	929	901	Conservativ traditional
	503	511	Einheitsgemeinde
	368	372	EG with Orth. rabbi
	1659	1999	EG with Orth. rabbi
	291	258	Conservative
	1529	1417	Liberal
	120	98	Einheitsgemeinde
	279	336	Orthodox
	984	1003	Orthodox
	1734	897	Orthodox
	1049	1003	Orthodox
	9555	9434	Orthodox
	10794	10157	Einheitsgemeinde
	127	132	Orthodox
	120	–	Einheitsgemeinde
	345	422	Orthodox
	208	197	Orthodox
	55	58	Einheitsgemeinde
	78	92	Orthodox
	379	395	Orthodox
	–	181	Orthodox

TABLE 6.3 · Jewish Communities and Regional Associations Represented in the Zentralrat (continued)

Regions in Germany	Jewish Regional Associations	Jewish Communities
Bremen	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde im Lande Bremen</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde im Lande Bremen</i>
Hamburg	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Hamburg</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Hamburg</i>
Hessen	<i>Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden in Hessen</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Darmstadt</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Kassel</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Limburg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Marburg/Lahn</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Wiesbaden</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Fulda</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Gießen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Offenbach</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Bad Nauheim</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Hanau</i>
	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Frankfurt/Main</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Frankfurt/Main</i>
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	<i>Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Rostock</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Schwerin</i>
Niedersachsen	<i>Landesverband der Jüdischen Gemeinden von Niedersachsen</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Bad Nenndorf</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde im Landkreis Schaumburg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Hannover</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Hildesheim</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Osnabrück</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Braunschweig</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Delmenhorst</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde im Landkreis Hameln-Pyrmont</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde zu Oldenburg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Hildesheim</i>
		<i>Jüdisch- Bucharisch-Sefardisches Zentrum Deutschlands in Hannover</i>
		<i>Orthodoxe Jüdische Gemeinde zu Wolfsburg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde für Göttingen und Südniedersachsen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Göttingen</i>

	Members		Religious Denomination¹
	2009	2013	
	1060	962	Orthodox
	2859	2481	Orthodox
	672	638	EG / Orthodox
	1074	835	EG with Orth. rabbi
	195	186	EG / Orthodox
	345	334	Einheitsgemeinde
	741	882	EG with Orth. rabbi
	452	423	Conservative-Orthodox
	398	363	Orthodox
	876	793	Orthodox
	322	286	Orthodox
	159	181	Orthodox
	6870	6753	Orthodox
	697	615	EG / Orthodox
	1011	835	Liberal
	72	73	Einheitsgemeinde
	23	21	Einheitsgemeinde
	4519	4431	Einheitsgemeinde
	97	25	Liberal
	1125	1063	Orthodox
	447	310	Not-orthodox
	193	184	Liberal
	187	118	Einheitsgemeinde
	313	325	Not-orthodox
	24	40	Liberal
	207	278	EG with Orth. rabbi
	66	79	Orthodox
	75	46	Masorti
	165	149	Liberal

TABLE 6.3 · Jewish Communities and Regional Associations Represented in the Zentralrat (continued)

Regions in Germany	Jewish Regional Associations	Jewish Communities
Niedersachsen (continued)	<i>Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden von Niedersachsen</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Bad Pyrmont</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Celle</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Göttingen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Hameln</i>
		<i>Liberale Jüdische Gemeinde Hannover</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Seesen</i>
		<i>Liberale Jüdische Gemeinde Wolfsburg/Region Braunschweig</i>
Nordrhein-Westfalen	<i>Landesverband der jüdischen Gemeinden von Nordrhein</i>	<i>Synagogengemeinde Bonn</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Duisburg-Mülheim-Oberhausen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Krefeld</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Aachen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Düsseldorf</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Essen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Mönchengladbach</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Wuppertal</i>
	<i>Landesverband der jüdischen Gemeinden von Westfalen-Lippe</i>	<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Bielefeld "Beit Tikwa"</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Gelsenkirchen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Hagen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Herford-Detmold</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Minden und Umgebung</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Bochum-Herne-Hattingen</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Dortmund</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Münster</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Paderborn</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Kreis Recklinghausen</i>
	<i>Synagogen-Gemeinde Köln</i>	<i>Synagogen-Gemeinde Köln</i>
Rheinland-Pfalz	<i>Landesverband der jüdischen Gemeinden von Rheinland-Pfalz</i>	<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde für die Kreise Bad Kreuznach und Birkenfeld</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Mainz</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde der Rheinpfalz</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Koblenz</i>
		<i>Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Trier</i>
Saarland	<i>Synagogengemeinde Saar</i>	<i>Synagogengemeinde Saar</i>
Sachsen	<i>Landesverband Sachsen der jüdischen Gemeinden</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Chemnitz</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde zu Dresden</i>
		<i>Israelitische Religionsgemeinde zu Leipzig</i>

	Members		Religious Denomination¹
	2009	2013	
	181	75	Liberal
	80	19	Liberal
	274	150	Liberal
	260	195	Liberal
	613	729	Progressive
	30	13	Liberal
	70	32	Liberal
	955	933	EG with Orth. rabbi
	2844	2671	EG with Orth. rabbi
	1061	997	Orthodox
	1386	1301	Orthodox
	6907	6987	EG with Orth. rabbi
	725	930	Orthodox
	709	699	EG with Orth. rabbi
	2269	2221	Orthodox
	282	284	Progressive
	410	378	EG / Traditional-Orthodox
	311	288	EG / Orthodox
	108	104	Einheitsgemeinde
	81	81	Einheitsgemeinde
	1168	1077	Einheitsgemeinde
	3232	3026	Orthodox
	794	722	Einheitsgemeinde
	68	52	Einheitsgemeinde
	606	571	Einheitsgemeinde
	4567	4176	Orthodox
	199	184	Einheitsgemeinde
	1045	1022	Orthodox
	615	650	EG / Orthodox
	968	940	Orthodox
	468	481	Orthodox
	1094	966	Orthodox
	643	598	EG with Orth. rabbi
	686	728	Liberal
	1300	1283	Orthodox

TABLE 6.3 · Jewish Communities and Regional Associations Represented in the Zentralrat (continued)

Regions in Germany	Jewish Regional Associations	Jewish Communities
Sachsen-Anhalt	<i>Landesverband jüdischer Gemeinden in Sachsen-Anhalt</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde zu Dessau</i>
		<i>Synagogen-Gemeinde zu Magdeburg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Halle (Saale)</i>
Schleswig-Holstein	<i>Jüdische Gemeinschaft Schleswig-Holstein</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Lübeck</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Kiel und Region</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Flensburg</i>
	<i>Landesverband der jüdischen Gemeinden von Schleswig-Holstein</i>	<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Bad Segeberg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Kiel</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Ahrensburg-Stormarn</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Pinneberg</i>
		<i>Jüdische Gemeinde Elmshorn</i>
Thüringen	<i>Jüdische Landesgemeinde Thüringen (Erfurt)</i>	<i>Jüdische Landesgemeinde Thüringen</i>

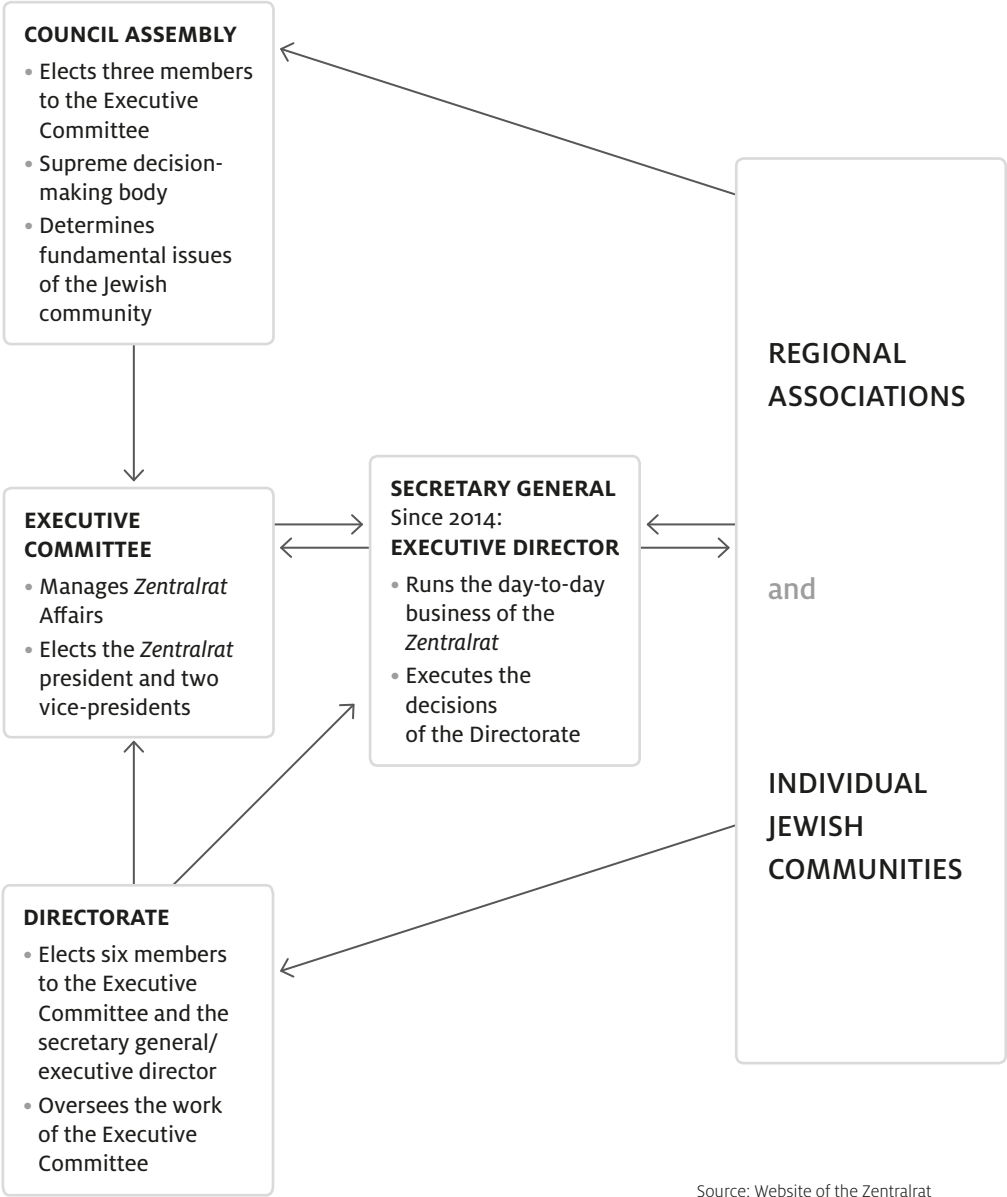
¹Religious denomination according to the community's self-definition.

²Einheitsgemeinde with Orthodox Rabbi.

³Orthodox-run Einheitsgemeinde.

	Members		Religious Denomination ¹
	2009	2013	
	440	340	Orthodox
	595	502	Orthodox
	670	601	Orthodox
	776	724	EG with Orth. rabbi
	474	458	Orthodox
	71	78	Orthodox
	188	224	Conservative and Liberal
	101	159	Liberal and Conservative
	20	18	Conservative
	205	265	Liberal
	45	47	Liberal and Conservative
	780	769	Einheitsgemeinde

Source: Website of the Zentralrat; Apel (2015); individual communities.



Source: Website of the Zentralrat

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Germany

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Israel

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Interviews conducted by author

(Titles and functions of the interviewees effective at the time of the interview)

- Adunka, Evelyn. 2006. Historian specializing in Austrian Jewish history
- Alexander, Fero. 2006. Executive chairman of Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia, ECJC professional adviser
- Allerhand, Jacob. 2004. Professor in Jewish Studies at the University of Vienna and the Jewish vice-president of the Coordinating Committee for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, and former director of the ZPC IKG school and president of the B'nai B'rith Loge Zvi Peres Chajes
- Apel, Amichai. 2006, 2015. Rabbi of the Jewish community of Düsseldorf
- Ascherov, Roman. 2007. Secretary general of the Association of Bukhara Jews
- Bar Chaim, Yechiel. 2007. JDC country director for several Central and Eastern European countries
- Belkin, Dmitrij. 2008. Emigrated from the Soviet Union in 1971, curator at the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt am Main
- Biderman, Jacob. 2007. Rabbi, founder and director of *Chabad* Vienna and representative of the Lauder Foundation in Austria
- Blumenfeld, Awi. 2005. Historian, formerly a very active member of the Munich Jewish community
- Bodemann, Michal. 2007. Professor of sociology (German studies) and author of books dealing with the Jews in Germany; co-founder of a Jewish left-wing group during Galinski's chairmanship, which opposed the political, religious, and cultural conformism and conservatism of the Berlin community
- Bodenheim, Alfred. 2007. Pro-rector of the *Hochschule für Jüdische Studien* (College of Jewish Studies) at the University of Heidelberg, Germany
- Brenner, Michael. 2007. Professor of Jewish history, chairman of the scientific working community of the Leo Baeck Institute in Germany, co-founder of Tarbut
- Chalmiev, Igor. 2007. FSU immigrant in Germany (in 1992), in charge of the integration programs of the Jewish Cultural Center
- Davidovic-Nagy, Daniela. 2010. Member of the IKG Gesher fraction
- Deutsch, Oskar. 2014. President of the IKG
- Diener, Jorge. 2006. JDC country director for Hungary and Bulgaria and coordinator of the Weinberg-Danube region project
- Durlacher, Naomi. 2006. Former *lahava* volunteer in Germany
- Ehrenberg, Itzchak. 2006. Orthodox rabbi of Berlin and CER member
- Eisenberg, Paul Chaim. 2005, 2014. Chief rabbi of Vienna and Chief rabbi of Austria
- Fastenbauer, Raimund. 2007. IKG secretary general for Jewish affairs
- Feiger, Sonja. 2007. Editor-in-chief of the IKG monthly magazine *Die Gemeinde*
- Feiger, Yvonne. 2007. Chairperson of the Jewish student organization in Vienna
- Gang, Nechemia. 2009, 2011. Chairman of the World Mizrachi Movement and former IKG board member
- Gilkarov, Benni. 2007. Person responsible for youth matters in the IKG
- Grünberg, Georg. 2004. Vice-president of B'nai B'rith Europe
- Grünberger, Janki. 2006. Works in an honorary position for *Bnei Akiva* Vienna

- Heimler, Gabriel. 2007. Founder of the Jewish art group Meshulash and the European Jewish journal *Golem*
- Hodik, Avshalom. 2007. Former IKG secretary general
- Heisler, András. 2008. President of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Hungary, EJC member
- Heuberger, Rachel. 2008. Member of the board of the Assembly of Representatives of the Jewish Community Frankfurt am Main, the *Zentralrat* Council Assembly, the ZWST General Assembly, and the commission of the Jewish school in Frankfurt
- Hofmeister, Shlomo. 2010, 2015. IKG deputy rabbi
- Homolka, Walter. 2007. Rabbi and professor at University of Potsdam and rector at its Abraham Geiger College, chairman of the Leo Baeck Foundation, and member of the executive board of the World Union for Progressive Judaism
- Kalmar, Daniela. 2006. Chairwoman of Moadon, the organization of young adults in Vienna
- Kaschi, Uriel. 2007. President of the Union of Jewish Students in Germany; member of the WUJS
- Kauders, Anthony. 2006. Historian focusing on German Jewry
- Kovács, András. 2006. Historian specializing in Jewish and Jewish identity studies at Central European University
- Kramer, Stephan. 2007. General secretary of the *Zentralrat*
- Kempin-Edelmann, Daniel. 2009. Cantor at the Egalitarian Minyan in the Jewish community of Frankfurt am Main
- Kessler, Judith. 2007. Editor-in-chief of the Berlin community monthly magazine *Jüdisches Berlin*
- Kizakova, Zuzanna. 2005. President of the Union of Jewish Students in the Slovak Republic, a member of the WUJS
- Kolsky, Daniel. 2006. President of the Union of Jewish Students in the Czech Republic, a member of the WUJS
- Kraus, Tomas. 2006, 2008. EJC vice-president and ECJC board member, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of the Czech Republic
- Kugelman, Cilly. 2007. Program director and vice director of the Jewish Museum Berlin
- Lagodinsky, Segey. 2007. FSU immigrant in Germany (in 1993), member of the board of the Assembly of Representatives of the Jewish Community of Berlin, special advisor to American Jewish Committee's Berlin Office
- Lappin, Eleonore. 2007. Historian associated with the *Institut für Geschichte der Juden in Österreich* (Institute for the History of Jews in Austria) and vice-president of *Or Chadash*
- Mandl, Mordechai. 2007. Leader of *Machsike Hadass* and IKG board member
- Mencer, Gabriela. 2006. Director of the social department at the Bratislava Jewish community, member of ECJC's Social Welfare Committee
- Meyers, Baruch. 2007. Chief rabbi of Slovakia, CER member
- Muzicant, Ariel. 2005, 2008, 2010. President of the IKG and EJC vice-president
- Nachama, Andreas. 2007. Liberal rabbi in Berlin and former chairman of the Jewish community of Berlin
- Pardes, Josef. 2005. Rabbi of *Misrachi* in Vienna

- Peck, Jeffrey. 2007. Professor at Georgetown University, current holder of the Walter Benjamin Chair in German-Jewish Culture and History at Humboldt University in Berlin, director of the Leo Baeck Summer University in Jewish Studies
- Pelinka, Anton. 2006. Political scientist researching Austrian-Jewish relations
- Pitum, Abi. 2008. Member of the Executive Committee of the *Zentralrat*; vice-president of the Jewish community of Munich and Upper Bavaria
- Rabinovici, Doron. 2007. Politically engaged writer
- Rebling, Jalda. 2007. Founder of the Egalitarian *Ohel Hachidush* congregation in Berlin, one of the few female cantors in Germany
- Rotenberg, Nechemia. 2008, 2014. Rabbi, religious principal of the Zwi Perez Chajes (ZPC) IKG school, and principal and director of the Zehut Center for Jewish Culture and Identity
- Runge, Irene. 2007. Founder of the *Jüdischer Kulturverein* (Jewish Cultural Center) in the GDR in 1986 and its recent acting manager
- Rürup, Reinhard. 2007. Professor emeritus of modern history, honorary fellow of the Leo Baeck Institute, researcher of German-Jewish history
- Schneiderman, Arkadi. 2007. Vice-chairman of the Berlin Jewish community and member of the *Zentralrat* Directorate
- Schoeps, Julius. 2007. Professor of history, founder of the Moses Mendelssohn Institute for European Jewish Studies, former member of the board of the Assembly of Representatives of the Jewish Community of Berlin
- Schüler-Springorum, Stephanie. 2007. Director of the *Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden* in Hamburg, historian specializing in German-Jewish history
- Schwarz, Rafael. 2007. Chairman of the IKG's youth commission, member of the executive board of the IKG Jewish school
- Seligmann, Rafael. 2007. German-Israeli writer, publicist, political scientist, and historian
- Senderey, Alberto. 2008. JDC director for Europe
- Serotta, Edward. 2007. Journalist, photographer, and filmmaker specializing in Jewish life in Central and Eastern Europe; director of the Central Europe Center for Research and Documentation Centropa, a Vienna- and Budapest-based NGO that uses advanced technologies to preserve and disseminate Jewish memory in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, and the Baltics
- Shaya, Boaz. 2008. Director of the Heritage Center and responsible for Jewish studies at the Lauder Business School in Vienna
- Sidon, Karol. 2006. Chief rabbi of Prague, CER member
- Spinner, Josh. 2007. Vice-president and CEO of the Lauder Foundation, head of the Lauder Foundation in Germany
- Steiner, Yossi. 2006. Rabbi of the Kosice community, CER member
- Teichtal, Yehuda. 2007. Rabbi; founder and director of *Chabad* Berlin
- Teichtelbaum, Natanel. 2006. Rabbi of the Cologne Jewish community, CER member
- Timm, Angelika. 2006. Senior lecturer at Humboldt University, non-Jewish historian specializing in German-Jewish history, as well as GDR politics regarding the Jews and German-Israeli relations.
- Traubner, Pavel. 2008. Vice-chairman of B'nai B'rith lodge Tolerancia Bratislava

- Vardi, Josef. 2007. General manager of Berlin's ZWST branch
- Weiss, Iris. 2007. Tour guide through Jewish Berlin (including Jewish Disney Tour)
- Weisz, Willy. 2004; 2009. Jewish vice-president of the Coordinating Committee for Christian-Jewish Cooperation and former representative of B'nai B'rith international and B'nai Brith Europe at the UN site in Vienna
- Werner, Peter. 2006. Mentor of B'nai B'rith lodge Tolerancia Bratislava, active in B'nai B'rith Europe
- Wishaidner, Wolfgang. 2013. Juridical consultant of the IRG

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