

**Jewish Economic Life
in Interwar Bukovina***

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Romanian Bukovina mostly retained the economic profile of Austrian Bukovina. It had a large primary sector (extraction of raw materials and harvesting of food), while the secondary sector (manufacturing industries) and tertiary sector (distribution of goods, services) were small and mainly concentrated in the province's former capital of Cernăuți (Germ. Czernowitz, Ukr. Chernivtsi), Romania's third most populous town after Bucharest and Chișinău, with a population of 112,427 inhabitants in 1930, of whom 42,592 (38%) were "ethnic Jews."¹ According to the 1930 Romanian census, 180,472 (61%) of Bukovina's 295,101 active inhabitants worked in agriculture, silviculture, livestock farming, etc.; 31,757 (11%) were engaged in industry; 26,348 (9%) in public institutions (of whom 47% were in the army and law enforcement); and 15,521 (5%) in commerce.² There were 16,049 industrial and commercial enterprises with a workforce of 48,746 individuals in Bukovina. Among them, 3,823 companies (24%), with a workforce of 14,908 (31%), were based in the town of Cernăuți. Of the 16,049 enterprises, 15,966 (99%) were small-sized companies, involving not more than 50 people. Out of these, 7,843 (49% of all companies) were one-person-businesses and 7,378 (46%) involved only 2 to 5 persons. 64 were medium-sized companies, with a workforce of 51 to 200. Only 19 businesses involved more than 200 people, of which 5 were located in the town of Cernăuți. The 4 largest businesses in terms of staff were a metalworking factory and three food processing factories. 15,251 (95%) of all companies were sole proprietor-

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¹ *Recensământul general al populației României din 29 Decembrie 1930*, Vol. II, Bucharest, Imprimeria Națională, 1938, p. 120. The Romanian government differentiated between a Jewish ethnicity and a Mosaic religion. Since the Romanian Central Statistical Institute compared the economic data with the figures for the various "ethnicities," we are bound to refer to "ethnic Jews" when using official statistical information.

² *Ibidem*, Vol. VII, Bucharest, Imprimeria Națională, 1941, p. LVIII-LXV.

ships, 280 (2%) partnerships, 186 (1%) public limited companies, and 59 were cooperatives.³

Jewish professional activity in Bukovina mainly centered on the secondary and tertiary sectors. According to the 1930 census, 58% of the active “ethnic Jewish” population (henceforth: Jewish workforce) of 35,198 (12% of the total active population) engaged in commerce and industry.

Table 1. Jewish professional activity in Bukovina (1930)⁴

Occupation	Jewish workforce (individuals)	Jewish workforce (%)
Commerce	10,550	30
Industry	10,009	28
Agriculture, silviculture, and livestock farming	2,125	6
Public health	1,264	4
Public administration	1,077	3
Transport and communications	1,059	3
Finance	1,201	3
Temporary work	905	3
Teaching and culture	531	2
Rentiers	2,504	7
Other	1,923	6
Unspecified	2,050	6
Total	35,198	100

In the mainly agrarian province, Jews held large shares of the positions and assets in the secondary and tertiary sectors. According to the 1930 census, the Jewish workforce accounted for 68% in commerce, 53% in finance, 35% in the public health sector, 31% in the industrial sector, and 14% of the total

³ *Ibidem*, Vol. X, Bucharest, Imprimeria Națională, 1938, p. 274-277, 350. The volumes of the 1930 census do not provide information on the size of each legal form of business.

⁴ *Ibidem*, Vol. VII, p. LVIII-LXV.

workforce in the transport and communications sector. 36% of all Bukovinian rentiers were “ethnic Jews.”⁵ In July 1938, 8,163 of 10,600 sole proprietorships in Bukovina (77%) belonged to Jews.⁶ However, in terms of staff and turnover, the size of these companies remains unknown.

In the **transport and communications sector**, the Jewish workforce was mainly involved in land transport outside of railways and tramways, including horse-drawn coaches and cabs (753 individuals, or 38% of the total workforce in this sector).⁷ A 1925 directory listed several Jewish international transport companies with headquarters or a branch in Cernăuți.⁸ Various travel agencies had a Jewish-led office in the province’s main town, as was the case with Sarnia, whose local head was Abram Heß in 1929.⁹ Finally, a number of cabmen were Jewish.¹⁰

In the **industrial sector**, the Jewish workforce engaged mostly in:

- 1) the textile and manufactured goods industry (5,151 individuals, or 43% of the total workforce in this sector);
- 2) the food industry (1,724 individuals, or 32%);
- 3) the lumber industry (1,196 individuals, or 16%);
- 4) the metalworking industry (1,004 individuals, or 20%);
- 5) the chemical, paper, and printing industry (647 individuals, or 40%).

Bukovina’s manufactured goods industry alone involved 10,693 individuals, of whom 4,459 (42%) were “ethnic Jews.” The workforce in this industry almost equaled the sum of the second and the third largest industrial branches, the lumber industry (7,498 individuals, of whom 1,196 [16%] were “ethnic Jews”) and the food industry (5,464 individuals, of whom 1,724 [32%] were “ethnic Jews”).¹¹ According to a 1925 article, the manufactured goods industry benefitted from the province’s long-standing connections with Western Europe, and was thus safe from competition from the Old Kingdom (Moldavia – Wallachia – Dobrogea) and Bessarabia.¹²

In 1938, among the industrial companies in Cernăuți whose share or invested capital was equal to or surpassed 5 million lei,¹³ many were Jewish: 1) Hersch

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ ANIC, PCM 299, file 38/1938, f. 27-38: General Commissariat for Minorities, report, January, 16 or 17, 1939.

⁷ *Recensământul*, Vol. VII, p. LVIII-LXV.

⁸ *Anuarul “Socec” al României-Mari*, Vol. II, *Provincia (1924-1925)*, Bucharest, Socec & Co, [1925], p. 37 (Bucovina).

⁹ *5000 Lei Belohnung*, in “Czernowitzer Morgenblatt”, 24 November 1929, p. 6.

¹⁰ For instance *Verkehrsunfall*, in “Czernowitzer Morgenblatt”, 14 February 1940, p. 3.

¹¹ *Recensământul*, Vol. VII, p. LVIII-LXV. For a list of various Jewish factories in Bukovina, see *Anexă*, in Nicolae Cajal and Hary Kuller (eds.), *Contribuția evreilor din România la cultură și civilizație*, Bucharest, 1996, p. 483-486.

¹² *Piața bucovineană*, in “Argus”, 17 December 1925, p. 4.

¹³ For the full list, see *Cernăuți*, in *Enciclopedia României*, Vol. II, *Țara Românească*, Bucharest, Imprimeria Națională, 1938, p. 595. I thank Francisca Solomon for calling some of these businesses to my attention.

Trichter's brick and tiled stove factory (est. 1902);¹⁴ 2) the Goldstein Bros & Co. Civic Beer Factory (Fabrica civică de Bere Frații Goldstein & Comp.), which evolved from the "Bürgerliches Bräuhaus" Gebrüder Goldstein & Comp. (est. 1912) and became (Jakob and Josef) Wiznitzer & Goldstein in 1926/1927;¹⁵ 3) Nechemias Zucker and Mechel Brender's mechanical weaving mill Zucker & Co.;¹⁶ 4) S. Rauchwerger's shoelace, lace, and ribbon factory (est. 1924),¹⁷ later owned by Aba, Moses, and Isak Rauchwerger;¹⁸ 5) the Hercules sock and knits factory (est. 1926) owned by Moses Solomovici and Bernhard Deligdisch,¹⁹ who were also the founders of a wire factory (est. 1922),²⁰ and cofounders of Prutul wire factory (est. 1924);²¹ 6) the (Richard and Sigmund) Trichter, (Iby) Naftalisohn, & Co. Trinaco sock and knits factory (est. 1926).²²

As per the 1930 census, both Jews and Gentiles were involved in the management of Cernăuți companies with a capital of 5 million lei or more, including: 1) the Romanian Textile Factory fabric and knits factory, Hlebnikian, Liebermann, & Co. ("Hlebnikian, Liebermann, & Comp" – Fabrica de țesături și împletituri "Postăvărie Română") (est. 1925);²³ 2) the Intex textile company (est. 1926);²⁴ 3) the Caurom Ltd. rubber goods factory (est. 1934).²⁵

Jews also led part of the province's lumber industry. Hermann Adlersberg owned vast tracts of forest in the Carpathians, as well as several sawmills.²⁶ His company, Frasin Wood Industry (Frassiner Holzindustrie, established in or prior to 1910), was taken over in 1927 by his sons Marc Aurel, Richard, and Siegfried under the name Adlersberg Bros. Wood Industry (Industria lemnului Frații Adlersberg). They expanded it by buying a sawmill in Nepolocăuții-Noi.²⁷ The

¹⁴ *Ein Fest der Arbeit*, in "Bukowinaer Rundschau", 13 June 1902, p. 4.

¹⁵ MOF, no. 185, 20 August 1926, p. 12601; *Păziți-vă de contrafaceri!*, in "Glasul Bucovinei", 1 January 1927, p. 7.

¹⁶ *Înregistrarea unei societăți cu garanție limitată*, in "Glasul Bucovinei", 27 July 1922, p. 3.

¹⁷ MOF, no. 91, 24 April 1924, p. 4650.

¹⁸ *50 Millionen-Schmuggel aufgedeckt*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 14 October 1938, p. 3; *Der 50 Millionen-Schmuggel*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 15 October 1938, p. 3.

¹⁹ *Noui societăți și bănci autorizate să funcționeze*, in "Argus", 31 October 1926, p. 5; MOF, no. 7, 12 January 1927, p. 207.

²⁰ *Înregistrarea unei societăți cu garanție limitată*, in "Glasul Bucovinei", 6 June 1923, p. 4.

²¹ MOF, no. 180, 19 August 1924, p. 9513.

²² MOF, no. 148, 6 July, 1926, p. 10105; *Transformări de avantagii industriale*, in "Argus", 16 January 1927, p. 4.

²³ *Înregistrarea unei societăți în nume colectiv*, in "Glasul Bucovinei", 22 July 1925, p. 4.

²⁴ MOF, no. 61, March 18, 1927, p. 3617.

²⁵ MOF II, no. 123, 31 May 1934, p. 3945-3946. See also the mentions of Jewish businesses in Hermann Sternberg, *Zur Geschichte der Juden in Czernowitz*, in Hugo Gold (ed.), *Geschichte der Juden in der Bukowina*, Vol. II, Tel Aviv, Olamenu, 1962, p. 42.

²⁶ *Großindustrieller Hermann Adlersberg gestorben*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 25 October 1923, p. 3; *Hermann Adlersberg*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 4 November, 1923, p. 4.

²⁷ *Înregistrarea unei societăți*, in "Glasul Bucovinei", 31 August 1927, p. 4; MOF II, no. 44, 23 February, 1929, p. 2094.

“ruthless” Jewish exploitation of “Romanian” forests was a common topic in Romanian antisemitic discourse of the period. In this context, the Adlersbergs, along with Max von Anhauch, became targets of A. C. Cuza’s antisemitic League for National Christian Defence.²⁸ In 1939, even National Socialist Germany pressed Romania to rid silviculture and the lumber industry of the Jews.²⁹

Jews were also present in the sugar industry. The chief executive of the sugar refineries in Crișceatic, Jucica, and Lujeni was Josef Reiss, the son of the first Jewish mayor of pre-1918 Czernowitz.³⁰

Jewish and other companies viewed as not ethnically Romanian were repeatedly attacked by Romanian nationalists for allegedly not hiring ethnic Romanians.³¹ In 1926, Bukovina’s leading Romanian politician Ion Nistor argued that the Orthodox Religious Fund should accept Adlersberg’s bid for the Fund’s timber in Frasin, on the condition that the company employ 50% ethnic Romanians.³² From 1937, the Romanian government mandated an increase to the share of ethnic Romanian employees within companies and fined the “offenders,” although all Romanian citizens, regardless of ethnicity, had equal rights under the constitution.³³ In this context, the Crișceatic sugar refinery was reported to the Romanian authorities in 1938 for purportedly lacking ethnic Romanian managerial staff – while being located in a region with an almost exclusively non-ethnic Romanian population.³⁴

The 1,264 “ethnic Jews” in the **public health sector** were liberal professionals and hospital staff. According to a 1936 statistic, there were 531 physicians in Bukovina, of whom 335 (63%) were “ethnic Jews.” 367 doctors (of whom 249 (68%) were “ethnic Jews”) were based in the five counties’ prefectures: Cernăuți, Storojineț, Rădăuți, Câmpulung, and Suceava, and the remaining 164 (of whom 86 – 52% – were “ethnic Jews”) elsewhere in the province.³⁵ In 1938, the Romanian government “reviewed” the titles and licenses of the doctors and pharmacists who had obtained their degrees abroad, mainly targeting Jewish professionals.³⁶ The lists used to this effect were considerably out-of-date: many

²⁸ *Exploatarea pădurilor românești*, in “Înfrățirea Românească”, 1 October 1927, p. 12.

²⁹ Philippe Henri Blasen, *La “primauté de la nation roumaine” et les “étrangers”: Les minorités et leur liberté du travail sous le cabinet Goga et la dictature royale (décembre 1937 – septembre 1940)*, Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărții de Știință, 2022, p. 322.

³⁰ MOF II, no. 268, 30 November 1928, p. 13703; no. 60, 14 March 1929, p. 3024; no. 11, 12 January 1935, p. 206.

³¹ For instance: *Tragedia muncitorului român la Cernăuți*, in “Cruciada Românismului”, 13 December 1934, p. 3.

³² *Eine stürmische Sitzung des Eparchialrates*, in “Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung”, 14 November 1926, p. 3. Regarding the Religious Fund, see Kurt Scharf, *Der griechisch-orientalische Religionsfonds der Bukowina 1783-1949*, Vienna, Böhlau, 2020.

³³ Philippe Henri Blasen, *op. cit.*, p. 13, 305-319.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 311.

³⁵ *Breviarul statistic al României*, Vol. I, Bucharest, Editura Institutului de Statistică, 1938, p. 75-76.

³⁶ See Philippe Henri Blasen, *op. cit.*, p. 285-299.

people had emigrated, retired, or died, whereas professionals actively advertising in the Cernăuți papers were missing. Information from other sources³⁷ shows that the large majority of Jewish doctors in the province were Bukovina-born and had studied in Vienna. Only a handful hailed from neighboring Galicia or Russia. Alternative places of study were Bologna, Padua, Paris, and Prague. Within the Jewish medical workforce, there were a few female doctors, namely Adele Tannenzapf, Esther Weich, and Ernestine Zeller Mayer. Jewish pharmacists in Cernăuți included Josef Geller, Abraham Guttmann, and Samuel Storfer.³⁸

Jews were also present in other liberal professions which were not listed separately in the 1930 census volumes. Most Cernăuți lawyers and architects mentioned in the 1925 directory were Jews.³⁹ One prominent Jewish lawyer and politician was Salomon Kassner, who also repeatedly provided legal advice in the local press. One Jewish architect and long-time member of Romania's Corps of Architects was Adam Appenzeller.⁴⁰

The **finance category** of the 1930 census included banks, cooperatives, insurance companies, and auxiliaries to trade. In Cernăuți there were 102 such establishments.⁴¹ Jews occupied various positions in Cernăuți banks, often alongside ethnic Romanians and other Gentiles. They sat together on the board of the East Bank (Banca de Est), formerly the Eastern Austrian Agricultural and Industrial Bank (Ostösterreichische Agrar- und Industriebank, est. 1918),⁴² whose chief executive was Jakob Kindler.⁴³ Both Jews and Gentiles, including future Iron Guard leader Neagoe Flondor, were among the founders of the Cernăuți Urban Mortgage Credit Society (Societate de Credit Funciar Urban) in 1929.⁴⁴

While longtime Jewish establishments continued to operate, new ones were also created. In 1925, the Sigmund Rosenblatt Bank (est. 1903) reopened as Rosenblatt, Linker & Schröder Bank.⁴⁵ After his two associates left, Markus Linker continued to run the establishment as M. Linker & Co. in 1928.⁴⁶ Similarly, in 1933, the Chodrower, Feinstein & Horowitz Bank (est. 1925) became the Feinstein Bank after Hermann Chodrower and Moses Horowitz left, and Abraham

³⁷ GenTeam, <https://www.genteam.at/de/> (accessed April 15, 2024).

³⁸ *Apotheker Samuel Storfer gestorben*, in "Ostjüdische Zeitung", 13 May 1931, p. 4.

³⁹ *Anuarul "Socec"*, p. 7-8 (Bucovina).

⁴⁰ Corpul Arhitecților din România, *Darea de seamă administrativă și financiară pe anul 1933*, Bucharest, Voința, 1934, p. 87; *In Albuquerque...*, "Die Stimme" (Tel-Aviv), February 1981, p. 12. I thank Mădălin Ghigeanu for providing me with information and materials about Jewish architects in Bukovina.

⁴¹ *Recensământul*, Vol. X, p. 744.

⁴² *Ostösterreichische Agrar- und Industrie-Bank, Ostbank*, in *Volkswirtschaftliche Chronik der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie*, July 1918, p. 233; *Banca de Est S.A.*, in "Glasul Bucovinei", 16 October 1919, p. 3.

⁴³ MOF, no. 51, 8 June 1923, p. 2382.

⁴⁴ MOF, no. 256, 16 November 1929, p. 8627-8631.

⁴⁵ *Bankgeschäft Rosenblatt, Linker & Schröder*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 13 November 1925, p. 6.

⁴⁶ *Aufforderung*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 29 April 1928, p. 8.

Feinstein stayed on.⁴⁷ The bureau de change Soifer Bros (Frații Soifer) became a bank around 1929.⁴⁸ In 1927, Josef Oehlgieser and Lippe Horowitz founded Bank Oehlgieser & Horowitz.⁴⁹

In 1930, Karl Klüger, Jakob Wiznitzer, Nathan Tropper, Gustav Hildebrand, Samuel Mosner, Hersch Chacham, Markus Kaswan, Chaim Kirmeier, Moses Ausländer, Sigmund Sternberg, Samuel Silbermann, and Saul Barnik founded the Central Jewish Credit and Economy Bank (Banca Centrală Evrească de Credit și Economie) in Cernăuți.⁵⁰ Later that year and in 1931, respectively, Jewish Credit and Economy Banks, Ltd., were established in Cozmeni and Sadagura,⁵¹ and the existing Jewish cooperative associations in Câmpulung, Gura-Humorului, Rădăuți, Storoiineț, Vășcăuți-pe-Ceremuș, and Vijnița turned into local Jewish Credit and Economy Banks, Ltd.⁵² From 1938, in the framework of a hardline Romanianisation policy pushed by the governor of the National Bank of Romania Mitiță Constantinescu, there was no realistic legal alternative left to keep Jewish cooperation alive.⁵³

In 1921, the Steaua României [Star of Romania] insurance company opened a branch in Cernăuți,⁵⁴ which employed Jewish managers. In 1936, Max Goldhaufen was appointed as regional director, and Gustav Hilfgott, Robert Held, and M. Engel as authorized signatories.⁵⁵

As shown in Table 1, 10,550 “ethnic Jews” engaged in **commerce**. The share of “ethnic Jews” in the various branches of this activity was substantial, albeit only a fraction of the total Jewish workforce.

The main branch of commerce in Bukovina consisted of food trade, restaurants, and pubs, which involved 6,968 individuals according to the 1930 census.⁵⁶ There were 3,920 related companies, of which 2,472 were grocers’ shops, 539 grocers’ shops or pubs, 297 tobacco and newspapers shops, 209 mixed grocers’ shops, 120 cake and confectioneries, etc.⁵⁷ How many of these were Jewish-owned remains unknown.

⁴⁷ *Înregistrarea unei societăți*, in “Glasul Bucovinei”, 5 February 1925, p. 4; *Știri bancare*, in “Glasul Bucovinei”, 31 December 1933, p. 5.

⁴⁸ *Bankhaus Brüder Soifer*, in “Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung”, 31 March 1929, p. 22.

⁴⁹ *Banknachricht*, in “Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung”, 3 July 1927, p. 7.

⁵⁰ MOF II, no. 124, 8 June 1930, p. 8082.

⁵¹ MOF II, no. 181, 14 August 1930, p. 11208.

⁵² MOF II, no. 229, 11 October 1930, p. 13488; no. 238, 22 October 1930, p. 13850-13851; no. 99, 1 May 1931, p. 5518-5519.

⁵³ *Alte instituții de credit puse în lichidare*, in “România”, 15 July 1938, p. 10; Joint Distribution Committee, file 907 (Collection 1933-1944), Wilhelm Filderman, memorandum, November 23, 1938, and summary report of the conference held in Paris on January, 16 and 17, 1939. Regarding the history of Jewish cooperation in Romania, see Moshe Ussoskin, *Struggle for Survival: A History of Jewish Credit Co-operatives in Bessarabia, Old-Rumania, Bukovina and Transylvania*, Jerusalem, Jerusalem Academic Press, 1975.

⁵⁴ *Steaua României*, in “Glasul Bucovinei”, 10 August 1921, p. 3.

⁵⁵ *Zum Gedenken an Moritz Krämer*, in “Czernowitzer Morgenblatt”, 20 March 1936, p. 5; *Din cercuri de asigurări*, in “Glasul Bucovinei”, 4 August 1936, p. 3.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁷ *Recensământul*, Vol. X, p. LXXVIII, 676.

Table 2. Jewish involvement in commerce in Bukovina (1930)⁵⁸

Branch	Jewish workforce (individuals)	Share of the Jewish workforce (%)	Share of the total workforce in the branch (%)
Food trade, restaurants, and pubs	4,414	13	63
“Other commercial businesses”	2,618	7	75
Sale of clothing, fabric, household equipment, and manufactured goods	1,250	4	75
Trade in agricultural products and animals, fuel, and building materials	1,007	3	71
Marketplace and itinerant trade	746	2	68
Buying and selling technical, mechanical, metallic, and chemical products	262	1	61
Running hotels, coffeeshops, bars, and similar establishments	253	1	57
Total	10,550	30	68

Most Cernăuți hotels and restaurants listed in the 1925 directory were Jewish-owned or managed by Jews.⁵⁹ Famous Jewish hotels in town were the Schwarzer Adler [Black Eagle] (built in 1863, owned by the Luttinger family),⁶⁰ Hotel Bristol, Hotel Central (in which the Femina-Bar opened in 1932),⁶¹ and

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, Vol. VII, p. LVIII-LXV.

⁵⁹ *Anuarul “Socec”*, p. 27, 33 (Bucovina).

⁶⁰ *Der “schwarze Adler”*, in “Bukowina”, 9 October 1863, p. 3.

⁶¹ *Was den Lebenskenner in Czernowitz noch interessiert*, in “Der Tag”, 13 March 1932, p. 5.

the Palace Hotel.⁶² Among Jewish restaurants and cafés in Cernăuți were Salo Stern's Café l'Europe (est. before 1884),⁶³ Restaurant Saul Brandes,⁶⁴ Restaurant Alter Drimmer (whose daughter became a chef at Salo Zimmering's Restaurant Splendid [est. 1940]),⁶⁵ Restaurant Nathan Ebner (Ebner later relocated to Brăila),⁶⁶ Restaurant Karl Feiger (est. 1924),⁶⁷ Restaurant Kahane, Isidor Klein's and Mathias Beutel's Restaurant Splendit (est. 1921,⁶⁸ not to be confused with the above; in 1930, Beutel opened his own restaurant, Katz la Beutel),⁶⁹ Café-Restaurant Samuel Krämer, Restaurant Osias Rosenblatt,⁷⁰ Jacob Thau's Café Comercial (est. 1930),⁷¹ and Bodega Hermann Weschler (est. 1932).⁷²

Hotels and restaurants with Jewish owners or managers also existed outside Cernăuți, especially in the spa town of Vatra Dornei,⁷³ with such establishments as Hotel Braunstein, Hotel Central (run by Rosa Druckmann), or Guesthouse Excelsior (run by Amalie Ebersohn). Moreover, Jews owned many pubs in Cernăuți and throughout the province, which were a constant topic of conversation and propaganda for the Romanian antisemites. When the Romanian government rescinded the alcohol licenses of Jewish natural and legal persons in December 1938 – February 1939 and closed their establishments, 377 businesses in Bukovina were affected.⁷⁴

There were a number of Jewish groceries, clothing shops, and jewelry shops in Cernăuți. Among the Jewish grocers in Cernăuți were Bernhard Billig (est. 1928),⁷⁵ Marie König, Leon Lutwak, Bernhard Schächter Jr., Eisig Schäfer, Bernhard Schärf, Schaje Schneider, M. Schwarz, Moses Sternberg, Moses Waldmann, Helene Weiß-Rauch (est. 1925),⁷⁶ and Benno Wender (est. 1925).⁷⁷ In 1928, Cernăuți bakers whom the Jewish community had authorized to

⁶² Hermann Sternberg, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁶³ *Das Café l'Europe ein Stück Czernowitz*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 24 February 1929, p. 15.

⁶⁴ *Todesfälle*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 24 September 1932, p. 5.

⁶⁵ *Eröffnungsanzeige*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 10 May 1940, p. 3.

⁶⁶ *Todesfall*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 8 November 1935, p. 7.

⁶⁷ *Eröffnungsanzeige*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 2 November 1924, p. 7.

⁶⁸ *Sonntag, den 28. August...*, in "Ostjüdische Zeitung", 26 August 1921, p. 4.

⁶⁹ *Geschäftsnachricht*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 20 May 1930, p. 6.

⁷⁰ *Osias Rosenblatt gestorben*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 6 December 1936, p. 3.

⁷¹ *Eine Sehenswürdigkeit für Kaffeehaus-Besucher*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 18 January 1930, p. 4.

⁷² *Eröffnung der Bodega Hermann Weschler*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 31 May 1932, p. 3.

⁷³ *Anuarul "Socet"*, p. 27, 49 (Bucovina).

⁷⁴ Philippe Henri Blasen, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

⁷⁵ *Eröffnungs-Anzeige*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 3 January 1928, p. 2.

⁷⁶ *Spezerei- und Delikatessen-Geschäft*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 29 October 1925, p. 3.

⁷⁷ *Das Kolonialwaren- und Delikatessengeschäft...*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 21 August 1925, p. 3.

produce matzos were Samuel Fleschler and Isak Groß, Jonas Friedberg and Aron D. Blank, David Klein and Benjamin Thaler, Isak Schnitzer and Esriel Kaufmann, Simon Margel and Samuel Roth, Moses Weinstein and Eisig Sturm, Hersch Weißmann, as well as Jakob Weißmann and Kasriel Spasser.⁷⁸

Jewish clothing shops in Cernăuți included Leiser Beer (women's fashion), Leon Blum (hats), Mendel Gelband (fashion and shoes), Leon Rosenheck's Saxonia (socks), Sandler & Badian (fashion, manufactured goods, linen), Hermann Schifris (furs), and Lupu Weinberg (furs). Jewish jewelers were Wilhelm Goldenstein, Hermann Rosenheck,⁷⁹ I. S. Schechter & Son, H. Schulman & S. Laub, Isidor Spinner,⁸⁰ and Arthur Storper.⁸¹ Not very flatteringly, the French journalist Albert Londres likened the streets in Cernăuți to "the corridors of a fantastic wardrobe whose clothes, helped by the winds, cast their fleas on the passers-by."⁸²

Interwar Bukovina boasted an impressive number of publishing houses, bookshops, and particularly German-language newspapers with Jewish participation.⁸³ Jewish bookshops in Cernăuți were Josua Widmann (est. 1873),⁸⁴ Moses Landau (est. 1886),⁸⁵ Leon König (est. 1888),⁸⁶ Siegmund Jäger (est. 1895; in 1926, the regional direction of the Romanian Railways attempted to expel him from his kiosk at Cernăuți Main Station),⁸⁷ Josef Gottlieb's Gottlieb Bros (Frații Gottlieb), which started as Buchdruckerei Emil Kanarski (1896),⁸⁸ Emil Guthertz (est. 1911, Dionys Schapira from 1929),⁸⁹ Epstein & Beiser (est. in or before 1922; later M. Epstein), Aurora (est. 1922),⁹⁰ Eminescu (est. 1922 as a stationery shop, later part of the Eminescu empire),⁹¹ Dr. (Emanuel?) Wagner's and Simon Preminger's book and stationery shop Krämer (est. 1923),⁹²

⁷⁸ *Kundmachung*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 18 February 1928, p. 8.

⁷⁹ *Todesfall*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 6 July 1932, p. 3.

⁸⁰ *Isidor Spinner S.A.*, in "Die Stimme" (Tel-Aviv), April-May 1964, p. 11.

⁸¹ I owe a considerable part of the research concerning the various trades to Bronwyn Cragg, who also thoroughly corrected the language of this article.

⁸² Albert Londres, *Le juif errant est arrivé*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1930, p. 149.

⁸³ For instance Andrei Corbea-Hoișie, Ion Lihaciu, and Markus Winkler (eds.), *Prolegomene la un dicționar al presei de limbă germană din Bucovina istorică (1848-1940)*, Iași, Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2012.

⁸⁴ *Schüler handeln mit Büchern*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 20 November 1932, p. 9; *Widmann*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 14 September 1933, p. 2.

⁸⁵ *50 jähriges Jubiläum der Buchhandlung M. Landau*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 6 September 1936, p. 3.

⁸⁶ *Leon König*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 5 December 1928, p. 3.

⁸⁷ *Gilt noch Recht?*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 22 August 1926, p. 6; *40 Jahre Buchhandlung Jäger*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 10 August 1935, p. 3.

⁸⁸ *Buchdruckerei*, in "Czernowitzer Presse", 15 March 1896, p. 6.

⁸⁹ *Eröffnungsanzeige*, in "Czernowitzer Tagblatt", 1 November 1911, p. 4.

⁹⁰ *Für die Literaturfreunde*, in "Ostjüdische Zeitung", 1 September 1922, p. 3.

⁹¹ *Die Papierhandlung Eminescu...*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 17 September 1922, p. 5.

⁹² *Neueröffnung*, in "Ostjüdische Zeitung", 5 February 1923, p. 4.

Benjamin Schapira (est. in or prior to 1926),⁹³ Dr. Josef Bernfeld & Co. (est. 1927),⁹⁴ Salo Kahn's Minerva (est. 1928 as a stationery shop),⁹⁵ S. Goldstein's Centrala (est. 1931 as stationery shop; Goldstein had worked previously for the stationer's Biedermann & Kindler),⁹⁶ Leo Ungar (est. 1931 as a stationery shop; Ungar had also been an employee of Biedermann & Kindler).⁹⁷ Since Benjamin Schapira only sold Hebrew books, which were of no use to Christian customers, he was granted an exception from the mandatory Saturday opening instituted on December 7, 1938 by Gheorghe Alexianu, the antisemitic governor of Bukovina.⁹⁸ The most successful was the Eminescu company⁹⁹ (ironically named after Romania's antisemitic national poet), which was founded in 1923 by businessman Mendel Abraham and editor Arnold Schwarz, and which became a small media empire. In particular, it owned the major Cernăuți newspaper "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung".¹⁰⁰

Jewish industry and commerce in Bukovina were subject to global economic factors. Letters sent in late 1929 to the Cernăuți Israelite Community testify to the direct impact of the Great Depression on Jewish businesses.¹⁰¹ The Great Depression also forced factory managers to lower wages, which resulted in strikes.¹⁰² In the countryside, Jewish trade and craftsmanship were intertwined with the performance of the local agricultural sector and the status of the national and global food market, as shown by 1938 police reports from Mihăileni, a small Moldavian town on the border with Bukovina.¹⁰³

Jewish economic and professional activity was further affected by propaganda, vandalism, and physical violence perpetuated by various antisemitic

⁹³ *Billige 4 Wochen*, in "Ostjüdische Zeitung", 17 August 1926, p. 4; in 1926, an advertisement for the same place appeared in Yiddish under the name of Rabbi Friedmann's manager Alter Bierbräuer: *Moda'ah!*, in "Ostjüdische Zeitung", 23 November 1926, p. 4.

⁹⁴ *Die Buchhandlung Dr. J. Bernfeld & Co.*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 2 October 1927, p. 2; *Dr. Josef Bernfeld S.A.*, in "Die Stimme" (Tel-Aviv), July 1972, p. 12.

⁹⁵ *Eröffnungs-Anzeige*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 20 June 1928, p. 5.

⁹⁶ *Ein neues Papiergeschäft*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 19 July 1931, p. 7.

⁹⁷ *Bekanntmachung*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 20 September 1927, p. 4; *Unentbehrlich für die Reise*, in "Czernowitzer Morgenblatt", 20 June 1931, p. 4.

⁹⁸ Philippe Henri Blasen, *Terrorisme légionnaire et ordonnances antisémites. La Région Suceava d'octobre 1938 à septembre 1940*, in ArchM, no. 10, 2018, p. 319-321.

⁹⁹ *Înregistrarea unei societăți cu garanță limitată...*, in "Glasul Bucovinei", 17 November 1923, p. 4.

¹⁰⁰ Nora Chelaru, *Die CAZ, die langlebigste Tageszeitung der Bukowina (1903-1940)*, in Ana-Maria Pălimariu and Wolfgang Müller-Funk (eds.), *Narrative des Peripheren in posthabsburgischen Literaturen des zentral(ost)europäischen Raums*, Iași, Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2020, p. 171-203.

¹⁰¹ State Archive of Chernivtsi Oblast, fond 325, opys 1, sprav 2275, available at <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS9T-6V14?i=3&cat=1387600>.

¹⁰² *Streik bei den Sägen "Moldova" und "Adlersberg"*, in "Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung", 21 June 1930, p. 7.

¹⁰³ Philippe Henri Blasen, *Rural Residents on King Carol's New Regime: Voices on the "Royal Dictatorship" from Mihăileni, Northern Moldavia (1938)*, in "Journal of Romanian Studies", no. 2, 2023, p. 201.

groups, in particular the League for National Christian Defence and the Iron Guard,¹⁰⁴ which also attempted to destroy the Jewish commerce through boycotts or by establishing rival shops.¹⁰⁵ Even more disastrous were the antisemitic measures undertaken by national and local Romanian authorities, especially the nationwide “review” of Romanian citizenship in 1938-1939,¹⁰⁶ which concerned those who had received Romanian citizenship under the January 12, 1919 decree (those who had been born in Romania), the May 28, 1919 decree (the Jewish inhabitants of the Old Kingdom), and the February 24 1924, law (the inhabitants of the new provinces: Bukovina, Transylvania, Banat, etc.). This “review” stripped 225,222 Jews of their Romanian citizenship and subjected their employers to heavy taxes; in Bukovina, 10,076 (34%) out of 30,004 “reviewed” Jews were denaturalized.¹⁰⁷ On December 1, 1938, Gheorghe Alexianu, the antisemitic governor of Suceava Region (comprising Bukovina as well as Dorohoi and Hotin counties) and future governor of Transnistria, moreover decreed that the denaturalized Jews could not be employed in any public or private company.¹⁰⁸ On June 26, 1940, only two days before Romania accepted the Soviet ultimatum and ceded Bessarabia and North Bukovina (including Cernăuți) to the USSR, the Jews were excluded from King Carol II’s party – then the country’s only legal political organization – and thus banned from civil service, liberal professions, and boards of directors.¹⁰⁹ This discrimination might explain why some Jews, especially from the disadvantaged social classes and/or the younger generation, welcomed the Soviet takeover on June 28, 1940 or attempted to reach the territory under Soviet control.¹¹⁰

Various accounts suggest that there was little enthusiasm for emigration to Palestine even among indigent Jews in Cernăuți.¹¹¹ However, Jews from

¹⁰⁴ For instance Armin Heinen, *Die Legion “Erzengel Michael” in Rumänien: Soziale Bewegung und politische Organisation*, Munich, R. Oldenbourg, 1986; Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2015.

¹⁰⁵ See Rebecca Haynes, *Work Camps, Commerce, and the Education of the “New Man” in the Romanian Legionary Movement*, in “The Historical Journal”, no. 4, December 2008, p. 943-967; Valentin Săndulescu, *Taming the Body: Preliminary Considerations Regarding the Legionary Work Camps System (1933-1937)*, in “Historical Yearbook”, 2008, p. 89-94. See also Bronwyn Cragg’s research.

¹⁰⁶ For further details, see Philippe Henri Blasen, *L’émancipation graduelle des Juifs de Roumanie et la révision de la citoyenneté roumaine sous le gouvernement Goga: Aspects juridiques (1879-1938) et historiques (1937-1938)*, in “Revista de Istorie a Evreilor din România”, no. 3, 2018, p. 253-290.

¹⁰⁷ Idem, *La “primauté de la nation roumaine”*, p. 36-58.

¹⁰⁸ Idem, *Terrorisme légionnaire*, p. 316.

¹⁰⁹ Idem, *La “primauté de la nation roumaine”*, p. 212.

¹¹⁰ See idem, *L’évacuation de la Bessarabie et de la Bucovine du Nord (juin-juillet 1940), la création d’un cliché antisémite roumain*, in “Revista de Istorie a Evreilor din România”, no. 4-5, 2019-2020, p. 271-310; idem, *Trecerea Prutului în urma cedării Basarabiei din iunie 1940: România sau URSS?*, in “Studia Universitatis Moldaviae”, no. 10, 2021, p. 32-42.

¹¹¹ Albert Londres, *op. cit.*, p. 145-155; Zvi Yavetz, *Erinnerungen an Czernowitz. Wo Menschen und Bücher lebten*, München, C. H. Beck, 2007, p. 151-154.

Bukovina went to work abroad, often to Vienna,¹¹² but also to other parts of Europe, as did the poet Moses Rosenkranz, who was hired as a farmhand in Alsace.¹¹³

To conclude, Jewish businesses thrived in Bukovina until the last years of the interwar period. Most of them were small – sometimes short-lived – companies, with just a few employees (or even only one entrepreneur or liberal professional). Jews were well integrated in the Bukovinian commercial landscape, where they coexisted and often worked together with Gentiles. However, an increasingly antisemitic atmosphere from the 1920s, as well as state antisemitism in the late 1930s decimated Jewish businesses in the region and deprived many Jews of the possibility to work legally, which might have contributed to the positive reception of the Soviet takeover in June 1940 in a part of the Jewish population.¹¹⁴

Jewish Economic Life in Interwar Bukovina (Abstract)

Keywords: Bukovina, Greater Romania, statistics, Jewish economic life, antisemitism.

Based on Romanian statistics and on Austrian and Romanian newspapers, this article attempts an overview of Jewish economic life in interwar Bukovina, when the province was part of Greater Romania. It shows how Jewish professional activity in Bukovina mainly centered on the secondary and tertiary sectors, names famous Jewish businesses, and shows how the economic structure of Bukovina was used as an argument by antisemitic Romanian politicians.

¹¹² For instance Karl Klüger, *Wiener Eindrücke*, in “Czernowitzer Morgenblatt”, 23 January 1921, p. 5.

¹¹³ For instance Moses Rosenkranz, *Jugend: Fragment einer Autobiographie*, Aachen, Rimbaud, 2014.

¹¹⁴ See Philippe Henri Blasen, *L'émancipation graduelle des Juifs de Roumanie...*