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Post-Holocaust Immigration and Hassidic Leadership: The Cases of Viznitz and Satmar

Menachem Keren-Kratz

Independent Researcher, Ramat Ha-Sharon 4722587, Israel; menachem.keren.kratz@gmail.com

Abstract: Immigration, particularly forced immigration, has a profound impact on every aspect of immigrants' lives. One such aspect is their religious convictions and practices. Nowadays, Migration Studies is a major academic field that produces many books and articles each year. This article examines the impact of forced immigration on the daily practices and internal relationships between leaders and followers of a specific religious group—Hassidism, in one particular period—the early second half of the 20th century. It does so by examining how two Hassidic leaders, the Satmar Rebbe in America and the Viznitzer Rebbe in Israel, established their communities after the Holocaust. This is one of only a few academic studies that explore post-Holocaust Hassidism, with a specific focus on the effects of forced immigration on its development. Throughout Jewish history, large-scale immigration and the inevitable need to adapt to new political, religious, and cultural circumstances had a profound influence on the way Jews conducted their religious affairs. This article explores how the uprooting of Hassidism from Eastern Europe after the Holocaust and its transplantation in countries that were new to them prompted Hassidic leaders who wanted to reestablish their communities to adopt a new set of leadership priorities. The result was that despite bearing the same title, Hassidic communities that were established after the Holocaust were very different from those that operated in Europe previously.

Keywords: immigration and religion; Jewish immigration; post-Holocaust Hassidism; Satmar; Viznitz; American Orthodoxy; Israeli Hassidim

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1. Introduction

Hassidism is the collective name of many Orthodox groups who follow a new type of Judaism that emerged in the mid-18th century. Like other Orthodox groups, the Hassidim strictly observe all the religious commands (*mitzvot*) and study the Torah, but compared with former traditional Jews, they are more inclined to Jewish mysticism. All Hassidic groups follow the teaching of a spiritual leader whom they consider a holy man and refer to him as a Tzaddik (righteous man) or a Rebbe. The Hassidim believe that he is capable of mediating between them and God, assuming He will respond positively to their requests if they are presented to Him by the Tzaddik. The role of the Tzaddik was to serve as both a spiritual leader to the Hassidim and to respond to their practical daily needs in all aspects of life by praying to God on their behalf, blessing them, and using a variety of mystical measures such as amulets and kabbalistic rituals (Biale et al. 2018).

Before the Holocaust, only a handful of Hassidim lived near their Rebbe's place of residence. This small group, which often numbered no more than a few dozen families, constituted the nuclear Hassidic community, which was also referred to as "the court."[1] The majority of the Hassidim lived in other towns and villages, and some of them even lived a great distance from their Rebbe. As a result, most of the Hassidim met their Rebbe only on special occasions, either when they came to him, usually during the holidays or when they needed to consult him, or when he visited their towns or villages.

Despite their admiration, most Hassidim never considered their Rebbe the only religious authority. They indeed regarded him as a Tzaddik capable of working miracles, yet,

in many cases, it was the local chief rabbi whom they considered a halakhic authority. Since only a few of the Hassidic rebbes conducted a yeshiva, most of the Hassidim considered the head of the yeshiva in which they or their sons studied the foremost authority on Talmud scholarship. Moreover, despite the close affinity between the Hassid and "his" tzaddik, many Hassidim used to visit other Hassidic rebbes, either because they lived closer to them or because they had the reputation of solving problems in specific fields such as matchmaking, infertility, domestic issues, or business disputes (Poll 1995, pp. 257–75).

Consequently, most of the Hassidim were influenced not only by the teachings of their own Rebbe, whom they rarely visited, but also by a group of other rabbinical figures. These included not only the abovementioned rabbis but also wandering preachers who gave sermons, local Torah scholars, as well as other miracle workers and Kabbalists.

The Hassidim realized that the only way their Tzadik could assist them was through praying to God for help and mercy on their behalf or by using his mystical powers. Consequently, they never expected him to act for them in any practical manner. Save for using some of the money the Hassidim gave him for charity, the Hassidic rebbes were never bothered in actively helping their Hassidim to find a place to live, a proper workplace, a suitable education institution for their children, or providing them with kosher food and religious facilities such as a mikvah or a cemetery. All this changed after the Holocaust, when the Hassidim were forced to immigrate to other countries.

2. Hassidism in the USA and Israel after the Holocaust

In recent decades, Migration Studies has become a major academic field that produces many studies each year. One of the growing segments within this discipline is the study of the impact of immigration on the immigrants' religious lifestyle in their new countries. In the past, the common notion was that compared with other challenges, such as language, housing, employment, and education, religion was a relatively minor issue. Nowadays, however, particularly in light of the large-scale immigration of Muslims to Western countries, which are predominantly Christian, it is clear that religion plays a major role in immigrants' absorption process and in their relationship with their new country.[2] This article examines the impact of post-Holocaust forced immigration of Eastern European Hasidic leaders and their followers to the United States and Israel on the daily practices and internal relationship between leaders and followers.

The article examines how two Hassidic leaders, Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum (1887–1979)—the Satmar Rebbe in America, and Rabbi Haim Meir Hager (1887–1972)—the Viznitzer Rebbe in Israel, established their communities after the Holocaust. The selection of these two figures has several reasons. First, both were among the first to implement the new post-Holocaust leadership strategy discussed in this article. Second, both established their new Hassidic communities in countries that later became major Hassidic centers—Israel and the United States. Third, both leaders became role models for other, perhaps less daring rebbes. Fourth, both of them managed to establish Hassidic communities far larger than the ones they had in Europe before the Holocaust.

Until the Holocaust, Hassidism was a predominantly Eastern European phenomenon. Indeed, groups of Hassidic immigrants from Eastern Europe founded a few small communities, both in Western Europe, Eretz Israel, and in the United States. However, given the central role of the Tzadik in Hassidic life and the fact that the few rebbes who did settle in these countries before the Holocaust were those whose reputation, scholarly skills, or leadership skills were not good enough to establish their own communities in Eastern Europe, prevented them from becoming "real" Hassidic courts (Ha-Lahmi 1996–1998, vols. 1–2; Gellman 2016, pp. 11–30; Assaf 1992; Wodziński 2018; Robinson 2005).

The situation of Eastern European Orthodox Jews after the Holocaust was devastating. On top of losing family members and their financial assets and being forced to restart their lives in foreign countries, Orthodox Jews questioned the role of God in the Holocaust and suffered a major theological crisis. This meant that after the Holocaust, and unlike previous periods, Hassidic leaders who wanted to stand by their Hassidim at such a critical

point had not only to cater to their spiritual and theological needs but also to address their unprecedented materialistic challenges.

Unlike Eastern European tzaddikim of the past, post-Holocaust Hassidic leaders needed to adopt a new set of skills. They needed to assist their potential Hassidim to find a home to live, a place to work, to provide them with religious facilities, affordable education institutions for the children, and to help them settle in a country that was new to them and whose language they did not speak.

These changes were exacerbated by the fact that unlike the situation in Eastern Europe when the Hassidim lived in thousands of small communities, after the Holocaust they concentrated in a few dozen locations in each country, and most of them in cities where the Jewish community was far larger than that in the cities and towns of Eastern Europe. The same was true for the Hassidic Rebbes, who before the Holocaust were scattered across Eastern Europe, while after it they concentrated in the big cities.[3]

Consequently, the competition between the Rebbes after the Holocaust was much greater than before. While Hassidic leaders who stuck to the old ways and settled for preaching, praying, and counseling did not have much demand for their services, the rebbes who were able to provide their followers with both their spiritual and materialistic needs established Hassidic communities that were far larger than the ones they led before the Holocaust (Dan 2001, pp. 52–65). This article reviews two prominent Hungarian Rabbis who were active Hassidic leaders both before and after the Holocaust and examines the change in their leadership style.[4] The Satmar Rebbe gained fame following his success in establishing the world's largest and most prosperous Hassidic court after the Holocaust, while Viznitz became Israel's second-largest Hassidic court. The leadership approach of both of them, the first in America and the second in Israel, served as role models for many other Hassidic leaders in these countries.

3. Satmar in America

3.1. Historical Background

Hungarian Jews began to migrate to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. Initially, as long as their number was still small, they integrated with other central and Eastern European communities, but, subsequently, they began to set up their own organizations. The first Hungarian-Jewish social association, The Hungarian Society of New York, was established in 1865, while Ohab Zedek, the first religious congregation, was founded in New York's Lower East Side in 1873 (Steinberger 2005).

Ohab Zedek and other Hungarian-Orthodox congregations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century comprised non-Hassidic Jews, who by and large led a more modern way of life and were better educated than Hungary's Hassidim. The latter, who adhered to a more conservative lifestyle, obeyed their rebbes who warned them not to immigrate to America, which they termed the "treifene medina" (Yiddish: the non-kosher country) (Hertzberg 1981). The notion that America was not a suitable place for observant Jews was not altogether unfounded. In their home countries, the vast majority of Central and Eastern European migrants, even those who were not fully observant, had received a Jewish education, refrained from working on the Sabbath, respected the rabbinical scholars, attended synagogue at least several times a year, and consumed kosher meat.

Given the conditions that prevailed in America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Jews found it all but impossible to maintain a traditional way of life. Most of the hundreds of thousands of Jews who were members of the American Orthodox communities were obliged to work on Saturday, the Sabbath, which during that time was a regular working day. They consumed non-kosher meat because the kosher variety was expensive, could not comply with the family purity laws since the *mikvahs* were few, far between, and costly, and lost respect for the rabbis, whom they perceived to be obsolete and uneducated in the ways of the modern world. Moreover, most Jews did not provide their children with a Jewish education, which was private and costly (Keren-Kratz 2022).

Most of the Hassidim who came to America without receiving their rabbi's blessing generally abandoned their Hassidic appearance and lifestyle. Yet, some established a few Hassidic congregations, usually titled "Anshe Sepharad" or "Nosah Ha-Ari," which alluded to their unique style of worship. These communities were usually not committed to any specific Hassidic court.[5] Following World War I, a few second-rank Hungarian rebbes settled in America and established small congregations (Wodziński 2018, pp. 148–49). In the mid-1920s, they, along with other Hassidic rabbis, established a rabbinical association named Agudat Ha-Admorim.[6]

From only three Hassidic synagogues in the early twentieth century, by the 1940s their number had grown to 130, and yet they still comprised only six percent of the overall number of synagogues in New York (Robinson 2005). Walking on the streets of any American city, up until the 1940s, one would only rarely come across Hassidic Jews dressed in their traditional long coats fastened by a *gartel* (a silk or silk-like belt tied around the waist during prayer), sporting a long beard and sidelocks, and their heads covered by a *shtreiml* (a wide and round fur hat usually used by Hassidim on Shabbat, holidays, and special occasions) (Gurock 2009, pp. 96–97; Deutch 2000; Schneersohn 1992a, 1992b).

3.2. American Orthodoxy's "Slide to the Right"

Up until the 1930s, only a few of the hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Jews in America strictly observed the *mitzvot*, while most of them were very lax in their religious conduct. Most of the rabbis earned a low wage and, fearing for their livelihood, dared not chastise their congregates, and certainly not their leaders, for their lax religious observance. Thus, the term "Orthodoxy" came to convey a different meaning in America to than it had in Eastern Europe, where most Orthodox Jews were also fully observant (Liebman 1965; Sarna 2004, pp. 135–207; Gurock 2009, pp. 1–20). The continuous immigration of Orthodox Jews, particularly during World War II and the Holocaust period, caused a total change in that respect.

Today's North American Orthodox communities present a completely different picture. Most members of these congregations maintain a more rigorous religious lifestyle than that which prevailed in the most illustrious prewar Orthodox communities in Eastern Europe. Several academic scholars who have studied the Haredization process of American Orthodoxy termed it "the swing" or "the slide" to the right (Heilman 2006; Soloveitchik 2021; Keren-Kratz 2022). This development facilitated the settlement of the more conservative Hungarian rabbis, and they, in turn, helped to drive this process further.

The "slide to the right" began in 1902 with the establishment of Agudat Ha-Rabanim Ha-Ortodoksim (The Union of Orthodox rabbis), and gained significant momentum in the mid-1930s. Then, as anti-Semitism in Europe intensified, many Orthodox Jews who had never before even considered doing so migrated to America. These Jews, who only sought to save their families' lives, were not seeking to fulfill the American Dream nor were they prepared to abandon their beliefs and lifestyle. On the contrary, they endured great hardship by having to settle for low-paid jobs that did not require them to work on the Sabbath and by refraining from opening businesses that would require their attendance on the holy days.[7]

These Jews were the driving force behind the establishment of thirteen new yeshivas between 1938 and 1948, which tripled their overall number in America. Many newcomers settled in Brooklyn, where six of the new yeshivas were built, and made it the bustling hub of Orthodox life in America. Those who settled further afield, such as in Lakewood and Monsey, turned these townships into Orthodox centers as well (Liebman 1965, pp. 94–95).

The newly arrived rabbis founded their Eastern European style congregations, which displayed less tolerance toward members who failed to observe all the *mitzvot*. To differentiate this type of congregation from those established previously, this new form of Orthodoxy came to be termed ultra-Orthodoxy. In 1937, Agudat Israel held its third international congress (Knesia Gedola) in Marienbad, Czechoslovakia. Two years later, and 27 years after

the movement was founded in Europe, American rabbis of Eastern European origin finally established its first American branch.[8]

3.3. The Expansion of Hungarian Hassidism

Considering its predominantly lenient Orthodox lifestyle and the fact that almost all Orthodox congregations and organizations supported Zionism, the strictly observant and anti-Zionist Hungarian rabbis refrained from immigrating to the United States. Nevertheless, with the rise of antisemitism in Europe in the 1930s and following American Orthodoxy's "slide to the right,"the first "true" Hungarian rabbis, namely those who had previously served as community chief rabbis, began migrating to the new world.

After the Holocaust, the former Hungarian Jews who survived and settled in America, among them several rabbis and descendants of Hassidic rebbes, founded new congregations. Most of these were Hassidic courts located on the Lower East Side, in Williamsburg, and in Crown Heights (Wodziński 2018, pp. 148–49). Since the members of these communities were Holocaust survivors who came directly from the displaced persons camps, they were unfamiliar with the American lifestyle, and their religious conduct was reminiscent of that to which they were accustomed in Europe before the Holocaust. Furthermore, many of these survivors felt compelled to adhere to their forefathers' traditions in order to commemorate both the ancestors and the traditions that had been annihilated during the Holocaust.

One such community was the Atzei Haim Congregation, established in the 1920s by Jews who originated from the town of Sighet and the neighboring villages of Maramaros. Following his immigration to America in 1946, they appointed Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum (1914–2006), a descendant of the town's rabbinical dynasty and a Holocaust survivor, as their rabbi.[9] Since the salary he earned from his congregation was not sufficient, like other rabbis he provided certificates for glatt kosher meat, Halav Israel, and other foodstuffs produced under his strict kashrut supervision.[10] Other Hungarian rabbis, mostly Hassidic, established additional Orthodox congregations.[11]

These rebbes, like most other American congregational rabbis who preceded them, regarded themselves first and foremost spiritual and religious leaders of their Hassidim. Consequently, while advancing their own well-being by either issuing Kashrut certifications for which they were paid or by establishing private education institutions, they refrained from catering to the material needs of their followers.

Yet, there was one rabbi who fundamentally changed the way Hassidic rabbis regarded their role and, instead of settling with spiritual guidance and functioning as a religious authority, was involved in every aspect of his Hassidim's daily challenges. He established an immense socioeconomic support system, encouraged his Hassidim to find work, provided them with a subsidized education system, and established communal businesses that employed the Hassidim. In time, his emissaries also provided the Hassidim with cheap housing solutions, offering them specially adopted government and municipal support and training programs. By so doing, Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum—the Satmar Rebbe—changed the way most other Hassidic rabbis regarded their role in the future.

3.4. Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum—The Satmar Rebbe

Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum, formerly chief rabbi of Satmar (Satu Mare), Romania, arrived in America on 27 September 1946. Although raised by a father who served both as a chief rabbi, a prominent Hassidic leader, and as head of a yeshiva, the child Yoel was not destined to succeed him in any of these positions, which were preserved for his elder brother. At the age of 17, shortly after his marriage and his father's death, he was ousted from his hometown to prevent him from interfering with his elder brother's accession to power. Left penniless, he then settled in Satmar, where he was soon recognized as an extraordinary Talmudic scholar (Keren-Kratz 2020b; Sorotzkin 2017, pp. 371–401; Inbari 2016, pp. 131–72).

Subsequently, while serving as chief rabbi in a remote village, he waited for the opportunity to prove himself equal to his older brother. Following his brother's untimely

death in 1926, Rabbi Yoel expected to replace him and thereby to secure his place in the family dynasty after all. To his disappointment, his own hometown's leaders bypassed him and chose his 14-year-old nephew instead. From that time onward, he resolved to do everything in his power to gain all the public positions of which he believed he had been deprived (Keren-Kratz 2020b, pp. 61–98).

Making use of his political skills and employing the most underhanded means, he waged a six-year-long campaign to be appointed Satmar's chief rabbi. To that end, his subordinates slandered, forged, threatened, and used verbal and even physical violence until in 1934 they managed to subdue all public resistance to the appointment of the extremist and zealous rabbi. It took Rabbi Yoel a further three years of cunning manipulations to get himself elected to the Central Bureau of the Orthodox Jewish Communities in Transylvania (Keren-Kratz 2020b, pp. 99–143).

Shortly after he had achieved all his political aims, the Holocaust descended. Much to his Hassidim's consternation, he made several attempts to escape, and, to that end, he even approached his archrivals, the Zionist activists. Eventually, when his entire congregation was forced into the ghetto, he fled in the middle of the night, was caught, and was sent to another ghetto. While most of its inmates were destined to be deported to Auschwitz, Rabbi Yoel boarded the Kasztner train. After a few months' incarceration in Bergen-Belsen, he was released to Switzerland.[12]

After leaving Switzerland, Rabbi Yoel decided to settle in Jerusalem and reestablish a Hassidic congregation there. This bid ended in failure owing to his political mistakes that stemmed from arrogance, as well as his dubious conduct during the Holocaust. Eventually, after accumulating enormous debts, Rabbi Yoel, persecuted by his creditors, was forced to flee on a ship that sailed on the holy days of Rosh Ha-Shana, and which lacked a proper *minyan* (quorum of ten Jewish men) for the festival's prayers (Keren-Kratz 2020b, pp. 200–9).

For almost two years Rabbi Yoel roamed among Jewish congregations seeking to raise funds to save his institutes in Jerusalem, with a view to returning there as soon as possible. However, since he spoke no English and persisted in criticizing American Jewry and articulating his anti-Zionist stands, his mission ended in failure. Since it became clear to him that he was not going to raise sufficient funds to save his institutions, and since he feared that once a Jewish state was established, it would haunt him for his anti-Zionist stance, he decided to settle in America (Keren-Kratz 2020b, pp. 214–15).

3.5. The Establishment of the Satmar Hassidic Court

Having spent two years in America before deciding to settle there, and unlike other rebbes who established their Hassidic communities right after their arrival, meant that Rabbi Yoel had a long time to absorb the collective sentiments of American Orthodox Jews as well as those of Holocaust survivors. Consequently, when he finally decided to establish his congregation, he already developed a comprehensive concept of the challenges he was going to face and how to overcome them (Keren-Kratz 2013, pp. 254–62).

One such experience was his meeting in America with Rabbi Michael Dov Weissmandel, whom Rabbi Yoel had known since before the war. Upon his arrival in America, Rabbi Weissmandel took a different path than most rabbis who settled in the big cities. Instead, together with his brother-in-law, Rabbi Shalom Moshe Unger, they settled in Somerville, New Jersey, which was far away from New York City. There, they reestablished a yeshiva for the surviving students from their old yeshiva in Nitra, Czechoslovakia.[13] Rabbi Yoel stayed at the yeshiva for almost two months, during which Rabbi Weissmandel told him about his plan to establish a self-sustained, strictly devoted ultra-Orthodox community.

Following these conversations, and after deciding to remain in America and to establish his own Hassidic court, Rabbi Yoel conducted himself according to three major principles: a. To maintain and even to reinforce his ultraconservative and anti-Zionist stances (Keren-Kratz 2017). b. To present himself as a leader in the old-fashioned Eastern European style and to establish a congregation in which its members conduct themselves as they were used to do in the Eastern European shtetel. c. Regardless of his formal tradi-

tionalistic position, to implement a series of novelties that would result in a new leadership style (Keren-Kratz 2018b).

Rabbi Yoel adopted Rabbi Weissmandel's other ideas: a. To operate independently and not to cooperate with other rabbis or Orthodox organizations such as Agudat Israel. b. To purchase a plot of land far away from the big city and establish an isolated Hassidic community. This mission, however, was accomplished only in the mid-1970s, a quarter of a century after the court's establishment. c. To take care of his Hassidim's basic material needs, a decision that set Satmar apart from other Hassidic groups and eventually turned it into a role model for them.[14]

3.6. Rabbi Yoel's Attitude to the Material World in America

In his position as a Hassidic leader or as a community chief rabbi in Europe, Rabbi Yoel, like other rabbis in the same positions, never felt obliged to cater directly to his followers' material needs. Besides helping them make business decisions, ruling on commercial disputes, and blessing his Hassidim to succeed in their various occupations, he was never involved in any commercial initiatives aimed at bettering his followers' materialistic status. Only during World War II, following the economic crisis that beset many Jews, did Rabbi Yoel, like other rabbis, become involved in all sorts of rescue operations, including raising funds and distributing donations to the needy.

After the Holocaust, once he settled in Jerusalem, he realized that the only way for him to establish and sustain a Hassidic community was to gather a group of young Holocaust survivors. In order to accommodate, dress, and feed them, he asked them to go to work. As their number grew, he ordered one of his followers who was a businessman to establish small workshops in which his Hassidim produced bricks, cloth, shoes, and furniture upholstery. His lack of business experience and the fact that he was shunned by other Orthodox groups in Jerusalem led his businesses to suffer great losses.

Shortly after arriving in America in the hope of collecting enough funds to cover his debts, Rabbi Yoel realized how important it was either for the Jews who immigrated before the war or for the Holocaust survivors to establish themselves financially and to pursue the American Dream of becoming economically successful. He realized that as in Jerusalem, if he was to have his Hassidic community, he had to take care of his Hassidim's material needs. The bitter experience in Jerusalem, however, taught him not to establish any commercial businesses of his own. Instead, he encouraged his followers to find work or to open businesses (Keren-Kratz 2017, pp. 254–56).

This approach was different from the one promoted by many rabbis in Israel and America who claimed that due to the great devastation of the Torah world during the Holocaust, all men should continue their studies in the yeshiva even after their marriage while their wives should become the family's main breadwinner. To explain to his Hassidim why they should go to work and make money, and even a lot of it, rather than study all day long, Rabbi Yoel developed a new "money theology" that was based on kabbalistic ideas that differentiated between pure and impure money. Impure money was, for example, that which was earned from Gentiles, heretics, Zionists, or the Israeli government. The theory also explained how to convert impure money into pure money and why it was important to have as much pure capital as possible.

3.7. The Initial Implementation of the Materialistic Approach

As his number of followers grew to several hundred, and among them were some well-established businessmen, Rabbi Yoel decided to establish several community services that would not only generate work for the Hassidim but also a permanent income for the court's institutions. These included a private education system, a few kosher meat shops, a mikvah, a Mazza bakery, a summer camp, a newspaper, and a function hall.

Although some of the Hassidim found employment within the community itself, and others were employed by other ultra-Orthodox employers, many of the Hassidim worked in workplaces that did not meet the proper conditions for the meticulous observance of

an ultra-Orthodox lifestyle. In these places, some located outside of the Hassidic neighborhoods, men worked alongside women; there was no kosher kitchen; no times were allocated for the mid-day prayer; and no days off were given on Jewish holidays and fasting days. Despite his principled opposition to women going to work, which was based on the customs of the past, Rabbi Yoel reconciled with the new economic reality and did not oppose it. Even in this case, not all women worked for ultra-Orthodox employers and under conditions suitable for Hassidic women. Moreover, to prepare them for the work world, girls who studied in Satmar's education system were trained in untraditional fields such as English, mathematics, bookkeeping, typing, and office management (Keren-Kratz 2017, pp. 304–5).

In the early fifties, the community consisted mainly of young men and women.[15] Some were born in Eastern European countries and immigrated before World War II, and others were Holocaust survivors. The men, most of whom had not previously been Rabbi Yoel's followers, attended public schools as required by law in Europe and the United States and thus had a comprehensive education. Consequently, many of them became professional workers who could earn a decent salary. At that time, the number of families, especially those with many children, was low. As a result, during the court's early years, many Hassidic families enjoyed a relatively good standard of living, and their socioeconomic status was higher than that of the average American white community.[16]

Aware of the financial capabilities of some of his more successful followers, Rabbi Yoel embraced several industrialists and businessmen and harnessed them and their money, asking them not only to donate to the community but also to employ its members. These businessmen were not exclusively connected to the court and did not always maintain the strict religious lifestyle expected from Satmar Hasidim. Nevertheless, Rabbi Yoel willingly accepted their donations and encouraged them to develop projects in their area of expertise, such as in the community's real estate business, and asked for their advice regarding managing the court's financial affairs. Only in rare instances, he waived donations when the donors were noticeably identified with bodies opposed to the court.

3.8. The Expansion of the Community

At the beginning of the 1960s, the Satmar community in America already numbered over 1000 families or about 5000–6000 people. About 2500 children studied in the community's educational institutions, of which about 1000 were girls. Their annual budget was about USD 600,000, and they employed dozens of education and administration personnel as well as drivers, cooks, and maintenance workers.[17] The summer camps established by the court hosted hundreds of boys and girls in over 150 recreation rooms. Most of these students were young, between the ages of 4 and 16, and this indicates that most of the families who sent their children to these institutions were relatively young. This also means that most of the families that belonged to the court were "first generation," namely that the children who were educated in Satmar's institution had not yet established families of their own.[18]

Besides the expansion of the main community, Satmar established several branches in cities around the world. Despite the number of Hassidim in these locations being far smaller than that in New York, most of them, such as the ones in London, Vienna, Montreal, Sau Paulo, and Antwerp, provided great financial support to the court.

On top of developing remote Satmar communities that accepted him as their leader, in the mid-1950s Rabbi Yoel also established and headed the Central Rabbinical Congress (also known as Hitahchdus Ha-Rabbanim), an organization that catered to all the rabbis who adopted his ultraconservative and anti-Zionist stances. During the 1960s, Rabbi Yoel published two books: *Va-Yoel Moshe* and *Al Ha-Geula Ve-Al Ha-Temurah* (Keren-Kratz 2023c; Idem 2025). By the end of the 1960s, thanks to the expansion of several Hassidic communities, the largest of which was Satmar, Williamsburg became known throughout the Jewish world as a stronghold of Hassidic ultra-Orthodoxy. Consequently, Rabbi Yoel became one of the most recognizable ultra-Orthodox leaders in America second only to the

Lubavitch Rebbe. His court, Satmar, became the largest Hassidic court in the world, and it also operated one of the largest Jewish education systems which provided services to other courts.

3.9. The Deterioration of the Hassidim's Economic Situation in the Mid-1960s

Although during the 1950s the financial situation of the Hassidim was relatively good, as years went by, the number of families with many children grew. By the end of the 1960s, these families already made up more than half of the Hassidic families. In addition, because general and professional studies were pushed to the side in the court's education system, their graduates were not equipped for the modern work world and their earning capacity dropped sharply.

The large Hassidic families, in which the parents' income was relatively low, had to pay more than average for various goods and services. For example, strict religious requirements increased the cost of kosher food, Hassidic garments could not be mass-produced and thus became expensive, and all children were obliged to study in the court's private and costly education system. The fact that many products and services were supplied by the court or only by certain designated people meant that there was no competition to keep the prices from rising. In addition, the Hassidim not driving on the Sabbath and their desire to live close to the rebbe and his *beit midrash* caused a sharp increase in housing prices.

The decrease in the family income and the large number of children, as well as the more than average expenditure, drove the socioeconomic situation of the Hassidim downhill. In the mid-1960s, the average income of a Hassidic family was about half that of an average New York family, and over a third of the Hassidic families in Williamsburg lived below the poverty line and needed government assistance (Kranzler 1995, p. 39).

Another challenge the Satmar Hassidim faced was the rising influx of black and Hispanic population to Williamsburg. Aiming to maintain the neighborhood's character and seeking to stop the departure of the white population to other areas, the municipal institutions decided to help the local Hassidic community. They granted various funds to organizations that were committed to raising the earning capacity of the Hassidim and assisted them in finding more affordable housing.

In 1966, one of the Satmar court's leaders established the United Jewish Organizations of Williamsburg, which became a branch of the city's Anti-Poverty Committee. UJO supported local educational institutions, helped small-scale entrepreneurs to develop their businesses, and obtained various grants for the purchase and rental of apartments for the members of the community.[19] Two years later, another Hassid opened the Council for Economic Opportunities, which addressed the economic problems of the Hassidic community in Williamsburg. CEO assisted Hassidic men and women to acquire professional training and provided them with guidance that helped them either to find more lucrative jobs or develop their own businesses.[20]

A major challenge to the Hassidim in Williamsburg was the rising cost of housing. Initially, Rabbi Yoel sought to establish a Hassidic neighborhood outside New York City. However, after failing to find a suitable location, Rabbi Yoel and his people concentrated on finding better housing solutions in Williamsburg. After the departure of several smaller Hassidic courts, Satmar became the main representative of the Jewish population of Williamsburg. Its representatives participated in various local committees that worked for the planning and construction of residential projects for the vulnerable population. In the early 1960s, the local building committees in Williamsburg decided to help the Hassidic public and prevent the further departure of the white residents from the neighborhood.[21]

The outcome of these activities was that between 1968 and 1976 several public housing projects were built in Williamsburg that offered about 2500 apartments and were intended to house about 10,000 people. Aware of the intended population composition of the projects, the Hassidic community of Williamsburg warned the municipal authorities that if these buildings were housed by mainly blacks and Hispanics, this may lead to social

disbalance, which would result in the departure of the rest of the Jewish population from the neighborhood. They also explained that living in the high-rise public housing projects was problematic for the Hassidim because they could not use the elevator on Shabbat.[22]

Eventually, after realizing that the projects would inevitably be built, and with no alternative location to which the whole community might be transferred, the Hassidic leaders sought to get as many apartments in the new projects. After a long public struggle, the Hassidim, mostly Satmar, were eligible for some 60 percent of the apartments, a large portion of them were on the lower floors.[23]

3.10. Overview: Hassidic Leadership in America after the Holocaust

Most American Jews, including the Orthodox, were not directly affected by World War II or by the Holocaust. Despite being exposed to the atrocities and the almost total extinction of Eastern European Jewry, and besides donating money to various rescue operations, they continued their ordinary everyday life. Consequently, most of the rabbis who lived in America at that time, including the few Hassidic leaders, never sought to change their ways and adopt new leadership norms.

This, however, was not the case for the Orthodox war refugees and Holocaust survivors. They not only lost their family and all their belongings, but also the Torah centers in Eastern Europe, many of the sages they admired, and even their full-hearted faith. Consequently, many surviving rabbis realized that they should adopt new leadership norms. This was all the more so for Hassidic rebbes who sought to reestablish their courts in America—the impure country and its admiration of materialistic success (Hertzberg 1981). One of the first to realize the need to change, and which succeeded in turning his small and frail initial court into an ultra-Orthodox mega-power, was the Satmar Rebbe.[24]

Rabbi Yoel realized from the very beginning that the Jewish congregation in America was very different from the Jewish community in Eastern Europe. Unlike the latter, which was a formal organization to which all the Jews living in the same place belonged, the former was a voluntary body. Consequently, the congregation received no external funding and was not authorized to force its members to pay dues or other payments. That meant that in order to survive and expand, the congregation's leader had to make sure its members make decent earnings; offer the members a sense of belonging to a tightly bound community that shares the same religious values and mutual commitment to its leader; and provide members with various religious rituals and practical services that would encourage them to contribute regular dues and special contributions. These principles were designed to create a constant flow of funds to the congregation, which will be invested in such a way that would expand the number of its members.

The result of these processes was that Rabbi Yoel became not only his congregation's spiritual leader, as were most of the other rabbis in the old Orthodox congregations in America, but also a social entrepreneur. He urged his followers to go to work and make money and developed a special theory to justify this seemingly earthly aim. He also provided them with a unique ultraconservative and anti-Zionist ideology, which was different than that of other rabbis.

Unlike other Hassidic leaders who only guided their followers in a religious and spiritual manner, he became a sort of general manager who oversees and guides his directors. While leading the court's general policy, he instructed the community lay leaders to provide for the Hassidim in all aspects of life—from housing and employment, through children's education and leisure, continuing with the provision of all sorts of religious services and kosher products, and ending with the court's own newspaper and publishing company. This trailblazing leadership style was eventually accepted by many other ultra-Orthodox leaders, Hassidic and non-Hassidic alike.

4. Viznitz in Israel

4.1. Hungarian Hassidism in Eretz Israel

Despite Eretz Israel's central role in Jewish religious thought, for a long time it was not a primary destination for most Hasidim and their leaders. Although individual Hasidim did occasionally immigrate to Eretz Israel, including the Besht, the founder of the Hassidic movement who reportedly made an unsuccessful attempt to do so, for a long time their number remained low. A notable shift occurred in 1777, when a group of Hasidim, led by Rabbi Menahem Mendel of Vitebsk (1730–1788) and Rabbi Avraham of Kalisk (1741–1777), settled in Eretz Israel. This migration, influenced by messianic expectations, established small Hassidic communities in Tiberias and Safed (Etkes 2013).

Despite ongoing Hassidic immigration to Eretz Israel, most of the Hasidim and their rebbes preferred to remain in Eastern Europe. The small Hassidic communities in Eretz Israel were generally connected to their European "mother" courts and settled in different locations. Hasidim from Volhynia and Galicia settled in Safed, while those from Belarus preferred Tiberias. By 1819, Lubavitch Hassidim established a small community in Hebron, and Sadegora Hasidim established a community in Jerusalem in the early 1840s.

Following the teaching of Rabbi Moshe Sofer (1762–1839), Hungary's foremost Orthodox leader also known after his book *Hatam Sofer*, the mid-19th century saw an increase in Orthodox Hungarian Jews immigrating to Eretz Israel. While most were Ashkenazim, the title given in Hungary to non-Hassidic Jews, some were Hassidim, and both groups established charity organizations titled *kollelim* to support their members (Keren-Kratz 2023a, pp. 173–86). Since the second half of the 20th century was a period of prosperity for the Jews in Hungary, they were able to contribute generously to their organizations, which in turn became more prosperous than other *kollelim* (Keren-Kratz 2020a).

One outcome of this situation was that after World War I, Rabbi Yosef Haim Sonnenfeld of Hungary (1848–1932) became the main religious and political leader of the Old Yishuv, namely the community of the more conservative and non-Zionist Orthodox Jews (Keren-Kratz 2019). While Hungarian Hassidim continued to arrive in Eretz Israel, and even had their own yeshiva, their numbers remained low. However, after the outbreak of World War II and the Holocaust, the number of Hungarian Hassidim soared. The most prominent Hungarian-Hassidic group that settled in Eretz Israel after the Holocaust was that of Viznitz, which became the second largest Hassidic group in the country.

4.2. Viznitz Historical Background

The court of Viznitz was a 19th-century offshoot of the court of Kossov, one of the oldest Hassidic courts that was established in the late 18th century. Although the town of Viznitz (Vijniţa) was located in Bukovina, most of its Hassidim lived in the northeastern regions of greater Hungary, collectively known as Transylvania. During World War I, Transylvania was annexed to Romania and Rabbi Israel Hagar (1860–1936)—The Viznitzer Rebbe—moved to Oradea (Nagyvárad, Großwardein), one of the largest towns in the region. Assisted by two of his sons and by his son-in-law who also moved there, and being more available for his Hassidim, he was able to rapidly expand his court. While one of the sons, Menachem Mendel (1885–1941), opened a yeshiva in one of the larger villages, another son, Haim Meir, remained with his father in Oradea, where he helped his father manage the affairs of the court and promote the local activity of Agudat Israel, the newly established ultra-Orthodox movement (Alfasi 1996, vol. 2, pp. 528–63).

In 1916, Rabbi Haim Meir was selected to serve as the chief rabbi of the village of Vulchovce (Irhocz) in Máramaros county, but he spent most of his time in Oradea with his father. In 1936, Rabbi Israel passed away, and Rabbi Haim Meir replaced him as head of the court in Oradea, as leader of the Hassidic faction within Agudat Israel in Romania, and as a major activist within the Central Bureau of the Orthodox Jewish Communities in Transylvania.[25]

Shortly after Germany invaded northern Transylvania in early 1944, Rabbi Haim Meir sent his family to cross the border illegally into Romania, where they settled in the city of Arad (Alfasi 1996, vol. 2, p. 533). After the Jews of Oradea were ordered to move into the ghetto, he acquired a work permit to engage in forced labor in one of the nearby forests. From there, he managed to flee with a small group that crossed the border to Romania, where he was united with the rest of his family (Roth 1990–2001, vol. 1, pp. 302–29). When the war ended, Rabbi Haim Meir returned to Oradea, where he rehabilitated Jewish religious life and, with the assistance of Agudat Israel, reestablished the religious institutions in Romania. In 1947, following the intensification of the anti-religious decrees of the Communist regime, he immigrated to Mandatory Palestine and settled in Tel Aviv.

4.3. Viznitz Leadership Legacy

Unlike most Hassidic rabbis in Eastern Europe, the leaders of the Viznitz court did not content themselves with merely providing blessings and prayers to their followers, yet sought ways to improve their lives in a practical manner. In 1912, the Viznitzer Rebbe, alongside several other Hassidic leaders, organized a rabbinical conference in Czernowitz (Tchernowitz, Tscherniwzi, Cernăuți), the capital of Bukovina. Facing a growing trend of secularization, particularly among the young generation, and the increasing influence of the Zionist movement, the rabbis discussed the steps that must be taken in the face of these challenges to Orthodox Judaism in general, and Hassidism in particular.

Realizing that relying on preaching and calling for repentance would not be sufficient, the rabbis made a precedent-setting decision. Seeking to encourage parents to send their children to the Hassidic Talmud Torah, they allowed the teaching of general studies as well, thus giving the children essential tools to enable them to find better jobs and even to continue their studies in high schools and universities. They also decided to establish vocational schools where boys who were not qualified for theoretical studies could learn to combine handicrafts with a Hassidic lifestyle.[26] The establishment of Agudat Israel a few months later, as well as the outbreak of World War I, terminated this initiative. Yet, when Agudat Israel resumed its operation in Poland in 1916, it established its own education system along the same principles outlined by the Czernowitz rabbinical conference.

Following the transition of Rabbi Israel Hager—The Viznitzer Rebbe—from Viznitz, Bukovina to Oradea, Transylvania, he appointed his son Menachem as head of the yeshiva in one of the largest villages in Maramaros county, where many Hassidic followers of the court lived. The yeshiva, which was recognized as an official rabbinic institution, had a dormitory and a dining room so that the students did not have to eat in a different house every day, as was the case in most other yeshivot. It also offered professional training in weaving and carpentry as well as classes in general subjects. The Viznitz yeshiva, which offered better conditions than other yeshivot, became a magnet for hundreds of young students. Rabbi Menachem also established a meat and sausage casing factory where the Hassidim were employed, and whose products were marketed to the Orthodox public in the United States.

Rabbi Israel, as well as his sons and sons-in-law, were active leaders of Agudat Israel in Transylvania and used their influence to convince the movement to establish a preparatory farm in which the Hassidim who intended to immigrate to Eretz Israel would receive agricultural training. It is thus not surprising that when the court resumed its activity in Eretz Israel after the Holocaust, its leaders continued to take care of their Hassidim not merely in the spiritual and religious sense but also in a practical manner.

4.4. Viznitz in Eretz Israel

When Rabbi Haim Meir arrived in Tel Aviv in 1947, the city already hosted several Hassidic leaders who were able to escape Europe either before or during the war (Glatter 2023). Among them were also some family members, including Rabbi Haim Meir's son—Rabbi Moshe Yehoshua (1916–2012). He headed the small Viznitz Yeshiva that was established by

his uncle Rabbi Eliezer Hager (1891–1946)—Rabbi Haim Meir's brother—who settled in Tel Aviv in 1944, yet died of cancer two years later.

Following the entrepreneurial–social line of action of his forefathers, Rabbi Haim Meir sought to implement an idea he contemplated back in Europe and to purchase a plot of land and establish a separate agricultural colony for his followers. After considering several options, he decided to buy a forty-dunam (10 acres) plot of land in the uninhabited areas south of Bnei Brak and to establish a small village where, similar to the way of life of the rural Jews in Maramaros, each of the settlers would have a lot that would serve as a small farm. A small commercial and industrial center was also planned to be built on the edge of the compound where those who are unwilling or unable to engage in agriculture or cattle breeding would work. Many of the Hassidim were also employed in the building of the new houses and factories.

To accomplish his plan, the Rebbe spent almost two years in Europe and the United States until he was able to raise the sums required for the downpayment for the plot, during which he was even accused that it was doomed to failure and that he was misleading the donors (Roth 1990–2001, vol. 3, pp. 293–404; Wallach 1998; Meir 1993, pp. 371–91). In the early 1950s, after completing the fundraising, including through the establishment of a joint stock company, the Rebbe build his own home there and was joined by the first group of settlers who had either bought or leased lots there.[27]

Following the large waves of immigration that came to Israel from Romania in the 1950s, the demand to live in the neighborhood increased greatly, and many new Hassidim joined the court. The Rebbe established a series of religious and educational institutions there, headed by the central *beit midrash*, which was inaugurated in 1955, along with several small industrial enterprises that provided a living for the Hassidim. In the coming years, the court established other businesses that were either run by the court or were franchised to members of the community.[28]

In 1958, the *Histadrut* (the mighty labor union controlled by the secular-leftist parties) sought to buy an eighty-dunam (20 acres) plot next to the Viznitz neighborhood. Fearing that the land would fall into foreign hands, Rabbi Haim Meir decided to buy the lot himself and expand the area of his neighborhood.[29]

By the end of the 1950s, more than 100 families lived in the neighborhood. About 400 children studied in the Heder and Talmud Torah, and another 200 children studied in the two yeshivas, one for those in the age of elementary school, and one for those who already celebrated their Bar Mitzvah.[30] Since the 1960s, after the neighborhood was annexed to Bnei Brak and when the children of the first settlers established families of their own, the previous small one-family houses were demolished and replaced with apartment buildings. Eventually, it lost its agricultural character and became a regular urban neighborhood. At the same time the court established more institutions, including a new Talmud Torah (Roth 1990–2001, vol. 3, pp. 446–53), a school for girls (Roth 1990–2001, vol. 3, pp. 457–58), and a children's institution for immigrants and Holocaust survivors (Roth 1990–2001, vol. 3, pp. 457–60). It also established a nursing home, a hotel that also served as a function hall, and a regular and a Matzah bakery, and it even purchased a private cemetery plot for the court's Hassidim.[31]

In 1960, the Viznitzer Rebbe launched his largest project so far. In those years, most of the Hassidim did not continue their studies in the yeshiva after the age of 18, and most of them served in the Israeli army. Some of the Haredi soldiers enrolled in a special military program titled Nahal, in which the soldiers combined military and agriculture training, following which they either joined an existing Haredi settlement or established a new one. The rebbe decided to establish his own Nahal unit, which would establish a rural settlement for his Hassidim. There, the Hassidim were expected to work in the fields and use the yields to produce kosher wine and conserved foods that would be exported to Orthodox Jews in America (Keren-Kratz 2018a).

In addition, since the Rebbe's son-in-law who oversaw the program was a big diamond merchant, he was asked to establish a diamond factory that would also provide additional jobs to the Hassidim. A few years later, it turned out that the plan to establish a Hassidic village failed and the place was passed to the Haredi party of Agudat Israel.

In the following years, Rabbi Haim Meir fostered the establishment of a community of Viznitz Hassidim in Netanya and Ashdod. At the same time, he also promoted the establishment of two new Viznitz neighborhoods—one in Safed and one in Jerusalem. These neighborhoods were only built in the mid-1970s, a few years after the passing of the Rebbe in 1972.

4.5. Overview: Viznitz Leadership in Israel

Most of the Hassidic rebbes that settled in Mandatory Palestine and Israel's early years sought to establish their communities according to the old and familiar patterns. They established a *beit midrash*, where their Hassidim could gather, pray, and study, and settled with praying for their success in both their personal and professional life. A few other rebbes, the Viznitzer Rebbe being one of them, took a different approach and became social activists who took it upon themselves to provide for their destitute, grief-stricken Hassidim, most of whom were Holocaust survivors, with material needs as well.

This leadership style was not completely new to Rabbi Haim Meir, and yet the scale of his operations in Israel after the Holocaust was far larger than that of his ancestors in earlier generations. He established Israel's first Hassidic neighborhood and provided work for his Hassidim first in the construction of the place and then in farming or in one of the businesses that were established in the neighborhood. He further founded a separate education system for the court's boys and girls so that they would not have to study far away from home. He provided job opportunities for his Hassidim and persuaded local industrialists and businessmen to employ them. He even catered to the Hassidic soldiers and established a military unit and an agricultural-industrial colony.

His entrepreneurial character served as an example for other rabbis—for example, when the Satmar Rebbe sought to establish his neighborhood outside of Jerusalem, he consulted Rabbi Haim Meir and eventually built his neighborhood nearby. Other Hasidic neighborhoods that were built in the 1950s and 1960s following the Viznitz Rebbe's model were Kiryat Sanz in Netanya; Kiryat Bobov in Bat Yam; Kiryat Ismah Moshe (Sasov) in Gani Tikva; Ramat Wizhnitz (Seret-Vizhnitz) in Haifa; Kiryat Spinka in Petah Tikva; Kiryat Kaliv in Rishon Le-Zion; and Kiryat Kretshnif in Rehovot. Kfar Chabad, the Chabad village, which was established as an isolated agricultural settlement and not as a neighborhood next to one of Israel's larger cities, was the exception to the rule (Keren-Kratz 2023b).

5. Conclusions

The living conditions, the political system, the economic situation, the social environment, and the relationship between Church and State in Israel and the United States were entirely different from those in Eastern Europe. The forced immigration of the Hassidim during World War II and after the Holocaust to countries that did not have a significant Hassidic tradition drove their rebbes to develop a far different leadership style than the one they used to follow in Eastern Europe. Unlike their old Hassidic communities, which were decades and even centuries old, they had to establish new ones from scratch. Moreover, a large portion of their Hassidim was made up of immigrants and Holocaust survivors who lost their families and all their belongings, and in many cases had serious doubts about their religious convictions.

As was shown in the Satmar and Viznitz cases, and as was later with most other Hassidic communities, the rebbes did not settle with spiritual and religious guidance and became social entrepreneurs. They provided their Hassidim with housing solutions, employment opportunities, and schools for their children, directly influencing every aspect of their daily lives. The result was that the Hassidim became almost totally dependent on the court's leadership.

While in the past the Hassid occasionally visited his rebbe and consulted him on various matters, he also approached other rabbis or rebbes and sent his children to educational institutions of his choice. Yet, after the Holocaust belonging to a certain court obligated the Hassidim to complete obedience to the leadership of a single Rebbe in all ways of life. Consequently, unlike in the past, after their immigration, most of the Hassidim were registered members of a certain Hassidic group, to which they paid dues and to which they had full commitment. Consequently, for example, the Hassidim were only allowed to visit or to consult with a limited number of rabbis and rebbes who were "approved" by their court's leadership. Thus, the Hassidic community became more homogeneous and the term "Hassidic court," which once referred to only a few dozen families, now included thousands and tens of thousands of Hassidim.

To conclude, this is one of only a few academic studies that explore post-Holocaust Hassidism, with a specific focus on the effects of forced immigration on its development. The involuntary immigration that was imposed on the Hassidim as a result of World War II and the Holocaust caused them to face many new challenges. Aware of these difficulties, the Hassidic rebbes who were faced with these new circumstances adopted a completely new leadership strategy, and much more emphasis was put on caring for their followers' material needs. This resulted in a far closer relationship between the Hassid, his community, and the rebbe, which led the Hassidic courts to become more defined and coherent, and the Hassidim to be more committed. As a result of the forced immigration, the very concept of Hassidism, Hassidic leadership, and the Hassidic community have changed so much that one might even say that save for the title and basic rituals and customs, there is very little in common between the Hassidic communities of Eastern Europe and those that were established after the Holocaust in other countries.

While this article focuses on the impact of post-Holocaust forced immigration on the Hasidic community, one should remember that similar social processes occurred within the Lithuanian, namely non-Hassidic Haredi community, as well. Examining the post-Holocaust ultra-Orthodox society in America and Haredi society in Israel shows a significant rise in the social status of the more prominent rabbis, now referred to as the Gedolim, as well as to their authority not only in the field of Halakha but also in every aspect of life, a phenomenon known as Da'at Torah (Stampfer 2017, pp. 11–20; Brown 2014).

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Notes

1 In the following, the article will discuss how the term "court" was expanded to indicate all the Hasidim who felt related to the same Rebbe.

2 For more details on the scholarship on Migration Studies, see, for example, IMISCOE (International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion) Migration Research Hub: https://migrationresearch.com/ (accessed on 23 August 2024).

3 This phenomenon began on a small scale after World War I when many rebbes fled their hometowns and settled in the cities. After the war ended, many of them returned to their former locations, yet some remained in the cities, particularly in Vienna. However, their number and status were far smaller compared with that of the rebbes who settled in New York or Tel Aviv after the Holocaust.

4 On Hungarian Orthodoxy and its uniquness, see: (Keren-Kratz 2023a).

5 *Ha-Leumi*, 3 January 1889, pp. 4–5; ibid., 10 January 1889, pp. 4–5. The titles of these congregations are taken from the Hasidic version of the Siddur (prayer book), which indicates that it followed a more kabbalistic interpretation of the text.

6 *Apirion*, 5, 684 (1924), p. 131; ibid., 5, 686 (1926), p. 171; ibid., 5, 687 (1927), pp. 50, 58.

7 (Keren-Kratz 2022). Although the Fair Labor Standards Act that regulated working hours was introduced in 1938, it took some twenty years until it was fully implemented. During that time, many businesses, and especially the garment industry in which many Jews were employed, continued to work a six-day week.

8 *Ha-Pardes*, December 1937, pp. 2–3.

9 Ibid., February 1947, pp. 6–7; *Morgen Journal*, 3 January 1947, p. 5; *U-Moshe Haya Roeh*, Kiryas Joel, 2006, vol. 3, pp. 386–87. Following Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum's death in 1979, Rabbi Moshe succeeded him as the Satmar Rebbe.

10 *Morgen Journal*, 1 March 1949, p. 10; ibid., 18 November 1949, p. 10; ibid., 5 December 1949, p. 10.

11 Among them were Rabbi Yehoshua Greenwald of Huszt; Rabbi Yekuthiel Yehuda Halberstam of Sanz-Klausenburg (Cluj); Rabbi Meir Hager of Oyber Visho (Vişeu de Sus, Felsővisó); Rabbi Yoel Meyer-Teitelbaum of Királyháza (Craia); Rabbi Yom-Tov Lipa Teitelbaum of Nyírbátor; Rabbi Ya'akov Weiss of Spinka; Rabbi Zvi Hirsh Meislish of Vác; Rabbi Michael Dov Weissmandel and Rabbi Shalom Moshe Ha-Levi Unger of Nitra; Rabbi Elazar Shapiro of Kivishad (Mezőkövesd); Rabbi Yozepa Friedlander of Liska; and Rabbi Raphael Blum of Kosice.

12 (Keren-Kratz 2014). The Kasztner train was a rescue operation aimed at saving some 1800 Hungarian Jews. Despite its success, the orgenizer, Zionist activist Israel Kasztner, was heavily criticized after the Holocaust. On this affair, see, for example: (Hecht 1961).

13 After the Holocaust, the yeshiva was reestablished in Nitra, Czechoslovakia, but a few years later Rabbi Weissmandel transferred it to the United States. On the yeshiva that later moved to Mounk Kisko, see: (Yeshiva 1953, (the book was printed by the yeshiva's own press); Weissmandel 2016, pp. 356–57).

14 The Rabbis of Skvita and Tosh also adopted Rabbi Weissmandel's concept of a secluded community, yet with far less success than Rabbi Yoel.

15 *Der Yid*, 12 December 1958, p. 7; ibid., 21 August 1959, p. 6.

16 (Rubin 1972, pp. 41, 131, 259). The average annual income of the Hasidim, around USD 8000, was like that of the New York City average. See US Bureau of Labor Statistics information: https://www.bls.gov/opub/100-years-of-u-s-consumer-spending.pdf (accessed on 24 August 2024).

17 *Der Yid*, 12 December 1958, pp. 6–7; *Panim El Panim*, 10 October 1958, p. 11.

18 *Der Yid*, 12 December 1958, p. 7; ibid., 21 August 1958, p. 6.

19 Ibid., 14 August 1964, p. 2; ibid., 17 September 1965, pp. 1–2; ibid., 1 March 1966, p. 1; ibid., 13 May 1966, pp. 1–2; ibid., 1 July 1966, p. 1; ibid., 3 February 1967, p. 1; ibid, 28 August 1970, p. 4; (Mintz 1992, p. 18; Kranzler 1995, pp. 33–37).

20 *Der Yid*, 29 April 1966, pp. 1–2; ibid., 3 November 1967, pp. 1–2; ibid., 1 December 1967, p. 1; ibid., 12 January 1968, pp. 1–2; ibid., 9 February 1968, p. 2.

21 *New York Times*, 17 May 1963.

22 *Der Tog/Morgen Journal*, 6 March 1958, p. 5.

23 *New York Times*, 28 July 1967; (Kranzler 1995, pp. 15–19).

24 On the transformation of Satmar into a political and economic mega-power, see: (Deutsch and Casper 2021; Stolzenberg and Myers 2021).

25 On Rabbi Haim Meir, see: (Roth 1990–2001).

26 *Mahazikei Ha-Dat*, 1 April 1912, p. 6; *Der Moment*, 22 April 1912, p. 2; *Ha-Tzfira*, 22 April 1912, p. 3; *Ha-Modia*, 26 April 1912, p. 1.

27 *Ha-Modia*, 3 June 1951, p. 2; *Shearim*. 28 June 1951, p. 3.

28 *Shearim*, 1 July 1955, p. 5.

29 *Forverts*, 12 September 1957, p. 12; *Shearim*, 21 January 1958, p. 2; ibid., 29 January 1958, p. 2; ibid., 17 August 1959, pp. 2–3; (Roth 1990–2001, vol. 3, pp. 411–28).

30 *Panim El Panim*, 25 May 1955, pp. 10–12; *Shearim*, 2 October 1959, p. 16.

31 *Panim El Panim*, 19 July 1963, pp. 12–13, 17; (Roth 1990–2001, vol. 3, pp. 461–62, 466–67).

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